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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Leesburg Historic District

other names/site number 085-350-31000

2. Location

street & number 100 block of East & West Van Buren Street N/A not for publication

city or town Leesburg N/A vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Kosciusko code 085 zip code 46538

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  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Robert R. Leeb* 4-19-93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 5/27/93

Leesburg H.D.  
Name of Property

Kosciusko Co., IN  
County and State

**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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
21	6	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	2	objects
22	8	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

See continuation sheet

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

See continuation sheet

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate  
Commercial Style  
LATE VICTORIAN

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE  
walls BRICK  
WOOD: weatherboard  
roof ASPHALT  
other METAL: aluminum  
ASBESTOS

**Narrative Description**

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

Leesburg H.D.  
Name of Property

Kosciusko Co., IN  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

GOVERNMENT

**Period of Significance**

1865-1936

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Public Works Administration

Powell, Cecil

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

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

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory

Leesburg H.D.  
Name of Property

Kosciusko Co., IN  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** 6.5

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 6	5 9 6 0 4 0	4 5 7 6 1 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 6	5 9 6 4 0 0	4 5 7 6 1 2 0

3	1 6	5 9 6 4 0 0	4 5 7 5 9 1 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	1 6	5 9 6 0 7 0	4 5 7 5 9 0 0

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Cynthia J. Brubaker, Architectural Conservator

organization Portfolio Design, Inc. date April 24, 1992

street & number 222 N. College Ave., Suite 300 telephone 812/334-2488

city or town Bloomington state IN zip code 47404

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

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

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

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

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

**Property Owner**

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

name List available at DHPA

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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Leesburg Historic District

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Function or Use

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/specialty store  
COMMERCE/department store  
COMMERCE/restaurant  
COMMERCE/financial institution  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/secondary structure  
DOMESTIC/hotel  
SOCIAL/meeting hall  
GOVERNMENT/city hall  
LANDSCAPE/brick street

Current Functions

COMMERCE/specialty store  
GOVERNMENT/city hall  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

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Leesburg Historic District

The Leesburg Historic District is a unique collection of civic, commercial and residential resources located along the central, brick-paved, business street of Kosciusko County's first town. The historic ambiance of the entire town is encapsulated in this two block area. The central commercial area is surrounded by large spacious lots with houses, large, mature trees and other landscaping. One residential block on the east and one residential lot on the west frame the commercial buildings within the boundaries of the historic district. The commercial row rises up with one and two story, brick buildings that abut one another and create a treeless, continuous street wall along the south side of West Van Buren (photo 1). Additional newer commercial resources are found along the north side of the same block.

Pearl Street separates East from West Van Buren and the Leesburg Town Hall separates the commercial from the residential areas at the southeast corner of Pearl and Van Buren (photo 11). All but two of the residential resources in the district are two story structures with a variety of materials, colors, plans and architectural details. The houses outside the boundaries are mostly smaller in scale, more uniform in style and retain less integrity due to alterations and additions (photos 8 and 15). A broad, brick-paved street, tree-lined in the residential blocks, unites the district and contributes significantly to the district's importance and charm (all photos except 11).

There are 30 total resources in the district, which includes residential and commercial structures, the town hall and the brick streets. The eight noncontributing resources include one commercial building, the 1962 fire station, two objects on the Town Hall grounds, three garages and one trailer. The commercial resources in the district include four Italianate, red brick structures all in the 100 block of West Van Buren and two Twentieth Century Commercial buildings. The residential resources include 11 houses that range in style from Greek Revival to Bungalow, some with garages or outbuildings. The town hall and the commercial buildings retain a good deal of integrity including original storefront configurations and materials on most buildings. The residential buildings range from those that maintain most of their original characteristics to some that have been altered with the addition of artificial siding and shutters, enclosed porches or rear additions. The brick streets are in good condition and are counted as one contributing structure.

#### CIVIC

The 1936 Leesburg Town Hall at 100 East Van Buren is a charming Public Works Administration rendition of the Colonial Revival architectural style (photo 11). The brick, one story hall with raised basement has a rectangular plan and a hipped roof with gabled front portico. The main or north elevation has a symmetrical composition with a central round-arched entrance flanked by two double-hung, 12-over-12, wood frame windows. The tall entrance portico is supported by triple square posts at the front corners and square pilasters against the facade. The round-arched roof of the portico gives its front gable the appearance of an open pediment. A simple wood entablature runs around the perimeter of the building. The entrance door is a wood and glass paneled door with multi-light sidelights and round-arched transom above. The variegated brick facade rests on a concrete foundation and a limestone corner stone with the "1936" date of construction is found on the northwest corner. This cornerstone was laid on October 17, 1936 with 50 articles entombed in it. The secondary facades also have multi-light, double hung windows and the west facade has a large overhead garage door and stone panel with the words "Fire Dept.". The fire department is now housed in a 1962, brick structure south of the Town Hall. Two noncontributing objects on the grounds of the Town Hall are a freestanding brick sign structure and a World War II vintage gun.

