

330

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED

MAR 23 1993

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name The Motor Mart Building

other names/site number Commerce Building

2. Location

street & number 520 Nebraska Street N/A not for publication

city or town Sioux City N/A vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Woodbury code 193 zip code 51102

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

David L. ... 3/15/83
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historical Society of Iowa
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

~~Entered in the National Register~~

Date of Action

Allores Byers

4/22/93

The Commerce Building
Name of Property

Woodbury Co. Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce / Specialty Store

Commerce / Business

Recreation / Music Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce / Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century

American Movements / Commercial
Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Concrete

other _____

Narrative Description

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

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Commerce

Period of Significance

1912; 1923

Significant Dates

1912; 1923

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

E.J. Henriques and

C.F. Lytle Co.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

The Commerce Building
Name of Property

Woodbury Co. Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5
---	---

7	1	4	4	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	7	0	7	9	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

3

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Snyder with the assistance of Paul Putz

organization The Commerce Building date August 3, 1992

street & number 520 Nebraska Street telephone 712-258-7558

city or town Sioux City state Iowa zip code 51102

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Sioux Building, Inc.

street & number P.O. Box 935 telephone 619-328-0718

city or town Rancho Mirage state CA zip code 92270

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

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Commerce Building, Woodbury Co. IA

The Motor Mart Building, now named the Commerce Building, is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Sixth and Nebraska streets in downtown Sioux City, Iowa. The four story building is 150' X 150' square and covers the entire quarter block. In the use of materials, distribution of fenestration, organization of mass and design details, the Motor Mart is representative of the Commercial style and its subsequent variants produced throughout the early decades of the twentieth century.

The Motor Mart's structural system is a poured reinforced concrete frame patented as the Turner Mushroom System. Primary facades are veneered in glazed brick over common brick infill and secondary walls employ brick infill. Windows appear in regular spacing between the exterior framing.

Nebraska Street's facade is the front of the building. Here the first floor is divided into seven bays, six of which originally accommodated corner-to-corner display windows. The center bay opened as an automobile entrance and was fitted with an overhanging marquee, since removed. Today a variety of 1960's and 70's metal and stone veneer treatments distinguish each of the bays, setting them apart as storefronts.

Eight brick-faced first floor columns stand on concrete plinths and carry a dripcourse of terra cotta formed in an I-beam configuration above the first floor windows. This feature is repeated below the second floor windows and gives the impression that a wide supporting band runs between the first and second floors.

Above each column the band holds terra cotta plaques each with a decorative diamond relief at the center surrounded with four smaller diamonds at each of its corners. The center plaque holds five metal sockets for electrical light bulbs, its satellites have one. Equally spaced between these plaques and centered in the band are three single cruciform terra cotta inserts similarly fitted for illumination in five-diamond relief. The whole of the first floor - its columns, bold openings, and the wide, electified band - present to the eye a base for the rest of the structure.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Commerce Building, Woodbury Co, IA

The "column" to this base is the unified fenestration of the next three floors. These use the building's structural framing to envelope a pair of square windows separated by a narrow wall section. All windows perforate a plain brick wall and are undistinguished in treatment with the exception of a thin terra cotta sill. Windows were originally metal framed with a large bottom sash and a transom comprising 1/3 of the opening. The latter was fixed, the bottom sash pivoted at the center. Wausau aluminum windows with a similar general configuration were installed in 1972. Again, electrified terra cotta inserts appear and are centered above each column, between each window pair in the center of each window.

A visual terminating effect is presented above the fourth floor windows. Here the supporting band of the first floor is repeated but instead of being held between uniform dripcourses it rests on a simple narrow molding and was originally finished off above with a terra cotta cornice. Using the same I-beam surface configuration as the first floor, the cornice projected out from the wall. This was removed, presumably in the 1972 rehabilitation. A centered, illuminated rectangular plaque displays the words "Motor Mart".

