

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100001797

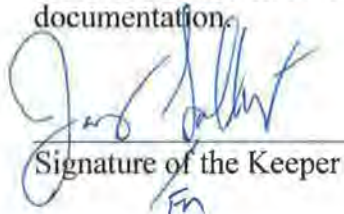
Date Listed: 11/9/2017

Property Name: Kearney Downtown Historic District

County: Buffalo

State: NE

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

11.14.2017

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 2: Street & Number: Amended to read "Roughly bounded by 25th Street, Avenue A, 19th Street, and 1st Avenue."

The Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**



56-1797

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 Kearney Downtown Historic District

Other names/site number N/A

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 Multiple

City or town Kearney State Nebraska County Buffalo

Not for publication Vicinity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

SHPO/Director

9/13/17

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Nebraska State Historical Society

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of Commenting Official

Date

Title

State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of Keeper

11-9-2017

Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] Private
[x] Public-local
[] Public-state
[] Public-federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- [] Building(s)
[x] District
[] Site
[] Structure
[] Object

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

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for Buildings, Sites, Structures, Objects, Total.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 4

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business, Professional, Financial, Specialty Store, Restaurant, Museum

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

GOVERNMENT/City Hall/County

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Theater

TRANSPORTATION/Service Station/Garage/Other: brick streets

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business, Professional, Specialty Store, Restaurant

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Theater

TRANSPORTATION/Service Station/Garage/Other: brick streets

GOVERNMENT/City Hall/County law

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Mediterranean Revival, Renaissance Revival, French Second Empire

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Terra Cotta, Stone, Concrete, Wood, Steel

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Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property**County and State****Description**

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe 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.)

The Kearney Downtown Historic District is in Kearney, Nebraska, the county seat of Buffalo County. The downtown core is the major retail, professional, and entertainment hub of the community. Kearney is approximately 130 miles west of Lincoln, the state's capital. Early settlement in the area occurred 1848 when Fort Kearny a military outpost was established at the convergence of several east-west trails, and has grown to a population of approximately 32,000 people according to 2014 statistics making it one of the five largest communities in Nebraska. The Kearney Downtown Historic District encompasses an area roughly between 19th and 24th Streets and Avenue A to 1st Avenue, roughly the five square blocks of the historic downtown core along Central Avenue.

The area comprises mainly one to three story brick, wood, and stone commercial buildings, with a few four and five story buildings. Most of these buildings are built lot line to lot line with no setbacks or landscaping except for two historic garages with angled facades, and one non-historic addition. The buildings follow the standard form of most commercial properties with rectangular footprints, flat roofs, storefront displays, recessed entryways, second story windows and projecting parapets both ornamental and plain. Architectural styles in the district consist mainly of late 1880s and early 20th Century Commercial Styles, Period Revival Styles of the mid-20th century, and Modern Movement styles. The district retains not only the heart of the historic commercial core of the city, but movie theaters, service stations, and city and county government buildings. Four buildings have been previously listed in the National Register, and are located within the district boundaries. These include the Lowe and Fair Commercial Block at 2003 Central Avenue and 10-12 East Railroad Street, the former United States Post Office, now the Museum of Nebraska Art at 2401 Central Avenue, the Fort Theater at 2205 Central Avenue, and the Masonic Temple and World Theater Building at 2318 Central Avenue.

The district encompasses Central Avenue from 19th Street on the south side to the alley between 24th and 25th Streets on the north side. Central Avenue has been the main commercial street for Kearney since the 1870s and remains so today. Originally a dirt road with a very early electric rail car transportation system, the street was paved during a district wide paving effort in 1915. These brick streets remain today and are considered a contributing feature of this district. There are 119 resources in the district, including 97 contributing buildings, one contributing structure, and one contributing object. Included in these resources are the system of bricks streets and a memorial monument to those who fought in the Civil War and the Spanish American War. There are 20 noncontributing resources including 14 buildings, one site, and five structures. The noncontributing resources include a collection of surface parking lots scattered throughout the district, new buildings, buildings significantly altered outside the period of significance and one small park. The railroad tracks bisect the district at the south side, but as a contemporary transportation resource are not counted as a resource within the property count.

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

Construction Development in Kearney

The city developed at the junction of two major railroad companies, the Union Pacific, and the Burlington Missouri River. A base population was already present in the area because of the military outpost Fort Kearny established in 1848. The decades of significant construction and early boom happened during the 1870s and 1880s when rail traffic was at a peak, financial markets were stable, and people were not only settling permanently in Kearney, but a significant population passing through on the railroad resulted in a variety of atypical service industries for the area. For example, a cotton mill was established and processed raw material into cotton sheeting and fabrics. This would not be possible without the significant rail traffic providing the raw materials. Seven banks were located along Central Avenue during these decades, a record number for a community of this size. The oldest building within the historic district located at the northwest corner of Central Avenue and 23rd Street was constructed in c. 1875 for the Buffalo County National Bank. A direct correlation is seen between the population growth, rising to more than 10,000 in the 1880s and its continued steady increase over the years with the steady growth of the built environment. Where many historic districts see a decade from which many of

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their buildings date, Kearney has a wide variety of buildings from every decade of its period of significance with an emphasis on building retention from the decades of the 1910s and 1920s as is illustrated in the graph below (Figure 1).

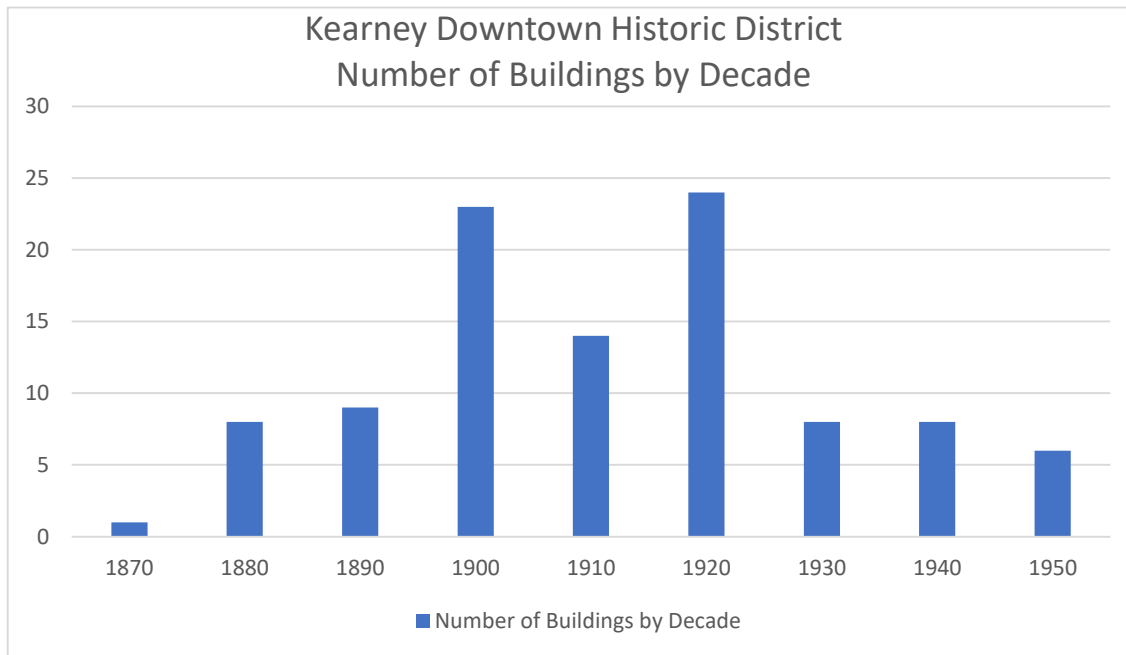


Figure 1. Table showing the number of buildings constructed by decade in the Kearney Downtown Historic District.

Some new construction occurred in the district during the 1930s through 1950s. Some was the result of public works projects like the City Hall and the County Building, and others include service stations, and modernizations to storefronts. Many of these new storefronts were added in the 1950s in attempts to modernize and adapt to changing retail themes of the times.

The following descriptions will highlight the major buildings in the district. A representative example of building types and styles within the district are described. Because of the number of buildings in the district a narrative on each property is not provided here, but the table at Figure 2 provides an illustrated listing of every property in the district, its contributing/noncontributing status, construction date, and thumbnail photograph.

Contributing Buildings

1900 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)

1900 Central Avenue, Knights of Columbus Hall; Geist Grocery

Built in 1909 this building operated as the Geist Grocery from 1909-1953 when the grocery was purchased and changed to a Mini-Max Super Market. The two-story commercial block has a detailed mural depicting the history of Kearney painted along the south façade at 19th Street. No fenestration exists on the first floor while the second story segmental arched openings have been infilled and shutters added. A simple flat canopy extends across the east (Central Avenue) façade, and the store front glass has been infilled. Detailed brick work marks the cornice across the east and south facades. The building currently houses the Knights of Columbus.¹

1904 Central, Barber Shop and Apartments

Built in 1935, this simple two-story brick façade has paired fenestration on the second floor with a single bay storefront with recessed entry on the ground level. A pedestrian door accessing the second floor neighbors the storefront. A simple flat aluminum awning extends along the main façade of the building. Originally the building housed Murphy’s Barber and Beauty shop on the lower floor with apartments on the upper floors, and today it is the home to the Old

¹ Kearney Daily Hub, 26 November 1909, p. 16.

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Town Salon and Barber. This building replaced a frame structure that formerly housed a harness repair shop and was considered one of the oldest building in the city.²

1906 Central Avenue-Contributing

The one-story painted brick building today is home to a saddle repair and tack shop. Built around 1900, the one-story brick building has a full-width aluminum and glass store front with recessed center door. A flat metal awning extends the width of the façade. The extended false front of the building has layers of detailed brick work, and a transom over the storefront has been in-filled.

1908 Central Avenue

Built c. 1900 and like its neighbor at 1906 central this one-story brick building has a full-width aluminum and glass storefront with recessed central entrance. A simple flat aluminum awning extends the length of the storefront. Detail brick work ornaments the cornice along the false front. The brick façade is painted off-white. La Unica Market is housed in the building today.

1910 Central Avenue

This one-story dark brown brick building has housed Dad's Tavern since 2000. The simple façade retains a full-width storefront with recessed center entrance. Display window openings have been reduced in size, but the storefront configuration remains intact. A distressed wood banner sign is above the storefront, where either a previous sign band or transom window was located. The brick at the cornice of the building is slightly recessed providing a sense of depth to the façade.

1914 Central Avenue

The building at 1914 Central Avenue retains the one-story scale of most of the block. It was constructed in 1940 of a light tan brick. The façade is unornamented with a full-width flush aluminum and glass storefront. Paired entry doors with transoms at the south end of the storefront provide an asymmetrical feel to the façade. A projecting sign is mounted at the center of the building façade. Currently the property is vacant.

1920 Central Avenue

This c. 1940 one story blonde brick building today houses the Rent-A-Center furniture store. The façade is unornamented in its applied brick detail. It retains a central aluminum and glass pedestrian door with large display windows on either side. The entirety of the storefront is flush with the sidewalk. One display window panel has been infilled with white vertical siding material. A blue awning extends the length of the façade. The exposed north façade also retains an entrance sheltered by the same blue awning. This side of the building is painted white and has a progressive stepped roof from the street front to the alley behind.

1900 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)**1901 Central Avenue-Contributing**

This building was built in 1952 and is light tan colored hollow ceramic tile. A tile cap extends the length of the cornice line. Residing on the northeast corner of 19th and Central, the building has a canted corner entrance with aluminum and glass display windows on either side. Three window bays face Central Avenue and one faces 19th Street. A backlit white and red sign mounted at the corner and projecting from the building identifies Karen's Speed Wash in red letters. Upon construction, the building was known as the Francis Garvin Building and cost of \$1,500 in 1951. It replaced an old frame structure that Garvin removed in 1947. It was operated as Kearney Refrigeration and as an appliance store in the 1950s and 1960s.³ Located behind the building is a restaurant in an addition with its own address denoting it as 1901 ½ Central Avenue. This addition is a simple one-story cinder block with corrugated metal slanted awning. The building previously housed Barney's Appliances and Kearney Refrigeration in the 1950s.

1903 Central Avenue-Contributing

This structure was rebuilt at 1903 Central at a cost of \$1,500 with a brick front with the construction work completed by Alvie Ledbetter in 1947. The one-story building has a full-width storefront with a single-entry door at the north end of

² Kearney Daily Hub, 24 August 1935, p. 9

³ Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office, Historic Resource Survey and Inventory Database.

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the façade. A flat metal awning identifies the current occupant of the building, Dave's Pawn Shop, and the blonde colored brick has two rows of slightly projecting stretcher courses adding depth to the otherwise simple façade.⁴

1905 Central-Contributing

This one story red brick building has a full-width store front with a recessed entry housing two entry doors. The storefront retains its original configuration and large striped canvas awning projects slants over the storefront. Detailed brick work at the cornice enhances the small store front. The building operated as a restaurant according to the 1949 Sanborn Map and a cream station in the 1924 Sanborn map, while today it houses the Timeless Barber.

1907-1909 Central Avenue

The building materials and configuration of this property are unique within the context of the downtown commercial core. The one-story building is constructed with textured concrete block with a simple aluminum and glass entry door centered in the façade. One large display type window is located on either side of the central entrance. The central entrance appears to have been much larger at one point as the area around the door is infilled with brick and smooth façade concrete masonry units. A band of smooth faced concrete blocks also consumes approximately 75% of the width of the building near the cornice line where it appears something was removed. According to the 1924 Sanborn maps the building was used as a garage, and 1949 Sanborn maps show the building used as an auto sales and tire shop. This could explain the entry alteration where an overhead door or larger opening was required to accommodate automobiles. Today the building is occupied by the Overhead Door Company.

