

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *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 Cherokee Commercial Historic District

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Parts of Main, Maple and Willow, between 1st and 6th streets [N/A] not for publication

city or town Cherokee [N/A] vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Cherokee code 035 zip code 51012

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).

Rowell G. Sike July 13, 2005
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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:)

Edson B. Beall 8.24.05
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
50	20	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
50	20	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

3

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade

Transportation/Road Related

Recreation & Culture/Museum

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade

Transportation/Road Related

Recreation & Culture/Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Italianate

Late Victorian/Romanesque

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals/Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls brick

roof Asphalt

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.

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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1867-1955

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

—

Architect/Builder

Beach, Warren Wilfred
Beuttler and Arnold

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: Cherokee Area Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 14.8 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A [1]5 [2]9[1]1[3]3[3] [4]7[3]6[1]6[8]
Zone Easting Northing

B [1]5 [2]9[1]1[1]9[2] [4]7[3]6[0]8[3]
Zone Easting Northing

C [1]5 [2]9[1]1[0]5[8] [4]7[3]6[0]4[9]

D [1]5 [2]9[0]8[6]8 [4]7[3]6[1]0[0]

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen

organization History Pays! Historic Preservation Consulting Firm date June 18, 2005

street & number 4411 Ingersoll Avenue telephone 515-274-3625

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50312-2415

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete 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 [see attached list on a continuation sheet]

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

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

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Cherokee Commercial Historic District

Cherokee County, Iowa

7. Narrative Description:

Materials, Continued:

Foundation	brick
Foundation	concrete
Walls	metal/aluminum
Walls	synthetics/vinyl
Walls	stucco
Walls	clapboard

Descriptive Summary:

Cherokee Iowa is the county seat of Cherokee County. Cherokee County is located in northwest Iowa, being situated in the third tier of counties south from the Minnesota border. Plymouth County, immediately west, separates the county from the Missouri River. The Little Sioux River crosses the county diagonally from the northeast to the southwest. Cherokee is situated on that river and occupies a location that is roughly centered within the county.

The commercial architectural significance of Cherokee's downtown is based upon its impressive state of preservation and survival, its scale and substantial design and construction, and the range of stylistic examples which interpret the developing architecture of the community. The district is further defined by a number of uncommon characteristics, and while these are not necessarily significant in their own right, they combine to enhance what is otherwise a significant and visually compelling historic district. The downtown has an unusual linear layout, basically a main commercial arterial with several cross streets and a secondary side street (to the south). What is most unusual is the east/west orientation of the principal street. One very interesting architectural feature was the employment of higher store ceilings and larger transom and storefront glass in north-facing buildings so as to capture ambient light. Naturally these buildings required no awnings as did the occupants of their opposing south-fronting storefronts on the north side of Main Street. The downtown is almost completely commercial in its composition, excluding churches, multiple unit residential buildings and even public buildings. The commercial core represents historic land use patterns that placed these types of buildings either well outside or on the margins of the downtown proper. One dominant influence of the original plat is the tendency of buildings to adhere to the narrow single lots. Most of the buildings are single storefronts so the pattern is quite evident. While a few blocks doubled or re-fronted single storefronts, there is only one documented example of an owner consciously planning a slightly broader storefront. Few of the downtown buildings had upper level residences which is quite remarkable. Instead office suites were far more common on these higher stories. Local construction characteristics include the use of darker rowlock bricks to pattern side and rear walls, a strong tendency for building footprints to coincide with lot lines (creating a standardized building width, particularly on West Main Street) and a decided preference for using recessed wall or window panels in combination with pilasters and horizontal projections in storefront design. Finally one reflection of a higher state of overall integrity is the retention of a great many original iron fire shutters on alleyway fronts.

Cherokee had its inception as a railroad town when, in June of 1870 the Dubuque and Sioux City Railroad finally was built across the county. Within a year, "Old Cherokee" (platted in 1856) was abandoned and the county seat and some buildings were relocated to the new site. The railroad right-of-way passed through the town site from the northeast to the southwest and the town plat, oriented to the cardinal directions, flanked the railroad with the

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intended downtown located on the south end of the original plat. The resulting downtown assumed a linear form, along Main Street principally to the east side of the railroad tracks. The selection of Cherokee as a railroad division point meant that the railroad presence was that of a multi-tracked yard, rather than the usual one or two tracks. With the division point came roundhouses, shops and jobs, all of which is represented by the National Register listing of the Illinois Central Railroad Yard (a part of the multiple property listing titled *The Advent and Development of Railroads in Iowa: 1855-1940*). The commercial core developed along two streets, the principal street, Main, between the railroad and Second Street, the secondary street being Second Street. Over time, the downtown would expand to the east of Second, to Willow Street to the north, Maple Street to the south, and west of the tracks. In Cherokee, the downtown was curiously segregated, with governmental functions relegated to Maple, livery, lumber and industry to the area west of the tracks, and commerce to the aforementioned two streets.

District Description:

The district consists of a somewhat irregular rectangular area that straddles Main and Maple streets, between First Street on the east and includes a few properties just to the west of Fifth Street, on the west. Both sides of Main Street are included between these two end streets, save for a north side section, located between Fourth and Fifth streets. This area was a railroad yard area during the historical time period and therefore contains no contributing buildings. The eastern two-thirds of the district comprises the core of the historical business district and the Main Street portion, east of Fourth Street, is solidly built up with brick and stone buildings (there are two frame building survivors). Here are found the larger commercial blocks and all of the three-story buildings. The latter are located on prominent corners along Main Street, the most notable being the Lewis Hotel (231 West Main, 1898) and Romanesque style Brummer Block (101-03 East Main, 1895). The east part of the district also includes commercial buildings along Second, Fourth, Willow and Maple streets. The former two streets are cross streets, while the latter two streets parallel Main Street, being one block north (Willow) and one block south of it (Maple). The buildings on Willow include the most significant and best-preserved examples of what was a later-date northward expansion of the downtown. Maple Street was in commercial use from the establishment of the downtown and all of the significant and best-preserved commercial examples on that street are included. Buildings excluded on the south side of Maple Street include the former armory and the public library, both of which have been substantially altered. The broad railroad yards and right-of-way of the Illinois Central Railroad cuts across the district at an angle, running northeast to southwest. A new bank and an altered, although early lumber yard are included along the south side of Main Street. Also included, along the west side of Fourth Street, are the railroad depot and express baggage building. The west third of the district is located west of the railroad and includes a number of key buildings. The majority of the buildings represent the near-total segregation of livery and automotive businesses to this part of the downtown (235-37 West Maple is the only garage building located within the east part of the district). This clustering of commercial buildings, the great majority of which post-dated 1900, included the city's only downtown apartment house (demolished) and a later-date Moderne style grocery store (112-16 North Fifth, 1946). This building and the Sachse, Bunn & Company warehouse/office block (201 South Fifth, 1920) both front onto West Fifth Street. The district is almost completely comprised of substantial brick buildings and stone, even in foundations or basement walls, is rarely used, given the lack of any native supply.

Lacking a square, the commercial buildings are arrayed in linear form and the four principal block fronts, along Main between First and Fifth, are double blocks, so any interruption of the overall profile or the covering of several facades has a more dramatic impact on the overall sense. The strongest full block front is the south side of Main between Second and Fourth Streets. The profile is interrupted by just two single-story newer inserts (one double

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and a single storefront). On the second-story level the storefronts in this block are very well preserved and there are no slip covers. The only void is 207 West Main which is to be completely restored. One general loss along this block front is the removal of distinctive pediments. Parapet lines and some finials remain in place, however. The block is strongly flanked by key buildings, the Lewis Hotel on the west and the Schuster Block on the east. Original storefronts are a rare commodity in most downtowns but on this block no storefront approximates the originals, all being set flush to the front with replacement infill. Signage infills the transom level.

The north side of Main Street counterpart block is comparable in that it has just two single-story interruptions of its two-story profile. Both are older buildings but each has been re-fronted. The frame building at 208 West Main is a historic frame building, but its aluminum sided frontage makes it jarringly intrusive particularly given its next door placement to a double slip-covered storefront to the east. The 1949 McDonald Block (210-12 West Main), located immediately west of 208 West Main, while two-stories in height, lacks any parapet so its lower profile and more modern lines add to a five-front wide interruption in the 19th Century building cadence. The intrusive single-story building at 216 West Main is separated from this group by just one older building. On the west of the street front are two striking buildings, the all-metal front at 220 West Main and the Hawley Allison block at 222 Main. The new bank on the west end of the block is excluded, but naturally is on a prominent corner location. On the east end of the block, the Colburn Allison Block at 200 West Main has lost its third floor but it is still deemed to contribute to the district. One visually hindering aspect of the district is the covering of upper level windows with sheeting. In most cases the original window sash remain intact. This readily reversible window treatment would greatly enhance the appearance of the buildings. Storefronts, almost needless to say, have been completely replaced and horizontal signage infills transom fronts. Just two storefronts in the block under discussion have retained historic storefronts. The best-preserved storefront and façade is found at 222 West Main.

East of Second Street, the north side of Main Street is most notable for its key buildings. The west half of the block is most noteworthy with four well-preserved buildings including the corner bank and the theater. A vacant lot, redeveloped as a park, is the only such void on Main Street. The east half of the block consists of two taller buildings that are flanked by a number of single-story buildings. Surviving pediments, recessed storefronts and intact pediment lines strengthen the integrity of the block. Sealed upper windows could be readily restored.

The south side of Main between First and Second streets is virtually intact on its west end. A triple-width single-story infill interrupts the two-story cadence of the block. There are two prominent three-story buildings on the west end. There are two slip-covered fronts on the block. A reversible yet apparent change is the covering or reduction of upper windows. Storefront footprints are recessed and an excellent cast iron example survives at 123 East Main. The sheer dominance of the massive three-story stone Brummer Block (101-03 East Main, 1895) is key to the downtown. It is very well preserved.

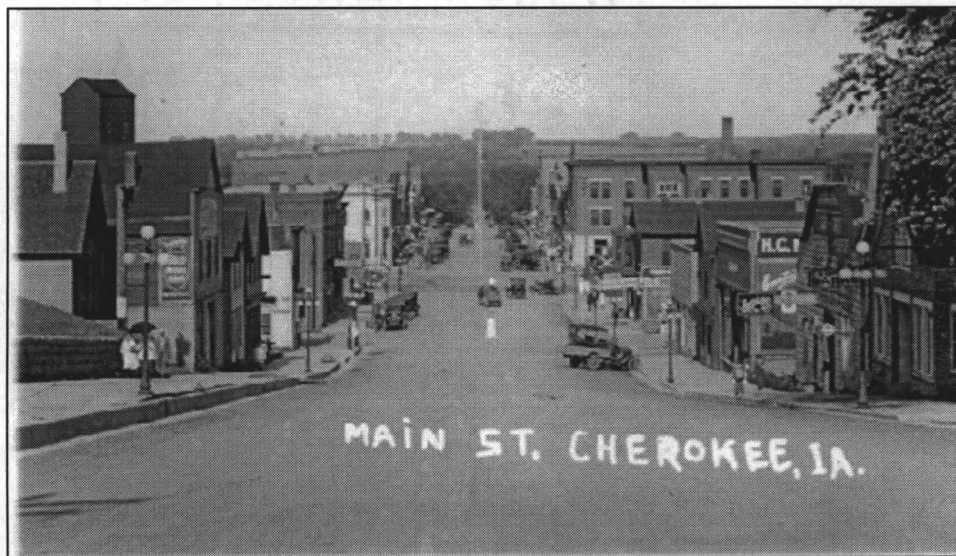
The Second Street block fronts are visually strong because of the side walls and secondary storefronts of the key corner buildings on all four corners of Main and Second. The Democrat building (108 North Second, 1908) is a key ornament to the district (the newer single-story buildings to the north are excluded). The buildings below the alley, south of Main, are mostly contributing. The second surviving frame building (108 South Second) is obscured by new siding and the double front at 108 South Second has been re-fronted beyond recognition, but the other three buildings on either side of the street are well preserved and the telephone exchange at 112 South Second is a key building.

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The Maple Street portion of the district is visually weaker due to the exclusion of newer or altered buildings along the east half of the south side of the street (west of South Second Street). The buildings on the north side of the block are later or secondary storefronts for the corner building that fronts east on South Second, but they are contributing to the district given their building dates and original integrity. The west end of the block includes the notable Swanson Garage (235-37 West Maple) and the railroad depot buildings at its South Fourth Street terminus.

To the west of the railroad yards, that part of the district includes a high proportion of important and well-preserved buildings. The lumberyard complex, while re-fronted and covered with metal siding, consists of historical buildings and occupies the same footprint as it has for over a century. The building at 424 West Main is rated non-contributing only because of the block glass window replacements on its upper front. The integrity evaluation for 501 West Main (non-contributing) could be reversed if a historical image is found of it.

The district includes all those contiguous commercial buildings in the downtown that have historical architectural merit and integrity. The district is bi-nodal in that a west end grouping of garages, liveries and automotive shop comprise a distinct subsection of the downtown, while the majority of the other buildings are located east of the railroad tracks, along Main, Second, Fourth, Maple and Willow streets.



West Main Street from Courthouse, view east, c.1925
501, 505 Main are visible on right-hand side, opposite truck
(Cherokee Area Archives)

The resulting district is visually compelling given its setting in the Little Sioux River Valley. The selection of a linear downtown layout, focused principally on a single street, meant that the commercial architecture had only to fill both sides of a single block to be impressive. In other towns having a central square, the challenge was to build up at least four full blocks with substantial buildings. The district is compact and focused and there are numerous large and well-preserved buildings in corner settings which give strength to the whole. The sheer mass of the district with so very many two-story and numerous three-story buildings conveys the message that this town has enjoyed an exceptionally successful commercial growth and prosperity. Few county seat communities in Western Iowa could boast market areas that exceeded even their county borders for any long period of time. Those that were particularly prosperous required railroad access and a lack of nearby in-county competition. Cherokee, as a railroad division

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point, was particularly advantaged and nearby competitors all suffered major downtown fires. Cherokee had no great fires. Many otherwise visually compelling buildings are weakened by the removal or covering of second story windows or the loss of cornice lines and decorative pediments.

The district is visually integrated because most of the buildings share common architectural characteristics, which combine vernacular and stylistic influences. Most common is the use of one or more slightly recessed wall planes on upper story facades. These are framed or defined by flanking brick pilasters (which step out at the transom lintel level in the middle bays of the façade or are a part of the end wall fronts), and horizontal belt courses, brick panels or a parapet base. In several instances elaborate window arches are combined arcade fashion to cap these recessed panels. A second local building trait is the use of a striped sidewall, where hard fired and darker header create blackened horizontal lines along the header courses. A third trait impacts the upstairs building interiors. In Cherokee upper stories housed offices or warehouses (and occasionally retail space) but not apartments. While a few owners had upstairs living quarters, absent are any examples of downtown apartment arrangements set atop the ground level storefronts. A few contemporary loft conversions are of recent date, but the local tendency was to use upper and basement levels for commercial or warehousing purposes. Architecturally this translates to painted signage in upper level windows, a more formal hall treatment (bead board, wainscoting) and the provision of natural light through large skylights into hallways. Ground level entryways lack the expected array of mailboxes. In at least one instance, two buildings share a single entry to save hallway space. These former office areas remain frozen in time, with names painted on frosted glass doors, equipment left in place, private phone lines, gas fixtures, skylights all perfectly preserved. They were never converted into apartments, this being another reflection of a very strong local preference against downtown residential building use.

One feature of the district is that its east/west orientation presented an architectural dilemma. Storefronts fronting south had almost too much natural light while those fronting north had too little. Historic photographs clearly indicate that north-side-of-the street merchants had to pay for and operate awnings while their south side counter parts were freed from this expense. The architectural solution, was to enlarge transoms and storefronts on the south side so as to capture whatever ambient light was available. So these storefronts historically had higher ceilings and larger areas of storefront and transom glass than did their fellow merchants across the street.

Cherokee's downtown is massive in its scale and substantial in its construction. Its compact nature encouraged buildings to go higher and to utilize basement space for secondary storefronts, particularly on corner locations. It is unusual to find multiple three-story blocks of early construction dates in Western Iowa county seat communities. These tended to enjoy their commercial high water mark in building development at a later date (during the pre-World War I years), by which time single-story commercial fronts, often with a wider storefront, had become the norm. In Cherokee three-story blocks occupy most of the prominent downtown corners and as late as 1920, there was a serious consideration to go even higher, to four-stories, and both of the Allison Blocks had been built to take on additional floors if need be. Another factor that encouraged architectural intensity was the unwillingness of Cherokee's developers to violate their sacred lot lines. While lot lines always influence resulting building dimension, the single-lot width dominates the early development phases in the downtown. Indeed, there is only one known instance where a developer (C. Allison, 200 West Main) had the boldness to acquire extra yardage so as to produce an imposingly broad business block. Even the simple doubling of the single lots, resulting in a double-storefront design, is most common after 1910 and a good number of the examples represent much later façade consolidations of what were previously individual storefronts. This fact produces a cadence or pattern to the downtown.

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Cherokee's surviving commercial buildings cover every developmental period of the downtown and indicate a sustained incremental growth pattern over time. The oldest buildings tend to be the most altered and are numerically under-represented because they tended to be replaced or given new storefronts. The five-year breakdown of building construction indicates that downtown growth spurts occurred in 1885-89, 1895-99, 1905-29, and 1945-49. The most intensive construction took place between 1910 and 1919 when 24 buildings arose, accounting for one of four surviving buildings.

<u>5-Year</u> <u>Period</u>	<u>Building</u> <u>Count:</u>	<u>5-Year</u> <u>Period</u>	<u>Building</u> <u>Count:</u>
1865-69	1	1920-24	3
1870-74		1925-29	4
1875-79		1930-34	1
1880-84	4	1935-39	3
1885-89	7	1940-44	1
1890-94	6	1945-49	4
1895-99	6	1950-54	2
1900-04	5	1955-59	2
1905-09	7	1960-64	0
1910-14	9	1965-69	1
1915-19	9	1970-74	2

Buildings which are associated with these particular growth periods potentially have a greater historical significance because they interpret the prosperous and growing phases of the downtown's history. The most sustained growth period was the 25-year between 1905-29. This growth, combined with the resiliency of local banks at least during the early 1920s, is fairly remarkable. Even today two frame commercial buildings survive along Main Street. The replacement pattern continued into the present time, but no massive rebuilding took place after the Great Depression. In the years prior to World War II several buildings were cut back, losing the uppermost floor.

Architectural Styles:

The numerous local architectural traits previously enumerated perhaps account for the general absence of any large number of purer stylistic examples in the downtown. Attributed stylistic examples represent the bare minimum characteristics of their styles, a reflection of the presence of a strong local commercial building tradition. This design template consisted of a combination of recessed wall/window planes that were distinguished by the use of square-cut brick pilasters and a range of horizontal elements (arcades, corbelled brickwork, belt courses, parapets).

Italianate Style: This style was surely more common, particularly on the lost wooden storefronts.

- 102 East Main, 1889
- 118 East Main, 1892
- 120 East Main, 1896
- 123 East Main, 1890
- 205 West Main, 1888
- 207 West Main, 1888
- 214 West Main, 1883
- 220 West Main, 1886

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Romanesque: The best example is 112 South Second, but the style is represented by narrow mortar joints and the use of terra cotta ornamentation.

112 South Second, 1906

101-103 East Main, 1895

424 West Main, 1902

Neo-Classical Revival: The large number of examples of this style represent the later phase of overbuilding the downtown as Cherokee reached its commercial zenith during the pre-Great Depression years.

201 South Fifth, 1920

108 North Second, 1908

100 East Main, 1914

109 East Main, 1904

108-10 East Main, 1920

113 East Main, 1919

201 West Main, 1896

202 West Main, 1888

203 West Main, 1915

209-11-13 West Main

219 West Main, 1914

222 West Main, 1909-10

223 West Main, 1903

225 West Main, 1906

231 West Main, 1898

421-23-25 West Main, 1913

427 West Main, 1935

Illinois Central Railroad Depot, 1896

Illinois Central Railroad Baggage Terminal, 1896

Art Deco/Moderne Style: This latest style evident is represented on a streamlined grocery store and the Masonic building.

105 East Willow, 1931

112-16 North Fifth, 1946

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Surveyed Commercial Properties in Cherokee, by date of construction order:

The date range is used to estimate building dates for those buildings lacking precise construction dates. The range denotes the first Sanborn fire insurance map on which the building appears (last date) and the earliest possible year following the previous map on which the building failed to appear. The date then is the middle year between those two dates. All other dates are documented construction dates.

