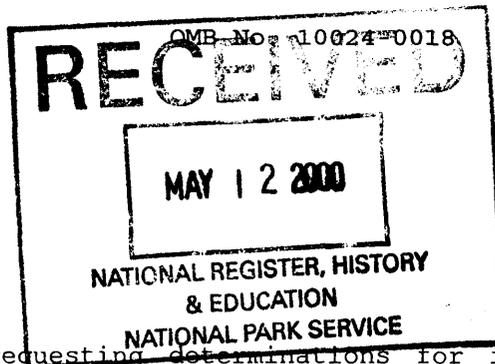


United States Department of Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



699

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 South Main Street Historic District
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Multiple (see list attached) N/A not for publication
City or town Village of Oregon N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Dane code 025 zip code 53575

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation for additional comments.)

Alicia J. Coyle May 4, 2000
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

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

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Section 7 Page 1

South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

DESCRIPTION: SUMMARY

The South Main Street Historic District is located in the Village of Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin. It is composed of 11 buildings and one object (the World War Memorial) on two blocks in Oregon's central business district. The two blocks are set perpendicular to each other, facing the World War Memorial plaza, forming a triangle (see photo 1 and map attached). The South Main Street Historic District is bounded on the north by Jefferson and Janesville streets, which meet at Main Street. The south lot lines of 123 and 134 South Main Street, 112 and 116 Janesville Street form the south boundary of the district. The east boundary coincides with the east lot lines of 116 Janesville and 134 South Main Street. The west lot lines of 101 South Main Street through 123 South Main Street form the west boundary.

The South Main Street Historic District is an intact and visually-distinct grouping of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings united by physical development and immediately recognizable as a downtown. The 11 buildings in the district were built between 1877 and 1915. The World War Memorial was erected in 1920. All twelve resources (100 percent) contribute to the significance of the district. Of particular note in the district are two fine Romanesque Revival commercial blocks. Nine of the eleven buildings were constructed in two brief periods, between 1877 and 1880 and between 1898 and 1900, increasing the cohesiveness of the district. Contiguous late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century one- and two-story masonry and frame buildings face the World War Memorial and form a continuous commercial streetscape. The level of integrity of the individual buildings varies in the district, but is generally good.

SETTING

South, east and west of the South Main Street Historic District are residential areas, with houses dating from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. North of the district, along both sides of North Main Street, there is another block of commercial development. Several of the buildings in this area are more than 50 years old, but their level of integrity is generally poor. Jefferson and Janesville streets (also called CTH CC) carry

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South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

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moderately-heavy traffic and create a physical barrier separating the South Main Street Historic District from the commercial development on North Main Street. Waterman Park, a small green space on what was formerly a part of the public square, is located on the east side of North Main Street, north of Janesville Street, further separating the two commercial areas. In the South Main Street Historic District, the World War Memorial plaza acts as a buffer against the traffic, giving the district an unhurried, pedestrian-friendly character that evokes an earlier time.

PRESENT APPEARANCE

The South Main Street Historic District includes 11 contributing buildings and one contributing object. One property in the district is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This is the Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge at 117 South Main Street (1898). None of the buildings in the district are known to have been designed by architects.

The district is made up primarily of contiguous, late nineteenth and early twentieth century, one- and two-story masonry and frame buildings, facing the World War Memorial plaza and forming a continuous commercial streetscape. Four of the eleven contributing buildings were erected between 1877 and 1880, accounting for 36 percent of the contributing buildings in the Main Street district.¹ Five (45 percent) were built between 1898 and 1900. The remaining two (18 percent) were built between 1908 and 1915. The World War Memorial was erected in 1920. The architects and builders of the buildings are unknown. The South Main Street Historic District retains a high degree of historic integrity in setting, materials, feeling, association and design. One-hundred percent of the resources in the district are contributing.

Three of the buildings in the South Main Street Historic District are Romanesque Revival in style while the remainder are commercial vernacular. The three Romanesque Revival buildings were built at about the same time (1898-99) and possess similar details,

¹Sources for the dates of construction are maps, tax rolls, and historical photos. These are listed in the bibliography.

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South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

suggesting that the same builder and/or designer was responsible for all three buildings. That person or firm has not been identified.

The earliest and most intact of the three Romanesque Revival buildings in the South Main Street Historic District is the Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge at 117 South Main Street (NRHP 1992). A two-story, cream brick building, the Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge was erected in 1898 (see photo 2). It possesses one of only two intact storefronts in the district, with an off-center entrance, paneled-wood kick-plates, multi-paned transom, and a cast-iron lintel with rosettes. Slender brick pilasters articulate the front (east-facing) facade and terminate in a stepped parapet with a red stone coping. At the second story, four one-over-one windows appear. A stone belt-course forms continuous sills. Two shades of red brick create broad, continuous lintels, round-arched above the outer windows and ogee-arched above the inner windows. A round, stone panel with the Masonic square-and-compass, framed with red brick and flanked by square sandstone panels reading: "18" and "98" further enriches the front facade. A projecting stone cornice with a classical profile marks the base of the parapet. The parapet is ornamented with projecting bricks and a blind arcade with continuous arches.

The Netherwood Building at 104 Janesville Street (1898) is a two-story, cream brick, Romanesque Revival building trimmed with red stone (see photo 3). Although the storefront was altered in 1952, the upper story retains very good integrity. Above the storefront, a pair of brick pilasters separates the front (north-facing) facade into thirds. In the central section, a band of windows surmounted by running arches of red stone suggests the transomed windows characteristic of Richardsonian Romanesque. A stone belt-course forms a continuous lintel between the windows and the arches. A checkerboard pattern of projecting bricks appears in the "transom" between the lintels and the arches. Above, there is an oval window of leaded-glass, flanked by red stone panels reading: "18" and "98." Above, the parapet features a triangular cap, with a coping and finial of red stone. On either side of the central section, three windows with red stone lintels light the second story. These windows are surmounted by a pressed-metal cornice with classical elements, and a brick parapet enriched with projecting bricks in a

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South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

checkerboard pattern and finished with a red stone coping. The second-story window openings have been reduced with boards and fitted with aluminum windows.