1911 central Avenue

This one-story brick façade constructed approximately 1910 has an off-center storefront with pedestrian door, and a notable large transom area that has been infilled. The lower portion of the storefront has been reduced in size and infilled with red brick. A full-width flat metal canopy extends the width of the building and ties back to the area of the transom. The brick cornice is stepped with a variety of detailed brick patterns. Today the building houses Central Electronics.

1913-1919 Central Avenue

Built c. 1920, the one-story brick building has three distinct storefronts and structure divisions. Today each storefront varies in its degree of alteration. For example, 1913 has no storefront, but an overhead garage door with a pedestrian entrance, 1917 has an entirely new storefront with wide aluminum framing, reflective glass and a central door, and blue canopy, and 1919 has a green canopy and a new storefront with central entrance. Cornice line brick detail unifies the façade. Throughout its history, various stone cutting, monuments, and offices were housed here as documented in the 1949 and 1924 Sanborn Maps.

1925 Central Avenue

The complex building at this address currently houses the Funshine Complex. The gabled roof building at the core of the complex has a projecting false front matching the other facades on the street. The west facing façade has three distinct storefronts, each sheltered by an awning, and each flush the façade surface. Rounding the corner from Central Avenue to 20th Street shows the complexity of this building. The gable roof building has a projecting monitor, and several additions to the property extend to the east. These additions clearly represent different building eras and are constructed of brick and poured concrete. Sanborn maps indicate a variety of uses over the years from a hitching shed in 1915, to various offices in 1924 and the Swift and Co Produce House in 1949 with a coal room, heating plant, and feed room present. The one story poured concrete building at the back (east) end of the complex and along the alley does not have a use or function attributed in various maps or references.

1930 Central Avenue

This c. 1940 one-story building has hollow tile constructed side walls and a simple brick façade. No store front is present just two pedestrian doors with a large window between. On the north side of the main façade one industrial multi-light steel window remains in place. A large white sign identifies the Winlectric office that has occupied the building since approximately 2000.

⁴ Kearney Daily Hub, 18 March 1947 p. 11

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2000 Central Avenue

Built c. 1905 This corner entry building conforms to the street configuration with its location at the northwest corner of Railroad Street and Central Avenue The one-story building is currently clad with faux stone materials on the east façade and stucco and wood on the south façade. A date plate projects above the corner entry with the construction date 1905. The pressed metal cornice is exposed and visible across the façade and the corner entry reveals the body of the building partially clad with pressed metal panels referencing textured block. Originally the building housed offices and restaurant, while today it houses Shear Images, a hair design studio. The cornice sheet metal is by George Mesker. Mesker operated an ornamental sheet metal company in Evansville, Indiana producing pressed metal ceilings, ornamental cornices and the like. His biggest competition were his brothers who owned and operated Mesker Brothers Iron Works in St. Louis and manufactured cast iron storefront components. The companies operated from the 1880s to the mid-twentieth century.⁵

2004 Central Avenue

This two-story building has brick building has a full-width storefront with two large central display windows, a recessed entry door to the retail space at the south end of the façade and a second entry door flush with the storefront at the north end of the façade. New cladding material covers the storefront wall surface. Three one-over-one windows at the second level have applied window cap molds painted white contrasting with the grey painted façade. A detailed course of brick work caps the building at the cornice line. A red canvas awning extends across the entire of the façade and the façade at 2006 Central. Built c. 1900, the building today houses the Razor's Edge Salon.

2006 Central Avenue

This two-story brick building was built c. 1900. The building retains a full-width storefront with recessed central entry. The aluminum framed glass display front retains its historic configuration. A stone lintel stretches across the second-floor windows. These three window openings have been reduced in size with an infill panel between the lintel and the new glass pane. Each window has a non-operational single pane of glass. The center window is twice the size of the window at each end. The blond brick façade has corbeled brick detail at the cornice line with a stone cap. Today the building houses the Kearney Coin Center.

2010 Central Avenue

2010 Central Avenue was built in 1910 and is a one-story brown brick building with full-width flat metal awning. The building is three bays wide with display windows running the first level façade and a recessed aluminum and glass central entrance. A noticeable series of supports connect from the awning back to the building. A vertical corrugated metal panel infills where a transom was located and functions as the sign board for The Solid Rock, a Christian book and gift shop. A projecting band of bricks in a rectangular form runs the width of the façade above the cornice line, providing some depth to the otherwise simple façade. In 1926 the Id City Café was housed here.

2014 and 2016 Central Avenue, Nash Building and Tripp Building

Built in 1885, this two-story brick building retains two-distinct Victorian era façade treatments. Though appearing as two separate entities, the building was constructed at one time with a center stair accessed by a pedestrian door at street level. The south side of the building has a full-width storefront with a recessed center entrance. Three segmental arched windows with ornate window caps painted contrasting white and gold and an applied beltcourse also painted white and gold define the second story. The windows have been replaced and currently simple one-over-one units are in place. A corbeled brick cornice leads into a detailed stepped multi-layered cornice with a segmental arched nameplate with the words W.L. Nash 1885 emblazoned within. This entablature is painted white with contrasting gold to enhance and emphasize the multi-layered detail.

The north side of the storefront is a large display window with a recessed entry door at the north end. Between the two storefronts is the pedestrian access door to the interior stair accessing the second level. Three window openings with elaborate applied and projecting window caps punctuate the second-floor façade. These windows are rectangular shaped with a double window at the center. Each window cap has a sunburst pattern painted in contrasting white and

⁵ Bock, Gordon. *Heavy Metal*, Traditional Product Reports, www.traditionalproductreports.com accessed 5-17-2017

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gold. Textured terra cotta bands detail the façade and lead to a second detailed cornice with applied winged lions, acanthus wreaths, fish scale shingles, and a second name plate identifying M.E. Seip.

Tying these two façades together are fluted pilaster at each end with terra cotta caps. The entire brick building is painted red with white and gold trim. Today the building houses the Home Thyme Antique Store. This building housed many retail spaces. The 1889 Sanborn Maps clearly show the one building with central stair housing a hardware store, tin shop, and jewelry store, by 1899 the maps identify the same tin shop on the second floor along with the hardware store on the first of the south bay and a bakery in the north bay each with a wood ceiling. The bakery and restaurant as well as the hardware store seem to have had some longevity in the building, as they are also both identified in the 1915 maps.

2018-2022 Central Avenue, King and Schramm Building

Built in 1907 this two-story three-bay brick façade has a row of nine one-over-one windows on the second floor. A band of decorative brick above the windows acts as an ornamental lintel tying this level of the building together. A dimensional and decorative brick cornice projects from the façade. Three unique storefronts punctuate the street level façade. The two northern-most storefronts each have a distinct flat metal awning with a large corrugated metal panel infilling the transom area. The third southernmost storefront has a black canvas awning with the New-U Salon emblazoned across the apron. The storefronts are distinct in their appearance each with large display windows and recessed entry doors. Known as the King and Schramm Building because W.O. King joined with William Schramm to build what would be two buildings with a unified appearance on the front. Based upon the location of the Tripp and Nash Building this building's original date and history can be ascertained from a newspaper article 11 December 1907 in the Kearney Hub⁶.

2024 and 2026 Central Avenue

The Bruce Furniture Building resides on the southwest corner of 21st Street and Central Avenue. This business combines two historic properties, the one-story brick building on the corner and the much older two story building immediately adjacent and south. In 1954 the five-story brick and stone opera house was located on this site and was torn down to make way for this modern building to house Bruce Furniture. The property consumes the corner lot along with the older two-story brick building next to it. Today, the interior of the property reads as one building as the two-story building was significantly altered as part of the 1954 construction effort. The two-story brick building has a metal curtain wall applied to the main façade and the exposed north second level wall was covered with stucco. A massive metal panel facade with incorporated awning with the company name, Bruce Furniture, spreads across the front of both buildings. Though a shift away from the standard and mostly cohesive brick commercial buildings of the district, this one-story mid-century example falls within the period of significance and represents the changes and alterations of the 1950s and 1960s that happened in communities across the country.

2000 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)**2001-2003 Central Avenue, Fair & Lowe Building (BF05-004)**

The Fair and Lowe Building is individually listed in the NRHP. It is architecturally significant as an intact example of Victorian Era commercial construction. The bay at 2003 Central Avenue was significantly altered in the 1940s. It has a full-width glass and aluminum storefront with a recessed off-center entrance at the south end of the façade. A second pedestrian entrance is immediately adjacent to the storefront entrance and provides access to the interior stair. A canvas awning the same color as the brown brick of the building façade extends across the entire store front. The upper story of the building has projecting and recessed banded brick designs with a basket weave pattern at the cornice. Two windows with new glass units are located at the second story. A soldier course of brick provides a lintel for these windows and adds detail to the horizontal brick banding of the façade. The sole business occupying the building today is a pet grooming service called Central Bark.

2007-2009 Central Avenue, (BF05-651)

This one story tan brick building has two storefronts each with aluminum and glass display windows and recessed entrance at the north end of the storefront. The main façade is ornamented with a terra cotta banding above the awnings and a Sullivanesque terra cotta key at the center of the cornice line. Each terra cotta brick is detailed with a

⁶ Kearney Daily Hub, 11 December 1907, p. 3

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curvilinear design. Above each storefront a rectangular sign board area is outlined with terra cotta bricks each with a square check design at the north and south ends of the sign. Today the building houses the Olde Towne Tattoo and Sweet Sensation businesses.

2011 Central Avenue

The two-story brick building, today housing O'Mally's Irish Pub, was built c. 1900. Ornamental corbeled brick work accents the cornice line of the building and four window openings with stone sills and lintels punctuate the second floor. The windows have been infilled with panels painted brown with white geometric design within each panel. The storefront and windows were significantly altered in 1965. The original storefront was covered with brick with two simple fixed window openings added, and a slightly projecting shingled shed roof with three faux triangular dormers extending from the façade starting just below the second story window sills. Historically, a grocery called Cody Wholesale Grocery opened here in 1946. Today, O'Mally's has a projecting neon sign in the shape of a foaming beer mug with the bar name.

2017-2019 Central Avenue

This one-story building has a double storefront with full-width metal awning and detailed brick work at the cornice line. The building has been painted a cream color with contrasting green trim to emphasize some of the brick work. The bay at 2015 was historically part of this building, but the three bays were subdivided into separate buildings for ownership purposes as well as physically. Built in 1920 this building today houses Platinum Event and Wedding Planning and Franca's Jewelry Store.

2021 Central Avenue (BF05-652)

This brown one-story brick building has a full-width canvas awning and a full-width store front with recessed entrance at the north end of the façade. Of note on this building is the brick detail in the façade providing texture and visual interest to the area above the awning, as well as the historic recessed entrance. The entry retains its original white and green tiled wall and floor. The one-inch glazed tile on the side wall has a green tile border forming two rectangular designs, while the floor is white, tan, and green tile with a simplified Greek key border design. Today the building houses Fanatics Bar, but was the home to the Central Café in 1926.

2023 Central Avenue (BF05-653)

This one-story red brick building has a tan glazed stepped-cornice with a tan rectangular cartouche just above the metal awning. The full-width storefront has tinted glass in the windows with a recessed center entrance. The building is currently vacant.

2025-2027 Central Avenue (BF05-654)

This two-story tan brick building has two distinct store fronts with a pedestrian door between the two providing street access to the interior stair to the second floor. The south storefront has a recessed central entrance and a black curved awning with scalloped apron. The north store front has a recessed door at the north end and a blue and white awning. Six one-over-one windows with heavy stone lintels and sills provide light to the second-floor interior. A stepped and corbeled brick cornice provides texture to the façade. The center pedestrian entrance is a metal door with transom all painted black. Today the business in the south bay is Olivia's Salon and the north bay is the Creative Teacher.

2029 Central Avenue

This three-story brick Romanesque commercial building has a unique recessed entry bay. Two square columns support the brick façade providing for a fully recessed entrance bay. Double doors with arched windows on either side and three transom lights above each opening define the recessed entry bay. Though the doors and windows are not historic the configuration and shape of the openings remains true. Fenestration on the second-story is defined by two arched brick openings flanking a wider center opening. The windows are new, but the arched shape has been retained. Four third-story windows are all arched with heavy brick arches above each window. To emphasize the architectural brick, the building has been painted green and burgundy.

2033 Central Avenue, City National Bank (BF05-480)

This building was constructed in 1889 for the City National Bank and designed by Frank and Bailey architects. Sanborn Maps through 1924 clearly show that this was a three-story building. The loss of the third floor and modernization of

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the storefront took place in the 1940s. The loss of the top floor impacts the scale of the building. Two segmental arched windows flank either side of the formal center pedestrian door. Paired fenestration on the second story have a course ashlar stone lintel, clearly illustrating its earlier construction date. The windows have been replaced with one single pane of tinted glass. The north façade of the building along 21st Street retains the paired fenestration within each bay and each with the course ashlar stone lintel. The first floor of this façade also retains the segmental arched large display windows. The corner of the building is softly rounded with the thin hard fired brick, also a sign of its earlier construction date. Vertical brick fan designs above each first floor segmental arched window remain in place. A band of white stone applied to the main floor at pedestrian level meets with the marble main entry door surround. Photos from the early 1960's show the building in its current state. Today the building is home to Stephen G. Lowe and Michael W. Baldwin Attorneys. Although significantly altered from its original construction date in the 1880s, the removal of the third floor and the modernization of the storefront reflect the trend of the middle-twentieth century to rehabilitate old downtown buildings. These alterations date to activity within the historic period of the district, and therefore contribute to the significant evolution of commercial development. Photo documentation from a private collection shows the building with these alterations long since completed in the 1960s.

