

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

DEC 13 1993

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Mt. Hood Hotel Annex

other names/site number Hood River Hotel

2. Location

street & number 102-08 Oak Street N/A not for publication

city or town Hood River N/A vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Hood River code 027 zip code 97031

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.)

Janna Hamrick December 1, 1993
Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO Date
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Entered in the
for Signature of the Keeper National Register Date of Action
Janna Hamrick 1/21/94

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	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		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

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC-Hotel
COMMERCE-Specialty Store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC-Hotel
COMMERCE-Specialty Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Canvas (rubberized)

other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development
Commerce

Social History

Period of Significance

1911-12 to 1942

Significant Dates

1911-12

1926

1925 and 1942

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Charles A. Bell, Ola Stryker Bell

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Mathison/Anderson (Builders)

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Hood River Glacier & News-Hood River

County Library

Mt. Hood Hotel Annex
Name of Property

Hood River Co., OR
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 0.25 acres

Hood River, Oregon-Washington 1:24000

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

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Zone

Easting

Northing

2

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3

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Zone

Easting

Northing

4

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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 Donovan, Sally

organization Donovan and Assoc. date July 1993

street & number 111 1/2 Third Street telephone (503) 386-6755

city or town Hood River state Oregon zip code 97031

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Barone, Inc. (Pasquale and Jacquie Barone)

street & number 1730 Orchard Road telephone (503) 386-1900

city or town Hood River state OR zip code 97031

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 Reduction Project (4004-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

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Summary Architectural Description

The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex (currently called the Hood River Hotel) is located on the northwest corner of First and Oak streets in Hood River, Oregon. The 20th Century Commercial Style building was constructed in 1911-12 for use as apartments, retail space, and an annex to the Mt. Hood Hotel. The rectangular building is three stories high with a full basement and is constructed of red brick in a common bond pattern. The deep cornice extends around the two primary facade, projecting over the one over one double hung wood sash upper story windows. The building is divided into five bays defined by brick piers and is supported on a rough aggregate concrete foundation. With the exception of alterations to the commercial storefronts, the exterior of the building has few alterations and is in good condition. The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex is listed on the 1988 Hood River Cultural Resource Inventory as a primary resource.

Setting

The Mt. Hood Hotel is sited on the northwest corner of First and Oak streets in Block 2, Lots 7 and 8 in The Original Town of Hood River. Located at the east end of downtown, the building fronts Oak Street, the main east-west arterial through Hood River. The east elevation faces First Street. The lot slopes down to the north towards the train depot and railroad tracks. The building encompasses the southeast quarter of the block. Flush with the public right-of-way on the south and east elevations, the hotel abuts another commercial building on the west. Located north of the building is an asphalt parking lot which has a concrete block wall defining the southern border of the lot.

Exterior

The Commercial Style building is two stories high on the south elevations (front facade) and three stories high on the east and north elevations. The building has a full basement. Measuring 100 feet by 100 feet, the building is square in plan.

The roof slopes down from west to east and is covered with a rubberized canvas roofing material. This sloping roof surrounds a 14 feet (north-south) by 40 feet (east-west) open court yard on the third floor. Skylights punctuate the roof and the floor of the court yard. The parapet ranges in height from approximately

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four inches on the west end to approximately five feet on the east end of the roof. Drain pipes are located at the northeast and southeast corners of the roof. The roofing material wraps around the concrete coping on the parapet. A corbelled brick chimney surmounts the east end of the roof.

The brick parapet is decorated with recessed rectangular panels finished with stucco. Projecting over the upper story windows, the wide wooden cornice wraps around the south and east elevations. A wide molding finishes the soffit. The upper story one over one double hung wood sash windows are accentuated by a raised single coursing of brick which outline the upper portion of the windows. The windows are arranged in an alternating pattern: single windows flank tripartite windows with the exception of the central two tripartite windows which are paired. Wooden window boxes decorate the upper story windows. A corbelled brick beltcourse separates the upper story from the lower stories.

The front (south) elevation of the hotel is divided into five bays: two of the bays are associated with the hotel, and the other bays house commercial businesses. The transoms on the two eastern bays have been restored and consist of large vertical panes divided with wooden muntins. The transoms on the two western storefronts are covered with wood, finished with stucco. A slightly projecting wooden beltcourse capped with metal flashing extends the length of the front facade above the transoms.

The western two storefronts have been remodeled over the years to accommodate various businesses. Display windows are large fixed pane windows with aluminum or metal frames. The configuration of the storefront in the second bay from the west appears original. Evidence of the original wooden storefront is on the western wall of the bay and the original wooden beaded ceiling board is above the entrance door.

The central storefront retains its original wooden storefront. The bulkhead of the store is made of recessed panels and the entrance door is wooden. The glass in the door transom has been removed to accommodate an air conditioning unit. The multi-pane transom window above the storefront is intact.

The eastern two bays are associated with the hotel: the eastern most bay is the hotel entrance and the adjacent bay is the

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restaurant. The entrance to the restaurant and the hotel have been recessed under the transom windows to accommodate an outside eating area. The interior walls of the bays are stucco. Small hexagonal floor tiles designed with a geometric border decorates the floor of the entrance. The French entrance doors of the hotel and restaurant are flanked by multi-pane doors capped with multi-light transoms.

Tall, two story multi-pane double hung windows embellish the east elevation of the building. These windows illuminate the hotel lobby and are finished with a corbelled brick sill. Windows on the northern end of the facade are one over one double hung windows and multi-pane casements. Three doors are located on this facade: one leading to the stair hall to the lobby and basement; one to the basement; and the northern most door leads to a guest suite. The suite door is flanked by multi-pane sidelights.

The exterior of the basement walls are covered with stucco. Stairs, descending from Oak Street, lead to a basement entrance door. The original wood door is intact and is capped with a multi-pane transom. A brick corbelled beltcourse separates the basement level from the upper stories.

The north (rear) elevation is three stories high with a fully exposed basement story. Bands of one over one double hung windows punctuate the facade. French doors on the first floor are enclosed with a small balcony with a simple wood railing. This door originally linked Mt. Hood Hotel with the annex. Other doors on the facade lead the basement.

Interior

The interior of the building is made up of the hotel lobby, a restaurant, a mezzanine, 41 guest rooms/suites, three commercial business spaces, and a full basement.

Hotel Lobby/Restaurant

The lobby is a rectangular room measuring approximately 20 feet (east-west) by 61 feet (north-south) and is two stories high. French doors, on the south elevation, are used as the main entrance doors. Multi-pane doors flank the entrance. Transoms above the French doors illuminate the lobby. The 17 feet high plaster ceiling is decorated with a chandelier and ceiling fans. A beautiful wide original crown molding and picture rail extends

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around the perimeter of the lobby, capping the plastered walls. Pilasters define the corners of the room and interior bays. Mounted wall sconces are on the east and west walls of the lobby. The two story multi-pane windows flank the central fireplace. The fireplace has a deep wooden classically detailed mantelpiece with side recessed paneled pilasters. The front of the mantelpiece is decorated with three recessed rectangular panels. The firebox surrounds are covered with marble tile. A small room on the west elevation of the lobby, formally a closet, is used as a gift shop. An opening in central interior bay leads to the restaurant.

The hotel desk, set at a diagonal, is located in the northeast corner of the lobby. The marble patterned laminate recessed panels are finished with fir trim. A small office is north of the desk. The restrooms, elevator (cage-type elevator with brass accordion door), and the door to the stair hall and first floor rooms are located in the northwest corner of the lobby/restaurant.

The restaurant is a rectangular room measuring approximately 20 feet (east-west) by 49 feet (north-south) and is two stories high. The ceilings are 17 feet high and are finished with plaster. On the south elevation, French doors flanked by multi-pane doors capped with transoms, lead to the outdoor dining area. A picture rail extends around the perimeter of the lobby, finishing the plastered wall surface.

A bar, on the west wall of the restaurant, is constructed with recessed panels covered with marbled patterned laminate which are trimmed with fir. The tiered back-bar is designed with a central etched back-lit mirror flanked by lower sideboards supported with boxed posts. The kitchen is located behind the north and west walls of the dining room. Wooden stairs in the northeast corner of the dining room lead to the mezzanine.

The mezzanine extends across the entire width of the restaurant and lobby. A wooden balustrade with square balusters and boxed newel posts with caps encloses the mezzanine level. The room is an open area with a light well and skylight in the western portion of the ceiling and a multi-pane window on the eastern wall. Carpet covers the western portion of the room and the original fir floors are exposed on the eastern half. A doorway on the north wall leads to the stair hall and the second story guest rooms. The elevator is adjacent to the door.

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Guest Rooms and Suites

There are 41 guest room/suites currently in use in the hotel. The first story guest rooms are accessed by a door on the north end of the lobby that leads into the stair hall and first story hallway. The hallway is L-shaped. French doors at the end of the north hallway led to the original Mt. Hood Hotel. Currently, the doors open to a small balcony.

The five guest rooms on the first floor are on the north side of the hall; the guest suite is in the northeast corner of the building. All the five panel exterior doors are capped with transoms. The guest rooms have private baths with views of the Columbia River and the railroad station. Some of the rooms have the original wooden vanities above the sink. A simple wood picture rail extends around the perimeter of the rooms and the doors and windows are capped with projecting cornice moldings. The rooms are carpeted and are heated with steam heat (the original radiators are intact). The guest suite is larger and is equipped with a kitchen and private bath.

The stair hall to the second story is U-shaped in plan. The baluster is comprised of simple square balusters and boxed newel posts with caps. The second story hall is identical in plan to the first story hall. The original fir floors in the second story hallway are exposed; a carpet runner is in the center of hall. Identically planned, there are five guest rooms and one suite on the second floor. Stairs, at the west end of the hall, are used as a second means of egress. The main stairway to the third floor is illuminated by a skylight.

The third floor has 26 guest rooms/suites; 17 are around the exterior perimeter and nine are positioned around the interior courtyard. All of the rooms have private baths. The rooms are similar in detail to the first and second story rooms. The original fir floors have been uncovered. Each of the interior rooms have windows that face the court yard, providing a exterior light source. Skylights illuminate the hallways and all the bathrooms on the east and south sides on the third floor. A utility room and back staircase is located along the west elevation of the floor.

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Basement

The basement is a large area which has been divided into several rooms. The mechanical room, housing the boiler and fuel tank, and storage rooms are on the west end of the basement. A storage room in the southwest corner of the building contains a coal delivery chute. The chute door is located in the sidewalk on Oak Street. The north elevation of the basement has been divided into three guest suites; the suite in the northeast corner of the basement is entered from First Street.

The largest basement room is in the southeastern corner and measures approximately 71 feet (north-south) and 74 feet (east-west). This room was originally used as the dining hall and kitchen. Ten inch by twelve inch beams supported on twelve inch by twelve inch posts span the basement north to south. The north portion of this large room has been divided into restrooms, storage rooms, and a kitchen. An original fireplace is on the east wall. The basement is in the process of being renovated.

Historic Alteration

The building originally housed commercial spaces, apartments, and guest rooms. The 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance indicates that the ground floor fronting Oak Street was originally occupied by four commercial businesses. An auto supply store was located where the lobby is currently. Historic photos also show that the storefront windows on the east elevation of the building were larger single pane storefront windows with transoms. The 1916 Sanborns also indicates that the narrow central storefront (104 1/2) contained a staircase and was used to access the upper story apartments.

In 1926, the lobby was moved from the original hotel to the southeast corner of the annex. The large two story windows on the east elevation were changed to more decorative multi-pane windows. The new lobby entrance was designed with exterior French doors flanked by multi-pane windows. The French doors led into a tiled foyer. Another set of French doors opened into the lobby. The new lobby replaced the auto parts store. The lobby was decorated with the latest of finishing and furniture (see description of lobby in the statement of significance section under "The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex").

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Non-Historic Alterations to Exterior

Alterations to the commercial storefronts occurred during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s to accommodate various businesses. These alterations included changing the bulkheads, covering the transoms, and the installation of aluminum frame windows. The lobby entrance doors, foyer, and interior doors were removed in the 1960s/1970s and replaced with a new bulkhead, aluminum frame windows and door when the space reverted to a commercial business space. Nine foot suspended ceilings were installed in the interior of commercial spaces. The hotel ceased to function and some of the rooms were used as apartments.