The third Romanesque Revival building in the South Main Street Historic District is the McDermott Building at 109 South Main Street (see photo 4). The simplest of the three, the McDermott Building is a two-story, red brick edifice accented with light-colored stone. The storefront has been altered, although the brick, banded with white stone, that frames the storefront remains. A stone belt-course separates the storefront from the second story. Four brick pilasters divide the second story into thirds and terminate in a stepped parapet, similar to the second story of the Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge. The central section features a pair of flat-arched windows with stone lintels, surmounted by a pair of small, round-arched windows with stone surrounds and stone panels with raised lettering reading "1899" and "McDERMOTT." The central section parapet is enriched with brick corbelling, projecting brickwork, and a stone coping. The flanking sections are identical and consist of a pair of flat-arched windows with brick lintels and pronounced stone keystones, surmounted by brick corbelling, a stone cornice with a classical profile and a parapet with projecting brickwork and a stone coping.

Two of the buildings in the South Main Street Historic District are late-nineteenth century commercial vernacular in form. These are the Montgomery & Martin/Observer Building at 112 Janesville Street (1899) and the Powers Building at 115 South Main Street (1877). The Montgomery & Martin/Observer Building is a two-story frame edifice with metal siding on the side elevation (see photo 5). It features pressed metal window hoods at the second story, and a pressed metal cornice. The two-story, brick Powers Building retains cast-iron columns in its storefront, segmental-arched windows with pronounced keystones at the second story, and decorative brickwork at the cornice.

Five buildings in the South Main Street Historic District display the characteristics of the early-twentieth century "Modern Broadfront" variant of the commercial vernacular form. All are one-story tall. The Cowdrey Tailor Shop at 111 South Main Street was a commercial vernacular building finished with cream brick and

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South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

enriched with Italianate-influenced decorative brickwork when erected in 1878. In 1911, the front facade was updated and now features a classical cornice over the storefront, surmounted by a horizontal panel of brick headers.

The Howe Drugstore at 121 South Main Street (see photo 6), built in 1880, was also a commercial vernacular building finished with cream brick and enriched with Italianate-influenced decorative brickwork. Around 1907, the front facade was updated with glazed white and red brick. About 1940, the current orange brick veneer was installed.

The Isaac Howe Rental at 123 South Main Street was also built in 1880 and originally matched Howe's Drugstore. Around 1925, the front facade was given its current simple appearance (see photo 6).

The Grady Grocery at 134 South Main Street was constructed in 1915. The front facade is veneered with red brick and features a panel outlined with brick headers (see photo 7).

The Hausmann Brewing Company Saloon at 116 Janesville Street was erected in 1900 and has a veneer of wire-cut orange brick. This was probably installed circa 1945 (see photo 5).

The Connor Building at 101 South Main Street, although built in 1908, is a commercial vernacular building with Romanesque Revival-inspired decorative brickwork, carried over from the neighboring McDermott Building (see photo 4). The original storefront was uncovered in 1998 and appears intact. The second-story windows are replacements.

The World War Memorial is the only object in the South Main Street District (see photo 8). The Memorial is composed of a polished Hurricane Island granite column, preserved from Chicago's old City Hall. The column is nine feet tall and is set on a classically-profiled base and topped with a globe, both of Barrie granite. The column is inscribed: "ERECTED IN HONOR OF THOSE WHO SERVED OUR COUNTRY IN THE WORLD WAR 1914-1918." It is said to have been the first tribute to the veterans of World War I erected in the U. S. and was dedicated on June 10, 1920. A polished granite bench inscribed: "DEDICATED TO ALL VETERANS," and enriched with the American eagle stands just west of the Memorial.

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South Main Street Historic District
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ALTERATIONS

Alterations in the South Main Street Historic District have been limited primarily to replacement windows and doors, and "modernized" storefronts, which post-date World War II. The Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge at 117 South Main Street is the only building with a completely intact facade. In most cases, elements of the original storefront remain, but part of the storefront has been infilled with wood or masonry to reduce window and door openings. These alterations are typical of downtown commercial districts and do not compromise the integrity of the South Main Street Historic District.

CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

<u>Address</u>	<u>Site name</u>	<u>Dates built/altered</u>
<u>Janesville Street</u>		
104	C. W. Netherwood Building	1898/1952
112	Montgomery & Martin/ Observer Building	1899
116	Hausmann Brewing Co. Saloon	1900/c. 1945
<u>Janesville and Main Streets</u>		
	World War Memorial	1920
<u>South Main Street</u>		
101	J. P. Connor Building	1908
109	McDermott Building	1899
111	T. B. Cowdrey Tailor Shop	1878/1911
115	C. E. Powers Building	1877
* 117	Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge	1898
121	Isaac Howe Drugstore	1880/c.1907/c.1940
123	Isaac Howe Rental	1880/c. 1945
134	T. H. Grady Grocery	1915

*117 S. Main previously listed on the National Register

South Main Street Historic District
Name of Property

Dane County, Wisconsin
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from
instructions)

Architecture
Commerce

A Property is associated with events
that have made a significant
contribution to the broad patterns o
our history.

B Property is associated with the lives
of persons significant in our past.

Period of Significance

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.

1877-1948

D Property has yielded, or is likely to
yield, information important in
prehistory or history.

Significant Dates

N/A

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

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is
marked above)

N/A

A owned by a religious institution or
used for religious purposes.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed property

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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 Bibliographic References

(Cite the sources used in preparing this form on continuation sheet(s).)