2100 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)

2100 Central Avenue, Andrews Building, Downing-Bartlett Building

This building was constructed in two episodes. The south portion of the property at the corner of 21st Street was built in 1889-1890. It was then later expanded on the north side in 1906, which is why it has differing shades of masonry. The elaborate three-story brick building reflects Romanesque style with its heavy columns, and arched windows. The upper stories of the building are tan brick with red brick extending vertically from the base of the second story windows and arching over the third story windows, then back down the other side, forming a dramatic syncopation and rhythm of the two-tone brick across the façade. Second story windows were one-over-one double hung units with rectangular transoms while the third story were the same, but with arched transoms. Some window glass on the south facing façade retains painted signage from office occupants. The street level façade is constructed with horizontally banded stone with contrasting smooth and ashlar textures. A recessed corner entrance has a heavy round granite column supporting the corner with an ornate terra cotta capital. Acanthus leaves, scrolls, and faces adorn the capital. The column has two bands of dark grey stone at the top and bottom and a band of light grey in the center. A steel beam with rosettes extends the width of the storefront. An elaborate former entrance on the south façade along 21st Street has a heavy sandstone, limestone, and terra cotta arch with four squat columns on each leg of the arch. The two storefronts are both flush with the exterior façade and a centered pedestrian door provides street access to the second floor. The architectural firm of Frank, Bailey and Farmer designed the 1889-1890 Andrews Block. An early tenant of the Andrews Building was Hawthorne's Jewelry Store.

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Photo of column capital detail showing gargoyle face and acanthus leaf pattern. Photo taken by Kara Harms during survey and field documentation, April 2017.

2104 Central Avenue

Built in 1939 for the Gambles store, this two story brick building has horizontal brick banding defining the upper level façade and expressing a more modern trend in building design. Two sets of paired one-over-one double hung windows punctuate the second floor. A broad corrugated metal panel covers the transom area above a flat metal awning. Hawthorne’s Jewelry store is signed in this area. A contrasting color brick storefront has simple single pane display windows.

2106 Central Avenue

Built in 1939 This two-story blond brick building has two storefronts. A flat metal awning suspends across the entirety of the façade. Above the north façade is a large sign for the current tenant Hoover’s Jewelry. The sign extends from the top of the awning to just under the second-story windows. It appears a second similar sign was located on the south storefront because wood one by mounting brackets remain, but no sign is present. The north storefront is clad with red brick with large display windows. The second floor has three simple rectangular windows with a horizontal orientation and a soldier course of bricks as lintel. A sleek streamlined triple row of brick detail forms an outline from the cornice to the north and south sides of the building façade expressing a simple modern aesthetic. This building was formerly the W.A. Downing Building which was completely taken down to framing and remodeled in 1939 then occupied by Brown-McDonald Company.

2116 Central Avenue (BF05-465), Bodinson Building

This two-story tan brick building was built in 1911 and constructed for Senator C.F. Bodinson who operated a hardware store north of this building. Bodinson had it constructed for renting with doctors and insurance offices occupying the building in the early years. It retains elaborate detailed brick work at the cornice, three windows on the second floor and a projecting flat metal awning. Above the awning and covering the brick façade is a wide panel of tile infill. Each of the three windows on the second floor are infilled with panels and within the panels are various shapes and sizes of stained glass. The building today houses Redman’s Boot and Shoes with a large sign hung over the center window. The sign and tile appear to date to the late 1950s or early 1960s.

2118 Central Avenue Williams Building (BF05-466)

This two-story brick building was constructed in 1892 with bricks made by local Hurley brickyard and designed by architects Brabrook and Brown. The building has a single bay storefront with recessed center entrance and second pedestrian entrance at the north side to access interior stairs to the second floor. A red canvas awning stretches across the façade. Three one-over-one windows on the second level have heavy applied window caps and a detailed cornice with projecting broken gabled name plate states, “Williams 1892.”

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2122 Central Avenue Miller Building; Robertson Block; Henline Building (BF05-007)

Originally constructed as the Robertson Block in 1889-1890 despite what is written on the cornice, newspaper accounts and the 1889 Sanborn map shows this was constructed 1889-1890 not 1888. Construction probably began in 1888 resulting in the date plate. The name on the cornice was changed from Robertson, when Henline took ownership of the building. Originally First National Bank occupied the ground floor with offices on the second floor and the Masonic lodge on the third floor. The building is an elaborate three stories with heavy projecting cornice in pressed metal. The storefront was altered in the 1960s. The east facing Central Avenue façade has three window bays on the second and third level, each window capped with a pedimented window hood with sunburst design in the entablature. The north façade along 22nd Street retains the same window configuration on both the second and third floors all with the elaborate window cap. A second entrance on the north façade most likely accessed the back offices or the Masonic lodge on the third floor and today houses the Palm Garden Lounge. A projecting neon sign with a palm tree and the business name projects from the building and the entrance is sheltered by a flat metal awning. First floor windows on the north façade are tall rectangular shaped with segmental arched caps and have been infilled with brick.

2100 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)

2119 Central Avenue, (BF05-464)

This two-story stone building was constructed in the 1880s. The coursed ashlar façade retains long blocks above the brown canvas awning with smaller square blocks below the cornice. A stone arch forms over four windows. The arched portion of the window has been infilled and newer panes installed. A smooth panel of stone clad the space between the crown molding trim of the cornice and the roof line. These stone panels have spalled off on the southern quarter of the cornice. The storefront has two large center display windows with pedestrian doors on either side. The building is present in the 1889 Sanborn and identified as a two-story office building. By 1904 the offices share space with a barber, and a bank in 1924. Earlier Sanborn's do not reach as far north as this building so the 1889 map is the first reference to it. Earliest historic photos from the late 1870s are not clear, so it is assumed the building was constructed in the early to mid-1880s.

2123 Central Avenue

This c. 1900 two story brick office building is the current home to ABC Drug and Gift. The building resides on the southeast corner of Central Avenue and 22nd Street and has a green canvas awning that wraps around the front of the building and extends around the corner of the north façade. The handsome dark brown brick façade is quite large. Two main window bays on the west facing façade have new tinted glass window configurations while the openings remain original. Stone caps and sills along the window bays add ornament and punctuate the main façade. The same stone detail enhances the north side of the building along 22nd Street.

2200 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)

2200 Central Avenue, Kaufmann and Wernert; Kaufmann Building (BF05-009)

Built as Kaufmann and Wernert five and dime store in 1922 and designed by Oscar Kirscke of Grand Island, this two story building resides on the northwest corner of Central Avenue and 22nd Street. The blond brick building has three large window bays on the east facing façade. Each window bay has four segmental arched window openings within. These windows have been replaced with new units and the segmental arch infilled. A raised brick detail outlines each window bay. A series of seven geometric brick keys extend down from the cornice line with projecting brick diamond shapes between providing Art Deco type applied detail to the façade. Three store fronts, each divided by a brick column consume the width of the street scape. A large metal awning projects across the entirety of the store front and wraps around the south side of the building to 22nd Street. This awning retains its original shape with an arch over the center storefront bay. Hanging from the center arch are individual metal frames rounded at the bottom to form a scalloped edge. These pieces most likely contained stained glass panels originally. The south side of the building retains one paired window on the second floor surrounded by the same brick mold, one brick key, and a series of single pane square openings on both the first and second floor.

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Image showing Central Avenue at 22nd Street looking northwest, showing the Kaufmann-Wernert Building as well as the remainder of buildings on the block. Photo taken 1965 from private collection housed at the Kearney Public Library.

2206 Central Avenue, Keens Building; Kaufmann and Wernert BF05-467

Constructed in 1915 this brown brick building has a double storefront with commercial style windows on the second level. A stone cornice with dentil molding caps the building. Each window grouping on the second floor is slightly recessed with stepped brick work outlining them. Although the building is two generous bays wide, there is only one expansive storefront with a recessed center entrance. Today the Self Service Furniture store sign is banded on a red corrugated panel above the awning. The first floor of this building was rented by Kaufmann and Wernert in 1915.

2210 Central Avenue, Hellman's Ready to Wear

This building represents the renovated storefronts visible in several properties throughout the district. A c. 1920 brick two story storefront was completely slip covered. This addition covered the windows and any architectural or ornamental detail on the façade. This completely new storefront with display windows on the street level dates to 1958 when the property was renovated to house Hellman's Ready to Wear. The new façade is a simple brick running bond across the entirety of the façade with a new modern storefront. Most of the slip covers applied to buildings across the district were completed in the late 1950s and very early 1960's. Not these dates can be documented, however, information in city plans and downtown district plans from 1961 note that many storefronts have already been modernized.

2214 Central Avenue

Built c. 1915 this two-story dark brown brick building has a curved striped canvas awning and full-width store front. Rather than the most standard recessed entry storefront, this property retains a deeply recessed entry bay that accommodates the pedestrian to enter the store front space and view the display from all sides. Paired one-over-one windows at the second floor are new units within the existing openings. Corbeled brick work at the cornice line adds texture to the façade. Today the building houses the Fanci That clothing store.

2216 Central Avenue Crescent Theater; Model Grocery BF05-468

Built in 1930 as the Crescent Theater the building experienced a major remodeling in 1930 when F.G. Keens purchased the property and had a new front built. Today the building reflects a vernacular Mediterranean Revival style with a project shed style roof fragment clad with ceramic roof tiles and supported by paired brackets. The white and tan brick façade has a full-width flat metal awning and today houses the Quilters Cottage retail store.

2218 Central Avenue, Buck's Booterie

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This two-story light tan brick building was operated as Buck's Booterie in the 1930s-1950s. The storefront is basically unchanged since at least 1920 when the building was pictured in "Pictorial Kearney, Nebraska" book. The brick building retains many similar details to many of its neighbors with a corbeled cornice line, heavy stone lintels over second floor windows, a large corrugated metal panel above the full-width metal awning and recessed entry store front.

2220-2224 Central Avenue, Masonic Temple, BF05-469

Built 1912-13 The Masonic Temple Building housed the group until the new building and theater were constructed about a block north in 1927. Constructed using contrasting tan and brown bricks the building has a highly ornamented façade with elaborate brick pattern work at the cornice and quoins. Brick banding extends across the north façade with darker brown banded brick pilasters. Of note is the south storefront that retains its original prisms glass transom, though the storefront was under construction at the time of this writing. The windows on the main east facing façade have all been infilled. A pedestrian entrance on the north façade retains six original masonic symbol tiles surrounding the former door opening. The Temple space encompassed the second floor with office/retail at the street level.



View of the east side of Central Avenue between 21st and 22nd Streets, showing three buildings in center of block that were rehabilitated with new textured sheet metal facades (slip covers). Photo taken in 1966 from a private collection housed at the Kearney Public Library.

2200 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)

2201 Central Avenue, Hamer Block

Built in 1889-1890 the Commercial and Savings Bank was previously located on the first floor with various offices on the second floor and in the basement including the Gould Land and Feed Company. The building was modified in the mid-1900s to accommodate a clothing store on the ground level. Building construction date based on newspaper mentioning the businesses in 1889 and Sanborn maps showing it in 1889 but not 1887. The red brick building has a corbeled cornice line and very tall window openings punctuating the second floor. The window openings have been reduced in size, but provide reference to the style of the earlier construction date. A stone band at the lintel and sill level of the windows acts as a belt course providing definition to the building and breaking up the façade as often seen in these property types in a tripartite nature.

2205 Central Avenue, The Empress/Fort Theater, listed NRHP BF05-176

2207-2209 Central Avenue

The one-story brick façade has a stepped cornice line with a stone cartouche ornamenting the center projection. The cornice line and the band of transom are outlined with stone. Built in 1924 this building served as Red Cross Chapter headquarters during World War II. In the 1930s, 2209 was location of Kearney Land and Mortgage Company and also a beauty shop. Newspaper ads in 1935 mention two businesses in the building and the storefront configuration does not match that shown in 1924 Sanborn Maps, therefore the construction date estimate is approximately 1924. Today the building houses the Kearney Skate Shop and White's Advanced Hearing Center.

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2213 Central Avenue

This one story brown brick building has a ceramic roof tile awning extending across its façade with a deeply recessed store front. Unusual for Kearney's downtown the building has an exterior stair accessing the lower level from the sidewalk. Built c. 1920 this building operated as the Davis Paint Store in the 1950s.

2215 Central Avenue, Eck's Paint and Glass

This simple one-story brick building has a corbeled cornice line and full-width metal awning. Built in 1916 with a 1948 addition made to the building with a new basement, it was operated as Eck's Paint and Glass from its construction in 1916 up to the 1950s.

2217-2219 Central Avenue

Built between 1915 and 1925 this two-story, two-bay storefront exemplifies the type of modernization happening in the 1950s and 1960s in Kearney. At the top of the building façade the detailed corbeled original brick cornice line is visible. Below that a sheet metal façade covers the second-story with four windows that retain a fixed pane above and two vertical pane sliders below. The entirety of the first-floor storefront and transom area is clad with faux stone applied sheeting.

