

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin #39, *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.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Downtown Ketchikan

Other names/site number: Alaska Heritage Resources Survey KET-1320

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: Front, Main, Mission, Dock, Mill streets

City or town: Ketchikan State: Alaska County: Ketchikan Gateway

Not for Publication:  Vicinity:

### 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A     B X C     D

<u>Jonel M. Antonson, Deputy SUPO</u>	<u>16 August 2017</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Alaska</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <u>   </u> meets <u>   </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

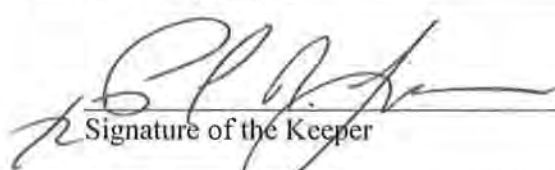
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

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:)

  
Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>26</u>	<u>24</u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>1</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	objects
<u>30</u>	<u>26</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce/Trade-business, professional, organizational, financial institution, specialty store, department store, restaurant
- Government-city hall, government office
- Social-meeting hall
- Domestic-multiple dwelling, hotel, single-dwelling
- Recreation and Culture-theater, work of art
- Religion-religious facility, church-related residence
- Transportation-pedestrian-related

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce/Trade-business, professional, organizational, financial institution, specialty store, department store, restaurant
- Domestic-multiple dwelling, hotel, single dwelling
- Government-city hall, government office
- Social-meeting hall
- Recreation and Culture-theater, work of art
- Religion-religious facility
- Transportation-pedestrian related

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## 7. Description

### **Architectural Classification:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Wood-frame, Pioneer  
Storefront Pioneer  
Chicago-style Commercial  
Queen Anne Commercial  
Late 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival/Colonial Residential

### **Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials: wood piling, concrete, brick, wood and metal siding, asphalt

### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### **Summary Paragraph**

From the days of Tlingit Indian fish camps and early settlers, to a brief stint as Alaska's largest city, the southern southeast Alaska community of Ketchikan draws much of its activity and visitor appeal from the history of its downtown. Professional, retail, entertainment and government services; a bustling and accessible waterfront dock; and residential areas in the hills form the functional and symbolic heart of Ketchikan. Thirty buildings, structures, objects, and one building individually listed in the National Register contribute to the Downtown Ketchikan historic character and date from 1900 to 1930. The buildings and structures retain excellent integrity and are good examples of building styles from the time of their construction. The oldest buildings in the district are of wood construction, and many of the later ones are of concrete. While many of the buildings have some alteration, the Downtown Ketchikan historic district still conveys the charm of its past.

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### **Narrative Description**

Ketchikan was positioned by geography, resources, and timing to become the "gateway" to Alaska. Cannery and mining booms brought people to and through southeast Alaska starting in the 1880s. Ketchikan's accessible, protected waterfront and position on the Inside Passage meant that virtually all ships passed the site when water transport was king. The site had relatively little flat, easily-developed land, and as a result the town developed as a linear community with Downtown at the center, and homes, canneries, and other uses extending to the north (Newtown) and south (Stedman/Thomas). The Downtown area was defined by Knob Hill to the north and Ketchikan Creek to the east and south. A significant part of early Ketchikan was built on wood pilings beyond the shoreline and over the tidal flats.



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Most of the lots in Ketchikan's downtown commercial district had buildings on them by 1930. The buildings reflected the economy, available materials, and purpose of construction. The first buildings were all built of wood. As fires destroyed buildings, the replacements used fireproof materials, often reinforced concrete. The first concrete commercial buildings in Alaska were built in Ketchikan. Many of these were handsomely detailed reflecting the healthy economy and early entrepreneurs' pride in the city. Today, Downtown Ketchikan is characterized by the mix of smaller wood buildings and larger concrete ones. Buildings newer than 1930 are the exception and have been built at a scale that complements the historic ones.

Downtown Ketchikan's business core is located on relatively flat land abutting steeper terrain on the north and northeast where the town's first neighborhoods were built. Stairways provided pedestrian access from the neighborhoods to the business, recreation, government, and social areas of the community. They remain important today.

Downtown's proximity to the waterfront always has been key to its economy. During the period of significance, 1900-1930, almost everything (including most people) arrived and departed on the docks. Two major steamship lines operated from Downtown wharves. The Ketchikan Spruce Mills, just across Mill Street from the Downtown district boundary, shared the waterfront and played a huge role in the development of Downtown. Today, Ketchikan is a port of call on the Inside Passage cruise circuit and thousands of visitors disembark every day during the summer months and walk across the docks to the Downtown area.

The area nominated for the National Register of Historic Places encompasses the city's original commercial core. It includes the upland side of Front Street from the tunnel to Mill Street, both sides of Main Street from the Improved Order of Red Men Hall to Mill Street, both sides of Mission and Dock Streets, and the north side of Mill Street. It includes the Chief Kyan and Chief Johnson totem poles, two blocks of Bawden Street, and several alleys.

### **Architectural Styles and Characteristics**

During Ketchikan's first years, buildings were simple, functional wood structures. They consisted mostly of utilitarian cannery-related buildings and pioneer homes ranging from temporary shacks and cabins to permanent houses with steep pitched gable roofs and shed roof porches. The Native people adapted their traditional long-house architecture to milled lumber, resulting in simple rectangular buildings with gable roofs and a single door in the gable face with windows on either side. Nearly all buildings were on posts or pilings, either over the water or to create a level floor on the rocky, sloping land.

The buildings constructed between 1900 and 1930 in Downtown Ketchikan are simple expressions of the popular American building styles of the times. They fall into six categories.

**Pioneer.** Wood frame, usually rectangular 2-story structures with a gabled or hipped roof and little ornamentation. They include residences, boarding houses, and buildings for civic and

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government functions. The U.S. Customs House (now Pioneers Hall) built in 1900 is the only remaining example.

**Storefront Pioneer.** This was the most common building type in Downtown during the period of significance. These buildings were simple, gabled roof buildings with large, flat "billboard" false-fronts facing the street. Quite often they were long and narrow, due to the basic 50 by 100-foot lot size. Sometimes two businesses on a single lot resulted in 25-foot wide buildings. The storefront typically had large display windows, a recessed doorway, and a classic cornice held up by decorative scroll brackets. Many of them had a marquee or rain canopy across the whole front of the building hung from chains. The Bon Marche and Hardcastle buildings illustrate this type.

**Chicago-style Commercial.** This type refers to the large, multi-story public and commercial buildings added to the Downtown area starting in 1911. They usually were designed by Seattle architects and built by outside contractors. Notably, they were built of reinforced concrete to be fireproof. They have storefront windows on the street level, ornate marquees, window placement reflecting structural columns, and ornamentation at the top cornice. The Tongass Trading and Heckman buildings are good examples of this type.

**Queen Anne Commercial.** The Queen Anne style was popular for residences and some commercial buildings, mostly hotels and stores. They were two- and three-story buildings with special attention to wood detailing beyond the storefront, adding features such as bay windows, angled entries on street corners, and turrets. Front Street had two such buildings, the Stedman and the Revilla Hotel (no longer extant).

**Industrial.** Mill, cannery, wharf, and shop buildings were common within the Downtown area through the first half of the twentieth century. These buildings were utilitarian, box-type wood frame structures with shed and gable roofs. They had wood shingle walls and roofs or corrugated siding and roofing. They were almost always on wood pilings. No examples of this building type stand today in Downtown.

**Residential.** As Ketchikan developed, residences of various styles were in the downtown, especially along Main and Mission streets. Pioneer farmhouse, colonial revival, and Queen Anne were common styles. Commercial development eventually eliminated all but two of them. The late 19th/20th Century Revival/Colonial residence style Yates Building is one of the remaining examples.

### **Physical Relationship of Buildings**

Until the mid-1880s, the only buildings at Ketchikan were a few Native dwellings. In 1887, the Tongass Packing Company established a small salmon cannery where the central waterfront is today. After the cannery burned in 1889, a saltery and wharf were built on the site. A trading post and a few houses with outbuildings were built around the same time.

In the summer of 1899, interest in prospecting around Alaska, inspired by the Klondike gold rush and promising gold discoveries near Ketchikan made the small community a center of mining and

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prospecting activity almost overnight. One newspaper reported some forty buildings under construction at Ketchikan in September 1899.

A map was drawn in March 1900 for the new Ketchikan Improvement Company. This development group hoped to sell lots to the merchants, saloon and restaurant operators, outfitters, launderers, barbers, doctors, lawyers, and others who were arriving in Ketchikan to open businesses to serve the miners and prospectors. The plat dedicated public thoroughfares that would become Front, Grant, Main, Bawden, and Mission Streets. The plat established the basic building block for downtown development, the 50 by 100-foot lot, still evident in the physical relationship of buildings in the Downtown to this day.

Aside from the six-story Federal Building built in 1937 on land adjacent to the Downtown district, no other building has exceeded the heights of buildings constructed during the period of significance. While over the years some buildings have replaced earlier ones, they have done so largely within the 1900 plat layout.

### **Changes in District Appearance**

The Downtown's most rapid development occurred between 1900 and 1914. During this period the commercial pattern of land use that survives to this day was established. Most notable is that Downtown Ketchikan expanded not up the slopes on solid ground but out over the tidal flats on wood pilings. The abundance of local timber, especially rot-resistant cedar, made this possible.

By 1914, Downtown Ketchikan had all of the elements of a typical town: library, courthouse, public school, bank, city hall, and two jails. It had three moving picture houses, one skating rink, nine saloons (all located on Front Street), and three pool hall/cigar shops. Two major general merchandising stores, Heckman's and Tongass Trading, were next to each other on Dock Street between Front and Main. Front Street was the commercial center of town. Virtually all of the buildings along it were businesses or services, and almost every lot was developed.

From the water side of Front Street, deep-water docks extended from the Ketchikan Cold Storage plant at Grant Street to the far end of the Ketchikan Power Company mill. Most of the dock area was used for loading and unloading freight and passengers from the steamships. But the docks also had space for coal storage, a cannery, marine supplies, fish handling, and a municipal boat landing. In 1918, the Pacific Coast Steamship Company and Alaska Steamship Company served Ketchikan along with the smaller, local Northland Steamship Company.

Fourteen buildings shown on the 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map stand today. All of the Downtown buildings on the map were of wood frame construction, save for four: Tongass Trading Company, part of Heckman's, Koel's bank building (corner of Dock and Main), and the Ketchikan Cold Storage plant. Well before 1914, Dock and Mission Streets followed their present routes. By 1906, a broad, planked Mission Street extended on pilings from Main Street, past the mission house and St. John's Church, to Stedman Street. The one-block-long Market Street was renamed Mission in 1923.

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The 1927 Sanborn map illustrates how the downtown commercial area changed during thirteen years. Street and lot patterns remained the same, as did waterfront boundaries except for the expansion of the Spruce Mill adjacent to Downtown. This was the period when many of today's downtown landmark buildings were constructed and commercial activities expanded beyond Front Street. Twenty-eight Downtown buildings standing today were built during this period. A number of these new buildings were constructed of concrete. Probably the most notable was the Ingersoll Hotel, which replaced the beautiful wood-framed Revilla Hotel after it burned in 1924. Other concrete buildings include the Citizens Light, Power and Water Company Building (City Hall), Gilmore Hotel, J.R. Heckman Building 2 (replacing a wood structure), and the First National Bank.

Mission Street saw the greatest change during this period as new businesses sprang up on both sides of the planked street over the tidal flats. It linked Downtown with Newtown to the north and Creek Street, the Thomas-Stedman area, and the community of Saxman to the south. In the block between Bawden and Stedman, the upland side had two barbershops, two restaurants, a pool hall, grocery store, beauty parlor, furniture store, dry goods and clothing store, and a planing mill/cabinet shop. On the water side stood the American Legion Hall, two offices, two restaurants, a sign painting shop, a fish market, a gunsmith, and a dry goods and clothing store. Only four of these buildings, all on the upland side, exist today. In the block to the west, the former Arthur Yates Hospital, next to St. John's Church, became the Episcopal Parish House when Ketchikan General Hospital was built on Bawden Street in 1923.

Front Street continued to be the commercial heart of Downtown. On the upland side, every lot between Grant and Mill Streets was occupied, and on the waterfront side only one lot was open between Grant and Mission. Over the years some buildings were replaced with bigger, newer ones, or were added on to. On the waterfront, seaward of the solid line of Front Street buildings, the Alaska Steamship Company and Ketchikan Cold Storage expanded their operations along the wharf. There were three drug stores and Downtown still had three movie houses. The wood-frame Coliseum Theater built in 1923 burned in 1956 and was replaced on the same site by the current Coliseum.

Probably the most notable change shown on the 1927 Sanborn map was that not a single saloon was to be found on Front Street. This was the result of Prohibition, which lasted from 1918 to 1933 in Alaska. Bootleg liquor sales went on, of course, but mostly away from Downtown.

By the early 1930s, after thirty-five years of continuous growth, downtown Ketchikan was a dense urban commercial area with a busy waterfront, booming spruce mill, businesses lining all streets, a number of formidable, fire-proof concrete buildings at major intersections, and virtually all of the community's services--school, hospital, library, churches, and social halls. An aerial photograph from the early 1930s shows very few vacant lots downtown.

The major changes to downtown since the photo include extensive fill on the Ketchikan Creek tidal flats, with the addition of the Federal Building, the demolition of stores and residences around upper Stedman, Dock Street, and Barney Way for the Centennial Building and adjoining parking; the loss

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largely a result of fire of nearly all of the structures on the waterfront side of Front Street; and the replacement of the Spruce Mill by tourism-related commercial development.

### **General Character of the District**

In the 1990s, the booming cruise industry altered Downtown Ketchikan's retail orientation. The numerous bars that opened after Prohibition ended and other entertainments for the people in the timber and fishing industries were replaced by seasonal retail establishments catering to the nearly one million cruise ship passengers arriving each summer. Much of the year-round retail activity left, primarily for areas north of Downtown. To meet the demands of cruise ships, the waterfront has undergone extensive transformation. No historic buildings remain on the seaward side of Front Street, and the docks' wood decking is all but lost. While this has arguably improved public access to the waterfront, the character of the historic waterfront has changed.

Although Ketchikan has continued to grow and the primary nature of Downtown's commerce has changed, Downtown buildings look much the same as they did in the period of significance. In the last several years, there has been considerable local effort to restore vitality to the Downtown. A number of year-round businesses have returned, several important historical buildings have been restored, sidewalk and pedestrian amenities have been improved, and a number of citizens have spoken out about the importance of retaining Downtown's historic character. Although non-contributing, a Welcome to Ketchikan sign continues the tradition of such a sign arching over Mission Street and facing Front Street.

### **General Condition of Buildings**

Most Downtown buildings are in good condition due, in large part, to the economic vitality of the visitor industry. The Gilmore Hotel, the one building in the district individually listed in the National Register, has been maintained since its restoration in 1991. While most of the identified properties are in good condition, the first U.S. Customs House/Pioneers Hall needs restoration work. The Pioneer Hotel has suffered from lack of maintenance and has a pronounced list to the south and the upper level windows are encased in plywood. Changes to the Stedman Hotel make it non-contributing, however, it is the same height and has general characteristics that make it compatible with neighboring buildings.

