NPS Form 10-900
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 classifications, 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 G.G. Gerber Building

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 210 NW 11th Ave. ☐ not for publication

city or town Portland ☐ vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97209

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ____ nationally ____ statewide X locally.

Signature of certifying official/Title - Deputy SHPO — Date: 7-24-07

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Action

✓ 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):

for Edson H. Beall — Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action: 9.6.07

G.G. Gerber Building
Name of Property

Multnomah Co., Oregon
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many as apply)

- X private
- ____ public - local
- ____ public - state
- ____ public - Federal

Category of Property
(check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		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)

INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

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, CONCRETE
roof: METAL
Other:

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

See continuation sheets.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

DESCRIPTION OF PHYSICAL APPEARENCE

The G.G. Gerber Building is located on Lots 2 and 3 of Block 70 in Couch's Addition to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. The parcel is located at the southwest corner of N. W. 11th Avenue, which runs north and south, and N.W. Davis Street, which runs east and west. The building was constructed in 1919 as an automobile repair shop for George Gordon Gerber.

SETTING

The building is located north of downtown in what is now known as the Pearl District, historically an industrial section of the city, with buildings dating from the late nineteenth to late twentieth century. The neighborhood is urban with new high-rise mixed-use buildings and low-rise older industrial buildings. The G.G. Gerber Building is two blocks north of Burnside Street, an arterial east-west route through the heart of Portland, and five blocks west of Broadway Street, a major arterial route running north-south. The 13th Avenue National Historic District is located to the northwest and was listed on the register in 1986. Many of these buildings have been rehabilitated into office and retail space as the area transitions from industrial to commercial. The Gerber Building is located between 10th and 11th Avenues. These streets are one-way (11th south and 10th north) with one-lane for vehicles and one-lane for the Portland Streetcar.

Block 70 is a standard Portland block of 200 by 200 feet. The Gerber Building is located at the southwest corner. To the south across Davis Street is the National Guard Armory Annex, built in 1891, listed on the National Register in 2000, and recently rehabilitated as an investment tax credit project. To the west across 11th Avenue is the four-story Pacific Coast Biscuit Company Building, built in 1890, and currently used as a parking garage. The opposite-corner from the southwest corner is the M Financial Building, built in 2002. It is a ten-story mixed-use building with office, retail, and classroom space for the Portland Art Institute. The Gerber building shares two common walls. The northern common wall is shared with the Bearing Service Company, a one-story warehouse designed by Richard Sundeleaf, built in 1945. The eastern common wall is shared with a one-story commercial structure built in 1921 and currently adapted for modern retail.

SITE

The G.G. Gerber Building is located on a 10,000 square foot parcel. The parcel is generally flat, sloping down approximately ten percent from west to east. The building is built to the lot line with no character defining landscape features.

STRUCTURE

The building is a one-story reinforced concrete and brick building with a metal-clad wooden-truss roof. The foundation is constructed of concrete and is not visible from the exterior of the building. The two street-facing facades (south and west) are constructed of speckled tan-colored brick that has a tactilely rough surface. The brick is laid in a common bond with grey-colored mortar in a raked joint. The north and east facades are plain concrete party walls.

EXTERIOR

West and South Facades

The primary facades are west and south, which face Davis Street and 11th Avenue, comprised of a bay-and-pier system. The bays contain industrial steel sash windows with pivoting awning sections and modern industrial roll doors. The integrated awning section changes position from high to low in the sashes to promote natural air circulation. The windows are accented with painted concrete sills. The bays have sets of two, three, or four windows connected with riveted steel frames. The metal window elements are painted tan in color.

The west facade has six window bays. The bays initiating from the northwest corner are uniform, as each bay has two sashes with twenty-four panes and an integrated awning section of eight frames. The central bay has a modern metal rolled sectional garage door that serves as an automobile entrance. The bay on the southwest corner has two sashes with twenty panes, and each sash has an integrated awning section of eight frames.

The south facade has four window bays. The bay at the southwest corner has three sets of windows each with twenty panes and an integrated awning section of eight frames. The next bay to the east has three windows, with the outer sashes having thirty panes, while the central has twenty panes. Each have integrated awning sections of eight frames. The central bay has a modern metal rolled sectional garage door that serves as an automobile entrance. The western-most bay on the southeastern facade has a modern glass swing door in the western section of the bay nearest the automobile entrance as a pedestrian entrance. There are four windows in the bay. The first has nine panes above the door, the second sash has seventeen panes, which includes a large modern section, the third has twenty-eight panes, and the fourth has twenty-one panes in the sash. The southeast corner bay has three sashes with twenty-eight panes. Each has an integrated awning section of eight panes.

Above the fenestration, the facade is articulated horizontally with a solid smooth cement signage band. Brick corbelling supports the stepped brick cornice under a slight eave at the roof. A brick

chimney rises above the roof line on the southeast corner.

North and East Facades

The secondary facades are the north and east, both concrete party walls. The north wall is connected with a two-story masonry structure and rises above the building approximately five feet. It is painted white. In the northeast corner there are four window openings that contain the original multi-paned industrial sashes. The sashes have been painted over due to the subsequent party wall. The east wall is connected with a single story red brick masonry structure. A light-well runs along approximately three-quarters of the wall. There are six window openings that contain the original multi-paned industrial sashes that have mostly been painted over due to the subsequent party wall. The party wall rises above the building by approximately fifteen feet.

INTERIOR

The building's interior is plain and functional in character. The building's total floor area is about 11,000 square feet. The interior has an open floor plan. There are two bays running east-west that are defined by a central row of unfinished timber columns. The flooring is unfinished cement slab. The western and southern walls are constructed of brick in a bay-and-pier system. The brick is painted with modern white latex paint. The piers protrude approximately two feet from the window bay. The fenestration is the defining feature of these walls, with large industrial steel sashes filling the bays. The eastern and northern walls are party walls constructed of poured concrete and finished in modern white latex paint. These concrete walls have the same bay-and-pier configuration, with the piers protruding approximately two feet. In the southeast and northeast corners are original brick chimneys. Originally an open mezzanine extended along most of the northern wall and some small utilitarian rooms extended across the southern wall. The painted wood and metal support brackets for the mezzanine are intact.

The high ceiling offers exceptional clearance for the auto service function of the building. The ceiling is an exposed, unfinished heavy timber truss rafter system. It is a Pratt Truss system. There are four rows running north-south of "super-span" saw-tooth construction between top and bottom chords. The perimeter of the truss is an angled chord section. Wood slats fill the central section of the truss above the central piers, dividing the ceiling in half. There are eight skylights in wood frames in the ceiling along the east wall in a simple rectangular shape approximately five feet by nine feet in size.

ALTERATIONS

Despite alterations, the building, considered as a whole, has retained historical integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, location, and setting. The exterior is essentially intact in

form, but has been modernized over time. The significant changes are to the doors on the south and west facades. The original garage doors were bi-fold wooden doors with glazed transoms above, but have been replaced with modern sectional roll doors. The pedestrian entrance was originally in the inner bay on the south facade where it currently exists, but was in the opposite (east) side of this bay.

Judging from the original plans, the interior is essentially intact. The design was intended to be stark due to the utilitarian function of the space. Materials beyond the structure have always been minimal. The space has always been utilized in the automotive industry and the interior has been updated over the years to suit the needs of the automotive tenants. The primary modification is the removal of a central demising wall, a shallow wooden open mezzanine along the north wall, and the modernization of the office space.

G.G. Gerber Building
Name of Property

Multnomah Co., Oregon
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).

__X__ 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.

__X__ 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.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1919-1928

Significant Dates
1919, date of construction

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

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- ___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36CFR67) 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
- __X__ Local government
- ___ University
- __X__ Other

Name of repository: Oregon Historical Society, City of Portland Building Records

The G. G. Gerber Building was constructed in 1919 as an automobile repair and parts manufacturing shop for George Gordon Gerber in Portland's downtown Auto Row, centered along Burnside. The Gerber Building represents a specific building type for related, yet ancillary, enterprises in the automobile industry in Portland. The resource is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A, Community Development, for its association with the advent of the automobile and the boom of an auto-related business cluster north of downtown along Burnside. The resource is also eligible under Criterion C, Architecture, as a specific early building type in Portland.

HISTORY OF THE RESOURCE

On December 7, 1919, the *Oregonian* featured the enterprise of G. G. Gerber in a large article in the automobile section. "Another baby industry growing to big-town proportion. Speaking of Portland as a motor car center. Did you know that this city now has the most modern and up-to-date enameling and fender plant west of Chicago?"[1] George Gordon Gerber was born on July 7, 1881 in Albany, New York. At the age of sixteen he struck out on his own and pursued the sheet metal trade. In 1900, he arrived in Portland and was employed with Hirshchberger's sheet metal plant. To gain further sheet metal experience he went to San Francisco, Chicago, and New York.[2] In 1907, he returned to Portland and worked for Burness and Martin, a sheet metal business that specialized in cornice fabrication, warm air heating, and roofing. In 1913, Burness and Martin began offering automobile repair services. The following year, Gerber was promoted to foreman, and in 1915 manager. Gerber was a noted auto body fabricator. "The body of the Chervrolet bug that ran rings around Mount Hood in record time last year...was manufactured by Gerber. He has since filled orders for eight others like it."[3] Among the Oregon Historical Society photo collection is a sketch Gerber's shop created for a custom limousine-style automobile.