On Sixth street the upper floors appeared the same as the front but the first floor's plate glass windows stopped just before the center bay. They were squeezed out by Sixth street's upward incline toward the rear of the Motor Mart which made the sidewalk cut across the first floor bays, half covering the end column on the building's northeast corner. The remaining bays were, and remain, closed.

Alley sides (the east and south) of the Motor Mart, except for the southwest bay, omit terra cotta and quality brick and resort to plain infill walls of common red brick and exposed concrete framing. Fenestration on these non-formal facades is consistent in pattern with street sides on floors three and four but altered in detail. Six over six double hung metal windows were originally installed and remain in place. An additional set on the first and second floor open the entire bay from column to column.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Commerce Building, Woodbury Co. IA

Above the upper story, and in startling dimension, appear the 6 palladian windows of the Roof Garden. This large stucco, gable roofed building measuring 128' X 62' was erected on the southeast section of the roof in about 1921. It housed a dance pavilion and restaurant originally called the Roof Garden.

Another stucco building on the southwest, this one flat roofed and measuring roughly 20' by 100', was attached to the west end of the Roof Garden and is visible on the Nebraska Street side. A similar stucco penthouse on the southeast is a 32' by 85' storeroom. These were constructed in 1922 and 1923 respectively. Minor rooftop structural changes took place over the years.

Exterior cladding of the Motor Mart is of "repressed" glazed brick manufactured by Haskin's Impervious Face Brick Co. The native clay for the brick came from the river bluffs south of Sioux City. Red ceramic flat tile covered the original roof and remains visible as the fifth level floor. Additions here are stuccoed hollow wall tile and their I-beam framed roofs above are concrete and tarred over. Ersatz Greek tile in cast concrete glazed the Roof Garden but its apparent failings are blanketed by tarred paper.

The building's interior is also an expression of its structural system. Each floor is supported by concrete pillars on 21 1/2 foot centers. The first floor facade on Nebraska Street, housed automobile show rooms. In the center bay an entrance allowed automobiles to be driven straight through the building to a large 10' X 20', 6000 lb capacity freight elevator at the rear. Here cars were transported to other floors for repairs, display and repainting.

Although the Motor Mart was built for the purpose of selling, repairing and parking automobiles, the fourth floor was finished to the specifications of the Sioux City Commercial Club and included meeting, dining and billiard rooms.

Unique to Sioux City was the Motor Mart's use of lights on exterior walls. A total of 288 clusters of bare light bulbs imbedded in its terra cotta inserts provided a spectacular sight when illuminated. Direct current was supplied by a generator powered by a steam operated power plant in the basement. Two coal-fired furnaces (still extant) served the boiler and the plant's 12-foot flywheel not only turned the generator but

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Commerce Building, Woodbury Co. IA

powered several other machines through a system of belts and drive shafts. Steam from the boiler heated the building.

In 1919 the Motor Mart was sold to A.L. Galinsky and the building was renamed the Commerce Building. Extensive remodeling took place to convert automobile show rooms and parking areas to modern office space. Elevators were installed.

The automobile elevator was dismantled in 1966 and a new freight elevator installed in its place. Blueprints show two passenger elevators were replaced with new Otis automatic elevators in 1967. The Roof Garden interior was enclosed with partition walls and a dropped ceiling.

An extensive three year remodeling program was completed in 1970 in which bathrooms, hallways and stairways were remodeled. Steel and glass entrances were installed in all offices and carpeting was installed in the hallways. The comprehensive program was celebrated with an open house on May 27, 1970.

In spite of the many changes made during the 80 years of its existence, the general exterior appearance of the Commerce Building has changed very little. The reinforced concrete floors and the "mushroom" pillars designed by C.A.P. Turner show no signs of spalling, cracking or weakness. Drilling a hole of any size through one of the floors defies all but the strongest and sharpest of tools.