2223 Central Avenue Kearney Savings Bank; Midway Loan and Trust

Built in 1890, and attributed to the architectural firm of Frank and Bailey by an 1889 Kearney Hub article. This three-story brick and stone building reflects the Romanesque style with arched windows, stonework, corbeled cornice line, and truncated tower. The first floor of the building has a new brick façade dating to the early 1950s with new aluminum doors and curved wall door surrounds from the 1940s. The building held many various offices that were rented out over the years. Originally known as the Kearney Savings building, the Midway Loan and Trust building, and Platte Valley State Bank. The building was renovated in the 1940s with new Art Deco style aluminum entry doors and curved aluminum clad recessed bays. Then again in the 1950s when a new brick first floor facade was added to surround the KGFW radio station which has been housed in the building since at least the early 1950s.



1953 image of 2223 Central Avenue when Platte Valley Bank occupied the space. Photo taken from *Like It Was, A Collection of Historical Pictures* published by the Kearney Hub newspaper in 1966.

2300 Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)

2300 Central Avenue, Buffalo County National Bank BF05-010

This building at the northwest corner of 23rd Street and Central Avenue is considered the oldest building in downtown Kearney, dating to the late 1870s. The three-story brick building has a mansard roof with through dormers punctuating

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the roof at the east and south facades. Significant ornamentation has been removed from this building, evidenced through historic photographs. Second level windows are arched with brick window caps and stone keystones in the arch. Similarly, the first level windows are segmental arched with a stone keystone. Window units have been replaced with single pane reflective glass throughout. A scalloped edge red canvas awning shelters the storefront. A plain stucco band beneath the mansard roof and above the second story windows replaces ornate brickwork that was evident in historic photographs. It housed one of the earliest banks in the city. Years after the bank the building housed the Blue Parrot Tea Rooms in 1926 and a restaurant or bakery for many years after.



Photo of the northwest corner of 23rd Street and Central Avenue taken 1906 showing 2300 Central Avenue and its immediate neighbor to the north. This building is present today, but has been altered and renovated from its original appearance. The south side underwent a significant rehabilitation in the 120s, while the north side was completely remodeled in 1946. Image taken from As It Was publication.



Photo of northwest corner of 23rd Street and Central Avenue taken in 1965 documenting alterations to the buildings on this block from their construction in the later 19th Century. The four story Masonic Temple and World Theater can be seen in this image. Photo courtesy of a private photo collection temporarily held at the Kearney Public Library.

2302 Central Avenue, BF05-47

This building presents the evolution of commercial construction in an exemplary way. Originally constructed in 1888 with a two-bay storefront and an elaborate cornice line with arched window caps, the façade was significantly altered sometime between 1915 and 1920. The cornice was removed and the brick façade rebuilt with a corbelled cornice. Quite

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unusually, the original windows from the 1880s were retained in this renovation, and remain in place today. The segmental arched shape remains visible even though framing surrounding the windows has been squared. Also of note is the original configuration of the storefront with the recessed entrance, and transom area. Most peculiarly when comparing to Sanborn maps up to 1924, the maps continue to indicate the two-bay width. The building at 2304, its immediate neighbor to the north is the second bay of the original 1888 construction date. This portion of the building was again completely reconstructed in the 1946 with a porcelain enameled steel panel façade and modern aluminum and glass window configuration.

2304 Central Avenue-Contributing

Gerber's Sweet Shop, Kearney's newest store in 1946 which had been completely remodeled and redecorated. The sweet shop made its own ice cream and frosted malts, sold candy, cigars, cigarettes, Double Kay nuts, and one of the largest stocks of magazines in the Midwest. Gerber was granted the permit to remodel and put a new front of the building in 1946 that was formerly May's Style Shop. See description at 2302 Central Avenue for additional detail.⁷

2318 Central Avenue, World Theater and Masonic Temple NRHP listed, BS05-471

2300 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)**2301 Central Avenue**

This two-story building was constructed c. 1888 and resides on the northeast corner of Central Avenue and 23rd Street. The construction date is estimated based on its presence in Sanborn Maps. The 1889 Sanborn clearly illustrates the building's presence, housing a furniture and undertaking business with upholstery in the back of the building. This remains constant in the maps after the turn of the twentieth century. The brick building has a multi-colored paint scheme to enhance the architectural brick details at the square window caps and quoins. A broad two bay store front has recessed central entrances. The first level of the building is clad in stone.

2305 central Avenue

Built c. 1920 this brown brick two-story commercial bay has four windows on the second story and a recessed brick panel under the cornice line adding texture to the façade. A brick framed center storefront with recessed entry has a second pedestrian door at the south end of the storefront. Today the building houses the Morris Press.

2311-2313 Central Avenue

This two-story stucco building is unique in the district as the only Spanish/Mediterranean style building. Built c. 1910, the smooth stucco façade has a projecting clay tile faux roof line supported by wood brackets. The full-width storefront has a scalloped edge flat canvas awning. The window units have been replaced with modern single panes with small operable hoppers at the bottom. The project cornice with clay tile encompasses the entirety of the north and west facades. Brown canvas awnings are located over each window on the north and east facades. The building resides on the southeast corner of 24th Street and Central Avenue. Along building face is an enclosed exterior stair with pedestrian door clad with the same stucco and clay tile roofing material and accessing the lower level as is indicated by its sloping roof. Another entry at the west end of the north façade is also sheltered by a project clay tile door hood.

2400 Block Central Avenue

2401 Central Avenue, United States Post Office, NRHP listed, BF05-169

Soldiers Memorial, Grounds of Museum of Nebraska Art, 2401 Central Avenue

This large obelisk honoring those who have served was erected in 1910 by the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). The monument is 33 feet high and made of granite. The GAR was a fraternal organization open to any man who served in the Union Army during the Civil War. Because this was a veterans only group, it ceased to exist upon the death of the last Union veteran. In Nebraska, the last Union veteran died in 1948.⁸ The monument was moved to this location. It was originally located in the intersection of Lincoln Highway (25th Street) and Central Avenue. It was moved in 1957 to

⁷ Kearney Daily Hub, 02 June 1946 and 04 October 1946

⁸ Wells, Dave. Monuments in Nebraska, www.civilwarmuseumnc.org, 9 May 2000, accessed 6 June 2017.

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the median of the same intersection. Then in 1994 it was moved to the current location. The object is still within approximately 125 feet from its original site.

1st Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)

2008 1st Avenue, Wenzell Hotel; Union Pacific Hotel-Contributing

The appearance of this building today is the result of several construction and alteration episodes starting in 1897. Built in 1897 and 1907 the building operated as a hotel from 1897 to 1965 and has had several additions, chiefly in 1907 when the two-story front façade was constructed to its current condition. Another addition was completed in 1914. Portion of the building was briefly used as a dining room that closed in 1920, and the southern half of the building has been lost and only a portion of the north half is extant. A George Mesker pressed metal cornice is retained. George Mesker operated an ornamental sheet metal company in Evansville, Indiana producing pressed metal ceilings, ornamental cornices, and the like. His biggest competition were his brothers who owned and operated Mesker Brothers Iron Works in St. Louis and manufactured cast iron storefront components. The companies operated from the 1880s to the mid-twentieth century.⁹ The two-story textured block building now has a large overhead garage door in the center bay flanked by two large display windows flush with the façade. The primary entry door is adjacent to the overhead door. The pressed metal cornice has leaf design that extends between each column of the façade.

2012 1st Avenue, Crossley Garage-Contributing

Although the date 1931 is painted in the shallow projecting pediment of this building, it was actually constructed in 1907 according to an advertisement in the Kearney Hub from June 4, 1907 stating the construction began on the Bolte and Crossley new automobile garage.¹⁰ Further articles show that the building was possibly designed by McClure and Walker Architects of Kearney because the Crossley Garage is listed among their buildings in an advertisement from the same paper from October, 1938.¹¹ Another article boasting over the quality of the new building stock in the city discusses the importance of W.F. Crossley contractor and builder as well as his association as contractor for many significant homes and churches in Kearney. Crossley came to Kearney in 1879 and according to the article owns the large auto garages on 1st Avenue.¹² The unusual building has three arched bays, is clad with stucco and retains a Mediterranean Style with its light colored smooth surface finish and the clay tile cornice line. The center bay is an overhead door as the building is still used for automotive services as Dewayne's Auto Repair.

2014 1st Avenue

This two-bay textured concrete block building has a simple yet striking façade with two overhead garage doors and a center pedestrian entrance and the first floor. Window trim and lintels are painted dark green as are the multi-pane glass overhead garage doors. This building also retains its automotive use today as The Dent Popper, paintless dent repair.

1900 Block Avenue A West Side (Even Numbers)

1900 Avenue A

This hollow tile garage building sits at the northwest corner of Avenue A and 19th Street. The freestanding building has a stepped façade at each of the east and west ends. Two overhead doors and an industrial steel multi-light window are in the east façade while the south façade retains the pedestrian entrance. An ornamental diamond shape in contrasting tile color is in the stepped façade. The Debus Baking Company built the tile garage in 1948 at a cost of \$7,000.¹³

1910-1920 Avenue A

This one-story hollow tile building with a stepped façade was constructed as a poultry warehouse between 1924 and 1949. The building has two overhead garage doors in the stepped end and a two-story office/warehouse area at the alley side of the building. A series of multi-paned industrial steel windows with operable hopper action center panes run the length of the south façade brings light into the work area. The base/foundation area of the building is painted white

⁹ (Gordon Bock, Heavy Metal, Traditional Product Reports, www.traditionalproductreports.com accessed 5-17-2017)

¹⁰ Kearney Hub, June 4, 1907 p. 3 advertisement.

¹¹ Kearney Hub, October 24, 1938 p. 9

¹² Kearney Hub, November 26, 1909 p. 7

¹³ Kearney Daily Hub, 17 May 1948 p. 1

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with black trim while the north façade also appears to be painted red brick color. The east and south facades retain the original finish of the tile. The north façade angles along 20th Street paralleling the railroad tracks. Today the building has two addresses to accommodate for new uses including an auto body frame repair shop and dance hall space called the Boxcar.

2000 Block Avenue A West Side (Even Numbers)

2006 Avenue A

Now a part of 2008 Avenue A and operated as Kearney Auto Parts until 1939, from 1940-1947 it was McCue's Feed store which operated in the combined 2006 and 2008 buildings.

2008 Avenue A

Built in 1907 as the Krug Beer Warehouse by contractor Richard Hibberd. The 1915 Sanborn lists it as a beer warehouse and 1917 Kearney Hub news article mentions the "old beer warehouse on Avenue A between Twenty-first and Railroad is undergoing extensive alterations." 1917 is the same year as state prohibition. Operated as the McCue Feed Store when business relocated to this building in 1940.

2014 Avenue A, McCues Garage

The garage built in 1951 for J. W. Hensley by J.E. Kauffman to replace a former concrete block manufacturing business on this location. The building has an angled façade to allow for parking and driving into the building. An overhead garage door on the east façade, glass block windows facing the railroad tracks, and a pedestrian door on the south façade punctuate the exterior. The brick building has a soldier course around the building above the overhead garage door and at the cornice line. Today the building is used for City Auto Repair.

2022 Avenue A

This one story brick building was built in 1940 and housed County offices. A round bronze plaque of the county seal is attached at the center of the building near the cornice line. A large applied red awning with the words Midtown Business Center across the front identifies the building today.

2000 Block Avenue A East side (Odd Numbers)

2001 Avenue A

This one story industrial building has a corbeled brick cornice and center entrance flanked by three window openings. The windows and entrance are flush with the wall surface and no storefronts are present on the building. Located just north of the railroad tracks, the property was most likely a warehouse for storage or processing of materials from the railroad.

2013 Avenue A, A.E. Brigham & Company Grocery, (BF05-659)

The Brigham Grocery company built this in 1921. It is a three-story brick façade with corbeled cornice line that has been converted to loft apartments. Red awnings are located over the main façade windows and across the former storefront.

2025 Avenue A, Consumers Public Power

This two-story streamline modern public building was constructed in 1948-49 for Consumer's Public Power, and designed by architect John Helleberg. Today the building is the City of Kearney and Buffalo County Law Enforcement Center. The building has rounded corners, and banded windows set within a broad stone surround. According to a 1967 photo in a private collection, the brick rounded corner was originally a porcelain enameled steel with aluminum banding across the top and the word "Consumers" stretching from one side of the building to the other over the rounded corner. The windows were a commercial style with two vertical lights and a horizontal light within one frame. A new brick storefront was added, the aluminum cap and signage removed and a broad stone band added extending across the north and west facades. New single pane windows replaced the original. East bay of the building remains the same. Today the building serves the City of Kearney and Buffalo County Law Enforcement Center.

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1967 photograph of Consumers Public Power at 2025 Avenue A. Image taken looking southeast. This photo shows the building prior to renovations that took place in 1993. Photo courtesy of private collection housed at the Kearney Public Library.



Image of the former Consumers Public Power at 2025 Avenue A. The building now houses the City of Kearney and Buffalo County Law Enforcement Center. Image taken looking southeast and showing renovations that took place in 1993. Photo taken by Kara Harms during field survey in April 2017.

West Railroad Street North Side

119 W. Railroad Street, Midway Bottling Works

This complex is used as the Coca Cola bottling company warehouse. The complex has several additions over time. The core of the building is a two-story brick façade with a band of industrial steel multi-light windows across the entirety of the second floor. Windows and doors on the first floor have been infilled with brick. A one-story brick wing extends to the west and a two-story brick wing extends to the east. The warehouse for Midway Bottling Works was built at this site in 1921.