Address	Date	Date Range	Contributing Or Non-Contributing
208 W Main	1867		Non-contributing
200 W Main	1882		Contributing
111-113 S Second	1882, 1903		Non-contributing , 113 S. Second is newer, counted as one bldg.
214 W Main	1883		Contributing
220 W Main	1886	1883-88	Contributing
211 W Main	Pre-1888		Contributing
202 W Main	1888		Contributing
204-06 W Main	1888		Non-contributing
207 W Main	1888		Contributing
102 E Main	1889		Contributing
111 E Main	1889		Non-contributing
123 E Main	1890		Contributing
422 W Main	1890		Non-contributing
424 W Main	1890, 1902		Contributing, building doubled in 1902, counts as one building
118 E Main	1892		Contributing
205 W Main	1893		Contributing
108 S Second	1894		Non-contributing
101-03 E Main	1895		Contributing
107 E Main	1896	1894-98	Non-contributing
120 E Main	1896	1893-98	Contributing
South 4 th , Illinois Central Passenger Depot, Express Terminal	1896		Contributing (two buildings) NRHP listed
201 W Main	1896	1894-98	Contributing
231 W Main	1898		Contributing, NRHP Listed
116 S 4th	1900		Contributing
223 W Main	1903	1900-06	Contributing
109 E Main	1904	1900-08	Contributing
112 S Second	1906		Contributing
225 W Main	1906		Contributing
108 N Second	1908		Contributing
117 S Second	1909		Contributing
211-13 W Main	1909		Contributing
227 W Main	1909		Non-contributing
112-14 S 4th	1910		Non-contributing
222 W Main	1910		Contributing
126 E Main	1912		Contributing

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Address	Date	Date Range	Contributing Or Non-Contributing
415 W Main		1913	Non-contributing
100 E Main		1914	Contributing
105 E Main		1914	Contributing
219 W Main		1914	Contributing
501 W Main		1914	Contributing
509 W Main		1914	Contributing
203 W Main		1915	Contributing
221 W Main		1915	Contributing
421-23-25 W Main		1915	Contributing
235-37 W Maple		1915	Contributing
115 S Second		1919	Contributing
113 E Main		1919 1915-1923	Contributing
115 E Main		1919	Contributing
420 W Main		1919 1915-23	Non-contributing
212 W Maple		1919	Contributing
201 S 5th		1920	Contributing
108-10 E Main		1920	Contributing
218 W Main		1920	Contributing
124 E Main		1928	Contributing
104-06 E Main		1929	Contributing
505 W Main		1929	Contributing
204 W Maple		1929	Non-contributing
105 E Willow		1931	Contributing
216 W Main		1935	Non-contributing
427 W Main		1933-34	Contributing
116 E Main		1937	Contributing
239 W Maple		1944	Contributing
112-116 N 5th		1946	Contributing
128 E Main		1947	Contributing
208 W Maple		1947	Contributing
210-12 W Main		1949	Contributing
117 E. Willow		1950	Contributing
122 E Main		1952	Non-contributing
117 E Main		1956	Non-contributing
114 E Main		1958	Non-contributing
215 W Main		1968	Non-contributing
401 W Main		1973	Non-contributing
119-21 E Main		1974	Non-contributing
112 E Main			

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Supplemental Contemporary Photographs:



201 South Fifth, view west
(Photo by Doug Pierson, January 19, 2005)



420-24 West Main, view northwest
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)



112 North Fifth, view northeast
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)

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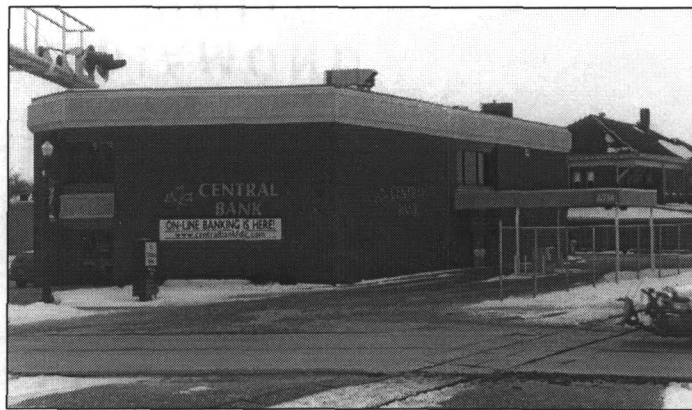
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Sutherland Lumber Company/Cherokee Lumber Company, 415 West Main, view southwest
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)



401 West Main, view south
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)



200 East Main, view northeast
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)

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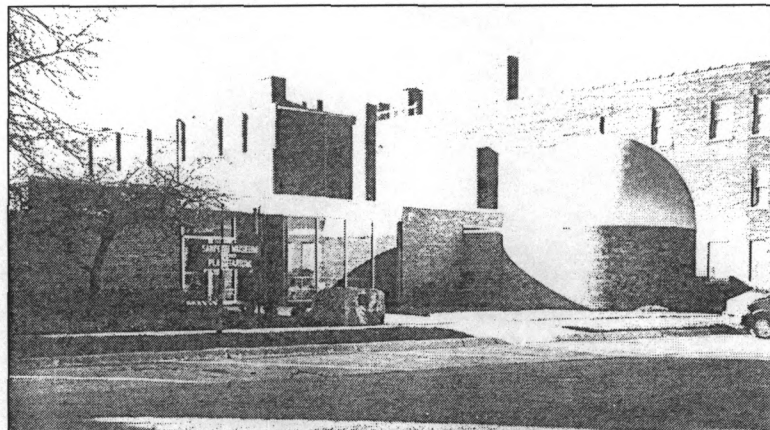
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108 (left) and 114 (right) South Second, view southeast
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)



Former Masonic building, 105 East Willow, view southwest
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)



Sanford Memorial Building, Sanford Museum and Planetarium, 117 East Willow
(1994 photo, courtesy of Sanford Museum)

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237 (left) and 239 (right) West Maple, view southeast
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)



Darker rowlock brickwork pattern, rear wall, 424 West Main
(Photo by Jim Jacobsen, January 14, 2005)

A great many side and rear walls in the downtown exhibit this striking pattern of darkly burned rowlock bricks which results in a striking horizontal pattern.

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Cherokee Commercial Historic District

Cherokee County, Iowa

8. Significance Statement:

Architects, Continued:

Josselyn & Taylor
Lewis, Robert A.
Lockhart, G. L.

Significance Summary:

The Cherokee Commercial Historic District is locally significant under Criterion C, Architecture. It consists of a well-preserved collection of buildings that collectively and cohesively represent the design and construction of downtown commercial buildings in this important county seat community. The district embodies a number of characteristics that are unusual for a Western Iowa county seat downtown. The expected array of stylistic applications is largely supplanted by a locally dominant vernacular commercial tradition, one that utilized particular building traits and the use of local materials. Unlike many town seat examples, narrow platted lots, with few exceptions, determined the width of the resulting commercial buildings. In terms of sheer scale, the district consists almost exclusively of multi-story designs, including many three-story examples. The buildings are also very substantially built, from both a materials and design standpoint. The unusual east/west linear layout of the downtown produced a differential provision of transom size and ceiling height, with shaded north-fronting buildings needing maximal amounts of ambient sunlight. Finally, in lieu of expected upper level apartments, multi-story buildings instead contained professional offices. The district includes commercial examples from each phase of commercial development in Cherokee. A Criterion A case for historical significance could readily be made but this nomination addresses only the architectural legacy of a regionally dominant northwest Iowa county seat community.

The commercial buildings in downtown Cherokee represent a virtually unbroken sequence of development that dates from the establishment of the town to the post-World War II years. While comparable communities experienced shorter and more intensive periods of growth, and re-buildings after major fires, they were also more susceptible to the various national downturns. Cherokee experienced reduced or no new building in its downtown during the middle 1880s and the Great Depression, but otherwise, the downtown was continually being renewed with the construction of more substantial and newer buildings. While the surviving buildings date from the earliest brick storefronts, two frame survivors represent the earliest downtown.

Some two dozen notable buildings comprise one third of the district. The same list virtually includes most if not all of the buildings that have recognizable architectural styles. The "best of show" landmark buildings include the Lewis Hotel, Brummer Block, Schuster, Hawley Allison, W. R. Griffin Block, the Masonic Temple, the Illinois Central Passenger Depot, the Sachse, Bunn Office/Warehouse, and the Cherokee State Bank. The notable shared characteristic of the downtown is the use, in the older brick buildings (largely pre-World War I), of the combined pilaster and recessed panel façade design.

Collectively, the downtown and its sustained physical growth reflects the regional economic dominance of Cherokee. This market dominance was achieved in the pre-World War I years and extended beyond the expected county lines of a county seat commercial center. Internal advantages which enabled Cherokee to achieve and retain

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market dominance included its being a railroad division point and the securing of a major state institution. The construction of the Lewis Hotel in 1898 was seen locally as a risky venture, given its immense scale, but the hotel enabled Cherokee to play a key role as a convention center. External advantages which played into the city's hands economically included the automobile, improved roads, the lack of area (particularly other in-county competitors) competition.

Cherokee's commercial buildings are large, substantially built and are for the most part deeper. The buildings when first built usually extended the full length of their lots. This is particularly true of north-facing buildings which needed to utilize sunlight through their ample alley front back windows. The same fairly uncommon north-facing orientation explains why awnings only appear on south-fronting buildings in historical photos and why transoms and ceiling heights are higher on north-fronting buildings.

Only W. R. Griffin's blocks (1915, 1933-34) had upstairs apartments and the only downtown apartment block (Hillside, located west of the district on West Main, non-extant) was near the courthouse, west of the district. Otherwise the upper levels of the downtown buildings were used for professional offices or storage or sales. The extensive use of basements (the Brummer Block and 208 West Maple have basement store areas) and the provision of several basement storefronts attest to the intensive commercial use of downtown space.

Regional Market and Economic Dominance:

A number of advantages explain at least in part why Cherokee businessmen were in a position to add substantial new commercial buildings to the downtown. Agricultural and railroad-generated prosperity are general growth factors. The construction of the State Hospital does not appear to have quickly generated new buildings after its 1902 opening. The period 1905-29 is a period of sustained growth, and a fairly remarkable one at that. The pre-World War I years were prosperous ones for Iowa farmers and considerable growth in Iowa towns usually appears c.1905-14, depending upon the impact of the 1906 economic depression. During these years many towns were belatedly transforming from frame to more fireproof construction, and this transformation often started with a fire and the rebuilding in more substantial and stylistic form, was the response to losses to fire. All things considered Cherokee's downtown enjoyed sustained growth and suffered no truly disastrous fires. The only exception was a lumberyard fire on State Street, the site of which remains a parking lot today. The city merchants committed themselves to building substantial fireproof buildings and thereby were able to hold on to their downtown reinvestment by avoiding uninsured fire loss.

General Historical Background:

Cherokee is a railroad town, which explains much about her history and overall form. Cherokee is not simply another square-cut grid-locked railroad town plat, if only due to her downtown layout. The town platters simply ignored the traditional town grid plan. There is no courthouse square or park, no design focus that is centered on the depot, or no complex network of intersecting commercial streets. Instead the downtown buildings are arranged in one long east-west running street with the courthouse located on a hilltop on the west end, a second site that was chosen in 1892 because the downtown had extended to that west-end point. Cherokee's downtown is functionally and spatially divided into two downtowns. There is the main downtown which is east of the railroad and there is a west "business district" which is west of the tracks. The latter started as a mixed use grouping that increasingly specialized first in horses and agricultural equipment, and then in automobiles and farm equipment. It was also the location of the town's

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most significant warehouse building, the Sachse, Bunn & Company, a major regional agricultural implements distributor. Most comparable communities developed an "automobile row" or district but few of these produced a sub-district that was so compact or distinctly separated from the downtown proper. The elevated west district first developed as a residential neighborhood and many of the town's churches clustered along West Main Street, an area known as "Piety Hill."

Cherokee's downtown grew both up and out. Her commercial buildings became taller and larger and the downtown area expanded outwards, mostly east and west, but north and south as well. The first brick storefronts and one all-metal fronted block were built just west of Second Avenue along West Main. All of the early banks were located on West Main, the earliest locating on North Fourth Street (the only block pictured in the 1875 *Andreas Atlas*). An unusual factor in Cherokee's downtown history is the complete absence of major devastating fires (yes there was the 1900 West Maple Street lumber yard blaze but it didn't take out any major businesses). Usually big fires presented large-scale opportunities to re-build a downtown with large numbers of similar-appearing fire-proof brick buildings. Cherokee's downtown grew incrementally, with each new building representing a new reinvestment on Main Street.

The ideal downtown place to conduct business, termed the "100% location," started on the northwest corner of Second and Main where the first three-story brick block was built. The first businesses had located closer to the railroad but the first blocks of brick buildings were built closer to Second Street. Second Street on either side of Main followed with brick building construction. Two intensive up-building periods followed, prior to and following the First World War and the whole length of Main Street was predominately of brick construction. Increasingly during the 1920s newer storefronts replaced older ones and the first double fronts were built to house the major chain stores.

The downtown district increasingly broadened north and south as the automobile dominated business trends. Auto garages, filling stations, and factories located along South Second, Fourth and Fifth streets. Less substantial business buildings were replaced, particularly along West Maple. Residential properties were displaced by commercial or church and fraternal buildings on East Willow and East Maple. The most substantial growth area between the World Wars took place along West Elm Street where a number of single-story garages and liveries were built, just south of the Sachse, Bunn Company Building. West Willow, once wholly residential, was commercialized, beginning in the 1920s, first along south side and gradually infiltrated from the side streets, Second and Fourth.

Finally, the sheer scale of the downtown buildings is impressive, suggesting a causal explanation of a local prosperity and commercial energy that goes beyond the usual prosperity related to the combined role of the county seat and railroad community. This scale is most readily measured by the cluster of three-story commercial business buildings, the prevalence of substantial two-story business fronts, and the relative absence of single-story fronts. Elaborate and large-scale business blocks also bespeak this sustained prosperity. The source of this prosperity includes the agricultural richness of the county and region, the presence of a major state institution, Cherokee's role as a "convention city," the presence of a railroad division point, and a regional dominance in agricultural equipment and auto sales. Much of this prosperity was owed to railroad and then good roads access to the city.

A number of key competitive factors enabled Cherokee to grow and surpass other regional county seat communities. These were the railroad, the selection of the town as a railroad division point; the awarding of a key state institution to Cherokee; and simple competitive location. Cherokee had relatively few nearby competing towns aside from other lesser railroad towns. There was to be no early struggle for the location of the county seat; that

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struggle would come in later years. Regional dominance could be achieved with little competition. Save for LeMars and Storm Lake, Cherokee faced little regional trade competition. Later, following World War I, the good roads movement made the town accessible to a broader trade region and Cherokee prospered due to her local factories, her strong retail trade, her role as a convention center, and her dominance in the marketing of agricultural implements and automobiles.

Historical Overview:

The town was platted in 1870 and relocated in response to the arrival of the Sioux City Railroad (succeeded by the Illinois Central Railroad). From the start the town was a coaling station and it was designated a division point in 1887. The downtown plat dictated the unusual linear layout of the stores along Main Street and its 22-foot wide commercial lots set the pattern for virtually every downtown commercial building. These narrow lots are best appreciated when one looks at the Cherokee State Bank (100 East Main, extant) or the Schuster Block (101 West Main, extant), both of which occupy corner lots on Second Street. The lack of major downtown fires precluded any large-scale opportunities for lot consolidation as a part of the rebuilding effort. The town's commercial development, while sustained, substantially increased c.1902 with the completion of the State Hospital for the Insane. An important downtown transformation that dated to the middle-1870s was the completion of the first brick building, a banking house. The absence of local stone precluded any large-scale use of that building material but the railroad allowed for the importation of stone trim work.

Maple Street, running parallel to Main and a block south, developed as the poorer commercial twin to both streets and over time took on the nickname "Boiler Avenue" because of the many boarding houses and hotels which clustered there. Maple Street more directly served the needs of the transient underclass, brought to and through the town by the railroad, and it consequently never developed a substantial commercial architecture. The east end of Maple, between Second and Fourth, was the center of town government from the 1880s on. The first firehouse and city hall were established on the north side of Maple (where the Little Panda restaurant is today), but gravitated across the street to a substantial brick combination city hall firehouse which was completed in 1908 (non-extant, current library addition site). This building was tucked in between the armory and library. This made for a curious contrast in land uses, government and taverns and barbershops.

By 1880 trade was so brisk that downtown store space was inadequate. The downtown had focused on Main along the first block east of the railroad. It was reported "...the tradesmen will have to spread out as they cannot all continue to remain in the section of Main between the railway and Second Street, even though that is a long block. Storeowners seem afraid that the public won't find them if they move around the corner [onto Second] or down the street" (*The History of Cherokee*, p. 5).

The year 1882 marks the beginning of the large-scale replacement of the first-generation of frame stores with more fireproof brick buildings now that locally produced brick were available. It was reported in 1883 that "Cherry red Cherokee bricks are turning the trick in enabling our town to erect handsome permanent structures. A million of brick were placed in walls last summer, and even more this season." Brick was locally produced. Supplementing the brick was artificial stone; local production of that valued commodity (there being no readily available stone in the county) was produced first in 1881. The same source continued "[it is]...to make blocks to take the place of flat natural stone that our area lacks. They have been most successful in using local sand with cement to make solid products for all sorts of building needs." The near complete absence of foundation stone reflects this lack of stone and

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several early 20th Century building projects were substantially delayed when imported stone failed to arrive. There is even one example of a cobblestone foundation wall, another measure of the lack of good building stone (221 West Main). The local stone-making firm was called the "Marble Works" and C. B. Holden purchased it in 1883. The plant produced marble trimmings for building interiors as well as tombstones.

The year 1883 saw the construction of the town's first three-story store building, the Allison Brothers' store, on the northwest corner of Second and Main, making that intersection as the center (or "100% location") of the downtown. The new block was liberally praised:

It is the most attractive and substantial business structure in the state, and we may say the entire Northwest. It is artistically constructed of brick with stone trimmings; is three stories high, the top portion being so arranged that another story can be easily added if desired. There is a large airy basement. The dimensions are 31x100; the main display windows are of plate glass each section being 102x164 inches, which are the largest of any panes of any kind and in any store in the western country, and there are but three larger in Chicago. Altogether it is the most complete and noticeable structure for commercial purposes in the west excepting buildings in Denver. The basement and first floor are occupied by Allison Bros. The second story is divided into large office rooms, and the third floor is elaborately fitted up for the Masonic Lodge of Cherokee, with large meeting hall, reception, banquet, and ante rooms (*The History of Cherokee*, p. 6; *Leading Industries of the West*, p. 46).

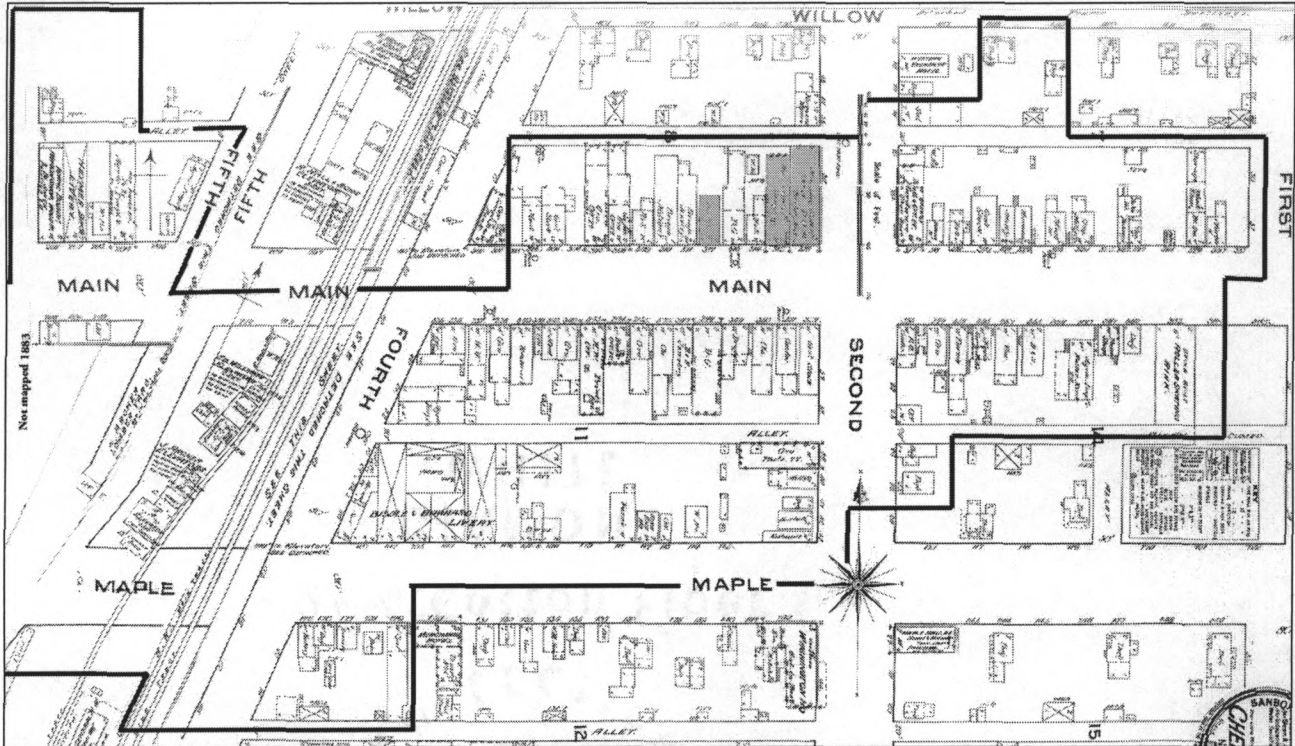
The November 1883 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicts a downtown of still primarily frame buildings. Ten bricks are in place out of 64 total storefronts in the immediate downtown (exclusive of West Maple which is all of frame construction). There are more two-story than one-story storefronts on Main Street. These taller buildings tend to cluster towards Fourth or Railroad Street and Second Street. The east end of East Main is only partly built up. That area included a roller rink, blacksmith shops, a large agricultural implements dealership, a marble shop. Hotels, save for the Western Exchange and the Farmers Home, on North Second, were all south of the downtown along Maple Street. The town hall and fire station occupied a two-story frame building on the north side of West Maple. Maple street mixed Biddle & Barnard's Livery (by the depot) with many dwellings, the Washington and Merchant's Hotels, saloons, and warehouses. Maple Hall, on the southeast corner of Maple and Second, was the first opera house. There were two banks, both on West Main. West of the tracks, along West Main, there was already a cluster of livery and farm implement stores. The town had 2,700 residents.