His experience gave Gerber the confidence to break off on his own and open Auto Sheet Metal Works. His first business location was at Ninth Avenue and Davis Street. He specialized in the repair and fabrication of radiators and fenders, and the operation quickly outgrew the small building. Gerber partnered with the Value Trust Company for funding and commissioned a new "plant" at the corner of 11th and Davis in early 1919 as the Great War (World War I) came to a close. Following the rationing of sheet metal in the Great War, demand after the war exploded and the auto industry experienced radical growth. By the 1920s, the automobile service industry constituted a new entrepreneurial domain, and Portland boasted eight-hundred filling stations and garages which gave work to 2,400 men. Another 4,000 men managed trucking and transfer companies or worked as chauffeurs and

[1] *Oregonian* (Portland, OR). 6, 1 December 7, 1919.
[2] *History of the Columbia River Valley from the Dalles to the Sea*. Vol. 2, Chicago: The SJ Clarke Publishing Co., 1928, pp. 803-804.
[3] *Oregonian* (Portland, OR). 6, 1 December 7, 1919.

truck drives.[4] Gerber's business experienced this growth. Upon constructing the new building he had developed his one man operation into a business that employed thirty workers in a small-scale plant.

Gerber's success was based on a personal theory of what sells is not how cheaply a piece of work can be done, but rather that satisfied customers are the best advertisement.[5] His high standards paid off as he gained vast experience with sheet metal fabrication that made it possible to offer expanded services in the new plant. Gerber's customers could now receive newly fabricated sheet metal fenders, body parts, and radiators. Repair services were also offered for fenders and bodies:

> In the plant was a fender machine which manufactured crown fenders...This remarkable contrivance is fitted with a series of roll dies by which crown fenders can be made that are exact duplicates in pattern of almost any automobile fender made. The shop also contained an automatic power hammer which could hammer out dents in auto body panels or fenders.[6]

Sheet metal was a key component of the automobile industry. "Sheet metal is simply metal formed into thin and flat pieces. It is one of the fundamental forms used in metalworking, and can be cut and bent into a variety of different shapes...It is characterized by its thickness or gauge of the metal."[7] Due to sheet metal's ability to be formed in to several shapes it was the ideal material for the automobile. During the 1920s, sheet metal comprised the body, the fender, and parts of the working machinery of the automobile. Because it was the main material of the automobile, it became imperative to have the ability to repair and fabricate it. Additionally, automotive technology evolved quickly and a variety of car makes and models were on the market. The parts for all autos were not necessarily readily available to auto repair shops. Sheet metal fabricators became necessary to the repair of autos because they could fabricate the part that was needed.

The new service that made Auto Sheet Metal Works further stand apart from competitors was the sheet metal enameling. Enamel provides a durable protective layer for the sheet metal, offering protection from elemental issues like rust. The plant boasted three enameling ovens "the only ones of their kind west of Chicago."[8] Prior to opening the shop at 11th and Davis, there was no modern sheet metal enameling plant on the west coast. Once a piece of sheet metal was fabricated or repaired it could be enameled, giving the metal that sought after "factory finish." The process was lengthy and required an expert to accomplish a high quality finish. The first step was a three part cleaning process that entailed sand blasting, a water wash, and drying. The next step was spraying a

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[4] Abbott, Carl. Portland. *Planning, Politics and Growth in a Twentieth Century City.* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1983)
[5] *Oregonian* (Portland, OR). 6, 1 December 7, 1919.
[6] Ibid
[7] Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheet_Metal, *"Sheet Metal".*
[8] *Oregonian* (Portland, OR). 6, 1 December 7, 1919.

primary coat, followed by two cycles of baking and coating, in preparation for the final layer. The final step was the application of varnish and a final baking to produce the shiny "factory finish."

The new building was designed to suit the needs of the modern machinery for the auto shop/plant. Auto Sheet Metal Works now offered expanded services, including radiators, fenders, and bodies for repair, fabrication, and enameling. The machinery required tall ceilings and an open floor plan. Motor belt systems, which kept the machinery running connected to the rafter system and open space, were occupied by a collection of machinery that included a fender molder, a sheet metal press, drill press, and wood working tools for custom interior finishes. The enameling ovens enabled the shop to give the "new car" look for the custom fabrication of any sheet metal item.

Gerber occupied this building from 1919 until 1928 when, due to a growing demand, it was necessary to expand. He moved within the auto district to a new location at 418 N.W. 11th Avenue. Presumably, his high quality work and referrals gave him a large customer base in Portland. He ran his business as president and manager until his until his death in 1949, when he passed away from a heart ailment at the age of sixty-seven.

Following Gerber's departure, the Gerber Building continued to be occupied by transportation-related businesses. After Gerber, the first occupant was the Oregon Kenworth Company, a commercial truck dealer. In 1931, a trucking company, Elks Transfer and Storage Company, moved in. Three years later, Elks divided the space using the northern half of the building while Ammer E.G. Inc Auto Repairs occupied the south. These two businesses occupied the building into the late 1940s. Since that time, the building has been occupied by various auto-related businesses, some utilizing the whole space and others dividing the building in half for two occupants. The Gerber building is the last remaining building that Auto Sheet Metal Works occupied. The two others have been demolished.

THE AUTOMOBILE IN PORTLAND, 1885-1930

Few inventions revolutionized day-to-day life as did the automobile. At first, it was a tinker's toy. Usually the product of wagon makers and bicycle shops, it ran on steam, electricity, or gasoline. The first practical car is credited to Gottlieb Daimler and Carl Benz in Germany in 1885. Charles and Frank Duryea of Chicopee, Massachusetts are often credited with the first American gasoline automobile, a 1-cylinder, 4-horsepower engine mounted underneath a carriage body. The first outdoor test was conducted on September 20, 1893, and the car traveled 200 feet.[9]

[9] Beverly Rae Kimes and Henry Austin Clark, Jr., *Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805-1942* (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 1989); Bentley, John. *Great American Automobiles.* (Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1957); Heritage Consulting Group historic Portland research files.

While Duryea may have built the first functional car, the spark to the American automobile industry was Alexander Winton. Winton emigrated from Scotland in 1884 and settled in Cleveland. In 1891, he established the Winton Bicycle Company and five years later, when the bottom dropped out of the bicycle market, he built a 1-cylinder car. The following year, he organized the Winton Motor Carriage Company and by spring built his second car, with a 2-cylinder. On Memorial Day, he drove it at an astonishing speed of 33.64 mph around Cleveland's Glenville Horse Track. That fall, he drove a circuitous 800 mile trip from Cleveland to New York in thirty-eight hours, timing his arrival to coincide with the Automobile Show at Madison Square Garden. Moving into production, by the end of 1898, Winton produced and sold twenty-two cars. He established a formal production process and the following year manufactured and sold 100 cars. The next year, Winton took another trip to New York and the publicity surrounding the trip solidified the horseless carriage nomenclature as an "automobile." Winton's sales grew steadily from 700 cars in 1901, to 850 in 1903, and 1,100 in 1907.[10]

Between 1901 and 1910, the automobile became a primary component of American culture. In 1898, there were fifty automobile manufacturers in the country, a decade later, there were five times that. Production rose from 7,000 in 1901, to 181,000 in 1910. By 1916, motorcar production topped 1.2 million, a 50 percent growth over 1915 sales. In total, by 1915, there were 2.4 million cars registered in the United States against an estimated population of 100 million. By the end of the 1920s, production reached four million cars and nationally one in five households owned a car. In Portland, by the end of the 1920s one in four households owned a car.[11] Driving had become a potent form of mass entertainment, and the automobile was elevated to a much-sought-after cultural icon. Next to a home, a car was a family's most expensive purchase. The number of registered cars nationally more than tripled during the 1920's, to an astonishing twenty-three million by 1930.[12]

The car that catapulted auto sales in America was Henry Ford's Model T. In 1906, Ford produced 8,000 vehicles, making him the largest auto manufacturer in the country. Two years later, he introduced the Model T, a model that he continued to refine and develop until 1927. In the first year, he produced 1,000 cars. This car featured a twenty horsepower, four-cylinder engine on a 100-inch wheelbase with dogged reliability. It could travel up to forty-five mph and get twenty-five mpg. By 1913, Ford introduced an assembly line production, thereby cutting production time from twelve and a half hours to one and a half hours. Sales prices ever decreased from $850 to $290 by 1924. In 1908, Ford had 8 percent of the marketplace, while ten years later, he controlled 48 percent.[13] By

[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Liebs, Chester H. *Main Street to Miracle Mile, American Roadside Architecture* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1985) pp. 20.
[13] Beverly Rae Kimes and Henry Austin Clark, Jr., *Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805-1942* (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 1989), pp. 559-562.

1914, the company had west coast assembly plants in Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Portland. Portland's Ford assembly plant started production in 1914 with ten cars per day.[14] The automobile had definitely established a share in America's culture.

"The development of automotive technology was rapid, due in part to the hundreds of small manufactures competing to gain the world's attention." [15] Due to the variety of auto manufactures, parts were not interchangeable from car to car. It was not until the late 1920s that manufacturing became more streamlined and interchangeable parts became available. By 1924, the American automobile market was beginning to become saturated and Alfred Sloan of General Motors (GM) created the concept of a yearly make and model to drive sales, which revolutionized the auto industry. This move to create different makes and models made it possible to have shared/interchangeable parts between models. Interchangeable parts made for a higher volume of mass production for the manufactures. Ultimately, it made it possible to make more affordable automobiles. An example of how parts became interchangeable is the 1930s LaSalle; a brand of GM sold by Cadillac used mechanical parts made by Oldsmobile to keep costs down.

