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NPS Form 10-900
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(Approved 03/88)

OMB No. 1024-0018

SEP 22 1989

NATIONAL REGISTER

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printers in 12 pitch. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Curtis Hardware Company
other names/site number: Howard's Cash Hardware 5DT.528

2. Location

street & number: 228 Grand Avenue (NA) not for publication
city, town: Paonia (NA) vicinity
state: Colorado code: CO county: Delta code: 029 zip code: 81428

3. Classification

Ownership of Property		Category of Property		No. of Resources within Property	
(x) private	(x) building(s)	contributing	noncontributing		
() public-local	() district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings	
() public-State	() site			sites	
() public-Federal	() structure			structures	
	() object			objects	
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total	
Name of related multiple property listing:				No. of contributing resources	
<u>N/A</u>				previously listed in the	
				National Register <u>0</u>	

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this (x) 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 (x) meets () does not meet the National Register criteria.
() See continuation sheet.

Barbara Swales

9-18-89

Signature of certifying official

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:) _____

Alana Byer

10/19/89

for
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/Specialty Store
COMMERCE/Financial Institution
DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian
Other: Victorian Commercial

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

foundations Stone, Other: Rubble Rock
walls Brick

roof Asphalt
other Metal: Cast Iron Storefront; Tin
Cornice

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The two story brick Curtis Hardware building, built in 1902, is located on one city lot in the middle of the one block long Paonia business district. The first floor was dedicated to the retail trade while the second floor was utilized as a three bedroom apartment which represents the lifestyle of the more affluent Paonia businessman at the turn-of-the-century. The building was designed in the Victorian Commercial style with Classical Revival detailing. The plan is rectangular and the flat roof slopes to the rear. Several of the distinctive architectural features on the facade are arranged asymmetrically. The cast iron storefront is set off center and has a recessed entry with double doors which have original brass handles, rectangular panes of glass in the upper portions and wood panels below. The display windows, flanking the doors have clerestory windows above and kick plates below divided into small glass panels. The original fixtures were built in Waverly, Iowa and sent by rail to Delta, Colorado on the newly completed railroad. The railroad was not opened to Paonia, thirty miles from Delta, until 1904 so the fixtures were hauled by horse-drawn wagons.

The cast iron storefront was manufactured by the Front Builders of St. Louis. Their stamp is on the ornate iron pilasters flanking the display windows. The threshold of the entrance is also of cast iron. The entire front of the building is protected from the sun by a roll-up red and white striped canvas awning with metal fittings from the Pueblo, Colorado Awning Company. The pilasters are painted a red brick color to complement the natural red color of bricks, from the Paonia brickyard, which were known for their reddish color. The wood trim and doors have been painted yellow.

(x) See Continuation Sheet

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Curtis Hardware

The Classical influence is prominent in the design of the second floor facade. The three sided oriel window is set off center on the right side. Between the oriel windows and at intervals across the face of the second floor are engaged doric columns. In between the columns are tin panels embossed with a Classical urn design. The frieze, above the second floor windows, consists of a narrow embossed tin border below a band of reversed scrolls.

The building is topped by a bracketed cornice with a round arched parapet in the center. Below the face of the arch in raised letters is the name, Curtis Hardware Company.

At the rear of the building there is an open stairway to the second floor with a covered recessed back entrance into the apartment. The first floor rear entrance has double doors with a transom and a segmental arched lintel. There is one tall narrow first floor window with a one-over-one double hung sash and a heavy stone lintel and sill. The second floor windows are wider than the first floor with wooden sash and stone lintels and sills.

On the right side of the facade is another wood paneled door with original brass hardware which leads to the staircase to the second floor apartment. Each step is fitted with brass corner pieces that serve as dust guards. A pine handrail runs the length of the stairway and rubber slipguards have been added to each step for safety.

At the top of the front stairway is a solid wood paneled door which has an oval glass pane topped with a raised scroll pediment. There is a brass knob and brass escutcheon plate etched with the Classical design found elsewhere in the building.

