

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any 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 Alliance Commercial Historic District

Other names/site number N/A

2. Location

Street & number Box Butte Avenue (Various Addresses)

Not for publication N/A

City or town Alliance

Vicinity N/A

State Nebraska Code NE County Box Butte Code 013 Zip code 69301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official

Jan. 15, 2007
Date

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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): _____

Edson H. Beall 3-21-07

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Alliance Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- Public-local
- Public-state
- Public-federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
44	10	Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
44	10	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
01

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- COMMERCE / TRADE / business
- COMMERCE / TRADE / financial institution
- COMMERCE / TRADE / department store
- COMMERCE / TRADE / warehouse
- COMMERCE / TRADE / specialty store
- COMMERCE / TRADE / restaurant
- GOVERNMENT / post office
- GOVERNMENT / courthouse
- RECREATION AND CULTURE / theater
- SOCIAL / meeting hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- COMMERCE / TRADE / business
- COMMERCE / TRADE / financial institution
- COMMERCE / TRADE / department store
- COMMERCE / TRADE / warehouse
- COMMERCE / TRADE / specialty store
- COMMERCE / TRADE / restaurant
- GOVERNMENT / post office
- GOVERNMENT / courthouse
- RECREATION AND CULTURE / theater
- SOCIAL / meeting hall
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- VACANT / NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Late Victorian: Romanesque
- Late 19th/20th Century Revivals: Mission Revival
- Modern Movement: Art Moderne
- Other: Commercial Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Foundation Concrete
- Walls Brick
- Roof Asphalt
- Other N/A

Narrative Description

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

See Continuation Sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1893-1957

Significant Dates

1893

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
X 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 for additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
X Local Government
University
Other
Name of repository:

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 17.4 acres

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

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1.			3.		
2.			4.		

[X] 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 John N. Vogel & Marisa A. Kosobucki
organization Heritage Research, Ltd. date 28 July 2006
street & number N89 W16785 Appleton Avenue telephone 262.251.7792
city or town Menomonee Falls state WI zip code 53051

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name/title Various
street & number Various telephone Various
city or town Alliance state NE zip code 69301

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Introduction:

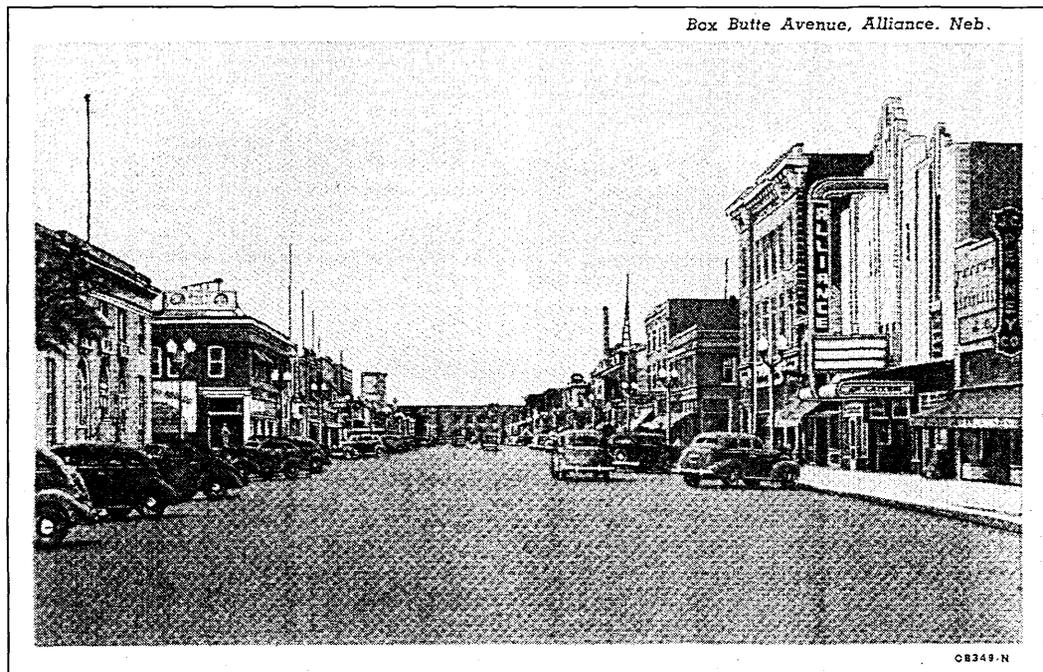


Figure 1: Box Butte Avenue. View from 400 block to south (ca. 1946). The building in the distant center is the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Depot--now demolished.

Alliance is a northwestern Nebraska community that was formally established in 1888. It is situated in the high plains of the state, immediately west-northwest of the state's prominent Sand Hills region. The town evolved as a support center for the farmers and cattlemen in the surrounding territory. It also became a major division point for the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad. Indeed, the community grew from a fledgling 300 residents in 1888, to one that included 3,500 inhabitants in 1902. The town claimed 5,500 residents in 1917.¹ And as the town grew, so did the country around it. Box Butte County claimed 5,572 residents in 1900, a number that increased to 6,131 in 1910 and 10,736 by 1940. Given the number of people it served, and the expanse of the territory from which it drew them, Alliance became a prominent point of commerce and trade for those that lived within an approximate thirty-mile or larger radius around the town.

The city's commerce was largely conducted along its main street, Box Butte Avenue. Anchoring the street, at its south end, was the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad depot (demolished). Its location provided quick and easy access to salesmen that wanted to conduct business in the town—especially business along Box Butte Avenue. Thus it is that the Alliance Commercial Historic District focuses on Box Butte Avenue, generally between Sixth Street to the north and Second Street on the south. The District also includes the buildings on Third and Fourth streets, between Box Butte Avenue and Laramie Avenue.

The District's built environment is largely represented by the commercial vernacular building form, rather than specific architectural styles. However, there are some distinct architectural styles represented. One such example is the community's Art Deco style movie theater (410 Box Butte Avenue/NeHBS #BX01-023), while another is the Neo-Classical

¹ The population figures noted are from the various State Gazetteer and Business Directories cited elsewhere in this document.

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Post Office (401 Box Butte Avenue/NeHBS #BX01-064). The historical integrity of the buildings found within the District is generally good to very good. Inevitably, the first floors (generally the retail area of multiple story buildings) of many of them have been changed over time. That fact is offset, however, by the integrity and continuity inevitably found on those many buildings with second and third floors. Several one story and a few two story buildings have been modified to the point that they offered nothing to the sense of time and place evoked by the vast majority of buildings in the District. Those buildings are considered noncontributing components within the District boundaries. Overall, the District includes 44 contributing buildings and 10 noncontributing buildings. One building in the District, the Box Butte County Court House, was individually listed in the National Register on January 10, 1990.

An architectural description for each of the fifty-five buildings in the District follows, as do some historical notes and information about specific buildings. The location of each building is referenced on the attached survey map.

Resources of the Alliance Commercial Historic District:

This section starts with buildings at the north end of Box Butte Avenue. The buildings described proceed south, on the west side of the street (properties #1-26). Next described are those on the south side of 3rd Street, as the district extends one block to the west (properties #27-30). Property #31 is a building on 4th Street. The east side of Box Butte Avenue is then illustrated, south to north (properties #32-50). Thereafter, two buildings on Laramie are noted (properties #51, 54), as are two buildings on 4th Street (properties #52, 53). The final property (#55) is on the north side of 3rd Street, between Box Butte and Laramie. This section concludes with a summary chart which again notes the contributing or noncontributing status of the building.

1. 524 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-216/Built 1947/commercial vernacular): This one-story, rectangular building was erected as a medical clinic in 1947.² It is constructed of brick and crowned by concrete coping. Its most distinguishing feature is the entryway which is defined by a door flanked by glass block side lights, all surrounded by a decorative terra cotta frame—the top center panel of which contains a caduceus. Terra cotta panels also extend to either side of the doorway for the lower one-third of its height, above which are 121 symmetrically arranged glass blocks that permit light to enter the lobby of the building. A flat awning projects over the entryway. The integrity of this building is excellent.
2. 510 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-026/Built 1940/commercial vernacular): Constructed of brick in 1940, this one story building housed the local telephone exchange.³ It rises from a water table constructed of terra cotta panels. The entrance is off-center to the south and flanked by four (two on each side), three-over-three light windows with aluminum storm windows. A similar window is off-set to the north. The door and windows are all surrounded by terra cotta frames with round arches. A decorative terra cotta panel with foliage design is present in the arch above each window and the door. A simple cornice extends the length of the building, above the window and door frames. The wall terminates with plain coping. With no apparent alterations, this building has excellent integrity.
3. 508 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-228/Built 1929/Pueblo Revival): The Fireside Restaurant building was constructed in 1929 as a photographic studio. It is a small building erected in the Pueblo Revival style. It is notable for its stucco walls, through which log roof beams project. An entryway that employs both squared and rounded corners, and that is crowned with a small tile roof, permits access to the modestly-sized courtyard, as well as the building itself. An unspecified "small addition" was reportedly made to the building in 1970, as was another in 1980.⁴ Minor alterations notwithstanding, the integrity of this building is very good.
4. 502 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-232/Built 1920/commercial vernacular): A former automobile

² Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (New York: Sanborn Map Co., Limited, 1948), electronic copy obtained from NeSHPO, Lincoln, NE.

³ Alliance Main Street Walking Tour (Alliance, NE: Alliance Main Street, n.d.), 3.

⁴ Ibid.

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dealership, the Lowery and Henry building is a two story edifice with excellent integrity that was built in 1920. The first floor is constructed of brick, while the second level is sheathed with a more functional, concrete veneer. The first floor of the building is distinguished by six large windows at its southeast corner (three on the south side and three on the east side). These are the windows in which new cars were displayed. Each claims a decorative, stained-glass transom, the south-facing, southeastern-most window of which includes the word "Garage." Extending above the six display windows, as well as the garage door and another entry to the north of that also has the word "Garage" in its transom, is a roof supported by simple brackets, as well as hung by chains above. A decorative cornice crowns the first floor of the building, above which rises an unadorned second level. It claims over thirty windows on the south and east sides, many of which contain nine lights. It is on this level that new and repaired automobiles were likely stored. The building was designed by Denver Architect H.W.J. Edbrooke and today houses a printing company.⁵

5. H.J. Ellis: 424 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-241/Built 1903/commercial vernacular): This two-story brick building was erected in 1903, with a rear addition constructed in 1919. It has a remodeled storefront (ca. 1960s), while several windows with segmental arches on the north side have been infilled. The primary façade of the building claims paired, one-over-one light windows with rock-faced, concrete sills on the second floor, centered above which is the name "H.J. Ellis," who was the editor of the *Alliance Herald* newspaper. An ornate, brick cornice crowns the building and wraps around the north wall. The building has served the community as an early home to its telephone exchange, as well as an early home to the *Alliance Times*.⁶ Despite the minor alterations to this building, its integrity is considered to be very good.
6. 422 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-242/Built 1914/commercial vernacular): With a renovated storefront framed with decorative columns on either side and a brick transom extending between them, the historical integrity of the second floor and cornice of this red brick building is very good and consistent with that of the buildings to the immediate north and south. The building is notable for its four, symmetrically placed, one-over-one light windows set in segmental arched frames with concrete sills. The top portion of each window frame currently has wood infill. Above the windows is a decorative cornice.