The first car appeared in Oregon and Portland on November 3, 1899. Henry Wemme was a German-born tent and awning merchant who arrived from the East in 1882. Much of his business success was from selling tents to Alaska-bound miners. When the Klondike gold rush boom went bust, he was hopelessly overextended with considerable raw material and no market. The sinking of the *Maine* in February 1898, and the subsequent Spanish American War, however, prompted an order of 32,000 tents from the federal government. Wemme ordered a car at the end of 1898. Upon arrival, he drove it at ten mph along Sixth Avenue, and five mph on the cobblestones of Front Avenue. It was a Stanley Steamer, one of 100 produced in Watertown, Massachusetts. By 1906, there were an estimated forty cars in Portland, including open air buses transporting visitors to the Lewis & Clark Exposition.

The city government became increasingly automobile aware. Planners recognized that the layout of Portland was not meeting the needs of the motorist. In 1913, the city completed the Broadway Bridge to relieve cross-river traffic and contemplated a licensing requirement for cars. At the same time, the city enacted the first comprehensive code for automobile and pedestrian traffic. The city had strong roots in the Good Roads Movement, a movement that was popular in the United States between 1880 and 1916 in which participants advocated for the education of road building and the improvement of roads in rural areas between cities.[16] In 1914, under the Good Roads Movement and leadership of John Yeon, Rufus Holman, C. S. Jackson, and others, the scenic Columbia Gorge

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[14] MacColl, E. Kimbark. *The Shaping of a City: Business and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1885 to 1915.* (Portland, OR: The Georgian Press Company, 1976), pp.431-432.
[15] Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/Automobile, *"Automobile"*.
[16] Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/Good_Roads_Movement,*"Good Roads Movement"*.

Highway opened. In 1918, due to the expense of expansive road development, Oregon became the first state in the nation to impose a gasoline tax for highway construction.

"Portland was more dependant than the average city on personal transportation."[17] In 1916, automobile registration in Multnomah County was 8,800, or one for every twenty residents. Fourteen years later, in 1930, that number rose to 88,000, or one for every four residents. By the late 1920s, Portlanders spent as much on automobiles as they did on food: $42 million to buy new cars and keep them running, and $100 million on automobile related expenses in total. Eight thousand local workers made their living selling, servicing, or driving cars and trucks. One 1927 report noted that Oregonians annually consumed more gallons of gasoline per motor vehicle registered than any other northern or western state. By the third decade of the twentieth century, over thirty percent of the city's land related to automobile uses. New improvements in the road systems in the 1920s promoted automobile usage, notably the reconstruction of the Burnside Bridge and construction of Sellwood and Ross Island Bridges.[18]

AUTOMOBILE REPAIR IN PORTLAND, 1903-1920

Before long, American cities saw the birth of a new kind of commercial district: the auto row.[19] Dealerships, repair shops, parts suppliers, gas stations, and other automotive establishments gathered here typically just outside a city's downtown core. Despite the competitive nature of operating similar businesses, these clusters thrived, as they had a more powerful draw to the automotive consumer being located together. At first, these businesses were typically based off of another trade and due to the rising popularity of automobiles evolved into providing automotive services. But as the automobile took hold in the United States and Portland, businesses were converted wholly to the automotive trade and some, like Gerber, built entirely new structures for this purpose.

The first reference to an automobile-related business listed in Portland's city directories was the Fred T. Merill Cycle Company in 1903, located on 6th Avenue, a bicycle based business that evolved to offer automotive services. "In 1898, Merill sold 8,850 bicycles making him the biggest bicycle operator west of the Mississippi."[20] By 1903 the bicycle craze was slowing down and to diversify

[17] Abbott, Carl. Portland. *Planning, Politics and Growth in a Twentieth Century City.* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1983, pp. 93.
[18] Abbott, Carl. Portland. *Planning, Politics and Growth in a Twentieth Century City.* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1983); MacColl, E. Kimbark. *The Growth of a City: Power and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1915-1950.* (Portland: The Georgian Press, 1979).
[19] Liebs, Chester H. *Main Street to Miracle Mile, American Roadside Architecture* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1985) pp. 91.
[20] Lansing, Jewel. *Portland: People, Politics, and Power 1851-2001.* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003) pp 226.

business Merill began to offer automotive services. The first business to open solely for automobile repair was McCartney and Son opening in 1905 it was located near downtown on Stark Street. The auto industry grew, responding to the local demand. In 1916, the year Gerber opened Auto Sheet Metal Works in its first location, there were a total of 186 auto related businesses in Portland, and sixty-five were specifically auto repair shops.[21]

By 1920, in the economic boom that followed the Great War, the auto industry experienced radical growth. In part, this growth was due to the end of wartime rationing of sheet metal, and automobile makers were no longer limited in production. The number of automobile-related businesses ranging from sales, parts, repair, service stations, supplies, and storage, flourished, expanding from 186 in 1916, to 473 in 1920. As the amount of motorists grew, the needs of servicing an automobile became more obvious and the auto service industry responded. More specialized commerce for the automobile was developed and there were thirty-four businesses dedicated to automobile repair. Approximately half of the automobile repair shops, including Gerber's, were located within the area north of downtown. The blocks bounded by the N.W. Park Avenue to the east, W. Burnside to the south, N.W. 14th Avenue to the west, and N.W. Everett to the north, made up downtown Portland's auto row. Additional auto-rows were located in East Portland at Grand and Burnside, 82nd Avenue, and Hawthorne.

THE G.G. GERBER BUILDING CONSIDERATION FOR LISTING UNDER CRITERION A

The G. G. Gerber Building is eligible for listing in the National Register for its association with the advent of the automobile and the boom of an auto-related business cluster in the early industrial area north of downtown Portland. A variety of auto-related businesses located in the neighborhood, ranging from repair, sales, supplies, parts, storage, and trucking companies, created Portland's auto row. The G.G. Gerber building is the earliest extant structure in the neighborhood, which was constructed specifically for automotive repair and sheet metal fabrication. It stands apart due to the caliber of business which it held, a successful sheet metal operation which was the only one of its kind providing auto sheet metal enameling services on the West Coast at the time it opened.

The G. G. Gerber Building was constructed during a period of transition for the northwest neighborhood positioned within Couch's Addition to the city of Portland. In the nineteenth century, Couch developed the neighborhood as residential, but the city soon experienced exponential growth and the industrial area on the riverfront expanded out. The section northwest of downtown was a natural expansion area for industry because of its close proximity to the river, the railroad, and downtown.

[21] Polk's Portland, Oregon City Directory (Portland, OR: Polks)

In 1919, the block on which George Gerber built was residential. Within a decade, however, most of the town homes on the block were demolished to make way for small-scale industrial buildings. By 1944, when Richard Sundeleaf's Bearing Service Company was constructed, the block was completely transformed for auto-related businesses. The auto-related businesses flourished in this area north of downtown Portland and by the 1950s the area surrounding the Gerber building was predominantly auto-related.[22] The 1969 Sanborn Map shows that the auto-cluster expanded in the area, and the Pacific Biscuit Factory directly across the street from the Gerber Building had been adapted into a parking garage. The blocks bounded by N.W. Park Avenue to the east, W. Burnside to the south, N.W. 14th Avenue to the west, and N.W. Everett to the north were clearly an auto district with most blocks hosting predominately auto-related businesses.[23] In the mid-1990s, the neighborhood began to be redeveloped as a high-density, mixed-use neighborhood, primarily occupied with condominiums and retail. As a result, only a handful of small-scale industrial buildings remain in the area.

ROLE OF THE G.G. GERBER BUILDING IN THE COMMUNITY: Comparative Analysis of Automobile-Related Buildings in the Area North of Downtown Portland, 1913-1944

The G.G. Gerber Building is significant and worthy of being listed in the National Register as it represents the earliest extant building constructed specifically for the automobile repair industry and more specifically sheet metal fabrication and repair. It facilitated the establishment of an automobile repair industry-related cluster in the area north of downtown Portland. In 1920, approximately half of the automobile repair shops in Portland listed in the city directory were located within this area north of downtown. Of these some fifteen businesses, only four remain and the Gerber is the earliest resource. Portland's Inventory of Historic Resources and related sources identify a handful of remaining resources from the auto cluster that related to auto repair in this neighborhood of these none are identified as being related to sheet metal fabrication or repair.

Raymond Guy (12th N.W. Eighth Avenue; 1920):
This one-story brick utilitarian structure was designed by MacNaughton and Raymond, Inc. The automotive repair garage has a simple massing with an open plan. The brick shell has tall brick piers with bays of industrial garage doors and modern windows.

Automotive Garage (322-324 N.W. 10th Avenue; 1920):
This one-story reinforced concrete utilitarian structure was designed as an automotive repair garage and retail. The garage has rectangular massing and a simple open plan. The exterior has a pier-and-window system with a single industrial garage door. This building has a moderate level of integrity, as the industrial windows have been replaced with plate glass.

[22] Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Portland, Oregon, 1950.
[23] Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Portland, Oregon, 1969.

Beryl Investment Company (229-235 N.W. 10th Avenue; 1920):
This two-story reinforced concrete utilitarian structure was designed by the owner as an automotive repair garage. The design is similar to the Gerber Building, with the exception of the second-story transom and stepped parapet.

Armory Automotive (100 N.W. 10th Avenue; 1922):
This one-story reinforced concrete utilitarian structure was designed as an automotive repair garage. It has a brick-pier and industrial steel-sash window wall system with an industrial garage door on the main facade. This building has a moderate level of integrity, as the industrial windows have been replaced with plate glass.

