

JAN 20 1995

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name N/A
other names/site number Unadilla Main Street Historic District; OT12: multiple

2. Location

street & number See map not for publication [N/A]
city or town Unadilla vicinity [N/A]
state Nebraska code NE county Otoe code 131 zip code 68454

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this [x] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [x] meets [] does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [x] statewide [] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Arthur Sommer
Signature of certifying official Date 1/11/95
Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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

Edron H. Ball 2/17/95

Entered in the National Register
Signature of Keeper Date of Action
[Signature] _____

Unadilla Main Street Historic District
Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
9		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
10		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: business
Commerce/Trade: financial institution
Commerce/Trade: specialty store
Commerce/Trade: restaurant
Government: post office
Health Care: medical business/office

Commerce/Trade: business
Commerce/Trade: financial institution
Commerce/Trade: specialty store
Commerce/Trade: restaurant
Government: post office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Early 20th Century Revival

foundation concrete
walls brick

roof asphalt
other

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning & Design

Period of Significance

1908-1912

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/ Builder

N/A

Primary Location of Additional Data:

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

Name of repository:

Unadilla Main Street Historic District
Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	14	730530	4506790	3.			
2.				4.			

[] See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carol Ahlgren, Architectural Historian

organization Nebr. State Historic Preservation Office date November, 1994

street & number 1500 R Street telephone (402) 471-4773

city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68501

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

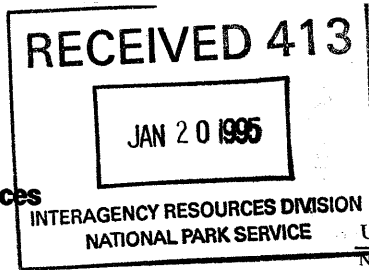
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**



Unadilla Main Street Historic District
 Name of Property
 Otoe County, Nebraska
 County and State

Section 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

The Unadilla Main Street Historic District consists of nine connected commercial buildings located on the north side of Main Street in Unadilla, a small southeastern Nebraska town. The one-story brick buildings, constructed between 1908 and 1912, are located along a raised concrete sidewalk accessed by four steps. The buildings were constructed on the triangular-shaped south half of Block 39 which was platted to parallel the railroad tracks which transverse the area in a pronounced curve south of Main Street. The district has a distinctive "v" shape and its buildings diminish in size from east to west. Overall integrity is good although some storefront remodeling has occurred through time. The nomination consists of nine (9) contributing buildings and one (1) contributing structure, the concrete sidewalk and steps.

The Unadilla Main Street Historic District is located in Unadilla, a small town in southeastern Nebraska (1990 population: 308), approximately 30 miles east of Lincoln, the state capital. Located on the north side of Main Street, the district consists of nine connected one-story brick commercial buildings constructed in a distinctive "v" shape. Main Street parallels the Burlington railroad tracks which transverse the area to the south in a pronounced curve. Built to conform to the triangular shape of the plat for Block 39, the district buildings diminish in size and scale from east to west.

South of Main Street and the railroad tracks is the Little Nemaha River; the bottom lands are planted in fields which extend toward low hills in the distance. The north half of Block 39 with the exception of three one-story commercial buildings to the west, is a vacant lot with full-size trees. The land rises steeply from the downtown district toward the hills and shady streets that characterize the town's residential area.

Constructed between 1908 and 1912, the nine connected brick buildings conform to the triangular shape of Block 39. The district, therefore, has a distinctive "v" shape which angles to the northwest (see site plan) and the individual connected buildings diminish in scale from east to west. The nine buildings share common materials such as chipped brick facades and corbelled cornices. The cohesiveness of the district is further reinforced by the common setback and the location of the buildings along a raised concrete sidewalk accessed by four steps.

The district is visually and architecturally dominated by the First National Bank (OT12-001), located at the northwest corner of Main and G streets which is also the eastern boundary of the district (see photo # 2 & 3). The bank, along with the adjacent Duncan Horstman Building to the west (OT12-002), was built in 1908. The remaining seven buildings were constructed between 1911-1912 after a devastating fire in the spring of 1911. With chipped brick exteriors and corbelled cornices, the First National Bank and the Duncan-Horstman Building (OT12-002) provided a stylistic model for the rebuilding of Main Street.

