

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name T.S. Martin & Company

other names/site number Karlton's, Fishgalls & Cameo

2. Location

street & number 515-17, 519-521 4th Street and 409-11 Nebraska Street N/A not for publication

city or town Sioux City N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Woodbury code 193 zip code 51101

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patricia Churkin DSHD 6-2-98
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is :
- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 - determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 - determined not eligible for the National Register.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain:)

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Edson A. Beall 7-15-98

T. S. Martin & Co
Name of Property

Woodbury, IA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

none

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/department store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

~~LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/~~
Beaux Arts

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY AMER. MOVEMENTS
Prairie School

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/granite
BRICK

walls BRICK
TERRA COTTA

roof ASPHALT

other METAL

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

T.S Martin & Co.
Name of Property

Woodbury IA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark an "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for national Register Listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1902-1919

Significant Dates

1902

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

McLaughlin, William

Fisher, Henry (continued)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

T.S. Martin & Co.
Name of Property

Woodbury IA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 14 713380 4707720

3 _____

2 _____

4 _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gretchen E. Schalge

organization City of Sioux City date 11/24/97

street & number Box 447 telephone 712/279-6159

city or town Sioux City state IA zip code 51102

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name see continuation sheet

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S. C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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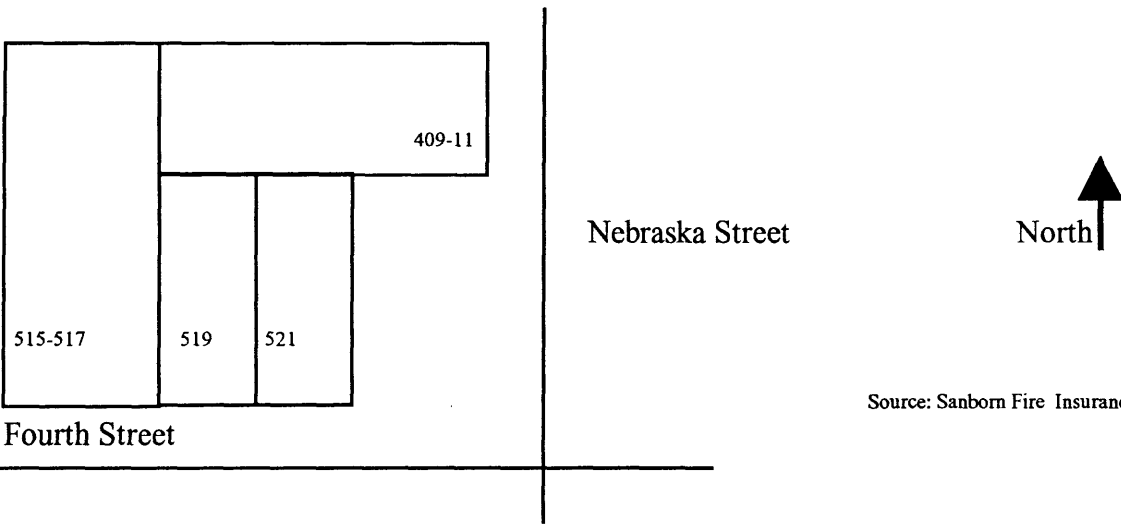
T.S. Martin & Co.
Woodbury, IA

Narrative Description

Occupying nearly a quarter block in downtown Sioux City, the T.S. Martin & Company department store is a large, three story, "L" shaped, masonry building with a flat roof and two prominent storefronts. The main building, which fronts onto 4th Street, actually is made up of three buildings dating from 1885 but given a new, unifying storefront in 1910-11. Stylistically the main building represents the Prairie School mode with its bright white terra cotta and long decorative bands of terra cotta details executed in foliage and geometric patterns. The Annex, which fronts onto Nebraska Street, was constructed in 1901-02 and stylistically represents the Beaux Arts mode with its roof-line knee wall, its accentuated cornice with acanthus leaf brackets, and its decorative swags.

Exterior - Main Building

The main building of the T.S. Martin & Company department store is actually a unification of three separately constructed buildings that date from 1885. The western-most portion of the main building, historically known as the Martin Block and addressed 515-17 4th Street, is a 50 foot x 150 foot, rectangular-shaped, three-story structure. The middle (519 4th Street) and eastern-most (521 4th Street) buildings each measure 25 feet x 100 feet. They are both rectangular-shaped, three-story structures.



Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1924

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Stylistically, these buildings were typical of late 1800's substantial frontier architecture. Constructed in brick, they featured elaborate cornices and tall plate-glass storefront windows. Having been constructed with nearly matching floor levels, T.S. Martin & Company combined 515-17 and 519 in 1894 and later added 521 Fourth Street in 1904. In 1910, Martin's decided to unify the three storefronts and hired local architect William L. Steele to prepare a design. Steele presented Martin with a design reminiscent of his mentor, Louis Sullivan¹. The unified front, the majority of which is still visible in the eastern half of the building, features a gleaming white terra cotta facade, a terra cotta cornice with decorative terra cotta trim in geometric designs, and decorative terra cotta molding executed in both geometric and foliage patterns. The original building featured Chicago-style windows (see Alterations).

Alterations

The original second and third floor windows in the eastern half (519 and 521 4th St.) of the T.S. Martin & Company department store have been replaced with tinted, aluminum frame, fixed windows. The storefront in this half has also been altered. Specifically, the transom windows have been covered with a signboard. The white terra cotta supporting columns and bulkheads have been covered with black-glazed brick. The storefront windows have been replaced; however, with the exception of the transom windows, they resemble the original windows in height.

The western half (515-517 4th Street) of the T.S. Martin & Company department store has been severely altered from its original appearance. The cornice has been removed. The second and third floors have been covered with a wood face. Beneath the covering is the white terra cotta facade matching the eastern half of the building. Also beneath the covering is the building's 1911 Chicago-style windows. The most intrusive alteration however, is the red-brick, double arched entry with Old English-styled, coachman light fixtures. The building's entrance and storefront windows sit approximately four feet behind the double arches.

Interior - Main Building

The interior of both halves of the main building has been altered from its original appearance. The ground floor has been "modernized" with paneling and display cases and the ceilings have been lowered and enclosed with acoustical tiles. Carpeting and linoleum tile cover

¹ William L. Steele studied under Louis Sullivan between 1897 and 1900. *Who Was Who in America* Vol.2 P. 507.