Pacific Coast Biscuit Company Garage and Warehouse (1140 N.W. Everett Street; 1925):
This one-story streetcar-era commercial structure was designed by Strong and MacNaughton as a garage and warehouse. The type of garage it was designed for is not specified. The building has a brick pier-and-sash wall system. The industrial steel-sash windows and industrial garage door bays are in the rear of the building.

The Royce Brothers (624-628 N.W. 6th Avenue; 1928):
This two-story, concrete frame, California Mission Style, utilitarian structure was designed by Charles W. Ertz as an automotive garage with retail space. The type of garage it was designed for is not specified. It has a more stylistic design than a standard garage due to the dual retail and garage purpose. The central entrance has a three-bay wide parapet-pediment that extends over the tile roof line.

Bearing Service Company (1040 N.W. Everett Street; 1944):
This one-story reinforced concrete streamline moderne structure was designed by Richard Sundeleaf as an automotive machine shop. The defining design feature of the building is the streamline fenestration comprised of a concrete pier and industrial steel sash window system. Although it was built over a decade later than the G. G. Gerber Building, in a different style, it is located on the same block and completed the block as the final piece in its automotive-related purpose.

The Historic Resource Inventory was a city-driven effort with extensive public input. However, the automobile-related buildings listed represent only a minimum number. The buildings listed on the inventory were recorded through a windshield survey, where only the high style architectural gems stood out in Portland's landscape. Typically, small industrial buildings, like the G.G. Gerber Building, were overlooked. Additional and targeted research may identify existing resources of the era not

previously associated with the automobile industry. The area north of downtown Portland has been highly redeveloped and most of the small industrial resources that once dominated the neighborhood have been demolished. The G. G. Gerber Building now stands as the earliest extant building constructed specifically for the automobile repair industry and more specifically the only one identified as a sheet metal fabrication shop.

THE G.G. GERBER BUILDING CONSIDERATION FOR LISTING UNDER CRITERION C

The G. G. Gerber Building is eligible for listing in the National Register as an exceptional example of one of the earliest structures specifically constructed for automobile repair in Portland. As a building type, the G. G. Gerber Building embodies the characteristics and features of the early automotive repair shop. Automotive repair buildings are distinguished by simple massing, open floor plans, large industrial steel-sash windows, durable materials, high ceilings, and a lack of ornamentation. Typically commissioned by small business owners, these buildings are spaces of economy, as well as function.

The Gerber Building was constructed as a "house of work" with spacious rooms divided only by the function of the space, making the work easy to organize and oversee. The basic design of the shell's main elevations along the west and south is a pier-and-sash wall system, which allows the work space to be bright with natural light. In addition, this feature has the economic benefit of being less expensive than artificial light. The industrial steel multi-paned sash windows were installed for function, featuring pivoting awning sections in each sash, the awnings were dispersed at different heights throughout the building to aid in air circulation. These industrial steel sash windows provide a vast amount of light and natural air circulation that the shop required. The large industrial door bays in the pier system permits ultimate accessibility, allowing the automobile to be driven directly into the building. The high ceilings, trussed roof, and open plan provided the work space for large mechanical systems required in Gerber's operation. Brackets were attached to the truss roof and walls, and in turn attached to the shafting and belting in the group drive motor that powered the fabrication machinery. The mezzanine provided storage space and a clear view to oversee employees. The concrete and wood are durable materials to withstand the heat, chemicals, and vibrations of the factory operations.

Gerber's Auto Sheet Metal Works had multiple facets, including sheet metal fabrication and repair, enameling, woodwork, and general repair. The building was designated into quadrants to facilitate the needs of the auto business. The northwest quadrant held woodworking, general installation, and repair equipment. This is also where the cars where worked on and stored. The northeast quadrant held three enameling ovens, the only three of their kind west of Chicago when the business opened in 1919. The northwest and southwest quadrants held the sheet metal fabrication and manipulation machinery, the heart of Gerber's business.

In the G. G. Gerber Building, the total design scheme speaks of its original automotive-repair purpose. It is an exceptional example of one of the earliest structures built specifically as an automotive repair and manufacturing garage found in Portland.

THE G.G. GERBER BUILDING AS A BUILDING TYPE: A Comparative Analysis of Automobile-Related Buildings in Portland, 1913-1926

The G. G. Gerber Building is eligible for listing in the National Register as it represents one of the earliest known remaining resources to be specifically constructed for automobile repair in Portland. While the design and construction of automobile dealerships has been recognized, this category of the automobile industry has long been overlooked due to the simple industrial nature of the design type. The building not only embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction, it also possesses a high level of integrity. Portland's Inventory of Historic Resources and related sources identify only a handful of extant automotive-related buildings in the City of Portland. These auto-related buildings are similar in design and form as a building type. The Gerber Building is the only building identified as being constructed for auto sheet metal fabrication and repair.

North Pacific Auto and Wagon Works (910 N.W. Hoyt Street; 1913):
This two-story reinforced concrete utilitarian garage was designed by John Larkin of Oregon Architectural and Engineering Company. This building was originally built as a carriage and wagon repair shop and later adapted to repair automobiles.

Ford Motor Assembly Plant (2505 S.E. Eleventh Avenue; 1914):
This three-story reinforced concrete brick utilitarian style building was designed by A. E. Doyle for the Ford Motor Company. It was designed as a factory to assemble automobiles.

J. M. Llewellyn Garage (6464 N. Greeley Avenue; 1919):
This one-story reinforced concrete structure was designed by W. W. Lucius as an automobile garage. It has rectangular massing with a simple open plan. This building, although built as an automobile garage, is not known to have been specifically built as an automotive repair shop. It served as a neighborhood garage in a north Portland residential neighborhood.

Autorest Garage (925-35 SW 10th Avenue; 1917):
This two-story brick utilitarian structure was designed by Jacobberger & Smith as an automotive showroom for the Stutz and Columbia automobile lines. The decorative features include a stepped parapet and cast-stone corbels. It is listed on the National Register.

Lind Warehouse and Garage (508 N. Tillamook Street; 1925):
This one-story reinforced concrete utilitarian building was designed by Ernst Kroner as a warehouse and garage (type unspecified). The brick clad exterior has a pier-and-sash wall system. The building is located in north Portland.

Gibstein Automotive Repair Garage (2076 N.W. Marshall Street; 1926):
This one-story streetcar-era commercial style building was designed by Lucius and Cash as an automotive repair garage. The garage served as a neighborhood garage in northwest Portland residential neighborhood.

CONCLUSION

The 1919 G. G. Gerber Building is locally outstanding and largely intact and is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A and C. It is one of the earliest buildings constructed specifically for use as an automotive repair shop. The building was built during a time when commercial and industrial building design was evolving to the meet the demands of the new motorist, and this building responded to that need. It is also significant as a business that anchored an auto-related business cluster in a developing industrial neighborhood. Currently, the area north of downtown Portland is being redeveloped into a mixed-use, high density, residential neighborhood. The Gerber Building, therefore, is one of a handful of small industrial buildings extant in this neighborhood. The building's significance, therefore, is elevated due to the demolition of many of the small industrial structures that once defined the neighborhood.

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Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/Good_Roads_Movement,*"Good Roads Movement."*

Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/Sheet_Metal, "Sheet Metal."

OTHER SOURCES

City of Portland Building Development Services Microform and Card Files

Heritage Consulting Group historic Portland research files

Multnomah County Tax Assessor Records

The Oregon Historical Society photographic research files

The Oregon Journal

The Oregonian

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Portland, Oregon

G.G. Gerber Building
Name of Property

Multnomah Co., Oregon
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	10	524938	5041068
2			
3			
4			

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 John M. Tess, President

organization Heritage Consulting Group date March 6, 2007

street & number 1120 NW Northrup St. telephone (503) 228-0272

city or town Portland state OR zip code 97209

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

name Mark Edlen, GED, Armory II, LLC

street & number 1120 NW Couch, Suite 600 telephone (503) 229-6000

city or town Portland state OR zip code 97209

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The G.G. Gerber Building is located on Lots 2 and 3 of Block 70 of Couch's Addition to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

