

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing:

Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 102-422 Main Street, 100 Block East and West 2nd Street, 100 Block East and West 3rd Street, 100 Block East 4th Street

City or town: Cedar Falls State: Iowa County: Black Hawk

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this  nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

	<u>DSHPO</u>	<u>15 AUG 2017</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:		Date
_ State Historical Society of Iowa		
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 or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

*Joe Elson H. Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

*10-2-17*  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>41</u>	<u>16</u>	buildings
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>                    </u>	structures
<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	objects
<u>42</u>	<u>16</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 4

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store
- COMMERCE/TRADE/Financial Institution
- COMMERCE/TRADE/Restaurant
- COMMERCE/TRADE/Professional
- DOMESTIC/Hotel
- SOCIAL/Meeting Hall
- RECREATION & CULTURE/Theater
- INDUSTRY/Manufacturing facility
- DEFENSE/Military facility/Military post

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/Specialty Store
- COMMERCE/TRADE/Financial Institution
- COMMERCE/TRADE/Restaurant
- COMMERCE/TRADE/Professional
- DOMESTIC/Hotel
- SOCIAL/Meeting Hall
- RECREATION & CULTURE/Theater

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN/Romanesque

LATE VICTORIAN/Second Empire

LATE 19TH & AND 20TH REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

LATE 19TH & AND 20TH REVIVALS/Neo-Classical Revival

LATE 19TH & AND 20TH REVIVALS/Beaux Arts

LATE 19TH & AND 20TH REVIVALS/Italian Renaissance

OTHER/Commercial/Brick Front

OTHER/Commercial

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

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation STONE/Limestone

Walls BRICK, STUCCO

Roof SYNTHETIC

Other STONE

### Narrative Description

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

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### Summary Paragraph

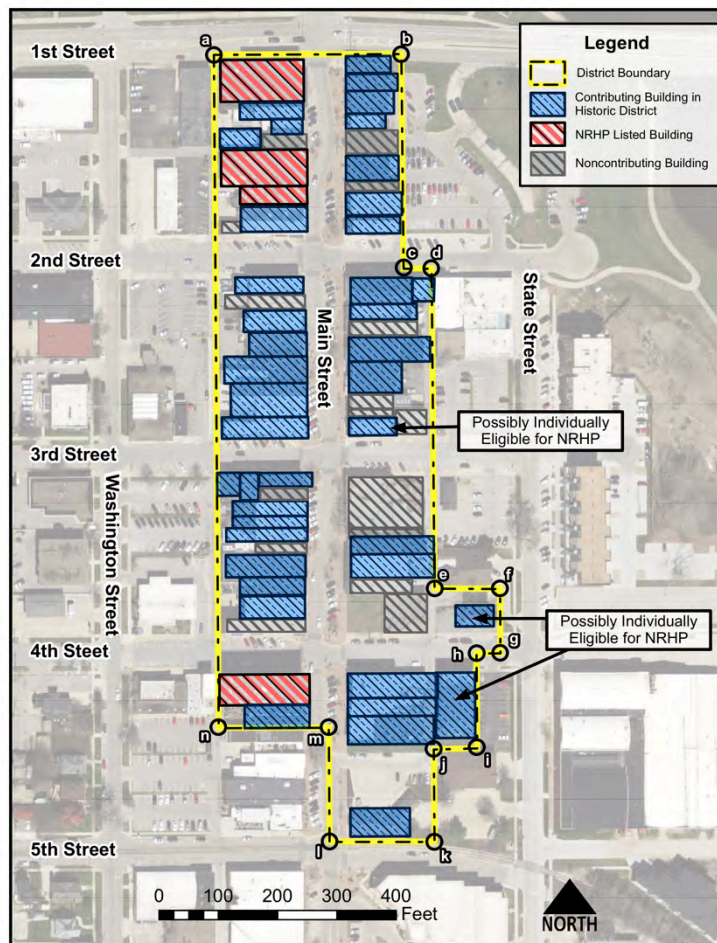
The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is the core of the central business district and its centralized location anchors the city. Cedar Falls is the second largest city in Black Hawk County, with a population of approximately 39,260. The city is located immediately to the west of Waterloo, the county seat. The city encompasses an area of 29.61 square miles. The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District encompasses approximately 10.45 acres and is located on the north end of Main Street, running in a north-south direction through the city. The district is linear with a one-half-block east and west span at Third Street and a one-block east and west span at Fourth Street. The district is composed of 46 contributing resources as well as 16 noncontributing resources.

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Contributing resources include four properties currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Cotton Theater, Black Hawk Hotel, Black Hawk Restaurant, and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Temple). In addition, three other properties appear to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (Security Trust & Savings Bank, Bob's Maid Rite, and the Rice-Dayton Mfg. Co./Armory). Noncontributing resources found in the district were either constructed after the period of significance or are historic buildings that have experienced extensive renovations to their façades and no longer meet the level of integrity necessary to contribute to the district.

The north end of the district is located along the west bank of the Cedar River, beginning at 1st Street and continuing south to include the 100 block, 200 block, 300 block, and the 400 block of Main Street, and terminating on the south at 5th Street. The western end of the district is bounded by the alleyway between Main Street and Washington Street from 1st Street to the southwest corner of 407 Main Street. The eastern end of the district is bounded by the alleyway and parking lots between Main Street and State Street, jogging east to include the 100 block of East 4th Street, then jogging back west and south to include 442 Main Street (Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad Depot) (Figures 1 and 2).



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The district is largely composed of two-story commercial buildings characteristic of those found in Main Street commercial areas across Iowa and the nation. They are typically rectangular, primarily with single or double storefronts, and of masonry construction. The buildings were constructed at the front of the lot, forming a regular setback, and filled the width of their lots, creating party walls with adjoining buildings. Buildings within the district are characteristically “Main Street” types that adhere to Property Types III, IV, V, and VI as outlined in the “Iowa’s Main Street Commercial Architecture” Multiple Property Document.<sup>1</sup> Some buildings are modest in their styling, but a range of architectural motifs such as brackets, pediments, window hoods, columns, and others are found throughout the district. Many additional details like decorative terra cotta panels, metal cornices at the roofline, and cast-iron storefront elements also help express the character of the commercial district. These buildings were used to house a range of retail businesses on the first floor, while the upper stories were often utilized for offices, lodging, and fraternal meeting spaces. Other buildings were constructed to serve particular purposes such as entertainment and hotel lodging. The district also includes some freestanding commercial buildings that range in size and historic use. Distinct architectural styles found within the district include Colonial Revival, Neoclassical Revival, Second Empire, Italianate, Italian Renaissance, Beaux Arts, Prairie style, and even an example of roadside commercial.

## **Narrative Description**

### Setting:

The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District runs north to south along Main Street and represents the commercial center of Cedar Falls. At its northern end, the district begins immediately south of the scenic Cedar River at the intersection of 1st Street, East Main Street, and Main Street. The district is approached from the east by the 1st Street/IA 57 Bridge over the Cedar River, and by the north over the river by the Main Street Bridge, first constructed in 1857. The surrounding buildings to the east of the district along State Street include additional commercial buildings, modern apartments, and some industrial buildings. Just beyond these buildings is green space along the banks of the Cedar River. The buildings to the west of the district transition into a residential area with homes primarily constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although constructed contemporaneously with the period of significance of the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District, the area is principally residential and the buildings do not contribute to the significance of the commercial district. Immediately south of the

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<sup>1</sup> Jan Olive Nash, “Iowa’s Main Street Commercial Architecture,” Multiple Property Document, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 2002.

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district boundary is modern infill outside the period of significance or pertinent historic contexts. A historic bird's-eye illustration (Figure 3), 1892 plat map (Figure 4), and 1946 bird's-eye photograph (Figure 5) help demonstrate the setting over time.

Main Street between 1st Street and 5th Street is a two-way street with two lanes of traffic. As Main Street runs through the district, it takes a curvilinear path meant to slow traffic and provide space for parking bays, plantings, decorative streetlights, and pedestrian centers. This layout resulted from the Downtown Shoppers Parkade renovation of the late 1960s, implemented to draw consumers back to the historic downtown and away from shopping malls and strip malls. The buildings in the district are primarily composed of brick and are predominantly two-part block commercial buildings with decorative motifs that give the district continuity in its historical feeling.

The buildings within the district adhere to Types I, III, IV, V, and VI articulated by historian Jan Olive Nash.<sup>2</sup> These types are:

- Type I: Commercial Districts;
- Type III: Second Generation and Reconstructing Main Street: Building, Structures, and Objects;
- Type IV: Specialized Buildings, Structures, and Objects;
- Type V: Remodeling Main Street: Face-Lifts and Later Additions; and
- Type VI: Modern Infill.

#### 100 Block Main Street/West 2nd Street:

This is the northernmost block of the district. Resources found on this block were constructed between 1867 and 1925, but some have later renovations. The west side of the block exhibits some of the most distinctive architectural styles found in the district, as well as three buildings currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, anchoring the significance of the district.

On the southwest corner of 1st Street and Main Street at 103 Main Street is the National Register-listed Cotton Theater, built in 1910. The Cotton Theater is a brick, three-story, Colonial Revival–style building. The façade is divided into three vertical bays with the narrower center bay slightly projecting. The building includes a range of details that speak to its style, including the arched entranceway, quoins, stone trim, an upper cornice with dentils, and a parapet with stone capping. To the south of the Cotton Theater is the National Register-listed Black Hawk Hotel at 115 Main Street. Originally constructed in 1878 as the Davis House by architect A. V. Lambert, the building was renamed the Burr's Hotel in 1884 and has served as a hotel ever since. It became the Black Hawk Hotel in 1914 and was remodeled in 1915 by architect J. G. Ralston. The building exhibits a range of architectural characteristics that make it a Cedar Falls landmark. The hotel is in the Second Empire style of architecture, and its most

<sup>2</sup> Nash, "Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture," 40–45.

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distinctive feature is its mansard roof. Other details include decorative stone hoodmolds and a wide cornice with brackets. The ground floor of the hotel was given Prairie-style details popular at the time of the 1915 remodel. These include details such as brick piers with stone capitals. Immediately next door to the south of the Black Hawk Hotel is the Townsend & Knapp Bank Block at 119 Main Street, constructed in 1870. The building is listed on the National Register with the Black Hawk Hotel because they were connected during the 1915 remodel of the hotel. The building is Italianate in style and includes such details as geometric pilasters, tall windows with ornate hoodmolds, and a cornice with brackets, dentils, and modillions. (Figures 6 through 12)

The west side of the 100 Block contains an additional four contributing resources and two that are noncontributing. Contributing resources include the F. N. Chase Grocery/Bundy Monument Co./Regent Café and the Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company (A&P Grocery) next to each other at 107 and 109 Main Street, respectively. The former has two stories and the latter one story. Both are single-storefront, vernacular commercial styles with brick cladding. The A&P has additional significant details, such as a brick-and-stone sign panel and a cornice with brick corbeling and stone cap. On the northwest corner of 2nd Street and Main Street is the White Block at 123–125 Main Street. The building has a double storefront, a centered name block reading “WHITE BLOCK,” stone bandcourses, and a metal cornice with dentils. Located in the alleyway immediately northwest of the Black Hawk Hotel is the Markussen Building/Gram Plumbing Shop at 113 Main Street, a one-story commercial building constructed with cast block. The Busy Bee Cafe at 111 Main Street, which has been heavily altered with wood sheathing, is noncontributing. Another noncontributing building is Davis Jewelry at 111 West 2nd Street, which has been heavily altered with a modern brick veneer.

The east side of the 100 Block of Main Street contains nine buildings, seven of which contribute to the historic district. The buildings were constructed between 1867 and 1917 and range from single-storefront buildings to a triple storefront. All except one are two-story buildings. Only the Phoenix Block/I.O.O.F Hall at 128 Main Street has three stories. The façades are all composed of brick, ranging in shade from dark red to a rosier color, with the exception of 120 Main Street, whose façade has been covered with stucco. Several buildings exhibit similar architectural features such as brick cornices with dentils and corbeling, and patterned brickwork with keystones over arched windows. Many buildings also have recessed entrances with cast-iron details.

The Severine Bros. Block/Cox and Sons Grocery at 102 Main Street include a range of fenestration in the upper story with patterned brickwork and keystones over the windows and corbeled brick cornice. The Severine Bros. Block at 104 Main Street is very similar in styling to 102 Main Street (Figure 13). At 106–108 Main Street is the Fellers Block, a double-storefront building with historic wood-and-glass storefront. The upper and lower stories are separated by a limestone bandcourse. The Severine Building at 110 Main Street also has patterned-brickwork hoodmolds with keystones



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over the windows and a slight brick cornice. This cornice continues to run through its neighbor, the Severine-Sartori Building at 112–114 Main Street. Besides the cornice, the double-storefront building at 112–114 Main Street has been mostly stripped of character-defining features and is noncontributing. On the Severine & Price Block at 116–118 Main Street the patterned brickwork hoodmolds over the windows reappear. Furthermore, there is extensive detailing in the cast-iron double storefront with columns, arched glass, and decorative spandrels (Figure 14). The Mitze Cleaners building at 120 Main Street lacks any original features, and its brick is covered in stucco. The building is noncontributing. The Phoenix Block at 122 Main Street: Wise & Bryant/Wilson, Miller Dry Goods/Phoenix Hall is an Italianate building with a wood-and-glass double storefront and a large cornice with dentils. This building once had three stories and looked very much like its neighbor, the Phoenix Block/I.O.O.F Hall, which has tall rectangular windows with cast-iron hoodmolds on the upper windows and a metal cornice with decorative brackets and modillions.

200 Block Main Street/East 2nd Street/East 3rd Street:

The west side of the 200 Block of Main Street contains seven buildings, six of which are contributing to the historic district. These buildings were constructed between 1862 and 1962. The west side of the block exhibits a wide range of commercial building types and styles with some displaying distinctive architectural styles beyond the more common vernacular “Main Street” types. Buildings range from one to two stories and have single to double storefronts. This side of the block is unified in its use of brick for the façades that range from light tan to dark brown to reddish (Figures 15 through 17).

On the southwest corner of 2nd Street and Main Street at 201 Main Street is the National Bank Building, first constructed in 1876 and heavily remodeled in 1958. The building has a curved corner storefront and has arched windows with patterned brickwork and stone sills running along the east and north elevations. The north elevation on 2nd Street has wood surface and shed roof with wood shingles on the ground floor (Figures 18 and 19). The Snyder Block at 203–205 Main Street has an extensively altered double storefront and a metal slipcover that obscures any historic identity, and thus it is noncontributing. Israel’s Clothing building at 207 Main Street was first constructed in 1885 and then given a new front in 1917. The building has one story and has patterned brickwork with stone detailing and a date block reading “1917” on the upper wall. Additionally, immediately above the date block is a small gable parapet. In the deeply recessed entry, the original mosaic floor tile reads, “Israel’s Clothing.” Next to the Israel’s Clothing building is the Ben Franklin Store at 209 Main Street. The building has a plate-glass storefront and tan-colored brick. These details and its horizontal orientation are typical of its 1962 construction date. The Miner & Case Block at 213–215 Main Street has a modern double storefront. The upper and lower stories are separated by a stone bandcourse, and the upper story has large arched windows with patterned-brick hoods and keystone as found regularly throughout the district. Next is the Carpenter Block at 217–221 Main Street. This two-story building with triple

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storefront has an abundance of distinctive architectural details. The building features ornate geometric elements influenced by the Prairie style and made with contrasting materials. The upper story has a series of six bay-like sections formed by six paired windows surrounded by brick-and-stone pilasters connected by stone window pediments. Filling the pediments are corbeled brick pendants and cross motifs. Running along the frieze band is a pointed-arch motif made with brick. Running the length of the roofline are small floral finials, and in the center is a stepped parapet with a decorative stone-and-brick panel. The south end of the west side of the 200 Block consists of the First National Bank building at 223 Main Street. The building is a two-story Neoclassical style often used for banks. Its façade includes four imposing two-story engaged Corinthian columns, complete with full entablature and pediment. The columns and pediment are made of stone, and the entablature is stone and a tan-colored brick (Figures 20 and 21).