### **Contributing and Non-contributing Resources**

Within the Downtown district boundaries there are fifty buildings. According to historical research and Borough assessment records, of them, the 27 (including the listed Gilmore Hotel) that are contributing were built prior to 1930 (the ending date for Downtown's period of significance). The majority of buildings are commercial enterprises at street level and offices, apartments, or storage on upper floors. In addition to buildings, there are two significant historic structures (2 alleys built in the early 1900s), and two historic objects (Chief Kyan and Chief Johnson totem

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poles initially raised in 1898 and 1902 respectively). The boldface type on the lists below indicates contributing properties.

**Front Street**

1.	Masonic Temple (1947-51)	308 Grant St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
2.	Reid Building (1937)	344 Front St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
3.	<b>City Hall/Citizens Light, Power &amp; Water (1925)</b>	334 Front St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
4.	Gilmore Hotel (1927) (Listed in the National Register)	326 Front St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
5.	314 Front St. (circa 1930)	314 Front St., Ketchikan, AK 99901
6.	<b>Fo'c'sle Bar (circa 1900)</b>	312 Front St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
7.	Stedman Hotel (1906)	300 Front St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
8.	<b>Tongass Trading Company (1913)</b>	226 Front Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
9.	Front Street Building (1981)	220 Front Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
10.	<b>Ingersoll Hotel (1924)</b>	314 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
11.	132 Front St. (1962)	132 Front St., Ketchikan, AK 99901
12.	<b>Pioneer Hotel (1926)</b>	118 -124 Front St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
13.	<b>116 Front (Rainbird Bar) (1912)</b>	116 Front St, Ketchikan, AK 99901

**Pioneer Alley**

14.	<b>Pioneer Way/Chief Kyan Way (early 1900s) (structure)</b>	Pioneer Alley (between Front Street and Main Street)
15.	<b>First U.S. Custom House/Pioneers Hall (1900)</b>	314 Pioneer Alley Ketchikan, AK 99901

**Main Street**

16.	<b>First National Bank (1911)</b>	331 Dock St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
17.	<b>J.R. Heckman Store Buildings 1 &amp; 2 (1912, 1920)</b>	213 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901

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18.	<b>J.R. Heckman Store Building 3 (1912)</b>	201-209 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
19.	121-127 Main (1951)	121-127 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
20.	103-115 Main (1981)	103-115 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
21.	<b>Improved Order of Red Men Hall (1924)</b>	342 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
22.	Christian Science Hall (1946)	330 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
23.	<b>Miners &amp; Merchants Bank (1923)</b>	306 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
24.	200 Main (2008)	200 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
25.	112-124 Main (1974)	112-124 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
26.	Mike's Elbow Room (1961)	108 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
27.	<b>Hardcastle Building (1923, 1972)</b>	100 Main St, Ketchikan, AK 99901

**Dock Street**

28.	First Bank Addition (1960's)	331 Dock Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
29.	413-415 Dock (1946)	413-415 Dock Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
30.	429-431 Dock (1930)	429-431 Dock Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
31.	<b>435-39 Dock/Chico's Restaurant (circa 1920)</b>	435 Dock Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
32.	<b>Agnes Edmonds House (1904)</b>	309 Dock Street, Ketchikan, AK 99901
33.	<b>Ketchikan Daily News/U.S. Post Office (1925)</b>	501 Dock St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
34.	<b>301-305 Bawden Street (1908)</b>	301-305 Bawden St, St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
35.	Tongass Business Center (1982)	616-618 Dock St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
36.	602 Dock (1919)	602 Dock St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
37.	Tobin Building (1946)	444 Dock St, Ketchikan, AK 99901



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**Mission Street**

38.	Coliseum Theater (1957)	405 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
39.	<b>411-413 Mission (1920)</b>	411-413 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
40.	<b>Arthur Yates Memorial Hospital/Yates Building (1905)</b>	423 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
41.	<b>St. John's Episcopal Church (1903)</b>	503 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
42.	<b>603-607 Mission (1919)</b>	603-607 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
43.	<b>New Deal Bldg. (1930)</b>	617-621 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
44.	<b>625-629 Mission (late 1920s)</b>	625-629 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
45.	<b>633 Mission (circa 1920)</b>	633 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
46.	Cape Fox Marketplace (2004)	500 Mission Street St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
47.	<b>Bon Marche Building (1913)</b>	422 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
48.	<b>Scanlon's Gallery (1906)</b>	318 Mission St, Ketchikan, AK 99901

**Mill Street**

49.	315-317 Mill St. (1950)	315-317 Mill St, Ketchikan, AK 99901
50.	<b>Betty King Alley (1900s) (structure)</b>	
51.	Union Rooms (1906)	319 Mill St., Ketchikan, AK 99901 (Now Venetian Jewelers)
52.	Bon Marche Addition (1972)	449 Mill Street, Ketchikan AK 99901
53.	<b>Chief Kyan Totem Pole (1898) (object)</b>	Corner of Mill St. and Bawden St.
54.	Whale Park (1974) (site)	Corner of Mill St. and Bawden St.
55.	<b>Chief Johnson Totem Pole (1902) (object)</b>	North corner of Totem Way and Stedman Street

**Other Sites and Objects**

56.	Welcome to Ketchikan Sign (object)	Mission Street between Front Street and Main Street
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**Qualities Distinguishing the District**

The unique and defining elements of the Downtown Ketchikan historic district are its role as the community's central business district, unchanged historic street and building pattern, consistent scale and building height, and remaining historic commercial and government buildings. These combined illustrate Ketchikan and its significance as the southeast gateway to Alaska.

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## 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.)

- 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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Exploration/Settlement  
Commerce  
Community Planning and Development  
Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1900-1930

**Significant Dates**

1900: U.S. Customs House built, town incorporated  
1911: 1<sup>st</sup> concrete building constructed

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Downtown Ketchikan historic district includes buildings, structures, and objects related to two significant eras of the community's history: Downtown Boom (1900-1915), and Consolidation and Expansion (1916-1930). This 30-year period firmly established Ketchikan as the major southeast gateway to Alaska, and as a key player in the economic and social development of Alaska. It was through Ketchikan that many of Alaska's early linkages to the lower 48 states, primarily via Seattle, were established. By 1930, due to the Great Depression, the growth of other towns in Alaska, and other means of access, Ketchikan's national and territorial importance was reduced somewhat, though it continued to be a regional center. Growth continued, but changes to the Downtown area were few, its basic development fabric having been firmly set.

The Downtown Ketchikan historic district is eligible for the National Register under criterion A as a cohesive group of historic properties that represent a broad pattern of the social and economic history of Ketchikan and Alaska. The district is eligible under criterion C as an area that embodies the

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distinctive characteristics of Ketchikan's early commercial architecture. While some of the commercial buildings have exceptional individual distinction, many more are representative of simple, frontier, southeast Alaska construction using local materials, often built on pilings over tidewater, and designed to serve the rapidly growing territory.

The period of significance for the Downtown Ketchikan district begins in 1900 after mining and prospecting activity started in 1899 and spurred a building boom and the city incorporated. The period of significance continues through three decades of growth and development as a regional center for commerce and government, mining, fisheries, shipping and wood products. The period of significance ends in 1930, corresponding to the nation's Depression, shift of development to southcentral Alaska, and the dispersion of the community's population north and south of Downtown.

Criteria considerations: A, owned by a religious institution; B, moved from its original location; and C, a reconstruction, apply to five properties in the district. St. John's Episcopal Church and the Yates Building are religious properties. They are among the earliest properties in the district and an integral part of Downtown Ketchikan through the period of significance. The Hardcastle Building has an addition when the Mining Journal Building was moved to the site in 1923, during the period of significance. It is counted as a single contributing building. The Chief Kyan and Chief Johnson totem poles are replacements of the originals that stand on the sites of the originals. Totem poles have a tradition of being replaced when one becomes too deteriorated.

---

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Exploration/Settlement**

For centuries before the 1880s, the only structures at the mouth of Ketchikan Creek were temporary shelters built by Tlingit Indians who came to the area in the summers to harvest salmon. After Alaska became part of the United States in 1867, non-Natives from west coast ports of San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver traveled north by boat along a route that became known as the Inside Passage. The relatively protected waterfront at the mouth of Ketchikan Creek became a regular stopping point for vessels. They observed the bountiful runs of salmon and by the late 1880s Tongass Packing opened a cannery where downtown Ketchikan is today. That cannery and not long after a general store started what was to become one of Alaska's most important communities. Promising mining prospects near Ketchikan brought more people to the area. The town developed as southern southeast Alaska's regional center and the southeast gateway to the rest of Alaska.

By 1897, Episcopal missionary work started in the mostly Native community of Ketchikan and a school for Native children opened. Native people settled just north of the present-day Chief Johnson totem pole and south of Ketchikan Creek. A U.S. Customs House was established in Ketchikan in 1900. At the time the town had a post office, newspaper, general stores, hotels, large cannery, and a population of 454. A town site was laid out with streets and platted lots, framing the frenzied growth that occurred over the following decades. Ketchikan became Alaska's largest community in less than three decades.

Downtown Ketchikan

Name of Property

Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska

County and State

## **Commerce**

After the town was established and incorporated in 1900, there was a burst of economic growth spurred by the mining industry and construction of a large cannery and cold storage plant south of Ketchikan Creek. Investment in the community was coming from many quarters. Construction in 1903 of what became the Ketchikan Spruce Mills played a significant role in facilitating the town's development by providing a ready source of locally milled lumber for buildings, docks, and streets. The community quickly spread over the tidal flats as new wharves, streets, and buildings were built on pilings. Hotels such as the Revilla and the Stedman sprung up; marine, mining and construction suppliers expanded; retail commerce including restaurants, bars, hardware, boardinghouses, theaters, laundries and card rooms lined the streets; and even the Episcopal Church continued to invest in Ketchikan with the building of St. John's Church and the Episcopal Clergy House that was to soon serve as the Arthur Yates Memorial Hospital.

## **Community Planning and Development**

A 1900 plat map created a grid pattern of lots and Front, Dock, Main and Mission streets became firmly established. Fires took their toll on some parts of Downtown, but determined pioneer investors and entrepreneurs turned to concrete fireproof structures. Starting in 1911, a series of concrete buildings were constructed that changed the face of the community. The first (and reportedly Alaska's first) concrete building--First National Bank--was constructed in 1911 and remains the "First Bank" of today. Following on its heels were several large, handsome concrete mercantile buildings; the J. R. Heckman Store buildings and Tongass Trading Company. These buildings were testimony to these entrepreneurs' confidence and commitment to the future of Downtown Ketchikan. Through the 1920s, more concrete buildings were constructed: the Ingersoll Hotel in 1924 (replacing the fire-destroyed Revilla Hotel), Citizens Power, Light & Water Company in 1925 (today's City Hall), and the Gilmore Hotel in 1927.

Although change has come to the Downtown's waterfront from Stedman Street around to Grant Street, the historic business core--the proposed Ketchikan Downtown historic district--continues to look much as it did at the end of its expansive growth years in the early 1930s. Many of the buildings date to the years between 1900 and 1930, and there has been virtually no change to the scale, height and pattern of the buildings in Downtown.

## **Architecture**

Downtown Ketchikan buildings include representatives of architectural styles popular in the early 1900s. Some of the commercial buildings have exceptional individual distinction, but most are simple, frontier expressions of the styles. The earlier buildings are wood, and many later buildings are concrete. Many are built on pilings over tidal flats.

Downtown Ketchikan

Name of Property

Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska

County and State

## Historic background

Americans established a small cannery at the mouth of Ketchikan Creek in 1887 where the Tlingit Indian people had a seasonal fish camp. In 1899, mining discoveries brought a rush of people who opened stores, bars, eateries, lodging houses, and doctor, dentist and lawyer offices to the site. Cabins and a few clapboard houses sprang up on the hillsides. A development company acquired land for a townsite, platted it, and sold lots. In August 1900, the residents voted to incorporate as a town.

The period 1900 to 1915 were boom years for Ketchikan and activity centered on the Downtown. Ketchikan quadrupled in size. Nearly all the lots around Front and lower Main streets were built upon with mostly 2- and 3-story buildings. Paths became planked streets, alleys, staircases, and sidewalks. Social halls and churches joined numerous new businesses. The community had two major department stores. The sawmill, canneries, and cold storage provided jobs for many residents. In this short time, Ketchikan was transformed into a real city, the southeast gateway to the Alaska Territory.

Resources related to this period:

- Chief Kyan Totem Pole (1898, object)
- Pioneer Way/Chief Kyan Way (early 1900s, structure)
- Betty King Alley (1900, structure)
- First U.S. Custom House/Pioneers Hall (1900)
- Fo'c'sle Bar (1900)
- Chief Johnson Totem Pole (1902, object)
- St John's Episcopal Church (1903)
- Agnes Edmonds House (circa 1904)
- Arthur Yates Memorial Hospital/Yates Building (1905)
- Stedman Hotel (1906)
- Scanlon's Gallery (1906)
- 301-305 Bawden Street (1908)
- First National Bank (1911)
- J. R. Heckman Store, Building 1 (1912)
- Bon Marche Building (circa 1913)
- 116 Front (Rainbird Bar) (1912)
- Tongass Trading Company (1913)
- JR Heckman Store, Building 3 (1913)

By 1915 buildings occupied most of the flat land of Downtown around Front and Main Streets. People continued to arrive, and by 1930 Ketchikan had 3,800 residents, making it Alaska's largest town. Development extended out over the tidal flats on pilings (the Spruce Mill expanded by half). Early wood buildings were replaced with more permanent buildings, often constructed of concrete. Mission, lower Main and Dock streets all saw new commercial development (often with apartments or rooms-to-let on upper floors). By 1930, over half of the buildings found in Downtown today were



Downtown Ketchikan

Name of Property

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standing. The periods of boom and consolidation ended, Downtown entered into a time of stability, with additions of newer, more modern buildings occurring only periodically.

Resources related to this period

- 603-607 Mission (1919)
- J.R. Heckman Addition—Building 2 (1920)
- 411-413 Mission (1920)
- 633 Mission (circa 1920)
- 435-39 Dock/Chico's Restaurant (circa 1920)
- Miners & Merchants Bank (1923)
- Ingersoll Hotel (1924)
- Improved Order of Red Men Hall (1924)
- City Hall/ Citizens Light, Power & Water (1925)
- Hardcastle Building (1923, building moved to site)
- Pioneer Hotel (1926)
- Ketchikan Daily News/U.S. Post Office (1925)
- Gilmore Hotel (1927) (Previously listed on the National Register)
- 625-629 Mission (late 1920s)
- New Deal Building (circa 1930)

Ketchikan's rapid growth stopped in 1930 as the canning industry peaked. With few lots empty in downtown, new development was along Tongass Avenue to the north. In the 1950s a pulp mill opened that brought workers to Ketchikan. That same decade, fires destroyed several buildings on the water side of Front Street, and they were not replaced. Ketchikan's "front door" became the downtown buildings on the upland side of Front Street. Although tourism has changed many downtown retailers to focus on the needs and expectations of visitors, the buildings continue to be used for purposes similar to those they were used for in the past. Downtown Ketchikan retains the look and feel it had in the early twentieth century

Downtown Ketchikan  
Name of Property

Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Campbell, Douglas. *Historic Downtown Ketchikan: A Restoration Handbook*. 1986.