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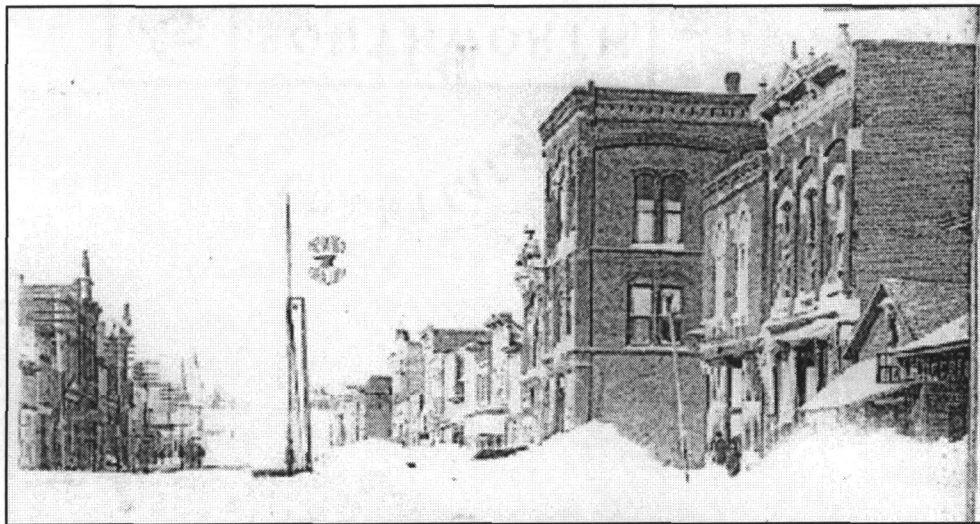
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1883 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (District marked)



1885-86 Blizzard, Main Street, view west

Note the mix of brick and frame storefronts and the high profile pediments, Corbett's Block (102 East Main) is visible at the right, Three story Allison's Block (200 West Main) in center.
(Cherokee Area Archives)

The May 1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicted that year's aggressive downtown building program as underway, although there were still but 13 brick storefronts downtown. Four lots, however, are cleared or being

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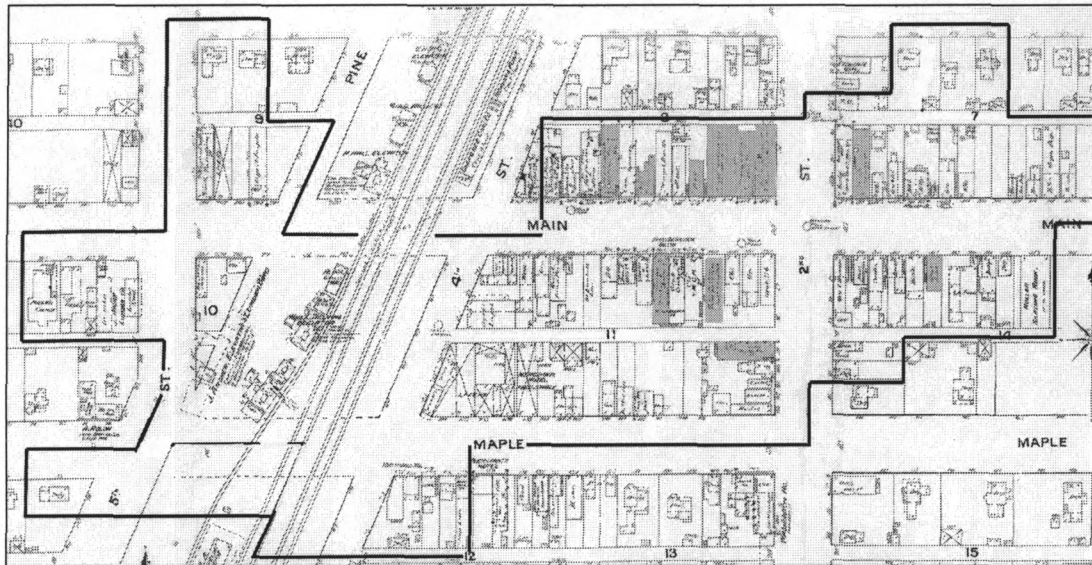
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excavated for the five new brick buildings to be completed that year. The first two named business “blocks” are depicted on this map (Vandercook’s and Miller’s, 211-13 West Main, extant). The post office continues to hover near the corner of Second and Main (it was on the southeast corner in 1883) and is as of 1888 north of the alley on east side North Second by 1888. South Second remains a venue for small single story frame storefronts, with just one brick in place. There are just two bricks on East Main, both on the northeast corner of Main and Second. Elm Street and South Fifth west of the tracks is home to the Rolow Plow Works and a livery on the northwest corner, and lumber sheds and agricultural implements stores line the south side of West Main, west of the tracks.



1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (District marked)

The west end of the downtown, predominantly churches and residences until the early 1890s, began to be transformed for both public and commercial land uses. The first substantial courthouse was built at 524 West Main (non-extant, replaced by present modern building). This area was offering livery and farm machinery dealers as early as 1883. More substantial buildings were now being added there (*The Cherokee Times*, January 22, September 17, 1891).



View of new courthouse from depot grounds, view northwest, 1914
(*History of Cherokee County*, 1914)

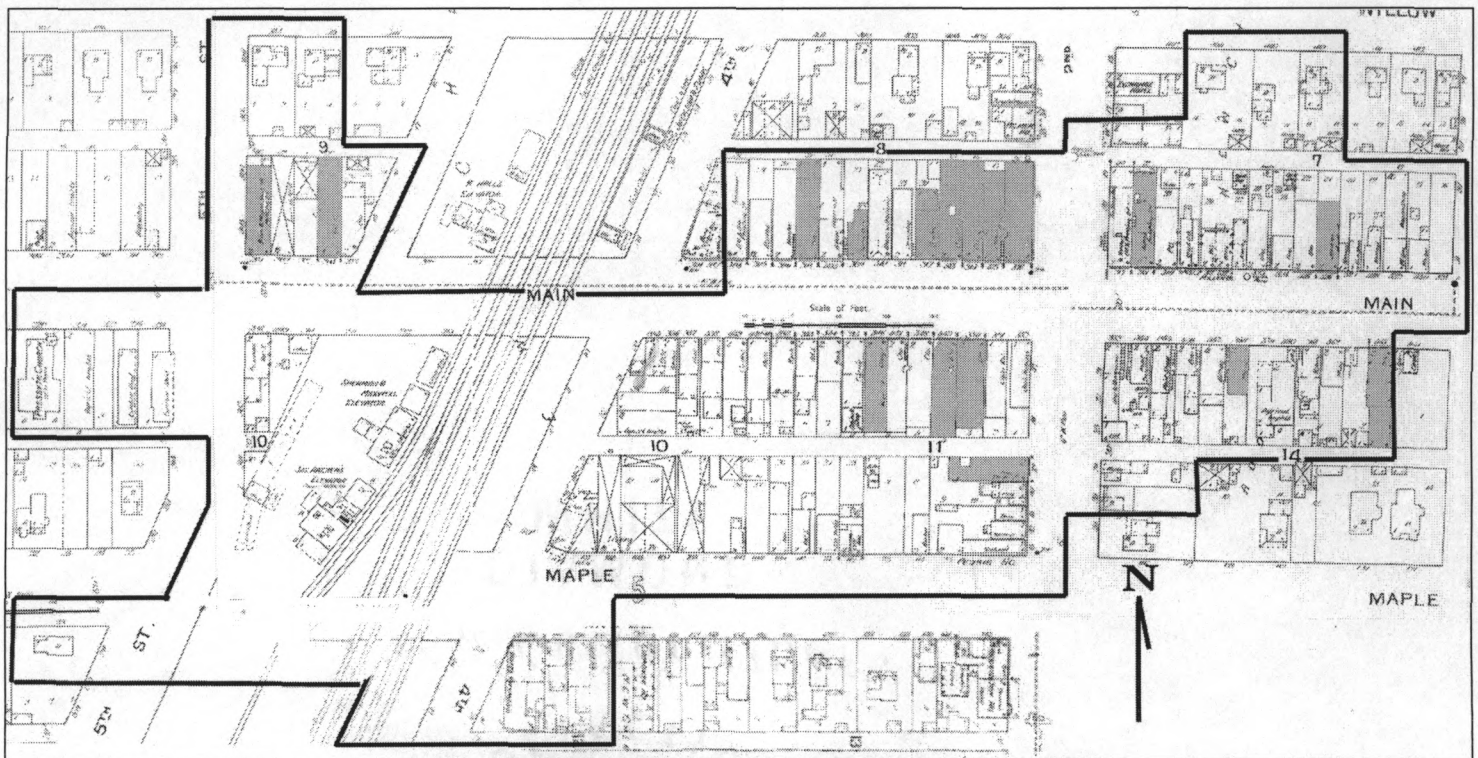
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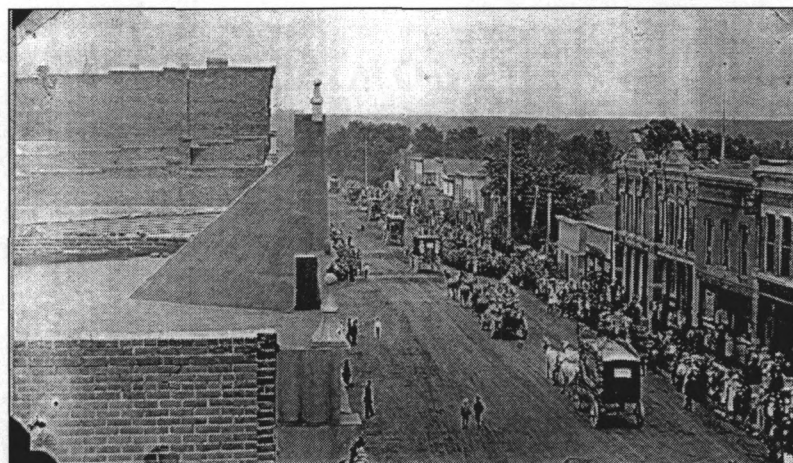
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The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for October gives the downtown brick storefront count as 23. These cluster towards Second Street on both sides of West Main Street. There are, however, six bricks east of Second on Main, all but one of which is on the north side of the street. Single-story stores could still be found scattered along Main, and two of these survive on the southwest corner of Main and Second. There are three banks downtown, all along West Main. Hotels were either clustered along Second Street or at the west end of Maple Street, close to the tracks. Maple Street was otherwise only lightly commercialized



1893 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (District marked)



South side 100s-200s East and West Main, view to the southeast, c.1895

Frames predominate east of the Simpson-Cleaves Blocks, third and fourth from the right (Cherokee Area Archives)

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The *Cherokee Times* looked back on the year 1896, terming it “a splendid showing” with a total in improvements of \$200,000. Cherokee was defying the national economic downturn, according to this account:

Cherokee has been the best city from a business standpoint, in this part of the state this year...[the “universal comment of traveling men”]...the only city on their route that seemed awake, so general has been the business depression caused by the low prices and the uncertainty as to the outcome of the presidential campaign. Cherokee is one of the few cities of its class in Iowa that has never been cursed with a boom and at no time in its history has it been freer from such an affliction than at present. (*Cherokee Weekly Times*, November 26, 1896).

The new Brummer Block (102 East Main, extant) was a landmark building for the downtown, and represented the high water mark of the massive multi-storefront, multi-story commercial, office and hall block. Executed in stone, the building solidly declared the intersection of Second and Main streets to be the key business location. Curiously, despite its considerable scale, its two first floor storefronts were relatively small due to the presence of a monumental central hall and stairway. Businesses which initially thrived there eventually had to move to larger quarters elsewhere (*ibid.*, March 12, 1896).



East Main Street, view west, c.1898

Note frame storefronts on both sides of East Main, dirt street, curbing, lack of street lights
(Cherokee Area Archives)

The April 1899 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map exhibits a number of new trends. The brick storefront count now totals 33, one third of which are located east of Second Street. Just nine frames remain on West Main. All of the principal corners at Fourth and Second are now infilled with substantial brick buildings of from two to three stories. The Brummer Block and the Hotel Trahn (120 East Main) had added three story buildings to East Main. West Maple was substantially infilled with frame buildings along the north side and along the west half of the south side. The Washington Hotel is gone; its burned-out site was still vacant after three years. The new depot was certainly inspiring

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this transformation. Piety Hill was still in place with the Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, First Methodist Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran, and Swedish Churches all clustered around the courthouse.



1899 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (District marked)

The Nase Livery, on the north side of Maple Street at its west end by the depot, burned on July 30, 1900. This fire was the only substantial downtown fire in Cherokee and it consumed no major buildings. The fire destroyed two adjacent barns and the entire southwest quarter of Block 11 was cleared. The newspaper editor welcomed the loss of “stinking old wooden shacks” to the blaze. The open alley, iron fire shutters and brick walls saved the stores on the south side of West Main. The lesser destroyed businesses included a grocery, meat market, restaurant, paint and wallpaper shop, barbershop, shoe and harness repair, cigar factory, two livery barns, and a billiard room. This underutilized part of the downtown would never be strongly built up and the “fire district” remains a parking lot to this day. Its real impact was to refocus commercial development to Main Street to the north.

There were still as many as 19 “frames” (wooden frame stores) on Main Street as of the turn-of-the century. The *Times* reported “There is a rumor afloat that the few remaining frames on West Main between Second and Railroad. Streets are to be replaced by handsome bricks...The carpenters’ hammer and the painters’ brush are swinging all over town, and with new additions and new coats of paint the appearance of the residential district is greatly improved and is adding to the reputation of Cherokee as a city of cozy homes” (*Times-Herald*, June 13, 1903).

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November 1903 View of Main Street, Southeast from the Courthouse

Prominent buildings, from left to right are the Peck Livery (left foreground), Brummer Block (background, left of center), Lewis Hotel, (left of center beyond the tracks), Opera House (right of center background), burned area from the 1900 fire (to right of Lewis Hotel), depot, and Raymond Hotel. Note the frame West End commercial buildings in the foreground (Cherokee City Archives)

Local cement block production began in 1907 when M. J. Gilleas purchased a gravel pit along Mill Creek. A rusticated concrete building block appears at this time in a few buildings, most notably the rear wing of 501 West Elm (fronts on South Fifth, south of the alley), and 110 South Fourth. The use of concrete block is pretty minimal at least with regard to commercial buildings, however (ibid.).

An economic scare struck the downtown in late 1907 but the *Times* editor wrote it off by saying it “belonged to the 1884 and 1900 class” of financial downturns. By January 1908 its effects had almost disappeared. In mid-March came a report that the railroad division offices would be relocated to Fort Dodge. While the report was not true, the newspaper complained that “The cause is as unexplainable as some other things the railroad has done” (*Times*, January 6, March 19, 1908).

A pre-war period of more intensive up-building began in 1908, immediately following the slight 1907 downturn. The construction of the new *Democrat* building at 108 North Second was the first of 22 new downtown buildings which arose between 1908 and 1920. Two other buildings had been built in 1906. All in all this represents the onset of a sustained and substantial major rebuilding of the downtown area. Much of the new building would infill East Main, replacing most of the old frame “rookeries” while other projects combined pre-existing blocks, adding new fronts.

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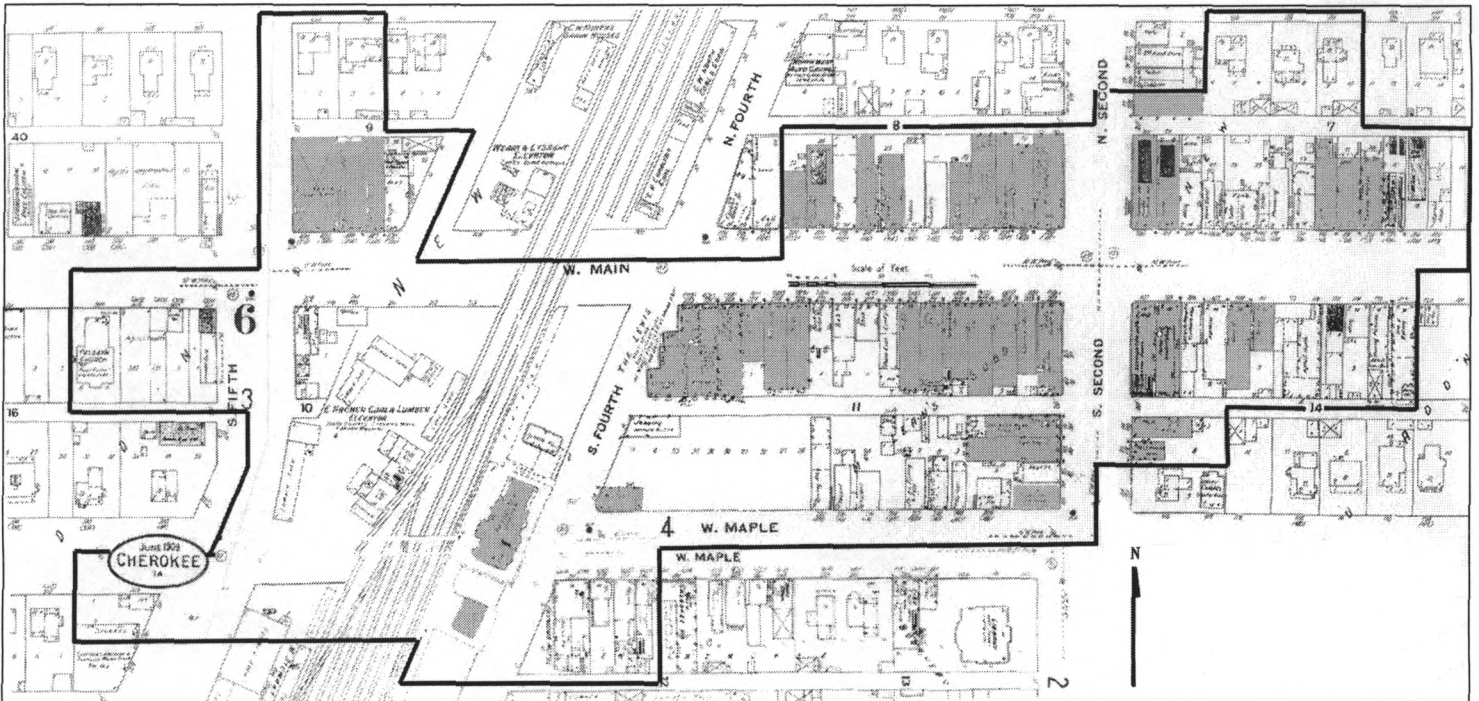
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On Piety Hill long-established churches relocated in the face of the westward expansion of the downtown. Both the Catholic and Presbyterian congregations departed to new and distant sites. The local emergence of the automobile garage, termed a "new industry in Cherokee" by the *Times* in 1908, marked a new focus for the west end of the downtown (*The History of Cherokee*, pp. 13-14; *Times*, January 13, 1908).



