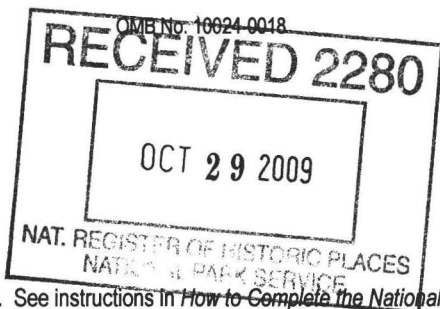


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

354



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 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

Historic name Alma Downtown Historic District  
Other name/site number 197-279

#### 2. Location

Street & number Missouri Street, Second to Fifth  not for publication  
City or town Alma  vicinity  
State Kansas Code KS County Wabaunsee Code 197 Zip code 66401

#### 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.)

Patrick Zoller DSHPO

10-26-09

Signature of certifying official/Title  
Kansas State Historical Society

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official /Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

Andrea McClelland

11-06-09

determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, (explain:)

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Name of Property

Wabaunsee County, Kansas  
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	10	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
21	10	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**

1

**6. Function or Use**

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

Commerce/trade: business, financial institution, specialty store,  
restaurant

Social: meeting hall

Government: city hall, post office

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

Commerce/trade: business, financial institution

Government: city hall, post office

Education: library

**7. Description**

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

Late Victorian/Italianate, Romanesque  
19th & 20th Century American Movement/Commercial  
Style

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Stone, Concrete  
Walls: Stone

Wood, Concrete block

Roof: Asphalt

Other:

**Narrative Description**

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

Alma Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Wabaunsee County, Kansas

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)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A-G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Commerce
Architecture

Period of Significance

circa 1880-1936

Significant Dates

1887

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

A. E. Forinash, stone mason; John & Rudolph Feiden, contractors
No significant architects known

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):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file.

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Name of Property

Wabaunsee County, Kansas  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Approximately 5.6 acres

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

1

1	4	7	3	4	5	4	0	4	3	2	1	7	1	0
Zone		Easting					Northing							

2

Zone		Easting					Northing							

3

Zone		Easting					Northing							

4

Zone		Easting					Northing							

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 Dale E. Nimz

Organization For the Alma Historic Preservation Committee Date October 10, 2008

Street & number 1928 Countryside Lane Telephone 785-842-8992

City or town Lawrence State KS Zip code 66044

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Name See attached list.

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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Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

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### Architectural Description

#### Summary

The Alma central business district is located on Missouri Street from Second to Fifth Streets with some development on West Third Street leading to the Wabaunsee County Courthouse. Highway 99 follows Missouri Street through downtown Alma. The Alma Downtown Historic District includes most of the commercial buildings in the business district on Missouri Street (see attached map for exact boundaries.) Generally, the east and west boundaries of the district extend to the alleys behind Missouri Street.

The north boundary is defined by a change in character from the historic commercial buildings on Missouri Street to residential buildings north of Fourth Street. The south boundary of the historic district is defined by a change from historic commercial buildings to modern commercial and light industrial buildings. The historic business district is located on a slope rising gradually from south to north. There is diagonal parking along the paved street with concrete sidewalks. Most of the extant buildings have identical setbacks with the building fronts extending to the sidewalk. Stone is the primary building material with some brick, wood frame, and concrete block. Generally, buildings are one and two stories tall. Several larger historic buildings anchor the ends of blocks.

Most of the buildings in the district are *two-part* and *one-part commercial blocks*. As defined by Richard Longstreth, the two-part commercial block is the "most common type of composition used for small and moderate-sized commercial buildings throughout the country."<sup>1</sup> These buildings feature a distinction between the storefront level and an upper zone. Most storefronts have symmetrically arranged facades with large display windows flanking a recessed entry. Second story windows are usually smaller and narrower than those on the first floor. The one-part commercial block has only a single story, which is similar to the lower zone of the two-part commercial block. These commercial buildings generally have low-sloping or flat roofs behind raised parapets.

The buildings in the district represent several architectural classifications: Late Victorian--Italianate and Romanesque, Early 20th Century American Movements--Commercial and Craftsman styles as well as Modern. These styles reflect the stages of Alma's development from the permanent building boom of the 1880s and 1890s through the first half of the twentieth century. The district includes twenty-seven buildings that were constructed before 1936. Only five buildings were constructed after 1936.

The extant architectural styles of the Alma Downtown Historic District are:

Italianate - 5

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1987), 24.

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Romanesque Revival - 4  
Commercial - 5  
Craftsman - 2  
Modern -2

Only one building in the Alma Downtown Historic District, the Brandt Hotel (1887), is individually listed in the National Register. The Wabaunsee County Courthouse, located one block west of Missouri Street, also is listed in the National Register. Significant architectural character representing the commercial and architectural development of Alma's historic business district is evident. There are thirty-two historic resources in the district. Twenty-one are contributing, ten are non-contributing, and one is individually listed in the National Register. Of the ten non-contributing buildings, five were constructed during the period of significance. Some of these non-contributing buildings could be contributing with appropriate façade rehabilitation. Approximately 69% of the buildings in the district have sufficient architectural integrity to represent the significant historical periods and associations.

Buildings evaluated as contributing usually have undergone alterations over time. Many of the alterations reflect changes common to historic commercial buildings as storefronts and facades were modernized with contemporary materials and signs. Some alterations detract from or obscure the historic architectural character of certain buildings, but many of the alterations are reversible. Rehabilitation of these buildings could change their evaluation and eligibility for rehabilitation tax credits. Generally acceptable alterations for contributing buildings include: windows which are covered but retain the original openings and recessions; additions which are obviously secondary to the main block; alterations to non-street-facing elevations; and storefront alterations provided that the transom outlines and other major architectural divisions are evident.

The following inventory list of buildings includes the address, construction and alteration dates in parenthesis, and historic name if documented. Also, there is a brief description of each building with architectural style, if evident.

### Inventory of Resources

The following properties are included in the historic district.

1. 504 Missouri, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building, 1936, contributing.

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a rectangular one-story Commercial-style building with a basement. It has a gable roof behind a stepped parapet. The building has a brick front, clay tile side and rear walls, and a stone foundation. There is a central front entrance and a rear side entrance above and to the north of the basement entrance. The entrance is flanked by single windows. There are four windows in the south façade, an entrance transom and window in the rear wall, and three windows in the north wall. The original windows are twelve-light metal sash. There is an exterior chimney

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flue in the north wall. Alterations include a non-historic wooden access ramp to the entrance, a non-historic metal entrance door, a non-historic glazed metal rear entrance door, and replacement front windows.

**2. 408 Missouri, First National Bank of Wamego, circa 1995, non-contributing.**

This is a rectangular one-story wood frame building with a low hipped roof. It has brick and synthetic sheathing. The main entrance and projecting drive-in portico face south towards a large concrete driveway. This building is non-contributing due to its age.

**3. 400 Missouri, Brandt [Alma Hotel], 1887, contributing, National Register.**

The Brandt Hotel is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a two-story limestone commercial block with a parapet and low-sloping roof. It has an ell plan with a main corner entrance set in a short angled wall facing southwest and a second entrance centered in the west façade. Stone walls are constructed of coursed shaped stone blocks laid in ashlar bond. Masonry openings have smooth-cut stone lintels and projecting stone sills. Prominent ornamental features are the polygonal wooden balcony that projects from the second floor and a pressed metal eave cornice. The Brandt Hotel is a late example of the Italianate style applied to a commercial building. This was the most common style used for commercial architecture during the mid-nineteenth century.

**4. 322-326 Missouri, Limerick Block [Alma City Hall], 1888, contributing**

The Limerick Block is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a large rectangular two-story Romanesque style limestone commercial block. It has a flat roof and parapet. The main west façade has six bays. The corner storefront has an entrance facing northwest and another recessed double storefront directly faces the street to the west. The massive detailed stone entrance, rough-cut stone blocks, round and semicircular arched openings, and projecting stone ornamental eave belt course are characteristic of the Romanesque style. In the double storefront, there are three ornamental cast iron posts on the first floor and paired wooden arched head windows on the second floor. Also, there is a storefront on the north side of the block to the east. Alterations in the double storefront include covered transoms and modern metal entrance doors.

**5. 320 Missouri, Crafts Building [Post Office], 1888, contributing**

The Crafts Building is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a two-story rectangular limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. It was constructed at the same time and in the same Romanesque style as the adjacent Limerick Block. Of the adjacent entrances to the north, one leads to the second floor and one to the main storefront. Stone detailing and ornamentation are characteristic of the Romanesque style. The first floor storefront has been

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altered with modern metal entrance doors, display windows, and a corrugated screen over the transom. Modern metal windows have been installed in the second floor. Despite these changes, the building retains sufficient exterior architectural integrity to contribute to the character of the historic district.

**6. 316 Missouri, Lutz Hardware, circa 1899, contributing.**

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The three-bay front has a recessed central entrance. There are two ornamental cast iron posts and an ornamental pressed metal eave cornice characteristic of the Italianate commercial style. The display window bays and entrance have been filled with stone and downsized modern windows. Upon guidance from the National Park Service, the building retains enough architectural integrity in its cornice and side elevation to be considered contributing.

**7. 308 Missouri, Ohst Building, circa 1900, non-contributing**

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The three-bay storefront has a recessed central double entrance. There are modern display windows, entrance doors, and a metal awning. The upper storefront transom and storefront have been covered with non-historic corrugated metal. Because of these alterations, the building is non-contributing.

**8. 306 Missouri, Sutherland Harness & Saddlery, circa 1900, contributing**

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with an entrance to the south. The storefront has cut-stone block ornamentation, a full-width metal lintel, and coursed rough-cut stone above the lintel. There is a non-historic metal entrance door and the transom windows have been covered.

**9. 304 Missouri, First National Bank of Alma [Stockgrowers State Bank], 1956, non-contributing**

This is a modern building constructed of concrete block. It is a one-story rectangular structure with a flat roof and parapet. In the storefront, there are ornamental stone piers laid in irregular courses. There is a side entrance with a metal entrance door, metal display windows, a shed-roofed awning, projecting sign, and an upper wooden façade screen. The building's construction date is outside the period of significance and is, therefore, non-contributing.

**10. 302 Missouri, Mueller Hardware, circa 1884, contributing**

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a rear-sloping low arched roof and parapet. There is a one-story rear wing surmounted with a smaller second-story block. It has a four-bay front with three cast-iron storefront posts on the first floor and coursed rough-cut stone blocks on the second floor. The storefront bays have been filled with wood panels and modern display windows. The main entrance and side entrance have been covered with wood and the transom has



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been covered with corrugated metal. There is a modern metal awning. The second floor front, side, and rear windows have been covered with wood panels. The side and rear walls have been parged and painted white. Although there have been several minor alterations, most are reversible. Because of its age, form, materials, and pattern of fenestration, it is contributing.

11. 300 Missouri, Conrad Mueller Saloon [Hendricks Hardware], circa. 1875, contributing

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a rear-sloping roof and parapet. There is a one-story rear wing. The building has a three-bay front with a recessed central entrance. The front is outlined with smooth-cut stone blocks and above the storefront lintel there are coursed rough-cut stone blocks. The storefront entrance and display window bays have been partially filled with stone. The transom has been covered, and there is a modern metal awning. Original window openings in the south façade wall have been partially filled with stone. Although there have been alterations, some are reversible. Because of its age, form, materials and pattern of fenestration, it is contributing.

11a. 300 Missouri, Storage building, c. 1890, contributing

This is a rectangular one-story alley building with a gable roof and rear entrance. It is set on stone piers. The building has vertical board sheathing and metal roofing. This accessory building was constructed before 1893 and used to store implements, paint, oil, and wire for Mueller and Hendricks Hardware over the years. Currently, the building is used for storage.

12. 230 Missouri, Commercial National Bank [Palenske Hall], circa 1873, 1908, contributing

This is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. It is a rectangular two-story Eclectic-style limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. Stone detailing on the first and second floor front is characteristic of the Romanesque style and there is a bracketed Italianate pressed metal projecting eave cornice that extends around the north side facade. The storefront has a main recessed side entrance with a glazed wooden entrance door, two large wooden display windows, a side entrance to the second floor, and a metal lintel. There is a large tripartite second floor window surmounted by headlights flanked by a round-arched window. Ornamental features include a corner carved smooth-cut stone post and two similar posts supporting a corner arch. The second floor façade is defined by raised smooth-cut stone piers and the arched window has carved stone ornament. The north side façade has eight bays with wooden double-hung windows. The original block was constructed ca. 1873. After a fire in 1890, the structure was rebuilt. The building was extended doubling its length. Another fire damaged the front of the building in 1906 or 1907. The front was rebuilt in 1908-1909.

13. 224 Missouri, [Campenella-Gentry Funeral Home], circa 1906, 1956, non-contributing

This is a one-story masonry commercial building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. There is a modern storefront with a central entrance flanked by display windows to the north set in a

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stuccoed wall. There is an awning and an upper façade screen constructed of vertical boards. The north half of the building was constructed about 1906; it has a rear wall with coursed irregular smooth-cut stone blocks, stone sills and flat smooth-cut stone lintels. The south half is constructed of concrete block. Three one-story stone buildings with a uniform size and setback were constructed at this location about 1906. Fire destroyed the middle building in 1922. In 1956 the surviving stone building was incorporated into a new furniture store building. The present storefront with stucco and an upper wooden façade screen appears to be a more recent treatment, ca. 2000. Because part of the building has been reconstructed and the storefront has been altered, it is non-contributing.

14. 222 Missouri, Simon Building, circa 1906, contributing

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. It has a three-bay front with a recessed central entrance with a wooden glazed entrance door. There are remnants of stone ornament at the storefront pier bases. The storefront has been altered with modern display windows and wooden infill. There is a modern wood-shingle shed-roofed awning. The south side façade has been parged. The storefront has been altered, but retains the inset central entrance. Upon guidance from the National Park Service, the building retains enough architectural integrity in its cornice and side elevation to be considered contributing.

15. 218 Missouri, American Telephone Building, circa 1960, non-contributing

This is a rectangular brick and concrete block building with a flat roof. It has a side front entrance with a metal door. Because of its age, materials, setback, and lack of fenestration, this building is non-contributing.

16. 212 Missouri, circa 1884, contributing

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The building has a four-bay front with a recessed central entrance and a side entrance to the second floor. Although the front has been altered, the basic elements of the historic storefront including the cast iron posts and display window openings remain. Historic drawings and photographs show that the building once had an Italianate eave cornice. On the second floor, the historic window openings have smooth-cut stone sills. The first floor storefront has non-historic display windows, a metal entrance door with sidelights, and a non-historic entrance door to the second floor. The storefront transom has been covered. The second floor windows have been altered and the eave cornice has been parged with modern mortar.

17. 208 Missouri, circa 1884, 1960, non-contributing

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a low gable roof and parapet. The first floor has a large overhead door and the second floor has two replacement metal windows. The first floor is covered with wood sheathing; the second floor is covered with corrugated metal sheathing.

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Reportedly, this building was converted for use as a carwash after 1967 and the first floor storefront was substantially altered at that time. Because of extensive alterations to the storefront and façade, this building is non-contributing.

**18. 204 Missouri, Palenske Block, circa 1890, contributing**

The Palenske Block is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. It is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The building has two storefronts flanking an arched central opening to the second floor stair. The storefronts have recessed central entrances, large display windows, and wooden bulkheads. Two ornamental cast iron posts support the metal storefront lintel. Rough-cut stone blocks accentuating the first floor end piers and central entrance and the three segmental arched window openings on the second floor suggest Italianate-style commercial architecture. Other window openings on the second floor have smooth-cut stone sills and lintels. The storefront bulkheads have been covered with modern material and the transoms have been painted. The upper cornice area has been re-pointed with modern mortar.

**19. 202 Missouri, Merrill Fritze garage, circa 1955, non-contributing**

This is a rectangular painted concrete block building with a flat roof and parapet. It is attached to the rear of the adjacent commercial block. There is a large overhead door to the south and a glazed wooden entrance door to the north. This building's construction date falls outside the period of significance and is, therefore, non-contributing.

**20. 200 Missouri, A. P. Zeckser Gas Station, circa 1924, contributing**

This is a rectangular wood-frame filling station with a hipped roof extended to the west supported on two tapered columns with brick bases. The form suggests an image (popular during the 1920s) of a filling station as a small residence. The building has a brick veneer base and the upper wall sheathing is secondary synthetic lap siding. The extended roof shelters a driveway in front of the office. There are Craftsman-style eave brackets and tapered posts. The building has a central entrance flanked by two wooden double-hung windows. There are identical windows in each side wall. The windows have modern aluminum storm windows. This building is relatively intact. Upon guidance from the National Park Service, the building retains enough architectural integrity in its form and features – despite its secondary synthetic siding – to be considered contributing.

**21. 223 Missouri, Farmers' Union Coop Association [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum], circa 1910, ca. 1957, contributing**

This is a rectangular one-story stone building with a flat roof and parapet. The seven-bay storefront has a recessed asymmetrical entrance and large display windows. There are five rectangular window openings in the south side façade. The Commercial-style storefront is wood frame construction with ornamental pressed metal sheathing on the upper front surmounted by an

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ornamental pressed metal eave cornice. The storefront bulkheads and transom are covered with non-historic square synthetic panels (ca. 1957). Both the metal entrance door and display windows are non-historic. The side windows are covered with painted wood panels.

**22. 227 Missouri, Meyer Block [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum], 1906, contributing**

The Meyer Block is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. It is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. There is a square corner entrance bay with a round arched masonry opening surmounted by crenellated stone ornament. The walls of this Commercial-style building are constructed of coursed rough-cut uniform stone blocks. The main east front has a five-bay front with stone bulkheads and display windows. There are two display windows facing north in the side façade. The transom has been painted white in these display windows. The Meyer Block extends all the way to the alley and has another storefront in the rear facing Third Street. This has a recessed central entrance flanked by display windows. The lower part of these windows has been covered.

**23. 301 Missouri, White Eagle Service Station, circa 1924, contributing**

This is a one-story rectangular stuccoed building with a hipped roof. A hipped roof port cochere on Craftsman-style tapered stuccoed columns extends to shelter a driveway. The filling station is oriented diagonally to face the intersection of Third and Missouri Streets. There is a central entrance with a glazed wooden entrance door flanked by wooden double-hung windows, side windows, and a rear entrance in the northwest corner. There is a tall brick end chimney in the rear. The filling station has been converted to a seasonal ice cream and sandwich shop.

**24. 305 Missouri, circa 2000, non-contributing**

This is a non-historic metal one-story rectangular detached building with a low gable roof. There is an entrance flanked by display windows to the south and another entrance to the north. The building is covered with vertical corrugated metal sheathing. Because of its age, form, and materials, it is non-contributing.

**25. 309-311 Missouri, Kinne & Kerans Block, circa 1888, contributing**

The Kinne & Kerans Block is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The north half of this block is longer than the south half. There is a one-story stone wing projecting from the north half extending almost to the alley. There is a double storefront with a central arched entrance to the second floor. Ornamental features are characteristic of the Italianate commercial style. There is a prominent slightly projecting entrance at the southeast corner ornamented with carved pier bases, smooth-cut stone columns, and a heavy carved masonry arch. This entrance has paired glazed wooden entrance doors with wooden screen doors. Next to the entrance, there is an arched masonry opening with paired wooden double-hung windows. There is another arched

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opening with paired windows above the south entrance and an arched opening with a single window above the central entrance. The other major ornamental feature is an elaborate pressed metal eave cornice with raised pediments including the Kinne and Kerans names above the storefront entrances. The storefront is deteriorated. Windows in the rear and side walls have 2/2 wooden double-hung sash. There are two wooden rear stairs from the second floor of each part of the building. The first floor storefront to the north has been altered with modern stone bulkheads, modern display windows, and a modern metal entrance door flanked by sidelights. Four windows on the second floor to the north have been covered with wood panels. Other second floor windows to the south have modern aluminum storm windows.

**26. 315 Missouri, Schmanke-Weaver Building, circa 1884, ca. 1906, contributing**

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a brick front, gable roof, and parapet. There is a recessed central entrance flanked by display windows. Reportedly, the building was damaged by fire in the early twentieth century and rebuilt so the present storefront probably dates from ca. 1906. The Romanesque-style facade has smooth-cut stone and brick quoins accentuating the end piers. There is a metal storefront lintel. Two large second-floor window openings have rough-cut stone sills and lintels. The windows have wooden 1/1 double-hung sash. Above the windows, there is a toothed brick belt course and a rectangular stone datestone. The gable parapet has a central stone chimney and a stone cap. The first floor storefront has been altered with modern metal bulkheads, display windows, a glazed metal entrance door, a covered transom, and a metal awning.

**27. 317 Missouri, Louis Undorf Meat Market, circa 1906, non-contributing**

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a rear-sloping roof and parapet. There is a recessed asymmetrical entrance and two large display windows. Rough-cut coursed limestone end piers are visible. The storefront has been altered with modern metal bulkheads, display windows, and a glazed metal entrance door. The upper storefront has been covered with a high corrugated metal façade screen. Large openings in the rear wall have been filled with concrete block. Because of the alterations to the facade, this building is non-contributing.

**28. 319-321 Missouri, P. J. Schulte Building, circa 1892, 1944, 2000, contributing**

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. There is a rectangular building in the rear of the north part attached to the building with a concrete block passage. This limestone outbuilding has a hipped roof. Reportedly in 1944, two existing historic storefronts were remodeled into a single "modern" storefront for P. J. Schulte. The features of the storefront were characteristic of the early twentieth century Commercial style. The first floor storefronts were altered and a brick veneer was applied to the earlier limestone facades. There was a central entrance to the north storefront, a side entrance to the south storefront, and an end entrance to the second floor. The south storefront has modern tan-colored brick laid in running bond. Second floor windows have slightly projecting brick sills and concrete lintels. There is an

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ornamental brick panel over the end stair entrance outlined in raised red brick and a raised red brick belt course at the eave. A slightly projecting concrete cap surmounts the brick wall. The storefront has modern board panels and modern display windows. There are aluminum storm windows on the second floor windows. The south side wall, the rear walls, and the attached outbuilding have been stuccoed.