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Section 8 Page 1

South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: SUMMARY

The South Main Street Historic District is significant under Criterion C at the local level, as an intact and visually distinct grouping of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings, united by physical development and immediately recognizable as a downtown. The South Main Street district also has the largest concentration of architecturally significant historic commercial buildings in Oregon, including two notable Romanesque Revival commercial buildings. Under Criterion A, the South Main Street Historic District is significant in commerce at the local level because its resources span the development of Oregon's central business district from 1877 to 1948. Many of Oregon's most important businesses were located in extant buildings in the South Main Street Historic District. The South Main Street Historic District retains excellent integrity; 100 percent of the resources are contributing. The period of significance extends from 1877, the year the earliest building in the district was erected, through 1948, the fifty-year cut-off date.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Village of Oregon is located in Oregon Township in south-central Dane County. In 1847, Oregon Township was created by the division of Rome Township, which included what would become the towns of Fitchburg, Oregon, Dunn, and Rutland.² The first log house, in what would become the village of Oregon, was built for C.P. Mosley in 1842. It was located just east of the South Main Street Historic District, on Janesville Street. I.M. Bennett soon bought Mosley's cabin, which also housed a tavern, and operated a general store out of the building as well. This building became the nucleus of the small community that was at first called "Rome Corners," and would eventually become Oregon.³

²"Souvenir of the Oregon Centennial," Oregon Observer, 26 June 1941, p. 39.

³W. L. Ames, History of Oregon and Trade Territory, (Oregon: W. L. Ames, 1924), p. 16.

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South Main Street Historic District
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Another Oregon pioneer was James Coville. Coville may have built the second log house in the community, in 1843. That structure stood at North Main and Grove streets, north of the South Main Street Historic District. Coville had a shoe shop in his log house. He sold the property, which was part of a larger parcel, to Charles Waterman. Waterman had the parcel surveyed as "Oregon," and filed this, the original plat of the village, on April 7, 1857.⁴ Part of the South Main Street Historic District is located in block 4 of the Waterman plat.

The post office was established in the settlement in 1848. Egbert Bennett was the first postmaster and erected the first frame house (which he also operated as a hotel) in the community in 1849. Other early settlers of Oregon included William Bedford, John Tipple, William Dudley, J. L. Brown, John Kiser, R. P. Rawson, Jake Baum, Stoddard Johnson, Elias Jacobus and Nathaniel Ames.⁵

In 1864, the Beloit and Madison Railroad (later a part of the Chicago and North Western system) extended a line through the village of Oregon. The railroad gave Oregon an economic advantage over competing settlements in the surrounding areas, such as Oak Hall, Lake View, Union and Rutland. By 1880, despite a series of fires in the 1860s and 1870s, Oregon was a lively community of 527 persons, with a thriving commercial district. Oregon incorporated as a village in 1883, and boasted 595 inhabitants in 1890.⁶

The Village of Oregon grew steadily between 1890 and 1940, reaching a population of 1,005 in 1940. The economy diversified during this period, to include a flour and grist mill (built 1890), a creamery (1900), the first bank (1892), the second bank (1900), and the

⁴Dane County Plats, A:36, 7 April 1857.

⁵Ames, pp. 14-15, 18 and 20; and "Souvenir of Oregon Centennial," p. 9.

⁶Wisconsin Legislative Reference Bureau, Blue Book, (Madison: State Printing Board, 1892).

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South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

third bank (1914).⁷ The buying and shipping of livestock, particularly cattle, was also an important facet of Oregon's economy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At one time, Oregon was the busiest shipping point for livestock and grain on the Chicago and North Western line between Chicago and Madison. Services expanded as well, with the organization of a volunteer fire-fighting company (1895), the erection of a water tower (1898) and the installation of water mains (1898-99), street lights (1898), telephone exchange (1901) and the first paved streets (1916).⁸ Following World War II, Oregon boomed, expanding between 25 and 50 percent each decade through 1980. In 1990, the residents of Oregon numbered 4,519.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The South Main Street Historic District is architecturally significant as an intact grouping of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings united by physical development. The size, configuration, and use of these buildings create a cohesive and visually distinct area immediately recognizable as a downtown. The South Main Street district also has two notable examples of Romanesque Revival commercial buildings.

Oregon's first businesses were located in log cabins. These included C.P. Mosley's tavern (1842) and James Coville's shoe store (1843). These buildings were located outside the South Main Street Historic District, at the north and east limits, respectively, of what would become Oregon's central business district. As the settlement grew, businesses located between these two sites, along North and South Main and Janesville streets.

In 1849, the first frame hotel was erected in Oregon. Built for Egbert Bennett and called the Oregon Exchange, it was located at 112-116 Janesville Street within the boundaries of the South Main Street district, and served as the post office as well. The Oregon

⁷Ames, pp. 24-28.

⁸"Souvenir of the Oregon Centennial," pp. 13 and 41; and Ames, pp. 24-28.

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South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

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Exchange was a rambling, two-story, side-gabled, Greek Revival building. It had a two-story, wrap-around porch, a broad cornice with returned eaves, six-over-six windows and a front door framed with sidelights. The building burned down in 1898.⁹ The first frame store building was erected at 104 Janesville Street, on the site of the current Netherwood Building, not long after the Oregon Exchange. It was a two-story, front-gabled, Greek Revival building, with a cornice and returned eaves. This building was moved south of its original site, to 140 South Main Street, in 1898. It remains there, much altered.¹⁰ Frame commercial vernacular buildings were also erected in Oregon's early years, including Boomtown Front and Front Gable structures.

In 1873, Oregon's central business district was composed of a scattering of buildings concentrated near the intersection of Janesville and Main streets, most of them facing the public square. The public square (currently Waterman Park and Park Street) was carved out of the south end of the block between North Main, Spring and Janesville streets.