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the floors. In the eastern half (519-21 4th Street) of the building, some linoleum tiles have been lifted to reveal small octagonal-shaped mosaic floor tiles. The only remaining detail on the second and third floors are pressed metal ceilings. The metal ceiling on the second floor of the eastern half has been covered with acoustical tile. However, some of the tile has been removed to reveal the metal ceiling.

A "fire wall" divides the eastern half of the main building (519-521 4th Street) into two equal sections of 25 feet in width. This "fire wall" was once a party wall between 519 4th Street and 521 4th Street. On the third floor of the eastern half of the main building, there is no door or pass-through between the equal sections. However, on the second floor, there is a wide doorway cut through the "fire wall" to allow passage between the two, 25-foot sections. The floor level of the section once addressed as 519 4th Street is slightly lower than that of 521 4th Street, so Martin's installed one set of two risers between the buildings.

Exterior - Annex, 401-11 Nebraska Street

Designed by local architect Henry Fisher in the Beaux Arts architectural style, the Annex was constructed in 1901-02, measures 50 foot x 100 foot and features a number of interesting details. The building is three stories tall with a flat roof and a decorative parapet or knee wall. The building is divided into three bays by decorative pilasters in the parapet wall and above the third floor windows. The distinction of bays however, lessens significantly at the third, second and ground floors. At the base of the parapet wall runs a decorative cornice which is supported by acanthus-leafed brackets. Beneath the cornice at the base of the brackets runs a band of dentil molding. Beneath the dentil molding and accentuating the Beaux Arts style is a series of decorative swags. A stylized flower modillion divides each series of swags into three sections.

The third floor windows are rectangular with rounded upper corners. The windows are double hung with the top window made up of small, square panes of purple glass. A 1901 *Sioux City Journal* news article referred to the type of glass as Luxfer prism windows.² Slightly above the third floor windows is a decorative band of molding that echoes the windows' gently curved line.

The second floor windows are rectangular and, like the third floor, are double hung with the upper window made up of the small panes of purple Luxfer prism glass.

² *Sioux City Journal*. 19 June 1901. P. 6.

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Alterations - Annex

The ground floor of the Annex has been significantly altered from its original appearance. From a drawing and photographs taken shortly after the building's construction, it appears that the Annex was designed with a typical turn-of-the-century storefront. It was designed with large-paned storefront windows with beveled-glass transoms and a central, recessed entrance with Luxfer prism transoms. Today the building has a shed-type, fabricated metal front covering the transom windows and storefront columns. There are three commercial-style, glass doors along the front facade -- one in the center and one on either side of the center. The doors are full-length glass with aluminum frames.

In addition to the changes made to the storefront, at some time in the past the Annex was painted white. News articles at the time of construction indicate that the building was constructed in pressed brick with stone trimmings. Perhaps, when Martin's constructed its 1911 building front on 4th Street in gleaming white terra cotta, Martin's also decided to update their Annex front by painting it white, thereby further "unifying" the store's appearance.

Currently, the Annex is vacant and in deteriorated condition.

Interior - Annex

The interior of the Annex has been altered from its original appearance. The ground floor has been converted into two movie theaters. The only remaining original element is the pressed metal ceilings. The second floor exhibits an open floor plan. To serve the first floor theater, heating and air conditioning units were installed by placing the mechanical systems on the wooden floor of this second level. A pressed metal ceiling is the only visible remaining feature of the original building on the second floor. The third floor also has an open floor plan. The only remaining elements of the original building are the pressed metal ceilings and wooden floor.

At the time the Annex and the main building were used as the T.S. Martin & Company department store, a passage existed between the two buildings. Although the passageways have been enclosed, there is evidence of their existence on the third floor of the Annex where a doorway has been enclosed with concrete block.

Both the Annex and the east half of the main building have been sold to a not-for-profit housing organization that plans on utilizing housing credits and Investment Tax Credits to convert the upper two floors of the old department store into low and moderate income housing units and the ground floor into retail space.

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Architect/ Builder (continuation)

Steele, William L.

Statement of Significance

The T.S. Martin & Co., dry goods store possess local significance under National Register Criterion A as the last remaining example of an important early Sioux City dry goods store. The dates of significance relate to the 1902 expansion of the T.S. Martin store into the Annex building through 1919, the date T.S. Martin & Co. moved from this location into a new building.

Criteria A

Thomas Sanford Martin was born 1853 in Galena, Illinois. He came to Sioux City with his parents in 1868 when he was fifteen years old and began working as a clerk in George W. Felt's grocery store located near Pearl and Fourth Streets, Sioux City's main business district. At this time, very little is known of T.S. Martin's parents. In 1868, Sioux City was a small, but rapidly growing freight center with an estimated permanent population of 1,380. In 1868, with the arrival of the Sioux City and Pacific Railroad, Sioux City began to eclipse St. Louis as the steamboat capitol of the West. With the new rail connection, eastern manufacturers who once transferred their Dakota and Montana-bound goods from rail to steamboat at St. Louis, were now able to bypass 1,000 miles of expensive river travel by shipping their freight directly to Sioux City. Goods and mail bound for Indian agencies, military outposts, and the numerous white settlements on the upper reaches of the Missouri River moved from rail cars, through Sioux City warehouses and onto waiting steamboats.³

From its beginning, Sioux City was destined to become the commercial center of the upper Missouri River. The 1876-77 city directory spoke in glowing terms of Sioux City and its economic environment, calling the small town:

...the unquestioned metropolis of a section reaching tens of miles to the south and east, and hundreds of miles to the north and west. It does not however, rely, so much upon the numbers of its inhabitants [nearly 6,000] as upon their indomitable energy and their everlasting determination to reach the farthest outposts and bind them to it by the net of trade it has woven over an extent of of country as large as some of the States..."⁴

³ Sorensen, Scott and B. Paul Chicoine. *Sioux City: A Pictorial History*. P. 40

⁴ Polk, R.L. *Sioux City Directory 1876-77*. P. 2.