Erected in 1914, the building served various functions throughout its history. It housed a tire repair shop in 1920, as well as other stores in 1930 and 1948.⁷

7. H.J. Ellis: 420 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-243/Built 1914/commercial vernacular): Mirroring the second floor window placement and cornice of the building at 422 Box Butte Avenue, the historic character of this building is remains. The first floor display area was remodeled in the ca. 1960s, and is now sheathed with stucco. It also has new windows. The name "H.J. Ellis" is centered immediately below the cornice.
8. Eagles Building: 416 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-024/Built 1927/commercial vernacular): The Roller Hardware and Appliance store is in the historic Eagles Building. Absolute symmetry is the key to this façade. It was constructed in 1927, and is a two-story, brick-faced building built generally in a 20th century commercial vernacular form. The building includes embellishments that identify its use as the home of the local Fraternal Order of Eagles (FOE). The largely windowed storefront level includes a recessed, modern, double-door entrance at the center. A single stone column separates the entry. Additional entrances are located at either end of the building, each of which is framed with a cut and incised stone surround representing columns and a pediment that evoke the Astrip classical style of architecture. An eagle is located at the center of each pediment and the left entrance also incorporates the building's 1927 date of construction. A transom tops each entryway and includes the letters FOE. The first and sec-

⁵ *Ibid.*⁶ *Ibid.*; *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., Limited, 1920), electronic copy obtained from NeSHPO, Lincoln, NE.⁷ *Walking Tour*, 3; *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., Limited, 1930), electronic copy obtained from NeSHPO, Lincoln, NE; *Sanborn Map* (1948).

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ond levels, as well as the second level and cornice line, are separated by a line of carved stonework. The symmetrically placed windows of the second floor include both single and paired sash openings that display a three light upper sash and single-pane lower sash. The cornice level includes a central, carved stone inset that reads AEAGLES BUILDING,⁸ while two-dimensional, carved stone eagles that stand atop a shield, occupy either corner. Finally, a three-dimensional eagle rests along the top of the cornice. Given its architectural attributes and sense of character, the integrity of this building is excellent.

Regarding the building's use, retail outlets were situated on the street level. Eagle's Club offices were then located on the second floor. The front of the building was restored in 1996.⁸

9. 412 Box Butte Avenue (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-244/Built 1920/commercial vernacular): Currently vacant, the physical changes to this 1920 building results in a loss of integrity.⁹ It is considered non-contributing.
10. 410 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-023/Built 1937/Art Deco): Constructed in the Art Deco style, this theater was built in 1937 and rises three stories in height. Although the first-floor entrances have been modernized, the primary central entrance remains recessed. The movie poster and box office areas are covered with colored glazed tile. A rectangular canopy extends over the entry and directly beneath the original marquee and vertical signage that identifies the building as the Alliance Theater. The building's stepped facade is covered with glazed tile and displays vertically oriented, hard-edge patterning that includes glass block within the outer examples, while highly stylized volutes embellish the central example. Also typical of the style are the metal casement (or awning) windows that are located along the second level. The integrity of this theater is excellent.

The theater was designed by architect Walter Simon, while the decorative front was conceived of and constructed by the Denver Terra Cotta Corporation. It cost \$145,375.00.¹⁰

11. 406 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-022/Built ca. 1897/commercial vernacular): Sheathed with aluminum, this small, two-story building was constructed prior to 1899. The diminutive, vernacular form building claims four, symmetrically placed, one-over-one light windows in the second floor, above which is a modest cornice. This is a frame building, of which there are few in the downtown Alliance area. The aluminum siding clearly replaces that which was original, however, the date of its application is at least fifty years past. Thus the integrity of this building is considered good.

A dressmaker was located in this building in 1899, as was a dressmaker and milliner in 1903. A candy shop occupied the property in 1909, along with an office. The candy shop remained in 1920, while a repair shop was located in the other half of the building in 1920. Thereafter, it was simply identified as a "store."¹¹

12. Newberry Hardware Co: 402 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-021/Built 1914/Neoclassical Revival): This prominent, three-story building housed the historic Newberry's Hardware Company. It was built in 1914 and employs the Neoclassical Revival style of architecture. Although the storefront windows have been replaced, and the east entrance has been replaced with a window, the recessed corner entry—which is marked by three brick piers—remains in place. Each entryway is topped with an arch that exhibits a central keystone and radiating brick trim.

⁸ *Walking Tour*, 3.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Walking Tour*, 3.

¹¹ *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., Limited, 1899), electronic copy obtained from NeSHPO, Lincoln, NE; *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., Limited, 1903), electronic copy obtained from NeSHPO, Lincoln, NE; *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* (New York: Sanborn Map Co., Limited, 1909), electronic copy obtained from NeSHPO, Lincoln, NE; *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948) *Walking Tour*, 3.

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These arches are now obscured by the remains of metal signage. The second level of the Box Butte Avenue elevation carries a series of six, double-hung sash windows that include a fixed upper sash (that has now been painted). The four interior windows are topped with a rectilinear, hood mold with corbel stops, while the outermost windows feature a straight hood accented with red trim. The third level also includes a series of six sash windows, without the fixed upper sash found on the second floor. The outermost bays project slightly and are articulated with red brick to simulate quoining. The projecting cornice level, which wraps around the building to the south, features contrasting red brick patterning, carved brackets, dentiling and modillion-like trim. A brick parapet rises above the cornice line and includes metal signage that identifies the building's name (Newberry's Hardware Co.), the date of construction of the building (1914) and the year of the company's establishment (1888).

Aside from the window replacement, the 4th Street facade remains relatively unchanged. Again, the outermost bays are articulated with red brick, while the inner seven bays are divided by engaged brick pilasters. Each bay includes two windows, the second-level examples of which again feature a fixed upper sash; however, not all upper lights appear to have been covered or painted along this elevation. Brick hood molds again include corbel stops. The integrity of this complete building is excellent.

The building was organized in such a fashion that hardware was sold on the first floor, while offices were located on the second. Newberry's harness and saddle shop was situated on the third floor.¹²

13. W.W. Norton: 318 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-215/Built 1890s/commercial vernacular): Proudly displaying the name "W.W. Norton" above its cornice, this is a three-story brick building that was erected in the 1890s. It appears, however, that the entire façade was reconstructed in the ca. 1920s, while the first floor retail area was remodeled in the 1960s. The first floor area now consists of red brick with display windows, above which is an awning and a bracketed panel in which the name "Heritage VI Mall" is displayed. Above that are four, symmetrically placed windows with brick sills. Each consists of a large, horizontally placed piece of glass, above which is a two-pane (side-by-side) transom. The third floor claims four sets of paired, one-over-one light double hung windows with brick sills. A raised brick cornice with stepped coping terminates the building. Storefront alterations in the 1960s notwithstanding, the overall integrity of this structure with its 1920s facade is good.

Mr. Norton apparently left the building in 1920, after which it served a variety of functions. A Woolworth's store occupied the first floor at one time, while the Central Hotel and other apartments were situated on the upper floors.¹³

14. 316 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-245/Built 1904/commercial vernacular): Built in 1904 of red brick, this modestly sized, two-story building has a remodeled, ca. 1970s storefront. The integrity of the second floor and cornice is very good, despite the placement of a sign advertising the store's name across the two sets of paired, second floor windows. Fred Holstein erected the building, which contained, among others, a drug store and jewelry outlet.¹⁴

15. 314 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-214/Built 1901/commercial vernacular): A panel of bricks in the decorative cornice of this two story, red brick building bears the date "1901." Beneath the cornice on the second floor are two pairs of one-over-one light windows with segmental arches and concrete sills. The first floor storefront was remodeled in the ca. 1960s and now consists of red tile squares, red brick and glass blocks. As for the businesses housed in the building, it claimed a dry good store shortly after its construction and a grocer by 1920. Thereafter, it was simply identified as a "store."¹⁵ Despite the remodeled storefront, the integrity of the general building is good,

¹² *Walking Tour*, 4.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

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while that of the second floor and cornice is very good.

16. 312 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-246/Built 1893/commercial vernacular): Said to have been constructed in 1893 as the original Newberry's Hardware, this simple, two-store brick, retail building has very much a 1950s appearance. The storefront contains sidewalk to ceiling display windows sheltered by a projecting awning, above which is a ridged, decorative panel. Immediately above the panel are two, symmetrically placed, paired, double-hung second floor windows. A simple, rectangular panel set off by inset bricks crowns the building.¹⁶ Based on its likely 1950s reconstruction, the integrity of this building is excellent.
17. Adler: 308 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-020/Built 1893/Romanesque Revival): This Romanesque Revival style building has a remodeled storefront (circa 1940s) with a base of granite panels, above which are displayed glass panels and an awning—all framed to either side by porcelain or glazed tile and topped with similar panels. More unique is the second floor of this brick sheathed edifice. It is covered with corbelled and patterned brick work and carries three round-arched windows that are topped with a continuous arcade consisting of four rows of header brick. The shaped, yet largely rectilinear, parapet is accented at each end of the building—as well as at the center—by battlement-like elements. Set within the parapet for each side of the building is the name "Adler." The character and integrity of the second floor in particular, is excellent.

The building dates to 1903 and has served a variety of stores throughout its history. It contained, for example, grocery, hardware, clothing and dry goods merchants in the early years of the twentieth century. A fraternal lodge was also located on the second floor between ca. 1903 and ca. 1930.¹⁷

18. 306 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-247/Built 1950s/commercial vernacular): It is uncertain if this building was remodeled to its current appearance, or if it was built this way. Nevertheless, the building—as presented—dates to the early 1950s. The first floor contains three commercial entrances that flank a central doorway to the apartment(s) upstairs. The entryways are constructed of light red brick and glass. All appear to provide access to Thieles mercantile. Sheltering the first floor is a large porch roof supported by seven cables anchored to the building above. The second floor of the building is sheathed with enamel panels. Seven, one-over-one light windows with no surrounds are symmetrically placed in the second floor. With no apparent alterations, the integrity of this early 1950s building is considered very good.