The brick facing is in excellent condition although the terra cotta courses need resetting, repairing and cleaning. Several of the windows in the fifth floor Roof Garden are broken out and need repair. The building is approximately 70% occupied at this time and remains a well kept, viable office building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

COMMERCE BUILDING, WOODBURY COUNTY, IOWA

The Commerce Building, constructed in 1912 as the Motor Mart, is significant under National Register Criterion C as a local representative of early twentieth century commercial architecture and the first in Sioux City to use the Turner Mushroom framing system. The Motor Mart Building is one in a large set of structures built to accommodate the burgeoning commercial growth of the Pre-World War I Era. In Sioux City's history, it is one of a now declining number of early twentieth century buildings which identified the character of that community for several decades.

In September, 1911, Ralph A. Bennett, owner of Bennett Auto Supply Company, located at 313 Nebraska Street, acquired the southeast corner of Sixth and Nebraska Streets for a consideration of \$45,000. Plans for a new building to be constructed on this site were drawn by the contracting firm of C.F. Lytle Co. which would act as both architect and builder. E. J. Henriques, chief architect for the Lytle Co., would design the building and supervise its construction. Those plans still exist.

Original intentions called for only two stories but they were changed in early 1912 to include two more floors. An article and photos in the Sioux City Tribune on December 26, 1911 shows two upper floors markedly reduced from the second, however, subsequent construction plans show similar second, third and fourth floor facades.

The Motor Mart was specifically designed to display, repair and provide parking for automobiles. It was one of the first reinforced, poured concrete buildings in Sioux City and the first to incorporate the innovative plans of Claude A. P. Turner of Minneapolis who had patented a new flat slab system of framing in 1908 that was best suited to the type of building Mr. Bennett wanted.

Actual building quickly followed planning. Concrete footings for the new building were poured in late February, 1912 and the building was completed in October, 1912.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6

Commerce Building, Woodbury Co, IA

To emphasize its association with modern times the Motor Mart's design combined lights with its commercial brick and terra cotta facades. More than 1600 lights were clustered in terra cotta plaques on the north, west and south sides of the building. When lighted at night the effect of this device was as spectacular as prospects for business..

The automobile industry, showing remarkable activity in America's first decade of the 20th century, was flourishing by 1911. In that year the Sioux City Journal affirmed the automobile was becoming a common utility, one which was developing recognition as an important economic factor. More than 25 different makes of automobiles were sold in Sioux City and dealerships and repair shops were filling downtown buildings. The Sioux City Automobile Association, of which Mr. Bennett was a member, estimated that in 1912 the community's automobile sales would total more than \$4,500,000.

"The phenomenal growth of the Bennett Auto Supply Co. was primarily the cause of the building of one of Sioux City's finest structures, the Motor Mart." So read an article in the Sioux City Journal on January 13, 1913 in a special section of the newspaper devoted to the building's opening. Clearly, the Bennett Auto Supply Company was experiencing such success that, in spite of their original construction plans of 1911, they needed to expand even further to keep abreast of projections for the following year. The city, its builders and businessmen were riding the crest of the modern age.

Appropriately, the Bennett Motor Mart took full advantage of modern construction techniques in employing the Turner Mushroom System. Its supporting columns on 21 1/2 feet centers allowed ample room for maneuvering automobiles of that era. Safety in parking as many as 300 cars was assured by a specified floor load of 400 lbs per square inch.

C.A.P. Turner, born in Lincoln, RI in 1869 was a graduate of Lehigh University and the School of Civil Engineering, South Bethlehem. In 1901 he formed his own company. Turner designed nearly two thousand concrete buildings, including about 150 buildings in Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN. He was the consulting engineer for the Soo Line Railroad and was significantly involved in the design and theory of bridge construction.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Commerce Building, Woodbury Co, IA

The Turner Mushroom system was patented in 1908 and named for his supporting column's wide topmost flair as well as the system's speed of erection. By using a webwork of steel reinforcing rod embedded in poured concrete the mushroom system produced flat ceilings and floors without intermittent beams. Its advantages included great strength, higher ceilings, unobstructed illumination and more open floors - attractive attributes for Bennett's builders.