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Sioux City's trade area was estimated to be over 120,000 square miles and included western Iowa, northern Nebraska and all of South Dakota.⁵

Martin spent his early adult years in this progressive, high-energy environment, working and learning important lessons of commerce in a few of Sioux City's more prominent establishments including H.D. Booge's and George Felt's grocery businesses. Following a brief encounter with a business enterprise in the gold rush town of Deadwood, South Dakota, Martin returned to Sioux City and in April 1880, after learning that D.T. Gillman had a 200 square-foot storefront to lease on Fourth Street, between Pearl and Douglas Streets, Martin secured the lease, went into partnership with George Wescott and brother James P. Martin, and opened a dry good store on the edge of the city's commercial district, thus marking the beginning of the Martin Company's 88 year relationship with the city of Sioux City.

In the 1880's, Sioux City was riding high on an economic boom. Its geographical location at the convergence of two rivers and on the edge of the Great Plains, where the western cattle ranges and the eastern grain fields met, destined Sioux City to become a major center for the distribution of supplies to western farmers and ranchers. During the 1880's neighboring territories saw a great increase in immigration, rail lines were constructed into Sioux City from nearly all directions, and Iowa became the nation's leading hog producer. Sioux City's manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers saw a steady increase in business as small country merchants rushed to fill their orders. By 1884, Sioux City boasted the largest linseed oil works in the nation. The city had several flour mills; stove, engine and plow manufacturers; soap, candy, carriage and mattress manufacturers; a pottery works and brick and tile yards. By 1890, the United States Census reported that Sioux City had 196 manufacturing establishments, and goods produced that year amounted to over \$14 million. In 1890, Sioux City had risen to fifth in the nation's packing industry. The assessed valuation of Sioux City property rose from \$1,148,000 in 1882 to \$20,000,000 in 1892.⁶

It was in this economic climate that Martin began his dry goods business. In 1880, the year Martin opened, Sioux City had grown to a population of 7,380 and there were seven other dry goods houses in town, only two of which had been in business since 1872. The town had paved streets, gas street lights, sidewalks, and in 1883-4 the city sanctioned an electric company,

⁵ Haefner, Marie. "The Boom In Sioux City". In *The Palimpsest*. Volume 21. P. 55.

⁶ Ibid. P. 54-64.

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and began a municipal waterworks and horse-drawn street railway system.⁷

In 1883, the T.S. Martin & Co. business grew to such a degree that it necessitated a move into a larger storefront. Martin gave up his 200 square-foot storefront that he had been renting for three years, and opened a new store at 323-25 Fourth Street (razed) in the heart of Sioux City's retail district. Then, in 1885, possibly in preparation for future expansion or just a fortuitous real estate investment, Martin purchased a 50 foot-wide, three-story, brick building at 515-517 Fourth Street which he leased to clothing retailers. Meanwhile, Martin's brother, Louis B., leased next door 519 Fourth Street and opened the T.S. Martin & Co. shoe store.

The story of the T.S. Martin & Co. would not be complete without also studying two other dry good houses operating in Sioux City at the time. Ben Davidson and Frank Pelletier opened their respective dry goods houses in the late 1800's and became Martin's main business rivals until the late 1940's.

Ben Davidson, Martin's first rival, arrived in Sioux City from Russia in 1882. Initially, Davidson traveled about Sioux City and environs peddling tinware. In 1884, with his brother Dave, he open the B. Davidson Bankrupt Store in a rented 10 x 20 foot storefront at Fourth and Jennings Streets. The company prospered so much so that by the late 1880's, Davidson moved to larger quarters in a corner 25 x 100 foot store at Fourth and Nebraska Streets. In January 1891, Davidson dropped the "Bankrupt" from his business name and moved his store to a two-story building on the southwest corner of Fourth and Pierce Streets. Davidson subsequently expanded this store on a number of occasions over the next decades. Coincidentally, most of his construction projects coincided with construction projects of his closest rivals -- Martin's and Pelletier's.⁸

Some degree of animosity existed between Davidson and Martin -- or at least animosity from Davidson directed toward Martin. Frequently there would appear in one or both of Sioux City's newspapers Davidson's advertisements and negative references to T.S. Martin & Co. For example, in an advertisement dated November 11, 1900, Davidson clearly takes umbrage with Martin for purchasing the stock of a bankrupt shoe company. Davidson used phrases such as "ostrich like stupidity" and "better than thou attitude," and accused Martin of selling defective

⁷ Sorensen, P. 40.

⁸ Sorensen, P. 95, 124.

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stock.⁹ Martin, however, did not seem to adopt Davidson's tactics, apparently choosing to ignore the charges rather than answer them.

Frank M. Pelletier, Martin's other main rival, arrived in Sioux City from Illinois in 1882 at age seventeen. He went into partnership in a grocery business but within nine months he sold his interest and began working as a clerk in the dress goods section of T.S. Martin & Company. Shortly thereafter, Pelletier entered into partnership with C.G. Culver, in the Culver & Co., dry goods house. In 1893, Culver died and Pelletier bought the business with partner Fred E. Parsons and renamed the store Parson-Pelletier Company. Perhaps because Pelletier was once in Martin's employ, on March 24, 1894, there appeared in the *Sioux City Journal* a letter of welcome from T.S. Martin & Co.:

We send a cordial welcome to the new retail Dry Goods house which yesterday opened its doors to the Sioux City public.

Competition is the life of business. The service of the public is the result to be sought for, and that service which is stimulated by generous rivalry is the only pathway to real and prominent success. The more business houses, therefore, the better, not only for the public but for all fair competitors themselves.

We must trust that a long and successful career lies before our neighbor and competitor."¹⁰

On April 12, 1894, less than three weeks following Pelletier's opening, T.S. Martin & Co., proudly announced their move to 515-17 and 519 Fourth Street:

... owing to the great increase in our business coming to us every day, and the overcrowded condition of certain departments, we are convinced that we must again build larger space for the coming year. We expect to open our own building, size 75 x 125, of four floors, to be strictly dry goods alone, on Fourth St., between Nebraska and Pierce, on or about September 1st, which will be

⁹ *Sioux City Journal*, 11 November 1900. P. 7.

¹⁰ *Sioux City Journal*, 24 March 1894, P. 3.

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Reference: *Sioux City Journal*. 10 April 1901

Showing architect McLaughlin's 1894 redesign of the 515-17 and 519 Fourth St. storefront. The other building referred to in the headline was T.S. Martin's Cedar Rapids store (not shown here).