In September, 2008, brick from the north half of this façade fell off. The north brick façade was removed revealing the earlier coursed rough-cut stone façade of the second floor. Presently, the building front has been stabilized and the owner is considering rehabilitation plans.

**29. 323 Missouri, Signal-Enterprise Building, circa 1901, contributing**

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a rear-sloping roof and parapet. The building has a four-bay front with side entrances. The first floor end piers are smooth-cut stone blocks and that ornamentation continues up the north corner on the second floor. There is a storefront lintel. Above the storefront, the walls are constructed of rough-cut coursed limestone blocks. There are four window openings with 1/1 wood double-hung windows. There are three interior chimney flues in the north side wall and four flues in the south wall. In the rear, the second floor is constructed of brick. The openings have rough-cut stone sills and smooth-cut flat lintels. The first floor front has been altered with modern stone infill, modern display windows, a glazed metal entrance door to the north and a modern entrance door to the south. There are modern metal storm windows on the second floor. In the rear, there is a modern ramp from the second floor exit. Two large openings in the rear first floor façade have been filled with coursed wooden shingles.

**30. 327 Missouri, Hochhans Block, circa 1906, non-contributing**

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. It has a double storefront with a recessed central entrance in the south front. The storefront has been altered with modern bulkheads, large metal display windows, and paired glazed metal entrance doors. There is a corrugated metal façade screen. Behind this building, there is a rectangular clay tile outbuilding with a gable roof as well as front and side entrances. A small modern corrugated metal structure has been added to the northwest corner of the main building. Because of the alterations to the façade, this building is non-contributing.

**30a. 327 Missouri, Storage building, c. 1922-1926, contributing**

This is a rectangular one-story clay tile building with a concrete foundation and floor. The gable roof is covered with metal roofing. An asymmetrical entrance faces east and a large vehicle entrance with a metal overhead door faces west. Wood 4/4 double-hung windows are regularly arranged in the south, east, and north walls. The outbuilding was built between May, 1922 and May, 1926 and served as a dry cleaning shop for the Alma Clothing Company.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Alma Downtown Historic District, located on Missouri Street between Second and Fifth Streets in Alma, Wabaunsee County, Kansas, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its significant historical association with the commercial and social development of Alma during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Alma Downtown Historic District is significant in local history. Alma became important as the county seat of Wabaunsee County after 1866. Although there are no buildings from the early settlement period included in the historic district, the location of the downtown business district was established early in Alma's history. Generally, the architectural character was defined after 1887 when the Rock Island railroad built its main line along the east and south border of the town. The architecture of the business district reflects two major stages of development in the community's history. These stages were associated with the period of agricultural and rural dominance in Kansas during the late nineteenth century and the state's economic and technological progress during the early twentieth century. With increased use of the automobile, an important transportation route (now Kansas Highway 99) now follows Missouri Street through Alma.

The Alma Downtown Historic District also is eligible for listing under Criterion C for architecture because many properties in the district are distinguished by a local tradition of masonry building construction using local limestone. Presently, Alma is promoted as the "city of native stone." That distinction dates back to the 1880s. As early as 1883, the stone of Wabaunsee County was recognized as a valuable building material. As one observer reported, "every part of the County is underlaid with a fine quality of limestone, both magnesium and common. A hard limestone, quarried in Mission Creek Township, is being used in many buildings in the county, and large quantities are exported to neighboring localities."<sup>2</sup> As a whole, the district is a relatively well-preserved example of the building types and methods of construction characteristic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Buildings in the district retain sufficient integrity of location, setting, materials, feeling, and association to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The period of significance (1880-1936) for the Alma Downtown Historic District is defined by two major waves of construction represented in the downtown buildings. The period begins with the construction of the Manhattan, Alma, and Burlingame (MAB), the first railroad to reach Alma in 1880. This line brought settlers and travelers, consumer goods and building materials to the town. The MAB and the Rock Island in 1887 provided transportation for the salt, coal, building stone, and livestock that brought prosperity to Wabaunsee County. The end of the period is defined by a

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<sup>2</sup> R. Sorren Magee, *Magee's History and Directory of Wabaunsee County* (Winchester, KS: Argus Job Printing Office, 1885), 13.

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slowdown in commercial development in the mid-1930s. Twenty-seven of the district's thirty-two historic resources (or 85 %) were erected during this fifty-six year period.

**Architectural History**

Based on the Alma Historic Preservation Survey conducted in 2007, the major periods of development in downtown Alma occurred in four stages from 1866 to about 1880, from 1880 to about 1915, from 1915 to about 1940, and from about 1940 to the present. This last stage of development primarily involved façade renovations and some new construction. The majority of extant historic resources within the downtown represent the years 1880 to 1936. The commercial architecture of the area is representative of Kansas architecture during these periods of development. Commercial buildings constructed in the late nineteenth century represent the Late Victorian Italianate and Romanesque styles. Buildings constructed in the early twentieth century include less ornate examples of the Commercial style. There are just five buildings that do not fall within the period of significance and, therefore, do not contribute to the historic architectural character of the district.

There are thirty-two buildings in the historic district. Nineteen appear to be more than one hundred years old and twenty-four appear to be more than fifty years old. Most of the historic buildings in the district are recognizable and reflect a typical evolution of architectural integrity over several decades of commercial development.

**Chronology**

After 1854, anti-slavery emigrants from Connecticut were important in the early settlement of Wabaunsee County (first named Richardson). Also, there was a steady emigration of German families into the county. As a writer commented in 1883, "Wabaunsee County was especially favored, settled as it was by New Englanders of good education and high ideals, and by perhaps the most desirable of foreign emigration--Germans--whose descendants are today among the most influential, industrious, and prosperous people of the county."<sup>3</sup>

After the Civil War ended, the large German population succeeded in changing the location of the county seat from Wabaunsee in the north to Alma, a more central location in Alma Township. Following the decisive county election on November 22, 1866, Alma was declared the new county seat. At that time, there was not a single house on the site. The town site was located on forty acres of bare prairie with bluestem grass waist high. There were no roads or streets.

Shortly after the election, an association of citizens of Alma Township organized to build a town. The association purchased forty acres from Gottlieb Zwanziger and hired him to survey the tract

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<sup>3</sup> Magee, Magee's History and Directory, 9, 14.



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and lay out the site into streets, blocks, and lots. The association offered lots for sale and, from the proceeds, paid for the construction of a wood frame building erected on the southwest corner of Missouri and Main [now Third] Street. The original courthouse was located one block east of the present site of the Wabaunsee County courthouse. At the same time, the association constructed a smaller building for the county clerk's office, just south of the court building.<sup>4</sup> The Wabaunsee County records and cash were moved to the Alma town site late in December, 1866.

The next building constructed in the town was the Alma Hotel built by John Winkler in the spring of 1868 on Missouri Street nearly opposite the county building. Alma was incorporated as a village in 1868 with about twenty residents. As late as 1869, there were only four buildings in Alma--"Schmitz and Meyer's store, Winkler's Hotel, Dierker's boarding house, and the court house."<sup>5</sup>

The town's growth was slow until after a final February 21, 1871 county seat election. To sway the voters, leaders of Alma promised to give Wabaunsee County "a safe, well-built, handsome stone building worth from \$6,000 to \$10,000."<sup>6</sup> Victory in that election confirmed the future of Alma as the Wabaunsee County seat. The stone court house (which cost \$8,000) was erected in 1872 and several other important buildings were constructed in Alma over the next several years.

A destructive prairie fire in 1875 brought Alma into the public eye and the successful effort to fight off the flames encouraged new investment in the town. The Conrad Mueller building at the northeast corner of Missouri and Third Streets (constructed ca. 1875) was one of the earliest stone buildings in Alma. Mueller was the proprietor of the Palace Billiard Hall which offered "choice cigars, tobacco and temperance refreshments of every kind. In early historic photographs of Missouri Street, however, most of the downtown commercial buildings were one-story wood frame structures."<sup>7</sup>

In the 1880s, the economy of Kansas boomed and emigrants rushed into the state. Alma also prospered and a decade of growth produced a flourishing community by 1890. The building of the first railroad to reach Alma was an important impetus to growth. The arrival of the Manhattan, Alma, and Burlingame Railroad (MAB) was the occasion for a gala celebration in Alma on July 4,

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<sup>4</sup> The old court house was torn down in March, 1906. See "Passing of the Old Court House," Alma Signal (?) 9 March 1906, Wabaunsee County Clippings, Kansas State Historical Society.

<sup>5</sup> William G. Cutler, History of the State of Kansas, "Wabaunsee Couty, Part 4," [www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/wabaunsee/wabaunsee-co-pt.html](http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/wabaunsee/wabaunsee-co-pt.html), p. 2 of 8. Accessed 2/16/2007; Matt Thomson, Early History of Wabaunsee County, Kansas (Alma, KS: Matt Thomson, 1901), 323; Kansas Directory Company, Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County (Topeka, KS: Kansas Directory Company, 1907), 38..

<sup>6</sup> Frank W. Blackmar, ed. Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History (Chicago, IL: Standard Publishing Company, 1912), [http://www.skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1912/w/Wabaunsee\\_county.html](http://www.skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1912/w/Wabaunsee_county.html), accessed 5/24/2007, p. 2 of 4.

<sup>7</sup> Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County, 39; "Birds Eye View of Alma," Wabaunsee County Herald n. d. [ca. 1880], Wabaunsee County Clippings, Kansas State Historical Society; Photograph by Louis Palenske, west side Missouri Street (1880), in Greg Hoots, ed., "Flint Hill Special," (Alma, KS: Wendy Page, Publisher, 1998), 36.

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1880 with 5,000 people attending and five bands to provide music. This was a branch line connecting the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad at Burlingame to the Kansas Pacific at Manhattan.<sup>8</sup> Fifty-two buildings were erected in Alma during 1884. The town had a population of about seven hundred in 1885 while the town's main rival in the southeastern part of Wabaunsee County, Eskridge, had about six hundred residents.<sup>9</sup>

In 1887 the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad built a railroad up the Mill Creek valley to Alma and west. The first main line constructed to Alma reached the town on March 25, 1887. As one glowing report said, "from the date of its arrival, Alma took to growing, to improving, and presently there is more building going on than there has been for years. The class of buildings, too, is substantial, such as would do amazing credit to the most pretentious streets in Kansas. The Wabaunsee County bank, the Brandt hotel and several other store houses of buildings of this character, and J. F. Limerick is putting up a building for the First National Bank which will cost \$85,000. All these buildings are, as is the court house, the public schools and many residences, built of stone." Another description published on July 19, 1888 reported that, "there are three drug stores, four grocery and general merchandise houses, two hardware stores, two furniture stores, two lumber yards, one livery stable, milliner stores and all the trades needful in such a community."<sup>10</sup>

According to an 1889 article, Alma had nearly doubled the number of its inhabitants since the building of the Rock Island Railroad. The report emphasized that "the coming of the Great Rock Island Route gave this city what it never previously enjoyed--a direct eastern and western connection. The discovery of coal, the establishment of cement works, of banks and other enterprises, and the advent of the Rock Island, are agencies which are exerting an influence immensely favorable to Alma's growth and prosperity." As the town grew, the location of the MAB railroad depot on the east side of Alma and the Rock Island depot on the south encouraged the development of nearby businesses and some local industries. By 1890 eight passenger trains each day gave residents of Alma direct service to Chicago, Kansas City, St. Joseph, Denver, Wichita, and southeast Kansas.<sup>11</sup>

Although there were ventures into salt production and coal mining near Alma, native stone proved to be the most enduring industrial resource of Wabaunsee County. As one commentator predicted in 1885, the county "has a great treasure in its hills, unsurpassed for building as well as lime and cement making enterprises. Limestone is found all over the county in ledges from one to six feet. This industry furnishes employment to many hundreds of men, the output being shipped in all directions for many purposes from railway ballast and bridge building to pretentious city

<sup>8</sup> Magee, *Magee's History and Directory*, 14; Thomson, *Early History*, 334. The MAB was abandoned in 1898.

<sup>9</sup> Thomson, *Early History*, 336.

<sup>10</sup> Thomson, *Early History*, 338; "Wabaunsee County," *Topeka Capital* 19 July 1888.

<sup>11</sup> "Historical: 1853-'89," *Wabaunsee County News* 7 November 1889.

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structures. There seems to be an unlimited supply of this stone, the largest quarries being located at Eskridge and Alma."<sup>12</sup>

At the Fox quarries, about four miles southwest of Alma, from twenty-five to seventy-five men were employed in 1892 and the stone was sent as far south as Texas to be used in the construction of bridges on the Rock Island extension. Stone from the Fox quarries also was used for construction of the Topeka Rock Island depot. Almost ten years later, fifty quarrymen and stone cutters were employed at the Fox quarries.<sup>13</sup>

By November 1891, the town of Alma had become the "city of native stone." As a reporter described, "nearly all of its business stores and residences are of the beautiful white limestone so prevalent in the county, and which is capable of ornamentation at a small cost, as the stone can be furnished for building purposes at a much less cost than would brick be if used. Few cities in the interior of Kansas present so pleasing and attractive an appearance in all respects, as does the capital of Wabaunsee county."<sup>14</sup> Some of the landmark buildings that contributed to the pleasing appearance of Alma were the Brandt Hotel (400 Missouri), the Limerick Block (322-326 Missouri), and the Palenske Block (204 Missouri).

The Brandt Hotel was constructed in 1887 to serve the railroad workers, salesmen, and travelers expected on the new Rock Island Railroad. The Brandt Hotel was praised as the best hotel in Alma. J. F. Limerick and his brother were immigrants from Ireland who established the Alma Coal Mining Company and the Alma Portland Cement Works. They built a large two-story stone building in 1888 to house their First National Bank and a general merchandise store. Unfortunately, the bank suspended operations on November 9, 1890 when the many Limerick enterprises became financially overextended.<sup>15</sup> The Limerick brothers lost their buildings and businesses to creditors and left for Oklahoma to make a new start.

Louis Palenske, the son of an early Wabaunsee County settler, was involved in the construction of several historic stone commercial buildings on the east side of Missouri Street in Block 9. The double store building at 208-212 Missouri was erected before 1885. The adjacent building, 204-206 Missouri, has a datestone of 1890. Later in 1908, Louis Palenske was involved in the reconstruction of 230 Missouri, now known as Palenske Hall. By 1892 Alma had an established business district, churches, schools, and important railroad connections. Most businesses in the downtown district had moved from early wood frame buildings into more substantial stone masonry structures by the late 1890s.

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<sup>12</sup> Magee, Magee's History and Directory, 17-18.

<sup>13</sup> "Alma," Alma Signal 27 August 1892; Thomson, Early History, 342.

<sup>14</sup> "Wabaunsee County." Topeka Journal 23 November 1891.

<sup>15</sup> Thomson, Early History, 341.

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Technological innovation and social change in the early twentieth century brought important improvements in Alma. A 1907 report summarized the early development, "Alma has made many improvements the last two years, among them is the Hochhaus Block, the new Meyer Building, Oetinger Lumber Yards, the \$15,000 High School building, the Lutheran Church, which cost a like sum, and L. Undorf's new market. Besides these many new residences have been erected. Every business place in Alma is occupied, and it is almost impossible to rent a house. The walks on Missouri Street are cement and new cement walks are being laid on the back streets. Alma is the only town in the county that can put on enough metropolitan airs to have an automobile parade every evening. From the standpoint of appearance, it is one of the most pleasing towns in Kansas. It is well kept and neat. Missouri street is kept in good repair and lined with nice looking business blocks of native stone. There is a uniformity and grace about the town which is good to see."<sup>16</sup>

In Alma, the Commercial Club organized in October, 1913. By 1914 there were forty-five members, mostly businessmen of the town. They worked on projects such as planning a new water system for the town, the construction of a new city hall, and organizing a good roads day. Alma had three banks in 1914. The First National Bank, the Alma National Bank (organized in 1889), and the Farmers National Bank (organized in 1912). During the Depression, all three banks were consolidated into the First National Bank of Alma chartered on March 4, 1932.<sup>17</sup>

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Kansans welcomed innovations such as the automobile, tractor, and airplane. By 1914 Kansans owned 50,000 cars and 30,000 of the owners were farmers. The extensive growth of automobile transportation was reflected in the construction of service station buildings in downtown Alma at 200 and 301 Missouri Street. During this period, the route of State Road was changed so that the present Kansas Highway 99 runs through downtown Alma on Missouri Street. The Depression of the 1930s and dry conditions state-wide made daily life difficult in Alma and Wabaunsee County. Only a few buildings were constructed in downtown Alma until after World War II ended in 1945.

Trends that affected the Alma Downtown Historic District after World War II were the movement of population from farms and ranches to cities, the development of the federal interstate highway system, and the decline of railroads. In the 1970s, railroad passenger service to Alma ended and the passenger depot was demolished. There are now fewer farms and rural residents in Wabaunsee County. Although the farm and ranch economy has declined in relative importance, there is potential to attract visitors and new as residents as a picturesque town in a scenic county. Alma is located only three miles south of Interstate 70 and within commuting distance of Manhattan and Topeka, major towns in the Kansas River valley urban population corridor. Kansas Highway 99 from Interstate 70 through Alma to the junction with Kansas Highway 4 has been designated the

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<sup>16</sup> Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County, 44.

<sup>17</sup> "Alma, Kansas Is Prosperous City," Topeka Capital 7 June 1914; "The First National Bank to Celebrate 50th Anniversary," Alma Signal-Enterprise 15 April 1982, p. 1, cols. 4-5..

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Kansas Native Stone Scenic Byway. Downtown Alma is an active business district anchored by public services including the City Hall, Post Office, Library, and the nearby Wabaunsee County Courthouse.

**Individual Property Histories**

The following properties are included in the historic district.<sup>18</sup>

**1. Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building, 504 Missouri, 1936, contributing.**

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This meeting hall for the American Legion and Auxiliary was constructed in 1936 as a memorial to veterans from Wabaunsee County. Plans for an American Legion-Auxiliary hall were first discussed at a meeting August 20, 1936, and work commenced on September 24. An article in the Alma Signal commented, "this is another real addition to our city and the Legion Auxiliary folks are to be congratulated." The foundation was constructed of local stone from the Am Bodell farm with walls of clay tile and a front of glazed brick. As the Alma Enterprise reported on October 23, tile layers under the supervision of Mr. Reynolds of Topeka built the walls. Am Bodell and Paul Falk did the concrete work and Art Senge and R. Diepenbrock did the carpentry. With much of the labor contributed by American Legion members, the building was completed in November at a cost of about \$3,000. The building is still a meeting hall and the current occupant is Ed Palenske American Legion Post #32.

**2. 408 Missouri, First National Bank of Wamego, circa 1995, non-contributing.**

This is a modern bank building.

**3. 400 Missouri, Brandt Hotel [Alma Hotel], 1887, contributing, National Register.**

The Brandt Hotel, individually listed on the National Register, is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. Located at the intersection of Missouri and Fourth Streets, the hotel building is a landmark at the northeast corner of the business district. Built in 1887, the two-story native stone building is a well preserved example of Italianate-style commercial architecture.

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<sup>18</sup> Historic building permits, water permits, and annual city directories were not available for Alma. Generally, estimated construction dates and historic property owners were determined by comparing the Sanborn Insurance Company maps (1885-1941) and the Kansas Inspection Bureau Fire Insurance Rates Booklets (1922-1941). Additional information about construction dates, historic property owners, and businesses was compiled from New Branches from Old Trees, a local history published by the Wabaunsee County Historical Society. Also, the author acknowledges with gratitude valuable assistance from local residents Greg Hoots, who provided digital copies of historic photographs, and Patricia Ringel, who provided newspaper references for the construction of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial American Legion Building.

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One of the leading businessmen of Wabaunsee County in 1885, Joseph Brandt was the proprietor of the Western Star Hotel in Alma. About two years later after the Rock Island Railroad reached the town, Joseph and his wife Christena had the Brandt Hotel built to serve railroad crews, salesmen, new settlers, and other visitors to Alma and Wabaunsee County. The Brandt Hotel opened on December 13, 1887. As the Alma Enterprise announced, "this is the largest hotel in the city... and is thoroughly fitted up with everything that goes to make up a first class hostelry. There are seventeen bedrooms on the second floor, all of them fitted up complete and thoroughly ventilated. Mr. Jos. Brandt, who has had years of experience in the hotel business, is the popular proprietor of this house." Jacob Horne purchased the property in 1896. After his death in 1899, his son, Louis, acquired the hotel. Louis died in 1901 and his wife Theresa Schutter Horne took over management of the hotel for the next thirty years. The hotel with a restaurant downstairs operated until the early 1960s. It has been vacant for several years, but the present owner plans to rehabilitate the building.

**4. 322-326 Missouri, Limerick Block [City Hall], 1888, contributing**

The Limerick Block is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. It was constructed for J. F. and R. J. Limerick, Irish immigrant brothers, who led a brief boom in Alma in the late 1880s. The Limerick brothers briefly operated a coal mine and lime kiln in the Mill Creek valley just east of Alma. Their large two-story native stone business block housed the First National Bank and a general merchandise store. There were offices for lawyers and doctors on the second floor.

As quickly as they expanded, the Limerick Brothers businesses became overextended. The brothers ran out of money and the bank operations were suspended on November 9, 1890. The Limerick brothers had to sell their buildings and land and moved to Perry, Oklahoma to make a new start. Guy Cleveland took over the general store and the Stuewe brothers took over the bank. According to a local article, P. R. Meyers and Company, dealers in general merchandise and groceries occupied all of the first floor except for the corner storeroom occupied by the First National Bank.<sup>19</sup> As late as 1957, the Masonic Lodge and the Eastern Star fraternal organizations held their meetings on the second floor of the old Limerick Block. In 1976, Dale Bleseke operated the Hy-Klas Supermarket in the main storeroom. Currently, the Alma City Hall occupies the end bay originally constructed for a bank.

