

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



APR 05 2012

318

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Corning Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 513-824 Davis Avenue, 701-829 Benton Avenue, and cross streets N/A not for publication

city or town Corning N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Adams code 003 zip code 50841

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Kerry G. Burnett Deputy SHPO *April 10th / 2012*
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historical Society of Iowa
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain): _____

Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

5/31/2012
Date of Action

Corning Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Adams County, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | public - State |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | public - Federal |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | object |

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 56 | 18 | buildings |
| | | district |
| 1 | | site |
| | 1 | structure |
| 1 | 1 | object |
| 58 | 20 | Total |

N/A

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce/Trade/Specialty Store
- Commerce/Trade/Department Store
- Commerce/Trade/financial institution
- Commerce/Trade/restaurant
- Government/post office
- Rec&Culture/music facility
- Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce/Trade/Specialty Store
- Commerce/Trade/Department Store
- Commerce/Trade/financial institution
- Commerce/Trade/restaurant
- Government/post office
- Rec&Culture/music facility
- Domestic/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Late Victorian/Italianate
- Late Victorian/Queen Anne
- Late 19th&20th Cent. Revivals/Col. Rev.
- Late 19th& Early 20th Cent. American Movements/Commercial Style
- Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- foundation: Stone
- walls: Brick
- Stucco
- roof: Asphalt
- other: _____

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Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

7. Description:

Styles, Continued:

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals/Classical Revival

Materials, Continued:

Foundation: Brick

Walls Metal/Iron
 Metal/Steel

Corning is the county-seat of Adams County, a county that is located three counties east of Iowa's western border (the Missouri River) and two counties north of the Missouri border (Iowa's southern boundary). Adams County, the second tier of counties as noted, is a nine-township county (the norm is twelve townships). The county is accordingly smaller by a fourth in terms of its territory and is also Iowa's lowest-population county. Corning is located south and west of the county center. The Nodaway River flows northeast through the town and the town occupies an amphitheater-shaped terrace to the north of that drainage. Corning's downtown is oriented north-south and is unusual in layout, given that there are two broad (100 feet in width) principal streets, Benton Avenue to the west, and Davis Avenue, to the east. The parallel streets, oriented to the downtown, are divided by just a half-wide series of blocks. Consequently, the commercial buildings that front east onto Davis Avenue, the principal commercial thoroughfare, are "double-ended," having their principal storefronts on Davis Avenue, but with secondary rear (west) storefronts on Benton Avenue. Central Park, an elongated rectangular reserve, is located between 8th and 9th streets. The county courthouse (excluded from this district) fronts south on the park, and the principal commercial buildings of the downtown, front north onto the same park. Figures 1-6 provide district maps, identify contributing and non-contributing buildings, and locate the downtown with the larger town.

The railroad angles along the north side of the Nodaway River at the base of the district, in a mixed use area that contains mills, the municipal power plant, food processing, trucking and other industrial land uses. Sixth Street was the historic highway for east/west travel. It largely serves as the southern focal point for the district although a number of buildings to the south are included in the district. The district includes commercial buildings on both sides of Davis Avenue below the park, and both sides of Benton Avenue, from a point south of 7th Street, north to 9th Street. There is just one building (a garage, 612 Benton) on the east side of Benton Avenue given that the other buildings on that side of the street all orient east to Davis Avenue as described. Just one 6th Street address (508, a former gas station) is included. Four 7th Street buildings, all on the district's west periphery, are included. The buildings at 505 and 507 8th Street, both of which front north towards the park are included, although the former City Hall, built as a part of the Opera House block (800 Davis Avenue) also fronts south onto that street. No 9th Street addresses are included and the courthouse is excluded due to the visual impact of its recent remodeling.

The buildings, due to the lay of the land, rise progressively in elevation between the south and north end of the district. The buildings along Davis Avenue are architecturally larger, more ornate, more

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closely placed, and more retail in function than are the counterparts on Benton Avenue. The commercial architecture on that street, Benton Avenue serving more as a working street, and as a broad parking lot, reflects more specific uses such as those of auto repair, a creamery, repair shops, and the like. There is a bank and numerous small offices, mostly dealing in insurance. Seventh and Eighth streets are architecturally the most important commercial streets within the district. Sixth Street was important as a highway but the architectural response to it was limited to gas stations and eateries. The other streets have retail buildings that front along them, those on 7th are combined with the 1930s federal post office, and those on 8th are associated with the park.

The district first developed with its largest and most substantial blocks being clustered at the southwest corner of Central Park, while the remaining buildings were almost completely of frame construction. Over time, the upper portion of Davis Avenue developed as the core downtown, with the larger, more substantial and more elaborately designed buildings being built there. The corner of 7th Street and Davis Avenue became the "100-percent location" where the banks all clustered. The transition from frame to brick commercial buildings started in the mid-1890s and was in the long run intensified by the losses of the 1896 fire. "Fireproof" construction was the rule, with few exceptions thereafter. Even today, the "boom town" frame storefronts at 513 and 515 Davis survive.¹

The vast majority of commercial building examples are classed as representing the commercial form or type. Other associated stylistic influences are for the most part minimally expressed given that their applications are restricted to a narrow yet tall façade with fairly limited and conservative ornamentation. Corner and other prominent buildings are the exception, particularly when turrets, oriels and more elaborate parapets and cornices are employed. Their construction dates range over a lengthy period of time. Single-story designs in particular are prone to this classification due to the fact that any minimal ornamentation is usually found in the transom-parapet areas of their design. The Italianate stylistic influence is represented by five examples (525, 601-03, 616-18, 617, 715 Davis Avenue). This categorization is applied to those examples that evidence elongated narrow upper windows (now or originally) and pressed tin or other elaborate cornices. The Queen Anne style has seven example buildings, all of which are located north of 7th Street on Davis Avenue (700, 704-06, 713, 719, 722, 723-29, 724-26 Davis Avenue). Some of these examples also reflect Classical Revival design influences. The Classical Revival style is also represented by two 1902 public (or quasi-public) examples, the opera house (800 Davis) and City Hall (406 8th Street) and one private one, the I.O.O.F. hall at 507 8th Street. The more prominent of both of these revival styles do approximate what could be stylistic examples rather than lesser "influences." These buildings tend to be larger named blocks, have bays (or had them originally) or oriel upper level windows, elaborate brickwork and particularly highly ornamental parapets often with decorative pediments as well as inscribed names and date stones. These are all later examples that reflect the mid-1890s boom in downtown building. The Craftsman stylistic influence has two examples, both of which represent the later up building of the 600s block of Davis Avenue (605-07, and 615 Davis Avenue). Finally the Colonial Revival stylistic influence is represented by two early public buildings, these being the library (829 Davis) and post office (606 7th Street).

¹ The term "100 percent location" is a reference to the most profitable point within a commercial district. This is where banks tend to cluster. Always located at a key intersection, this location can and usually does change over time.

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The district buildings are almost all commercial ones, both from the standpoint of original construction and purpose and subsequent use. Just four residential buildings are included, two of which housed commercial activities in their later years (one in a separate front yard office building, non-extant). The other two buildings consist of a former church and its former parsonage. With the exception of the former church (824 Davis) these are cottage buildings. The vast majority of the commercial buildings have full basements, load-bearing brick walls, parapet surrounds and flat roofs. They are rectangular in footprint and orient one or two of their narrower end walls as ornamental commercial facades to one of the two principal parallel commercial streets. A dozen buildings front to the numbered cross streets. There are 39 single-story and 38 two-story plans. While the former are evenly divided across the downtown, all but five of the two-story buildings are located on the principal "main street" Davis Avenue or the contiguous side street locations. All of the architecturally distinctive buildings do the same, save for the post office (606 7th Street), the creamery (813 Benton) and the library (829 Benton). The unusual if not unique feature of this downtown is that the buildings on the west side of Davis Avenue, between 9th and 6th streets, have functional entrances at both ends of their plans and in many cases there are two historic facades that reflect this.

Individual Building Descriptions:

Building names refer to original historical functions and titles.

Benton Avenue:

612 Benton Avenue: (ca. 1940 , contributing)

This is a single-story tile gable roof garage.

701 Benton Avenue-Lyon's Feed Store: (1893-99, non-contributing)

This two-story brick commercial building originated as a fully fenestrated design with an east-facing storefront. The building measures 36 feet in width and 88 feet in length. The Brooks Bank covered the building with a gold-colored slip screen in 1967.

713 Benton Avenue-Machine Shop/Dr. Beemer's Veterinary: (1892, non-contributing)

This simple gable front single story frame building measures 18 feet in width and 36 feet in length. A concrete block (1950s) rear addition contains 407 square feet. There is no basement, just a concrete floor. The building has a replacement brick storefront and is aluminum sided. It has been remodeled multiple times.

715 Benton Avenue: (1900, contributing)

This single story frame storefront measures 20 feet in width and 42 feet in length and has no basement. The building has been greatly modified, particularly with the addition of a concrete block rear extension in 1953. An original door and flanking windows in the rear of the original building have been removed. It is thought that this building was moved to Corning from the defunct Queen City. The

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storefront of the building has been both altered and covered with permastone and the remainder of the building has been aluminum sided.

717 Benton Avenue: (ca. 1925, contributing)

This single story brick and tile storefront measures 22 feet in width and 94 feet in length. There is a 36 foot long rear concrete block 1962 garage addition. The original core is 25 feet in depth and has a full basement. The dark brick storefront has a centered entrance with side display windows with a kick plate. The high parapet front is covered with paneling. A transom level is retained within the storefront. Originally the building had a very high ceiling and a south side window, set above the original transom line, provided interior light into the front of the store.

719 Benton Avenue: (1903, non-contributing)

This two-story tile and brick storefront measures 22 feet in width and 96 feet in length. It has a rear porch and a full basement. There are three apartments on the upper level. The building facade dates from 1946 and represents an infilling of the original one. This facade employs two colors of brick to create its design. A darker brick is used to form side pilasters and to form broad bands that cross the front above the transom level and at the parapet base. A lighter brick then is used to infill the remaining window and parapet panels. One stringcourse line of the lighter brick underscores the parapet base and crosses the two upstairs front windows just above the lintel level. The coping or parapet cap is simply marked with a subtle projection of several brick courses. There is a large rectangular stone or concrete panel set into the parapet front which once identified the original tenant firm ("W. C.--C.--A.S.____"). The front is executed as a single plane. The building's storefront has been bricked in with reduced fenestration. There is a fixed canvas awning. The building is now in residential use only. Given the storefront infilling, the building is deemed to be non-contributing to the district.

721 Benton Avenue: (pre-1886, contributing)

This two story front portion of this brick and tile storefront measures 22 feet in width and 60 feet in length the single-story additions are 36 feet and 28 feet in length respectively. The rearmost addition has no roof, but is a concrete shell with metal casement windows. The rear addition and loading dock date to 1953. Of some interest is the use of cast concrete I-beams which support its floor (dating the addition to c.1939). The second floor contains two apartments with storage in the rear (Adams County *Free Press*, March 12, 1953).

The facade is quite utilitarian. The storefront has a centered entryway with flanking side display windows. This storefront is very nicely preserved and has a full width awning set above it. The upstairs entryway is to the left of the storefront. The building facade is executed without ornamentation save for a minor corbelled brick parapet treatment. Three upper level windows are set right of center to accommodate the stairway. They have rowlock brick sills and no lintel treatment.

723 Benton Avenue: (pre-1899 pre-1886, non-contributing)

This single story brick storefront measures 21.5 feet in width and 60 feet in length. There is a full basement. The facade is a recent Main Street design that was necessary due to an internal explosion that destroyed the existing front (although the lost front dated to the 1940s). The front parapet wall survives.

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725 Benton Avenue: (1895, 1945, non-contributing)

The original building, in two story form, dates to 1895 but the current façade covering dates to mid-1945 when the building remnant was largely rebuilt as a garage. The façade is covered with a metal slip screen and this obscures any evaluation of what lies beneath it. No historic image has yet been found. Until the covering is removed, and the exposed building is re-evaluated, the building is non-contributing to the district.

801 Benton Avenue-Farmers Co-op Creamery: (1957-59, contributing)

This two-part wing comprises two additions made to the original creamery building (813 Benton Avenue). The two iterations are counted as one, given the close proximity of their construction dates (1957, 1959) and designs and because they are now separately owned. This is a two-story industrial brick building that has a concrete load-bearing system of columns and cast floors with brick panel curtain walls. The power plant section (north wing, 1957) is a steel structure with a brick veneer. Both sections have full basements. The building has a blonde brick veneer and rear tile walls in a matching color. Fenestration is minimal, with the upper level windows being infilled with block glass on the south wall. Ground level windows remain open. Windows on the power plant wing have been paneled shut. The 1959 section measures 22 feet by 84 feet.

813 Benton Avenue-Farmers Cooperative Creamery: (1931, contributing)

This is a large gabled structure with rectangular plan and a front false parapet front. The facade is really not the functional primary facade despite the presence of signage, which fills the parapet wall front. The presence of the cooling room in the front of the plan precluded its use as an egress point. The principal facade or working approach was from the south, in the courtyard that was formed by a series of late 1950s additions (see 801 Benton, 602 8th Street).

The building is brick veneered with concrete column inserts. Four square cut pilasters break up the facade, forming exterior edges and framing the ends of the parapet wall. The pilasters add a vertical sense to the design. Brick soldier brick stringcourses cross the facade at the eaves line and parapet wall baseline. The facade has been altered by the infilling of the sole window and door. The building measures 44 by 48 feet.

The original interior plan included a front office and cooling room, a central operations room that extended across the full width of the plan, and rear storage, boiler and coal rooms (*Free Press*, July 30, 1931).

819 Benton Avenue: (1910, contributing)

This is a single story gable front frame gable roof cottage. It is set back on the site and long had a separate small frame commercial building to the east or in front of it (non-extant). The building post-dates to ca. 1919.

821 Benton Avenue: (pre-1929, contributing)

This single story cottage residence has long been used for mixed residential and commercial purposes and it is located in a predominantly commercial area. The cottage measures 16 feet in width

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and 25 feet in length. There is a subsumed front porch. The cottage is well preserved although its original clapboard has been covered with asbestos siding.

829 Benton Avenue-Rawson Law Office: (1930, contributing)

This Colonial Revival style two-story public red brick library building stands on the southwest corner of 9th Street and Benton Avenue, and in its original design, fronted east onto the city park. The design resembles that of a side gabled residence. Pronounced parapet end walls and the use of an asymmetrical fenestration pattern of interest. Larger Palladian window sets, with sidelights and a transom, are placed at each end of the upper floor. The lower level side fenestration is uncharacteristic in that shorter windows were used in lieu of copying the facade windows. The building gained a modernistic west-end addition when it became the public library. The original building is readily discerned and the addition is very low in profile relative to the original building.

Davis Avenue:

516 Davis Avenue/International Harvester: (1927-29, non-contributing)

This single-story tile building is said to date to 1937, but the fire insurance maps do not confirm this. A 1958 photo depicts the subject building, but with a plain parapet, a different storefront and a working awning. It measures 25 feet by 70 feet. There was originally a double centered entryway and there were small flanking side windows. Both door and windows have been reduced in size and replaced. A tile coping caps the parapet wall. The full-width transom or parapet space is covered with signage. Large rectangular display windows flank the single door centered entryway. The building even features a full-width awning that is likely much like its original one. There is no basement.

517-19 Davis Avenue: (1930, contributing)

This is one of the more substantial Bottle Row commercial properties. This two-story dark hollow tile and brick commercial building measures 40 feet in width and 100 feet in depth. There is a single story rear frame addition (38 feet in width). Wood posts support the upper story on the main floor. The facade is faced with a polychrome brick. The fenestration is symmetrical. The rear wall is stuccoed. There are two storefronts, now accessed through a central entrance, and there is an off-center upstairs entrance. There are apartments upstairs. There are five apartments on the second floor, which are actively rented.ⁱⁱ

521 Davis Avenue: (1929, contributing)

This single-story tile commercial front measures 25 feet by 70 feet. There is no basement. The facade is also faced with tile. There was originally a double centered entryway and there were small flanking side windows. Both door and windows have been reduced in size and replaced. A tile coping caps the parapet wall.

ⁱⁱ "Bottle Row" was literally that part of the lower downtown where one expected to find empty beer bottles. The term emerges prior to World War I, and likely went underground during the prohibition years. It regained its popularity during the 1960s and for awhile elected its own symbolic mayor.

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523 Davis Avenue/Bollman Modern Dairy and State Liquor Store: (1937, contributing)

The two storefronts of this dark brown brick single-story commercial building each measure 20 feet in width and 60 feet in depth. The partial basement measures 28 by 20 feet. The sidewalls measure 12 feet in height, the front wall 14 feet.

This is a nicely executed late 1930s double front. The storefronts each have recessed central entrances and flanking side windows, the entirety of each being completely glassed. A shingled canopy obscures the transom area and upper part of the storefronts. The parapet wall features an interesting and unusual coping treatment. Three brick pilasters define the two storefronts. The parapet top steps up from the central pilaster to two flanking and higher end pilasters. The coping is of concrete. The parapet front is ornamented with triple evenly spaced diamonds of brickwork.

524-26 Davis Avenue/Adams County Farm Bureau: (1945, contributing)

This two-story tile brick veneered building measures 44 feet in width and 74 feet in length (the two story front section), while the single-story rear addition measures 44 by 58 feet. The basement measures 40 feet by 40 feet. This is a substantial two-story double commercial front in Bottle Row. There is a very high parapet and the upper front windows were shortened when the building gained a new front during the 1930s. The north storefront has an overhead garage door with flanking door and windows. The south storefront has a centered entrance and traditional commercial front. Apartments occupy the upper floor. The north half of the storefront was occupied by a garage as early as 1937 (see history).

525 Davis Avenue/O. R. Heaton's Block/Ryan Motor Garage: (1898, contributing)

This two-story Italianate style brick storefront measures 40 feet in width by 60 feet in length. There is no basement. There is an angled entry and a cut corner on the northeast corner. The upper windows have semi-elliptical arches and double hung sash (two over two lights in each). The second floor has been stuccoed and the brick detailing is somewhat obscured. A projecting cornice line defines the base of the parapet wall and corbelled brick piers project on both the east and north walls. The storefront area has been covered with vertical siding and the transom area hidden by a fixed shingled canopy covering. Wood columns bear the weight of the upper floor.

Vacant Lot: 528-30 Davis Avenue (not counted)

It is not counted given that it is a vacant lot.

601-03 Davis Avenue-Hotel Madison/Madison Block: (1898, contributing)

This two story double front red brick Italianate style commercial block features an unusual facade treatment on Corning's main business street. The upper floor is set high above a cast iron storefront. The second floor facade is recessed completely within a surrounding framework of side pilasters, base, and parapet top. Decorative stone stringcourses connect the sill levels of the five evenly distributed double-hung windows and form a line just above their semi-elliptical arch tops. The parapet level is stepped out as noted and is limited to a denticulated cornice line, which is set atop corner caps on the respective corner pilasters. The south sidewall continues only this cornice line in its ornamentation.

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The transom area in the storefront, while covered, can be readily interpreted. There is a central upstairs entrance and two storefronts. The storefronts have been altered, that on the north being completely built in with a reduction of the display window area, and the alteration of the original recessed central entryway (still in place in the southernmost storefront). The south sidewall is blank on the main floor save for a single rear window. There are three apartments on the second floor and a central hallway runs the length of the plan with rear stairs access.

605-07 Davis Avenue: (1910, contributing)

This single-story brick fronted tile Craftsman style commercial block measures 40 feet in width and 40 feet in depth. There is no basement. A 24 by 36 feet tile garage in the back of the lot dates to 1948 and is an outbuilding to this property (see 612 Benton Avenue).

This triple storefront is of the same class as 521-23 Davis Avenue on the block to the south. Both designs reflect the lower profile storefronts of the 1920s and 1930s, which are linked with the impact of the automobile on commercial architecture. Both buildings employ raised "bookend" pilasters at either side of the cornice line. This design has an elongated geometrical design in raised brick set across the parapet front. A darker brick forms the coping and outlines the cornice line. The storefront below has likely been considerably modified and likely employs a steel structural support system. A denticulated line of dark and light bricks traces the base of the parapet wall. The storefront is subdivided into three small storefronts by the use of two brick pilasters. The central storefront is slightly wider than are the flanking ones. The original door and display glass profiles appear to survive. The two southernmost storefronts have recessed single door entrances on the right-hand side while the last one reverses that arrangement. The display window is angled into these entries on one side. The transom now consists of 14 rectangular lights, which are set in line between the two pilasters. A broad horizontal band separates the transoms and storefronts and this might represent an alteration. As of 1989 the color scheme was reversed with the ornamental lines being white against a darker background. Signage completely covered the transom areas and two of the three display windows had been reduced in size.

606 Davis Avenue: (pre-1929, contributing)

This single-story concrete block commercial building dates to c.1928 but its c.1950s permastone front has substantially altered its appearance. There is a two-story rear addition that postdates 1929 as well as a long side addition, both of concrete block, of the same date. It is a contributing building within the district because the new front falls well within the 50-year cutoff date.

608 Davis Avenue: (post-1929, contributing)

This single-story brick-fronted tile commercial building measures 22 feet in width and 85 feet in length. A 1940 photo shows that a frame commercial storefront was on this site as of c.1940. The facade with its block glass and metal canopy dates only from the 1950s.

609 Davis Avenue-First Federal Savings & Loan: (pre-1883, non-contributing)

This two-story brick storefront is completely obscured by an upper level wood shingled chalet front and its storefront has been modernized. The building measures 40 feet square and occupies a double storefront. There is a full basement. There are offices on the ground floor and three apartments upstairs, all of which have been vacant for years. There is a rear wooden fire escape. The rear doors and

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lower windows have semi-elliptical arched openings. The mansard front covered the original and it is thought that the earlier elements remain preserved beneath the covering. Like 605-07 Davis to the south this building also utilized a linear geometric parapet front brickwork design.

613 Davis Avenue: (1910(pre-1883, contributing)

This single-story brick storefront measures 20 feet in width and 100 feet in length. There is no basement. This is a well-preserved diminutive example of commercial architecture, which dates to ca. 1916-19. Two other Davis Avenue storefronts (521-23 and 607-09) are similar in their form and ornamentation. The building at 607-09 Davis is a larger copy of this same design and the two likely shared designer/builders. The storefront consists of a double display window and an off center entrance which is set beneath a transom line and a steel beam support. The parapet wall is recessed between "bookend" pilasters with raised caps. A brick rowlock course projects above the steel beam and defines the parapet wall base on the lower side, and a second rowlock course, forming the coping, does the same above it. The parapet itself, veneered in dark brown brick, has an elaborate geometrical design across its front, formed from projecting bricks. The largely intact storefront is an excellent representation of its time and style. Signage only partly obscures the transom glass.

615 Davis Avenue: (pre-1886, contributing)

This two-story brick-faced commercial building measures 20 feet in width and 100 feet in length. The facade has Craftsman style windows on its upper level and its styling dates it to the pre-World War I years. The storefront is placed alongside a entrance to the upstairs. The entry is centered between flanking display windows which angle in towards the door on either side. Separate high transoms cap the storefront and side entry. The facade brickwork is otherwise executed in a single smooth wall plane. Two double hung windows are evenly spaced across the upper level, being set well above the transom level. Concrete sills and lintels define the window openings. A recessed rectangular brick panel ornaments the parapet wall above these openings. Three diamond shaped brick groupings project across this panel. The cornice treatment reflects earlier commercial design. A denticulated row of corbelled brick runs beneath a tin cornice line. The transom lights have been covered but the front otherwise is well preserved and represents its original style and appearance quite well.

This is the southernmost "double-ender" storefront set between Davis and Benton avenues. The rear facade has a matching side entrance and tall transom, a centered window pair, and another single window across its face. Two square cut windows are unevenly spaced on the upper floor. The parapet treatment is limited to a flat projection of the upper three courses of brickwork

616-18 Davis Avenue-A. F. Okey Block: (1894, contributing)

This two-story Italianate style commercial storefront measures 44 feet in width and 90 feet in depth. There is a full basement. There are apartments on the second floor with a central hallway and rear external stair access. These apartments have not been rented for several decades.

The building interiors were extensively modified in April 1940 when Thompson Electric Company (south half) and Dr. J. C. Pennebaker (north half) occupied the building. The doctor added a front waiting room, private office and an x-ray room, and widened the south alley door to accommodate ambulance patients. The electrical firm added basement stairs to accommodate a new basement shop and added front display windows that featured then innovative fluorescent lights (Adams County *Free Press*, April 4, 1940).

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The facade retains a good pressed tin decorative cornice example. Few such examples survive due in large part to the 1896 fire losses. The post-fire replacement fronts had brick cornices and parapets in lieu of metal ones. The cornice was deemed to be impressive when it was first presented to the community. It "adds much to the appearance of the building," offered the editor of the *Adams County Union*. The Murray Iron Works of Burlington, Iowa fabricated the store's cast iron storefront. The storefront lines and transoms are perfectly preserved. The main upper front is executed in plain flush-set brickwork. The five upper level windows have segmental brick arches and stone sills. A brick belt course connects the spring points of these arches. A decorative brick band is formed above the windows by the use of two belt courses. Projecting bricks form a string of Maltese crosses across the front. The tin cornice line is set above this feature (*Union*, August 9, 1894). The southern sidewall is stuccoed and was originally fully fenestrated (the window openings have been covered with panels, set within the openings).

617 Davis Avenue-Potter's Drug Store: (pre-1886, contributing)

This ornate Italianate style two-story brick commercial storefront measures 20 feet in width and 100 feet in length. It is a good example of this style as an influence in commercial building design. The building retains one of a handful of pressed tin decorative cornices in the district. The storefront level has been completely and signage covers the transom area. Three elongated Italianate windows are evenly spaced across the upper level. Stone sills and a stone stringcourse, which runs beneath the spring, points for the semi-elliptical window arches frame the window openings. The rear addition features a double window set which is set beneath a broad voussoir brick arch. Such a window is commonly seen ca. 1910 in commercial construction. The rear storefront, which is largely obstructed by a backlit fixed awning, appears to have transom openings set above a storefront. The building is contributing due to its well-preserved upper façade and metal cornice with pediment.

619 Davis Avenue: (1908-29, contributing)

This two-story brick commercial storefront measures 20 feet in width and 100 feet in length. There is no basement. The broad storefront with its small side entrance and extensive display windows reflects the increased use of steel in commercial building. The storefront has a broad clear span without intermediate structural supports. The transom glass is typical of post-1900 construction. At the same time, the use of a dark rusticated brick set with thin mortar joints reflects the 1890s, as does the corbelled V-shaped row of brick piers which forms the base of the cornice line. This latter treatment can be seen on the post-fire fronts, which still line the 700s block of Davis to the northeast. The recessed flat panel, set within the parapet front is also typical of post-1900 fronts. This is a very well preserved and nicely restored storefront. The Benton Avenue secondary or west end storefront matches the building's Davis Avenue primary storefront in terms of design. Its storefront has been infilled with a different color of brick, and its display windows altered and reduced to a series of doors and windows.

620 Davis Avenue-Supply Store/HyVee Grocery Store: (pre-1886, contributing)

This single-story brick Classical Revival style commercial storefront measures 24 feet in width and 96 feet in length and has a half basement. The brick facade is of later date and features a simple rectangular recessed panel in its parapet front, along with raised corner piers and a concrete coping. While the historical section describes how this building front was redone in 1990.

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622 Davis Avenue: (1900-07, contributing)

This charming single story bank building measures 22 feet in width and 96 feet in length (2,208 square feet) with a half basement. It was remodeled in 1941. The facade is veneered with a pressed face brick. There are three arched openings with voussoir brick arches. Stone inlays form the windowsills and a thick and a thin stringcourse, which run across the spring point of the arches. The parapet features a rectangular recessed panel with a denticulated base and cornice line, with projecting stone coping line.

624 Davis Avenue: (1890, non-contributing)

This single-story brick commercial storefront measures 22 feet in width and 132 feet in depth. The building has a brick front that likely dates from its 1948 remodeling as a tavern. The original rectangular storefront windows are boarded with reduced window openings, typical of a bar storefront. It is a non-contributing building within the district, although the simple re-opening of the storefront windows might render it contributing, depending upon a re-evaluation of its status.

625 Davis Avenue-J. W. Biggar Block: (1908, contributing)

This two-story brick double storefront measures 40 feet by 100 feet. It has a full basement half of which is developed for commercial use. This pre-World War I design combines a steel support system, a flat grayish colored brick veneer front, and clear design lines that were then considered a very modern storefront. The two steel support beams open up the broad storefronts. A double store entry is off center to the north corner, while a single door entry at the opposite end leads upstairs. The facade has four square cut large and broad window openings and these are paired and the pairs are evenly spaced across the front. A thick projecting brick stringcourse and stone cap and sill underscore these openings. Another broad projecting brick stringcourse caps the windows. The cornice is flat save for a band of brick piers and rosettes. These are executed in a flat almost symbolic manner, evoking the cornices of earlier storefronts while still simplifying them in a more modern way. This brick corbelling projects beyond the "bookend" corner pilasters, the faces of which are on the same plane as is the main wall. A concrete coping tops the parapet front and pilasters. The design of this building is identical with 627 Davis Avenue, located immediately north. The secondary front on Benton Avenue matches the main one. The transom area has been covered, as has one storefront. This building is counted separately due to the later building date of 625 Davis and the different coloring of its brickwork. The two buildings constitute one of the most important department store blocks in the district.

626 Davis Avenue-Andrews Building: (pre-1929, contributing)

This single-story brick commercial storefront measures 22 feet in width and 132 feet in depth. This building is of architectural interest given that it is a single-story building on a prominent corner. Consequently it presents a substantial two-sided raised parapet wall so as to impress. The building façade was remodeled in 1960. There is also a faux brick corbelling treatment that replaced the cornice. Given the retention of a substantial façade display window as well as sidewall windows, the building is deemed to be contributing.

627 Davis Avenue-J. W. Biggar Block: (pre-1886, contributing)

This fairly extraordinary corner double-ender two-story brick storefront measures 40 feet by 100 feet. It has a full basement, 90 percent of which is developed for retail usage. There is a 16 by 40 foot

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rear mezzanine on the ground floor. This pre-World War I design combines a steel support system, a flat brick veneer front, and clear design lines in what was then considered a very modern storefront. The two steel support beams open up the broad storefronts. A double store entry is off center to the north corner, while a single door entry at the opposite end leads upstairs. The facade has four square cut large and broad window openings on each end wall and four sets of paired narrower windows along the north sidewall. The front and rear windows are paired and the pairs are evenly spaced across the front. A thick projecting brick stringcourse and stone cap and sill underscore these openings. Another broad projecting brick stringcourse caps the windows. The cornice is flat save for a band of brick piers and rosettes. These are executed in a flat almost symbolic manner, evoking the cornices of earlier storefronts while still simplifying them in a more modern way. This brick corbelling projects beyond the "bookend" corner pilasters, the faces of which are on same plane as is the main wall. A concrete coping tops the parapet front and pilasters. The design of this building is identical with 625 Davis Avenue, located immediately south. The secondary front on Benton Avenue matches the main one on Davis. Each storefront wraps around for one bay's width at the corner on the 7th Street sidewall. Three pairs of high single light windows are set between these two sidewall display windows, being aligned with the upper level window sets. Iron columns divide the two storefronts. There is a freight elevator in the southwest corner.

700 Davis Avenue-Beymer Block/Andrew's Clothing/Hogan's Bank: (1897, contributing)

This is one of the city's most elaborate two-story commercial fronts with an angled corner entrance, corner oriel bay and its elaborate brickwork. The south sidewall originally featured additional oriel bays. Two side rear storefronts face onto 7th Street. The original storefront display area has been partly bricked in but the windows are still large enough to convey the original openings. The transom entry window and upper level windows remain intact, but have temporary panel covers. The upper fenestration on the facade and front half of the visible sidewall is better preserved with the retention of the original window openings, all of which are now covered. The middle portion of the upper sidewall has been completely refaced and smaller metal casement windows substitute for the originals, including those above one of the rear storefronts. The parapet wall is set atop a projecting cornice line of corbelled brick piers and this stringcourse is set even with the cornices of the bay windows. The second floor is divided into eight office rooms with a south-side full-length hallway.

701 Davis Avenue-First National Bank: (1884, contributing)

This Queen Anne style commercial building now occupies three former storefront sites. The northernmost of these is a drive-in banking service (20 feet in width) while the building proper (south half) measures 40 by 100 feet. The next section north is a single-story construction. The Benton Avenue facade has a raised main floor entrance and matching metal canopy. This building, while incorporating an earlier structure, is a new one from the standpoint of its exterior and it is therefore not historically significant.

The original 1884 bank was completely remodeled between 1952-55, incorporating an acquired building to the north. The public was interested in this effort given that it claimed to be the only post-World War I bank construction effort in Southwestern Iowa. The bank extended one more storefront north in 1965 when it added a drive-through. Today the second floor includes two apartments and a storage room. These were developed in the 1950s remodeling work.

