

Renotification/No Acknowledgments

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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received MAR 29 1982

date entered MAY 13 1982

Rec'd by HCRS 11-07-81

1. Name Alma Multiple Resource Area

historic

and/or common Multiple Resources of Alma (partial inventory)

2. Location

street & number Main and Second Streets between Riverview Drive and Laue Street and that portion of Riverview Drive between Main Street and Sunset Drive not for publication

city, town Alma vicinity of congressional district Third

state Wisconsin code 55 county Buffalo code 011

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
Multiple	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial
Resource	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no NA	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Buffalo County Courthouse

street & number 407 South Second Street

city, town Alma state Wisconsin 54610

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1977 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☒ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☒ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☐ original site
☒ moved date 408 South Second (1896)

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

I. General Description

Alma's development was directly affected by its topography. The city lies on the northern edge of Wisconsin's driftless area that was not covered by pervasive sheets of ice during the last glacial epoch. As a result, the local terrain is characterized by a broad, rolling upland plain divided into ridges by narrow ravines and wider valleys, watered by intermittent or moderately-sized streams. Viewed from the Mississippi River terrace, a steep range of wooded bluffs, the western slope of one such ridge, towers 500 feet over the town. On that narrow ribbon of land between the base of the bluffs and the riverbank are found most of Alma's buildings. Although the area surveyed measures about a mile and a half long from north to south, its depth east to west averages only two blocks. Through annexation Alma has increased its current overall length to more than seven miles, much of which is yet undeveloped.

It is hard to conceive of a sizable settlement being built in the multiple resource area today, since relatively little level land is available. The community owes its existence to a series of manmade terraces, shored up by what must amount to miles of stone retaining walls, especially prominent behind buildings on the east side of Main and the west side of Second Streets. Several ravines dissect the area, draining the slopes. A few have been contained by stone or concrete culverts, such as along the length of Swift or Olive Streets. Many residences retain their cisterns, which served a dual purpose in catching runoff for domestic use and in helping prevent erosion and mudslides before storm sewers were installed in the 1930's.

Those fond of climbing may negotiate a city-maintained hiking trail up to Buena Vista Park, which overlooks the town and a vast stretch of the Mississippi Valley besides. Alma's natural setting is augmented by the many flower and vegetable gardens found here in the warmer season. Though there is evidence that extensive grape arbors were maintained in former times, fewer small vineyard and orchards are present today.

The majority of buildings in the city stand on 50' x 100' lots, with generally more open space visible between structures on Second Street than on Main in the central district. Another apparent pattern is that Main Street properties tend to front directly on the street, as do those on the west side of Second. Buildings on the east side of Second tend to be set back from the street, providing for ample front yards. Careful observation reveals that nearly every structure in town has, from at least one window on its western exposure, a resplendent view of the river and the Minnesota bluffs.

Substantially few alterations have taken place in the basic lay-out of Alma since its periods of significance. Some things which have changed include the discontinuance of "the Landing," used by steamboats at the foot of Cedar Street and a second landing known as "the Levee" at the foot of North Street. The proximity of the lock and dam all but prevent boats from currently docking at these sites. Also, the railroad tracks were moved off their intermittent trestles along the riverbank and rebuilt on filled land at the same location. Another apparent change has been the disappearance of several small farmsteads that once dotted the community with their barns and outbuildings, providing fresh dairy and poultry products throughout different neighborhoods. Before farm animals were banned from the city, well after the turn of the century, residents used to pasture their horses and cattle in a sort of commons area called "Mossy Hollow" which adjoins the multiple resource area on the south.

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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (continued)

Alma Historical Society Intensive Survey
1979
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Great River Road Survey
1979
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Gallagher Survey
1979
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Hurley Survey
1971
State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

A last change that might be pointed out is the profuse growth of trees on the bluff faces. Trees were reported to have been sparse on the bluffs during Alma's development, partly because the Indians were reputed to set the slopes on fire each year to encourage the growth of grasses favored by wild game. Also, woodcutters employed in gathering fuel for steamboats in the town's early years cut what trees they could find close at hand. It was not until the 1880's that the familiar wooded slopes began to show in period photographs.

A more detailed description of Alma between the 1870's and the 1930's can be found in the bird's-eye view of the village in the Buffalo County Atlas of 1877 (see bibliography), a similar but later sketch published by Ruger and Stoner (Madison, 1884), and the Sanborn-Perris Insurance Maps of the city done between 1889 and 1931 (see bibliography).