The east side of the 200 Block of Main Street contains ten buildings, six of which are contributing to the historic district. These buildings mostly range in construction date from 1872 to 1911, but one building dates from 2008 (Figure 22). The east side of the 200 Block is composed primarily of vernacular commercial architecture with similar architectural details found throughout. Nevertheless, there are examples with more distinctive architectural styles. All the buildings have two stories and range from single to triple storefronts. Nearly all of the façades are brick with the exception of half of the noncontributing Sartori-Larsen Block at 222 Main Street where the original brick has been covered. The brick ranges from light-to-dark brown to reddish, although the brick on the Union Block at 212–214 Main Street has been painted red and that on the Sartori-Larsen Block painted bluish-grey.

The section of the Matthias-Woodmen Block at 202–204 Main Street, constructed in 1900, was built to match the Matthias Block at 206 Main Street originally built in 1872 but remodeled with the construction of its neighbor. The storefronts have mostly been remodeled but retain features such as cast-iron columns. Furthermore, a storefront lintel with rosettes runs across the three buildings. Immediately above the storefront lintel is a stone bandcourse/common sill across the entire façade. The fenestration on the upper stories have either been partially filled or replaced with new windows. Additionally, above the fenestration are brick lintels, horizontal projecting brickwork, and a cornice formed by corbeled brick. There is a nameblock that reads “1900 F. MATTIAS” in the frieze band and the roof is lined with finials.

At the east end of the 202–204 Main Street building is the William Zack Block at 109 East 2nd Street with a single storefront, windows with arched headers in the upper story, and cornice of brick corbeling. The southeast corner of the building has been filled in with concrete block. South of the Matthias-Woodmen block is the MMC Properties building at 208–210 Main Street. This building dates from 2008 and as modern infill is noncontributing. Next to this is the Union Block at 212–214 Main Street. This double storefront constructed in 1887 has a cast-iron store lintel with rosettes

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across its façade. The fenestration in the upper story has been altered over time. There once was a row of seven tall windows with decorative hoodmolds. By 1920, their height had been lowered, and now all but the three central windows have been completely filled in. The most striking feature of the Union Block is the original cornice with decorative brackets and a round pediment with dentils and "UNION BLOCK" written in it. Below the cornice are three stone panels that read "L. H. SEVERIN," "1887," and "N. RODENBACH" (Figure 23). The Juhl Block at 216–220 Main Street is a two-story, brick, vernacular commercial building with a triple storefront. The façade is symmetrical with three paired windows, stone-and-brick sills, and transom windows over each. Brick piers with headers divide the fenestration. The frieze band above has brick corbeling, and there is brick corbeling at the cornice. The Sartori-Larsen Block at 222 Main Street was once an Italianate double storefront building that has since been stripped of nearly all the original details, and the only characteristic that remains is cast-iron columns. The Larsen Block at 224 Main Street was connected to the Sartori-Larsen Block at 222 Main Street during a remodel and is noncontributing. On the south end of this side of the 200 Block is the Security Savings Bank at 226 Main Street. The Security Savings Bank is an elaborate Beaux Arts–style building with extensive detailing. The entrance has detailed stone pilasters topped by an elaborate stone pediment with an ornate tympanum and "1907" in the center. Impressively, the original stained-glass transom remains over the door. A stone main-floor frieze with dentils wraps around the building. Resting on this frieze are brick-and-stone pilasters that divide the fenestration with ornate window heads. The cornice is stone with a brick parapet above. Immediately below the cornice on the south elevation are squat-arched windows with decorative headings (Figure 24). Adjacent to the rear of 226 Main Street at 110 East 3rd Street is Cedar River Auto Company building, which is noncontributing due to heavy alterations including a new brick veneer and newer fenestration.

*300 Block Main Street/West 3rd Street:*

The west side of the 300 Block of Main Street and the south side of the 100 Block of West 3rd Street contains twelve buildings, nine of which are contributing to the historic district. These buildings range in construction date from 1876 to 1899 with some later remodels. The east side on the 300 Block of Main Street and south side of the 100 Block of West 3rd Street are primarily composed of Italianate and vernacular commercial styles, but Queen Anne and Beaux Arts examples are also present. All buildings have two stories and range from single to triple storefronts. Brick is the primary cladding material, but some have limestone or stucco façades (Figures 25 and 26).

The Dayton Block/Robinson's Dry Goods at 301 Main Street is a polychrome commercial building with Beaux Arts styling. The windows on the building have patterned brick surrounds as well as transoms filled with decorative terra cotta panels. The frieze has a decorative band of garlands and above that is a pressed metal cornice with dentils and modillions. A parapet with small brick arches also runs the length of the

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building. Prominently on the north elevation is an original, enclosed, wood staircase. The polychrome design and first-floor cornice is reflected in the Dayton Building section at 112 West 3rd Street. Separating them is the Pfeiffer Co. Building at 110 West 3rd Street that has a large oriel window and pressed-metal cornice that give it some Queen Anne details (Figure 27). The Pfeiffer Co. Building at 303 Main Street shares the same pressed-metal cornice as 110 West 3rd Street. The Pfeiffer Co. Building at 303 Main Street once included other details of that at 110 West 3rd Street, but they have been removed and the brick covered with stucco. Because of this, the Pfeiffer Co. Building at 303 Main Street is noncontributing. The Jorgenson Block at 305 Main Street has a three-arch portico, rows of differently textured brick, a brickwork panel, and pressed-metal cornice. All except the portico are original. The Carpenter Bros. Block at 307 Main Street has brick veneer, patterned brickwork around the upper-story fenestration, and a brickwork panel. This building was once like its neighbor at 309 Main Street, also part of the Carpenter Bros. Block. This building has a limestone façade, and the upper-story fenestration has been filled in with wood and smaller windows. There is a pressed-metal cornice with brackets and modillions. The F. N. Chase & Sons Building at 311 Main Street has been drastically altered. Its storefront has been remodeled, its brick covered with stucco, and the fenestration remodeled. This property is noncontributing. The Wise Block at 315 Main Street has a remodeled triple storefront. The upper story has brick pilasters dividing the fenestration and a brickwork frieze. The Williams Block at 317 Main Street has a remodeled storefront with new brick cladding. The upper story has three windows with stone sills and patterned-brick window hoods. The New Sartori Building at 319–321 Main Street is a double-storefront building with a first-floor stone cornice. The fenestration has been filled in with wood and smaller windows and is divided by brick pilasters. The building has decorative brick corbeling in the frieze and a stone cap. Additionally, there is a stone name block reading “SARTORI BLOCK.” On the end of the block is the Mornin Block at 323 Main Street that has an altered storefront, yet the upper story contains original features such as a continuous stone sill, brick pilasters, and finials over the end pilasters. The upper portion has contrasting brick with brick panels. This building is noncontributing.

The east side of the 300 Block of Main Street contains five buildings, two of which are contributing to the historic district. They range in construction date from 1895 to 1963. The buildings are one- or two-story buildings with single storefronts and are assorted types of vernacular commercial architecture with varying degrees of styling. Brick is the primary cladding material, though one building has its exterior covered with stucco.

At 302 Main Street is the Citizens Savings Bank/Wells Fargo Bank. The building had been two stories when built in 1910 but underwent extensive alterations in 1963. It is now a one-story commercial building with brick veneer. Although remodeled over fifty years ago, the bank no longer fits into the character of the historic district and is noncontributing. Next to the bank is Christensen Building at 310 Main Street. This small one-story building was built in 1960. Its exterior has been stuccoed over, obscuring any historic features. It is noncontributing. The McNally Block at 312 Main

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Street has a remodeled storefront while the upper story is largely original except for the new windows filling the fenestration. There are stone sills and brick pilasters that divide the fenestration. There is decorative brickwork above the windows and a pressed-metal cornice. The H. S. Gilkey Block at 314–316 Main Street has a remodeled double storefront. Its upper story is now polychrome with the majority of the façade composed of tan brick and later alterations in dark red brick. New windows fill the historical fenestration, and above the windows are terra cotta panels. The building also has a pressed-metal cornice with brackets on the ends. At the end of the block is the Oleson Block at 318 Main Street. This building has been heavily altered. The storefront has been extensively changed, the fenestration has been filled in with brick and smaller windows, and the cornice has been covered with a metal slipcover. The Oleson Block is noncontributing.

East 4th Street:

East 4th Street contains three buildings, two on the north and one on the south. Two of the buildings are contributing to the historic district. They range in construction dates from 1911 to 1949. At 108 East 4th Street is the Multauf Tire Shop, a one-story automobile repair garage clad in brick veneer. This veneer appears to be over the original concrete block. This, in addition to the new windows and doors, makes the Multauf Tire Shop noncontributing. To the east is Bob's Maid Rite at 116 East 4th Street. Bob's Maid Rite is an excellent example of roadside commercial architecture and is a one-story building with wood-clad and stucco exterior and a side-gable roof. The building includes a design that evokes timbering in the gables and has vintage signs and advertising (Figure 28). Across the street on the south side of East 4th Street is the Rice-Dayton Mfg./National Guard Armory at 115–119 East 4th Street. This building has a broad brick-clad façade with a raised basement of cast concrete block. The building is Italian Renaissance Revival in style with its rusticated basement and arched doorways with patterned-brick window hoods. The fenestration in the upper story is simple in design with windows and stone sills aligned in a symmetrical pattern. Above the windows is a cornice with a patterned-brickwork motif running its length.

400 Block Main Street:

The west side of the 400 Block of Main Street contains two buildings within the district boundaries (there are two other large buildings that are modern infill and are excluded from the district). Both buildings are contributing resources and the I.O.O.F. Temple at 401 Main Street is currently listed on the National Register. The I.O.O.F. Temple was constructed in 1901 while its neighbor, the Bruhn Building at 407 Main Street, was constructed in 1926. The I.O.O.F. Temple is a three-story Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Revival building built as commercial space and as a fraternal meeting hall. The east elevation has three bays flanked by granite columns with Ionic capitals resting on limestone piers. Each bay has a limestone arch with an urn design at the keystone. Two bays of the above style are immediately around the corner on the

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north elevation. The second floor has a pattern of three windows per bay with decorative lintels along both the east and north elevations. Between the second and third-floor is a stone band with dentils. Along the third-floor are a series arcades with elaborate brick and stone detailing. In the center of the third-floor of the east elevation is a single large arched window (Figures 29 and 30). Next to the I.O.O.F Temple is the Bruhn Building at 407 Main Street, a one-story building with polychrome brick patterning on the façade. This building is a simple vernacular building but does include detailing such as the patterned-brick frieze with a name block reading "19 BRUHN 26."

The east side of the 400 Block of Main Street contains four buildings, all of which are contributing. These buildings range in construction date from 1887 to 1908. The buildings are primarily composed of vernacular commercial styles with brick façades. The exception is the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern (BCR&N) Railroad Depot marking the south end of the district, which is representative of the Romanesque style. The buildings range from one to two stories.

The Henry Dahl Furniture building at 402 Main Street is a two-story building clad in tan/grey bricks. The corner entrance has been remodeled. The upper story has simple punched openings for windows with a continuous sill and header. The Jeffers Building at 406 Main Street is a two-story, single-storefront building. The storefront retains cast-iron posts and lintel. The upper story has three arched windows with brick hoods and pressed-metal cornice with brackets and dentils. At 408–412 Main Street is the former Packard's Opera, damaged in a fire and remodeled in 1948 as the Cotton Building. This one-story, triple-storefront building is clad in tan bricks. The building is very simple in styling with a patterned-brick cornice and stone cap serving as the main features. Although simple and no longer able to represent its opera house past, the 1948 remodel gives it the characteristic vernacular commercial style of the time. At the southernmost portion of the district is the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad Depot at 422 Main Street. The depot has a rusticated stone foundation and brick exterior walls. Found throughout the building are multi-pane arched windows. The depot has a complex roofline and wide overhanging eaves with decorative brackets. There have been some alterations such as the removal of the former cupola and the addition of a drive-through portico to serve the bank. Nevertheless, the depot remains contributing to the historic district (Figures 31 and 32).

*Integrity:*

All contributing and noncontributing resources within the boundaries of the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District have been considered against the seven aspects of integrity: materials, workmanship, design, location, setting, feeling, and association. In order to remain viable, commercial properties must undertake some alterations to attract customers and to meet the demands of consumers. Often this "modernization" takes place at the first-floor storefront. Common alterations may include replacing the recessed entry by bringing the door forward to the sidewalk, installing new windows,

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and covering the transom with signage. Because it is understood that alterations may be needed to keep a business economically viable, some alterations to the storefront may be determined acceptable if the rest of the building retains its historic fabric and design. The measurement of acceptability is reached if the building retains sufficient character-defining features in its setting, materials, and design so that the original builder or owner would recognize it. Owners at times may undertake other alterations because of maintenance issues or to give the property a more “modern” look. Buildings like this can retain a lower threshold of integrity and still contribute to the district. However, these would be unacceptable in individually eligible or National Register-listed properties. If they maintain overall design, fenestration, and materials, buildings can still contribute to the historic feeling and association of the district. Nonetheless, if buildings have been dramatically altered and materials and workmanship have been covered with materials like stucco or metal slipcovers, they are noncontributing.

The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District retains a high level of integrity in its buildings and overall surroundings. Of the 61 total buildings and one structure within the district boundaries, 46 are contributing, including four currently listed on the National Register and an additional three determined individually eligible.

The area that makes up the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District has been the location of the business district since the city’s inception. Additionally, the buildings stand where originally constructed and have not been moved.

The setting has remained much as it was when the district was developed. The buildings were lined along the street uniformly, set to the front of the lots and filling their widths. This created a wide pedestrian space popular before transportation changed the ways Americans shop. Surrounding areas to the east and west are used today much as they were in the past, and the path of the Cedar River helps define the setting of the district.

Design is consistent throughout the district with rectangular form and symmetry of fenestration on the façades. Brick is the most prominent material in the district and has only been covered in a few examples. Many also retain features like cast-iron columns in the storefront.

Workmanship is evident in the character-defining features found throughout the district. Examples include pressed-metal cornices, cast-iron or patterned-brick hoodmolds, bandcourses/common sills, corbeled brick, and terra cotta panels among others.

The overall uniformity and repetition of appearance and features, as well as examples of distinctive architectural styles sustains the historic feeling of the district and ties it to its historical association of a central commercial center.

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The following table lists all of the resources that compose the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District.