The exterior was completely modernized using a blonde colored face brick, casement windows and metal belt courses on the east façade. Copying the Brooks Bank, a drive-through bank was

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constructed on the lot to the north in 1961. The whole is considered to be but one building. It is counted as a contributing building within the district given that it's remodeling was considered to be regionally significant and took place well before the 50-year cutoff.

702 Davis Avenue-W. R. Hollister Block: (1897, contributing)

This two-story commercial front has a brick facade that largely matches 700 Davis immediately to the south. The storefront retains its cast iron storefront. The original three upper level windows with semi-elliptical brick arches have been covered with replica double hung sash coverings. A stone stringcourse traces the windowsill level and a brick stringcourse runs above the windows. The parapet is plain but projects above a line of corbelled brick piers. A stone coping caps the front.

This building measures 22 feet in width and 132 feet in length. The building has a full basement. It was remodeled in 1966. The second floor is vacant, being used only for storage. The offices on that level were never converted to apartments.

704 Davis Avenue-Jacob F. Lutz Building/Lyric-American Theater: (1897, contributing)

This is the north half of a double front two-story brick Queen Anne style commercial block. The original front had two storefronts and a central upstairs entry. A three-part vertical division of the upper facade, with a narrow centered panel and single narrow window, was above the upstairs doorway. The facade at 706 Davis is identical, but has lost its oriel bay, while this building has retained its bay. The large oriel bay window is balanced with a single double hung window with semi-elliptical arch. Three brick stringcourses break up the upper facade and a fourth forms the sill line for the central window. The lines run at the sill level, and across the base of the parapet wall. The front is framed by vertical and horizontal pilasters and parapet front. The top of each panel steps out, forming dentils beneath the parapet front. The 704 storefront retains its cast iron storefront support beam with decorative rosettes. Its storefront has been partly reduced with flanking brick infilling. The transom area of 706 Davis is covered with signage and the storefront is otherwise modern. The central upstairs entrance remains in place. A tile rear addition (704 Davis) dates to post 1907-29. There is a single leased apartment on the second floor. It is a contributing building within the district. The present day marquee was inaugurated in June 1937.

706 Davis Avenue-John Roland Building: (1898, contributing)

This is the north half of a double front two-story brick Queen Anne style commercial block. The original front had two storefronts and a central upstairs entry. A three-part vertical division of the upper facade, with a narrow centered panel and single narrow window, was above the upstairs doorway. The 706 Davis front has lost the oriel (see 704 Davis) and its window openings have been reduced and its sash replaced with metal casement windows. Three brick stringcourses break up the upper facade and a fourth forms the sill line for the central window. The lines run at the sill level, and across the base of the parapet wall. The front is framed by vertical and horizontal pilasters and parapet front. The top of each panel steps out, forming dentils beneath the parapet front. The 704 storefront retains its cast iron storefront support beam with decorative rosettes. Its storefront has been partly reduced with flanking brick infilling. The transom area of 706 Davis is covered with signage and the storefront is otherwise modern. The central upstairs entrance remains in place. There are two apartments upstairs. A rear 40-foot long addition with balcony was built in 1946 and the storefront was remodeled in 1961 and in 1983-84.

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708 Davis Avenue: (1898, contributing)

This single-story commercial front offers one of the best-preserved historic storefronts in Corning. The cast iron front has been restored and painted and the original central entrance with flanking display windows survives. The transom window areas have not been reopened but the openings can be seen. The parapet front is covered with a vertical patterned metal cover. The building measures 22 feet by 96 feet and there is a 22 by 20 foot basement.

709 Davis Avenue: (1897, contributing)

This one-story brick commercial storefront measures 20 feet in width and 100 feet in length. There is a full basement. A chalet wood shingle canopy covers most of the main front. The Benton Avenue front displays cast iron in the storefront and a plain parapet wall. A late 1896 photograph indicates that there was a large light-colored recessed brick panel, which infilled the parapet wall front above the transom window level. This panel was framed by a darker brick, which projected beyond it on each side and across the top. There was a simple corbelled brick cornice line, which has been removed. It is a non-contributing building within the district but the removal of the chalet front would likely render the building to be contributing, depending on the findings of a re-evaluation.

710 Davis Avenue-Potter's Drug/Lauvstad Drug: (1897, contributing)

This single-story building measures 22 feet in width by 132 feet in depth. A single-story rear addition dates to 1987-99. The 1989 survey photo indicates that this building has an intact cast iron storefront and a highly decorative brick parapet front with recessed wall panels and a unique denticulated-corbelled cornice line. All of this was replaced by a new brick front, which did retain the transom windows and the cast iron components.

711 Davis Avenue-Dr. A. A. Rawson's Drug Store: (1897, contributing)

This two-story brick commercial storefront measures 20 feet in width by 100 feet in length. It has a full basement as well as a mezzanine on the ground floor. The building was refurbished in 1974. The 1899 fire insurance map indicates however that this was still a single-story building as of that date. The second story was therefore added between 1900 and 1907, by which time the fire insurance maps confirm that the building is two stories tall.

The building has a parapet wall with a recessed panel of lighter colored brick. The existing upper story frames a lighter colored front wall panel with two elongated window openings, using darker colored side pilasters and a darker cornice line and base stringcourse. Two lighter stringcourses run across the upper facade at the sill level and along the base of the parapet wall. A denticulated row of bricks underscores this upper stringcourse and another line of brick dentils serves as the base of the cornice. The windows have semi-elliptical brick arch tops. A date stone insert between the windows reads "1897." The Benton Avenue secondary front matches the main one. All of the upper level windows have been covered over, as has the rear storefront. There is a simple central door entry.

The second floor consists of open storage areas, a smaller front room and a large back room. There is an old rope and pulley operated elevator in the southwest corner. The stairway is centered along the southern sidewall.

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713 Davis Avenue-Ben F. Ivey Block: (1898, contributing)

This building facade offers a unique example of the polychromatic Queen Anne commercial style. Both the wall materials and the decorative elements mix contrasting materials and colors, an indicator of this stylistic influence. A very unusual feature is the light brown brick square date panel, which is set between the windows on the second floor. Dates are usually found in inset stones or centered on cornice lines.

This two-story brick storefront measures 19 feet in width and 100 feet in length (1,900 square feet on main floor). It has a full basement. This building is of some architectural interest due to its narrow width. This is the district's narrowest commercial plan.

The vertical height is somewhat exaggerated and the building's parapet wall rises above both of its neighbors despite the fact that the elevation of this property is set below that of 715 Davis to the north. This building has an intact cast iron storefront with a central entrance and flanking full-length display windows. Like 711 Davis to the south (and said to be of the same construction date) a stone stringcourse forms the sill line for the two upper level windows. The two windows have semi-elliptical brick arches, which spring from large inset spring stones. The voussoir brick window arches consist of a row of full-length brick and an outside row of rowlock bricks. These are presently painted in alternating white and black colors to emphasize the brickwork. This decorative lintel treatment is long-standing and dates back at least as far as the 1930s. The parapet wall on this building is unique to Corning. A rare example of a terra-cotta decorative stringcourse forms the parapet wall base. Above this line a projecting brick stringcourse has also been painted in contrasting colors. A denticulated line is set above this line. The building's plain brick parapet line set above the cornice hints that it once had a pressed tin cornice. A late 1896 photo indicates that this short parapet wall is original and that originally there was a name-stone centered on its front, likely identifying Okey as its builder. A large square panel of light colored brick bears the centered raised date "1897." This panel with a darker brick projecting frame, is set between the two front windows. The secondary Benton Avenue storefront matches the main one. Of note are the window frames on both storefronts. These are specially shaped to project forward from the base and tops of each window opening.

The second floor is divided into four rooms and the whole has a 14 foot-high ceiling. The stairway is along the west end of the southern sidewall and there is a rope and pulley operated freight elevator in the north center of the plan.

714 Davis Avenue: (1974, non-contributing)

This single story brick fronted storefront is of recent date and occupies the vacated alleyway on this block.

715 Davis Avenue-McClelland Drug Store: (pre-1886, contributing)

This brick storefront Italianate style measures 21 feet in width and 100 feet in length. The east two-story portion is 50 feet in length as is the rear single-story portion. This is the only double fronted building in town that presents differing storefront heights on the two avenues. The basement is used for storage. The building was remodeled in 1973.

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This building is an example of the Italianate commercial style of architecture. The three semi-elliptical facade window hoods and the elaborate cornice line best represent this style. The storefront has a side entrance with two display window bays on its south side. The entry to the second floor is also set next to the store entryway. The three windows on the upper front are evenly spaced. Each window arch is traced with a very unique projecting brick arch with raised dentil-like ornamentation. A double spring stone effect is created at each arch base through the use of short horizontal projecting brick stringcourses, which jut out from each window side. A very elaborate band of saw tooth projecting brick, interwoven over three courses, defines the parapet wall base. The parapet is capped with an elaborate pressed tin cornice. The facade has been nicely restored and colorized to emphasize its richly detailed brickwork and cornice. The second floor was never converted to apartments, and contained professional offices and storage space.

716 Davis Avenue-Thompson Building: (1897, non-contributing)

This single-story brick storefront measures 22 feet in width and 132 feet in depth. There is no basement. The facade is of recent date and is unadorned. Two tile rear additions postdate 1907 and predate 1929.

718 Davis Avenue: (1897, contributing)

This single-story brick storefront measures 22 feet in width and 132 feet in depth. There is no basement. The facade brickwork matches that of 720 Davis immediately to the north. The storefront has a cast iron column and beam support system with a centered recessed entry and flanking display windows. The parapet wall is ornamented with a projecting corbelled brick row of "V" shaped piers. The coping is of stone. The building steps down the hill relative to the flanking buildings. A rear addition postdates 1929.

719-21 Davis Avenue-Wisheart-Ivey/Thompson Block (?): (1897, contributing)

This remarkable two-story double brick Queen Anne style storefront nicely partners with the equally impressive Widener Block immediately north. The building is amazingly well preserved in its basic form. There are two cast iron storefronts, which are stepped down the descending street level. The southern front has a central entrance, that to the north a left-hand one. There is no front upstairs entrance; rather the upper floor was served by an exterior alleyway stairway (gone) and via a shared stairway in the Widener building. The upper storefront level is dominated by two story hexagonal towers/bays. These are suspended over the storefronts and flank a single broad central second floor window. The window has three windows, a larger central one, with matching transoms. The window has a semi-elliptical arch cap. A stone sill underscores the window. A matching arch of projecting brick, traces the window arch. The towers/turrets are visually broken into two stories. The uppermost level is slightly thinner in scale, being stepped back slightly at the parapet level where a wood shingled skirt or band assumes a slightly concave profile. The parapet level of the turrets is elaborated with sunlight motifs, ornate brackets and a pressed tin cladding. The entire upper level is now stuccoed. The brickwork is visible only along the parapet level where four stringcourses of corbelled brickwork progressively stage out to form the parapet. The entire upper level is framed or recessed within a framework, which is formed by projecting end wall pilasters, and the parapet wall above. The storefront wall plane is recessed slightly behind this main wall plane. The castellated appearance of the cornice line is due to the current paint scheme. The cornice consists of a solid brick projecting mass. The southern exposed alley sidewall is stuccoed. Its windows have semi-elliptical arch caps. The Murray Iron Works of Burlington, Iowa fabricated the cast iron storefront. The second floor has a central six

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foot-wide longitudinal hall. There are five rectangular office spaces, three on the north side and two on the south. They are used only for storage.

The building actually consists of two sections. The two-story front portion measures 43 feet in width and 50 feet in length. The single-story rear section measures 39.5 feet in width and 25 feet in length.

720 Davis Avenue: (1897, contributing)

This single-story brick storefront measures 22 feet in width and 132 feet in depth. There is no basement. The facade brickwork matches 718 Davis immediately south. The storefront has a cast iron column and beam support system with a centered recessed entry and flanking display windows. The parapet wall is ornamented with a projecting corbelled brick row of "V" shaped piers. The coping is of stone. The building steps down the hill relative to the flanking buildings. Successive rear additions postdate 1907.

722 Davis Avenue-Downing's Grocery: (1897, contributing)

This two-story brick Queen Anne style storefront is the third of three unified storefronts all of which we reconstructed in 1897 by A. B. Turner. This front is stepped down some five feet at the cornice line due to the drop in elevation south from Davis Avenue and 8th Street. This building's facade necessarily shares the identical ornamental brickwork found on 724 and 726 Davis to the immediate north. The steel beam, which supports the storefront, hints that the support columns might also survive. The brickwork above features broad semi-elliptical brick arches over the two window openings and a brick stringcourse, which runs across the front just below the lintel level. The larger opening originally contained an oriel bay window. The corbelled brick cornice projects outward. The building measures 20 feet in width by 92 feet in depth.

723-29 Davis Avenue, 501-03 8th Street-Zachias T. Widener Building: (1895, contributing)

This imposing commercial Queen Anne style block is the keystone of Corning's downtown. It is remarkable for its scale and complexity of design as well as for its impressive state of preservation. In its basic form this building is nearly square in plan, measuring 57 feet north and south, and 50.5 feet east and west. The building has a full basement. Its two nearly identical facades feature a centered oriel bay window topped by a centered pediment, set atop the parapet wall. Paired window sets flank each bay window. These are framed by a molded brick or terra-cotta surround. The corner is infilled with a cantilevered turret.

The upper level facades are notable for their fairly extensive use of terra-cotta inserts (relatively uncommon in surviving storefronts in Corning) as well as for the extensive and elaborate usage of molded, rubbed or corbelled brickwork. Most notable are the sharply angled triangular brick columns, which are paired at each corner and alongside either side of the bay windows. These vertical lines are based on cast terra-cotta inserts set below the upper level sill line. They then rise through the parapet and terminate above the coping line, being capped with round-tipped terra-cotta finials. Most of the latter survive in place. Each pediment bears the building nameplate in carved stone and a semi-circular capstone proclaims the founding date of the firm and that of the new building ("1880-1895"). The bays and tower are elaborately decorated with the Icarian French lily motif. The tower cornice line repeats the name of the building in coper lettering.

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The cast iron storefronts are perfectly preserved and comprise all of the east (Davis Avenue) facade and a third of the north one (8th Street). Ambrose Manufacturing Company of St. Joseph, Missouri produced the ironwork. There is a small basement storefront at the southeast corner. The building was designed to have just one major main floor occupant and its angled entryway is located at the northeast corner where it could be addressed to either intersecting cross street. A minor storefront is located at the northwest corner.

The second floor plan consists of an east/west running hall, which runs along the south sidewall, with stairs to the street on the east end. There is one large room in the west half, and three rectangular office areas in the east end.

724-726 Davis Avenue-A. B. Turner Block: (1897, contributing)

This impressive two-story double brick Queen Anne style storefront has a covered storefront and its second floor front has lost two projecting oriel window bays. Despite these alterations, the building retains its ornamental brickwork patterns. These include stringcourses at the sill and lintel window levels and a corbelled projecting brick cornice and parapet wall. The north sidewall is better preserved with its original five paired window sets and one larger double window set. The downstairs windows might have been altered. Iron columns supported the unified ground storefront. The front wall stands 30 feet high. The frontage is 46 feet wide and 132 feet deep with no basement (6,072 square feet). There is a mezzanine level on the west end of the building.

This property includes the double front facing west as well as two north-facing 8th Street storefronts in the rear. The property was constructed as one unit and remains under single ownership, so is considered a single building.

800 Davis Avenue-John Clinton Reese Building/Opera House: (1899, not counted or evaluated, NRHP listed)

This Classical Revival style property is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The two-story block is situated on the downtown's most prominent corner location. The plan consists of a raised limestone basement, a cut southwest entry corner, a low parapet with hipped roof, and an ornamental pediment above the main entrance. A semi-circular bay projects from above the entrance, as does a three-sided bay that is centered on the west second story front. The blonde colored face brick exterior is organized by the use of pilasters into three bays to the west and five to the south. A storefront with cast iron frame, infills the west lower level and a display window from that storefront extends the opening through the westernmost bay on the south side. The facades are fully fenestrated and include a range of rectangular attic lights on both fronts. The building interior retains its suspended gallery (west end) and its stage and proscenium. The building is in the final stages of a complete restoration. The lower level has been adapted as a staging and support level for the upstairs opera house. There is a full basement. Apartments added in 1943 above the balcony have been removed. This building reused a substantial portion of the foundations of the burned First National Bank building. Also retained was a 16-foot square vault foundation that the newspaper company long used to support a basement press. The 8th Street loading dock was built in mid-1948 (Adams County *Free Press*, July 2, 1936).

804 Davis Avenue-W. S. Hefling Block/Johnston House: (1897, non-contributing)

This is a two-story commercial building with a brick facade and stuccoed brick sidewalls. Originally this front had the second floor entrance as well as a ground level entrance. Display windows

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were to the left of the paired entryways. The fenestration has been altered on the storefront level with the reduction of the storefront windows and on the upper floor with a similar reduction of the windows there. The entire facade has been refaced with a plain front. The brick parapet wall is unadorned. This building has a 20-foot wide frontage and an 80-foot depth. A single-story rear addition measures 20 by 30 feet. Current usage includes a tavern downstairs with two apartments upstairs.

The single-story rear addition dates to between 1907 and 1929. Twin wire glass skylights are set above this addition. The second floor appears to retain the hotel period room arrangement with a central set of stairs and a hall and six rooms on one side, seven on the other. The building is now called the McNulty Building. The current façade dates to the 1960s and consequently the building is deemed to be non-contributing.

806 Davis Avenue-W. O. Mitchell Block: (1897, contributing)

This is a two-story commercial building with a brick facade and stuccoed brick sidewalls. The fenestration has been altered on the storefront level with the reduction of the storefront windows. Three original metal casement windows with transoms remain on the upper level front. The brick parapet wall has three recessed flat panels, each set above a window. The parapet front is otherwise unadorned and there is a tile coping. The new front dates from 1953 when the American Legion obtained 806 Davis Avenue. The single-story rear addition dates to between 1907 and 1929. Twin wire glass skylights are set above this addition.

810 Davis Avenue (vacant lot, not counted)

816 Davis Avenue: (1899-1907, non-contributing)

This single-story boomtown front commercial building has an aluminum siding front covering but it otherwise retains its original form and fenestration. It measures 20 feet in width and 32 feet in depth. An off center raised entrance has a two-part display window to its south side. The rear vault measures 17 feet by six feet. There is a one-quarter basement. The building has been completely remodeled with all new windows.

818 Davis Avenue-Rogers Plumbing, Electric and Heating: (1893, contributing)

This two-story stuccoed hollow tile and brick front business building measures 22 feet in width and 44 feet in depth. There is a single-story (25 feet square) rear addition to the building. Like its neighbor to the north, the facade of this building has been altered on the upper level, changing the fenestration and eliminating the cornice. On the storefront level twin side entrances flank a broad display window. A canopy conceals the possible presence of transom windows. A single triple set of casement windows is now centered on the second floor front. The building contains 1,232 square feet of space. There is a rear upper level former sun porch now used as a law library and the rear addition is used as a garage. The rear addition measures 18 feet by 22 feet. The main floor was last remodeled in 1977, the front entrance and upper floor in 1990.

820 1/2 Davis Avenue (alley property): (post-1929, contributing)

This two-story concrete block commercial building is on the west side of the alley in the block south of 9th Street and east of Davis Avenue. Originally a combination shop and upstairs residence, there

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Corning Commercial Historic District,
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is an east end garage door and a single door side entrance (converted into a window). A north side deck and stairs accesses the upper level. The upper windows were originally metal casement windows. Three of these on the south sidewall have been reduced and replaced.

822 Davis Avenue-Union Republican Office/C. W. Gray Building: (1905-07, contributing)

This two-story stuccoed brick commercial building measures 24 feet in width and 51 feet in depth. The building has a front basement entry as well as a raised main floor entry. The fenestration has been considerably altered with the apparent elimination of display window transoms or window reductions and the enclosing the round arch entry transom. The two second floor windows interrupt a corbelled brick stringcourse, which passes across the front just below the lintel line. The entire exterior has been stuccoed and the original cornice has been removed, being reduced to a flat surface. The building has a single story rear addition. The building main floor windows were all semi-elliptical arched.

824 Davis Avenue-former United Brethren Church: (pre-1899, contributing)

This story and a half frame residence was remodeled from the United Brethren Church, retaining the same side wings, converting these into bays and adding a front wraparound porch. The church had a steep hip roof with jerkin head gables over each wing and a 30-foot high belfry set into the northwest front corner. It is a contributing building within the district given that its historical integrity is based upon its remodeled residential status within the district's period of significance.

6th Street:

508 6th Street: (1944, non-contributing)

This is an L-plan single-story concrete block former service station. It has been converted to retail use and its twin service bay doors have been bricked in. An angled corrugated metal second roof projects above it. The exterior has been painted a light blue with dark blue detailing that does underscore the former service bay locations, and matches the color of fixed awnings.

7th Street

601-03 7th Street/Agricultural and Conservation Services Building: (1950, contributing)

This single-story commercial building postdates World War II. It has a brick exterior and tile coping. Display window openings are recessed within the building shell and have slightly raised kick plates. These remain open save for one front window that is paneled shut. The entry has a hung aluminum flat canopy.

602 7th Street/Myers Produce Company: (1900, contributing)

This single-story brick faced tile building dates to ca. 1908-28. The facade is divided into four uneven vertical bays by brick pilasters. The single door entry is right of center on the plan. A horizontal brick stringcourse defines the base of the parapet wall. The parapet and main building front panels are recessed within this pattern of stringcourses and pilasters. A corbelled brick cornice caps the whole. The windows have likely been altered. The brickwork continues around the west sidewall for some 25 feet.

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The tile wall, slightly recessed, continues northward along the alley. A garage door is located on the alley front at the northwest corner. It is a contributing building within the district.

602 1/2 7th Street/Glen Myers Trucking Company: (1925-27, non-contributing)

This curiously shaped single-story barn is located on the east side of the alley in Block 6, on the southeast corner of the intersecting alleys on that block. The rectangular building measures 44 feet in width on its north end and 32 feet wide at its southern end. It is 70 feet long (2,653 square feet). An angled double-door drive-in entryway on the west side accounts for the difference in width. The building has a metal roof. The north half of the building is of tile construction, the south half of metal construction. The building was enlarged in 1965 and an automatic door replaced the original door. The interior was gutted and a machine shop was placed in the building.

605 7th Street/Swift & Co. Produce: (1958, contributing)

This single story commercial tile double storefront was constructed in two phases, the western section being the oldest, dating to 1915, the eastern one from 1953. The eastern storefront is of concrete block construction, while that on the west is of tile and brick construction. Both buildings were part of a single operation and today the two storefronts remain under unified use and ownership and are treated as one property.

606 7th Street-Corning U.S. Post Office: (1938, contributing)

This is a nicely preserved and designed post office building. It reflects a stronger than usual Colonial Revival stylistic influence. The usual flat roofed square post office plan is in this case supplemented with a full-width hipped roof and a centered cupola. The building retains its original standing seam metal roof and the cupola is unmatched in any other state post office plan. The building facade is divided into the expected five bays with a centered entryway and two windows on either side. The building has a raised foundation. The water table projects beyond the main wall plane of the structure. The window openings are recessed within panels and brick panel sections continue the opening downward from the sill to the water table below. Heavy limestone lintels and thinner stone sills frame each opening. The entryway has a classical frame surround and very diminutive transom lights. These features again reflect the strong Colonial Revival influence in the design. Cast iron lanterns flank the entryway in lieu of the usual freestanding cast iron standards and glass globes, usually placed at either side of the stair approach. There is a centered approach with granite steps and concrete area walls on three sides provide light for the basement. The ground floor plan places the postmaster's office, vault, swing room and swing room bath, women's toilet and janitor's toilet all in a row along the east sidewall. The brick infilled window opening on that side denotes the presence of the vault. The west sidewall has five window openings, which match those on the face and east sidewall. On the rear or north wall, the original mailing platform and vestibule survive unaltered, and the platform fronts east. The building lobby contains one of the state's finest New Deal public buildings murals.

607 7th Street-Laundromat: (1919, contributing)

This single-story brick building was built in 1953 to house a laundromat. It matches the preceding 605 7th to the east in terms in storefront layout and scale. While under common ownership with the other building, and being identical in style, it is counted separately due to its later date and separate historical function.

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8th Street:

406 8th Street-City Hall and Fire Department: (1902, contributing)

This Classical Revival style building reads architecturally like the rear (east) part of the opera house (800 Davis) but it is completely separate and was built simultaneously with that building. The two buildings share a common yellow face brick. The City Hall is lower in profile than the opera house because it has no raised foundation. The ground floor originally contained the firehouse, jail and police, and there was a hose tower within the plan. Council offices, used for public meetings, were upstairs. Its façade is composed of five arched bays. There is a plain cornice and a centered pediment. The building is lower than the opera house due to the lack of a raised foundation. This design represents the rebuilding of an 1888 building of similar massing and identical function that burned in 1896.

505 8th Street-Andrew Thompson's Block: (1895, non-contributing)

This two-story brick storefront measures 23.5 feet in width and 60.5 feet in length. There are two apartments upstairs and a dentist's office on the main floor.

The storefront has been completely replaced (1953) and a wooden canopy covers the transom window area. There are three evenly spaced windows on the upper level. These have semi-elliptical brick arches and stone sills. The parapet wall is plain but is defined by a denticulated stringcourse and a corbelled brick stringcourse. The coping is of stone. Given the infilling of the storefront and the presence of the fixed chalet canopy.

507 8th Street-Odd Fellows Building: (1895, non-contributing)

This two-story brick Classical Revival style storefront and lodge hall measures 25 feet in width and 100 feet in depth. It has a full basement. The building is termed three stories given that its basement is exposed at street level on Benton Avenue (west side). The lodge hall has been subdivided into two floor levels and there are four apartments with two and three bedrooms each. The original storefront of this building is lost or obscured beneath the present day one. A wood shingled canopy obscures the transom area of the front. The upper windows, two side single openings and a paired centered set, have been bricked in. The combination of lower and upper floor changes renders this building non-contributing in the proposed commercial historic district. The west sidewall windows have been infilled and reduced in size but this change marks the damage in that area caused by a major 1919 fire. At least five full-sized windows were lost and not rebuilt. Later the openings were reopened but with smaller windows.

The pediment and parapet wall treatments on this building are simply wonderful. The Odd Fellows emblem survives, centered on the parapet within a semi-elliptical stone arch with keystone. The parapet is broken into three sections, the middle one featuring a broad pilaster and pediment cap. The corbelled brickwork, which ornaments the pediment and cornice, is combined with cut stone trim work and is unmatched in the downtown. The square finial form on the pediment was copied in the tower finial of the Widener building, to the east.

602 8th Street/Cudahy Produce Company: (1919, contributing)

This single-story tile and brick storefront measures 44 feet by 100 feet. It has a cast iron front and the storefront is divided into three equal sized bays. A central entrance and flanking display

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windows had very tall transom lights set above them. Each opening is a recessed panel, which is defined by pilasters and the parapet above. The parapet also features a horizontal recessed brick panel. Corbelled brick lines frame the panel. A thick concrete coping caps the facade and the sidewall parapet steps down in stages toward the back of the building. The extensive infilling of the storefront represents its consolidation into the adjacent creamery operation. The building was remodeled from an office function to store three large milk tanks in 1958-59. Given that these changes fall prior to the 50-year cutoff, this building is contributing to the proposed downtown historic district.

9th Street:

405 9th Street: (1894, contributing)

This is a frame single story cross-gable cottage plan. While it has been covered with vinyl siding, its original fenestration remains intact. There is a front low-deck, with entry canopy and a rear shed-roof wing. A low-deck/porch is also located in the southeast corner. The cottage sets atop a high terrace and there are no outbuildings.

Other:

Central Park: (1857, contributing)

This rectangular park, half a block in width, extends from 8th to 9th streets, and is bordered on its east side by Davis Avenue, and its west by Benton Avenue. The Adams County Courthouse has always fronted south onto the park. The parkland drops somewhat in elevation from north to south. The tree canopy is immature and concrete walks bisect the park from each corner. Two objects are in the park, a new brick entry gate that flanks the sidewalk at the southeast corner (non-contributing object), and a ca. 1909 fountain that is centered south of center. A wooden band shell and pergola, of recent date, is a non-contributing structure and is centered east of center along Davis Avenue.

Park Pagoda, Central Park (1990's, non-contributing)

This frame pagoda and slightly raised stage/platform are counted as a structure.

Park Fountain, Central Park (1909, contributing)

This fountain is counted as an object.

Park Gates, Central Park (1990's, non-contributing)

These gates are counted as an object.

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Master District Building List:

| Address | Year | Style | Contributing | Non-contributing | Additional Notes: |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| 612 Benton | 1940 | Commercial | 1 | | A minor garage |
| 701 Benton | -1893-1899 | Commercial | | 1 | |
| 713 Benton | 1892 | Commercial | | 2 | |
| 715 Benton | 1900 | Commercial | | 3 | |
| 717 Benton | -1886 | Commercial | 2 | | |
| 719 Benton | 1903 | Commercial | | 4 | |
| 721 Benton | -1886 | Commercial | 3 | | |
| 723 Benton | -1899 | Commercial | | 5 | |
| 725 Benton | 1895 | Commercial | | 6 | |
| 801 Benton | 1957-59 | Commercial | 4 | | |
| 813 Benton | 1931 | Commercial | 5 | | |
| 819 Benton | 1910 | Bungalow | 6 | | |
| 821 Benton | -1929 | Craftsman | 7 | | |
| 829 Benton | 1930 | Colonial Revival | 8 | | |
| 516 Davis | 1925-27 | Commercial | | 7 | |
| 517-19 Davis | 1930 | Commercial | 9 | | |
| 521 Davis | 1929 | Commercial | 10 | | |
| 523 Davis | 1937 | Commercial | 11 | | |
| 524-26 Davis | 1945 | Commercial | 12 | | |
| 525 Davis | 1898 | Italianate | 13 | | |
| 528-30 Davis | N/A | | | | Vacant lot, not counted |
| 601-03 Davis | 1898 | Commercial | 14 | | |
| 605-07 Davis | 1910 | Prairie | 15 | | |
| 606 Davis | -1929 | Commercial | 16 | | |
| 608 Davis | 1929+ | Commercial | 17 | | |
| 609 Davis | -1883 | Commercial | | 8 | |
| 613 Davis | 1910 | Commercial | 18 | | |
| 615 Davis | -1886 | Commercial | 19 | | |
| 616-18 Davis | 1894 | Italianate | 20 | | |
| 617 Davis | -1886 | Italianate | 21 | | |
| 619 Davis | 1908-1929 | Commercial | 22 | | |
| 620 Davis | -1886 | Commercial | 23 | | |
| 622 Davis | 1900-1907 | Commercial | 24 | | |
| 624 Davis | 1890 | Commercial | | 9 | |
| 625 Davis | 1908 | Prairie | 25 | | |
| 626 Davis | -1886 -1929 | Commercial | 26 | | |
| 627 Davis | -1886 | Prairie | 27 | | |
| 700 Davis | 1897 | Queen Anne | 28 | | |
| 701 Davis | 1884 | Commercial | 29 | | |
| 702 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | 30 | | |
| 704 Davis | 1897 | Queen Anne | 31 | | |
| 706 Davis | 1898 | Queen Anne | 32 | | |
| 708 Davis | 1898 | Commercial | 33 | | |

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| Address | Year | Style | Contributing | Non-contributing | Additional Notes: |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|--------------|------------------|--|
| 709 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | | 10 | |
| 710 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | 34 | | |
| 711 Davis | 1897 | Italianate | 35 | | |
| 713 Davis | 1898 | Class.Revival | 36 | | |
| 714 Davis | 1974 | Commercial | | 11 | |
| 715 Davis | -1886 | Italianate | 37 | | |
| 716 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | | 12 | |
| 718 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | 38 | | |
| 719-21 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | 39 | | |
| 720 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | 40 | | |
| 722 Davis | 1897 | Queen Anne | 41 | | |
| 723-29 Davis | 1895 | Queen Anne | 42 | | |
| 724-26 Davis | 1897 | Queen Anne | 43 | | |
| 800 Davis | 1899 | Classical Revival | | | Not counted as is individually listed on the National Register |
| 804 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | | 13 | |
| 806 Davis | 1897 | Commercial | 44 | | |
| 810 Davis | N/A | | | | Vacant lot |
| 816 Davis | 1899-1907 | Commercial | | 14 | |
| 818 Davis | 1933 | Commercial | 45 | | |
| 820 ½ Davis | 1929+ | Commercial | 46 | | On alley to east |
| 822 Davis | 1905-1907 | Commercial | 47 | | |
| 824 Davis | -1899 | Classical Revival | 48 | | |
| 508 6 th St. | 1944 | Commercial | | 15 | |
| 601-03 7 th | 1950? | Commercial | 49 | | |
| 602 7 th | 1900 | Commercial | 50 | | |
| 602 ½ 7 th | 1927-1928 | Commercial | | 16 | On alley to north |
| 605 7 th | 1958 | Commercial | 51 | | |
| 606 7 th | 1938 | Colonial Revival | 52 | | |
| 607 7 th | 1919 | Commercial | 53 | | |
| 406 8 th | 1902 | Classical Revival | 54 | | |
| 505 8 th | 1895 | Commercial | | 17 | |
| 507 8 th | 1895 | Classical Revival | | 18 | |
| 602 8 th | 1919 | | 55 | | |
| 405 9 th | 1894 | 1.5-st. cross gable cottage | 56 | | |
| Central Park | 1857 | N/A | 57 | | Site |
| Park Pagoda | 1990s | N/A | | 19 | Structure |
| Park Fountain | 1909 | N/A | 58 | | Object |
| Park Gates | 1990s | N/A | | 20 | Object |
| Totals: | | | 58 | 20 | |

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Corning Commercial Historic District,
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Integrity Evaluation:

This commercial district evidences a good level of historical integrity. As a whole the district largely occupies its historical geographical limits, retains numerous examples of cast iron and steel structural storefront elements, a good range of well preserved storefronts as a whole, and a minimal number of fully or largely covered or obscured upper facades. Negative integrity features include the recent loss of two important buildings (the railroad depot and a two-story block at 530 Davis Avenue), the removal of a number of bay windows, and the paneling over of a number of upper level windows. Four buildings have mansard-like fixed shingled fronts that cover some or all of the façade.