The businesses historically at this location operated for 100 years (1888-1898) and included a drugstore, dry goods store, jeweler and furniture store. Given the uncertainty of the building's age, however, it is unknown if those pursuits occurred in the present building—or a predecessor. Harry F. Thiele purchased the property in 1904. It is his name that remains on the building today.¹⁸

19. 302 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-019/Built 1903/Romanesque Revival): A two-story, red brick edifice, this building rises from a water table of red tiles and conveys components of the Romanesque Revival architectural style. The main, east-facing façade is notable for its round arch and keystone entryway to the south. To the north of the entryway is a small picture window that replaced three, historic-period Romanesque windows. Immediately around the corner from the previously noted doorway (east corner of the south side) is a companion doorway. To its west, is a round-arched window, beyond which are four windows with straight heads, beyond which are three round-arched windows, beyond which are several other windows with straight heads. Above the windows on the east side of the building, as well as those on the east half of the south side of the building, are decorative panels. Above the panel on the east side of the building (second floor) are four, one-over-one light windows with brick sills and

¹⁶ *Walking Tour*, 4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*; *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

¹⁸ *Walking Tour*, 5; *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

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straight heads. Continuing on the second floor, at the east end of the south side of the building are two paired, one-over-one light windows with brick sills and straight heads. To the west of those are four single, one-over-one light windows with Romanesque arched hoods. Two more paired windows with straight heads are to the west of those with the Romanesque arches. The west half of the south side of the second floor contains five units of paired windows with brick sills and heads of relieving arches. Alterations to the building appear to be limited to the installation of a tile water table, as well as the infilling and doorways installed in the Romanesque entry arches. Those alterations do not detract from the size, scale and style of the building. Its integrity is considered to be very good.

The main block of this building, which is that in the immediate northwest corner of Box Butte Avenue and 3rd Street intersection, was reportedly built in 1903 for the Guardian State Bank. An addition to the west is thought to have been constructed between 1903 and 1909. A bank operated at this location through at least 1948.¹⁹

20. 224 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-248/Built 1953/commercial vernacular): Sheathed with marble panels is the Bank of the West building. It is a large, two-story building that occupies the southwest corner of Box Butte Avenue and 3rd Street. The prominent northeast corner of the building is characterized by a series of fourteen large windows with transoms on the first floor. Immediately above those are panels with "Bank of the West" displayed. The second floor of the building on that corner contains windows like those on the first floor, only upside down. To the west of this corner (north side of the building) is a series of four, plain, projecting columns, in between which are single window units on the first and second floors similar to those in the corner. The west end of the north side of the building contains windows on the first and second floor like those in the northeast corner. On the east side of the building, a large solid, projecting panel is immediately south of the corner previously described, to the south of which are first and second floor windows like those in the northeast corner. The integrity of this building is excellent. The building's 1953 construction notwithstanding, a bank was situated at this location for much of the preceding half century.²⁰
21. 218 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-230/Built ca. 1906/commercial vernacular): Crowned with a decorative cornice that employs red and tan brick and is notable for its polychrome effect, this is a two story building with what is a historic-period, remodeled first-floor storefront. The main entrance is offset to the left and flanked by two, large picture windows. To the north of the right window is a doorway that provides access to the second floor. A glass block transom is above the storefront door and windows, as well as above the doorway at the right side of the building. The second floor is notable for its four, round-arched windows, the lights in which have been reduced in size. The windows are one-over-one light units, with an opaque panel above. The arches are easily defined by the polychrome effect. Above the arches, and below the cornice, is a series of ten, light-brick, cross-like, decorations. Given its architectural attributes, including the remodeled storefront and the polychrome effect above the second floor windows and in the cornice, the integrity of this building is very good.
- This edifice was constructed in the ca. 1906 period. Originally housing a saloon, it contained a grocery store by 1920. Thereafter, in 1930 and 1948, the building was simply noted as containing a store.²¹
22. 216 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-210/Built ca. 1952/commercial vernacular): This simple and unadorned, one-story building is constructed of brick. It has a recessed entryway flanked by large display windows. A stepped brick cornice is its most prominent feature. The present building dates to the ca. 1952 period and has excellent integrity.²²

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Walking Tour*, 5.

²¹ *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

²² *Sanborn Map* (1948); Observation, 03 May 2006.

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23. 214 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-209/Built 1903/commercial vernacular): Built of light brick, this one-story building was erected in 1903 and remodeled in 1998. It contained a bowling alley and café, as well as a drug store between at least 1930 and 1948. The building is notable for its four, large picture windows, two of which are on either side of the centered, wood door with inset panels. An "I" beam extends the length of the building, above the windows, above which appears to be an extended transom light comprised of glass blocks. A well defined cornice of stepped, header and stretcher bricks, one row of stretchers of which is placed vertically, terminates the building.²³ Remodeling notwithstanding, the scale and cornice of this building date it to the early 1900s. Its integrity is considered good.
24. 212 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-249/Built 1903/commercial vernacular): Another simple, red brick, one story building, the wooden door of this building is flanked by four (two on each side), modestly sized windows, above which is a transom of glass blocks. The entire doorway/picture window/transom unit is highlighted by a frame of lighter bricks. The brick wall terminates with glazed tile coping. The integrity of this building, which was constructed in 1903 and remodeled in 1993, appears to be intact.²⁴
25. 210 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-231/Built 1914/commercial vernacular): Employing a commercial vernacular architectural form, this two-story building was constructed in 1914 of brick. The doorway (with a transom light) is offset to the north side of the building, to the south of which are two display windows, all of which are sheltered by a large, wooden shingle awning. The second floor is identified by two units of simple, one-over-one light window units with cement sills and no discernable heads. The corners of the building are defined by horizontally placed brick-work pilasters that extend from sidewalk to coping, the latter of which crowns the simple, stepped cornice. The display windows are modern, as are the door to the north and the awning. Despite, those items, the historic massing and scale of the entire façade are intact. Thus its overall integrity is considered to be very good.
- The building has housed over time a bookstore, candy store and sign shop.²⁵
26. F.E. Reddish/Wilson Bros: 208 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-208/Built 1916/commercial vernacular): Constructed of brick, this building is characterized by a central stairway to the second floor that is flanked by pilasters. To the north is a storefront with a recessed door flanked by display windows. It is sheltered by an awning roof hung by four chains anchored to the building immediately above a transom of opaque panels. To the south is another storefront with a red tile-covered wall beneath the display windows, above which is a transom of glass blocks. The second floor contains a single, one-over-one light window over the central stairway, to either side of which are three, symmetrically placed, one-over-one light windows. A moderately decorative, brickwork cornice crowns the building. Centered in the cornice, over the stairway to the second floor, is a date of "1916." In the cornice to the north is the name "Wilson Bros." "F.E. Reddish" is the name in the cornice to the south. The minor storefront modifications notwithstanding, the overall sense of integrity offered by this building is very good.
- A furniture store was identified in the "Wilson Bros." portion of this location in both 1920 and 1948. It was also noted that the upstairs included an office and hotel rooms. The "Reddish" part of the building simply contained retail outlets.²⁶
27. 113 3rd Street (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-250/Built ca. 1906/commercial vernacular): Built of red brick, the front of this building has been modified. The storefront was rebuilt with board and batten. The door to the commercial establishment is offset to the east and flanked by two windows. A door to the second floor apartment is located at the right

²³ *Walking Tour*, 5; *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

²⁴ *Walking Tour*, 5.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948); *Walking Tour*, 6.

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hand side of the building (west). A transom of glass blocks extends the length of the building. The second floor has a stucco finish and contains two, symmetrically placed windows with sixteen, horizontally placed lights and topped by six, small, vertically placed, transom lights. The building contains no cornice nor any other discernable features. Its east side is visible along the alley to the east. Many of the segmentally arched windows on that wall have been infilled, while several others have been reduced in size. The building has clearly undergone many changes, those to the façade likely dating to the 1950s. Given the impact of those alterations, its integrity is marginal. Nevertheless, the building is still able to contribute to the historic sense of time and place offered by the District.

This building was erected in ca. 1906. The first floor contained in 1909 a dry good store, in 1920 a ladies clothing store and in 1930 simply a "store." The local VFW club also occupied in 1930 rooms on the second floor.²⁷

28. 115 3rd Street (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-223/Built ca. 1925/commercial vernacular): Flanked by doors at either side of the building, the first floor is characterized by three large windows set on a base that rises approximately two feet from the sidewalk. A large transom that appears to be enclosed with see-through panels is above the storefront and extends the width of the building. The cornice employs a nominal polychrome effect since it is constructed of red brick. The area below, as well as the parapet, is constructed of much lighter colored brick. The only obvious modification to this building is limited to the transom. Its overall integrity is intact and considered to be good.

This modestly sized building was constructed in ca. 1925. It contained a movie theater at least from 1930 to 1948.²⁸

29. I.O.O.F IG8: 117 3rd Street (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-224/Built 1929/commercial vernacular): The initials "I.O.O.F IG8" are set within a prominent, red brick panel beneath the parapet coping of this three story building which is defined by two storefronts—the eastern one of which appears to have been remodeled. It claims a centered door flanked by four glass panels (two on each side), above which is a transom covered with aluminum. The storefront to the west may be original and has two doors, with two picture windows to the west. The transom is constructed of small, opaque, glass squares. The second floor of the building claims four, symmetrically placed, two-over-two light windows with brick sills. Four, one-over-one light, third floor windows with brick sills are centered above those on the second floor. Despite the minor storefront alterations, the integrity of this building is very good.

Constructed in 1929, the first floor of this edifice was used for automobile sales—at least for the 1930s and 1940s. Additionally, a lodge hall was situated on the second floor during the 30s and 40s.²⁹

30. 123 3rd Street (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-251/Built 1930/commercial vernacular): With its exterior completely remodeled and rebuilt, the only historical sense of character retained by this 1930 building is its cornice.³⁰ It is a non-contributing component within the District.
31. 119 4th Street (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-219/Built 1909/commercial vernacular): A large, three story, red brick building, this commercial edifice was historically associated with the Newberry's Hardware Company building at 404 Box Butte Avenue (Building #12 in this inventory). The first floor of the building is characterized by three, symmetrically placed units that contain three window panes and a glass block transom. The main entrance to this building is located in the center unit. Between the first and second floors is the name "Newberry's Hardware Co," flanked by the date of "1888" (to the east) and "1909" (to the west). The second floor contains six, symmetrically placed, one-over-one light windows with concrete sills and round-arched hoods that were infilled with brick. The third floor claims six, one-over-one light windows, all centered above the windows on the second floor. Each has a concrete sill, but no

²⁷ Sanborn Map (1903); Sanborn Map (1909); Sanborn Map (1920); Sanborn Map (1930); Sanborn Map (1948).

²⁸ Sanborn Map (1920); Sanborn Map (1930); Sanborn Map (1948).

²⁹ Walking Tour, 5; Sanborn Map (1930); Sanborn Map (1948).

³⁰ Walking Tour, 5.

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discernable hood. A modest, brick cornice crowns the building. The east wall of the building, which faces the adjacent alley, reveals the red brick (the front of the building has been painted gray), as well as a number of regularly and irregularly-placed, two-over-two light windows. With no significant detractors or alterations, the integrity of this building is very good.

