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1. Name: **Merrill Avenue Historic District**
2. Location: Including the west side of Merrill Avenue between South Douglas Street and West Clement Street, as well as the Northern Pacific Railroad Depot and Chamber of Commerce building on east side of Merrill Avenue.
3. Classification: District
Public and Private Ownership
Public acquisition: Not applicable
Accessible: Unrestricted
Present Uses: Commercial, Entertainment, Government, Transportation
4. Owner of Property: Multiple Ownership
5. Location of Legal Description: Dawson County Courthouse
207 West Bell Street, Glendive, Montana
6. Representation in Existing Surveys: Historical Resource Survey, Glendive, Montana, 1987
Montana State Historic Preservation Office
Helena, Montana
7. Description: 29 Contributing resources
15 noncontributing resources

The Merrill Avenue Historic District lies along the south edge of the multiple resource area on the west side of Glendive, which is located between the Burlington Northern railroad tracks and the Yellowstone River. The district is a long, narrow strip of one- and two-story masonry commercial buildings, which were mostly built between the late 1800's and the early 1930's. Most face onto Merrill Avenue and the Burlington Northern Railroad yard and tracks, although a few face West Bell Street, the secondary commercial street in the community that developed as a result of the location of the Bell Street Bridge over the Yellowstone River during the late 19th Century. The commercial buildings are built to lot lines along the west side of Merrill Avenue, and almost all of the buildings constructed during the historic period still stand. The Northern Pacific Railroad depot, constructed in 1922, marks the upper end of the historic district on the south side of Merrill Avenue, and the Glendive City Hall, a two-story, Neo-classical building designed by Brynjulf Rivenes stands at lower end. The small, concrete building that houses the Glendive Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture and a small park are included within the historic district boundaries on the southeast side of Merrill Avenue.

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The historic buildings along Merrill Avenue are closely bunched on 25' x 140' commercial lots. Merrill Avenue is laid out on a northeast/southwest grid, with intersecting streets like West Bell Street, running in a northwest/southeast direction. There are no distinguishing natural features within the district. The small park located between the railroad depot and the Chamber of Commerce office is shaded by the only trees in the district. The basic change in the appearance of the Merrill Avenue area over time has been the removal of the railroad and commercial warehouses, lumberyards, stockyards, etc. that used to be located on the southeast side of Merrill Avenue. These industrial and agricultural buildings have been replaced by modern, metal warehouses and a new supermarket. The boundary for the Merrill Avenue Historic District excludes this more recent development.

The district exhibits architectural styles, scale, massing, and materials similar to those found in western towns established in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. District buildings are mostly all one- and two-part, rectangular, masonry and concrete or concrete block structures with raised front parapets and stepped roofs. Most are single-bay buildings; some are multi-lot business blocks. The only exception to this standard commercial construction pattern basic styles is the Glendive City Hall, which is free-standing, Neo-classical style building constructed in 1915. Architectural styles in evidence include Italianate, Gothic Revival, Neo-Classical, and the spare, flat facades of the 1920's that are detailed only with polychromatic brick patterning. Although a number of the commercial buildings were likely to have been architect-designed, only the works of Brynjulf Rivenes have been positively identified within the historic district.

The historic period for the Merrill Avenue Historic District spans the years from 1886 to 1930. The only building that represents important architectural developments after this period is the Lulhaven Bar (OTS7, L1). In 1937, the historic Stipek Building, which was erected in 1901, underwent an extensive remodeling to create a remarkable, new Art Deco design. The original corbeled brick parapet of the Stipek Building is still in evidence on the primary facades of the building along Merrill Avenue and Valentine Street, beneath which was applied new Carrera glass and glass block on the Merrill Avenue facade and the clipped corner entry in a complete reworking of the historic storefront. The new windows are elongated octagonal shapes set in thick alloy metal frames. The name "Lulhaven" is spelled out in neon, wrapping around the corner of the building. Although this building was remodeled after the identified historic period, it is considered to be of primary architectural significance due to the fact that it is the only building to represent the Art Deco style in the multiple resource area, and is an outstanding example of the style used for commercial purposes in the State.

Merrill Avenue continues to serve as the commercial center of town. The buildings are in generally good condition. There is only one building in the district that was built after 1940. Alterations to the historic buildings in recent years have in most cases involved storefront remodeling, including the installation of new plate glass windows, and, in some instances, reworking of the

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primary entrance and the application of modern sheathing materials such as sheet metal and false masonry veneer. Contributing buildings within the historic district have all retained primary historic architectural integrity on the upper levels, while a few have experienced recent street level remodeling.