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**COMMERCIAL**

The largest and most dominant commercial resource in the district is the two story, brick block at 101-107 West Van Buren (photo 12). This Italianate style building was built in 1890 after an 1889 fire. It has four storefront bays at the street level and twelve evenly spaced bays each with a tall narrow window opening on the second floor. The building was undertaken in sections by different owners but functions as one structure architecturally and housed both the Masons and the International Order of Oddfellows on the second floor. The two westernmost storefronts retain their original cast iron storefront structure, scale, proportions and materials. The two easternmost storefronts and the first floor of the easternmost facade have been altered with a new brick bulkhead, glass windows and doors and an asphalt-shingled shed roof. Most of the original double-hung, two-over-two, wood frame windows have been covered with grooved wood panels, but all retain their pressed metal window hoods. All of the segmental-arched window openings on the second floor of the easternmost facade are covered with grooved wood panels. A pressed metal cornice with brackets, finials and two pediments spans the top of the main or north facade. The Masonic symbol and lodge "No. 181" are found in raised letters on the easternmost pediment and "IOOF" on the westernmost pediment.

Original storefront volumes are maintained at the front of the two westernmost storefronts on the first floor. The original room plans and volumes are maintained throughout the second floor. The Masons still meet in their original lodge room and some original furniture and lodge paraphernalia remains in use in the room. The Oddfellows no longer meet, but their space is used by the Order of the Eastern Star.

The two story 113 West Van Buren, is very similar to the Masonic/IOOF Building (photo 14). Built the same year in the same style, the building has the same cast iron storefront on the first floor, pressed metal window hoods on the second floor and cornice above. The three window hoods have the raised letters "F.", "C.", and "B.", which stands for the code words of the Knights of Pythias; friendship, charity and benevolence. This building was the first home of the Knights, which they enlarged significantly by building over 115 West Van Buren in 1907 (photo 14).

Rendered in a scaled-down version of the Italianate, this two story Knights of Pythias Building has a simpler, all brick facade with pilasters and bracketed cornice to achieve its decoration and a more horizontal orientation than the tradition vertical effect of the Italianate. The original first floor storefront is intact, as are the second floor rectangular window openings with simple stone lintels and sills. Original double-hung, one-over-one, wood frame windows and two small stones with the lodge name and number and construction date are in place on the second floor. Interior spaces, volumes, and materials are intact including pressed metal ceilings on both floors and the large lodge room with raised wood platform on the second floor.

The one story, brick, Italianate, D.K. Brown Building at 109 West Van Buren, was also built in 1890 after the 1889 fire (photo 13). The storefront retains its original proportions and cast iron cornice, but has been altered with the addition of brick piers and bulkhead. The original pressed metal cornice with brackets, finials and central raised section with the building name all remain intact.

The last two contributing, commercial resources in the district are simple, yet handsome, Twentieth Century Commercial style buildings. The red brick building at 117-119 West Van Buren was built in 1914 with a central two story bay flanked by one story bays (photo 1). Original storefront materials, proportions, and openings are largely

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intact on the first floor. Rectangular window openings with limestone lintels and sills and decorative limestone blocks symmetrically placed on the facade remain on the second floor. Similar facade decoration is found on the one story 101 East Van Buren, which was built around the same time, but altered in the 1950s with the addition of glass block in the window openings (photo 3).

**RESIDENTIAL**

The oldest house in the district at 109 East Van Buren was originally a hotel built around 1865 (photo 6). The Greek Revival style structure was altered on the inside and with a front porch and rear addition around 1910. Wide, wood pilasters frame the front corners of the house and support a deep, wood entablature that runs across the front facade and continues around the side east and west facades to form the returns of the pedimented gable ends. The entablature continues along the perimeter of the rear addition. Asbestos hardboard siding was added at some point in the 1930s or 1940s, but it does not obscure the effect of the wood trimmed, double-hung windows, nor of the leaded glass window on the front facade.