This building was erected in 1909, at which time its use was identified as a warehouse for mill construction. It was definitively identified with Newberry's Hardware by 1920 and was attached to the main store through a tunnel beneath the street.³¹

32. 203 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-252/Built ca. 1910/commercial vernacular): This simple, one story building was constructed in ca. 1910 and served as a drug store. It has a door to the south, to the north of which are four window panes with three, horizontally placed glass panels in each. The lower and upper panels are opaque with green and yellow colors, respectively, while the center pane can be viewed through. Unadorned coping terminates the building.³² This store has clearly been remodeled since its construction. Yet it retains its historic sense of scale, despite remodeling. Thus its integrity is considered fair.

33. 205 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-253/Built 1917/commercial vernacular): Constructed in 1917 of red brick, this building has storefront windows framed in aluminum that flank the central doorway. An awning is supported by rods and chains that are anchored to the building wall above the transom that has been covered with fiberglass. Symmetrically placed in the second floor are two windows. Each sash has two horizontal lights, as well as two transom lights. The sills of each window are brick. The wood windows appear to be original. A simple cornice crowns the building. While the transom is clearly not original, the overall integrity of the building holds up well.

The building served Snyder Storage in 1920, perhaps as a warehouse or transfer point. It continued to serve the storage industry in 1948.³³

34. 207 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-254/Built ca. 1925/commercial vernacular): Now home to the "Sandhillers' Saloon," this edifice housed a dry cleaner in 1920 and unidentified stores in 1930 and 1948. The storefront of this building has been modernized in the 1960s. The doorway to what was likely a second floor apartment is at the far south of the building, immediately to the left of which is the door to the saloon. The area to the left of that door has been rebuilt with light red brick and claims two, modestly sized windows. Above that is a historic transom that appears to have been covered over and contains a sign for the current business. The integrity of the second floor is good. It contains four windows, two each to either side of the building's center. Each has a dark red brick sill and decorative windowhood. A simple, dark red brick cornice and coping crown the building. Each of the second floor windows has been covered with wood, although the original size of each is quite apparent.³⁴

35. 209 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-255/Built ca. 1925/commercial vernacular): This two-story, light red brick building is another example of the commercial vernacular architectural form. It appears to date to ca. 1925 and housed retail businesses in 1930 and 1948. The first floor storefront was remodeled and partially infilled with vertically-placed board, into which reduced-size windows are placed. An awning hangs over the entryway, supported by four rods that anchor in the building wall, immediately above the transom that is enclosed with material through which beer signs and various trophies can be observed. Four windows are centered in the second floor of the building.

³¹ *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948); *Walking Tour*, 4.

³² *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

³³ *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948); *Walking Tour*, 6. Regarding the date of construction, the *Sanborn Map* (1920) definitively states 1917, while that in the walking tour brochure is 1903. Given the nature of care that went into production of the Sanborn maps, as well as the character of the building, the date stated therein is assumed to be correct.

³⁴ *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

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Each is either a single light unit, or they have been covered with a dark film material. One window (center left/north) may be covered with wood. A simple, red brick panel highlights the area above the windows, above which is a simple coping of brick.³⁵ Despite storefront remodeling, this building retains well its sense of historic scale and massing. Its integrity is considered to be good.

36. 211 Box Butte Avenue (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-256/Built 1903/commercial vernacular): Now home to "Oasis Music," this brick building was constructed in 1903. It has been significantly altered and no longer offers a sense of historic or architectural character.³⁶
37. 213 Box Butte Avenue (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-257/Built ca. 1915/commercial vernacular): With a storefront level sheathed with vertically placed boards over brick, this building has a large, projecting, wood-shingled awning. The windows are all new. In its current condition, the building lacks historical and architectural character.
38. 217 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-211/Built ca. 1915/commercial vernacular): The storefront of this modest, one story, brick building, which was erected in ca. 1915, appears to be original. Two doors (one for each of two businesses) are centered in the building, to the sides of which are two glass panels. A retracted awning is available to shelter the entryways, above which is a six-panel, glass transom. The building is crowned by a nominally stepped parapet with a plain, concrete cornice. Its integrity is very good. The building contained a cigar store and tailor in 1920, and simply "stores" in 1930 and 1948.³⁷
39. 219 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-212/Built ca. 1925/commercial vernacular): Constructed of red brick, this is a modest, one-story commercial building that was built in ca. 1925. The windows and centered doorway have all been modernized and replaced with thermo-pane glass in metal frames, while the prominent transom has been sheathed with modern metal. A decorative panel of slightly different colored and decoratively placed bricks is set in the building, above the transom and beneath the simple brick cornice. The edifice simply housed a store in 1930, but a furniture store in 1948.³⁸ Alterations to the windows and transom notwithstanding, the scale, massing and overall sense of integrity offered by this building remains. Indeed, it is considered to be very good.
40. 223 Box Butte Avenue (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-258/Modern): Situated on the southeast corner of Box Butte Avenue and 3rd Street, this is a single story, metal-sheathed building. It is a noncontributing component within the District.
41. 305 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-259/Built ca.1925/commercial vernacular): Home now to "Elaine's Fine Art Gallery," this is a two story building of light red brick that was either constructed or remodeled in the ca. 1925 period.³⁹ The integrity of the display windows and their placement appears to be good, although it is likely that the area surrounding them, as well as that portion of the building above the awning roof and below that point at which the four awning support chains are anchored to the wall, has been resurfaced. On the second floor, the right and left (north and south) sides of the building are defined by columns of vertically placed brick, between which is a single course of vertically placed bricks that also serves as the lintel for two sets of paired, one-over-one light windows with brick sills. A simple cornice highlighted by a single row of vertically placed bricks crowned by a row of header

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Walking Tour*, 6.

³⁷ *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

³⁸ *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948).

³⁹ Visual evaluation of this building, with its vertical brick, Art Deco-type framing in the north and south corners of the building, clearly establishes a ca. 1925 date of construction. The walking tour brochure, however, states that the building was erected in 1903—which is far too early, given the character of the façade. It is possible that the building may have been constructed in 1903, and that the façade was reconstructed in the mid-1920s. *Walking Tour*, 1.

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bricks tops the building, which simply served the community as a retail outlet in general and a shoe store in particular—at least for a time. The integrity of the second floor, which contained an office and apartment, is excellent.⁴⁰

42. Frankle: 307 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-213/Built ca.1920/commercial vernacular): Identified as the “Frankle” building by a panel inset in the stepped parapet, this is a large, two-story retail building constructed of brick in the ca. 1920 period.⁴¹ The first level storefront was remodeled in ca. 1970 and is now defined by a centered doorway flanked by six (three on each side), large, glass panes. Any transom that may exist is presently covered by an awning that projects slightly over the sidewalk, although it is rather high—thus permitting signage for the stores that previously occupied the building which is now vacant. The second floor is noteworthy for the three sets of paired, one-over-one light windows that are framed by a polychrome row of vertically placed bricks that extend the length of the building and serves as the window’s headers. Similar bricks then extend down on each side of the window pairs as “stretchers.” The windows all have concrete sills. Vertical and stretcher bricks also highlight the north and south corners of the second floor, as well as frame the “Frankle” name. The building’s parapet and coping are visibly distinguished with the same vertically placed and header bricks. The overall integrity of the building, with its modestly remodeled storefront, appears good. That of the second floor and cornice, in particular, is excellent.

A men’s clothier operated in this building for well over half a century, while a chiropractor, dentist and apartments were among the occupants of the second floor above.⁴²

43. 311 Box Butte Avenue (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-260/Built 1903/commercial vernacular): Thought to be a two-story edifice built—perhaps—in 1903, the entire building above the flat roof awning is sheathed with modern metal that obscures all material that may be under it. That fact, along with a non-descript storefront below, renders this building noncontributing.⁴³

44. Elias Essay: 313 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-261/Built ca. 1915/commercial vernacular): This storefront retains the historic placement of the doorway and its adjacent display windows, however, the area surrounding them has been covered with vertical boards painted white. That fact notwithstanding, the second floor contains two original, symmetrically placed picture windows with concrete sills. A panel with the name “Elias Essay” is centered in the building above the two windows. The building is crowned by a stepped parapet with coping. The ca. 1960s remodeling of the storefront notwithstanding, the integrity of the second floor and cornice is excellent.

The building appears to have been constructed in ca. 1915, while an addition to the rear (east) was erected sometime prior to 1948.⁴⁴ It housed over time stores that sold meat, women’s clothing and radios, among many other things. Offices and apartments were upstairs.⁴⁵

45. 315 Box Butte Avenue (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-262/Built 1903/commercial vernacular): A small, one-story building, this store is dominated by a modern, shed roof/awning that employs shake shingles. The building offers no sense of historical character and is considered noncontributing.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948); *Walking Tour*, 1.

⁴¹ The appearance of this building suggests that it was erected in the ca. 1920 period. Yet the walking tour brochure attributes a 1902 date to the building. Given the character and visual arrangement of the building, it was certainly remodeled—if not built a new—in the ca. 1920 period. Nevertheless, a construction date of 1902 cannot be completely eliminated. *Walking Tour*, 1.

⁴² *Walking Tour*, 1.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948); *Walking Tour*, 2. The walking tour brochure ascribes a date of construction to 1903. Given the shape of the building at the time, it is unlikely that that building survived today—even if additions were built to the rear. A thorough review of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps suggest it is more likely that the present building was constructed in ca. 1915, and that an addition was built to the rear (east) sometime thereafter.

⁴⁵ *Walking Tour*, 2.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

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46. 317 Box Butte Avenue (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-263/Built ca. 1925/commercial vernacular): Now home to "Williams Jewelers, Inc.," the storefront of this building—which was likely built in ca. 1925—was completely reconstructed in 1978 and now reveals no sense of historic character. It is a noncontributing component in the District.⁴⁷

47. 323 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-066/Built 1893/commercial vernacular): The storefronts of this large building appear to have been remodeled in the past, given the variation in the tile and brick bases that rise above the sidewalk and support the first floor display windows—all of which appear to employ aluminum or stainless steel frames. An opaque transom is above the display area and extends the entire length of the building. It contains the name of "Dollar General," which now occupies the building. Above the transom, on the west side of the building, is a row of ten, symmetrically placed, one-over-one light windows with stone sills and segmental arched hoods. This row of windows wraps around the north side of the building, where it includes thirteen more units. All windows on the east and north side of the second floor of the building are tied together with a continuous course of decoratively placed bricks that reflect the curvature of the segmental arches over each window. The building is crowned by a decorative cornice and stone coping. While the transom retains a strong sense of its historical character, that of the second floor and cornice is excellent. This is one of the oldest buildings in Alliance. Its integrity is very good.