Resource List: Contributing, Non-Contributing, Individually Eligible, and National Register-Listed Properties

Address	Resource	Date	NRHP Listed	Possibly Individually Eligible	Contributing	Non-Contributing
<b>100 Block of Main Street</b>						
102 Main St.	Severine Bros. Block	c. 1888			X	
103 Main St.	Cotton Theater	1910	X			
104 Main St.	Severine Bros. Block.	1867			X	
106-108 Main St.	Fellers Block.	1899			X	
107 Main St.	F. N. Chase Grocery	c.1875/ 1913/ 1942			X	
109 Main St.	A&P Grocery	c. 1922			X	
110 Main St.	Severine Building.	c. 1868			X	
111 Main St.	Busy Bee Cafe.	1924				X
112-114 Main St.	Severine-Sartori Building.	c. 1868				X
113 Main St.	Markussen Building	1912			X	
115 Main St.	Black Hawk Hotel	1878/ 1914	X			
116-118 Main St.	Severine & Price Block	1873			X	
119 Main St.	Townsend & Knapp Bank Block	1870	X			
120 Main St.	Mitze Cleaners	1917				X
122 Main St.	Phoenix Block	1871			X	
123-125 Main St.	White Block/Post Office	1899			X	
128 Main St.	Phoenix/I.O.O.F. Hall	1871			X	
<b>100 Block of East and West 2nd Street</b>						
109 E 2nd St.	Wm. Zack Block	1884			X	
111 W 2nd St.	Davis Jewelry	c. 1925				X
<b>200 Block of Main Street</b>						
201 Main St.	National Bank Building	1876/ 1949/ 1958			X	



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Address	Resource	Date	NRHP Listed	Possibly Individually Eligible	Contributing	Non-Contributing
202-204 Main St.	Woodmen-Matthias Block	1900			X	
203-205 Main St.	Snyder Block	1876				X
206 Main St.	Matthias Block.	1900			X	
207 Main St.	Israel's Clothing	1917			X	
208-210 Main St.	MMC Properties Building	2008				X
209 Main Street	Ben Franklin Store	1962			X	
212-214 Main St.	Union Block	1887			X	
213-215 Main St.	Miner & Case Block	1862/ 1956			X	
216-220 Main St.	Juhl Block	1911			X	
217-221 Main St.	Carpenter Block	1908			X	
222 Main St.	Sartori-Larsen Block	1894				X
223 Main St.	First National Bank	1908			X	
224 Main St.	J. P. Larsen Block	1894				X
226 Main St.	Security Savings Bank	1908		X		
<b>100 Block of East and West 3rd Street</b>						
110 E 3rd St.	Cedar River Auto Company	1914				X
110 W 3rd St.	Pfeiffer Co. Building	1887/ 1900			X	
112 W 3rd St.	Dayton Building	1897			X	
<b>300 Block of Main Street</b>						
301 Main St.	Dayton Block	1897			X	
302 Main St.	Citizens Saving Bank	1910/ 1963				X
303 Main St.	Pfeiffer Co. Block	1887/ 1968				X
305 Main St.	Jorgenson Block	1899/ 1971			X	
307 Main St.	Carpenter Bros. Block	1876/ 1930			X	
309 Main St.	Carpenter Bros. Block	1876/ 1895			X	
310 Main St.	Christensen Building	1960				X
311 Main St.	F. N. Chase & Sons Building	1899				X
312 Main St.	McNally Block	1898			X	

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Address	Resource	Date	NRHP Listed	Possibly Individually Eligible	Contributing	Non-Contributing
314-316 Main St.	H. S. Gilkey Block	1900/1946			X	
315 Main St.	Wise Block	c.1890/c.1937			X	
317 Main St.	Williams Block	1875			X	
318 Main St.	Oleson Block	1895				X
319-321 Main St.	New Sartori Building	1899			X	
323 Main St.	Mornin Block	1898				X
<b>100 Block of East 4th Street</b>						
108 E 4th St.	Multauf Tire Shop and Service Station	1949				X
115-119 E 4th St.	Rice-Dayton Mfg./Armory	1911		X		
116 E 4th St.	Bob's Maid Rite	1947		X		
<b>400 Block of Main Street</b>						
401 Main St.	I.O.O.F. Temple	1901	X			
402 Main St.	Henry Dahl Furniture	1908			X	
406 Main St.	Jeffers Building	1898			X	
407 Main St.	Bruhn Building	1926			X	
408-412 Main St.	Packard's Opera House/Cotton Building	1884/1948			X	
422 Main St.	BCR&N Railroad Depot	1887-1888			X	
<b>Structures</b>						
Main St. between 1st St. and 5th St.	Downtown Shoppers Parkade	1968			X	

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

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

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1862–1968

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1862

1878

1902

1910

1968

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Ralston, John G.

Lambert, A. V.

Robinson, James E.

Selix and Ritland

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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 Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is significant at the local level under National Register Criterion A in the area of Commerce and Community Planning and Development, and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The historic district encompasses the section of Main Street between 1st Street and 5th Street in downtown Cedar Falls that has served as the primary commercial business center of the city since its development in the mid-nineteenth century. The area not only included businesses that provided goods and services but also included social and cultural amenities such as hotels, theaters, and opera houses. The district also contains a collection of mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century commercial architecture representative of the types, styles, and materials frequently used between the period of significance of 1862 and 1968. These buildings retain most of their original character-defining features and help represent the progression of building types and their uses during this period. The district is also representative of Community Planning and Development because of the Downtown Shoppers Parkade that exemplifies a concerted effort to revitalize the downtown in the mid-twentieth century. The period of significance begins in 1862 with the construction of the Miner & Case Block at 213–215 Main Street, as it is the oldest extant building in the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District. The period of significance ends in 1968 with the construction of the Downtown Shoppers Parkade that gave Main Street its circuitous path through downtown and included decorative lighting, plantings, and pedestrian spaces.

The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District meets the registration requirements of the “Iowa’s Main Street Commercial Architecture” Multiple Property Document for the National Register of Historic Places. The district is significant under Criterion A as determined under Property Type I (commercial districts). The district encompasses the historic and contemporary commercial and social center of Cedar Falls and is associated with the settlement, growth, and development of the city. The district is also significant under Criteria A and C under Property Type III (second generation properties and reconstructing main street) for including resources associated with the continued development of Cedar Falls’ downtown as well as encompassing intact examples of vernacular styles, the work of well-known architects, and artistic examples of main street architectural styles. The district is significant under Criteria A and C under Property Type IV (specialized buildings, structures, and objects) for association with the later building phase of the city’s commercial district and serving an important role on Main Street. Additionally, the district includes intact examples of vernacular commercial buildings, the works of well-known architects, and examples of artistic representations of influential architectural styles. Furthermore, the district is significant under Property Type V (remodeling main street) for being representative of later phases of construction, the district’s important role on Main Street, as well as including good examples of architectural styles executed as remodeling for older commercial buildings. The district

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also includes some examples of Property Type VI (modern infill) that are noncontributing.<sup>3</sup>

An archaeological investigation was not a part of this nomination. Additional research may identify archeological sites that could contribute to the overall historical significance of the property.

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

*Criterion A: Cedar Falls Commercial Development and Community Planning and Development*

The period of significance for the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District covers the timeframe between 1862 and 1968. The period of significance begins in 1862 with the construction of the Miner & Case Block as the oldest extant building in the district. The layout of the area was fashioned earlier with the platting of the downtown that established the design visible to this day. The platting of the commercial district along the banks of the Cedar River outlined the town lots from which the commercial buildings, banks, hotels, and theaters would rise and continue to fill to this day. The river provided an impetus for settlement as people came to harness the energy produced by the river to operate mills and factories. The river also provided an early form of transportation for moving goods and people. Nonetheless, the city's relationship to the Cedar River is a complicated one that at times fueled the economic growth that led to the construction of the buildings in the commercial district, and at other times threatened the wellbeing of downtown with the risk of floods. The Cedar River only served as a transportation network for a limited period before other forms of transportation arrived and shaped the look and character of the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District. First were the railroads that brought rapid growth as well as access to new materials and architectural designs. Then came the dominance of the automobile that greatly affected the district, vacillating between gutting the downtown of its economic viability, and later providing the primary mode by which patrons would visit and shop in the area. The complex relationship to the automobile is what marks the terminal point for the period of significance. In an attempt to accommodate consumers reliant on cars the city constructed the Downtown Shoppers Parkade in 1968, meant to both make the district accessible by automobile and to make the downtown walkable and pedestrian friendly.

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<sup>3</sup> Nash, "Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture," 37-44.



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As the federal government opened up the land to a westward-moving population through the forcible displacement of Native American people—such as members of the Meskwaki, Sac, Ioway, and other tribes—pioneers set out for the opportunity provided by the fertile soil of Iowa. The basis of development in Black Hawk County predominantly rested on agriculture. The emphasis on agriculture and the construction of a gristmill at Cedar Falls brought in farmers from the surrounding area to process their grain. The emphasis on agriculture meant the mill did brisk business and “often sixty or seventy-five teams would line up near the mill, awaiting their turn,” making Cedar Falls a focus of commerce in the area.<sup>6</sup>

The growth of Cedar Falls began to accelerate with the mills bringing people to market. By 1850, Cedar Falls had a population of 135 made up of 26 families. The first post-office was opened in 1849 and operated by Dempsey Overman. The first mercantile store opened in 1850, and the first lawyer opened his office in 1851.<sup>7</sup> In 1851, the town was organized and John Overman served as the first mayor. John and Dempsey Overman, along with family members Phoebe, William, and Harriet, plus Edwin Brown officially entered the town plat located on Sections 8 and 9, Township 89, Range 14 in 1853, officially incorporating the town.<sup>8</sup> The plat paralleled the Cedar River by laying out the primary streets north to south. Following the platting of the town the population of Cedar Falls grew rapidly from approximately 450 in 1855 to over 1,500 in 1860.<sup>9</sup>

Black Hawk County had also been organized in 1853 and Cedar Falls was initially named the county seat. The town proprietors consisting of the Overmans and Brown donated 66 lots to pay for the future courthouse. However, a dispute with Waterloo arose over the siting of the county seat. One day this issue went beyond a disagreement and actually turned into a clash in the street. This instance involved “an unorganized mob” that “came up from Waterloo to take the [court] records by force, but the men of Cedar Falls armed with ancient hen fruit [eggs] fought off the invaders.”<sup>10</sup> Despite the skirmish with eggs, the matter was settled by vote and Waterloo eventually won this battle and gained the county seat in 1855.<sup>11</sup>

Early business in Cedar Falls focused on flour, wool, grist, and sawmills driven by what one 1855 immigrant pamphlet stated was “the best of waterpower and eligible sites for

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*History of Black Hawk County, Iowa and Its People* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915), 273–274.

<sup>6</sup> Hartman, *History of Black Hawk County*, 274.

<sup>7</sup> Melendy, *Historical Record of Cedar Falls*, 10.

<sup>8</sup> Isaiah Van Metre, *History of Black Hawk County, Iowa and Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Company, 1904), 165.

<sup>9</sup> Melendy, *Historical Record of Cedar Falls*, 11.

<sup>10</sup> Roger Leavitt, *When Cedar Falls Was Young* (Cedar Falls: Record Press, 1928), 11.

<sup>11</sup> Western Historical Company, *The History of Black Hawk County, Iowa* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1878), 323.



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mills and manufacturing establishments.”<sup>12</sup> In addition to manufacturing, a number of businesses began to spring up along Main Street. These included the first drug store by S. A. Bishop in 1854, later to be joined by the Main Street feature of Wise & Bryant in 1860. Samuel Berry opened the first clothing store in 1855 followed by M. Israel. In 1860, Charles Ratterey established the first bookstore, with later firms including Wise & Bryant, The Pfeiffer Co., and George S. Mornin. Other shops included Overman & Clough’s furniture store in 1855 and J. J. Wellings cabinet shop the same year.<sup>13</sup> Although the city faced setbacks such as losing the county seat, the Panic of 1857, and a destructive fire in 1859, Cedar Falls was rapidly diversifying its manufacturing and commercial activities.

One of the most important events that powered the commercial success of Cedar Falls and helped physically shape the downtown was the arrival of the railroad in 1861. By the late 1840s, railroads began to be constructed in Iowa. Yet, these first railroads were primarily local in extent and it was not until 1856 that the first railroad was built across the Mississippi, connecting local systems with much larger regional ones.<sup>14</sup> Access to railways could be a major economic boon for any town lucky enough to have one come their way. The railroad was a system that opened up distant markets to the locally made products. This access to a rapid mode of transportation that moved flour, timber, and manufactured goods created an economic stimulus for local communities. Furthermore, this now meant that towns and cities had access to a much broader array of consumer goods that may be produced elsewhere or may be cheaper than buying local because metropolitan areas such as Chicago could reach much higher economies of scale. Lumberyards were often built next to railroad tracks and could supply local communities with the dimensional lumber, machined nails, and shingles used to build the retail and domestic buildings of the surrounding community. In addition, railways began to bring in more brick and stone that were mass produced and uniform in size and quality. Regional architectural styles began to blur as railroads allowed for the dissemination of builder and style books. New materials such as cast iron and pressed sheet metal also began to make their way along the tracks. Eventually cast-iron fronts were made available, and business owners could even mail order entire buildings and have them shipped on the railroad.<sup>15</sup>

Because of the advantages that came with access to railways, cities and towns vigorously competed to secure a railroad depot. Local citizens, businessmen, and boosters understood that railroads could greatly encourage increased settlement and

<sup>12</sup> N. Howe Parker, *Iowa as it is in 1855; A Gazetteer for Citizens and a Hand-book for Immigrants* (Chicago: Keen and Lee, 1855), 112.

<sup>13</sup> Melendy, *Historical Record of Cedar Falls*, 118–125.

<sup>14</sup> Office of Rail Transportation, “Iowa Rail History,” Iowa Department of Transportation, <http://www.iowadot.gov/iowarail/history/history.htm> (accessed 11/10/2016).

<sup>15</sup> Nash, “Iowa’s Main Street Commercial Architecture,” 3–4.

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secure economic growth.<sup>16</sup> The citizens of Cedar Falls understood this and actively sought to entice railroads to establish a depot in their town as early as 1854. To accomplish this feat, “the citizens of Cedar Falls subscribed in land, lots and money, \$100,000 to secure the building of the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad.”<sup>17</sup> Their efforts proved fruitful as the Dubuque & Pacific Railroad (later the Illinois Central) arrived in 1861 with much fanfare. The citizens, led by Marshal, John M. Overman formed a welcoming committee led by the Cedar Falls Brass Band. The first train arrived in Cedar Falls on April 11, 1861, and a *Cedar Falls Gazette* article from the next day noted that “15 minutes before 5 o’clock the toot of the coming locomotive with its visitors and excursionists set everybody of tiptoe. Bounding on came the Iron Horse, as he reached the depot a beautiful wreath of evergreens prepared by the ladies of Cedar Falls, was thrown over his proud neck as he rolled majestically by.” The gathered crowd gave three enthusiastic cheers because they understood the railroad provided a great economic opportunity and helped them recover a piece of pride lost when the county seat went to Waterloo.