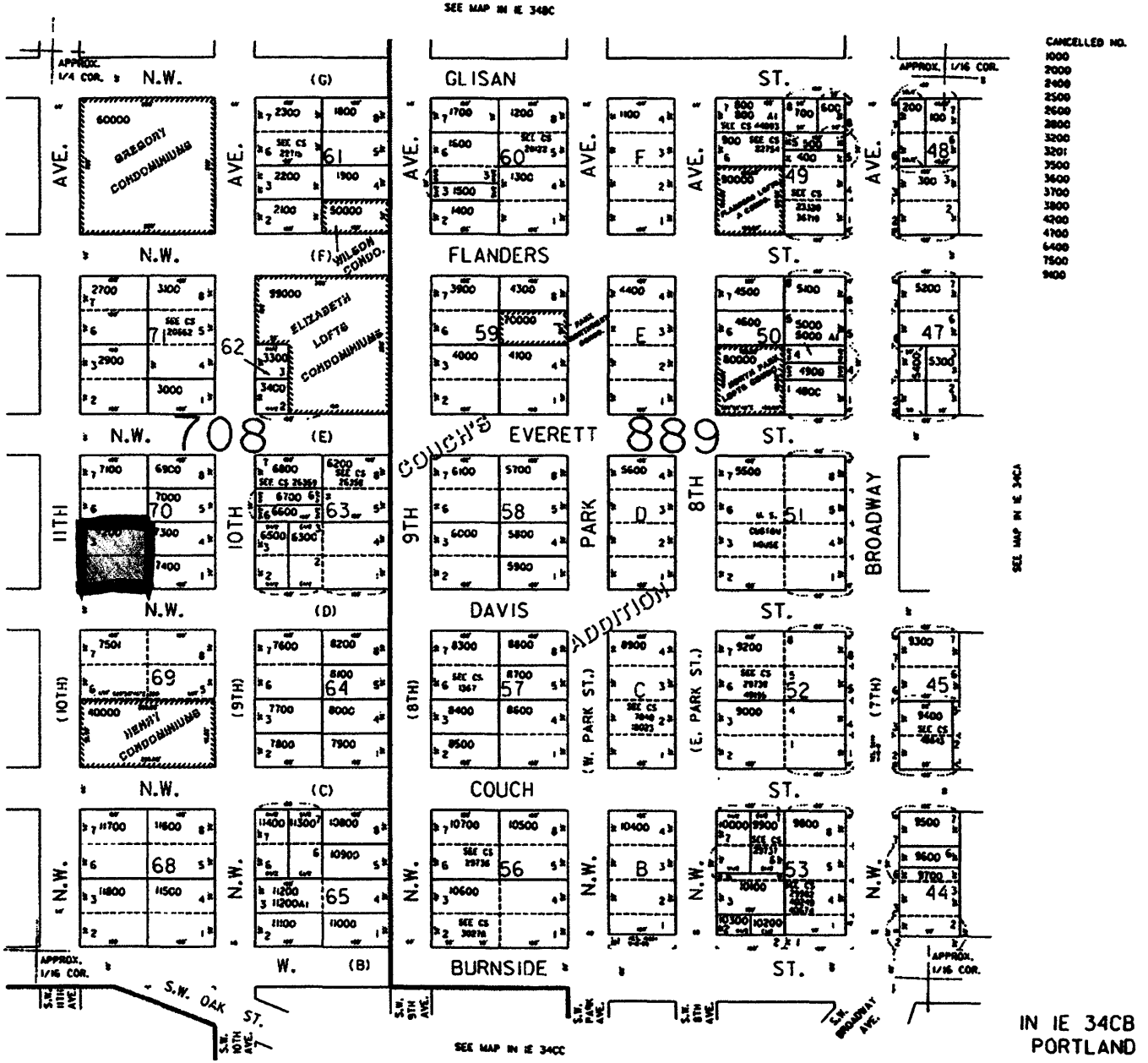
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary is the legally recorded boundary historically associated with the G.G. Gerber Building for which National Register status is being requested.

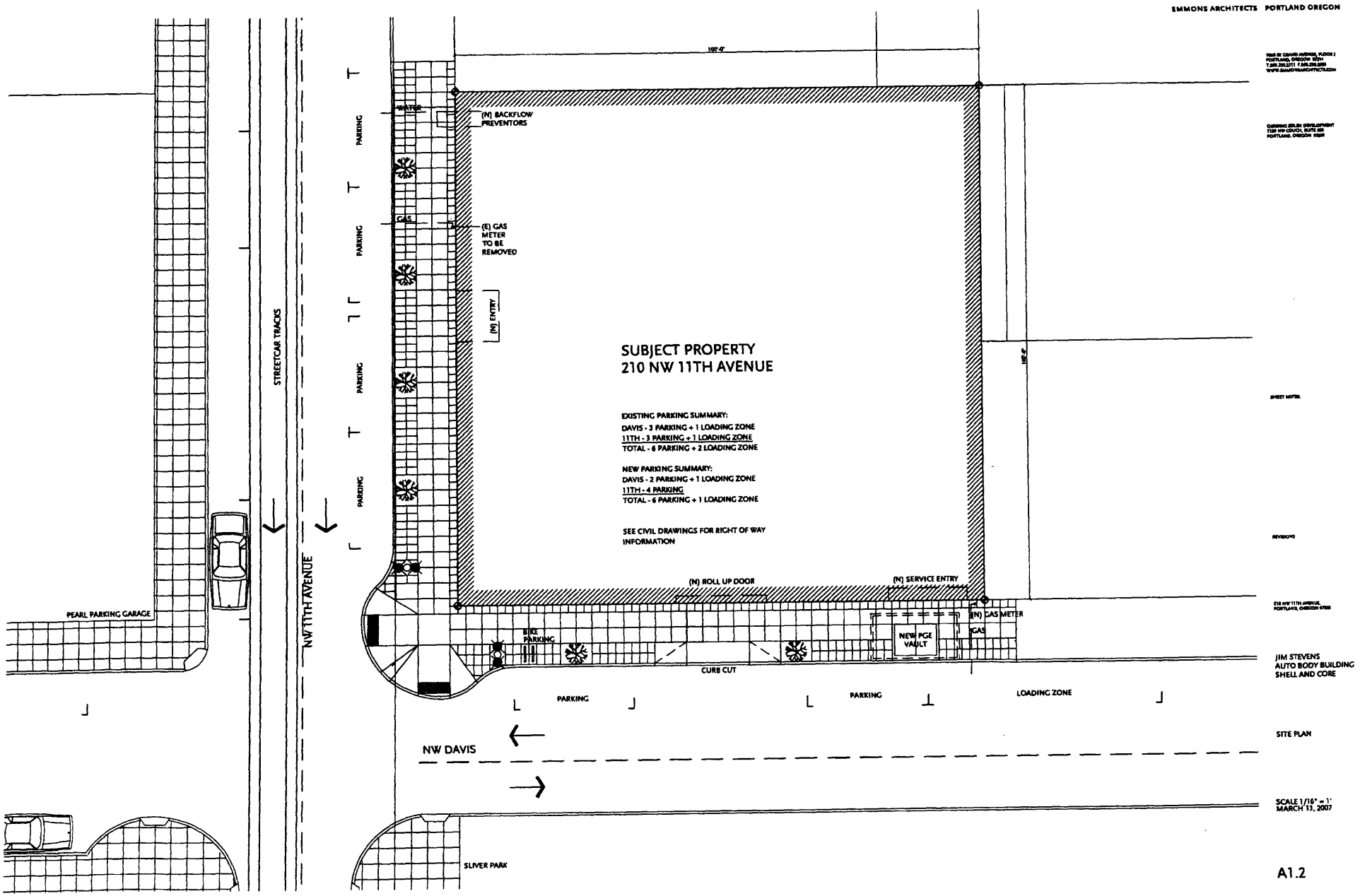
THIS MAP WAS PREPARED FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSE ONLY

NW1/4 SW1/4 SEC. 34 T.1N. R.1E. W.M.
MULTNOMAH COUNTY
1" = 100'