By 1873, J. B. Munger had opened a brickyard east of Oregon and was producing high-quality cream brick. Munger's brickyard was in operation for many years, shipping brick throughout the region. Although it is uncertain when the first brick store was erected in Oregon, the four buildings in the South Main Street Historic District that were constructed between 1877 and 1880 are of cream brick, which likely came from Munger's brickyard. These are the Powers Building at 115 South Main Street (1877), the Cowdrey Tailor Shop at 111 South Main Street (1878), the Howe Drugstore at 121 South Main Street (1880), and Howe Rental at 123 South Main Street (1880). Apart from the much-altered frame building at 140 South Main Street, these four are the earliest surviving commercial buildings in Oregon. A series of fires between 1864 and 1880

⁹"Souvenir of the Oregon Centennial," p. 37; and Florice Paulson, A Walk Back In History: Do You Know?, (Oregon: N. p., 1990), no page numbers.

¹⁰Paulson, no page number.

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South Main Street Historic District
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destroyed many early store buildings on North and South Main streets.¹¹

The 1881 bird's-eye view of Oregon shows a continuous commercial streetscape of one- and two-story frame and brick buildings in the 100 blocks of South Main and Janesville streets (both north and south sides). The 100-block of North Main Street is less-developed. Boomtown Front, Front Gabled and Greek Revival frame structures are intermixed with brick buildings displaying Italianate-influenced segmental-arched openings and decorative brickwork. The Powers Building at 115 South Main Street is a good and fairly intact example of the Italianate-influenced brick commercial buildings of the era.

Between 1880 and 1898, no new buildings were erected in the South Main Street district, probably because both South Main and Janesville streets were completely built up by 1880. New commercial construction during this period appears to have concentrated along North Main Street. The Grand Central Hotel at 100 North Main Street (1883, demolished) and Cronk's Opera House at circa 110 North Main Street (built sometime between 1881 and 1894) were two of the buildings erected on North Main Street between 1880 and 1898. In 1898, fire destroyed the 1849 Oregon Exchange at 112-116 Janesville Street, and the first frame store (extant, altered), which stood at 104 Janesville Street, was moved to 140 South Main Street. These events created space for three new buildings. The Netherwood Building at 104 Janesville Street (1898), the Montgomery & Martin/Observer Building at 112 Janesville Street (1899), and the Hausmann Brewing Company Saloon at 116 Janesville Street (1900) were erected in quick succession. During the same brief period, two more buildings were erected in the district, replacing older frame structures: the Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge at 117 South Main Street (1898) and the McDermott Building at 109 South Main Street (1899). These last two structures and the Netherwood Building all display elements of the Romanesque Revival style. Two are constructed of cream brick, which may have come from the Oregon-area Munger brickyard. The Montgomery & Martin/Observer Building

¹¹Ames, pp. 20-21.

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South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin

and the Hausmann Brewing Company Saloon are both commercial vernacular buildings.

Two buildings in the district were erected after 1900. Both are commercial vernacular in form. The Connor Building at 101 South Main Street (1900) is a red brick structure and features Romanesque Revival-influenced decorative brickwork carried over from the neighboring McDermott Building. The Grady Grocery at 134 South Main Street (1915) is a Modern Broadfront with a red-brick front facade. The Modern Broadfront commercial vernacular form is prominent in the South Main Street district because the front facades of four of the nineteenth century buildings were replaced between 1911 and about 1945.

The last resource added to the South Main Street District is the World War Memorial, erected in 1920. This monument immediately became the focal point of the South Main Street district. It remains so today.

Since the end of World War II, the storefronts of a few of the buildings in the South Main Street Historic District have been altered in an attempt to modernize them, but no new buildings have been erected. Recently, efforts at preserving the historic character of the buildings have been made. Despite some change, the South Main Street Historic District retains good integrity. New commercial construction has occurred outside the South Main Street Historic District and has concentrated on North Main Street, gradually expanding northward to the north limits of the village.

The South Main Street Historic District has two notable Romanesque Revival commercial buildings. Both represent the late-nineteenth century variant of the style, influenced by the Queen Anne style and by the work of Henry Hobson Richardson. The Romanesque Revival style was built in Wisconsin between about 1880 and 1900. It is an eclectic and free translation of Romanesque forms, constructed of masonry and using round-arched openings. Polychromy, bands of windows with continuous sills and lintels, and heavy ornamental

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brickwork at the cornice are typical.¹² The Netherwood Building at 104 Janesville Street and the Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge at 117 South Main Street, both built in 1898, incorporate these features. The Netherwood Building also has a gabled parapet, a less-common element employed in late-nineteenth century Romanesque Revival. The Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge is also notable for its intact cast-iron storefront. This building was listed on the National Register in 1992.

None of the buildings in the South Main Street Historic District are known to have been designed by architects, nor are any architects listed in the Oregon business directory through 1928. Architectural firms from Madison, which lies just north of Oregon, could have designed buildings in the South Main Street district, but local craftsman more likely are responsible for the appearance of the district. None of the builders of the South Main Street district have been identified either, but several masons and carpenters appear in the city directories between 1873 and 1911 (neither occupation appears in later directories). Masons included: James Day (at least 1873-at least 1895), Rasmus Anderson (at least 1895-at least 1911), Charles Keller (at least 1903-at least 1911), and George Theobald (at least 1903-at least 1911). Cornelius Johnson (at least 1895-at least 1911), Clarence Wolf (at least 1895- at least 1903), Matthew Lamont and son William Lamont (at least 1903-at least 1911), and Demire Miller (at least 1903-at least 1911) were among the carpenters.

In conclusion, the South Main Street Historic District is locally significant under Criterion C as an intact and visually distinct grouping of late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings, united by physical development and immediately recognizable as part of a downtown. The South Main Street district has the largest concentration of architecturally significant historic commercial buildings in Oregon, and showcases two fine and intact Romanesque Revival commercial buildings.

¹²Wyatt, Barbara, editor, Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), II:2-12.