The apartment is entered through the foyer and reception room. The reception room possibly was used for after hours business meetings because two paneled sliding pocket doors separate this area from the rest of the home when closed. Another set of the sliding pocket doors is located at the end of the parlor. If all of the sliding doors were closed the apartment would break into four rooms, but with the doors open the continuous space gives the apartment an airy feeling.

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Curtis Hardware

The foyer, dining room, and parlor all have a non-original striped carpet of teal, reds and yellows. The parlor may be entered from the reception area. In the parlor, the center of attention is the working fireplace. The fireplace has a dark stained wood mantle, possibly made of walnut, which is hand-carved and in excellent condition. The two fluted columns starting at the base of the mantle are about three feet high and embrace a beveled glass mirror. The base of the mantle is adorned with a carved wood swag on the front of the fireplace. During the months that the fireplace is not in use the intricately patterned metal screen is replaced with an ornate curved solid iron cover. The taupe and grey tiles used for the fireplace have a ceramic glaze and are embossed with a shell pattern. A number of tiles in the upper portion are missing and the spaces filled with plaster.

The living room, which also opens off the reception area, has a large bay window which faces Grand Avenue. The window is about 10' high and is complete with 4" pine trim, which also surrounds all of the windows in the apartment and is detailed with carvings and rosettes. The pine woodwork extends around each door and each room has an 8" pine baseboard that remains in excellent condition as do the pine floors throughout the entire house. The hanging pink glass light fixture is a later addition. The light switches are in round metal casings, and the switches rotate to turn the electricity on and off.

The apartment has two bedrooms with three large closets. The third bedroom is equipped with a custom wardrobe. Each of the large closets has built-in drawers and cupboards giving the apartment more storage space than in many houses. Each of the bedrooms and living area has a large skylight built into the ceiling and framed with wood molding. The apartment doors have four original transom windows that are in working order.

The back bedroom, off the kitchen, has a wardrobe with a pull out steel bar. The sliding steel bar is embossed with the date 1907, and the manufacturer's name-- Grand Rapids Showcase Company. This bedroom is close to the kitchen and the bathroom. The bathroom has been modernized, but still has a claw foot Victorian bathtub and a pedestal sink. Both the fixtures are of white enamel and look new except for their antique design. The bathroom connects to the large and serviceable kitchen.

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Curtis Hardware

The non-original vinyl floor covering has a similar color combination to the carpet in the front areas of the house. The tin ceiling has been painted yellow to pick up the yellow stripe in the flooring and to give this room without a skylight the same light look as many other rooms in the apartment. The tin ceiling is highly decorative with embossed scrolls and designs which repeat the Classical urn design. This same ceiling material is found in the retail portion of the building.

The kitchen's most interesting feature is the unusual built-in baking center made of pine with function foremost in the mind of the designer. The cooking center has ten small spice drawers and nine larger drawers all with brass knobs. The built-in bread storage area and flour bins are unusual in today's world. The built-in cutting board slides out of the counter portion of the baking center and is in good condition. A radiator heating unit, added in 1930, remains in working order. The kitchen is accessed through a swinging pine door that enters the formal dining room. This room has a large built-in china cabinet with many shelves and cupboards. This unit was built in the throughway between the kitchen and dining room, to make the job of serving meals much easier. Some of the cupboards are made more attractive by the addition of etched glass panes.

The apartment has three exits: the front door, the back door, and the elevator located in the formal dining room. The elevator was installed in 1948 when an elderly relative came to live with the family and was too incapacitated to walk up the steep staircase. The elevator is an open cage Otis that runs from the ground floor to the apartment. The grill of the elevator is ornately detailed. This is the first and only elevator installed in Paonia during the town's history. The back door window is beautifully etched with a glass pedestal fruit bowl pattern.