The district is bordered to the east by G Street, to the west by H Street and the south by Main Street. Immediately southeast of the district are several large cylindrical corn dryers. To the southwest near the railroad tracks, a large frame c.1900 tin-sided grain elevator provides a sense of enclosure to the area. Main Street was the original route of Nebraska State Highway 2 which paralleled the railroad tracks and turned north on I Street. The highway was rerouted in the 1960's several blocks north, by-passing the downtown.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Unadilla Main Street Historic District

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

DESCRIPTION (continued)

When Unadilla was platted in 1871, the first commercial district developed parallel to the railroad, on both the north and south sides of the tracks. The commercial area consisted of frame false-front buildings that housed a variety of businesses such as dry goods stores, blacksmith shops, and hotels. The principal intersection of the initial commercial district was Main and G streets with the depot at the southeast corner and the two-story frame Union Hotel at the northwest corner.

Available historic photos indicate that by the turn of the century the north side of Main Street had become the primary business area. One- and two-story frame false-front buildings were located along a raised wooden sidewalk with varying setbacks that attempted to compensate for the triangular shape of the plat (see photo #1). Following the demolition of the Union Hotel at the intersection of Main and G Streets, the First National Bank (OT12-001) and the Duncan-Horstman commercial building (OT12-002) were constructed in 1908.

Three years later, in April 1911, a fire destroyed all of the businesses and houses west of the bank and store. The community decided to immediately rebuild the business district in the same location on the north side of Main Street and the bank and store provided a stylistic model. The resulting district, which was completed within a year after the fire, has served as Unadilla's main commercial area to the present.

Following several major floods during the 20th century, the most recent in 1950, the remaining businesses and houses south of the railroad tracks were relocated or abandoned. The depot, which had been located at the intersection of Main and G streets south of the tracks, was swept away during the 1950 flood. Today there is no evidence of the streets, houses, and businesses that were located south of the tracks; the bottom lands of the Little Nemaha River are now fields.

The following inventory includes site number, historic name, date of construction, photo views and, where appropriate, current name. Building typologies were derived from Richard Longstreth's The Buildings of Main Street (1987). The inventory begins at the eastern edge of the district (Main and G streets) and progresses from east to west.

Inventory of Contributing Buildings

OT12-001: First National Bank, 1908 (photo #2, 3 & 5). The First National Bank, located at the intersection of Main and G streets, represents the visual and architectural anchor of the district. Constructed on the site of an 1870's frame hotel, the bank was completed in 1908. With its architectural details and brick construction, the bank represented the beginnings of Unadilla's "second generation" Main Street. Following the destruction of all the buildings on the north side of Main Street by fire in 1911, the bank and the adjacent brick store (OT12-002) provided the stylistic model for the rebuilding of the business district which occurred within a year after the fire.

The one-story bank has details suggestive of the Renaissance Revival style such as a castellated parapet on the south (main) and east facades. The building measures approximately 50 by 25 feet and features a chipped brick exterior, limestone sills, label molds, and a corner entrance. A non-contributing (c.1980) one-story brick addition extends to the alley line at the rear of the building. Since its completion in 1908, the bank has served the community in its prominent location at the intersection of Main and G streets.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Unadilla Main Street Historic District

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7 Page 3

DESCRIPTION (continued)

OT12-002: Duncan-Horstman Building (Horstman's Mall), 1908 (photo #3, 4). The former M.W. Duncan Store is located immediately west of the First National Bank and is one of the nine connected brick buildings that comprise the district. Like the adjacent bank, the store was constructed in 1908 and survived the devastating fire of 1911. The one-story, one-part brick commercial block building measures approximately 29 x 50 feet and features a chipped brick exterior.