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South Main Street Historic District
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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE: COMMERCE

The South Main Street Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A, because its resources span the development of Oregon's central business district from 1877 to 1948. Many of Oregon's most important businesses were located in the South Main Street Historic District. Oregon's newspaper, the post office, the public library, barbers, clothing stores, boot and shoe stores, groceries, general stores, hardware stores, bakeries, a harness shop, jewelers, tailors, furniture stores, confectioneries, milliners and dressmakers, drug stores, saloons, meat markets, the Masonic Lodge, and an auditorium are some of the uses that were located in extant buildings in the district. Many of businesses, or their successor firms, were long-lived. One was still located in the district until recently: the Oregon Observer, the village's newspaper, at 112 Janesville Street since 1910.

The earliest businesses in Oregon were operated out of the proprietor's log cabin and included C.P. Mosley's tavern (1842), which soon became I.M. Bennett's tavern and general store, and James Coville's shoe store (1843). Two blacksmith shops soon followed. By 1849, the first hotel, a frame building, had been built. This was the Oregon Exchange (demolished), located at 112-16 Janesville Street in the South Main Street district. These early businesses suggest that Oregon, then known as "Rome Corners," was developing as an agricultural support community and serving as a way station for those traveling between Madison and Janesville.

In 1873, Oregon's businesses and professionals included J.W. Coville's general store, Isaact Howe's general store, G.W. Getz' wagon factory, J. Richards' lumberyard, a broom factory, two stock-dealers (J. Waterman and S.G. Abbott), and one attorney (F.D. Powers). By 1880, there were 29 businesses in Oregon, including three general stores, one harness maker, one grocery and pharmacy, one grocery and confectionery, one grocery, one pharmacy, one public hall, one millinery, one confectionery and jewelry store, one wagon maker and blacksmith, one tailor, one meat market, two boot and shoe shops, one furniture store, one hardware store, one lumber yard, one machine shop and sawmill, one jeweler, one hotel, one livery, one agricultural implements dealer, one stationer, one feed and seed store, one billiard hall, one barber, and one

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South Main Street Historic District
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brickyard. The newspaper, the Oregon Observer, which is still published today, was founded in 1880.¹³

Four buildings in the South Main Street Historic District were erected between 1873 and 1880. Charles E. Powers had the building at 115 South Main Street erected in 1877 to house his confectionery and jewelry store. Powers was in business at this location for 26 years, selling the building 1903.¹⁴ By 1908, Arthur Criddle's drugstore had moved into the building. Criddle operated the Oregon Drug Company as late as 1928, by which time Axel Johnson was working with him. In 1945, Johnson bought the building, which he continued to own until at least 1950. The Powers Building was also the site of Oregon's first public library, which was located on the second floor from 1908 until 1914.¹⁵

The building at 111 South Main Street was erected for Thomas B. Cowdrey's tailor shop in 1878. By 1880, another tailor was in residence, but Cowdrey retained ownership of the building until his death, circa 1903. Cowdrey was born in Pennsylvania and settled in Oregon in 1862. Cowdrey's son, F.B. Cowdrey, was born in Oregon and owned the Cowdrey building until at least 1941. For more than 30 years, the (F.B.) Cowdrey and (E.E.) Buche clothing and shoe store, called the White House, was located here.¹⁶

The buildings at 121 and 123 South Main Street were erected together for Isaac Howe in 1880. Howe was born in Vermont and graduated from the Vermont Medical College in 1849. He settled in Wisconsin in 1851. In 1865, he opened a drug store and grocery with

¹³"Souvenir of Oregon Centennial," p. 11.

¹⁴Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; and Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory, (Detroit: R. L. Polk and Company, 1895 and 1903).

¹⁵Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; and Paulson, no page numbers.

¹⁶Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1895; 1903; 1911; 1915; 1919; and 1924-25; and Ad, "Souvenir of Oregon Centennial," p. 28.

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his brother, C.M. Howe, in Stoughton. The Howes moved the business to Oregon in 1866, but the partnership dissolved in 1869. Isaac Howe had a store building erected on this site in 1876, but it burned in 1880. The existing buildings were then erected. Howe's drugstore was located in 121 South Main Street; 123 South Main Street was rented out. Around 1907, Lydia Meloy bought 121 South Main Street and A.M. Anderson's grocery and general store moved in, remaining there until about 1924. Anderson was succeeded by Arthur Ames' general store, here until at least 1941. Ames purchased the building from Meloy's estate between 1945 and 1950, retaining ownership until at least 1965.

The building at 123 South Main Street housed a general store until at least 1910. The firm of (Marcus) Terwilliger and (J.J.) Lindsay were the first tenants. The partnership dissolved but Terwilliger had a general store as late as 1895. By 1896, S. Grant Champnor had purchased the building. Champnor operated a general store and grocery on site until at least 1919 and owned the building until at least 1940. By 1919, the Kivlin and Kern hardware and plumbing business had moved in. Later called Kivlin and McCann, this enterprise continued in the building until at least 1941.¹⁷

Oregon experienced many advancements between 1880 and the turn of the century. In 1883, Oregon incorporated as a village. Citizens organized a volunteer fire-fighting company in 1895. In 1898, the water tower and pumping station were erected, and water mains and gas-powered street lights were installed. A telephone exchange began operating in 1901. In 1903, there were 59 businesses and professionals in Oregon, including eight livestock breeders and salesmen, four blacksmiths, four general stores, three saloons, two barbers, two harness makers, two physicians, two wagon makers, two attorneys, two liverys, two agricultural implements dealers, two grocers, one ice-dealer, one milk deliverer, one dressmaker, one dentist, one auctioneer, one drayman, one tailor, one restaurant, one telephone exchange, one furniture store, one horseshoer, one billiard parlor, one jeweler, one milliner, one hotel, one clothing

¹⁷E. W. Keyes, editor, History of Dane County, (Chicago: Western Historical Association, 1880), II:1236; Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; and "Souvenir of Oregon Centennial," pp. 24 and 30.