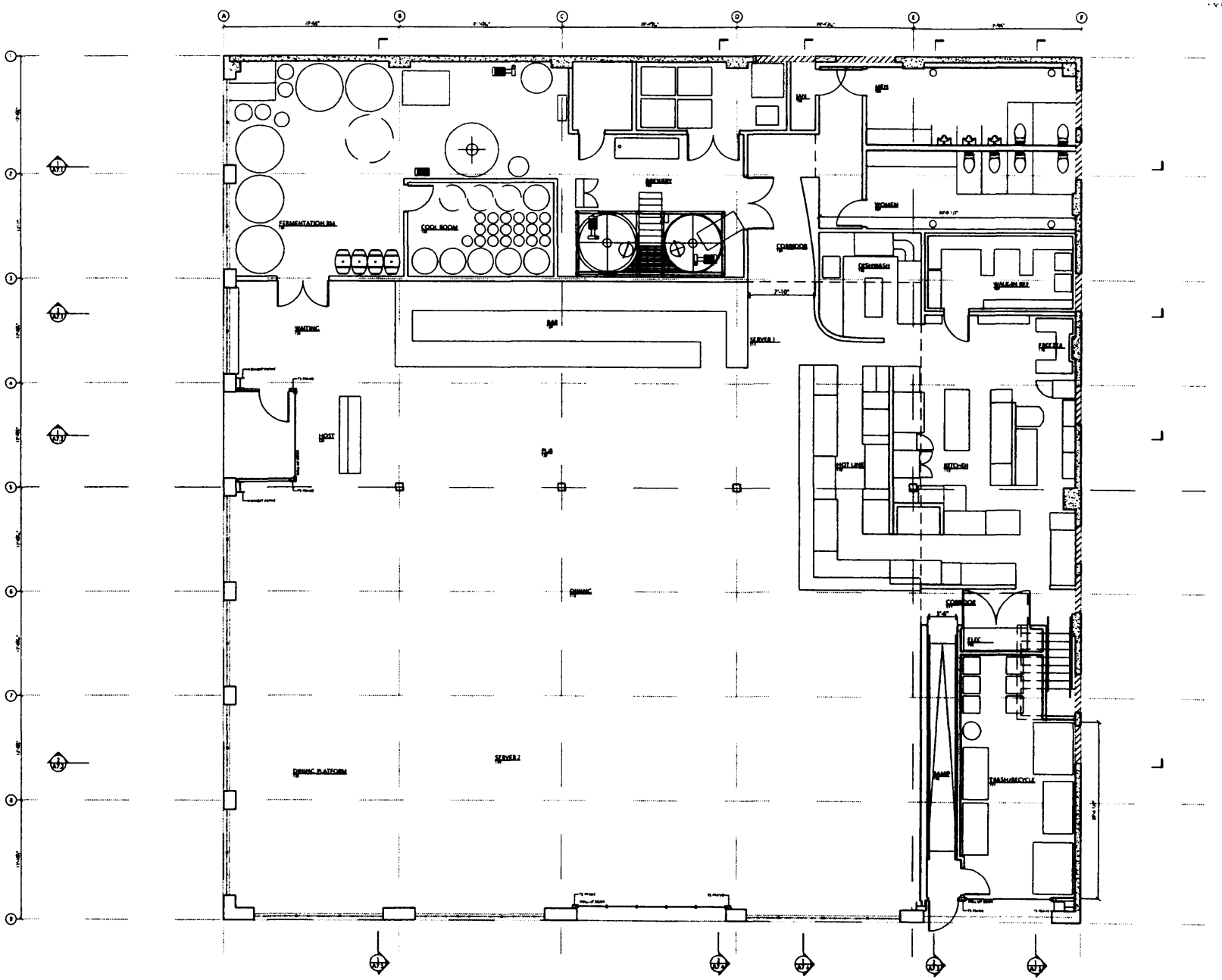
IN 1E 34CB
PORTLAND



IN 1E 34CB
PORTLAND



G.S. Gerber Building Site Plan

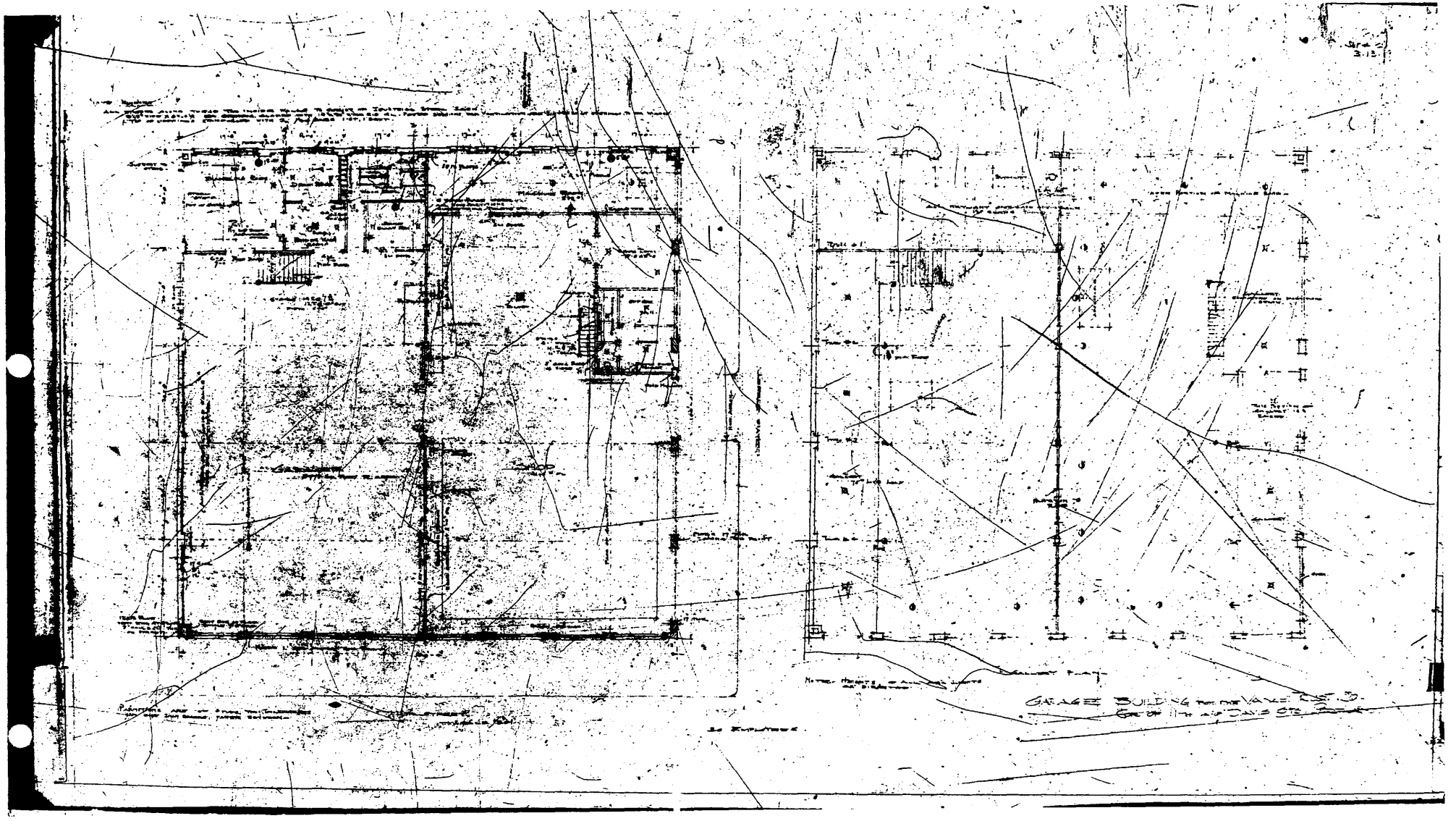


FIRST FLOOR
SHELL CORE + TI PLAN

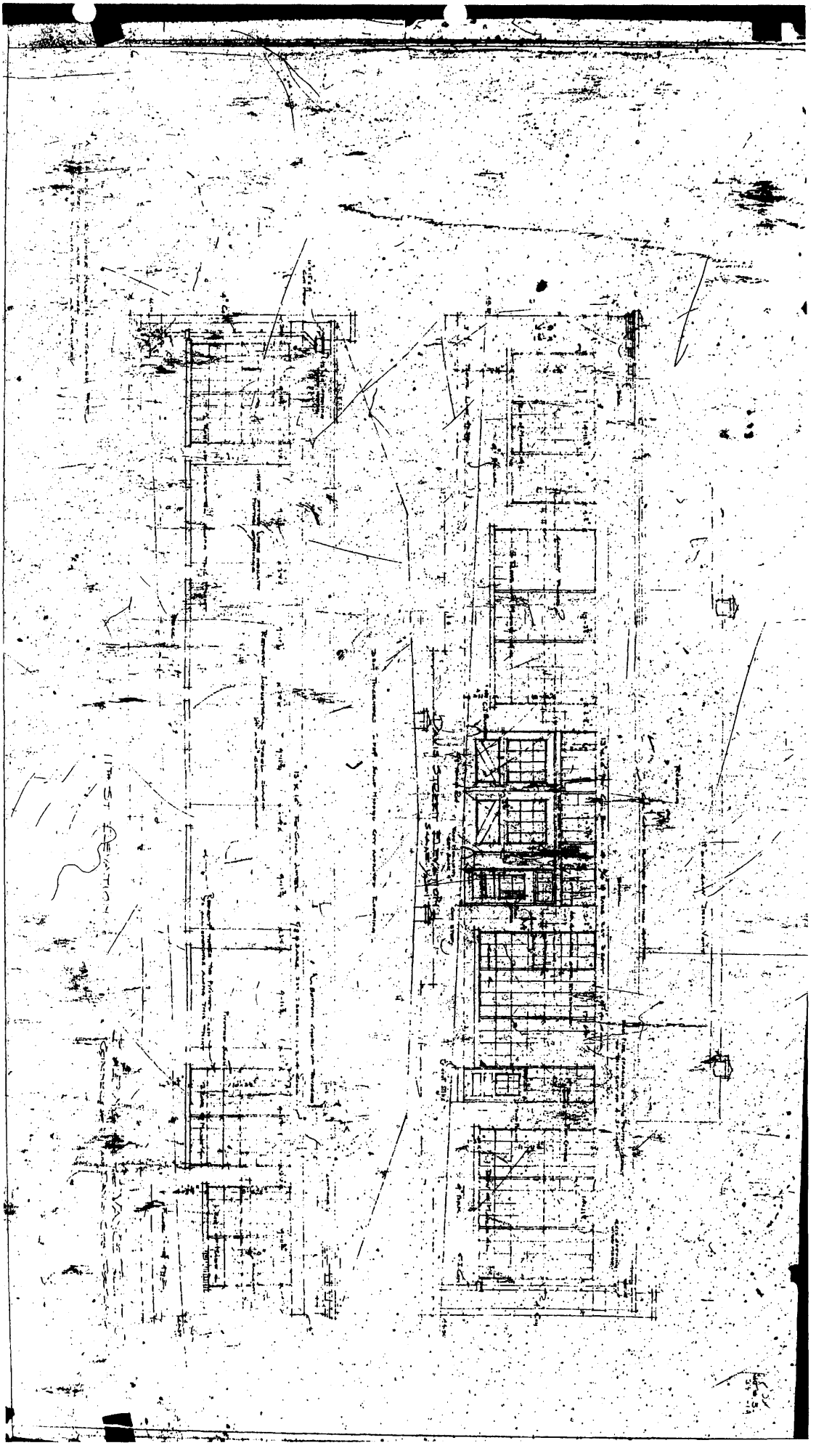
SCALE 1" = ½"