The circa 1870 house at 123 West Van Buren anchors the west end of the district with a unique Gothic Revival and Italianate architectural style (photo 15). The steeply pitched, cross gable roof and T-shaped plan presents a Gothic Revival-like, symmetrical, central gable towards the street with an Italianate-like, wrap-around, flat-roofed porch supported by Queen Anne style turned posts and jigsaw-cut brackets. Italianate style long, narrow, segmental-arched, window openings with raised hoods are symmetrically placed on all the painted brick facades of the one and one half story house.

A purely Italianate style house at 112 East Van Buren was built about ten years later at the east end of the district (photo 8). This two story, wood frame house has a low-pitched roof with wide, overhanging eaves and a symmetrical plan with a projecting bay at the center of the main or north facade. Long, narrow window openings, a wide wood entablature, corner trim pieces and a stone foundation are additional, character-defining aspects of the house. A newer, one story addition is at the rear of the house and a noncontributing trailer is located on the rear of the lot.

The circa 1890 Wallace House at 113 East Van Buren anchors the northeast corner of the district (photo 7). The two and one half story, wood frame house has many features of the Queen Anne style such as a complex floor plan, multiple gables, and a three story turret with a conical slate roof. The foundation is built of colored stone in greys and pinks with red mortar. The interior has six fireplaces, which is reflected on the exterior by the presence of three brick chimneys. The interior was divided into several apartments and the exterior altered with the addition of asbestos hardboard siding, horizontal "picture" windows, and a rear, one story addition. Some restoration has taken place including the removal of some of the exterior siding, which reveals decorative wood siding and shingles.

The eclectic revival house at 107 East Van Buren was built in 1900 by Hart Brown (photo 5). The two and one half story house is almost completely intact inside and out and displays elements of the Prairie style and the Classical and Mission Revival styles. The house has a multi-colored, granite, fieldstone foundation with red mortar, cut ashlar sandstone facade on the first floor and cut smooth sandstone facade on the second floor, leaded glass windows, pressed metal eave brackets and attic dormer decoration, and an asphalt shingle, formerly slate, roof. The nearly rectangular plan is interrupted by a turret at the rear, northwest corner and by a rear, rectangular porch. The Prairie



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style feeling is achieved by the low-pitched, hipped-roof with wide, overhanging eaves on the house and on the deep, front porch, by the Romanesque arched opening on the second floor over the main entrance and by the Wrightian, leaded glass windows. The Classical Revival style feeling is achieved by the bracketed eaves and the presence of ornate plaster cornice molding and wood trim on the interior. The Mission Revival style feeling is achieved by the attic dormer with a center round arch, that echoes the second floor Romanesque arch, flanked by finials.

The interior retains its original floor plan, volumes, materials, and details. The fine original workmanship is evident in mahogany wood floors, ornate plaster crown molding, egg and dart wood trim, wood staircase and built-in cabinets, and stained glass windows in the dining room and stairway. Other original features include a tile floor and wainscoting in the front entrance, pocket doors to the dining room, original cabinets in the kitchen and beveled and leaded glass windows and doors. The excellent condition of this house as well as, its fine details and original construction, make it a truly outstanding contribution to the district.

One of the newest houses in the district, the bungalow at 104 East Van Buren was built in 1930 (photo 10). A contributing garage was built in 1934 in the same style and with the same materials behind the house. A small doctor's office was built a few years later in a matching style and attached to the main house via a small corridor. Many characteristic details of the bungalow or Craftsman style are present including the low-pitched roof; wide, overhanging eaves; deep, recessed porch with large, battered columns; and wood trellis. Interior features include built-in, oak cabinets around the living room fireplace, and as dividers between the living room and dining room; coffered ceiling in the dining room with wood beams and original light fixtures; and a built-in eating nook in the kitchen.

The newest house in the district is a two story, Dutch Colonial Revival at 108 East Van Buren probably built in the 1930s (photo 9). Its characteristic features include a gambrel roof with full width front and rear facade dormers and corresponding first floor shed roof; symmetrical composition; and small, round-arched entrance portico at the front, center of the house. The house has been altered with the addition of artificial siding. There is also a contributing garage behind the house built in the same style.