East Railroad Street North Side

14 E. Railroad Street, C.A. Bartz Building

Built in 1914, this small one-story building is located on the corner of Railroad Street and the alley between Central and Avenue A. The textured concrete block building has a cantilevered entrance with a large display window flush with the wall on the south façade. The building was owned by C.A. Bartz who was a grocer in Kearney. The 1915 Sanborn

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maps indicate poultry and cream storage here. The one-story addition to the east has a stucco façade and recessed entrance. Today the Platte Valley Brewery and Tap House occupies the space.

20 E. Railroad Street, Filling Station

Built c. 1937, the building has an angled façade to allow for parking and driving into the building. An overhead garage door on the east façade, glass block windows facing the railroad tracks, and a pedestrian door on the south façade punctuate the exterior. The brick building has a soldier course around the building above the overhead garage door and at the cornice line. Today the building is used for City Auto Repair.

West 21st Street South Side

16 West 21st St., Patterson Motor Co., Sears and Roebuck Store

The one-story brick building encompasses the entire half block and was formerly a Sears and Roebuck Store and Service Station. Patterson Motor Company serviced and dealt Ford automobiles in the late teens. The building today houses Fitness 101 and Jacobi's Carpet One. A flat metal awning covers the entirety of the storefront. The brick façade has been painted dark gray across the sign band, and a light neutral color on the lower level and cornice line. Ornamental brick work in the cornice is difficult to discern due to the heavy paint.

East 21st Street South Side (Odd Numbers)

21-23 E. 21st Street-Contributing, Auto Garage, Tex's Café

This one-story light tan brick building was constructed in two bays as an auto body shop. Today Tex's Café occupies the building, but its' past as a shop is clearly visible in the multi-paned glass window reflective of the overhead garage door on the north façade. The building wraps the corner of 21st Street and Avenue A, and retains large open display windows flush with the wall surface. A projecting back lit Coca-Cola sign with Tex's Café projects off the east bay of the building. The east façade along Avenue A retains the original flat metal awning running the entirety of this street front with windows immediately below the awning.

East 21st Street North Side (Even Numbers)

10-12 East 21st Street (BF05-462)

Built in 1920, this one-story brick building has a double storefront. The storefronts are in original condition with the east most store front retaining the display windows with a recessed center entrance and the western storefront retaining its pedestrian door at the west side of the display windows. The original stained-glass transom remains in place above both storefronts, and a corbeled cornice line further emphasizes the main façade. A sign in the shape of a woman's head in profile with the name Headliner Studio painted in the center. A deteriorated canvas awning projects from the western most storefront. The east side of the building is vacant. 1924 Sanborn maps indicate the building was storage at one time.

14 E. 21st Street

This one-story brick building was built in 1908 with a new storefront from the mid-to-late 1950s. Evidence of the 1908 building can be seen in its side profile. Residing at the northeast corner of 21st Street and the alley between Central Avenue and Avenue A, the west façade retains its 1908 appearance with a project pressed metal cornice with supporting brackets. The front of the building retains a neon sign "Lumbergs" and an entirely new brick storefront with corner entrance and one large display window flush with the wall. This alteration was common in the 1950s and 1960s attempting to bring old and outdated buildings into the modern era by adding storefronts and covering historic design details that reveal the original date of construction.

18 E. 21st Street

18 East 21st is a two-story brick building with corbeled cornice line and one full-width store front. Today the building is Thunderhead Pizza and Beer and the large black awning contains the signage. Three large windows at the second level have been replaced with single pane units. The storefront is new aluminum and glass configuration with center door. The 1924 Sanborn Maps show that a motorcycle repair shop was located in the building.

East 22nd Street North Side (Even Numbers)

6-12 E. 22nd Street

Kearney Downtown Historic DistrictBuffalo County, NE**Name of Property****County and State**

Constructed between 1924 and 1928, this two-story brick building has a flat metal awning across the street facing façade. There are four storefront bays at street level. The dark brown brick is accented with a stone beltcourse and corbeled brick work. The cornice line has a projecting center feature and stone corner details within recessed brick panels at the second level. The large awning, beltcourse, corbeling, and roofline add to a solid horizontal orientation to the building. Early occupants of this building were Stewarts Shoe Repair and Chili Bowl Restaurant.

18 E. 22nd Street, City Hall (BF05-008)-Contributing

City Hall was designed by McClure & Walker and was a PWA project constructed in 1939. This building replaced the original City Hall which was built in 1889 with a large clock tower that is repeated in the existing building. The brick two-story Art Deco made efforts to repeat the clock tower from the original city hall through its center entry bay that projects above the roofline in a truncated tower with pyramidal roof. The tan brick building has an elaborate stone entry with vertical geometric details carved in the stone and long narrow glass block windows. The recessed entry itself has three shallow steps and curved walls along the stone surround at both the first and second story. Brickwork throughout the façade retains horizontal banding in its coursing. A one-story bay at the north side of the building on Avenue A also has a formal Art Deco stone surround at the entrance door. Windows throughout have been replaced. The opening size has been retained, but new window units with four horizontal glass panes and reflective glass replace the original window units.

West 23rd Street North Side (Odd Numbers)**15 W. 23rd Street, Steam Laundry Building; Cunningham Journal Printing (BF05-002)-Contributing**

Occupied and built by L.B. Cunningham at a cost of \$13,000 in 1890, Cunningham ran one of the first newspapers in Kearney in the 1880s. Sanborn Maps show a YMCA occupied one part of the building in 1893 and the Kearney Steam Laundry by 1899. A portion of the building was always identified as printing. The raised center entrance is flanked by large glass display windows on either side. These windows have been replaced with dark tinted glass. The original door canopy and a vertical banner neon sign, "Cunningham Journal Plus Eatery" identifies the business today. The second floor has two groups of three arched window units capped by arched brick. The windows have been replaced with rectangular plans with the arches infilled. A detailed, projecting cornice extends across the main façade with two separate title banners above each window grouping; one stating Cunningham the other Journal Building. The south (front) façade faces 23rd Street and is constructed of a hard-fired finished brick that wraps along with all ornamentation around the corners of each side of the building, but then terminates one bay deep at the sides. The remainder of the building construction is with a lesser quality brick of a slightly different color. The façade is currently painted a tan and cream color scheme to accent the brick work.

East 23rd Street North Side (Even Numbers)**16 E. 23rd Street-Contributing**

Built in 1924 with an addition in 1949, this one story streamline moderne building expresses its style through detailed brick work throughout the façade. The simple rectangular building has rounded corners with horizontal banding at the cornice line. The horizontal banding is interrupted by vertical details that extend slightly above the cornice line. Brick pilasters with stone caps divide the window bays. Residing on the northwest corner of East 23rd Street and Avenue A the east façade has a central garage door with paired multi-light industrial steel windows on either side of the overhead door. Header courses of brick defines the rounded course, and soldier courses define the lintels of the windows on the 1924 portion of the building. The 1949 addition that extends to the west was not built with the soldier courses above windows. The original steel windows are retained at the east façade, but have tinted storm windows on the outside. A concrete block addition extends to the north of the building and is recessed from the street.

East 24th Street South Side (Odd Numbers)**17 W. 24th Street, Fraternal Order of Eagles**

Built in 1935 this one-story brick building is light tan in color with contrasting red bricks ornamenting the façade. A small rectangular neon sign projects from the southwest corner of the rooftop with the letters FOE 2722 emblazoned on it. The storefront area is completely infilled with brown bricks with a simple double glass and aluminum pedestrian door at the east end of the façade. Three anchors with hooks are present in the façade from an awning that is no longer present. The infill appears to date to the early 1960s or late 1950s.

21 E. 24th Street, (BF05-473)

Kearney Downtown Historic District

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This two story brick service station was built c. 1940. The canted front façade provides room for drive through service and filling. According to the 1949 Sanborn Maps, there were three gas pumps in this area with service. Two overhead garage doors are located at the east façade one for truck height and one for automobile height. The corners of the building have openwork brick joints that are also present on either side of the main entry door. A basket weave brick pattern defines the cornice line with a soldier course of bricks above each window. The main entry door at the northeast canted façade has been reduced in size with a single door and infill surrounding the door. Today the building houses the Lennox Air Conditioning and Heating business.

Brick Streets Central Avenue, 21st Street, 1st Avenue and Avenue A

Kearney’s streets were paved with brick in 1915. Brick patterning on the main traffic lanes and traveling surface is a simple running type bond. Detailed herringbone patterns, basket weave patterns, and simple angled designs are incorporated into the intersections. This was typical in brick street design. To strengthen the structural integrity of the street surfacing and extend longevity, traffic is meant to travel perpendicular to the brick patterning and coursing. Intersections were routinely designed with angled patterns to accommodate the turning radius of the automobile, protect the integrity of the brick surface, and extend longevity of the surface.

Non-contributing

Noncontributing resources throughout the district include buildings that have been significantly altered outside the period of significance for this district, new construction, infill parking lots, or pocket parks. Descriptions below represent a sampling of the noncontributing buildings within district boundaries.

2400 Central Avenue, Chapman Coffee

This complex of buildings was constructed between 2003 and 2010. It resides on the northwest corner of 24th St and Central Avenue and includes a small one-story cottage with stucco cladding and clay tile roof, surrounding by extensive landscaping and with a significant setback from the street. Part of the complex also includes a series of buildings immediately north of this cottage constructed in the same stucco and tile roof method and ranging from two-story flat roofed building to one-and-a-half story gable end buildings.

1912 Central Ave

This one-story building has a full-width storefront with recessed central entrance. An aluminum awning extends the width of the storefront. The entirety of the façade is clad with a stucco type material with horizontal striped pattern at the outer edges and along the cornice line. Today the Fox Hole Bar and Grill is housed in the building. The building was constructed around 1900, like the others on the block, but its exterior renovation is recent.

2013 and 2015 Central Avenue

This two-story building has a stucco second story with new brick and heavy framed aluminum and glass storefront. The building has been combined with 2015 Central Avenue its immediate neighbor to the north. 2015 Central is a one-story brick building with the main entrance to the current tenant, the Alley Rose restaurant. The two buildings are combined to accommodate the restaurant. The facades of both are painted the same tan color with a dark green and burgundy storefront, and a natural rock material laid to appear dry fit. The storefront has been designed to create a unified appearance for the business. The storefront has been modernized outside the period of significance of the district and combining the two to create a unified façade diminishes the physical integrity of 2013 so that it no longer reads as a unique and individual building. These alterations were completed in 2004.

2109 Central Avenue-Non-contributing (Nelson’s Furniture)

Nelson’s furniture consumes much of this block. Multiple historic buildings dating from 1900 through 1920 now encompass the furniture store complex. One uniform sheet metal façade extends the entirety of the storefront connecting all the buildings. A rigid frame canvas awning extends across the entirety of the façade. Buffalo County Assessor records indicate most of this work was completed between 2000 and 2010.

Figure 2. Table of Resources within Kearney Downtown Historic District

	Address/Survey #	Date	C/NC
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Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
1900 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)			
	1900 Central Avenue	1909	C
	1904 Central Avenue	1935	C
	1906 Central Avenue	c. 1900	C
	1908 Central Avenue	1900	C
	1910 Central Avenue	1900	C
	1912 Central Avenue	1950	NC
	1914 Central Avenue	1940	C




Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	1920 Central Avenue	c. 1940	C
	1930 Central Avenue	c. 1940	C
<p>1900 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)</p>			
	1901 Central Avenue	1952	C
	1903 Central Avenue	1947	C
	1905 Central Avenue	c. 1920	C
	1907 Central Avenue	c. 1920	C
	1911 Central Avenue	1910	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	1913 Central Avenue	1920	C
	1917 Central Avenue	1920	C
	1919 Central Avenue	1920	C
	1925 Central Avenue	1910	NC
<p>2000 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)</p>			
	2000 Central Avenue	1905	C
	2002 Central Avenue	c. 1950	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	2004 Central Avenue	c. 1900	C
	2006 Central Avenue	c. 1900	C
	2010 Central Avenue	1910	C
	2014 Central Avenue	1885	C
	2018-2022 Central Avenue	1907	C
	2026 Central Avenue	1900 and 1954	C
2000 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)			

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	2001-2003 Central Avenue	1890	NRHP Listed
	2007-2009 Central Avenue	1920	C
	2011 Central Avenue	c. 1900 and 1965	C
	2015-2013 Central Avenue	1900 1920 2004	NC
	2017-2019 Central Avenue	1920	C
	2021 Central Avenue Bf05-652	1920	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property		County and State	
	<p>2023 Central Avenue Bf05-653</p>	<p>c. 1920</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2025-2027 Central Avenue BF05-654</p>	<p>c. 1900</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2029 Central Avenue</p>	<p>1890</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2033 Central Avenue BF05-480</p>	<p>1889</p>	<p>C</p>
<p>2100 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)</p>			
	<p>2100 Central Avenue</p>	<p>1890</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2104 Central Avenue</p>	<p>1939</p>	<p>C</p>

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property

County and State

	<p>2106 Central Avenue</p>	<p>1939</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2110 Central Avenue</p>	<p>c. 1925 c. 1960</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2112 Central Avenue</p>	<p>c. 1900 c. 1960</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2114 Central Avenue</p>	<p>c. 1900 c. 1960</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2116 Central Avenue BF05-465</p>	<p>1911</p>	<p>C</p>