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remodeled with all modern improvements. These changes will make such marked improvements that you will at once appreciate them. "If you can't get it at Martin's, it's no use trying" is a remark often heard. This refers to completedness and "completeness", and is one of the points most carefully considered here, and "too" you'll find the new store lighter and brighter and fresher.¹¹

Martin hired local architect William McLaughlin to rebuild 515-17 Fourth and neighboring 519 Fourth Street (the latter of which was occupied by Martin's shoe department and which Martin rented from realtors Joseph and Sigmund Schulein). According to the *Sioux City Tribune*, Martin spent \$25,000 on his remodeling project which included installing two-story plate glass windows, lowering a floor, and replacing wooden girders with steel supports. The only pieces of the original buildings left standing were the exterior walls. The remodeled building was equipped with an elevator, steam heating facilities and new plumbing. The interior was finished in quarter sawn white oak.¹²

On June 19, 1901, T.S. Martin again announced that his store was expanding. With the increase in Martin's drop-in trade and his desire to enlarge his mail order department, Martin decided to construct larger quarters. Martin hired local architect Henry Fisher to design an Annex that fronted onto Nebraska Street and joined the back of the existing Martin store, thereby giving the department store two prominent store fronts: one on Fourth Street and the other on Nebraska Street. Plans called for the new, \$15,000, three-story Annex to be pressed brick, with stone trimmings, large plate glass windows and transoms made of small panes of purple, Luxfer prism glass. On December 6th, Martin proudly announced that their new Annex was open and specially decorated for the Christmas season, although other interior improvements continued.

On January 1, 1902, T.S. Martin & Co. wished its customers a happy new year and thanked them for their continuing support. Martin reminded readers that his was the oldest operating department store in Sioux City, having grown from one small storefront with a force of four salespeople and annual sales amounting to \$35,000 in 1880, to two stores (one in Sioux City

¹¹ *Sioux City Journal*, 12 April 1894, P. 3

¹² *Sioux City Tribune*, Holiday Edition, 31 December 1894, P. 7.

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and another in Cedar Rapids), 300 employees, floor space nearing 50,000 square feet and annual sales amounting to nearly \$1 million.

Interior remodeling of the department store continued throughout the first two months of 1902. On March 3, 1902, Martin announced the project's near-completion to his customers:

“There's only a few more finishing touches to put on throughout the store, and we'll be ready to ask you to visit the neatest, lightest and most convenient dry goods store in Sioux City and one of the largest stores in the state.”¹³

Throughout their history in Sioux City, Martin's, Davidson's, and Pelletier's used interesting slogans or catch-phrases to attract customers to their stores. When referring to their building, the words Martin often used were “lightest, brightest and most convenient”; perhaps using this imagery to convey the feeling that they had fresh, shiny, new merchandise. In 1904, for example, while rival Pelletier's conducted a fire-sale, Martin's ran an advertisement that enticed customers to visit Martin's “where there's not a scrap of trash at any price. This big new store entirely filled with fresh, clean, new merchandise”¹⁴, indirectly implying that his rival sold sooty, damaged goods.

Pelletier's championed themselves as the “Big Store” and offered its customers such conveniences as comfortable restrooms, quick elevator service, daily newspapers and the latest periodicals, and telephone and messenger service. Davidson's on the other hand, selected to focus upon their prices, boldly promoting itself as “the Store that is Holding Down the Cost of Living in Sioux City Twenty-Five Per Cent”.¹⁵

There may have been some truth to Davidson's claim. Prior to 1904, Davidson's ran a grocery and meat department in their dry goods store. Apparently, local merchants took exception to Davidson's grocery business, accusing them of purposely undercutting their prices and operating the department at a loss. Because they were such a large and diverse operation, Davidson's was able to make-up for the loss in the grocery and meat department by operating the remainder of their dry goods departments at a profit. On June 5, 1904, the situation came to a head. Davidson's bowed to the pressure of the business community and decided to close their

¹³ *Sioux City Journal*. 2 March 1902. P. 8.

¹⁴ *Sioux City Journal*. 11 October 1904. P 10.

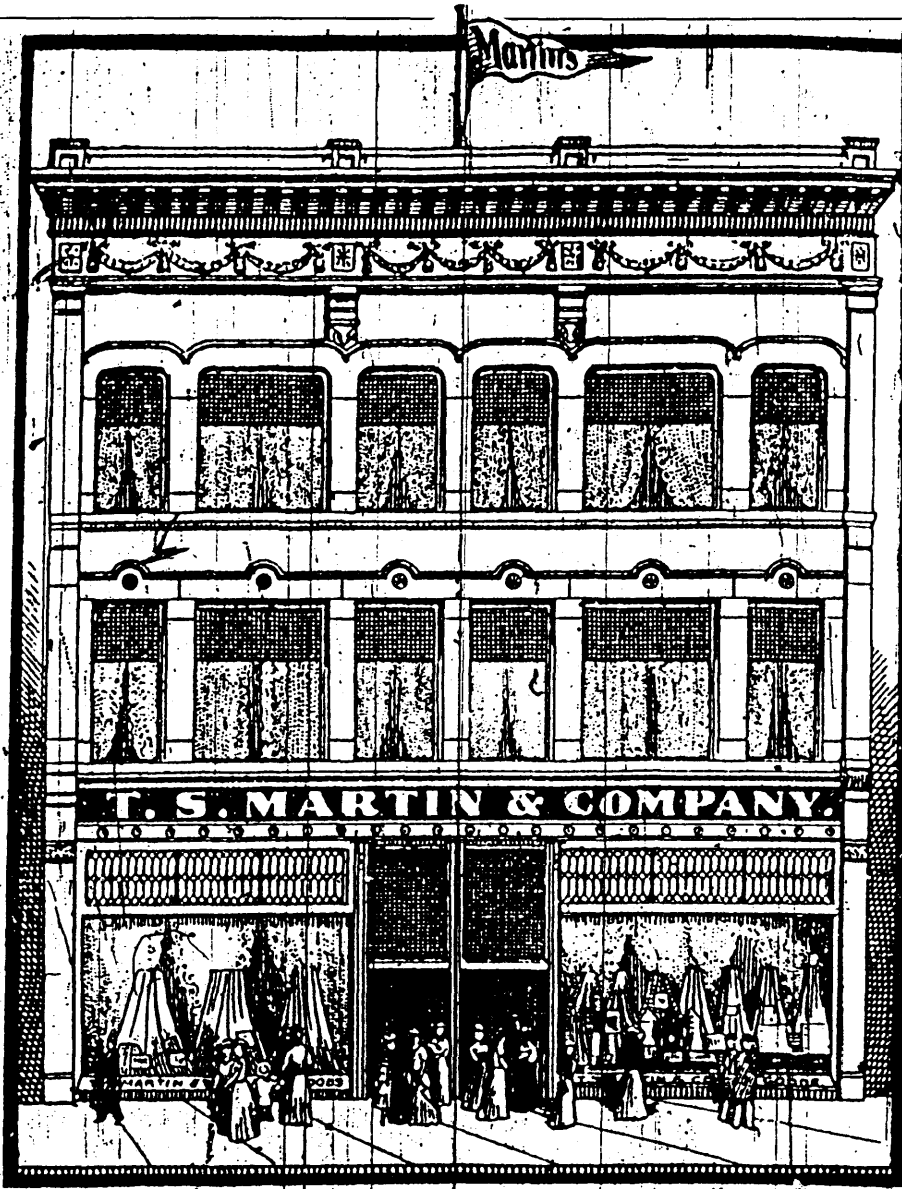
¹⁵ *Sioux City Journal*. 14 April 1904. P. 7.