II. Architectural

The Multiple Resource Area lies on two parallel streets, Main and Second Streets, which run north and south. Second Street is about twenty feet higher than Main Street. These two primary streets are connected by eighteen shorter, intersecting streets of which only four are open to vehicular traffic, the remaining fourteen having cement steps and handrails for pedestrian traffic. Main Street, from 50 to 100 feet from the Mississippi River, is synonymous with Highway 35, and Second Street between Hill and Water Streets is synonymous with County Trunk E. Alma's natural barriers on the west and east have severely limited where development can occur. Thus, competition for building sites has resulted in few open spaces. However, there is a landscaped open area along the railroad tracks on the west side of Main Street south of North Street. The commercial district lies on Main Street between Cedar and North Streets with the residential areas being north of Cedar and south of North Streets on Main Street and all of Second Street. The commercial area is fairly dense with more than one building on a lot in some cases. The residential area is less dense but there are houses on almost every lot on which it is physically possible to build. In fact, it was a fairly frequent occurrence after the turn of the century for people to tear down their existing houses, often ones their parents had built, or to tear down old barns and sheds to create new spaces to build. Examples of this practice include the houses at 203 North Second, 103 South Second and 605 South Second. This also occurred in the commercial district when business growth necessitated a new building, such as at 210 North Main and 117 North Main. Due to the density of buildings and retaining walls in the commercial district, there is a general lack of trees, plantings and gardens in this area. However, the residential areas have plantings, trees and marvelous terraced gardens, particularly behind the houses on the east side of Second Street. Second Street used to be lined with sugar maple trees but they were removed in the 1940's because age had weakened them. In 1885 when the railroad came, many warehouses and docks leading down to the river were removed to make room for the tracks. Also in the 1950's when Highway 35 was widened, several houses on lower Main Street south of Swift Street were removed. At that time many of the two story porches along Main Street were removed although several of the second story porches remain, now bracketed for support.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

The Multiple Resource Area contains examples of brick, frame and a very few stone buildings, primarily constructed between the 1860's and the 1930's. Most of the architecture is vernacular in style. However there is a definite Greek Revival influence found in the predominance of gabled roofs with cornice or eave returns. This style continues to appear on structures built after the 1920's. There are several houses built in the Queen Anne style, some of brick, but most of wood frame. Most of the frame houses with Queen Anne elements were built by Anton and/or Ulrich Walser. The house at 1109 South Main is the only building in Alma reminiscent of Second Empire design, while the house at 503 South Second embodies characteristics of the Greek Revival. There are several bungalows. The commercial buildings are generally 2 to 3 story frame or brick structures with applied "boomtown" storefronts. Seventy-seven per cent of the buildings in the Multiple Resources Area are residences, 18% are commercial structures, 2.5% are public buildings, and 2.5% are used for religious, fraternal, or other purposes.

The majority of buildings have stone foundations and brick chimneys. The residences are mostly of two stories in an L or T shape, the L or T created when an addition was built. Brick buildings have segmental or keystone arch windows and doors, and both brick and frame structures have decorative wood or metal trim. There are some stained, beveled and leaded glass windows and many windows have multiple panes. The few examples of three story residences appear to be in proportion to the other houses on Second Street, since their main entrances are on the second level, and thus only seem larger when viewed from Main Street. Roofs are mostly gabled and usually have asphalt shingles, although a few have tin roofs and one has a slate roof. Original clapboard siding has in many cases been covered with asbestos shingle, asphalt or aluminum siding.

III. Archeological Description and Survey Methodology

The Mississippi bluffline in the vicinity of Alma, Wisconsin, has long been recognized as an area of rich archeological potential. One of the first archeological explorers in the area was G. H. Squier of Trempealeau, who recorded two or three conical mounds "at the mouth of Beef river" (1914:135). From the manner in which Squier's report is phrased, it is questionable whether or not he ever even saw the mounds. Certainly his brief description does not allow for their precise relocation today; as they were said to have been nearly obliterated by plowing at the time of the reporting, it is likely that the mounds are no longer extant.

What may or may not have been a different mound group was reported by C. E. Brown (1906:297), based on information extracted from Kessinger's History of Buffalo County (1888:76). This group was said to have been situated "at the junction of Beef River with Beef Slough," a locational description which, again, does not provide much basis for accurate relocation.