The arrival of the Dubuque & Pacific/Illinois Central Railroad was followed by the Cedar Falls & Minnesota Railroad in 1863, and then the Burlington, Cedar Rapids, and Minnesota Railroad (later called the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern) in 1870. By 1884, the Chicago Great Western established a fourth rail service with depot. In 1887, the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern built the railroad depot that continues to stand at 422 Main Street.<sup>18</sup> Having four railroad lines connected Cedar Falls with a wide range of large metropolitan cities in the Midwest. Early settler, prominent citizen, energetic booster, and local historian Peter Melendy attributed the success of the town to the railroad, noting that “these roads give up a great advantage over many places,” and that “perhaps as prime factor in Cedar Fall’s growth of recent years was the entrance of the Illinois Central into the [city] limits.”<sup>19</sup> The railroads greatly aided and accelerated commercial development of Cedar Falls, allowing local merchants to expand the reach of local goods and bring in those not manufactured locally that were then sold by merchants.

The commercial success and access to building materials afforded by the railroads initiated the construction of the earliest commercial buildings that remain extant in the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District. Examples of resources in the district include the Miner & Case Block at 213–215 Main Street, constructed the year after the first railroad. Buildings such as the Townsend & Knapp Bank Block constructed in 1870, and the National Bank Building in 1876 were built to handle the increased commerce and movement of capital in the city. In order to accommodate the increased passenger

<sup>16</sup> William Page, “The Historical and Architectural Resources of Black Hawk Counties, Iowa, circa 1843–1941,” National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Document, 1992, University of Northern Iowa, ROD Library Special Collections and Archives, E5.

<sup>17</sup> Van Metre, *History of Black Hawk County, Iowa and Representative Citizens*, 167.

<sup>18</sup> Jennifer Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls: City of Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, Iowa* (Coralville: Price Preservation Research, 2016), 7–8.

<sup>19</sup> Melendy, *Historical Record of Cedar Falls*, 72.

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traffic and incoming settlers the Davis House, later Burr's Hotel and then the Black Hawk Hotel, was constructed in 1878 (remodeled in 1914). With the inclusion of buildings such as Union Block, S. A. Packard's Opera, the drugstore of Pfeiffer & Sons, the commercial district had taken shape by the 1880s and would be recognizable if one were to step back in time.<sup>20</sup>

The railroads fueled the economic development of the commercial district as well as the wider industrial institutions along the river during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Mills and manufactures proliferated and transportation by rail continued to bring in settlers and capital that the commercial district served. Still, Cedar Falls experienced setbacks during this period. These included the constant threat of fire, a frequent danger to densely built downtown areas across the nation. The years 1867 and 1871 saw conflagrations that tore through many of the original wooden buildings that made up the commercial district.<sup>21</sup>

Before the advent of widespread municipal water towers and water works, often little could be done to manage the outbreak of a fire. The 1867 fire alone destroyed seven buildings, and a *Cedar Falls Gazette* article from July 19, 1867 noted that after the fire was discovered at T. Hazlett's dry goods store, "the fire then communicated to the adjoining building, and it was found that the only hope for checking its spread was to tear down one or two buildings." It was not until after the 1871 fire that Cedar Falls committed to purchasing a fire engine, hose, and horse carts that formed Cedar Falls Engine Company No. 1, bettering the town's chances against fires. Although the losses were painful and deeply affected many citizens' lives, there was a silver lining to the disasters. Following the loss of older wooden buildings, Cedar Falls' proprietors could rebuild with newly available materials and constructed commercial buildings with masonry or even cast iron. New buildings were raised up in the aftermath, hence the name of the Phoenix block. As older wooden storefront buildings became inadequate for the needs of the community, or as more were lost to fires or other disasters, Cedar Falls began to erect buildings with more distinctive and grand architectural styles. Ornate Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Revival and Colonial Revival styles were used in the I.O.O.F. Temple and the Cotton Theater, built in 1901 and 1910, respectively. Fashionable architectural trends, such as the Prairie style, were utilized in new buildings such as the Carpenter Block and in the renovation of the Black Hawk Hotel. These all gave Cedar Falls a contemporary and attractive look and feel for the growing community.

Not long after the 1871 fire, another less tangible disaster swept through Cedar Falls, Iowa, and the nation as a whole. The Panic of 1873 rocked the national economy and sent many of the nation's railroads to consolidating or spiraling into receivership. Although the economic depression hit many railroad towns hard, Cedar Falls quickly bounced back. In 1876, the former Soldiers' Orphans' Home, constructed in 1869, was

<sup>20</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 45–57.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

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converted into the Iowa State Normal School. First established to train future schoolteachers, it later became Iowa State Teachers College from 1909 to 1961; then from 1961 to 1967 it was renamed State College of Iowa before transitioning to its current name, University of Northern Iowa.<sup>22</sup>

Cedar Falls had faced economic setbacks and fires and by the 1890s had become a flourishing center of industry with a vibrant commercial district. By 1893, manufacturing was the major generator of prosperity for Cedar Falls. The city seemed uniquely situated for success. Local historian Peter Melendy noted, "These advantages are due, first, to its natural location; second, its fine water power; third, its railroads; fourth, and not least, to its educational features, and finally to the superior vim, energy and enterprise of its people;" these advantages led to 61 manufacturing and industrial plants in Cedar Falls by 1893.<sup>23</sup> These industries undergird the wider development of Cedar Falls that included five hotels, one opera house, four railroad depots, and 194 businesses that provided commercial and social life to the town.<sup>24</sup> The vibrancy of the commercial district, the surrounding well-kept homes, and tree-lined streets led local boosters like Peter Melendy to proclaim Cedar Falls as the "Garden City" or "Lawn City," and a August 23, 1898 *Cedar Falls Gazette* article called the "Lawn City" a "thriving place of 6500 inhabitants, and is without exception the most beautiful city in Iowa."<sup>25</sup> It must be remembered that local publications would favor their city, but the development of Cedar Falls gave citizens plenty to be proud of.

The opportunity for a thriving commercial center and the mobility provided by the railroad attracted increasing numbers of immigrants from both the eastern United States and Europe. In the decade between the 1890 and 1900 the United States Census recorded the largest increase in population in Cedar Falls' history. Included in these numbers were many first- and second-generation immigrants from Europe. The largest ethnic group in Black Hawk County for most of its history was German immigrants. However, beginning in the 1850s, Danish immigrants made their way into the county and had a particularly large presence in Cedar Falls. In 1855, the first Danish immigrants made their way to the area when Frederick Petersen and his family settled in Cedar Falls. Danish immigrants began to arrive in substantial numbers between the 1870s and early twentieth century. Many Danish immigrants chose Cedar Falls because of the internationally known, locally produced Danish newspaper, the *Dannevirke*. Danish immigrants greatly added to the character to Cedar Falls and the Danish language could be heard throughout the streets and shops of Cedar Falls.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Brian C. Collins, *Images of America: Cedar Falls, Iowa* (Charleston: Arcadia, 1998).

<sup>23</sup> Melendy, *Historical Record of Cedar Falls*, 82.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 21–22.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>26</sup> Ancestry.com. "1890, 1900 U.S. Census, Black Hawk County, Iowa, Population Schedule." Digital image. Last updated 2016. <http://www.ancestry.com>; Page, "The Historical and Architectural Resources of Black Hawk Counties, Iowa, circa 1843–1941," E24; Shanna McNamee, "Danish Community," Historical Cedar Falls website, <https://sites.google.com/historicalcedarfalls/home/categories/danish-community> (accessed October 13, 2016).

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Many Danes had arrived because they took jobs with the railroads or settled in the area to farm. Historian Glenda Riley notes Danes “were soon known for their careful, efficient farming methods.”<sup>27</sup> Outside of their agricultural knowhow, Danes also contributed to the commercial and social life of Cedar Falls. They established a range of businesses and enterprises, including some located within the district boundaries. Examples include the Juhl Harness Shop in the Juhl Block at 216–220 Main Street that operated between 1894 and 1916, the J. Jensen Dentist office on the second floor of the First National Bank building at 223 Main Street that operated between 1903 and 1913, and the office of Dr. A. S. Hansen at 302 1/2 Main Street. The local Danish population also established churches and local organizations like the Lyren Society. And although the use of the Danish language began to decline following the onset World War I, their heritage remains an important part of the city.<sup>28</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century, changing modes of transportation once again played an important role in shaping Cedar Falls. Streetcar/trolley technology affected the layout, planning, and economic development of cities through their ability to overcome both time and space with the speed of travel they provided. Initially, streetcars consisted of passenger cars pulled by horses. Streetcars pulled by horses did increase the distance people could travel by foot but it was not until the introduction of the electric streetcar things really began to accelerate. In 1887, the electric streetcar was introduced, revolutionizing transportation both within and between cities. Following the introduction of the electric streetcar the length of streetcar track increased rapidly across the nation, expanding from 5,783 miles in 1890 to 34,404 miles in 1907.<sup>29</sup> Historian William Page states that streetcars and interurban lines “complimented the nation’s railroad network by providing a more localized passenger and freight service between established communities, job sites, and rural neighborhoods.”<sup>30</sup> These lines and the mobility they provided also altered the pattern of real estate development. The advent of streetcars and interurban lines opened up vacant countryside to development where middle-class city dwellers could now build houses in neighborhoods with large lots and then commute to jobs in the city center.<sup>31</sup>

People now often take the ease of travel as a given, but even in smaller cities such as Cedar Falls, just trying to get across town in the nineteenth century could prove time consuming. The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is over a mile away from the city’s other major institution, the University of Northern Iowa. Before, in order to move between the downtown and the College, people had to use their feet, horse if they had the space to keep one, or later horse-drawn streetcar. To address this problem, the

<sup>27</sup> Glenda Riley, *Cities on the Cedar: A Portrait of Cedar Falls, Waterloo and Black Hawk County*, (Parkersburg: Mid-Prairie Books, 1988), 44.

<sup>28</sup> McNamee, “Danish Community,” Historical Cedar Falls website.

<sup>29</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015), 66.

<sup>30</sup> Page, “The Historical and Architectural Resources of Black Hawk Counties, Iowa, circa 1843–1941,” E7.

<sup>31</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 66.

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Cedar Falls & Normal Railway was established and two miles of line were put down to link the downtown with the College. This streetcar initially operated on a small internal combustion engine but proved inefficient, leading the Cedar Falls & Normal Railway to go defunct (Figure 33).<sup>32</sup> In 1898, the Waterloo, Cedar Falls, & Northern Railway (formed as the Waterloo & Cedar Falls Rapid Transit Company in 1895) purchased and electrified the line and added an additional eight miles of track to connect Cedar Falls to Waterloo.<sup>33</sup>

By 1908, the improved line connected the downtown to the College, the residential areas to the downtown, and Cedar Falls to Waterloo. The railway quickly proved successful and eventually added additional tracks within Cedar Falls as well as expanded regionally, eventually connecting Waverly, Cedar Falls, Waterloo, La Porte City, and Cedar Rapids. The interurban became the most important mode of transportation along the Cedar River corridor, and along with technology such as the telephone, greatly enhanced the ability of those in the commercial district to conduct business.<sup>34</sup> The interurban continued to be an essential piece of transportation infrastructure in the region for an extended duration. Nevertheless, the railway struggled through the Great Depression, eventually cutting service to three trips a day, and by 1937 cutting service to Waverly. The line saw a bit of a resurgence during World War II as the railway was used for transporting people to military training programs at the College.<sup>35</sup> Despite this, the railway soon experienced a swift decline. This included a “disastrous fire that swept the WCF&N yard in Waterloo” in 1954, obsolescence of equipment, and the rapid rise of the automobile, leading the line to end passenger service in 1956.<sup>36</sup>

The heyday of the Waterloo, Cedar Falls, & Northern Railway coincided with the historical prime of the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District. An article from the December 18, 1908, edition of the *Cedar Falls Gazette* firmly stated, “no other city in the state offers present advantages and future prospects to investors and homeseekers more inviting than Cedar Falls.” The newspaper placed the advantages and prospects on a nexus of “its fine location, the great natural resources of the surrounding county and the excellent transportation facilities,” as well as “the increased trade” and number of new stores downtown. “The most positive proof of the condition of a city is a fair representation of the standing of its business houses,” noted the above newspaper

<sup>32</sup> H. Roger Grant and Don L. Hofsommer, *Iowa's Railroads: An Album* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 62.

<sup>33</sup> Department of History, “Black Hawk County Past and Present: Early Years,” University of Northern Iowa, <http://www.uni.edu/historyofblackhawkcounty/econ20thcent/Railway/EarlyYears.htm> (accessed November 11, 2016); “Cedar Falls and Normal Railway Co. Ordinance to be Submitted to the People for their Approval,” *Cedar Falls Gazette*, October 21, 1898.

<sup>34</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 15; Page, “The Historical and Architectural Resources of Black Hawk Counties, Iowa, circa 1843–1941,” E3, E7–E8.

<sup>35</sup> Page, “The Historical and Architectural Resources of Black Hawk Counties, Iowa, circa 1843–1941,” E9; McNamee, “Danish Community,” Historical Cedar Falls website.

<sup>36</sup> John Reynolds, “Land of Trolleys,” *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, January 22, 1956.

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article, further stating, “the commercial enterprises of Cedar Falls are typified by the large and progressive houses handling complete stocks and supplying Cedar Fall and surrounding territory.”<sup>37</sup> By the early twentieth century, Cedar Falls appeared to have hit its stride in growth and commercial development.

The local industry, commerce, the College, mobility, and increased settlement led to a period of commercial prosperity and growing community infrastructure. Once primarily lined with dirt streets and wood sidewalks, downtown became paved. “The first brick paving laid in Cedar Falls was in the year 1898, when the total amount installed was 4,768 lineal feet,” noted a local history, and “the coming of each year since has brought additional paving, as well as cement walks and sewerage facilities.”<sup>38</sup> By 1915, Cedar Falls boasted 10 1/2 miles of paving (brick, asphalt, and concrete), 49 miles of cement sidewalks, and 15 1/2 miles of sanitary sewers. The city also started a municipal light plant to take over the defunct Citizens Gas & Electricity Company, first offering service in 1914. By the next year, the municipal plant had 1,200 consumers and supplied power to 217 residence streetlights and 42 five-light ornamental electoliers located downtown. Cedar Falls also took the opportunity offered by its economic success to address the specter of fire that had always threatened the downtown commercial area by building a water works in 1912, replacing the earlier 1888 plant. The city continued to expand their water infrastructure, and by 1915 Cedar Falls had 19 miles of water mains, 127 fire hydrants, and 1,400 water customers.<sup>39</sup> The period roughly between 1890 and 1920 proved an era of prosperity for Cedar Falls where its population and businesses grew, providing the capital to make a wide range of municipal improvements. All of this gave a lively atmosphere to the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District.

Commerce was not the only activity that defined the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District. The downtown also served as an important community space that anchored the social life of the city. Fraternal organization such as the I.O.O.F. and Freemasons centered their activities downtown. The I.O.O.F. even helped construct multi-use buildings such as the I.O.O.F. Temple that had retail space on the first floor and a meeting hall on the second floor. The meeting spaces were often open for use by other groups and organizations as well. Downtown was a place to see and be seen by other people. A popular evening activity of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was the promenade where people strolled along the streets and mingled. These were a social concern and newspapers included full fashion features to make sure people were in style. A *Cedar Falls Gazette* from February 7, 1899, included the article “The Newest Things. What The Good Dressers Are Wearing” discussing new “coat and skirt costumes” that appeared on the street that were “especially well suited to the promenade.” Parades also often made their way along the downtown commercial area. “Let everybody be out to witness this grand parade, it will be something for the children

<sup>37</sup> “Business Review of Cedar Falls: The City as it is Today, *Cedar Falls Gazette*, December 18, 1908.