The building retains its transom windows and asymmetrical central entrance flanked by cast-iron columns. Similar to other district buildings, the Duncan-Horstman Building features brick corbelling at the cornice. Built in 1908 by M.W. Duncan as a dry goods and grocery store, it was acquired by the Horstman family two years later and has remained in the family's ownership to the present.

OT12-003: Russell & Wallen Hardware Store (Unadilla Hardware Store), 1911 (photo #3, 4, 6 & 7). The Russell and Wallen Hardware store is a one-part brick commercial block building, one of the nine connected district buildings. The one-story brick building measures approximately 30 x 60 feet and features a central recessed entrance, cast iron columns, a metal awning, and a corbelled cornice. The store represents the first rebuilding of Main Street that occurred after the devastating fire of 1911.

Work on the building began in June 1911 and the local newspaper reported that, "Everybody feels better to see the work of rebuilding in progress" (Otoe Union, 6/16/1911). Although ownership has changed several times since it was constructed, the building continues to serve the community as a hardware store.

OT12-004: Darling Pharmacy Building (Ma's Bar & Grill #1), 1911 (photo #6, 8). The Darling Pharmacy Building is a one-story, one-part commercial building--one of nine contiguous buildings that comprise the district. The rectangular-shaped building measures approximately 18 by 77 feet. Architectural details are limited to simple brick corbelling at the cornice similar to other district buildings. The original facade however, has been altered with in-fill wooden siding and the windows have been replaced. Since these changes may be reversible and the building retains its scale, shape, and original location, it is considered contributing to the district. At an undetermined date, an opening was created in the interior west wall to expand into the adjacent "Ma's Bar and Grill #2."

OT12-038: Frank Yeigh Building (Ma's Bar & Grill #2), 1911 (photo #6, 8). The Frank Yeigh Building is a one-story, one-part brick commercial building. Like the adjacent Darling Pharmacy Building, the main facade angles to the northwest to accommodate the plat for Block 39 (see site plan). The Yeigh Building measures approximately 34 by 50 feet and features a brick corbelled cornice. Now part of Ma's Bar & Grill, the Yeigh Building originally housed a meat market and continued in that capacity until the 1940's. Like the adjacent Darling Pharmacy Building (OT12-004) and Unadilla Post Office Building (OT12-039), the interior wall was altered c.1940 to expand into Ma's Bar and Grill #2-3.

OT12-039: Unadilla Post Office Building (Ma's Bar & Grill #3), 1912 (photo #6, 8). The Unadilla Post Office Building is located immediately west of the Yeigh Building. The one-part, one-story brick commercial building was completed in 1912 for post mistress Catherine Butt after the 1911 fire. Similar to the three commercial buildings to the east, the former post office was constructed with an angled main facade to conform to the triangular shape of the south half of Block 39. The building measures approximately 14 by 28 feet.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Unadilla Main Street Historic District

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 7, 8 Page 4

DESCRIPTION (continued)

In the late 1940's, the common wall of the building and the adjacent Yeigh Building (OT12-038) was partially removed to enlarge the grocery store. At that time or during a subsequent remodelling, the exterior doorway was removed to expand into Ma's Bar & Grill #2. The building exhibits good integrity, however, and shares the simple brick corbelled cornice of other district buildings.

OT12-005: Gorsage Barber Shop Building (K & L Arcade), 1912 (photo #8). The Gorsage Barber Shop Building is a brick one-part commercial building located immediately west of the adjacent post office. The Gorsage Building was completed in 1912 and was one of seven district buildings constructed after the 1911 fire. The main facade features the simple brick corbelled cornice which characterizes the district. The building, which measures approximately 20 by 35 feet, also reflects the district's conformity to the triangular plat of Block 39; its main facade is approximately 3-4 feet lower in height than the buildings to the east. The building retains its original fenestration: a three-part window and off-center entrance.

OT12-006: Barker-Finigan Creamery Building (Averil's Beauty Shop), 1912 (photo #8). The Barker-Finigan Creamery Building, along with the adjacent commercial building to the immediate west (OT12-007), represents the final reconstruction of Unadilla's Main Street after the 1911 fire. Work on both buildings began in September of 1912 and was completed by the end of the year (The Otoe Union, 9/13/1912; 11/22/1912). The Barker-Finigan Building also reflects the district's conformity to the triangular plat of Block 39; it is narrower and smaller in scale than the buildings to the east. The one-part brick commercial building, which measures approximately 23 by 23 feet, features a simple brick corbelled cornice and a three-part window.