The architectural heart of the district is located in the 700s block of Davis Avenue, the buildings that front north along 8th Street on Central Park and the opera house and city hall buildings (800 Davis, 406 8th Street). Integrity evaluations are based upon two factors, these being the proportion of retained original façade materials and design, and façade changes that can be functionally explained as having occurred within the period of significance. Buildings that might otherwise be judged as being non-contributing, but that fall under this latter subset are 525, 606, 620, 701, 804, 806, 818, 822, Davis and 602 8th Street. One façade that reads to be historic, but is not, is 716 Davis Avenue. Contributing single-story buildings must have their parapet levels uncovered, and their storefronts not infilled (exceptions are those that appear in the list of documented exceptions). Ideally transom voids are still open but the closure of this feature is common and in most cases fixed canvas awnings replicate this important intervening horizontal feature. Parapets and copings ideally remain in place as well. Two-story buildings that are contributing retain their original massing, have unobstructed facades and retain their open storefronts. Ideally they retain bays or oriels, cornices and any iron storefront components, as well as their open transom windows. Paneled upper window openings are not deemed to be fundamentally detrimental because in most cases the window fabric or at least the openings are extant. Reduced upper level window openings are detrimental to the evaluation if they combine with the loss of other elements, such as the storefront, transom or parapet.

This nomination is being made in conjunction with a Main Street Challenge Grant façade improvement grant. The nomination is also being offered so as to encourage the use of federal and state historic preservation tax credit incentives, to realize rehabilitation efforts that can go beyond the confines of the challenge grant opportunity.

The integrity quality of location is met by the fact that the district encompasses the historic boundaries of Corning's downtown. This downtown has expanded internally rather than geographically, in the form of larger buildings. The dislocation of residences by commercial land use was restricted to Benton Avenue.

The integrity quality of design is met by the survival of the core of substantial brick blocks that defined the downtown, and mostly date to the latter 1890s and through 1902. These larger and more elaborate high-style designs are preserved in good to exceptional condition. Of particular note are the numerous cast iron framed storefronts that survive. The most common changes are upper level window down-sizing and storefront infilling. The numerous cast iron fronts remain visible regardless of these storefront alterations. A higher proportion of well preserved storefronts survives within the district.

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The integrity of the district's setting is strongly retained. The scale of a town's downtown is determined by a combination of factors. First, the original plat usually locates the planned downtown and allocates a specially platted area for it. Then, depending on fortune and success, the town is challenged to fill that allocated space with a solid array of impressive storefronts. Corning with its elongated downtown and twin main streets, was particularly under this pressure. Given these size factors it is no surprise that even a semblance of solid commercial building up was only achieved well after the major phases of building up, these normally dating to the World War I years, was finished. Given this ready availability of store building space, a district like Corning tends to continue to use older and outmoded buildings and also tends to have some interspersed residences surviving on the secondary street. These are frequently used at least in part for commercial purposes. The physical setting of the downtown with its north-end park and courthouse, all arranged with an upwardly inclined topography from south to north, is also preserved. The boundary between commercial and residential use is retained, as is the clustering of churches along the northern periphery of the district.

The integrity quality of materials is well preserved. Original materials survive and are visible. This predominantly involves brick facades with a minimal use of decorative stone. Pressed metal cornices are in the minority but are mostly preserved, while brick cornices are almost all still intact. Storefront structural components and other ornamental elements remain visible and intact. Just three building fronts have been stuccoed and one is covered with permastone (all of these changes pre-dating the 50-year National Register cutoff point).

The integrity quality of workmanship is also well preserved, given that ornamental materials remain intact and visible. This is true of massing and wall planes, cornices and pediments, storefronts, ornamentation, and even one basement storefront and its staircase. There are relatively few instances where exterior walls have been recovered or obscured from view. Cornice and pediment and other ornamental detailing survives in many instances.

The integrity quality of feeling is embodied in the commercial feeling of the downtown. Corning is a very early and successful Iowa Main Street participant and considerable attention has been paid to storefront visibility, colors and the provision of awnings. Feeling is conveyed by the visual dominance of the larger buildings, and their juxtaposition to the park. A unusual aspect of feeling is vested in the double-ended commercial buildings that make up the center of the district, between Davis and Benton avenues.

The integrity quality of association is reflected in the fundamental test of asking whether those who build and used these buildings would readily locate and recognize their buildings today. They would. The downtown still ranges up the same hill, is surmounted by the Central Park, the key buildings cluster around that park and the twin avenues still function as they always have.

Corning Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Adams County, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1873-1962

Significant Dates

1896

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Anson, J. R.

Anthony, George W.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: Corning House of History

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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Architects/Builders Continued:

Architects: Continued (see Architects' Section, below)

Chafee, A. H.
Frevert, Ramsey, Drey and Kobes
Searcy, A. A.
Voss, Henry
Welch, William W.
Wetherell, Frank
Wever, Charles

Builders: (see Builders' Section, below)

Anthony, George W.
Chafee, A. A.
Church and Company
McGaffin, Sam L.
Niebo and Martin
Shafer, C. A.

The Corning Commercial Historic District is locally significant on the basis of its commercial architecture (Criterion C) and its association with the commercial growth and success of Adams County's county seat community (Criterion A). The district is also significant as an example of an unusual downtown plat, given its layout of twin-parallel "main streets" plat and the inclusion of a prominent public square at its high end, with the courthouse and jail being located on the park and opposite the downtown. The commercial architecture reflects the very substantial up-building of the core downtown during the 1890s, a transitional period of reinvestment that was aided and abetted by the devastation of the east half of district wrought by the fire of 1896. The new buildings further reflect the maturation of local businesses and their related construction of larger and more ornate business blocks over time. The district is significant for its direct and sustained association with the commercial role that it played in Corning and regionally as well. The documentation of the use of each building and of the collective whole attests to the constant struggle of innumerable downtown entrepreneurs to both make a living and to contribute the growth of Corning. The significance of this context is represented by the basic fact that Iowa's smallest county could produce so extensive and so fine a range of commercial buildings. The significance of Corning's commercial story is one that naturally did not stop or even substantially wane in 1961. The downtown retained department stores and a full array of retail and service industries well after comparable county seat communities lost them and Corning's retailers operated branch stores in other nearby communities. The efforts of Corning to struggle against the demise of its downtown continues today and the community led the way in developing the organizations and tools to preserve its downtown. The period of significance is 1873-1962; it is based on the earliest surviving building in the district and the 50-year cutoff point. The significant date is 1896, the year of the great fire.

The commercial architecture of Corning is imposing in both its scale and style. The largest and most substantial business blocks cluster at the upper edge of the district, along the south side of Central

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Corning Commercial Historic District,
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Park. The commercial architectural expression is in fact well out of scale given the small population base of Corning and Adams County over time. It represents in material form the energy and success of Corning's merchants who aggressively made Corning the commercial center of a market area that extended well south of the county line. The architectural significance also rests on the unusual building design response to Corning's twin "main streets." The resulting half-wide block was built up with double-ended stores that had primary (eastern) and secondary (western) facades. Finally the commercial architecture memorializes the disastrous downtown fire of 1896 by virtue of the contrasting surviving buildings (the west side of upper Davis Avenue) and the post-fire replacements (the opposite side), all of which necessarily sprang up in one unified re-building effort. In sum the commercial architecture represents the successful building up of a most picturesque and architecturally interesting southwestern Iowa downtown.

The district's historical significance is further attested by a number of features or historical themes. The district retains good examples of every phase of its development and history. The district's linear layout, with twin 100-foot wide main streets, associated with a park and the courthouse placed at its uppermost end, is unusual and is thought to be the only such town layout in Iowa. The employment of a three-block long double-ended row of commercial buildings, arrayed along a series of half-blocks, is also unmatched in the state. The buildings included in this feature have double or even triple front facades (the latter number if they occupy a street corner location, see 627 Davis Avenue). The three major developmental periods in the district's history, the push to build better commercial buildings following the financial panic of the early 1890s, the response to the disastrous fire of late 1896, and the final phase of downtown up building in the 1930s, and the role of the Federal government in the enhancement of public art and the symbolism of community life, are all well and fully represented in the surviving building fabric. The buildings also represent a number of important downtown sub-themes, these being the need to house large and expanding department stores, the provision of a modern opera house and city hall, the tendency to incorporate auto-related services within the pre-existing downtown, the growth of government and particularly federal agricultural agencies (601-3 7th Street, 606 7th Street, 602 8th Street, 406 8th Street, 829 Benton Avenue, and others) and the need to house replacement banks following the Great Depression.

Early Corning History, 1857-1869:

David N. Smith, the principal founder of the Corning Town Company, filed the town plat for the new railroad town, called Corning on September 21, 1857. The anticipated arrival of the promised cross-state railroad (Burlington & Missouri Railroad) propelled an initial burst of enthusiastic town building and Smith even funded the erection of a number of substantial speculative business buildings, including the town's first brick storefront (non-extant). The first hotel was built in 1859. During the early 1860s the town consisted of about 40 homes and a population of 150 persons. Smith named the new town for Erastus Corning (1794-1872), of New York, the director of the Burlington & Missouri Railroad (Burlington West, pp. 46, 99, 102; "A Brief History of Corning and Adams County," 1957, p. 86; Adams County *Union*, January 1, 1898 *Union-Republican*, January 1, 1898; (Gauthier, p. 56).ⁱⁱⁱ

ⁱⁱⁱ David N. Smith remained popular in Corning. The Adams County *Gazette* reported on August 26, 1869 that "D. N. Smith Esq., one of the early and true friends of Corning, spent the night here on his way from Nebraska to the east...Of course he rejoiced at our prosperity."

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The town plat was laid out across a natural south-facing amphitheater that ran along a rounded bluff line that arose 200 feet above the river and 150 feet above the railroad grade. Whether accidental or purposeful, the town's residents have ever since been reminded that the railroad made their town--the sounds of each passing train make it seem that the train is right in one's front yard! One other result of this setting was the provision of a one-third mile long "natural toboggan run" which was noted as of 1889 and appears to have run along Davis Avenue, downhill from the Opera House corner at 8th Street (Corning & Adams County, 1889, p. 24).

The Corning town plat showed the traits of the typical railroad town plan but with some originality thrown in. Most notable was the provision of two broad avenues (Benton and Davis avenues), separated by a narrow range of half blocks. These connected the railroad depot to the south with the town's park and courthouse, both of which stood atop the bluff to the north. Corning was platted just northwest of the railroad, so that its depot was in its southeast corner. Davis Avenue was routinely termed "Main Street" in local newspaper accounts, while Benton was termed the "back street." This 1875 description described the unusual platting:

...The town is handsomely laid off in uniform blocks of eight lots each, with streets and alleys crossing each other at right angles, running east and west and north and south. The streets are each 66 feet wide, except three of them, running north and south, which are called Avenues, and are each 100 feet wide. The alleys are 16½ feet wide. Some of the business lots are 30x100 feet, and others 44x132 feet. The lots designated for residences are 66x132 feet, two of them forming a quarter block, eight rods square, with streets and alleys on all sides. The streets running east and west are numbered, progressively, from First to Eleventh, and the others have appropriate names (Andreas, Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa, p. 497).

Another unusual feature of Corning's plan was the assignment of the downtown area to the extreme southeast corner of the plat, at the point where the railroad adjoined the town. Even today there is no extensive development of any kind to the east or south from the downtown.

The railroad's arrival was delayed by national financial depression and then the Civil War. W. C. Chubb came to Corning on one of the railroad construction trains in mid-1869 and described his new hometown:

...we see a new town, the buildings mostly located in three long lines extending from near the railroad, one half of the way up the hill, on the two sides of Davis avenue and on the west side of Benton avenue with a few houses scattered over the plat [sic] in the west of town; a pleasing picture for a future home, a site from which beautiful landscapes could be seen, its clean white painted buildings; a brand new town, with the music of the hammer and the saw and the air redolent with piney odor of new buildings. A wagon track up the middle of Davis avenue cut the virgin sod, with here and there a foot path leading to the buildings on either side.

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The preferred commercial lots were those that fronted Central Park from its southern end, these lots fronting along the south side of 8th Street. None of these early and substantial frame blocks survive but the point is that the focal point of the new downtown was on top of the hill by the park (Adams County *Union*, January 1, 1898).

It is said by some that the town planners intended the half blocks which lay between Benton and Davis avenues to be reserved as a series of small parks that would have linked the depot with the courthouse. This is not probable given that the earliest downtown photographs show buildings on these same half-lots and it is likely that the early commercial development south of the park meant that public ownership of the half blocks was never considered. The lots that were desired were sold off. The plat ignored the long-term possibility that Corning would become the county seat of Adams County. A park ringed with business blocks was part of the original town vision as this account, from 1895, indicates:

The location of the courthouse no doubt had much to do with defeating the original plan of building Corning 'up around the square.' Business drifted away and down the hill. The removal of the old frame buildings of late to give way for new brick structures has caused a looking up in value of lots around central park and the old buildings are finding new sites thereon.

Churches and residences initially fronted on the park on three sides, and some of the former would be converted for commercial use as the downtown belatedly moved northward (Adams County *Union*, July 18, 1895).

It is curious that the original city plat failed to appreciate the value of orienting the 8th Street lots between Davis and Benton avenues towards Central Park. Instead these lots ran east and west, as did all of the shorter lots, which ran between those avenues. It wasn't until December 8, 1869 that a supplemental re-plat reoriented and enlarged these lots. This re-plat coincided with the renewal of downtown building that followed the resumption of railroad construction westward. The replat underscores the importance of the 8th Street lots as the initial commercial center of Corning (Property Abstract, 719 Davis Avenue).

Corning, Railroad Town and County Seat, the First Growth Explosion, 1869-1892:

The delay in gaining rail service stymied growth and Corning lost its first newspaper and forfeited its post office several times. Fortunes were so reversed that in 1860 druggist Dr. A. A. Rawson even dragged his store to Quincy, the initial county seat. "Was too early that was all," he recalled in 1886, "we were received with smiles [in Quincy], "Had to come back [to Corning later] etc." Quincy retains a few houses and is located four miles to the northwest of Corning (Adams County *Union*, October 28, 1886).

With the approach of the steel rails, the momentum swung back to Corning and in the fall of 1869 there were 16 business relocations from faltering Queen City and most of these involved doing what Rawson had done, save in the other direction. Queen City is now a ghost town, having just missed the railroad's right-of-way. It was just over a mile to the northeast of Corning. The railroad reached the

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city during early August 1869 (Adams County *Gazette*, October 7, 1869; *Glenwood Opinion*, August 7, 28, 1869).

Armed with this new asset, the next step was to obtain the county seat designation. Corning lost and the defeat was aided by druggist Rawson who was still loyal to his new abode. By 1872, Corning had outpaced rival Queen City in its growth and Quincy's hopes for obtaining railroad service had been permanently dashed. Corning finally prevailed in the matter in December 1872 and set about making plans for raising up a courthouse (Adams County *Union*, January 1, 1898; Adams County *Gazette*, October 7, 1869).^{iv}

After the railroad reached Corning, its growth was meteoric, reaching 1,526 persons by 1880, a rough doubling since 1870. Corning's industry, as of the late 1880's, was primarily based on agricultural product processing and its commercial sales and services catered heavily to the needs of area farmers. Early on, the town had a cheese factory, canning factory and a creamery. It also had two brickyards and several stone quarries. Corning's livery and agricultural implement operations all clustered near the depot, for the most part east of Davis Avenue (U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, 1880*. Washington; Government Printing Office, 1883, p. 159; Adams County, Iowa 1892, p. 11).

Corning had its first visit by the town map makers of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company of New York in early 1886. The town had barely escaped disaster with a January 1885 fire. The victorious firemen failed to impress the mapmakers with their single hand-pulled fire engine. Overall, the town's capacity to fight a fire was rated as "not good." The Sanborn map depicts a downtown located exclusively north of 6th Street. The core of the downtown was atop the hill, along 8th Street. Benton Avenue was retail only at its north end and was otherwise residential or the locale for liveries. The west side of Davis Avenue was slightly more built up, with an almost solid bank of two-story store buildings between 6th and 7th streets. There were 14 brick storefronts in the downtown, assembled in double fronts or scattered singly.

A municipal water supply was established in 1888. A contracted downtown well was a failure but an itinerant well digger found a water source that was both adequate and drought-proof. The initial water distribution system numbered 28 water hydrants. The first reliable electrical service began in 1889. Within a decade the system serviced 900 street lamps. The plant burned in the 1896 fire but was back in operation within two months. Another town improvement was the establishment of a local normal school academy. After several disappointments, a Presbyterian-supported school was established in 1885 and continued in operation until ca. 1906. It was prominently located at the foot of Davis Avenue, where the Bacon Hotel was later built (Adams County *Union*, January 1, 1898).

^{iv} The county defeated a mid-1938 bond issue for a replacement courthouse. Two subsequent efforts similarly failed before a 1954 vote succeeded. The 1955 replacement cost considerably more given the absence of federal assistance. The new building was representative of its era, but recent façade remodelings have rendered it unrecognizable (*Tree Tenders*, March 1997, Vol. 6, No. 1, Adams County *Free Press*, April 28, May 5, June 6, July 7, August 11, 1938).

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Many of Corning's secret and fraternal organizations date from the 1880s. The first Grand Army of the Republic Post, established in 1882, failed, but a permanent replacement came in the form of Lewellyn Post #324 in late May 1884. The Women's Relief Corps organized in 1887. The Modern Woodmen of America Olive Camp #1266 was formed on November 27, 1889. The Order of the Eastern Star Emblem Chapter #64 organized in 1888, as did the Odd Fellows and their counterparts, the Rebekah Lodge. The Knights of Pythias King Arthur Lodge #173 was organized in May 1887. The Masons naturally were organized in the county much earlier, beginning in November 1858 with the first Quincy lodge. The Corning Instruction Lodge #273 dates from June 24, 1870 (*Adams County Union*, January 1, 1898).^v

One long enduring local institution was Corning's Iowa National Guard unit, known as "Company K." Originally part of Iowa's 3rd Infantry Regiment, the unit organized at the end of July, 1893, the result of Corning's hosting of the regimental encampment that same month. Capt. A. B. Shaw was the unit's first commander. The guard unit would see service in Council Bluff in mid-1895 in response to Kelly's army, which was marching to Washington in protest of unemployment in the mines and the Gold standard. The guard unit protected the downtown after the October 9, 1896 fire. They went to the Spanish American War, the Mexican border in 1915, saw active service in the 169th Infantry of the famous Rainbow Division during the "World War" and went to eastern Iowa during the cow war of 1931. Dwindling local support led to their disbanding on November 15, 1937, after repeated local efforts to bring the unit up to strength. The Corning Armory was constructed in 1910, being incorporated into the Park Hotel building (non-extant, 810 Davis) in the early 1920s to house the unit's activities and was the scene of other community events (*Adams County Republican*, January 1, 1898; *Adams County Free Press*, November 4, 11, 1910; November 11, 1937; Jacobsen, *Back at the Old Stand...*, p. 153).

By early 1888 Corning had a population of about 2,000 people, and could claim the following business firms: two banks, eight general stores, four grocery stores, three drug stores, three hardware stores, three barber shops, two clothing stores, two boot and shoe stores, three hotels, several restaurants, a flour and feed store, three livery stables, four meat markets, four blacksmith shops, two agricultural implement dealers, two elevators and three newspapers (the *Free Press*, the *Gazette* and the *Union*^{vi}), an opera house, steam mill, laundry, two fenced in parks (Central and Grove parks) and three stone quarries (*Adams County Free Press*, March 1, 1888).

The first frame courthouse burned on February 22, 1889. The fire loss forced the construction of a more substantial courthouse in 1890. Non-extant, being replaced in 1957, it was rated as one of the best in southwest Iowa (*Adams County Free Press*, June 2, 1938).

Icarians on Main Street, 1878-1890s:

The French Icarian Colony was one of America's more notable communal societal experiments. It was established in 1848 by the French philosopher Etienne Cabet and its last colony, located in Adams

^v The growing Catholic population in Corning organized the Knights of Columbus (1915) and the Catholic Daughters of America (1919) (*Centurama*, pp. 133-34).

^{vi} It is impressive that Corning could boast three papers of nearly equal circulation. Their early 1885 subscriptions levels were *Free Press*-738, *Union*-637, and *Gazette*-627. The first two named were then the "official" record papers (*Free Press*, January 8, 1885).

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County, to the east of Corning, flickered out of existence in 1898. As a large-scale landowner, the colony had a profound impact on the development of town and county. It contributed many entrepreneurs to Corning's commercial history.

The Icarian iris (fleur d' lis) symbol is incorporated into the ornamentation of the bay window of 706 Davis (the American Theater). This symbolic evocation of the Icarians is no accident. The commercial manifestations of the Icarian story played themselves out on the main streets of Corning just as the broader colony presence influenced Adams County history. This is no surprise given that the colony was replete with skilled artisans and members of energy and intellect. The Icarian commercial presence took several forms. The colony solicited general trade at its flour and saw mills as early as 1876, and there was always a direct marketing link between the agricultural products of the colony and the shipping point at Corning. The colony directly sponsored a number of Corning businesses beginning in 1878. Many of these subsequently turned into for-profit enterprises which were operated by their former colony managers after the demise of Icaria. Finally, many persons who were connected in some way with the Icarian movement, while not formal members, played important commercial roles in Corning (Gauthier, p.112).

Frame Stores Give Way to Permanent Brick Ones, 1894-96:

The first permanent downtown building boom time began in the early 1890's. Corning's merchants were from the start committed to building in brick and the ready availability of good locally produced brick was a local cost-saving advantage. By 1890 new storefronts were predominantly of brick construction save for lesser structures such as liveries and small shops. By mid-1895 the *Union* observed that "The frame business block is doomed in Corning. With so many good store rooms in the city as will be when the seven that are now in course of construction will be finished, the owners of frame buildings will find it impossible to rent them and will be necessitated to build better ones or sell to those who will. They cannot afford to pay taxes on rentless property" (Adams County *Union*, July 18, 1895).

The retail advantage of Corning, almost from the onset, was the ability of its merchants to develop a trade area that was always disproportionate in scale, given the size of the town and county. At its zenith the Corning trade area penetrated half way to Bedford, as far west as Highway 71, north as far as Massena, and eastward to Stringtown and Prescott. Creston shoppers commonly purchased their groceries in Corning. The county history of 1892 noted "The business portion of Corning is solidly and substantially built, her residences are a subject of just pride to her people...Corning draws her trade from a wide extent of country. Her merchants have earned an enviable reputation as business men and it is common talk among the people who come to Corning to buy goods that her merchants sell better goods for less money than those of any other city or town in that part of the state. Corning was rated "one of the best shipping points along the line of the C.B.& Q. R.R., shipping large quantities of hay, grain, hogs, cattle, butter, eggs, horses, etc." (Adams County, 1892, p. 12; (interview, Don Williams, April 28, 1999).

The return of the Sanborn Map Company field men is a good indication that enough downtown development had transpired to invalidate the previous 1886 map work. After the passage of just six years, the two-sheet base map was inadequate. The dominance of brick construction had yet to take place as of 1893, with just one two-story double storefront since 1886. Commercial uses flanked both sides of Central Park but the buildings were mostly small frames and all four of the towns empty buildings were

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to be found there. The major change was the extension of most of the store buildings that were located in the half-wide blocks, between the two main streets. The first retail buildings south of 6th Street had also appeared and Benton Street, on the whole, was considerably more commercialized (1903 Sanborn map).

The year 1894 was the jumping off point for frenzied store building. Despite the extensive 1896 fire losses, six buildings date from 1894-95. The *Union* predicted in late February 1894, that "Our carpenters and masons will all be employed this spring," and just two weeks later noted "the prospect for building in Corning and Adams County is as good as for any spring in our history." Total construction reached an impressive \$100,000, of which \$40,000 was for residential improvements (Adams County *Union*, December 28, 1893; January 11, February 22, March 1, August 9, 1894; January 3, 1895; *Agricultural Annual Year Book*, 1894, p. 306).

The national financial panic of the early 1890s was somewhat kind to Corning and the 1893 Sanborn map enumerated just four vacant storefronts. In mid-1894 the *Union* observed, "Corning has already had a very remarkable year's development, considering the weather and administration, but the prospect is good for as much more before the season is over." At the beginning of 1895, the same source reported, "The prospective improvements for this season are already nearly as flattering as those of last year. Corning is the best trading city in Southwest Iowa and her educational and social advantages are unsurpassed" (Adams County *Union*, July 19, August 2, 1894; January 17, 31, 1895).

This confidence was all the stronger two months later. The construction of several brick blocks was by this time a certainty and it was said "the electric current of activity has been turned on in Corning for 1895, and the fires of enterprise and determination kindled into a glowing flame." This accomplishment was achieved despite "imaginary hard times" which kept nearby sister cities from doing the same. It was advised "they would do well to lift their heads, step out into the sunlight of confidence and aggressiveness and take on some of the energy which characterizes the movements of our citizens." Traveling salesmen collectively reported "nowhere [have they] found better trade conditions existing than can be seen in the towns of Adams County." The county's success, building on that of 1894, was "traced to [the] high degree of intelligence and irresistible enterprise" of the local citizenry" (Adams County *Union*, March 14, 1895).

What was described as "a new departure" was that of stone-paved street crossing. The *Union* termed it "the best innovation that has been undertaken by the City in years." The street crossing locations were laid down first at Davis Avenue and 7th Street, and a year later at Davis Avenue and 8th Street. The last one was a privately funded building effort (Adams County *Union*, August 30, 1894, August 29, 1895).

The Ladies of the Village Improvement Association incorporated on July 7, 1896, being a by-product of the Corning Women's Club. The first free library was an early accomplishment. The first subscription telephone service was organized at this same time, with 40 subscribers (Adams County *Free Press*, July 23, 1896; Adams County *Union*, January 1, 1898).

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The Great Corning Fire of October 9, 1896:

If any singular event left its mark on Corning's downtown, it surely was the disastrous fire of October 9, 1896. The fire eliminated many of the newly constructed brick blocks as well many other buildings and structures. The replacement buildings survive along the east side (700s, 800s blocks) of Davis Avenue as a distinct grouping and these, with their fairly uniform styles and brick composition, attest to the scale of the disaster. At the same time, the west side of Davis, north of 7th Street, which escaped destruction, includes many of the new commercial buildings which were built between 1894 and 1896. The fire further encouraged the subsequent northward expansion of the business district towards the courthouse and around both sides of Central Park, and it greatly altered individual business partnerships, locations and fortunes. The fire greatly encouraged the trend of brick commercial construction and fostered greater attention to fireproofing store buildings and the downtown as a whole. This disaster occurred despite the fact that the great majority of victim buildings were of supposedly more fireproof brick construction.

The *Free Press* reported, "This is the greatest fire our town has ever had. The destruction of property is fearful to contemplate. Prosperous merchants have been utterly ruined; and the city will not recover from its effects for years to come. For a time it seemed as though the major portion of the entire city was doomed. Men, women and children worked nobly in their efforts to save what they could before the business houses were burned" (Adams County *Free Press*, October 9, 1896).

It took just two hours for the fire to consume 23 store buildings. Every building on the block bordered by 7th and 8th streets, and Davis and Adams avenues, was destroyed. The fire spread to the block north of 8th and destroyed all but one building on the Davis Avenue front, and the Goodale tenement house located on the southeast quarter of the block.

The Response to the Disaster, Corning Rebuilds, 1896-1902:

Like the proverbial Phoenix, Corning's merchants transformed the fiery disaster into an opportunity for advancement. The lost buildings were simply replicated uniformly in brick on the pre-existing parcels by the same owners and largely for the same burned-out tenants. Still the end result was a solid block and a half of new bricks, more modern in every respect. These new edifices reflected a change in the downtown business arrangement. The blocks north of 7th Street were all the more "the place to do business" and the upper end of the east side of Davis now caught up with and by-passed its long-dominant west side counterpart. Curiously the local banks abandoned the east side of Davis Avenue altogether, although 7th Street remained the preferred bank location. This final re-construction effort resulted in the building of the combination Opera House and City Hall on the northeast corner of 8th and Davis in 1902-03.

Plans to replace the more substantial bricks were announced. A. M. Beymer contracted with contractor A. H. Chafee to build a two-story block and had a five-year long tenant lease with C. F. Andrews, clothing merchant. Beymer's edifice (extant, 700 Davis) would serve as a prominent "bookend" for the east side of Davis, later joined by the Turner's Block at the north end of the block.

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Fourteen brick stores, an even mix of single and two-story buildings, completely infilled a block and a half of the east side of Davis Avenue north of 7th Street. The major replacement blocks were A. M. Beymers (700 Davis Avenue) and the new Turner Store (724-26 Davis Avenue). The Masons occupied their new hall in the Turner building in early 1897, and would use the hall until 1910. Other new buildings from this period were 525, 530, 601-03 and 609 Davis Avenue (*Adams County Union*, November 12, 1896; January 1, 1898).

The city council voted on March 2 to adopt the Philadelphia System of numbering properties. Each block was to comprise 100 numbers with an assigned number for every 22 feet in commercial areas and every 66 feet in residential ones. Even numbers were on the north and east sides of streets, odd ones on the south and west sides. The system took hold only in the downtown. In its final form, street numbers began at the south and east town lines (*City Council Minutes, Record Book #3, pp. 58-60*).

The newspapers of the 1890s are filled with references to departing farm families, lured westward by cheaper farmland. Gold fever struck in late 1898, this time in the Black Hills area of South Dakota. Two notable Corning merchants decamped to that point, C. L. Wisheart and Ben Ivey, the latter at least intended to combine mining and mercantile efforts out west (*Adams County Union-Republican*, December 8, 22, 1898).

Just one new downtown building, 713 Davis, is attributed to the year 1899. One interesting "modern improvement" of that same year was the installation of a patterned steel ceiling in the Beymer block (700 Davis Avenue) (*Adams County Free Press*, March 23, 1899).

The downtown was full and there were no acceptable locations even for a machine shop. W. W. Miller, a Carbon shop owner came to town seeking a new location and went home unable to find a suitable one (*Adams County Free Press*, March 30, 1899).

The next Sanborn map, prepared in February 1899 nicely presents the rebuilt and much improved Corning downtown. The most apparent transformation was along the east side of Davis, north of the Hotel Bacon, and the west side north of 7th Street. The clean, crisp lines of brick store after brick store fill now filled these blocks without exception. South of 6th Street, Davis Avenue remained largely undeveloped. The Windsor House (pre-1886, non-extant) stood alone on the east side of that street, with an empty lot to the north, and there are several vacant lots across the street to the west. The middle reaches of both sides of the 700's block of Davis Avenue continued to be filled with single-story brick storefronts. South of the park on the south side of 8th Street, there now stood a uniform block of two-story brick buildings. Once again, the map makers had found it necessary to return to Corning after the passage of just six years' time (1899 Sanborn map).

The prominent burned out corner at 8th Street and Davis Avenue, still buried in fire debris, was finally cleared away. In March 1902 voters passed a bond issue to build a new city hall (406 8th Street) and Clarinda, Iowa, architect W. W. Welch prepared the plan. The new opera house was finished by 1903 and the City Council authorized the Opera House Company to also stage outside entertainments using a portable stage. The completion of the opera house, as well as new store buildings located at 620 and 622 Davis Avenue, brought to a close an era of downtown building up that had begun in 1894 (*City Council Minutes, Vol. 3, p. 190, Vol. 4, pp. 3, 6, 9, 10, 11, 101*).