203, 205, 207, 209 West Main, view southwest, 1910
(Cherokee City Archives)



1909 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (District marked)

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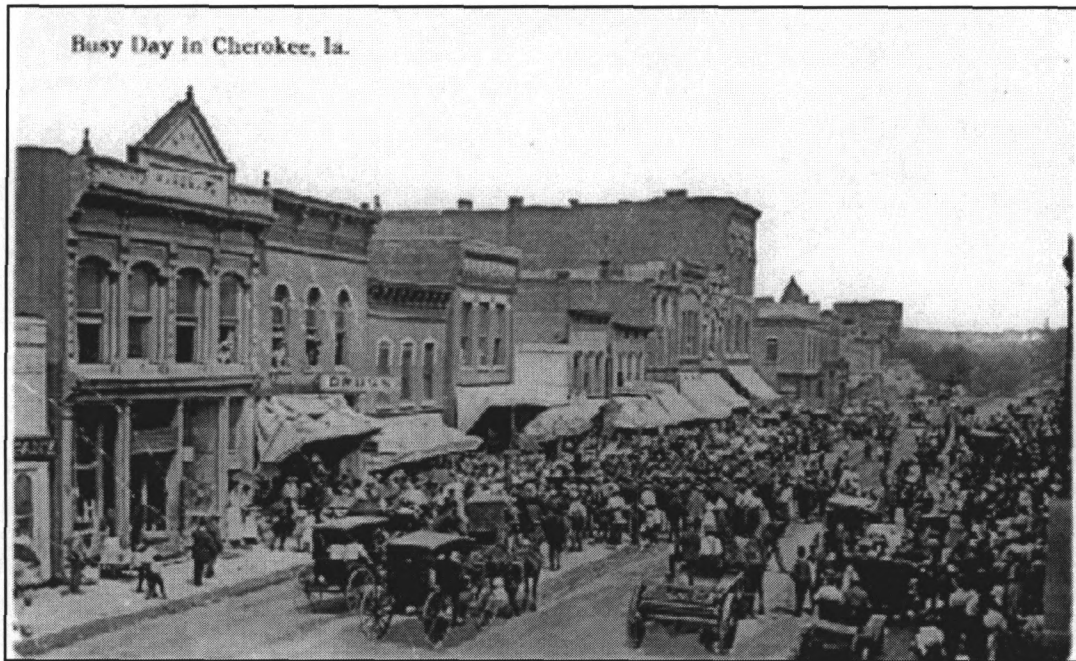
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The June 1909 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicts the downtown which largely survives today. The brick storefront count was an impressive 38. Still, just 13 of these are east of Second, relatively little change in 10 years. The big change is along South Second where four brick storefronts in place or under construction have transformed that cross street. All of the banks remain west of Second but East Main claims the first moving picture show (121 East Main). The hotel trade had consolidated to cluster immediately southeast of the new depot with only the Trahn Hotel being located outside of that Maple Street hotel venue. Piety Hill worshipers were still under siege, with the Presbyterian Church being flanked by commercial uses. They relocated Willow and North First the next year. West Main, beyond the tracks and South Fifth Street had clearly emerged as the agricultural implement sector. Just one implement dealership held out on East Main. Automotive uses first appear on this map. The North West Auto Garage occupied former warehouses at North Fourth and Willow. The new city hall and firehouse was just behind the new library building on Maple. Just two residences held out on the south side of the 200s block of West Maple. There the 1900 fire-cleared site of the liveryies was still largely undeveloped.



North side, 200s block West Main, view to east, c.1910

Note awning pattern on south-fronting buildings to the left, predominance of two-story brick fronts
(Cherokee Area Archives)

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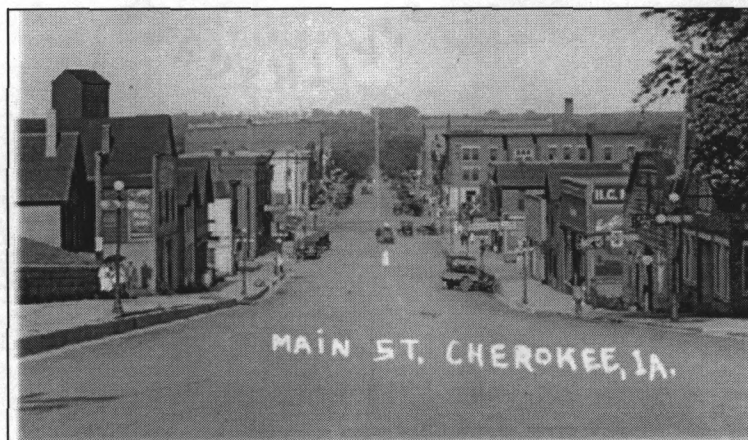
Cherokee Commercial Historic District

Cherokee County, Iowa



South Second Street, view north to Main, c.1915
Note substantial two-story bricks on west side, and awnings
(Cherokee Area Archives)

The *Times* crowed “Things Are Coming Cherokee’s Way” in mid-March 1914, reporting “business concerns are [being] attracted [to Cherokee] by our prosperity and desire to locate here.” Secretary Little of the Commercial Club credited City Clerk William Shardlow with some of the publicity, noting that the Clerk “has seen to it that the paving and other public improvements have been mentioned in the trade journals.” One added touch was the establishment of a two-man “Clean up brigade” garbed in white uniforms and armed with a two-wheel barrel cart to collect the street’s refuse. Telephone poles were being pulled, and two of the largest at Second and Main disappeared. The *Times* offered “Main Street looks a lot better every week as unsightly objects are removed and new buildings approach completion” (*ibid.*, March 16, April 9, October 1, 1914).



West Main from Piety Hill, view east, c.1915
Note garages on both sides of Main, tracks at base of hill
(Cherokee Area Archives)

The December 1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map offers a good visual summary of the growing impact of the automobile on Cherokee. The new commercial land use is the automobile garage/showroom, six of which are now in

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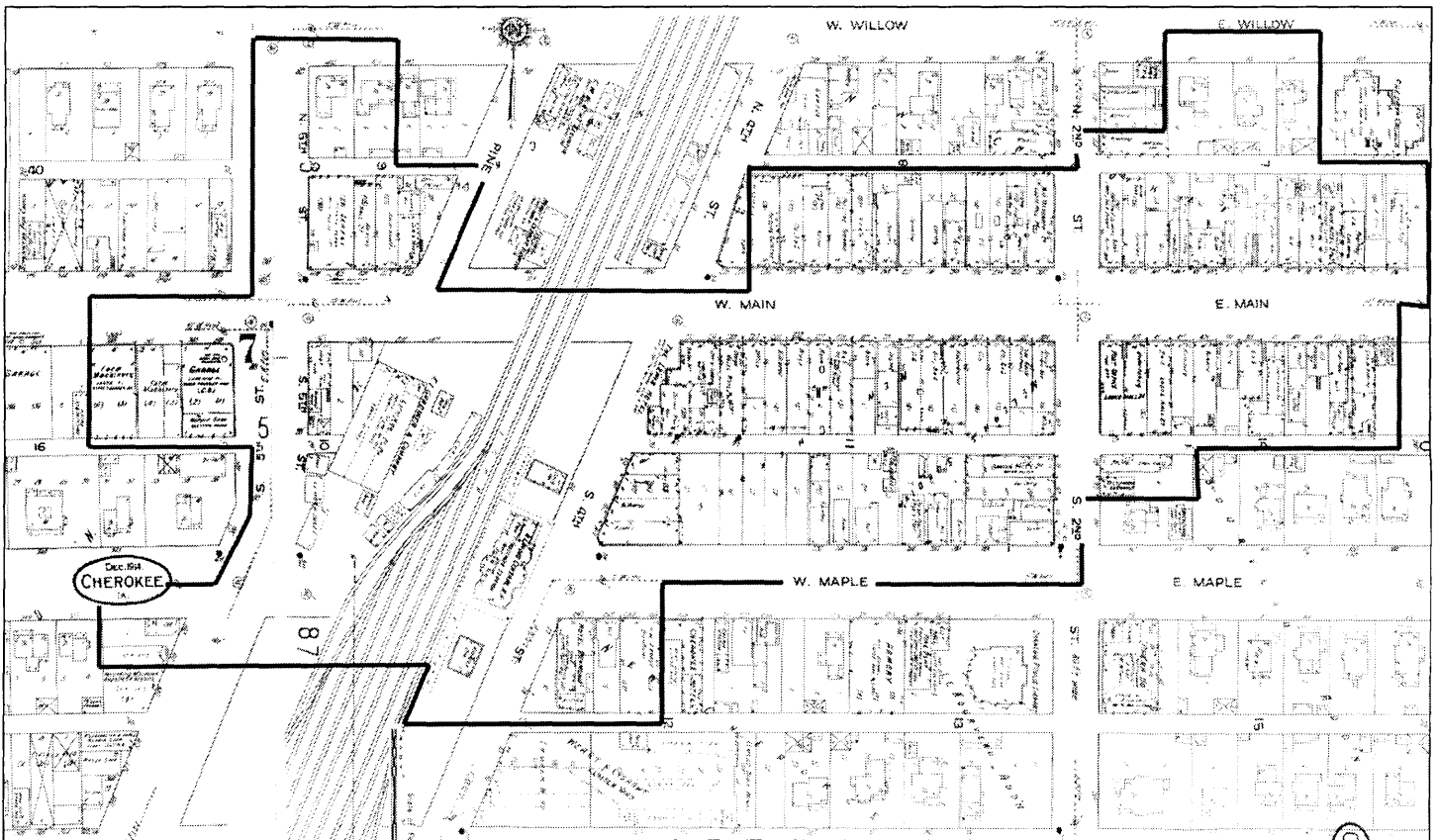
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Cherokee Commercial Historic District

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operation, half of which occupied all-new buildings. These appeared at 235-37 West Maple, and continued at North Fourth and Willow. The majority of the garages had gravitated west to where the liveries and agricultural implement firms had always gone, Elm Street and West Main, west of the tracks. Four substantial garages clustered along the south side of the 500 block of West Main. The former Catholic Church had first been shown as being converted for an auto garage, and it remained so, joined on the east by a new garage building. The Peck Livery, 426-28 West Main, was now converted for use as a garage. The new Presbyterian Church and the armory building were the only noteworthy new buildings. Otherwise East Main Street had by this time largely replaced its remaining frame storefronts and the commercial area west of the tracks was more solidly developed, with more substantial buildings in place. The brick storefront count was 44, again exclusive of bricks on Maple and South Fourth (8 in number). There were 16 bricks east of Second, and 28 west of that street. Just 5 frames survived west of Second on Main, but there were 16 on East Main. West Maple now boasted the armory-government-library complex and a new auto garage at 235 West Maple but its commercial buildings were still of frame construction.



1914 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

The war years brought both prosperity and inflation to Cherokee. Labor and materials costs soared and began to have a chilling effect on construction by 1919. The *Times* reported “Cherokee Has Building Year-Old Landmarks [are] Giving Way to Fine Modern Business Blocks-Labor Shortage Interferes.” The high cost of building materials combined with a scarcity of those materials and “the labor situation” were the only impediments to keep the town

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“from making a record in building operations this year.” Many buildings were under way and others were being deferred a year. New projects included the Nelson Building (not identified), three new West Main garages built by L. Florine, Salsbury, and Kressee & Charles Jenkins (apparently 511-517 West Main, all non-extant), the notable Sachse, Bunn and Company warehouse and office block (201 South Fifth, which housed this key agricultural implements firm, the Wall Building (old Millard Block, 104 East Main, now J. C. Penny Building), the Surles Block (115 South Second), and the American Theater (*Times*, September 12, 1919).

This building rush was not only impressive but also grandiose in scale. The same thing had happened in 1914 when two Classical Revival banks arose simultaneously at Second and Main and the last of the three-story buildings were built (A. H. Smith Building, 105 East Main). Now the projects tended to broaden and a heightened emphasis upon decoration returned. The Sachse, Bunn & Company Building is an outstanding example of a very fine large scale and highly ornamental building, and it was constructed in the west district, across the tracks from the downtown. The premier downtown project was the American Theater (108-10 East Main). Movie house operators Fiske and James had “remarkable success in the [local] theater business” and they obtained a long-term lease on the Meeker lots on East Main and announced plans to build a \$65,000 modern movie house with 750 seat capacity. The building was designed by St. Paul Architect G. L. Lockhart “who ranks as one of the greatest theater architects in the country.” The Classical Revival design employed generous amounts of decorative stonework and incorporated two leasable storefronts on either side of the theater front. A hint of trouble surfaced in late August 1919 when the design was scaled back by 50 seats due to increased material and labor costs. The builders attempted winter construction so as to take advantage of the “slack construction period” and presumed lower wage rates but their October start date was delayed by two months and they had to form a joint stock company to fund the rapidly inflating building cost. Their operating movie house, that the new building would have replaced, closed in early 1920 when its lease expired (*Time*, May 9, June 3, August 5, 29, December 2, 1919, January 2, 1920).

No new downtown buildings were built in 1921-22 but there was a building resurgence in 1923. In early April the *Times* reported that “Signs Indicate More Building” and reported prospects for the erection of two business blocks in different parts of the business section. One of these was a new garage at 505 West Elm. The Country Club built a modest clubhouse (\$11,000) that year and the town established the obligatory tourist camp. The most notable announcement came late in the year from Dale Goldie, who acquired the still-unfinished American Theater in a Sheriff’s sale for a mere \$2,200 and promised to push the work forward. The *Times* was hopeful, noted that it would take a year to quiet any and all claims against the property which was on rented ground, but offered “the structure, if completed as planned, will be one of the very finest theater buildings in Iowa” (*ibid.*, April 4, 27, November 12, 1923, May 5, 1924).

The western commercial district began to assume quite respectable lines as W. R. Griffin undertook a construction project that carried the downtown to the shadows of the hill top courthouse. At first he planned a five-storefront single story garage. The *Times* reported that Griffin “has commenced work on an improvement that will make a great change in the appearance of West Main.” In fact, Griffin waited a year and updated his plan to include a basement garage with a three-story apartment block, titled Hillside Apartments. This building functioned as a hotel for much of its history and was only recently demolished. The *Evening Times* said it would be “the first apartment house in Cherokee” (*Evening Times*, July 2, 1924; March 25, April 6, 15, 1925 (*Times*, Obituary, W. R. Griffin, June 30, 1947).

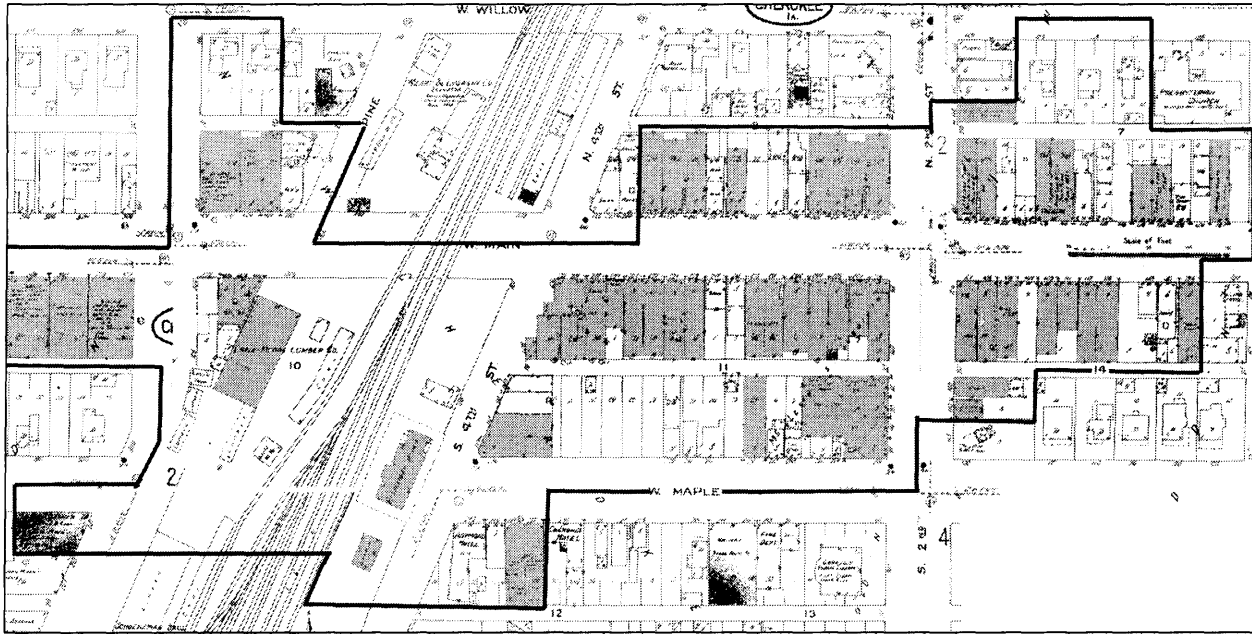
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1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (District marked)

The September 1924 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicts 21 bricks east of Second Street and 29 west of Second Street. There are still 13 frames on Main Street alone. A single dwelling and 12 frames remain in the 200s block of West Maple. Curiously, the 1900 fire-cleared area on West Maple remained undeveloped after 24 years. Just two dwellings remained on the south side of the 200s block of West Willow which was also by this time largely commercialized. The real change was apparent west of the tracks where that automotive-farm implement district had reached “critical mass” in terms of density and dominance. West Elm had always had a large livery complex on its south side but by 1924 the eastern two-thirds of the 500s block was fully occupied by sprawling liveries, garages and other repair shops. The two commercial concentrations were now unified by the completion of the impressive office/warehouse complex at 201-207 South Fifth.

Cherokee was a popular convention venue and had the hotel base to support large gatherings. There was in fact a shortage of hotel accommodations and the *Times* complained that “Hotel facilities are of excellent character but they have not expanded to keep pace with conditions changed by road improvement and automobile traffic.” Some 500 state bankers gathered there in late May 1925 and the consensus was that a “returning prosperity for agricultural Iowa” and a “gradual advancement of farm land prices” would be achieved. The *Evening Times* similarly predicted prosperity for agriculture in mid-year. The paper cited rising hog prices and hoped for the “promise of recovery in all branches of the livestock industry.” By year’s end the same source reported “Business Field Shows Growth-Cherokee Trade Region Shows Expansion in General Lines.” Good roads and an aggressive advertising campaign had quadrupled the Cherokee trade area exclusive of still local grocery and staples purchasing. Catalogue sales through Sioux City business houses were being beaten by more competitive Cherokee prices. Fires in nearby Larrabee’s and Rockwell City benefited the fire-free Cherokee (*Evening Times*, May 20, July 31, November 9, 1925).

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The “battle royal” of 1925 was between Cherokee and Northwestern Bell Telephone Company. The citizens were sufficiently unimpressed with the company’s phone service and denied a franchise renewal early in the year. The company threatened to cut services off in July but finally another vote was held in October. Bell promised a “complete rebuilding of the plant” and an upgrading to the “common battery system.” The final result was a doubling of the telephone exchange building at 112 South Second. One real benefit of the remodeling was the promise that patrons using the long-distance phone at the exchange would no longer have to go downstairs to do this! (ibid., April 24, July 21, August 5, 31, October 2, 5, 7, 21, December 14, 1925).

The second “Trade Expansion” season unfolded with “another big trade event” in late April 1926 with 48 participating retailers. The *Evening Times* concluded

“...more and more Cherokee is becoming one of the big retail trade centers of Northwest Iowa. Its stores have been greatly impressed within the past few years, with the installation of handsome storefronts, the finest modern fixtures, and large stocks of the very latest offerings of merchandise in all lines. Couple these with the drawing power of moderate prices and high quality of merchandise and you have the secret for the rapid enlargement of Cherokee’s trade territory.”

Splendid roads were the primary reason, but a fine movie theater “gives an added interest for the whole family,” offering another inducement for shoppers to visit Cherokee (ibid., April 23, 1926).

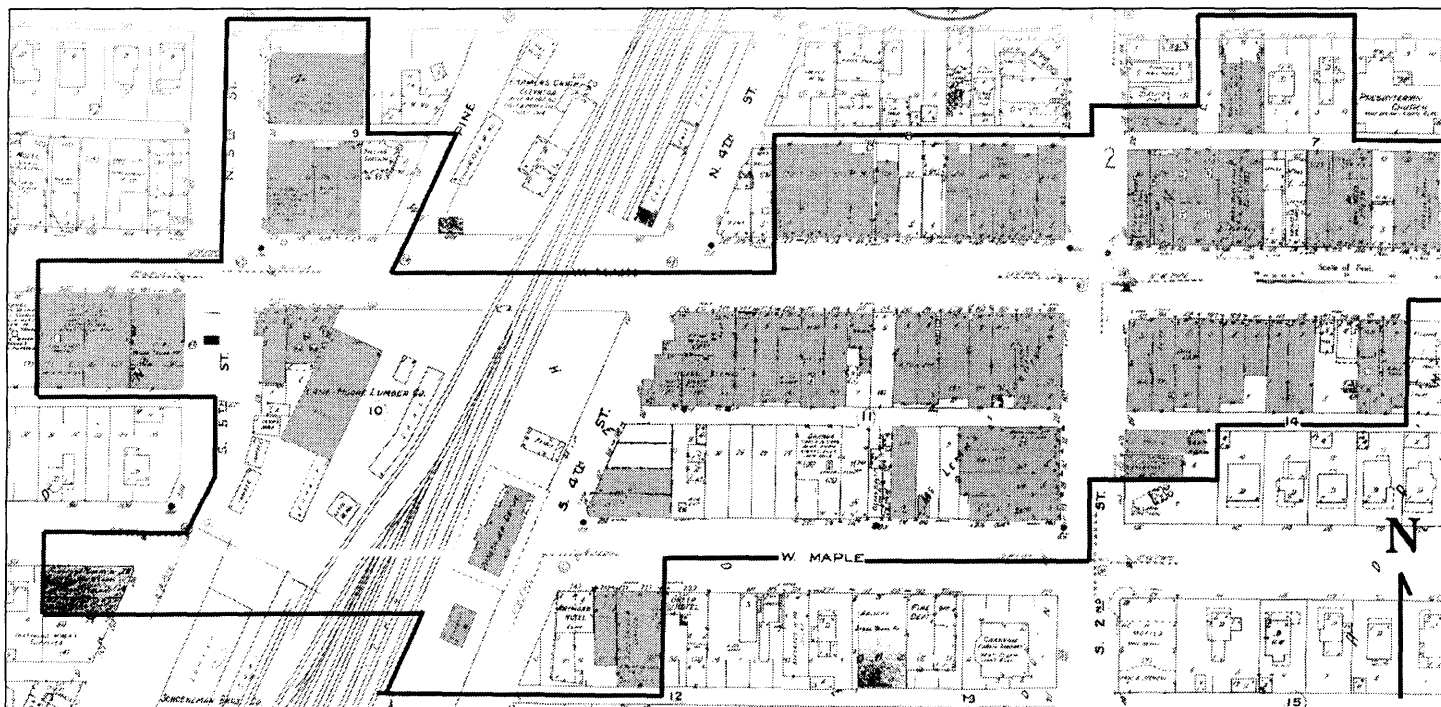


Aerial view north, Cherokee downtown, c.1955

West Maple Street (left foreground) is impressively commercialized but the Opera House (right foreground) and the new garage on the north side of West Maple are gone. The armory is in the left hand lower corner
(Courtesy Gene Dorr)

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Downtown rebuilding began anew between 1934 and 1937 with four new buildings. The next new building would come only late during World War II, in 1944, and a total of eight new buildings were built between 1944 and 1949. Five buildings were added during the 1950s and six more in the 1960s. Just one new building arose in the 1970s.