A third site reported during this initial period of amateur exploration consisted of a single conical mound, said to be located simply "at Alma" (Brown 1906:297). Again, this bit of information is not based on first-hand observation of the site; rather, it found its way into Brown's inventory of Wisconsin antiquities by way of G. A. West, another amateur archeologist, who himself had received the report from another (unnamed) source.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

For all their vagueness, the early reports provided definite indications of substantial prehistoric (at least Woodland) occupation of the Alma vicinity. In spite of this, the area was virtually ignored by the professional archeological community until fairly recently. Systematic fieldwork within the Alma corporate limits was not undertaken until 1971, when William Hurley, of the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, conducted survey and testing operations along the north side of the Buffalo River just above its confluence with the Mississippi. Hurley's efforts in the area were part of a larger research project designed "to selectively examine a very large geographic region (i.e. the northern part of Wisconsin's unglaciated "Driftless Area") via its drainage systems" (1971:1). With his primary goal the identification of major occupations in each area selected for investigation, Hurley's work may be characterized as extensive rather than intensive in its scope, a reconnaissance effort rather than an evaluative study.

Five previously unreported archeological sites were recorded by Hurley as the result of his work along the Buffalo River. All are located within the Alma corporate limits, although not necessarily within the multiple resource boundaries (see map):

1. 47 Bf-28, Parker Site 1, is located in the NW 1/4 of Section 26, T22N R13W. It occupies a broad terrace segment just east of Iron Creek and west of the Alma city dump. An occupation measuring some 350 sq. meters is indicated by the spatial distribution of surface debris, while limited testing revealed subsurface material to a depth of 50 cm. While cultural affiliation is essentially unknown, the single grit-tempered sherd recovered from one of the test pits demonstrates the presence of a Woodland component.
2. 47 Bf-31, Parker Site 2, is located in the NE 1/4 of Section 26, T22N R13W, occupying a narrow terrace segment on the west side of the Alma city dump. A town road serves as the site's southern boundary; during construction of the road, Hurley surmises, a portion of Bf-31 was probably destroyed. Text excavations in the eastern portion of Bf-31 yielded mixed prehistoric and historic debris, while the western portion produced only prehistoric remains. Again, precise temporal/cultural affiliation of the prehistoric component cannot be determined on the basis of the material collected; a single grit-tempered sherd from the site's southern edge, along the town road, indicates the presence of a Woodland occupation.
3. 47 Bf-32, Parker Site 3, is located in the NE 1/4 of Section 26, T22N R13W, where it occupies a small terrace segment just north of the town road. Both surface collection and limited subsurface testing were carried out at the site, described by Hurley (1971:43) as a spatially restricted, single component (Woodland) campsite. Material was encountered in undisturbed contexts up to 60 cm. deep in one test pit; while the results of the limited excavations cannot be said to constitute a full evaluation of the site's informational potential, they certainly indicate that this potential may be considerable.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

4. 47 Bf-33, Parker Site 4, is located in the NE 1/4 of Section 26, T22N R13W, just west of, and across a draw from, Parker 3. Surface collection only was undertaken at this site, resulting in the recovery of a small amount of non-diagnostic lithic material.
5. 47 Bf-34, Parker Site 5, is located in the NW 1/4 of Section 25, T22N R13W, the easternmost of the five sites identified by Hurley. Situated on a narrow terrace ledge north of the town road, the site was subjected to surface reconnaissance only. Material recovered consisted solely of non-diagnostic lithic debris.

In addition to Hurley's limited reconnaissance work along the Buffalo River only one other large-scale systematic survey has been undertaken in the Alma Multiple Resource Area. This survey was initiated in 1979 by John Penman, highway archeologist with the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, as a planning study for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (in connection with the inter-state Great River Road project). A rather wide corridor was outlined for survey by the Department of Transportation, taking in low riverbank areas as well as the top of the high bluffline. Much of the corporate entity of Alma is included within the Great River Road survey area; only parts of the extreme north (north of the Buffalo River) and along the southeast corporate boundary are not included.