Kuklok, Dennis, Charles Martinson, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Department, and Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center. *Atlas of the Ketchikan Region*. 1976.

Reeve, Stephen, Kent Miller, and Ron Kasprisin. *Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan Policies for the City of Ketchikan and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough*. 1976.

Tucker, Phil and Gary Benner. *Ketchikan, A City Historic Properties Survey*. Vol. 2. 1984.

Van Cleave, Richard. *Construction Projects Lists*. Tongass Historical Museum. 2011.

### **Ketchikan Telephone Books:**

Citizens Light, Power & Water Company Telephone Directory. 1910-1933

Ketchikan Public Utilities Telephone Directory. 1935-2011

### **Directories:**

*Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer and Business Directory*. Seattle: R. L. Polk & Co. 1901-1902, 1909-1910, 1911-1912, 1915-1916, 1923-1924.

*Polk's Ketchikan (Alaska) City Directory*. 1962-1999.

### **Fire Insurance Maps:**

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Ketchikan, Alaska. 1914, 1927, 1927 updated through 1946, 1927 updated through 1952.

### **Tax Records:**

Town of Ketchikan Tax Assessment Roll. 1909-1919

City of Ketchikan Tax Assessment Roll. 1920-1955

Tongass Historical Museum, Vertical Files

Tongass Historical Museum, Photograph Collections

### **Ketchikan Maps:**

1900 - *Map Showing a Portion of the Supplemental Plat of the Town of Ketchikan, Alaska*

1905 - *Plat of the Claim of Walter S. Coutant, et al., Known as the Venetia Lode Claim*

1910 - *Plat of the Subdivisional Survey of Ketchikan Townsite U.S. Survey No. 437*

1919 - *Map of subdivision of "Venetia" Mining Claim*

1922 - *Map of Ketchikan Power Company Showing Buildings, and Log Storage, Wharf and Joining Property on Tide Flats*

Downtown Ketchikan  
Name of Property

Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska  
County and State

Circa 1925 - Plat maps of Ketchikan Streets, Blocks 1-38  
1943 - Port of Ketchikan Security Maps  
Circa 1980 - City of Ketchikan Property Map

**Ketchikan Newspapers:**

Alaska Fishing News (1934-1945)  
Daily Miner (1906-1914)  
Daily Progressive-Miner (1915-1919)  
First City News (1925-1926)  
Helm Bay and Ketchikan Miner (1900)  
Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle (1919-1957)  
Ketchikan Daily Alaska Fishing News (1945-1947)  
Ketchikan Daily News (1922-1923)  
Ketchikan Daily News (1947-present)  
Ketchikan Miner (1907-1915)  
Ketchikan Mining News (1907)  
Ketchikan Record (1989-1990)  
Ketchikan Times (1919-1920)  
Ketchikan Weekly Journal (1919-1920)  
Mining Journal (1901-1907)  
Morning Mail (1913-1914)  
Saturday Mail (1914-1915)  
Southeastern Log (1971-1989)

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

N/A

- 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: City of Ketchikan Museum

Downtown Ketchikan  
 Name of Property

Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska  
 County and State

**Historic Resources Survey Number:** Alaska Heritage Resources Survey No. KET-1320

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 10 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: NAD 1983 Alaska Albers  
 (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Point	Lat	Long
1	55.342907	-131.646711
2	55.342224	-131.645833
3	55.342374	-131.644573
4	55.342226	-131.643297
5	55.341909	-131.64261
6	55.340561	-131.645944
7	55.342638	-131.64853
8	55.342834	-131.648043
9	55.342125	-131.647201
10	55.342304	-131.646715
11	55.342700	-131.647204

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Downtown Ketchikan historic district starts at the back corner of the Improved Order of Red Men Hall (point 1), follows the north side of Main Street, turns east at Dock Street (point 2), crosses Bawden Street (point 3), continues on Dock Street (point 4) until it intersects Mill Street (point 5), follows Mill Street south to Front Street (point 6), follows Front Street northeast to Grant Street (point 7), turns southwest (point 8) to include the buildings facing Front Street to Dock Street (point 9), then returns northeast (point 10) to the front of the Improved Order of Red Men Hall (point 11), and finally to the point of beginning. See attached Boundary and Photo Key map.

Downtown Ketchikan  
Name of Property

Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska  
County and State

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The proposed boundaries follow streets and property lines to include the buildings, sites and structures that define the commercial core of Downtown Ketchikan between 1900 and 1930, the period of significance. The district forms a roughly triangular shaped area.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Stephen Reeve, AIA, AICP  
organization: RAI Development Solutions  
street & number: P.O. Box 23154  
city or town: Ketchikan state: Alaska zip code: 99901-3154  
e-mail: smreeve@mac.com  
telephone:  
date: November 15, 2012; updated May 31, 2016, revised August 16, 2017

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Downtown Ketchikan  
Name of Property

Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska  
County and State

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Downtown Ketchikan  
City or Vicinity: Ketchikan  
County: Ketchikan State: Alaska  
Photographer: Stephen Reeve  
Date Photographed: All photos May 4, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera, date photographed:

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0001  
Chief Kyan Totem Pole and St. John's Church, from Mills Street, camera facing northwest

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0002  
Tongass Trading Company and J.R. Heckman Store on Front Street, camera facing southeast

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0003  
City Hall and Gilmore Building along Front Street, camera facing northeast

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0004  
View of Front Street from Front Street stairway, camera facing southeast

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0005  
View of Main Street from Dock Street, camera facing southeast

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0006  
Miners & Merchants Bank on Main Street, camera facing north

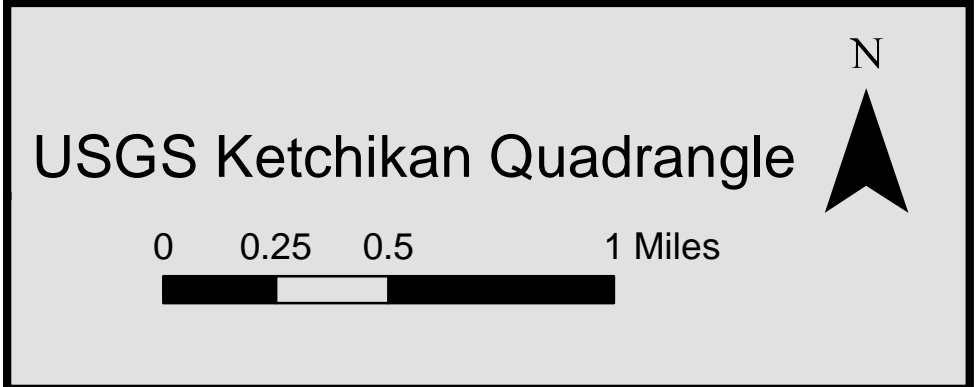
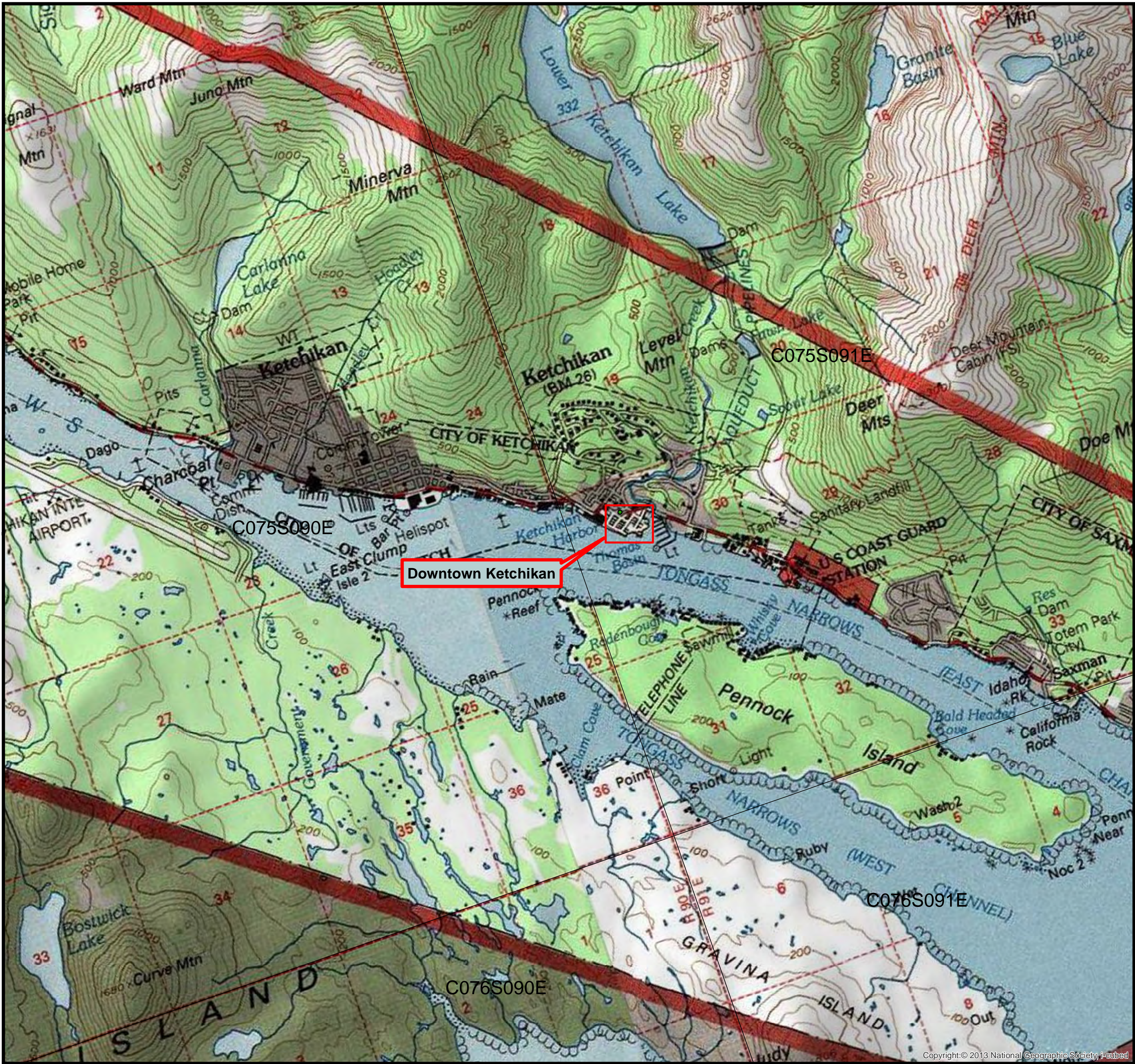
AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0007  
View along Mission Street, St. John's Church in center, camera facing east

**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 100 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.

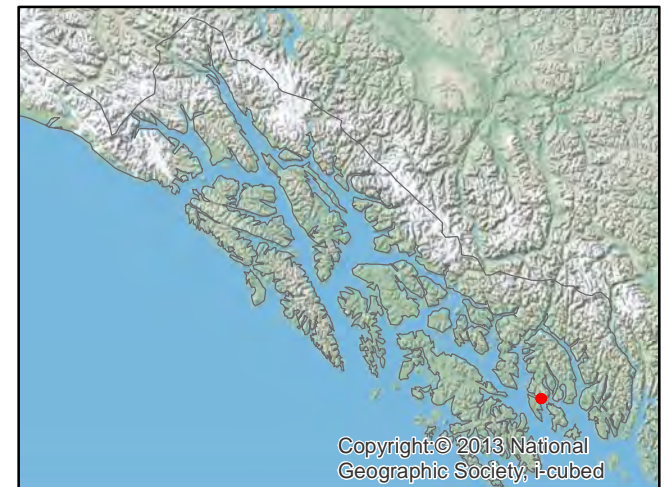
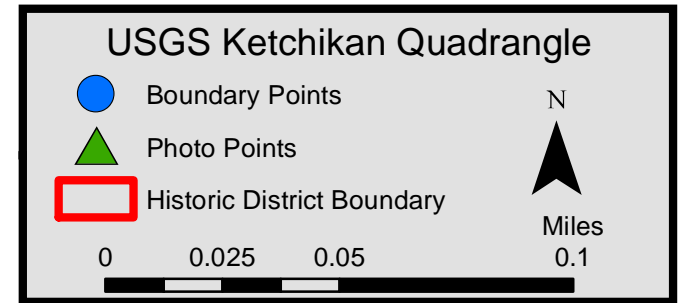
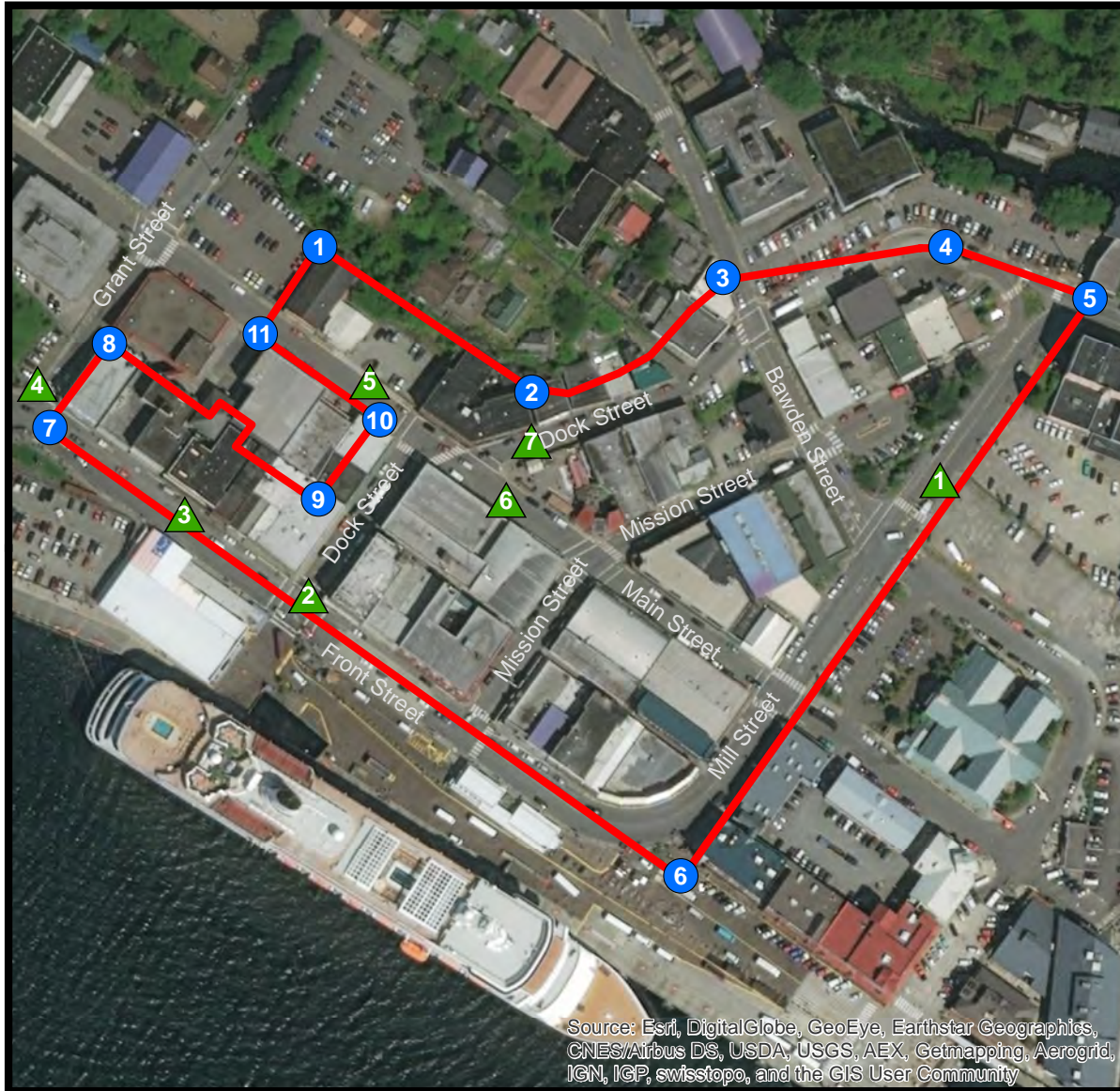