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Source: *Sioux City Journal*. 19 April 1907 P. 22.
Showing the Annex located at 409-11 Nebraska Street.

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grocery and meat department. The *Sioux City Journal*, a frequent Davidson's supporter, lamented the closing and wrote harshly about Davidson's critics:

It must be conceded that for many years Davidson Bros. Co., have been recognized as the store for the masses; the store that catered to all classes and conditions of people and a store that has attained an enviable reputation as being the "bargain store" of Sioux City. When asked how he felt, Davidson said "I'm glad it's over. We fought for the people, and especially for the poor people of Sioux City, and fought bravely, but we could not fight the entire business community."¹⁶

The rivalry that existed between the three department stores, reached beyond newspaper advertisement pages to major construction projects. On June 5, 1904, two years following the opening of the Annex, Martin announced to his customers that he had acquired neighboring 521 Fourth Street and was beginning another major remodeling project. A 25 foot wide, three-story building dating from 1885, 521 Fourth Street was the mirror image of 519 Fourth Street.¹⁷

On June 3, 1904, two days before Martin's announcement, Davidson announced plans to remodel his store. Eight days later however, Davidson scrapped his remodeling plans and decided instead to construct a new store building. On June 22, 1904, Pelletier announced that he planned to move from his leased quarters in the Massachusetts Block located at Fourth and Jackson Streets, to the Pierce Block located on Nebraska, between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Pelletier's move included hiring local architect G. W. Burkhead to remodel the existing building and add a fourth floor. The *Sioux City Journal* optimistically forecast that the building would be "...one of the handsomest fronts in Sioux City."¹⁸

Pelletier's plans to relocate proved to be quite fortunate. On December 23, 1904, an elaborate Christmas display located in the basement of his leased space in the Massachusetts Block caught fire and quickly engulfed the entire building. The fire then spread to neighboring buildings. By the time Sioux City firefighters got control of the blaze, two and one-half city

¹⁶ *Sioux City Journal*. 5 June 1904. P. 11.

¹⁷ Polk, R.L. *Sioux City Directory*. 1903-04, 1904.

¹⁸ *Sioux City Journal*. 22 June 1904. P. 10.

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Reference: *Sioux City Journal*. 12 October 1904 P.10.
Showing the addition of 521 4th Street.

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blocks lay in ruin. The loss of buildings and merchandise was estimated at \$1,703,928.¹⁹ The Martin store, although within the path of the fire, sustained only heavy smoke damage. Davidson's sustained little to no damage and, in a December 25, 1904 advertisement, expressed

...deep sorrow and regret for the great loss and misfortune that has fallen upon Sioux City and our brother merchants... For our own, and our employee's and Sioux City's sake alike, we also wish to publicly express sincere gratefulness that Pierce Street marked the ending of the great fire's progress westward...²⁰

Pelletier's on the other hand, lost all of their merchandise in the blaze. The store relocated to temporary quarters on Pierce street to settle their out-standing business accounts. By mid January, 1905 their advertisements dropped from the newspaper and the store's future seemed uncertain. However, Frank Pelletier decided to rebuild. Nearly ten months following the fire, Pelletier's announced the grand opening of their new, 70,000 square foot store by calling the new building "Magnificent! Beautiful! Wonderful! Splendid!"²¹. Both Davidson's and Martin's welcomed Pelletier's new store. Davidson's eloquently described Pelletier's as having "... risen like a Phoenix from the ashes..."²²

During the next six years, the "Big Three" department stores remained relatively contented with the condition of their stores. However on April 13, 1911, one day after T.S. Martin & Co.'s 31st anniversary, the *Sioux City Tribune* announced a new round in construction activity for the "Big Three" by revealing that the Pelletier Company planned a \$35,000 addition and Davidson Brothers planned a \$50,000 new building annex.²³ Following suit, nearly three weeks later, on April 29th, Martin announced that he had hired local architect W.L. Steele to design a new \$25,000 front for his Fourth Street store and published the design in the *Sioux City Journal*. Steele's design called for a gleaming white terra cotta storefront and large plate glass windows.²⁴ A photograph taken during a June 20, 1911 parade revealed the extent of Martin's remodeling project. The building's exterior wall was completely removed, exposing the second and third floors. Martin did not close his store for any part of this disruptive construction project. Instead, he must have operated his business out of the Annex and the ground floor of the

¹⁹ Sorensen, P.P. 126-127.

²⁰ *Sioux City Journal*. 25 December 1904. P. 7.

²¹ *Sioux City Journal*. 13 October 1905. P. 6.

²² *Sioux City Journal*. 13 October 1905. P. 5.

²³ *Sioux City Tribune*. 13 April 1911. P. 9.