The remaining houses in the district include two vernacular style houses at 105 and 110 East Van Buren, the former a circa 1900 Hall and Parlor and the latter a circa 1890 Gabled-ell (photos 2 and 9). Both have been altered with added or enclosed porches and artificial siding. Two American Four-Square style houses are found at 103 and 111 East Van Buren. The former, a brick house, was built around 1900 and the latter, a wood frame house, was built around 1910 (photos 4 and 7). The house at 111 East Van Buren is reported to be a Sears & Roebuck house, but has added artificial siding and shutters. All four of these houses retain their overall form, massing, and feeling of association with the history of the district.

#### NONCONTRIBUTING

The most visible noncontributing resource in the district is the commercial structure at 111 West Van Buren built as the D.H. Lessig block in 1890 (photo 13). Originally a twin to its neighbor at 109 West Van Buren, this building was altered by the removal of the cornice, the drastic reduction in the size of the window openings and a refacing with a limestone veneer. The difference in building material, color, and storefront scale presents a stark contrast to the district. However, the overall scale and massing is maintained, and with its small size and lone status as a

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noncontributing resource, the integrity of the district as a whole is not jeopardized by its presence. The 1962 fire station is rectangular in plan, built of brick and very compatible with the Town Hall in size, scale, massing, style and materials. Likewise, the two objects on the Town Hall grounds do not detract from the character of the Town Hall or the district.

The remaining noncontributing resources in the district include three garages built since the period of significance at 105, 107 and 123 West Van Buren and a trailer at 112 West Van Buren. These structures are sited towards the rear of their lots and are not a noticeable detractor to the district (photos 4, 6 and 9).

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**SUMMARY PARAGRAPH**

The Leesburg Historic District encompasses the central business block and one residential block of a small community in north central Kosciusko County, Indiana. The attached brick commercial and civic buildings contrast with the brick, stone and frame single family homes. The historic collection is blended together with wide brick paved and tree lined streets. The district is the well preserved core of the county's first town and signifies its association with the commercial and social development of the town. The architecture is representative of styles prevalent between the Civil War and the 1930s. The surrounding town is distinguishable from the district by residential lots with less historic integrity. The design, setting, materials, workmanship and association of the district's buildings adequately portray a sense of the history and architecture of this small village.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

The Leesburg Historic District can be evaluated in the context of other small towns throughout the county with similar resources dating from the time of the Civil War until around 1940. Leesburg holds special significance as the first town and county seat in the county and should be considered for its place among the county's early communities. These include Warsaw, Milford and Palestine, all platted in 1836, and Oswego, North Webster and Syracuse, all platted in 1837.

In 1835 Levi Lee platted his timbered land surrounded by wild plum thickets and prairie as Leesburg. Lee built the town's first house, a log cabin, and sold the first of his 48 lots to Metcalf Beck, who built a store and residence. Although the first county court was held in Lee's cabin in 1836, Warsaw was platted the same year and established as the county seat the next year. This designation gave Warsaw an edge on prosperity and it quickly surpassed Leesburg in development of all types. There are two story, brick, Italianate commercial buildings in the Warsaw Courthouse Square Historic District (085-662-46000) similar to those found in Leesburg however, the overall scale of the two districts is markedly different. Palestine prospered as a result of its grist mill built in 1836, but declined when it was bypassed by the railroads; little remains of the town today.

Milford has several resources that are similar to those found in Leesburg including a Renaissance Revival Carnegie library (085-411-06014) that has the same compact scale and delicate classical details as the Leesburg Town Hall (photo 11). There are also comparable houses and a few commercial buildings however, due to a loss of integrity, there is not a cohesive mass of buildings to form a comparable district. The same is true of Syracuse platted in 1837. Oswego and North Webster, both also platted in 1837, are very small communities and never benefitted from railroad expansion in the county. Each has a wood frame Greek Revival store as their only historic commercial resource (085-350-30017 and 085-473-36006).

Nineteenth century development of most of the towns in the county is largely linked to the development of the railroads. Although this theme is of secondary importance in the history of Leesburg, it should be considered. The Cincinnati, Wabash and Michigan railroad was built through the east end of town in 1870 and certainly boosted the economy and brought new opportunity. However, the earlier laying of the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago railroad through the county in the mid-1850s established Pierceton and Warsaw as the county's dominant commercial centers. The Winona Interurban, which ran through town on Main Street by 1914, provided additional commuting possibilities, but only for a short period of time.