8. Statement of Significance

Period of Significance: 1886-1930, 1937

Areas of Significance: architecture, commerce, politics and government, and transportation

The Merrill Avenue Historic Commercial District has been the focus of the historical development of the city of Glendive since its establishment with the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1881. The district is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because it clearly reflects the patterns of economic and physical growth of this commercial center of the Lower Yellowstone Valley in the late 19th Century and first two decades of the 20th Century. After the establishment of Glendive as the headquarters of the Yellowstone Division of the Northern Pacific Railroad, the town developed into a shipping point for the livestock and agricultural products that became the mainstay of the Eastern Montana economy during the early 20th Century.

The district conveys a strong sense of historical and architectural cohesiveness in several ways. The historic commercial buildings are closely grouped in a 6-block-long, one-sided strip. They are all one- and two-story, masonry (brick, tile, poured concrete, or concrete block), single-lot and multi-lot buildings that historically have served commercial purposes. They exhibit the typical design characteristics that resulted from the adoption of the decorative detailing common to major American styles to enliven western, tripart, "Main Street" facade designs. Elements of the Italianate, Gothic Revival, and Neo-classical styles are evident on the historic commercial facades of the early 20th Century in Glendive. Materials consist mostly of locally produced brick and concrete block and "imported" Hebron brick. The wood frame, false front commercial buildings of the first years of the town's existence have completely disappeared from the district, having been replaced by masonry buildings by the 1920's. Only one building constructed after 1940 is located within district boundaries. Despite street level remodeling and the residing, more than 70% of the buildings display the common characteristics of the historic architecture of their period of construction and are considered to be contributing components of the historic district.

The work of Miles City-based architect Brynjulf Rivenes, who was Norwegian-born and trained, is pronounced in the historic district. The clean, symmetrically organized, finely detailed Neo-classical facades designed by Rivenes during the first two decades of the century are easily identifiable within the historic district. In addition to producing complete plans and specifications for the Glendive City Hall, the Krug Building, the Rivenes-West Hardware Company Building, and the First National Bank Building (now remodeled), Rivenes also designed the 1910's, Neo-classical facade remodelings for the Dion

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Brother Building and the Douglas Mead Company Building. All of these buildings are located within the Merrill Avenue Historic District.

Early significant individuals such as Charles Krug, Henry Dion, J. H. Miskimen, Frank Kinney, A. S. Foss, Henry Douglas, David Mead, G. D. Hollecker, W. F. Jordan, C. A. Thurston, and Thomas Hogan are associated with many of the buildings in the commercial historic district. They were mostly ranchers and businessmen, who financed the construction of these buildings and most served as civic leaders when the town experienced its period of greatest prominence and growth from 1900-1920. These early community boosters generally opted for a slow, steady growth for which the town and the area have been historically known. Charles Krug, the town's alleged first millionaire, is credited with providing the town with the resources necessary to survive the 1920's with no bank failures, a time when over half of the banks in Montana closed their doors. They built a town with the basically conservative commercial and residential designs that reflected their conservative beliefs.

The Merrill Avenue Historic District has been a center of regional growth and economic stability. Since it includes the railroad and the one-time headquarters of the Yellowstone Division, it is directly associated with the role the railroad has played as a major employer in the community and as a supply and distribution center for the Lower Yellowstone region. It was an important financial and trade center for ranchers of the Lower Yellowstone Valley, for the small towns that were established in the early 1900's as the result of the dry land farming boom, and for major Depression Era projects such as the Buffalo Rapids Irrigation Project. The historic district contains the Glendive City Hall, which is symbolic of the importance of politics in the public life of the community and of the optimism and civic pride felt at the time this monumental building was constructed (1910).

There are few intrusions in the Merrill Avenue Historic District as defined, although the destruction of warehouses, lumber yards, etc. on the southeast side of Merrill Avenue, and the construction of modern commercial buildings on the northwest half from the blocks on the northwest side has necessitated the drawing of a long, narrow district boundary. The district is a fairly compact and highly cohesive. For the reasons mentioned above, this commercial historic district constitutes a long, narrow strip, which stand alone among the typical downtown commercial districts of facing blocks of historic buildings in other towns in the State.

Virtually no new construction occurred within the Merrill Avenue Historic District between 1930 and 1940, with the exception of the facade remodeling of the Lulhaven Bar. The period of significance for this historic district, thus, ends in 1930, with the single significant date of 1937 noted.

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9. Biographical Reference: See Multiple Resource nomination form

10. Geographic Data: Acreage: 2.5 acres
U.S.G.S. Quadrangle: Glendive, MT 1967
UTM References:

	zone	easting	northing
A.	13	521927	5216885
B.	13	522020	5216840
C.	13	521620	5216320
D.	13	521595	5216350

Verbal Boundary: The historic district includes the southeast half of six commercial blocks and the strip of land between West Towne and West Clement on the southeast side of Merrill, which includes the old Northern Pacific Railroad depot, a small park, and the Glendive Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture office. Located within this boundary are 44 properties, 29 of which are contributing and 15 of which are noncontributing structures. The properties are commercial in use except for the Glendive City Hall and the park.