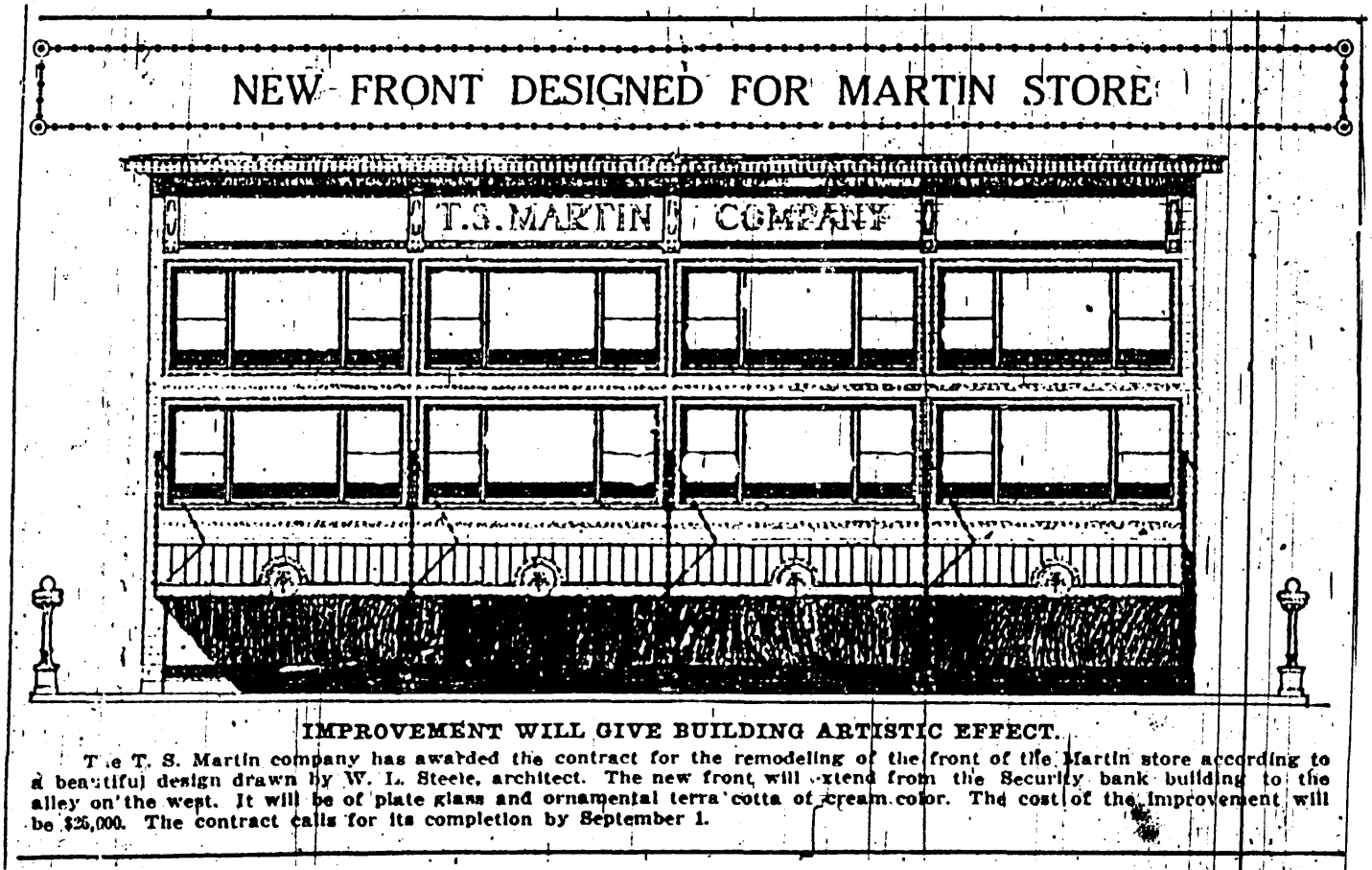
²⁴ *Sioux City Journal*. 29 April 1911. P. 9.

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Reference: *Sioux City Journal*. 29 April 1911. P. 9.
Showing the new Steele designed storefront for 515-17, 519 and 521 Fourth Street.

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Fourth Street store and enticed his customers with what he termed “rebuilding sales”. The end result of the construction project was met with great praise. Published shortly after the building’s completion, one Sioux City promotional booklet hailed the new building as “destined to remain one of the handsomest buildings of the city.”²⁵

In 1910 and 1911, the Davidson store embarked on the most ambitious expansion of all of the “Big Three” department stores. In those years, Davidson’s completed an addition and remodeling, adding one-third more space to their existing store. Then, in 1911 Davidson’s added a four-story, 65x85 foot building over an adjoining alley, thereby giving the store a total of 200,000 square feet of floor area.²⁶

Martin was not satisfied with maintaining his new 60,000 square foot space. Like his major competitors (or because of them), he was constantly driven to expand his business. One year following his major remodeling project, Martin began making plans for the construction of a new store building on the northeast corner of Fourth and Nebraska Streets.²⁷

Martin never had the opportunity to realize his construction plans. On August 7, 1915, Thomas S. Martin died of pneumonia following a long illness. The *Sioux City Tribune*, paid tribute to Martin by recognizing him as one of Sioux City’s pioneer merchants and identifying him with the progress of Sioux City’s business life for more than 35 years. The department store passed to Martin’s sons J. Earle, Jules T., and Howard V. The sons decided to press forward with their father’s plans for a new store building and on March 19, 1919, the new store opened to the public. It was a six-story, 135,000 square foot building. Iowa governor William Harding and South Dakota governor Peter Norbeck both attended the building’s dedication along with 200 newspaper reporters, editors and writers.²⁸

Following the opening of Martin’s new store, the old store building on Fourth Street and the Annex on Nebraska Street were broken into three parcels, sold, and occupied by a variety of retail establishments.

During and shortly after the Second World War, the “Big Three” department stores began to fall victim to the trend toward larger, regional department stores. The first ripple began on January 3, 1943, when Davidson’s announced that they had purchased the Pelletier department store. A Davidson spokesman was quoted as saying, “Our purchase of our long-time friendly

²⁵ Biddison, John J. *One Hundred Peeps at Sioux City: A Souvenir of the Best Town on Earth*. September, 1911.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Sioux City Tribune*. 11 August 1915.