This is a prominent building on Box Butte Avenue. Indeed, it is one of the oldest on the street and was constructed in 1893 by J.R. Phelan, superintendent of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad. A variety of businesses have been housed in its storefronts over the years, including printing services, dry goods, a bakery and a hardware outlet. An opera facility also occupied a large part of the second floor for many years. Indeed, it was a room that met many other community needs—such as providing a venue for graduations. By 1930 and 1948, however, the building was simply noted as containing "stores." It was reported that the property was purchased by Will Rhodes in 1924 and used as the Rhodes Department Store until the 1980s.⁴⁸

48. 401 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-064/Built 1916/Neoclassical): Designed by Supervising Architect James A. Wetmore and constructed in 1916 in the Neoclassical architectural style, this two-story, brick faced building houses the United States Post Office in Alliance. Although a one-story, modern entrance enclosure now obscures the original, classically derived, round-arched entrance and flanking windows, the formal symmetry, stone trim and dentiled cornice still exemplify the style. In addition, metal balconets with stone console and bracket trim front each of the three, central, upper-level windows. First-floor windows appear to have been downsized and replaced. The openings of those windows are now infilled with an aggregate panel that matches the circa 1950s addition to the north. Second-floor windows are also replacements, however, the size of the original openings remain intact. A handicap access ramp wraps around the building to the south.⁴⁹ Despite the alterations, this building still conveys well its Neoclassical style. Its integrity is good.

49. 411 Box Butte Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-025/Built 1914/Neoclassical): This Neoclassical Revival style building was constructed in 1914 and rests on a raised basement that is faced with bands of brick that simulate a rusticated base. Windows throughout this lower level have been boarded over, although the original rectangular openings remain intact. The Box Butte Avenue facade consists of three windows along the main level, the central one of which has been downsized and includes a pair of replacement sash windows. Both of the two outer windows have also been downsized and partially infilled. Each includes a pair of rectilinear-pane glass doors and is fronted by a stone balconet with bracket trim below. Each of the three openings, as well as those along the remaining facades, is outlined by a flush brick surround. Remaining openings along the main level appear to also have been boarded over. A metal cornice with modillions projects slightly near the building's top edge, which is embellished with a stepped,

⁴⁷ *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Walking Tour*, 2.

⁴⁸ *Sanborn Map* (1899); *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Sanborn Map* (1930); *Sanborn Map* (1948); *Walking Tour*, 2.

⁴⁹ *Walking Tour*, 2.

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brick parapet with scroll-like stone trim. Raised within an inset stone panel are the letters BPOE and the numbers 961, referring to the building's original occupants, the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks, Lodge #961. Although many windows have been covered with wood, while the front, west-facing windows have been downsized, the sense of scale, massing and architectural style conveyed by this building is significant. Its integrity is very good.

This prominent building was designed by the architectural firm of Rose & Peterson, of Kansas City, Kansas. The doors and windows were restored in 1998.⁵⁰

50. 515 Box Butte Avenue (National Register listed/NeHBS #BX01-063/Built 1914): The Box Butte County Court House was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on 10 January 1990. It was listed for both its historical (Criterion A) and architectural (Criterion C) significance.
51. 407 Laramie Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-149/Built ca. 1895/Two Story Cube): A two-story, cube house, this building was erected of brick in ca. 1895. Two entrances are offset to the north, to the left of which is a small, horizontally-placed light. (It is possible that a larger window is to the south of the doorways, but, if so, it is obscured by a large piece of furniture on the deck.) The doorways are sheltered by a hip roof porch supported by three Tuscan columns and a plain frieze. Two, one-over-one light windows with segmental arched hoods are symmetrically placed in the second floor, above the porch. The house is crowned by a hip roof, the western plane of which claims a gable dormer with shingle siding and a single, pedimented window.⁵¹ With no alterations that detract from it, the integrity of this house is good.
52. Essay: 124 4th Street (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-218/Built ca. 1950/commercial vernacular): Constructed of light red brick, this is a simple, two story office building that dates to the ca. 1950 period. The entrances are situated in the southwest corner of the building, the first floor of which is recessed at that location and sheltered by the second floor. A doorway is located in each of the recessed planes (facing south and west), both of which are surrounded by glass block. The primary façade of the building faces south. And at the east end of that exposure is another, single door. Between the primary entrance in the southwest corner, and the subordinate door to the east, is a row of glass blocks with a concrete sill that extends between them. Symmetrically placed beneath the row of glass blocks are two, inset brick panels with concrete sills. The second floor of the building is defined by six units of paired windows, all with concrete sills. Each window employs two-over-two, horizontally placed lights. (The windows also wrap around on the west side of the building.) Centered in the building, between the second floor lights and the plain cornice, is an inset panel with the name "Essay." It is flanked by some nominal, decorative brickwork and two plain panels. With no apparent modifications or alterations, the integrity of this building is considered to be excellent.
53. 128 4th Street (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-264/Built ca. 1925/commercial vernacular): This is a one story building that was constructed in ca. 1925 and is sheathed on the sides with aluminum siding. The front is also sided with stucco. The building conveys no character and is considered noncontributing.
54. 315 Laramie Avenue (Contributing/NeHBS #BX01-217/Built 1893/commercial vernacular): Home to "Bernie's Hardware," this is a two-story building constructed of brick. The entrance is slightly inset and offset to the south. It is flanked by windows and transom lights set in aluminum frames and highlighted, top and bottom, by orange panels of enamel. To the north of the main entrance are two large windows, again, framed top and bottom by orange panels (note: two of the panels at the bottom are gray). An old overhead door is located to the north of the two units with orange panels. Symmetrically placed in the second floor of the building are three windows, each with sixteen lights. A course of vertically placed brick "stretchers" extends the length of the building, immediately above the windows. A

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Sanborn Map* (1899).

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similar row of brick serves as a simple cornice for the nominally, stepped parapet that is topped with brick coping. Additional windows around the building are symmetrically and asymmetrically placed. This is a relatively simple industrial building with nominal alterations. Its integrity is considered very good.

This building was reportedly erected in 1893. It housed a tin shop in 1920 that may have been associated with Newberry's Hardware. By 1930, however, its association with Newberry's was well identified, as was the building's role as a tin shop, hardware storage facility, farm implement outlet and warehouse #2.⁵²

55. 124 3rd Street (Noncontributing/NeHBS #BX01-265/Modern): The First National Bank building is characterized by two floors and a series of fifteen arches on its south and west sides. The arches extend to a height that includes both floors of the building. This is a modern building that was constructed in 1966 and remodeled in 1996.⁵³ It is a non-contributing component in the Historic District.

PROPERTY SUMMARY:

No.	Address	NeHBS #	Historic/Current Use	C/NC	Built
1.	524 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-216	Office/Office	C	1947
2.	510 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-026	Office/Office	C	1940
3.	508 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-228	Restaurant/Restaurant	C	1929
4.	502 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-232	Auto Sales/Retail	C	1920
5.	424 Box Butte Ave. (H.J. Ellis)	NeHBS #BX01-241	Retail/Retail	C	1903
6.	422 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-242	Retail(?)/Office	C	1914
7.	420 Box Butte Ave. (H.J. Ellis)	NeHBS #BX01-243	Retail/Vacant	C	1914
8.	416 Box Butte Ave. (Eagles Bldg)	NeHBS #BX01-024	Fraternal/Retail	C	1927
9.	412 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-244	Retail/Vacant	N/C	1920
10.	410 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-023	Theater/Theater	C	1937
11.	406 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-022	Retail/Retail	C	c1897
12.	402 Box Butte Ave. (Newberry)	NeHBS #BX01-021	Retail-Warehouse/Retail	C	1914
13.	318 Box Butte Ave. (W.W. Norton)	NeHBS #BX01-215	Retail/Retail	C	1890s
14.	316 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-245	Retail/Retail	C	1904
15.	314 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-214	Retail/Retail	C	1901
16.	312 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-246	Retail/Retail	C	1893
17.	308 Box Butte Ave. (Adler)	NeHBS #BX01-020	Retail/Retail	C	1893
18.	306 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-247	Retail/Retail	C	1950s
19.	302 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-019	Bank/Office	C	1903
20.	224 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-248	Bank/Bank	C	1953
21.	218 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-230	Retail(?)/Service	C	c1906
22.	216 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-210	Retail/Retail	C	c1952
23.	214 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-209	Retail/Office	C	1903
24.	212 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-249	Office/Office	C	1903
25.	210 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-231	Retail/Retail	C	1914
26.	208 Box Butte Ave. (Reddish)	NeHBS #BX01-208	Retail/Storage	C	1916
27.	113 3 rd St.	NeHBS #BX01-250	Retail/Retail	C	c1906
28.	115 3 rd St.	NeHBS #BX01-223	Retail/Retail	C	c1925
29.	117 3 rd St. (IOOF IG8)	NeHBS #BX01-224	Retail/Retail	C	1929

⁵² Walking Tour, 4; Sanborn Map (1920); Sanborn Map (1930).

⁵³ Walking Tour, 5.

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30.	123 3 rd St.	NeHBS #BX01-251	Fraternal/Fraternal	N/C	1930
31.	119 4 th St.	NeHBS #BX01-219	Warehouse/Unknown	C	1909
32.	203 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-252	Retail/Retail	C	c1910
33.	205 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-253	Retail/Vacant	C	1917
34.	207 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-254	Retail/Tavern	C	c1925
35.	209 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-255	Retail(?)/Tavern	C	c1925
36.	211 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-256	Retail/Retail	N/C	1903
37.	213 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-257	Unknown/Restaurant	N/C	c1915
38.	217 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-211	Retail(?)/Service	C	c1915
39.	219 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-212	Retail(?)/Service	C	c1925
40.	223 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-258	Unknown/Retail-Office	N/C	Modern
41.	305 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-259	Retail/Retail	C	c1925
42.	307 Box Butte Ave. (Frankle)	NeHBS #BX01-213	Retail/Vacant	C	c1920
43.	311 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-260	Retail/Retail	N/C	1903
44.	313 Box Butte Ave. (Elias Essay)	NeHBS #BX01-261	Retail/Retail	C	c1915
45.	315 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-262	Retail/Retail	N/C	1903
46.	317 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-263	Retail/Retail	N/C	c1925
47.	323 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-066	Retail/Retail	C	1893
48.	401 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-064	Gov't/Gov't	C	1916
49.	411 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-025	Fraternal/Restaurant	C	1914
50.	515 Box Butte Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-063	Gov't/Gov't	C	1914
51.	407 Laramie Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-149	House/House	C	c1895
52.	124 4 th St. (Essay)	NeHBS #BX01-218	Office/Office	C	c1950
53.	128 4 th St.	NeHBS #BX01-264	Office(?)/Office	N/C	c1925
54.	315 Laramie Ave.	NeHBS #BX01-217	Retail/Retail	C	1893
55.	124 3 rd St.	NeHBS #BX01-265	Bank/Bank	N/C	Modern

Summary:

The Alliance Commercial Historic District is a unique resource that clearly ties the city today to its historic development of the past. The variety of buildings in the district, as well as the integrity they embody, enables the district to demonstrate well the role it played in the development of the city as a whole, as well as in the surrounding region. Noncontributing resources are present in the district. They are limited and do not detract from the overall integrity of, nor the sense of time and place offered by, the district!