The Lytle Construction Co. first appears in the Sioux City Directory in 1901 and each year until 1965. Trade papers and public records claim this was an outstanding construction and architectural firm, well liked in the community and capable of building all types of structures which were sound as well as attractive. "The Common Clay", trade magazine of the American Terra Cotta Company of Chicago, said: "The Lytle Company are architects and engineers. While specializing in banks, they are equipped to handle any kind of building from the first sketch until the key is turned over to the owner, all in one contract." Northwest Architectural Archives records show the Lytle Company designed and built at least 25 banks in the Sioux City area between 1913-1932.

Bennett sold the Motor Mart building after only seven years and, although the Bennett Auto Supply Company was listed as located there in 1921, the Motor Mart's conversion to a conventional office building was underway, guided by its new owner, A.L. Galinsky, a local businessman. He renamed it the Commerce Building. Bennett was off to organize and successfully operate the Hawkeye Truck Company, also at Sioux City, until it was broken by the depression.

Firms and institutions of substance occupied the Building under both its names: the Bennett Bank, Elco Photo, The Sioux City Chamber of Commerce, The American Brokerage Company, Bishop's Cafeteria, the Key Life Insurance Co., The Sioux City Symphony Orchestra, Dunn and Bradstreet, Sioux City Broadcasting, Lincoln National Life and Sioux City Gas and Electric, to name a few.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Commerce Building, Woodbury Co, IA

Construction of the Roof Garden above the Motor Mart in 1921-3 added an unexpected dimension to the building's history. Towering above the upper story, this stuccoed addition, incorporating giant Palladian windows and a Greek "tiled" pitched gable, was a ballroom. Hardwood flooring installed over the tile roof created a dance floor of approximately 9000 square feet. At least two additions to the original building followed almost immediately - probably as the impracticalities of an open rooftop dance floor were experienced that first season.

On March 31, 1923 the "New Roof Garden" opened featuring Acherman's Easy Goin' Jazz Orchestra from Los Angeles, marking the beginning of a long period of rooftop entertainment. Under the direction of Tom Archer, a dance hall promoter and proprietor, the Roof Garden featured large bands and other attractions. The pavilion was used for many city social events. Over the ensuing 20 years most of the famous "Big Bands" of that era were headlined at the Roof Garden. By 1938, when promising young band leader Lawrence Welk played there, it was called the "Skylon Ballroom".

Transpiring years saw some gradual physical changes but the building continued to be a prestigious business address. A 1960's conversion installed updated elevators and other features. Finally, a major renovation was completed in the early 1970's. This involved a comprehensive interior modernization of facilities and fixtures. There remain no historically significant interior features with the exception of the original steam boilers in the basement.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10 Page 9

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES -

Commerce Building Woodbury Co, IA

Carl W. Condit, American Building: Materials and Techniques from the Beginning of the Colonial Settlements to the Present (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

Laufer, Marilyn et. al., Sioux City, Iowa: An Architectural View (Sioux City, Sioux City Art Center, 1983).

"Lytle Company" Architects and Builders Files, Historic Preservation Bureau, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines.

Sioux City Tribune. December 25, 26, 1911; April 27, 1912; January 13, 1913; March 31, 1922.

Sioux City Journal. April 17, May 8, June 16, Aug 18, Oct 20, Sept 19, 1912; May 15, June 14, 1922.

Sorensen, Scott and B. Paul Chicoine, Sioux City: A Pictorial History (Norfolk\Virginia Beach: Donning Company, 1982).

City Directories, Sioux City, Iowa: 1911 - 1923.

Castle, Henry, Minnesota. Its Story and Biography (Chicago and New York: Lewis Publishing, 1915).

Newlon, Howard Jr, A Selection of American Papers on Concrete: 1876-1926 (Detroit, Michigan: American Concrete Association, 1976).

Wherry, Joseph. Automobiles of the World (Galahad Books: New York, 1968).