# Downtown Ketchikan Historic District Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska



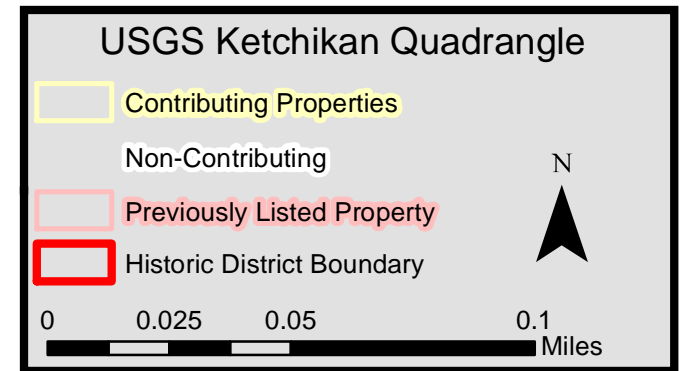


# Downtown Ketchikan Historic District Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska Boundary and Photo Key





# Downtown Ketchikan Historic District Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska Property Key











TONGASS TRADING COMPANY

TONGASS TRADING CO



MEN'S APPAREL LOWER LEVEL

CURIO & SOUVENIRS MAIN LEVEL

WOMEN'S APPAREL UPPER LEVEL

DO NOT ENTER

ONE WAY



Dock St.

SALMON



NO RIGHT TURN





GILMORE BUILDING

KETCHIKAN CITY HALL

The GILMORE Hotel

ANNABELLE'S Key & Chowder House

KING CRAB











DOCK ST 300

MAIN ST 300

STOP

Julie's  
FINE JEWELRY  
ARTS & GIFTS

Julie's  
FINE JEWELRY  
ARTS & GIFTS  
LOCALLY OWNED  
& OPERATED  
YEAR ROUND  
VISIT US AT  
WWW.JULIESJEWELRY.COM

Natural Gold Nuggets  
& Fine Jewelry

Trinkets

Alaska Dreams  
GREENSKEEN PHOTOGRAPHY

ANY  
TIME



A person wearing a purple jacket and dark pants is walking away from the camera on the sidewalk.







ATM

ATM

ONE WAY

WELLS FARGO

407







National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Downtown Ketchikan Historic District

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: ALASKA, Ketchikan Gateway

Date Received: 8/18/2017      Date of Pending List: \_\_\_\_\_      Date of 16th Day: 7/12/2016      Date of 45th Day: 10/2/2017      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: 16000467

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

Accept       Return       Reject      10/2/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Downtown Ketchikan Historic District is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce, Exploration/Settlement, Community Planning & Development, and Architecture. Largely built out and developed by 1930, the Downtown Ketchikan district represents a cohesive collection of early twentieth century commercial and civic buildings that served both the local community and as an important southeastern gateway to the rest of Alaska. The modest 2 and 3-story wood-frame and concrete buildings reflect the common pioneer and early commercial forms of the period. Although modern infill has replaced portions of the history commercial core the scale and prominence of the historic buildings retains sufficient integrity to convey the historic and architectural significance of the district.

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept NR Criteria A & C

Reviewer Paul Lusignan

Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2229

Date 10/2/2017

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

**ALASKA HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
VOTING RECORD**

Date: November 26, 2012

It is moved that the **Downtown Ketchikan Historic District** **qualifies** for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion/criteria **A, C**; exception/ exceptions **n/a**; level of significance **local**. The period of significance is **1887-1930** and the areas of significance are **exploration and settlement, community planning and development, and architecture**. The property is associated with Alaska Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan theme/themes **exploration and settlement, intellectual and social institutions**.

Moved by: **David Moore**      Seconded by: **Terrence Cole**

Vote on motion:

IN FAVOR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN	RESULT
Treadwell		Bittner	Passed 5-0-1
Cole			
Moore (architect)			Rejected
Ross			
Veltre			Tabled

If tabled or rejected, reasons or instructions on how to proceed:

Other comments:

David Moore, architect on the Alaska Historical Commission, supported nomination of the property under criterion C. The City of Ketchikan Historic Commission determined the property eligible at their meeting December 21, 2011. The Alaska Historical Commission reaffirmed its action on December 13, 2013. Correspondence with the author of the nomination confirmed the information in the nomination is accurate.

**MINUTES**  
**Ketchikan Historic Commission Meeting**  
**December 13, 2011**

The meeting was called to order in the Tongass Historical Museum at 5:34 PM.

Members present: Morgan Barry, William Bird, Leslie Jackson, Dragon London, Michael Naab, Susan Peters, Dave Rubin, and John Stewart. Members absent: Elinore Jacobsen.

**NEW BUSINESS: Nominations of Ketchikan's Downtown and Creek Street districts for registering in the National Register of Historic Places**

Commission Chair Michael Naab reviewed the Downtown and Creek Street Survey project, undertaken by the Commission under a Historic Preservation Fund grant provided by the State of Alaska in 2010. He reminded the Commission members that, at a meeting of the Commission held on November 29, 2011, they had authorized preparation of draft nominations of the Downtown and Creek Street districts for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Chairman Naab referred to the two draft nominations, prepared on behalf of the Ketchikan Historic Commission by RAI Development Solutions and circulated to Commission members for review. He asked for a motion.

Motion: Dragon London moved that the draft nomination of the **Ketchikan Downtown Commercial historic district** for registration in the National Register of Historic Places, completed by RAI Development Solutions in December 2011, be approved and submitted to the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office for review and subsequent submission to the Alaska State Historical Commission and the Keeper of the National Register, with the intent that said historic district be officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Susan Peters seconded the motion.

There was lengthy discussion, principally concerning the district boundaries and the reasons for designating certain properties "contributing" and "non-contribution." There were no requests for changes, however. The Chair called for a vote. The motion carried, with all of the Commission members present voted in favor; there were no votes in opposition.

Motion: Susan Peters moved that the draft nomination of the **Creek Street historic district** for registration in the National Register of Historic Places, completed by RAI Development Solutions in December 2011, be approved and

submitted to the Alaska State Historic Preservation Office for review and subsequent submission to the Alaska State Historical Commission and the Keeper of the National Register, with the intent that said historic district be officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The motion was seconded by Dave Rubin.

Discussion centered on the proposed district boundaries, in particular the omission of 706 Totem Way and the Stedman Street Properties, all of which are included within the locally-designated historic district boundaries. Chairman Naab explained the reasoning for omitting the properties. No amendments were offered, and the Chair called for a vote. The motion was approved, with all members present voting in favor, none in opposition.

#### **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:42 PM.





November 8, 2012

Judith E. Bittner, State Historic Preservation Officer  
Office of History and Archaeology  
Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation  
550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1310  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565  
Dear Sirs:

RECEIVED  
NOV X 3 2012  
OHA

Thlinket Tribe No. 4, IORM, is a fraternal lodge, part of a patriotic national organization known as The Improved Order of Red Men, which has existed in part since 1765 in what is now known as The United States of America.

Our Lodge has been part of the Ketchikan, Alaska scene since 1900 and has owned several properties over the years.

We presently own and occupy a building located at 342 Main Street in Ketchikan which was built 1920-1922 by the Eagles Lodge and bought by us in 1947.

It has come to our attention that our building is included in the proposed Ketchikan Downtown Historic District.

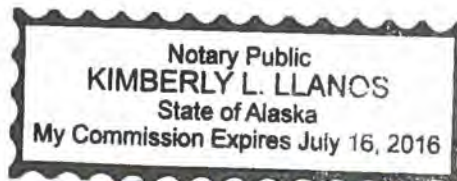
At the regularly scheduled Lodge meeting held October 30, 2012 a letter from Joan M. Antonson, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer was read and the members in attendance made the decision to object to our property being included in the afore mentioned proposal.

As a Trustee of the Lodge, I have been instructed by the Lodge to inform you that we do not want our property listed in this endeavor.

In as much as we will not be able to attend the meeting on November 26, 2012, we would like our objections to be made known and made a part of the minutes of the meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Ray Hendricks II, PS, Trustee





THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Natural Resources

DIVISION OF PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION  
Office of History & Archaeology

550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1310  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565  
907.269.8721  
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha>

RECEIVED 2280

JUN 10 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

June 3, 2016

Re: 3330-2 Downtown Ketchikan

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service 2280, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1201 I (Eye) Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Attn: Paul Lusignan

Dear Paul:

Enclosed is National Register of Historic Places documentation for the Downtown Ketchikan historic district in Southeast Alaska. One disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination, and the other the photographs.

The Alaska Historical Commission, the state review board, found the district eligible for listing on November 26, 2012 and reaffirmed their decision on December 13, 2013. Their voting record is attached. The author of the nomination reviewed the nomination earlier this month and confirmed what is attached is accurate. The property is in the boundaries of the City of Ketchikan, a Certified Local Government, and its historic commission found the historic district eligible for listing in the National Register. Its voting record is included in the nomination package.

Prior to the Alaska Historical Commission meetings, statewide press releases went out with specific mention of National Register documentation review, and the mayor of the City of Ketchikan was notified and provided information about the program, results of listing, and how to comment or object to the listing. I concur with the eligibility of Downtown Ketchikan for listing in the National Register and have signed the nomination.

Alaska Historical Commission members determined the Downtown Ketchikan historic district eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C. Criteria considerations for religious, moved, and reconstructed properties are addressed in the nomination. Commission members said the district is associated with the Alaska historic preservation plan themes of exploration and settlement and intellectual and social institutions. The areas of significance are exploration and settlement, community planning and development, and architecture. The period of significance for the property is 1887-1930, starting when the first permanent buildings were constructed in downtown Ketchikan and ending when construction of new buildings in the commercial district noticeably slowed due to the Great Depression, community expansion north and south of town, and aviation replacing Alaska's almost total reliance on maritime transportation.

If you have any questions regarding the documentation please contact me at [jo.antonson@alaska.gov](mailto:jo.antonson@alaska.gov) or 907.269.8714.  
Thank you!

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Joan M. Antonson.

Joan M. Antonson  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure: 2 disks, signature page



RECEIVED 2280

JUN 10 2016

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Downtown Ketchikan  
Other names/site number: Alaska Heritage Resources Survey KET-1320  
Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: Front, Main, Mission, Dock, Mill streets  
City or town: Ketchikan State: Alaska County: Ketchikan Gateway  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 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

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<u>Joan M. Antonson</u>	<u>3 June 2016</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Alaska</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**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:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**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

Returned

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>29</u>	<u>26</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>3</u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>40</u>	<u>27</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce/Trade
- Government
- Social
- Domestic
- Recreation and Culture
- Religion
- Transportation
- Industry/Processing/Extraction

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Commerce/Trade
- Domestic
- Government
- Social
- Recreation and Culture
- Religion
- Transportation

Returned

---

## 7. Description

### **Architectural Classification:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Wood-frame, Pioneer  
 Storefront Pioneer  
 Chicago-style Commercial  
 Queen Anne Commercial  
 Late 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival/Colonial Residential

### **Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials: wood piling, concrete, brick, wood and metal siding, asphalt

### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

---

### **Summary Paragraph**

From the days of Tlingit Indian fish camps and of early settlers, to a brief stint as Alaska's largest city, the southern southeast Alaska community of Ketchikan has a rich history. Present-day Ketchikan draws much of its activity and visitor appeal from the history of its downtown. Professional, retail, entertainment and government services; a bustling and accessible waterfront dock; and residential areas in the hills above co-exist comfortably and compactly to form the functional and symbolic heart of Ketchikan. Forty buildings, sites, structures, and objects contribute to the Downtown Ketchikan historic character, most dating from 1900 to the early 1930s. The buildings and structures retain excellent integrity and are good examples of building styles of their times. The oldest buildings in the district are of wood construction, and many of the later of concrete. While many buildings have had some alteration, Downtown Ketchikan still has the charm of its past.

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### **Narrative Description**

Ketchikan was positioned by geography, resources, and timing to become the "gateway" to Alaska. Cannery and mining booms brought people to and through southeast Alaska starting in the 1880s. Ketchikan's accessible, protected waterfront and position on the Inside Passage meant that virtually all ships passed the site when water transport was key. The site had relatively little flat, easily-developed land, and as a result the town developed as a linear community with Downtown at the center, and homes, canneries and other uses extending to the north (Newtown) and south (Stedman/Thomas). The Downtown area was defined by Knob Hill to the north and Ketchikan Creek to the east and south. A significant part of early Ketchikan was built on wood pilings beyond the shoreline and over the tide flats.

Most of the lots in Ketchikan's downtown commercial district had buildings on them by 1930. The buildings reflected the economy, available materials, and purpose of construction. The first buildings were all built of wood. As fires destroyed many buildings, the replacements used fireproof

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materials, often reinforced concrete. The first concrete commercial buildings in Alaska were built in Ketchikan. Many of these were handsomely detailed reflecting the healthy economy and early entrepreneurs' pride in the city. Today, Downtown Ketchikan is characterized by a mix of smaller wood buildings and larger concrete ones. While there are buildings newer than 1966, they are the exception and have been built at a scale that complements the historic ones.

Downtown Ketchikan's business core is located on relatively flat land abutting steeper terrain on the north and northeast where the town's first neighborhoods were built. Stairways provided pedestrian access from the neighborhoods to the business, recreation, government and social areas of the community. They remain important today.