1924/1947 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (District marked)

The 1924/1947 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map depicts just two frames on West Main (208, 216 West Main, and six frames or vacant lots on East Main. The downtown is now virtually entirely of brick or tile construction. The 200s block of West Maple had just three rookeries left (and no, the burned district of 1900 was still largely undeveloped save for the large garage at 216-20). The hotel distribution pattern was much the same, save for the Hillside Hotel by the courthouse; there were three hotels near the depot and one (the Iowa) on East Main. The impact of the automobile is shown in the distribution of filling stations. Most clustered along Second Street, the designated highway. There were gas stations at every intersection between Linn Street and Locust except on Main. There were also gas stations on West Main, East Main and Euclid Avenue, North Fifth off of Main, South Fifth and Elm. Auto garages by this time were less centralized and tended to cluster along the same major streets. The largest congregation remained west of the tracks, although a mini-auto node was well developed on East Main on the eastern outskirts of the town.

The West end area as noted had long specialized on livery and agricultural implement-related services, and following the rising dominance of the automobile it took on auto sales and repair services. By the mid-1930s "automobile row" located along the 400s block of West Main was serving a broad regional sales market. Single-story dealership buildings displaced churches from the east part of Piety Hill. William R. Griffin (1870-1947) was largely

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responsible for building up this commercial node and was credited with being “one of Cherokee’s pioneer citizens and booster and builder of city interests.” Griffin was born in Steamboat Rock, Iowa and first came to Cherokee in 1893. He enjoyed a varied career as a merchant and an entertainment road and film show manager. Griffin’s particular developmental legacy to Cherokee was his substantial building up of the western business district. He briefly left town prior to returning in 1912 when he started erecting buildings. He reported that he simply “liked buildings” and believed that if built well, his buildings would long survive. In all, he built at least five buildings on West Main or Fifth Street (W. R. Griffin Block, 321-23 West Main, 1913; Hillside Apartments, 512-16 West Main, 1925 (non-extant) and 508 West Main, 1925 (non-extant); 425 West Main, 1935; Swanson Grocery, 112-16 North Fifth, 1946).

In 1950 the town gained the [Tiel] Sanford Museum, located at 117 East Willow just east of the Masonic Lodge. It was claimed to be the first planetarium in Iowa. In 1959 the Safeway Store occupied the former garage, 216-20 West Maple (non-extant), and a new courthouse was built in 1960. The Headley Garage (515-17 West Main) was demolished to allow for the construction of the Methodist Church educational center.

The 1970 census found a county population of 17,269 persons, representing a 9.5 percent decrease since 1960. There were 7,272 residents in Cherokee. This was the second ten-year county seat decline, a loss of 5.5 percent since 1960. Cherokee residents now account for 42 percent of county residents. The 1980 headcount recorded another seven percent decline, reducing the county population to 16,084. Cherokee had 7,004 residents, recording its first decline, that of 3.7. Fully 43.5 percent of the county population lived in Cherokee. The hard times of the early 1980s were rough on farmers and towns like Cherokee. The town lost its third bank in 1985 and the 1990 Cherokee census recorded a population loss of 14 percent in just ten years (the countywide count declined to 14,098). The 2000 census figures for the county were 13,035, another 7.5 percent drop, that of the town 11 percent, to 5,369.

Architects:

Warren Wilfred Beach (1872-1937) designed the Hawley Allison Block, 222 West Main, c.1910. Beach was a nationally known expert on architectural specifications and construction supervision, writing articles for *Pencil Points* and *Architectural Forum* from the late 1920s until his death, as well as at least one book. Beach worked under the noted firm of Josselyn & Taylor in Cedar Rapids prior to establishing his practice in Sioux City in 1899 and partnered with William La Barthe Steele 1905-07. He was working in New York as a railroad architect between 1906-09, returned for just six months, and went back to New York in 1910. This commission was somehow fitted into this time period. One account states that Beach left design work in 1913 but a 1923 source claims that W. W. Beech Company did design work continuously since 1899. His market area covered Illinois, Iowa, and South Dakota (Shank, pp. 17-20).

William Beuttler and Ralph Arnold of Sioux City. Buettler (1883-1963) and Arnold (1889-1961) entered into a design partnership in Sioux City in 1912. They principally designed churches and schools, serving a seven-state market that principally included Northwestern Iowa, and the adjoining portions of Nebraska and South Dakota. When World War II halted civilian construction, the partners dissolved the firm. Arnold served as architect for the Iowa State Board of Control from 1941 until after 1955. Buettler had a German-born father who was an architect/builder. Both Beuttler and Arnold worked for architect Wilfred W. Beach, in Sioux City, before they joined forces. Beuttler continued practicing alone in Sioux City and later partnered with his son W. Lee Buettler. Two surviving

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architectural firms trace their origins to this partnership (Shank, pp.12-13, 24-25). The partners designed the Sachse, Bunn & Company Block, 201 South Fifth Street (1920).

Henry Saville Josselyn (1849-1934) & Eugene Hartwell Taylor (1853-1924), Cedar Rapids: This firm is rated the state's first "modern" design firm, with Josselyn as the designer. He was briefly trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Taylor completed the two-year course) and first practiced, beginning in 1880, as George Josselyn & Son. Two years later Josselyn & Taylor was established in Cedar Rapids, beginning a 40-year design partnership. Both partners played key roles in the professional organization of Iowa architects. They designed the Lewis Hotel in 1896, being in the city designing the new Cherokee Iowa Hospital For The Insane (Shank, pp. 90-91, 159-61).

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9. Major Bibliographic References:

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Cherokee Commercial Historic District

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10. Geographical Data:

USGS Coordinates:

Zone 15

	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
E	290878	4736193
F	290934	4736281
G	291017	4736227
H	291095	4736217
I	291232	4736258
J	291333	4736204

Boundary Description:

The district includes the following blocks or partial blocks:

- Block 7, Lots east fraction Lot 4, Lots 501-, 16-30
- Block 8, Lots 16-27 and the east 8' of Lot 28.
- Block 9, Lots 1-4, fractional portions of Lots 25-30
- Block 10, all including sub-sections 201, 202 and railroad right of way
- Block A-11, entire block
- Block E-11, entire block
- Block 12, all of the north half except the south three-quarters of lots 1-5, and all but the south 120' of sub-parcel 213.
- Block A-13, Lots 11-13
- Block E-14, Lots 2-8
- Block 19, Lot 1

Boundary Justification:

The district includes all of surviving historical downtown area that represents the commercial heritage of Cherokee. It excludes peripheral residential and other non-commercial properties, minimizes vacant lots and excludes peripheral later-date commercial buildings.

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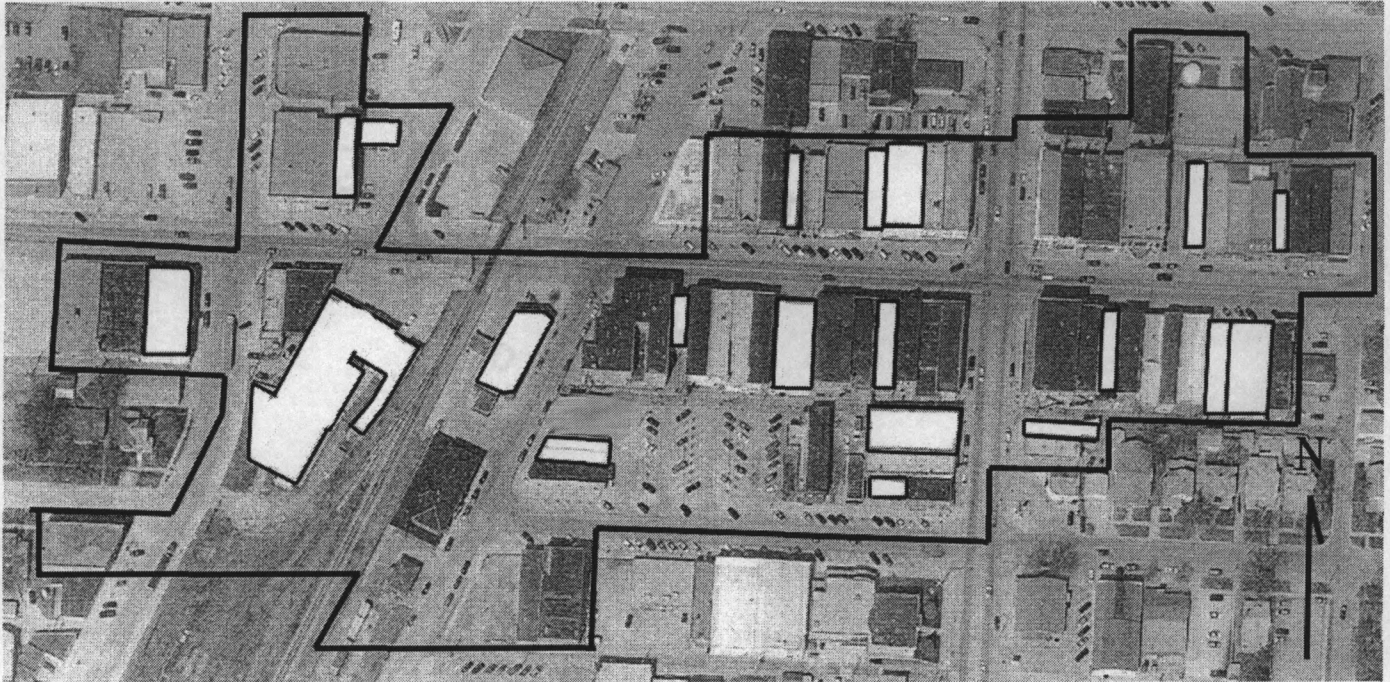
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Map:



District map showing non-contributing buildings shaded white, district boundary in black
(Map provided by the City of Cherokee, 2005)

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Photographs:

Dates: January 14, 2005
Photographer: James E. Jacobsen
Location of Negatives: Cherokee Area Archives

Frame	Direction	Description
1	East	West Main overview from west end
2	Southeast	South side of Main, west of Fifth
3	Southwest	421-25, 427 West Main
4	Southwest	West Main from railroad tracks, overview
5	Northeast	north side of West Main
6	Northeast	222-220-218-216-214 West Main
7	Northeast	220-218-216-214-208-206-204 West Main
8	Northeast	108 North Second
9	Northeast	north side East Main, 100-102-104/6-108/10-112-112-116-118-122-124-126
10	Northeast	same, 100-102-104/6-108/10
11	Northeast	same, overview from east end
12	Southwest	south side East Main, overview from east end
13	Southwest	same, 115, 113, 111, 109, 107, 105, 101-03 East Main
14	Northwest	west side South Second from Maple
15	Northeast	east side of same
16	Southwest	south side West Main from Second
17	Southwest	same, 201, 203, 205, 207, 211/13-215 West Main
18	Southwest	same, 219, 221, 223, 225 West Main
19	Southeast	Lewis Hotel and overview of West Main from west of railroad tracks
20	North	Depot and baggage terminal, South Fourth
21	Southwest	South side West Maple, 227/31 and 235/37 West Maple, depot buildings
22	West	North side West Maple, overview from Second
23	Northeast	same, overview from middle of block
24	Southwest	east side of South Second to the south of Main

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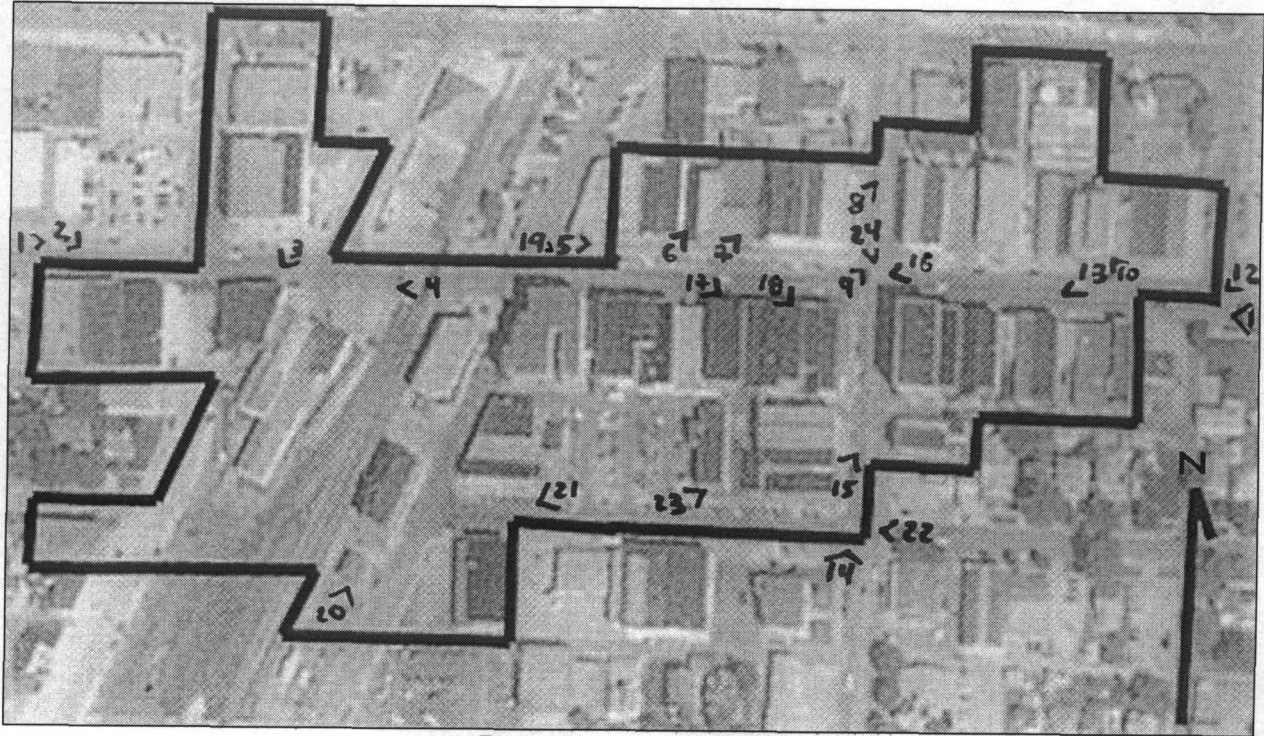


Photo Perspective Map
(US Geological Survey Aerial Map, 2004)

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Owner List:

R & D Stephenson, Inc.
Kurt and Joyce Rasmus
100 East Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Creative Cutters LLC
102 East Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Mark D. & Jeanne M. Bogenrief
Box 337
Merrill, IA 51038

R. L. Fridley Theatres Inc.
1321 Walnut Street
Des Moines, IA 50309

Carey, Inc.
107 East Main Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Dennis & Donna Henrich
109 East Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Dwight G and Bonnie S. Varce
605 West Cedar Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Tiel Sanford Memorial Bldg.
Sanford Museum & Planetarium
117 E. Willow Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Jonathan & Cherie & Winterboer
Barb & Steven Schuck
736 West Cedar Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

William D. Cook
736 West Cedar Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Leroy O. and Audrey J. Nelson
803 Jeffries Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Randolph C. & Marcia Reeves
510 Bailey Court
Cherokee, IA 51012

Pool & Pub Inc.
Randall & Rhonda Harrington
119 East Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Dale and Blair Allen
220 South Main
Galva, IA 51020

Warren Moon
1827 480th Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Robert and Donna Leach
124 East Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Filmore and Darlene M.
Gustafson
1702 Linden Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Nathan A. & Virginia E. Phipps
926 Riverview Drive
100 East Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Deborah D. and Douglas Lee
Dunn
1126 West Bluff Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Mr. Kent Wenck
1114 West Main Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Mr. Richard P. Angell
P.O. Box 400
Cherokee, IA 51012

R. Paul and Paula Burch
1298 560th Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Rust Publishing IA LLC
P.O. Box 930
LeMars, IA 51031

Carey Hetrick and Coree Stewart
619 West Cherry St.
Cherokee, IA 51012

Mr. Robert Ben Jobe
114 South Fourth
Cherokee, IA 51012

Heritage Bank NA
101 North Main Street
Holstein, IA 50125

Depot Renovation Inc.
Old Railroad Depot
119 South 4th Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

City of Cherokee
416 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

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Cherokee Broadcasting Corp.
Sioux Valley Broadcasting Co.
210 South Fifth
Cherokee, IA 51012

Randall & Sandra S. Pritts
800 Rock Island Avenue
Cherokee, IA 51012

Harry B. Burkhardt
203 North 11th
Cherokee, IA 51012

Michelle M. Bunkers and Mandy
L. Feltner
200 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Jackie LLC
214 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Lori Ann Dreckman & Tim
Gerard
P. O. Box 288
Marcus, IA 51035

Don & Dorothy Royer
202 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

David L. Sayre & Thomas C.
Letsche
333 Sioux Valley Drive
Cherokee, IA 51012

Lewis Apartments General
Partnership
Northwest Iowa Realty
228 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

G. & J. Jones Corporation
203 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Marvin Wallace Miller Jr.
216 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Steven L. and Diana G. Rochleau
325 Oak Knoll Drive
Cherokee, IA 51012

Don E. Ahrens
P.O. Box 288
Okoboj, IA 51355

Mike & Kelly Pitts
1600 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Central Trust & Savings Bank
401 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Gary & Judith Jones
205 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Paige McNeil
P. O. Box 398
Cherokee, IA 51012

Love Tire Inc.
112 North Fifth
Cherokee, IA 51012

Cherokee Institute of Performing
Arts LLP
c/o Jimmy Davis
5134 Old 21 Route
Cherokee, IA 51012

Dale J. Galles
401 South Craig Drive
Cherokee, IA 51012

John A. Wibe
427 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Hi Midge LC
P. O. Box 209
Cherokee, IA 51012

Michael M. and Marilyn K.
Samsel
745 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Dwight & Barbara Moats
Box 705
Marcus, IA 51035

James R. & Barbara J. Clabaugh
1602 West Main Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Mark Martin
222 West Main
Cherokee, IA 51012

Cherokee Area Economic
Development Corporation
418 West Cedar
Cherokee, IA 51012

Kathy Stief
1924 440th Street
Larrabee, IA 5029

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Cherokee County, Iowa

Michael J. & Paul R. Taylor
217 West Maple
Cherokee, IA 51012

Barlow Building Corporation
204 West Maple
Cherokee, IA 51012

Carey Hetrick & Coree Stewart
610 West Cherry
Cherokee, IA 51012

Bryan Thu Lam
212 West Maple
Cherokee, IA 51012

Lila and Howard Nelson & Jerry
Sipes
533 Park Avenue
Cherokee, IA 51012

Frank & Bernice L. E. Phipps
Courthouse
Cherokee, IA 51012

Joanne Loughlin
401 Flint Street
Cherokee, IA 51012

Canadian National Railway
Company
17641 South Ashland Avenue
Homewood, IL 60430

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Cherokee Commercial Historic District

Cherokee County, Iowa

District Buildings (address order):

108 N Second 1908, The Democrat Building

Arch. Style/Type Classical Revival
 Physical Description This single-story brick commercial building features an alley-side cut corner raised entry, limestone detailing, a Classical Revival style stone entry surround and a triangular pediment.
 Alterations The building exterior is well preserved save for the replacement of the doors (1986) and the infilling of all basement alleyway sidewall windows (1983, 1989). The main storefront window is now a single light and the transom area is covered.
 Building History This building housed the *Cherokee Democrat* newspaper its construction in 1908. A Mr. Goldie, of Goldie Printing Company, the owner of the newspaper, is credited with designing the building. That company owned the newspaper. The Times Publishing Company, which published a daily paper, succeeded the *Democrat* and was operated by Dwight Clark and was here until 1962.