Recent Rehabilitation/Restoration Work

The majority of the Mt. Hood Hotel was vacant and severely deteriorating when the building was purchased in September, 1988. Paquale and Jacquie Barone have rehabilitated the building, remodeling and restoring the building to its original function. The intense process of rehabilitation began in the fall of 1988 and the majority of the work on the hotel was completed in December 1989. Restoration/rehabilitation work undertaken included:

- Re-roofing building and repointed exterior brick;
- Uncovering the original transoms on the eastern two storefronts and installing glass;
- Removal of exterior fire escapes;
- Construction of the exterior dining area (tile work on the floor and stucco side walls);
- Construction of the entrance to the hotel lobby and restaurant. French doors flanked by multi-pane doors capped with transoms were constructed. This configuration was similar in design to the original interior entrance doors;
- Paint removed from the rear elevation of the building;
- False ceiling removed uncovering the original 17 feet high ceilings in the current restaurant, lobby and commercial spaces;

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- The tall, multi-pane windows on the east elevation of the lobby were uncovered. The windows were repaired and rehabilitated;
- The original crown molding was uncovered in the lobby;
- The fireplace in the lobby was uncovered exposing the original mantelpiece and tile work. The tiles around the firebox were replaced due to deterioration; the ornate central tiles, designed with country scenes, were saved and are displayed in the lobby;
- Reconstruction of the mezzanine balustrade using the stair hall balustrade as a model;
- Plaster ceilings and walls were all repaired;
- Construction of the a new front desk in the lobby;
- Construction of the bar and stairs in the restaurant;
- All the doors to the guest rooms and suites were repaired and new glass was installed in the transoms above the doors;
- Removal of a portion of the west wall of the lobby, creating a passageway between the lobby and the restaurant;
- Original radiators rehabilitated;
- Two guest rooms on the western wall of the third floor were eliminated to accommodate a second staircase and a laundry room;
- The fir floors in the first, second and third floor hallways were refurbished along with the floors in the third floor guest rooms and suites;
- Original closets in the guest rooms were changed into bathrooms;
- Guest room vanities were refurbished;

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- Entire building on the interior was painted;
- New plumbing, sprinkling system, alarm system, and electric system were installed;
- New period light fixtures were installed;

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SHPO SUMMARY

The Commercial-style brick building which occupies a 100 x 100 foot lot at the northwest corner of Oak and First Streets in downtown Hood River, Oregon was completed in 1912 as an adjunct of the adjoining Mt. Hood Hotel of 1881. Following its enlargement after 1886, the parent hotel rose to a height of three stories and was crowned by a mansarded observation tower and encircled by a double veranda. Overlooking the Oregon-Washington Railroad and Navigation Company passenger station and the Columbia River to the north, the parent hotel presented an imposing front on its corner site downslope on First Street, where it was prominent to the view of travelers arriving by steamboat and train. With the advent of automobile traffic, the city's premier hotel took a back seat to its up-to-date annex. It was substantially closed after 1926 and was razed about 1930. Its site is now parking space for the former annex, which was renamed Hood River Hotel.

The historic Mt. Hood Hotel Annex meets National Register Criterion A in the area of community development as the town's first first-class tourist hotel specifically designed for motoring clientele passing on Oak Street, the original Columbia River Highway. In recognition of the transition from railroad to automobile trade in this center of the fruit industry, the main lobby of the complex had been shifted to the annex in 1926. The renovations were designed by Portland architect George Post. As is pointed out in the following documentation, the elegant new lobby was opened for use simultaneously with the dedication of the newly completed Mt. Hood Loop Highway which inspired an era of tourism in the Hood River Valley. At the same time, one of the ground story retail spaces was remodeled expressly for use of the local Chamber of Commerce.

The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex, or Hood River Hotel, is significant also under Criterion B as the place most importantly associated with its long time owners and proprietors, Charles Bell (1860-1925) and his wife, the former Ola Stryker (1866-1942), public-spirited community leaders who aided a variety of progressive causes in the Hood River County seat, notably the Good Roads movement and development of the Mt. Hood Loop.

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Although executed in fire-resistant material, as opposed to wood frame construction, the annex achieved a certain visual continuity with its heavily striated parent hotel block through a prominent cornice line, rectilinear attic panels and conforming floor levels. Because its site slopes steeply toward the riverfront, the nominated building is three stories on a daylight basement on the north, but its facade on Oak Street is two stories in height. Its street elevations are formally organized. On the uppermost story, fenestration consists of a symmetrical arrangement of single double-hung and the double-hung assemblies with sidelights that were characteristic of commercial buildings of the Chicago School. These third story windows are outlined by a continuous brick string course tracing the flat arches. A prominent, flare-top brick chimney rises above the attic on the east end, revealing the location of the lobby fireplace. The lobby interior, open to the second story, has been restored. Its airy elegance is enhanced by oversize multi-pane windows flanking the fireplace on the east wall. Window and door trim of good quality is rounded out by cornice and picture molding, square-balustered railings with square posts and caps, pilasters and bases. The lobby is balanced on the west half of the ground story by retail space.

Guest rooms and former apartments are trimmed with standard millwork of the day, including architrave door frames with transoms, picture molding in the hallways, and so on. The third floor plan is a standard double-loaded corridor in a U-shaped configuration surrounding a central light court.

By 1988, when it was acquired by the current owners, the building had been partially abandoned and was deteriorating. In the following year, the Barones completed a rehabilitation based on returning the building to its original function. Alterations to Oak Street retail fronts had been carried out in the post war period through the 1970s. These were reversed in the east two bays where transoms were uncovered and suspended ceilings were removed. The rehabilitation entailed reroofing, repointing exterior brick, restoration of the lobby, including reconstruction of a mezzanine balustrade, refurbishing guest rooms, and comprehensively upgrading electrical and plumbing systems. The restaurant, which was a key component of the rehabilitation scheme, accounted for modification in the form of an interior passage between the lobby and restaurant spaces and a front entrance recess, two bays wide, to be used for outdoor dining.

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Statement of Significance

The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex, constructed in 1911-12, is significant under Criterion (a) for its direct association with the first hotel built in Hood River, the Mt. Hood Hotel. The construction of the Annex is associated with Hood River's second building phase when large brick structures replaced smaller, wooden buildings. This period of rapid growth and development, 1901-1913, was due to the success of the tourism, fruit, and timber industries. The brick hotel represents the last of the substantial brick buildings constructed along the Hood River's main street during this period. The building is an excellent example of its type.

The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex symbolizes the transition from a railroad dependent community to an automobile oriented town. The Annex was built facing Oak Street, which became Hood River's section of the Columbia River Highway. Businesses along Oak Street were highly visible to motor vehicle traffic. The construction of the Annex coincided with the beginning of the automobile era when the majority of the new businesses in Hood River served the automobilist.

The original Mt. Hood Hotel was built in 1881, the same year the town of Hood River was platted. The hotel was strategically sited adjacent to the railroad depot, the main means of transportation until the second decade of the 20th century. The hotel was a gathering place for visitors and towns people alike. Socializing took place at the hotel, and many business deals were made in the lobby. The hotel gained fame as a destination resort as well as a stopping point for people traveling to other locations in the valley. As Hood River became known throughout the country for its successful fruit industry and for its scenic beauty, the Mt. Hood Hotel expanded.

The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex was built just south of the original hotel in response to the increase in tourism and the new business created by fruit and timber industries. In addition, Hood River's population tripled from 1900 to 1915. The Annex originally housed four commercial stores, apartments for Hood River workers, and additional guest rooms for tourists.

In 1926, the main lobby was moved from the original hotel to the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex. The new lobby opened on the same day as the official dedication of the newly completed Mt. Hood Loop Highway.

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Now tourists could motor from Portland to Hood River on the Columbia River Highway (completed in 1915-16) and then proceed back to Portland around the south face of Mt. Hood on the Mt. Hood Loop. The new lobby provided a high profile for automobiles passing through Hood River. At this time, the Hood River Chamber of Commerce also moved their offices to the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex for better exposure. After the lobby was moved, the original hotel closed its doors to tourists and was demolished in the 1930s. The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex became the "Mt. Hood Hotel". The hotel remained in operation until the 1960s when it was closed to tourists. The building deteriorated in the 1970s and 1980s until the current owners restored the building to its original use as a tourist hotel.

The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex is also significant under Criterion (b) for its association with Ola and Charles Bell: the builders, owners and proprietors of the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex. Charles Bell purchased the original Mt. Hood Hotel in 1893 and owned the hotel until 1900. Charles Bell then re-purchased the hotel in 1908. Charles and Ola Bell lived at the hotel and ran the business until 1942 when Ola, the last of the immediate Bell family, died.

Charles Bell was well known throughout the region for his humor, business acumen, humanitarianism, generosity, and civic mindedness. Charles was an early resident of Hood River, moving to the town in 1890 while under contract with the Oregon Lumber Company. After purchasing the Mt. Hood Hotel in 1893, Charles quit the logging business and managed the pioneer hostelry. He was elected to the City Council which he served for a total of eight years. During this time Charles was instrumental in planning some of the early amenities in Hood River such as street lighting, and paved sidewalks and streets. Charles, along with the Davenport Brothers, was responsible for building an irrigation system along the west side of the Hood River Valley. The ditch opened up development in the valley and supplied the town with water. Charles was known for his humanitarian activities. He headed the local welfare association, provided meals for the needy, gave lodging to newcomers, and started the "Community Christmas" where Christmas baskets were distributed to poor families. Charles was active in other local and regional organizations such as the Hood River Commercial Club, the Hood River School Board, and the Oregon Hotel Association. He was

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instrumental in securing funds for the Mt. Hood Loop Highway and served on a state highway commission.

Ola Stryker Bell was co-owner of the Mt. Hood Hotel. Ola was an experienced hotel manager, gaining her early skills in the business at the famous Seaside House in Seaside, Oregon and in various other resorts and hotels in the state. As a young woman, she was industrious and helped raise her younger siblings prior to starting her career in the hotel business. After her marriage to Charles Bell in 1907, the Bells purchased the Mt. Hood Hotel and teamed up in the operation of the pioneer hotel. Ola is credited with much of the management of the hotel and was involved in every aspect of the hotel's operation. She was remembered for her efficiency and her wonderful cooking. Along with running the first class hotel, Ola was very involved in Hood River politics. She was the first woman elected to the Hood River City Council (1928) and the first woman appointed to the Hood River Port Commission (1933). She believed that every citizen had certain civic obligation and should be active in community affairs. Ola served on the hospital board and helped fund raise for the "new" Hood River Hospital. She served on the county welfare board for many years and often took care of run-away girls.

Early Development of Hood River

In 1854, Nathaniel and Mary Coe settled the first permanent land claim in the present-day town of Hood River. By the late 1850s, the Coe's had established a successful farmstead, beautiful gardens, and orchards. The success of the Coe's farmstead attracted new pioneers to the Hood River Valley. The Hood River area, however, grew slowly during the next two decades because the community was still isolated and dependent on the Columbia River steamboats for transportation, mail, and supplies. In the beginning of the 1880s, one single event stimulated tremendous growth in the region; the coming of the railroad.

The O.W.R. & N. Co. Railroad reached Hood River in November, 1882, ushering in a new period of growth. The following year, the transcontinental railroad was completed, further linking the Columbia River Gorge with Eastern and Western cities. The railroad reduced travel time from Portland to Hood River from five hours, by stage, to three hours by rail.

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In 1881, residents planned the site of the O.W.R. & N. Co. railroad station and depot in anticipation of the coming of the railroad. The original town site of Hood River, a four block area south of the depot, was platted at the same time. A first hotel in the new townsite was constructed adjacent the railroad depot and called the Mt. Hood Hotel.

The Original Mt. Hood Hotel

The original Mt. Hood Hotel was constructed in 1881 adjacent the O.W.R. & N. Railroad station at the corner of First and Cascade streets. The hotel was constructed by T.J. Hosford in conjunction with the coming of the railroad and the platting of the original townsite of Hood River. It was the first commercial hotel built in the new townsite and one of the first buildings erected in town. The two story wooden structure was simple in design, rectangular in plan with a one story ell.

The hotel was in a strategic location for attracting visitors. The building could be seen by passing river boats and passenger trains, alike. It was the center of activity and served as a gathering place for conducting business as well as socializing. Sales people, real estate agents, lawyers, fruit growers and land developers were among the business people taking advantage of the hotel as a gathering place. The hotel was sold in 1884 to J.R. Rankins who subsequently sold the building two years later to Robert "Bobby" Rand.

Rand enlarged the hotel, doubling its size, and adding a dining room and a veranda to the north and east sides of the building. The wide veranda extended across the front, commanding an excellent view of the Columbia River. The hotel was larger than any other building in town and presented a kind of "false front" to visitors entering the city. The prominent hotel seemed to promise a larger, more established community than Hood River was in 1880s.

The success of the hotel was linked to the increasing notoriety of the Hood River Valley as an excellent fruit growing region and a destination point for many tourists from all over the country. The region was noted for its mild climate, scenic beauty, and resorts. Fishing, hunting, sailing, horseback riding, bicycling, skiing, camping and hiking were all part of the activities

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available to visitors of the valley prior to the turn of the century.

The fruit industry also drew visitors to the valley as the news spread of its natural beauty and fertile soil. An article written by a Maryland visitor captures the grandeur of the region:

The Rhine may seem to sweep in stately fashion beneath breathtaking cliffs and hills that soar lofty above its waters, but in the presence of the awe-inspiring heights and depths and changing shadows of the "Gorge of the Columbia River," the Rhine becomes an insignificant memory, and the mind's sense of dimension is baffled in the effort to take in these infinitely greater, nobler and more majestically beautiful Rhine of our native land (Glacier, June 1897).

The Mt. Hood Hotel had become a favorite stopover for tourist and naturalist viewing the scenic beauty of the Hood River region when Charles and Rosann Bell purchased the Mt. Hood Hotel in November 1893 from Robert Rand. Charles was very active in managing the hotel and greeted new-comers as they stepped into the lobby of the hotel. Bell was known for his generosity, often helping foreigners by giving them a place to stay, and helping them find work. The hotel was often the first place people stayed when they moved to the area. The hotel became the scene of many social and fraternal meetings and gatherings.

The Bells moved to Portland around 1895 due to Rosann Bell's deteriorating health. The Bells leased the hotel during this time. Rosann died in October 1896, leaving Charles with a small son and the hotel. Bell returned to Hood River and married Lucie Ellison in 1897. At this time, Bell managed the hotel and also began his term on the City Council. Lucie Ellison died in November, 1899 in Hood River, two years after the couple were married. Charles Bell sold the hotel to Clinton L. Gilbert in 1900 and returned to work as a foreman in the logging camps.