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE




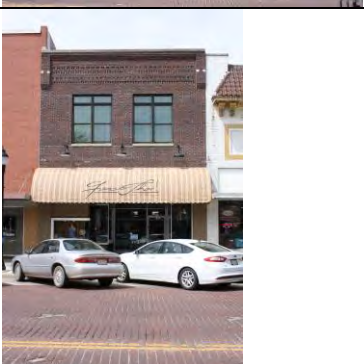
Name of Property	County and State		
	<p>2118 Central Avenue BF05-466</p>	<p>1892</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2120 Central Avenue</p>	<p>1910 c. 1960</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2122 Central Avenue BF05-007</p>	<p>1890</p>	<p>C</p>
<p>2100 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)</p>			
	<p>2109 Central Avenue</p>	<p>1900 1920 2007</p>	<p>NC</p>
	<p>2119 Central Avenue BF05-464</p>	<p>c. 1880</p>	<p>C</p>

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property

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	<p>2123 Central Avenue</p>	<p>c. 1900</p>	<p>C</p>
<p>2200 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)</p>			
	<p>2200 Central Avenue BF05-009</p>	<p>1922</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2206 Central Avenue BF05-467</p>	<p>1915</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2210 Central Avenue</p>	<p>1920 1958</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2214 Central Avenue</p>	<p>1900</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2218 Central Avenue</p>	<p>C. 1920</p>	<p>C</p>

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	2220-2224 Central Avenue BF05-469	1912-13	C
2200 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)			
	2201 Central Avenue	1889	C
	2205 Central Avenue BF05-176	1940	NRHP Listed
	2207-2209 Central Avenue	1924	C
	2211 Central Avenue	c. 1950	C
	2213 Central Avenue	c. 1920	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	2215 Central Avenue	1916 1948	C
	2217-1129 Central Avenue	C. 1915 1960	C
	2223 Central Avenue	1890	C
<p>2300 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)</p>			
	2300 Central Avenue BF05-010	c. 1875	C
	2302 Central Avenue BF05-47	1888 C. 1920	C
	2304 Central Avenue	1946	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	2318 Central Avenue BF05-471	1927	NRHP Listed
2300 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)			
	2301 Central Avenue	c. 1888	C
	2305 Central Avenue	c. 1920	C
	2309 Central Avenue	c. 1920	C
	2311-2313 Central Avenue	c. 1910	C
2400 Block Central Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)			
	2400 Central Avenue	2003 2010	NC

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	2406-2410 Central Avenue	1920 1940	C
	2412 Central Avenue	c. 1920	C
2400 Block Central Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)			
	2401 Central Avenue BF05-169	1911	NRHP Listed
1st Avenue West Side (Even Numbers)			
	2006 1st Avenue		NC
	2008 1st Avenue	1897 1907	C
	2012 1st Avenue	1907	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	2014 1st Avenue	1907	C
1st Avenue East Side (Odd Numbers)			
	2005 1st Avenue	N/A	NC
	1st Avenue Parking Lot 2000 Block	N/A	NC
	2023 1st Avenue	1920	C
	1st Avenue Parking Lot NE Corner at 23rd Street intersection	N/A	NC
1900 Block Avenue A West Side (Even Numbers)			
	1901 Avenue A	1948	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	<p>Parking Lot Avenue A 1900 Block</p>		<p>NC</p>
	<p>1910-1920 Avenue A</p>	<p>c.1945</p>	<p>C</p>
<p>2000 Block Avenue A West Side (Even Numbers)</p>			
	<p>2014 Avenue A</p>	<p>1951</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>2006-2008 Avenue A</p>	<p>1907 1920</p>	<p>C</p>
	<p>Avenue A Parking Lot 2000 Block</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>NC</p>
	<p>2022 Avenue A</p>	<p>1940</p>	<p>C</p>
<p>2000 Block Avenue A East Side (Odd Numbers)</p>			

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	2001 Avenue A	c. 1920	C
	2013 Avenue A	1921	C
	2025 Avenue A	1948 1995	C
2300 Block Avenue A West Side (Even Numbers)			
West Railroad Street North Side			
	119 W Railroad St	1921 1949	C
East Railroad Street North Side			
	14 Railroad Street	1914 1940	C
	20 E. Railroad Street	1937	C
West 21 st Street South Side			

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	16 West 21 st Street	C.1910	C
East 21 st Street South Side			
	13 E. 21st Street	C.1910	NC
	17 E. 21st Street	1910	NC
	19 E. 21st Street	1920	NC
	21 E. 21st Street	1920	C
	23 E. 21st Street	1920	C
East 21 st Street North Side			
	10-12 E. 21st Street BF05-462	1920	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
	14 E. 21st Street	1908 c. 1955	C
	18 E. 21st Street	1900	C
East 22 nd Street North Side			
	10-12 E. 22 nd Street	C.1924	C
	18 E 22nd Street	1939/1980	C
West 23 rd Street North Side			
	15 W. 23 rd Street BF05-002	1890	C
	9 W. 23 rd Street	C.1890	C
East 23 rd Street North Side			
	16 E. 23 rd Street	1924 1949	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

Name of Property	County and State		
			
West 24 th Street North Side			
	17 W. 24 th Street	1935	C
West 24 th Street South Side			
	15 E. 24th Street	2008	NC
	21 E. 24th Street BF05-473	c. 1940	C
	Soldiers Memorial	1910	C
	Brick Streets	1915	C

Kearney Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

Buffalo County, NE
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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.)

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.
A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- E** A commemorative property.
- G** Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Transportation

Period of Significance

1875-1965

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

McClure and Walker

John Helleberg

Frank and Bailey

Frank, Bailey and Farmer

Babrook and Brown

Oscar Kirscke

Richard Hibbard

George Mesker

Kearney Downtown Historic District

Buffalo County, NE

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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 Kearney Downtown Historic District represents the core of commerce and historic transportation in the city from both the historic period and today. It is locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Transportation. The downtown core has provided residents with goods and services since the founding of the community in 1872. The buildings and structures within the area centered on Central Avenue from 19th Street to 24th Street reflect the development of the community and its commercial growth into central Nebraska's regional hub. The period of significance begins in 1875 the construction date of the oldest extant building in the district and extends to 1965. This terminal date was chosen because of the numerous changes to the community in the mid-1960s. Before 1962 the only street over the railroad tracks was Central Avenue which then led to the only bridge over the Platte River. In 1962 a new highway overpass was constructed leading to the new/under construction Interstate. Once the Interstate and new bridges over the tracks and the River were completed, the Lincoln Highway (25th Street) ceased to have prominence, and commercial development begins to shift to the edges of town surrounding the new Interstate highway. The interstate through Kearney was completed by the end of 1964 and the following year realized the major shift in commercial development.

Kearney's development was bolstered not only by its central location associated with transportation corridors, but by the success and notoriety of many of its more famous citizens who were tireless promoters of the community, some resulting in a presence within the built environment of downtown Kearney. Kearney is also a unique community in Nebraska in that it has grown continuously since its founding with only setbacks and stagnation during the Depression decades of the 1890s and 1930s. During the 1880s and the 1890s Kearney prospered and it was well documented by noted photographers in Nebraska including Alfred Anderson, John Stryker and Solomon Butcher.

Narrative Statement of Significance

History of Kearney

Located in the Platte River valley in south-central Nebraska, Kearney is the seat of Buffalo County. The city was established in 1872 (originally named Kearney Junction) at the junction point for the Burlington and Missouri River and Union Pacific railroads. General Stephen Kearny is the town's namesake. Kearny was one of the foremost antebellum frontier officers in the U.S. Army and served in the Mexican-American War. The city was sited near Fort Kearny, founded as a US Army outpost in 1848 and established to protect thousands of pioneers, Pony Express riders and prospectors traveling west on the Oregon Trail. The fort saw a record number of passersby after the 1849 Gold Rush when more than 30,000 people came through the area following the Platte River Valley trail systems. A postal misspelling of the name added the extra "e", but was not deemed a significant enough error to correct, so the community retains the spelling Kearney. Modern day Kearney has a population of 32,469, and is home to the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

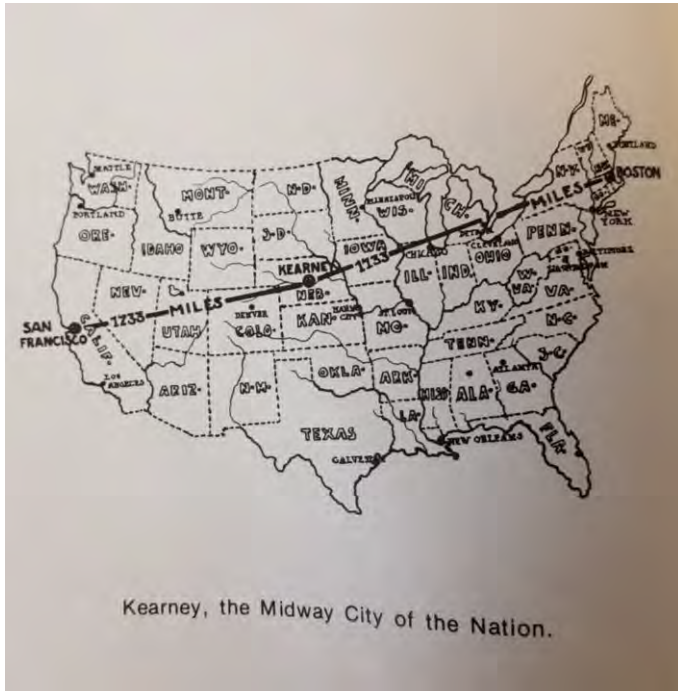
Early settlement is credited to a homestead claim filed by the Collins family in 1871, the town founded in 1872, and when incorporated by 1873 the town known then as Kearney Junction had 245 residents. With the arrival and growth of service, Kearney grew to 10,000 people in the 1880s. Its first 50 years of development highlights the open competition between the Union Pacific and the Burlington Railroads. This early economic boom brought the state reform school (later the Industrial School for Boys), the Kearney Canal and electric plant, and major infrastructure improvements like sewer systems and electric street cars. Kearney was also home to flour and cotton mills, brick yards, the Kearney Military Academy, and the Mother Hull Hospital operated by the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The city suffered a significant financial and population loss resulting from the economic depression of 1893, but rebounded after the turn of the twentieth century. The city resumed its growth at a slower pace, reaching a population of 8,500 by 1930. Acquiring the State Normal School in 1903, the state Tubercular Hospital in 1911, and the seedling mile on the Lincoln Highway in 1915 contributed to its gradual but continual growth. Following World War II, the community built a solid economic and financial foundation evidenced through growing business climate and thriving Central Avenue storefronts, services, and professional offices. In 1964 Kearney was linked to the newly constructed Interstate 80, causing a boom in tourism, commercial construction, and entertainment facilities near the new highway.

Kearney Downtown Historic District

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Map of the United States showing Kearney with one of its nicknames of the Midway City. The map notes that Kearney is 1733 miles from Boston and San Francisco. Image taken from Kearney City Plan, 1961.

Commercial Development

Significant early impact on commercial development in Kearney is contributed to the arrival of both the Union Pacific and Burlington and Missouri River Railroads. Downtown Kearney became a major industrial and commercial area with a building boom in the 1870s and 1880s. This resulted from individual entrepreneurial businessmen and women and organized innovators and investors. One of the innovators and early investors in downtown Kearney was a businessman named George Washington Frank. Frank arrived in 1880 and formed the Frank Improvement Company. He backed the 16-mile Kearney Canal where it formed Kearney Lake. This provided not only water and recreation, but hydro-electric power to the city. Readily available city-wide electricity led to other important projects including the Kearney Cotton Mill and the electric street car system, the first in Nebraska. The availability of electric power and accessibility of raw material through the railroad led to ten years of a successful cotton mill in a state where cotton was not cropped. Kearney was considered a pioneer in electric power and one of the foremost electric cities in the west. By 1890 Kearney's industrial environment included the Kearney Cotton Mill, Kearney Flour Mill and Elevator, Kearney Oatmeal Mill, Kearney Paper Mill, Metcalf Cracker Factor, and Kearney Foundry and Iron Works among many others.¹⁴ Frank's partner and fellow investor H.D. Watson only strengthened the stability of the company.

Readily available water and power by 1890 throughout Kearney's commercial core boosted its reputation as a town with great potential. These two resources, along with traffic generated by the railroad supported the major building boom of the 1880s. Along with the industrial success, the commercial strength of Kearney also grew. Major construction throughout the 1870s and 1880s resulted in densely built commercial core by 1890. Two major buildings downtown included the Midway Hotel and the Kearney Opera House, neither of which are extant. The impressive five story Opera House was torn down in 1954 after suffering financial losses for years, and was located where Bruce Furniture is now, while the Midway Hotel burned.

Seven banks were part of the symbolic success of the community, an incredibly high number for a community of its size. They included Kearney National, First National, Buffalo County National, City National, Farmers Bank, Commercial Savings Bank, and Kearney Savings Bank. The banks were all downtown on Central Avenue and some of those buildings are present in the district today including 2300 Central Ave, constructed in 1875, housing the Buffalo County National Bank and the oldest building in the district. At the time other commercial enterprises opened including department stores, grocery

¹⁴ Holmgren, Philip S. Ph.D. Kearney 125 Years, 1873-1998 pp20-21

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stores, offices, barbershops, attorneys, and specialty retail. Supporting the commerce downtown was the presence of several fraternal and social organizations.