<sup>38</sup> Hartman, *History of Black Hawk County*, 280.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 280–281.

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of today to tell their grandchildren” proclaimed a *Cedar Falls Gazette* article from August 23, 1904, discussing the Grand Floral Parade, the Bicycle Parade, and Calithumpians, seemingly all part of the Merchant’s Harvest Jubilee.<sup>40</sup> Parades downtown could also be more somber events, such as the Memorial Day parade that made its way along Main Street in 1917 that was “more generally observed in a patriotic way this year than ever before” because of World War I.<sup>41</sup>

Although the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District was in the midst of general prosperity and progress in the early twentieth century, other broader events were taking place that changed the American economy and infrastructure and significantly altered the prospects of the downtown. Once again, new modes of transportation affected the fortunes of the commercial district. This time it was the advent of the automobile, whose mobility and associated infrastructure did not always benefit city centers around the nation, including Cedar Falls.

Automobiles were at first a hobby of the wealthy meant as conspicuous consumption and a leisure activity. However, in 1910, with the introduction of Henry Ford’s methods of mass production the automobile became accessible to the middle class.<sup>42</sup> Because of the long dominance of the railroad, little effort had been put into maintaining roads, but following Ford’s efficient manufacturing techniques, automobile ownership rapidly expanded. By 1918, still only one in thirteen families owned an automobile, but remarkably, by 1929 four out five families owned one.<sup>43</sup> This created a constituency that national and state legislatures could not ignore. The potential of the automobile, as well as concerns by local communities of being left behind, led citizens to push the Iowa General Assembly to address the conditions of Iowa’s roads. By 1911, the first marked highway was being constructed across Iowa. Enthusiasm for the automobile only continued to grow. Following World War I, highway boosterism and the demand for adequate roads grew, coinciding with an unprecedented acceleration of car ownership between 1918 and 1941 when the automobile became the primary form of transportation.<sup>44</sup>

To meet the needs of the automobile and its owners, regional Good Roads committees and county and city leaders began planning for the future of transportation by car. As early as 1910, people like W. F. Parrot, writer for the *Waterloo Reporter*, began to conceive of a network of roads to connect various population centers of Iowa. By 1915, the Red Ball Route, a precursor to the Avenue of the Saints marked by roadside red ball insignia, promoted by Robert N. Carson and running from St. Paul to St. Louis, had been registered. Having earlier declined to have the Red Ball Route pass through

<sup>40</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 18.

<sup>41</sup> “Memorial Day Will Be Well Observed,” *Cedar Falls Record*, May 31, 1917.

<sup>42</sup> McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 67.

<sup>43</sup> William H. Thompson, *Transportation in Iowa: A Historical Summary* (Ames: Iowa Department of Transportation, 1989), 69; McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 67.

<sup>44</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 19; Page, “The Historical and Architectural Resources of Black Hawk Counties, Iowa, circa 1843–1941,” E11.



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Cedar Falls, the next year the city requested that the highway be marked to go through the city.<sup>45</sup> Rerouting added little to the total distance of the highway but was believed “to be a good change” because it added a section of better road and at the same time took “the tourist thru [*sic*] one of the finest cities between St. Louis and St. Paul.”<sup>46</sup> The same year, the Hawkeye Highway, the principal auto route between Dubuque and Sioux City, was marked, and both it and the Red Ball Route lead through Main Street Cedar Falls.<sup>47</sup> The Pershing Way soon joined the Red Ball Route through the Cedar River corridor in 1919. Both underlined the importance of this corridor and its ability to maintain the historical connection between other cities and towns along the Cedar River.<sup>48</sup>

Initially the automobile and highways generated benefits for Cedar Falls in connecting the city with regional and interstate communities. Shortly after the marking of the Red Ball Route through Cedar Falls, local papers took note. An “increase in the number of automobiles passing thru [*sic*] the city has been noticed since the Red Ball route was changed so as to pass thru [*sic*] Main Street,” noted the *Cedar Falls Record* of July 20, 1916. The next month, the same paper proclaimed on August 10, 1916, “the Red Ball Route has demonstrated its value as a tourist proposition this year.” Clearly, the highways were at first proving to be an economic asset. As highways became more capital intensive and the need for regulation arose, the states and federal government stepped in to support the new transportation infrastructure. In 1919, the Primary Highway Act was adopted in Iowa, and by 1926 the federal government established the U.S. Highway System, making the above routes become Highway 218, Highway 20, and later Interstate 380.<sup>49</sup>

Improved roads allowed rural residents to make their way to town in order to shop, as well as to bring their own goods in to sell. With tourist and rural residents arriving new auto-related businesses such as gas stations and garages began to appear, bringing in a new commercial activity. Nonetheless, the mobility afforded by the automobile proved a double-edged sword for many communities. The same mobility that allowed consumers to come into town also now meant that they were not tied to their local main street. Larger towns were better positioned to take advantage of the regionalization of shopping, and consumers could just bypass the closest town to head to a larger one with more amenities. The rise of the automobile also rearranged space and the way it was used. By the 1920s, a new type of suburbs began to be developed that were dependent on the automobile. This allowed for the middle class, and following World

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<sup>45</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 20; Page, “The Historical and Architectural Resources of Black Hawk Counties, Iowa, circa 1843–1941,” E11.

<sup>46</sup> “On Red Ball Route,” *Cedar Falls Record*, February 24, 1916.

<sup>47</sup> “Auto Routes Are Now Well Marked,” *Cedar Falls Record*, July 6, 1916.

<sup>48</sup> Page, “The Historical and Architectural Resources of Black Hawk Counties, Iowa, circa 1843–1941,” E11.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, E11–E12.

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War II the working class, to move out of city centers.<sup>50</sup> By the 1940s, urban sprawl was draining city centers across the nation of their industry, population, and retail trade. Developers understood that the automobile enabled shoppers to come to them, and they began to construct new shopping centers located along highways and other thoroughfares, built on cheaper land outside or on the fringes of city centers. This depleted historic commercial centers of tax revenue, businesses, and people.<sup>51</sup> The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District proved more resilient than most downtowns because some of the worst effects were blunted by the continued use of the trolley system that brought shoppers directly to the downtown.<sup>52</sup>

Following the end of World War II, decentralization accelerated across the country with rising wages and federally backed loans standardizing the suburbs as the centers of American life. Cedar Falls sought to fight off decentralization through various strategies beginning in the 1940s. "Retail merchants are becoming very conscious of the need of change in the appearance of Main street," noted a September 29, 1946, *Waterloo Sunday Courier* article. Downtown businesses and the local Chamber of Commerce sought to give their buildings the modern look that they felt people were expecting in a post-war age of technological enthusiasm. To accomplish this, merchants "painted, re-stuccoed, and even completely tore out old fronts;" furthermore, to get the desired appearance, "false fronts may be cut down, cupolas eliminated and in several instances it may be suggested that entire third floors be torn down."<sup>53</sup> This was an ongoing effort and examples include removing the third floor of part of the Phoenix Block, stripping the cornice and window hoods from the National Bank Building, and bricking in the windows on the Union Block. Changes such as bricking in windows, remodeling storefronts, and removing cornices and window hoods were made on multiple buildings in the downtown.

Once the trolley ended passenger service in 1956, shoppers, businesses, and professional offices began to quickly abandon the commercial center on Main Street. To combat commercial decline and to reestablish the downtown as an important public community space, as opposed to the privatization of public space malls and other shopping centers represented, Cedar Falls undertook a large-scale urban renewal project. This undertaking centered on the Downtown Shoppers Parkade that completely overhauled Main Street along the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District (Figure 34). The plan, designed by landscape architects Selix and Ritland and initiated in 1968, realigned Main Street to give it a curvilinear layout through the district. This did a number of things for the space with the downtown. The curvy layout of the street slowed down automobile traffic, created additional parking spaces, formed pedestrian areas with benches and plantings, and installed decorative streetlights. The Parkade

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<sup>50</sup> Nash, "Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture," 9; McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, 67.

<sup>51</sup> Christopher N. Schloemer, "The Impact of Cars on Cities," *Saber and Scroll*, 4:3 (December 2015): 6.

<sup>52</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 23.

<sup>53</sup> Bea Hall, "Cedar Falls To Be Streamlined," *Waterloo Sunday Courier*, September 29, 1946.

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was a concerted effort by community leaders to revitalize the downtown by giving it a modern look and design that was believed to be able to revive the area as the community center it once was. Extensive thought had been put into how to address the dire situation of the downtown. In 1966, the City formed the Cedar Falls Downtown Improvement Committee and undertook an eighteen-month-long study at the cost of \$1,800 to ascertain how the area could be saved through planning. The city decided on the landscaping plan proposed by Selix and Ritland that incorporated improvements from other downtown renovations but made sure the design was unique to Cedar Falls. The construction of the Parkade was a community undertaking with the costs being divided between the City, Cedar Falls Municipal Utilities, and the downtown merchants. Other communities around the state quickly took notice of the improvements. "Cedar Falls has completed a revolutionary half-million-dollar, do-it-yourself job designed to save the city's downtown business district," announced Jack Hovelson of the *Des Moines Register*, who went on to note that the Parkade gave the downtown "a new look that already has been a shot of adrenalin to the business community."<sup>54</sup> The evidence of revitalization led to enthusiasm for the prospects of the downtown. During the same period, the city filled in the millrace to allow for the rerouting of Highway 20 across 1st Street.<sup>55</sup> All of this planning helped make the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District a walkable, pedestrian-friendly space that still provided easy access by automobile.

The implementation of the Downtown Shoppers Parkade in 1968 marks the terminal point of the period of significance because it was a key part in shaping the district as it is known today and speaks to the struggles and solutions cities have encountered since the advent of the automobile. However, the construction of the Parkade does not mark the end in the overall story of downtown Cedar Falls. The Parkade laid the groundwork for a future resurgence, but events such as the 1980s farm crisis meant that the downtown still faced severe economic issues. However, the mid-1990s saw the beginning of vigorous planning to revitalize the commercial district. Over the subsequent years, the city used preservation as a planning tool, a historic preservation commission was established to make sure the city's history was considered in development, and the Cedar Falls Community Main Street was founded to ensure that redevelopment is done in a manner that preserves the physical environment and the human capital of the downtown district. These efforts have paid off, and the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is once again a vibrant economic and community center.

### Criterion C: Architecture:

The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the area of architecture. The section of Main Street located between 1st Street and 5th Street, and including the side streets of 2nd

<sup>54</sup> Jack Hovelson, "Main Street Takes a Turn for the Better," *Des Moines Register*, August 2, 1970.

<sup>55</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 26; Hovelson, "Main Street Takes a Turn for the Better."

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Street, 3rd Street, and 4th Street, contains a collection of buildings that include distinct architectural styles or are representative of the styles and construction techniques popular during the period of significance. The buildings primarily comprise late-nineteenth and early-twentieth commercial buildings as well as some modern infill. Distinctive architectural styles within the district boundaries include Colonial and Classic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Italian Renaissance, Beaux Arts, and Prairie style. The majority are commercial "Main Street" types. Most are one- to two-story, one- to two-part block buildings, though some three-story examples are present as well. They range from one to three storefronts and are masonry buildings. Found throughout are popular motifs such as pressed metal cornices, dentils, brackets, cast-iron storefront details, columns, and window hoods, among others. The district contains four National Register-listed properties and three determined individually eligible. Overall, the district contains 45 contributing and 16 noncontributing buildings, and 1 contributing structure. The contributing buildings were constructed during the period of significance between 1862 and 1968. The buildings within the district boundaries illustrate architectural details and methods of construction popular during the period of significance. In addition, the methods, materials, and styles also communicate the commercial significance of the district and its development over time.

Some of the buildings with more distinctive architectural styles were constructed by well known Iowa architects. The Davis House/Burr Hotel was constructed in 1878 based on designs drawn by A. V. Lambert, an architect working out of Fort Dodge. A. V. Lambert had an early career in Iowa architecture, being commissioned to construct the building for the Humboldt County seat in Dakota City, Iowa, in 1859. The Davis House/Burr Hotel is one of Lambert's most recognized works, but he is also known for the Corpus Christi Church in Fort Dodge, Iowa, built from the plans of Fridolin Herr, and constructed under Lambert's supervision.<sup>56</sup> In 1914, prominent local architect John G. Ralston was hired to update the Davis House/Burr Hotel, which afterwards became the Black Hawk Hotel. Ralston worked out of Waterloo, Iowa, and had constructed many of the school buildings in Waterloo. Ralston was active between 1898 and 1953 and oversaw a broad range of private and public buildings. These included the Waterloo Public Library, the Black Hawk County Soldiers Memorial Hall, Waverly Municipal Hydroelectric Powerhouse, and the Clement B. Gingrich House in La Porte City, among others. During his career, Ralston designed 100 Waterloo residences, 90 out-of-town residences, and a total of 79 commercial and public structures, 33 in Waterloo and 46 out of town. Many of his buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Ralston modernized the Black Hawk Hotel using the Prairie style and made the lobby more efficient and expansive.<sup>57</sup> Other times, local builders were contracted such as

<sup>56</sup> Union Publishing Company, *History of Kossuth and Humboldt Counties, Iowa* (Springfield: Union Publishing Company, 1884), 569; John H. Mitchell, "Corpus Christi Church," National Register of Historic Places. National Park Service. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 1974.

<sup>57</sup> Iowa Culture, "Featured Tour: RAGBRAI XLIII," Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, <http://iowacultureapp.com/featuredtours/index.html> (accessed November 17, 2016); archINFORM, "John G. Ralston," archINFORM.net <https://eng.archinform.net/arch/88557.htm> (accessed November 17, 2016); Barbara Beving Long, "Black Hawk County Soldiers Memorial Hall and Park," National Park Service. U.S.

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James E. Robinson who built the Dayton Building. The commercial district also utilized new forms of design when hiring the Waterloo landscape architecture firm Selix and Ritland to plan the Downtown Shoppers Parkade.

Although many wooden commercial buildings were once located along Main Street, they have all been replaced by masonry buildings through attrition by fire or modernization of the commercial district. Buildings within the district are largely composed of brick, although examples of limestone and cast concrete block are present. Initially bricks may have been locally produced and limestone cut from local quarries. In his 1893 historical record of Cedar Falls, Peter Melendy records three local quarries owned by Henry, Chapman, and Hansen, and as well as stone cutters James Caughlin, Joseph Sartori, Ed. E. Carpenter, and J. Velter. Furthermore, in an extensive list of "What Cedar Falls Makes," Melendy also noted brick and pressed brick manufactured in the city.<sup>58</sup> Regardless, the arrival of the railroad gave builders access to mass-produced brick that was uniform in size and quality and frequently less costly. Different types of brick were utilized according to their use. Storefronts often used a finer decorative brick that could be produced in a range of colors such as brown, dark red, and tan, all of which are present in the district. Rear or sidewall usually consisted of a common soft brick less appealing to the eye.<sup>59</sup> Brick was utilized as decoration in a variety of ways across the façades in the commercial district. Frequently found are corbeled brick cornices and brick window hoods or hoodmolds. Brick was also often used to create pilasters or to form geometric patterns for panels or other detailing. Limestone masonry may also be used, although only the Carpenter Bros. Block is faced with stone and the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern depot has rough stone block foundation. Elsewhere, stone was most often used as decorative details or name/date blocks. The Gram Plumbing Shop demonstrates other types of masonry that later became available, on this case, rough-faced cast concrete block locally produced by Weart-Frisby Lumber Co.<sup>60</sup>

Following advancements in metallurgy and taking advantage of the speed and reach of the railroads, metal building components began to reshape the face of Main Street buildings across the nation. Technological innovations led to the manufacture of mass produced metal components used for cornices, window hoods, columns and posts, and entire storefronts. Foundries in the eastern United States produced and disseminated trade catalogues that advertised the various components they manufactured. Merchants, from the comfort of their businesses, could order various parts by mail through the catalogue, ranging from architectural details to eventually entire storefronts. Cast and wrought iron boasted an array of benefits for downtown commercial retailers. Cast iron's compressive strength allowed for narrower columns, leading to the

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Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 1988, 8:2; Jan Olive Full, "Waverly Municipal Hydroelectric Powerhouse," National Park Service. U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 2013, 8:7.