Clinton Gilbert realized the business potential of the Mt. Hood Hotel when purchasing the property. Hood River's population had tripled from 210 in 1890 to 622 in 1900 and was accessible by railway, boat, and wagon road. A substantial increase in building activity occurred after the turn of the century. During Gilbert's ownership several of the substantial brick commercial buildings

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were constructed in downtown: the Masonic Temple (1901), the E.L. Smith Building (1904), the Waucoma Hotel (1904), the Davidson Building (1905), and the I.O.O.F. Hall (1906). The Mt. Hood railroad was completed in 1906 to Dee, Oregon, further stimulating development of the orchard lands and timber lands in the Hood River Valley. Other resorts and hotels were constructed to accommodate visitors which included the Cottage Farms, the Oregon Hotel, the Country Club Inn, the Wah-Gwin Gwin Hotel (on the site of the present day Columbia Gorge Hotel), and the Dee Hotel.

After purchasing the Mt. Hood Hotel, Gilbert states in a 1900 advertisement that the hotel is under "New Management. Hotel Newly Refitted and Renovated Throughout. Commercial Rates, = \$2.00 Per Day" (Blythe, 1900). In 1904, after a local saloon owner announced plans to build a large, brick three story hotel, the Waucoma Hotel, Gilbert enlarged the Mt. Hood Hotel. The roof was raised and a third floor was added along with a cupola capped with an American flag. A three story wooden annex was built adjacent the building to the south. The Mt. Hood boasted of 70 rooms, 10 with private baths, a parlor, a dining room and a modern kitchen. Two sample rooms, a steam heating system, and a barber shop were added. The cost of the renovation was \$10,000.

The new facilities were very popular with visitors and locals alike. Gilbert started the tradition of Sunday night dinners with music provided by local musicians. Various music clubs, such as the mandolin club, often played for the guests. The building of the Waucoma Hotel and the renovation of the Mt. Hood Hotel coincided with the early boom period in Hood River's history. This boom period, in part, was brought about by the 1905 Lewis and Clark Fair in Portland. The fair, perhaps, did more for the promotion of the Hood River Valley as a tourist destination and fruit producing region than any other advertising campaign in the history of the valley. During the four months of the fair, special sight-seeing trips by train and boat brought thousands of visitors to the Columbia River Gorge. The flurry of tourist activity also stimulated land sales and building in the area as evident in the number of commercial and residential buildings constructed in the years immediately following the exposition.

After the death of Clinton Gilbert, Charles Bell re-purchased the Mt. Hood Hotel from Mary Gilbert in January 1908. Charles had recently married Ola Stryker (November 1907). Ola, an experienced

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business women and manager, proved to be a good partner in the hotel business. The Bells ran a first rate hotel which provided comfort, friendly service, and good meals. Many business transactions took place in the hotel as well as social gatherings. The lobby of the hotel was used by many of the women residents of the valley to socialize, knit and crochet. Often while husbands ran errands in town, wives remained in the hotel's lobby, socializing until spouses returned at the end of the day. The Bells also became known for their civic involvement and welfare work. One historian describes the Bells as their own "social agency" (Guppy, *Panorama*, 1981). Their son, Fred Bell, also lived at the hotel, helping in the management.

The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex

In May 1911, Charles Bell purchased Lots 7 and 8 in Block Two in the Original Town of Hood River from the Fashion Livery and Dray Company. The 100 feet by 100 feet lot was located directly south of the Mt. Hood Hotel. By late summer, 1911, plans were underway for the demolition of the wooden livery stable on the site and the construction of a new brick building.

In August, 1911 the two local papers announced Charley and Ola Bell's plans for the new building site. The headlines read, "Bell Will Build New Opera House" (*Hood River Glacier*, 3 August 1911) and "New Opera House for Hood River" (*Hood River News*, 2 August 1911). The article in the *Hood River Glacier*, stated,

"Charles A. Bell, the owner of the Mt. Hood Hotel, completed plans Monday whereby he will erect a two story brick structure at the corner of Oak and First streets. Work on the new building which will be 100 feet by 100 feet, will begin immediately. The frame structure that have occupied the lots are being cleared away in preparation for the excavation work. According to plans of the proposed structure, a large convention and opera hall, handsomely equipped and with a seating capacity for a large gathering, will be located on the second story next to the First Street side. A billiards hall and bowling alley will be constructed on the first floor of the First Street side of the building. The main floor on Oak Street will be put to stores. In the part of the second story not devoted to the opera house hall,

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first class apartments will be constructed. A court will be constructed in the center of the building. It is stated that the building had already been leased to Portland parties" (Hood River Glacier, 3 August 1911).

The couple wanted to add these recreational and commercial services to the hotel and the community. The Bells were already running a successful hotel, known throughout the Northwest for its hospitality and key location. The new "opera house" was the talk of the town, and the building was referred to as the "Bell Building", later known as the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex.

The downtown was bustling with building activity in 1911 which included the construction of the Sprout Building (directly west of the Bell Building), the new Fashion Livery on Front and Oak streets, the Apple Cider Vinegar Company Building by the railroad tracks, the new O.R.W. and N. Co. Railroad Depot, and the First Congregational Church. Other commercial brick buildings constructed in 1909-10 included the Hall Building, the Eliot Building, and the First National Bank. These substantial buildings attest to the prosperity of Hood River in the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century. These buildings represent the last of the large, brick commercial structures constructed in downtown Hood River.

Construction of the Bell Building progressed rapidly. By August 30, 1911, the excavation of the building was completed and it was noted that "seven bricklayers were put to work on the Bell Building Friday, and caused the back wall of the building to spring up as if by magic" (*Hood River News*, 20 September 1911). The contractors for the brick work were Mathison and Anderson. Neither Mathison nor Anderson are listed in the 1910 Directory as residents of Hood River. The contractors may have been an out of town contracting firm. No architect was mentioned in the various newspaper articles.

According to the October 11, 1911, edition of the *Hood River News*, work on the building was delayed. Lumber which was used to protect the workers from the brick laying above, failed to arrive. One worker was slightly injured and the other "knights of the hammer and saw" took heed until the lumber arrived. By mid January, 1912, the Bell Building was almost finished and painters were rapidly finishing the upper story apartments. The apartments

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were first class apartments, some with two or more rooms, were fitted with "disappearing beds, hot and cold running water, and private baths" (*Hood River News*, August 2, 1911). Although the original plan for the building included an opera house and convention room, only a portion of interior rooms were constructed.

The upper story apartments and the four commercial spaces fronting Oak Street were finished, however, the opera house and bowling alley were not constructed. By June, 1912, the building was referred to as "The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex". An article dated 19 June 1912 in the *Hood River News*, states that,

Work has been started on an aerial passage to connect the Mt. Hood Hotel and the capacious new annex which has been recently completed. This passageway will be constructed on a level with the second story and will be of substantial and strictly fireproof construction. When this is completed it is the intention of Mr. and Mrs. Bell to finish twenty more rooms in the annex, where thirty have been already completed."

The Bells concurrently with the construction of the Annex renovated the original hotel. In June, 1912, the newspapers reported that work had begun on the interior of the hotel. A large staircase was constructed opposite the entrance that connected with the passageway to the annex. The lobby was also rearranged when the old staircase was removed, partitions removed to create larger spaces, and new lighting installed. Mission style furnishings were purchased for the lobby and the office, to match the style of the furnishings in the Annex. The Bells, were lauded for their "progressive spirit" after the completion of the renovations (*Hood River News*, 17 July 1912).

The 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps indicate (see attached maps) four commercial businesses in the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex (beginning with the western-most store): a billiards and cigar shop (108 Oak); a harness shop (106 Oak); a grocery store (104 Oak); and an auto supply store (102 Oak). The billiards and cigar shop, Tostevin and Sonniksen, advertised a "Soda Fountain, Soft Drinks of all Kinds, Billiards and Pool, Confectionery, Cigar, and Tobacco" and the harness shop, Weber's, advertised "Harnesses and Saddles, Whips, Ropes, Horsemen's Supplies, Gloves, Suitcases and Canvas Goods" (1917 Polk's Hood River County Directory). A narrow

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storefront in the center of the four stores facing Oak Street contained the stairway accessing the upper story apartments.

The Mt. Hood Hotel Annex not only provided commercial stores for Hood River retailers and guest rooms for visitors, but also housing for many Hood River workers. Some of the people living at the Mt. Hood Hotel and Annex in 1917 included two cannery workers, an auto company owner, a manager of a auto garage, a line worker, a maid, salesperson, two bookkeepers, a chauffeur, the manager of the Apple Grower's Association, a clerk, a musician, and a farmer. A majority of these people worked in close proximity to the hotel. The annex provided needed housing during a period of rapid growth in Hood River.

The construction of the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex corresponds to the beginning of the automobile age in Hood River. The tourist industry was booming when the Bells announced their plans for the new annex which was originally planned to house a new opera hall, convention room, apartments, and commercial stores. Perhaps because of the high demand for guest facilities, the Bells altered their plans for the annex to accommodate the increasing tourism in Hood River. An October 5, 1911, edition of the *Hood River News* states,

"Despite the fact that Hood River had two first class hotels, during the last week, the rooms have been full and it has been found necessary to turn away patrons. The full tourist travel has been felt."

The first automobile introduced into town (ca. 1905) was nicknamed the 'potato bug'. Residents were amused at the new device as it wistfully chugged down the hill from the Heights to downtown and then had to be pulled back up the hill by a team of horses. The town boasted of 71 cars in 1910 and had passed an ordinance limiting the speed of the automobiles to 10 miles per hour. By 1911, 117 cars were in Hood River; ranking fifth in the number of autos in the entire state. Portland had 3,208 autos at that time (*Hood River News*, 14 December 1911). The Bells, with their personal association with Simon Benson, may have known that a good roads bill was on its way when they built the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex. The Good Roads Movement was initiated the year the Annex was built.

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Good Roads Movement

The 'Good Roads Bill' was passed by Congress in 1911; this was the beginning of the Good Roads Movement which stimulated development throughout the Hood River region in the second decade of the 20th century. The scenic Columbia River Highway was constructed after the passage of the Good Roads bill, ushering in the age of the automobile in the history of Oregon.

The Good Roads Movement was perhaps the most important single factor in the future development of Oregon. As automobile usage increased in the cities, demands were put on governmental agencies to provide better road conditions. The State Highway Commission was organized in 1913 in response to the need of the automobilist to improve the quality of the state road system. The state highway system was adopted a year later in 1914. The Columbia River Highway was one of the commission's first major projects in the state (Smith, 1984:55).

The building of the Columbia River Highway was made possible by the involvement of financial backers and promoters, Samuel Hill, John Yeon, and Samuel Lancaster. The highway construction began in 1913 from the west end of the Columbia River Gorge (Portland vicinity) and was completed to Hood River in July 1915 (officially dedicated in 1916).

Over 100 cars passed through Hood River in a single day when the Columbia River Highway was opened in 1915. The trip from Portland to Hood River took four to five hours on an average. John Yeon, state roadmaster, stated upon its opening, "No one can measure what the highway means to the state and to the world. It is not a mere boulevard—it is a vast natural park, 88 miles long, for it is scenic from Portland to The Dalles. The wealth of tourists money which it will attract is immeasurable" (*Hood River News*, 15 July 1915).

The highway was completed to The Dalles in 1922. The Columbia River Highway became known throughout the country for its scenic beauty and excellent crafting and opened the Columbia River Gorge to automobile travelers and recreational seekers. Scenic overlooks and public facilities were opened along the highway such as Vista House and Multnomah Falls Lodge. An article in a 1921 issue of *The Motors*, describes the road as a "scenic highway, which, realizing the danger of superlatives, I do not scruple to

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say is the finest in the known world" (transcribed in the *Hood River News*, 1 April 1921).

The teens and twenties gave way to a new surge in building activity as tourism increased dramatically with the completion of the Columbia River Highway. The construction of service stations and car dealerships ensued all over town to accommodate the tourist and local automobile owners. Restaurants and hotels also opened in an effort to accommodate the tourists. The population in Hood River increased from 2,331 in 1910 to 3,000 in ca. 1920. A promotional brochure states of Hood River:

The city is the business center of the county and its business houses are first class in every respect. Two banks with deposits of two million dollars; three excellent hotels; two up-to-date newspapers; a beautiful modern theater containing the finest organ in Oregon outside of Portland.... A Commercial Club of 200 members, and a large and active Women's Club; all fraternal organizations, three of which own their own buildings. Six large garages take care of the needs of the 2000 automobiles owned in the community and of thousands of tourists that continually flock to Hood River (Commercial Club Brochure, 1923).

The Mt. Hood Hotel benefited from the increase in tourism after the completion of the Columbia Gorge Highway. The automobile started to replace the railroad as the preferred means of individual transportation. By 1920 there were 2218 automobiles in Hood River County. The completion of the Mt. Hood Loop Highway further promoted tourism in the Hood River region.

Mt. Hood Loop Highway

Although the Columbia River Highway was completed first, plans for both the river road and Mt. Hood Loop Highway were devised in the teens. By 1919 a formal group was organized to lobby for the construction of the Loop Road. Representatives for Hood River included Leslie Butler (banker and financier) and C.A. Bell (proprietor of the Mt. Hood Hotel). The meeting was held with representatives of the Forest Service, the four affected counties, and the State Highway Commission. The meeting "was in the interest of government construction of the loop road, the entire

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length which is 106 miles connecting with the Columbia Gorge Highway, which is a length of sixty-six miles in length, making a total of 172 miles from Portland to Portland" (*Hood River Glacier*, 2 February 1919).