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The City of Alliance traces its founding to 1888 and the arrival of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad (a division of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad). The townsite was platted that same year. Alliance grew rapidly. From 300 residents in 1888, the city's population jumped to 3,500 by 1902 and 5,500 by 1917. Similarly, the Box Butte County population grew from 5,572 residents in 1900, to 6,131 in 1910 and 10,736 in 1940. The number of businesses in the developing community evolved as well. Excluding the types of merchants commonly found in smaller crossroads communities and villages (i.e. taverns, general stores and hardware stores), the number of retailers and services offered in Alliance jumped from ten in 1888 to 117 in 1917.⁵⁴ It was with this growth in the number and types of merchants Alliance offered, that the city, from the time of its founding to the mid-1950s, became a unique and prominent trade center for much of the west central Nebraska Panhandle⁵⁵

Alliance developed a prominent commercial district in which most of the merchants and services associated with the community's growth were located. The business district was anchored by the railroad depot (no longer extant) and 1st Street to the south, and extended north along Box Butte Avenue to approximately 6th Street. (There was also some commercial growth to the east and west of Box Butte Avenue.) The architectural character of most of the buildings constructed along Box Butte Avenue is reflected by the commercial vernacular building form. There are some "high style" buildings in the district as well, including the community's Art Deco style movie theater (410 Box Butte Avenue/NeHBS #BX01-023) and the Neo-Classical Post Office (401 Box Butte Avenue/NeHBS #BX01-064). The historical integrity of the buildings found within the district is very good.

It is the great number of late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings remaining along Box Butte Avenue, between 2nd and 6th streets, that constitute the Alliance Commercial Historic District. These are the buildings that housed the businesses that enabled Alliance to establish itself as, and then to service the surrounding region as, a prominent trade center. Indeed, it was the only trade center of its size that serviced those within at least a thirty-mile radius. With its integrity intact, the Alliance Commercial Historic District is able to evoke a sense of historic time and place. It is, therefore, significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for the role it played in promoting the historic growth of, and sustaining those in, the city and its surrounding region from 1893 to 1957.⁵⁶

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Alliance is located in the southeast corner of Box Butte County in the Panhandle, or northwest region, of Nebraska. Originally, Box Butte County was part of Dawes County when the latter was carved out of Sioux County in 1885. A large number of pioneers had settled in the southern portion of Dawes County, which was more than a sixty mile trip to the county seat of Chadron. As a result, settlers in the southern half of Dawes County petitioned in 1886 to form their own county. The separation of the county was well received and, by fall of the same year, Box Butte County was established just south of the Niobrara River. The county, which was already populated, received more settlers. It recorded a population of 5,494 by 1890. However, by 1900, only 78 more people had settled in the county as the census records counted 5,572 people. The United States Congress passed the Kinkaid Act in 1904. It boosted the settlement of northwestern and north central Nebraska by offering an allotment of 640 acres of land per settler. As a result, the county developed a more extensive agricultural economy which, in 1905, consisted of 468 farms that operated on a total of 245,298 acres of land.

⁵⁴ See citations elsewhere in this document for the validation of these figures.

⁵⁵ This geographic characterization of Alliance, when contrasted with crossroad communities and villages, is adapted from the Central Place Theory. Discussions about that theory can be found in the following sources: John E. Brush, "The Hierarchy of Central Places in Southwestern Wisconsin," *Geographical Review* 43 (1953), 380,387; "Central Place Theory in Australia," Website designated under Central Place Theory, <http://www.macalester.edu/courses/GEOG61/imcrober/cntplc.html>, accessed 07 July 2006 (includes direct quotation); Ingolf Vogeler, et al., *Wisconsin: A Geography* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 157-159.

⁵⁶ The period of significance has been defined by the year in which the oldest building remaining in the District was constructed (1893) and a time that is consistent with the National Register program and is 50 years in the past (1957).

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Farmers in the county produced a variety of crops including potatoes, corn, barley, oats and wheat and raised a total of 21,621 cattle, 8,524 sheep, 2,800 horses and mules as well as 666 hogs.⁵⁷

The county's population increased in 1910 to 6,131. After World War I, wheat production was high and land prices began to rise as more farmers sought land in Box Butte County. The number of self-owned farms jumped in 1920 to 643, while 181 people rented farmland. Farming technology increased the size of farms, however, and the number of farmers began to decrease. In 1935, there were 932 farms which operated on 638,458 acres of land, while ten years later the number of farms had dropped to 702, but operated on 680,586 acres of land. The county population continued to rise. Between 1940 and 1950, it increased from 10,736 to 12,279. Box Butte County maintained into the later part of the twentieth century an agricultural economy that was always supported by the City of Alliance.⁵⁸ It is this evolving and maturing farmland region for which Alliance developed as a significant trade center.

The site of present-day Alliance was sold in the spring of 1887 to the Lincoln Land and Loan Company for \$48.00 an acre. But the company would not plat a town until the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad--an extension of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad--was sure to come through that portion of Box Butte County. Settlers were eager to prosper in a new railroad town and came to the area. They started a small settlement on the property of Samuel E. Smith (located just east of present-day Alliance), which was called Grand Lake.⁵⁹

The anticipated railroad finally arrived during the summer of 1887 in Box Butte County. Thus, in the early winter of 1888, the Alliance railroad depot opened. By February of that same year, lots platted directly north of the railroad line were for sale. Alliance was incorporated as a village by March. The first lot was sold to the former Grand Lake banking firm of Porter Eihlers & Company, which constructed a new bank at the southwest corner of Box Butte Avenue and Third Street (no longer extant). Buildings that were moved from Grand Lake, as well as new construction, rapidly filled the open lots. The village's population reached approximately 1,000 by 1890. Its extensive commercial center boasted a myriad of businesses including a U.S. Land Office, four banks, two newspapers, two mills, three hardware stores, five general merchandise shops as well as numerous blacksmiths, grocers, bakers, barbers, hotels and restaurants, saloons, physicians and attorneys. An agricultural implement dealer and livestock breeder were both established to accommodate the surrounding farmers and ranchers.⁶⁰

Three fires swept through downtown Alliance in 1892-93. They razed a large number of the commercial buildings which had developed along Third Street and Box Butte Avenue. One building that survived the fires was the two-story, brick, Phelan Opera House (321 & 323 Box Butte Avenue; NeHBS #BX01-066) at the southeast corner of Box Butte Avenue and Fourth Street. It was constructed in 1893 by Burlington & Missouri River Railroad Superintendent J.R. Phelan. The first floor of the Phelan Opera House was occupied by a variety of stores, including grocers and hardware businesses while the second floor hosted various performances into the 1920s. Like most small town opera halls, the building was also the site of many local events such as graduations and numerous civic meetings.⁶¹

⁵⁷Anna N. Phillips, & Vilma D. Ball, *History of Box Butte County: From Dinosaurs to Streamlines* (Hemingford, NE: Leader Print, 1939), 31; *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey: Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Box Butte County, Nebraska*, Prepared for the Nebraska State Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office by Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center, July 1996, 26-27, Copy available online at www.nebraskahistory.org; *City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska*, Compiled and written by the Centennial Committee (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1988), 11, 13.

⁵⁸*City of Alliance and Box Butte County, Nebraska*, 13; *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey: Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Box Butte County, Nebraska*, 28-30.

⁵⁹*Ibid*, 33.

⁶⁰Mae Manion, "Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County (Alliance, Nebraska: Iron Man Industries, 1976), 21-22; Phillips & Ball, *History of Box Butte County: From Dinosaurs to Streamlines*, 33-34. *Nebraska State Gazetteer, Business Directory and Farmers List for 1890-1891* (Omaha: J. M. Wolfe & Co., 1890).

⁶¹*Alliance Main Street: Walking Tour*, Pamphlet prepared by Alliance Main Street, Alliance, Nebraska, Copy on file at Heritage Research, Ltd., Menomonee Falls, WI, 1-2; Manion, "Prairie Pioneers" of Box Butte County, 266.

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Despite the previously noted fires, and the Panic of 1893, growth in the community continued throughout the 1890s. Its population reached 1,500 by 1895 and 3,000 in 1899. Alliance was incorporated as a city in 1893. Numerous hotels and boarding houses were located by 1893 at the south end of Box Butte Avenue, near the train depot, while a concentration of shops and services remained further north along Box Butte Avenue between Third and Fourth streets.⁶²

By the turn-of-the-twentieth-century, Alliance became the Box Butte county seat. The city's commercial center continued to flourish as some new services were added by 1902, including a bicycle-repair shop, a piano/organ store, a photographer and a bowling alley. That same year the town was serviced with electricity. The following year a fire department was established with thirty volunteers and three hose carts. Alliance also became a focal point along the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad, which saw its facilities there increase to include a large roundhouse and repair shops.⁶³

A regional headquarters for the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad was located in Alliance by 1909. It employed between 500 and 600 men. There were also nearly 180 businesses in the city in 1909, as well as at least nine different churches, graded high schools, a state junior normal school, a Catholic academy and a private hospital. The population of Alliance reached an estimated 5,000 by 1910.⁶⁴

Alliance saw one of its greatest building booms during the mid-1910s. In 1914 alone, the total cost of new buildings and improvements was over \$300,000. Many of the new commercial buildings were constructed with local bricks made by George M. Fox. The local Commercial Club was very active in promoting growth. It helped to facilitate business in the city with its marketing material and many conventions held in Alliance. Chenia A. Newberry, a local hardware business man, was a large supporter of the Commercial Club. In 1914, the new C.A. Newberry Hardware store (402 Box Butte Avenue; NeHBS #BX01-021) was constructed at the northwest corner of Box Butte Avenue and Fourth Street. It cost \$45,000 and claimed 28,000 square feet of floor space, along with a sprinkler system. Another building, constructed in 1909 and located to the southwest of the hardware store at 119 W. Fourth Street (NeHBS #BX01-219), served as a warehouse for the large business. A tunnel was dug underneath the street between the two buildings. The new Box Butte County Courthouse (515 Box Butte Avenue, listed NRHP 1-1-1990, NeHBS #BX01-063) and a new Elks Club (411 Box Butte Avenue; NeHBS #BX01-025) building were both designed by the Kansas City, Kansas architectural firm of Rose & Peterson and constructed along Box Butte Avenue that year. Two years later, a new Post Office (401 Box Butte Avenue; NeHBS #BX01-064) was built directly south of the Elks Club under the supervision of U.S. Treasury Department architect James Wetmore.⁶⁵

After World War I, the community experienced continued growth. Its population exceeded 5,000, while the businesses in the town reflected the changing times. New enterprises included auto garages and filling stations, as well as motion picture houses and departments stores. A new Alliance Theater (410 Box Butte Avenue; NeHBS #BX01-023) building joined the downtown city-center along Box Butte Avenue in 1937. The 1930s also saw many of the city's streets being paved.⁶⁶

Alliance was selected as the site for a U.S. Army Air Force base--known as the Alliance Army Air Base--during World War II. That action boosted the city's population to over 10,000 people. This sudden growth produced a new neighborhood of temporary housing called "Chimney Town" on the east side of Alliance. There were also at least eight new blocks added

⁶² *Sanborn Map* (1899); *Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1894-1895* (Omaha: J.M. Wolfe & Co., 1894).