Contributing/Non-Contributing
 Contributing

108 S Second 1894, Wilson's/Steinhouse's/Salsbery's Photo Studio

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, gable front frame
 Physical Description This simple two-story front-gabled frame commercial building was constructed as a photo studio with north-side skylights along the alley side. A two-story tile rear addition, used as a darkroom, dates from 1914-24.
 Alterations The building is clad with vinyl siding with a brick veneer half-high front wall has been added to the façade.
 Building History Canadian born photographer John S. Wilson was the builder of this photo studio in 1894 and the building was built for that use, with north-facing studio windows. The *Cherokee Times* (March 29, 1888) reported that Wilson had repurchased his old photo gallery from a Mr. Roosevelt who was to relocate to the Pacific Slope, assumed management. Son Phil Salsbery was a partner with his mother in 1940. The studio was gutted by a fire on February 5, 1937. Wilson remained here until 1907.

Contributing/Non-Contributing
 Non-contributing

111-13 S Second 1882, 1903, French's Racket Store (111)/Wilson's Photo Gallery/Cherokee Times (113)

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, Gable Front
 Physical Description The northernmost building (111 South Second) dates from 1882. This two-story brick block was built as a photographic studio with rear skylights along the north alley sidewall. The building had a cast iron storefront with center and left-hand side (second floor) front entrances. The second floor had a centered paired set of windows and two side windows. Corbelled brick work and a tin cornice and parapet completed the front. The building at 113 is a two-story brick block with a double right-hand side front entrance. the outer door leading upstairs. Four second floor windows were set into recessed brick panels. The parapet wall is stepped out above these panels to form a plain brick cornice.

Alterations The present modern flat brick facade with asymmetrical fenestration dates from 1963 and has completely covered and likely replaced the original historical fronts.

Building History Photographer J. S. Wilson built 111 South Second for use as a photographic studio on the upstairs level. Groceries occupied the ground level. Grocers Arthur & Berry were displaced to the newly built Surles Block in 1919 when the Cherokee Times purchased the building to the immediate south at 115 South Second, departing 111 South Second in July 1919. The move on the part of the newspaper reflected its growing job printing trade. The corner location with ample sunlight and a location on a busy commercial street, was ideal. The adjoining building at 113 South Second first housed R. H. French's "Racket Store," a variety store. His successful business, which pre-dated this location, enjoyed a regional trade and was representative of Cherokee's commercial dominance.

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Cherokee County, Iowa

Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-contributing, counts as one due to unified ownership and facade

112 S Second 1906, Northwestern Bell Telephone Exchange

Arch. Style/Type Romanesque

Physical Description The differing brickwork of this two-story commercial building reflects a two-stage construction history. The first floor was Romanesque in style with repeating heavy round brick arches and thin mortar joints. The blonde brick of the facade proper contrasted with a darker red brick used in the foundation, belt courses and pilasters. The second story addition (Spring 1926) was designed to complement the original but its brickwork is more mixed in color. The building was enlarged upwards and extended to the rear of the property. The plain parapet incorporates an elaborate wooden cornice. The evolved facade is one of the best preserved in the downtown.

Alterations The only changes are the infilling of the front basement windows with block glass and the upper sashes of the windows and door transom space have been covered with signage. The upper windows have been temporarily covered). There is a 1926 rear addition

Building History The Key State Telephone Company constructed this small office building and the building attests to the developing commercial importance of South Second between Maple and Main streets. The enlargement of the building interprets the 1925 rebellion by the community which demanded improved phone service. Barely surviving a franchise vote, the company made the improvements it had promised the voters. A Mr. Halford was the contractor.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

115 S Second 1919, Surles Block

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, two-story parapet front

Physical Description This is a two-story brick single width storefront with a utilitarian brick storefront of plain brick. Two left-hand side entrances provide access to the store and second floor. A simple corbelled brick cornice line defines the base of a very plain brick parapet wall. Four rectangular concrete molded inserts identify the original firm and the year of construction ("19-Surles-19") and these are framed by a square of rowlock bricks with square corner stone inserts. This building represented a doubling of the older building located at 117 South Second Street.

Alterations The storefront retains its transom opening.

Building History Frank Surles purchased this lot in 1919 and built this building for Arthur & Berry's new store, which had departed 111 South Second to make room for the *Times* newspaper. A series of notable restaurants later occupied the building.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

117 S Second 1909, Farr & Surles Restaurant

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single story parapet front

Physical Description This double storefront brick block (see 115 South Second) retains its storefront dimensions despite the fact that the transom glassed area has been covered. The parapet wall exhibits a complex corbelled brick design and the parapet cap is formed by three rows of brick which step out successively to support a concrete coping cap.

Alterations Transoms are covered but can be discerned. A fixed canopy has been added and the storefront materials replaced.

Building History This was one of two new commercial blocks and one major remodeling that dated to 1910. Farr & Surles built the building for their restaurant 1909-10 on a prominent corner location, a former location for the McLean Hotel.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

112-14 S 4th 1910, no historical name

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front

Physical Description These single story concrete block buildings replaced earlier blocks destroyed by a fire (1906). Slip covers obscure possible brick facades which match the south exposed wall of 116 South Fourth. This building unites two formerly separate addresses, 112, 114 South 4th and is now counted as a single building due to its unified facade and ownership.

Alterations The 1965 slipcovers and canopy obscures all facade details, stucco under cover.

Building History This commercial property originally housed a jewelry store.

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Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-contributing
Contributing

116 S 4th	1900, no historical name
Arch. Style/Type	Commercial, single-story parapet front
Physical Description	This two-story brick block is of interest due to its triangular footprint and its tri-colored brickwork.
Alterations	1962 slipcover and canopy on front only. The original elaborate brick pediment/parapet was replaced with a plain light colored brick parapet and the south side windows reduced in size. This building is determined to be contributing because most of its brickwork is exposed and the entryway exhibits an unusual rubbed brick and decorative brick treatment.
Building History	This building is of historical interest because it and its mate at 110 South 4th alone survived the great Maple Street 1906 fire, likely because they alone were of fire-proof construction.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing due to exposed side wall and documentation (1960s photo) that shows matching brick façade beneath covered front
South 4th	1896, Illinois Central Passenger Depot
Arch. Style/Type	Neo-Classical Style
Physical Description	Two-story rectangular brick plan with limestone foundation.
Alterations	Wrap-around canopies removed in 1941 and 1989, dormers removed 1943, freight door in-filled 1946.
Building History	Served as Illinois Central Railroad Passenger Depot in association with a railroad division point.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing, NRHP Listed as part of Illinois Central Railroad Yard, bounded by South 4 th and South 5 th , West Maple and West Beech
South 4th	1896, Illinois Central Express Terminal
Arch. Style/Type	Neo-Classical Style
Physical Description	Single-story brick rectangular plan with hip roof, 32x24'6"
Alterations	Doors altered, 12' north addition 1922.
Building History	Served as Illinois Central Railroad express terminal association with a railroad division point.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing, NRHP Listed as part of Illinois Central Railroad Yard, bounded by South 4 th and South 5 th , West Maple and West Beech
201 S 5th	1920, Sachse, Bunn & Company
Arch. Style/Type	Colonial Revival style
Physical Description	The two-story block measures 50x98 and features a full basement. Construction is of tile and reinforced concrete and the only wood is that used in its interior trim work. An unusual three-story vault could be accessed from any floor and the original design featured a private interior telephone system. A large freight elevator is at the back of the plan.
Alterations	KCHE Radio remodeled a fire-damaged office on the main floor and removed an apartment in 1992. A two-story warehouse was originally connected to this building on the south.

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Building History This is a landmark block that combined the functions of office building, fireproof storage and a basement garage. It was locally hailed for its substantial fireproof construction, modern qualities and the community investment which it represented (\$50,000) when it was built. The architects were William Beuttler and Ralph Arnold of Sioux City. The Geiger Construction Company of Sheldon built the building. This property, with its exceptional architecture and scale, attests to the developing role of the downtown area west of the railroad tracks for use as an agricultural implements and livery-auto services area. The scale of the Sachse, Bunn & Company clearly indicates that Cherokee enjoyed a hegemony in the sale of agricultural implements within the region at this time

The Sachse, Bunn & Company, which sold threshing machines. This firm organized in May 1908 when it first issued stock. Its founders were E. G. Sachse and J. W. Bunn. The firm had a branch office in Sioux City and as of 1920 had eight traveling salesmen in its employment as well as 16 persons locally in its offices and shops. The company's market area included Northwest Iowa as well as parts of South Dakota and Nebraska. The *Daily Times* noted that the regional market with annual sales of \$250,000 meant that money was being brought into Cherokee by this growing company. It noted "The company is in every sense a home institution, officered by home men, and as such is deservedly a source of local pride and entitled to every possible encouragement from the community."

Building History, Continued Company officers were E. G. Sachse, president; J. W. Bunn, vice-president; E. L. Turner, secretary-treasurer, and A. R. Sachse, assistant secretary. T. W. Hartigan, C. W. Knight and Fred Fuhrmann were, in addition to the officers, members of the company board of directors. E. L. Turner managed the Cherokee home office.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

112-116 N 5th

1946, Swanson's Grocery

Arch. Style/Type Moderne Style

Physical Description This single-story tile building represents the modern form of the chain-grocery store and features a vaulted steel framed aluminum canopy roof. The footprint has streamlined corners on the northwest and Southwest corners, with a tile exterior.

Alterations The conversion to tire repair has added five garage bay openings on the north side. The alley and east rear walls are constructed of tile.

Building History This moderne-style building was the final commercial contribution made by W. R. Griffin to the west part of the Cherokee business district.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

100 E Main

1914, Cherokee State Bank

Arch. Style/Type Classical Revival Style

Physical Description This two-story bank building is the only Cherokee building with a nearly complete full terra cotta cladding (one that is combined with red brick wall panels). The south or main facade is quite narrow (24x100). A high stone faced raised foundation flanks the fairly small entryway and a deeply recessed entryway is flanked by monumental fluted Corinthian columns. These and the surfaces within the entryway, including window surrounds, panels, ceiling moldings and so on are executed in white terra cotta. Egg and dart moldings support the strongly projecting soffitt. The cornice front bears the lettering "Cherokee State Bank." A plain red brick parapet with raised central panel surmounts the cornice. Brick pilasters divide the west sidewall into seven bays, each of which features a triple-window set.

Alterations The building was remodeled into an office facility in 1966-67. The bank fixtures were removed. Two law offices upstairs became apartments. The building is so well constructed that it was designated a Civil Defense Shelter during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The architect and builder are not identified.

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Building History The building's location represents the early 20th Century re-emergence of the dominance of the intersection at Second and Main, this corner being the last of the four to be rebuilt with a more substantial building. This coincided with East Main being substantially built up with fireproof brick buildings. The bank building also reflects pre-World War I municipal prosperity. The Cherokee State Bank was established in 1888, and this is its second site. This new building was first envisioned on Christmas Day 1913 when the directors formed a building committee with authority to enter into construction and furnishings contracts to not exceed \$40,000. The building construction began in early 1914 and by early July the basement was nearly complete. The bank moved into the new building on April 5, 1915. The new building was locally lauded as a "magnificent structure" which required an entire year's construction effort. It was fully fireproof, constructed of 12-14 inch wide tile walls. The massive vault was said to be the largest in the region ("not to be matched in Sioux City till the new Livestock National Bank is finished"). The interior waiting rooms were finished in marble and mahogany. The entry doors were solid bronze with double plate glass windows.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

101-03 E Main **1895, J. R. Brummer Block**

Arch. Style/Type Romanesque Style

Physical Description This is Cherokee's most substantial and best preserved three-story commercial block with a double storefront. The exterior is fully faced with Sioux Falls "Blue Jasper" stone. The building exterior exhibits stylistic characteristics commonly found on Sioux Falls pink "granite" buildings of this era. It also offers a hint of Romanesque with its castellated entryway, particularly in the combination of classical flanking polished columns and fairly heavy stone archway. The stonework employs two coursing techniques, a random ashlar which lacks defined courses, which is used between the floor levels, and an alternating layering of long thin stone courses with shorter broader ones, which is used on the main floor west sidewall (this latter coursing technique is also found on 109 East Main). Bold stone belt courses underscore each of the upper floor levels and incorporate the sills of triple window sets which center on each level over each storefront. A separate stone belt course caps the third floor and a broad stone parapet wall continues nearly half a story higher. A centered carved stone panel reads "J. H. Brummer." An elaborate stone cornice and parapet cap the building. The storefronts retain their cast iron beams with decorative rosettes.

Alterations The storefront areas retain their historic proportions and may well have preserved transoms behind the signage areas. The storefront materials are new but both retain the original storefront lines.

Building History When it opened in 1897 the "Regulator Store," owned by A. M. Wilson (dry goods), occupied the larger corner store, while housed "The Regulator" store, owned by A. M. Wilson, while Mr. Aldron's furniture and embalming business filled the east storefront. The new building housed professional offices on its second floor, and the Masonic Lodge on the third. A basement storefront was occupied by a barber shop. A major "mercantile event" in the city's history was the opening of Wolff & Wolff, a major regional firm that was lured to the city in 1925. It opened "on the corner," a reflection of the importance of this corner location. The post office also occupied 101 East Main from pre-1909 until post-1924. The building is now used for storage for the American Theater, located due east.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

102 E Main **1889, Corbett Block**

Arch. Style/Type Italianate Style

Physical Description This is an early and well-preserved two-story commercial brick block. An early holdover in its design is the recessed treatment of its three window bays on the second floor, behind the main wall plane. This creates a pilaster and rounded arch effect, which is commonly seen on much earlier buildings. The window arches have keystones and square bull nose terra cotta inserts are placed in the wall above each of these. The window arches are repeated in the stone arches which cap each recessed window bay. These arches combine to form a band across the entire facade. An elaborate tin cornice surmounts the whole, with the same three bays, and a triangular central pediment and finial treatment. The name "Corbett" appears under the denticulated soffitt, and the year "1885" appears above the block's name.

Alterations The storefront has been completely modified. The original was a cast iron storefront and it is likely that a structural I beam has replaced the iron support system and eliminated the transom area. The second floor windows have been covered, but likely remain intact behind the covers.

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- Building History The Cherokee *Times* (January 7, 1886) lists this building as "Corbett's Block" costing \$4,000, as one of the new buildings constructed during 1885. Carleton Corbett was the builder/developer, being previously located on this site since 1870. The building first housed a furniture store.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 104-06 E Main 1929, J. C. Penney Store**
- Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front
- Physical Description This is Cherokee's only single-story automobile-influenced chain store example. The original building was designed with two stories but the existing building represents what was finally built. The storefront of this building is largely hidden behind a new stone storefront but it appears that the original storefront was executed in stone without a clerestory or transom area, or at least a lower one. A stone band surmounts the storefront and is in turn capped by a stone cornice line. The building interior is visually impressive. The ceiling level is quite high and there is a raised mezzanine area across the back of the store. The building has iron column structural supports and had four wire-glass skylights.
- Alterations This single story double-front commercial building is of interest because of its size and its period. It is a singular local example of the broad single-story automobile-influenced storefront but this is only because the second story was removed. The stonework is similar to that of the American Theater located immediately to the east.
- Building History George Wall purchased the Millard Building in July 1914 along with the Beebe lot adjoining it to the east. The lots were "in a very desirable location" in the opinion of the Cherokee *Times*. By mid-1919 he planned to incorporate the two-story Millard block into "a modern brick building to cover the entire lot," completely replacing the front of the old building. As late as 1924, two separate buildings remained. The J. C. Penney Store purchased 107 East Main, immediately across the street to the south, in July 1925 having "for several years sought a suitable location in Cherokee." Four years later it finally had a "building of suitable capacity" when it leased this building. The store contained 4,600 square feet. When finished this was "the largest storeroom in Cherokee and what is said to be the finest J. C. Penney Store in Iowa." W. L. E. Appleyard and Associates served as the contractor, financier and owner operator of the building. The new store opened on September 14, 1929. It then leased the new building to Penney's which occupied it until 1985.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 105 E Main 1914, A. H. Smith Building**
- Arch. Style/Type Commercial, parapet front
- Physical Description This is the last of a number of three-story commercial buildings which were built in Cherokee. All of these taller buildings clustered around the intersection of Main and Second. The footprint measures 25x90. The third floor had a hall and twin skylights. The brickwork on the upper two floors is utilitarian, consisting of a stretcher bond veneer. Four windows on each floor are symmetrically distributed. Three courses of yellow brick demark a stringcourse at the top of each window row and rounded arches. Unlike many of the other buildings, this facade employs no side pilasters but presents a flat wall plane.
- Alterations A slipcover which is partly shared with the building at 107 East Main obscures much of the transom and upper storefront area. The storefront itself has been replaced. The upper part of the cornice and the coping has been lost and has a replacement metal coping. Windows on the upper floors have been sealed, and those on the third floor the covers surround reduced windows. The building is rated contributing due to its massing and the visibility of the upper two stories.
- Building History Builder A. H. Smith built this block to house the Ransomerian Business College on the third floor, and the L. M. & S. Shoe Store on the ground floor in 1914. The Knights of Pythias had a hall on the second floor. The basement and first floor of this building burned on February 1, 1924. Ellerbrock Brothers ready-to-wear and the L.M.&S. Shoe Store were totally burned out. The building was badly damaged throughout and the basement was flooded with 4-5 feet of water as the fire was fought. Both tenants stayed in business and the damage was repaired. The upper levels were by this time occupied by a host of fraternal organizations.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 107 E Main 1896/1894-98, Lockwood Building/Kingsbury Furniture**
- Arch. Style/Type Commercial, parapet front
- Physical Description Undetermined
- Description

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- Alterations A modern stone faced storefront completely obscures any historical detailing or materials.
- Building History The Sanborn maps would date this building to post 1893 and pre-1899, much earlier than City Assessor's date of 1915. Kingsbury's Furniture, a major regional firm, suffered water and smoke damage with 107 East Main, to the east, burned on February 1, 1924.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-contributing
- 108-10 E Main 1920, American Theater**
- Arch. Style/Type Neo-Classical Revival style
- Physical Description Like the Cherokee Bank building, 100 East Main, this broad two-story theater design combines a visually dominant veneer (in this instance limestone in lieu of terra cotta) with red brick wall panels. The plan combines two flanking small storefronts with a column flanked central theatre entry and bay. Surmounting the whole is an elaborate stone cornice line. A plain brick parapet wall then rises well above the cornice line and is capped with a stone coping. A decorative carved stone shield motif is centered on the parapet wall.
- Alterations The original theater marquee, rectangular in form, has been replaced by the triangular one. The second floor windows have been at least covered, and likely replaced. The windows have been shortened to a third of their original size. The stone cornice is blackened with soot.
- Building History This building attests to the great building hopes for downtown Cherokee as of 1919-20, many of which were crushed by increased construction costs. Movie entrepreneurs Berry J. Sisk and Walter F. James announced plans for a 750-seat theater in May 1919, to be completed by January 1, 1920. The architect was G. L. Lockhart of St. Paul "who ranks as one of the greatest theater architects in the country." The building was to be financed through a local joint stock company. Strikes prevented stone from being delivered and delays increased construction costs and the unfinished building was sold by the county sheriff in 1925. Purchaser Dale Goldie finally finished and opened the theater. The original contractor was J. A. McDonald Company of Minneapolis.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 109 E Main 1904/1900-08, M. E. A. Young Building**
- Arch. Style/Type Neo-Classical Style
- Physical Description This stone-faced commercial facade exhibits an unusual detailing and remains in an excellent stage of preservation. The building is said to be made of Cherokee Stone, locally quarried. The storefront employs a framed panel arrangement. Stone side pilasters and the cornice/parapet surround the recessed main facade front. Of particular interest is the stone pattern of the second floor. Broader short rectangular blocks alternate between rows with longer thin stones, resulting in a layered pattern. Of special interest are the stone carvings set in between the stone brackets along the base of the upper story. Nearly weathered away, this attention to detailing bespeaks a very conscientious original construction effort.
- Alterations The storefront has been modernized and a wood shingle shed roof canopy infills the transom area. The modern storefront angles into to a right-hand single door entryway. The display windows have been shortened at the base and a short brick base has been added. The wooden front canopy was put on by the Shoe Place owners. The present owners remodeled (restored?) the second floor in 1990.
- Building History The Sanborn maps positively date this building to post-1899 and pre-1909The building suffered an arson fire in early April 1910 at which time the tenant was the F. J. Brockway & Company Department Store.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 111 E Main 1889, no historical name**
- Arch. Style/Type Commercial False Front
- Physical Description This is an early surviving two-story frame commercial building.
- Alterations The current modern storefront completely obscures any historical facade or components. The current owner added the wooden cover and reinstalled the upper windows, although in a reduced size. The rear addition post-dates 1947
- Building History
- Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing
- 112 E Main [no building]**
- Arch. Style/Type Not applicable

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Physical Description Vacant lot, a walking park is owned by the Sanborn Museum. This lot last had a two-story frame storefront

Alterations N/A

Building History N/A

Contributing/Non-Contributing Not counted

113 E Main **1919/1915-23, no historical name**

Arch. Style/Type Classical Revival Style

Physical Description This two-story brick commercial block is contemporary with the second story of the 112 S. Second, both employ the same blonde brick. The facade itself is recessed within a brick frame of side columns and a bracketed brick cornice line with stone coping. A brick belt course runs across the lintels, being formed by the stepping out and then back of the brick courses, forming an unusual undulating horizontal line.