Work began on the Loop Highway in 1921-22 after the counties involved agreed to fund a percentage of the project. The highway was promoted not only for its scenic beauty but for use by farmers and orchardists as a market road. The Loop Highway was *officially* opened in June, 1926. A caravan of 34 cars from Portland passed over the highway in celebration of the opening. Several keynote speakers addressed the crowds that gathered at various points. The highway was touted as:

"One of Oregon's most beautiful scenic highways, the Mt. Hood Loop, extends from the Columbia River Highway at Hood River, up through the Hood River Valley to and around this majestic mountain".

The "Loop" became a favorite outing for motorists, carrying thousands of tourists through the Hood River Valley. The Bell's opened the new lobby, located in the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex, on the same day the Loop Highway was officially dedicated.

Mt. Hood Hotel's New Lobby

In conjunction with the dedication of the Mt. Hood Loop Highway, the Mt. Hood Hotel officially opened its new lobby. The lobby was moved from the original Mt. Hood Hotel building to the brick Annex. The new lobby fronted the Columbia River Highway (Oak Street), which was more visible to tourists driving through the town. The Hood River Glacier states prior to the opening that the:

*The new office and its location, fronting Oak Street at the corner of First, has resulted from a change in travel, mostly from train to motor vehicles. The new lobby and office opens on the main city thoroughfare, carrying traffic of the Loop and Columbia River highways (*Hood River Glacier*, 3 June 1926).*

In March 1926, plans for renovating the Mt. Hood Hotel Annex were underway. George Post, a Portland architect, completed the design work, and MacLean Engineering Company was hired for the

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engineering portions of the renovation. Fred and Ola Bell (Chlares Bell died in 1925) hired local contractors and utilized local businesses for much of the renovation. Local firms included: L.C. Baldwin, general contractor; William Zolls, fireplace and chimneys; Oscar Shear and J.R. Sosey, painters; E.A. Franz Company, floor coverings; and Kelly Brothers, furnishings.

The renovation included the construction of a new lobby, offices, and additional guest rooms. These renovations included the installation of a "modern elevator", a mezzanine level, a lobby desk, a fireplace, new flooring, painting, and lighting. A new telephone system was installed and three new apartments added. Plans for building a dining room in the basement with a fireplace were underway at the time of the opening.

Upon its opening, the lobby was lauded as a "beautiful lobby, one would have to go deep into superlatives, for no expense and ingenuity has been spared to make this lobby worthy of the pioneer hotel of this city" (*Hood River News*, 4 June 1926). The article further described the work:

At the entrance, fronting on Oak St., the visitor enters through a glassed-in and tiled floor vestibule. The main lobby with its unusually high ceiling, is decorated in what is known as sunburst tint which, together with all woodwork in the popular Sovereign grey is at once beautiful and restful. The extensive floor is covered with broad squared marble covering and a huge decorated fireplace will be greatly appreciated by visitors when the chilly evening approach.... A mezzanine floor will be tastefully furnished and will be used as a writing room.... One of the most appealing features, for which Mrs. Bell is given the credit, is the lighting. This is of the most modern, indirect type.... The furniture is all of the overstuffed type, with tasteful fabrics and offering a maximum of comfort.

The store directly east of the new lobby, once occupied by a grocery store, was designed to accommodate the offices of the Hood River Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber had previously been located on Third Street between Oak and State streets. Being located on the Columbia River Highway, the new Chamber office was highly visible.

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The original Mt. Hood Hotel was closed and only the third floor remained open for use as apartments. The Hood River Annex became "The Mt. Hood Hotel" and continued to serve Hood River in the same capacity as the old hotel. The hotel was utilized by many local organizations and everyone remembers the dinners served in the new dining room in the "annex". In 1930 a portion of the basement was remodeled for use by the Hood River Elks Club. The basement was used for many years by the club.

Fred and Ola Bell were co-owners of the hotel until Fred's death in 1934. The original hotel was demolished ca. 1930 as the building became obsolete. After her stepson's death, Ola continued to run the Mt. Hood Hotel with the help of a relative. Ola Bell operated the well-known Mt. Hood Hotel for 34 years until her death in 1942.

The hotel was sold as part of Ola Bell's estate by her siblings, Rey, Guy, Pearl, and George in September 1944 to Charles P. McCan. The property was sold to Alberta Reynolds, and Don and Dorothy Shahlman in 1948 for \$120,000. The Stahlmans owned the hotel until ca. 1962. During the Stahlmans, the hotel ceased operation as a hotel. The storefronts were altered, and the lobby was converted to a commercial store. Business declined in the 1950s due to competition from motels and the construction of the water-grade freeway which diverted traffic from the Columbia River Highway. Some of the apartments were still in use in the 1960's, however, many of the rooms were closed due to fire codes. The building continued to deteriorate in the 1970s and 1980s until Pasquale Barone purchased the hotel in 1988. Since then, Jacquie and Pasquale Barone have restored and renovated the hotel to its original grandeur.

The building has once again become a favorite spot for visitors from around the state, country, and world. The hotel retains the feel of the 1926 lobby and guest rooms and is furnished with period furniture. Live music, and flowers fill the lobby as they did during the Bells' ownership. According to various sources, the spirit of Ola Bell still walks the halls, overseeing the management of the her beloved hotel.

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The Bells were prominent in the hotel business, civic affairs and humanitarian causes. Besides operating the Mt. Hood Hotel full time, the Bells made time to participate in local politic and civic organizations. Charles, Ola, and Fred all resided at the Mt. Hood Hotel and were at the center of the town's activities, both in location and avocation.

Charles Alonzo Bell

Charles A. Bell was born in Taymouth, New Brunswick, Canada in 1860 to George and Jane Norman Bell. After finishing his early education in Canada, Charles worked in the logging business, moving with the various logging camps through parts of Canada and Maine. In 1878, Charles moved to Duluth, Minnesota, where he filed a declaration of intention for citizenship in 1880 (Bell was granted citizenship on July 7, 1913, at age 55). Bell remained in Minnesota where he continued in the logging business until 1886 when he was sent by the North Powder Lumber Company to break up a log jam in an Idaho river (Lockley, 1928:217). By this time, he was known as an experienced lumberjack. The Oregon Lumber Company hired Bell to assist them in their various logging operations in Oregon. Bell moved with the company to North Powder, Oregon, and then moved to Pendleton where he married his first wife, Rosann Young of Faymouth, New Brunswick. The couple were married on July 4, 1890. The Bells moved to Hood River in the fall of 1890 where Charles did contracting work for the Oregon Lumber Company.

Bell brought logging equipment to the Hood River region, consisting of several carloads of oxen and equipment. The following years as a "foreman of the logging camp (for the Oregon Lumber Company), he logged off several thousand acres of timber on and around Mt. Hood, as well as across the river in Skamania County, Washington" (Lockley, 1928:217).

In November, 1893, Bell and his wife, Rosann, purchased the Mt. Hood Hotel from Robert Rand. This started Bell's long association as its owner and promoter. Under Bell's ownership, the hotel thrived and became known throughout the Northwest for its fine dining room, "modern rooms" and comfortable atmosphere. The hotel was a gathering place in the community and was used by many organizations and groups. Bell sold the hotel in 1900 to Clarence Gilbert and returned to work for the Oregon Lumber Company as a

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camp foreman. In 1907, Bell repurchased the Mt. Hood Hotel and ran the hotel for almost twenty years with his third wife, Ola Bell, until his death.

Although managing the hotel was a time consuming job, Bell always found time for civic activities. He was active in planning and securing funds for the construction of the first extensive irrigation ditch in the Hood River Valley. This ditch was important as it opened up thousands of acres for orchard and farming land on the west side of the Hood River Valley. Bell worked with the Davenport brothers, Franklin, Mark and Warren to construct the "farmer's ditch". By June, 1897 water flowed through the ditch to the lower west side of the Valley and even into Hood River. The eleven mile ditch cost \$28,000 to build; within two years land prices had tripled on the west side of the Valley. Bell was very activity in promotion and development of Hood River's fruit industry and was remembered as "one of the founders of the strawberry and apple industry" (*Oregonian*, 17 April 1925,p. 10).

Bell began his political career early in the history of Hood River. He served on the City Council in 1897, two years after the town was incorporated. Bell was instrumental in many of the early decisions of the fledgling community. He served from 1897 until 1901 and then was reappointed in 1914, serving three more years (Lockley, 1928:919-20). Bell's obituary states that, "Charley Bell was associated with the development of Hood River in many ways. He built the first wooden sidewalks the town ever boasted and, several years later, he was the first property owner to use cement in a sidewalk here. When the Butler Bank, the pioneer institution of its kind in this county, opened its doors, Charley Bell was waiting to be the first to make a deposit, and it was recently recalled that this deposit was on behalf of his son Fred, still stands and has been accumulating interest through more than two decades... He was also for six years a member of the school board" (*Hood River News*, 17 April 1925).

Bell had a great appreciation for the scenic beauty of the Hood River Valley and Mt. Hood. He often traveled through the Hood River Valley and around Mt. Hood, marveling at the beauty of the country. Bell was known as a good roads booster throughout the region and knew early good roads advocates, Simon Benson (one time chair of the State Highway Commission) and John Yeon, through his

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early associations with the logging industry. Bell was appointed to the publicity committee of the Hotel Men for Good Roads in December 1912 and was active in promoting the idea of the Columbia Gorge Highway.

When the idea for the Mt. Hood Loop Highway was first supposed, Bell became an avid supporter of the plan. In 1919, Bell was appointed to a legislative and an executive committee for the promotion and financing of the Loop Highway. He played a leading part "in the successful campaign to float a bond issue for this county's participation in this great project" (*Hood River News*, 17 April 1925). Although the Loop Highway was completed and formally dedicated a year after Bell's death in 1925, Bell was instrumental in the promotion of the highway in Hood River County. In association with the construction of the scenic highway, Bell was involved in the Mount Hood Development Association, an organization involved in promoting the construction of a hotel on Mount Hood. On one trip around the Mt. Hood with a district forester, Bell displayed his stamina and humor as described in an article in the July 7, 1915 *Hood River News*:

Charley Bell, proprietor of the Mt. Hood Hotel, whose friends hardly know whether to describe him as Hood River's Mark Twain or just "the village cut-up", put most of the "pep" into the party which made the arduous trip around Mt. Hood a few days ago. Although Mr. Bell is no longer a youngster, he set a pace which kept even the seasoned forest service men a humping.... Mr. Bell would suddenly essay some startling acrobatic stunts, accompanied by a few war whoops that would bring the party down from the sublime to the ridiculous with a crash.... Charley Bell would let out a whoop like a Comanche Indian and come racing down the line like Ichabod Crane flying before the headless horseman-his arms flapping like broken shutters and his legs doing all sorts of buck and wing antics in the air. Nevertheless, there was a time of reckoning-that night Charley Bell couldn't sit down."

Respected as a business person and civic leader, Bell was also known for his generosity and charitable activities. He gave freely to the less fortunate citizens of the county. He was head of the local welfare association, and he often helped people in need, providing them with a place to stay, a warm meal, and work.

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Charles Bell founded the custom of distributing Christmas baskets filled with goodies to the poorer residents of the valley. This custom became known as the community Christmas tree. Every Christmas, the Bells opened up the doors to the dining hall at the Mt. Hood Hotel and provided Christmas dinner for people in need. Lockley, in *The History of the Columbia River Valley*, states of Bell's generosity, "He gave food and money generously but he was entirely unostentatious in his giving and desired no credit for it. He was one of those noble souls who do good for the joy of the act, not for the hope of any reward or praise. He was a friend to all men and all who knew him were his friends...." (Lockley, 1928:218).

Charley Bell died on April 15, 1925 in Hood River. The *Hood River News*, dated April 17, 1925 states the cause of death as "septic poisoning". Bell was survived by his son Fred and his wife, Ola Stryker Bell. Fred Bell was born to Charles and Rosann Bell in 1890. Rosann Bell died in October, 1896, leaving her husband and six year old child. The following year, Charles married Lucy Ellison who died two years later on November 6, 1899. In 1907, Bell married Ola Stryker, the same year he repurchased the Mt. Hood Hotel. Ola Bell was instrumental in the operation of the Mt. Hood Hotel.

Ola Maude Stryker Bell

Ola Maude Stryker Bell was born in Brownsville, Oregon, on November 8, 1866 to a pioneer family, David S. and Celia M. Stryker. David Stryker was born in Strykerville, New York, and Celia Stone Stryker was born in Rock Island, Illinois. Celia served as a nurse in the civil war. On February 27, 1864, the Strykers were married in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The couple left Iowa in April of the same year, travelling west with 26 other wagons. David Stryker was in charge of killing game for the wagon train; Celia Stryker was also very proficient with a rifle (*Oregon Journal*, 23 July 1935).

Prior to settling in Oregon, the Strykers wintered over in Boise, Idaho, where they lived in a log cabin built by David. The couple's oldest son, Stanton was born in the cabin. In the spring of 1866, the couple moved to Oregon, settling in Brownsville in Linn County. Ola Maude Stryker was born in the fall of the same year. In 1867, the family moved to Corvallis where David operated

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a photography gallery. Five years later, the family relocated to Dayton, Washington. David worked in a drug store while spending his spare time studying medicine. He later went back east to study medicine at the Scudder Medical College in Cincinnati, Ohio, receiving his degree in medicine. Stryker then moved back to Oregon, moving to Roseburg where he practiced medicine and later to Drain, Oregon. In Drain, along with practicing medicine, Stryker built a brick yard with his eldest son and constructed the first brick building in town known as the Stryker building. Stryker had his drug store in the building. David's wife, Celia Stryker, died in 1884 while living in Drain. After the death of Celia Stryker, the family moved to Portland where David married Anna Olson. Stryker lived in Portland practicing medicine until his death in 1899.