Prior to 1911, Leonard Finigan operated a creamery in a frame structure west of the present building. Following the destruction of all the frame buildings on the north side of Main Street during the 1911 fire, the new creamery was built in what the local newspaper referred to as the "Barker building" (The Otoe Union, 9/27/1912; 11/8/1912). Mr. Barker apparently constructed or funded the new building; and according to available information, it was used as a produce and cream station until c.1940.

OT12-007: Carper Harness Shop (Unadilla Post Office), 1912 (photo #8). The Carper Harness Shop Building is located at the extreme west edge of the district. Construction of the one-story brick building began in the fall of 1911 and was completed a year later. The harness shop represents the final reconstruction of Unadilla's Main Street following the 1911 fire. The building also reflects the district's conformity to the triangular plat of Block 39; it is narrower and smaller in size than the buildings to the east. The one-part brick commercial building, which measures approximately 17 by 21 feet, features a simple brick corbelled cornice and a two-part window.

Originally constructed as a harness shop by Edward Carper, by the 1930's the building was used as a private residence. In the mid-1940's it was leased for use as the Unadilla Post Office and has served in that capacity to the present.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Unadilla Main Street Historic District is significant on the state level under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Design. The district is located on triangular-shaped lots that comprise the south half of Block 39, original town plat. The nine connected buildings, which diminish in size and scale

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Unadilla Main Street Historic District

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 5

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

from east to west, parallel Main Street and the railroad tracks and share common materials, scale, and setback. The district is significant as an excellent example of the impact of the railroad on town form and for its retention that form in a second-generation commercial district after a 1911 fire destroyed the original frame buildings. The period of significance, 1908-1912, encompasses the construction of the earliest extant buildings in 1908 through 1912 to include the final reconstruction following the fire.

=====

The Unadilla Main Street Historic District is located in Unadilla, a small Otoe County town in southeastern Nebraska (1990 population: 308). The town was platted in 1871 on the route of the Midland Pacific Railway Company which entered the state at Nebraska City, continued west from Unadilla and Lincoln, terminating in York (Baldwin, 1917). Similar to small towns throughout the Great Plains, the establishment and development of Unadilla was intrinsically linked to the railroad. To insure the community's future, in 1873-74 area residents built a stockyards and a depot and donated them to the railroad company (Andreas, 1882).

Similar to railroad towns throughout the Great Plains, Unadilla was platted to conform to a rectangular grid, regardless of natural features and topography. Unadilla's plat, however, also illustrates what city planning historian John Reps has described as the limitations of the "grid iron" town design (Reps, 1979). South of the district, the railroad entered the area in pronounced curve roughly parallel to the Little Nemaha River. The Unadilla plat represented an attempt to follow the curve of the railroad tracks which resulted in several triangular-shaped blocks and half blocks. One of the most noticeable of these, and the only one that had substantial development through time, is the south half of Block 39, the nominated area (see sketch map).

Despite the irregularity of the Block 39 lots, the area became the central business area and has served in that capacity to the present. The historic district represents what cultural geographer John Hudson has identified as the earliest railroad town form with development parallel to the tracks. Generally, if such towns grew, they evolved into a "t-form" with development at a right angle from the railroad tracks (Hudson, 1990). Second-generation commercial buildings along such streets were usually constructed of more permanent material such as brick.

The Unadilla Main Street Historic District, located on the south half of Block 39, is an excellent, intact example of the early railroad town form. The district is unusual, however, since the triangular lots were not replatted or left vacant after the 1911 fire which destroyed the original frame commercial buildings. Instead of rebuilding a block north of Main Street or at a right angle from the tracks on G Street in a t-town form, the community decided to rebuild the business district in the original location facing the railroad tracks.