Commercial growth in downtown Kearney was heavily influenced by the opportunities from rail traffic. Construction of the opera house, a five-story massive building, and atypical for a community of this size, thrived because of the availability of traveling shows, vaudeville acts, and circuit lecturers making their rounds among communities at rail stops. Shows were scheduled around available groups coming and going, often with costumed actors sprinting from their performance directly to the rail to take off to the next location. Others stayed longer, offering another layer of financial diversity to blossoming local business. Supporting commerce such as hotels, restaurants, and personal services were required. Other local services such as barbers and retail stores along with fraternal organizations provided a rich and varied downtown community. Early examples of multi-use buildings, such as the Fair and Lowe on Railroad Street and Central Avenue is but one remaining from this period. Supporting the rapid population influx, the city installed a comprehensive sewer system in 1888, a \$70,000 community investment paid for by city bonds.¹⁵ The combination of early electricity, sanitary sewer, and public transit fostered further diversity among service providers downtown. Doctors, barbers, and restaurants had readily available clean water and power. Lawyers, and financial institutions had access to the broad permanent and transient populations. However, the skyrocketing growth and building construction came almost abruptly to a halt when in the early 1890s, the investors Frank and Watson dissolved their partnership. Some sources suggest they disagreed on promotional tactics, and that an economic readjustment was due. However, for Kearney this became severe when coupled with the national economic depression occurring in 1893 as well as three years of failed crops due to drought. Kearney saw factories close, businesses fail, and an exodus of nearly half its population. Even houses were abandoned with some eventually being torn down and others moved.¹⁶

After the turn of the twentieth century, a new Kearney was in the making. With its wide streets and the infrastructure boom of the 1880s, a significant number of impressive commercial buildings downtown, city parks, and public utilities contributed to a new optimism. A second set of tracks added to the Union Pacific line in 1900 was a palpable symbol of the rebirth of the community, along with an additional line south from Kearney in 1917.¹⁷ As with many communities throughout Nebraska, the turn of the twentieth century saw steady growth and a rebound from the depression. Kearney further stabilized increase when in 1902 the State Normal School was established (now University of Nebraska at Kearney), and shortly after a Boys Reform School, State Hospital, and the Kearney Army Air Base were built¹⁸ The decades up to the Great Depression in the 1930s realized the most significant growth of the built environment downtown. Commercial development grew steadily largely based on the needs and demands of employees from these institutions.

Kearney's municipal government needs were served by a massive stone and brick City Hall that was torn down and a new WPA building constructed in its place in 1939. The new building was meant to be modern and streamlined, but gave a nod to the demanding architecture of the original city hall through the construction of a truncated tower reminiscent of the clock tower of the original building. New City Hall is a contributing building in this district nomination. Though new construction was limited during the decade of the 1930s, a number of buildings were rehabilitated with new brick facing, new storefronts, and some smaller scale infill constructed.

Building during the 1940s and 1950s includes a series of automobile service centers and garages along Avenue A. Where Central Avenue remains the commercial and retail core of the district, the streets flanking had a different theme. Avenue A has four buildings built for automobile service from the 1920s through the 1950s. They include garages, service stations, and specialty automotive like a radiator shop on every corner from Railroad Street to 24th Street within the district. These buildings are located at 21 E. 24th Street, 16 East 23rd Street, 21-23 East 21st Street, and 20 East Railroad

¹⁵ Bassett, Samuel Clay. History of Kearney, Nebraska (Part 1). The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, Chicago, IL 1916, p.

¹⁶ Ibid, p 28

¹⁷ Skala, Mary Jane. 150 Years of Rollin' Metal: Union Pacific turned Kearney from empty prairie to booming city. Kearney Hub, December 2, 2012.

¹⁸ Howell, Alice. Kearney, Buffalo County. University of Nebraska-Lincoln Virtual Nebraska, Nebraska... Our Towns, www.casde.unl.edu accessed 5-30-2017

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Street. Service stations also flank the western boundary of the district, but of an earlier generation. Crowley Garage at 2008-2012 1st Avenue was a major Ford dealer and auto shop in the early 1900s and 1910s.

After World War II and throughout the 1950s, commercial growth in Kearney shifted and an effort was put forth to modernize the existing building stock on Central Avenue and throughout the commercial core. Because of Kearney's early economic success, the downtown was fully built out and paved by 1915. The thriving economy and dense commercial core left the only option for modernization to tear down or alter the existing buildings. The city identified this as a priority and noted numerous improvements already made in the Central Business District Study in 1966 (the Study). Regarding the aesthetic conditions of downtown compared to shopping malls, the Study stated that, "it is not difficult to see that a downtown having an environment which is repulsive to the senses is going to suffer in competition with one of beauty and pleasant surroundings."¹⁹ The shopping mall in this reference holding the beauty and pleasant surroundings. However, fortunately for Kearney, according to the authors of this study, its aesthetic condition was better than most because many of the elements which contribute to its aesthetic quality including buildings fronts, display windows, sidewalks, and streets have already been updated to accommodate the modern shopper. The plan notes that a significant amount of refacing and decorating has been completed on the first-floor level of many of the Central Avenue blocks, and that the upper story walls have had "little attempt to make them attractive or architecturally harmonious."²⁰ It is important to note for this historic district and within the 1966 study, that the trend for commercial development and redevelopment in downtown Kearney is retention and renovation of the existing building stock and that at the time it was clear that removing old buildings with new buildings taking their place was not the trend. Unlike many communities there was little to no competition in Kearney from new indoor shopping centers, and individual property owners and merchants chose to remodel their storefronts and interiors to present a modern and improved façade.

Significant examples, though not vast in number, are scattered throughout the district. The building at 2210 Central Avenue has a new blank brick façade with no ornament and no windows, along with a new storefront. This building along with Bruce's Furniture at 2026 Central Avenue are examples of the types of renewal taking place in the 1950s in Kearney. The building at 2304 Central Avenue retains an earlier 1946 porcelain enameled tile slipcover and modern storefront. These renovations completely changed the buildings to the point where any architectural information predating their mid-century renovation has been removed or is no longer visible. In the case of Bruce's Furniture, an entire building was removed (the Opera House) and replaced with this very modern interpretation of a main street storefront. Whereas these buildings were completely renovated, others were just given a new first story facelift. One example is the building at 2223 Central Avenue. This 1890 brick and stone Romanesque building housed the Platte Valley Bank and the Midway Loan and Trust Company. The upper floors retain heavy brick and stone arches and a truncated tower at the corner. However, in the 1940s and 1950s the street level façade was altered to house the KFGW Radio Station. The radio station still occupies the building and the entry doors and façade reflect a mid-century aesthetic while the upper floors retain their original architectural details. Though this irony of stylistic details on one building may be shocking to the eye, they both represent significant development eras of Kearney's downtown district. The 1966 study further recommended that those buildings not already renovated could be sand blasted, painted, have applied curtain wall treatments, and window shuttered.

Transportation Introduction

Transportation is a key ingredient in Kearney's development. Kearney's commercial growth spurred in the 1870s and 1880s as the hub of both the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad and Union Pacific Railroad, then again in the 1910s and 1920s with the dawn of the automobile age with some of the earliest paved portions of the transcontinental Lincoln Highway (U.S. 30) bisecting the community. The Lincoln Highway began in New York City and extended across the middle of the country to its terminus in San Francisco, California. Kearney marketed itself as the Midway City, and constructed motels, diners, service stations, and automobile dealerships to cater to the travelers. Kearney marketed itself as both the Hub City and the Midway City. The Hub because of the busy rail lines, and this eventually became the namesake of the local newspaper, still published today, The Kearney Hub; and the Midway because it was 1733 miles from Boston and San Francisco along the rail line.

Railroad Development

¹⁹ Hare and Hare City Planners, Central Business District Study for Kearney, Nebraska 1966, p. 17

²⁰ Ibid. p. 18

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The westward push of the railroad system in the United States at the end of the Civil War, established many Nebraska communities, including Kearney Junction. The name was selected because the Burlington and Missouri River junctioned with the tracks of the Union Pacific here. Early settlement in Kearney Junction began in 1871 immediately after the town was platted. The town grew quickly, no doubt because of the presence of two major rail lines and by 1873 boasted 245 residents.

The Pacific Railroad Act of 1862 authorized the transcontinental Union Pacific Railroad. Construction started in Omaha, Nebraska at the eastern most point in the state in 1865 and by the following year it arrived in Buffalo County near Kearney. Not to be outdone, Congress authorized the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad extension from its line in Iowa through Nebraska to intersect with the Union Pacific near the 100th meridian. This point became Kearney Junction, now Kearney. The Burlington railroad was completed from Plattsmouth, Nebraska (south of Omaha) and the junction made with the Union Pacific on September 1, 1872.²¹ Some controversy arose when the entirety of the nearly 1000 acres of land for the townsite was purchased by D.N. Smith an agent for the Burlington. Union Pacific trains refused to stop in town until they received an interest in the townsite. Eventually half the city lots were deeded to the Union Pacific and all trains were stopping at Kearney Junction. Two major rail lines in Kearney Junction brought commercial competition and plans for many other smaller lines to be constructed to and from the city. Though many lines were identified on maps and planned for, the majority were never built.²² An 1892 county directory states that there were over 107 miles of railroad, 21 stations with telegraph, express and shipping facilities in Buffalo County at the time.²³ Both railroad companies built depots flanking the downtown core. The UP depot was along Railroad Street at the terminus of 1st Avenue and the Burlington Depot was along Railroad Street at the end of Avenue A. Neither depot is present today. A contemporary small-scale concrete block structure for the Burlington is located at Railroad Street and approximately 1st Avenue.

The main line of the Union Pacific was built south of Kearney leaving it as the terminus of a 24-mile stub line. A group of creative businessmen formed the Kearney and Black Hills Railroad with the intention of building a line starting at Kearney and travelling through to the Black Hills. They met with local support, but by the late 1880s and early 1990s the Union Pacific began exerting influence over the fledging rail company.²⁴

The population swelled to more than 10,000 in 1880. Multiple trains entering town on both lines provided a constant flow of people, goods, and news. One of the major early industries directly associated with the railroad was a cotton mill. The raw material (cotton) was received by train and processed in Kearney. Industry and commercial growth that was only possible because of the active rail lines. However, the economic depression of 1893 and subsequent drought years hit the commercial core hard and the population diminished by half of its height to 5,634 residents by 1890.²⁵ After that point, the community diversified and saw an influx of non-rail related institutions locate in the city bolstering their economic base in the early 1900s. From that point on the railroads were a significant piece of commerce and development (as they continue to be today) but their influence as the sole force of early settlement was diminished. It was 20 years later when the first transcontinental automobile highway came through Kearney providing a significant influx of auto tourists driving their way across the country, or just experiencing day trips from neighboring communities.

Highway Development

The Platte River Valley through Nebraska has historically been a route for the nation's travel. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Oregon-California Trail, the Mormon Trail, and the Pony Express followed the general corridor. The transcontinental Union Pacific Railroad followed, and the Lincoln Highway was established in 1913, representing another milestone in the development of this corridor. Initially the Lincoln Highway was promoted to be a completely paved and toll-free route across the country. Lincoln Highway's development was supported by the Lincoln Highway Association, a group of business men lead by Carl Graham Fisher and organized to establish the highway's route across

²¹ Howell, Alice. *Railroads in Buffalo County*, Buffalo Tales, Buffalo County Historical Society, volume 1, No. 5, May, 1978.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Howell, accessed 5-30-2017

²⁵ Ibid.

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the country and through Nebraska. The 450-mile route in Nebraska was identified in 1913, and entered the state in Omaha from the east and exited at Bushnell at the west. Kearney was among the nine major communities connected by the road. Kearney celebrated the road by placing torches along 20 miles of the highway, and the following year, the owner of the Midway Hotel (a major downtown building no longer extant) erected a sign in the tower of the building with the highway logo and lit with colored bulbs. The city lit the entire length of the highway through Kearney with 100 watt bulbs and the main road through town was renamed Lincoln Way (now 25th Street).

As funding for an entirely paved highway waned, other promotional mechanisms were developed. One of these was the idea of "Seedling Miles". The Lincoln Highway Association stated that "great oaks from little acorns will grow; long roads of concrete from seedling miles will spring."²⁶ A seedling mile was a small section of road with hard surfacing constructed through donation and meant to spur communities to extend the highway improvements, thus contributing to eventually having a fully paved transcontinental Lincoln Highway. Grand Island constructed the first seedling mile stretch in the state in 1915. Not to be outdone, Kearney completed their seedling mile two weeks after Grand Island's was completed. Kearney's seedling mile was 15 feet wide which was five feet wider than the recommended 10 feet.²⁷

The Lincoln Highway continued its promotion efforts until the late 1920s when it became part of the federal system of numbered highways, and was identified through Nebraska as Route 30. As the named identity waned, one last effort to brand the highway came in 1928 when a series of approximately 3000 concrete markers with a bronze bust of Lincoln, and a directional arrow were erected across the country, largely by Boy Scout troops. Various unique buildings and structures were constructed along the corridor to support the tourism and transportation along the route. These include motels, filling and service stations, rest areas, garages, and car dealerships. Highways were routed through commercial districts and main streets to both promote and market the new highway and to afford travelers the benefits of the commercial offerings found in the districts. During the height of the Lincoln Highway, many commercial districts paved or bricked their streets to improve the commercial areas also accommodating travelers along the Highway. In Kearney, Avenue A was a significant auto row with multiple garages, services stations, and specialty auto retailers. Between 1920 and 1950 this edge of the district grew and serviced many of the Lincoln Highway auto travelers.