**5. 320 Missouri, Crafts Building [Post Office], 1888, contributing**

This building was built for druggist Fred Crafts. Born in 1835, Fred Crafts came to Alma in June, 1875 and won an appointment as postmaster in 1879. In 1892 the Alma Signal reported, "Fred Crafts occupies his own building, erected at the same time with, and forming a part of the Limerick

<sup>19</sup> "Alma," Alma Signal 27 August 1892.

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block."<sup>20</sup> A business directory published in the county atlas of 1902 recorded John Crafts as a druggist and Alma city treasurer. Reportedly, either Fred or John Crafts sold the property to Frank Brown who later sold to Fred Baugh. About 1912 the building housed a produce house run by Bert Littlefield. About 1930 Fred Rakes opened a grocery store in the building. Rakes later sold to Walt Gillespie who sold to R. O. Dyer. Dyer sold to Vernon Reuter about 1960. Reuter expanded the grocery by moving into the adjacent Limerick Building. In 1963 Don Falk bought the building and remodeled the interior for a restaurant. After the restaurant closed in 1967, the Alma Post Office moved into the first floor storefront.

6. 316 Missouri, Lutz Hardware, circa 1899, contributing.

Reportedly, this building was built by Fred Lutz. The structure was recorded on the January, 1900, Sanborn map as a hardware store. Lutz came to Alma in 1871 and he was recorded as a hardware and furniture dealer in 1902 and 1907. In 1911 the business advertised as the Kleen Kutter store. In 1916 Robert Lutz, Fred's son, and Oscar Nelson bought the store. In 1918 Nelson bought out his partner. It was recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map as a store selling hardware, paint, and oil. Nelson operated the store until 1964 when he sold to Norman Anderson. Anderson sold to Ralph Abbott who closed the business in 1966. Marvin Hendricks bought the building in 1970, remodeled the interior for offices, and renamed it the Professional Building. It is now occupied by the Uptown Beauty Shop.

7. 308 Missouri, Ohst Building, circa 1900, non-contributing

This property was vacant in the February, 1885 Sanborn map, but there was a one-story stone jewelry store on the property by January, 1893. Reportedly, a fire about 1900 destroyed buildings in this location and August Ohst, a local painter, rebuilt on this property. In the January, 1900 Sanborn map, it was recorded as a barber shop and office. From 1922 to 1930, the property was a barber shop with a paint shop in the basement. Partitioned in 1930s, Ohst had a barber shop in 1936 and Walter Diehl, a cobbler, occupied the other half of the building. Two stores in the building (barber and cobbler) were recorded in the 1941 Sanborn map. Al Nicely's barber shop occupied part of the building in the early 1940s. It is now occupied by Gambino's Pizza.

8. 306 Missouri, Sutherland Harness & Saddlery, circa 1899, contributing

On August 27, 1892, the Alma Signal reported that George Sutherland occupied "a substantial stone building filled with harness, saddles, whips, laprobes, etc." Reportedly, George Sutherland rebuilt this building about 1900 after a fire. A one-story stone building in this location was recorded in the 1900, 1908 and 1922 Sanborn maps and Sutherland Harness & Saddlery was listed

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<sup>20</sup> "Alma," Alma Signal 27 August 1892.

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in the business directory of the 1919 county atlas. By 1936 the business was Stuewe Harness and Shoes. In January, 1941, it was Stuewe Paints and Wallpaper. The building housed the Alma Branch Library in 1976. Currently, it is occupied by Flint Hills Antiques.

**9. 304 Missouri, First National Bank of Alma [Stockgrowers State Bank], 1956, non-contributing**

According to the 1941 Sanborn map, this property was vacant. In 1956, the First National Bank of Alma built a modern building with a concrete block rear addition. Reportedly, the Bank of Alma (established 1895) consolidated in 1932 with the Farmers National Bank (established 1912) and the First National Bank (established in 1888) to form the First National Bank of Alma with O. F. Deans as president.

**10. 302 Missouri, Mueller Hardware, circa 1884, contributing**

A two-story stone building on the property was recorded in the 1893 Sanborn map and it may have been constructed before 1885. Conrad Mueller constructed the building to house his expanding hardware business and the Muellers lived on the second floor. Also, Fred Lutz operated a furniture business in the front for several years. When Conrad Mueller died in 1920, his son Gus Mueller purchased the business and operated it until he sold to Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Hendricks in 1951. Currently, the building is occupied by Hendricks Hardware.

**11. 300 Missouri, Conrad Mueller Saloon, circa. 1875, contributing**

This building was constructed by Conrad Mueller about 1875. He operated a saloon until after state Prohibition was approved in 1880 and then opened a hardware business. When Conrad Mueller died in 1920, his son Gus Mueller purchased the business and operated it until he sold to Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Hendricks in 1951. Currently, the building is occupied by Hendricks Hardware.

**11a. 300 Missouri, Storage building, c. 1890, contributing**

This wood frame alley building was recorded on the 1893 Sanborn map and was used to store implements, paint, oil, and wire over the years. Currently, the building is used for storage.

**12. 230 Missouri, Commercial National Bank [Palenske Hall], ca. 1873, 1908, contributing**

Peter Degan built this building in 1873 as Germania Hall. In 1883, he was described as a German emigrant hotel keeper who came to Alma in 1869. After a fire in 1890, the structure was rebuilt as the Horne Building. At this time, the storefront was saved and the north side was extended doubling the length of the building. A stone ice house was recorded at the rear of the property in



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the January, 1892 Sanborn map. The building was also described as the Gottlieb Noller saloon. It was recorded as a saloon in the January, 1900 Sanborn map with a dwelling on the second floor.

Another fire damaged the front of the building in 1906 or 1907. On October 23, 1908, the Alma Enterprise reported, "preparations for work have begun on the repairs and new front for the Horne Building on the corner which is to be the future home of the Commercial National Bank. A modern plate glass front with a corner entrance will be put in, also a big vault, new floors and ceilings, and it will be made into a handsome banking room. It will help with the looks of the street very much and Mr. Palenske is to be commended for the enterprise. Feiden Brothers will do the work." Renovation work continued into 1909 and the building housed the bank for about twelve years.

The first floor of this building was recorded as vacant with an office on the second floor in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. A photograph from early 1928 shows the Bowes attorney office on the second floor. According to Fire Insurance Booklets, the building housed a store selling jewelry and pianos with offices and a dwelling upstairs in 1922 and 1924. It was the Ruetter-Hess Electric Light store and office in 1928 and the Simon-Hess Beer Parlor with offices on the second floor in 1934. Later, George Sommer bought the building and Clarence Frank operated a produce store in the building until the mid-1960s. The building was donated to the Wabaunsee County Historical Society in 1968. Currently, the Wabaunsee County Economic Development office occupies the first floor of the building.

13. 224 Missouri, [Campenella-Gentry Funeral Home], circa 1908, 1956, contributing

A photograph from the southwest looking toward the southeast corner of Third and Main Streets published in the 1907 Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County showed three similar stone store buildings south of the Commercial National Bank on the corner of Main [Third] and Missouri Streets. Three one-story stone buildings with a uniform size and setback were recorded on this property in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. From the north, they were a general store, a telephone office, and a job printing office. The F. C. Noller Mercantile Company, the general store, was shown at this location in a ca. 1910 photograph. Fire destroyed the middle building in 1922. The north building was a motion picture theater (capacity 200) from ca. 1922 until after 1941. It was the Colonial Theater in 1928, the Thowe Theater in 1930, and the Hasenbank Theater in 1936 and 1941. In 1956 the theater building was incorporated into a new furniture store constructed by Hasenbank and LaMar. Currently, the building is occupied by the Campenella-Gentry Funeral Home.

14. 222 Missouri, Simon Building, circa 1908, contributing

A photograph from the southwest looking toward the southeast corner of Third and Main Streets published in the 1907 Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County showed three similar

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stone store buildings south of the Commercial National Bank on the corner of Main [Third] and Missouri Streets. Three one-story stone buildings with a uniform size and setback were recorded on this property in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. This building (owned by Charlie Simon) was a job printing office in 1908. A local telephone exchange was located in this building from ca. 1920 to 1960. The McMahan telephone service in Alma began June 25, 1898. The name was changed to the Wabaunsee Telephone Company in 1903 and by 1907 there were 275 telephones in the Alma vicinity. In 1930 the building housed the United Telephone Exchange. In 1960 the telephone office was moved to Holton. There was a barber shop operated by Ervin Stuewe in the building in 1976. Currently, the building houses a barber shop and beauty shop.

15. 218 Missouri, American Telephone Building, circa 1960, non-contributing

This is a non-historic building housing the telephone equipment and switching center.

16. 212 Missouri, Morris Drug Store, circa 1884, contributing

This two-story stone commercial building was built for Louis Palenske. According to the February, 1885 Sanborn map, the storefront was vacant with a barber in the basement. For many years the building housed a drug store operated by Thomas Morris, who lived upstairs. The Morris Drug Store was shown in a line drawing published in the August 27, 1892 Alma Signal and the drug store was recorded in the January, 1893 Sanborn map. Also, there was a meeting hall on the second floor. The drug store was recorded in the January, 1900 Sanborn map. There was a tailor shop on the first floor recorded in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. Later, the building housed the Star Restaurant, James E. Ketterman proprietor. The J. E. Kitterman [sic] restaurant was listed in the 1907 Alma business directory without a specific location. The property was recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map as a restaurant with a one-story rear kitchen; the Ketterman restaurant was recorded at this location in the Fire Insurance Booklet for May 6, 1924. The property was a store in the 1941 Sanborn map. About 1950 Chris Wertzberger and August Guth started a liquor store in the building. After Mr. Guth's death, his son Harold Guth bought the business and was the owner in 1976. Currently, the building is occupied by Herbic Liquor.

17. 208 Missouri, circa 1884, 1960, non-contributing.

This two-story stone commercial building was built for Louis Palenske. According to the February, 1885 Sanborn map, the first floor had a jewelry, books and notions store with the Masonic Hall on the second floor and a one-story wood frame photography gallery in the rear. Probably, this was the original Palenske store and photography studio (see also 204 Missouri). In the January, 1893 Sanborn map, the first floor was vacant with a meeting hall on the second floor. According to the January, 1900 Sanborn map, this was a notions store. A lunch room on the first floor and a barber in the basement were recorded in the 1908 Sanborn map. The property was recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map as a tailor shop with a milk station in the basement.

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Reportedly, the Gustav H. Meier photo gallery also was located in this building which Meier purchased for his studio and residence. Born in 1865, Meier came to Alma in 1887 to study photography with Louis Palenske (see 204 Missouri). He operated a photography studio from about 1890 until his death in 1941. As the Alma Signal reported August 27, 1892, "G. H. Meier has one of the most complete photograph galleries in the west." Meier's studio actually may have been in the rear of 206 Missouri as recorded on the 1908 and 1922 Sanborn maps (see 204 Missouri). The property was recorded as the Meyer [sic] building in the May 6, 1924 Fire Insurance Booklet. Later, Bill Grunewald operated an Army goods store and Armond Atkinson had a photography shop in the building. George and Ella Herl bought the building in 1967 and converted the first floor storefront into a car wash. Currently, the building is used as a liquor store and warehouse.

18. 204 Missouri, Palenske Block [Alma State Bank Block], 1890, contributing

The Palenske Block is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. According to the building datestone, it was constructed for Louis Palenske in 1890 adjacent to the earlier business block associated with Louis Palenske. According to Matt Thomson's Early History of Wabaunsee County, Kansas, Palenske was born in 1858 and in 1877 he began to study photography "under the tutorship of the ablest masters of the art in Topeka and Kansas City. Palenske opened a book and stationery store in 1882. He added musical instruments and sewing machines until he carried the largest stock in the county by 1902. Palenske began banking under the name L. Palenske & Company in 1888. The company merged with the Alma State Bank which opened June 24, 1889 and later merged into the Alma National Bank on January 3, 1898. According to the Topeka Journal November 23, 1891, Charles Ross was president of the Alma State Bank and Fred Lutz was vice president. Louis Palenske served as cashier for these financial institutions. In 1896 Palenske was elected a representative to the state legislature. Palenske was cashier of the Alma National Bank in 1902. According to the 1908 Sanborn map, the north part of the building was a novelty store with a photography studio in the rear and a bank in the south part. In 1909 Palenske established the Commercial National Bank so he may have sold his interest in the Alma National Bank. According to the Topeka Daily Capital June 7, 1914, Fred Reuter was president, Otto J. Hess was vice president, and O. F. Deans was cashier of the Alma National Bank.

In the early 1920s, Fred Steinmeyer bought the building. It was recorded as the Steinmeyer Tire and Battery Shop in the May 6, 1924 Fire Insurance Booklet. The entire building was recorded as a farm implement business in the 1922 Sanborn map with a photography studio in the rear. Fred Steinmeyer's two sons, Elmer and Herb, were partners in the Star-Durant automobile agency. In the 1941 Sanborn map, the north storefront was recorded as beer storage and the south storefront as auto storage. Merrill Fritze bought the building in the 1950. The building housed a pool hall and tavern in 1957. Currently, the building is occupied by an antique shop.

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**19. 202 Missouri, Merrill Fritze garage, circa 1955, non-contributing**

This is a modern concrete block garage building. Merrill Fritze bought the property next to his gas station in the 1950s. Currently, the building is used for storage.

**20. 200 Missouri, A. P. Zeckser Gas Station, circa 1924, contributing**

A. P. Zeckser built this gasoline filling station between December 30, 1922 and May 29, 1925 after moving the building housing his parents' shoe shop and home to the east. A wood-frame dwelling was recorded on the property in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. The Shell Oil Company purchased the station about 1930. Merrill Fritze bought the property about 1935 and operated the service station until after 1976. Currently, the building is used for equipment storage.

**21. 223 Missouri, Farmers' Union Cooperative Store [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum], circa 1910, contributing**

For many years in the nineteenth century, the Meyer General Store stood on this property. According to the November, 1908 Sanborn map, this was a one-story wood-frame general store with a metal-covered front. A stone rear warehouse half the width of the main building that was constructed before January, 1893 extended almost to the rear lot line. The storefront was rebuilt as a one-story stone building and that structure was recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. Probably, the reconstruction was associated with the change to the Farmers' Union Cooperative Store. C. B. Thowe was the store manager followed by John Ditman. Ditman died sometime after 1957 and the Farmers Coop Store closed. The "new front" was installed just before 1957. Clarence Karns bought the building; he and his son operated the store until their deaths. His daughter Laura and her husband operated an IGA store in the building in 1976. The Wabaunsee County Historical Society purchased the building in December, 1986 and, currently, the building is used by the Wabaunsee County Historical Museum.

**22. 227 Missouri, Meyer Block [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum], 1906, contributing**

The first building in Alma, which was constructed in 1866 for the county offices and court, stood on this site until 1906. Then August and Otto Meyer constructed this fine store building. O. A. Meyer laid the cornerstone for the new building in the week before May 25, 1906. John and Rudolph Feiden were the stone masons who built the building. The Alma Post Office was located in the north half of the storefront. C. O. Kinne served as postmaster. The south half of the storefront was the Post Office Drug Store, Dr. August Meyer proprietor. The post office moved to the rear storefront which faces Third Street about 1910 and remained until after 1957. I. A. Robertson was the postmaster. In 1912 the Farmers National Bank was established and located in the north half of the storefront. E. E. Ames was president and E. H. Womer was vice president and

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cashier in 1919. All the banks in Alma were consolidated in 1932. After the Farmers National Bank closed, the drug store moved into the north half and Ed Mann operated a jewelry store in the south. Don Holcomb removed the partition and his pharmacy occupied the entire store in 1957. The building was donated to the Wabaunsee County Historical Society in 1969 and currently serves as the Wabaunsee County Historical Museum.

**23. 301 Missouri, White Eagle Service Station, circa 1924, contributing**

There was no filling station at this location recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. Then J. Degenhardt moved the older wooden buildings from the site and built a gasoline service station. In the Kansas Inspection Bureau booklets for Alma, the business was recorded as the Degenhardt-Stuewe filling station May 6, 1924 and again May 2, 1930. Later, Degenhardt's son Leo and grandson Jim Degenhardt operated the business as a Conoco station. Currently, the building is used as a seasonal ice cream and sandwich shop

**24. 305 Missouri, [Frank's Plumbing], circa 2000, non-contributing**

This is a non-historic corrugated metal building. It was built for and houses a plumbing shop.

**25. 309-311 Missouri, Kinne & Kerans Block, circa 1888, contributing**

The Kinne and Kerans Block is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. Originally, the south half of the building was the Wabaunsee County Bank operated by Vories & Howard. The bank was declared insolvent on January 23, 1889. Later, the Alma National Bank occupied the south storefront. A bank in this location was recorded in the 1908 and 1922 Sanborn map. About 1945 Gus Diepenbrock and his wife purchased the south part of the building. He had a barber shop on the first floor and they lived upstairs. His widow owned the property in 1976.

The north half of this double store building was the C. O. Kinne and J. J. Kearns General Store. Kerans came to Alma in 1884. Later, he operated an abstract, real estate, and loan office. Probably, this was the real estate and loan office in the south part of the building recorded in the 1893 Sanborn map. Kinne came to Alma in 1871 and served as postmaster in the first decade of the twentieth century. The Post Office in the south part of the building was recorded in the 1900 Sanborn map.

In 1890 J. B. Cassidy opened a grocery store in the north half of this building. Cassidy had been employed by the J. F. Limerick and Company. By 1907, Cassidy was serving his second term as mayor of Alma. Later, Cassidy was followed in the grocery business by Simeon Smith, G. A. Kratzer, and John Ditman. The grocery store was recorded in the 1922 Sanborn map. A hand printing office in the rear of the north block was recorded in the 1893 and 1900 Sanborn maps.

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The Modern Woodmen Lodge Hall was housed upstairs for many years. After the grocery business closed about 1945, Ross Troutner opened a dry cleaning and clothing store in the building which he later sold to Herb Mueller. Currently, the south storefront is occupied by a bakery and the north storefront is the Wabaunsee County Farm Bureau office.

26. 315 Missouri, Schmanke-Weaver Building, circa 1884, 1906, contributing

Reportedly, this building was constructed for Christoph Schmanke. A harness store in a two-story stone building with a brick front was recorded at this location in the February, 1885 Sanborn map. J. C., Henry J., and William Pippert occupied the building from ca. 1888-1893. The Alma Signal August 27, 1892 reported that William Pippert "carries a full stock of musical instruments, notions, and sewing machines." A millinery store with a dwelling on the second floor was recorded in the January, 1893 Sanborn map. The first floor was recorded as a meat market in the January, 1900 Sanborn map. Frank Grunewald and Thomas O'Neil owned the market. The Grunewald & O'Neil meat market and Mrs. Frank Grunewald, millinery, were recorded in the Wabaunsee County Directory and History of 1907. Reportedly, W. G. Weaver purchased the building in 1906 and rebuilt the storefront after a fire damaged the building. Weaver came to Alma in 1868. He opened an insurance office in 1879 and established the Wabaunsee County Abstract Office in 1899. By 1907, the office also sold real estate and made loans. In 1919 Weaver served as clerk of the District Court and a director of the Farmers National Bank. A jewelry store on the first floor and an office on the second floor were recorded in the 1908 and 1922 Sanborn maps. Weaver sold the property to Victor Hergenreter in 1960. Donna Reuter, the current building owner, has operated Wabaunsee County Abstracting since 1976.

27. 317 Missouri, Louis Undorf Meat Market, circa 1906, non-contributing

This building was constructed for the Louis Undorf Meat Market about 1906. A new one-story stone building for a market was recorded in the November 1908 Sanborn map. It was described as the City Meat Market, Louis Undorf, proprietor, in 1911. The property was recorded as a butcher with a meat shop in the rear and a poultry house on the alley in the 1922 Sanborn map. It was a store in the 1941 Sanborn map. The building was remodeled about 1960 for the Harvey Comer café. Hubert Undorf was the owner in 1976. Currently, the building is vacant.

28. 319-321 Missouri, P. J. Schulte Building, ca. 1884, 1888, 1944, 2008, contributing

In the February, 1885 Sanborn map, a two-story stone building with a barber on the first floor and a dwelling on the second floor was recorded on the south half of Lot 5, Block 7, in this location. The building later housed the Alma Enterprise, a newspaper established October 11, 1884 by Frank I. Sage and O. W. Little. Attorney Carey Carroll purchased the Enterprise in 1943 (see 323 Missouri). The south building was recorded as a hand printing office in the 1893 Sanborn map. About 1944 P. J. Schulte purchased both buildings on Lot 5 and had a new brick front constructed.

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In the January, 1893 Sanborn map, another two-story stone building, a meat market, was recorded on the north half of Lot 5, Block 7. The building was recorded as a meat market with a rear ice house in the January, 1900 and November, 1908 Sanborn map. The building was recorded as a restaurant with a bakery and wood oven attached to the rear of the main building in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. Probably, the change from meat market to restaurant-bakery occurred about 1910. According to the Topeka Daily Capital June 7, 1914, the City Bakery operated by Fred Zimmerman was the "only one in the city." Zimmerman produced 800 loaves of bread a day. Later the bakery was operated by Mike Rongish, E. G. Schmidt, and his son, R. L. Schmidt. The building was recorded as a store and bake shop in the 1941 Sanborn map. Reportedly, P. J. Schulte purchased the building from G. H. Meier about 1944. The building housed the Hy-Klas super market in 1957. Currently, the building is occupied by a flower shop.