Downtown's waterfront has always been key to its economy. During the period of significance, 1900-1930, almost everything (including most people) arrived and departed on the docks. Two major steamship lines operated from Downtown wharves. The Ketchikan Spruce Mills, just across Mill Street from the Downtown district boundary, shared the waterfront and played a huge role in the development of Downtown. Today, Ketchikan is a port of call on the Inside Passage cruise circuit and thousands of visitors disembark every day during the summer months and walk across the docks to the Downtown area.

The area nominated for the National Register of Historic Places encompasses the city's original commercial core. It includes the upland side of Front Street from the tunnel to Mill Street, both sides of Main Street from Grant to Mill Streets, both sides of Mission and Dock Streets, and the north side of Mill Street. It includes the Chief Xyan and Chief Johnson totem poles and the wooden alleys and stairways that penetrate the business area.

### Architectural Styles and Characteristics

During Ketchikan's first decade or so, its pioneer years, buildings were simple, functional wood structures. They consisted mostly of utilitarian cannery-related buildings and pioneer homes ranging from temporary shacks and cabins to permanent houses with steep pitched gable roofs and shed roof porches. The Native people adapted their traditional longhouse architecture to milled lumber, resulting in simple rectangular buildings with gable roofs and a single door in the gable face with windows on either side. Nearly all buildings were on posts or pilings, either out over the water or for a level floor on the rocky, usually sloping land.

The buildings constructed between 1900 and 1930 in the downtown area are simple expressions of the popular building styles of the times in Alaska. They fall into six categories.

**Pioneer.** Wood frame, usually rectangular 2-story structures with a gabled or hipped roof and little ornamentation. They could be residences, boarding houses, or for civic or government functions. The U.S. Customs House (now Pioneers Hall) built in 1900 is the only remaining example.

**Storefront Pioneer.** This was the most common building type in Downtown during the period of significance. These buildings were simple, gabled roof buildings with large, flat "billboard" false-

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fronts facing the street. Quite often they were long and narrow, due to the basic 50 by 100 foot lot size. Sometimes two businesses on a single lot resulted in 25 foot wide buildings. The storefront typically had large display windows, a recessed doorway, and a classic cornice held up by decorative scroll brackets. Many of them had a marquee or rain canopy along the whole front hung from chains. The Bon Marche and Hardcastle buildings illustrate this type.

**Chicago-style Commercial.** This type refers to the large, multi-story public and commercial buildings added to the Downtown area starting in 1911. They usually were designed by Seattle architects and built by outside contractors. Notably, they were built of reinforced concrete to be fireproof. They have storefront windows on the street level, ornate marquees, window placement reflecting structural columns, and ornamentation at the top cornice. The Tongass Trading and Heckman buildings are good examples of this type.

**Queen Anne Commercial.** The Queen Anne style was popular for residences and some commercial buildings, mostly hotels and stores. They were two- and three-story buildings with special attention to wood detail beyond the storefront, adding features such as bay windows, angled entries on street corners, and turrets. Front Street had two such buildings, the Stedman and the Revilla Hotel (no longer extant). The Stedman, remodeled in 2011, restored some of this detail.

**Industrial.** Mill, cannery, wharf, and shop buildings were common within the Downtown area through the first half of the twentieth century. These buildings were utilitarian, box-type wood frame structures with shed and gable roofs. They had wood shingle walls and roofs or corrugated siding and roofing. They were almost always on wood pilings. No examples of this building type stand today in Downtown.

**Residential Styles.** As Ketchikan developed, residences of various styles were in the downtown, especially along Main and Mission streets. Pioneer farmhouse, colonial revival, and Queen Anne were common styles. Commercial development eventually eliminated all but two of them. The late 19th/20th Century Revival/Colonial residence style Yates Building is one of the remaining examples.

### Physical Relationship of Buildings

Until the mid-1880s, the only buildings at Ketchikan were a few Native dwellings. In 1887, the Tongass Packing Company established a small salmon cannery where the central waterfront is today. After the cannery burned in 1889, a saltery and wharf were built on the site. A trading post and a few houses with outbuildings were built around the same time.

In the summer of 1899, interest in prospecting around Alaska, inspired by the Klondike gold rush, and in particular discoveries of promising gold prospects near Ketchikan, made the small community a center of mining and prospecting activity almost overnight. One newspaper reported some forty buildings under construction at Ketchikan in September 1899.

A map was drawn in March 1900 for the newly-formed Ketchikan Improvement Company. The development group hoped to sell lots to the merchants, saloon and restaurant operators, outfitters, launderers, barbers, doctors, lawyers, and others who were arriving in Ketchikan to serve--or fleece--the miners and prospectors. The plat dedicated public thoroughfares that would become



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Front, Grant, Main, Bawden and Mission Streets. The plat established the basic building block for downtown development, the 50 by 100 foot lot, still evident in the physical relationship of buildings in the Downtown to this day.

Aside from the six-story Federal Building built in 1937 on land adjacent to the Downtown district, no other building has exceeded the heights of buildings constructed during the period of significance. While over the years some buildings have replaced earlier ones, they have done so largely within the 1900 plat layout.

### **Changes in District Appearance**

The Downtown's most rapid development occurred between 1900 and 1914. During this period the commercial pattern of land use that survives to this day was established. Most notable is that Downtown Ketchikan expanded not up the slopes on solid ground but out over the tide flats on wood pilings. The abundance of local timber, especially rot-resistant cedar, made this possible.

By 1914, Downtown Ketchikan had all of the elements of a typical town: library, courthouse, public school, bank, city hall and two jails. It had three moving picture houses, one skating rink, nine saloons (all located on Front Street), and three pool hall/cigar shops. Two major general merchandising stores, Heckman's and Tongass Trading, were next to each other on Dock Street between Front and Main. Front Street was the commercial center of town. Virtually all of the buildings along it were businesses or services, and almost every lot was developed.

Behind the water side of Front Street, deep-water docks extended from the Ketchikan Cold Storage plant at Grant Street to the far end of the Ketchikan Power Company mill. Most of the dock area was used for loading and unloading freight and passengers from the steamships. But the docks also had space for coal storage, a cannery, marine supplies, fish handling, and a municipal boat landing. In 1918, the Pacific Coast Steamship Company and Alaska Steamship Company served Ketchikan along with the smaller, local Northland Steamship Company.

Fourteen buildings shown on the 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map stand today. All of the Downtown buildings were of wood frame construction, save for three buildings: Tongass Trading, part of Heckman's, Koel's bank building (corner of Dock and Main), and the Ketchikan Cold Storage plant. Well before 1914, Dock and Mission Streets had assumed their present routes. Dock Street roughly followed the original shoreline between Front and Bawden. By 1906, a broad, planked Mission Street extended on pilings from Main Street, past the mission house and St. John's Church, to Stedman Street. The one-block-long Market Street was renamed Mission in 1923.

The 1927 Sanborn map illustrates how the downtown commercial area changed during thirteen years. Street and lot patterns remained the same, as did waterfront boundaries except for the expansion of the Spruce Mill adjacent to Downtown. This was the period when many of today's downtown landmark buildings were constructed and commercial activities expanded beyond Front Street. Twenty-eight Downtown buildings standing today were built during this period. A number of these new buildings were constructed of concrete. Probably the most notable was the Ingersoll Hotel, which replaced the beautiful wood-framed Revilla Hotel after it burned in 1924. Other concrete

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buildings include the Citizens Light, Power and Water Company Building (City Hall), Gilmore Hotel, J. R. Heckman Building 2 (replacing a wood structure), and the First National Bank

Mission Street saw the greatest change during this period as new businesses sprang up on both sides of the planked street over the tide flats. It linked Downtown with Newtown to the north and Creek Street, the Thomas-Stedman area, and Saxman to the south. In the block between Bawden and Stedman, the upland side had two barbershops, two restaurants, a pool hall, grocery store, beauty parlor, furniture store, dry goods and clothing store, and a planing mill/cabinet shop. On the water side stood the American Legion Hall, two offices, two restaurants, a sign painting shop, a fish market, a gunsmith, and a dry goods and clothing store. Only four of these buildings, all on the upland side, exist today. In the block to the west, the former Arthur Yates Hospital, next to St. John's Church, became the Episcopal Parish House when Ketchikan General Hospital was built on Bawden Street in 1923.

Front Street continued to be the commercial heart of Downtown. On the upland side, every lot between Grant and Mill Streets was occupied, and on the waterfront side only one lot was open between Grant and Mission. Change consisted of replacing existing buildings with bigger, newer ones, or building additions to the old. On the waterfront, seaward of the solid line of Front Street buildings, the Alaska Steamship Company and Ketchikan Cold Storage expanded their operations along the wharf. There were three drug stores and Downtown still had three movie houses, most notably the 1923 Coliseum Theater. That wood-frame building burned in 1956 and was replaced on the same site by the current Coliseum.

Probably the most notable change shown on the 1927 Sanborn map was that not a single saloon was to be found on Front Street. This was the result of Prohibition, which lasted from 1918 to 1933 in Alaska. Bootleg liquor sales went on, of course, but mostly away from Downtown.

By the early 1930s, after thirty-five years of continuous growth, Downtown Ketchikan was a dense urban commercial area with a busy waterfront, booming spruce mill businesses lining all streets, a number of formidable, fire-proof concrete buildings at major intersections, and virtually all of the community's services--school, hospital, library, churches, and social hall. An aerial photograph from the early 1930s shows very few vacant lots downtown.

The major changes to downtown since the photo include extensive fill on the Ketchikan Creek tide flats, with the addition of the Federal Building, the demolition of stores and residences around upper Stedman, Dock Street, and Barney Way for the Centennial Building and adjoining parking; the loss largely a result of fire of nearly all of the structures on the waterfront side of Front Street; and the replacement of the Spruce Mill by tourism-related commercial development.

### **General Character of the District**

In the 1990s, the booming cruise industry altered Downtown Ketchikan's retail orientation. The numerous bars and other entertainments for the people in the timber and fishing industries were replaced by seasonal retail establishments catering to the nearly

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one million cruise ship passengers arriving each summer. Much of the year-round retail activity left, primarily for areas north of Downtown. To meet the demands of cruise ships, the waterfront has undergone extensive transformation. No historic buildings remain on the seaward side of Front Street, and the docks' wood decking is all but lost. While this has arguably improved public access to the waterfront, the character of the historic waterfront has changed.

Although Ketchikan has continued to grow and the primary nature of Downtown's commerce has changed, Downtown buildings look much the same as they did in the period of significance. In the last several years, there has been considerable local effort to restore vitality to the Downtown. A number of year-round businesses have returned, several important historical buildings have been restored, sidewalk and pedestrian amenities have been improved, and a number of citizens have spoken out about the importance of retaining Downtown's historic character. At the same time, several buildings have been constructed that have not respected the scale and character of the Downtown.

### General Condition of Buildings

Most Downtown buildings are in good condition due, in large part, to the economic vitality of the visitor industry. The Gilmore Hotel, the only building in the district individually listed in the National Register, has been maintained since its restoration in 1991. While most of the identified properties are in good condition, the former U.S. Custom House and Pioneers Hall need restoration work. The Pioneer Hotel has suffered from lack of maintenance and has a pronounced list to the south and the upper level windows at upper levels are encased in plywood on the interior. Two buildings constructed after the period of significance, the Fireside Building and the City Fire Hall have uncertain futures.

### Contributing and Non-contributing Resources

Within the Downtown district boundaries there are 54 parcels with 50 principal buildings. According to historical research and Borough assessment records of the 50 buildings, 30 were built prior to 1930 (the ending date for Downtown's period of significance), 11 were built between 1930 and 1966, and 10 after 1966. The majority of buildings are commercial enterprises at street level and offices, apartments, or storage on upper floors. In addition to buildings, there are seven significant historic structures (4 staircases and 2 alleys built in the early 1900s and the tunnel built in 1954), two historic sites (downtown waterfront and Ketchikan Spruce Mills), and three historic objects (Chief Kyan and Chief Johnson totem poles initially raised in 1898 and 1902 respectively) and the Ketchikan welcome arch (1930s). The boldface type on the lists below indicates contributing properties.

#### Front Street

1. Knob Hill Tunnel (1954) (structure)
2. Masonic Temple (1947-51)
3. Reid Building (1937)
4. **City Hall (1925)**

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5. **Pioneer Way/Chief Kyan Way (early 1900s) (structure)**
6. **Pioneers Hall (1900)**
7. **Gilmore Hotel (1926)**
8. 314 Front St. (circa 1930)
9. **Fo'c'sle Bar (circa 1900)**
10. **Stedman Hotel (1905)**
11. **Tongass Trading Company (1913)**
12. Front Street Building (1981)
13. **Ingersoll Hotel (1924)**
14. 132 Front St. (1962)
15. **Pioneer Hotel (1926)**
16. **116 Front (Rainbird Bar) (1912)**

#### **Main Street**

17. City Police Station (1934)
18. Elks Lodge/Fireside (1951)
19. Fire Hall (1943)
20. **First National Bank (1941)**
21. **JR Heckman Store Buildings 1 & 2 (1912, 1920)**
22. **JR Heckman Store Building 3 (1912)**
23. 121-127 Main (1951)
24. 103-115 Main (1981)
25. **Red Men Hall (1924)**
26. Christian Science Hall (1946)
27. **Miners & Merchants Bank (1923)**
28. 200 Main (2008)
29. 112-124 Main (1974)
30. Mike's Elbow Room (1961)
31. **Hardcastle Building (1923, 1972)**

#### **Dock Street**

32. First Bank Addition (1960's)
33. 413-415 Dock (1946)
34. Knickerbocker Hotel (circa 1920)
35. 429-431 Dock (1930)
36. **Chico's Restaurant (circa 1920)**
37. **Agnes Edmonds House (1904)**
38. **Ketchikan Daily News (1925)**
39. **301-305 Bawden (1908)**
40. Tongass Business Center (1982)
41. 602 Dock (1919)
42. Tobin Building (1946)
43. 616-618 Dock (1982)

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### **Mission Street**

44. **Coliseum Theater (1957)**
45. **411-413 Mission (1920)**
46. **Yates Building (1904)**
47. **St. John's Church (1903)**
48. **603-607 Mission (1919)**
49. **New Deal Bldg. (1930)**
50. **625-629 Mission (late 1920s)**
51. **633 Mission (circa 1920)**
52. **Cape Fox Marketplace (2004)**
53. **Bon Marche (1913)**
54. **Scanlon's Gallery (1906)**

### **Mill Street**

55. **315-317 Mill St. (1950s)**
56. **Betty King Alley (1970s) (structure)**
57. **Union Rooms (1906)**
58. **Bon Marche Addition (1972)**
59. **Chief Kyan Totem Pole (1908) (object)**
60. **Whale Park (1974)**
61. **Chief Johnson Totem Pole (1902) (object)**

### **Other Sites and Objects**

62. **Dock Street Wharf (circa 1915) (counted with other wharves as 1 site)**
63. **Ketchikan Wharf (1890s) (counted with other wharves as 1 site)**
64. **Heckman Wharf (early 1900s) (counted with other wharves as 1 site)**
65. **Spruce Mill Site (entrance) (1903)**
66. **Welcome to Ketchikan Sign (early 1930s) (object)**
67. **Historic Stairways (early 1900s) (4 structures)**

### **Qualities Distinguishing the District**

The unique and defining elements of the Downtown Ketchikan historic district are its role as the community's central business district, unchanged historic street and building pattern, consistent scale and building height, remaining historic commercial and government buildings, and significance of Ketchikan as the southeast gateway to Alaska.