The retail portion of the building has large show windows at street level. Curtis' brother was a jeweler, who set up his jewelry display in the front window of the hardware store. The retail space has many original features. The window transom above the door, the solid oak floor and the tin ceiling, as well as the lucky horseshoe with the bell hanging above the elevator in the apartment, all elements which give the building its historic feeling.

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Curtis Hardware

The first floor tin ceiling, with its scrolls and rosettes, is the same pattern as is found in the kitchen of the apartment except it is painted white. The ceiling, which is over twelve feet tall, remains in good condition and has not been altered except for the addition of a ceiling fan and electric lights.

The oiled oak floor is tongue and groove with the only change being normal wear patterns. The upstairs elevator is located at the rear of the store. A hand operated freight elevator which services the basement is also found at the rear of the store. This elevator is no longer operable and was sealed due to safety concerns. A large coal furnace dominates the basement space which is finished with concrete walls and floor. There are shelves attached to the walls, cabinets and other storage areas. The coal furnace operates with a fire box and augur that provides heat to the retail area. The heat rises through an opening in the center of the floor of the hardware store. This opening has a large ornate iron grill. The ventilating system installed by Curtis provides a set of ducts that allows the air to tunnel through the basement and circulate the heat in the main floor. The furnace is complete with iron tools that are necessary for its operation. The coal room is about 15' from the furnace, and has an opening from the dock at the back door of the building for the unloading of coal.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: () nationally () statewide (X) locally

Applicable National Register Criteria (x) A () B (x) C () D
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) () A () B () C () D () E () F () G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Commerce

Period of Significance

1902
1902 - 1939

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Curtis, Sidney - Builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Curtis Hardware Company building was constructed at 228 Grand Avenue, Paonia, Colorado during 1902. The Hardware Company was in continuous operation until it was closed in 1987, with only very minor changes to the building. The Curtis Hardware Company building is significant under Criterion A for its importance to the town of Paonia in the area of commerce. This is one of the oldest remaining buildings in the business district of Paonia and was one of the first businesses to begin in the town. The building is also significant under Criterion C for its architecture because it is one of the best remaining examples of Victorian Commercial architecture in Delta County. The building is notable both for its design and the architectural integrity of both its exterior and its interior.

When a community is first settled it is usually because one person has a vision for the area. Paonia was started in this same tradition by Samuel Wade. Wade believed that the fertile soils and moderate climate in Paonia would be the ideal situation to grow the highest quality fruit anywhere in the United States. It was with this vision that Wade brought the first fruit trees and peonies bushes to the valley. He named the town Peonies after his favorite flower, but in 1882 the federal government named the township Paonia instead of Peonies. Wade's vision of Paonia becoming the fruit growing capital of the world was fulfilled during the early 1900's. It would also enjoy the reputation as being among the more prosperous towns on the Western Slope during the first decade of the 1900s.¹

(x) See continuation sheet

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Curtis Hardware

The original owner of the hardware company was Sidney Curtis who also did most of the construction of the building. Curtis, the son of an Iowa hardware merchant, came west and began his hardware business in a young town. Paonia was the town where he chose to construct a store and apartment.

Given the promise that the town of Paonia held during the early part of the century, it is easy to understand why Curtis chose this town for his business venture. Curtis recognized the need for a hardware store in this young agricultural community. He also chose the property for his venture well. More than eighty years later it is still the most prominent business site in the community. Curtis purchased his land from Samuel Wade and others who had purchased the land in a 160 acre parcel from the government for \$200. This land included what is now known as Grand Avenue, and it remains the primary business district in the community.

Curtis did not end his ambitions with becoming a successful merchant. Curtis and a few others started the First National Bank of Paonia in 1903. This was the second bank for Paonia, but it faced a very major problem. The bank building had not been built by opening day, March 16, 1903. Curtis allowed them to open and operate the First National Bank in the Curtis Hardware Company Building.