**29. 323 Missouri, Signal-Enterprise Building, circa 1901, contributing**

The south half of Lot 6, Block 7 was vacant in the January, 1900 Sanborn map. A two-story stone building with a printing office was recorded on the property in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. In the 1922 Sanborn map, it was recorded as the Alma Signal printing office with a doctor's office on the second floor. Matt Thomson started the Alma Signal newspaper September 7, 1889. He sold the newspaper to Dr. O. S. Chester and Carey Carroll in 1901. H. C. Sticher was the editor and publisher in 1907. Judge Carey E. Carroll (1868-1948), purchased the Enterprise and consolidated the two Alma papers September 19, 1943. Carroll was admitted to the bar in 1895 and elected Wabaunsee County attorney in 1896. In 1911 Carroll had his law office on the second floor along with the office of Oscar Schmitz who was county attorney at the time. The building's first floor storefront was remodeled by 1957. After Judge Carroll's death, his son, A. E. Carroll, published the newspaper until 1961 when he sold to Robert F. Stuewe. Mrs. Lucy Carroll owned the building in 1976. This building still is occupied by the Alma Signal-Enterprise newspaper.

**30. 327 Missouri, Hochhans Block, circa 1906, non-contributing**

There was a wood frame building with a rear wagon shed on the north half of Lot 6, Block 7 recorded in the January, 1900 Sanborn map. This was a wagon shop owned by R. A. Hochhans. Apparently, Hochhaus replaced that structure about 1906. The existing one-story stone building with a double storefront occupying the north half of Lot 6 and the south half of Lot 7 was recorded in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. Also in 1907, the Wabaunsee County Directory and History reported, "Alma has made many improvements the last two years, among them the Hochhans Block, the new Meyer Building [see 227 Missouri] ... and L. Undorf's new market [see 317 Missouri]. The Knostman Clothing Company occupied the north half of the building in 1907. According to the November, 1908 Sanborn map, the building had a buggy shop in the south half and a store selling clothing, boots, and shoes in the north half. I. A. Robertson, who worked for Knostman, bought the clothing business in 1911. Robertson served as mayor of Alma in 1906.

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The Alma Clothing Company was recorded in the building on May 6, 1924. Robertson later sold to C. H. Schmidt who sold to Art Johnson who established the Miller & Johnson Drug Company. Johnson owned the building by January 14, 1927 and used the south half for a drug store and the north half as a clothing store. In 1954 Dr. E. B. McKnight had his office in the north part of the building.

The south half of the building was a variety and book store and the north half was a clothing store recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. Joe Treu operated the bookstore. He sold to the Miller & Johnson Drug Company. Albert J. Peckinovsky purchased the building from Miller and Johnson and later sold to Francis Newton. Newton's widow Catherine Newton sold to Milton V. Rubottom. Currently, the building is used as a restaurant.

**30a.** 327 Missouri, Storage building, c. 1922-1926, contributing

The tile outbuilding behind the north storefront was built between May, 1922 and May, 1926 and served as a dry cleaning shop for the Alma Clothing Company. Currently, the building is vacant.



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The Wabaunsee County Historical Museum has a collection of historic photographs of Alma and Wabaunsee County. Several photographs show historic buildings on Missouri Street from the 1870s through the 1960s.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundary of the nominated historic district begins at the northeast corner of Lot 3, Block 1, Original Town of Alma, then proceeds south on the midline of the alley east of Missouri Street crossing Fourth Street, then crossing Third Street to the south east corner of a tract consisting of the west 67 feet of Lot 1, Block 9. The boundary proceeds from that point directly south to the midline of Second Street, then west to the midline of Missouri Street, then north to the southeast corner of Lot 6, Block 10, then west to the midline of the alley west of Missouri Street, then north to the midline of Third Street. The boundary proceeds east to a point directly south of the southwest corner of a tract consisting of the east 58 feet of Lot 1, Block 7, then north to the southwest corner of Lot 3, Block 7, then west to the midline of the alley west of Missouri Street, then north to the intersection with the midline of Fourth Street, then east to the midline of Missouri Street.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary of the Alma Downtown Historic District encompasses the concentration of historic resources that retain architectural integrity and are associated with the commercial development of the community during the period of significance. The district's boundary corresponds to the lot lines of the included properties. The contributing resources define the historic setting and historic sense of place of downtown Alma, which is strengthened by the intact historic street network. The district is primarily linear and follows the north-south route of Missouri Street, the community's main commercial thoroughfare.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS**

**Section Number Photographs Page 33**

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**PHOTO LABELS**

**Alma Downtown Historic District, Wabaunsee County, Kansas**

Photographer: Dale Nimz  
1928 Countryside Lane, Lawrence, KS 66044

Location of digital negatives: Kansas Historic Preservation Office

**Exterior**

1. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0001.tif, Streetscape, east side Missouri Street, 200 block, view from southwest, 10/21/2008.
2. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0002.tif, Zeckser Gas Station, 200 Missouri Street, view from southwest, 10/21/2008.
3. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0003.tif, Palenske Block, 204 Missouri Street, view from west, 10/21/2008.
4. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0004.tif, Commercial National Bank, 230 Missouri Street, view from northwest, 10/21/2008.
5. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0005.tif, Streetscape, Missouri Street, view from south, 10/21/2008.
6. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0006.tif, Farmers Union Coop, 223 Missouri Street, view from southeast, 10/21/2008.
7. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0007.tif, Meyer Block, 227 Missouri Street, view from northeast, 10/21/2008.
8. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0008.tif, Streetscape, Third and Missouri Street, view from south, 10/21/2008.
9. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0009.tif, Streetscape, east side Missouri Street, 300 block, view from southwest, 10/21/2008.

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**Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS**

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10. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0010.tif, Mueller Hardware, 302 Missouri Street, view from west southwest, 10/21/2008.
  11. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0011.tif, Streetscape, east side Missouri Street, 300 block, view from south, 10/21/2008.
  12. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0012.tif, Crafts Building, 320 Missouri Street, view from west, 10/21/2008.
  13. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0013.tif, Limerick Block,, 326 Missouri Street, view from northwest, 10/21/2008.
  14. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0014.tif, Brandt Hotel, 400 Missouri Street, view from southwest, 10/21/2008.
  15. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0015.tif, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building, 504 Missouri Street, view from west, 10/21/2008.
  16. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0016.tif, Kinne and Kerans Block, 309-311 Missouri Street, view from east, 10/21/2008.
  17. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0017.tif, Schmanke-Weaver Building, 315 Missouri Street, view from east, 10/21/2008.
  18. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0018.tif, Streetscape, 319-327 Missouri, view from southeast, 10/21/2008.
  19. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0019.tif, Signal-Enterprise Building, 323 Missouri Street, view from northeast, 10/21/2008.
  20. KS\_WabaunseeCounty\_AlmaDowntownDistrict\_0020.tif, Hochans Block, 327 Missouri Street, view from northeast, 10/21/2008.

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Continuation Sheet

Section Number Add'l Documentation Page 35 Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

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**PROPERTY OWNERS**

**PROPERTIES LOCATED IN PROPOSED ALMA DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1. 504 Missouri Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building (1936), contributing  
Owner--Ed Palenske Post #32, 504 Missouri, Alma, KS 66401
2. 408 Missouri First National Bank of Wamego (ca. 1995), non-contributing  
Owner--First National Bank of Wamego, P. O. Box 226, Wamego, KS 66547
3. 400 Missouri Alma Hotel (1887), individually listed on National Register  
Alma Hotel, LLC, 315 E. 55th, Kansas City, MO 64113
4. 322-326 Missouri Limerick Block (1888), contributing  
326 Missouri, City Hall, City of Alma, P. O. Box 444, Alma, KS 66401  
  
324-326 Missouri  
David A. Stuewe, P. O. Box 64, Alma, KS 66401
5. 320 Missouri Crafts Building [Post Office] (1888), contributing  
Don Hendricks, 714 Missouri, Alma, KS 66401
6. 316 Missouri Lutz Hardware [Uptown Beauty Shop] (ca. 1899), contributing  
Marvin C. Hendricks, Trustee, Box 386, Alma, KS 66401
7. 308 Missouri Ohst Building [Gambinos] (ca. 1900), non-contributing  
JWW LLC, 3613 NW 46<sup>th</sup> St, Topeka, KS 66618
8. 306 Missouri Sutherland Harness and Saddlery [Flint Hill Antiques] (ca. 1900), contributing.  
Bradley L. Hamblet, P. O. Box 233, Alma, KS 66401
9. 304 Missouri First National Bank of Alma [Stockgrowers State Bank] (1956), non-contributing.  
Stockgrowers State Bank, P. O. Box 217, Alma, KS 66401

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**Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS**

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10. 302 Missouri Mueller Hardware, [Stockgrowers State Bank] (ca. 1884), contributing Stockgrowers State Bank, P. O. Box 217, Alma, KS 66401
11. 300 Missouri Conrad Mueller Saloon (ca. 1875), contributing Marvin C. Hendricks, Trustee, P. O. Box 386, Alma, KS 66401
- 11a. 300 Missouri Mueller Hardware storage building (ca. 1890), contributing Marvin C. Hendricks, Trustee, P. O. Box 386, Alma, KS 66401
12. 230 Missouri Commercial National Bank [Palenske Hall] (ca. 1873, 1908), contributing Wabaunsee County Historical Society, P. O. Box 387, Alma, KS 66401
13. 224 Missouri [Campenella-Gentry Funeral Home] (ca. 1906, 1956), non-contributing Kaw Valley Funeral Co. LLC, P. O. 232, Wamego, KS 66547
14. 222 Missouri Simon Building (ca. 1906), contributing Colleen A. Falk, P. O. Box 273, Alma, KS 66401
15. 218 Missouri American Telephone Building (ca. 1960), non-contributing American Telephone Company, 6666 W. 110th Street, Overland Park, KS 66211 [United Telephone System]
16. 212 Missouri [Herbic Liquor] (ca. 1884), contributing David A. Stuewe, IRA Trust, c/o Trust Co. of Manhattan 330 Poyntz Ave, Manhattan, KS 66502
17. 208 Missouri [Herbic Liquor warehouse] (ca. 1884, ca. 1960), non-contributing David A. Stuewe, David A. IRA Trust, c/o Trust Co. of Manhattan 330 Poyntz Ave, Manhattan, KS 66502
18. 204 Missouri Palenske Block (ca. 1890), contributing David A. Stuewe, IRA Trust, c/o Trust Co. of Manhattan 330 Poyntz Ave, Manhattan, KS 66502



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**Alma Downtown Historic District  
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19. 202 Missouri Merrill Fritze garage (ca. 1955), non-contributing  
James D. Diepenbrock, P. O. Box 373, Alma, KS 66401
  
20. 200 Missouri A. P. Zeckser Gas Station (ca. 1920), contributing  
James D. Diepenbrock, P. O. Box 373, Alma, KS 66401
  
21. 223 Missouri Farmers Union Coop Association, [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum] (ca. 1910, 1957), contributing.  
Wabaunsee County Historical Society, Box 387, Alma, KS 66401
  
22. 227 Missouri Meyer Block [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum] (1906), contributing.  
Wabaunsee County Historical Society, Box 387, Alma, KS 66401
  
23. 301 Missouri White Eagle Service Station (ca. 1920), contributing  
Galen E. and Linda K. Craghead, 24648 Nehring Branch Rd, Alma, KS 66401
  
24. 305 Missouri [Frank's Plumbing] (ca. 2000), non-contributing  
Don Frank, P. O. Box 187, Alma, KS 66401
  
25. 309 Missouri Kinne & Kerans Block (ca. 1888), contributing  
Nyla L. Gehrt, 730 SW Vesper Ave., Topeka, KS 66606, c/o Lydia Diepenbrock  
311 Missouri, contributing  
Wabaunsee County Farm Bureau, 37334 Pioneer Rd., Alma, KS 66401
  
26. 315 Missouri Schmanke-Weaver Building (ca. 1884, 1906), contributing  
Donna Reuter, P. O. 37, Alma, KS 66401
  
27. 317 Missouri Louis Undorf Meat Market (ca. 1906), non-contributing  
Jennifer Frank, 317 Missouri, Alma, KS 66401
  
28. 319-321 Missouri P. J. Schulte Building (ca. 1892, 1944, 2000), contributing  
Tim Swenson, P. O. Box 202, Alma, KS 66401

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**Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS**

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29. 323 Missouri Signal-Enterprise Building (ca. 1901), contributing  
Ervan D. and Pamela K. Stuewe, P. O. Box 158, Alma, KS 66401

30. 327 Missouri Hochhans Block (ca. 1906), non-contributing  
Donald and Deborah Westhoff, P. O. Box 38, Alma, KS 66401

30a. 327 Missouri Storage building (ca. 1924), contributing  
Donald and Deborah Westhoff, P. O. Box 38, Alma, KS 66401

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Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

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**HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS**

(Figure 1, Streetscape, west side Missouri Street north of Third, from southeast, ca. 1880).<sup>21</sup>



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<sup>21</sup> Photograph by Louis Palenske, west side Missouri Street (1880), in Greg Hoots, ed., "Flint Hill Special," (Alma, KS: Wendy Page, Publisher, 1998), 36.

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Alma Downtown Historic District  
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(Figure 2, View of Missouri Street from north, ca. 1948, Limerick Block, 322-326 Missouri, left.)



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Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

(Figure 3, View of east Side Missouri Street, ca. 1900, Palenske Block, 204 Missouri, to the right.)



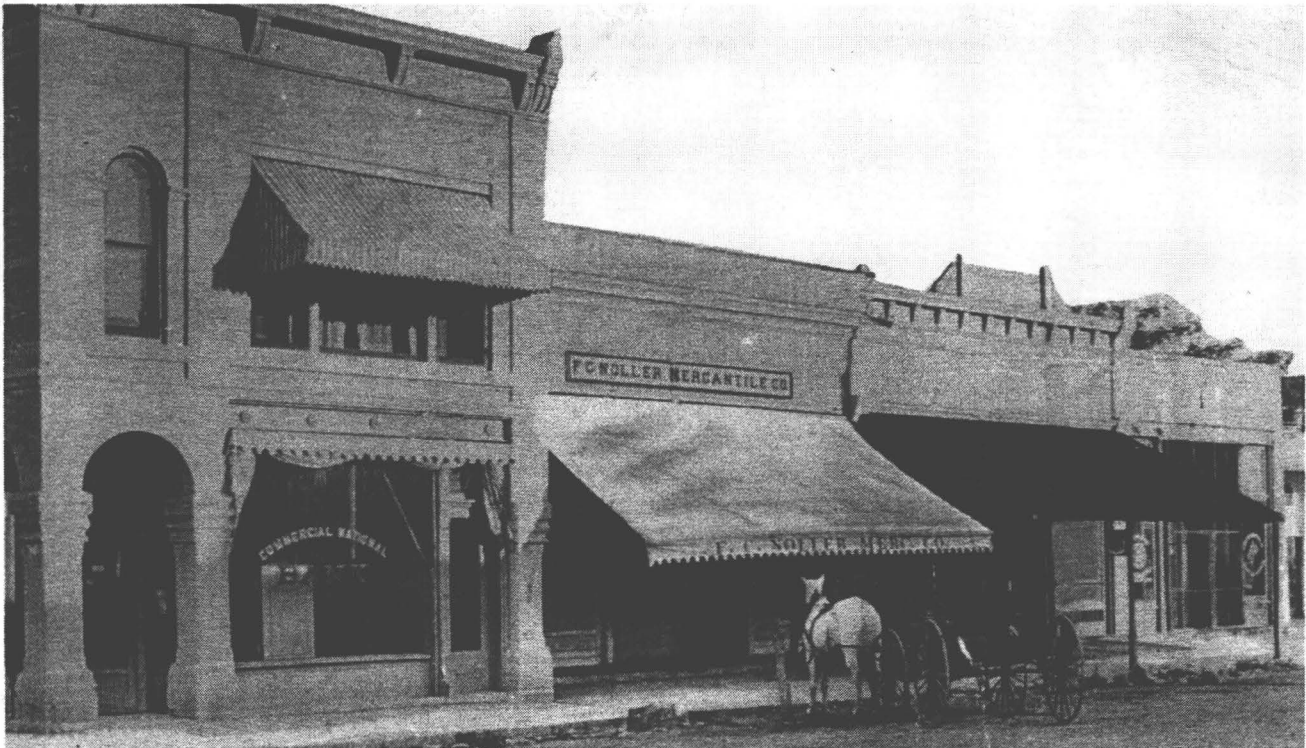
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Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

(Figure 4, View of Commercial National Bank from northwest, ca. 1910).



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Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

(Figure 5, View of Meyer Block, 227 Missouri, ca. 1906, from northeast.)



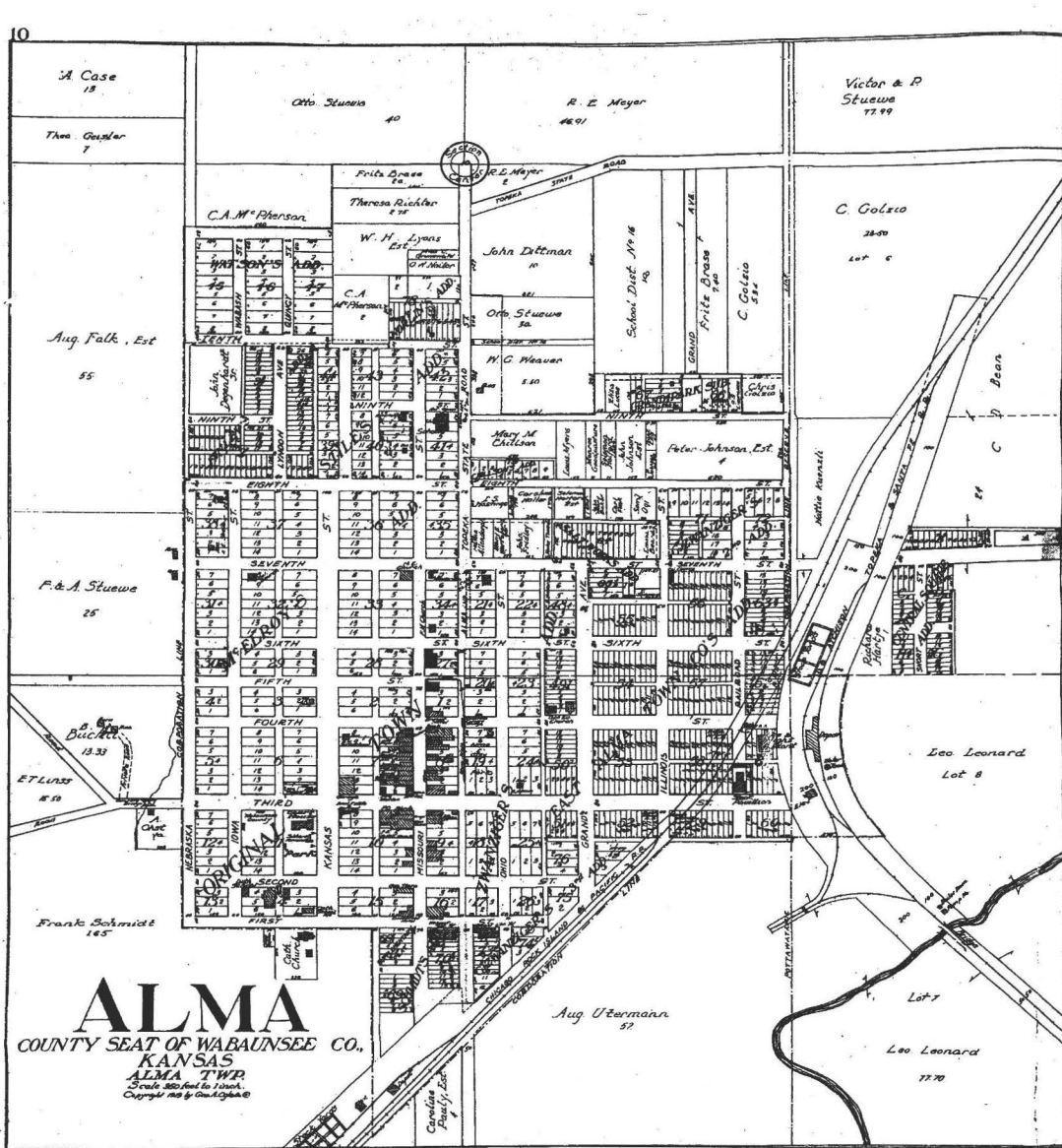
United States Department of the Interior  
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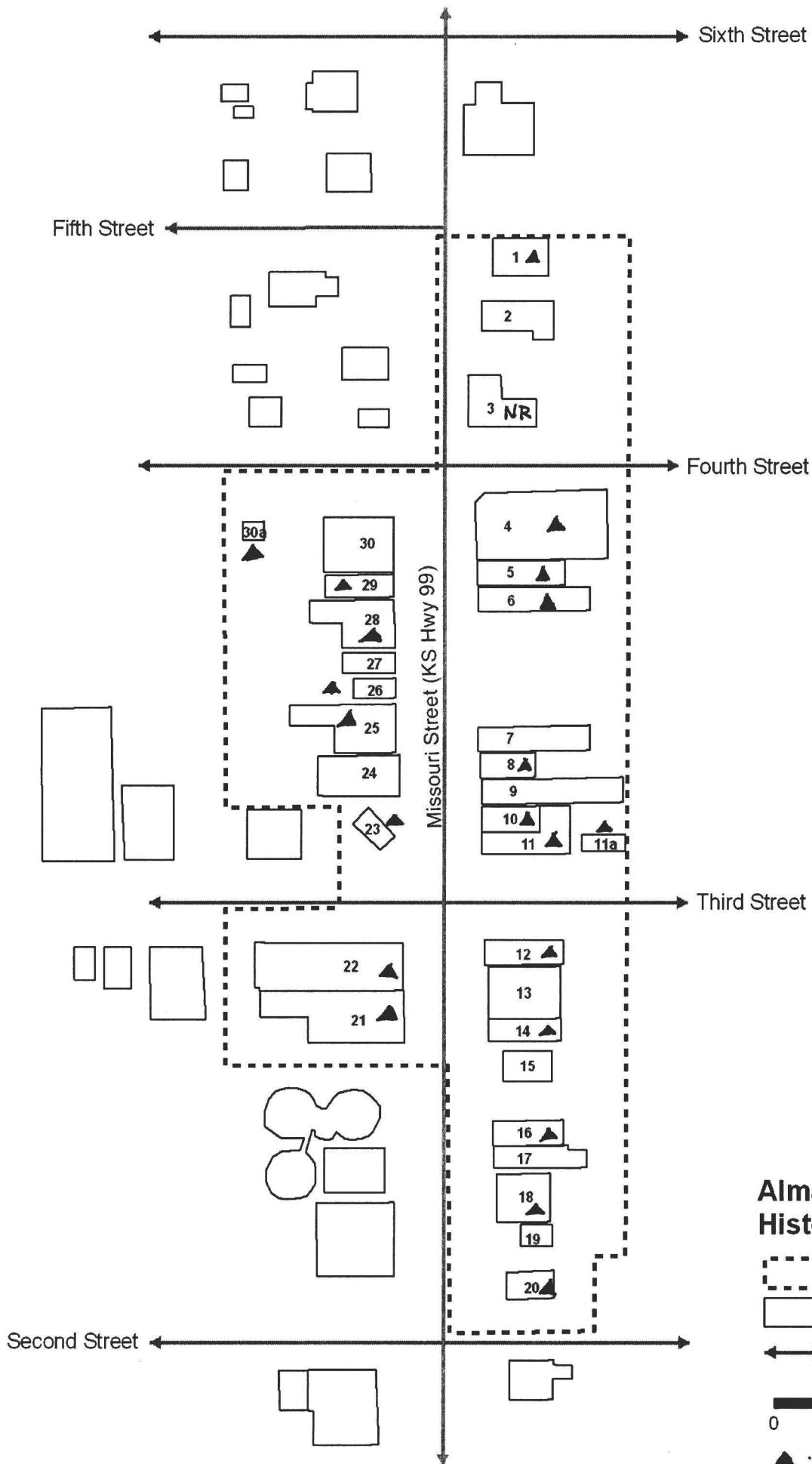
Alma Downtown Historic District  
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(Figure 6, Map, City of Alma, Standard Atlas of Wabaunsee County, 1919).