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Corning truly came of age on February 5, 1903 when it was classified as a city of the second class. The first telephone franchise was negotiated that same year. Official street grades were established and the city Marshall was given the power to demolish new buildings that failed to abide by the new building code. A reserved open market place was established along the east half of Benton Avenue, between 5th and 6th Streets.

James F. Bryan, of the *Creston Advertiser-Gazette* penned a praiseful series of short articles about Corning in the fall of 1904 under the title "A Corning Write Up." The *Union-Republican* was pleased to reprint them and the following excerpts come from Bryan's piece. He first compared the city to Rome and its seven hills:

Adams county, does not rule; now-a-days, that is not the province of cities and towns, but nestled among the hills along the Nodaway, overlooking one of the most fertile and picturesque valleys in the corn belt, this pretty town is a center of commerce, education and politics. Her influence permeates every part of the county and even extends into other counties with which the people of this community have to do, socially, commercially and politically.

Corning is a beautiful and very prosperous county seat town of some thing more than two thousand souls. No more commanding location could have been selected for a town. The fathers who founded the place had an eye for the beautiful. Like Rome, Corning sits upon and among the hills. Not barren bluffs, but gently sloping and productive hills, from which one gets a fine glimpse into the broad and fertile valley of the Nodaway lying to the east and south, a valley noted for its productiveness, for well cultivated acres as the reward to the industrious husbandry who people the broad acres lying on either side of this Iowa stream...

The city of Corning has several distinguished features, chief among them being education and literature. No town of 2500 people gives more attention and consideration to this subject than does Corning. It is a community of churches, schools and books; a town where literary societies flourish because of their influence for good; a town where schools are among the first in importance; where churches and religious organizations are maintained because of a desire upon the part of the people to have a God loving citizenship, and because of the fact that the best and most useful civilization is built up under the shadows of such institutions. Other cities may boast of commerce, of manufactures of wealth, but Corning can rise above all of these and lay claims to prominence and usefulness because of a high degree of culture and religious zeal...

The town has a commercial side as well. It is the trading point for a large territory, a rich and productive section, where farmers are well to do, prosperous, contented and happy. The volume of retail trade in this town is exceptionally heavy. Farmers come from a dozen to twenty miles for the purpose of buying goods. This heavy trade creates a demand for modern up to date business houses. And the demand is supplied. No town of equal size can show better stores more enterprising merchants, or can outdo Corning

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on prices. In this, as in other things, Corning ranks high. The city has an excellent water system, a good lighting plant and other conveniences. Taxes are proportionately reasonable and public improvements are kept abreast of the times. The past year has been rather a tough time for this town owing to a bank failure during the past winter and a hail storm which swept over the county last summer destroying crops to a strip of territory several miles wide. But the town has two good, strong banks, well managed, and the crop prospect is excellent, so that the town and county are rapidly recovering and ere long all traces of those misfortunes will have been almost entirely obliterated. The town and county are both wealthy and no serious consequences will follow the unfortunate circumstances of the past twelve months (*Adams County Union-Republican*, August 3, 1904).

More Downtown Building, 1905-1910:

The setbacks that Bryan described likely account for the lack of new downtown building during 1904. The two-story brick building at 820 Davis Avenue dates to 1905 and represents another less intensive period of commercial redevelopment in Corning. The county continued to lose residents and the *Free Press* noted "a decided decrease in the population, especially in the townships where there is no incorporated towns, and many of the towns also show a decrease." Corning had lost 225 residents between 1900 and 1905. The Corning State Savings Bank failed in early 1905 as did the private electric company (*Adams County Free Press*, February 9, July 29, 1905; April 22, August 26, 1905; *Adams County Union-Republican*, November 2, 1904; September 6, 1905).

The expansion of the downtown towards the courthouse continued. The law and abstract firm of Stanley & Stanley occupied a remodeled storefront at 816 Davis. They added a brick vault to the rear of the building to protect their records. The *Free Press* noted that "while the building is away from the business part of town, it is very close to the courthouse where their business is mostly transacted" (*Adams County Free Press*, November 24, 1906).

In 1908 Corning's largest and finest store building, James W. Biggar's Department Store (625-27 Davis Avenue) opened for business on the corner of Davis Avenue and 7th Street. It was "practically a three story building" because the basement area was also a sales room with a nine foot high ceiling. There was a 20 foot by 40 foot mezzanine level and the stairs led to the mezzanine and then to the second floor. The exterior was veneered with a distinctive dark brown face brick. The *Free Press* reported "The building is modern in every respect and is one of the nicest store rooms in the state the proprietors having visited many of the large cities and took the best plans that could be found, which together with his own ideas has made a model storeroom." This development placed the largest store in town on the same intersection as the town's banks (*Adams County Free Press*, March 9, June 8, 1907; March 21, April 4, 1908).

Corning had very few houses available for rent in 1907. Another positive sign was the probable promotion of the Corning post office to second class status by 1908-09. It generated \$7,800 in revenue during 1907, just shy of the necessary \$8,000 to qualify for a second class service. Once \$10,000 annual revenue was achieved, the city would qualify for its own federal building. Very few towns the size of Corning handled so much mail. The Okey Vernon Bank was chartered as a national bank in early June.

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The Farmers National Bank had similarly graduated to this status in February 1906. The local paper carefully noted the two charter certification numbers and deduced that nationally 625 banks had become national banks, a sure sign of national recovery, and Corning had two of those banks. Not to be left out, the First National Bank of Corning doubled its capitalization to \$100,000 early in 1908, having recently been designated a U.S. depository bank. It was said that "there are but few banks in towns the size of Corning with a capital of \$100,000, and we are pleased to note the increase in business and the demand for the change" (Adams County *Free Press*, May 30, August 3, December 2, 1907; April 11, June 8, September 19, 1908).

As noted all three of these banks were clustered near the intersection of Davis Avenue and 7th Street as of 1907. The First National was at 701 Davis, the Farmer's National was at 707 Davis (non-extant, now the Okey-Vernon drive-through), and the Okey Vernon Bank was at 626 Davis. The First National was actively planning the construction of a replacement building at 605-607 Davis between May and July, 1908. The *Free Press* encouraged the plan, noting "It would add greatly to the appearance of that part of town and would show great enterprise on the part of the bank." The plans for a substantial two-story brick building never materialized in the face of an unreliable national economy (Adams County *Free Press*, May 30, July 25, 1908).

Central Park gained what might have been its first bandstand in mid-1908. The Corning Band was formed in response and began the tradition of an open air park concert (Adams County *Free Press*, May 16, June 13, 20, 1908).

The year 1908 was a presidential election year and Corning enjoyed political visits by William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic candidate, and Eugene Debs, the Socialist candidate. Bryan's visit was somewhat the more spectacular because the enthusiastic crowd of 800-1,200 constructed a large bonfire south of the tracks. Bryan's train was longer than expected and the fire threatened to burn the rearmost cars so the stopover was abbreviated for the safety of the candidate and the train. Deb's visit in mid-September came with just three hours warning but he still drew a crowd of 250 to the depot. Both occasions saw the turning out of the new town band (Adams County *Free Press*, August 1, September 12, 1908).

A Quieter Interlude, 1910-23:

Six downtown buildings date to the years 1910-1914, and four more buildings date to 1919. In 1910 the First National Bank abandoned its plan to build a new bank at 605-09 Davis Avenue, and instead built single-story commercial fronts (605-07, 609, 613 Davis Avenue). Just one was built from 1920 through 1924. These figures generally follow national building trends, save for the lack of construction in 1915-16, years which predated the World War I. The flurry of 1919 building is worth further investigation because it followed the war, but these were all single-story gas or produce stations or sales barns. Little construction would have taken place 1920-24 because of high building costs. This lack of large-scale construction activity also indicates that the downtown was sufficiently built up and local commercial needs were met. Absent a major loss of buildings, this was to be expected. Most of the older frame buildings had long ago been replaced and most construction took place around the edges of the downtown proper, where service oriented businesses made a less intensive use of the land. In Corning downtown expansion was focused along the numbered side streets and was directed to the west

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of Benton Avenue at this time. Much was accomplished during these years in the upgrading of municipal infrastructure and many changes were made to the downtown buildings, both inside and out (Adams County *Free Press*, May 30, July 25, 1908; April 2, 1910).

The years 1911-13 were important because it was during that time that brick paving finally brought Davis Avenue and most of the major city streets out of the mud. The brick laying started at depot and proceeded north to 8th (*A Brief History of Corning and Adams County*, 1957, p. 90).

The year 1911 was also termed the year in which "something was doin [sic]." The *Free Press* reported at year's end that the year had witnessed "an unusually large amount" of building and improvement and "already there is more building in prospect than there has been in years." The city now boasted 24-hour electrical service and 25 five-globe electrolier lights were in place in the downtown. Corning won a spot along the newly designated highway, the Blue Grass River to River Road (Adams County *Free Press*, September 30, 1911).

The paving expanded over the next two years to complete the business district, including the Benton Avenue, and expanded into the residential neighborhoods. Recall that the major downtown streets were 100 feet in width, the cross streets 66 feet. The paving was just 40 feet in width so substantial unpaved parkings remained. The Biggar store and garage owner E. E. Lehnen "attract[ed] a great deal of attention and favorable comment" when they paved approaches between their businesses and the pavement south of 7th Street on Benton Avenue. Al Downing and the First National Bank, owners of the two northern corners, now considered paving their respective sides of Benton Avenue. As construction costs increased, the *Free Press* encouraged the merchants, advising that they could save money by acting now (Adams County *Free Press*, June 28, 1913).

New suspended electric streetlights were hung downtown and new electroliers lined both sides of Davis Avenue. Single larger upper lights burned all night and the clustered lower smaller lights went off at midnight. The Lyric Theatre, precursor of the American, opened for business at its present site, 704 Davis, in mid-April (Adams County *Free Press*, April 19, June 7, 28, August 16, September 13, October 4, 1913).

A number of lesser buildings were constructed in 1919 immediately following the war, these being the earliest local filling stations and other minor structures. Swift & Company built a tile produce station storefront at 607 7th Street and the Collins Oil Company built the city's second filling station at 507 6th Street (non-extant). A new 200-foot long hitching rack was built along both sides of Benton Avenue between 7th and 8th streets. Additional racks were located at 6th Street and Benton Avenue. The back street was the long-term parking lot for "main street" (Davis Avenue) (Adams County *Free Press*, April 5, May 17, 24, August 2, 18, December 30, 1919).

A severe drought killed off the local creamery trade as farmers were forced to reduce their dairy herds. The lack of milk closed the facility in mid-September. By mid-December a prolonged strike-driven coal shortage was crippling the entire state. The railroad administration threatened to halt coal shipments given the report that coal usage in the city was "running wide open. A local committee was appointed to set guidelines to reduce coal consumption and J. H. Gillett was appointed "Coal Commissioner." His responsibilities included controlling the county's coal production. The committee

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enacted amazingly strict business guidelines that went into effect December 10. Churches were reduced to a single weekly services and the armory, all theaters, picture shows, billiard halls, lodges, clubs, the opera house and "other places of amusement" were all shut down. Restaurants could only sell regular meals. Garages had to reduce heat overnight to merely prevent damage to automobiles due to freezing. All streetlights and electric advertisements were shut down. The coal committee went door to door to homes and businesses to inventory the current coal supply and found a fair supply to be on hand. The strikes had been settled but it would be several weeks before normalcy would return. Adams County and Corning were greatly helped by the Carbon and Nodaway coal mine supplies. The harsh winter did put an end to the ice famine (Adams County *Free Press*, September 13, December 3, 13, 1919).

A second flurry of street paving was concluded by 1921. This work included Benton Avenue (the "back street") from 6th to 10th streets. All of the downtown alleys were also paved, as were the cross streets (Official Map of Corning...1912).

The annual "Turkey Day" celebration dates from 1925 and was held just before Thanksgiving each year. Live birds were tossed from a high vantage point and the public scrambled for a free bird. Merchants offered special sales in conjunction with the bird tossing. The Commercial Club was the sponsor. By 1939 the tossing point was the Free Press/Opera House corner (800 Davis) (*Free Press*, November 13, 1930; November 16, 1939).

Two new buildings were constructed in 1929-30. The building at 521 Davis (extant) was the first of a number of fireproof buildings that would be built on lower Davis Avenue, or "Bottle Row."

As specialized filling station buildings appeared in Corning, a pattern quickly developed with the half-dozen downtown stations clustering mostly along 6th Street or Highway 34, and also on or south of the intersection of that route with Highway 148 (Quincy Street) immediately east. This filling station corridor, extending from the Highway 148 railroad viaduct north and west to Nodaway Street along 6th, was soon christened "Gasoline Alley." A downtown tourist camp was established immediately south of Highway 34, at 6th and Nodaway and a number of auto garages also gravitated to sites along 6th Street.

Corning lost another bank in 1916, this being the Farmer's National Bank, the successor to the failed Corning State Saving's Bank. By 1929 just two banks survived downtown. The Okey-Vernon bank had replaced the First National at 701 Davis and J. J. Hogan's private bank, established in 1922, was at 700 Davis. Hogan's bank failed in October 1930 leaving the town with just one bank.

Downtown Land Ownership:

In most towns it seems that a few individuals end up owning considerable amounts of land. Downtown property ownership is usually more visible or obvious. It is frequently the case that these land empires are not located on "Main Street" but occur in the outlying portions of the downtown. Two "land magnates," John Anderson and O. W. Williams, played a leading role in this process in Corning. These retailers worked in the areas of liveries, produce and later autos (Anderson) and gravestone production (Williams). Although peripheral to the big downtown retailers, they quietly bought up virtually all of the land along the west side of Benton Avenue, between 6th and 8th streets. Williams at least bought entire quarter blocks at a time and acquired the southwest and northwest quarter blocks at 7th

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and Benton. Anderson had the northwest quarter block at Benton Avenue and 6th Street, the northeast quarter block at 7th and Nodaway (the future post office site) and the southeast quarter block at 8th and Nodaway. Both men were substantial builders. Anderson built the Red Front Livery (non-extant, 8th Street west of 725 Benton), the Lone Eagle Gas Station (non-extant, Nodaway and 8th, north of the post office), a phone company building (he ran the company, non-extant, 8th and Nodaway), and a number of auto garages. Willaims built three produce station buildings in 1919, two of which survive (605 7th Street and 602 8th Street) (interview, Don Williams, April 28, 1999).

Post-Depression Construction, 1931-1941:

The general perception of the Great Depression is that it slammed down nationally on all of the country immediately following the October 1929 stock market crash. In reality, the process of economic deterioration was more gradual and to some extent it took several more years for the Midwest to be profoundly affected. During 1930 Corning was busily building its new library, and Standard Oil built a super service station on the 6th Street on the former site of Wadham's lumber yard (not-extant). McClelland Drugs sported the town's first neon sign (it read "Drugs"). Corning resident Dan Turner was elected governor. The town was first served by buses. Highway 34 was paved across the county. The American Theater offered the first area sound films and Davis Avenue was nightly crowded with out-of-county cars. The *Free Press* observed that "It [the movie theater] used to be [supported by] a Corning and vicinity public but now he [Kuhl the manager for the past four years] is nightly greeted by the old public and large parties from Atlantic, Creston, Red Oak, Villisca, Clarinda, Massena and many other towns within driving distance" (Adams County *Free Press*, February 20, 27, April 17, May 13, September 18, 1930).

On the more ominous side, 1930 brought with it the beginning of the worst Midwest drought in American history. The Adams County Bank in Nodaway closed its doors in mid-October when its parent bank failed in Villisca. The Hogan State Bank folded just a few weeks later, on November 4. The notice of closure was simply discovered on the bank's front door and came as a "distinct surprise" although rumors had been circulating about its safety for several weeks. It reopened on November 14 for liquidation (Adams County *Free Press*, October 16, November 6, 13, 1930; March 3, 26, 1931).

The new Cities Service Oil Station opened for business in early May, in conjunction with the Green Gables Tourist Camp. The camp was east of Corning on Highway 34. The Myers Trucking Company introduced the first "semi" truck to Corning. The new truck was eight feet longer than any truck previously used by the company (Adams County *Free Press*, April 9, May 7, July 30, 1931).

These years witnessed the addition of at least six major downtown buildings as well as a new depot, the co-op creamery and the municipal power plant, and the new St. Patrick's Catholic Church (dedicated on November 19, 1931). All of these improvements were built either on the periphery of the downtown, along Benton Avenue or further west, or on the 500s block of Davis Avenue, as the more substantial business district gravitated southwards. To a great extent buildings like the power plant, county garage, and the new post office represented both the maturation of municipal services and infrastructure as well as the fast-growing role of the Federal government, although just the post office represented direct federal dollars. An unsuccessful effort was made to obtain a federal loan for the power plant (Adams County *Free Press*, November 19, 1931).

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The Adams County Cooperative Creamery Association was formed in late February 1931 by area farmers who sought to improve the cream market. Creameries were experiencing phenomenal success throughout the state and these Adams County sponsors recognized a sure thing when they saw it. They incorporated for a 20-year period using the "Danish Cooperative Plan." A site was purchased in early April (801-13 Benton Avenue, extant). The downtown site won out because it came with an abundant water supply. The creamery was built that same year and the public subscription of \$25,000 was fully paid off by August 1933 (Adams County *Free Press*, May 21, July 30, September 10, October 22, 1931; August 10, 1933).

The *Free Press* observed that the construction of a new railroad depot and the new creamery gave "the town an air of prosperity which is not consistent with the constant talk of depression which one hears on all sides at all times" (Adams County *Free Press*, March 3, June 2, 1932).

The Great Depression was in full force in the county by 1932-33. As early as mid-1931, the board of supervisors acted to lower rural farm assessments by \$300,000 and it was reported that the average farm had suffered an operating loss of \$850 that year. The first organized farmers foreclosure demonstration took place at the courthouse on January 18, 1933 with 600-700 angry but peaceful farmers present. By mid-April there were 100 county families on county relief and the county sought \$7,500 for their support. The first ten local young men departed in mid-May for Des Moines for Civilian Conservation Corps service. The First National Bank of Prestcott closed its doors to the public on February 2, 1933 when the Creston Iowa Savings Bank was closed. The two banks had no connection apart from sharing the same stockholders, but that was enough. It took some time to reorganize the bank. Then it was again Corning's turn and there was just one bank left. The *Free Press* accounts are contradictory. On March 9, the paper proudly noted that in the face of a national bank holiday (March 4), the Okey-Vernon bank was one of just a few state banks to remain open all day. Then on March 15, the same source reported that the bank had indeed closed for ten days beginning on March 4, finally reopening on March 14. Even then, depositors had to convince the bank personnel that their requested withdrawals were for "legitimate purposes" (and not for hoarding). Nearly all of the downtown businesses had reported a drop in the value of their trading with the loss of the sole bank and the newspaper admitted that "For perhaps the first time in history Corning has been without immediate banking facilities." The bank did reopen without restrictions however and weathered the national economic "storm" up to the present day. Just one downtown building dates to 1933, that being the two story brick at 818 Davis Avenue. The downtown merchants banded together to offer what was admittedly an "unusual" "Spring Bargain Week" from April 29 through May 6, 1933, to boost lagging trade (Adams County *Free Press*, June 11, 1931; January 26, February 9, March 9, 15, 16, April 13, 27, May 18, 1933).

The construction of the municipal power plant (501 Benton, extant) in 1935 was a major community accomplishment. The new plant, designed in the popular Moderne style, went into operation on October 24, 1935. Over time the publicly owned utility would save the community considerable money. Within just five years, four successive rate reductions were announced and the plant saved residents an estimated \$50,000. In the interim funds were available to construct a three-bay garage in matching style and brick in late 1936 and a new engine in 1937. The plant was of critical importance to the county as well given that the first Rural Electrification Authority lines were powered from this

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facility during the first months of 1936. The plant was authorized under the state's Simmer Law that allowed for initial bond issues and subsequent coverage of operational cost from plant revenues. The bond issue was \$160,000, a third of which was paid off by 1940. The major cause for increased power demand during these years was attributed to the growing use of electric stoves (*Adams County Free Press*, December 24, 1936; October 17, 1940).

The lower most block of Davis Avenue was considerably built up with more substantial business buildings during these years. 517 Davis Avenue was the first improvement, constructed in 1932. It was followed in June 1937 by 523-25 Davis Avenue, built by A. T. Wheeler & Son. 525 Davis Avenue housed the city's first Iowa liquor store. The new building infilled what had been a vacant lot. Two more buildings, the present day Napa building (516 Davis) and a minor garage (528 Davis Avenue) were built in 1937. All of these were single story tile buildings with brick veneer fronts, and all are extant (*Adams County Free Press*, June 17, September 16, 1937).

The awarding of a new federal building for Corning was announced in the late summer of 1937. The Corning project was unusual in that construction almost immediately followed the site purchase. The new building was dedicated on June 15, 1939. The basement provided offices for the Farm Bureau, Extension Service, Internal Revenue Service and army recruiting (*Adams County Free Press*, August 19, September 16, October 7, November 4, December 23, 1937; June 30, September 22, 1938, June 8, June 24, 1939).^{vii}

Most remarkably, the lobby Works Progress Administration mural design was selected and awarded within just months of the opening of the building. Artist Marian Gilmore (1909-1960) of Ottumwa, Iowa, was one of 48 selected designers out of 1,470 submissions that were evaluated by a panel of four artist jurors in a Washington, DC, competition. Her design was entitled "Concert in the Park" and featured a centered square-cut open bandstand surrounded by trees and people.

Miss Gilmore thinks it will not be one bit embarrassing to paint with an audience, but does wish the opening to the scaffold might be more nearly closed as she fears she may get absorbed in her work and step off.

(*Adams County Free Press*, August 29, 1940)

Gilmore's mural is historically significant for two reasons. First it has been highly rated for its artistic quality and it is probably one of the finest public art works of its kind in the state. Second, the mural design process is representative of the federal art program's effort to produce art works which enhanced public buildings but which also were acceptable to the community in which they were installed. Artist Gilmore ran into the opposition of the local postmaster A. C. Peterson because the bandstand didn't resemble the one in Corning. Gilmore wanted a more representative example but Peterson wanted Corning's bandstand. E. B. Rowan, head of the federal arts section, intervened with the artist when she advised him that the bandstand design was based on a structure in Hendricks, Iowa. He instructed her to use the Corning example. There is no indication that Corning's residents were unduly concerned about the design issue. It is curious that her original design, apparently from the 48 States competition,

^{vii} Don Williams recalls that the excavators struck a concrete public swimming pool that was used until the 1920s until the polio epidemic forced its closing (letter. Williams to Jacobsen. May 15, 1999).

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appeared in the *Free Press* on October 26, 1939. The original version was reprinted in March 1941 when the mural was installed. In the final version, the artist removed a small garden (which was in the Corning park) and a cannon and an obelisk which were not. She also removed background houses which strongly resembled those which front Central Park from the west. Gilmore's experience forms the core of Karal Marling's book, Wall-to-Wall America; A Cultural History of Post-Office Murals in the Great Depression. The central issue was a struggle between a sectional regionalism, represented by Grant Wood who demanded that the public had to be touched by the work, and a more generic regionalism which Gilmore endorsed, which employed more generic symbols and avoided using specific local models. The federal arts bureaucrats chose to conservatively avoid bad press and pushed the artists to give consideration to local situations. Gilmore wasn't an abstract elitist and she proved that by her willingness to spend three enjoyable weeks in Corning, attempting to directly paint her mural (Marling, pp. 86-105, 330-331).

The Corning mural depicts an ingathering of hometown folks, a dream of peace and harmony in the countryside. Gilmore did not insert a menacing tornado that her concertgoers must unite to resist, but she is aware, pictorially, of forces external to the grassy park, forces that the collective ethos alone keeps at bay. The Iowa sky is inky and threatening. The trees form a bulwark against realities that the radiant light of the bandstand cannot penetrate...

Karal Ann Marling, Wall-to-Wall America

Corning suffered \$18,000 in fire damages during 1937, the majority of that loss being attributed to two major downtown fires. The Kaiman Market (806 Davis Avenue, extant) was nearly destroyed in a massive March 20 fire with damages estimated at \$12-14,000. The three hour long fire damaged four buildings, including the armory, the Kaiman building, the Hawley building (804 Davis Avenue, extant), and the *Free Press* building (or former Opera House, 800-802 Davis Avenue, extant). The Villisca fire department came to the assistance of Corning. No buildings were destroyed but it is probable that 804 Davis required a new storefront. It was gutted internally, losing its main floor. The second major fire was the burning of the Ankeny Rexall Drug Store (709 Davis Avenue, extant) on August 10. The damages totaled \$7-8,000. Curiously Ankeny had been burned out in 1896 as well. His store was able to reopen in early December (Adams County *Free Press*, March 25, August 12, December 2, 1937).

The perceived threat of the chain store finally materialized in Corning during the years 1938-39. The Corning Supply Store, selling groceries and produce, opened for business in mid-September 1938 at 622 Davis Avenue (extant), three doors south of the old post office. It was one of a number of Hyde Service & Supply stores, which were primarily a Northern Missouri chain store. When a General Assembly joint committee held hearings on a proposed chain store tax in late February, 1939 the recommended annual punitive tax ranged from \$10 to \$500 per store, depending upon store size and other factors. A very stringent state law that restricted chain store competition had been invalidated by the U. S. Supreme Court in 1936 (Adams County *Free Press*, September 15, 1938; February 15, 1939; Beckman, pp. 252-53).

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Postwar Commercial Construction, 1945-1962:

Relatively few Corning downtown buildings postdate World War II and these are mostly found on the outer edges of the business district. The year 1945 brought the remodeling of the Okey-Vernon bank (701 Davis Avenue). The loss of the Bacon Hotel to fire in 1951 led to newer infill on the northeast corner of Davis Avenue and 6th Street (and that parcel is consequently outside of the district). The courthouse as noted dates to 1954-55 and the creamery additions (801 Benton) date to 1957-1959. The public library was expanded in 1964 (829 Benton Avenue). In 1974 the 714 Davis Avenue storefront infilled a vacated alleyway.

The return of World War II veterans set the stage for a power struggle between young activists and what was perceived as a comfortable conservative older generation of merchants and community leaders. The years 1945-1995 encompass the ascendancy of this new post-Depression and post-war generation. Their collective demand for change and activism reflected a national effort to take advantage of the prosperous postwar opportunities while still retaining the best qualities of community. In the eyes of some, the Corning "old guard" of pre-war retailers and merchants was a solid, very conservative force, one that was opposed to change or direct or even indirect competition in the downtown. This struggle was perhaps intensified by the absence of the major chain store retailers. Some blame this conservative clique with stifling the establishment of new local businesses, at least substantial ones, resulting in the outflow of local talent to other communities. It is also said that the local bank was cool to making business start-up loans, a key impediment. A survey of the new Corning businesses that were founded following World War II appears to support this claim. The new businesses represented completely new services or functions that typically experienced high turnover rates. Appliance sales and electrical repair, while not new, was rapidly changing after the war in response to increased consumer demand. Produce houses, freighting, bakeries, insurance, and auto servicing were peripheral sectors where opportunities could be found. At any rate, a great many new businesses were established beginning in 1944-45 as servicemen were being discharged.

Corning had community improvement organizations from its earliest years. Between the world wars the Corning Commercial Club bore the leading responsibility for community improvement. The returning veterans were frustrated that the club's chief annual event was a Thanksgiving turkey giveaway. Corning's Rotary Club was chartered in 1944, this being another reflection of changing times. The Lion's Club, with about 60 members, was composed principally of recently returned war veterans. The group missed an annual dues payment and was instructed by the national organization to disband or pay their dues. In true Corning fashion, they disbanded and directed their efforts into the newly organized Chamber. The new Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1949 (Adams County History, pp. 643, 655).^{viii}

Clothing sales was another key market where Corning was regionally dominant. Two department stores (Turner's, Biggar's) and Andrew's Clothing store enjoyed a broad regional trade. Corning also offered five new auto franchises, three farm implement dealerships and two major lumberyards and Corning was strong in each of these fields. A curious weakness was banking. Corning was down to a single bank, the Okey-Vernon Bank following the loss of the Hogan Bank in late 1930.

^{viii} It was retitled the Adams County Chamber of Commerce in 1963

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Corning also led the way in the creamery business. The Farmers Co-op Creamery was by this time the largest creamery operating in Iowa. A major part of its butter market was located in New York because the creamery produced kosher butter. The Co-Op creamery was but one of a number of agriculture related businesses, there being two major produce buying stations in operation.

Still absent from Corning were the national chain stores. Apparently, Corning was too small to attract them. The downtown continued to host regionally generated chain stores such as HyVee, which evolved from the original Supply Store, which had caused the chain store controversy before the war, and Places variety store, another regionally produced chain.

The locating of the National Farmers Organization (NFO) in Corning helped put the town on the "national map." The NFO dates its organization to 1955 and Dan Turner secured a Corning location by providing the fledgling farm union with rent-free quarters in 718-720 Davis Avenue (extant). The group brought farm leaders, including many from Wisconsin (the NFO was strongest in the nation's dairy areas). The organization flourished as a result of mid-1950s national organizing efforts under its president, Orin Lee Staley. The headquarters location expanded northward into 722 Davis Avenue and finally occupied all of 722-726 Davis Avenue. While the administrative payroll was vital to the town, the supportive secretarial positions were valued second incomes for many Corning families. The NFO leadership, recipients of a considerable legal case award, relocated to Ames in the early 1990s. They built their own headquarters and have subsequently struggled to maintain their organizational vitality in the face of the continuing decline of the family farm (Adams County History, p. 651; oral interview, Richard Cantieri).

The best of times in Corning came in the mid-1950s when "Main Street" was full of competing stores. The Centurama centennial celebration of 1957 was thought to be an exceptional experience, being reflective of the vitality of the community (oral histories). The loss of Biggar's Department Store in 1955 was followed by some major downtown realignment. Anthony's Department store replaced Biggar's and was burned out in 1959. Turner's Department Store then replaced Anthony's and the NFO filled in behind them. The economic center of the downtown shifted southward to 7th and Davis.

Women always played a key yet largely invisible role in conducting downtown businesses. Sometimes, it was the unexpected loss of a husband that required the surviving partner to step in, aided by older children. William Biggar died soon after finishing his splendid store and his family stepped in to continue the business. Mrs. Louise Lauvstad similarly ran Potter's Drug Store after her husband died in 1933. The community and Dr. Fred Binder in particular, helped her survive, and with time she relocated the business and put her own name on it. She was termed the "Dean of Corning business women" in her special "Meet Your Business Women" *Free Press* write-up. These women were active business partners. Mrs. Edna (Daggett) Hill worked for Dr. Binder as a nurse for 20 years, and then partnered with husband Lee Hill to provide income tax and credit bureau services. He died in 1953 and she continued the income tax service for four more years. Banker Thelma Heitsman was a valued partner in the Whitmore family Hedrick Savings Bank team and she was brought to Corning as a vice-president of the newly acquired Okey-Vernon bank. She was included in the first edition of Who's Who of American Women published in 1959 (*Adams County Free Press*, "Know Your Banker" series, *Free Press*, ca. 1960).

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Downtown decline inevitably followed during the 1960s and thereafter, this decline being driven by the loss of population and the retail market decline that that loss produced. The Bank of Brooks, a private bank, relocated to Corning in 1965. Beginning in the early 1970s, county and community leaders began to recruit industrial development and a 30-year era of aggressive and creative community redevelopment efforts was inaugurated. Every success was seemingly met with job losses, but the sum of jobs was slowly advanced. In the early 1990s the town committed to the Main Street Iowa program and many state and national awards were received. The creamery closed in 1965, largely due to the fact that area farmers were no longer maintaining dairy herds and had quickly abandoned milk production in the face of the changing farm economy (oral interview, Richard Cantieri, Joe Johnston).

An organized "fight-back" to reverse population decline and its attendant loss of jobs and consumer buying power began in 1973. The loss of Major Brands, a food processing firm with 100 local jobs, occurred in the early 1970s alerted community leaders to the state of crisis that was facing most of the smaller population Iowa counties. The emphasis for 20 years focused on industrial recruitment and the Blue Grass Industrial Park, a 75-acre tract of land located on the west edge of Corning was established by 1976-77. Speculative buildings were constructed (these being some of the first such building efforts in the state). Some 400 new jobs resulted from these efforts. Beginning in 1990 the Adams Community Economic Development Corporation (ACEDC) was serving as the umbrella organization for two initiatives, industrial recruitment and the revitalization of the Corning retail district. Corning was accepted as a participating Main Street Iowa community in 1990. ACEDC added housing needs to its agenda beginning in 1992. Hospital expansion and improvement, and the development of major recreational facilities have also been community priorities. Even as ground was regained, new job losses frustrated the efforts to move forward. Burcliff Industries, the first Blue Grass Park tenant, departed the county in 1995 taking 175 jobs with them. That same year the National Farmers Organization relocated to Ames, taking 300 jobs. Many of the latter were valued second income secretarial and clerical positions. While these fairly recent job losses were hard to swallow, they would have been devastating had the community failed to take aggressive action when it did. The success of the Main Street program, with its new jobs and businesses, has drawn national attention to Corning and Adams County (Celebrating Adams County, pp. 17-18, 25).