History

By 1881, less than a decade after it was platted, Unadilla had reached its peak population (440) and was described in relation to the railroad: "Like so many of our little towns in the west [it] sprang up with the advent of the railroad," (Miller, 1881). Unadilla was one of 15 towns platted along the Midland Pacific Railroad line from Nebraska City to York. To ensure its future, in 1873-74, area residents had constructed a stockyards and depot and donated them to the railroad company (Andreas, 1882).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Unadilla Main Street Historic District
Name of Property
Otoe County, Nebraska
County and State

Section 8 Page 6

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

In 1881, Unadilla's commercial area consisted of about a dozen businesses located parallel to and on both the north and south sides of the railroad tracks. Businesses included two hotels, a restaurant, two hardware stores and several livery and blacksmith shops. Early advertisements reflected the importance of the railroad on the town's development. The Union Hotel, for example, advertised its location in 1881 as "opposite the depot." The other hotel was located "just north of the depot." Other businesses such as blacksmith shops advertised as being located "south of the tracks" and "south of the depot" (Miller, 1881, pp. 126-131).

By the turn of the century, the north side of Main Street had become Unadilla's primary commercial area. Businesses consisted of one- and two-story frame false-front buildings that attempted to conform to the irregularity of the triangular plat for Block 39. The result was a variety of set-backs with some businesses angled to compensate for the triangular shape of individual lots. All of the buildings were accessed by a raised wooden sidewalk (see photo #1).

In 1908, the second-generation business district was initiated with the construction of two brick buildings: the First National Bank (OT12-001) and Duncan's Hardware Store (OT12-002). Typical of second-generation commercial buildings, both were constructed of permanent material (brick) and featured stylistic details such as concrete/stone sills, rusticated or "chipped" brick exteriors and corbelled cornices. The newspaper followed the progress of construction and commented that the new buildings would be "set square with the sun, moon, and stars, regardless of all previous arrangement of this street" (The Otoe Union, May 1, 1908).

From 1908-1911, the bank and store were the only brick buildings and new construction in Unadilla's business district. The future of the town's Main Street would change dramatically, however, on the evening of April 22, 1911. A fire began in the middle of the block and destroyed 12 frame commercial buildings in less than one hour (The Union, 4/28/1911; Nebraska City News 4/25/1911). The fire, with an estimated \$35,000 worth of damage, left only the brick bank and hardware store.

The community immediately began planning the reconstruction of the business district. The newspaper reported that an attempt would be made to "straighten the business area" after the debris was cleared away. Two days after the disaster a public meeting was called by the village board. The community decided to prohibit future construction of frame buildings in the business district. Ordinance 70, which passed on April 26, 1911, made it illegal to construct or move onto Block 39 any frame or wooden buildings "or one(s) of any material except stone, brick or other incombustible material." The Ordinance also required design review and approval of new construction by the village board (The Otoe Union, 4/28/1911).

For the next two months the community debated the relocation and/or reconstruction of the business district. The newspaper commented on the opportunity to change the plat of Block 39: "Now is the time to straighten up the town and build right, it will make the new buildings more valuable" (The Otoe Union, 5/5/1911).

Several weeks later the newspaper described two proposals regarding the reconstruction of the business district. One called for changing the primary business street to extend north on G Street resulting in a commercial district at a right angle from the tracks in Hudson's "t-town" form. The second proposal was to rebuild on the north half of Block 39 facing the railroad tracks, but abandoning the triangular-shaped

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Unadilla Main Street Historic District

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 8 Page 7

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

lots. The "triangle" as it was called, would become a public park. Located between the railroad and the business district, it would: "present a nice view to the travelling public" (The Otoe Union, 5/12/1911).

The second proposal seemed favored but it required the donation or purchase of the lots on the south half of Block 39. A week later, the newspaper reported on the debate with an article entitled "What Shall We Do?" (The Otoe Union, 5/19/1911). A subscription fund to purchase the triangle was proposed, even if it required a special election. The article stated that the future of the commercial district would affect all property owners in Unadilla as well as area residents. Therefore, it was argued straightening the street should not be the sole responsibility of the business owners affected by the fire. The newspaper proposed that the town should "Have the ground surveyed [to] straighten up and lay out a good business street" (The Otoe Union, 5/19/1911).