Relying exclusively on pedestrian survey of primarily plowed fields, the Great River Road survey crew located five archeological sites within the corporate city limits, although not necessarily within the multiple resource area (see map):

1. 47 Bf-1, the site codification number originally assigned to Squier's Buffalo River conicals, was "reassigned" to an extant mound group located on a short peninsular intrusion into the Buffalo River from its north bank (NW 1/4 Section 26, T22N R13W). The site has not been visited by the Great River survey team, who obtained locational and descriptive information from local area residents. The mounds (number undetermined) are reportedly situated in a low, wet area, and are visible from high ground during seasons of minimal vegetation.
2. 47 Bf-2, the site codification number originally assigned to C. E. Brown's mound group at the confluence of Buffalo River/Buffalo Slough, has been "reassigned" to an extant mound group that can be described as occupying such a position. The "Gi'hon" group (NE 1/4 Section 27, T22N R13W) consists of at least three conicals located on the upper slope of a triangular promontory north of the mouth of the Buffalo River. The mounds do not appear to have been disturbed to any great extent.
3. 47 Bf-3, the site codification number originally assigned to G. A. West's single conical at Alma, now also designates a campsite located in the SE 1/4, Section 35, T22N R13W. Approximately 2 ha. in extent, the site produced lithic debris and a single projectile point, which may be diagnostic of an Archaic occupation.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

4. 47 Bf-47, the Secrist Site, is located in the SE 1/4 of Section 26, T22N R13W, at the base of the promontory on which the Gi'hon Mounds sit. Surface collection at the site yielded lithic and ceramic materials indicating a Late Woodland occupation.
5. 47 Bf-57, the Garden Site, is located in the NE 1/4 of Section 27, T22N R13W, along the south side of the Buffalo River at the base of the bluffs. About 1.5 ha. in extent, the site yielded non-diagnostic lithic debris and historic material.

No great attention has been focused on historic archeological sites in the Alma Multiple Resource Area. It is likely that within the city of Alma itself much historical data has been lost as a result of recent development. For example, in his survey for the city's proposed wastewater treatment facility, James Gallagher, an archeologist from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, found the area to have been "totally altered by excavations up to one hundred feet deep" (1979). Given the long history of land re-use in the city, however, it is probable that a certain amount of information pertaining to earlier stages in the city's growth and history is to be found below the present city streets and in isolated unoccupied areas. At least two historic archeological sites are known which appear to retain enough contextual integrity to warrant their further evaluation: the Julius Wilke brickyard at 300 East Laue Street and the Union Brewery at 801-807 South Main Street.

IV. Survey Methodology

This Multiple Resource Nomination is based on two surveys. An intensive historical survey was conducted in the multiple resource area by the Alma Historical Society between 1978 and 1980 with Michael Doyle and Barbara Anderson-Sannes, research historians, doing the work. The intensive historical survey identified and researched buildings that were constructed before 1940 and compiled historical data on them. Buildings of historical importance were identified through local research using oral interviews, property abstracts, maps, tax rolls, and published histories. The Buffalo County Journal (under various names) was studied between 1869-1943 (see bibliography). The local project supervisor was Delvan Deneff of the Alma Historical Society. David Donath, historian for the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, coordinated the survey with state intensive survey procedures early in the project. Barbara Wyatt, Survey and Planning Coordinator of the Historic Preservation Division, replaced David Donath in the final stages of the project.

In 1977 the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin conducted a reconnaissance windshield survey that identified 36 sites of architectural or engineering interest within the city limits of Alma. The survey was conducted by a graduate student from the University of Florida.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

V. Description of Historic District

It is very difficult to write a description of the historic district without repeating nearly everything that has been written for the Multiple Resource Area as a whole. Those features which are most prominent in the Multiple Resource Area are best exemplified in the district. These include the wooded bluffs, the riverbank, the terraced slopes faced by stone retaining walls, the predominance of brick or wood frame vernacular buildings oriented to the west, and the fact that most of the city's notable architectural styles, such as the Queen Anne, are found within the district. Of the 134 total structures found in the district, 32 are pivotal (24%), 91 are contributing (67%) and 12 are non-contributing (9%).

VI. Justification of Historic District Boundaries

The boundaries of the historic district were delineated within the Multiple Resource Area due to the following factors: 1) the number of historically and architecturally significant buildings was much greater in the district than outside of it; 2) the district area is more densely built up than the Multiple Resource Area; and 3) fewer non-contributing structures are found in the district. In addition, the east and west boundaries were determined by the natural boundaries of the bluff and river, respectively. North and south boundaries were fixed along two streets (Cedar and Swift) which lie contiguous with ravines that drain the bluff headlands. Neighborhoods immediately north and south of these streets are a less visually distinct area since they are less densely built up and contain more new buildings and old buildings lacking architectural integrity.