The continuing commercial vitality of Corning is reflected in its four banks, two of which are branch banks. The downtown retains a full spectrum of retail businesses, including two drug stores and two hardware stores.

District Architects:

Just a few commercial buildings have attributed architects. Out-of-town architects were invariably hired to design the city's school buildings and it was the same for many of the more significant commercial buildings. Local architects were more likely to be contractor-designers who transitioned into design work from their initial involvement in constructing buildings. The following architects who are known to have designed Corning downtown buildings are mainly non-residents:

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Anson, J. R. (Kansas City):

He remodeled the First National Bank building for the Okey-Vernon Bank in 1916 (Adams County *Union-Republican*, August 11, 1916).

Anthony, George W.

Corning boasted her own architect by the name of George W. Anthony. "Not every town the size of Corning can boast of an architect of its own" the *Union* noted. Council Bluff was the nearest regional city with an architect. Anthony had started as a mechanic and carpenter and "all the surrounding country have some fine buildings that are monuments of his handiwork." He was, by the end of 1895, advertising himself an architect as well. Anthony promised that his hands-on building and lumber experience made him an architect who could reduce construction costs. The *Union* encouraged home builders to use Anthony's service, and added "henceforth those contemplating erecting a fine edifice need not go to the extra expense of securing an architect from abroad, but may secure both an architect and a conservative contractor in the person of Mr. Anthony" (*Union*, December 26, 1895).^{ix}

Anthony was the designer of dozens of the largest residences in town. On his much-regretted departure, the *Free Press* noted, "he has built many of the best residences in Corning and vicinity." He was also a builder although he presumably combined design and contracting services on most of his jobs. He built the United Brethren Church (824 Davis) in 1894. He played a reduced role in the post-1896 fire rebuilding, being responsible for designing Mrs. Goodale's two-story frame store replacement and was the builder of the Hollister block (700 Davis, which he also designed prior to its fire loss) and 804 Davis. He designed the B. F. Ivey Block in 1897) (Adams County *Free Press*, May 28, 1896; April 22, September 23, 1897; May 4, 1899; February 8, 1902).

Chafee, A. H.:

One principal local builder, contractor, A. H. Chafee, is credited with almost all of the up building of Corning's downtown during the years 1874-1900. Chafee was by early 1896 was termed "townsmen and architect." He built the Beymer Block (700 Davis), the Hollister Block (702 Davis) and most notably, the Widener Block (723-29 Davis) (*Union-Republican*, January 25, 1900; Adams County *Free Press*, March 19, November 5, 1896).

Frevert, Ramsey, Drey and Kobes (West Des Moines):

This firm designed the library addition in the 1970s.

Searcy, A. A. (Turkio, Missouri):

He designed the Widener Block in 1895 (Adams County *Free Press*, February 7, 1895).

Voss, Henry (Omaha):

^{ix} In fact Anthony wasn't a real architect with his certificate of graduation until July, 1897, *Free Press*, July 21, 1897

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The massive destruction of half of the downtown drew this architect to town and he secured most of the commissions and also superintended their construction. He is directly attributed to designing the Hollister Block (700 Davis), displacing Anthony who had designed the burned block. An unnamed Omaha architect was consulted on the 1901 Opera House construction (800 Davis) and this was likely Voss as well (Adams County *Free Press*, May 28, October 22, 1896; January 21, 1897; October 5, 1901).

Welch, William W. (Clarinda):

Welch was born in Pennsylvania in 1859 and was living in Clarinda, Page County, Iowa, by the early 1880s. He moved to Nebraska 1890-93 but returned to Clarinda by early 1896. The 1900 and 1910 federal census records identify him as a contractor rather than an architect. Welch was responsible for designing and building the majority of the substantial business buildings in his hometown, including the public library. He also designed buildings in western Illinois and southwestern Iowa. He designed the Masonic Temple and two churches in Creston, Iowa. In Corning he designed and built the high school and the residence of Walter Newcomb, both in 1901-02. He designed the Opera House and the City Hall in the same time period (Federal Census, 1900, T623, R452, p. 220, 1910, T624, R417, p. 227; Adams County *Free Press*, May 25, June 15, 29, 1901; March 26, 1902; March 10, 1906; www.colonialwhitehouse.com).

Wetherell, Frank (Des Moines):

Wetherell designed the Rawson public library (829 Benton Avenue) in 1930 (Adams County *Free Press*, February 27, 1930).

Wever, Charles (aka Wever Engineering):

He designed the 1958 creamery addition, the first local application of pre-stressed concrete construction. He also designed the replacement for the burned First Christian Church in 1959 (Adams County *Free Press*, July 17, 1958; April 16, 1959).

District Builders:

Anthony, George W. (see architects):

Chafee, A. A. (see architects):

Church and Company (Kansas City, Missouri):

This firm built the post office (606 7th Street) in 1939.

McGaffin, Sam L.:

He built the main Creamery building (627 Benton) in 1930 and remodeled the new Turner's (724-26 Davis) in 1941.

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Niebo and Martin (Des Moines):

This firm built the library in 1930.

Shafer, C. A.:

He built the Ivey Block (713 Davis) in 1897.

Individual Building Histories:

Benton Avenue:

612 Benton Avenue: (ca. 1940, contributing)

This simple tile gable roof garage was used as a carwash in conjunction with the Phillips 66 service station to the south. It was built in conjunction with 225 Davis Avenue to the east.

701 Benton Avenue-Lyon's Feed Store: (pre-1893, non-contributing)

This early building long housed W. S. Lyon's Company & Son Flour and Feed Store and was called the "Lyon's Building." Now unrecognizable with its Bank of Brooks golden slipcover (1965-67) the bank drive-through utilizes a former entry that led to a livery yard on the north side of this building. This is one of just three private banks still operating in Iowa.

713 Benton Avenue-Machine Shop/Dr. Beemer's Veterinary: (ca. 1892, non-contributing)

By the 1920s the building housed a machine shop. Dr. M. R. Beemer, Veterinarian, was here ca. 1941-57. The building presently houses the owner's personal office.

715 Benton Avenue: (ca. 1918, non-contributing)

This building was moved to this site from Queen City sometime after 1907. The building has always housed dry cleaning firms

717 Benton Avenue: Armour Cream Station (ca. 1925, contributing)

This building housed a cream station (ca. 1930-44); Joe Vaughn's Radiator Service (1958-63); A the Corning Animal House (pet store, 1979); Bowman's Decorating Center (1983-1985); the Living Word Christian Center (1986+); Simply Country (crafts shop, 1993) (Adams County *Free Press*, August 28, 1930; February 24, 1944; September 25, 1958; January 3, 1963; March 22, 1979; June 30, 1983; July 11, August 15, 1985; August 21, 1986; July 1, 1993).

719 Benton Avenue: (ca. 1903, non-contributing)

This building is said to have been built ca. 1903 and but it appears on fire insurance maps beginning in 1886 and on through 1929 as a frame building. The building housed a tailor shop (1907); a

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dwelling (1929); tax service (1944-79); D. F. Hynnek's chiropractic clinic (1988-1993) (Adams County *Free Press*, February 24, 1944; February 14, 1946, January 11, 1979; May 5, 1988; May 13, 1993).

721 Benton Avenue: (ca. 1925, contributing)

The building housed Earl Johns' Dairy Bar (pre-1943-post-1950). The business sold dairy products in conjunction with the local creamery and also sold ice cream and other treats. By January 1948 Carl Riegel was operating a furniture repair business at the back of the building (1948-55). Clarence Bender's garage moved here in 1946. Bender was serving as the town mayor at the time. Furnished apartments were offered as early as 1946 and the upstairs remained occupied as late as 1994 (Adams County *Free Press*, July 22, 1943, January 28, April 15, 1948; October 12, 1950).

723 Benton Avenue: (pre-1899, non-contributing)

This building housed a wagon repository (1899); a carpentry shop (1907-29); Clarence Bender's garage (1933-44); Rich's Auto Service (1977 to present). A recent explosion destroyed the storefront and caused its reconstruction (Adams County *Free Press*, August 10, 1933; May 11, 1939; April 13, August 3, October 12, 1944; October 13, 1977).

725 Benton Avenue: Ruben Brothers Ford Agency and Garage: (1945, non-contributing)

Lonnie and Fred Ruben built their garage on the corner of 8th and Benton during the spring and summer of 1945, and occupied their new building at the end of February 1946. The building was virtually destroyed by fire on July 26, 1960 and it was rebuilt (Adams County *Free Press*, August 3, 1944; March 22, August 2, November 15, 1945; February 28, 1946; July 27, December 1, 1960).

801 Benton Avenue-Farmers Co-op Creamery: (1931, contributing)

The success of the creamery operation resulted in the expansion of the original building. In 1957 a power plant was added across the back of the parcel and in 1959 a two-story office and laboratory wing was built along 8th Street. The Nodaway Valley Foods was the initial partner tenant in the facility.

813 Benton Avenue-Farmers Cooperative Creamery: (1931, contributing)

The creamery is the district's best example of how Benton Avenue was the locale for non-retail commercial functions. The Dairy opened in the fall of 1931 and enjoyed a long-term success, surviving until 1970. It began operations on September 10, 1931. This successful creamery business flourished for nearly 40 years, closing in 1970, but it represents a rural commercial enterprise in Corning. The drought that began in 1934 hampered operations but after World War II the larger dairy conglomerates pulled out and opened a larger market to the co-op. The loss of area dairy herds finally closed down the business (*Free Press*, August 1, 1940; Adams County History, pp. 55-56).

819 Benton Avenue: (ca. 1910, contributing)

The Lee Hill family occupied this residence as early as 1933. Hill was a "night marshal" by 1928 and a Justice of the Peace during the World War II years. Dr. Dale W. Ireland, a dentist, relocated from the Okey Bank building to this location in early 1945 and operated his business there, presumably

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in a building that stood in front of the house. He served a number of terms on the city's school board and died while in that office in 1956. That is why the house sits so far back. Chuck and Katie Lenz lived here 1959-1961 when they operated Kaylen Lanes, Corning's bowling alley and was a competitive bowler himself. The non-extant front building housed the alley (Adams County *Free Press*, April 6, 1928; June 22, 1933; January 18, 1945; March 13, 1952; January 26, 1956; August 13, 1959; August 4, 1960).

821 Benton Avenue: (ca. 1915, contributing)

This residential property was occupied by the McLean family as late as late 1946. Thereafter it has been long used for home office purposes, as McClelland/Briles tax service and real estate (1950's-1985); [Jackie] McClelland/[Linda] England Tax Services (1985-present (Adams County *Free Press*, December 12, 1985).

829 Benton Avenue-Rawson Law Office/Corning Public Library: (1930, contributing)

Despite its large and quite modern rear addition, the Corning Public Library is historically significant because it, along with the railroad depot, the cooperative creamery, and the municipal power plant, represents Corning's struggle to survive and indeed to grow in the face of the Great Depression. The library occupied a former frame residence on the south half of this lot as of 1929. The new 1930 building, designed by Des Moines architect Frank Wetherell, and built by Frank Wetherell, also of Des Moines, retained portions of the Rawson Law Office (a corner brick building). The library then occupied the entire building. Land to the west was donated in the early 1970s and a modern library addition was constructed with architects Frevert, Ramsey, Drey and Kobes of West Des Moines as the designers. It was readdressed as 603 9th Street when that portion became the new entrance.

Davis Avenue

516 Davis Avenue/International Harvester: (1925-27, non-contributing)

This building housed International Harvester (ca. 1958-60); Cavett Auto Supply (ca. 1976-1985); P&M Automobile (1987); Napa (present tenant) (Adams County *Free Press*, May 20, 1976; November 19, 1987).

517-19 Davis Avenue: (1930, contributing)

This building was built by and first housed the [Pat J.] Ryan Implement Company. The building included five upstairs apartments and Pat Ryan and family occupied one of these. It was noted that Bottle Row had been greatly improved during the years prior to the construction of this building, and that this was a "fine addition" to it-so much so that Bottle Row should now be termed "uptown." Later tenants were Snyder's Garage (1937); Sickler & Keever Hardware; Harvey Jensen's auto sales and repair (1946) (Adams County *Free Press*, November 7, 1929; April 17, 1930; January 14, 1937; March 21, 1946; August 12, 1982).

521 Davis Avenue: (ca. 1925, contributing)

The building housed a welding shop (1929); Bill Parker's dry cleaning (pre-1948); Preston Dry Cleaners (1948-60) (Adams County *Free Press*, February 28, 1957; August 11, 1960).

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523 Davis Avenue/Wheeler Building/Bollman Modern Dairy and State Liquor Store: (1937, contributing)

A. T. Wheeler & Son (lumber yard owners) constructed this double storefront in mid-September 1937 to house the E. O. Bollman Modern Dairy and ice cream plant (south front) and the newly acquired Iowa State Liquor Store (north half). Later tenants were Oke's Dairy (to 1940); Bradford Cleaners (1940+); 4-Hour Coin Laundry (1965-present) (*Free Press*, September 16, 1937; September 26, 1940).

524-26 Davis Avenue/Ryan Implement Company: (1934, contributing)

Minie Johnson Biesmann built this building in 1934 to house the McCormick-Deering Company, a farm implements firm. Tenants in 524 Davis were the Adams County Farm Bureau (ca. 1958-62); Templeton Appliances (1976-post-1997), while 526 Davis housed the Westinghouse Appliance Store (1958) (Adams County *Free Press*, September 23, 1937; July 25, 1940; March 29, 1962; December 2, 1976; June 5, 1997).

525 Davis Avenue/O. R. Heaton's Block/William Ryan Building/Ryan Motor Garage: (1898, contributing)

Implement dealer Orange R. Heaton moved his business into his new brick block in early February 1898. Later occupants were the Ford Auto Dealership (as Ryan Motor Garage, 1919-ca. 1930s); the Cline Beer Parlor (1937); Ryan Motor Company (1940); the Ration Board and the Campbell and Tindall Garage (1945) (Adams County *Free Press*, February 10, 1898, August 18, 1906; June 17, 1937; February 1 1940; November 1, 1945; *Centurama Scrapbook*).

601-03 Davis Avenue-Hotel Madison/Madison Block: (1898, contributing)

This building raced for completion against another (non-extant) nearby block in 1898 and that competition represents the building up of this part of the downtown. The *Free Press* observed that "It is a matter of pride to our citizens to see these office structures going up in that portion of the city." Merchant A. R. Madison started this in mid-March 1898. The newspaper termed the Madison building "a decoration and ornament to our city as well as a good business block." Madison won the race, moving in to his finished block in early June 1898 (Adams County *Free Press*, March 21, April 7, 14, 28, May 5, June 2, 1898; *Republican*, March 17, 31, 1898).

The building occupants were the Madison Hotel (until 1903); the Victoria Hotel (to 1927); Dr. E. L. Gardiner's offices and apartments. Additional tenant firms at 601 Davis included Dimmler Wallpaper & Paint (1957); Lyle Reeves Jewelry and Photography (1992-1996; Davis Street Jewelry (1997) and Acme Computers (1998). Tenant firms in 603 Davis included D. E. Abbey Real Estate and Insurance (1951-57); Judy's Beautyrama (1966); Sun Spa Center (1984); Phillips Agency Insurance (1985); The Cottage Shop bakery (1985); and Nurses On Call (1995) (Adams County *Free Press*, March 2, November 4, 16, 1927; January 13, 1928).

605-07 Davis Avenue: (1910, contributing)

Early building tenants have not been identified. As of 1988 Patricia's Salon, Barber Stylist and Video Den occupied the three storefronts from south to north (Adams County *Free Press*, May 30, July 25, 1908; August 7, 1909; April 21, 1910).

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606 Davis Avenue-Bacon Hotel Coffee Shop: (ca. 1925, contributing)

Fire insurance maps show this building as extant, without rear additions, as of September 1929. The building was built as a café addition to the non-extant Hotel Bacon, directly south. By 1934 the business was catering to special events as the "Hotel Bacon Coffee Shop and Dining Room." The café was the first site where community senior meals were served, beginning in February 1974. State Farm Insurance was here 1974-80, and Jo's Outlaw Lounge has occupied the building since 1989 (Adams County *Free Press*, December 31, 1931; September 13, 1934; October 17, 1974; March 16, 1989; January 25, 1990).

608 Davis Avenue: (ca. 1955, contributing)

Brittian Standard Parts (1957-61) was the building tenant until September 1960, followed by the Western Light & Telephone Company. The company expended \$100,000 to install dial phone equipment. The work reflected the transformation of Corning and county phones from operator-assisted to individual dial-up phone use. A front business office was created and service began in the fall of 1961. H&R Block tax services was opened here in 1985 and remained as late as 1991, and was followed by the Retreat Lounge; Kay's Café (1997 to present) (Adams County *Free Press*, April 11, 1957; September 15, 1960; April 1, October 5, 1961; November 21, 1985).

609 Davis Avenue-First Federal Savings & Loan: (pre-1875, non-contributing)

This building is the oldest surviving brick storefront in the downtown. A photograph dated to that year depicted it as the only brick building on this street. The 1883 Sanborn Map shows the building extant. It housed a very early hotel (the "Farmer's House," ca. 1886-1916) and is of historical interest given that few of these early hotels survive. F. V. Schull's meat market occupied the north half of the storefront 1909-1912. As of 1961 Bickford's Dress Shop and Music Store and Dimmler Paint Store occupied the two storefronts. The storefronts were combined in 1975 and the Corning Title Company followed (1974-75). A branch of the Marion County Savings and Loan was here (1976-1990s) (Adams County *Free Press*, April 10, 1910; January 27, 1912).

613 Davis Avenue: (1910, contributing)

This was one of a number of single-story speculative building ventures made by the First National Bank in 1910 (*Free Press*, May 30, July 25, 1908; April 21, 1910).

More recent tenants were H. L. Hurt's bakery (until the end of 1943); Lester Hite's bakery; Mary Alice (Rodgers) Gauthier's abstract business(1970's); Sears Catalog Store (1982-93); Video Den (1996); Red Raider's Kitchen (1997); L. J.'s Kitchen (also 1997) (Adams County *Free Press*, December 30, 1943; January 9, 1975).

615 Davis Avenue: (pre-1886, contributing)

The current storefront just predates World War I. Retail tenants included the Morgan Implement Company (1944-1975); Cavett Auto Supply; Buffet Grille; Steffen's Stemwinder Buffet Grille (1979-93); the Three Squares A Day (1979-93); the Melting Pot (oak furniture and crafts store, 1996-98) (Adams County *Free Press*, February 11, 1960; November 7, 1974; January 9, 1975).

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616-18 Davis Avenue-A. F. Okey Block/George Lavelly Building: (1895, contributing)

A. F. Okey built this block to house his hardware business. The upstairs contained an opera house with 20-foot high ceilings. Valued at \$11,000, Okey's new block was the largest of a number of 1894 improvements that the *Union* described as "a genuine boom." Other original tenants were M. M. Parkinson, a federal revenue collector, and Byerly's Clarinda Cigar Factory; J. W. Bohan & Son and the post office (here until 1897). E. M. Orth's crockery store ("the Post Office Merchant") was here 1895. The post office was back at this address as of 1929, prior to the construction of the federal building in 1937 (Adams County *Union*, March 5, April 5, May 17, 24, June 14, September 13, 1894; June 13, October 3, 10, 17, 24, 1895; Adams County *Free Press*, January 24, February 28, 1895).

Later tenants were Harris' Store (pre-1909); E. M. Cain's clothing store (1909+); Dr. M. B. Latimer's dentist office (1910); Dr. Johnson (1910); the post office (pre-1929-1938); Thompson Electric Company (1940-65); Dr. J. C. Pennebacker (1940) and Kennedy Real Estate (1945) (Adams County *Free Press*, February 20, 1909; June 4, 1910).

617 Davis Avenue-Potter's Drug Store: (pre-1886, contributing)

The storefront on this building is likely Corning's earliest surviving front. The first building use was as a restaurant (1886); and a restaurant/bakery (1893-1907). P. E. Potter's Drug & Jewelry was run by the widow, Juliette Potter (1913-16), and then by John Lauvstad, whose widow, Louise Reichardt Lauvstad also kept the business going here (1933-42) and then until 1955 at another address. Later tenants were Carden's Bootery (1956-65); Drew's Shoe Den (1977); Rosser's Shoe Store (1983-86); the Emporium (1986-95); Pheasant Land Travel (1992), and Subway (1997 to present) (Adams County *Free Press*, March 1, 1916; July 22, 1943; August 22, 1955).

619 Davis Avenue: (ca. 1910, contributing)

Hilliard's Furniture and Funeral Parlor (1923-30) is the earliest known tenant firm. The company opened a furniture exchange on the second floor in 1926. Lyon's Furniture and Funeral Parlor (1950s) was the second tenant firm, followed by Turner Men's Store (1964-1996) and Natural Boutique (1997-98) (Adams County *Free Press*, April 16, 1926).

620 Davis Avenue: (ca. 1900, contributing)

This is very early frame storefront with a brick front and the 1900 date is based upon its façade date. Later tenants were Vern L. Ashenfelter's Shoe Repair (1945-1966+, his widow and son kept the business going after Vern died); Bowman Construction (1978-82); the First Commercial National Bank (1990) along with Taylor Made Travel. At that time "extensive remodeling gave the building a turn-of-the-century look" (Adams County *Free Press*, November 29, 1945; December 14, 1989; June 22, 1995).

622 Davis Avenue: Okey-Vernon Bank: Corning Supply Store/HyVee Grocery Store: (ca. 1900, contributing)

The Okey-Vernon private bank was established in 1900 and built this building. The next tenant, by 1929, was an unspecified store, then the Service and Supply renamed HyVee Grocery chain (ca. 1949-1959); Corning Gas Company (1962-59); an appliance and propane store (1962-66; Skelgas Company,

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(1976-96) (Adams County *Free Press*, February 8, 1900; September 15, 1938, February 15, 1939; Beckman, pp. 252-53).

624 Davis Avenue: (1890, non-contributing)

The first tenant firm was a hardware store (1890-1929+); followed by Jay's Pastime Lounge was here as of 1965. The Red Bull Lounge was displaced by the expansion northward of the Okey-Vernon Bank and relocated to this site in 1987, and still remains there. It opened in 1960 as a key club with 92 members (*Centurama Scrapbook*).

625 Davis Avenue: J. W. Biggar Block: (ca. 1915, contributing)

This double block (625-627 Davis Avenue) is one of the most significant in the district. This addition, that doubled the original (1908) store to the north was built for the J. W. Biggar Department Store (organized as Scott and Biggar in 1893). C. R. Anthony's store replaced it and was burned out in a February 1959 fire. Turner's Department store repaired the damage and relocated to this site from its 724-26 Davis Avenue. Turner's expanded with a number of regional branch stores, but finally closed in 2002 (Adams County *Free Press*, February 5, 1959; March 2, 9, 1907, April 4, 1908; January 5, March 9, June 29, 1939),

626 Davis Avenue-Andrews Building: (1929, contributing)

Iowa-Nebraska Light & Power Company occupied this property for a number of years. In 1939 the storefront was divided. Dr. O. E. Wilson, a dentist leased the rear area and a side door was added to the 7th Street side. Miss. Wilma Richard's "Richard Beauty Shoppe" leased the front space. Adams County Electric Co-Op was in this storefront as of 1965 and remains there today (*Free Press*, April 6, 1939).

627 Davis Avenue-J. W. Biggar Block: (1908, contributing)

This is Corning's largest store building. Expanded to 625 Davis (1915) it housed J. W. Biggar's Department Store until 1955. C. R. Anthony's store replaced it and was burned out in a February 1959 fire. Turner's Department store repaired the damage and relocated to this site from its 724-26 Davis Avenue. Turners expanded with a number of regional branch stores, but finally closed in 2002 (Adams County *Free Press*, February 5, 1959; March 2, 9, 1907, April 4, 1908; January 5, March 9, June 29, 1939).

700 Davis Avenue-Beymer Block/Andrew's Clothing/Hogan's Bank: (1898, contributing)

This replacement building was constructed by contractor A. A. Chaffee. The Andrews Clothing Store reoccupied the new building, as did contractor/architect George Anthony, possibly the designer of this building. A stamped steel ceiling was added in 1899 (Adams County *Union*, November 12, 19, 1896; Adams County *Free Press*, December 17, 1896; March 11, May 6, July 1, 1897; March 23, 1899).

Later tenant firms were Jones Real Estate (1905); E. M. Cain's Clothing Store (1905); J. H. Dunn (1911); J. J. Hogan's private state bank (1930, failed 1931); Chalmer's Café (1930); Cain's Clothing (1942); Corner Cafe (1965) (Adams County *Free Press*, July 1, 1911; August 7, November 6, 1930; July 9, 1931).

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701 Davis Avenue-Okey Vernon National Bank: (1957, contributing)

The core building dates to 1885 but the remodeled bank exterior dates to 1957. The Okey Vernon National Bank was established in 1900, and received its national charter in 1907. This building was occupied in 1915, replacing the First National Bank. The present building was completely remodeled and expanded northward to make room for a drive-through bank service. The bank was the first regional bank to be substantially remodeled after World War II (Adams County *Free Press*, April 25, August 1, 1884, April 25, 1908).

702 Davis Avenue-W. R. Hollister Block: (1898, contributing)

Contractor A. H. Chaffee built this replacement building following the 1896 fire and Omaha architect Henry Voss was the designer. Voss is said to have dominated the design work after the fire, and this is his first announced commission (Adams County *Union*, May 28, October 15, 22, November 12, 19, December 17, 1896; Adams County *Union*, October 29, 1896).

The first tenant firm was the furniture firm of J. L. Snavelly and Robert Hollister and Hollister's hardware store succeeded that firm. Knott and Hanson Insurance (1910); Boyd Roland Furniture and Undertaking (1910-46); Western Auto (1955) and Mack Hardware (1960) were later tenants (Adams County *Free Press*, July 1, 1895; November 5, 1959).

704 Davis Avenue-Jacob F. Lutz Building/Lyric Theater: (1897, contributing)

Tenant firms in this post-fire building were Christie & Van Sandt Restaurant and Bakery (1897); the Lyric Theater (Corning's first actual movie theater, 1913-ca. 1926); American Theater (1926-present) (Adams County *Union*, December 9, 1897; April 12, 1913; February 20, 1930; June 3, 17, 1937).

706 Davis Avenue-John Roland Building: (1898, contributing)

The Anthony Clothing Store moved into "elegant new quarters" in the Roland Building in early 1898, sharing quarters with shoemaker John Lendgren. Later tenant firms were the B. F. Shinn Drug Store (1906); the Dale Himby Restaurant (1930); Leach Hardware; Gambles Variety Store (1958-60) (Adams County *Republican*, January 13, May 30, September 1, 1898; November 3, December 1, 29, 1906; Adams County *Republican*, February 10, 1898).

708 Davis Avenue: (1898, contributing)

Later tenants in this post-fire building were a "Billiards & Carem" business (1907-08) (Adams County *Free Press*, May 30, 1908).

709 Davis Avenue: (1897, non-contributing)

It is very probable that this building was constructed by the druggists Ankeny and Carmichael. Later tenant firms were a stationery and jewelry firm (1899), a drugstore (1907); paint and drugs (1929). Eivin's Rexall Drug Store hosted the Corning Coffee Club in 1956 with 137 members (1956); Dunham Rexall Drugs (1963+). A substantial basement fire occurred in 1937 (Adams County *Free Press*, June 17, 1897; February 9, 1907; August 12, 1937).

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710 Davis Avenue-Potter's Drug/"F. C. Okey" Building/Lauvstad Drug: (1898, contributing)

Later tenants in this post-fire building were Magnusson Meats (to 1938); the A. S. Bradley Store (1938, new storefront); and Potter-Lauvstad Drugs (1943-1973). The City of Corning has owned the building since the 1980s and it has been used as a Chamber of Commerce and Main Street and economic development office (Adams County *Free Press*, September 1, 1938; Property Abstract, 710 Davis Avenue).

711 Davis Avenue-Dr. A. A. Rawson's Drug Store: (1897, contributing)

Dr. Rawson built this post-fire building to house the Harris & Westrope Hardware Store. A hardware store remained as of 1938. Western Auto was here as of 1965 (Adams County *Free Press*, May 14, 1895; May 13, June 10, 17, July 8, 29, October 14, 1897).

713 Davis Avenue-Ben F. Ivey Block: (1897, contributing)

Local architect G. W. Anthony designed this building and purchased Ivey's clothing business in 1898. The City Hall was upstairs (1898). Later tenant firms were Russell Hardware Store (1899); Vance's then Cumming's tin shop (1900-1966+) (Adams County *Republican*, November 11, 1897; Adams County *Union*, May 5, September 23, November 11, 1897; Adams County *Free Press*, December 8, 1898).

714 Davis Avenue: (1972, non-contributing)

This is a new commercial building that was made possible by the vacation of the alleyway. Its construction was associated with the increased space needs of the National Farmer's Organization, which used this building for computers and storage. The Print Shop was the next tenant firm.

715 Davis Avenue-McClelland Drug Store: (1880, contributing)

This is an early brick building and one possessed of an elaborate tin cornice. Sanborn maps show a frame clothing store here in 1886, with an upstairs hall. The same use continued as of 1893, with a drugstore being present by 1899 and thereafter. A warehouse occupied the back of the plan in 1899. Later tenant firms were Potter's Drug (new front, 1908); McClelland Drug Store (1930); McMahan's Drug Store (present tenant) (Adams County *Free Press*, April 11, 1908; March 13, 1909; May 13, 1930).

716 Davis Avenue-Thompson Building: (1898, non-contributing)

This building was built by Andy Thompson following the 1896 fire. This building is best remembered for housing the Candy Kitchen, an Italian-owned and operated confectionary. Many towns along the Burlington Route developed these ethnic Italian businesses as a result of the push by a Chicago-based equipment and supply company. First established by Paris Tome, the business was acquired by John and Elsie Cantieri and Larry Bulleri. The business became more of a restaurant in 1957 and it was the first Corning restaurant with air conditioning. The business closed in the late 1980s (Adams County *History*, pp. 149-50, 653).

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Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

718 Davis Avenue: (1897, contributing)

Sanborn maps place a boots and shoes firm here 1899-1929. The National Farmers Organization was first housed in 718-720 Davis in the mid-1950s before relocating to the Turner Block, 722-26 Davis in later years.

719-21 Davis Avenue-Wisheart-Ivey/Thompson Block/Davis Apartments: (1896, contributing)

Andy Thompson is the probable builder, partnering with Charles Wisheart and Ben Ivey. Sanborn maps depict this building in 1899, occupied by a gentlemen's furnishings store, and having an alley side fire escape. A dry goods firm (north) and jewelry store (south) were here in 1907. Later tenants were the Parker Jewelry, Freeborn Grocery Store, Orpha Carl Hat Shop, and Burkheimer Piano Company on the main floor, and Dr. J. H. Wallahan, Linn Real Estate and Haight Studio on the second floor (all 1919); Conway Brothers Furniture Store (1919+); a photo shop was upstairs as of 1929; Davis Apartments (1944+); Houck Plumbing and Heating (1950-63); Rittle's Dry Goods (1959) (Adams County *Union*, January 24, 1895, Adams County *Free Press*, March 7, 1895; October 25, 1919; December 14, 1950; Adams County *Union*, December 27, 1894; Property abstract).

720 Davis Avenue: (1898, contributing)

This post-fire building housed either Snavely's furniture store or Cole and Peregrine's drugstore. The fire insurance maps place the post office here 1899-1907. The newly organized National Farmers Organization occupied 718-720 beginning in the mid-1950s (Adams County *Free Press*, May 6, June 3, 1897; January 20, 1944; November 5, 1959).

722 Davis Avenue-Al Downing's Grocery: (1898, contributing)

Al Downing occupied this post-fire building (1897). Sanborn maps place a dry goods store in this building, with clubrooms upstairs, as of 1899. Queens ware and groceries were sold there in 1907. A telephone exchange was there in 1929. Later tenant firms were P. H. Bevins' Shoe Store (1898); Fred W. Hill (1898); Roy Hilliard's Furniture and Undertaking business (late 1920s and early 1930s). A transom glass with the name "Hilliard's" was recently discovered and salvaged from the building (Adams County *Union*, October 15, 1896; Adams County *Free Press*, March 17, 18, April 1, 15, July 1, August 26, October 21, 28, November 4, 18, 25, December 3, 1897; (Adams County *Republican*, October 20, 1898).