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store, one drugstore, one opera house, one nursery, one photographer, one lumberyard, one shoemaker, one bank, and one meat market.¹⁸

Five buildings in the South Main Street Historic District were built between 1898 and 1900. The Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge was erected at 117 South Main Street in 1898. The National Register nomination for this structure claims it was erected in two parts, with the first floor built in 1877 and the second floor following in 1898. As late as June 1894, there was a two-story frame commercial building on this site. Village tax rolls suggest that this building was built all at once, for H. H. Marvin and the Masonic Lodge, in 1898. Henry H. Marvin opened a hardware store in Oregon circa 1875. Marvin was in business in an earlier building on this site by 1877. The existing building housed the Marvin Hardware Company from 1898 until circa 1912. Marvin retained ownership of the building until 1920, leasing to (Earl) Prichard and (Patrick) Cusick, hardware dealers. Prichard and Cusick were in business together until 1940, when George Peterson bought out Prichard. Peterson and Cusick continued the business, while Prichard retained ownership of the building until his death in 1945. Peterson then bought the building, keeping it until 1971. The second floor space was built for the Masonic Lodge, at Marvin's invitation. It housed the Masonic Lodge until 1961.¹⁹

Charles W. Netherwood had the building at 104 Janesville Street constructed in 1898. Netherwood was born in New York in 1843 and settled in Oregon with his parents in 1856. Following service in the Civil War, he opened Netherwood Hall, on the northwest corner of Main and Jefferson (then West) Street. The first building burned in 1873 and was rebuilt on the first site. The second Netherwood Hall burned in 1898. Netherwood then erected the existing Netherwood Building on the current site. Several long-time

¹⁸Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1903.

¹⁹Map of Oregon, (Pelham, New York: Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Company, 1894 and 1899); Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; and Jane Eisely, "Oregon Masonic Lodge," National Register Nomination, 1992.

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businesses located in the Netherwood Building's four storefronts. The South Main Street storefront housed the post office from 1898 until at least 1928. The western storefront on the Janesville Street side housed a grocery in 1899. By 1907, William Laughlin's jewelry store was in residence; he was succeeded by another jeweler, Milton Wischoff, in 1915. Wischoff remained until at least 1941. The center storefront was a barbershop from 1899 until 1916. The public library located in this space from 1916 until 1941. The eastern storefront housed the City Meat Market from 1899 until 1921, when the Home Bakery moved in. Part of the second floor of the Netherwood Building was leased to the local chapter of the Modern Woodmen, a fraternal organization who held meetings there and sub-leased the space to the public for dances, church dinners and small gatherings. In addition to running the post office, Charles Netherwood sold stationery and insurance. He was civic-minded, serving as chairman of the board of supervisors of Dane County, mayor, town treasurer, and member of the Oregon Board of Education at various times. Netherwood owned the building until his death in 1939.²⁰

The building at 109 South Main Street was erected for Bernard McDermott in 1899. McDermott was born in Vermont and settled in Oregon in 1881. He operated a general store in the village until his death in 1901. McDermott's sons, George and William, succeeded him in business. The McDermott's Sons General Store continued until at least 1928. Later tenants were regional or national franchises, including the Kroger Grocery, Felix (circa 1940), Gamble and Ben Franklin. The McDermott family owned the building until at least 1950.²¹

George Montgomery and Charles Martin had the building at 112 Janesville Street constructed in 1899. The structure housed their

²⁰Paulson, no page numbers; Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; and Map of Oregon, (Pelham, New York: Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Company, 1899; 1910 and 1928).

²¹Paulson, no page numbers; Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; and Lightfoot's Company's Dane County Directory: 1928-29, (Peoria, Illinois: W. H. Lightfoot Company, 1928).

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saloon until at least 1903 and another, the Buof Brewing Company Saloon, until 1910. In February 1910, E.F. Kramer, publisher of the Oregon Observer, moved the newspaper into the building, where it continues today. The Oregon Observer began publication in 1880. Kramer owned the building from at least 1925 until at least 1955; it remained in the Kramer family until at least 1965.²²

The building at 116 Janesville Street was erected for the Hausmann Brewing Company in 1900. The Company's saloon was in the building until at least 1910. Prohibition likely inspired the Hausmann Brewing Company to sell the property to William Hayes in 1919. Hayes was a harness maker, in business in Oregon from at least 1911 until at least 1928. He owned the building until at least 1935. Hayes was succeeded by a series of barbers, one of whom, Cletus Brown, owned the property from at least 1945 until at least 1965.²³

During the early twentieth century, the number of businesses and professionals in Oregon remained fairly steady, as the village continued in its role as an agricultural support community. New types of enterprises came to Oregon, such as automobile dealerships and garages, and motion picture theaters. An electric light plant and a public sewer system were also inaugurated, both in 1906. The first paved streets appeared in 1916. In 1924, there were 54 businesses and professionals in Oregon, including four automobile garages, three general stores, three livestock dealers, two banks, two harness makers, two clothing and shoe stores, two meat markets, two dentists, two blacksmiths, two physicians, two electricians, one gas station, one newspaper, one billiard parlor and bowling alley, one cigar factory, one creamery, one electric utility, one telephone exchange, one hotel, one drugstore, one agricultural implements dealer, one mason, one furniture store, one lumberyard, one milliner, one veterinarian, one auto rental agency, one attorney, one realtor, one coal and feed dealer, one feed mill, one

²²Paulson, no page numbers; and Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls.

²³Paulson, no page numbers; Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; and Map of Oregon, 1900; 1910; and 1928.

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opera house, one drayman, one bakery, one grocery, one jeweler, and one motion picture theater.²⁴

Two buildings in the district were erected in the early twentieth century: the Connor Building at 101 South Main Street (1908) and the Grady Grocery at 134 South Main Street (1915).