No further news on the debate appeared until June 2, 1911, when it was reported that two new buildings would be started within the next few weeks. It was also noted that "No attempt will be made to buy the triangle as the sum asked for it is \$1,200." The triangle was allegedly resurveyed and the "line straightened" (The Otoe Union, 6/2/1911). Construction of the new commercial district began immediately and was completed within a year. On the first anniversary of the fire the newspaper reported:

"A year ago the editor stood on the streets and looked on the smoking ruins of the desolated town. And today, we look on a new and modern Unadilla with [its] permanent brick store buildings of the best construction... and see a brighter future for the town" (The Otoe Union 4/26/1912).

Significance

The Unadilla Main Street Historic District is significant on the state level under criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Design. The nine connected brick commercial buildings, located on a triangular-shaped half block facing Main Street and the railroad tracks, clearly illustrate the railroad's influence on the original town plat and subsequent development. The district is also significant as an excellent example of a second generation main street that retained its original form after a devastating fire in 1911.

Unadilla was one of 15 towns platted by the Midland Pacific Railroad Company (later consolidated by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy), which extended from Nebraska City through Unadilla and Lincoln, terminating at York. Other small towns on the Midland main line such as Utica, Tamora, and Waco also featured initial commercial development parallel to the tracks. According to available Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey data, none of the other small towns on the Midland line, however, were developed on a plat that deviated from the standard rectangular grid. Further, as other towns on the line developed second-generation main street districts, they evolved into the "t-form with commercial buildings at a right angle from the railroad.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Unadilla Main Street Historic District

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

County and State

Section 9, 10 Page 8

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andreas, A.T. History of the State of Nebraska. Vol. II. Chicago, IL: Western History Company, 1882.

Baldwin, William W. Corporate History of the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Railroad Company. Chicago, IL: C.B. & Q. Railroad Company, 1917.

Hudson, John C. "Settlement of the American Grassland," in Michael P. Conzen, ed., The Making of the American Landscape. London: Harper Collins Academic, 1990.

Longstreth, Richard. The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture. Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987.

Miller, R.H. & J.S. Nebraska City and Otoe County Directory. Lincoln, NE: Journal Company, 1881.

Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey, files. Lincoln, NE: State Historic Preservation Office.

Reps, John. Cities of the American West: A History of Frontier Urban Planning. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979.

Newspapers

Nebraska City News, Nebraska City, NE: April 25, 1911.

The Otoe Union, Unadilla, NE: 1908-1912.

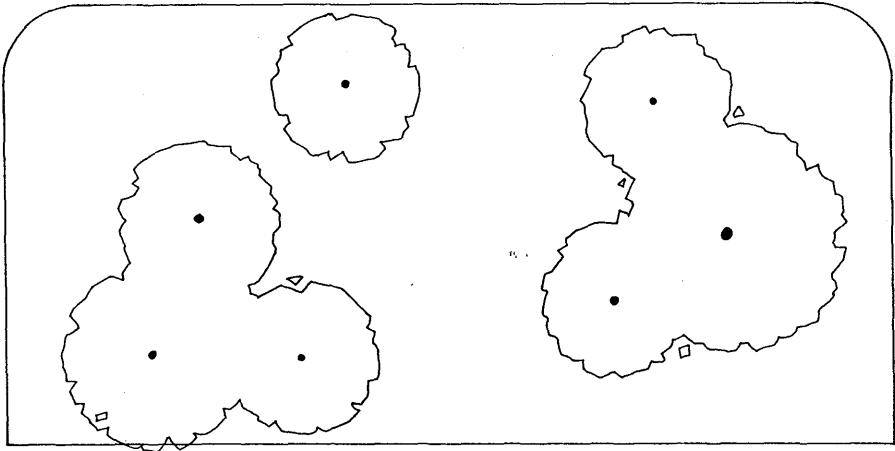
The Syracuse Journal, Syracuse, NE: April 28, 1911.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