723-29 Davis Avenue, 501-03 8th Street-Zachias T. Widener Building: (1896, contributing)

This is a prominent and notable district commercial block. Its builder, Zachias T. Widener was a dry goods merchant in Corning, as early as 1880. The building architect was A. A. Searcy of Tarkio, Missouri. The new edifice was described as being "one of the most elegant and tastily appointed business houses in Southwestern Iowa." Sanborn maps locate a dry goods firm in this building as of early 1899, the same use continuing through 1907. By 1929 offices and an upstairs lodge hall are noted (Property abstract, 719-21 Davis Avenue; Adams County *Free Press*, February 7, 1895; April 30, November 26, December 24, 1896; Adams County *Union*, October 15, 1896).

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Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

724-726 Davis Avenue-Austin B. Turner Block: (1898, contributing)

Austin B. Turner Sr.'s general merchandise firm occupied this site in 1869 and he lost his 1881 brick block to the 1896 fire. He died in 1928 and the firm was run by sons Austin B. Turner, Jr., Daniel W. Turner, and grandson Francis A. Turner under the name "Turner Brothers." The firm relocated to 625-27 Davis Avenue. The masons occupied an upstairs hall until 1911 (*Union*, November 29, 1894; *Centurama Scrapbook*; Adams County *Free Press*, January 16, 1941).

800 Davis Avenue: Opera House: (1902, contributing)

This was the city's third opera house. J. C. Reese intended to build a double storefront but added a stock company-financed opera house. Architect William W. Welch of Clarinda, Iowa, designed the building in conjunction with the City Hall (406 8th Street) to the east. Initially the opera house stage was to have occupied the third floor of the latter building, but in the final plan the two plans overlapped. It appears that Reese built the hose tower for the City Hall as part of the shared arrangement. The opera house quickly devolved into a motion picture and vaudeville/local events venue. By 1929 it had direct competition from the Lyric Theater, a block to the south. The building was used as a warehouse by the *Free Press* newspaper and in 1943, several apartments were added atop the balcony (Adams County *Republican*, June 14, 1898; Jacobsen, James E. Part 1 Investment Tax Act Application, Corning City Hall and Engine House, March 31, 2012).

W. P. McCoy's Furniture Store was the first ground floor tenant, followed by H. E. Christie in the same line (1915-19). Van Wagenen's upholstery business leased the basement in May 1908, and offered to file saws and fix parasols. H. M. Watt opened a pool hall in the building in July 1919. The *Free Press* Publishing Company occupied the ground floor and basement in 1922 and purchased the whole building in 1936. At this time the county attorney had offices upstairs and the auditorium had been idle for several years. The building narrowly escaped destruction in the massive March 20, 1937 burning of Kaiman's Market at 806 Davis (Adams County *Free Press*, May 2, 1908; August 2, July 19, 1919; July 2, 1936; July 8, 1948).

804 Davis Avenue-W. S. Hefling Block/Johnston House/Hawley Building/Davis Avenue Apartments: (1898, non-contributing)

This building was rebuilt six years before the opera house was. The reconstruction of 804 and 806 Davis was simultaneous and the two buildings shared a second-story hall. The Johnston Hotel was the original tenant. Later tenant firms were the Harris Medicine Company (1906); Knights of Pythias Hall (1907); O. C. Powelson's garage (pre-1920-1929+); Dr. O. H. Hawley (upstairs office, pre-1937); Green Door Tavern (1970's), The Pub (present occupant). The building was heavily damaged when 806 Davis Avenue burned on March 20, 1937 (Adams County *Free Press*, October 8, 1896; February 18, March 11, 25, 1897; November 3, 1906; March 25, 1937; July 7, 1948).

806 Davis Avenue-W. O. Mitchell Block: (1898, contributing)

This post-fire building was built simultaneously with the building to the south and the buildings shared a second-story hall. Sanborn maps show the Johnson House Hotel as being also in this building with the G. A. R. Hall upstairs, as of 1899. By 1907 the Knights of Pythias were upstairs. An auto storage firm occupied the ground level s of 1929. Later tenant firms included a bowling alley (1905), Page Automobile Company (1915-20); Kaiman Market (destroyed by the fire of March 20, 1937); apartments upstairs (by 1929); Cudahy Produce Company (displaced by the new federal building, 1937);

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 63

Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

Hollenbeck's TV Repair (1972+) (Adams County *Union*, October 15, 1896, Adams County *Free Press*, November 5, 1896; October 21, 1905; May 26, 1906; March 25, December 2, 23, 1937).

The Corning Ourcq American Legion Post #117 purchased the Kaiman building in 1949 and the *Free Press* reported, "A new front will be installed and the interior decorated and painted" (Adams County *Free Press*, September 15, 1949).

816 Davis Avenue: (ca. 1905, non-contributing)

Sanborn maps show this building as an office with a rear vault in late 1907, with the same use continuing through 1929. The Morgan Implement Company had its offices here in 1959 through 1974 when it closed. Later tenants were several insurance companies (1979-89) and then a beauty salon (1991-96) (Adams County *Free Press*, July 23, 1959; July 16, 1972; January 1, 1975).

818 Davis Avenue-Rogers Plumbing, Electric and Heating: (1933, contributing)

Dean Rogers and wife Alice (Liken) Rogers built this building to house their plumbing, electric and heating business. The family lived in the upstairs apartment and the family and firm resided here for 15 years before relocating elsewhere in 1947. Dr. John Nolan leased the first floor for office use. The law office of Stanley, Nielsen and Nielsen, the current tenants, moved in 1978. The Adams County Abstract Office was briefly here in 1992 (Adams County *Free Press*, March 16, 1933; February 6, 1947).

820 1/2 Davis Avenue (alley property)-Hollenbeck's TV Repairs: (ca. 1925, contributing)

This building housed Hollenbeck's TV repair at one time. Hollenbeck also used 822 Davis. Ed Davison's Salvage Grocery replaced Hollenbeck in 1972. Lawyers Nielsen and Nielsen now have their conference rooms in the upper level (Adams County *Free Press*, July 16, 1972).

822 Davis Avenue-Union Republican Office/C. W. Gray Building: (ca. 1900, contributing)

This building interprets the northward expansion of the downtown along the east edge of the public park. As of 1909 the *Union-Republican* printing office was located here and it is possible that the newspaper built this building in 1905. The Sanborn map places a printing firm in this building as of 1907. The American Legion and its auxiliary occupied new quarters in what was termed the "old *Union-Republican* building, owned by C. W. Gray in late 1930. The 1929 Sanborn map shows the building as a residence, with radio repair in the basement. The update shows an electrical repair firm here. By 1935 Phillips Electric Shop occupied this property, and remained four years later. The Miller family lived here ca. 1947-74. Roy Miller did furniture repairs (Adams County *Free Press*, April 10, 1909; October 30, 1930; July 11, 1935; April 6, 1939; April 3, 1947; January 3, 1974).

824 Davis Avenue-former United Brethren Church: (1894, contributing)

Local architect George W. Anthony designed the new church building and served as its general contractor. It served as a church until its sale in 1909, when it was converted by Mrs. Fred Brown into a 12-room private residence. This former church building marked the northernmost reach of the 1896 fire. Dr. O. E. Wilson lived here and ran his office at this address. He sold the property to Harry Wilmarth in April 1939. It was then noted, "The building is one of the landmarks of Corning and at one time was used as a church building." It has housed at least two small businesses, a handcraft shop in 1959 and the Old Curiosity Shop in 1996. This residential building was transformed into apartments by 1989 (Adams

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County *Union*, May 17, July 19, August 19, 1894; October 15, 1896; April 6, 1939; February 26, 1959; February 9, 1989; October 31, 1996; Adams County *Free Press*, November 14, 1895; April 10, 1909).

6th Street:

508 6th Street: Anderson and Miller Oil Company/Phillips 66 Service Station (ca. 1944, non-contributing)

John R. "Swede" Anderson (1893-1991) formed the Anderson-Miller Oil Company in 1944, in partnership with his brother Otto and Dick Miller. This station appears on fire insurance maps as of 1929, but this version was likely built in 1944 and was certainly built by 1953. They used the garage to the north (612 Benton Avenue) as a winter car wash and storage building (Adams County *Free Press*, November 7, 1946; March 12, 1953; November 25, 1965; September 5, 1991).

7th Street:

601-03 7th Street/Agricultural and Conservation Services Building: (ca. 1950, contributing)

This building included three office spaces and a full basement. The Federal land bank and Soil Conservation Service were located here. FmHA occupied 601 7th, 1979-87 and ASCS (1986-92) and the County Extension Service (1993-98) occupied 603 7th.

602 7th Street/Glen Myers Produce Company: (ca. 1900, contributing)

This company provided community and area trucking services during World War II. The 1929 Sanborn map shows this building as a store. The Hayes Brothers Implement Company occupied the building when Myers sold it in late 1946 to James Waters and Clifford McGregor. The tenant firm moved to 8th Street early the next year. The Corning Title Company was here 1983-86 (Adams County *Free Press*, March 7, November 28, 1946).

602 1/2 7th Street/Glen Myers Trucking Company: (ca. 1925-27, contributing)

This building was built by Glen Myers Jr. and was occupied by his firm until 1946 (Adams County *Free Press*, March 7, 1946).

605 7th Street/Laundromat: (1958, contributing)

The first reference to the Westinghouse (later the Corning) Laundromat appeared to be a new business announcement, dated March 1959. The laundromat was still in operation under its new name as of early 1966. The Calico Corner, selling fabrics, was here 1978-79, and was followed by Peterson Floral and Antiques, 1985-post-1998 (Adams County *Free Press*, March 26, 1959; March 24, 1966).

606 7th Street-Corning United States Post office-Federal Building: (1939, contributing)

The John A. Anderson livery site was purchased for \$7,500 and Cudahay Produce Station and Campbell & Bolte Garage & Sales were forced to relocate. Construction bids were opened on June 30, 1938, with Church Company of Kansas City winning the contract for \$44,397. A. P. Nichols did the excavation work in mid-September 1938. A well on the site was found to be filled with interesting

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Adams County, Iowa

“relics.” No ceremony was held when the cornerstone was laid and the dedicatory items had to be simply placed in a new wall cavity. The building was dedicated on June 15, 1939. Mural artist Marian Gilmore produced the interior mural in her Ottumwa studio and installed it in March 1941 (*Adams County Free Press*, August 19, September 16, 20, October 7, December 23, 1937; September 22, 29, 1938; June 8, November 2, 1939; August 29, September 12, 26, 1940).

607 7th Street/Swift and Company Produce Station: (1919, contributing)

In 1919 Swift and Company wanted a building built for the produce trade. O. W. Williams built this produce station for them at this location in response and the Swift Company leased this building for many years. These stations purchased the cream, eggs, and poultry from the rural families. The Home and Garden Center was here as of 1966. (*Adams County Free Press*, August 2, 1919; Letter, Don Williams to James Jacobsen, May 15, 1999).

8th Street:

406 8th Street: Former Corning City Hall and Fire House (1902, contributing)

This very substantial building housed the city hall, police and fire departments. The fire department departed to new quarters in 1966. A new city hall was occupied in 1976. The assembly room housed virtually all of the major public events that took place in Corning during this time period. Clarinda, Iowa, architect William W. Welch designed the building in conjunction with the adjacent Opera House (800 Davis Avenue) (Jacobsen, Part 1 Investment Tax Act Application, Corning City Hall and Engine House, March 31, 2012).

505 8th Street-Andrew Thompson's Block: (1895, contributing)

This building arose simultaneously with Widener's block to the immediate east, beginning in the summer of 1895. Andy Thompson Sr. occupied the building in late November of that same year. Sanborn maps show a grocery in this building as of 1899, by which time there was a single-story rear wing present. The same use is shown in 1907 and by 1929 the storefront housed two stores (*Adams County Union*, September 26, 1895; *Adams County Free Press*, November 21, 1895).

507 8th Street-Odd Fellows Building: (1895, non-contributing)

The Odd Fellows built the building leased the ground floor and owned the building until 1945. The first tenant, Scott & Biggar Flour and Feed, moved their new stock into their store in early January 1896. A grocery was here as of 1907. Dunn Flour and Feed Company, from Red Oak, occupied the first floor storefront in mid-February 1930, replacing the closed business of A. L. Freeborn. Staples Implement Company, a John Deere franchise, occupied the building in 1945. The Adams County Production and Marketing Administration and the Soil Conservation Office were here by 1951. Corning Vision Center has occupied the ground floor since 1949 (*Adams County Free Press*, February 13 1930; September 20, 1945; October 4, 1951).

602 8th Street/Cudahy Produce Company: (1919, contributing)

O. W. Williams built this building for the Cudahy Company for use as a produce station and that firm, an affiliate of the national Cudahy Company, remained here, 1919-January 1, 1957. Later tenants

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Corning Commercial Historic District,
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were the Fairmont Creamery; the Hayes Brothers Implement Company (1947-48); the Rural Electric Authority (1959); (Adams County *Free Press*, November 28, 1946; May 13, 1948; June 18, 1959).

9th Street:

405 9th Street: (pre-1893, contributing)

This house likely predated the construction of the Church of the Brethren in 1894. The 1893 Sanborn Map shows the house turned and located along the north line of the parcel. It was probably moved to the back of the lot and converted as a parsonage. After 1909 it served as a private residence. In 1948 it too had a commercial purpose, housing Mitchell Electric Bottle Gas Service (Adams County *Free Press*, August 19, 1948).

Other:

Central Park: (1857, plat, contributing)

The park has gained and lost structures over its history and in 1939 it was even a candidate site for the new federal building or post office. The fountain was donated by Capt. F. M. Davis (Adams County *Free Press*, July 31, 1909).

Park Pagoda, Central Park (1990's, non-contributing)

This frame pagoda and slightly raised stage/platform is counted as a structure.

Park Fountain, Central Park (1909, contributing)

This fountain is counted as an object.

Park Gates, Central Park (1990's, non-contributing)

These gates are counted as an object.

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Paul Gauthier, October 1998, April 15, 1999
Ted Turner, April 15, 1999
Joe Cook, April 15, 1999
Joe Johnston, former County Treasurer, April 15, 1999
Allan and Herbert Heaton, April 15, May 24, 1999
Doug Sickler, April 15, 1999
Marvin Steffen, April 28, 1999 (Corning mayor)
Don Williams, April 28, 1999

Letters:

Letter from Don Williams, May 15, 1999

Newspapers:

Newspapers were extensively searched and provided the greater proportion of historical data for this project. Given the large number of citations and the likelihood that this list will grow prior to the submission of the revised nomination, the individual citations will not be listed until the complete range of citations is finalized.

Adams County *Free Press* (1883-present) Searched 1893-1900, 1905-09, 1911, 1913-14, 1919, 1937-41
Adams County *Gazette* (few surviving issues as cited in text)

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Adams County, Iowa

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Online Resources:

W. T. S. White House, Clarinda, Iowa: www.colonialwhitehouse.com (accessed March 31, 2012)

Corning Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Adams County, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 18.11 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|---|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 15 | 354190 | 4539140 | 3 | 14 | 354000 | 4539510 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | 15 | 354060 | 4539120 | 4 | 15 | 354200 | 4539500 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen
organization History Pays! date April 5, 2012
street & number 4411 Ingersoll Avenue telephone 515-274-3625
city or town Des Moines state Iowa zip code 50312
e-mail hp@raccoon.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs.**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner:

name (refer to attached list)
street & number telephone
city or town state Iowa 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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

Verbal Boundary Description:

The district boundary is depicted on Figures 1-6. The district includes the complete half blocks that front east onto Davis Avenue, between 9th Street on the north, and 7th Street to the south. Similarly Central Park and the half blocks that separate Davis and Benton avenues, between 6th and 9th Street are included, as are the half blocks that front east onto Benton Avenue, between 9th and 7th streets. The quarter block that fronts west onto Davis Avenue, south of 8th Street is included. Alleys form the east and west boundaries of the out-lying half and quarter blocks as described. Lots within the original town plat are numbered sequentially and are not dependent upon block references. Partial block lots that are included with this district are Lots 177, 228-229, 264-265, 288-289, 218-319, and 641-645.

Boundary Justification:

This district boundary includes the majority of Corning's historic commercial buildings. The buildings and other resources included are contiguous, represent the specified period of significance, and retain sufficient collective historical integrity so as to define a visually distinctive and unified district. The district excludes buildings that represent more recent commercial expansions, or those buildings that replaced historic buildings in recent years. Central Park and the downtown plat that provided spatial form to the district are also included in the district.

Photographs:

Photographer: James E. Jacobsen
Date of Photographs: April 14, 2011
Type of Film: Ilford Delta ASA 400
Original Negative Location: Main Street Corning

| <u>Frame</u> | <u>Direction</u> | <u>Description:</u> |
|--------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | Southeast | East side of Davis Avenue south of 6 th Street |
| 2 | Northwest | West side of Davis Avenue south of 6 th Street |
| 3 | Southwest | West side of Davis Avenue south of 6 th Street |
| 4 | Northwest | West side of Davis Avenue north of 6 th Street |
| 5 | Southwest | West side of Davis Avenue north of 6 th Street |
| 6 | Northeast | East side of Davis Avenue north of 7 th Street |
| 7 | Southeast | East side of Davis Avenue south of 7 th Street |
| 8 | West | 7 th Street from east of Davis and alley |
| 9 | Northwest | West side of Davis Avenue north of 7 th Street |
| 10 | Southeast | East side of Davis Avenue north of 7 th Street |
| 11 | East | East side of Davis Avenue north of 8 th , park gates, 820.5 Davis at left |
| 12 | Southeast | East side of Davis Avenue north and south of 8 th Street |
| 13 | East | East side of Davis Avenue north of 8 th Street, across Central Park |
| 14 | Southeast | East side of Davis Avenue between 8 th and 9 th streets |
| 15 | Northwest | Alley north of 8 th , east of Davis Avenue, 406 8 th and 820.5 Davis (right) |
| 16 | South | Alley south of 8 th and east of Davis Avenue |
| 17 | Northeast | West side of buildings fronting east on Davis Avenue, north of 6 th Street |

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Section number 10 Page 73

Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

| Frame | Direction | Description: |
|-------|-----------|--|
| 18 | South | 508 6 th (center) and 612 Benton Avenue to left of same Benton Avenue south from 7 th Street (west side of street excluded south of 601-03 7 th visible at far right) |
| 19 | Northwest | U. S. Post Office |
| 20 | East | View along 7 th Street from west of Benton Avenue |
| 21 | Northwest | Benton Avenue viewed north from just north of 7 th Street |
| 22 | Northeast | 8 th Street from west of Benton Avenue (602 8 th at far left) |
| 23 | Northwest | Benton Avenue viewed from 8 th Street |
| 24 | Southwest | West side of Benton Avenue south of 8 th Street |
| 25 | South | Benton Avenue from 9 th Street |

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 74 Corning Commercial Historic District,
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Imbedded Images:

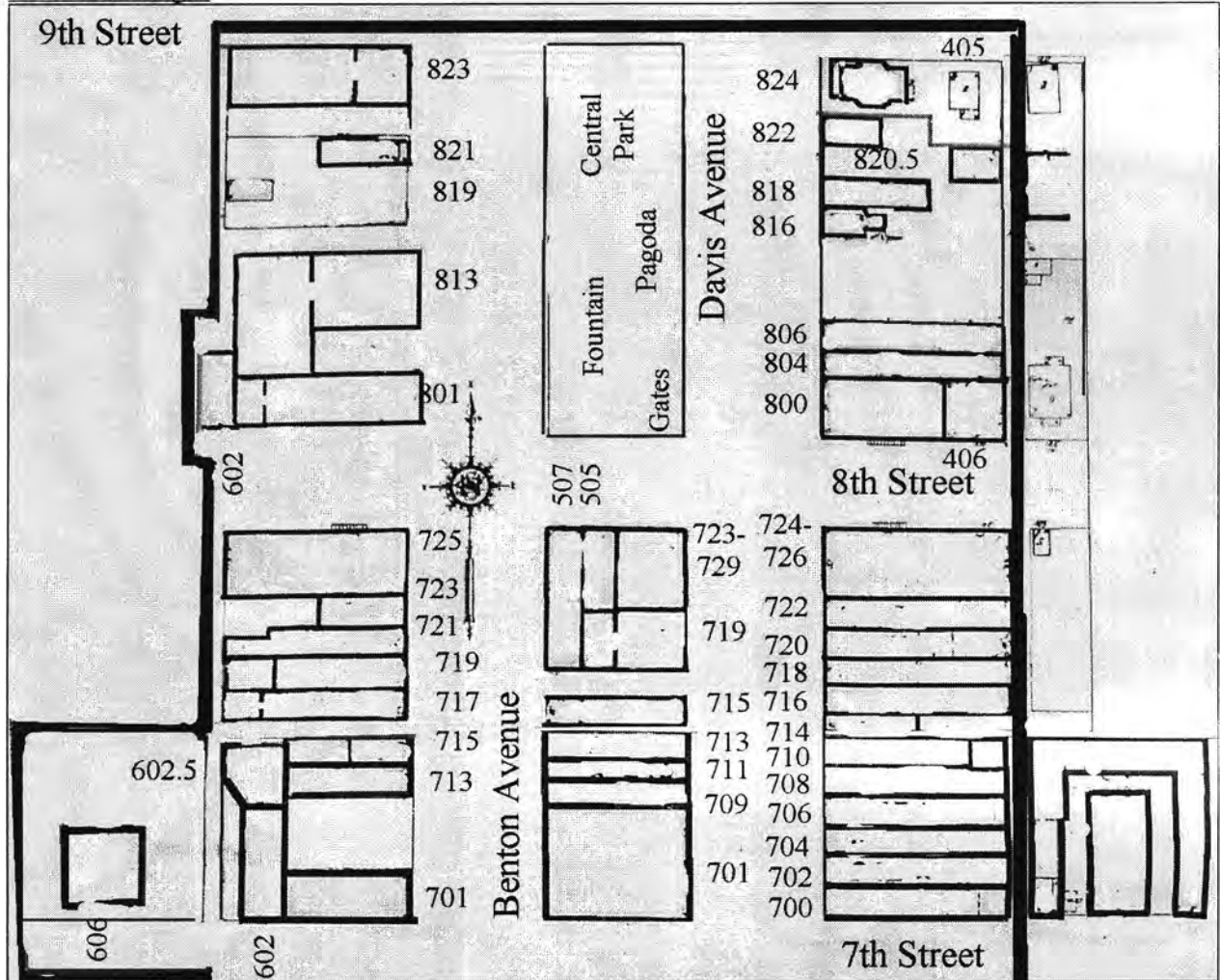


Figure 1: District Map (north half) (Jacobsen, 2011)

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 75 Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

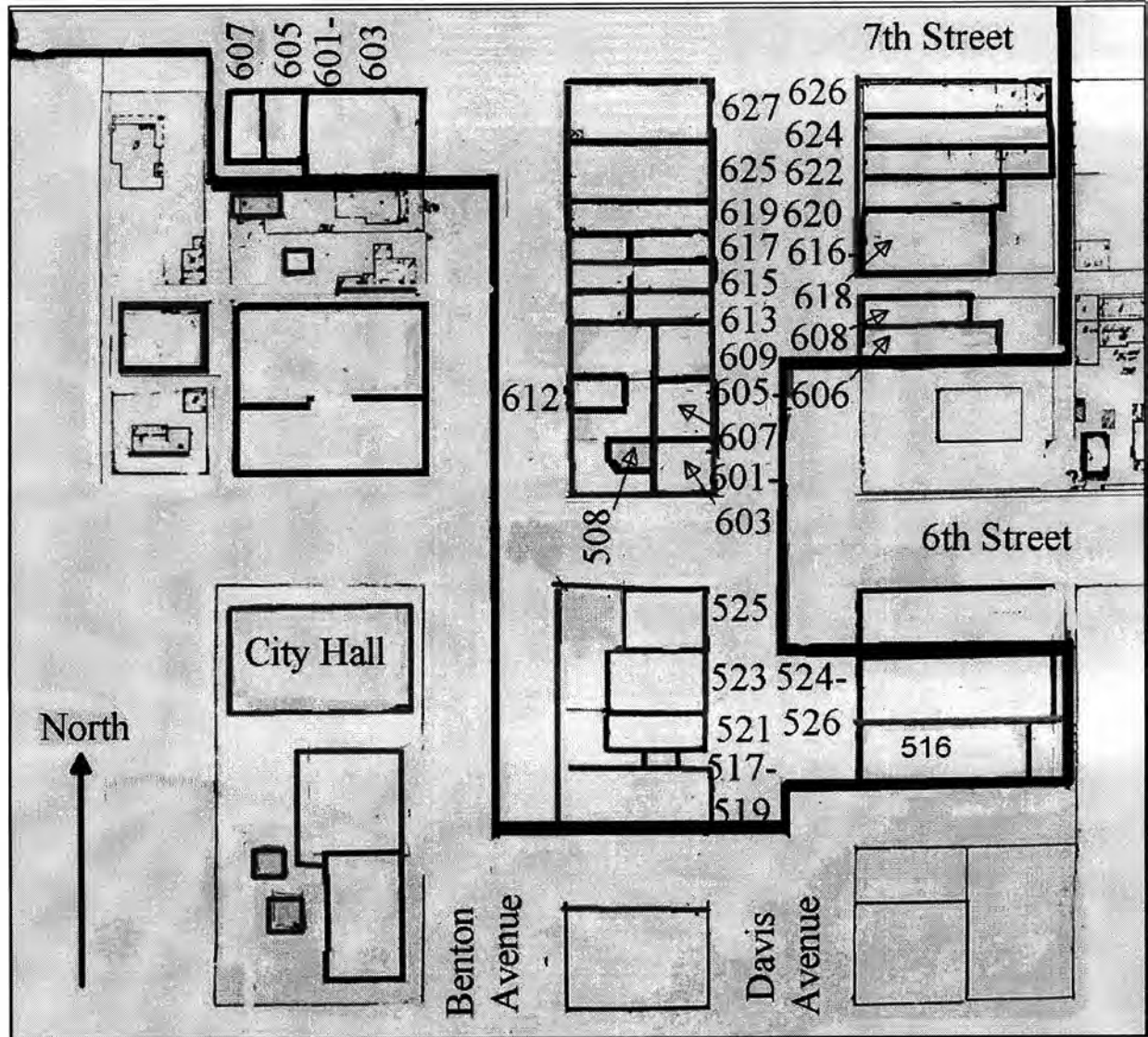


Figure 2: District Map (south half) (Jacobsen, 2011)

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 76 Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

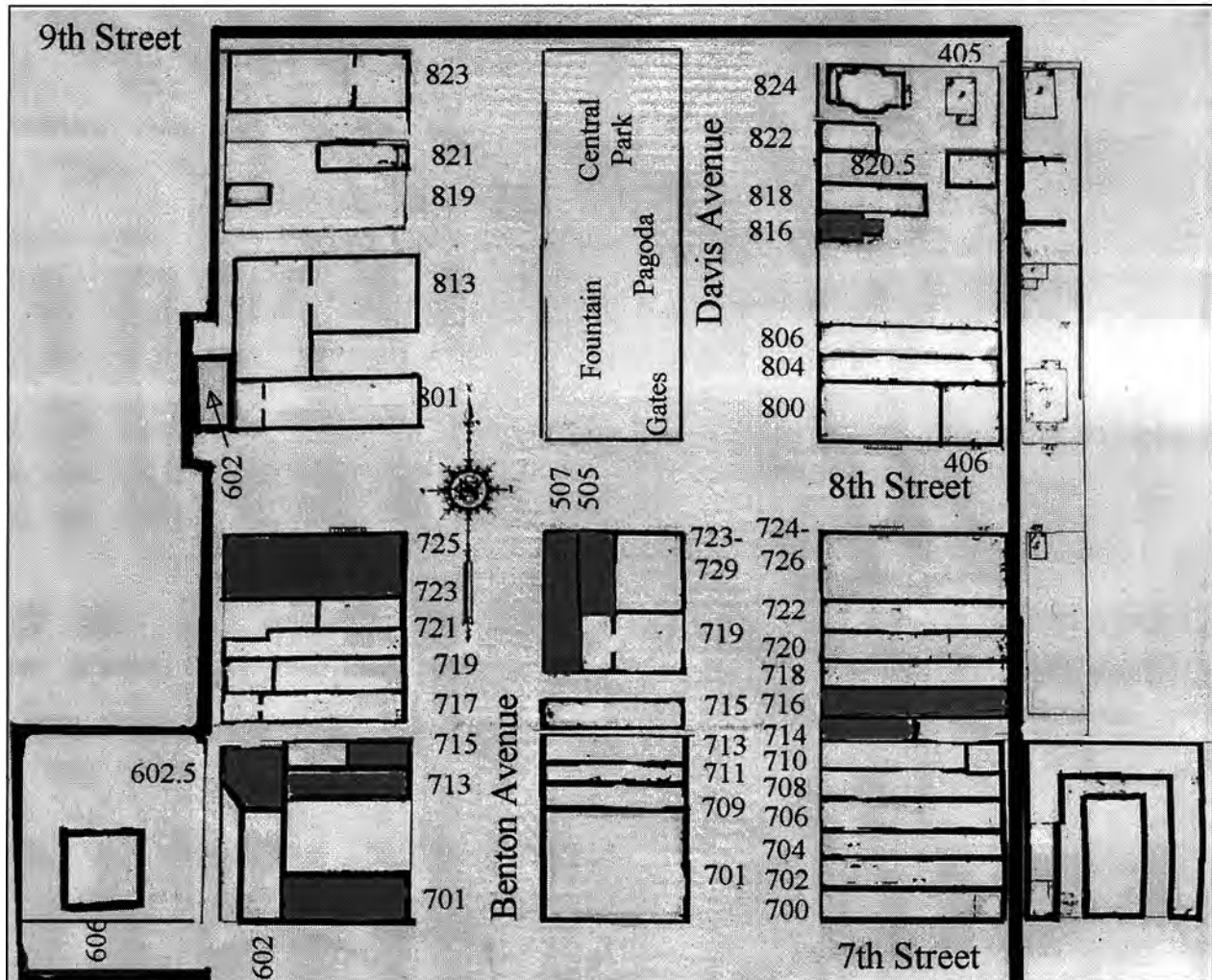


Figure 3: District Map, Contributing/non-contributing buildings (north half) (Jacobsen, 2011)

Key: Non-contributing buildings are shaded dark gray

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 77 Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

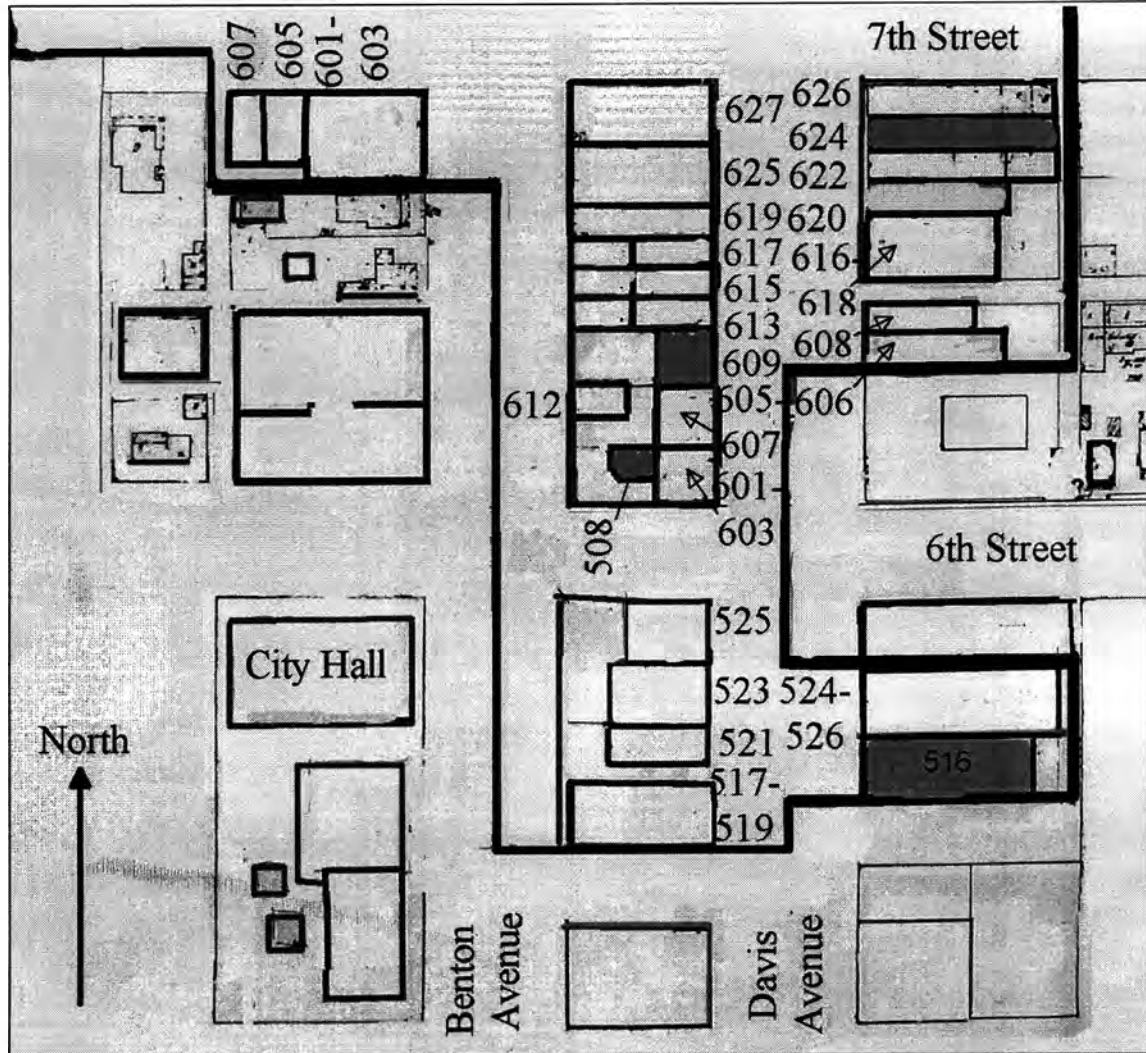


Figure 4: District Map, Contributing/non-contributing buildings (south half) (Jacobsen, 2011)