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In the framework of identified historic districts in the county, it is most appropriate to compare the Leesburg Historic District as a whole with the Silver Lake and Pierceton districts due to the size of the towns and the scale of the districts. The Silver Lake Historic District (085-591-86000) is a dense collection of brick and concrete block, two story buildings located at the crossroads of two major state roads. A striking Italianate, commercial block serves as a strong focus of the district, which has three other nineteenth century Italianate and Romanesque Revival buildings. There are also several concrete block automobile related resources that give the district its association with road travel in the early part of this century. The Pierceton district (085-510-41000) is unique for its total domination by the advent of the railroad, its wide range of resource types, and the predominance of brick as a building material. The Leesburg district is unique among this group of three for its combination of commercial and residential resources, brick streets and status as the county's first town.

**CRITERION A**

The Leesburg Historic District is eligible for the National Register under criterion A for its association with the commercial and social development of the town. This well preserved core is significant as the county's first town. It reveals its history via three resource types, civic, commercial and residential, built over the course of a century. The high integrity and comfortable siting of individual buildings bound together by historic brick streets tangibly reflect the important historical associations.

After platting the original town in 1835, Levi Lee sold his first lot, number 24 on the northwest corner of Van Buren and Pearl, to Metcalf Beck. Beck moved his grocery store, acquired from his father-in-law James Comstock, to this site in 1836. James and William Blain built the town's first drug store in 1835 on the southwest corner of Van Buren and Pearl. These early merchants prospered well, purchased lands adjoining the town and platted their own additions in 1837, which greatly expanded the town's size. By 1836 there were five merchants in town. They built log structures and purchased their merchandise in Fort Wayne.

In the 1840s the early log buildings began to be replaced by frame structures, many of which were lost to fires over the years. The first frame business block was built during this time on the site of the present day 101-107 West Van Buren (photo 12). Robert Blain, who ran the Empire Hotel, Robert Geddis, who had a hardware store, Summy and Biggs, who ran a dry goods and grocery store and the Starr brothers consolidated their efforts in this first frame commercial structure. The building burned in the late 1850s and was replaced by others.

The 1850s also saw the organization of Leesburg's first society. The Leesburg Horse Company was formed in 1853 to capture and punish horse thieves. In 1855, the Leesburg Lodge No. 181 of the Free and Associated Masons was organized and met over the Empire Hotel block at the site of their present day lodge. The associated Leesburg Chapter No. 287 of the Order of the Eastern Star was formed in 1903. The Masons and Eastern Star remain active in the 1990s.

In 1860, the Leesburg Cornet Band was formed, which gave open air concerts on Saturdays around the turn of the century. The earliest residential resource in the district is a Greek Revival wood frame house at 109 East Van Buren (photo 5). The house was built as a hotel around 1865 and later converted for use as a single family residence. The painted brick house at 123 West Van Buren was built just west of the commercial core around 1870. It commands the corner of Jefferson and Van Buren with a unique blending of the Gothic Revival and Italianate architectural styles (photo 15).

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The 1870s brought many improvements to the small town. The Cincinnati, Wabash and Michigan railroad was laid through the east end of town in 1870. The town was incorporated in 1876 and established a fire department in 1879. By the end of the decade, the Western addition was platted west of Main Street. The Leesburg Lodge No. 432 of the International Order of Oddfellows was established in 1873, the Leesburg Camp No. 149 of the IOOF in 1877 and the associated Evergreen Lodge of Rebekahs No. 484 in 1895. None of these groups remain active in the 1990s.

The town's first newspaper, The Kosciusko County Prohibitionist, was published in 1881 for two years. A second paper, The Kosciusko County Standard, was published for twenty years beginning in 1888 before being sold to a publisher in Syracuse. The prime businesses of 1887 included a druggist, dry goods store, hardware store, general merchandise store, a tinner, a harness shop, a wagon and carriage manufacturer and a grain dealer. That same year the St. Leon Lodge No. 192 of the Knights of Pythias was organized. The associated Leon Lodge No. 112 of the Pythian Sisters was established in 1895. These groups are no longer active in the 1990s.

On New Year's Eve 1889, a fire started in the saloon of Charles L. Brown and destroyed all the buildings on the south side of Van Buren to the corner of Pearl. Several of the town's merchants got together and decided to build a more permanent structure out of brick. The Masons, Oddfellows and Knights of Pythias joined in and built the second floors for lodge rooms. Before the end of 1890, the large commercial block at 101-107 West Van Buren (photo 12), the D.K. Brown block at 109 West Van Buren, the D.H. Lessig block at 111 West Van Buren (photo 13) and 113 West Van Buren (photo 14) rose phoenix-like from the ashes.