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### 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.)

- 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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Exploration/Settlement
- Community Planning and Development
- Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1887-1930

**Significant Dates**

- 1887: First cannery established
- 1898: Chief Kyan Totem Pole raised
- 1900: U.S. Customs House built, town incorporated
- 1903: Spruce mill built
- 1911: 1<sup>st</sup> concrete building constructed

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion I is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

Returned

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Downtown Ketchikan historic district includes buildings, sites, structures, and objects related to three significant eras of the community's history: Beginnings (1887-1900), Downtown Boom (1901-1915), and Consolidation and Expansion (1916-1930). This 43-year period firmly established Ketchikan as the major southeast gateway to Alaska, and as a key player in the economic and social development of Alaska. It was through Ketchikan that many of Alaska's early linkages to the lower 48 states, primarily via Seattle, were established. By the 1930s, due to the Great Depression and the growth of other towns in Alaska and other means of access, Ketchikan's national and territorial importance was reduced somewhat, though it continued to be a regional center. Growth continued, but changes to the Downtown area were few, its basic development fabric having been firmly set.

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The Downtown Ketchikan historic district is eligible for the National Register under criterion A as a cohesive group of historic properties that represent a broad pattern of the social and economic history of Ketchikan and Alaska. The district is eligible under criterion C as an area that embodies the distinctive characteristics of Ketchikan's early commercial architecture. While some of the commercial buildings have exceptional individual distinction, many more are representative of simple, frontier, southeast Alaska construction using local materials, often built on pilings over tidewater, and designed to serve the rapidly growing territory.

The period of significance for the Downtown Ketchikan district begins in 1887 with the establishment of a small cannery. Later, a store opened near Ketchikan Creek. Mining and prospecting activity in 1899 spurred a building boom and incorporation of the city in 1900. The period of significance continues through three decades of growth and development as a regional center for commerce and government, mining, fisheries, shipping and wood products. The period of significance ends in 1930, corresponding to the nation's Depression, shift of development to southcentral Alaska, and the dispersion of the community's population north and south of Downtown.

Criteria considerations: A, owned by a religious institution; B, moved from its original location; and C, a reconstruction, apply to five properties in the district. St. John's Episcopal Church and the Yates Building are religious properties. They are among the earliest properties in the district and an integral part of Downtown Ketchikan through the period of significance. The Hardcastle Building has an addition, the Mining Journal Building that was moved to the site in 1923, during the period of significance. It is counted as a single contributing building. Finally, the Chief Kyan and Chief Johnson totem poles are replacements of the originals. They stand on the sites of the originals. Totem poles have a tradition of being replaced after they become too deteriorated.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

### Exploration/Settlement

For centuries before the 1880s, the only structures at the mouth of Ketchikan Creek were temporary shelters built by Tlingit Indians who came to the area in the summers to harvest salmon. After Alaska became part of the United States in 1867, non-Natives from west coast ports of San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver traveled north by boat along a route that became known as the Inside Passage. The relatively protected waterfront at the mouth of Ketchikan Creek became a regular stopping point for vessels. They observed the bountiful runs of salmon and by the late 1880s Tongass Packing opened a cannery where downtown Ketchikan is today. That first cannery and, not long after a general store, started what was to become one of Alaska's most important communities. Promising mining prospects near Ketchikan brought more people to the area. The town developed as the regional center and the southeast gateway' to the rest of Alaska.

By 1897, Episcopal missionary work started in the mostly Native community of Ketchikan and a school for Native children opened. Native people settled just north of the present day Chief Johnson totem pole and south of Ketchikan Creek. A U.S. Customs House was established in Ketchikan in 1900. At the time the town had a post office, newspaper, general stores, hotels, large cannery, and a

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population of 454. A town site was laid out with streets and platted lots, framing the frenzied growth that occurred over the following decades. Ketchikan became Alaska's largest community in less than three decades.

### **Community Planning and Development**

After the town was established and incorporated in 1900, a burst of growth was spurred by the mining industry and construction of a large cannery and cold storage plant south of Ketchikan Creek. Investment in the community was coming from many quarters. Construction in 1903 of what became the Ketchikan Spruce Mills played a significant role in facilitating the town's development by providing a ready source of locally milled lumber for buildings, docks, and streets. The community quickly spread over the tidelands as new wharves, streets, and buildings were built on pilings. Landmark hotels such as the Revilla and the Stedman sprung up; marine, mining and construction suppliers expanded; retail commerce including restaurants, bars, hardware, boardinghouses, theaters, laundries and card rooms lined the streets; and even the Episcopal Church continued to invest in Ketchikan with the building of St. John's Church and the Episcopal Clergy House that was to soon serve as the Arthur Yates Memorial Hospital.

A 1900 plat map created a grid pattern of lots and Front, Dock, Main and Mission streets became firmly established. Fires took their toll on some parts of Downtown, but determined pioneer investors and entrepreneurs turned to concrete fire-proof structures. Starting in 1911, a series of concrete buildings were constructed that changed the face of the community. The first (and reportedly Alaska's first) concrete building--First National Bank--was constructed in 1911 and remains the "First Bank" of today. Following on its heels were several large, handsome concrete mercantile buildings; the J. R. Heckman Store buildings and Longass Trading Company. These buildings were testimony to these entrepreneurs' confidence and commitment to the future of Downtown Ketchikan. Through the 1920s, more concrete buildings were constructed: the Ingersoll Hotel in 1924 (replacing the fire-destroyed Revilla Hotel), Citizens Power, Light & Water Company in 1925 (today's City Hall), and the Gilmore Hotel in 1927.

Although change has come to the Downtown's waterfront from Stedman Street around to Grant Street, the historic business core--the proposed Ketchikan Downtown historic district--continues to look much as it did at the end of its expansive growth years in the early 1930s. Many of the buildings date to the years between 1900 and 1930, and there has been virtually no change to the scale, height and pattern of the buildings in Downtown.

### **Architecture**

Downtown Ketchikan buildings include representatives of a number of architectural styles popular in the early 1900s. Some of the commercial buildings have exceptional individual distinction, but most are simple, frontier expressions of the styles. The earlier buildings are wood, and many of the later commercial buildings are concrete. Many are built on pilings over tidewater. In addition, the stairways, given names as if they were streets, are defining characteristics of the town.

Downtown Ketchikan  
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### **Beginnings (1887-1900)**

In the years between 1887 and 1900, Ketchikan developed from a seasonal Tlingit fish camp with one or two permanent Native residents to a burgeoning town with a population of nearly 500. A small cannery was established in 1887, and in 1890 there were 40 inhabitants, 26 of them Tlingit Indians. The population changed little until 1895, when Tlingit from Tongass Island began to move to Ketchikan and settle near the creek. Then, in 1899, the community found itself at the center of a mining boom. Stores, bars, eateries, and lodging houses went up almost overnight, along with doctors', dentists' and lawyers' offices. Cabins and a few clapboard houses sprung up on the hillsides. A development company acquired the rights to the townsite, platted it, and sold lots. In August 1900, the residents voted to incorporate as a town.

Resources related to this period:

- Ketchikan Wharf (1890s, site)
- Chief Kyan Totem Pole (1898, object)
- First U.S. Custom House/Pioneers Hall (1900)
- US Store/Fo'c'sle Bar (1900)

### **Downtown Boom (1901-1915)**

The period 1900 to 1915 were boom years for Ketchikan and activity centered on the Downtown core. Ketchikan quadrupled in size; nearly all the lots around Front and lower Main streets were built upon with mostly 2- and 3-story buildings. Paths became planked streets and sidewalks. Social halls and churches joined numerous new businesses. The community had two major department stores. The sawmill, canneries, and cold storage provided jobs for many residents. In this short time, Ketchikan was transformed into a real city, the southeast gateway to the Alaska Territory.

Resources related to this period:

- Historic Alleys and Stairways (early 1900s, structures & sites)
- Heckman Wharf and Dock Street Extension (early 1900s, sites)
- Chief Johnson Totem Pole (1902, object)
- Ketchikan Spruce Mills (1903, site)
- St John's Episcopal Church (1903)
- Agnes Edmonds House (circa 1904)
- Arthur Yates Memorial Hospital (1905)
- Stedman Hotel (1906)
- Scanlon's Gallery building (1906)
- 301-305 Bawden Street (1908)
- First National Bank (1911)
- J. R. Heckman Store, Building 1 (1912)
- Bon Marche Building (circa 1912)
- 116 Front/Rainbird Bar (1912)
- Tongass Trading Company (1913)



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- JR Heckman Store, Building 3 (1913)

### 3. Consolidation and Expansion (1916-1930)

By 1915 buildings occupied most of the flat land of Downtown around Front and Main Streets. People continued to arrive, and by 1930 Ketchikan had 3,800 residents, making it Alaska's largest town. Development extended out over the tide flats on pilings (the Spruce Mill expanded by half). Early wood buildings were replaced with more permanent buildings, often constructed of concrete. Mission, lower Main and Dock streets all saw new commercial development (often with apartments or rooms-to-let on upper floors). By 1930, fully two thirds of the buildings found in Downtown today were standing. The periods of boom and consolidation ended and Downtown entered into a time of stability, with additions of new, more modern buildings occurring only periodically.

Resources related to this period

- Bon Marche Building Addition (1919)
- J.R. Heckman Addition—Building 3 (1920)
- 633 Mission (circa 1920)
- 435-39 Dock/Chico's Restaurant (circa 1920)
- Miners and Merchants Bank (1920)
- Coliseum Theater (1923, site)
- Ingersoll Hotel (1924)
- Improved Order of Red Men Hall (1924)
- City Hall/ Citizens Light, Power & Water (1925)
- Hardcastle Building (1923, building moved to site)
- Pioneer Hotel (1925)
- Ketchikan Daily News/U.S. Post Office (1925)
- Gilmore Hotel (1927)
- 625-629 Mission (late 1920s)
- New Deal Building (circa 1930)

Ketchikan's rapid growth tapered in the mid-1930s as the canning industry peaked. New development took place outside the downtown core, with suburbs and commercial areas expanding, particularly along Tongass Avenue to the north of Downtown.

A new building boom occurred in Ketchikan in the 1950s with the opening of a pulp mill at Ward Cove and consequent expansion of Southeast Alaska's timber industry. A number of older downtown buildings were razed during this time. Many of the mercantile buildings that lined the water side of Front Street were destroyed by a series of fires, some natural, some man-made. That area has remained generally open dock space ever since, so that Ketchikan's "front door" now consists of the primarily 1920s-era buildings on the upland side of Front Street.

In the 1990s, the booming cruise industry changed Downtown's retail orientation. The numerous bars and other entertainments for the people in the timber and fishing industries were replaced by

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seasonal retail establishments catering to the thousands of cruise ship passengers arriving each summer. Much of the year-round retail activity moved to commercial areas north of Downtown. Although the town continues to grow, Downtown Ketchikan continues to look much as it did in the 1920s.

Returned

Downtown Ketchikan  
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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Campbell, Douglas. *Historic Downtown Ketchikan: A Restoration Handbook*. 1986.

Kuklock, Dennis, Charles Martinson, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Department, and Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center. *Atlas of the Ketchikan Region*. 1976.

Reeve, Stephen, Kent Miller, and Ron Kasprisin. *Ketchikan Comprehensive Plan Policies for the City of Ketchikan and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough*. 1976.

Tucker, Phil and Gary B. *Ketchikan, A City Historic Properties Survey*. Vol. 2. 1984.

Van Cleave, Richard. *Construction Projects Lists*. Tongass Historical Museum. 2011.

### **Ketchikan Telephone Books:**

Citizens Light, Power & Water Company Telephone Directory. 1910-1933

Ketchikan Public Utilities Telephone Directory. 1935-2011

### **Directories:**

*Alaska-Yukon Gazetteer and Business Directory*. Seattle: E. L. Polk & Co. 1901-1902, 1909-1910, 1911-1912, 1915-1916, 1923-1924.

*Polk's Ketchikan (Alaska) City Directory*. 1962-1999.

### **Fire Insurance Maps:**

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Ketchikan, Alaska. 1914, 1927, 1927 updated through 1946, 1927 updated through 1952.

### **Tax Records:**

Town of Ketchikan Tax Assessment Roll. 1909-1919

City of Ketchikan Tax Assessment Roll. 1920-1955

Tongass Historical Museum, Vertical Files

Tongass Historical Museum, Photograph Collections

### **Ketchikan Maps:**

1900 - *Map Showing a Portion of the Supplemental Plat of the Town of Ketchikan, Alaska*

1905 - *Plat of the Claim of Walter S. Coutant, et al., Known as the Venetia Lode Claim*

1910 - *Plat of the Subdivisional Survey of Ketchikan Townsite U.S. Survey No. 437*

1919 - *Map of subdivision of "Venetia" Mining Claim*

1922 - *Map of Ketchikan Power Company Showing Buildings, and Log Storage, Wharf and Joining Property on Tide Flats*

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Circa 1925 - Plat maps of Ketchikan Streets, Blocks 1-38  
1943 - Port of Ketchikan Security Maps  
Circa 1980 - City of Ketchikan Property Map

**Ketchikan Newspapers:**

- Alaska Fishing News (1934-1945)
- Daily Miner (1906-1914)
- Daily Progressive-Miner (1915-1919)
- First City News (1925-1926)
- Helm Bay and Ketchikan Miner (1900)
- Ketchikan Alaska Chronicle (1919-1957)
- Ketchikan Daily Alaska Fishing News (1945-1947)
- Ketchikan Daily News (1927-1928)
- Ketchikan Daily News (1947-present)
- Ketchikan Miner (1907-1915)
- Ketchikan Mining News (1900)
- Ketchikan Record (1989-1990)
- Ketchikan Times (1919-1920)
- Ketchikan Weekly Journal (1919-1920)
- Mining Journal (1901-1907)
- Morning Mail (1913-1914)
- Saturday Mail (1914-1915)
- Southeastern Log (1971-1989)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

N/A

- 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: City of Ketchikan Museum

**Historic Resources Survey Number:** Alaska Heritage Resources Survey No. KET-1320



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### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 12.47 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

#### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |            |                 |                   |
|------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 9 | Easting: 332036 | Northing: 6136125 |
| 2. Zone: 9 | Easting: 332106 | Northing: 6136169 |
| 3. Zone: 9 | Easting: 332162 | Northing: 6136140 |
| 4. Zone: 9 | Easting: 332224 | Northing: 6136067 |
| 5. Zone: 9 | Easting: 332305 | Northing: 6136090 |
| 6. Zone: 9 | Easting: 332408 | Northing: 6136023 |
| 7. Zone: 9 | Easting: 332190 | Northing: 6135883 |