Key: Non-contributing buildings are shaded dark gray

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 78 Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

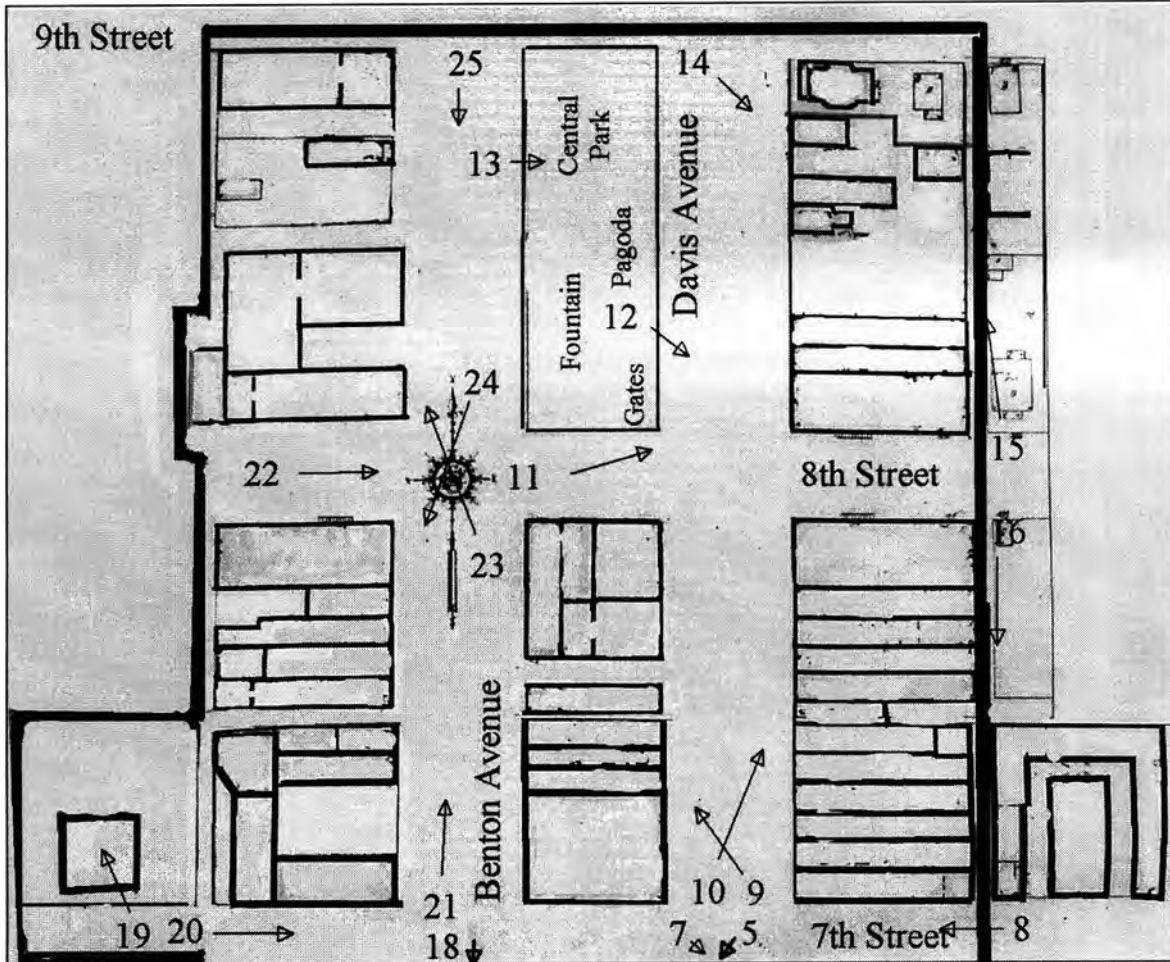


Figure 5: District Map, photo vantage map (north half) (Jacobsen, 2011)

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 79 Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

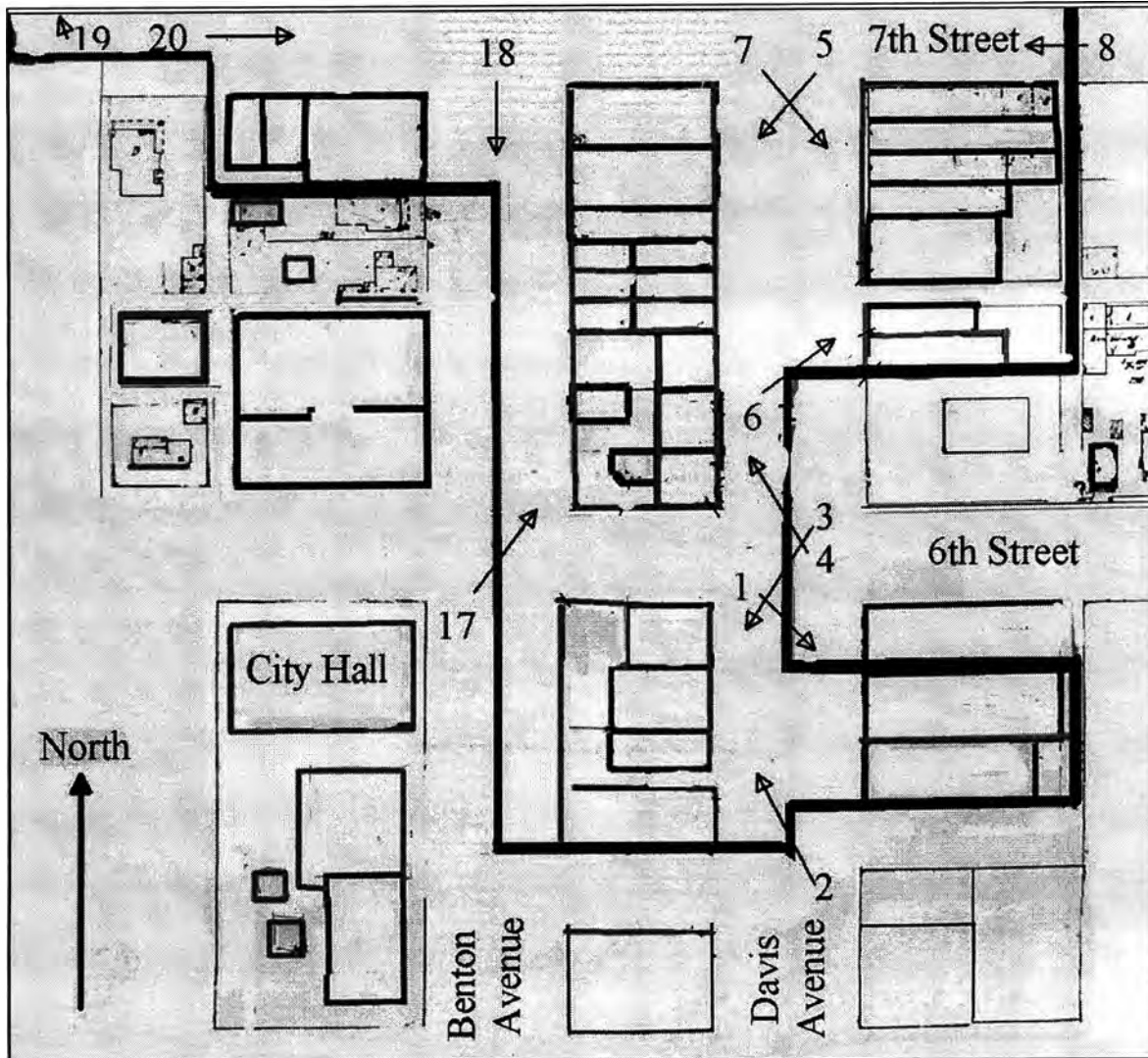


Figure 6: District Map, photo vantage map (south half) (Jacobsen, 2011)

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 80 Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

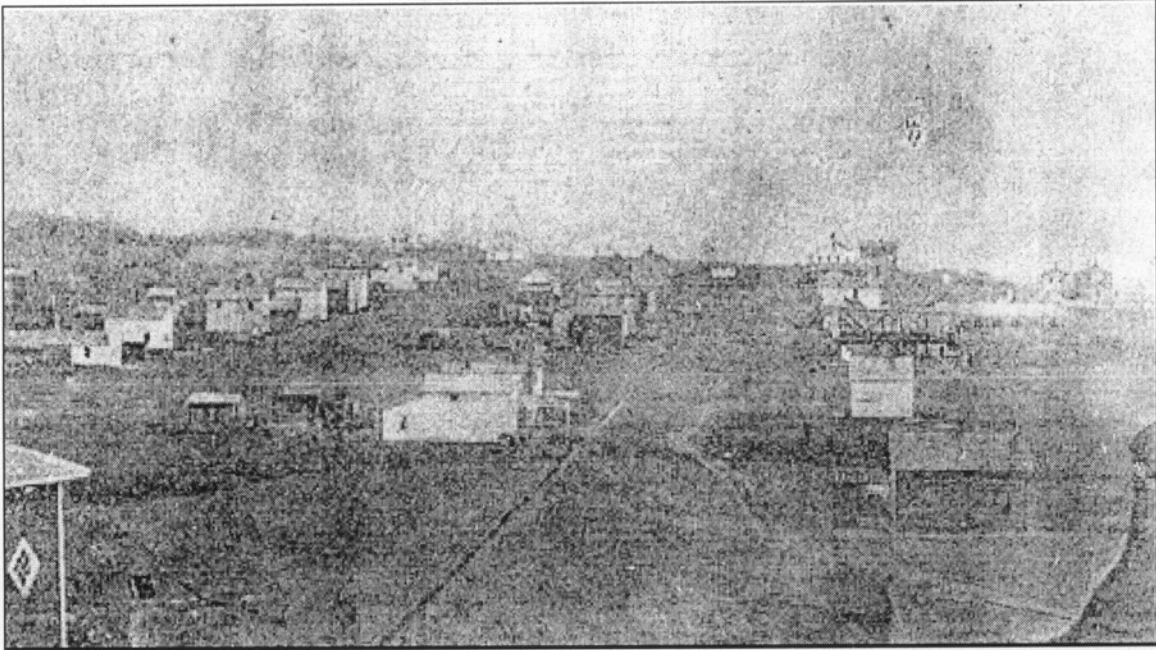


Figure 7: 1870s view of downtown Corning, looking north along Davis Avenue from the railroad depot (Corning House of History)

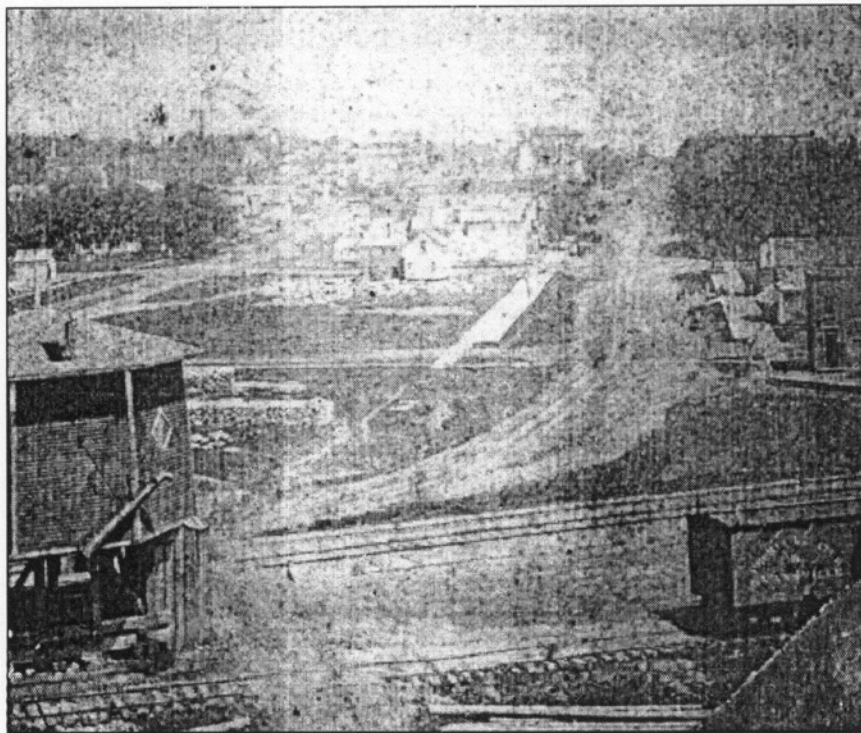


Figure 8: Half of a stereoscopic photo of Corning, c.1878, view north from Depot up Davis Avenue (State Historical Society of Iowa, State Historical Archives, Angrick Collection)

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Figure 9: West Side of Davis Avenue, 700s block, Twining Corner (now 723-29 Davis) at upper right, view northwest from 7th, c.1885, 715 Davis, the only extant (and brick) building in this view, is shown just behind the parked wagon to the right

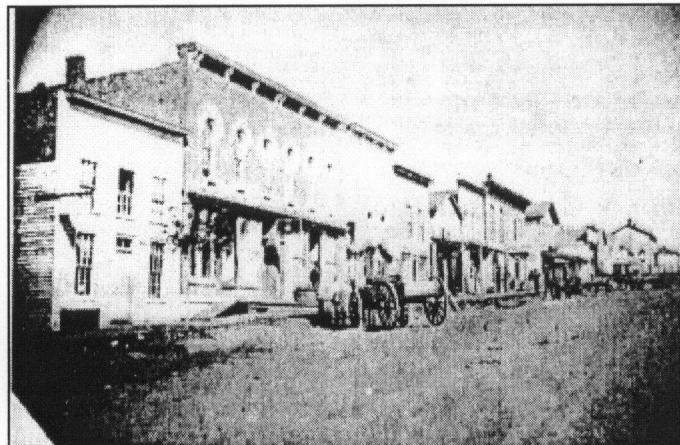


Figure 10: West Side of Davis Avenue, viewed northwest from 6th Street. The Twining Corner and Courthouse visible at the far upper right, view northwest, c.1885 (Corning House of History)

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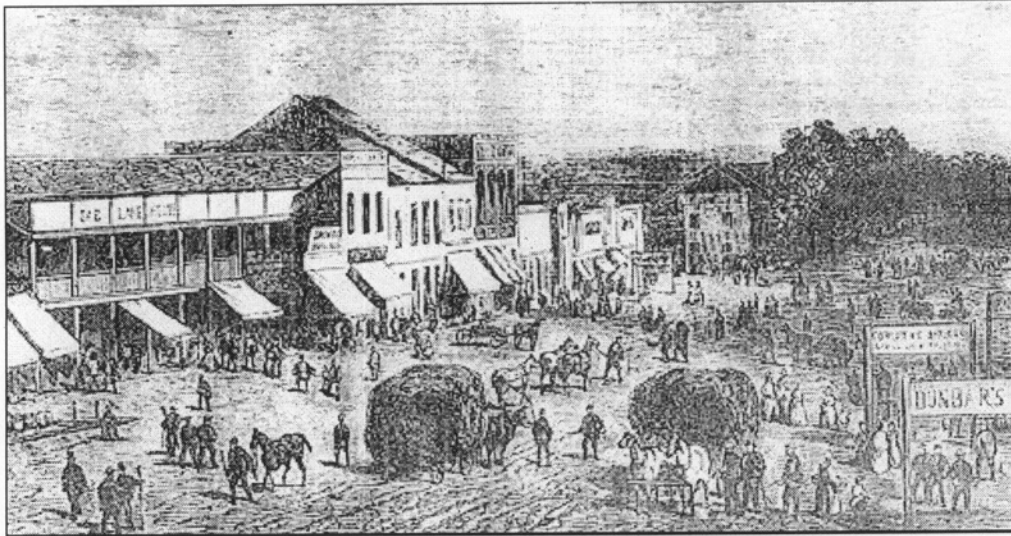


Figure 11: "La grand-rue de Corning, en Iowa." East side of Davis Avenue, viewed southeast from 8th Street (Partons Pour Icarie, 1957)



Figure 12: 7th Street Viewed west from Davis, 1913,
(Iowa State Historical Society, State Historical Archives, George Shane Photographic Collection)

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 83 Corning Commercial Historic District,
Adams County, Iowa

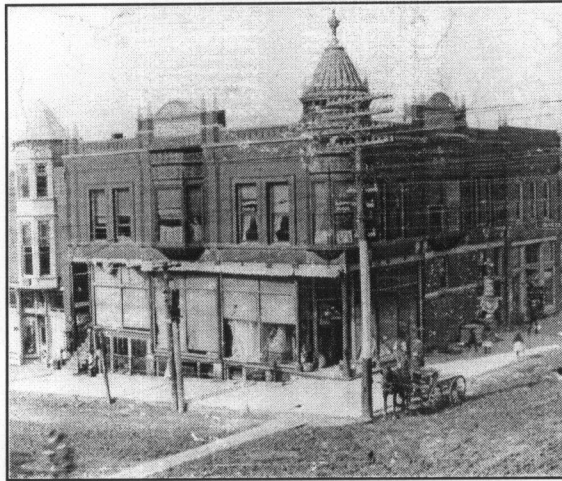


Figure 13: The Widener Block, 723-29 Davis Avenue, view southwest from 8th Street, c.1896.
The Thompson Building (505 8th) is to the immediate right, note the first-generation street corner electric arc light visible at right center

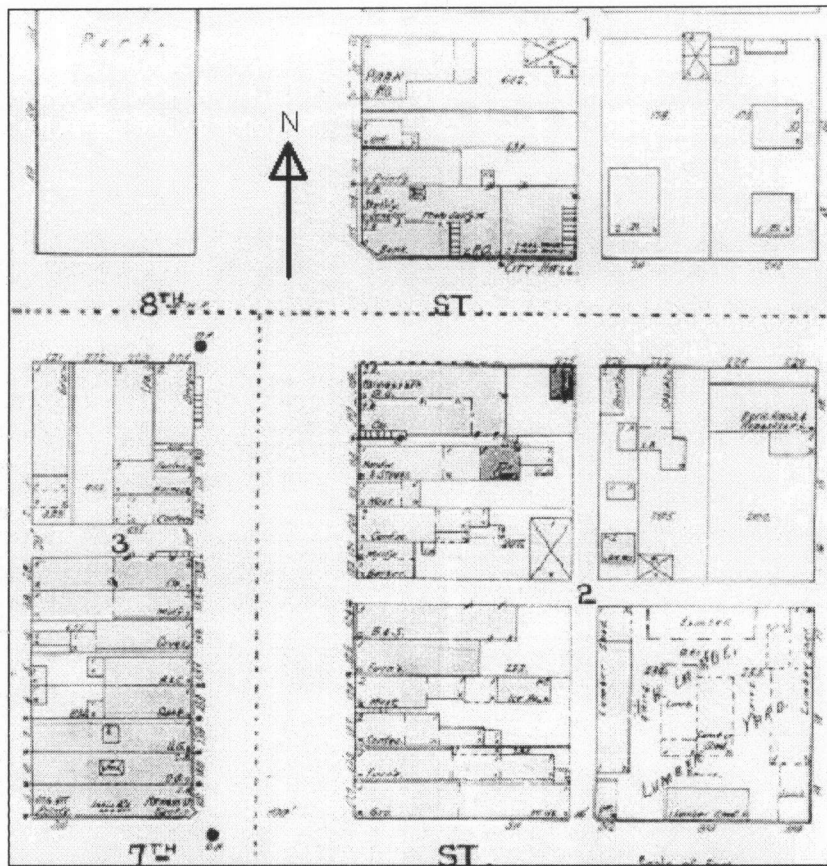


Figure 14: The downtown that burned, 1893 Sanborn Map
The buildings along the east side of Davis all burned. North is to the top of the map

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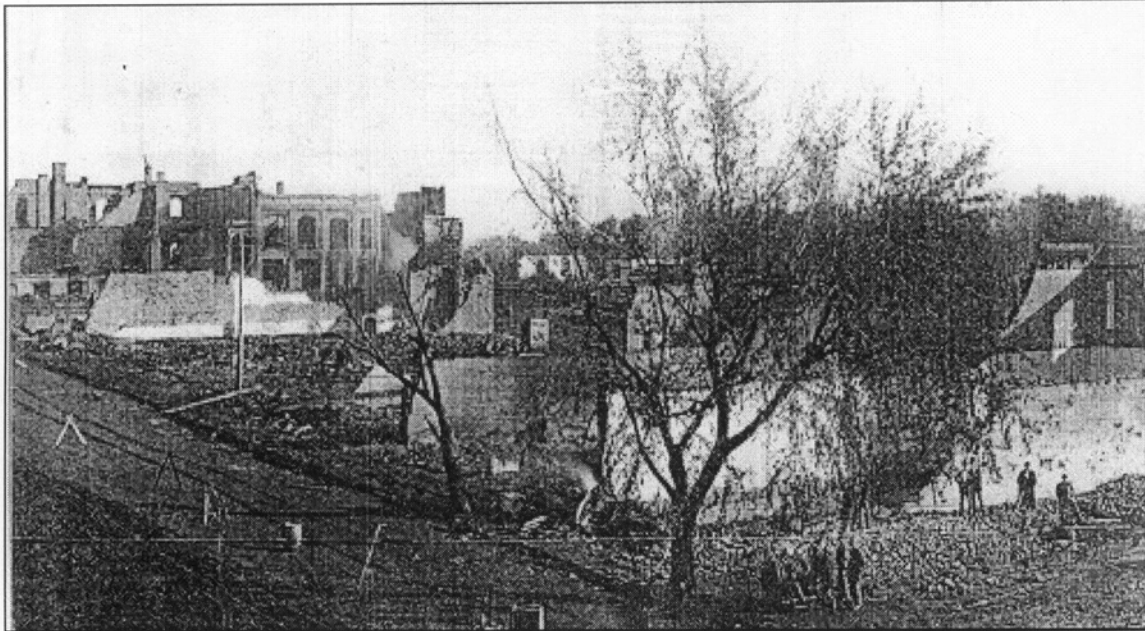


Figure 15: The burned district looking northeast from 7th Street and Davis Avenue, note the dead trees at the Beymer Corner in foreground (Corning House of History)



Figure 16: The west side of 700s block of Davis after the great fire, view northwest from 7th Street. The First National Bank (now Okey-Vernon, 701 Davis) stands in the left foreground (Corning House of History)

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Adams County, Iowa



Figure 17: Repairing the fire damage on the west side of Davis Avenue, 1896, note the boarded up windows on the Widner Building in the foreground, view southwest from atop ruins of the Johnson Hotel (Corning House of History)



Figure 18: West side of Benton Avenue looking northwest from 8th Street, c.1940, 821, 823 (non-extant), 829 (the library), the Church of Christ and the high school from left to right (Corning House of History)

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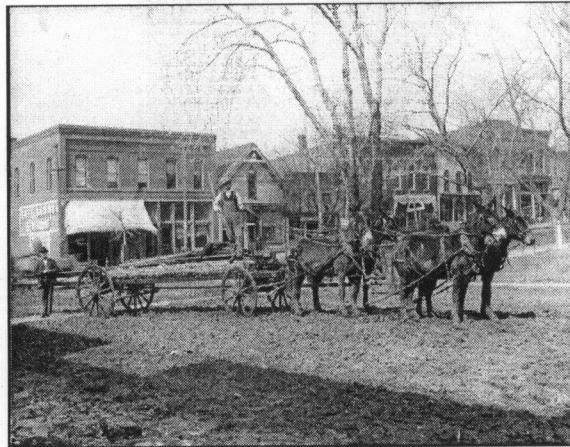


Figure 19: Development on the south end of Davis at 6th Street, 1898. The Madison Hotel (601-03 Davis) is at the left, the present First Federal Savings Bank of Creston (609 Davis) is three buildings to the right of the hotel. The Hotel Bacon stands to the right out of view (Corning House of History)



Figure 20: 601 Davis, view northwest from 6th Street, ca. 1900 (Centurama, p. 135)



Figure 21: The newly rebuilt east side of Davis Avenue, 1897, looking northeast from 7th Street, the Andrews Clothing occupies the new Beymer Building (700 Davis), note the Turner buildings (720, 722, 724-26 Davis)s, the Hefling and Mitchell buildings (804-06 Davis and the still vacant 800 Davis parcel) and the belfry on the United Brethren Church at upper left (Corning House of History)

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Section number Additional Documentation Page 87 Corning Commercial Historic District,
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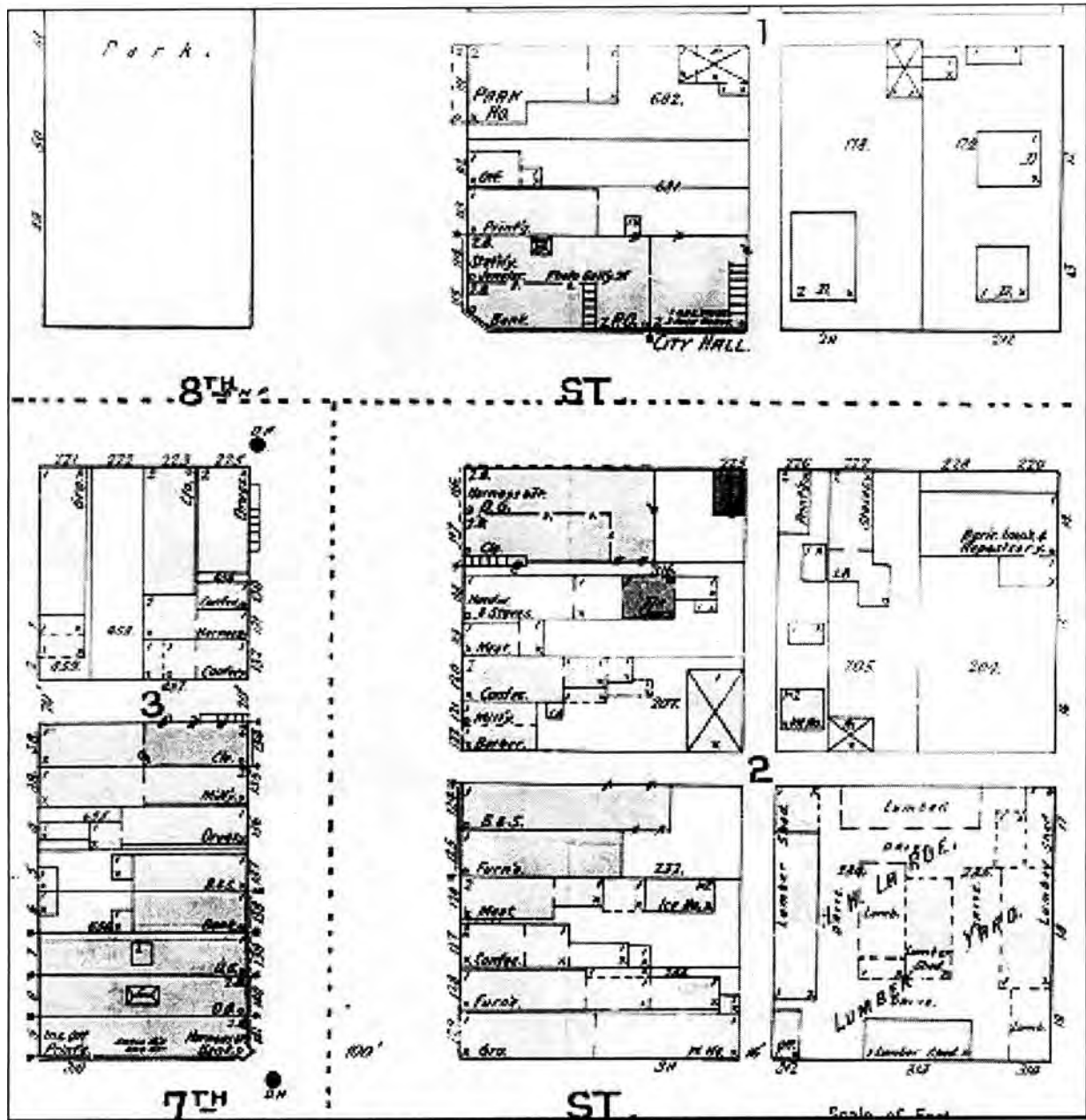


Figure 22: Sanborn map detail 1899 showing the rebuilt downtown

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Figure 23: The new Turners Store and east side of Davis Avenue, 1897, view to southwest from 8th Street
(Corning House of History)



Figure 24: A rare and early view of Benton Avenue looking south from a point north of 8th Street.
(Corning House of History)

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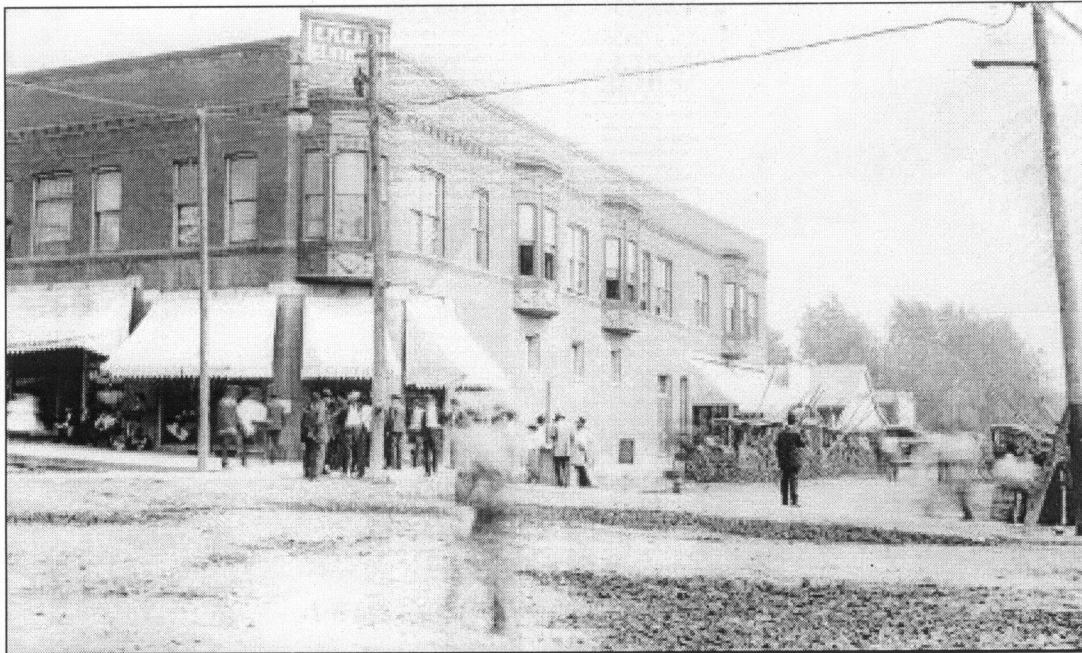


Figure 25: The new Beymer Block, 700 Davis Avenue, view northeast from Davis Avenue and 7th Street, ca. 1905 (Corning House of History)



Figure 26: The Biggar Company Store, view southwest from 7th Street and Davis Avenue, c.1908 (Corning House of History)

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Figure 27: East side of Davis Avenue, viewed ca. 1902 from 8th Street, showing the new Opera House and City Hall (far right), the Hefling and Mitchell Buildings (804-06 Davis), and the Park Hotel/Armory (non-extant), right to left (Corning House of History)