### Alma Downtown Historic District

Historic District

Buildings

Streets



: Contributing  
 NR: National Register Listed

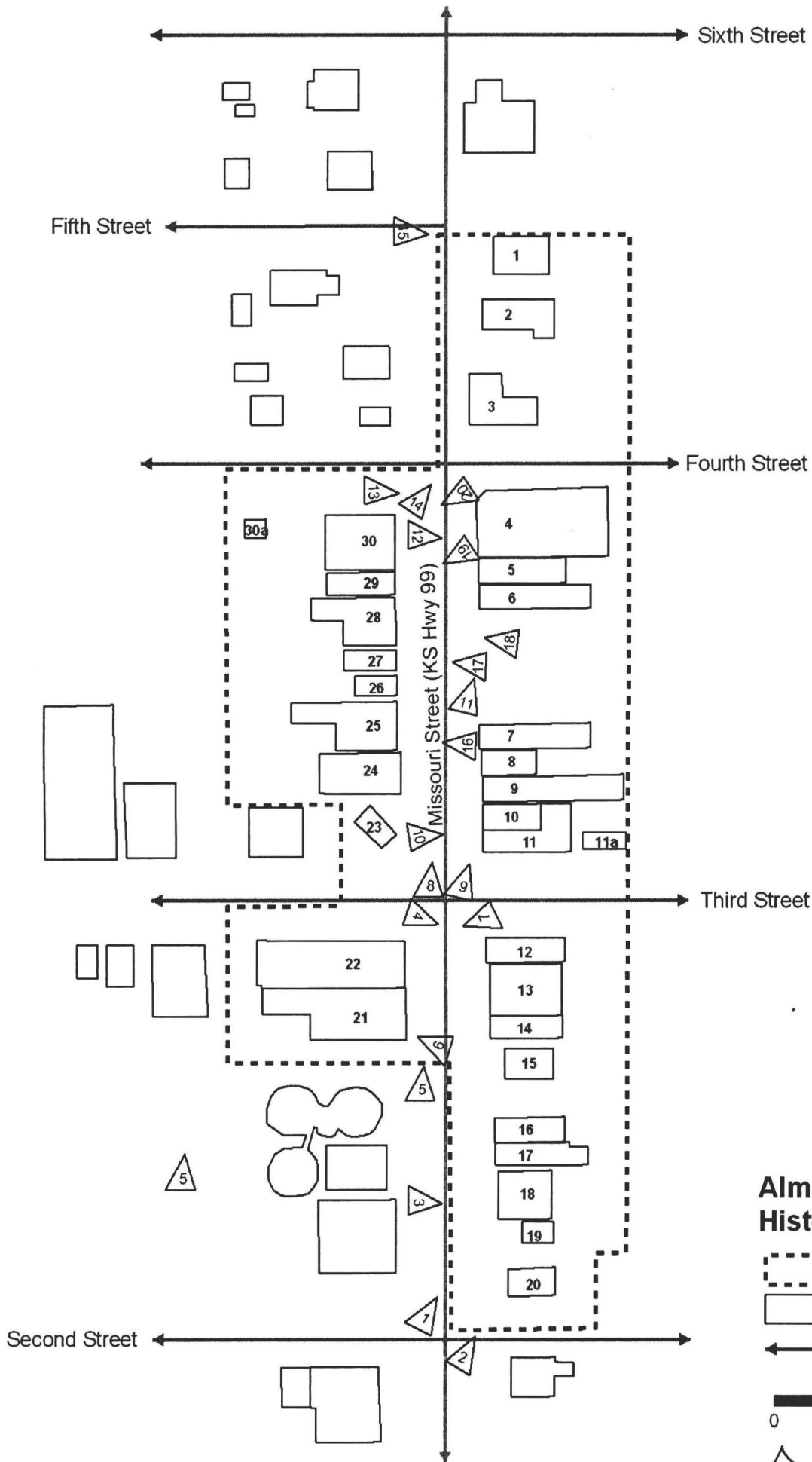






Photo Directions

**Alma Downtown Historic District**

-  Historic District
  -  Buildings
  -  Streets
  -  Photo Direction
- 0 50 100 200 Feet

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY NAME: Alma Downtown Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KANSAS, Wabaunsee

DATE RECEIVED: 10/29/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/12/09  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000354

DETAILED EVALUATION:

     ACCEPT      RETURN      REJECT                      DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*This revised nomination clarifies the period of significance as ending in 1936 and has dropped references to mid-20th century remodeling and alterations as significant aspects of downtown district's historic evolution. This district contains an outstanding group of limestone commercial buildings. Recommendations made in return comments have been followed (with the exception of considering district's role in automobile travel and transportation). The Lutz Hardware Building (#6) and A.P. Becker Gas Station have been reevaluated as contributing resources.*

RECOM./CRITERIA   Met A4C  

REVIEWER   LM Cellard   DISCIPLINE   History  

TELEPHONE                      DATE   11/06/09  

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y  N  see attached SLR Y  N

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



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### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

Historic name Alma Downtown Historic District  
Other name/site number 197-279

#### 2. Location

Street & number Missouri Street, Second to Fifth  not for publication  
City or town Alma  vicinity  
State Kansas Code KS County Wabaunsee Code 197 Zip code 66401

#### 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.)

Patrick Jolmer DSHPO 4-10-09  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

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

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

Alma Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Wabaunsee County, Kansas

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	
20	11	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
20	11	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

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter Categories from instructions)

Commerce/trade

Government/city hall, post office

Social/meeting hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/trade

Government/city hall, post office, library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Italianate, Romanesque

19th & 20th Century American Movement/Commercial Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Stone, Concrete

Walls: Stone

Wood, Concrete block

Roof: Asphalt/

Other:

Narrative Description

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

Alma Downtown Historic District

Name of Property

Wabaunsee County, Kansas

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)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

circa 1884-1956

Significant Dates

1887

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

A. E. Forinash, stone mason; John & Rudolph Feiden, contractors

No significant architects known

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):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, designated landmark, recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey, recorded by Historic American Engineering.

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

Wabaunsee County Historical Museum

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Name of Property

Wabaunsee County, Kansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Approximately 5.6 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	4	7	3	4	5	4	0	4	3	2	1	7	1	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

2

Zone		Easting						Northing						

3

Zone		Easting						Northing						

4

Zone		Easting						Northing						

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 Dale E. Nimz

Organization For the Alma Historic Preservation Committee Date October 10, 2008

Street & number 1928 Countryside Lane Telephone 785-842-8992

City or town Lawrence State KS Zip code 66044

**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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

Name See attached list.

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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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number 7 Page 1

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

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### Architectural Description

#### Summary

The Alma central business district is located on Missouri Street from Second to Fifth Streets with some development on West Third Street leading to the Wabaunsee County Courthouse. Highway 99 follows Missouri Street through downtown Alma. The Alma Downtown Historic District includes most of the commercial buildings in the business district on Missouri Street (see attached map for exact boundaries.) Generally, the east and west boundaries of the district extend to the alleys behind Missouri Street.

The north boundary is defined by a change in character from the historic commercial buildings on Missouri Street to residential buildings north of Fourth Street. The south boundary of the historic district is defined by a change from historic commercial buildings to modern commercial and light industrial buildings. The historic business district is located on a slope rising gradually from south to north. There is diagonal parking along the paved street with concrete sidewalks. Most of the extant buildings have identical setbacks with the building fronts extending to the sidewalk. Stone is the primary building material with some brick, wood frame, and concrete block. Generally, buildings are one and two stories tall. Several larger historic buildings anchor the ends of blocks.

Most of the buildings in the district are *two-part and one-part commercial blocks*. As defined by Richard Longstreth, the two-part commercial block is the "most common type of composition used for small and moderate-sized commercial buildings throughout the country."<sup>1</sup> These buildings feature a distinction between the storefront level and an upper zone. Most storefronts have symmetrically arranged facades with large display windows flanking a recessed entry. Second story windows are usually smaller and narrower than those on the first floor. The one-part commercial block has only a single story which is similar to the lower zone of the two-part commercial block. These commercial buildings generally have low-sloping or flat roofs behind raised parapets.

The buildings in the district represent several architectural classifications: Late Victorian--Italianate and Romanesque, Early 20th Century American Movements--Commercial and Craftsman styles as well as Modern. These styles reflect the stages of Alma's development from the permanent building boom of the 1880s and 1890s through the first half of the twentieth century. The district includes twenty-nine buildings that were constructed before 1957. Only three buildings were constructed after 1957.

The extant architectural styles of the Alma Downtown Historic District are:

Italianate - 5

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street* (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1987), 24.



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Continuation Sheet

Section Number 7 Page 2

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

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Romanesque Revival - 4  
Commercial - 5  
Craftsman - 2  
Modern -2

Only one building in the Alma Downtown Historic District, the Brandt Hotel (1887), is individually listed on the National Register. The Wabaunsee County Courthouse, located one block west of Missouri Street, also is listed in the National Register. Significant architectural character representing the commercial and architectural development of Alma's historic business district is evident. There are thirty-two architectural resources in the district. Twenty-one are contributing and eleven are non-contributing. Of the non-contributing buildings, seven were constructed during the period of significance. Some of these non-contributing buildings could be contributing with appropriate façade rehabilitation. Approximately 65% of the buildings in the district have sufficient architectural integrity to represent the significant historical periods and associations.

Buildings evaluated as contributing usually have undergone alterations over time. Many of the alterations reflect changes common to historic commercial buildings as storefronts and facades were modernized with contemporary materials and signs. Some alterations detract from or obscure the historic architectural character of certain buildings, but many of the alterations are reversible. Rehabilitation of these buildings could change their evaluation and eligibility for rehabilitation tax credits. Generally acceptable alterations for contributing buildings include: windows which are covered but retain the original openings and recessions; additions which are obviously secondary to the main block; alterations to non-street-facing elevations; and storefront alterations provided that the transom outlines and other major architectural divisions are evident.

The following inventory list of buildings includes the address, construction and alteration dates in parenthesis, and historic name if documented. Also, there is a brief description of each building with architectural style, if evident.

### Inventory of Resources

The following properties are included in the historic district.

1. 504 Missouri, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building, 1936, contributing.

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a rectangular one-story Commercial-style building with a basement. It has a gable roof behind a stepped parapet. The building has a brick front, clay tile side and rear walls, and a stone foundation. There is a central front entrance and a rear side entrance above and to the north of the basement entrance. The entrance is flanked by single windows. There are four windows in the south façade, an entrance transom and window in the rear wall, and three windows in the north wall. The original windows are twelve-light metal sash. There is an exterior chimney

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Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

Section Number 7 Page 3

flue in the north wall. Alterations include a non-historic wooden access ramp to the entrance, a non-historic metal entrance door, a non-historic glazed metal rear entrance door, and replacement front windows.

2. 408 Missouri, First National Bank of Wamego, circa 1995, non-contributing.

This is a rectangular one-story wood frame building with a low hipped roof. It has brick and synthetic sheathing. The main entrance and projecting drive-in portico face south towards a large concrete driveway. This building is non-contributing due to its age.

3. 400 Missouri, Brandt [Alma Hotel], 1887, contributing, National Register.

The Brandt Hotel is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a two-story limestone commercial block with a parapet and low-sloping roof. It has an ell plan with a main corner entrance set in a short angled wall facing southwest and a second entrance centered in the west façade. Stone walls are constructed of coursed shaped stone blocks laid in ashlar bond. Masonry openings have smooth-cut stone lintels and projecting stone sills. Prominent ornamental features are the polygonal wooden balcony that projects from the second floor and a pressed metal eave cornice. The Brandt Hotel is a late example of the Italianate style applied to a commercial building. This was the most common style used for commercial architecture during the mid-nineteenth century.

4. 322-326 Missouri, Limerick Block [Alma City Hall], 1888, contributing

The Limerick Block is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a large rectangular two-story Romanesque style limestone commercial block. It has a flat roof and parapet. The main west façade has six bays. The corner storefront has an entrance facing northwest and another recessed double storefront directly faces the street to the west. The massive detailed stone entrance, rough-cut stone blocks, round and semicircular arched openings, and projecting stone ornamental eave belt course are characteristic of the Romanesque style. In the double storefront, there are three ornamental cast iron posts on the first floor and paired wooden arched head windows on the second floor. Also, there is a storefront on the north side of the block to the east. Alterations in the double storefront include covered transoms and modern metal entrance doors.

5. 320 Missouri, Crafts Building [Post Office], 1888, contributing

The Crafts Building is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a two-story rectangular limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. It was constructed at the same time and in the same Romanesque style as the adjacent Limerick Block. Of the adjacent entrances to the north, one leads to the second floor and one to the main storefront. Stone detailing and ornamentation are characteristic of the Romanesque style. The first floor storefront has been

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altered with modern metal entrance doors, display windows, and a corrugated screen over the transom. Modern metal windows have been installed in the second floor. Despite these changes, the building retains sufficient exterior architectural integrity to contribute to the character of the historic district.

? 6. 316 Missouri, Lutz Hardware, circa 1899, non-contributing.

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The three-bay front has a recessed central entrance. There are two ornamental cast iron posts and an ornamental pressed metal eave cornice characteristic of the Italianate commercial style. Since the display window bays and entrance have been filled with stone and modern windows, it is non-contributing.

7. 308 Missouri, Ohst Building, circa 1900, non-contributing

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The three-bay storefront has a recessed central double entrance. There are modern display windows, entrance doors, and a metal awning. The upper storefront transom and storefront have been covered with non-historic corrugated metal. Because of these alterations, the building is non-contributing.

8. 306 Missouri, Sutherland Harness & Saddlery, circa 1900, contributing

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with an entrance to the south. The storefront has cut-stone block ornamentation, a full-width metal lintel, and coursed rough-cut stone above the lintel. There is a non-historic metal entrance door and the transom windows have been covered.

? 9. 304 Missouri, First National Bank of Alma [Stockgrowers State Bank], 1956, contributing ?

This is a modern building constructed of concrete block. It is a one-story rectangular structure with a flat roof and parapet. In the storefront, there are ornamental stone piers laid in irregular courses. There is a side entrance with a metal entrance door, metal display windows, a shed-roofed awning, projecting sign, and an upper wooden façade screen. Although some of the façade materials appear to be more recent, because of its age, form, and materials, it is contributing.

10. 302 Missouri, Mueller Hardware, circa 1884, contributing

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a rear-sloping low arched roof and parapet. There is a one-story rear wing surmounted with a smaller second-story block. It has a four-bay front with three cast-iron storefront posts on the first floor and coursed rough-cut stone blocks on the second floor. The storefront bays have been filled with wood panels and modern display windows. The main entrance and side entrance have been covered with wood and the transom has been covered with corrugated metal. There is a modern metal awning. The second floor front,

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side, and rear windows have been covered with wood panels. The side and rear walls have been parged and painted white. Although there have been several minor alterations, most are reversible. Because of its age, form, materials, and pattern of fenestration, it is contributing.

11. 300 Missouri, Conrad Mueller Saloon [Hendricks Hardware], circa. 1875, contributing

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a rear-sloping roof and parapet. There is a one-story rear wing. The building has a three-bay front with a recessed central entrance. The front is outlined with smooth-cut stone blocks and above the storefront lintel there are coursed rough-cut stone blocks. The storefront entrance and display window bays have been partially filled with stone. The transom has been covered, and there is a modern metal awning. Original window openings in the south façade wall have been partially filled with stone. Although there have been alterations, some are reversible. Because of its age, form, materials and pattern of fenestration, it is contributing.

11a. 300 Missouri, Storage building, c. 1890, contributing

This is a rectangular one-story alley building with a gable roof and rear entrance. It is set on stone piers. The building has vertical board sheathing and metal roofing. This accessory building was constructed before 1893 and used to store implements, paint, oil, and wire for Mueller and Hendricks Hardware over the years. Currently, the building is used for storage.

12. 230 Missouri, Commercial National Bank [Palenske Hall], circa 1873, 1908, contributing

This is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. It is a rectangular two-story Eclectic-style limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. Stone detailing on the first and second floor front is characteristic of the Romanesque style and there is a bracketed Italianate pressed metal projecting eave cornice that extends around the north side facade. The storefront has a main recessed side entrance with a glazed wooden entrance door, two large wooden display windows, a side entrance to the second floor, and a metal lintel. There is a large tripartite second floor window surmounted by headlights flanked by a round-arched window. Ornamental features include a corner carved smooth-cut stone post and two similar posts supporting a corner arch. The second floor façade is defined by raised smooth-cut stone piers and the arched window has carved stone ornament. The north side façade has eight bays with wooden double-hung windows. The original block was constructed ca. 1873. After a fire in 1890, the structure was rebuilt. The building was extended doubling its length. Another fire damaged the front of the building in 1906 or 1907. The front was rebuilt in 1908-1909.

13. 224 Missouri, [Campenella-Gentry Funeral Home], circa 1906, 1956, non-contributing

This is a one-story masonry commercial building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. There is a modern storefront with a central entrance flanked by display windows to the north set in a stuccoed wall. There is an awning and an upper façade screen constructed of vertical boards. The

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north half of the building was constructed about 1906; it has a rear wall with coursed irregular smooth-cut stone blocks, stone sills and flat smooth-cut stone lintels. The south half is constructed of concrete block. Three one-story stone buildings with a uniform size and setback were constructed at this location about 1906. Fire destroyed the middle building in 1922. In 1956 the surviving stone building was incorporated into a new furniture store building. The present storefront with stucco and an upper wooden façade screen appears to be a more recent treatment, ca. 2000. Because part of the building has been reconstructed and the storefront has been altered, it is non-contributing.

14. 222 Missouri, Simon Building, circa 1906, non-contributing

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. It has a three-bay front with a recessed central entrance with a wooden glazed entrance door. There are remnants of stone ornament at the storefront pier bases. The storefront has been altered with modern display windows and wooden infill. There is a modern wood-shingle shed-roofed awning. The south side façade has been parged with non-historic mortar. Because the storefront has been altered, the building is non-contributing.

15. 218 Missouri, American Telephone Building, circa 1960, non-contributing

This is a rectangular brick and concrete block building with a flat roof. It has a side front entrance with a metal door. Because of its age, materials, setback, and lack of fenestration, this building is non-contributing.

16. 212 Missouri, circa 1884, contributing

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The building has a four-bay front with a recessed central entrance and a side entrance to the second floor. Although the front has been altered, the basic elements of the historic storefront including the cast iron posts and display window openings remain. Historic drawings and photographs show that the building once had an Italianate eave cornice. On the second floor, the historic window openings have smooth-cut stone sills. The first floor storefront has non-historic display windows, a metal entrance door with sidelights, and a non-historic entrance door to the second floor. The storefront transom has been covered. The second floor windows have been altered and the eave cornice has been parged with modern mortar.

17. 208 Missouri, circa 1884, 1960, non-contributing

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a low gable roof and parapet. The first floor has a large overhead door and the second floor has two replacement metal windows. The first floor is covered with wood sheathing; the second floor is covered with corrugated metal sheathing. Reportedly, this building was converted for use as a carwash after 1967 and the first floor

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storefront was substantially altered at that time. Because of extensive alterations to the storefront and façade, this building is non-contributing.

18. 204 Missouri, Palenske Block, circa 1890, contributing

The Palenske Block is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. It is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The building has two storefronts flanking an arched central opening to the second floor stair. The storefronts have recessed central entrances, large display windows, and wooden bulkheads. Two ornamental cast iron posts support the metal storefront lintel. Rough-cut stone blocks accentuating the first floor end piers and central entrance and the three segmental arched window openings on the second floor suggest Italianate-style commercial architecture. Other window openings on the second floor have smooth-cut stone sills and lintels. The storefront bulkheads have been covered with modern material and the transoms have been painted. The upper cornice area has been re-pointed with modern mortar.

19. 202 Missouri, Merrill Fritze garage, circa 1955, contributing

This is a rectangular painted concrete block building with a flat roof and parapet. It is attached to the rear of the adjacent commercial block. There is a large overhead door to the south and a glazed wooden entrance door to the north. Because of the age, massing, and materials, this building is contributing.