The merchants in the new block at 101-107 included Amos Garrett proprietor of Garrett and Siple, dry goods and groceries, at the west end and William Zimmerman proprietor of William Zimmerman and Company, dry goods. David K. Brown arrived in Leesburg in 1884, manufactured harnesses and saddlery and built his harness shop at 109 West Van Buren. David H. Lessig built an almost identical business block next door to Brown at 111 West Van Buren. The two men were involved in forming the Leesburg Flouring Mills in 1899. Jordan Becknell was a saw mill owner and proprietor of a hardware, paint and oil store at 113 West Van Buren. Ringgenberg and Berst, successors to Becknell's business, enlarged their store by building 115 West Van Buren (photo 14) in 1907. The Knights of Pythias, who built their second floor lodge above Becknell in 1890, enlarged their lodge by building the second floor above 115 West Van Buren in 1907.

The end of the century also saw construction of several residences including two vernacular style houses at 105 and 110 East Van Buren (photos 2 and 9), an Italianate style wood frame house at 112 East Van Buren (photo 8) and the Queen Anne style wood frame Wallace House at 113 East Van Buren (photo 7).

The turn of the century brought the Winona Interurban Railroad to Leesburg along with many other new things. The Leesburg Journal began publication in 1908. By 1914 there were two physicians, a hardware store, a furniture store, a meat market, a general merchandise store, a restaurant and lunch counter, a restaurant/grocery store/jewelry store, a blacksmith, a harness shop, a wagon and carriage shop, two automobile garages and two telephone exchanges. Rodol Plummer was in the furniture business and began buying and selling cars in 1912 including Crow, Brush, Studebaker, Overland, Hudson and Ford. He built a brick and cement block garage at 117-119 West Van Buren (photo 1) in 1914, where he sold auto supplies and provided auto repair. That same year, the Wallace addition was platted along main street on the south side of town. Houses were being built, new cement sidewalks being put in and shade trees planted at the front of the residential lots.

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Five of the houses in the district date from after the turn of the century. These include two period revival style houses, one bungalow and two American four-squares. The eclectic revival style house at 107 East Van Buren was built in 1900 (photo 5) by landowner and banker Hart Brown. Brown, who was known for his prowess at buying and selling real estate, lived in Leesburg until the 1930s. The exuberant mix of architectural styles and exacting detail, inside and out, are a testament to the risk-taking, entrepreneurial spirit of its builder. Two American Four-Square style houses are found at 103 and 111 East Van Buren (photos 4 and 7). Cecil Powell built the Craftsman style bungalow at 104 East Van Buren (photo 10) for Dr. Charles Thomas in 1930. Thomas had a matching garage behind the house and a small office that was connected to the main house built a few years later. The 1930s Dutch Colonial Revival next door at 108 East Van Buren (photo 9) is the most recent house built in the district. The Leesburg Town Hall was built in 1936 as a federal Public Works Administration project. The finely detailed Colonial Revival style and compact, efficient form is characteristic of similar projects across the country built as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal. The laying of the cornerstone on October 17, 1936, one hundred and one years after the town's founding, was a ceremonious event with 500 people in attendance and 50 commemorative articles entombed in the building's wall.

**CRITERION C**

The Leesburg Historic District is eligible for the National Register under criterion C for its embodiment of characteristics of several different architectural styles. These styles are rendered among three resource types, civic, commercial and residential. Their dates of construction span nearly a century. The small, manageable scale and careful blending of styles and types among the buildings is inviting to the pedestrian and motorist as well as, the shopper and resident. The full length of the district is connected by brick-paved streets, a late 19C./early 20C. architectural element and a key contribution to the district's feeling of time and place.

**19C. RESIDENTIAL**

The district is framed by houses. The oldest house, at 109 East Van Buren, was originally a hotel built around 1865 (photo 5). Greek Revival influence is apparent by the pilasters, entablature and pedimented end gables with returns. Alterations performed in 1910 and the 1930s or 1940s are evident, but do not obscure the effect of the character and style of the facade. Two vernacular style houses at 105 and 110 East Van Buren, the former a circa 1900 Hall and Parlor and the latter a circa 1890 Gabled-ell (photos 2 and 9), portray their simple form despite some changes.