Business was not brisk by today's standards, but the records show deposits were received and loans of a few hundred dollars were made. The bank operated in the Curtis Hardware Company building until the next year when a building was constructed next door. The First National Bank is still in operation in Paonia and is the oldest bank in Delta County. ²

One can imagine what activity the hardware store saw during the years 1902 - 1903. The hardware trade was thriving; the jewelry store of Curtis' brother was prospering and the First National Bank was loaning money and receiving deposits. As with many visions, the hope of Paonia as the "Fruit Capital of the World" would be severely dampened with the great freeze of 1912. It was during this time that many of the larger fruit orchards would be lost. The high-tech wind machines were not available to help the young trees survive the below zero winter. It was the first such winter since the settlement of the valley, but it would take its toll. Many of the new businesses would fail during the next few years, and the main street of Paonia ceased to grow. Curtis was one of the few merchants to

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hang on during these lean years. Many of the Paonia citizens would turn to the coal mine, about fifteen miles away, for a source of income instead of leaving the beautiful valley. They would keep their orchards and replant their trees little by little; Curtis remained to supply their needs.

George "Shorty" Hunten is a native of the North Fork Valley. He is the best historian concerning the Curtis Hardware Company. He remembers the store from his early childhood and in 1930 he began working for the Howard's who then owned the hardware business. He married their daughter and eventually purchased the hardware company. He maintained that a town was only as good as its hardware store, and he kept the old fixtures polished until they glistened. He did not believe in modern packages; he used the original 300 drawer cabinets to stock his treasures of corks and screws. Customers were never pressured to buy more than they needed, and the town's people could gather in this congenial spot and share stories about elk hunts, trout fishing, and the fruit crop without ever feeling the need to sweeten the cash box.³

Few buildings have maintained their historic integrity as well as the Curtis Hardware Company. Everyone who owned and operated this establishment had the same vision for the community. To the residents of Paonia, the Curtis Hardware Company building is a symbol of the pioneer vision that established the community, and the same vision that still leads the community.

This building is significant under Criterion C as a representation of a type and period of construction. Curtis Hardware is notable for its unusual cast iron storefront and the decorative oriel window on the second floor. The exterior of the building has classical detailing which is embodied in its columns, scrolls, and urn motif. The commercial and residential areas of the interior have maintained a high degree of architectural integrity.

The period of significance to commerce has been ended in 1939 because of the 50 year criterion.

-
1. Hammond, Martha. The North Fork Valley, 1905. Publisher unknown.
 2. Snyder, Len. "The History of the First National Bank." 1988.
 3. Hunten, George. "The History of Howard's Cash Hardware."

9. Major Bibliographical References

Hammond, Martha. The North Fork Valley. 1905. Publisher unknown.
Harvey, Bob. "80 Years the Building." North Fork Times, Feb. 1982.
Hunten, George. "The History of Howard's Cash Hardware." 1977.
Snyder, Len. "The History of the First National Bank." 1988.

() See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested | <input type="checkbox"/> State Historic Preservation Office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> previously listed in the National Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Other State agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> previously determined eligible by the National Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> designated a National Historic Landmark | <input type="checkbox"/> Local government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> University |
| <input type="checkbox"/> recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
- Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property: Under one acre

UTM References

A <u>1</u> <u>3</u> <u>2</u> <u>7</u> <u>4</u> <u>6</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	B <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
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Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing

() See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Township 14S; Range 91W; SW 1/4 of SE 1/4 of NW 1/4 of NE 1/4 of Section 6; 6th PM in Delta County.
Lot 14 of Block 3 Original Townsite.

() See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes property historically associated with the building.