20. 200 Missouri, A. P. Zeckser Gas Station circa 1924, non-contributing

This is a rectangular wood frame filling station with a hipped roof extended to the west supported on two tapered columns with brick bases. The form suggests an image (popular during the 1920s) of a filling station as a small residence. The building has a brick veneer base and the upper wall sheathing is synthetic lap siding. The extended roof shelters a driveway in front of the office. There are Craftsman-style eave brackets and tapered posts. The building has a central entrance flanked by two wooden double-hung windows. There are identical windows in each side wall. The windows have modern aluminum storm windows. This building is relatively well-preserved, but it is non-contributing because of the synthetic secondary siding.

21. 223 Missouri, Farmers' Union Coop Association [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum], circa 1910, ca. 1957, contributing

This is a rectangular one-story stone building with a flat roof and parapet. The seven-bay storefront has a recessed asymmetrical entrance and large display windows. There are five rectangular window openings in the south side façade. The Commercial-style storefront is wood frame construction with ornamental pressed metal sheathing on the upper front surmounted by an ornamental pressed metal eave cornice. The storefront bulkheads and transom are covered with

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non-historic square synthetic panels (ca. 1957). Both the metal entrance door and display windows are non-historic. The side windows are covered with painted wood panels.

**22.** 227 Missouri, Meyer Block [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum], 1906, contributing

The Meyer Block is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. It is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. There is a square corner entrance bay with a round arched masonry opening surmounted by crenellated stone ornament. The walls of this Commercial-style building are constructed of coursed rough-cut uniform stone blocks. The main east front has a five-bay front with stone bulkheads and display windows. There are two display windows facing north in the side façade. The transom has been painted white in these display windows. The Meyer Block extends all the way to the alley and has another storefront in the rear facing Third Street. This has a recessed central entrance flanked by display windows. The lower part of these windows has been covered.

**23.** 301 Missouri, White Eagle Service Station, circa 1924, contributing

This is a one-story rectangular stuccoed building with a hipped roof. A hipped roof port cochere on Craftsman-style tapered stuccoed columns extends to shelter a driveway. The filling station is oriented diagonally to face the intersection of Third and Missouri Streets. There is a central entrance with a glazed wooden entrance door flanked by wooden double-hung windows, side windows, and a rear entrance in the northwest corner. There is a tall brick end chimney in the rear. The filling station has been converted to a seasonal ice cream and sandwich shop.

**24.** 305 Missouri, circa 2000, non-contributing

This is a non-historic metal one-story rectangular detached building with a low gable roof. There is an entrance flanked by display windows to the south and another entrance to the north. The building is covered with vertical corrugated metal sheathing. Because of its age, form, and materials, it is non-contributing.

**25.** 309-311 Missouri, Kinne & Kerans Block, circa 1888, contributing

The Kinne & Kerans Block is a key contributing building in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. The north half of this block is longer than the south half. There is a one-story stone wing projecting from the north half extending almost to the alley. There is a double storefront with a central arched entrance to the second floor. Ornamental features are characteristic of the Italianate commercial style. There is a prominent slightly projecting entrance at the southeast corner ornamented with carved pier bases, smooth-cut stone columns, and a heavy carved masonry arch. This entrance has paired glazed wooden entrance doors with wooden screen doors. Next to the entrance, there is an arched masonry opening with paired wooden double-hung windows. There is another arched opening with paired windows above the south entrance and an arched opening with a single

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window above the central entrance. The other major ornamental feature is an elaborate pressed metal eave cornice with raised pediments including the Kinne and Kerans names above the storefront entrances. The storefront is deteriorated. Windows in the rear and side walls have 2/2 wooden double-hung sash. There are two wooden rear stairs from the second floor of each part of the building. The first floor storefront to the north has been altered with modern stone bulkheads, modern display windows, and a modern metal entrance door flanked by sidelights. Four windows on the second floor to the north have been covered with wood panels. Other second floor windows to the south have modern aluminum storm windows.

26. 315 Missouri, Schmanke-Weaver Building, circa 1884, ca. 1906, contributing

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a brick front, gable roof, and parapet. There is a recessed central entrance flanked by display windows. Reportedly, the building was damaged by fire in the early twentieth century and rebuilt so the present storefront probably dates from ca. 1906. The Romanesque-style facade has smooth-cut stone and brick quoins accentuating the end piers. There is a metal storefront lintel. Two large second-floor window openings have rough-cut stone sills and lintels. The windows have wooden 1/1 double-hung sash. Above the windows, there is a toothed brick belt course and a rectangular stone datestone. The gable parapet has a central stone chimney and a stone cap. The first floor storefront has been altered with modern metal bulkheads, display windows, a glazed metal entrance door, a covered transom, and a metal awning.

27. 317 Missouri, Louis Undorf Meat Market, circa 1906, non-contributing

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a rear-sloping roof and parapet. There is a recessed asymmetrical entrance and two large display windows. Rough-cut coursed limestone end piers are visible. The storefront has been altered with modern metal bulkheads, display windows, and a glazed metal entrance door. The upper storefront has been covered with a high corrugated metal façade screen. Large openings in the rear wall have been filled with concrete block. Because of the alterations to the facade, this building is non-contributing.

28. 319-321 Missouri, P. J. Schulte Building, circa 1892, 1944, 2000, contributing

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a flat roof and parapet. There is a rectangular building in the rear of the north part attached to the building with a concrete block passage. This limestone outbuilding has a hipped roof. Reportedly in 1944, two existing historic storefronts were remodeled into a single "modern" storefront for P. J. Schulte. The features of the storefront were characteristic of the early twentieth century Commercial style. The first floor storefronts were altered and a brick veneer was applied to the earlier limestone facades. There was a central entrance to the north storefront, a side entrance to the south storefront, and an end entrance to the second floor. The south storefront has modern tan-colored brick laid in running bond. Second floor windows have slightly projecting brick sills and concrete lintels. There is an ornamental brick panel over the end stair entrance outlined in raised red brick and a raised red



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brick belt course at the eave. A slightly projecting concrete cap surmounts the brick wall. The storefront has modern board panels and modern display windows. There are aluminum storm windows on the second floor windows. The south side wall, the rear walls, and the attached outbuilding have been stuccoed.

In September, 2008, brick from the north half of this façade fell off. The north brick façade was removed revealing the earlier coursed rough-cut stone façade of the second floor. Presently, the building front has been stabilized and the owner is considering rehabilitation plans.

**29.** 323 Missouri, Signal-Enterprise Building, circa 1901, contributing

This is a rectangular two-story limestone building with a rear-sloping roof and parapet. The building has a four-bay front with side entrances. The first floor end piers are smooth-cut stone blocks and that ornamentation continues up the north corner on the second floor. There is a storefront lintel. Above the storefront, the walls are constructed of rough-cut coursed limestone blocks. There are four window openings with 1/1 wood double-hung windows. There are three interior chimney flues in the north side wall and four flues in the south wall. In the rear, the second floor is constructed of brick. The openings have rough-cut stone sills and smooth-cut flat lintels. The first floor front has been altered with modern stone infill, modern display windows, a glazed metal entrance door to the north and a modern entrance door to the south. There are modern metal storm windows on the second floor. In the rear, there is a modern ramp from the second floor exit. Two large openings in the rear first floor façade have been filled with coursed wooden shingles.

**30.** 327 Missouri, Hochhans Block, circa 1906, non-contributing

This is a rectangular one-story limestone building with a low rear-sloping roof and parapet. It has a double storefront with a recessed central entrance in the south front. The storefront has been altered with modern bulkheads, large metal display windows, and paired glazed metal entrance doors. There is a corrugated metal façade screen. Behind this building, there is a rectangular clay tile outbuilding with a gable roof as well as front and side entrances. A small modern corrugated metal structure has been added to the northwest corner of the main building. Because of the alterations to the façade, this building is non-contributing.

**30a.** 327 Missouri, Storage building, c. 1922-1926, contributing

This is a rectangular one-story clay tile building with a concrete foundation and floor. The gable roof is covered with metal roofing. An asymmetrical entrance faces east and a large vehicle entrance with a metal overhead door faces west. Wood 4/4 double-hung windows are regularly arranged in the south, east, and north walls. The outbuilding was built between May, 1922 and May, 1926 and served as a dry cleaning shop for the Alma Clothing Company.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Alma Downtown Historic District, located on Missouri Street between Second and Fifth Streets in Alma, Wabaunsee County, Kansas, is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its significant historical association with the commercial and social development of Alma during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Alma Downtown Historic District is significant in local history. Alma became important as the county seat of Wabaunsee County after 1866. Although there are no buildings from the early settlement period included in the historic district, the location of the downtown business district was established early in Alma's history. Generally, the architectural character was defined after 1887 when the Rock Island railroad built its main line along the east and south border of the town. The architecture of the business district reflects two major stages of development in the community's history. These stages were associated with the period of agricultural and rural dominance in Kansas during the late nineteenth century and the state's economic and technological progress during the early twentieth century. With increased use of the automobile, an important transportation route (now Kansas Highway 99) now follows Missouri Street through Alma.

The Alma Downtown Historic District also is eligible for listing under Criterion C for architecture because many properties in the district are distinguished by a local tradition of masonry building construction using local limestone. Presently, Alma is promoted as the "city of native stone." That distinction dates back to the 1880s. As early as 1883, the stone of Wabaunsee County was recognized as a valuable building material. As one observer reported, "every part of the County is underlaid with a fine quality of limestone, both magnesium and common. A hard limestone, quarried in Mission Creek Township, is being used in many buildings in the county, and large quantities are exported to neighboring localities."<sup>2</sup> As a whole, the district is a relatively well preserved example of the building types and methods of construction characteristic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Buildings in the district retain sufficient integrity of location, setting, materials, feeling, and association to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The period of significance (1880-1956) for the Alma Downtown Historic District is defined by the construction of the Manhattan, Alma, and Burlingame (MAB), the first railroad to reach Alma in 1880. This line brought settlers and travelers, consumer goods and building materials to the town. The MAB and the Rock Island in 1887 provided transportation for the salt, coal, building stone, and livestock that brought prosperity to Wabaunsee County. The end of the period is defined by the change to a more "modern" architecture as exemplified by construction of the First National

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<sup>2</sup> R. Sorren Magee, Magee's History and Directory of Wabaunsee County (Winchester, KS: Argus Job Printing Office, 1885), 13.

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Bank of Alma (304 Missouri) and alteration of other storefronts to present a more up-to-date appearance.

### Architectural History

Based on the Alma Historic Preservation Survey conducted in 2007, the major periods of development in downtown Alma occurred in four stages from 1866 to about 1880, from 1880 to about 1915, from 1915 to about 1956, and from about 1956 to the present. The commercial architecture of the area is representative of Kansas architecture during these periods of development. Commercial buildings constructed in the late nineteenth century represent the Late Victorian Italianate and Romanesque styles. Buildings constructed in the early twentieth century include less ornate examples of the Commercial style. Several historic buildings have been altered or partly covered and some historic storefronts have been altered with modern materials, particularly on the first floor. A few examples of infill construction do not contribute to the historic architectural character of the district.

There are thirty-two buildings in the historic district. Nineteen appear to be more than one hundred years old and twenty-four appear to be more than fifty years old. Most of the historic buildings in the district are recognizable and reflect a typical evolution of architectural integrity over several decades of commercial development.

### Chronology

After 1854, anti-slavery emigrants from Connecticut were important in the early settlement of Wabaunsee County (first named Richardson). Also, there was a steady emigration of German families into the county. As a writer commented in 1883, "Wabaunsee County was especially favored, settled as it was by New Englanders of good education and high ideals, and by perhaps the most desirable of foreign emigration--Germans--whose descendants are today among the most influential, industrious, and prosperous people of the county."<sup>3</sup>

After the Civil War ended, the large German population succeeded in changing the location of the county seat from Wabaunsee in the north to Alma, a more central location in Alma Township. Following the decisive county election on November 22, 1866, Alma was declared the new county seat. At that time, there was not a single house on the site. The town site was located on forty acres of bare prairie with bluestem grass waist high. There were no roads or streets.

Shortly after the election, an association of citizens of Alma Township organized to build a town. The association purchased forty acres from Gottlieb Zwanziger and hired him to survey the tract and lay out the site into streets, blocks, and lots. The association offered lots for sale and, from the

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<sup>3</sup> Magee, *Magee's History and Directory*, 9, 14.

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proceeds, paid for the construction of a wood frame building erected on the southwest corner of Missouri and Main [now Third] Street. The original courthouse was located one block east of the present site of the Wabaunsee County courthouse. At the same time, the association constructed a smaller building for the county clerk's office, just south of the court building.<sup>4</sup> The Wabaunsee County records and cash were moved to the Alma town site late in December, 1866.

The next building constructed in the town was the Alma Hotel built by John Winkler in the spring of 1868 on Missouri Street nearly opposite the county building. Alma was incorporated as a village in 1868 with about twenty residents. As late as 1869, there were only four buildings in Alma--"Schmitz and Meyer's store, Winkler's Hotel, Dierker's boarding house, and the court house."<sup>5</sup>

The town's growth was slow until after a final February 21, 1871 county seat election. To sway the voters, leaders of Alma promised to give Wabaunsee County "a safe, well-built, handsome stone building worth from \$6,000 to \$10,000."<sup>6</sup> Victory in that election confirmed the future of Alma as the Wabaunsee County seat. The stone court house (which cost \$8,000) was erected in 1872 and several other important buildings were constructed in Alma over the next several years.

A destructive prairie fire in 1875 brought Alma into the public eye and the successful effort to fight off the flames encouraged new investment in the town. The Conrad Mueller building at the northeast corner of Missouri and Third Streets (constructed ca. 1875) was one of the earliest stone buildings in Alma. Mueller was the proprietor of the Palace Billiard Hall which offered "choice cigars, tobacco and temperance refreshments of every kind. In early historic photographs of Missouri Street, however, most of the downtown commercial buildings were one-story wood frame structures."<sup>7</sup>

In the 1880s, the economy of Kansas boomed and emigrants rushed into the state. Alma also prospered and a decade of growth produced a flourishing community by 1890. The building of the first railroad to reach Alma was an important impetus to growth. The arrival of the Manhattan, Alma, and Burlingame Railroad (MAB) was the occasion for a gala celebration in Alma on July 4, 1880 with 5,000 people attending and five bands to provide music. This was a branch line

<sup>4</sup> The old court house was torn down in March, 1906. See "Passing of the Old Court House," Alma Signal (?) 9 March 1906, Wabaunsee County Clippings, Kansas State Historical Society.

<sup>5</sup> William G. Cutler, History of the State of Kansas, "Wabaunsee Couy, Part 4," [www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/wabaunsee/wabaunsee-co-pt.html](http://www.kancoll.org/books/cutler/wabaunsee/wabaunsee-co-pt.html), p. 2 of 8. Accessed 2/16/2007; Matt Thomson, Early History of Wabaunsee County, Kansas (Alma, KS: Matt Thomson, 1901), 323; Kansas Directory Company, Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County (Topeka, KS: Kansas Directory Company, 1907), 38..

<sup>6</sup> Frank W. Blackmar, ed. Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History (Chicago, IL: Standard Publishing Company, 1912), [http://www.skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1912/w/Wabaunsee\\_county.html](http://www.skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1912/w/Wabaunsee_county.html), accessed 5/24/2007, p. 2 of 4.

<sup>7</sup> Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County, 39; "Birds Eye View of Alma," Wabaunsee County Herald n. d. [ca. 1880], Wabaunsee County Clippings, Kansas State Historical Society; Photograph by Louis Palenske, west side Missouri Street (1880), in Greg Hoots, ed., "Flint Hill Special," (Alma, KS: Wendy Page, Publisher, 1998), 36.

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connecting the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad at Burlingame to the Kansas Pacific at Manhattan.<sup>8</sup> Fifty-two buildings were erected in Alma during 1884. The town had a population of about seven hundred in 1885 while the town's main rival in the southeastern part of Wabaunsee County, Eskridge, had about six hundred residents.<sup>9</sup>

In 1887 the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad built a railroad up the Mill Creek valley to Alma and west. The first main line constructed to Alma reached the town on March 25, 1887. As one glowing report said, "from the date of its arrival, Alma took to growing, to improving, and presently there is more building going on than there has been for years. The class of buildings, too, is substantial, such as would do amazing credit to the most pretentious streets in Kansas. The Wabaunsee County bank, the Brandt hotel and several other store houses of buildings of this character, and J. F. Limerick is putting up a building for the First National Bank which will cost \$85,000. All these buildings are, as is the court house, the public schools and many residences, built of stone." Another description published on July 19, 1888 reported that, "there are three drug stores, four grocery and general merchandise houses, two hardware stores, two furniture stores, two lumber yards, one livery stable, milliner stores and all the trades needful in such a community."<sup>10</sup>

According to an 1889 article, Alma had nearly doubled the number of its inhabitants since the building of the Rock Island Railroad. The report emphasized that "the coming of the Great Rock Island Route gave this city what it never previously enjoyed--a direct eastern and western connection. The discovery of coal, the establishment of cement works, of banks and other enterprises, and the advent of the Rock Island, are agencies which are exerting an influence immensely favorable to Alma's growth and prosperity." As the town grew, the location of the MAB railroad depot on the east side of Alma and the Rock Island depot on the south encouraged the development of nearby businesses and some local industries. By 1890 eight passenger trains each day gave residents of Alma direct service to Chicago, Kansas City, St. Joseph, Denver, Wichita, and southeast Kansas.<sup>11</sup>

Although there were ventures into salt production and coal mining near Alma, native stone proved to be the most enduring industrial resource of Wabaunsee County. As one commentator predicted in 1885, the county "has a great treasure in its hills, unsurpassed for building as well as lime and cement making enterprises. Limestone is found all over the county in ledges from one to six feet. This industry furnishes employment to many hundreds of men, the output being shipped in all directions for many purposes from railway ballast and bridge building to pretentious city

<sup>8</sup> Magee, Magee's History and Directory, 14; Thomson, Early History, 334. The MAB was abandoned in 1898.

<sup>9</sup> Thomson, Early History, 336.

<sup>10</sup> Thomson, Early History, 338; "Wabaunsee County," Topeka Capital 19 July 1888.

<sup>11</sup> "Historical: 1853-'89," Wabaunsee County News 7 November 1889.

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structures. There seems to be an unlimited supply of this stone, the largest quarries being located at Eskridge and Alma."<sup>12</sup>

At the Fox quarries, about four miles southwest of Alma, from twenty-five to seventy-five men were employed in 1892 and the stone was sent as far south as Texas to be used in the construction of bridges on the Rock Island extension. Stone from the Fox quarries also was used for construction of the Topeka Rock Island depot. Almost ten years later, fifty quarrymen and stone cutters were employed at the Fox quarries.<sup>13</sup>

By November 1891, the town of Alma had become the "city of native stone." As a reporter described, "nearly all of its business stores and residences are of the beautiful white limestone so prevalent in the county, and which is capable of ornamentation at a small cost, as the stone can be furnished for building purposes at a much less cost than would brick be if used. Few cities in the interior of Kansas present so pleasing and attractive an appearance in all respects, as does the capital of Wabaunsee county."<sup>14</sup> Some of the landmark buildings that contributed to the pleasing appearance of Alma were the Brandt Hotel (400 Missouri), the Limerick Block (322-326 Missouri), and the Palenske Block (204 Missouri).

The Brandt Hotel was constructed in 1887 to serve the railroad workers, salesmen, and travelers expected on the new Rock Island Railroad. The Brandt Hotel was praised as the best hotel in Alma. J. F. Limerick and his brother were immigrants from Ireland who established the Alma Coal Mining Company and the Alma Portland Cement Works. They built a large two-story stone building in 1888 to house their First National Bank and a general merchandise store. Unfortunately, the bank suspended operations on November 9, 1890 when the many Limerick enterprises became financially overextended.<sup>15</sup> The Limerick brothers lost their buildings and businesses to creditors and left for Oklahoma to make a new start.

Louis Palenske, the son of an early Wabaunsee County settler, was involved in the construction of several historic stone commercial buildings on the east side of Missouri Street in Block 9. The double store building at 208-212 Missouri was erected before 1885. The adjacent building, 204-206 Missouri, has a datestone of 1890. Later in 1908, Louis Palenske was involved in the reconstruction of 230 Missouri, now known as Palenske Hall. By 1892 Alma had an established business district, churches, schools, and important railroad connections. Most businesses in the downtown district had moved from early wood frame buildings into more substantial stone masonry structures by the late 1890s.

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<sup>12</sup> Magee, Magee's History and Directory, 17-18.

<sup>13</sup> "Alma," Alma Signal 27 August 1892; Thomson, Early History, 342.

<sup>14</sup> "Wabaunsee County." Topeka Journal 23 November 1891.

<sup>15</sup> Thomson, Early History, 341.

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Technological innovation and social change in the early twentieth century brought important improvements in Alma. A 1907 report summarized the early development, "Alma has made many improvements the last two years, among them is the Hochhaus Block, the new Meyer Building, Oetinger Lumber Yards, the \$15,000 High School building, the Lutheran Church, which cost a like sum, and L. Undorf's new market. Besides these many new residences have been erected. Every business place in Alma is occupied, and it is almost impossible to rent a house. The walks on Missouri Street are cement and new cement walks are being laid on the back streets. Alma is the only town in the county that can put on enough metropolitan airs to have an automobile parade every evening. From the standpoint of appearance, it is one of the most pleasing towns in Kansas. It is well kept and neat. Missouri street is kept in good repair and lined with nice looking business blocks of native stone. There is a uniformity and grace about the town which is good to see."<sup>16</sup>

In Alma, the Commercial Club organized in October, 1913. By 1914 there were forty-five members, mostly businessmen of the town. They worked on projects such as planning a new water system for the town, the construction of a new city hall, and organizing a good roads day. Alma had three banks in 1914. The First National Bank, the Alma National Bank (organized in 1889), and the Farmers National Bank (organized in 1912). During the Depression, all three banks were consolidated into the First National Bank of Alma chartered on March 4, 1932.<sup>17</sup>

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Kansans welcomed innovations such as the automobile, tractor, and airplane. By 1914 Kansans owned 50,000 cars and 30,000 of the owners were farmers. The extensive growth of automobile transportation was reflected in the construction of service station buildings in downtown Alma at 200 and 301 Missouri Street. During this period, the route of State Road was changed so that the present Kansas Highway 99 runs through downtown Alma on Missouri Street. The Depression of the 1930s and dry conditions state-wide made daily life difficult in Alma and Wabaunsee County. Only a few buildings were constructed in downtown Alma until after World War II ended in 1945.