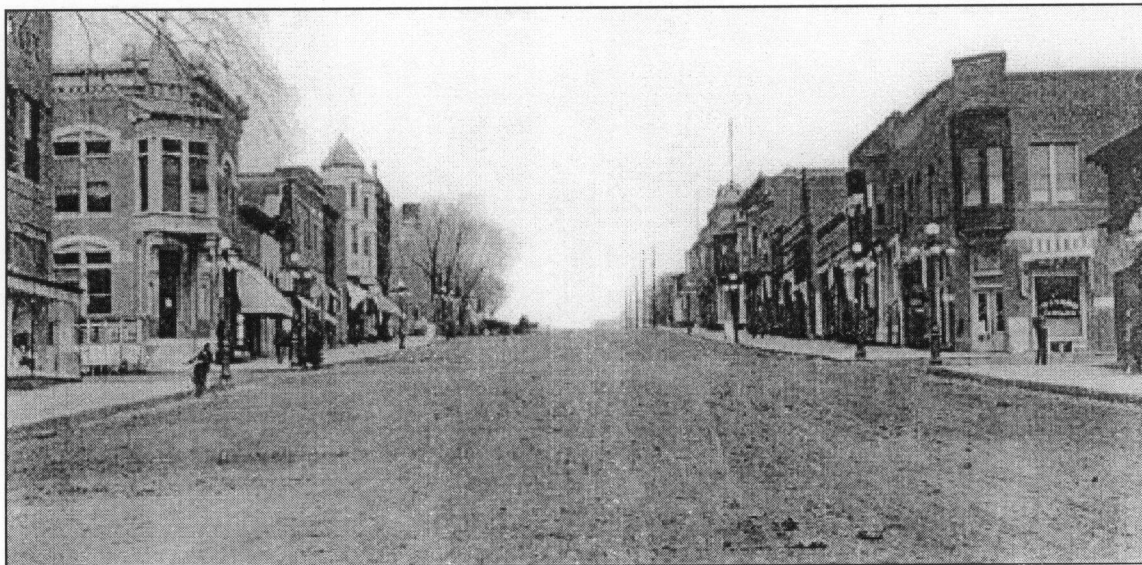


Figure 28: Davis Avenue, looking north from 6th Street, note second generation electric street lights and the portable popcorn wagon (at the far left on 7th Street) (Corning House of History)

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Figure 29: Bottle Row, looking up Davis Avenue from the depot, c.1915, the trees along lower Davis Avenue (at right) cluster around the Hotel Bacon (Corning House of History)

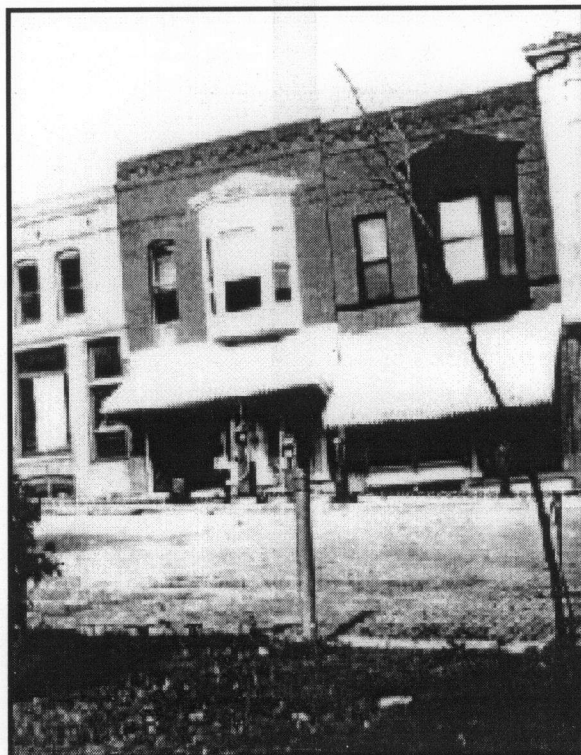


Figure 30: 804-06 Davis ca. 1915, view northeast
(Iowa State Historical Society, State Historical Archives, George Shane Photographic Collection)

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Figure 31: 1936 aerial view of Corning, looking north from the depot up Benton and Davis Avenues. Note "Gasoline Alley" and the tourist camp along 6th Street. The Anderson livery still stands on future post office site (State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa Historical Archives, Photographic Collection, Cities and Towns)

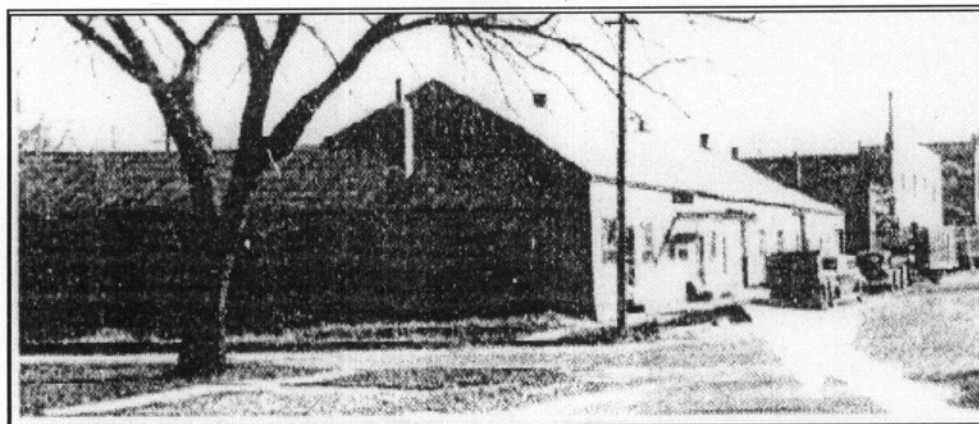


Figure 32: Post office construction site, view northeast along 7th, produce station and Lyon's Feed Store in distance (Adams County *Free Press*, December 23, 1937)

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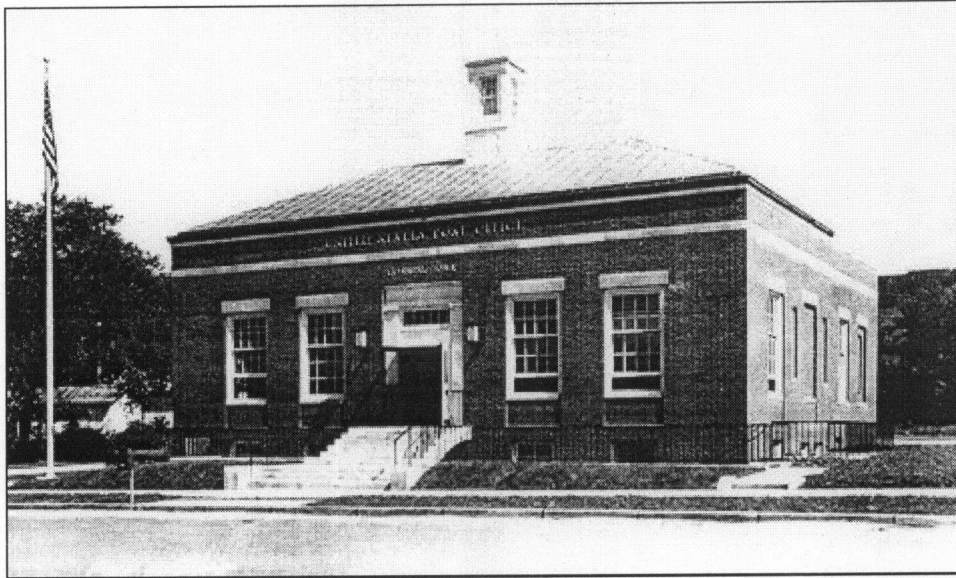


Figure 33: Corning's new post office/federal building, view northwest from 7th Street
(Adams County *Free Press*, December 27, 1938)

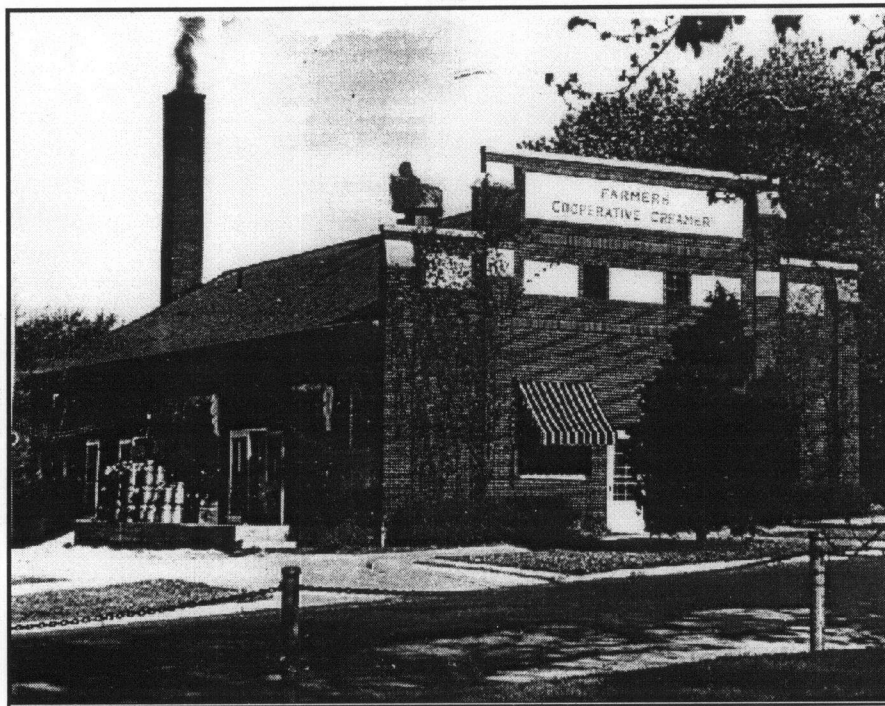


Figure 34: Farmers Cooperative Creamery, c. 1957, view northwest from 8th Street
(Corning House of History)

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Figure 35: The NFO Offices, 718-22 Davis Avenue, ca. 1965 (Corning House of History)



Figure 36: The best of times, Davis Avenue looking northeast from 7th Street, ca 1955
(Lauvstadt Center Photo Collection)

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Figure 37: From "Bottle Row to Nob Hill," view north along Davis Avenue, ca. 1958
(State Historical Society of Iowa, Archives Photo Collection)



Figure 38: Davis Avenue, looking south from 7th Street to the depot, ca. 1958
(State Historical Society of Iowa, Archives Photo Collection)

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Figure 39: 700 Davis, ca. 1940, view northeast, note movie theater
(Lauvstadt Center Photo Collection)



Figure 40: 704 Davis, 1940, view northwest
(Lauvstadt Center Photo Collection)

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Figure 41: Bacon Hotel, c.1940, 606 and 608 Davis, Okey Block (616-18 Davis) to left, view northeast
(Lauvstadt Center Photo Collection)

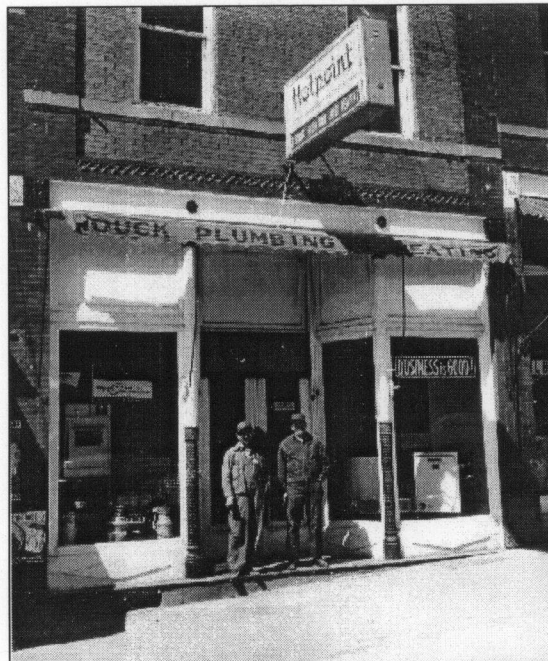


Figure 42: 711 Davis, 1958, view northwest
(Lauvstadt Center Photo Collection)

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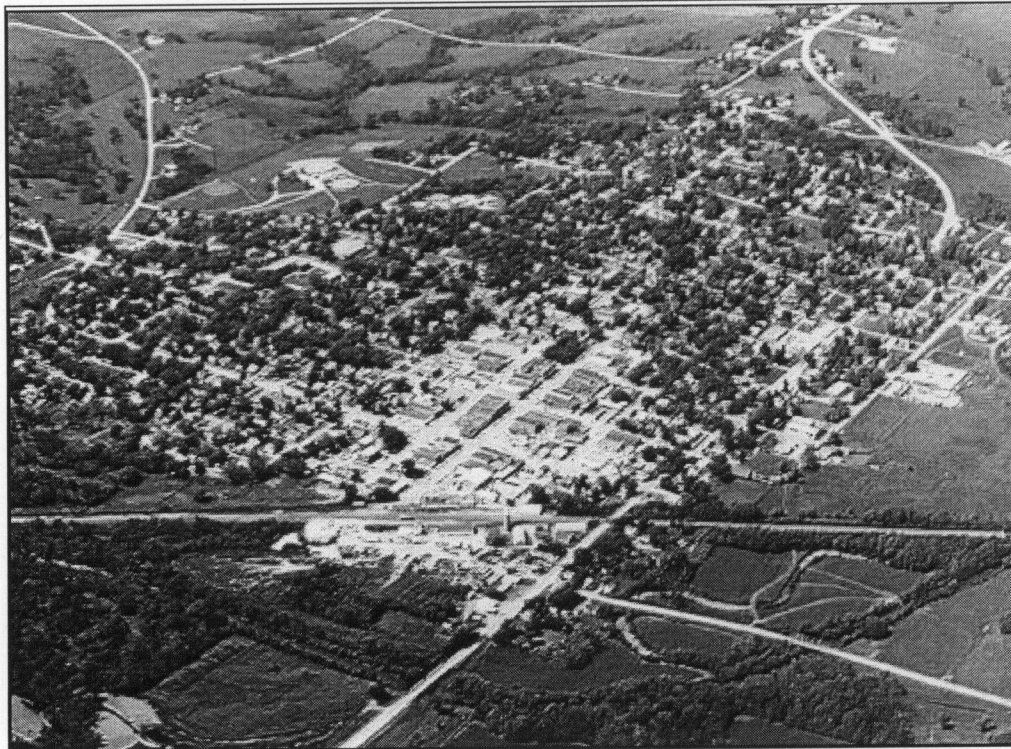


Figure 43: Aerial view of Corning, looking northwest, ca. 1965-70.

Note how the downtown forms a corner of the plat with residences to the north and west
(State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa Historical Archives, Photographic Collection, Cities and Towns)

Corning Historic District Owners' Mailing List:

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Matt & Denise Riley 824 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 824 Davis Avenue |
| Ed Graf 822 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 822 Davis Avenue |
| Larry Antisdell 405 ½ Davis Avenue c/o 1005 Bluegrass Dr. Corning, IA 50841 | 405 ½ Davis Avenue |
| Ann Nielsen 818 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 818 Davis Avenue |
| Renae Bartenhagen 816 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 816 Davis Avenue |
| City of Corning: Guy Brace 808-814 Davis Avenue c/o 601 6 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | 808-814 Davis Avenue |

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| | |
|--|------------------------|
| American Legion: Ed Harlow 806 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 806 Davis Avenue |
| Diane Hollander 804 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 804 Davis Avenue |
| Corning Opera House Attn: Nancy Carmichael 800 Davis Avenue c/o 710 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 800 Davis Avenue |
| Central Park Attn: City of Corning 601 6 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | Central Park |
| Michael Goldberg 729 & 723 Davis Avenue c/o 710 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 729 & 723 Davis Avenue |
| Wendy Thibodeaux 724-726 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 729 & 723 Davis Avenue |
| Barb James 722 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 722 Davis Avenue |
| Adam Grundman 719-721 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 719-721 Davis Avenue |
| Ashley Templeton 720 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 720 Davis Avenue |
| Donna Hogan 718 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 718 Davis Avenue |
| John Thomsen 715 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 715 Davis Avenue |
| Steve Stueckradt 716 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 716 Davis Avenue |
| Sally Hensley 713 Davis Avenue c/o 721 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 713 Davis Avenue |
| Mark Olive 714 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 714 Davis Avenue |

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Continuation Sheet

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Adams County, Iowa

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Jo Bissel 711 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 709 Davis Avenue |
| City of Corning: Guy Brace 710 Davis Avenue c/o 601 6 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | 709 Davis Avenue |
| Matt & Denise Riley 709 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 709 Davis Avenue |
| Debbie Blazek 708 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 708 Davis Avenue |
| Linda Shearer 706 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 706 Davis Avenue |
| Ray Kegerize 704 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 702 Davis Avenue |
| Jack Gadberry 702 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 702 Davis Avenue |
| James Whitmore 701 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 700 Davis Avenue |
| Adonica Struhar 700 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 700 Davis Avenue |
| Jessica Wilson 627 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 627 Davis Avenue |
| J Wilson 626 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 626 Davis Avenue |
| Bruce Bain 625 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 625 Davis Avenue |
| Walt Veatch 624 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 624 Davis Avenue |
| Jerry Peckham 622 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 622 Davis Avenue |
| Judy Antisdell 620 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 620 Davis Avenue |
| Neil Arbogast 619 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 619 Davis Avenue |

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Adams County, Iowa

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Jon Groves 616-618 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 617 Davis Avenue |
| Todd Thompsor 617 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 617 Davis Avenue |
| Alec Turner 615 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 615 Davis Avenue |
| John & Kathy Bozwell 613 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 613 Davis Avenue |
| Ty Rogers 609 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 609 Davis Avenue |
| Jimmy Olsen 606-608 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 606-608 Davis Avenue |
| Dale Carmichael c/o 605-607 Davis Avenue 612 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 612 Benton Avenue |
| Lori Preston 601-603 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 601-603 Davis Avenue |
| Wayne Ross 525-527 Davis Avenue c/o 2021 Quincy Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 525-527 Davis Avenue |
| Mick Templeton 524-526 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 524-526 Davis Avenue |
| Timothy & Rayma Frank 521-523 Davis Avenue c/o P.O. Box 248 Afton, IA 50830 | 521-523 Davis Avenue |
| Teri Walters c/o 517-519 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 517-519 Davis Avenue |
| Rick Bissell 516 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 516 Davis Avenue |
| Dave Walters 513-515 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 513-515 Davis Avenue |
| Burton Heaton 602 7 th St. c/o 701 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 602 7 th St. |

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| | |
|---|--|
| Don Williams 713-715 Benton Avenue 605-607 Benton Avenue c/o 705 Grove Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 713-715 Benton Avenue 605-607 Benton Avenue |
| Barton Construction 717 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 717 Benton Avenue |
| J Russell 719 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 719 Benton Avenue |
| Sally Hensley 721 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 721 Benton Avenue |
| Rich Drake 723 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 723 Benton Avenue |
| Brian Kannas 725 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | |
| Matt & Denise Riley 801 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 801 Benton Avenue |
| Rex Townsend 815 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 815 Benton Avenue |
| William & Julie Davis, Jr. 819 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 819 Benton Avenue |
| Linda England 821 Benton Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 821 Benton Avenue |
| Warren Blaisure 506 6 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | 506 6 th St. |
| Jimmy Olsen 507 6 th St. c/o 606 Davis Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 507 6 th St. |
| Donald Williams 601-603 7 th St. c/o 705 Grove Avenue Corning, IA 50841 | 601-603 7 th St. |
| Anna Leonard 604 7 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | 604 7 th St. |
| Chris Cline 606 7 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | 606 7 th St. |

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| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Doug Leonard, U. S. Postmaster 608 7 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | 608 7 th St. |
| Betty Chase 505-507 8 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | 505-507 8 th St. |
| Rob Peterson 504 8 th St. Corning, IA 50841 | 504 8 th St. |
| Warren & Virginia Elwood 405 9 th St. c/o 1414 E. Summit St. Red Oak, IA 51566 | 405 9 th St. |

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Corning Commercial Historic District

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Adams

DATE RECEIVED: 4/20/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/11/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/29/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/06/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000318

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 5/31/2012 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A&C
REVIEWER Patricia Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian
TELEPHONE _____ DATE 5/31/2012

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 1

TCS <No. B >014 BN *ZP-606f 240 N N N-2-79 7292 06.13.11 6R08 2073.4/100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 2

TCS <NO. 10 > 026 BN
*2P-606f 240 N N N N-84 7292 06.13.11 GR08 2073.47 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo #3

TCS <NO. 2 >017 BN
*24-606f 240 N N N-1-92 7292 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo #4

TCS <No. 6 > 020 BN
*24-606f 240 N N N-1-73 7292 06.13.11 6R08 2073.4/100.0



XXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXX

MAGNUM DRUG STORE

LONG ARRANGER

Public
at
Corner

Live
More
Play
Easy



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo #5

TCS <N> 1 >011 BN
*24-606f240 N N N-1-83 7292 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4 / 100.0



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Corning

Corning

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Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 6

TCS <NO. S > 023 BN *24-6064 240 N N N N-81 7292 06.13.11 6R08 2073.4/ 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 7

TCS <NO. 4 >002 BN
*24-606f 240 N N M-5-71 7292 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo #8

TCS <No. 1 >008 BN
*2P-606e 240 N N N-3-35 7290 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4/100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 9

TCS <NO. 2 > 008 BN
*24-606f 240 N N N-1-71 2292 06.13.11 6R08 2073.4 / 100.0



AMERICAN

EASTERN HARDWARE



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 10

TCS <NO. 3 >005 BN
*2P-606f 240 N N N-2-72 7292 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4/ 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 11

TCS <NO. 21 >017 BN
*24-606e 240 N N N-2-53 7290 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo #12

TCS <NO. 28 >023 BN
*2D-606e 240 N N N-3-47 7290 06.13.11 6R08 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County,
Iowa

Photo # 13

TCS <No. 26 >026 BN
*2d-606e 240 N N N N 19 7290 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4/ 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 14

TCS <NP> 22 > 038 BN
*24-606f240 N N N-4-60 7292 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4/100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 15

TCS <NO. 34 > 032 BN
*24-606e 240 N N N-4 20 2290 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo #16

TCS <NO. 35 > 029 BN
*24-606e 240 N N N-3-11 7290 06.13.11 6R88 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 17

TCS <No. 13 > 029 BN
*24-606f 240 N N N N-55 7292 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4/ 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 18

TCS <NO - 4 > 002 BN
*24-606e 240 N N N-6-47 7290 06.13.11 6R08 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 19

TCS <No. 15 >014BN
*2D-606e 240 N N N-3-18 7290 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4/ 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 20

TCS <No. 16 > 011 BN
*2D-606e 240 N N N-5-24 7290 06.13.11 GR08 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo #21

TCS <No. 3 >005 BN
*2d-606e 240 N N N-2-16 7290 06.13.11 GR08 2073.47 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo #22

TCS <NO. 19 >020 BN
*2d-606e 240 N N N-2-31 7290 06.13.11 GR08 2073.47 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 23

TCS <NO. 20 > 032 BN
*24-606f 240 N N N-3-27 7292 06.13.11 6R08 2073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic District, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Photo # 24

TCS <NO. 1B >035 BN
*24-6064 240 N N N-2-59 7292 06.13.11 GR08 Z073.4 / 100.0



Corning Commercial Historic Districts, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

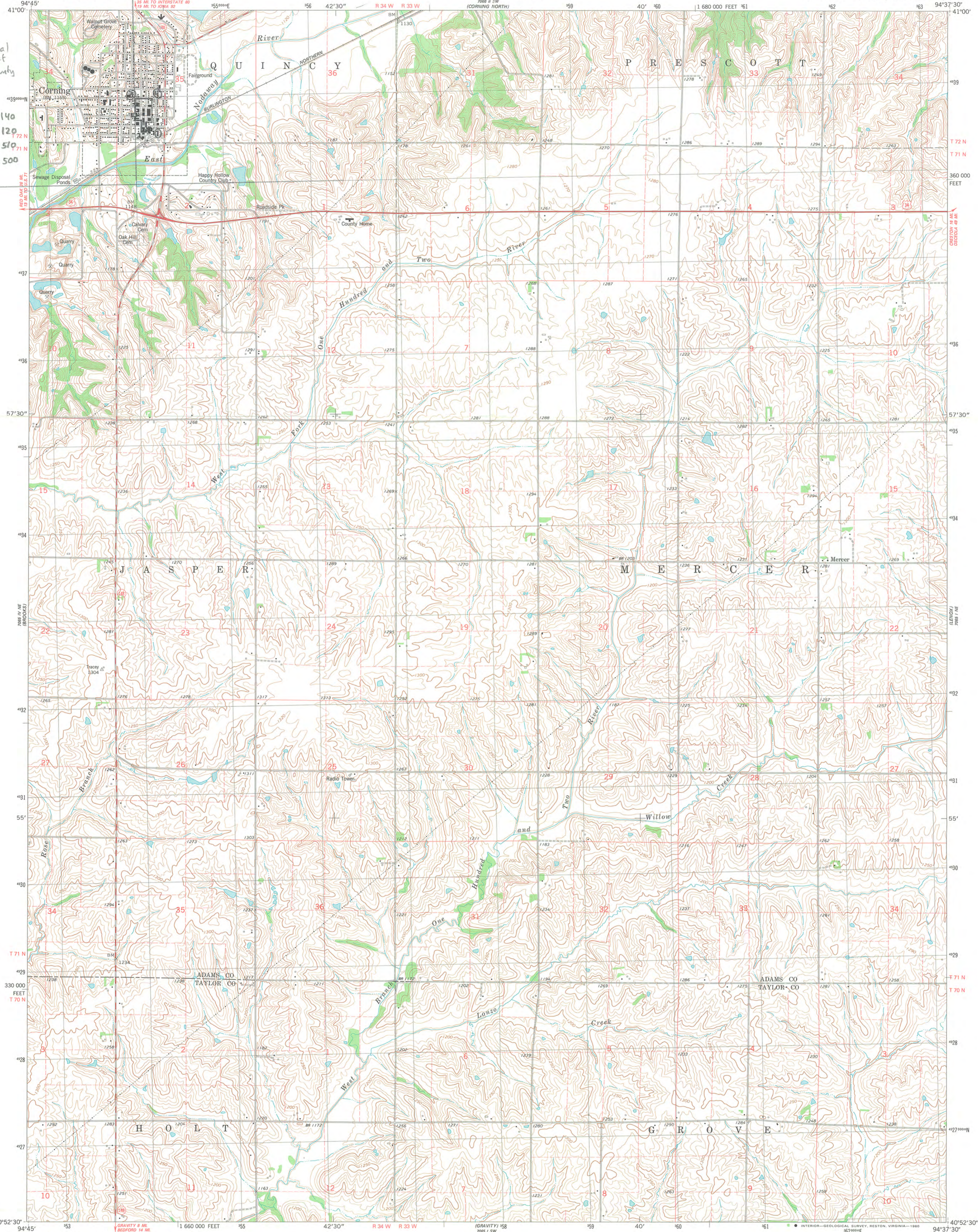
Photo #25

TCS <NO. 21 >041 BN
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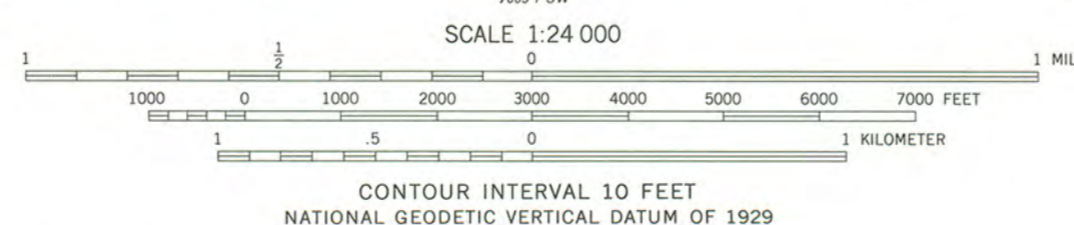
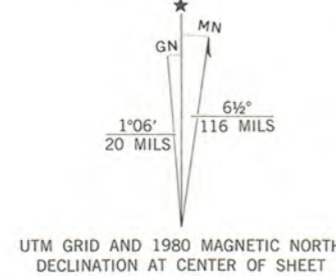
JUN 20 2011

Corning Commercial
Historic District
Corning, Adams County
Iowa
Zone 15

- 1 354 190 4539 140
- 2 354 060 4539 120
- 3 354 000 4539 510
- 4 354 200 4539 500



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey in cooperation with the Iowa Geological Survey. Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA. Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1975. Field checked 1977. Map edited 1980. Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Iowa coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic). 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15 1927 North American Datum. To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 3 meters north and 21 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks. Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is un-checked.



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Primary highway, hard surface | Light-duty road, hard or improved surface |
| Secondary highway, hard surface | Unimproved road |
| Interstate Route | U. S. Route |
| | State Route |

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092 AND BY THE IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, IOWA CITY, IOWA 52240. A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST.

CORNING SOUTH, IOWA
N4052.5-W9437.5/7.5

1980

DMA 7065 1 NW-SERIES 7876

March 22, 2012

Dallan C. Wordekemper, CCIM
Federal Preservation Officer
Real Estate Specialist
United States Postal Service
475 l'Enfant Plaza, SW
Suite 6670
Washington, DC 20260-1862

RE: U.S.P.S. Building, 606 7th Street, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Dear Mr. Wordekemper:

We are pleased to inform you that the above property was accepted for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the State National Register Nominations Review Committee at its February 10, 2012 meeting. The National Register is the Federal Government's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation. Listing in the National Register provides recognition and assists in preserving the heritage of our Nation. If you would like to provide comment or object to this nomination please submit such to Beth Foster Hill within 30-days from the date of this letter. After 30-days the nomination will be forwarded to the National Park Service for probable listing.

Listing in the National Register provides the following benefits to historic properties:


- Consideration in the planning for Federal, Federally licensed, and Federally assisted projects. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires Federal agencies allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on projects affecting historic properties listed in the National Register. For further information please refer to 36 CFR 800.
- Eligibility for Federal tax benefits. If a property is listed in the National Register, certain Federal tax provisions may apply. The Tax Reform Act of 1986 revises the historic preservation tax incentives authorized by Congress in the Tax Reform Act of 1976, the Revenue Act of 1978, the Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980, the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, and Tax Reform Act of 1984, and as of January 1, 1987, provides for a 20 percent investment tax credit with a full adjustment to basis for rehabilitating historic commercial, industrial, and rental residential buildings. The former 15 percent and 20 percent investment Tax Credits (ITCs) for rehabilitation of older commercial buildings are combined into a single 10 percent ITC for commercial or industrial buildings built before 1936. The Tax Treatment Extension Act of 1980 provides Federal tax deductions for charitable contributions for conservation purposes of partial interests in historically important land areas or structures. Whether these provisions are advantageous to a property owner is dependent upon the particular circumstances of the property and the owner. Because tax aspects outlined above are complex, individuals should consult legal counsel or the appropriate local Internal Revenue Service office for assistance in determining the tax consequences of the above provisions. For further information, please refer to 36 CFR 67 and Treasury Regulation Sections 1.48-12 (ITCs) and 1.170A-14 (charitable contributions).
- Consideration of historic values in the decision to issue a surface coal mining permit where coal is located, in accord with the Surface Mining and Control Act of 1977. For further information please refer to 30 CFR 700 et seq.

- Qualification for Federal and State grants for historic preservation when funds are available.
- Eligibility for State Tax Credits for rehabilitation. Properties listed on the National Register, eligible for listing on the National Register or Barns constructed before 1937 are eligible to apply for a 25 percent state tax credit for rehabilitation. The cost of a 24-month qualified rehabilitation project would exceed either \$25,000 or 25 percent of the fair market value for a residential property or barn less the land before rehabilitation. For commercial properties, the rehabilitation project would exceed 50 percent of the assessed value of the property less the land before rehabilitation - whichever is less. The State Historic Preservation office must approve the rehabilitation work before an amount of tax credits will be reserved for your project. There are limited credits available each year, so let us know if you want the application information.

Owners of private properties nominated to the National Register of Historic Places have an opportunity to concur in or object to listing in accord with the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR 60. Any owner or partial owner of private property who chooses to object to listing is required to submit to the State Historic Preservation Officer a notarized statement certifying that the party is the sole or partial owner of the private property and objects to the listing. Each owner or partial owner of private property has one vote regardless of what part of the property that party owns. If a majority of private property owners object a property will not be listed; however, the State Historic Preservation Officer shall submit the nomination to the Keeper of the National Register for a determination of eligibility of the property for listing in the National Register. If the property is then determined eligible for listing, although not formally listed, Federal agencies will be required to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment before the agency may fund, license, or assist a project which will affect the property.

Should you have any questions about the National Register of Historic Places, Tax Incentives or about this nomination in particular, please feel free to contact me by telephone at 515-281-4137 or by e-mail at beth.foster@iowa.gov. You may find information or enjoy visiting the National Register website at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/index.htm> or the Historic Preservation section of our website at www.iowahistory.org.

Sincerely,


for

Berry Bennett
Interim Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

MARY TIFFANY COWNIE, DIRECTOR



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

STATE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY of
IOWA

JEROME THOMPSON
ADMINISTRATOR



MATTHEW HARRIS
ADMINISTRATOR

600 E. LOCUST
DES MOINES, IOWA
50319

T. (515) 281-5111
F. (515) 282-0502

CULTURALAFFAIRS.ORG

April 19, 2012

Carol Shull, Chief
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street, N.W.-- 8th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

The following National Register nomination(s) are enclosed for your review and listed if acceptable

- Corning Commercial Historic District, 513-824 Davis Avenue, 701-829 Benton Avenue, and cross streets, Corning, Adams County, Iowa

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth Foster Hill".

Elizabeth Foster Hill, Manager
National Register and Tax Incentive Programs