Ola Stryker was the second of six children born to Celia and David Stryker. In 1887, at the age of 21, Ola moved from Portland to Salem with her siblings, leaving her father and step-mother in Portland. Ola was in charge of caring for the younger children until they finished school. Ola's five siblings included: Stanton, a prominent Portland physician who died in a climbing accident on Mt. Hood in 1927; George, a dentist who was credited with patented plates used in the profession; Guy, a printer; Rey, a dentist; and Pearl who married George Wissinger of Milwaulkie.

While caring for her siblings in Salem, Ola attended Willamette University for two years. She worked her way through college by sewing for students and residents of the city. After the younger children had finished school, the family moved to Milwaulkie, Oregon (*Oregon Journal*, 19 July 1935). In about 1896, Ola and a friend, Josie Parrott, went to Gearhart on the Oregon coast and worked as the superintendent of the children's dining room. The following year, she was hired to oversee the installation of the furniture in the new Hotel Flavel in Clatsop County, Oregon which opened in 1897. In the summer of 1898, Ola returned to the coast as the housekeeper for the well-known Seaside House. Built in 1873, the hotel was constructed by railroad builder, Ben Holladay on a 7,000 acres parcel of land. It included beach accesses, a sprawling Italianate Villa style wood hotel building (demolished in 1922), and a horse racing track (Walton-Potter, 1974:157). Ola ran Seaside House for several years, probably returning to the Portland vicinity during the off seasons. Ola recounts in an interview with historian Fred Lockley that there were over one

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hundred guests a day, very often "150 to 175 guests". She continues in the article, "We had our own dairy, so we had plenty of cream, milk and butter. We also had a poultry yard, so we had spring chickens and eggs. We were able to buy clams and crabs at a low price so that the guests who stayed with us lived well. Our German baker was an artist and our two Chinese cooks took pride in their work" (*Oregon Journal*, 26 July 1935). The hotel also hired a Swiss herdsman to look after the poultry and dairy yards.

According to the Portland City directories, Ola worked at other jobs during her months away from the coast which included working as a nurse at a children's home (1898-99 Portland City Directory), and a chambermaid and housekeeper at the St. Charles Hotel (1900-1901, 1901-02 Portland City Directory). After her marriage to Charles Bell and prior to her move to Hood River, Ola worked at a hot springs resort in Montana, and was manager of the dining room at Collins Hot Springs in Washington. Ola recounts meals she served to a national convention of undertakers while working at Collins Hot Springs; over 300 people were served salmon dinners in her dining hall at one sitting (*Oregon Journal*, 26 July 1935). Ola was also responsible for opening "the first cafeteria in Portland" (*Oregon Journal*, 26 July 1935). The cafeteria was in the Y.W.C.A. building lunch room in Portland. Meals were 15 to 30 cents a piece. Ola worked at the cafeteria for three years.

Ola Stryker married Charles Bell on November 19, 1907, at the Baptist Church in Portland. A month after the couple were married, the Bells purchased the original Mt. Hood Hotel. Ola's long career in the hotel business readied her for the task of running the Mt. Hood Hotel. The first year the couple operated the hotel, the hotel made enough money to pay off the \$35,000 mortgage they had on the building.

According to local sources, Ola Bell was responsible for much of the management of the original Mt. Hotel Hotel and the "Annex". She was known as a warm, giving woman who was charismatic and who loved people. Ruth Guppy, Hood River historian, described Ola as one of the "finest women in Hood River, who was very efficient and a good cook" (Guppy, 14 July 1993). She managed the hotel's dining room which was known throughout the region for its excellent meals. A local newspaper writer stated,

Our experience with this kindly women goes back to 1918, when we were newcomers and found ourselves in need of

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advise, which she gave freely and to our advantage. We recall that Mrs. Bell stated that, if one wished to get acquainted the quickest way, one should engage a table in the large dining room of the Mount Hood Hotel on any Sunday evening, for it was customary for nearly everybody who was anybody in Hood River to gather at the hotel to enjoy one of the famous dinners (Hood River News, 21 May 1942).

Besides operating a first class hotel, Ola was very active in local politics and organizations in Hood River. She believed "that every citizen has certain civic obligations, and I have tried to do my duty as a citizen. A good many people think only of the privileges of citizenship and not of its duties and responsibilities" (*Oregon Journal*, 23 July 1935). She was the first woman elected to the City Council and the Port Commission. She was elected to the City Council in the fall of 1928 and served a four year term. During her tenure on the council, the council decided to install street lighting and a new water system. No other woman sat on the City Council until after Ola's death in 1942. When the Hood River Port District was created in August 1933, Governor Martin appointed Ola to the Port Commission. Another woman was appointed to the commission the same year, and Ola claimed in a 1935 interview that "Mrs. Christine Monroe and I are the only women on the Coast, if not in the entire United States, who are port commissioners" (*Oregon Journal*, 23 July 1935). She was elected to the port commission in 1935 and served until 1937.

Ola Bell also served on the county welfare board for many years and served as juvenile probation officer for Hood River. She often took in runaway girls and tried to "mother and advise" them (*Oregonian* 23 July 1935). Ola served on the hospital board for over 17 years and was active in planning the Hood River hospital. Other activities included being a member of the Women's Club, the Order of the Eastern Star, the American Legion Auxiliary, and the Riverside Church. Her leisure time was spent making quilts which she sold to raise money for charitable organizations. Ola Stryker Bell died in Hood River on May 19, 1942.

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Fred Bell

Fred Bell was born in Reith, Oregon, in 1890 to Rosann and Charles Bell. Shortly after Fred was born, the couple moved to Hood River. After graduating from Hood River High School where he won numerous awards for his athletic abilities, Fred moved to Portland and attended Hill Military Academy. Fred served in WWI for two years with the Forty-first Division, American Expeditionary Force in France. After the war he remained in Europe for six months with the Army Occupation in Germany. Fred returned to Hood River after his last term of duty.

After his father died in 1925, Fred helped manage the Mt. Hood Hotel with his step-mother, Ola Bell. He was instrumental, along with Ola, for designing the new hotel lobby which was moved from the original hotel to the annex in 1926. Like his father and step-mother, Fred was active in the community, serving on the City Council and the volunteer fire department. He was a member of the Masons, the Knights of Pythias, and the American Legion (post commander, 1921).

Fred Bell died on July 21, 1934, at the age of 44, from hemorrhaging after a tooth extraction in Portland. He was married to Mildred Hinds in 1933. Fred's obituary states that "like his father, C.A. Bell, Fred was keenly interested in welfare work and any project for the betterment of the community which had always been 'home' to him" (*Hood River News*, 21 July 1934).

Hotels in Hood River

There were only two large commercial hotels within the city limits of Hood River: the Mt. Hood Hotel and the Waucoma Hotel. The Waucoma Hotel (listed on the National Register in 1981) was built in 1904, west of the Mt. Hood Hotel. Although the Waucoma Hotel was very important architecturally and historically, in the history of Hood River, the "Waucoma Hotel could never gain the unique social status of the rival hostelry and he (the owner) had to be content with the Mt. Hood Hotel's overflow, plus a 'drummer trade'" (Michaelson, National Register, 1981).

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The Columbia Gorge Hotel, constructed in 1921, by Simon Benson, was constructed outside the town of Hood River overlooking the Columbia River. The hotel, designed in the Mediterranean Style, was an elegant hotel catering to visitors motoring along the Columbia Gorge Highway. The hotel is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Continuation Sheet

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Hood River News. 10 January 1911; 17 January 1911; 2 August 1911; 23 August 1911; 20 September 1911; 11 October 1911; 8 November 1911; 14 December 1911; 19 June 1912; 17 July 1912; 7 July 1915; 15 July 1915; 9 January 1919; 15; 12 February 1919; 2 April 1919; 30 April 1919; 14 May 1919; 25 June 1919; 23 July 1919; 13 August 1919; 1 October 1919; January 1919; 7 January 1921; 25 February 1921; 1

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April 1921; 20 April 1921; 29 August 1921; 17 April 1925;
5 January 1926; 26 March 1926; 21 May 1926; 4 June 1926;
11 June 1926; 21 July 1934; 21 May 1942; 23 April 1981-
Panorama Section; 18 April 1990; 2 May 1990.

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Continuation Sheet

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated area is made up of a square parcel of land located in the downtown commercial core of Hood River. The area measures 100 feet by 100 feet, and is located in the Original Town of Hood River, Block 2, Lots 7 and 8, Tax Lot 2400, in Section 25, T3N R10E.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated area, encompassing less than one acre, includes the entire Mt. Hood Hotel Annex building, Tax Lot 2400.

SW1/4 SE1/4 Sec. 25 T3N R10E WM
HOOD RIVER COUNTY
1"=100'

3N 10 25DC

- Contracted No
 100A2
 100A1
 101
 200
 2000
 2500
 2501

SCALE 1:2400
 FEET
 KILOMETER

COLUMBIA RIVER
 Sec Map 3N 10 25

COLUMBIA RIVER

HIGHWAY

O. W. R.R. and N. CO.

RAILROAD
 L PEROT

COLUMBIA

STREET

STREET

DAK

STREET

STREET

STREET

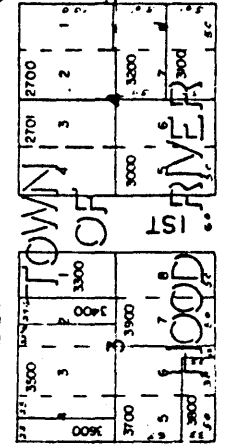
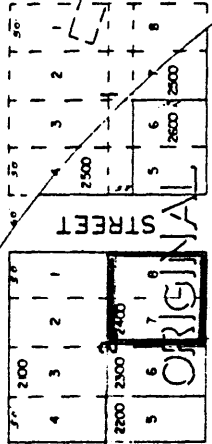
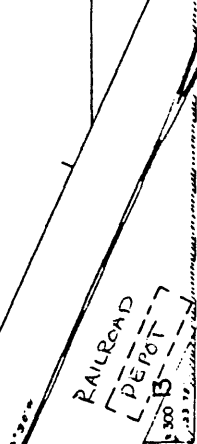
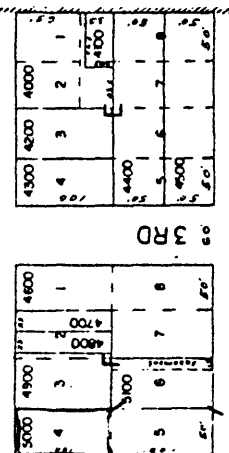
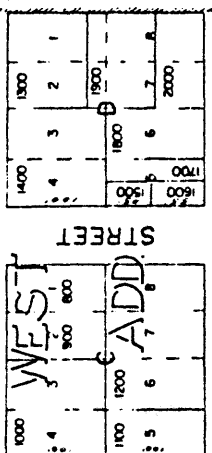
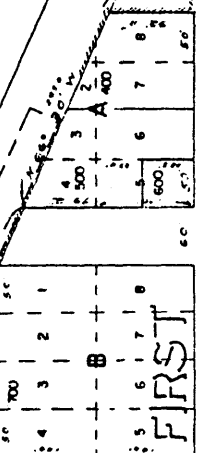
4TH STREET

3RD STREET

2ND STREET

FRONT STREET

SI



See Map 3N 10 25D0

E Line Neighbors Cor DLC No 17

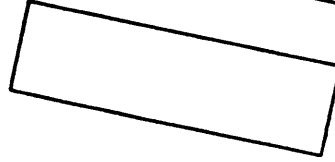
STATE

STREET



Railroad Tracks

Railroad Depot



Cascade Avenue

Second Street

First Street

Comm.
Bldg.

Comm.
Bldg.

Parking Lot
(Original Mt. Hood Hotel Site)

Comm.
Bldg.