²⁸ Sorensen, P. 154.

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competitor will undoubtedly be good news to the patrons of both stores because now they will find all the good merchandise lines of the two stores conveniently merged under one roof.”²⁹ Shortly thereafter, the Pelletier’s building was demolished. Nearly four years later, on December 23, 1947, the president of Younker Bros. of Des Moines, announced the purchase of Davidson Bros. The Younker president said, “The main objective and result of this merger will establish the Sioux City store as the largest, most complete and most modern department store in this entire tristate area.”³⁰ Less than one year later, on December 13, 1948, the May Department Stores Co., St. Louis, purchased T.S. Martin & Co.³¹ Although both Younker and May Companies retained the Davidson and Martin name in their new stores, the purchases signaled the end of the locally-owned, family-operated dry goods houses in Sioux City.

All three of the large department stores have been demolished. Davidson’s and Martin’s were razed in Sioux City’s Urban Renewal campaign of the 1970’s, and Pelletier’s was demolished in the 1940’s. The small, three-story T.S. Martin & Co. building on Fourth Street and its Annex on Nebraska Street are all that remains of Sioux City’s “Big Three” department stores. Today, the west half of the 4th Street storefront is owned and occupied by a men’s clothing store. The Annex and the east half of the 4th Street storefront are vacant and in disrepair. Both the Annex and the east half of the 4th Street storefront have recently been purchased by a not-for-profit housing organization that will utilize Investment Tax Credits to restore the upper two floors of both buildings into low-moderate income apartments and the ground floor into retail space.

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The State Historical Society of Iowa: Iowa City, 1940.

²⁹ *Sioux City Journal*. 3 January 1943.

³⁰ *Sioux City Journal*. 23 December 1947.

³¹ *Sioux City Journal*. 12 December 1948.

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Woodbury County Courthouse. Clerk & Recorder. Property Transfer Records.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

Main Store: West 75 feet 2 7/16 inches of Lots 7 & 8, and west 1/3 of Lot 9, Block 15 Sioux City East Addition, Sioux City, Iowa.

Annex: East 2/3 of Lot 9, Block 15 Sioux City East Addition, Sioux City, Iowa.

Boundary Justification

The nominated boundary is the boundary historically associated with the subject property.

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Property owners:

511-17 Fourth Street:
Kletschke Properties
515 Fourth Street
Sioux City IA 51101

519-521 Fourth Street:
City of Sioux City
Box 447
Sioux City IA 51102

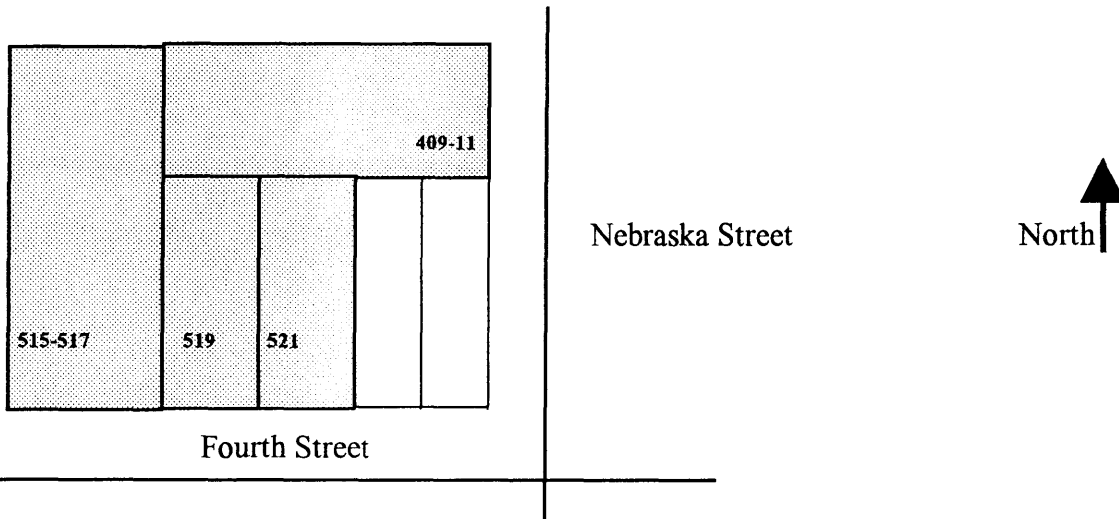
409-11 Nebraska Street
City of Sioux City
Box 447
Sioux City IA 51102