⁶³ *McAvoy's Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1902-1903* (Omaha: Omaha Directory Co., 1901).

⁶⁴ Phillips & Ball, *History of Box Butte County: From Dinosaurs to Streamlines*, 44; *Sanborn Map* (1903); *Sanborn Map* (1909); *Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory* (1902); *Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1909* (Omaha: Polk-McAvoy Directory co., 1909).

⁶⁵ "The Messenger: A Yearly Report of Work of the Commercial Club, March 1 1914, To March 1, 1915" (Alliance, NE: The Commercial Club, 1915), 1; *Alliance Main Street: Walking Tour*, 2, 4; "Alliance--The Best and The Largest," Industrial Edition of the *Alliance (NE) Semi-Weekly Times*, February 1915, 24.

⁶⁶ *Sanborn Map* (1920); *Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1917* (Omaha: Polk-McAvoy Directory, Co., 1917).

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to the western side of the city. Although the residential areas of the city were expanded, the primary commercial district remained along Box Butte Avenue.⁶⁷

The air base was closed on 31 October 1945, which resulted in a population decrease. Those claiming residence in Alliance totaled only 7,891 by 1950. Moving into the latter part of the twentieth century, the city continued to experience a population decline. Even as it did, Alliance remained in the 1940s and 1950s the primary trade center for those in the region—just as it had been at the turn of the century. The community claimed 6,862 residents in 1970, shortly before the Burlington Northern Railroad (the successor to the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad) expanded its presence in the city. With the growth tied to that move by the railroad, Alliance's population increased by 1980 to 9,869.⁶⁸

The Alliance commercial district continues to provide the city and surrounding rural communities with multiple businesses and various services. It operates in an identifiable collection of buildings that have survived from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

SUPPLEMENTAL CONTEXT (Architects):

Rose & Peterson: The architectural firm of Rose & Peterson operated in Kansas City, Kansas and was comprised of William W. Rose and David B. Peterson. Rose was previously linked from 1889 to 1894 with Kansas City architect James Oliver Hogg. Thereafter, he practiced on his own in Kansas City from 1895 until he formed a partnership with Peterson in 1909. The partnership lasted until 1925. During the firm's fifteen year existence, Rose and Peterson designed a wide range of properties that included multiple civic, recreational, commercial, industrial, institutional, social and religious buildings across the country. The firm was hired in 1914 to design both the Alliance Courthouse (500 Box Butte Avenue; NeHBS #BX01-063) and Alliance Elks Lodge building (411 Box Butte Avenue; NeHBS #BX01-025).⁶⁹

Walter H. Simon: Walter H. Simon was born in 1892. He was raised in Illinois and attended the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois. After graduating in 1915, Simon took a job and moved to Eldorado, Kansas. He moved to Denver in the early 1920s and opened his own architectural firm in 1925. Simon's business continued into the 1960s, when he partnered for a short time with architect John B. Hippo. Simon retired in 1976 and died ten years later.⁷⁰

James A. Wetmore: James A. Wetmore maintained the U.S. Treasury Department, Architectural Supervisor position for a total of almost twenty years—from 1912-1913 and again from 1915-1934. At least 2,000 federal buildings were constructed under his supervision, including the Alliance Post Office in 1916 (401 Box Butte Avenue; NeHBS #BX01-064). Wetmore passed away in 1940.⁷¹

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE/CRITERION A:

From the start of this railroad community, Alliance rapidly emerged as a prominent, regional trade center. A hierarchy of trade centers has been identified, and includes crossroad communities, villages, towns and cities.⁷²

⁶⁷ James C. Olson and Ronald C. Naugle, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1887), 334; *Alliance, Nebraska: Knight Museum Board and Partners* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia, 2000), 61; *Sanborn Map* (1948).

⁶⁸ Bradley H. Baltensperger, *Nebraska: A Geography* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), 120; *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Box Butte County, Nebraska*, 37; *Nebraska Our Towns: Panhandle* (Lincoln, NE: J&L Lee Co., 1988), 18.

⁶⁹ Biographical information on William W. Rose and David B. Peterson was obtained online from <http://www.kcps.org>, on 12 July 2006.

⁷⁰ Biographical information on Walter H. Simon was obtained from on line from the Colorado Historical Society website, <http://coloradohistory-oahp.org/guides/architects/simon.pdf>, on 28 July 2006.

⁷¹ Obituary, James A. Wetmore, *New York Times*, 15 March 1940; Henry F. Withey and Elsie Rathburn Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970), 647; "United States Post office Construction from 1913-1943, State of Wisconsin-Milwaukee District," National Register nomination prepared by Charles W. Causier, AICP & Joseph G. Jurkiewicz, AIA, HNTB, 10 January 1994, 14, Copy on file at the Wisconsin State Historical Society, Division of Historic Preservation, Madison, Wisconsin.

⁷² Brush, "The Hierarchy of Central Places," 380,387; "Central Place Theory in Australia," Website accessed 07 July 2006 (includes direct quotation); Ingolf Vogeler, et al., *Wisconsin: A Geography* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 157-159.

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Crossroad communities, also called hamlets, are the smallest component in the hierarchy and were historically found most consistently throughout the region. They were nominal settlements with a small population that met the most immediate needs of those living nearby. Businesses offered by such entities might have included a general store, tavern and filling station. They also frequently claimed an elementary school. The population in a crossroad community might range from 20 to 300. Villages were larger than crossroad communities, and were not found as frequently. They generally claimed 115 to 1,415 residents and provided more services and merchants to the surrounding area than did a hamlet. Village businesses typically included those found in hamlets, as well as auto and implement dealers, hardware stores, lumber outlets and livestock lots. They might even offer banking, postal and telephone services. Indeed, villages were said to be "significant centers for the goods and services most frequently demanded by rural people."⁷³ Next in the hierarchy came towns, which were followed by cities. The latter was the ultimate trade center. It provided a wide variety of specialty, wholesale/retail and manufacturing functions. Cities are epitomized by examples like Chicago, Denver and Omaha, although most Nebraska cities were considerably smaller—like Lincoln, Grand Island and North Platte.

Towns are the third level in the hierarchy. They played an intriguing role in the hierarchy due to the range of their populations, as well as in the variety of retail outlets and services they offered. Towns were typically home to more than fifty businesses and from 1,300 to 7,200 residents. And of those fifty businesses, at least thirty were devoted to products and services other than taverns, gasoline sales and grocery stores. Included within these generalities, there were four main functions that defined a town. First, capitalizing on those that lived in the community, in addition to those that resided in the surrounding region, towns offered a number of personal services, as well as a variety of retail and specialty shops. They could also start to offer recreational and governmental infrastructure opportunities. Second, retail possibilities in a town might have included furniture, clothing and drugstores, among many others. Real estate and insurance opportunities were also typically found in a town, as were barbers and photographers. Recreational opportunities included bowling alleys, billiard halls and movie theaters. Doctors, lawyers and dentists were also among the professionals found in a town. Third, towns also offered a variety of services for those aspiring agriculturalists that lived in the region. Such assistance included those activities provided by veterinarians, livestock wholesalers and feed mills. And fourth, towns were attractive trade centers that drew salesmen hoping to market their products to the merchants that supported the residents in both the community and the region. Hotels, restaurants and train depots were among the components of a town that accommodated those people.⁷⁴

In general, Alliance historically has met most of the criteria associated with being a town. Shortly after its 1888 settlement, the fledgling community's population had reached 300. Thereafter, it increased to 1,200 in 1893 and 3,500 in 1902 by which time it was firmly established as a regional trade center. The city evolved by offering a variety of resources that met the needs of its residents, hinterland farmers and cattle ranchers alike. These included general stores and grocers, as well as specialty shops and services—among which were furniture stores, jewelers and automobile-related businesses. Physicians, attorneys and veterinarians were found in the community. Alliance supported a water system and county courthouse, as well as recreational outlets such as a library and a park. The town was also an agricultural support center that offered implement dealers, hardware stores, blacksmiths and flour and feed companies. And Alliance was a frequent stop for salesmen that traveled on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy railroad line, as evidenced by the hotels and restaurants along Box Butte Avenue, which constituted the town's primary business district.

It is important to remember that Alliance evolved as an agricultural support center, as well as a primary railroad division point. The nearest communities of a comparable or larger historic size were Chadron, approximately 60 miles to the north, and Scotts Bluff, about 55 miles to the southwest. The fact of the matter is that Alliance was the largest trade center in the central Panhandle region, and the services it provided were critical in sustaining those in the community, as well as in the surrounding region.

⁷³ Brush, "Hierarchy of Central Places," 385.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 386-390.

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The chart provided helps to establish Alliance's role as a regional trade center. The businesses identified *exclude* those typically found in a village, including general stores, hardware stores, gas stations and so on. Indeed, those cited focus more on the unique exchanges that help to define Alliance as unique and prominent trade center.

Alliance	1888	1893	1902	1917
Attorney	2	6	6	8
Auto/Parts/Gas	0	0	0	6
Bank	2	4	1	3
Bottling Works	0	0	1	0
Cemetery	0	0	0	1
Clothing ⁷⁵	1	5	10	14
Confectioner	0	3	2	4
County Courthouse	0	0	1	1
Department Store	0	0	0	2
Drug Store	2	3	4	3
Feed/Flour Mills	0	1	2	3
Food Specialty ⁷⁶	0	3	5	6
Furniture	1	2	1	2
Grocery	0	1	10	5
Hospital	0	0	0	1
Hotels	0	4	5	6
Insurance	0	0	3	3
Livestock	0	0	0	2
Music/Piano/Organ	0	0	1	3
Newspaper	1	2	2	3
Photographer	0	1	1	2
Phys/Vet/Dentist	1	4	4	18
Real Estate	0	7	4	8
Recreation ⁷⁷	0	1	1	8
Restaurants	0	1	4	3
Specialty School	0	0	0	1
Undertaker	0	0	2	0
Water/Sewer	0	0	1	1
BUSINESSES LISTED	10	48	72	117
POPULATION⁷⁸	300	1,200	3,500	5,500

⁷⁵ Included in the "Clothing" category are such subcategories as: Boots/Shoes, Clothing, Millinery and Tailor.