Downtown Ketchikan  
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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Downtown Ketchikan historic district starts at the south end of the Front Street tunnel, goes northeast following Pioneer Way then to Grant Street to Main Street where it turns southeast, then follows the upland edge of Main and Bawden Streets, goes along Stedman Street (includes the Chief Johnson totem pole) to Mill then runs southeast along its seaward edge, and then northwest along Front Street (with a short extension at Dock and Front) back to the point of beginning. See attached map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The proposed boundaries follow property lines and include all of the contributing buildings, sites and structures that define the commercial core of Downtown Ketchikan during the period of significance. The district forms a roughly triangular shaped area. See attached map.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Stephen Reeves, AIA, AIA-P  
organization: RAI Development Solutions  
street & number: P.O. Box 23154  
city or town: Ketchikan state: Alaska zip code: 99901-3154  
e-mail: smreeve@mac.com  
telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
date: November 15, 2012, updated April 20, 2013

---

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date,

Downtown Ketchikan  
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etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Downtown Ketchikan  
City or Vicinity: Ketchikan  
County: Ketchikan State: Alaska  
Photographer: Stephen Reeve  
Date Photographed: All photos May 4, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera, date photographed:

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0001  
Chief Kayn Totem Pole and St. John's Church, from Mills Street, camera facing northwest

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0002  
Welcome to Ketchikan arch on Mission Street near intersection with Front Street, camera facing northeast

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0003  
Tongass Trading Company and JR Heckman Store on Front Street, camera facing southeast

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0004  
City Hall and Gilmore Building along Front Street, camera facing northeast

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0005  
View of Front Street from Front Street stairway, camera facing southeast

AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0006  
Miners & Merchants Bank on Main Street, camera facing north

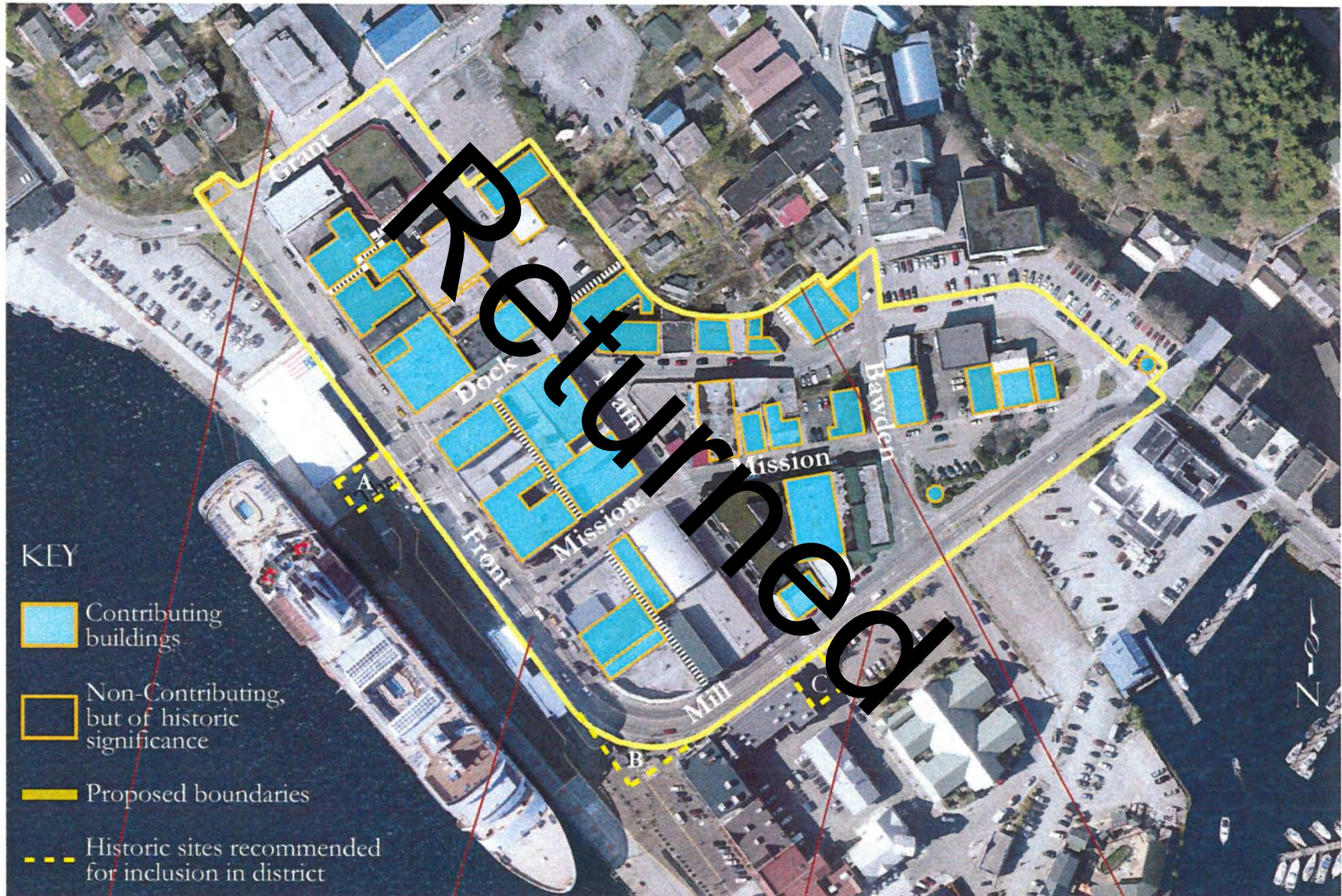
AK\_KetchikanGatewayBorough\_DowntownKetchikan\_0007  
View along Edmonds Street from stairway (structure not in district), St. John's Church in center, camera facing south

**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 100 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.



# Downtown Ketchikan - Contributing and Non-Contributing Buildings

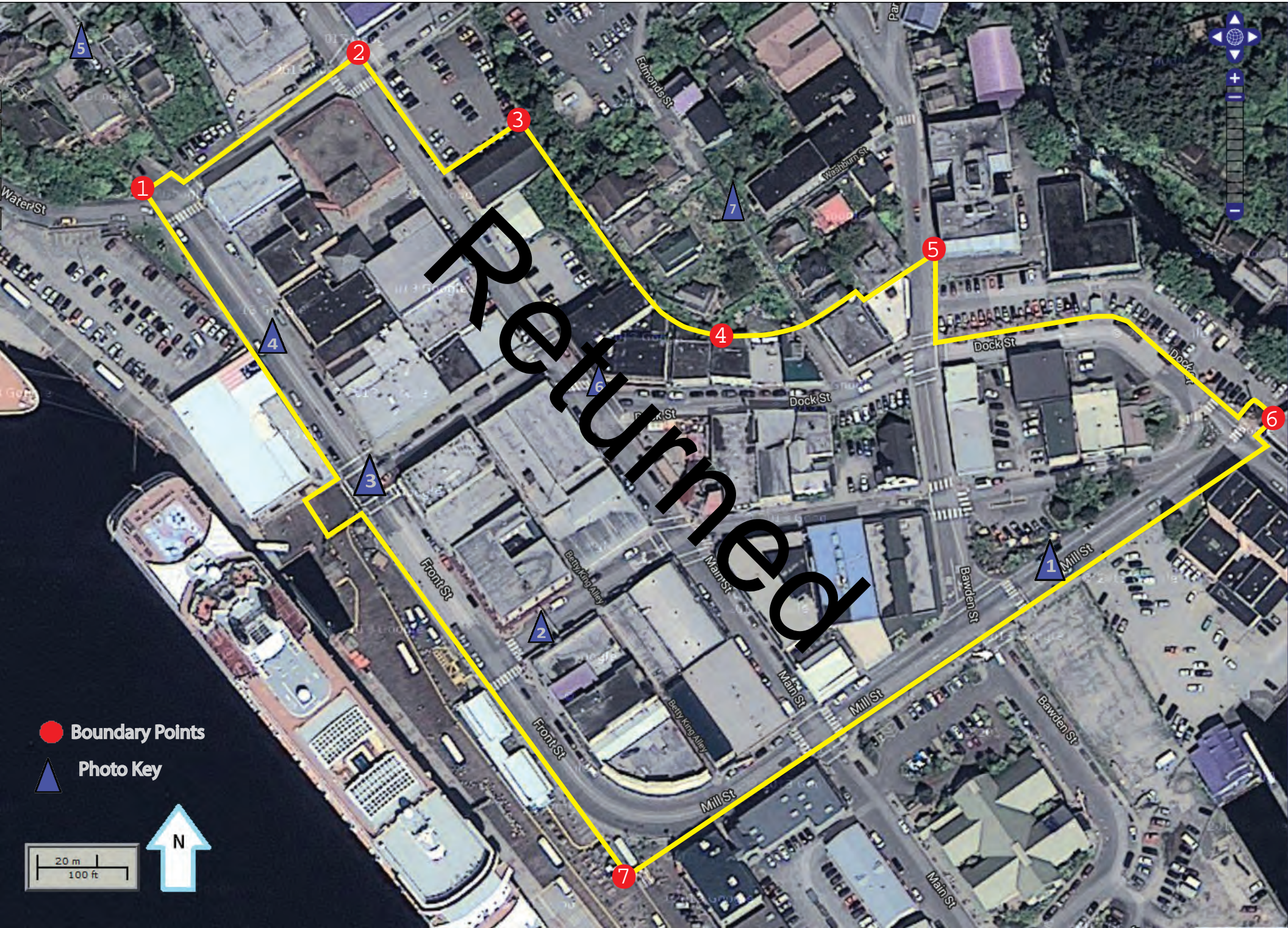
## Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska





# Downtown Ketchikan - Boundary Map and Photo Key

## Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska



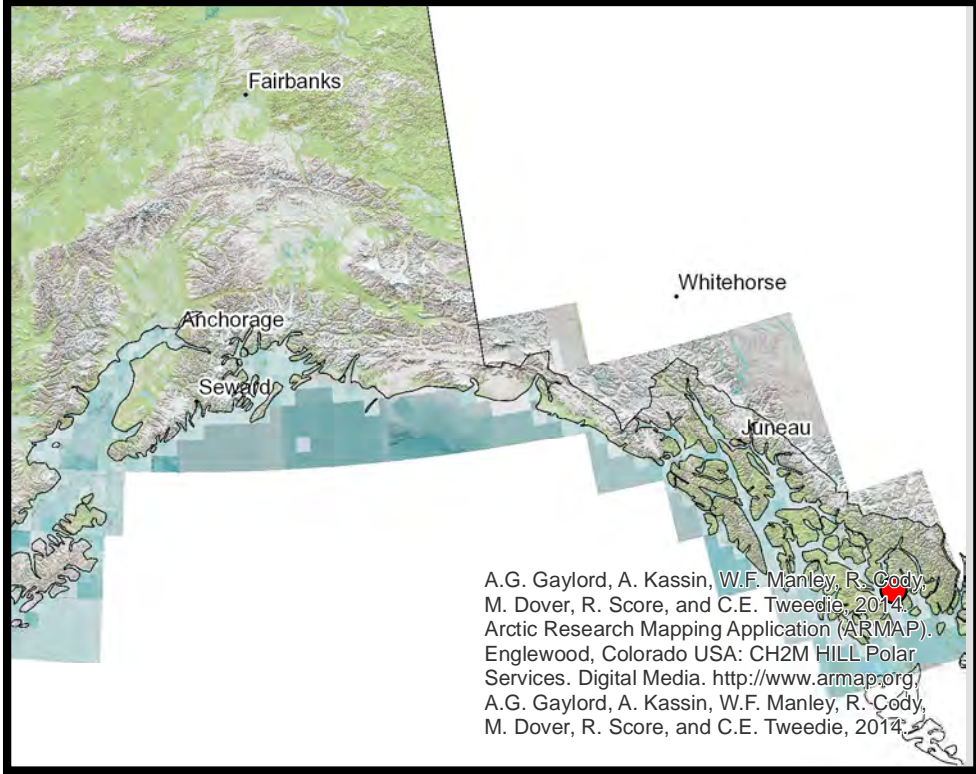
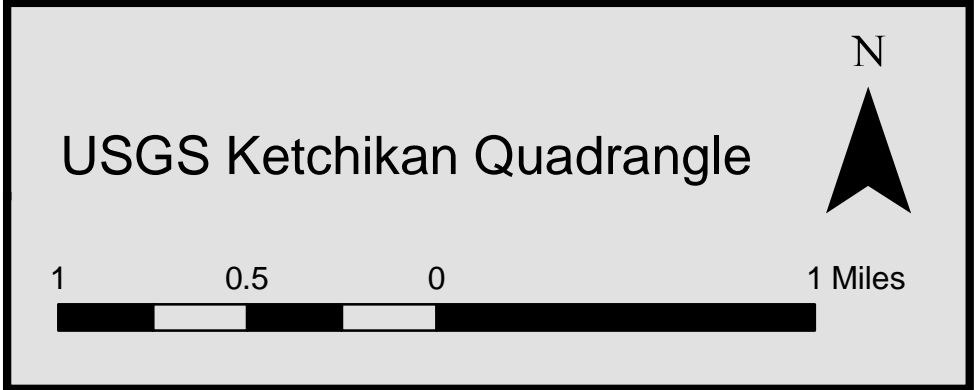
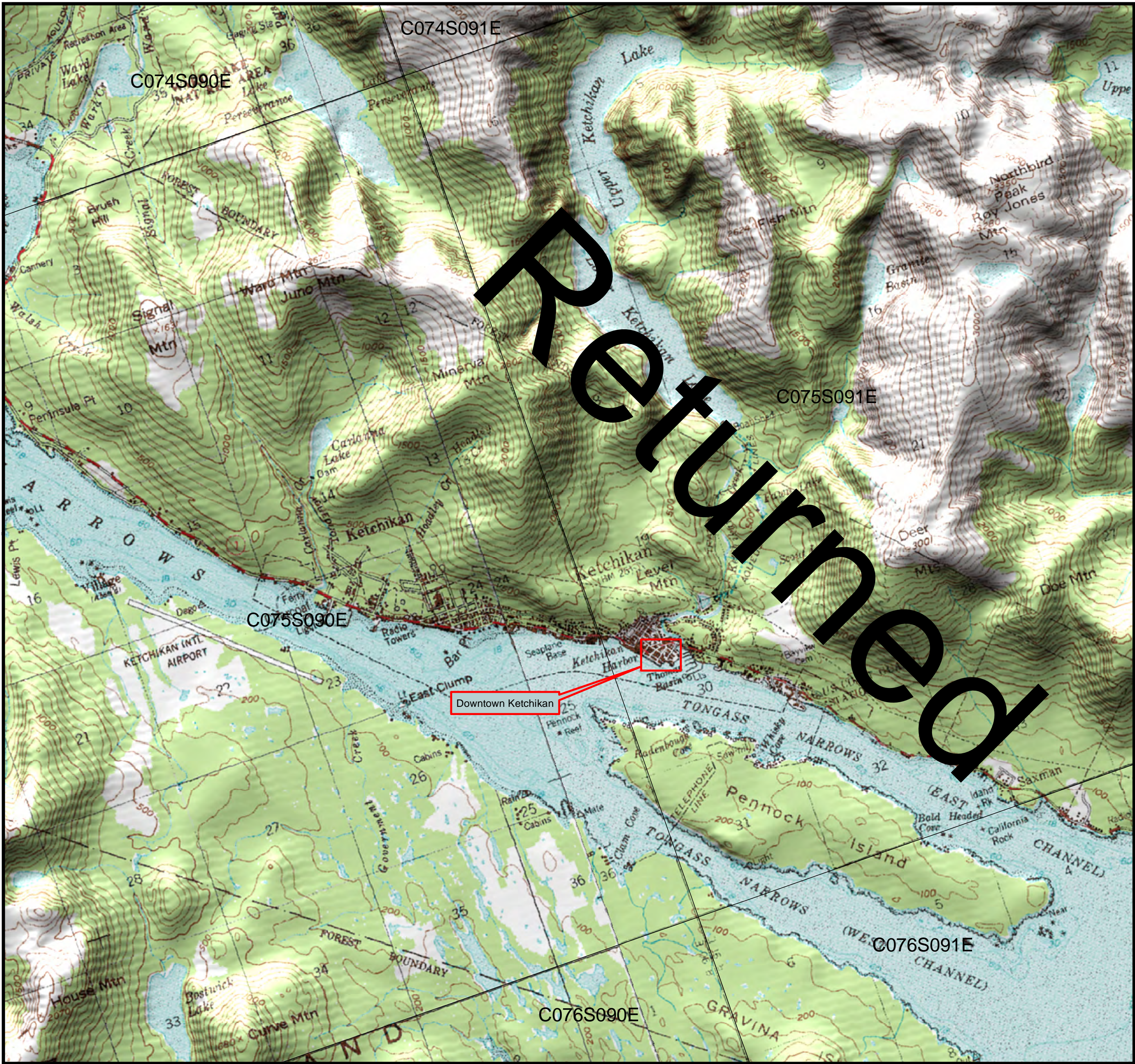
- Boundary Points
- ▲ Photo Key