The boundary for the historic district includes the following parcels of land: the southeastern halves of blocks 7, 8, 10, 15, 16 and lots 1-8 of block 6 of the Original Townsite of Glendive, Montana; strip of land about 100' wide running on the southeast side of Merrill Avenue (which includes Burlington Northern Depot) between West Clement and West Benham Streets; and a strip of land about 75' wide on the south side of Merrill Avenue (which includes a small park and the Chamber of Commerce office) between West Benham and West Towne Streets.

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OTS = Original Townsite.

<u>legal location</u>	<u>historical name (date)</u>	<u>style</u>	<u>evaluation</u>
OTS6,L6-8(E)	Sutherland Bldg (1905)	concrete block	contributing
OTS6,L6-7(W)	Sutherland Res. (c.1906)	concrete block	primary
OTS6,L1-5	Glendive City Hall (1914)	Neo-classical	primary
OTS7,L12	Kinney Bldg (1905)	Italianate	contributing
OTS7,L11	Krug Bldg (c.1908)	remodeled	noncontributing
OTS7,L10	Leidahl Bldg (1912)	western commercial	contributing
OTS7,8-9	vacant lots		
OTS7,L7	Foss Bldg (1904)	Queen Anne commercial	contributing
OTS7,L6	Gillis Bldg (1904)	Queen Anne commercial	contributing
OTS7,L4-5	Rivenes-Wester Bldg (1909)	Neo-classical	primary
OTS7,L2-3	Krug Bldg (1910)	Neo-classical	contributing
OTS7,L1	Stipek Bldg/Lulhaven Bar (1901) (1937)	Art Deco	primary
OTS8,L11-12	Phoenix Block (c.1886)	remodeled	noncontributing
OTS8,L10	Helms Saloon (c.1888)	remodeled	noncontributing
OTS8,L9	Lee's Saloon (c.1888)	remodeled	noncontributing
OTS8,L8	Taylor Building (c.1887)	western commercial	contributing
OTS8,L7	Miskimen Bldg. (1903)	remodeled, c.1946	noncontributing
OTS8,L6	Dion Bldg (1905)	Queen Anne commercial	contributing
OTS8,L3-5	Dion Bros Bldg (1894,1910)	Neo-classical	primary
OTS8,front L1-2	Henry Dion Bldg(1886,1929)	polychrome brick	contributing
OTS8,middle L1-2	Kolstad Jewelers (1929)	polychrome brick	contributing
OTS8,rear L1-4	J.C. Penney (1929)	western commercial	contributing
OTS10,rear L11-12	Rivenes Bldg (1905)	Queen Anne commercial	contributing
OTS10,middle L11-12	Masonic Annex (1910)	Prairie commercial	contributing
OTS10,front L11-12	Masonic Temple (1889)	Italianate	primary
OTS10,L10	First Nat'l Bank (1904)	remodeled	noncontributing
OTS10,L8-9	Coleman Block (1894,1903)	remodeled, c.1940's	noncontributing
OTS10,L7	Coleman Block (1894,1903)	remodeled, c.1960's	noncontributing
OTS10,L5-6	Miskimen Bldg (1893-1903)	western commercial	contributing
OTS10,L4	Davis/Farnum Drug (1903)	remodeled, c.1975	noncontributing
OTS10,L2-3	Douglas Mead Bldg (1886, 1903,1915)	Neo-classical	contributing
OTS10,L1	Merchants Bank (1903)	remodeled, 1955	noncontributing
OTS15,L11-12	Exxon Station (1961)	Industrial	noncontributing
OTS15,L10	Exchange Bank (1901)	western commercial	contributing
OTS15,L8-9	Leonard Bldg (1914)	remodeled	noncontributing
OTS15,L7	Murn Bldg (1922)	polychrome brick	contributing
OTS15,L6	Healy's Cigar Store (1918)	western commercial	contributing

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OTS15,L5	Rose Theater (1918)	remodeled	noncontributing
OTS15,L1-4	Jordon Hotel (1901)	remodeled	noncontributing
OTS16,L7-12	Beasley Block (1910)	western commercial	contributing
OTS16,L5-6	Tandy Leather (1905-10)	western commercial	contributing
OTS16,L1-4	First Fidelity Bank (1979)	Modern environmental	noncontrib.
RR R-O-W	NPRR Depot (1922)	Prairie industrial	primary
RR R-O-W	Chamber of Commerce (c.1905)	Craftsman	contributing
RR R-O-W	City park	open space	contributing