Paul Snyder, Sioux City Iowa, Personal reminiscences from interviews conducted July 18, 1992.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: The legal description of the property is: LOTS 1,2,& 3 - BLOCK 11, Sioux City East Addition, Sioux City IA.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION: The boundaries of the nomination are the legal boundaries of the property and are historically associated with the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number Photo Page 1Photograph Information: The Commerce Building. Woodbury Co.
Iowa

- PHOTO # 1 - Photographer: Paul Snyder
Date of Photo: July 23, 1992
Location of Original Negative:
520 Nebraska St
Sioux City, IA
(the above information applies to all subsequent photos)
Description: Nebraska and Sixth street facades with
streetscape.
Camera facing South East
- PHOTO # 2 - Description: Nebraska and Sixth street facades,
Camera facing South East
- PHOTO # 3 - Description: Nebraska St. and south facades,
Camera facing North East
- PHOTO # 4 - Description: Sixth street and east facades,
Camera facing South West
- PHOTO # 5 - Description: Roof Garden detail.
Camera facing South East
- PHOTO # 6 - Description: Terra Cotta work, "Motor Mart" plaque
Nebraska St facade
Camera facing East
- PHOTO # 7 - Description: Terra Cotta work, Nebraska St facade
Camera facing East
- PHOTO # 8 - Description: First floor interior
Camera facing East
- PHOTO # 9 - Description: Second floor interior.
Camera facing West