The circa 1870 painted brick house at 123 West Van Buren anchors the west end of the district with a unique Gothic Revival and Italianate architectural style (photo 15). Gothic Revival details include a steeply pitched, cross gable roof with a center front gable. Italianate details include a flat-roofed porch and long, narrow, segmental-arched, window openings with raised hoods. A purely Italianate style wood frame house at 112 East Van Buren was built about ten years later at the east end of the district (photo 8). It too has long, narrow window openings, but also has a more characteristic low-pitched roof with wide, overhanging eaves. The circa 1890 wood frame Wallace House at 113 East Van Buren anchors the northeast corner of the district (photo 7). The Queen Anne style is featured in this display of multiple gables and chimneys, a three story turret with a conical slate roof and a colored stone foundation. Restoration efforts have revealed decorative wood siding and shingles under the asbestos hardboard siding.

**19C. COMMERCIAL**

Four Italianate, red brick structures on the south side of the 100 block of West Van Buren comprise the core of the district. The largest is a four bay, two story, brick block at 101-107 West Van Buren (photo 12). The 1890

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structure replaced previous commercial buildings consumed in a New Years Eve, 1889 fire. Italianate details include tall narrow, segmental-arched window openings, pressed metal window hoods, cast iron storefronts and a pressed metal cornice with brackets, finials and two pediments. A traditional configuration of retail stores on the first floor and lodge halls on the upper floor is used.

Similar Italianate details are found at the D.K. Brown Building 109 West Van Buren (photo 13) and 113 West Van Buren (photo 14). Both were also built after the 1889 fire. The 1907 115 West Van Buren warrants inclusion in this group (photo 14). Its style is a toned-down Italianate with pilasters and a bracketed cornice, but with a more horizontal orientation than the traditional vertical effect of the Italianate. Although storefronts and windows have been altered, a wealth of historic fabric remains, as do the original volumes and floor plans of these historic commercial resources.

**20C. COMMERCIAL**

Two commercial buildings classified architecturally as 20C. Commercial are found at 117-119 West Van Buren (photo 1) and 101 East Van Buren (photo 3). These modest, yet handsome, red brick buildings were built in the 1910s. Limestone provides the only contrasting decoration. Original storefront materials, proportions, and openings are intact. Minimal alterations do not detract from the character of the buildings.

**20C. RESIDENTIAL**

Five houses built since the turn of the century include two period revival style houses, one bungalow and two American four-squares. The eclectic revival style house at 107 East Van Buren was built in 1900 (photo 5). Prairie style details include a low-pitched, hipped-roof with wide, overhanging eaves, a Romanesque arched opening and Wrightian, leaded glass windows. Classical Revival details include bracketed eaves and ornate plaster cornice molding and wood trim on the interior. A curvilinear arch above an attic dormer evokes the Mission Revival style. This exuberant mix of styles is complimented by an interior with fine original workmanship intact throughout. Mahogany wood floors, ornate plaster crown molding, egg and dart wood trim, a paneled wood staircase with built-in cabinets and stained glass windows contribute to this truly outstanding residence.

Two American Four-Square style houses are found at 103 and 111 East Van Buren. The former, a brick house, was built around 1900 and the latter, reportedly a Sears & Roebuck mail order house, wood frame house, was built around 1910 (photos 4 and 7).

A Craftsman style bungalow at 104 East Van Buren built in 1930 (photo 10) and a 1930s Dutch Colonial Revival next door at 108 East Van Buren (photo 9) are the newest contributing resources in the district. The low-pitched roof with wide, overhanging eaves, deep, recessed porch with large, battered columns and wood trellis are characteristic of the bungalow style at 104 East Van Buren. Interior features include built-in, oak cabinets and dividers, a coffered ceiling, original fixtures and a built-in eating nook in the kitchen. A matching garage built in 1934 completes the picture. The Dutch Colonial at 108 East Van Buren features the requisite gambrel roof, a symmetrical facade and classical entrance portico.

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**20C. CIVIC**

The American Colonial Revival style of the 1930s is represented by the Leesburg Town Hall (photo 11). This winsome rendition of the style was built in 1936 as a Public Works Administration project. The brick, one story hall with raised basement has a rectangular plan and a hipped roof. Its most prominent features are the tall, multi-paned windows and gabled center front portico, which give the hall its delicate American Colonial tenor.

**INTEGRITY**

The town hall and commercial buildings retain a good deal of integrity including original storefront configurations and materials on most buildings. The residential buildings range from those that maintain most of their original characteristics to some that have been altered with the addition of artificial siding and shutters, enclosed porches or rear additions.