<sup>58</sup> Melendy, *Historical Record of Cedar Falls*, 131–132, 106–107.

<sup>59</sup> Nash, "Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture," 15.

<sup>60</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 28–29.

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replacement of brick columns at the ground level and opening up the storefront for more, larger, and variously shaped glass windows. Furthermore, as historian Jan Olive Nash argues, these cast-iron components “were perceived as fireproof, had no construction season to limit their installation, required little skill to bolt together, and, aesthetically came in almost any style and were decorated and painted to the owner’s choice.”<sup>61</sup> With four railways accessing Cedar Falls, the city was favorably positioned to take advantage of cast-iron components delivered by rail. Cast-iron and metal components abound in the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District. Most prominent are the pressed metal cornices, as well as window hoods, storefront columns, and lintels.

Historian Jennifer Price in her *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls: City of Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, Iowa*, categorized the buildings within the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District into three property types associated with the historic contexts she established for Cedar Falls. These include “Property Type A: Buildings, Structures, and Sites Associated with Cedar Fall’s Early Town, Mill, and Railroad development and the ‘Lawn City’ Era of Downtown Prosperity, 1850s–1920s;” “Property Type B: Buildings, Structures, and Sites Associated with Cedar Falls Highway and Automobile Era, 1910s–1950s;” and “Property Type C: Buildings, Structures, and Sites Associated with Mid-Century Development of Downtown Cedar Falls, 1940s–1965.”<sup>62</sup> These property types were constructed to roughly coincide with the property types historian Jan Olive Nash established for “Iowa’s Main Street Commercial Architecture” noted in Section 7 above (Type III: Second Generation and Reconstructing Main Street: Building, Structures, and Objects; Type IV: Specialized Buildings, Structures, and Objects; Type V: Remodeling Main Street: Face-Lifts and Later Additions; Type VI: Modern Infill). These typologies coincide with each other, such as Type A with Types III and V; Type B with Types III, IV, V, and VI; and Type C with Types III, IV, V, and VI.

The vast majority of buildings within the district boundaries adhere to Property Type A and Property Types III and V as all but 9 buildings fit into these categories. The buildings of Type III were constructed in the succeeding years of a town’s commercial growth. The buildings were either infill on previously empty lots, or more frequently for Cedar Falls, replaced earlier buildings lost to fires and demolition. They also represent the role played by the railroad in a community’s development and access to materials. The buildings are usually masonry construction, particularly of mass-produced brick shipped in by rail. These buildings are examples of particular, detailed architectural styles such as Italianate and Classical Revival as the railroad helped to spread national styles. Buildings of Type III and the historical period of Property Type A were also shaped by other mass-produced materials such as the cast-iron and metal features used for a variety of details on the district’s buildings. These building most closely fit with the “Lawn City” era of prosperity. Buildings lost to fires, such as those fires that occurred in 1867 and 1871, disappeared during the same period when multiple railroads

<sup>61</sup> Nash, “Iowa’s Main Street Commercial Architecture,” 19–20.

<sup>62</sup> Price, *Intensive Survey and Evaluation of Downtown Cedar Falls*, 30–32.

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made Cedar Falls a stop on their lines, and the city continued to experience commercial and industrial growth. These historical trends intersected to shape the appearance of the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District.

It also must be noted that many of the buildings from this period fit with Type V since some like the Black Hawk Hotel were renovated in the early twentieth century and many others remodeled in the mid-twentieth century to modernize their appearance.

Property Type B overlaps some with Type A and coincides with the height of Cedar Falls' prosperity, the influence of the interurban railroad and trolleys, and the effect the automobile and highway had on the economy and development of the city. Around this era additional revival styles established themselves downtown and new styles such as the Prairie style were used for the Carpenter Block and the renovation of the Black Hawk Hotel. This period also saw the establishment of new businesses that catered to the automobile like Bob's Maid Rite or Multauf Tire Shop and Service Station.

Property Type C and Property Type V most clearly demonstrate the powerful impact of the automobile on the city centers across the nation and specifically in Cedar Falls. The newfound mobility of Americans led to a rapid decentralization of shopping and commercial activity. In order to fight this trend, Cedar Falls undertook a concerted effort to renovate the commercial district, modernize its appearance, and try to draw people back downtown. Often storefronts were dramatically altered and architectural details that spoke of a former time were removed. This period also witnessed the city trying new approaches to entice shoppers back. Most prominent was the utilization of landscape architecture for the Downtown Shoppers Parkade that realigned Main Street and helped make the district the pedestrian friendly space it is now.

The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is fortunate to have little of Property Type VI, modern infill. Although some buildings have experienced alterations during the mid-twentieth century, only the MMC Properties Building, constructed 2008, was built outside of the period of significance. This speaks to the resiliency of the commercial district in holding up to economic and social challenges posed by trends such as decentralization. It further underscores that the district strongly retains key aspects of its past character and development.

Acknowledgements:

*Wapsi Valley Archeology, Inc. would like to extend thanks to all those whose invaluable help led to the completion of this nomination. In particular, acknowledgments must be given to Iris Lehmann, Planner I for the City of Cedar Falls; Carol Lilly and the rest of the staff at Cedar Falls Community Main Street; Julie Huffman-Klinkowitz and the rest of the staff at the Cedar Falls Historical Society; the members of the Cedar Falls Historic*

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*Preservation Commission; and the student volunteers from Dr. Thomas Connors' Iowa history class at the University of Northern Iowa.*

*The activity that is the subject of a National Register nomination has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.*

*This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above or if you desire further information, please write to:*

*Office of Equal Opportunity  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20204*



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### **Photographs and Other Media**

Cedar Falls Historical Society

Photo Series II: C. F. History. Box 1.1: Main Street History.

Photo Series IV: C. F. Business: Box 1, A–B.

Photo Series IV: C. F. Business: Box 2, C.

Photo Series IV: C. F. Business: Box 3, D–G.

Photo Series IV: C. F. Business: Box 6, N–O.

Photo Series IV: C. F. Business: Box 9, U–Z.

State Historical Society of Iowa. Research Center.  
Cedar Falls Clipping Folder.

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Postcards: Organizations and Clubs.  
Postcards: Theaters.

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

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 10.45 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

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

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Latitude: -92.446197 | Longitude: 42.537799 |
| B. Latitude: -92.444999 | Longitude: 42.537799 |
| C. Latitude: -92.444999 | Longitude: 42.536800 |
| D. Latitude: -92.444801 | Longitude: 42.536800 |
| E. Latitude: -92.444801 | Longitude: 42.535301 |

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F. Latitude: -92.444396	Longitude: 42.535301
G. Latitude: -92.444396	Longitude: 42.534999
H. Latitude: -92.444602	Longitude: 42.534999
I. Latitude: -92.444602	Longitude: 42.534599
J. Latitude: -92.444900	Longitude: 42.534599
K. Latitude: -92.444900	Longitude: 42.534099
L. Latitude: -92.445503	Longitude: 42.534198
M. Latitude: -92.445503	Longitude: 42.534698
N. Latitude: -92.446197	Longitude: 42.534698

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

A. Zone: 15 T	Easting: 545476.401377	Northing: 4709639.07937
B. Zone: 15 T	Easting: 545572.709903	Northing: 4709639.50271
C. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545573.979905	Northing: 4709529.85915
D. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545588.1616	Northing: 4709529.43582
E. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545589.883159	Northing: 4709364.82938
F. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545623.347726	Northing: 4709364.70238
G. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545623.578443	Northing: 4709331.65268
H. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545611.407586	Northing: 4709331.38809
I. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545611.530871	Northing: 4709282.78334

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J. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545589.360341	Northing: 4709282.18608
K. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545589.661967	Northing: 4709234.4869
L. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545535.898526	Northing: 4709234.6139
M. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545535.274108	Northing: 4709293.31977
N. Zone: 15T	Easting: 545478.790745	Northing: 4709293.25627

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

The boundary of the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is shown on Figure 2, entitled "Boundaries of Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District and contributing/noncontributing status of each building." The district includes:

Original Town Plat; Block 1, lots 1–3  
Block 2, lots 1–4  
Block 3, lots 1–4  
Block 4, lots 5–8  
Block 5, lots 1, 5–8

Mills Square Add.; Lots 1–12

Garrison & Dean's Add.; Block 8, lots 5–8  
Fract'l Block 8, lots 1–4

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

The boundary of the Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is the geographic area that most clearly represents the commercial development, community planning, and commercial architecture of Cedar Falls during the period of significance of 1862 to 1968.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Jason O'Brien; Architectural Historian  
organization: Wapsi Valley Archeology, Inc.  
street & number: 126 East Main Street  
city or town: Anamosa state: Iowa zip code: 52205  
e-mail: jjobrien@wapsivalleyarch.com  
telephone: 319-462-4760  
date: November 2016

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:



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

### Photographs

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

### Photographic Log

Name of Property: Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District

City or Vicinity: Cedar Falls

County: Black Hawk State: Iowa

Photographer: Jason O'Brien

Date Photographed: October 12, 2016; and November 19, 2016.

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

Photo 1 of 26: View of west side of 100 Block Main Street, looking southwest from 1st Street.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_001)

Photo 2 of 26: Cotton Theater, 103 Main Street, looking west.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_002)

Photo 3 of 26: View of west side of 100 Block Main Street, looking southwest.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_003)

Photo 4 of 26: Black Hawk Hotel, 115 Main Street, looking west.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_004)

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Photo 5 of 26: View of west side of 100 Block Main Street, looking southwest.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_005)

Photo 6 of 26: View of east side of 100 Block Main Street, looking southeast from 1st Street.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_006)

Photo 7 of 26: View of east side of 100 Block Main Street, looking southeast.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_007)

Photo 8 of 26: Phoenix Block, 128 Main Street, looking southeast.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_008)

Photo 9 of 26: View of west side of 200 Block Main Street, looking southwest from 2nd Street.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_009)

Photo 10 of 26: View of west side of 200 Block Main Street, looking southwest.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_010)

Photo 11 of 26: Carpenter Block, 217–221 Main Street, looking west.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_011)

Photo 12 of 26: View of east side of 200 Block Main Street, looking southeast from 2nd Street.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_012)

Photo 13 of 26: Union Block, 212–214 Main Street, looking southeast.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_013)

Photo 14 of 26: Security Savings Bank, 226 Main Street, looking east.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_014)

Photo 15 of 26: Dayton Block, 301 Main Street, looking southwest from 3rd Street.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_015)

Photo 16 of 26: Pfeiffer Co. Building, 110 West 3rd Street, and Dayton Building, 112 West 3rd Street,  
looking south.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_016)

Photo 17 of 26: View of west side of 300 Block Main Street, looking southwest.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_017)

Photo 18 of 26: View of east side of 300 Block Main Street, looking southeast from 3rd Street.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_018)

Photo 19 of 26: View of east side of 300 Block Main Street, looking southeast.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_019)

Photo 20 of 26: Bob's Maid Rite, 116 East 4th Street, looking northeast.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_020)

Photo 21 of 26: Rice Dayton Mfg. Co./Armory, 115–119 East 4th Street, looking south.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_021)

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Photo 22 of 26: I.O.O.F. Temple, 401 Main Street, looking southwest from 4th Street.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_022)

Photo 23 of 26: Bruhn Building, 407 Main Street, looking west.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_023)

Photo 24 of 26: View of east side of 400 Main Street, looking southeast from 4th Street.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_024)

Photo 25 of 26: View of east side of 400 Main Street, looking east.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_025)

Photo 26 of 26: Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad Depot, 422 Main Street, looking northeast.  
(IA\_Black Hawk County\_Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District\_026)

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Map showing photograph locations and directions, Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District. *Source: ISU GIS Facility (2015)*

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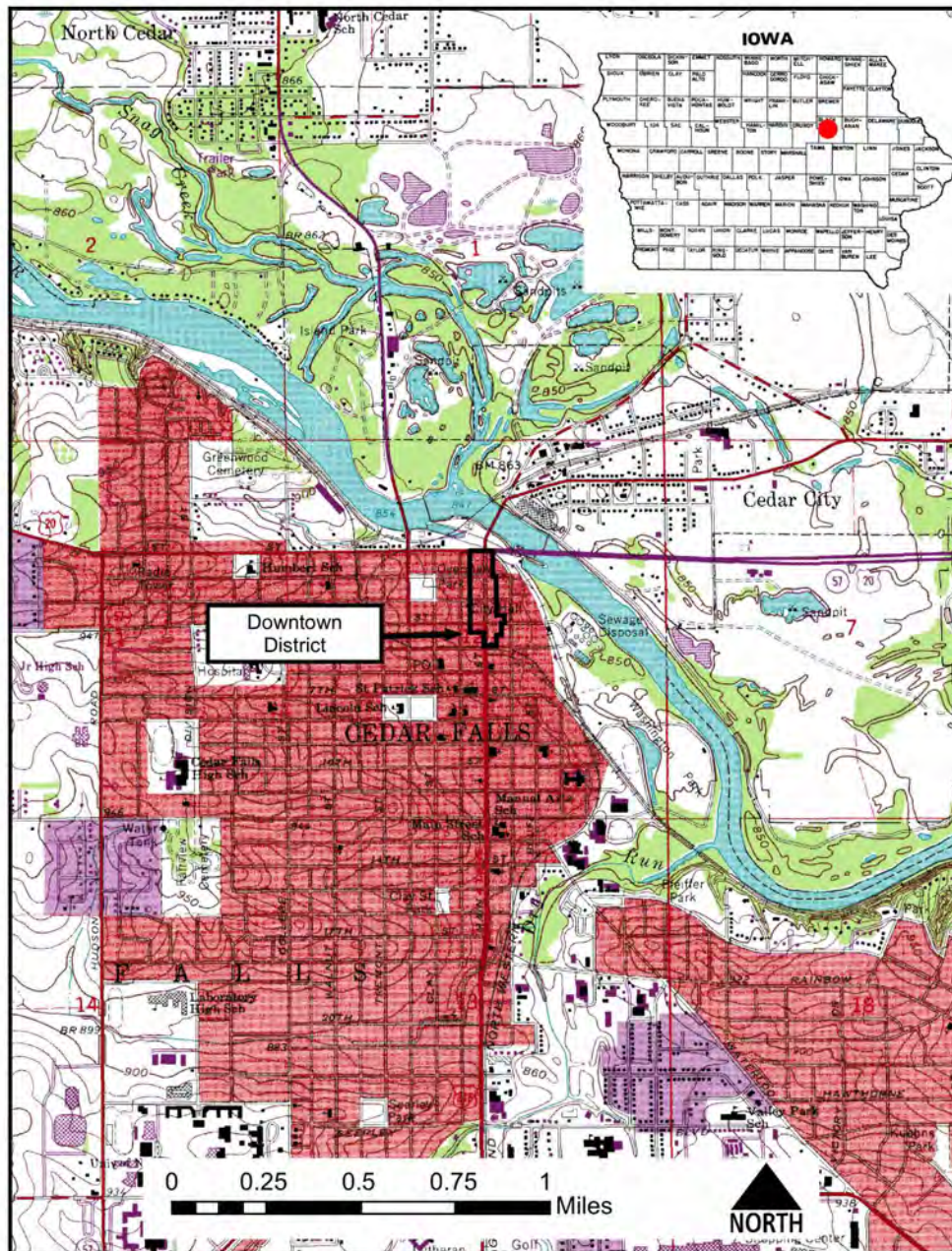


Figure 1: USGS Map of Cedar Falls (1980). Location of Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District. Source: USGS Cedar Falls, Iowa, 7.5" series map (1980).