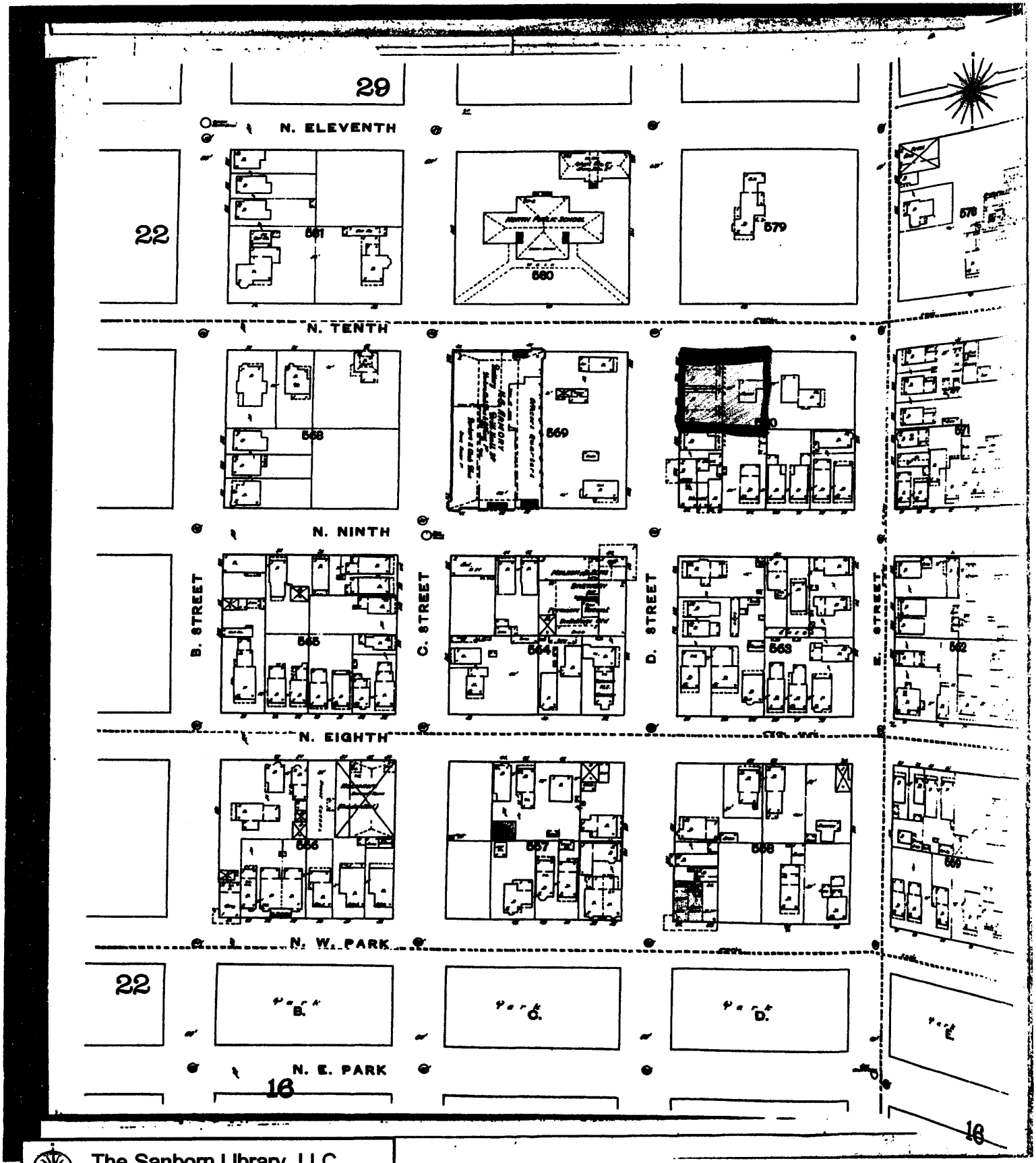
A4.1

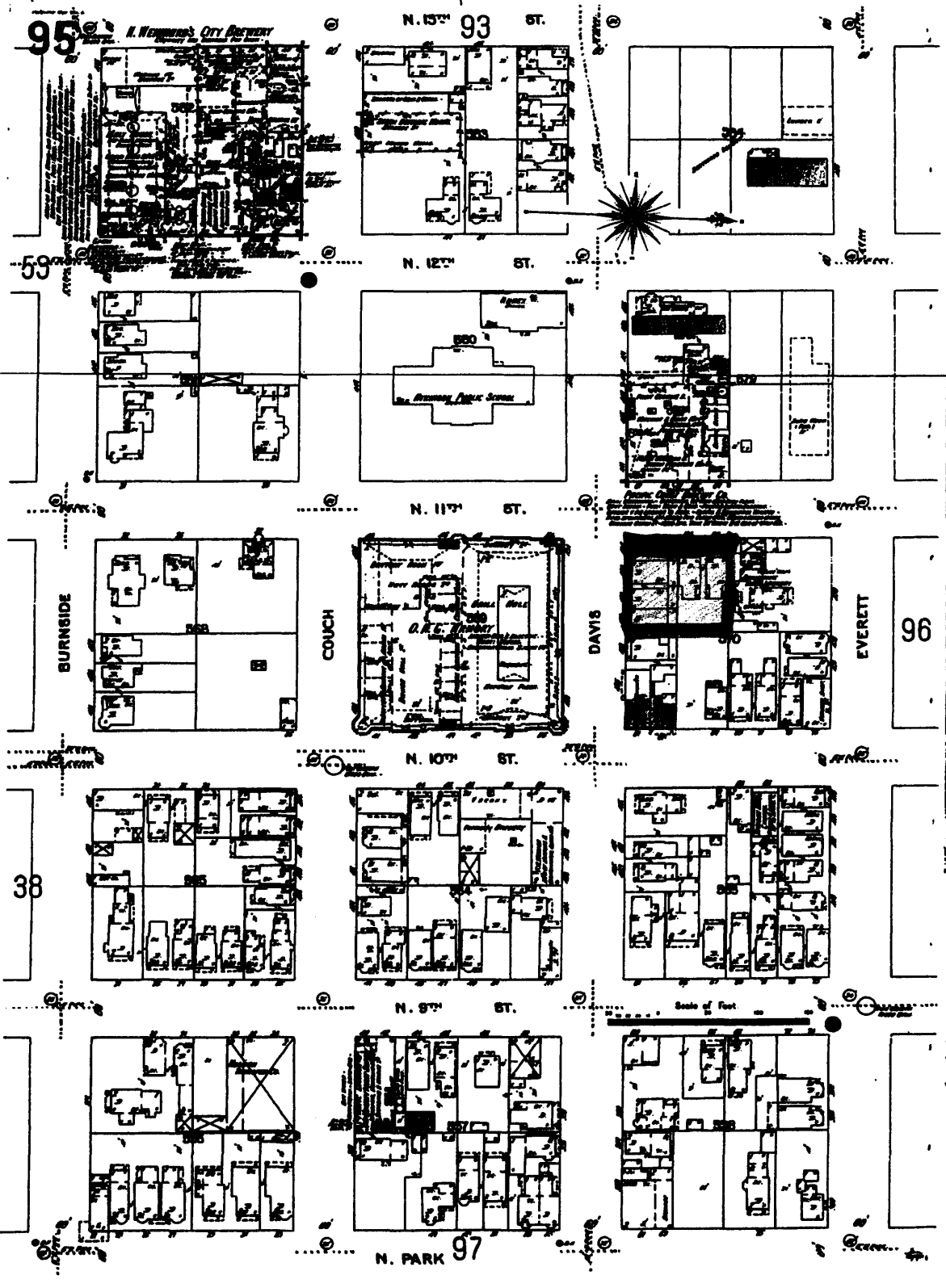
G. G. Gerber Building Current Floor Plan