Trends that affected the Alma Downtown Historic District after World War II were the movement of population from farms and ranches to cities, the development of the federal interstate highway system, and the decline of railroads. In the 1970s, railroad passenger service to Alma ended and the passenger depot was demolished. There are now fewer farms and rural residents in Wabaunsee County. Although the farm and ranch economy has declined in relative importance, there is potential to attract visitors and new as residents as a picturesque town in a scenic county. Alma is located only three miles south of Interstate 70 and within commuting distance of Manhattan and Topeka, major towns in the Kansas River valley urban population corridor. Kansas Highway 99 from Interstate 70 through Alma to the junction with Kansas Highway 4 has been designated the

<sup>16</sup> Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County, 44.

<sup>17</sup> "Alma, Kansas Is Prosperous City," Topeka Capital 7 June 1914; "The First National Bank to Celebrate 50th Anniversary," Alma Signal-Enterprise 15 April 1982, p. 1, cols. 4-5..

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Kansas Native Stone Scenic Byway. Downtown Alma is an active business district anchored by public services including the City Hall, Post Office, Library, and the nearby Wabaunsee County Courthouse.

**Individual Property Histories**

The following properties are included in the historic district.<sup>18</sup>

**1. Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building, 504 Missouri, 1936, contributing.**

The Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Building is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. This meeting hall for the American Legion and Auxiliary was constructed in 1936 as a memorial to veterans from Wabaunsee County. Plans for an American Legion-Auxiliary hall were first discussed at a meeting August 20, 1936, and work commenced on September 24. An article in the Alma Signal commented, "this is another real addition to our city and the Legion Auxiliary folks are to be congratulated." The foundation was constructed of local stone from the Am Bodell farm with walls of clay tile and a front of glazed brick. As the Alma Enterprise reported on October 23, tile layers under the supervision of Mr. Reynolds of Topeka built the walls. Am Bodell and Paul Falk did the concrete work and Art Senge and R. Diepenbrock did the carpentry. With much of the labor contributed by American Legion members, the building was completed in November at a cost of about \$3,000. The building is still a meeting hall and the current occupant is Ed Palenske American Legion Post #32.

**2. 408 Missouri, First National Bank of Wamego, circa 1995, non-contributing.**

This is a modern bank building.

**3. 400 Missouri, Brandt Hotel [Alma Hotel], 1887, contributing, National Register.**

The Brandt Hotel, individually listed on the National Register, is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. Located at the intersection of Missouri and Fourth Streets, the hotel building is a landmark at the northeast corner of the business district. Built in 1887, the two-story native stone building is a well preserved example of Italianate-style commercial architecture.

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<sup>18</sup> Historic building permits, water permits, and annual city directories were not available for Alma. Generally, estimated construction dates and historic property owners were determined by comparing the Sanborn Insurance Company maps (1885-1941) and the Kansas Inspection Bureau Fire Insurance Rates Booklets (1922-1941). Additional information about construction dates, historic property owners, and businesses was compiled from New Branches from Old Trees, a local history published by the Wabaunsee County Historical Society. Also, the author acknowledges with gratitude valuable assistance from local residents Greg Hoots, who provided digital copies of historic photographs, and Patricia Ringel, who provided newspaper references for the construction of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial American Legion Building.



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One of the leading businessmen of Wabaunsee County in 1885, Joseph Brandt was the proprietor of the Western Star Hotel in Alma. About two years later after the Rock Island Railroad reached the town, Joseph and his wife Christena had the Brandt Hotel built to serve railroad crews, salesmen, new settlers, and other visitors to Alma and Wabaunsee County. The Brandt Hotel opened on December 13, 1887. As the Alma Enterprise announced, "this is the largest hotel in the city... and is thoroughly fitted up with everything that goes to make up a first class hostelry. There are seventeen bedrooms on the second floor, all of them fitted up complete and thoroughly ventilated. Mr. Jos. Brandt, who has had years of experience in the hotel business, is the popular proprietor of this house." Jacob Horne purchased the property in 1896. After his death in 1899, his son, Louis, acquired the hotel. Louis died in 1901 and his wife Theresa Schutter Horne took over management of the hotel for the next thirty years. The hotel with a restaurant downstairs operated until the early 1960s. It has been vacant for several years, but the present owner plans to rehabilitate the building.

4. 322-326 Missouri, Limerick Block [City Hall], 1888, contributing

The Limerick Block is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. It was constructed for J. F. and R. J. Limerick, Irish immigrant brothers, who led a brief boom in Alma in the late 1880s. The Limerick brothers briefly operated a coal mine and lime kiln in the Mill Creek valley just east of Alma. Their large two-story native stone business block housed the First National Bank and a general merchandise store. There were offices for lawyers and doctors on the second floor.

As quickly as they expanded, the Limerick Brothers businesses became overextended. The brothers ran out of money and the bank operations were suspended on November 9, 1890. The Limerick brothers had to sell their buildings and land and moved to Perry, Oklahoma to make a new start. Guy Cleveland took over the general store and the Stuewe brothers took over the bank. According to a local article, P. R. Meyers and Company, dealers in general merchandise and groceries occupied all of the first floor except for the corner storeroom occupied by the First National Bank.<sup>19</sup> As late as 1957, the Masonic Lodge and the Eastern Star fraternal organizations held their meetings on the second floor of the old Limerick Block. In 1976, Dale Bleseke operated the Hy-Klas Supermarket in the main storeroom. Currently, the Alma City Hall occupies the end bay originally constructed for a bank.

5. 320 Missouri, Crafts Building [Post Office], 1888, contributing

This building was built for druggist Fred Crafts. Born in 1835, Fred Crafts came to Alma in June, 1875 and won an appointment as postmaster in 1879. In 1892 the Alma Signal reported, "Fred Crafts occupies his own building, erected at the same time with, and forming a part of the Limerick

<sup>19</sup> "Alma," Alma Signal 27 August 1892.

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block."<sup>20</sup> A business directory published in the county atlas of 1902 recorded John Crafts as a druggist and Alma city treasurer. Reportedly, either Fred or John Crafts sold the property to Frank Brown who later sold to Fred Baugh. About 1912 the building housed a produce house run by Bert Littlefield. About 1930 Fred Rakes opened a grocery store in the building. Rakes later sold to Walt Gillespie who sold to R. O. Dyer. Dyer sold to Vernon Reuter about 1960. Reuter expanded the grocery by moving into the adjacent Limerick Building. In 1963 Don Falk bought the building and remodeled the interior for a restaurant. After the restaurant closed in 1967, the Alma Post Office moved into the first floor storefront.

6. 316 Missouri, Lutz Hardware, circa 1899, non-contributing.

Reportedly, this building was built by Fred Lutz. The structure was recorded on the January, 1900, Sanborn map as a hardware store. Lutz came to Alma in 1871 and he was recorded as a hardware and furniture dealer in 1902 and 1907. In 1911 the business advertised as the Kleen Kutter store. In 1916 Robert Lutz, Fred's son, and Oscar Nelson bought the store. In 1918 Nelson bought out his partner. It was recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map as a store selling hardware, paint, and oil. Nelson operated the store until 1964 when he sold to Norman Anderson. Anderson sold to Ralph Abbott who closed the business in 1966. Marvin Hendricks bought the building in 1970, remodeled the interior for offices, and renamed it the Professional Building. It is now occupied by the Uptown Beauty Shop.

7. 308 Missouri, Ohst Building, circa 1900, non-contributing

This property was vacant in the February, 1885 Sanborn map, but there was a one-story stone jewelry store on the property by January, 1893. Reportedly, a fire about 1900 destroyed buildings in this location and August Ohst, a local painter, rebuilt on this property. In the January, 1900 Sanborn map, it was recorded as a barber shop and office. From 1922 to 1930, the property was a barber shop with a paint shop in the basement. Partitioned in 1930s, Ohst had a barber shop in 1936 and Walter Diehl, a cobbler, occupied the other half of the building. Two stores in the building (barber and cobbler) were recorded in the 1941 Sanborn map. Al Nicely's barber shop occupied part of the building in the early 1940s. It is now occupied by Gambino's Pizza.

8. 306 Missouri, Sutherland Harness & Saddlery, circa 1899, contributing

On August 27, 1892, the Alma Signal reported that George Sutherland occupied "a substantial stone building filled with harness, saddles, whips, laprobes, etc." Reportedly, George Sutherland rebuilt this building about 1900 after a fire. A one-story stone building in this location was recorded in the 1900, 1908 and 1922 Sanborn maps and Sutherland Harness & Saddlery was listed

<sup>20</sup> "Alma," Alma Signal 27 August 1892.

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in the business directory of the 1919 county atlas. By 1936 the business was Stuewe Harness and Shoes. In January, 1941, it was Stuewe Paints and Wallpaper. The building housed the Alma Branch Library in 1976. Currently, it is occupied by Flint Hills Antiques.

9. 304 Missouri, First National Bank of Alma [Stockgrowers State Bank], 1956, contributing

According to the 1941 Sanborn map, this property was vacant. In 1956, the First National Bank of Alma built a modern building with a concrete block rear addition. Reportedly, the Bank of Alma (established 1895) consolidated in 1932 with the Farmers National Bank (established 1912) and the First National Bank (established in 1888) to form the First National Bank of Alma with O. F. Deans as president.

10. 302 Missouri, Mueller Hardware, circa 1884, contributing

A two-story stone building on the property was recorded in the 1893 Sanborn map and it may have been constructed before 1885. Conrad Mueller constructed the building to house his expanding hardware business and the Muellers lived on the second floor. Also, Fred Lutz operated a furniture business in the front for several years. When Conrad Mueller died in 1920, his son Gus Mueller purchased the business and operated it until he sold to Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Hendricks in 1951. Currently, the building is occupied by Hendricks Hardware.

11. 300 Missouri, Conrad Mueller Saloon, circa. 1875, contributing

This building was constructed by Conrad Mueller about 1875. He operated a saloon until after state Prohibition was approved in 1880 and then opened a hardware business. When Conrad Mueller died in 1920, his son Gus Mueller purchased the business and operated it until he sold to Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Hendricks in 1951. Currently, the building is occupied by Hendricks Hardware.

11a. 300 Missouri, Storage building, c. 1890, contributing

This wood frame alley building was recorded on the 1893 Sanborn map and was used to store implements, paint, oil, and wire over the years. Currently, the building is used for storage.

12. 230 Missouri, Commercial National Bank [Palenske Hall], ca. 1873, 1908, contributing

Peter Degan built this building in 1873 as Germania Hall. In 1883, he was described as a German emigrant hotel keeper who came to Alma in 1869. After a fire in 1890, the structure was rebuilt as the Horne Building. At this time, the storefront was saved and the north side was extended doubling the length of the building. A stone ice house was recorded at the rear of the property in

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the January, 1892 Sanborn map. The building was also described as the Gottlieb Noller saloon. It was recorded as a saloon in the January, 1900 Sanborn map with a dwelling on the second floor.

Another fire damaged the front of the building in 1906 or 1907. On October 23, 1908, the Alma Enterprise reported, "preparations for work have begun on the repairs and new front for the Horne Building on the corner which is to be the future home of the Commercial National Bank. A modern plate glass front with a corner entrance will be put in, also a big vault, new floors and ceilings, and it will be made into a handsome banking room. It will help with the looks of the street very much and Mr. Palenske is to be commended for the enterprise. Feiden Brothers will do the work." Renovation work continued into 1909 and the building housed the bank for about twelve years.

The first floor of this building was recorded as vacant with an office on the second floor in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. A photograph from early 1928 shows the Bowes attorney office on the second floor. According to Fire Insurance Booklets, the building housed a store selling jewelry and pianos with offices and a dwelling upstairs in 1922 and 1924. It was the Ruetter-Hess Electric Light store and office in 1928 and the Simon-Hess Beer Parlor with offices on the second floor in 1934. Later, George Sommer bought the building and Clarence Frank operated a produce store in the building until the mid-1960s. The building was donated to the Wabaunsee County Historical Society in 1968. Currently, the Wabaunsee County Economic Development office occupies the first floor of the building.

13. 224 Missouri, [Campenella-Gentry Funeral Home], circa 1908, 1956, non-contributing

A photograph from the southwest looking toward the southeast corner of Third and Main Streets published in the 1907 Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County showed three similar stone store buildings south of the Commercial National Bank on the corner of Main [Third] and Missouri Streets. Three one-story stone buildings with a uniform size and setback were recorded on this property in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. From the north, they were a general store, a telephone office, and a job printing office. The F. C. Noller Mercantile Company, the general store, was shown at this location in a ca. 1910 photograph. Fire destroyed the middle building in 1922. The north building was a motion picture theater (capacity 200) from ca. 1922 until after 1941. It was the Colonial Theater in 1928, the Thowe Theater in 1930, and the Hasenbank Theater in 1936 and 1941. In 1956 the theater building was incorporated into a new furniture store constructed by Hasenbank and LaMar. Currently, the building is occupied by the Campenella-Gentry Funeral Home.

14. 222 Missouri, Simon Building, circa 1908, non-contributing

A photograph from the southwest looking toward the southeast corner of Third and Main Streets published in the 1907 Business Directory and History of Wabaunsee County showed three similar

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stone store buildings south of the Commercial National Bank on the corner of Main [Third] and Missouri Streets. Three one-story stone buildings with a uniform size and setback were recorded on this property in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. This building (owned by Charlie Simon) was a job printing office in 1908. A local telephone exchange was located in this building from ca. 1920 to 1960. The McMahan telephone service in Alma began June 25, 1898. The name was changed to the Wabaunsee Telephone Company in 1903 and by 1907 there were 275 telephones in the Alma vicinity. In 1930 the building housed the United Telephone Exchange. In 1960 the telephone office was moved to Holton. There was a barber shop operated by Ervin Stuewe in the building in 1976. Currently, the building houses a barber shop and beauty shop.

15. 218 Missouri, American Telephone Building, circa 1960, non-contributing

This is a non-historic building housing the telephone equipment and switching center.

16. 212 Missouri, Morris Drug Store, circa 1884, contributing

This two-story stone commercial building was built for Louis Palenske. According to the February, 1885 Sanborn map, the storefront was vacant with a barber in the basement. For many years the building housed a drug store operated by Thomas Morris, who lived upstairs. The Morris Drug Store was shown in a line drawing published in the August 27, 1892 Alma Signal and the drug store was recorded in the January, 1893 Sanborn map. Also, there was a meeting hall on the second floor. The drug store was recorded in the January, 1900 Sanborn map. There was a tailor shop on the first floor recorded in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. Later, the building housed the Star Restaurant, James E. Ketterman proprietor. The J. E. Kitterman [sic] restaurant was listed in the 1907 Alma business directory without a specific location. The property was recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map as a restaurant with a one-story rear kitchen; the Ketterman restaurant was recorded at this location in the Fire Insurance Booklet for May 6, 1924. The property was a store in the 1941 Sanborn map. About 1950 Chris Wertzberger and August Guth started a liquor store in the building. After Mr. Guth's death, his son Harold Guth bought the business and was the owner in 1976. Currently, the building is occupied by Herbic Liquor.

17. 208 Missouri, circa 1884, 1960, non-contributing.

This two-story stone commercial building was built for Louis Palenske. According to the February, 1885 Sanborn map, the first floor had a jewelry, books and notions store with the Masonic Hall on the second floor and a one-story wood frame photography gallery in the rear. Probably, this was the original Palenske store and photography studio (see also 204 Missouri). In the January, 1893 Sanborn map, the first floor was vacant with a meeting hall on the second floor. According to the January, 1900 Sanborn map, this was a notions store. A lunch room on the first floor and a barber in the basement were recorded in the 1908 Sanborn map. The property was recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map as a tailor shop with a milk station in the basement.

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Reportedly, the Gustav H. Meier photo gallery also was located in this building which Meier purchased for his studio and residence. Born in 1865, Meier came to Alma in 1887 to study photography with Louis Palenske (see 204 Missouri). He operated a photography studio from about 1890 until his death in 1941. As the Alma Signal reported August 27, 1892, "G. H. Meier has one of the most complete photograph galleries in the west." Meier's studio actually may have been in the rear of 206 Missouri as recorded on the 1908 and 1922 Sanborn maps (see 204 Missouri). The property was recorded as the Meyer [sic] building in the May 6, 1924 Fire Insurance Booklet. Later, Bill Grunewald operated an Army goods store and Armond Atkinson had a photography shop in the building. George and Ella Herl bought the building in 1967 and converted the first floor storefront into a car wash. Currently, the building is used as a liquor store and warehouse.

18. 204 Missouri, Palenske Block [Alma State Bank Block], 1890, contributing

The Palenske Block is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. According to the building datestone, it was constructed for Louis Palenske in 1890 adjacent to the earlier business block associated with Louis Palenske. According to Matt Thomson's Early History of Wabaunsee County, Kansas, Palenske was born in 1858 and in 1877 he began to study photography "under the tutorship of the ablest masters of the art in Topeka and Kansas City. Palenske opened a book and stationery store in 1882. He added musical instruments and sewing machines until he carried the largest stock in the county by 1902. Palenske began banking under the name L. Palenske & Company in 1888. The company merged with the Alma State Bank which opened June 24, 1889 and later merged into the Alma National Bank on January 3, 1898. According to the Topeka Journal November 23, 1891, Charles Ross was president of the Alma State Bank and Fred Lutz was vice president. Louis Palenske served as cashier for these financial institutions. In 1896 Palenske was elected a representative to the state legislature. Palenske was cashier of the Alma National Bank in 1902. According to the 1908 Sanborn map, the north part of the building was a novelty store with a photography studio in the rear and a bank in the south part. In 1909 Palenske established the Commercial National Bank so he may have sold his interest in the Alma National Bank. According to the Topeka Daily Capital June 7, 1914, Fred Reuter was president, Otto J. Hess was vice president, and O. F. Deans was cashier of the Alma National Bank.

In the early 1920s, Fred Steinmeyer bought the building. It was recorded as the Steinmeyer Tire and Battery Shop in the May 6, 1924 Fire Insurance Booklet. The entire building was recorded as a farm implement business in the 1922 Sanborn map with a photography studio in the rear. Fred Steinmeyer's two sons, Elmer and Herb, were partners in the Star-Durant automobile agency. In the 1941 Sanborn map, the north storefront was recorded as beer storage and the south storefront as auto storage. Merrill Fritze bought the building in the 1950. The building housed a pool hall and tavern in 1957. Currently, the building is occupied by an antique shop.

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19. 202 Missouri, Merrill Fritze garage, circa 1955, contributing

This is a modern concrete block garage building. Merrill Fritze bought the property next to his gas station in the 1950s. Currently, the building is used for storage.

20. 200 Missouri, A. P. Zeckser Gas Station, circa 1924, non-contributing

A. P. Zeckser built this gasoline filling station between December 30, 1922 and May 29, 1925 after moving the building housing his parents' shoe shop and home to the east. A wood-frame dwelling was recorded on the property in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. The Shell Oil Company purchased the station about 1930. Merrill Fritze bought the property about 1935 and operated the service station until after 1976. Currently, the building is used for equipment storage.

21. 223 Missouri, Farmers' Union Cooperative Store [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum], circa 1910, contributing

For many years in the nineteenth century, the Meyer General Store stood on this property. According to the November, 1908 Sanborn map, this was a one-story wood-frame general store with a metal-covered front. A stone rear warehouse half the width of the main building that was constructed before January, 1893 extended almost to the rear lot line. The storefront was rebuilt as a one-story stone building and that structure was recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. Probably, the reconstruction was associated with the change to the Farmers' Union Cooperative Store. C. B. Thowe was the store manager followed by John Ditman. Ditman died sometime after 1957 and the Farmers Coop Store closed. The "new front" was installed just before 1957. Clarence Karns bought the building; he and his son operated the store until their deaths. His daughter Laura and her husband operated an IGA store in the building in 1976. The Wabaunsee County Historical Society purchased the building in December, 1986 and, currently, the building is used by the Wabaunsee County Historical Museum.

22. 227 Missouri, Meyer Block [Wabaunsee County Historical Museum], 1906, contributing

The first building in Alma, which was constructed in 1866 for the county offices and court, stood on this site until 1906. Then August and Otto Meyer constructed this fine store building. O. A. Meyer laid the cornerstone for the new building in the week before May 25, 1906. John and Rudolph Feiden were the stone masons who built the building. The Alma Post Office was located in the north half of the storefront. C. O. Kinne served as postmaster. The south half of the storefront was the Post Office Drug Store, Dr. August Meyer proprietor. The post office moved to the rear storefront which faces Third Street about 1910 and remained until after 1957. I. A. Robertson was the postmaster. In 1912 the Farmers National Bank was established and located in the north half of the storefront. E. E. Ames was president and E. H. Womer was vice president and

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cashier in 1919. All the banks in Alma were consolidated in 1932. After the Farmers National Bank closed, the drug store moved into the north half and Ed Mann operated a jewelry store in the south. Don Holcomb removed the partition and his pharmacy occupied the entire store in 1957. The building was donated to the Wabaunsee County Historical Society in 1969 and currently serves as the Wabaunsee County Historical Museum.

23. 301 Missouri, White Eagle Service Station, circa 1924, contributing

There was no filling station at this location recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. Then J. Degenhardt moved the older wooden buildings from the site and built a gasoline service station. In the Kansas Inspection Bureau booklets for Alma, the business was recorded as the Degenhardt-Stuewe filling station May 6, 1924 and again May 2, 1930. Later, Degenhardt's son Leo and grandson Jim Degenhardt operated the business as a Conoco station. Currently, the building is used as a seasonal ice cream and sandwich shop

24. 305 Missouri, [Frank's Plumbing], circa 2000, non-contributing

This is a non-historic corrugated metal building. It was built for and houses a plumbing shop.