Alterations The storefront has been completely replaced. The awning might cover surviving transoms. Both window sets have been greatly reduced, being replaced by much smaller pairs of metal windows which are set within panelled infills.

Building History The Sanborn Maps indicate that the building was constructed between 1914 and 1924.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

114 E Main **1958, Sears Roebuck & Company**

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front

Physical Description This storefront is less than 50 years old. It is apparently a replacement storefront (1992) on a slightly older building (1958-59). The facade consists of a plain stack bond brick front, elaborated only by a shallow projecting sill above the storefront, and a coping, now covered by a metal cap. The sidewalls exhibit a fairly common brick coursing pattern, this being the use of darkly burned bricks in the rowlock courses, resulting in a striped horizontal visual effect. In this case, the method is employed to form a high water table and four mid-wall lines. This technique argues that the sidewalls are older than the rest of the building.

Alterations New 1992 storefront. The flat roof was replaced by a gable roof in 1986.

Building History Sears Roebuck and Co., here 1959-1977, and Sears Catalog Merchandise (operated by David A. Ladwig) was here 1977 to 1993.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-contributing

115 E Main **1919, Knipe Building**

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, two-story parapet front

Physical Description This is a very plain two-story brick double front commercial building. The facade has a single wall plane with a veneered front. A flush-set panel in the parapet wall above the windows is the only elaboration of the parapet area.

Alterations The storefront has been modernized and the transom area filled in with signage and paneling. The austerity of the cornice line hint that a more elaborate cap has been lost over time.

Building History The Knipe family acquired this property in 1910 and Forest and Margaret Knipe owned the building by 1924 and added a rear addition that year. The Knipe Shoe Store was here as early as 1924 through 1947.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

116 E Main **1937, Karlson & Betsworth Hardware**

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front

Physical Description This is a very utilitarian single-story polychrome brick commercial building. The facade has a single wall plane with no side pilaster treatments. The multicolored brick is set in stretcher bond and is a veneer on the structural front.

Alterations The original storefront configuration appears to be intact. The transom area has been covered but likely remains intact.

Building History This building is present by 1935.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

117 E Main **1956, no historical name**

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front

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Physical Description	This is a two-story commercial plan, lacking any rear additions, that dates to 1956 and is non-contributing.
Alterations	None
Building History	Recent building.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Non-Contributing
118 E Main	1892, A. H. Smith Block
Arch. Style/Type	Italianate style
Physical Description	This two-story brick, stone and terra cotta clad commercial block is notable for its intermixed façade materials. The building's first floor is raised well above the sidewalk level. The facade consists of a single wall plane without side pilasters. A broad band of terracotta projecting pyramid shapes fills in the second floor front below the stone window sills and connecting belt course. The facade brickwork is otherwise quite smooth, consisting of a stretcher bond brick veneer.
Alterations	The storefront is somewhat obstructed by a slip cover but enough of the cast iron storefront frame is visible to indicate that it and the transom window areas survive intact. Two original or early main entry doors remain, one on the left-hand side, accesses the upstairs.
Building History	A. H. Smith's Jewelry first occupied this building
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
119-21 E Main	1974, Pool & Pub
Arch. Style/Type	Commercial, single-story parapet front
Physical Description	This is a newer double front commercial building.
Alterations	None
Building History	Recent building
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Non-Contributing
120 E Main	1896/1893-98, J. Trahn Hotel
Arch. Style/Type	Italianate Style
Physical Description	This is the easternmost three-story commercial buildings in Cherokee, and has the narrowest footprint. The facade employs a rich variety of brick surfaces. The front employs a very flat smooth surface with narrow mortar joints that is ornamented with a variety of projecting belt courses, a stepped out wall plane on the upper third floor, and other brackets and elements.
Alterations	The building facade is fully obscured by a slip cover. Historical images indicate that the storefront is of cast-iron and likely survives beneath the covering. The transoms and openings are framed by highly decorative cast iron work. A steel beam with decorative rosettes caps the storefront, being set beneath a denticulated row of brick, possibly set at an angle.
Building History	The Trahn Hotel was established in 1870 and re-located to this address when this building was built. It is important to the development of downtown Cherokee because it is the only surviving hotel building east of Second Street. While many city hotels were located along Maple between Second and Fourth, several were along Second north of Main and this one was one of the latter. This tall yet narrow hotel plan contained stores on the ground level.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
122 E Main	1952, Miller-Mac Insurance Agency
Arch. Style/Type	Commercial, single-story parapet front
Physical Description	This is a modern single-story brick fronted building with a flat parapet cap.
Alterations	The east two-thirds of the original storefront have been bricked in and the entry reduced in height.
Building History	The Miller-Mac Insurance Agency was the first occupant of this building from 1952 through 1976 and the building likely dates to 1952.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Non-Contributing

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- 123 E Main 1890, C. E. White Block**
 Arch. Style/Type Italianate Style
 Physical Description This two-story brick commercial building is an early and well preserved commercial block. The facade retains an early form of elaboration, the use of recessed wall planes set within brick pilasters which project flush to the building's wall plane. The four brick pilasters continue up to and above the parapet level, each terminating in a square cut stone cap. The parapet wall steps up in the center. A carved stone inset panel reads "C. E. White 1890" and is centered above the central window. Terra cotta decorative inserts ornament the façade. A well-preserved pressed tin ceiling survives on the main floor must have saved the rest of the building. Interior cast iron columns support the upper floor through the center of the main floor.
 Alterations The facade has been covered but the two iron columns remain in place and visible. The front windows have been reduced. The second floor windows have also been reduced and the openings partly infilled. There has been severe settling on the facade which is causing brick joint failure and separation throughout the center of the second floor front. Side exterior stairs have been reversed to the back of the plan.
 Building History This building represents the early permanent up-building of the south side of East Main Street in the early 1890s. It is also the only downtown building associated with a heinous crime, the slaying of Florence Porter in 1901. C. E. White's grocery was the original storefront occupant.
 Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 124 E Main 1928, Red Owl Grocery**
 Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front
 Physical Description This is a very utilitarian single-story brick commercial plan. Side pilasters flank the storefront and there is a very simple cornice line with stone coping.
 Alterations The storefront has been replaced and the transom area covered. A metal canopy has been added.
 Building History A plumbing and heating business was the first occupant of this building.
 Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 126 E Main 1912, Holden Block/Cherokee Marble Works**
 Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front
 Physical Description This is a single-story brick commercial front but it is fairly ornamented, reflective of its origins, as a retail stonework store. A steel beam with decorative rosettes caps the transom space. The facade is framed by side brick pilasters with stone bases and dividers at the transom base and cap, and the denticulated stone cornice line above. The parapet has a centered triangular pediment and the name "Holden" is on the parapet front.
 Alterations The storefront consists of new materials but the transom space is simply covered and might survive intact.
 Building History This building was the easternmost commercial building on the north side of Main Street for many years. The lot to the immediate east was vacant and was used to display funeral monuments. The Cherokee Marble Works, owned and operated by C. B. Holden, was here for many years, at least from pre-1883 through 1947.
 Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 128 E Main 1947, no historical name**
 Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front
 Physical Description Despite its recent vintage the building blends in architecturally with single-story stores of earlier vintage given the use of decorative stone inlays to form a parapet and front pediment and the use of brick on the storefront.
 Alterations
 Building History This once vacant lot was used for many years as a stone monument display site by the Holden Monument Company which had its building immediately to the west at 126 East Main.
 Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing
- 200 W Main 1882, [Colburn] Allison Block**
 Arch. Style/Type Italianate style

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Physical Description	<p>Many downtown buildings employ a series of recessed wall planes that are defined by pilasters and horizontal lines. This was surely the first or a very early example of this design characteristic. In this example, undulating arches capped the window sets on the third floor. The corner location allowed for a rear side storefront on North Second Street. Minnesota limestone was used in the basement and foundation. An internal support system of cast iron columns creates a clear span on the first floor and basement levels. The interior plan featured an unusual front mezzanine (still in place). Tin Ceilings are 20 feet high and are ornamented with intersecting panels and beams. The Masonic Hall occupied the third floor.</p>
Alterations	<p>The building lost its third floor and parapet prior to the 1950s. The storefront has been completely replaced. Second floor windows have panel covers but the windows remain intact.</p>
Building History	<p>This was the first three-story building and it occupied the best commercial corner. The owners wanted an imposing building (31x100) and acquired six additional feet to broaden the front (all other buildings are defined by their original lot dimensions). The building to the west was built at the same time and the two builders used a shared party wall and shared in-wall flues to increase their usable interior spaces and a shared entry connects to offices on the second floor. This building combined commercial and fraternal uses and represented an early milestone effort to modernize the downtown. This was the first commercial building to use gas lights.</p>
Building History, Continued	<p>The property is titled the Colburn Allison Block simply to distinguish it from the Hawley Allison Block at 222 West Main. Brothers Colburn and Hawley Allison jointly built this building in 1882. An eventual falling out resulted in the two competing buildings. Pioneer merchant Colburn Allison (1845-1939) was associated with this property for all of his working life in Cherokee.</p> <p>The <i>Leading Industries of the West</i> (1883) remarked on the completed building and “boomed” it considerably as was the fashion of the day:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“It is the most attractive and substantial business structure in the state and we may say the entire North-west. It is artistically constructed of brick with stone trimmings; is three stories high, the top portion being so arranged that another story can be easily added if desired. There is a large airy basement. The dimensions are 31x100; the main display windows are of plate glass, each section being 102x164 inches, which are the largest of any panes of any kind and in any store in the western country, and there are but three larger in Chicago. Altogether it is the most complete and noticeable structure for commercial purposes in the west excepting buildings in Denver. The basement and first floor are occupied by Allison Bros. The second story is divided into larger office rooms, and the third floor is elaborately fitted up for the Masonic Lodge of Cherokee, with larger main hall, reception, banquet, working and ante-rooms.”</p> <p>Waters Bros. Dry Goods occupied the building until 1939 when it was replaced by Meyer and Robert Wolff’s Department Store, which was here until 1973.</p>
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
201 W Main	1896/1894-98, Schuster Building
Arch. Style/Type	Neo-Classical style
Physical Description	<p>This is an elaborate two-story brick block, ornamented with Neo-Classical style Corinthian Columns, denticulated eaves line, terra cotta spring stone inserts and sills, and corbelled brick detailing. It is double fronted, with the front three bays of the South Second Street façade having the same stylistic treatment. A rear secondary matching storefront, set at a lower level due to the drop in elevation, is the better preserved with its transom and cast iron work intact. The title “Schuster” is centered in the frieze band. A Neo-Classical influence is imparted by Corinthian column caps, and the otherwise plain, straight-cut broadly projecting cornice line is underscored by a denticulated eaves line. Terra Cotta is used extensively to accent the façade and parapet and cornice. The upstairs office areas are remarkably well preserved.</p>
Alterations	<p>That principal storefront has been completely rebuilt with the infilling of the transom area, and the use of new materials. A yellow brick frames the storefront. The upstairs windows have been removed and covered with panels.</p>
Building History	<p>The Schuster Brothers Pharmacy was the original principal tenant firm. Unlike 200 Main, the rear storefront always housed separate firms, Mrs. M. B. Cochran’s Millinery being the first occupant.</p>
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
202 W Main	1888, W. G. Sylvester Block

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Arch. Style/Type Neo-Classical style
 Physical Description This is the narrowest block in the downtown due to the frontage added to 200 West Main to the east. This building was built simultaneously with that one and shares a party wall, upper level entry and in wall flues. The narrow plan mandated a single triple-window set (Gothic style) on the second floor front. The second floor office area retains a pristine skylight and pressed tin covers ceilings and walls completely. The original building filled its lot so there was no option for further rear extensions.
 Alterations The upper level windows remain intact but are behind covers and the massive cantilevered tin cornice has been removed (c.1950s) leaving its blank pediment base exposed.
 Building History W. G. Sylvester was the original owner/builder and his drug and fancy goods store was the first storefront occupant. It later housed several clothing stores and Swanson Hardware was at this location 1935-63. Several jewelry stores followed. Printing firms long occupied the second floor (c.1893-1914).
 Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

203 W. Main 1915, Security National Bank

Arch. Style/Type Neo-Classical
 Physical Description The all stone two-story façade has a deeply recessed wall plane, with an upper level bay, with pronounced square-cut end wall stone pilasters, and a pedimented and denticulated cap placed on front of a square cut parapet front.
 Alterations The lower half of the façade has been replaced with a very distinctive Carrara glass front.
 Building History This was the second bank to close during the Great Depression. The Security National Bank closed just three months to after the first bank failure, closing on March 15, 1931. It was not reorganized and stood empty on West Main Street for years before it became a bakery.
 Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

204-06 W Main 1888, Blake & Carratt Blocks, or Blake and Knox & Nicholson Blocks

Arch. Style/Type Two different original facades with slightly varied heights
 Physical Description Two separate two-story brick blocks are non-contributing due to their façade coverings.
 Alterations Both buildings are completely hidden behind a stone or concrete slipcover. It is likely that the historic facades largely survive beneath the cover although any projecting cornices were removed. Decorative tin ceilings remain in 204 West Main.
 Building History These buildings were either the C. A. Blake block (206 West Main, 1888) and the Charles Carratt block (204 West Main, 1888), or the Knox and Nicholson block (204 West Main, 1888-89). The buildings represent two of five similar brick blocks that were racing for completion as of 1888. There was a hall in 204 West Main. The two buildings are counted as one property, given their unified façade and ownership.
 Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing, counted as one building due to unified ownership and facade

205 W Main 1893, Simpson Building

Arch. Style/Type Italianate Style
 Physical Description This two-story brick block has the characteristic window panel theme, individualized by the use of broad cast pedimented window. A considerable amount of terra cotta decorative inserts are used. The second floor is reached by a separate entryway set into the left-hand side of the storefront. The upper story front is well preserved in terms of its parts.
 Alterations The storefront has been fully replaced or covered so it is impossible to determine original appearance or the state of its preservation.
 Building History The façade matches that of 207 West Main which dates to 1888 and this building was here by 1893. The named and dated pediment atop the building dates the building to 1893. It is unusual that two buildings would share the same design especially when five years separate their construction. The two buildings attest to the permanent building up of this part of West Main Street in the late 1880s and early 1890s. A grocery first occupied the new building.
 Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

207 W Main 1888, Dr. Cleaves Building

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Arch. Style/Type Italianate style
Physical Description This two-story brick block is identical to 205 West Main (dated 1893) immediately west. This façade employs the recessed window panel technique common to the downtown. Cast pedimented window hoods are used to individualize the building design. Ashlar stone forms the raised foundation for the sidewalls. Terra cotta panel inserts are set beneath of the four upper windows. The original building filled all of its lot back to the alley.
Alterations This building was in danger of collapse and the current owner is in the process of reconstructing it as well as the original storefront. It is counted as contributing given the planned reconstruction.
Building History Dr. Cleaves started work on his new brick building in early 1888. Mr. Starbuck was the contractor. This was one of five new two-story brick storefronts constructed in Cherokee that year. Merchant tailor Andrew Blomberg was the first occupant in October of that year. Valued at \$10,000, this was the second most expensive of the five new blocks.
Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

208 W Main 1867/71, Otto Rudolph Furniture

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, false front
Physical Description This two-story gable front frame commercial building is an incredibly early and rare survivor given its claimed (1864) and more probable (1867) building date. The 1883 Sanborn Map confirms the presence of this building.
Alterations The building has a false front square pediment that obscures its true profile.
Building History This building is both Cherokee's earliest surviving commercial building but is in addition likely one of the state's few early surviving commercial structures. It represents the earliest phase of Cherokee's downtown growth and development and is therefore of historic and architectural interest. William Jones, merchant tailor and "dealer in Clothing and Gents' Furnishing Goods" was the earliest documented occupant, located here as of 1871 and as late as 1889.
Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing (the removal of the façade covering would render this building contributing to the district).

210-12 W Main 1949, McDonald Block

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, two-story parapet front
Physical Description The modified storefront (1994) has covered much of the brickwork with a false front and a decorative triangular "gable" design highlights the store entrance. The polychrome brick veneer originally filled the entire area above the broad single storefront.
Alterations Storefront replaced and transom level covered.
Building History Attorney Lew McDonald built this building in mid-1949 to house the Fareway Grocery Store. Osterling Corporation built the new block. The second story would house office space. The store had double entrances and cost \$45,000. The Fareway store remained until 1990. Osterling Construction had the building contract.
Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing because upper floor remains visible, although multi-gabled chalet element partly obstructs that level.

211-13 W Main 1909, 1885, Vandercook's Block

Arch. Style/Type Neo-Classical Style (211-213), Commercial two-story parapet front (209)
Physical Description This was one of just two named blocks to appear on the 1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Today two two-story brick buildings are combined by unified ownership and a partly unified storefront. The single storefront at 211 is a utilitarian storefront that represents the re-facing of an earlier façade that dates back at least to 1888. The double-storefront Vandercook's Block remains distinctive despite its having been painted brown. It is distinguished by its prominent centered pediment and the use of stone lintels. The upper level housed the Knights of Pythias Hall and is a clear span space with cast iron support columns. The building at 209 West Main pre-dates 1883 and has apparently been re-fronted.
Alterations The Vandercook's Block has lost its cornice, and pediment and has been painted brown. A unified storefront obscures any surviving storefront materials or features on the two buildings.

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- Building History Mordecai Vandercook (1823-82) is credited with locating the new Cherokee downtown on Main as opposed to Elm Street, where the town speculators intended it to take root. His location lay on the section line and it is also said offered cheaper lots. Vandercook was New York-born and set up a business at the old town site with brother-in-law William Van Eps. The partners moved their building to the new town site. This building honors Vandercook but postdated his death by three years. The building cost \$12,000 and was the earliest substantial brick storefront to be built on the west side of the 200s block of West Main and probably the first double-storefront built in brick in the downtown. Woolworth's Department Store occupied both buildings by the 1940s and likely unified the storefronts.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing **1883, no historical name**
- 214 W Main
- Arch. Style/Type Italianate style
- Physical Description This is a plain yet rather early brick two-story block. The design employs the local recessed window/wall panel technique with flanking pilasters. The corbelled brickwork is typical of much later turn-of-the-century buildings. This building is the only one in the downtown which uses a rusticated stone for lintels and sills. The parapet area is of special note because it projects forward from the main mass. The parapet face is infilled with with eight evenly spaced rusticated limestone blocks and this panel is in turn enframed by the projecting side and upper brick surface. A stone coping completes the design.
- Alterations It is probable that the transom area survives beneath the present (1983-4) storefront. The infilling of the upper windows with glass block and the altered storefront combine to make this a marginally contributing building. The current signs, trim and awning on storefront date from 1992.
- Building History A boots and shoes firm was the original tenant of the new building, with a photo gallery upstairs.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing **1968, no historical name**
- 215 W Main
- Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front
- Physical Description This is a newer non-contributing building.
- Alterations None
- Building History This is a recent building
- Contributing/Non-Contributing **1935, no historical name**
- 216 W Main
- Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front
- Physical Description While the core single-story building dates to 1935, it is completely obscured by the modern replacement and is non-contributing.
- Alterations This is a non-contributing property given the complete and recent facade makeover.
- Building History This building replaced a two-story frame storefront.
- Contributing/Non-Contributing **1920, Happy Hour Theater/Old American Theater/A. C. Cooper Building/Murraine Clothing**
- 218 W Main
- Arch. Style/Type Commercial, two-story parapet front
- Physical Description This is one of a few post-World War I commercial buildings and represents the re-fronting in 1920 of an 1880 block. The footprint measures 24x100. The second floor windows are likely intact. A new storefront obscures the original one. The new storefront results in façade with similarities and similar brickwork between it and the McDonald Building (1949) to the east.
- Alterations Transom is covered but intact, storefront replaced with recessed entrance
- Building History Nova Scotian-born grocer A. B. Ross built the original building between 1880 and 1883. The building last housed the "old American [movie] Theater" which closed on January 2, 1920. Its operators Sisk and James were confident that their "New" American Theater at 108-110 East Main, begun the previous year would soon be ready. The building was purchased by A. C. Cooper of LeMars and he remodeled it for a new clothing store which was to open in mid-February 1920. A force immediately tore off the old storefront and it was to be replaced with an "up-to-date modern front."