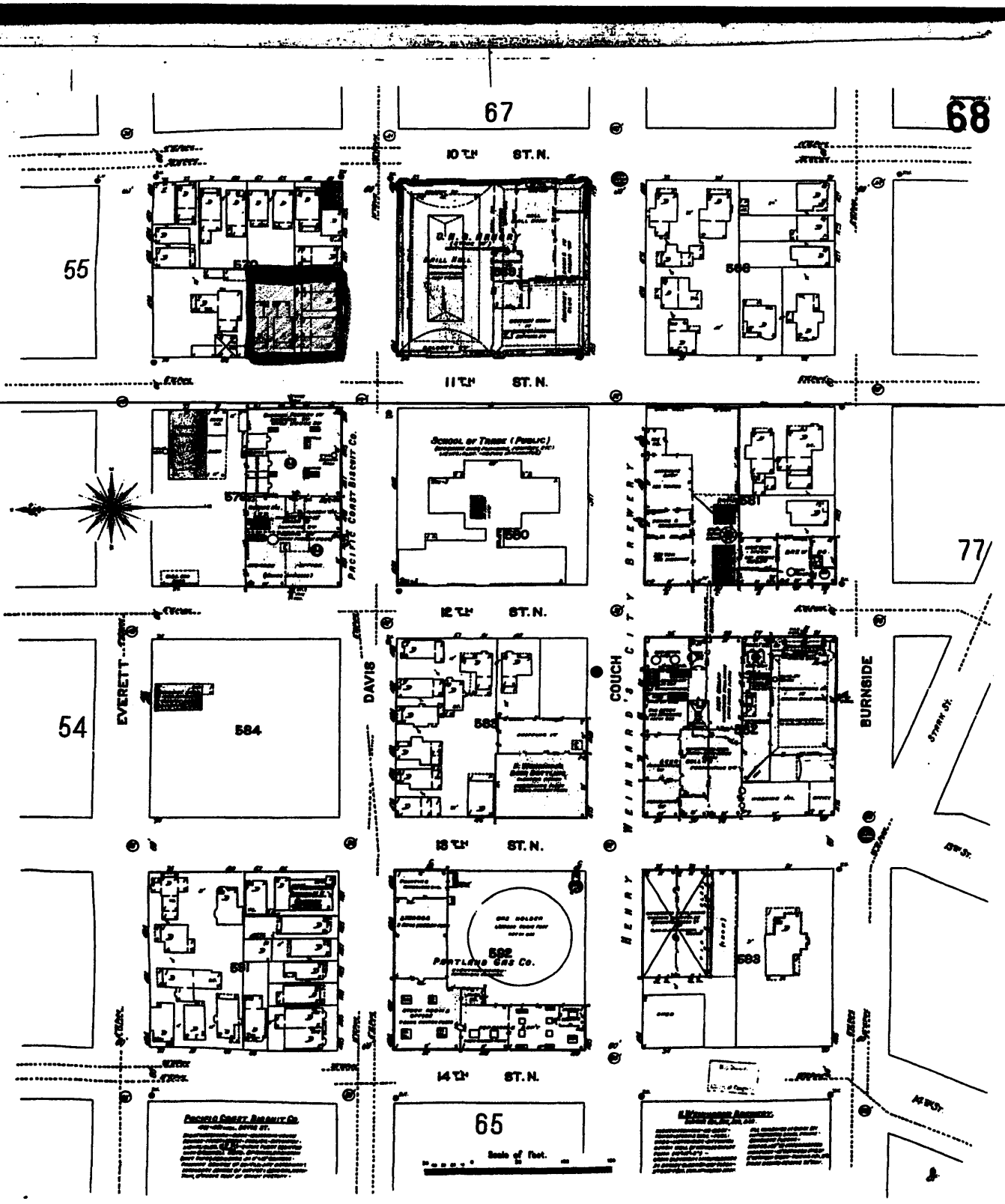


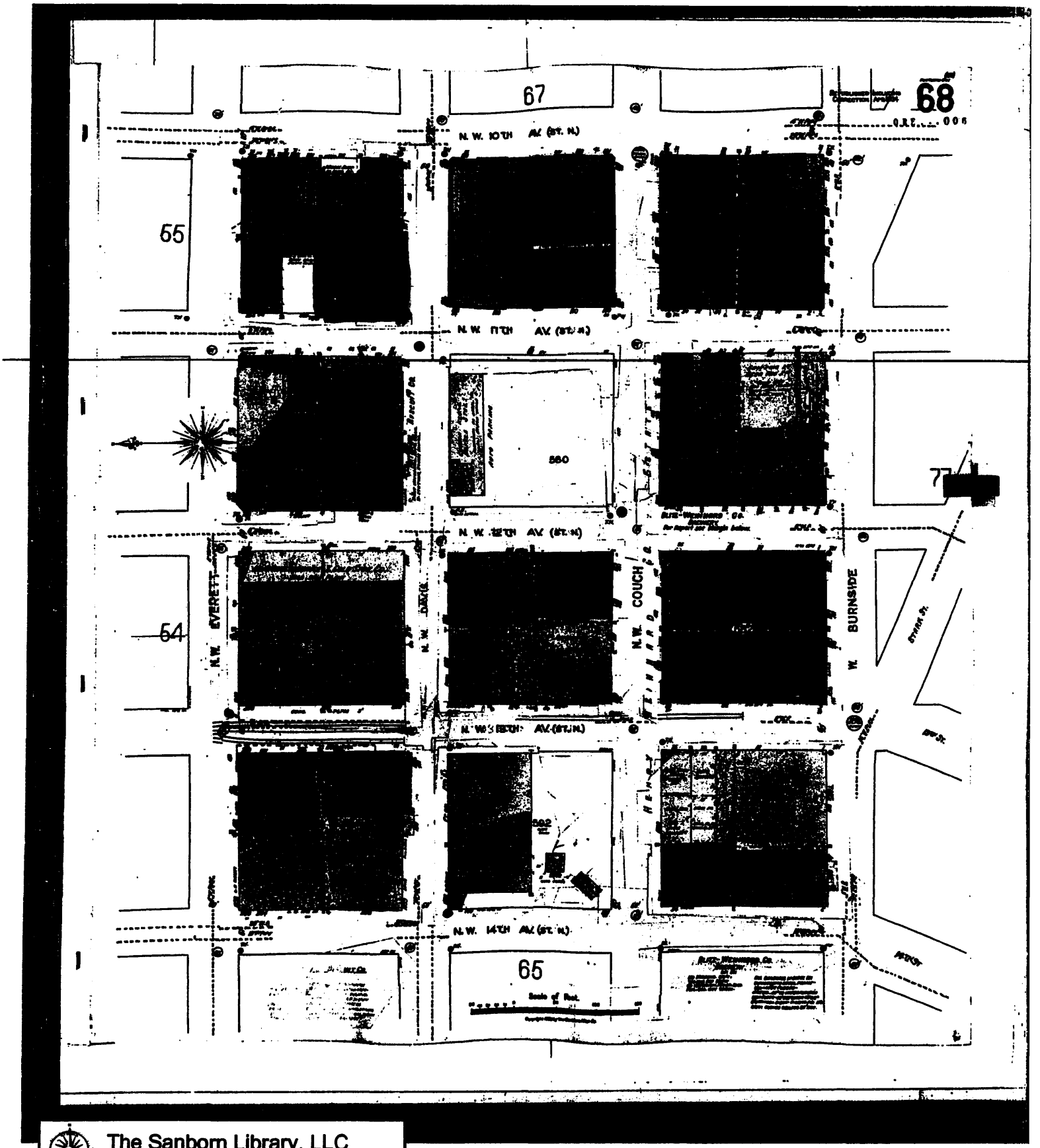
G.G. Gerber Building Original Floor Plans

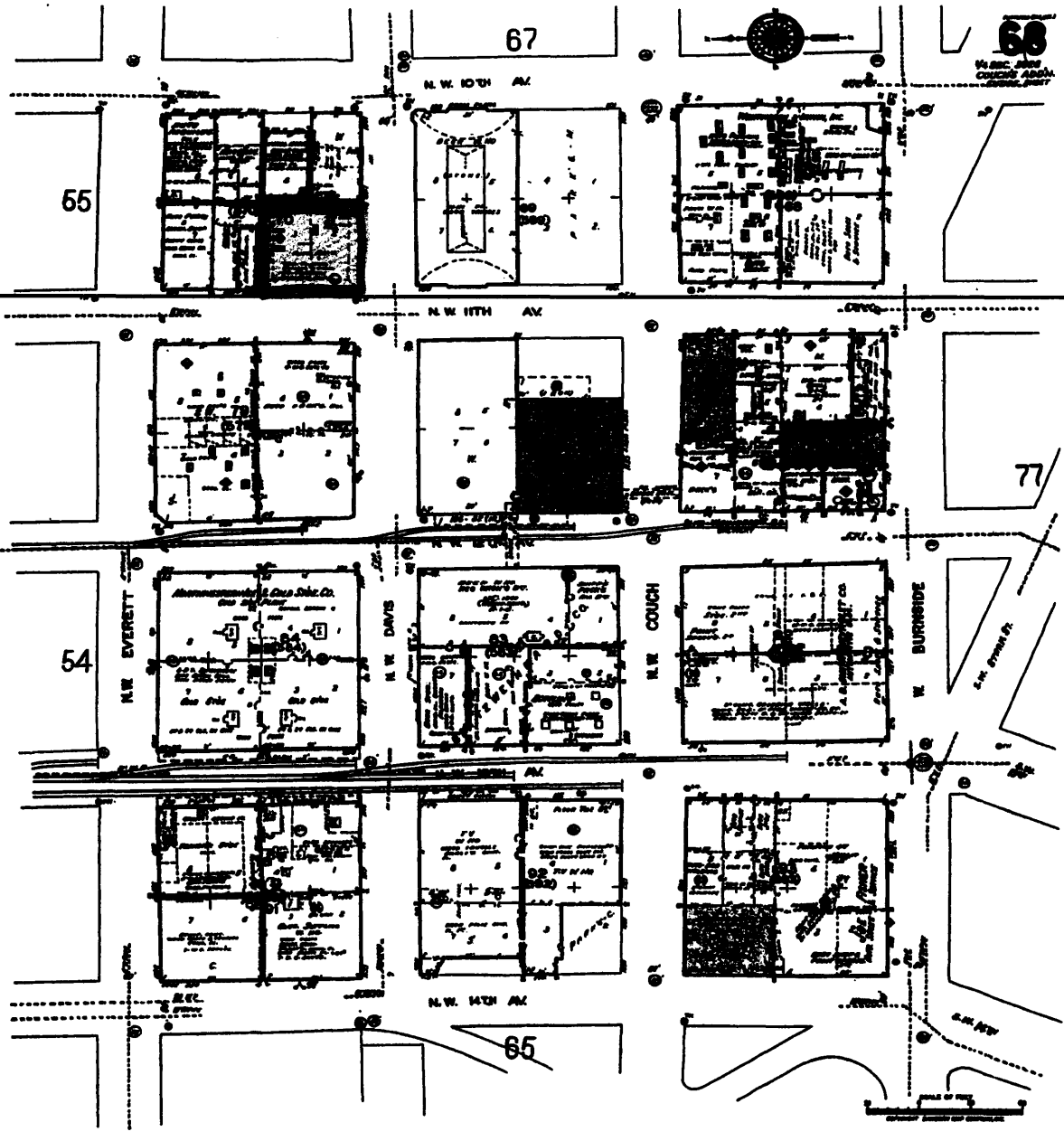












PHOTOGRAPHS

Name of Property: G.G. Gerber Building
County and State: Multnomah County, Oregon
Photographer: Heritage Photo
Date of Photographs: January 2007
Location of Negatives: Digital
Paper and Ink: Epson Premium Glossy Paper and Epson UltraChrome K3 Pigmented Inks

1. Exterior View, Looking Southeast at West Elevation
2. Exterior View, Looking Northeast at West Elevation
3. Exterior View, Looking Northeast at South Elevation
4. Exterior View, Looking Northwest at South Elevation
5. Interior View, Looking Northeast at Northeast Corner
6. Interior View, Looking Southwest at Southwest Corner
7. Interior View, Looking West at West Wall