() See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: <u>Cindy Hartline</u>	Date: <u>5/1/1989</u>
Organization: <u>owner</u>	Telephone: <u>303-527-3900</u>
Street & Number: <u>P.O. Box 1000</u>	State: <u>CO</u> Zip Code: <u>81428</u>
City or Town: <u>Paonia</u>	

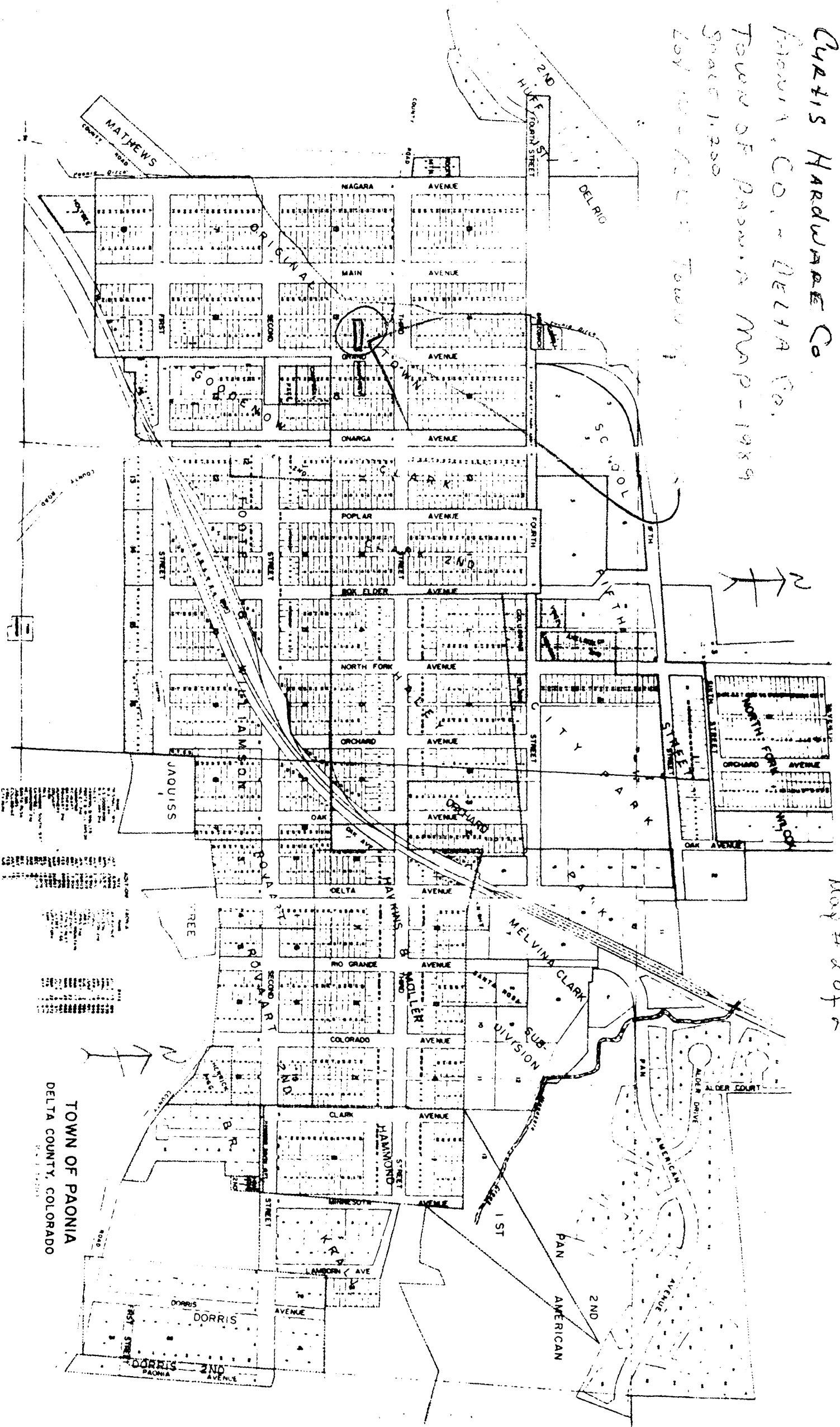
Chertis Hardware Co.

Paonia, Co. - Delta Co.

Town of Paonia Map - 1989

Scale 1:350

Lot 100 - 1000 - Town of Paonia



Map # 2 of 2

TOWN OF PAONIA
DELTA COUNTY, COLORADO