Brick Streets

In Kearney, the early downtown streets were congested dirt roads. The first paving in Kearney were simple stone crossings on Central Avenue in 1880. Streetlights were added to the downtown area as early as 1889.²⁸ The city's electrification in the 1880s provided a street railcar system and massive power poles were constructed up and down Central Avenue. Lincoln Highway and the automobile continued to gain popularity, and because of the increased highway traffic the City chose to pave the major streets through the commercial area in 1915. Other significant infrastructure improvements, like a sewer and water system were completed, making the time ripe for the paving project. Vitrified brick was laid throughout their downtown district in 1915. Central Avenue on both the north and south sides of the railroad tracks was paved as well as all the major numbered cross streets up to 25th Street (Route 30). Central Avenue was the only downtown street that provided a crossing over the railroad tracks cementing it as a significant transportation corridor for the city.

This system of brick streets continues to serve the city. No major highways traverse the paving leaving it for the sole use of the downtown visitor. This nomination includes the brick streets along Central Avenue, 21st Street, Avenue A, and 1st Street. These streets are in good condition and retain a high degree of integrity contributing to the historic character defining features of the commercial core.

After the downtown core was paved, traffic along Central Avenue flowed much more freely. Central Avenue in addition to being a north-south state highway, also contained the prime retail frontage in the central business district. The master plan for the City of Kearney completed in 1961 identifies that Highway 10 which ran along Central Avenue should

²⁶ Puschendorf, L. Robert (et al), Historic and Architectural Resources of the Lincoln Highway in Nebraska. Multiple Property Document, January 2007, p. 15

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Holmgren, p 59

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be relocated to a new bridge over the tracks at Second Avenue, and identified the approximate location of Interstate 80, though neither were yet constructed. At the time, Central Avenue was the only downtown street that provided a railroad crossing, thus requiring a significant amount of through traffic flooding the commercial core. Highway 10 was relocated two blocks west of Central on Second Avenue the following year redirecting through traffic off Central Avenue. Removing the traffic caused substantial changes in the characteristics of the shopping core, primarily at the frontage between Railroad Avenue and 24th Streets. Parking on Central Avenue was eased once traffic was minimized, and the pedestrian experience was more pleasant and safer. Completing the Interstate Highway interchange at the south edge of town along with substantial length of the interstate, expanded the trade area of Kearney's downtown significantly. This was evidenced by increased enrollment (nearly doubled) at Kearney State College (now University of Nebraska at Kearney), increased disposable income and retail activity. The City determined that this increase in population and enhanced business atmosphere was a direct result of highway construction, and that college growth will continue to sustain physical improvements in the downtown business district.²⁹ Kearney was linked with the Interstate system in 1964 which brought new and different boom in tourism. Construction of hotels and restaurants served the traveling public and the city grew along the new interstate exchange. This marks the terminal date for the period of significance for this district. Once through traffic was removed from Central Avenue, the new bridge at 2nd Avenue constructed, a new bridge over the Platte River completed, and the interstate interchange built, the characteristics of downtown changed. It remains today the primary retail and professional service district in the city. Hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues were built near the interstate exchange providing services to the public passing through as well as visitors to Kearney, but Central Avenue still serves the community as its mainstay business district.

During the 1970s and 1980s Kearney maintained its population and even saw a slow steady growth. It was recognized as one of the fastest-growing cities in Nebraska during the 1990s. Major employers continue to include the University of Nebraska at Kearney and the Good Samaritan Hospital. In 1999, the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument was constructed over Interstate 80 adding to the growth of tourism and the continued development of the commercial area surrounding Interstate 80. The city continues to maintain its population at 33,520 people, sustaining steady growth since 1990 and holding its place as the 4th largest city in Nebraska. With strongholds like the University of Nebraska at Kearney campus, tourist sites like the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument, and a diverse commercial and industrial base, the community continues to draw permanent population as well as tourism.

Conclusion

The built environment represented in the Kearney Downtown Historic District illustrates the commercial development of the city from its inception in 1872. This development was significantly influenced by the presence of two major rail lines: the Union Pacific and the Burlington and Missouri River. Competition between these rail lines brought a great influx of people and services resulting in the built environment present today. Automobile traffic had its own influence when the Lincoln Highway routed through Kearney bringing new groups of tourists and travelers to and through the community. Later the new exchange on the Interstate Highway marks the terminal point for the period of significance for this district in 1965. The Kearney Downtown Historic Districts retains a high degree of historic integrity and retains significance at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Transportation.

²⁹ Hare and Hare, p 2

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9. Major Bibliographic References

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Skala, Mary Jane. *150 Years of Rollin' Metal: Union Pacific Turned Kearney from Empty Prairie to Booming City*, Kearney Daily Hub. 2 December 2012.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

Primary location of additional data:

- 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 # _____

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other (Name of repository) _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Approximately 30 USGS Quadrangle _____

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

- | | | | | |
|----|----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| 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 | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 2. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 3. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |
| 4. | Zone | _____ | Easting | _____ | Northing | _____ |

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

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The Kearney Downtown Historic District encompasses the primary core of historic downtown development. Central Avenue from the alley between 24th and 25th Streets to 19th Street is the heart of the district. More specifically the linear boundary runs from the northeast corner beginning at the driveway between 24th and 25th Street and Avenue A south to 23rd Street then east to the alley between Central and Avenue A on 23rd Street then south to the property line mid-block and east to Avenue A, south to 22nd Street, west on 22nd Street to the alley between Central and Avenue A then south to 21st Street. At 21st Street the boundary continues east to the alley between Avenue A and Avenue B and heads south to East Railroad Street. Following Railroad Street west to the tracks, the boundary then crosses the tracks south to West 20th Street, then continues east to Avenue A where it turns south to 19th Street. 19th Street marks the south terminus of the district boundary. At 19th Street the boundary continues west to the alley between Central Avenue and 1st Street where it continues north to West 20th Street turning east to cross over the tracks to West Railroad Street. West Railroad Street carries the boundary to its western terminus at 2nd Avenue, where it continues north to the boundary between the Coca Cola plant and the public library parking lot, then east to 1st Avenue. At 1st Avenue the boundary continues north to West 21st Street where it turns towards the east then continues north again at the alley between Central Avenue and 1st Avenue. Here the boundary continues north along this alley to 23rd Street. At 23rd Street the boundary turns west to 1st Avenue, then continues north to the alley between 24th and 25th Streets where it continues to meet with the starting boundary point at the northeast corner of the Museum of Nebraska Art complex.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This boundary was identified and selected by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office. It encompasses the main core of historic commercial development in downtown Kearney. The irregular boundary incorporates the vast majority of historic downtown properties developed to serve the primary commercial, professional, and retail needs of the community.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Melissa Dirr Gengler and Kara Harms</u>	date	<u>July 2017</u>
organization	<u>Historic Resources Group, Inc.</u>	street & number	<u>442 South 28th Street</u>
street & number	<u>442 South 28th Street</u>	telephone	<u>402-770-5877</u>
city or town	<u>Lincoln</u>	state	<u>NE</u> zip code <u>68510</u>
email	<u>melissa@hrg-nebraska.com</u>		

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 map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO 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.

Photo Log

Kearney Downtown Historic District Buffalo County, NE
Name of Property **County and State**

Name of Property Kearney Downtown Historic District

City or Vicinity Kearney County Buffalo State Nebraska

Photographer Kara Harms Date Photographed April 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera.

1. View of Central Avenue at 19th Street looking northwest
2. View of Central Avenue at 20th Street looking south
3. View of Central Avenue at 20th Street looking southeast
4. View of Central Avenue at railroad tracks looking north
5. View of Central Avenue from 25th Street looking south
6. View of Central Avenue from Railroad Street looking north
7. View of 22nd Street at Central Avenue looking southeast
8. View of 2200 Central Avenue at 22nd Street looking southwest
9. View of 2201 Central Avenue at 22nd Street looking northeast
10. View of 2123 Central Avenue from 21rd Street looking southwest
11. View of City Hall at 18 E. 22nd Street from Avenue A looking northwest
12. View of 2100 Central Avenue at 21st Street looking northwest
13. View of 20 E. Railroad Street from Avenue A looking west
14. View of 2300 Central Avenue from 23rd Street looking northwest
15. View of 15 W. 23rd Street looking northwest
16. View of 10 E. 21st Street looking north
17. View of 16 E 23rd Street from Avenue A looking northwest
18. View of 2304 Central Avenue looking west
19. View from sidewalk at west side of Central Avenue between 22nd and 23rd Streets looking north at street awnings

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.

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- 1: 40.699831° -99.082977°
- 2: 40.699811° -99.080200°
- 3: 40.698680° -99.080239°
- 4: 40.698655° -99.081036°
- 5: 40.698168° -99.080979°
- 6: 40.698173° -99.080234°
- 7: 40.697647° -99.080253°
- 8: 40.697583° -99.081076°
- 9: 40.696610° -99.080782°
- 10: 40.696579° -99.079573°
- 11: 40.695701° -99.079640°
- 12: 40.695259° -99.081539°
- 13: 40.694498° -99.081607°
- 14: 40.694662° -99.080349°
- 15: 40.693452° -99.080387°

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- 16. 40.693478° -99.082497°
- 17. 40.694591° -99.082508°
- 18. 40.695295° -99.082130°
- 19. 40.695008° -99.084414°
- 20. 40.695769° -99.084441°
- 21. 40.695873° -99.083115°
- 22. 40.696614° -99.083122°
- 23. 40.696599° -99.082402°
- 24. 40.698627° -99.082372°
- 25. 40.698603° -99.083093°

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Description





PT MACHINE



K of C Charity Unity nights of Columbus Fraternity Patriotism

La Unica

DAD'S TAVERN

Beer & Cakes







Sweet
SENSATIONS
ADULT MOVIE THEATRE

DINE
BRICKS

Old Time Tattoo

OLD TIME TATTOO

TATTOO

PIERCING

Street sign

7



LOWE INVESTMENT
Real Estate
Property Management
234 4478

N Railroad St

ANTIQUES

The Solid Rock







A large, three-story red brick building with a white base. The ground floor features several arched openings, some of which are currently empty. The second and third floors have rows of rectangular windows. A large tree with light green foliage stands in front of the building, partially obscuring it. To the right, a smaller, two-story brick building with arched windows is visible. Further down the street, a blue awning with the text "The Creative + Trade" is visible above a storefront.

A street paved with dark red cobblestones in a herringbone pattern. Several cars are parked along the curb on the right side of the street. A white SUV is the most prominent vehicle. In the foreground, a circular manhole cover is visible in the cobblestone pavement. A traffic light stands at the corner, and a street lamp is visible in the upper right corner of the frame.



MASONIC TEMPLE

RYAN YOGA
BOUTIQUE • SPA • HOT YOGA

KEARNEY CENTRE
VACUUM

VACUUM
CLEANERS

VACUUM
SALES SERVICE
DRECK
AUTHORIZED DEALER

KEARNEY CENTRE
VACUUM



FORT

FORT DENTISTRY
NEW PATIENTS WELCOME
237 5853

Central Ave.
22nd Street



ABC DRUG & GIFT HealthMart PHARMACY

2123 CENTRAL AVE. 2123 CENTRAL AVE.

ABC DRUG & GIFT HealthMart PHARMACY

ABC DRUG & GIFT HealthMart PHARMACY

STOP IN AND TAKE A HRP





TRU CAFE

TRU CAFE

BO SHON

Bauhaus

WATKINS

Brick Street
Coffee Roasters
Art Show & Sale

Gifts - Art - Books - Candles

Manufactured by Bauhaus



CITY AUTO
REPAIR

CITY AUTO
REPAIR

STOP

PILOT
4-1795

CLARK
1





WINNING

1890

JOURNAL BUILDING

CAMPUS BAR
PLUS RESTAURANT

ONE WAY




Kearney
Glass

auto
glass


GLASS DOCTOR
HOME • AUTO • BUSINESS
SERVICES



Suite Child 
mama, baby & beyond

2304

Suite Child
mama, baby & beyond

MEMBER OF THE
SUNBELT CHAPTER
OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF REALTORS
1001 MARKET STREET, SUITE 200
GREENSBORO, NC 27401
919.286.1234

Shopping Tripps

Shopping Tripps

OPEN
SUNDAY
1-5

THE BRICKS

INVEST
IN THE
BRICKS

The Quilter's Cottage

RED

85% OF
WORK
KEY
WEAVE
THE MESH
SIDE B&B



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 9/25/2017 Date of Pending List: 10/26/2017 Date of 16th Day: 11/13/2017 Date of 45th Day: 11/9/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 11/9/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : **Yes**

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



September 21, 2017

Jim Gabbert
NPS-National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW
Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Re: Kearney Downtown Historic District, Buffalo County, NE

Dear Mr. Gabbert,

Enclosed is the complete nomination packet for the Kearney Downtown Historic District, Buffalo County, Nebraska. The enclosed contents are as follows:

- The signed first page of the Kearney Downtown Historic District nomination.
- One archival disk with the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Kearney Downtown Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places in PDF format and:
- PDF of correspondence related to the nomination.
- One (1) disc with the photographs for the Kearney Downtown Historic District nomination.

If you have any questions regarding the submitted materials, feel free to contact me at the phone number or email address below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David L. Calease".

David L. Calease
National Register and Historic Marker Coordinator
Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office

Phone: 402-471-4775
Fax: 402-471-3100
david.calease@nebraska.gov

Enclosures (2): 1 disk with Nomination
1 disk with National Register Photographs

1500 R Street
PO Box 82554
Lincoln, NE 68501-2554
p: (800) 833-6747
(402) 471-3270
f: (402) 471-3100
www.nebraskahistory.org