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photo Page 2

Photo Information. The Commercial Building. Woodbury Co.
Iowa

PHOTO # 10 - Description: Third floor interior
Camera facing West

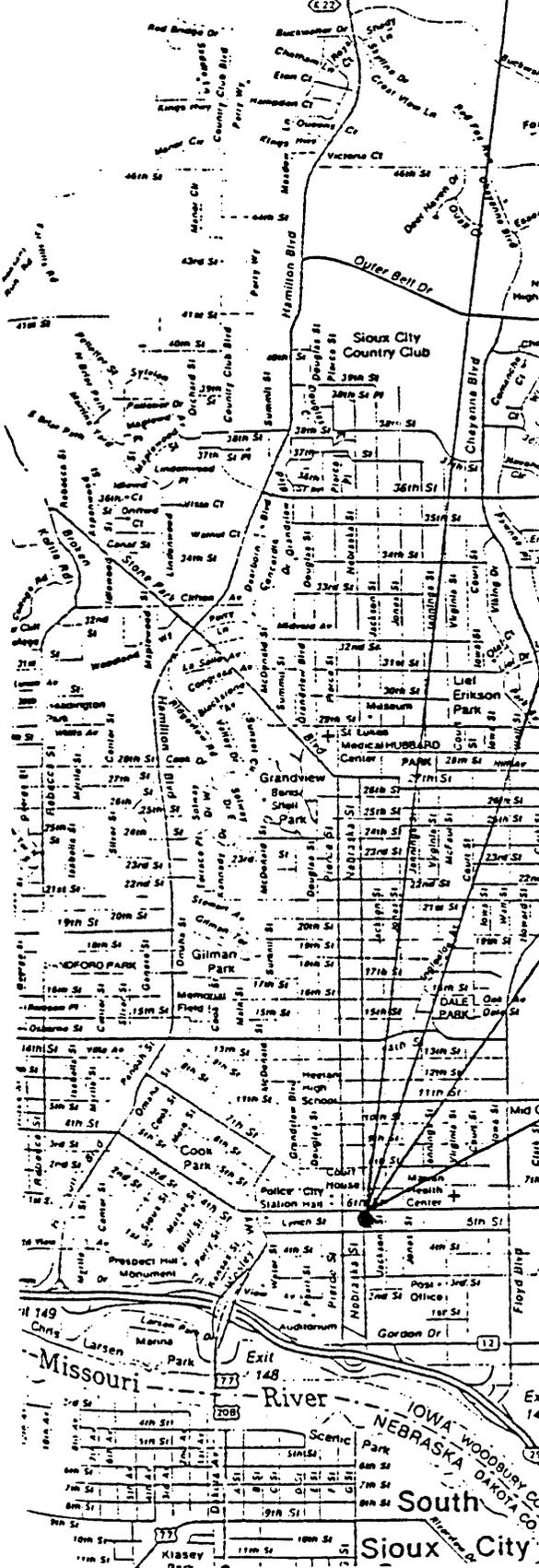
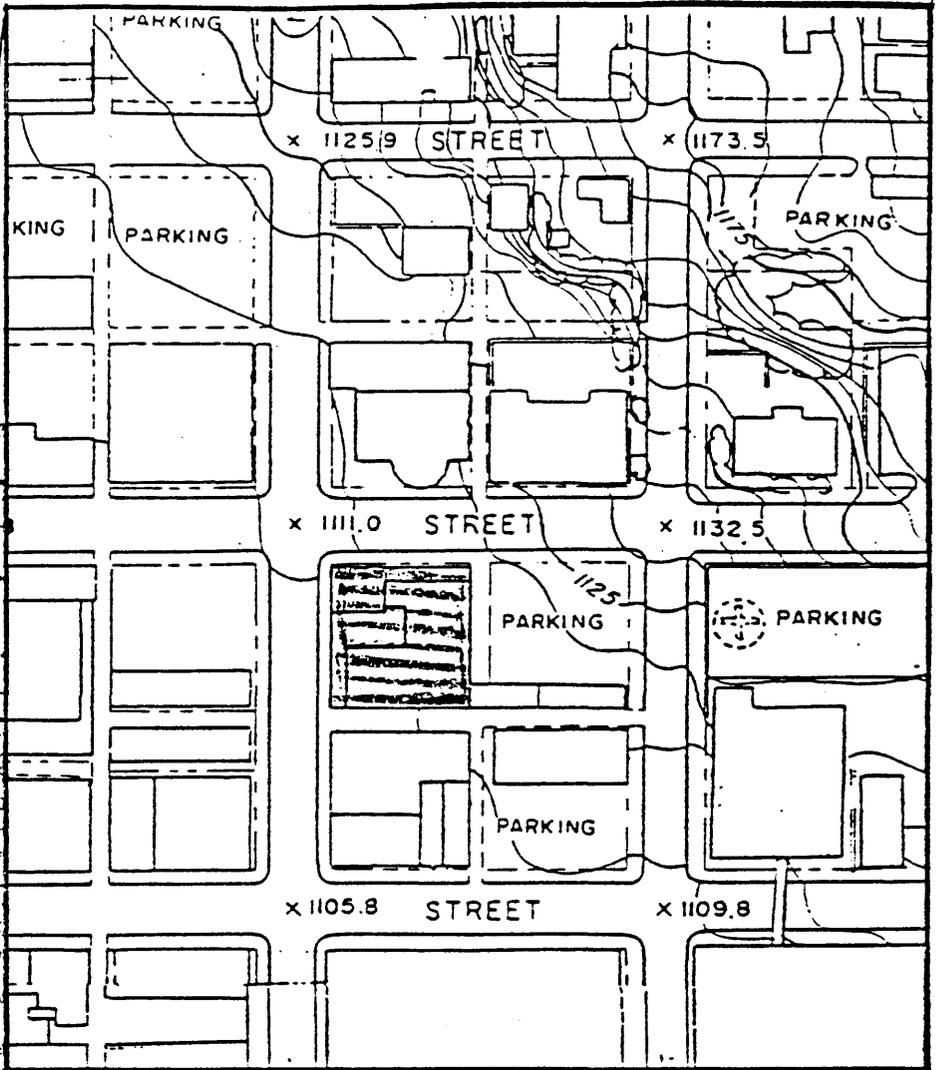
PHOTO # 11 - Description: Fourth floor interior
Camera facing West

PHOTO # 12 - Description: Columns, interior
Camera facing North

PHOTO # 13 - Description: Upper column detail
Camera facing North

PHOTO # 14 - Description: Heating system details
Camera facing East

*The Commerce Building
1125 9th Street*



AB E-W streets west of Country Club Blvd
and Main St designated W
AN N-S streets south of 1st St designated S

Scale 1 inch = .66 mile
Construction of streets and
roads may be in progress in
certain areas.

**Sioux
City**

To Sac City
Fort Dodge

Western Iowa Tech
Community College