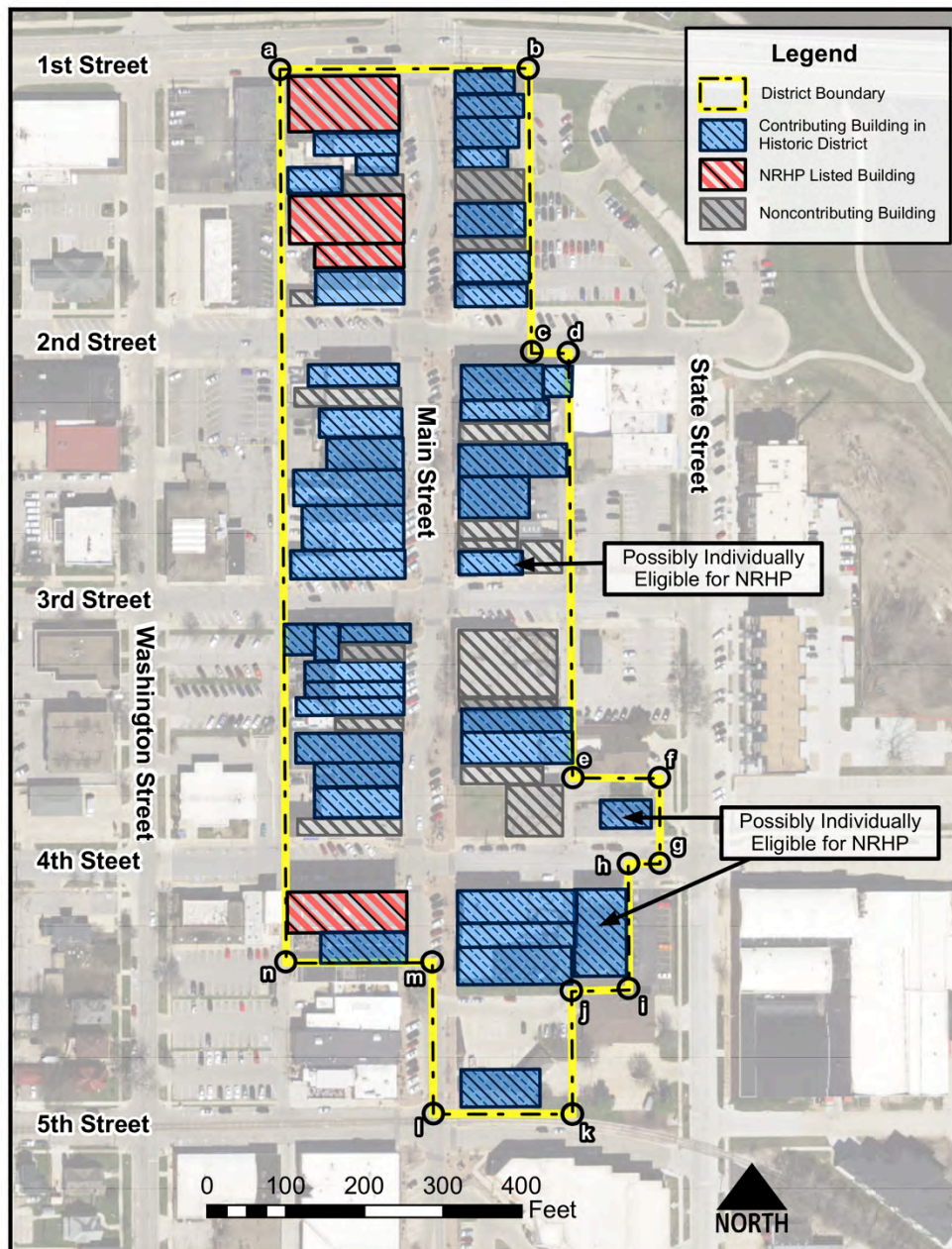
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Figure 2: Boundaries of Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District and contributing/noncontributing status of each building. Source: ISU GIS Facility (2015).



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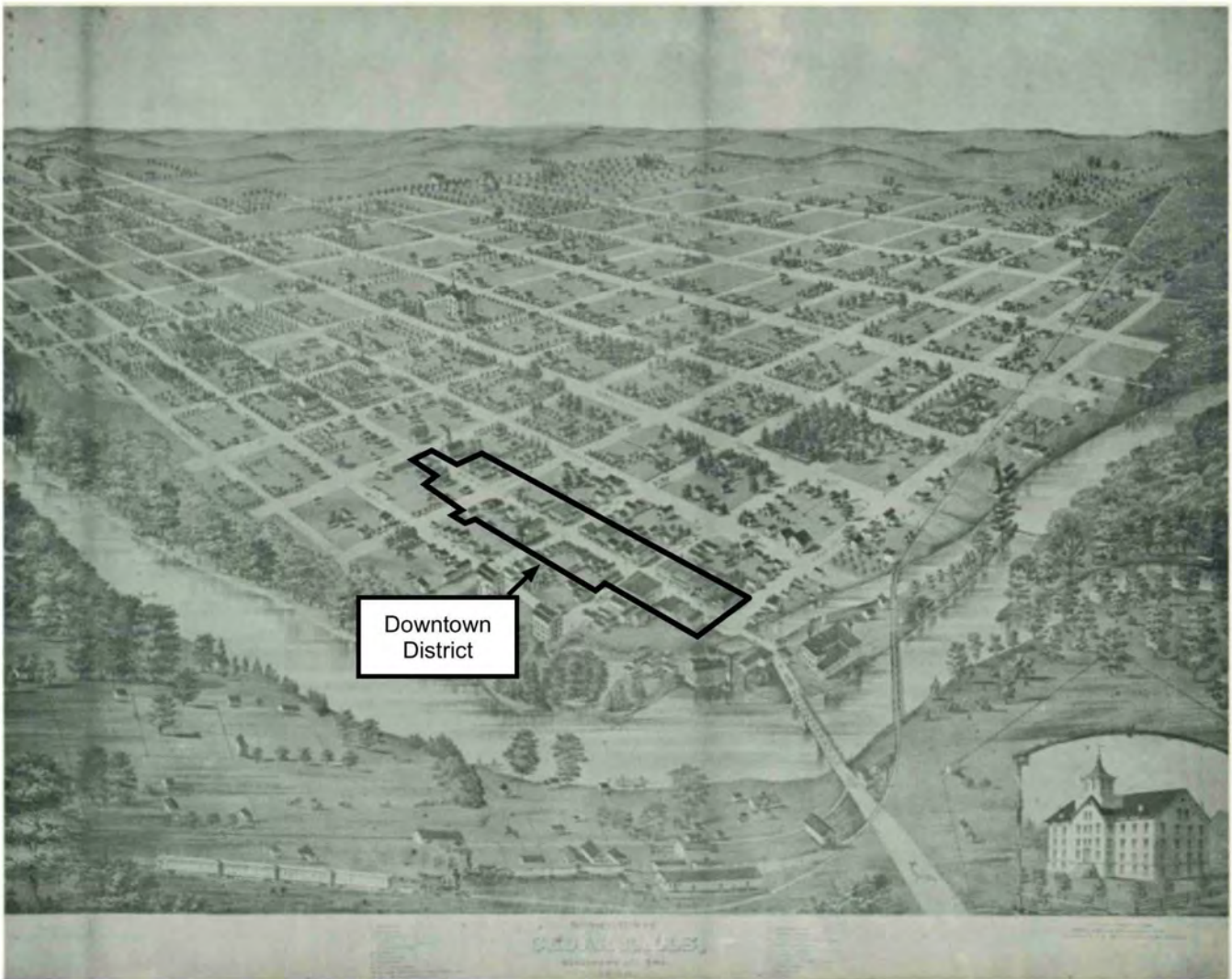


Figure 3: 1868 bird's-eye view of Cedar Falls, Black Hawk County, Iowa. View to the southwest.  
*Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.*

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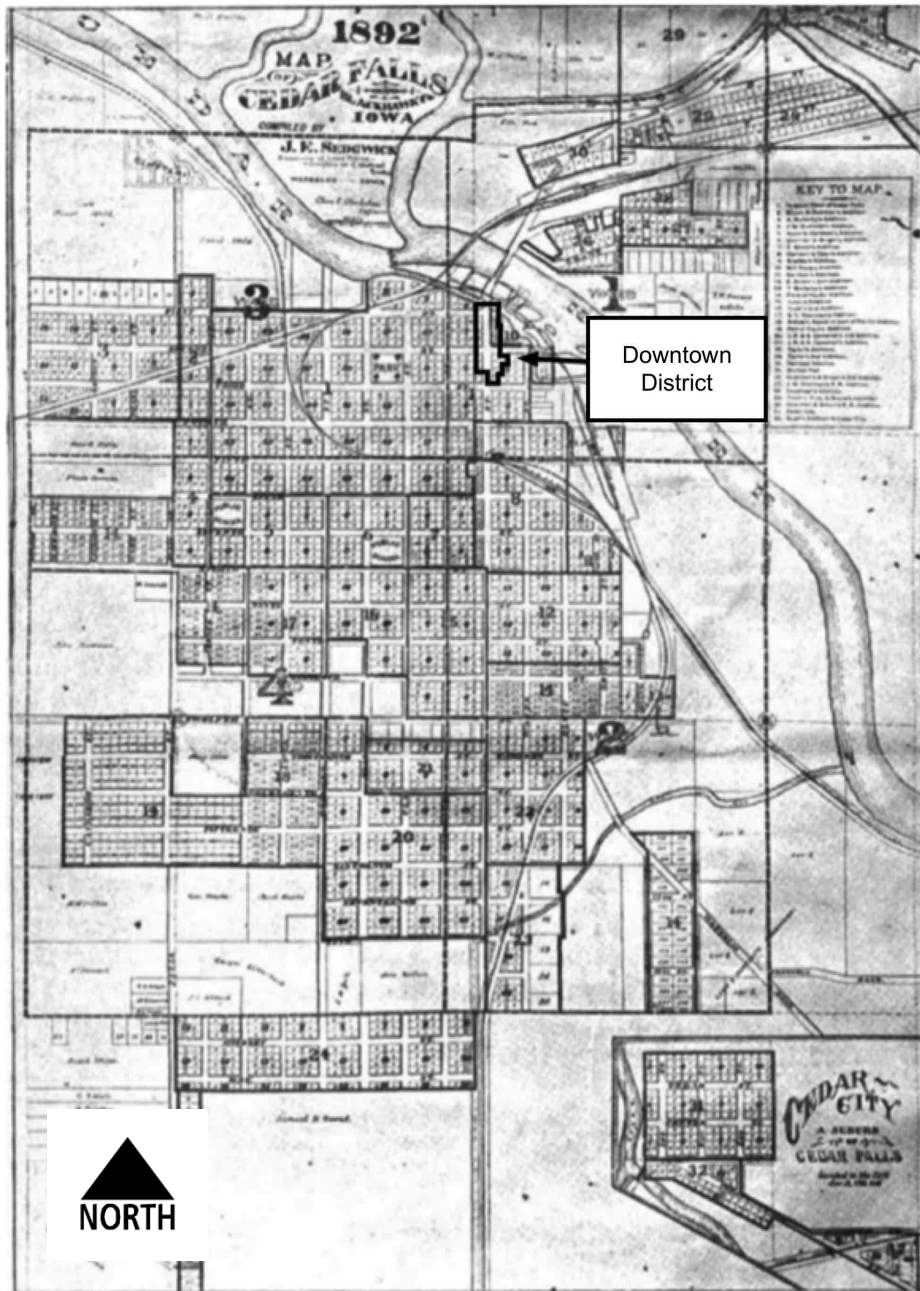


Figure 4: 1892 plat map of Cedar Falls. Source: Peter Melendy, *Historical Record of Cedar Falls*.



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Figure 5: 1946 aerial photograph of Cedar Falls. View to the east-southeast.  
*Source: State Historical Society of Iowa. Research Center.*

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Figure 6: View of Main Street looking south between 1st and 2nd Street circa 1880.  
Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.



Figure 7: View of Main Street looking south between 1st and 2nd Street, circa 1910.  
Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.

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Figure 8: Postcard of Regent/Cotton Theater, circa 1921. Source: State Historical Society of Iowa. Research Center.



Figure 9: View of Regent/Cotton Theater, 103 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.

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Figure 10: Postcard of Black Hawk Hotel after renovation, circa 1920. Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.



Figure 11: View of Black Hawk Hotel, 115 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.

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Figure 12: Townsend & Knapp Bank Block and White Block, 119 and 123-125 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.



Figure 13: View of Severine Bros. Block, 102 and 104 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.

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Figure 14: View of Severine & Price Block, 116–118 Main Street. Note Cast-iron storefront detailing. 2016 Photograph.



Figure 15: View of west side of 200 Block Main Street, circa 1909. Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.

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Figure 16: View of intersection of Main Street and 100 East Block of 2nd Street, circa 1870. *Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.*



Figure 17: View of Main Street south from 2nd Street, date unknown. *Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.*

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Figure 18: View of National Bank Building, 201 Main Street, 1893. Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.



Figure 19: View of 201 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.



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Figure 20: View of Cedar Falls National Bank, 223 Main Street. Date unknown.  
*Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.*



Figure 21: View of Cedar Falls National Bank, 223 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.