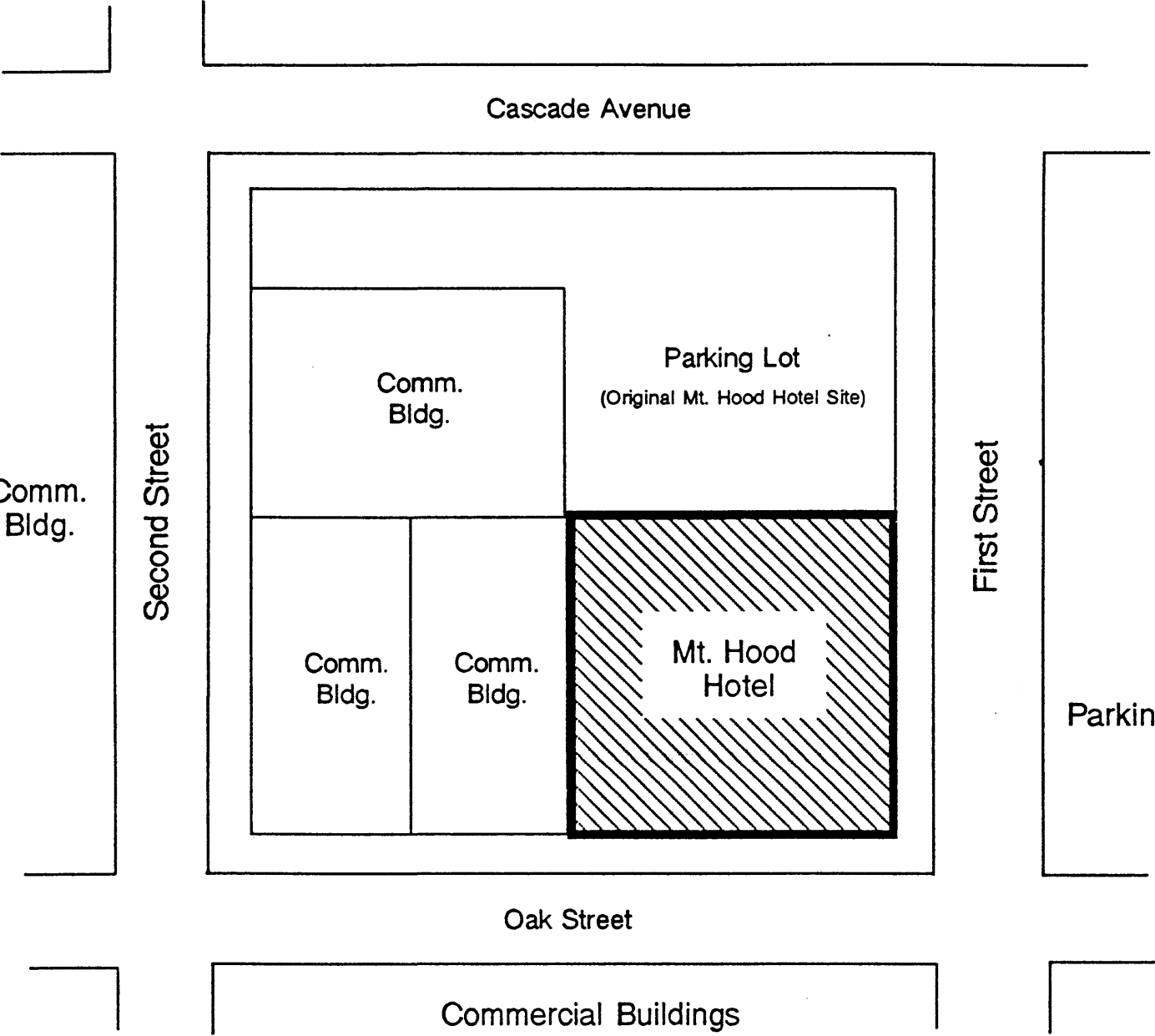
Comm.
Bldg.

Mt. Hood
Hotel

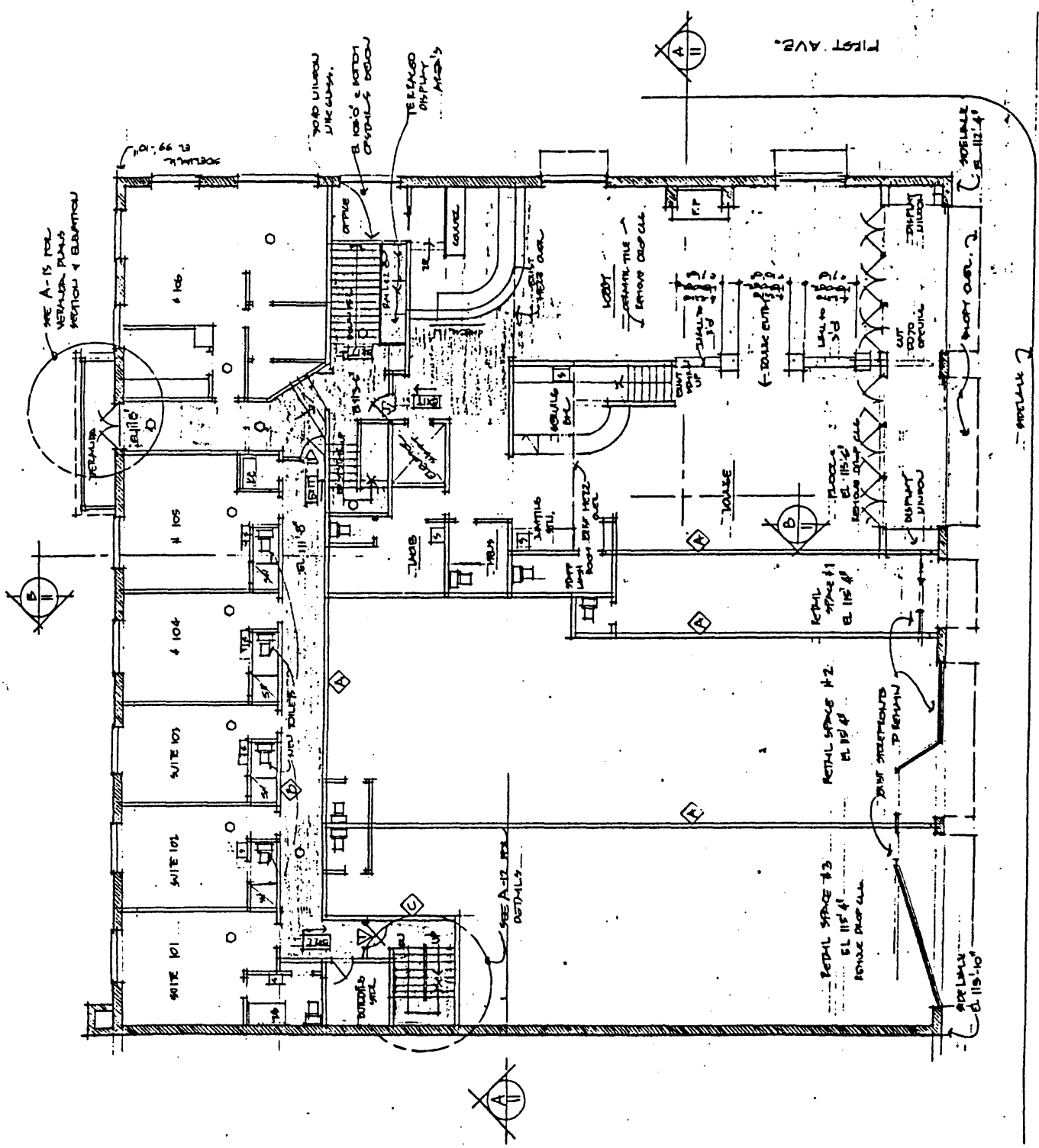
Parking

Oak Street

Commercial Buildings



MOUNT HOOD HOTEL

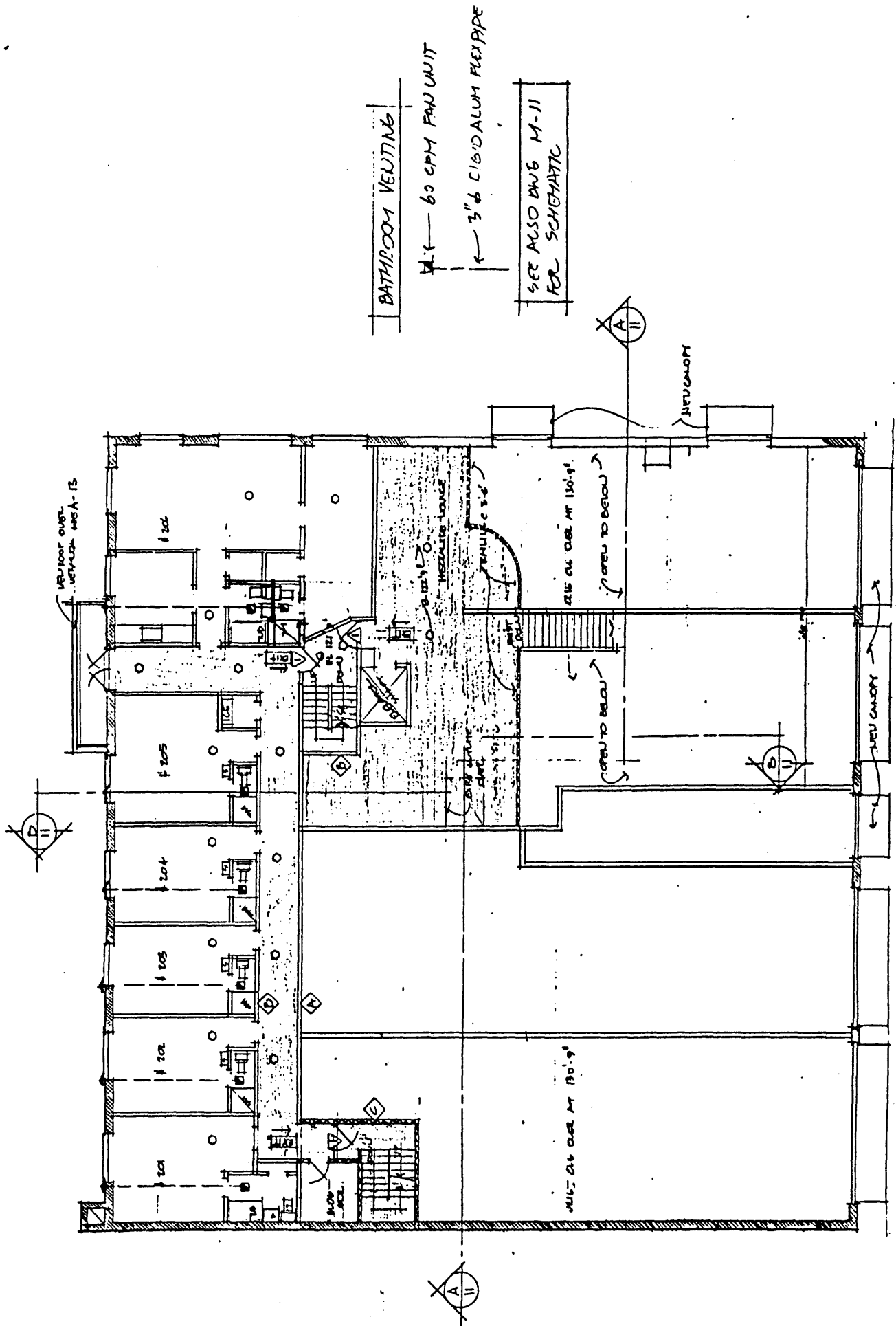


O.A.K. ST.

1ST FLOOR PLAN NEU 1/8-11-13

SEE SHEET B FOR EXIST. PLAN
SEE SHEET C FOR LEGEND

FIRST AVE.