The most visible noncontributing resource in the district is the commercial structure at 111 West Van Buren (photo 13). Built around 1890 as a twin to its neighbor at 109 West Van Buren, the building was altered but maintains a compatible overall scale and massing. The 1962 fire station and the two objects on the Town Hall grounds are also compatible with surrounding buildings (photo 11). Other noncontributing resources in the district include three garages built since the period of significance at 105, 107 and 123 West Van Buren and a trailer at 112 West Van Buren. These structures are sited towards the rear of their lots (photos 4, 6 and 9).

Despite these alterations and noncontributing resources, the district maintains integrity. The brick streets and landscape characteristics add to the district and significantly strengthen the association with history. Preservation activities in the district include removing artificial siding, restoring interiors and maintaining exteriors by individuals. These activities are in keeping with the quality of the district and have added to the integrity and significance of the district.



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The following information is the same for all the photographs listed:

Leesburg Historic District

Leesburg, Indiana

Photographer: Cynthia Brubaker

Date of photograph: April 7, 1991

Location of original negative: Portfolio Design Inc., 222 North College Avenue,  
Suite 300, Bloomington, Indiana 47404, 812/334-2488

1. 101-119 West Van Buren  
Streetscape of commercial buildings, photographer facing southeast
2. 105-113 East Van Buren  
Streetscape of residential buildings, photographer facing northeast
3. 101 East Van Buren  
Individual commercial building, photographer facing northeast
4. 101 and 103 East Van Buren  
Individual buildings, photographer facing north
5. 107 East Van Buren  
Individual residential building, photographer facing north
6. 107 and 109 East Van Buren  
Individual residential buildings, photographer facing north
7. 111 and 113 East Van Buren  
Individual residential buildings, photographer facing northwest
8. 112 East Van Buren  
Individual residential building and resources outside the district boundaries,  
photographer facing southeast
9. 108 and 110 East Van Buren  
Individual residential building, photographer facing southwest
10. 104 East Van Buren  
Individual residential building, photographer facing southeast
11. Leesburg Town Hall and Fire Station  
100 East Van Buren  
Individual civic buildings, photographer facing southeast

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12. 101-107 West Van Buren  
Commercial buildings, photographer facing south

13. 109-111 West Van Buren  
Commercial buildings, photographer facing south

14. 113-115 West Van Buren  
Commercial buildings, photographer facing south

15. 123 West Van Buren  
Individual residential building, photographer facing southwest

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Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the intersection of the north curblin of West Van Buren Street and the east curblin of Jefferson Street cross West Van Buren and proceed south along the east curblin of Jefferson to the south property line of 123 West Van Buren. Then proceed east along said property line to the west property line of 117-119 West Van Buren. Proceed south along said property line to the north curblin of the alley south of West Van Buren. Then proceed east along said curblin, crossing Pearl Street, to the west curblin of Harrison Street. Proceed north along said curblin to the south curblin of the alley north of East Van Buren Street. Then proceed west along said curblin to the east curblin of Pearl. Proceed south along said curblin to the north curblin of East Van Buren. Proceed west along the north curblin of West Van Buren to the point of beginning.

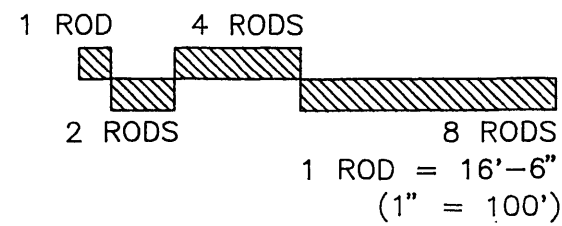
Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Leesburg Historic District include all of the historic commercial buildings along the south side of the 100 block of West Van Buren Street, one adjacent residential lot to the west and both sides of the 100 block of East Van Buren Street. The 1936 Town Hall and residences built between the mid-19C. and the mid-20C. are included along East Van Buren. This group represents the core of Leesburg, its historic downtown and most high style architectural homes.

PLUM STREET



# LEESBURG HISTORIC DISTRICT









PRAIRIE STREET

222 N. College Ave., Suite 300  
 Bloomington, IN 47404  
 (812) 334-2488

**PORTFOLIO DESIGN**

### KEY

-  DISTRICT BOUNDARY
-  CONTRIBUTING BUILDING
-  NONCONTRIBUTING BUILDING
-  BUILDING OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT
-  128 HOUSE NUMBER
-  128 PHOTOGRAPH REFERENCE