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**Cedar Falls Downtown Commercial District  
Black Hawk County, IA**

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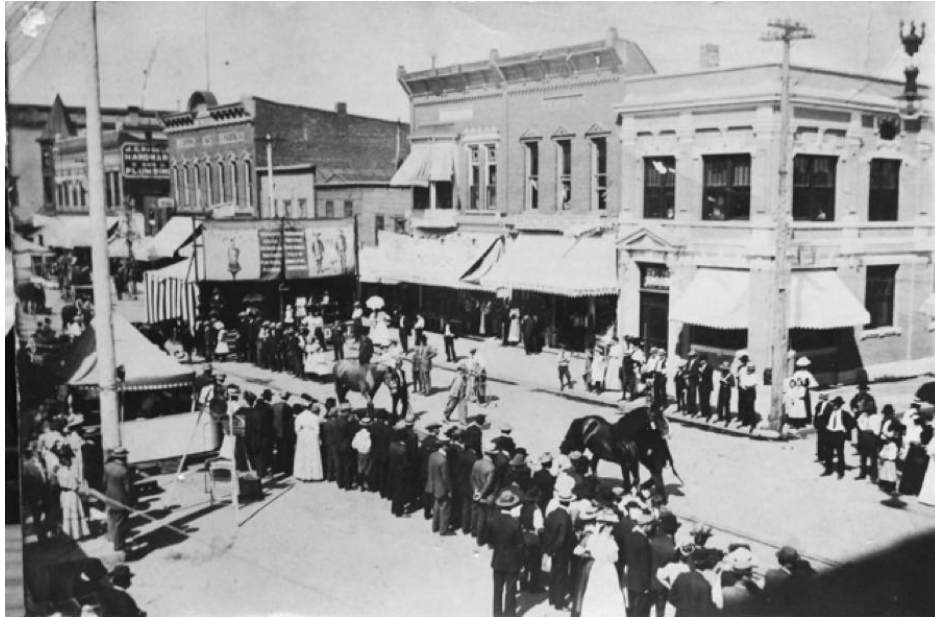


Figure 22: View of 200 Block Main Street, circa 1908 (Merchant's Harvest Jubilee).  
*Cedar Falls Historical Society.*



Figure 23: View of Union Block, 212-214 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.

**United States Department of the Interior  
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**Cedar Falls Downtown Commercial District  
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Figure 24: View of Security Savings Bank, 226 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.



Figure 25: Panoramic view of Main Street facing West 3rd Street, 1907. Cedar Falls Historical Society.

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**Cedar Falls Downtown Commercial District  
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Figure 26: View of the west side of the 300 Block Main Street facing northwest (I.O.O.F. Temple in front, 401 Main Street), date unknown. *Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.*



Figure 27: View of Dayton Block, 301 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
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**Cedar Falls Downtown Commercial District  
Black Hawk County, IA**

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Figure 28: Bob's Maid Rite, 116 E 4th Street. 2016 Photograph.



Figure 29: Postcard of I.O.O.F. Temple, 401 Main Street, circa 1916.  
Source: *State Historical Society of Iowa. Research Center.*

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Black Hawk County, IA**

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Figure 30: View of I.O.O.F. Temple, 401 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.



Figure 31: Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad Depot, 422 Main Street, 1894.  
Source: *Cedar Falls Illustrated*, February 1, 1894.

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**Cedar Falls Downtown Commercial District  
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Figure 32: View of Burlington, Cedar Rapids & Northern Railroad Depot, 422 Main Street. 2016 Photograph.



Figure 33: Cedar Falls & Normal Railway on Main Street, circa 1897. *Source: Cedar Falls Historical Society.*

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Figure 34: View of Parkade facing north from 5th Street, circa 1970.  
Source: *State Historical Society of Iowa. Research Center.*



PROPERTY OWNER LIST  
PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT  
DOWNTOWN CEDAR FALLS

510 State St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 204 Main St

Avan Properties LLC  
1746 Dakota Dr.  
Waterloo, IA 50701  
Property in proposed district: 108 Main St

B J S Holdings LLC  
Petersen, Bruce  
311 Main St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 311 Main St

Beck, Darin E & Beck, Catherine D  
504 N Highland Dr.  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Properties in proposed district: 312 Main St; 310 Main St; 314-316 Main St

Bell, William L & Bell, Julie A  
Po Box 7  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 113 Main St

Black Hawk Lodge No 65 AF  
Po Box 493  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Properties in proposed district: 216 Main St; 214 Main St

Blackhawk Hotel LLC  
1104 5th Av  
Grinnell, IA 50112  
Properties in proposed district: 115 Main St; 119 Main St

BT Holdings LLC  
217 Washington St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 122 Main St

Cedar Falls Band Inc.  
Welty, Mark Steven  
1604 W 4th St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Properties in proposed district: 203 Main St; 305 Main St

PROPERTY OWNER LIST  
PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT  
DOWNTOWN CEDAR FALLS

Cedar Falls Community Theatre  
Po Box 381  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 103 Main St

CEFARE LLC  
C/O Alan Hill  
12639 E Glacial Crest Dr.  
White Water, WI 53190  
Properties in proposed district: 219-221 Main St; 223 Main St

Deery, Jodi Properties LLC  
3224 Abraham Dr.  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 303 Main St

Eastman, Barry D Jr. & Hermann, Ann M  
1615 Washington St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 305 Main St

Farris, David & Rice, Mimi  
215 Colorado Rd  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Properties in proposed district: 116 Main St; 118 Main St

Fencl Properties LLC  
1209 Dundee Av  
Waterloo, IA 50701  
Property in proposed district: 422 Main St

First National Bank Cedar Fall  
Thomson Property Tax Services  
Po Box 2609  
Carlsbad, CA 92018  
Property in proposed district: 302 Main St

Fore Investors LLC  
201 Washington St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 110 Main St

Gaede, Dennis L & Gaede Marilyn K  
4307 Briarwood Dr.  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 412 Main St

PROPERTY OWNER LIST  
PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT  
DOWNTOWN CEDAR FALLS

Hi Yield LLC  
604 Clay St  
Po Box 128  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 307 Main St

Humble Properties LLC  
125 Main St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Properties in proposed district: 125 Main St; 111 W 2nd St

IBL DDT LLC  
527 Jessica Ln  
Po Box 673  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 120 Main St

Jacobs, John L  
109 E 2nd St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 109 E 2nd St

JJ Land L C  
7728 N Union Rd  
Janesville, IA 50647  
Properties in proposed district: 110 -112 E 3rd St; 222-224 Main St

K Group L C  
2204 Valley Park Dr.  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 226 Main St

Koeppel, Allen D & Koeppel, Penne L  
626 Shirley St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 116 E 4th St

Lauber, Merlyn D & Lauber, Carol D  
1815 Winter Ridge Rd  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 301 Main St

Leuer, Michael William & Leuer, Rosella  
2301 Center St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 201 Main St

PROPERTY OWNER LIST  
PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT  
DOWNTOWN CEDAR FALLS

Mak Inc.  
20995 487th Ln  
McGregor, MN 55760  
Property in proposed district: 207 Main St

MMC Properties LLC  
Po Box 188  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Properties in proposed district: 112 Main St; 114 Main St; 213 Main St; 215  
Main St; 217 Main St; 106 Main St; 206 Main St; 208-210 Main St; 115-119 E  
4th St

Money Pit LLC  
2202 College St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Properties in proposed district: 402 Main St; 109 E 4th St; 406 Main St

NAB Investments LLC  
315 Main St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Properties in proposed district: 315 Main St; 317 Main St

One Hundred Two Main St LLC  
% Barry Eastman  
1615 Washington St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 102 Main St

Penaluna Enterprises LLC  
Po Box 805  
Waterloo, IA 50704  
Property in proposed district: 111 Main St

SC And B Properties LLC  
318 Main St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 318 Main St

Schilling, Timothy  
319 1/2 Main St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613"  
Properties in proposed district: 309 Main St; 319 Main St; 321 Main St; 323  
Main St

Shimek, Andrew & Shimek, Julie  
827 Commercial St  
Waterloo, IA 50702  
Property in proposed district: 109 Main St; 104 Main St

PROPERTY OWNER LIST  
PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT  
DOWNTOWN CEDAR FALLS

Shimek, Roberta M  
1504 Hammond Av  
Waterloo, IA 50702  
Property in proposed district: 107 Main St

Simple As 128 LLC  
205 E 18th St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 128 Main St

Skyview LC  
808 Dearborn Av  
Waterloo, IA 50707  
Property in proposed district: 401 Main St

Strickler Properties LC  
618 Lake Ridge Dr.  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 209-211 Main St

T And T Rental LC  
409 Main St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 407 Main St

Thodes Inc.  
202 Main St  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Property in proposed district: 202 Main St

TSA Properties LLC  
% Stedman, Troy M  
16412 Monrovia St  
Overland Park, Ks 66221  
Property in proposed district: 108 E 4th St

Vera James LLC  
191 Hampshire Rd  
Waterloo, IA 50701  
Property in proposed district: 123 Main St



COTTON THEATRE

Oster Regent Theatre

I LOVE A PIANO  
DEC 2 TO 11  
ON SALE NOV 22

STEEGE'S  
MEAT MARKET

Nov 19  
10:00 First



COTTON THEATRE  
1910 - 1918

Oster Regent Theatre  
Home Of Cedar Falls Community Theatre

CALENDAR - GALS  
TUES & SAT 7:30 PM  
SUN 2 PM

Serving You First.  
First National Bank

107  
LUNA  
107  
LUNA



2 HOUR PARKING  
9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM  
Handicap Accessible

Yellow banner on a street lamp.



BLACK HAWK HOTEL

One Eleven Main  
11  
12  
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10

STEEGEE'S  
MEAT MARKET

LUNA Art Wine

BUD LIGHT

2 HR PARKING  
9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM  
Handicap Accessible

Life O

GRAND OPENING PARTY  
NOVEMBER 10th 4-10PM

GRAND OPENING PARTY  
NOVEMBER 10th 4-10PM

107







DELI

SHEPHERD CREEK  
BAR

BH

BH

115



WHITE BLOCK

UNCLE  
HARRY'S  
5 and DIME  
TAVERN

Humble Travel

SOHO  
SUSHI BAR & DELI

THE  
STUFFED  
OLIVE  
MARTINI BAR

STUFFED  
OLIVE  
TAPAS MENU

CUP of JOE



Cup of Joe

102

Espresso Bar

Espresso Bar

VINTAGE IRON CO.

GALLERY 106

GALLERY 106

106

Parkwood





oot

ner's flat

CHOCOLATE

SINGLESE

Running Walking Fitness



nes

SINGLESPEED  
BREWING

2 HR  
PARKING  
9:00 AM  
TO  
5:00 PM

ard Jones  
STMENTS

646 RNM

ALBANY



BERK'S

St. Vincent De Paul  
THRIFT SHOP

Crash  
BLUE ROOM  
LOUNGE

St. Vincent  
De Paul  
Thrift Store

Coors LIGHT  
Budweiser





Jiva  
AYEDA

Century 21  
LSB REAL ESTATE

Holiday Hoopla

Holiday Hoopla

EVENTS AND GIFTS

Holiday Hoopla

Holiday Hoopla

FASHION TO FIVE

An Elegant Affair

High Fashion Local Experience

◆ L



1101

Century 21  
RE/MAX

Century 21

LSB REAL ESTATE

Century 21  
RE/MAX

KITCHEN  
ESSENTIALS  
AND GIFTS

KITCHEN ESSENTIALS AND GIFTS

NO PARKING  
8:00 AM TO 5:00 PM

WANTED:  
DOWNTOWN  
RETAIL SPACE  
319-277-7983  
www.kitchenessentials.com

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LINK ME  
K.E. Property Maintenance  
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81T-517

ETH-42W

SILVERADO





TOADS



SECOP  
CITY H  
OVERSE  
PARKIN  
MAIN ST  
FAR REACH TECHNOLOGIES  
prairie girl  
Basket of Dreams  
WORLDLY WINDOW  
WALKER



WELLS FARGO

gies

L.H. SEVERIN

1887

MODERN

Main SWEETS Street LIFE IS SWEET

Purse-N-ality

& Cobblestone Cr

SONIC LOO

WORLD'S WINDOW GLOBAL GIFTS, DECOR & MORE

MISS WONDERFUL UNIT

2 HOUR PARKING 9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM EMERGENCY SNOW ROUTE

Yum! CANDY JUST Fudge





226

EAST NORTH

Personal & Business Insurance

INSURANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT



Striped awning with red and white diagonal stripes.

1444

Blue mailbox with USPS logo.



300  
MAIN ST.  
PARKING  
CITY HALL  
MUSEUMS







LBL

BL

Bakery

Pub | The Pump Haus | Grill

The Main Street Exchange

2 hr parking  
9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM  
NO PARKING  
ANYTIME

CTX 591

309-71

WELLS FARGO

WELLS FARGO

FedEx

Night  
Deposit

NO  
OPEN





S  
ILL

Loop

Palace Clothiers

DARN TOUGH

More

DERINGERS

DERINGERS

RESTAURANT

NOBLE OAK

SMOKEHOUSE BARBECUE

Brummel Madsen Insurance  
BUSINESS • HOME • AUTO • HEALTH

Loop

Cedar Falls





MAID-RITE

Eat  
MAID-RITE  
SINCE 1926



MAID-RITE SHOP

NO PARKING  
WITHOUT THE PERMITS  
ISSUED BY THE  
TOWNSHIP OF  
HOLLAND  
VIOLATORS SUBJECT  
TO FINES  
AND COSTS

NO PARKING  
EXCEPT FOR PERMITS  
ISSUED BY THE  
TOWNSHIP OF  
HOLLAND  
VIOLATORS SUBJECT  
TO FINES  
AND COSTS

Trick  
or  
Treat

OPEN  
Eat  
MAID-RITE  
SINCE 1926

BREAKFAST MAID-RITES  
Till 11 am Served All Day

Eat  
MAID-RITE  
SINCE 1926

Trick

MIAMI  
DON 176  
FLORIDA



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**319-830-5000**  
**FISCHELS**  
**COMMERCIAL GROUP**  
**319-234-5000**

115

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"Not just a game, an experience!"  
**ESCAPE**  
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CEDAR VALLEY



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*Distinction by day*      *Splendor by night*





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Jim Sulentic  
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319-234-3000

Tavern & Grill Tavern & Grill



WHISKEY ROAD

WHISKEY ROAD



OPENS DAILY  
11:00 AM

MAIN ST.  
FOURTH ST.  
PARKING  
LIBRARY  
REC CENTER  
PARKING  
LIBRARY  
HOSPITAL

WHISKEY ROAD



Three arched windows on the second floor of the brick building.

WHISKEY ROAD

TRUE COMRADE

RED OWL TATTOOS

Shampoo

No parking sign

2 HOUR parking sign

PHOTO



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: 8/17/2017      Date of Pending List: 9/19/2017      Date of 16th Day: 10/4/2017      Date of 45th Day: 10/2/2017      Date of Weekly List: 10/5/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      10/2/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Edson Beall      Discipline Historian

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

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



IOWA  
ARTS  
COUNCIL

PRODUCE  
IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
MUSEUM OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

STATE  
HISTORIC  
SITES

STATE HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
OFFICE OF IOWA

IOWA  
HISTORICAL  
FOUNDATION

August 15, 2017

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief  
National Register and National Historic Landmarks  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.  
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The following National Register nomination(s) from Iowa are enclosed for your review and listing if acceptable.

**Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District**

The Cedar Falls Downtown Historic District is significant at the local level under National Register Criterion A in the area of Commerce and Community Planning and Development, and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The historic district encompasses the section of Main Street between 1st Street and 5th Street in downtown Cedar Falls that has served as the primary commercial business center of the city since its development in the mid-nineteenth century. The area not only included businesses that provided goods and services but also included social and cultural amenities such as hotels, theaters, and opera houses. The district also contains a collection of mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century commercial architecture representative of the types, styles, and materials frequently used between the period of significance of 1862 and 1968.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Laura Sadowsky  
State Historian  
State Historical Society of Iowa

Enclosures.