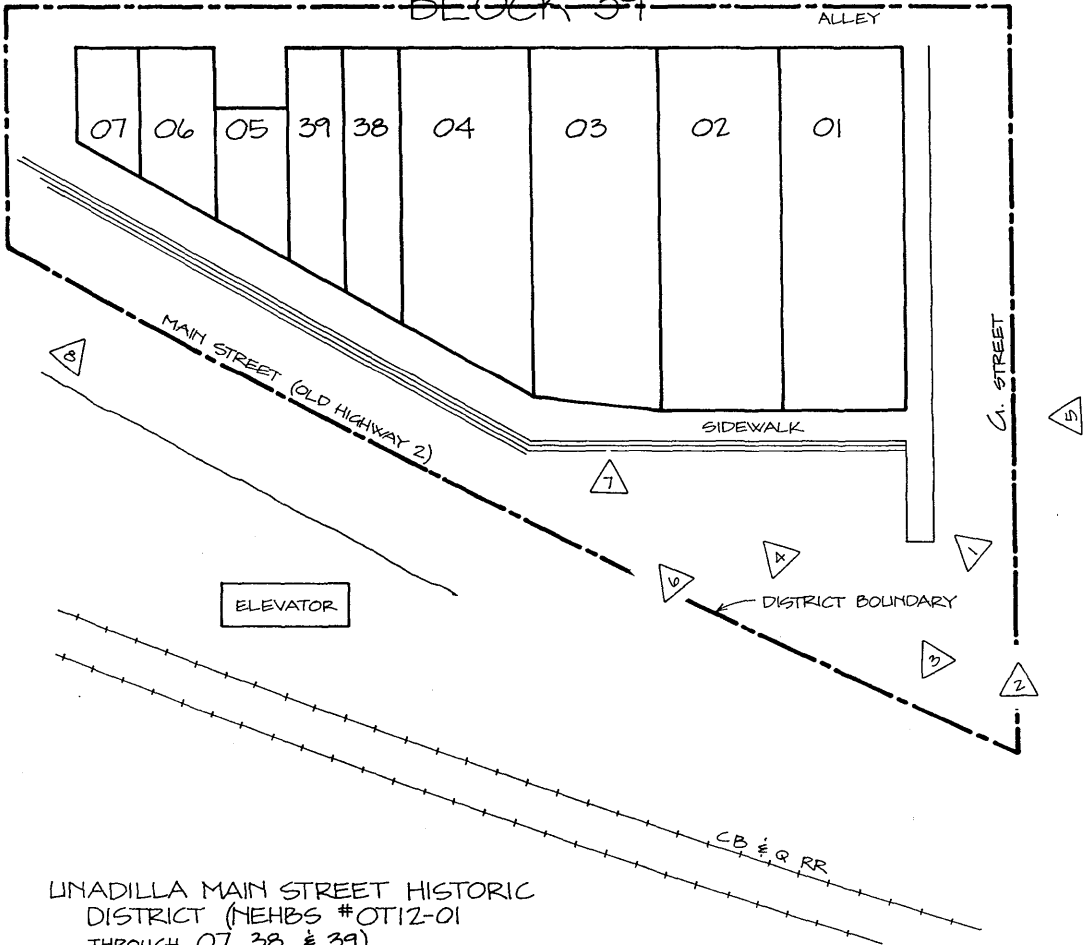
The Unadilla Main Street Historic District consists of a tract of land which encompasses the entirety of Lots 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 of the south half of Block 39, Original Town Plat, Unadilla, Otoe County, Nebraska.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nomination includes that tract of land which has been historically associated with the commercial district.



BLOCK 39



LINADILLA MAIN STREET HISTORIC
 DISTRICT (NEHBS #OT12-01
 THROUGH 07, 38, & 39)
 LINADILLA, OTOE
 COUNTY, NEBRASKA
 SITE PLAN - NO SCALE
 NOVEMBER 1994
 DRAWN BY DELL DARLING