⁷⁶ Included in the "Food Specialty" category are such subcategories as: Bakery, Dairy and Meat.

⁷⁷ Included in the "Recreation" category are such subcategories as: Movies, Billiards, Bowling and Opera.

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It is clear that the community of Alliance played a critical role in generally maintaining and sustaining the inhabitants in the town, as well as those in the region—which extended approximately 30 miles or more in all directions. More specifically, the Alliance Commercial Historic District embodies a prominent number of the buildings that accommodated a variety of merchants that played a vital role in supporting those in the city and the region. Individually, those include the National Register-listed Box Butte County Courthouse 515 Main Street (Property #50/NeHBS #BX01-063), as well as the following distinctive commercial buildings: Lowery and Henry Automotive garage located at 502 Box Butte Avenue (Property #4/NeHBS #BX01-232); Eagles Building, 416 Box Butte Avenue (Property #8/NeHBS #BX01-024); Alliance Theater, 410 Box Butte Avenue (Property #10/NeHBS #BX01-023); Newberry’s Hardware, 402 Box Butte Avenue (Property #12/NeHBS #BX01-021); Adler Building, 308 Box Butte Avenue (Property #17/NeHBS #BX01-020); Phelan Opera Building, 323 Box Butte Avenue (Property #47/NeHBS #BX01-066); United States Post Office, 401 Box Butte Avenue (Property #48/NeHBS #BX01-064); and BPOE Lodge, 411 Box Butte Avenue (Property #49/NeHBS #BX01-025). Collectively, the district includes all of the buildings discussed in Section 7 and noted on the attached map.

Built between 1893 and the mid-1950s, the Alliance Commercial Historic District is largely comprised of vernacular commercial buildings—along with some high style examples—that create a prominent commercial streetscape. First floor storefront remodeling notwithstanding, the second and third floors of these structures, as well as their cornices, are prominent and retain a substantial amount of integrity. The district, which contains 55 buildings, claims only 10 that are non-contributing. This greatly enhances its ability to offer a sense of historic “time and place”—a vital component when nominating a historic district to the National Register of Historic Places. More to the point (in National Register terms), this District retains integrity of setting, feeling and association.

The Alliance Commercial Historic District is a fine example of a late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial district in a prominent central Panhandle trade center. The structures in the District retain a consequential amount of integrity, while the historic landscape in general retains its sense of scale, massing and proportion. As such, the district is very much able to evoke a sense of time and place. That is, the town business district offers today a good sense of what it was as it evolved between 1893 and 1957. It would also be recognizable to those historically associated with the town as the primary trade center in the central Panhandle region. Therefore, with its historic integrity largely intact, and as an entity that would be recognized by historic Alliance citizens, the Alliance Commercial Historic District is significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

CONCLUSION:

The Alliance Commercial Historic District is significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. It is a prominent gathering of buildings that played a vital role in sustaining those that historically settled in the community and its expansive neighboring region. The district retains the character, as well as the sense of time and place, necessary to evoke a very good sense of historic Alliance and the role it played in promoting commerce and sustaining those throughout the region from 1893, the date of its oldest remaining structures, to 1957, fifty years prior to today’s date.

⁷⁸ The population figures used in this chart are from the various State Gazetteer and Business Directories cited elsewhere in this document. As such, they are not official US census numbers.

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GEOGRAPHIC DATA:

Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:

A: 13/676031/4662876
B: 13/676221/4662888
C: 13/676221/4662777
D: 13/676186/4662772
E: 13/676187/4662436
F: 13/676069/4662429
G: 13/676067/4662490
H: 13/675995/4662492
I: 13/675989/4662722
J: 13/676047/4662715

Verbal Boundary Description:

Starting at the Point of Beginning, which is situated at the northwest corner of 6th Street and the alley immediately to the west of Box Butte Avenue, then south along the alley to 5th Street, continue south along that alley to the south property line of Lot 15, then west along that property line to Laramie Street, then south along Laramie Street to the alley south of 3rd Street, then east along the alley to the alley immediately west of Box Butte Avenue, then south along that alley to 2nd Street, then east along 2nd Street to the alley immediately east of Box Butte Avenue, then north along that alley to 5th Street, then east on 5th Street to Niobrara Avenue, then north on Niobrara Avenue to 6th Street, then west on 6th Street to the Point of Beginning.

Included in these boundaries are the following legal entities:

Block 03, Original Plat: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 22 and 23
Block 04, County Addition: Lots 16, 17, 18, 20 and 21
Block 09, County Addition: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14
Block 10, Original Plat: Lots 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18
Block 15, Original Plat: Lots 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21
Block 16, Original Plat: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21
Block 21, Original Plat: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21
Block 22, Original Plat: Lots 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18

SEE USGS MAP ON FOLLOWING PAGE FOR ILLUSTRATION OF UTM COORDINATES.

Boundary Justification:

All boundary lines are believed to be consistent with, and include all previously referenced lots, the total of which constitutes the Alliance Commercial Historic District.

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Index to Photographs:

The following information pertains to each photo:

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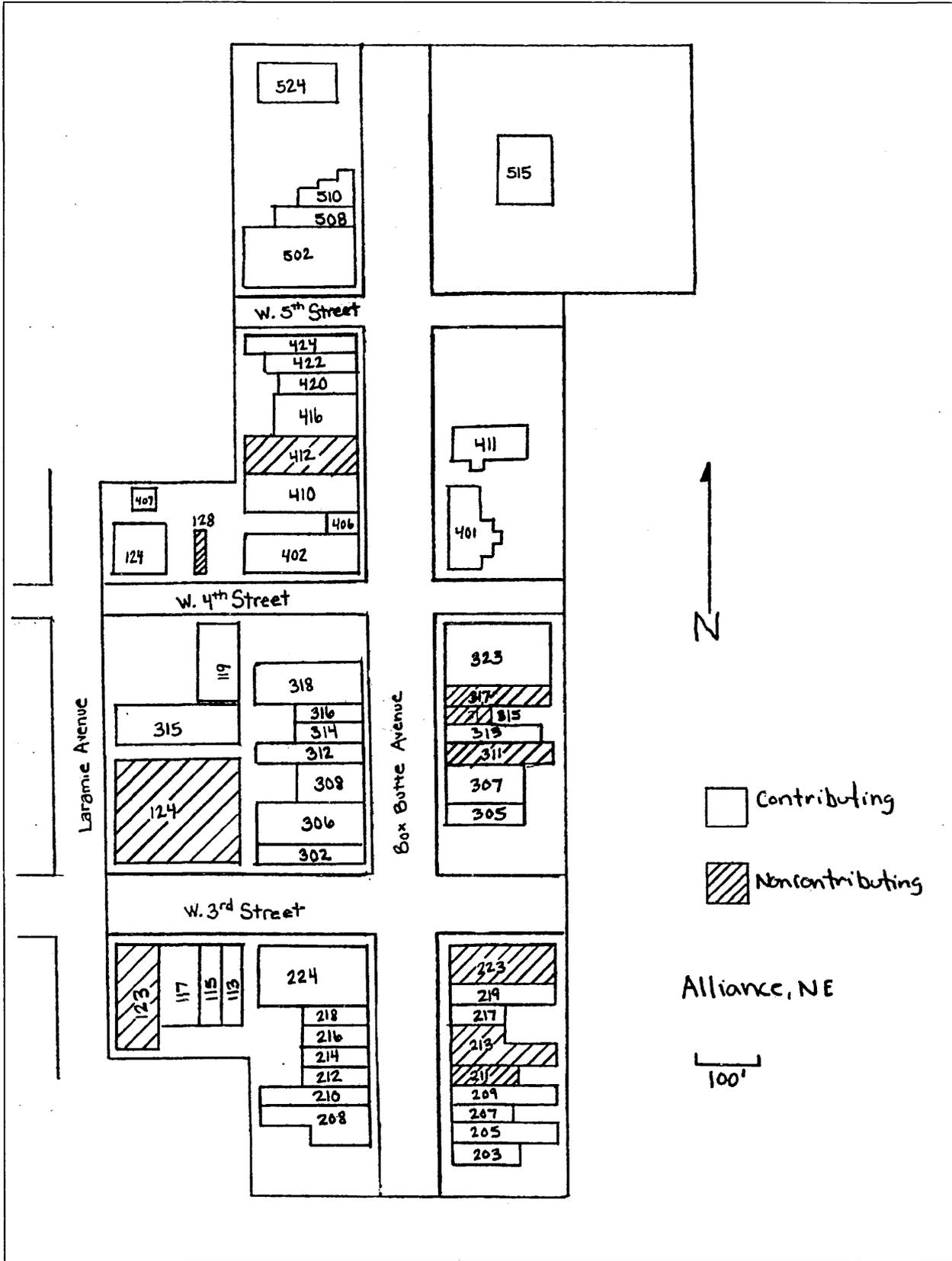
John N. Vogel, Photographer

03 May 2006

Negative on file at the Nebraska State Historical Society

Photograph	Description of Photograph	View
1 of 18	Historic District view from 1 st Street (view of district)	To N
2 of 18	South ½ of 200 block of Box Butte Avenue, east side of street (view of block in district)	To SE
3 of 18	200 block of Box Butte Avenue, west side of street (view of block in district)	To SW
4 of 18	100 block of 3 rd street, south side of street (view of block in district)	To SE
5 of 18	300 block of Box Butte Avenue, west side of street (view of block in district)	To SW
6 of 18	308 Box Butte Avenue (view of historic Adler Building)	To W
7 of 18	300 block of Box Butte Avenue, east side of street (view of block in district)	To NE
8 of 18	323 Box Butte Avenue (view of building constructed by J.R. Phelan)	To E
9 of 18	400 block of Box Butte Avenue, west side of street (view of block in district)	To SW
10 of 18	Corner of Laramie Avenue & 4 th Street (view of 315 Laramie & 124 4 th Street)	To NE
11 of 18	402 Box Butte Avenue (view of Newberry's Hardware building)	To WNW
12 of 18	410 Box Butte Avenue (view of Alliance Movie Theater)	To W
13 of 18	416 Box Butte Avenue (view of Eagles Building)	To W
14 of 18	500 Block of Box Butte Avenue (view of block in district)	To SW
15 of 18	502 Box Butte Avenue (view of Lowery & Henry Auto Garage)	To WNW
16 of 18	401 Box Butte Avenue (view of US Post Office)	To NE
17 of 18	411 Box Butte Avenue (view of Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks)	To E
18 of 18	515 Box Butte Avenue (view of National Register-listed County Courthouse)	To NE

**Alliance Commercial Historic District
Alliance, Box Butte County, Nebraska**



Alliance Commercial Historic District
 Alliance, Box Butte County, Nebraska
 Photo Key