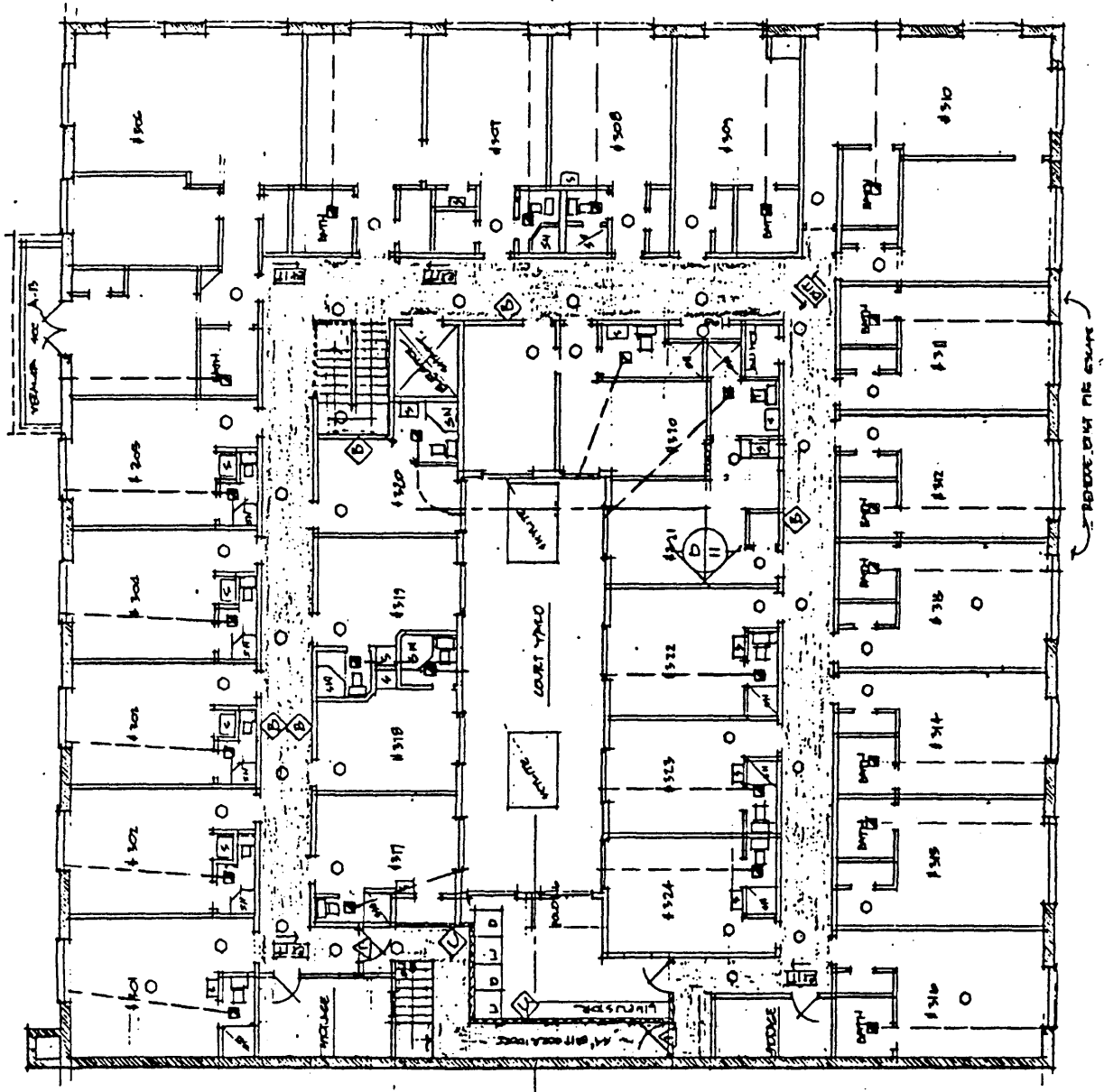
BATHROOM VENTING

60 CFM FAN UNIT

3" Ø DIGIDALUM FLEXPIPE

SEE ALSO DWG M-11 FOR SCHEMATIC

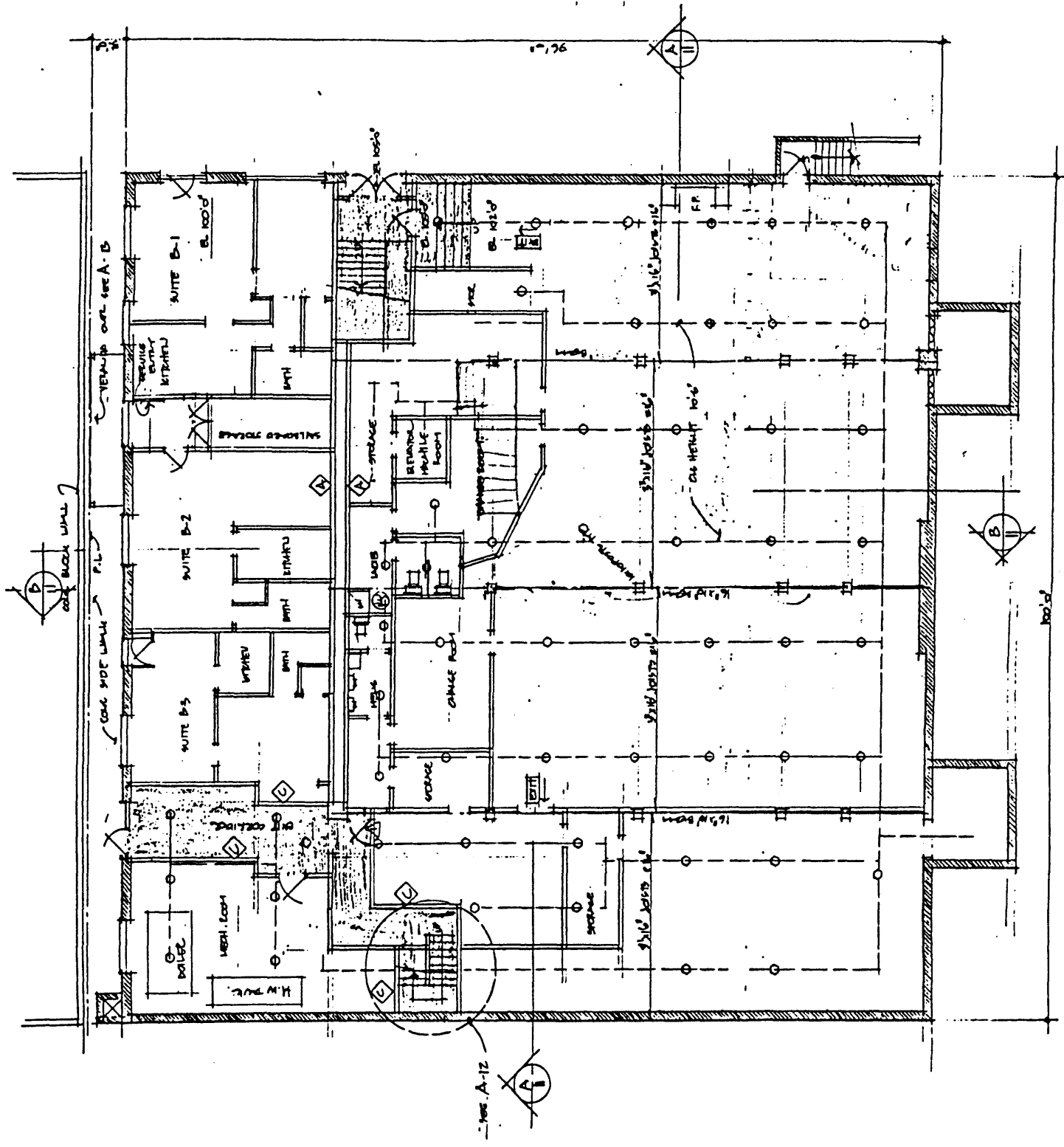
2ND FLOOR FAN VENT 1/8-113
SEE DWG 7 FOR BENT FAN



EXIT SYSTEM
 PRELIMINARY LOCATION
 EXISTING WIRE ENTRY DECKS
 15 MIN (UNOCCUPIED) EXIT ROOFS (U.P. PAUL. N/A)
 EXIST. WALL
 2 1/2" x 6" (IF FIBERGLASS) FIRE BLOCKS (EMERGENCY) (IF OVER 6'0") 2" TYPE X REINFORCED CONCRETE
 2" x 4" (IF FIBERGLASS) FIRE BLOCKS (EMERGENCY) (IF OVER 6'0") 2" TYPE X REINFORCED CONCRETE
 * SEE DETAILS ON A-1

LEGEND
 A
 B
 C
 D
 * SEE DETAILS ON A-1
 BATHROOM VENTING
 600 CFM FAN UNIT
 3" Ø RIGID ALUM. FLEX PIPE
 SEE ALSO DWG M-11 FOR SCHEDULING

3RD FLOOR PLAN NEW 1/8-12
 SEE DWG 8 FOR DETAILS



NEW BASEMENT FLOOR 16'-11 1/2"

SEE PLAN & SPEC. DRAWING FOR
SEE SPEC & PLAN DRAWING

DAVIDSON FRUIT COS. CANNERY
& BOX FACTORY

FOUR STEAM HEAT FOR COOKING STEAM
3 LAMP BURNERS FOR FULL WOOD & SMOKE
1 1/2 TONS OF WOOD PILES IN BOX FACTORY
CONCRETE - 2 IN BUILT ON ON ON FOR FLOOR OF
A PILE FROM BELOW - SMALL PILE ON TOP OF
CONCRETE - STEAM COILS IN CANNERY
WOOD ON THREE BENCHES. EXHAUST DUCT
AND FOR PUMPS INTERMITTENTLY ABOUT 8 P.M.
OF THE YEAR