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Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
219 W Main	1914, Delaplane Building
Arch. Style/Type	Neo-Classical Style
Physical Description	This two-story brick storefront was constructed just prior to the First World War and its design employs a large amount of white terra cotta trim. The facade design is simple, combining Neo-Classical influences with simple geometrical forms, its triple window front on the upper story being distinctive for its raised terra cotta surrounds and keystone caps. White terra cotta blocks frame three geometrical panel patterns across the facade. A Neo-Classical terra cotta dentilated cornice is topped with a short brick parapet wall and a terra cotta coping. The facade design is of particular interest because the central mass of the facade is projected forward while the sidewalls step back above the second floor sill line. The horizontal elements wrap around to these flanking setbacks. The footprint measures 24x100 and the basement ceiling is nine feet high. The building was fireproof and featured a toilet on each of its floors.
Alterations	The store front is covered by a wooden slipcover but it is likely that much of the original storefront survives beneath it. The covering extends to the second story sill level, which indicates the presence of a tall transom.
Building History	This building is known as the Delaplane Building and first housed G. S. Delaplane's Shoes. It is curious that for most of its history, this location has sold shoes and boots. Park Bros. of Storm Lake, built the building.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
220 W Main	1886/1883-1888, R. C [&] C.K. Hardware/Gnam Hardware
Arch. Style/Type	Italianate style
Physical Description	This is a splendid cast-iron-all metal front building, of extremely early date (second oldest surviving block), and the only all-metal storefront in the town. The facade design and materials might well be a hardware advertisement on the part of its builder-occupant. The building plan uses the expected combination of recessed wall-window panels set beneath visually dominant vertical pilasters and it is possible that this treatment was later emulated by subsequent local commercial block designers. In this instance the vertical members are metal and are ornately varied in their ornamentation. The pilasters act in combination with free-standing round columns which flank each of the four upper level window openings. The cornice line steps out boldly with paired and end brackets and remarkably the cornice line and triangular pediment still survive.
Alterations	The pediment has been stripped of its raised lettering ("R. C." and "C. K." on the pediment top, and "HARDWARE" across the pediment base). These initials have not been deciphered. It is hoped that the transom area survives intact beneath the vertical wooden covering. The storefront proper has been replaced and it would appear that the original iron column supports have been replaced by an I-beam support system.
Building History	This building represents the substantial development of the west end of Main Street and the north side of that street in particular in the early 1880s. While the surname of the original builders is undetermined, John and George Gaum had their hardware business here by the 1880s and sold out to Neil Hageman in 1902
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
221 W Main	1915, Cherokee State Bank (site)/First Federal Savings and Loan
Arch. Style/Type	Commercial, two-story parapet front
Physical Description	This two-story brick commercial building generally resembles adjacent 219 West Main, which was built the same year. Its design is more pragmatic, utilizing stone in lieu of terra cotta for its ornamentation with a simpler overall design. The upper level wall planes of both buildings step out at the sill line, unusual to Cherokee in particular, where wall planes normally were recessed behind a frame of pilasters and horizontal breaks. A larger scale carved stone cornice, matching the lines of the one set beneath the windows, defines the base of the parapet wall. The wall steps back at each side and its cap also steps down. A stone coping caps the whole. The basement east wall is built of un-coursed cobblestones, an absolute singularity.
Alterations	The storefront is probably somewhat preserved beneath the modern storefront transom covering.
Building History	The Cherokee State Bank was the first tenant of this new building. It was a store by 1924.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
222 W Main	1909-10, Hawley Allison company
Arch. Style/Type	Neo-Classical style

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Physical Description	The second Allison block is a two-story brick 28x100 plan with a full basement. The over-built building had clear span spaces on each of its floors. Like its counterpart at 200 West Main, it was designed to be increased to four stories in height if needed. The facade presents a flat-plane brickwork and the only ornamental use of brick takes place at the parapet base and above. The windows are presented without lintels and a belt course of projecting brick sets off the parapet baseline. A full-width recessed rectangle panel fills the parapet front with no other elaboration. An elaborate neo-classical cornice, with several rows of dentils (the largest and uppermost in executed in stone), is topped with a plain stone coping. The storefront itself is executed in light stone with patterns of carved vertically set rectangular recesses in each sidewall end. The store used the upper windows to display mannequins. The store signage, probably dating to the 1930s was backlit. Inside, the large rear mezzanine and an original open passenger elevator survive, along with a vintage c.1950s array of dressing and storage rooms. The basement was fully finished from the original construction for use as a sales room.
Alterations	The transom windows survive behind the wood covers. The storefront itself is an early replacement. The facade and particularly the storefront are absolutely intact and the simple uncovering the second floor windows and the transoms would put it in mint condition. It even has a working awning.
Building History	The high state of preservation is due that the founding firm of Hawley Allison, womens' clothiers, has until quite recently, been the sole occupant of the building since its construction. The building now houses an antiques and art store. Allison's firm previously occupied a building on this same site. Architect Wilfred Warren Beach (1872-1937) of Sioux City was in town in early April 1909 to confer with Allison about the design of his new building and construction took place during 1910. Architect Beach designed two additional floors that were to have been constructed in 1920 but the worsening times shelved that plan.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
223 W Main	1903/1906-09, no historical name
Arch. Style/Type	Neo-Classical style
Physical Description	This two-story commercial front represents a transitional design between the late-Victorian and the less ornate and more pragmatic early 20th Century storefront. It retains a high level of ornate detailing while at the same time the basic wall mass has been smoothed and simplified. The bay window (only 421-5 West Main and this building feature these bays) offers a residential detailing.
Alterations	The building originally had a decorative triangular pediment atop the front. The transom area above the storefront has been covered but is intact. A chalet wooden canopy also covers the transom area. The storefront is otherwise intact.
Building History	This is a very attractive building and one that, along with adjoining buildings to the east, represents the building up of the south side of West Main Street before and after World War II. Druggist M. J. Shea was the first building occupant and he was at this location as of 1906, thereby dating the building to c.1905-06.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
225 W Main	1906, no historical name
Arch. Style/Type	Neo-Classical style
Physical Description	While contemporaneous with adjacent 221 West Main, this facade uses a simple single plane wall massing. Only the three rectangular brick panels set into the parapet front differ from this dominant wall plane. Three windows are evenly spaced on the second floor. Each is defined by a thicker stone lintel and a thinner stone sill, the ends of both elements project beyond the sides of the window openings. A tin cornice with supportive brackets, paired at each end, forming three uneven bays in the center, completes the plan. The sidewall rowlock courses are laid with darkly burned brick which results in a candy-striped appearance to the sidewalls due to the pattern of darker horizontal lines.
Alterations	The storefront is completely hidden beneath a metal slipcover but the second floor is unobstructed.
Building History	A billiard parlor was the first building tenant and the same use continued as late as 1947.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
227 W Main	1909, no historical name
Arch. Style/Type	Commercial, single-story parapet front
Physical Description	Single story rectangular plan, originally the façade was stone designed in a Classical Revival style.

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Alterations This is a non-contributing building given the extreme facade changes which have taken place since 1960.
Building History The building appears to date from 1900-1909. The building was first used as an office, and was a store by 1924.
Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing

231 W Main 1898, [Robert A.] Lewis Hotel

Arch. Style/Type Neo-Classical style, Architects Josselyn & Taylor, Cedar Rapids
Physical Description This three story brick hotel block has an irregular footprint that steps out along angled South 5th Street and enabled its designers to present a very broad design front. The design has a limestone base, dual colored brick mass (red brick was used for detailing) and a prominent metal parapet.

Alterations Minimal.
Building History Robert Lewis came to the city in 1872 and for 25 years operated his Green Hill Nursery before embarking on the hotel trade, building a hotel that well exceeded the apparent needs of Cherokee.
Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing, individually NRHP-listed 1997,

401 West Main 1973, Central Trust & Savings Bank

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, two-story parapet front
Physical Description Two-story brick with broad stone projecting parapet band, on parallelogram footprint, drive through porte-cochere on west side wall.
Alterations None.
Building History Later infill on former site of depot park, no previous building on site.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing

415 W Main 1913, Lane-Moore Lumber Company

Arch. Style/Type False front commercial
Physical Description The present building appears to be a frame remnant of the Lane Moore Lumber Company complex which occupied the site from 1909 on. The westernmost building is a part of that facility but the facade has been totally changed and the building is therefore non-contributing.

Alterations Historic building covered with metal siding and re-fronted.
Building History This is an early surviving building complex that angles along the west side of the railroad tracks.
Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing

420 W Main/105 Pine 1919/1915-23, no historical name

Arch. Style/Type Commercial
Physical Description This gas station has assumed several profiles over its history and this plan might be of rather recent date. The earliest stations were tucked in behind a two-story business block to the front. The building angled to present a canopy front to Pine Street. The building is deemed to be non-contributing given the lack of information to document its integrity level.

Alterations Re-fronted.
Building History The gas station dates to c.1914-15.
Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing

421-423-425 W Main 1915, W. R. Griffin Block

Arch. Style/Type Neo-Classical style

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Physical Description	<p>The Griffin Block is one of a number of distinguished west end buildings. It is one of two downtown buildings to utilize second floor bay windows. Few downtown buildings combined upper level housing with commercial uses, but this one provided upper level apartments. The new building was judged to be innovative for its extensive use of steel girders to support the upper floor. It is also exceptional for its brickwork. It was felt that this would protect firefighters from sudden collapse. A unique buff pressed brick with tapered edges was used. Contrasting brick colors define string courses and the parapet. A carved stone infilled panel is set above the two middle windows, and is framed with the pinkish-purple brick. Three stones proclaim "19-W. R. Griffin-15." This building also represented an early use (at least in downtown Cherokee) of concrete, which formed its foundation walls.</p>
Alterations	<p>The storefront has four potentially reused cast iron columns in lieu of expected steel supports. These are marked "HADERY INTERNATIONAL STEEL & IRON CONSTRUCTION COMPANY-EVANSVILLE INDIANA." The original storefront survives complete with the long transom windows. Some storefront remodeling was done in 1978. The windows were replaced.</p>
Building History	<p>This building best represents the substantial efforts of builder-developer W. R. Griffin who single-handedly pushed the commercial development of Main Street west of the Illinois Central Railroad tracks. This building, constructed in 1915, was his first major construction effort in this area, and it would set the architectural tone for this western commercial district. W. R. Griffin (?-1947) was an early promoter of the city and ran a meat market, then ran a road show prior to relocating to South Dakota. He returned to Cherokee in 1912 and he went into his old business on the west side of town. He is responsible for the erection of a number of commercial buildings on West Main and North Fifth, including this building, Swanson's Supermarket, the Hillside Hotel and others. Griffin's Meat Market was the original tenant in the new building and the family occupied one of the four apartments (styled the "Griffin Apartments"). The Western Union Telegraph Office was here from 1915 through 1930 (Obituary, unidentified newspaper, June 30, 1947).</p>
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
422 W Main	1890, no historical name
Arch. Style/Type	Commercial, two-story parapet front
Physical Description	<p>This early-date two story commercial front has a modern replacement facade. The storefront has likely been shortened by the removal of the transom area and the second floor windows have been consolidated and infilled with glass block and two small windows. A uniform brick facade of various shades of buff and a concrete cornice have replaced the original brick front. The original second floor had three windows, each recessed within a vertical panel, set beneath rounded brick or stone arches. A tin cornice sat atop the whole.</p>
Alterations	The complete replacement of the storefront renders this building unrecognizable.
Building History	<p>This early block was converted first for the sale of agricultural implements (through 1914), and then for use by the developing automotive trade by c.1915. This building had a hall on its second floor. It has housed a harness store and billiards hall.</p>
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Non-Contributing
424 W Main	1890/1902, William M. Peck Livery Block
Arch. Style/Type	Romanesque style
Physical Description	<p>This building is impressive for its sheer scale, its design and use of materials, and because it is a rare surviving livery barn. This building established a standard for commercial buildings which would be subsequently built on West Main west of the railroad tracks. This standard is defined by the use of contrasting brick colors to distinguish the floor levels of the buildings. This is one of the largest if not the largest historic commercial building in Cherokee, the closest challenger being the Brummer Block at Second and Main. Its impressive scale, fully three storefronts wide and two stories tall is all the more impressive when it is realized that this was built for livery barn purposes. This indicates that the livery trade was a going concern in Cherokee as of 1890-1902. Save for the west side wall, all exposed walls are treated equally with regard to ornamentation (stone key stones and sills, angled brick belt courses, rusticated brick courses between the floors). A façade horizontal wall panel bears the name/date plate of the building "W.M. PECK, 1902"</p>

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Alterations Door and window changes naturally have altered the historical pattern. On the west wall, two large doors likely replaced windows. On the facade, a picture window has unified a door-window set and an original drive in door and transom have been infilled with windows and a single pedestrian door. The storefront of 424 West Main has been replaced. The windows on the second floor have been preserved.

Building History Jerry Lehrs planned "a handsome double business block" in early 1891, likely this building. James Archer built it and Lehrs occupied one of the two storerooms William M. Peck added on to a pre-existing 1890 livery building (426) and unified the facade of the three buildings in 1902 to house Peck & Lawrey's Livery and Feed. Quite likely, 424 West Main was added and its brickwork was matched to that of 426 Main. This building marked the first truly substantial commercial commitment to the developing west district on West Main. A spectacular fire gutted all three storefronts on December 26, 1924. The "stubborn blaze" required 6 lines of hose and the firemen battled low water pressure to contain the blaze. Stevenson Brothers Garage was then here and was the source of the blaze. W. B. Seippel had his garage here and saved his cars. The Ku-Klux-Klan was using the upstairs lodge room also saved their belongings. Automotive retail uses occupied the building in later years (*Evening Times*, December 29, 1924).

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

427 W Main 1933-34, no historical name

Arch. Style/Type Neo-Classical style

Physical Description This building is one of W. R. Griffin's later contributions to the west commercial district of Cherokee, one that was consciously blended architecturally with 421-25 West Main. It continues the design tradition of contrasting brick colors to enhance the building's appearance. Metal casemate windows hint at late date of construction. The brickwork is of a green-yellow tint while the detail brick is purple in color. This latter brick frames the storefront, forms the base of the main wall, and separates the two floor levels. It forms the soldier course lintels and rowlock course sills of the upper windows and it sets off the corners of the parapet level with a series of double- and single-course brick stringcourses of varying length. A clay tile coping completes the composition.

Alterations The original storefront might survive under the current covering.

Building History W. R. Griffin (1870-1947) purchased this property in November 1933. He announced plans to demolish that building and to erect a "modern two-story building" in its place.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

501 W Main 1914, Staver & Lathrop's Auto Garage

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front

Physical Description This is one of the town's buildings that were built specifically to house auto garages. The building stands on an uneven site, with the northwest corner on West Main being considerably elevated over the alley ground level along the south side. The building is a very practical simple design, plain concrete block walls. The rectangular plan has a cut corner on the northeast corner, possibly once an entryway. There is a wood truss roof system.

Alterations The building appears to have been completely re-fronted and painted white.

Building History The *Cherokee Times* (July 6, 1914) announced that Staver & Lathrop's new 50x100 foot cement garage would be ready for occupancy within a few days. The paper observed "It is a beautiful building with plate glass front, steam heating plant, electric lights, 26x86 basement, ladies waiting room and cement floors." The garage had a 17-car capacity.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing

505, 509 W Main 1929, 1914, Homer C. Miller Garage (second)

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front

Physical Description The two buildings (505, 509 West Main) are matched in design and plan. The buildings sit on a hill so the ground level is much higher on its northwest corner, so the storefronts step up towards the west. The brick cornice line matches commercial buildings of the period with the same corbelled brick bracket pattern. This building supplemented 509 and features a concrete insert panel in its parapet wall which states "19-H. C. Miller-29." The building at 505 West Main, built in 1929, was consciously matched in façade design with the 1914 building, the only major difference being a slightly lighter colored face brick on the front. The storefront is more display oriented with the entire front being committed to three large display windows.

Alterations The storefronts are remarkably well preserved. The clerestory or transom areas are retained and original window structure might survive in the newer building. The building was remodeled about 1960.

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Building History *The Cherokee Times* (February 26, July 6, 1914) reported "[this is]...one of the finest improvements on West Main Street. It is 30x100 feet, front finished with paving brick and the balance with Kansas City Gas burnt brick. There are 12 tons of steel in the building. It is unusually high, 24 feet, made necessary because of the threshing outfits which are stored there. Mr. Miller now has 10,000 square feet of floor space and if things are favorable he contemplates replacing his frame building with a fire-proof structure next year."

Homer C. Miller built this addition to his garage building at 509 West Main during the summer of 1929, to house his growing agricultural implements business. The lot was previously occupied by the Presbyterian Church. Miller was located at 505 or 507 West Main as of 1907 occupying two frame buildings on this same site. The building at 507 West Main was built in 1914. The new building was opened on October 5, 1929 with 2,500 attendees at an open house. The front showroom served as an evening dance hall and Ruth Banister's band provided the music. The enlarged building totaled 15,000 square feet. It included the garage, sales rooms, show room and also housed the National Tire Stores Inc. when it opened. An auto garage with 50-car capacity occupied 509 West Main by 1924, and the whole facility was auto oriented by 1947 (*Daily Times*, May 22, October 7, 1929).

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing, counted as two building due to differences in elevation (staged up the hill slightly) and slight design differences.

204 W Maple 1929, Surles Building Side wing

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front

Physical Description Single-story brick parapet front storefront with suspended metal canopy, central entrance.

Alterations Metal slipcovers completely cover the front.

Building History This was the "ell" addition of the Surles Building, 115 South Second Street.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Non-Contributing

208 W Maple 1947, no historical name

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, single-story parapet front

Physical Description This is a very rudimentary brick single story storefront. It combines what appears to be a basement apartment with a recessed front cellar window.

Alterations None noted.

Building History

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

212 W Maple 1919, no historical name

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, two-story parapet front

Physical Description This is a two-story brick commercial block. The plain facade is of red brick construction. The base of the parapet wall steps out and is accentuated with corbelled brick. The narrow west-side addition dates from 1924-47 and its brickwork is newer and even more simplified. It incorporates a recessed loading dock area and is fully fenestrated on its second floor west side wall. Of interest is the basement window well which allows light into the basement through a front basement window. This appears to be original to the building and there is a basement level storefront.

Alterations The storefront is new and a front door has been bricked off. A canopy covers the front of the building. There is likely a surviving transom beneath this canopy. Several other west side wing additions to the rear of the plan have been demolished since 1947 and the removal of these has left scars on the surviving building.

Building History This building, the Perrett Building, likely originated c.1919 as a single-story storefront. J. W. Sheldon probably added the upper story in 1925 with the intention of starting a hotel.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Contributing

235-37 W Maple 1915, S. Swanson Auto Garage

Arch. Style/Type Commercial, two-story parapet front

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Physical Description	This two-story auto garage is the only example of a multi-story auto dealership/garage in Cherokee. It is also exceptional in that it is located east of the railroad tracks rather than to the west of the tracks. The symmetrical front is broken into three full bays and two end half-bays with a center garage door and flanking display windows. A centered second floor panel has a concrete insert which reads "19-S.Swanson-15." The building is tile lined and brick veneered. Two rows of iron columns support both floor levels. There is no basement.
Alterations	The building is vacant and all openings are covered. The level of integrity appears to be quite high. The building employs a face brick on the facade and plainer brick on its sidewalls.
Building History	This building is notable for being the town's only two-story auto garage and dealership. It is also of a rather early date, being built within a year of the earliest known garage construction in Cherokee. It had a 35-car capacity as of 1924.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
239 W Maple	1944, no historical name
Arch. Style/Type	Commercial, single-story parapet front
Physical Description	This building matches 225 West Maple, but has a reversed plan. Tile side walls.
Alterations	Originally it likely had transom windows and display windows which filled the now covered openings.
Building History	If built in 1944, it is an interesting example of wartime commercial construction in the town.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
105 E Willow	1931, Masonic Temple
Arch. Style/Type	Moderne-Art Deco
Physical Description	This is the only example of this style in Cherokee and it is well executed. The building (42x100) approximates a public building with its plane smooth stone frontage and its monumental entryway. Vertical Art Deco ornamentation is restrained, being restricted to the decorative door columns, the window edgings in the stone, and in the deeply cut full-height flutings in either flanking brick sidewall. The windows are all metal casemate openings. Decorative stone chevron patterns are used in panels above the door and between the windows. The brick veneer is polychromatic. Stone caps (set above each of the flanking rounded fluted recesses) and a soldier brick course cap the side brick walls at the parapet base level. The facade brickwork is briefly continued on the fronts of each side wall, but then a plain brick forms the sidewalls. The three-story building is 32 feet high. The roof is steel framed.
Alterations	None noted.
Building History	This fraternal building is of architectural interest because of its style and the fact that it was built in 1931 in the early years of the Great Depression. Two local banks had closed between late 1930 and 1931 yet this building was conceived and constructed. This building resulted a dozen years of planned efforts to upgrade the commercial properties along North Second, at the southeast corner of Willow and Second by building a combination commercial and fraternal block
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing
107 E Willow	1950, Tiel Sanford Memorial Building, Museum and Planetarium
Arch. Style/Type	International, Architects: William M. Ingemann and Milton V. Bergstedt, St. Paul, Minnesota
Physical Description	Single-story flat roofed rectangular plan with dome capped planetarium wing in northwest corner, full basement, brick and glass front.
Alterations	None noted
Building History	The W. A. Sanford family funded the museum prior to World War I in memory of their only child who died in 1927. World War II delayed its construction. Contracts were let in July 1949. The building was finished in 1950 and opened on April 22, 1951.
Contributing/Non-Contributing	Contributing