25. 309-311 Missouri, Kinne & Kerans Block, circa 1888, contributing

The Kinne and Kerans Block is a key contributing property in the Alma Downtown Historic District. Originally, the south half of the building was the Wabaunsee County Bank operated by Vories & Howard. The bank was declared insolvent on January 23, 1889. Later, the Alma National Bank occupied the south storefront. A bank in this location was recorded in the 1908 and 1922 Sanborn map. About 1945 Gus Diepenbrock and his wife purchased the south part of the building. He had a barber shop on the first floor and they lived upstairs. His widow owned the property in 1976.

The north half of this double store building was the C. O. Kinne and J. J. Kearns General Store. Kerans came to Alma in 1884. Later, he operated an abstract, real estate, and loan office. Probably, this was the real estate and loan office in the south part of the building recorded in the 1893 Sanborn map. Kinne came to Alma in 1871 and served as postmaster in the first decade of the twentieth century. The Post Office in the south part of the building was recorded in the 1900 Sanborn map.

In 1890 J. B. Cassidy opened a grocery store in the north half of this building. Cassidy had been employed by the J. F. Limerick and Company. By 1907, Cassidy was serving his second term as mayor of Alma. Later, Cassidy was followed in the grocery business by Simeon Smith, G. A. Kratzer, and John Ditman. The grocery store was recorded in the 1922 Sanborn map. A hand printing office in the rear of the north block was recorded in the 1893 and 1900 Sanborn maps.



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Continuation Sheet

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

Section Number 8 Page 26

The Modern Woodmen Lodge Hall was housed upstairs for many years. After the grocery business closed about 1945, Ross Troutner opened a dry cleaning and clothing store in the building which he later sold to Herb Mueller. Currently, the south storefront is occupied by a bakery and the north storefront is the Wabaunsee County Farm Bureau office.

26. 315 Missouri, Schmanke-Weaver Building, circa 1884, 1906, contributing

Reportedly, this building was constructed for Christoph Schmanke. A harness store in a two-story stone building with a brick front was recorded at this location in the February, 1885 Sanborn map. J. C., Henry J., and William Pippert occupied the building from ca. 1888-1893. The Alma Signal August 27, 1892 reported that William Pippert "carries a full stock of musical instruments, notions, and sewing machines." A millinery store with a dwelling on the second floor was recorded in the January, 1893 Sanborn map. The first floor was recorded as a meat market in the January, 1900 Sanborn map. Frank Grunewald and Thomas O'Neil owned the market. The Grunewald & O'Neil meat market and Mrs. Frank Grunewald, millinery, were recorded in the Wabaunsee County Directory and History of 1907. Reportedly, W. G. Weaver purchased the building in 1906 and rebuilt the storefront after a fire damaged the building. Weaver came to Alma in 1868. He opened an insurance office in 1879 and established the Wabaunsee County Abstract Office in 1899. By 1907, the office also sold real estate and made loans. In 1919 Weaver served as clerk of the District Court and a director of the Farmers National Bank. A jewelry store on the first floor and an office on the second floor were recorded in the 1908 and 1922 Sanborn maps. Weaver sold the property to Victor Hergenreter in 1960. Donna Reuter, the current building owner, has operated Wabaunsee County Abstracting since 1976.

27. 317 Missouri, Louis Undorf Meat Market, circa 1906, non-contributing

This building was constructed for the Louis Undorf Meat Market about 1906. A new one-story stone building for a market was recorded in the November 1908 Sanborn map. It was described as the City Meat Market, Louis Undorf, proprietor, in 1911. The property was recorded as a butcher with a meat shop in the rear and a poultry house on the alley in the 1922 Sanborn map. It was a store in the 1941 Sanborn map. The building was remodeled about 1960 for the Harvey Comer café. Hubert Undorf was the owner in 1976. Currently, the building is vacant.

28. 319-321 Missouri, P. J. Schulte Building, ca. 1884, 1888, 1944, 2008, contributing

In the February, 1885 Sanborn map, a two-story stone building with a barber on the first floor and a dwelling on the second floor was recorded on the south half of Lot 5, Block 7, in this location. The building later housed the Alma Enterprise, a newspaper established October 11, 1884 by Frank I. Sage and O. W. Little. Attorney Carey Carroll purchased the Enterprise in 1943 (see 323 Missouri). The south building was recorded as a hand printing office in the 1893 Sanborn map. About 1944 P. J. Schulte purchased both buildings on Lot 5 and had a new brick front constructed.

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Continuation Sheet

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

Section Number 8 Page 27

In the January, 1893 Sanborn map, another two-story stone building, a meat market, was recorded on the north half of Lot 5, Block 7. The building was recorded as a meat market with a rear ice house in the January, 1900 and November, 1908 Sanborn map. The building was recorded as a restaurant with a bakery and wood oven attached to the rear of the main building in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. Probably, the change from meat market to restaurant-bakery occurred about 1910. According to the Topeka Daily Capital June 7, 1914, the City Bakery operated by Fred Zimmerman was the "only one in the city." Zimmerman produced 800 loaves of bread a day. Later the bakery was operated by Mike Rongish, E. G. Schmidt, and his son, R. L. Schmidt. The building was recorded as a store and bake shop in the 1941 Sanborn map. Reportedly, P. J. Schulte purchased the building from G. H. Meier about 1944. The building housed the Hy-Klas super market in 1957. Currently, the building is occupied by a flower shop.

29. 323 Missouri, Signal-Enterprise Building, circa. 1901, contributing

The south half of Lot 6, Block 7 was vacant in the January, 1900 Sanborn map. A two-story stone building with a printing office was recorded on the property in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. In the 1922 Sanborn map, it was recorded as the Alma Signal printing office with a doctor's office on the second floor. Matt Thomson started the Alma Signal newspaper September 7, 1889. He sold the newspaper to Dr. O. S. Chester and Carey Carroll in 1901. H. C. Sticher was the editor and publisher in 1907. Judge Carey E. Carroll (1868-1948), purchased the Enterprise and consolidated the two Alma papers September 19, 1943. Carroll was admitted to the bar in 1895 and elected Wabaunsee County attorney in 1896. In 1911 Carroll had his law office on the second floor along with the office of Oscar Schmitz who was county attorney at the time. The building's first floor storefront was remodeled by 1957. After Judge Carroll's death, his son, A. E. Carroll, published the newspaper until 1961 when he sold to Robert F. Stuewe. Mrs. Lucy Carroll owned the building in 1976. This building still is occupied by the Alma Signal-Enterprise newspaper.

30. 327 Missouri, Hochhans Block, circa 1906, non-contributing

There was a wood frame building with a rear wagon shed on the north half of Lot 6, Block 7 recorded in the January, 1900 Sanborn map. This was a wagon shop owned by R. A. Hochhans. Apparently, Hochhaus replaced that structure about 1906. The existing one-story stone building with a double storefront occupying the north half of Lot 6 and the south half of Lot 7 was recorded in the November, 1908 Sanborn map. Also in 1907, the Wabaunsee County Directory and History reported, "Alma has made many improvements the last two years, among them the Hochhans Block, the new Meyer Building [see 227 Missouri] ... and L. Undorf's new market [see 317 Missouri]. The Knostman Clothing Company occupied the north half of the building in 1907. According to the November, 1908 Sanborn map, the building had a buggy shop in the south half and a store selling clothing, boots, and shoes in the north half. I. A. Robertson, who worked for Knostman, bought the clothing business in 1911. Robertson served as mayor of Alma in 1906.

United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation Sheet

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

Section Number 8 Page 28

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The Alma Clothing Company was recorded in the building on May 6, 1924. Robertson later sold to C. H. Schmidt who sold to Art Johnson who established the Miller & Johnson Drug Company. Johnson owned the building by January 14, 1927 and used the south half for a drug store and the north half as a clothing store. In 1954 Dr. E. B. McKnight had his office in the north part of the building.

The south half of the building was a variety and book store and the north half was a clothing store recorded in the May, 1922 Sanborn map. Joe Treu operated the bookstore. He sold to the Miller & Johnson Drug Company. Albert J. Peckinovsky purchased the building from Miller and Johnson and later sold to Francis Newton. Newton's widow Catherine Newton sold to Milton V. Rubottom. Currently, the building is used as a restaurant.

**30a.** 327 Missouri, Storage building, c. 1922-1926, contributing

The tile outbuilding behind the north storefront was built between May, 1922 and May, 1926 and served as a dry cleaning shop for the Alma Clothing Company. Currently, the building is vacant.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Number 9 Page 29

Alma Downtown Historic District  
Alma, Wabaunsee County, KS

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**REFERENCE LIST**

Andreas, A. T., Cutler, William G. History of the State of Kansas (Chicago, IL: A. T. Andreas, 1883). Accessed online 2/16/2007 at <http://www.kancoll.org/books>

Blackmar, Frank W. Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History (Chicago, IL: Standard Publishing Company, 1912). Accessed online 5/24/2007 at <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1912>

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**Articles**

"Alma," Alma Signal 27 August 1892.

"Alma, Kansas, Is Prosperous City," Topeka Capital 7 June 1914.

Alma Enterprise 20 August 1936.

Alma Enterprise 23 October 1936.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Alma Downtown Historic District

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KANSAS, Wabaunsee

DATE RECEIVED: 4/17/09      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/04/09  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/19/09      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/31/09  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000354

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: Y    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    \_\_\_\_\_ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*See attached comments*

RECOM./CRITERIA Return  
REVIEWER JM Clallard DISCIPLINE History  
TELEPHONE 202-354-2258 DATE 5/21/09  
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

## **Alma Downtown Historic District**

**Waubausee County, Kansas**

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### **Recommendation: Return for Additional Documentation**

The architecture in this historic district is remarkable, reflecting a cohesive collection of limestone commercial architecture dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Many buildings retain historic storefronts, while others reflect changes typical in most commercial downtown areas. Several buildings that are classified as non-contributing may actually have sufficient character-defining features to convey their historical identity. The most obvious example is the gas station at 200 Missouri. The period of significance ends just short of the 50 year cut-off, yet with the exception of the Stockholders Bank of Alma and a 1950s gas station, there is little mid-20<sup>th</sup> century construction; the selection of the period of significance needs further discussion. Nomination is being returned for both technical and substantive reasons.

#### **Section 5: Count of Resources**

Revise the count based on the reevaluation of contributing and noncontributing resources recommended in Section 7 below.

#### **Section 6: Functions**

Historic Functions: Please add as many sub-functions as apply under COMMERCE. Current Functions: Please add as many sub-functions as apply under COMMERCE. Also, please add the function EDUCATION to go with the sub-function for "library."

#### **Section 7: Description**

Please change the status of the A.P. Zeckser Gas Station (200 Missouri) to contributing; this building clearly retains its character-defining features and the historic identity of a 1920s gas stations despite the synthetic siding. Also, reassess the contributing/noncontributing status of the Lutz Hardware (316 Missouri) and Simon Building (222 Missouri) to determine if the cornice or upper story character, or side elevation is sufficiently visible and intact to convey the building's historic identity.

Also, as a result of the reevaluation of the period of significance, please reassess the contributing/noncontributing status of the 1956 First National Bank of Alma (304 Missouri). Please ascertain through historic photographs or advertisements that the appearance of the current façade dates to its original construction in 1956.

#### **Section 8: Statement of Significance**

Please strengthen the justification for the closing date of the period of significance, and the explanation of how post-war, modern construction, such as the 1956 First National Bank Building, reflects an important stage in the history of downtown commercial activity or the evolution of commercial architecture locally. Please explain the nature of the 1950s storefront renovations mentioned on page 8.12, and identify 1) the types of changes that are considered "historic," and 2) the buildings that reflect these significant changes. You might also discuss the continuing importance of this main street as an automobile route into the fifties, linking the 1955 garage at 202 Missouri with the earlier gas stations as evidence of the downtown's continuing role in servicing automobiles. In what ways do the materials used and the overall design of the 1956 bank building—with a wood shingled awning and wooden façade—reflect significant aspects of Alma's architectural heritage or the evolution of commercial architecture in the postwar period. How is the so-called "modern" character of the bank the same as, or different from, the kinds of façade remodeling that have made other buildings in the district non-contributing?

**Sketch Map:**

Please provide a sketch map that meets the requirements outlined on page 62 of the *How To Complete the National Register Registration Form*.

**Photographs:**

Please note that I have entered the missing county name on the back of each photograph.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the issues raised above, please contact Linda McClelland at 202-354-2258, or [linda\\_mcclelland@nps.gov](mailto:linda_mcclelland@nps.gov).

May.21, 2009

















MUSEUM

WARMINSTER COUNTY  
MUSEUM

WARMINSTER ST

STOP



















LUDWIG A. MILLER  
MEMORIAL  
BORN 1886 - DIED 1941

AMERICAN LEGION  
42nd ILLINOIS POST #2

103





ANN & KEATING'S  
GENERAL  
MERCHANDISE

**FB**  
Farm Bureau

GENERAL MERCHANDISE  
FRESH MEATS  
PRODUCE

1910

THE  
RESTAURANT



KEFANS  
NAL  
NDISE

1917

1917







Del  
Rio  
Restau

The Signal Enterprise  
Signal Enterprise Co.  
712 883331

CLOSED

CHEVROLET

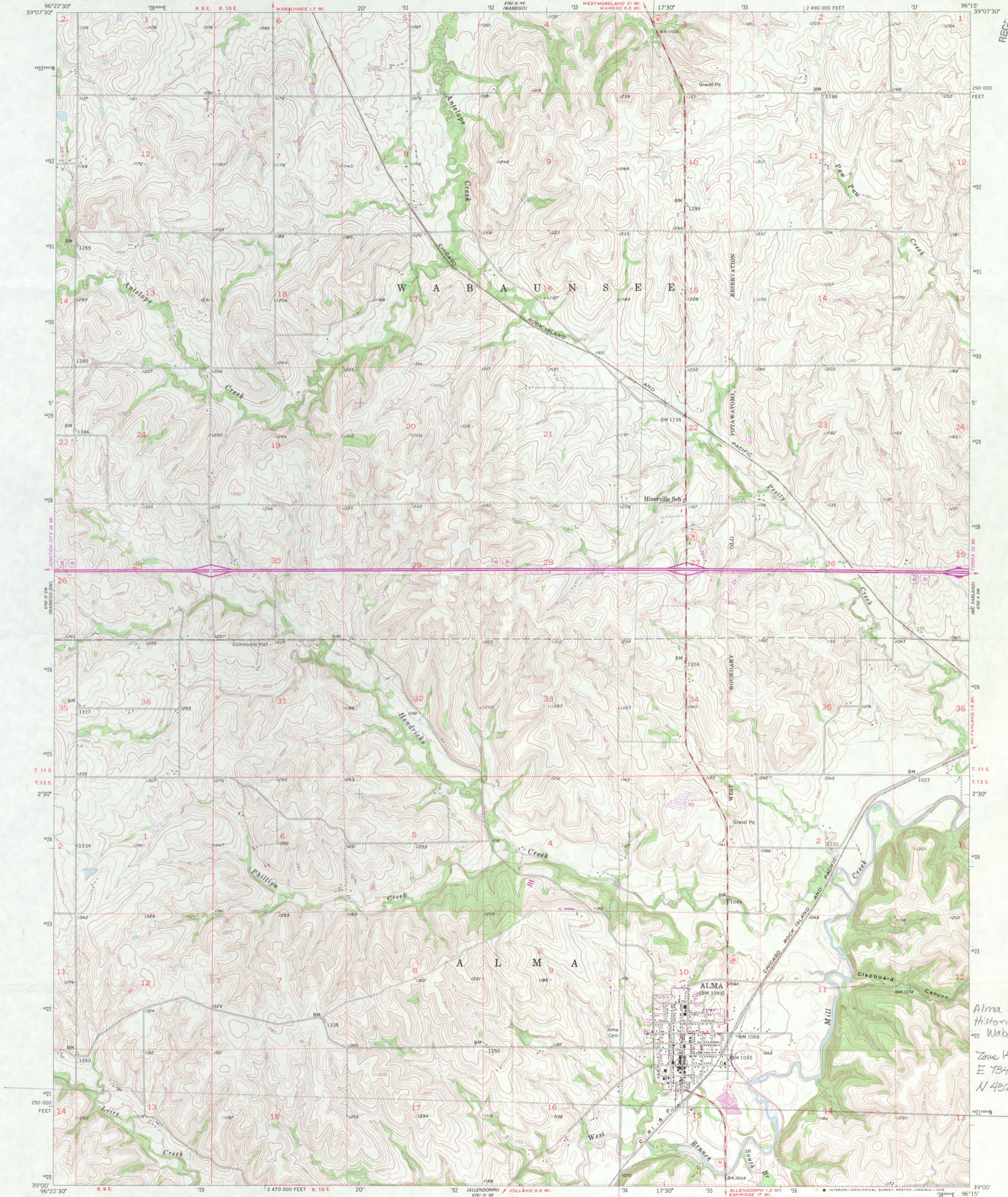


Deb's  
Restaurant  
Dinner • Lunch • Bar

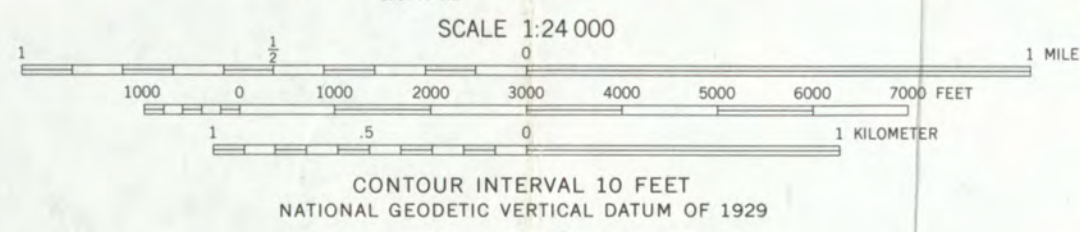
RESTAURANT

CHICKEN  
COURSES

RECEIVED  
DEC 0 5 2008  
Cultural Resources Division

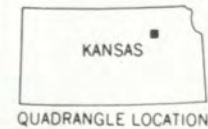


Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1951. Field check 1954  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Kansas coordinate system,  
north zone  
Dotted land lines by Bureau of Indian Affairs  
indicate approximate locations  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue  
Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with  
State of Kansas agencies from aerial photographs taken  
1977. Map edited 1978. This information not field checked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	4 LANE 16 LANE	Light-duty
Medium-duty	4 LANE 16 LANE	Unimproved dirt
U.S. Route		State Route
		Interstate Route



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND STATE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66044  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ALMA, KANS.  
N3900-W9615/7.5  
1954  
PHOTOREVISED 1978  
AMS 6762 III SE-SERIES V878

Alma Downtown  
Historic District  
Wabaunsee Co., KS  
Zone 14  
E 734540  
N 4321710

# KANSAS

Kansas State Historical Society  
Cultural Resources Division

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

April 15, 2009

Dr. Janet Matthews  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, N. W.  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor (MS 2280)  
Washington, DC 20005



Dear Dr. Matthews:

Please find enclosed the following National Register documents:

- Ecumenical Christian Ministries Building – Lawrence, Douglas Co., Kansas
- S-W Supply Company – Girard, Crawford Co., Kansas
- State Bank of Girard – Girard, Crawford Co., Kansas
- Holton Bath House and Swimming Pool – Holton, Jackson Co., Kansas
- Alma Downtown Historic District – Alma, Wabaunsee Co., Kansas
- Old Mission Mausoleum – Wichita, Sedgwick Co., Kansas
- Smyser House – Wichita, Sedgwick Co., Kansas

Please contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at 785-272-8681 ext. 216 or [smartin@kshs.org](mailto:smartin@kshs.org).

Sincerely yours,

Sarah J. Martin  
National Register Coordinator

Enclosures



# KANSAS

Kansas Historical Society  
Cultural Resources Division



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Linda McClelland, Historian, National Register of Historic Places  
FROM: Sarah Martin, National Register Coordinator, Kansas Historical Society  
DATE: October 28, 2009  
SUBJECT: Re-submission of Alma Downtown Historic District nomination

The Alma Downtown Historic District nomination has been revised per your comments dated May 21, 2009.

**Section 6:** The applicable sub-functions have been added under both *Historic Functions* and *Current Functions*. The function EDUCATION has been added to *Current Functions*.

**Section 7:** These properties have been reassessed and changed to contributing: No. 6 – 316 Missouri Street; No. 14 – 222 Missouri Street; No. 20 – 200 Missouri Street.

These properties have been changed to non-contributing due to the change in period of significance: No. 9 – 304 Missouri Street; No. 19 – 202 Missouri Street.

**Section 8:** (Period of Significance) - Upon reflection of your comments concerning the period of significance, we re-evaluated the district's thirty-two resources and determined a more appropriate end date was 1936. Twenty-seven of the district's thirty-two buildings fall within this revised period of significance (1880-1936). Moreover, your questions regarding the district's few mid twentieth-century resources revealed no clear patterns or trends that warranted extending the period of significance into the 1950s.

**Sketch Map** – See attached

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this nomination. I am available at 785-272-8681 ext. 216 or [smartin@kshs.org](mailto:smartin@kshs.org).

Recommendation: SLR Return

Action: SLR Return None

Documentation Issues-Discussion Sheet

State Name: KS County Name Wahawanssee Resource Name Alma Downtown HD

Reference No. 354 Multiple Name \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Problem: - no district map  
- photos labeled incorrectly - need county name - OK done  
- need subfunctions for commerce/trade; library is a subfunction of education not government  
specialty store  
depth store, business  
financial institution  
restaurant

Resolution: #20 - Gas Station → cont /  
SLR: Yes No (outstanding non-cont  
Database Change: example)

PLB