150

DAVIDSON FRUIT COS.
CANNERY

14

Storage

13

RIVER

MT HODD HOTEL

16

2

LIBRARY

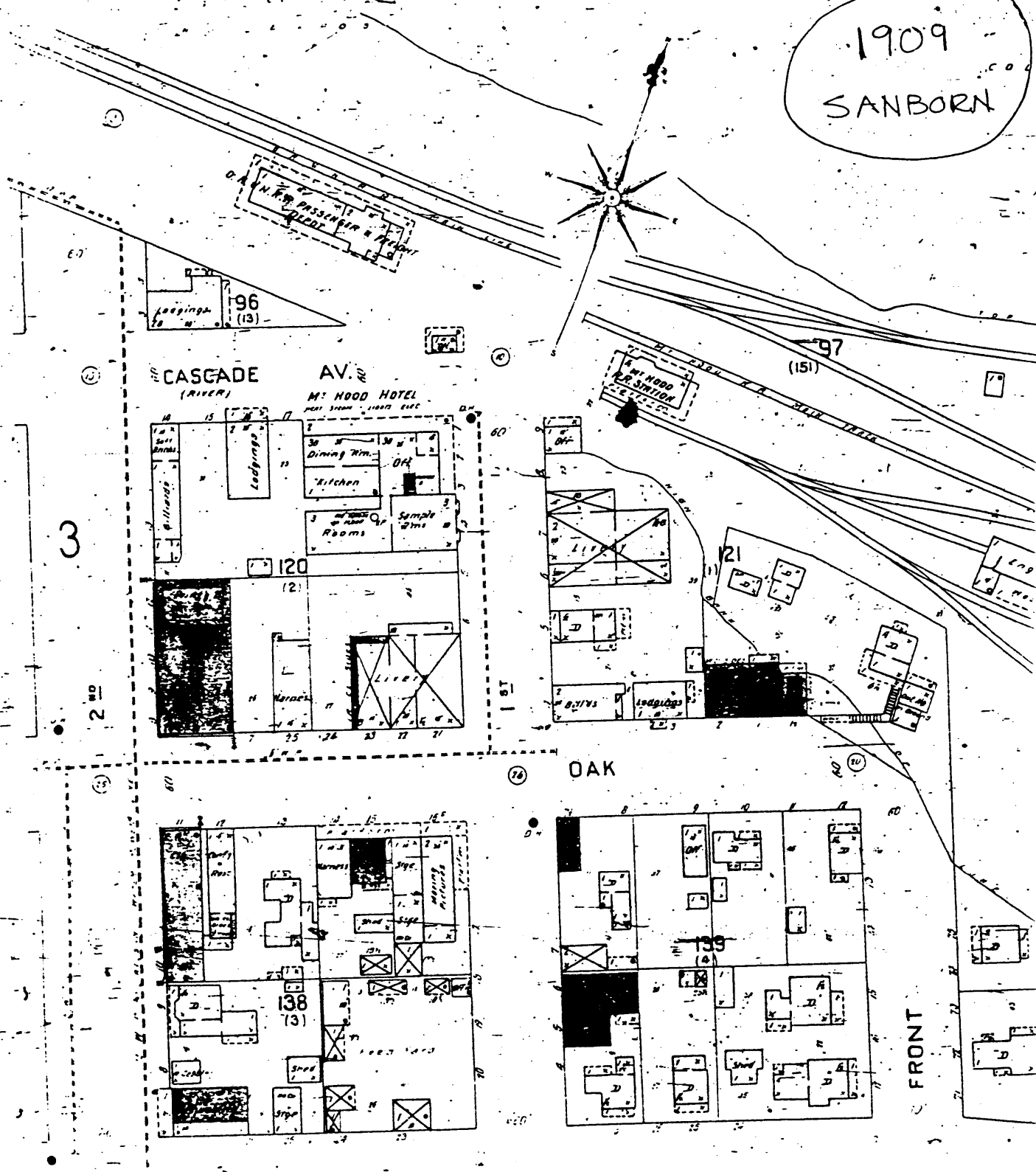
OAK

14

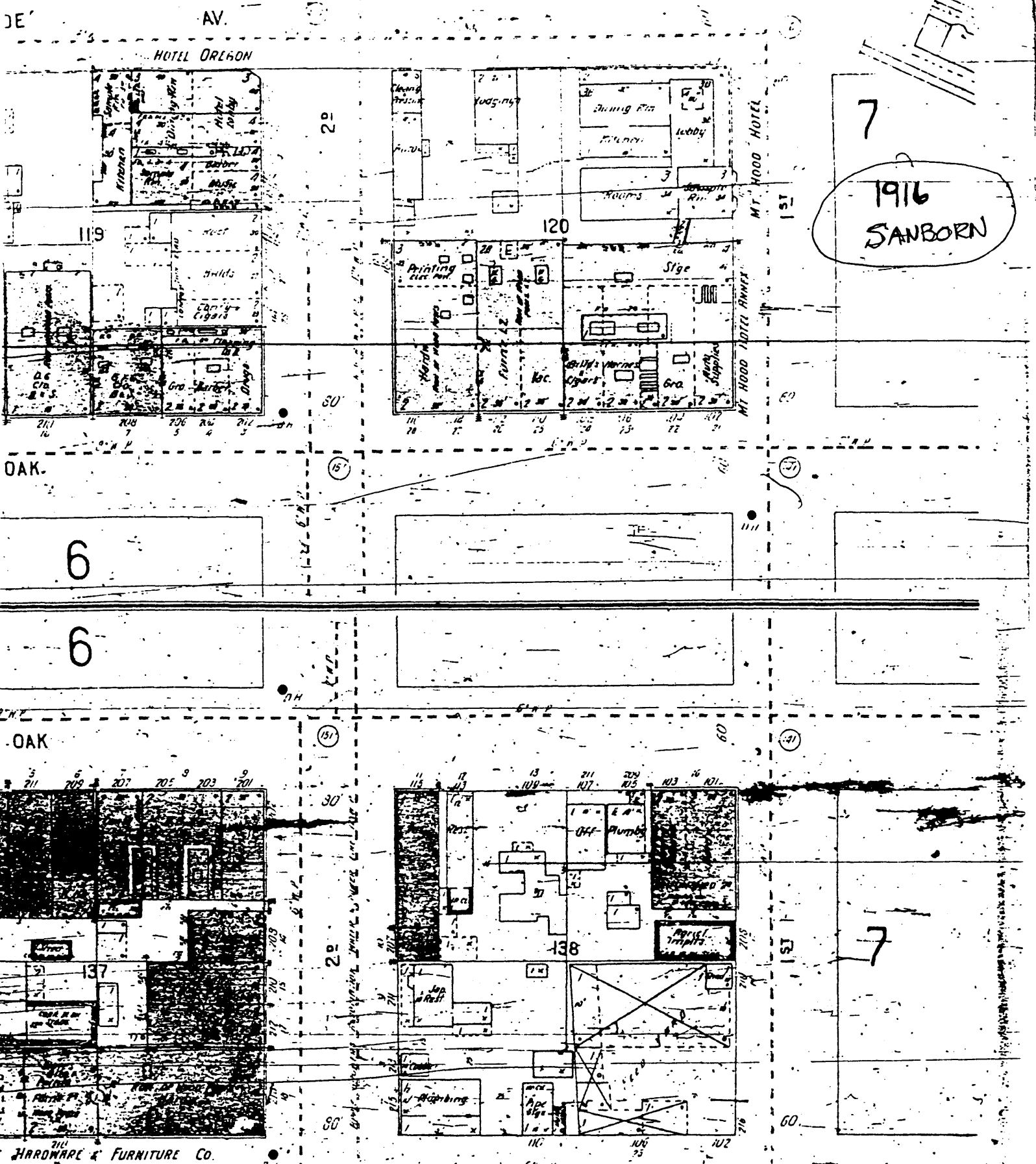
15

16

1909
SANBORN

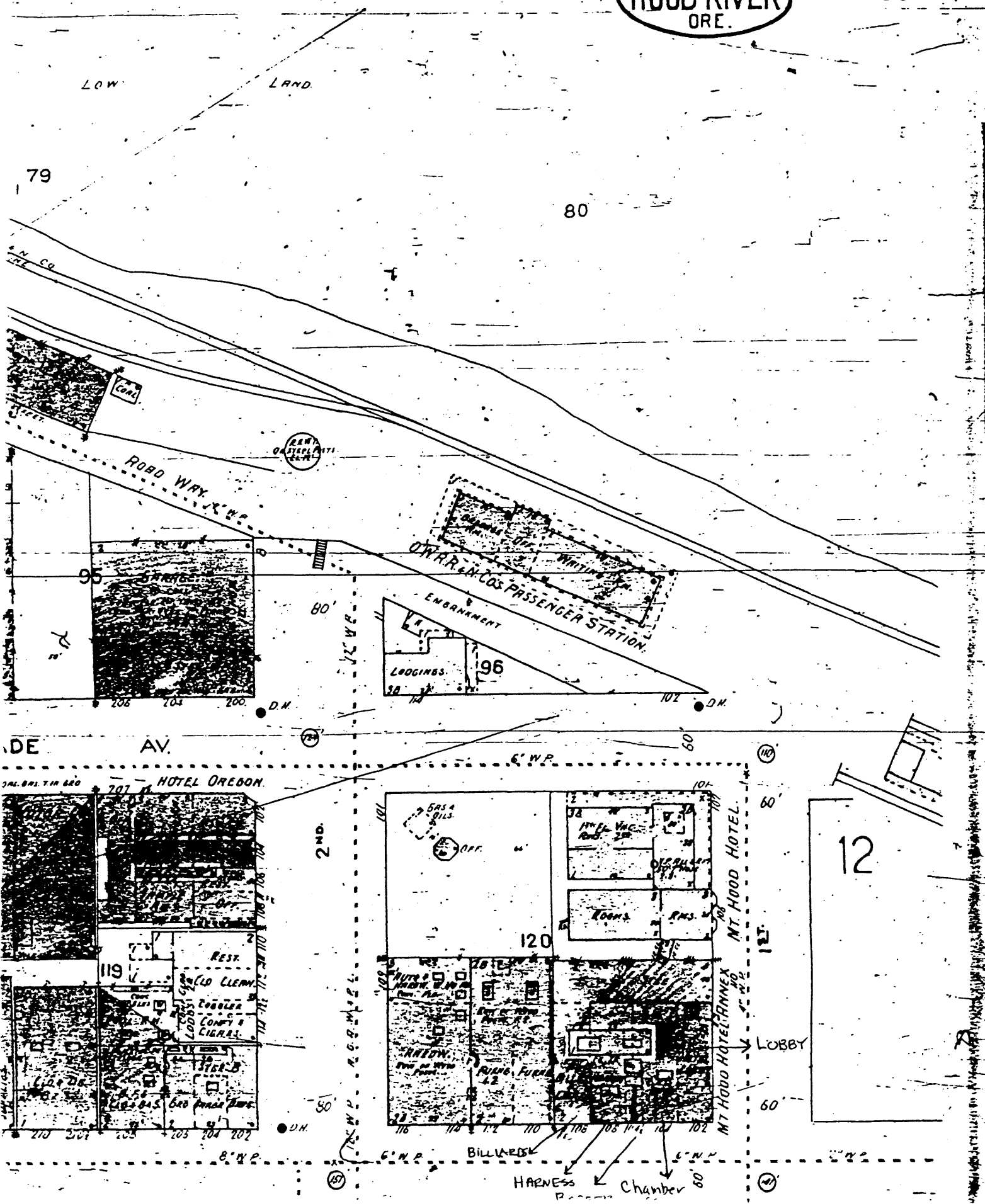


1909 Sanborn Fire
Insurance Map



Sanborn Fire Insurance
Map 1916

Scale of Feet



LOW LAND

79

80

COAL

RAILWAY
CROSSING

ROAD WAY

O.W.R. & C.O.S. PASSENGER STATION
EMBRANKMENT
LODGINGS

96

1ST AV. 2ND AV. 3RD AV.

HOTEL OREGON

119

REST.
COOKER
COMPT & CIGARET.

120

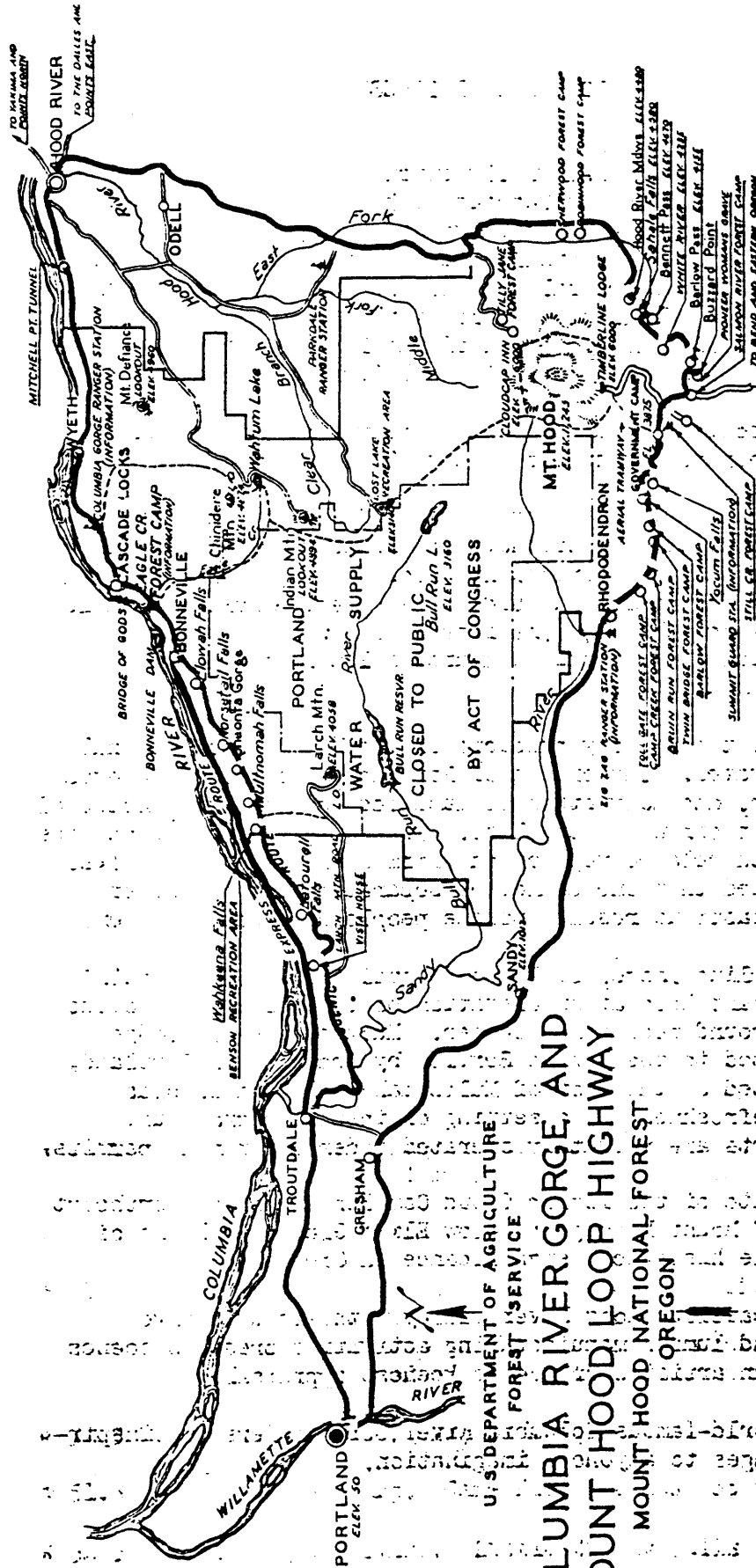
MT. HOOD HOTEL

LOBBY

BILLIARDS

HARNESS Chamber

12

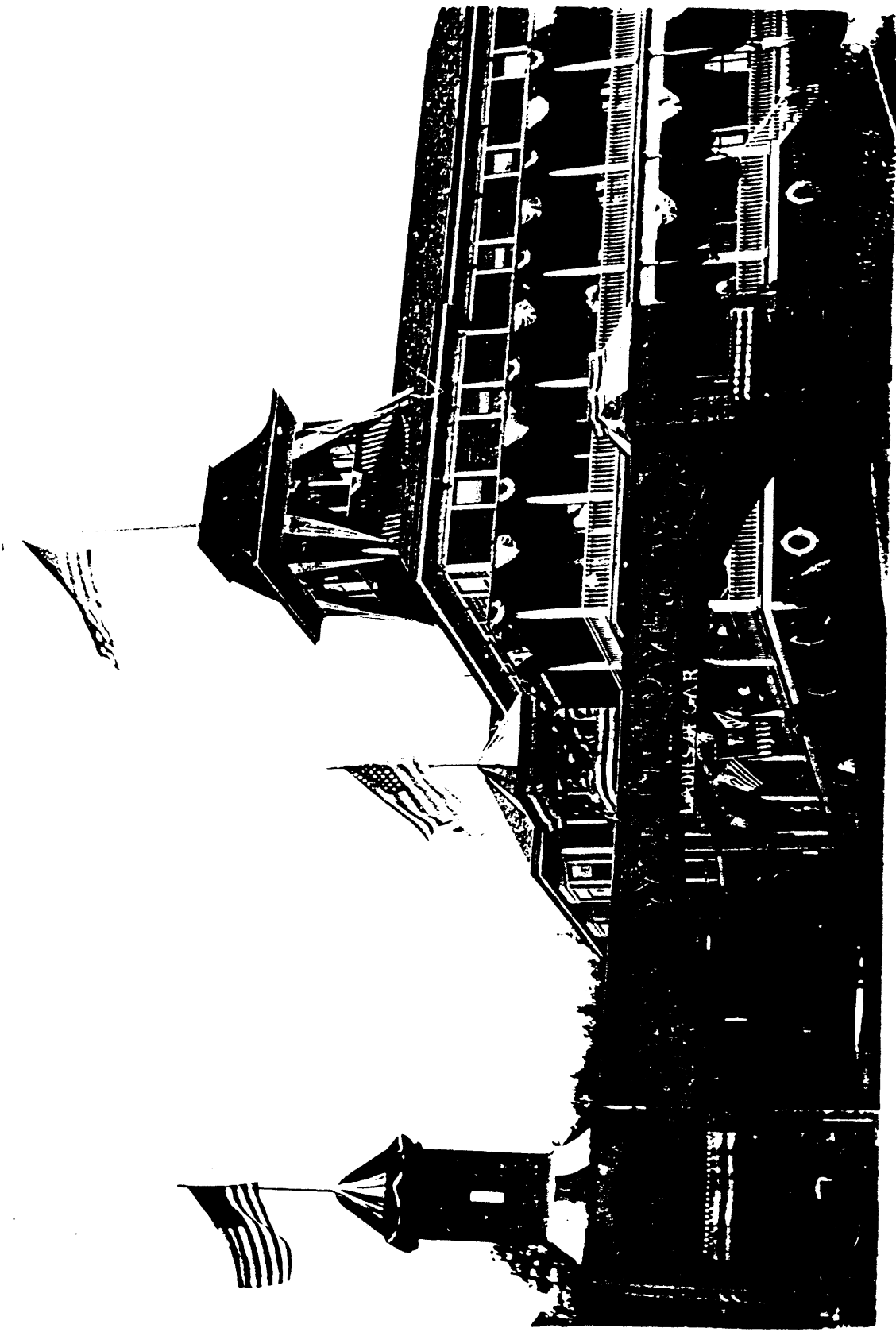


COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE, AND MOUNT HOOD LOOP HIGHWAY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
MOUNT HOOD NATIONAL FOREST
OREGON

- LEGEND
- NATIONAL FOREST BOUNDARY
 - BULL RUN DIVISION PORTLAND WATERSHED
 - OREGON SKYLARK TRAIL

SCRM VERT FILE, Mt Hood Loop Hwy. Log (Scenic Route) Mt Hood National Forest, ~~Portland~~ Oregon
United States of Agriculture Forest Service 1951



Original Mt. Hood Hotel
ca. 1905