The Connor Building was constructed for the J.P. Connor General Store. Brothers John P. and Bernard F. Connor were operating a general store in Oregon by 1895. By 1903, the partnership had dissolved. J.P.'s sons, John and Bernard, joined the firm and continued the business after J.P.'s death. Connor had a rivalry with his neighbors and competitors, the McDermotts, and in 1908 matched their 1899 building with his own. The Connor Building shows many similarities to the McDermott block, perhaps because of the competition between the two enterprises. The J.P. Connor General Store was in business until at least 1924. In 1926, Edward G. Booth and son, Gerald, bought 101 South Main Street for their furniture store. Booth and Son began as a furniture and undertaking business around 1910. The E.G. Booth and Son Furniture Store continued in the building until at least 1941. The firm owned the building until at least 1955.²⁵

The Grady Grocery was constructed for T.H. Grady in 1915. Prior to 1895, a small frame butcher shop stood on the site. In 1895, part of the 1868 Oregon Public School was moved onto the site and became the Village Hall. A two-story frame building with a bell-cupola, the old school also served as the fire station. The butcher shop was moved north on the lot, just south of the Exchange Hotel (current site of the Netherwood Block), but was gone by 1899. In 1915, the Village Hall was moved to the north side of the public square, where the existing Village Hall is located. Thomas H. Grady was employed as head clerk at the B. McDermott/B. McDermott's Sons General Store for many years, beginning in 1881. In 1903, Grady opened his own grocery. Grady operated the grocery until at least

²⁴Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1924.

²⁵Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; Wisconsin State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1911 and 1924.

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1934 and the owned the building until at least 1930. The building remained in the Grady family until at least 1945.²⁶

In 1920, the World War Memorial was erected on the small plaza at the southeast corner of South Main and Janesville streets. Said to be the first monument to honor veterans of World War I, Oregon's World War Memorial may have affected national political history. Wisconsin Senator Irvine L. Lenroot was the keynote speaker at the Memorial's dedication ceremony on June 10, 1920. At the same time, the Republican national convention was selecting candidates for the presidential election. Lenroot was in the running for vice-president and might have been nominated had he been present. Calvin Coolidge became the vice-presidential candidate, succeeding to the presidency following the death of Warren G. Harding.²⁷

By 1915, the South Main Street Historic District was completely built out. While no new buildings were erected in the South Main Street district after that date, property owners and businesses kept pace by updating the front facades of their buildings. This trend had begun around 1907 with the Howe drugstore at 121 South Main Street. The Cowdrey Tailor Shop followed with a new front facade in 1911.

While a complete listing of Oregon's business during the 1930s and 1940s is unavailable, it is clear that many of the firms that had established themselves in the district by the 1920s weathered the Depression and lasted into the 1940s. These included the Oregon Observer (112 Janesville Street, still in residence); Cowdrey and Buche, clothing and shoes (The White House, 111 South Main Street); Kivlin and Kern, hardware and plumbing (123 South Main Street); Oregon Drug Company/Axel Johnson, drugs and candies (115 South Main Street); Prichard and Cusick/Peterson and Cusick, hardware (117 South Main Street); Milton Wischoff, jewelry and optometry (104

²⁶Paulson, no page numbers; Village of Oregon, Tax Rolls; and Ames, p. 31.

²⁷Paulson, no page numbers; and Frieda M. Lease, "Soldiers' Memorial--Symbol of Community Patriotism," Unpublished manuscript, 1983, on file, Oregon Area Historical Society.

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Janesville Street); the Oregon Public Library (104 Janesville Street); and E.G. Booth and Son, furniture (101 South Main Street). Three buildings in the South Main Street district received new front facades, probably during the 1940s: the Hausmann Brewing Company Saloon at 116 Janesville Street; the Howe Drugstore at 121 South Main Street; and Howe Rental at 123 South Main Street.

Since 1950, several of the storefronts have been modernized in an effort to keep the central business district competitive with the new commercial area that has grown up along North Main Street at the north limits of the village. Recently, a few property owners have tried to preserve the historic character of their building or return it to its historic appearance. The owner of the Marvin Hardware/Masonic Lodge participated in the federal historic preservation tax credit program. The original Connor Building storefront was recently uncovered. The National Register nomination of the South Main Street Historic District is the latest effort in this trend. The nomination was initiated by the Oregon Area Historical Society, which has obtained the support of a majority of the property owners, the Village Economic Development Commission and the Oregon Village Board.

PRESERVATION ACTIVITY

The village of Oregon does not have a historic preservation ordinance, although the Village Board did declare the Water Tower and Pump House a local cultural landmark in 1984. The Water Tower and Pump House is located on Janesville Street, just east of the South Main Street Historic District. The Oregon Area Historical Society (OAHS) has become active in historic preservation efforts recently. In 1997, the OAHS sponsored the nomination of the old Oregon High School to the National Register. The OAHS sponsored this nomination and plans to apply to an intensive survey of the village's historic resources next year, through a bequest by attorney Charles Cell.

Preservation activity in the South Main Street Historic District has been limited primarily to individual efforts on the part of property owners, some of whom have shown an appreciation of the historic character of their buildings in the rehabilitation or restoration of their properties. The owner of the Marvin

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Hardware/Masonic Lodge participated in the historic preservation tax credit program in 1992.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

No archaeological remains have been discovered to date in the South Main Street Historic District. Some prehistoric and late historic remains may be present, as Native Americans and, later, European Americans have inhabited the area for hundreds of years. Any remains of pre-European cultures are likely to have been disturbed, if not destroyed, by the building activity associated with the development of Oregon. The presence of historic archaeological remains is likely, and would be worth exploring.