20 m  
100 ft





# Downtown Ketchikan Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska







Lusignan, Paul <paul\_lusignan@nps.gov>

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## Downtown Ketchikan NR

1 message

**Lusignan, Paul** <paul\_lusignan@nps.gov>

Thu, Jul 21, 2016 at 3:34 PM

To: "NR-AK: JO ANTONSON (Email)" <jo.antonson@alaska.gov>

Hi Jo,

We had some concerns and questions while reviewing the Ketchikan Downtown district nomination.

I know this one has been a long time in the making and was probably good to get off your desk and out of the office, but there are some issues that I think bear discussing. I've drafted a return sheet outlining the concerns.

If you are comfortable with returning this to the city for the revisions as noted, I can proceed in that manner and send everything back to your office. If on the other hand, given all of the time expended already from initial drafting to Keeper's review, if you think this might just be the death blow to the nomination I would be willing to discuss the concerns with you and see if there are easy answers to some of these that we can fix short of a formal return. A number of the issues can actually be corrected with an SLR from our office. At a certain point though the number of SLR "corrections" begins to make the nomination form look questionable.

Please read the draft notes and see what you think. I'll be ready to discuss the path forward when you are. I am back in the office on Monday.

Thanks

Paul R. Lusignan  
Historian, National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
202-354-2229, fax 202-371-2229



**downtownketchikan.rtn.doc**

357K

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Downtown Ketchikan Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ALASKA, Ketchikan Gateway

DATE RECEIVED: 6/10/16      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/27/16  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/12/16      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/26/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000467

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                           DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**RETURN  
SEE ATTACHED COMMENTS**

RECOM./CRITERIA RETURN

REVIEWER PAUL R. LUSIGNAR DISCIPLINE HISTORIAN

TELEPHONE 202-354-2229 DATE 7/26/2016

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.



## **DOWNTOWN KETCHIKAN**

### **Ketchikan Gateway Borough, AK**

#### **National Register of Historic Places - Return Comments:**

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The current documentation is being returned for technical and substantive reasons.

##### **Procedural Issues:**

The owner notifications and State Review Board consideration of this nomination date from 2012 and 2013, over 3 years ago. Pursuit of the nomination at this time without re-notification runs the risk of establishing grounds for procedural error if any properties have changed hands in the intervening years. Before resubmission of this nomination the preparer and the SHPO should verify that the narrative content of the nomination still matches the physical condition of the resources and that ownership of property in the district has not significantly changed.

##### **Classification:**

\*The Resource Count for the district should be revised.

The number of contributing buildings should be reduced by at least two-reflecting the fact that the Coliseum Theater (built 1957) (#44) was completed outside the period of significance and must be re-categorized as non-contributing. The Gilmore Hotel was previously listed in the National Register and should therefore not be included in the district count. (It is accounted for in the *Previously Listed* box. The number of non-contributing buildings should be increased by one to account for the Coliseum Theater re-categorization.

See Description Section comments below for addition concerns regarding the final resource count and the categorization of specific resources.

##### **Historic and Current Functions:**

\*Whenever possible the category citations should include both general and specific sub-categories.

Recommend: Commerce/Trade-professional, financial institution, specialty store, department store, restaurant; Government-government office; Social-meeting hall; Domestic-single dwelling, hotel, multiple dwelling; Recreation/Culture-theater; and Religion-religious facility.

##### **Description:**

There are a number of questions regarding the inclusion of certain resources and the categorization of others.

**Buildings.** Why were the substantial non-contributing buildings at the far northern extreme of the district along Front and Main Street (#17, 18, 19) included in the boundaries? Their inclusion reduces the ratio of contributing to non-contributing resources unnecessarily and interjects rather substantial buildings into the historic district streetscape. It appears as if the district boundary could be re-adjusted easily. See tunnel discussion below.

How is the *Ketchikan Daily News Building* (#38) categorized as a contributing resource, while a property such as the *Knickerbocker Hotel* is non-contributing? The Ketchikan Daily News has had what appears to be significant alterations made to its primary façade (full height class-front entry, reconfigured façade windows) while the Knickerbocker appears much less altered. It is unclear without seeing historic views,

but the scale, materials and fenestration pattern on the Knickerbocker seem compatible with other historic resources. The windows and façade may have had different decorative treatments, but as a contributing resources the building could still read as a circa 1920 building. The Daily News has had more radical changes. The physical condition of the Daily News appears to be better than the run-down Knickerbocker, but that should not be confused with integrity. Please clarify categorization rationale.

The history and condition of the *Stedman Hotel* building(s) is unclear. Was the rehabilitation work recently undertaken authentic to the original design? Did it meet the *Secretary Standards*, or was it a modern interpretation trying to harken back to older times? There is a certain false character feeling to the adjacent buildings and the oversized corner tower. Is this a historic building with a few alterations, or a modern facility made up to look like an Alaskan pioneer? Please clarify categorization rational, also see attached historic figures.

The *Coliseum Theater* (#44) was built outside the period of significance and should be a non-contributing resource. Revise Resource Count and Inventory as necessary.

Structures. Why is the *Knob Hill Tunnel* (#1) even being included in the nomination if it represents a non-contributing (1954) resource, is neither commercial nor civic in function, and is located at the extreme edge of the district boundary? From the district resource map it even appears that the boundaries terminate at the opening of the tunnel and do not even include the full functional resource. (Delete from resource count and inventory.)

The location of the four *Stairway* approaches linking the upslope residential areas to the commercial core are not provided on the map or in the inventory. Upon reviewing the district map and contemporary aerials the stairways do not even appear to be located within the district boundaries. The C/NC map does appear to have been taken from a larger map that might have noted the locations. Either clearly note the location of the stairways and make sure that the identified boundaries include the full extent of these resources, or if they lie outside the boundaries delete them from the Resource Count and the inventory.)

Sites. Do the contributing sites (Dock Street Wharf (#62), Ketchikan Wharf (#63), Heckman Wharf (#64) and Spruce Mill Site (#65) have specific extant features, or are they simply the locations of former elements of the downtown infrastructure? None of these resources appears to have a location clearly marked on the district map. If there are no identifiable features, ruins, artifacts, or archaeological components that can be or have been verified, then the former locations cannot be categorized as contributing sites for NR purposes. Their location can be noted and discussed, but they are not extant resources. Mark on map or delete from Resource Count and Inventory.

Object. Does the current Welcome to Ketchikan sign actually date from 1930s? It does not appear to match one found in a 1935 photograph, and it looks more modern and likely to be outside the period of significance. Clarify and remove from Inventory and Revise Count if non-historic.

The Building Inventory would be more useful if it contained street addresses, or if the Inventory numbers were placed on the district map. (Update inventory and/or map.)

Given the rapid acceleration of development in the city, it is assumed that the nominations narrative still reflects current conditions. This should be verified upon revision and resubmission of the documentation.

**Significance:**

*Commerce* should be added as a basic area of significance. As well as reflecting the heart of the early settlement of the community the district is noted as the commercial and economic core of Ketchikan.

Commerce would appear to be a justified area of significance without additional justification. (Add Commerce)

The *Period of Significance* should be revised to read: 1900—1930. Generally the period of significance should not predate the date of the earliest extant resources. The 1887-1900 era was certainly an important part of the development history of the district, but the extant resources effectively convey the character and history of the period from 1900-1930. The earliest identified physical resources date from 1900, with the exception of the recreated totem pole (1898), which relative to the commercial and settlement history of the district is a minor resource and dates to within a couple of years of the 1900 time point.

**Verbal Boundary Description:**

Depending on decisions made regarding the issues noted above, the verbal boundary description and maps may need to be revised.

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me directly at the number or e-mail listed below.



---

Paul R. Lusignan, Historian  
(for) Keeper of the National Register  
(202) 354-2229  
[Paul\\_lusignan@nps.gov](mailto:Paul_lusignan@nps.gov)

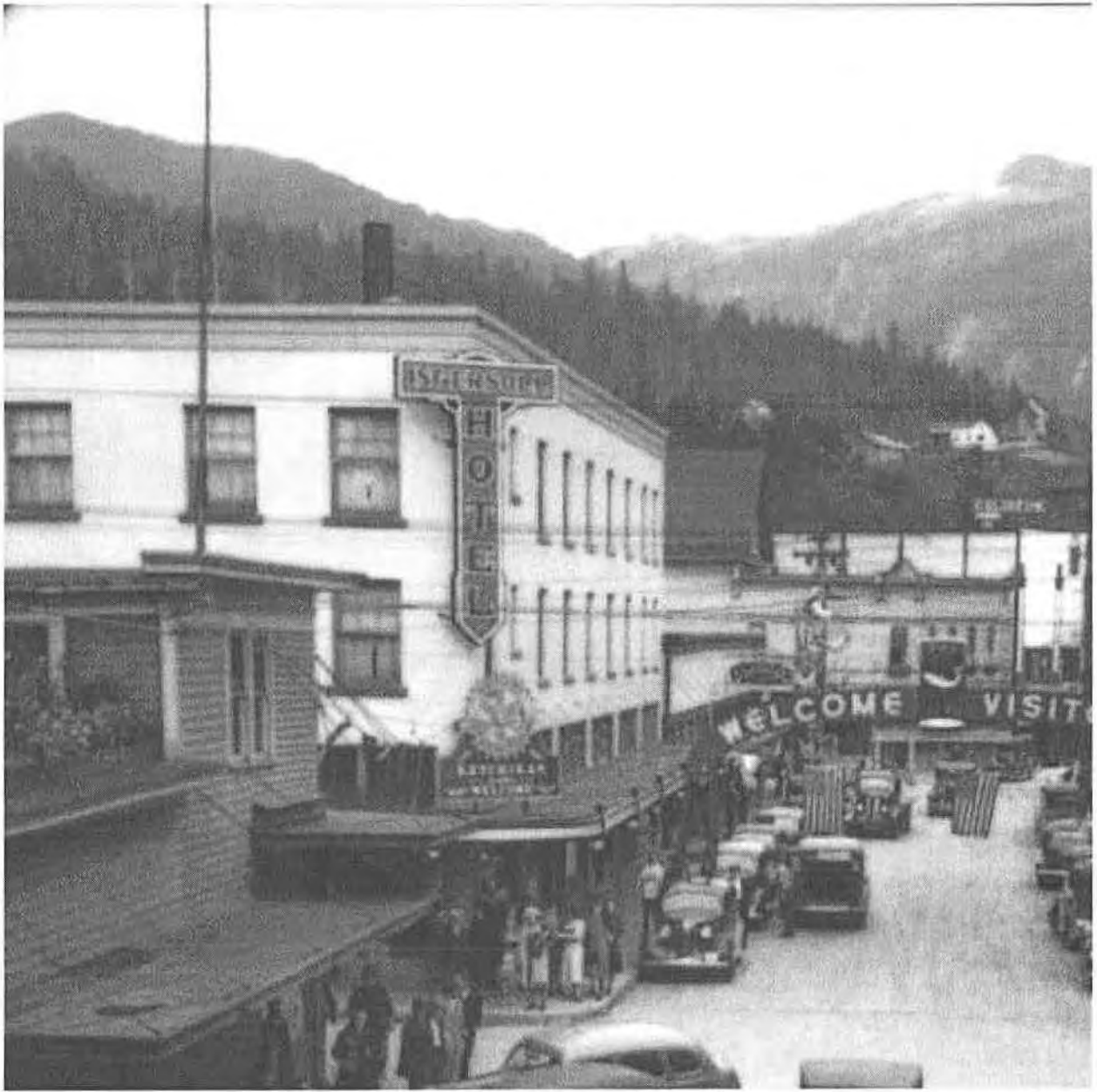
S:\nr\lusi\slrtemp\downtownketchikan.rtn



Alaska State Library - Historical Collections









THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of Natural Resources**

DIVISION OF PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION  
Office of History & Archaeology

550 West 7<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 1310  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-3565  
907.269.8721  
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha>



August 16, 2017

Re: 3330-2 Downtown Ketchikan

J. Paul Loether, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Attn: Paul Lusignan

Dear Paul:

Enclosed please find a revised National Register of Historic Places documentation package for the Downtown Ketchikan historic district in Southeast Alaska. The changes made to the nomination and maps address your comments dated July 26, 2016. I discussed the comments with the author of the nomination. I sent all property owners a letter on December 26, 2016, updating them on the status of the nomination and providing them another opportunity to comment on listing the district in the National Register. The disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination, maps, photographs, voting records and all comments received from owners. I concur with the Alaska Historical Commission's recommendations on eligibility for listing Downtown Ketchikan historic district in the National Register and have signed the nomination.

If you have any questions regarding the revised documentation package please contact me at [jo.antonson@alaska.gov](mailto:jo.antonson@alaska.gov) or 907.269.8714.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Joan M. Antonson".

Joan M. Antonson  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure: 2 disks, signature page