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MAP - SKETCH MAP



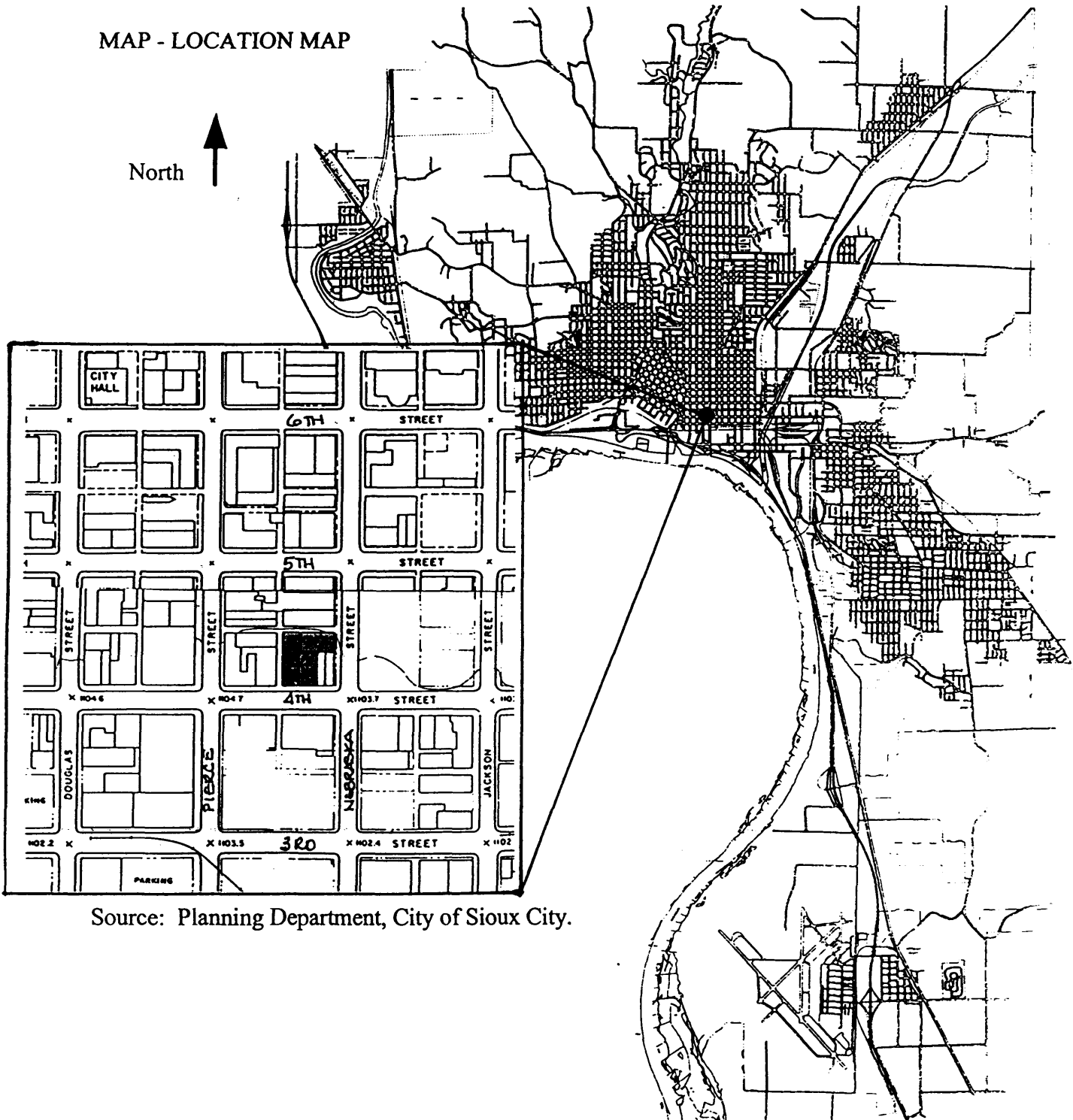
Source: Sanborn Map Company of New York, 1924 P. 13.

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MAP - LOCATION MAP



Source: Planning Department, City of Sioux City.

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PHOTOGRAPHS - HISTORIC

1. Photographer: Unknown
1908
Sioux City Public Museum
Intersection of Fourth and Nebraska Streets – showing original 4th Street frontage and
Nebraska Street frontage.
Camera facing: NW

2. Photographer: Unknown
June 20, 1911
Sioux City Public Museum
Showing removal of storefront of 515-21 Fourth Street.
Camera facing: NE

3. Photographer: Unknown
c. 1911
Sioux City Public Museum
Showing New William Steele designed storefront of 515-21 Fourth Street.
Camera facing: NW

4. Photographer: Unknown
c. 1960
Sioux City Public Museum
Showing the false covering over the west 1/2 of the old T.S. Martin & Co. store.
Camera facing: NW

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PHOTOGRAPHS - CURRENT

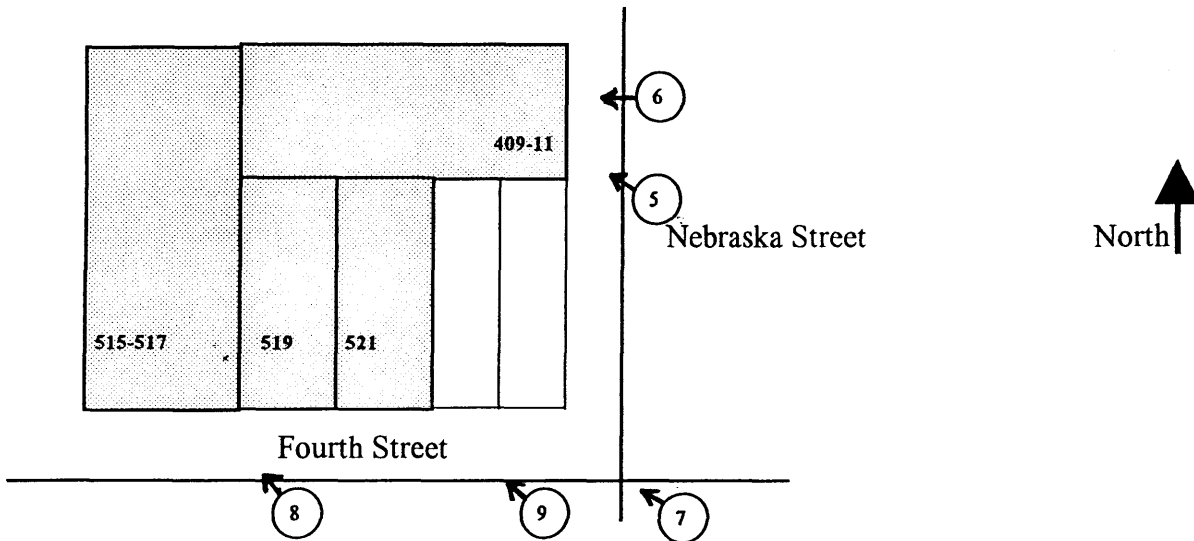
5. Photographer: Gretchen E. Schalge
1998
Community Development Dept., City of Sioux City
Showing: 409-11 Nebraska Street
Camera facing: NW
6. Photographer: Gretchen E. Schalge
1998
Community Development Dept., City of Sioux City
Showing: 409-11 Nebraska Street – showing detailing above third floor windows
Camera facing: W
7. Photographer: Gretchen E. Schalge
1998
Community Development Dept., City of Sioux City
Showing: 511-521 Fourth Street & 409-11 Nebraska Street
Camera facing: NW
8. Photographer: Gretchen E. Schalge
1998
Community Development Dept., City of Sioux City
Showing: 511-21 Fourth Street
Camera facing: NW
9. Photographer: Gretchen E. Schalge
1998
Community Development Dept., City of Sioux City
Showing: frontage of 519-21 Fourth Street
Camera facing: NW

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MAP
CAMERA ANGLES
CURRENT PHOTOGRAPHS



Source: Sanborn Map Company of New
York, 1924 P. 13.