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South Main Street Historic District

Dane County, Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

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

Primary location of additional data:
 State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State Agency
 Federal Agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository:
Oregon Village Hall

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2 acres

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

1 1/6 3/0/5/3/6/0 4/7/5/5/1/9/0 3 1/6 3/0/5/4/3/0 4/7/5/5/0/7/0
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

2 1/6 3/0/5/4/4/0 4/7/5/5/1/2/0 4 1/6 3/0/5/3/5/0 4/7/5/5/1/1/0
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
___ see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a Continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth L. Miller, Preservation Consultant, for
organization Oregon Area Historical Society date 11-15-1998
street & number 4685 Schneider Drive telephone 608-835-3046
city or town Oregon state WI zip code 53575
contact: JoAn Gefke

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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

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

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The South Main Street Historic District encompasses Lot 1 and the north 126.5 feet of Lot 2, Block 4, Waterman's original plat of Oregon; Lots 1 through 8, Block B, W. S. Bedford Addition; and that part of the old public square lying south of Janesville Street as indicated on the district site map; all in the Village of Oregon, Dane County, Wisconsin. Total of about 2 acres.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries of the South Main Street Historic District encompass the two blocks of Oregon's traditional central business district, along and adjacent to the 100-blocks of South Main and Janesville Streets, that retains integrity and that part of the old public square lying south of Janesville Street. The boundaries were drawn to exclude areas that are not in commercial use, are of a different character or time period, or have lost integrity.

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Photo 1 of 8
South Main Street Historic District
Oregon, Dane County, WI
Photo by Elizabeth L. Miller, 26 September 1998
Negative on file at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Facing West
101 through 123 South Main Street and World War Memorial

Photo 2 of 8
117 South Main Street
Facing West

Photo 3 of 8
104 Janesville Street
facing South

Photo 4 of 8
101 through 109 South Main Street
Facing West

Photo 5 of 8
104 through 116 Janesville Street
Facing South West

Photo 6 of 8
121 and 123 South Main Street
Facing North West

Photo 7 of 8
134 South Main Street
Facing North East

Photo 8 of 8
World War Memorial
Facing East

South Main Street Historic District
Name of Property

Dane County, Wisconsin
County and State

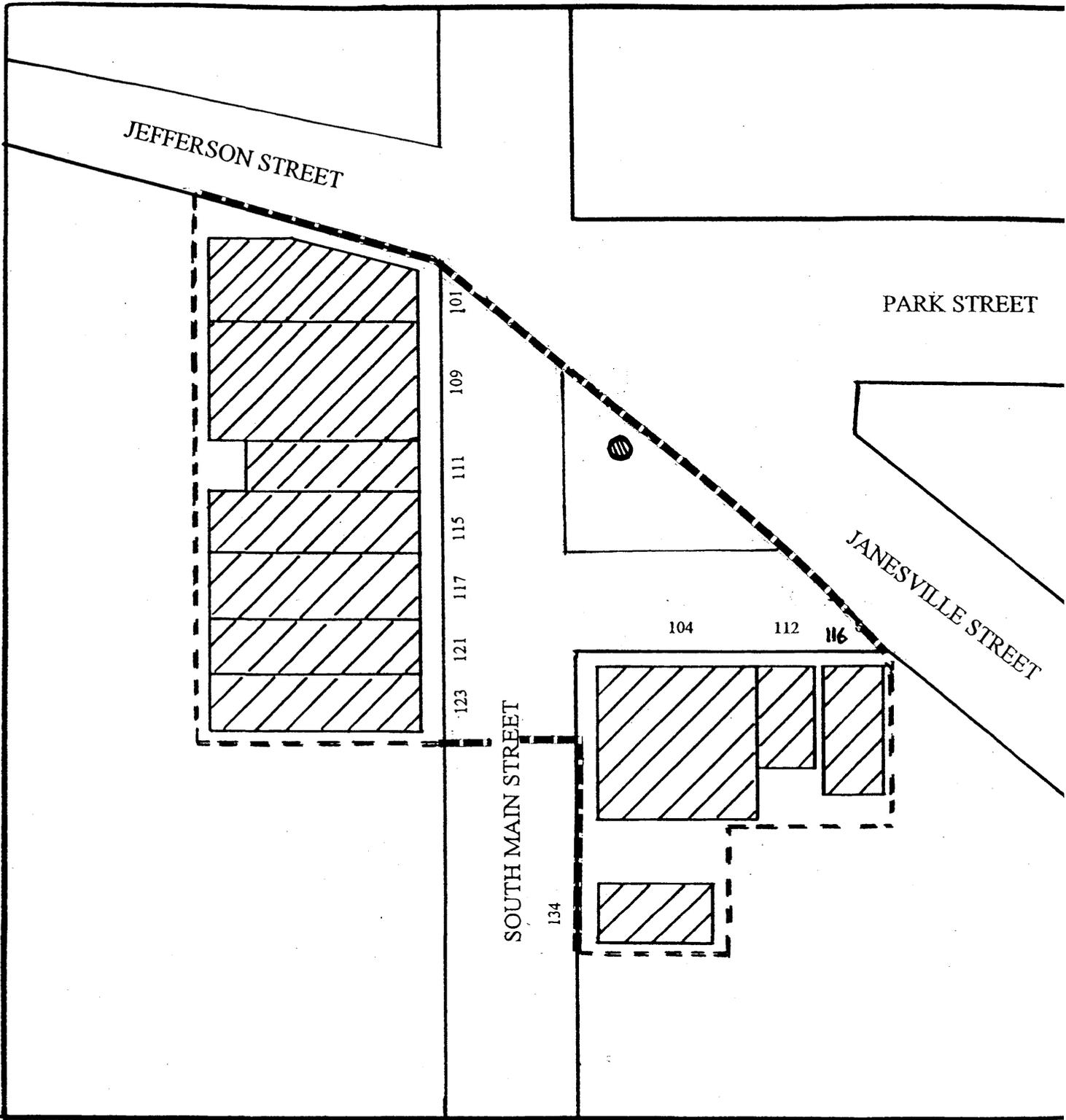
Property Owner

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

name Multiple (see list attached)
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.

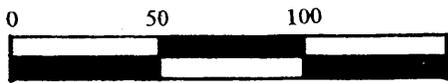


SOUTH MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

OREGON

DANE COUNTY

WISCONSIN



SCALE IN FEET

NONCONTRIBUTING
CONTRIBUTING
DISTRICT BOUNDARY