VII. Boundaries - Delineation of Historic District

Starting at the northwest corner of the district (corner of Cedar and Main Streets) the boundary proceeds in a southerly direction between the buildings fronting Main Street on the east and the tracks of the Burlington Northern Railroad on the West. Just beyond the railroad tracks is an embankment above the shore of the Mississippi River. There are no buildings west of the tracks. At the junction of North and Main Streets the boundary shifts slightly to include the residential blocks on the east side of Main Street. From this point south there are not any structures on the west side of Main, only the tracks and the river.

At Swift Street--which is closed to all but pedestrian traffic on the steps--the boundary line ascends easterly to Second Street, turning back north behind the residential area on the east side of Second. Here again there are no buildings to be found, since the backyards of these blocks lie at the foot of the bluffs. The boundary continues its northern course to Elm Street where it turns east for a half block, then north again to Cedar Street. This variance follows the topography along the base of the bluff to include two contributing outbuildings, before descending along a ravine known locally as "the Dip," which has been paved over at the junction of Cedar and Second. Proceeding west down Cedar, the boundary veers north at the alley to take in the first two buildings, then west to connect with Main Street, and then south along Main St. to join the point of departure at the corner of Cedar and Main. (continued)

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

VIII. Descriptions of Selected Pivotal Buildings in the Alma Historic District

111 North Main Street, 1882, Tester and Schilling Hardware Store

In 1873 John W. Tester and Samuel Schilling entered into a partnership and bought the only hardware store in town, that of William Miller, the tinsmith. It was located south of the Commercial Hotel until 1882 when they had this building built. This three story red brick romanesque commercial building still retains its original appearance except for the upper parts of the front windows being covered. It is of solid brick construction, the first story used for the store and storage space, the top two floors are used for living space. It remains a hardware store and residence to this day. The exterior features a heavily bracketed cornice, arch windows with stone bands, a cast iron balcony with cast iron brackets over the entrance, carved posts on the store front and a large stone slab entrance. Tester and Schilling continued in business together until 1889 when Tester sold Schilling his interest. Schilling continued alone until 1903.

121 North Main Street, 1896, Mathias Ruben Grocery, Bakery and Confectionery and Residence

J. G. Auer and A. O. Latschaw built this two story commercial building with wood siding for Mathias Ruben, to house his grocery, bakery and confectionery. Ruben was born in Dalin, Canton Graubuenden, Switzerland and spent his childhood there. As a young man he traveled about Florence, Italy, and the Island of Sardinia where he was trained in the art of baking and pastry making. He came to Alma in 1872, married Caroline Grotjahn and tended bar at the Union House until 1882 when he opened a bakery and confectionery in Fimian's old stand at 101 North Main. He built the Rothrock building at 119 North Main in 1893 to improve his business location, building this place three years later. Ruben baked all his own bread in the bakery building to the rear of his store until 1915. He continued to operate the store until his death in 1925. The store was then run by his son Edwin and is still in operation with his grandson Donald as proprietor. The exterior features molded window lintels, an oriel window to the north and a sheet metal cornice manufactured at the cornice works of Anton Gass of La Crosse.

101 South Main Street, 1875, Gesell's Photography Studio

Gerhard Gesell came to Alma in the fall of 1876 from Reads Landing, Minnesota, where he had in 1873 embarked on a career as a photographer. In 1887 he purchased this 2 1/2 story frame building, with stone basement, gabled roof and clapboard siding that is now covered with aluminum siding, that Phillip Zeller had built in 1875 for his harness shop and residence. Gesell immediately moved in his photography studio on the second level and his Art, Book and Stationery Store on the first floor. Later the family also moved into the second floor. Gesell operated both the studio and store until 1890 when he sold the store to John Hammer, leasing him the first floor also. From that time on Gesell devoted himself exclusively to his work as a photo-artist and was involved in doing much portrait work as well as landscapes, particularly views of Beef Slough and shots of Alma from across the river. He also created special works such as the Old Settler's Picture he did in 1891. He gathered many of the old settlers listed in Kessinger's History of Buffalo County, taking individual pictures of each and placed

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

them together in a large grouping that now can be found in the Buffalo County courthouse. When the family moved to their house on Second Street (no longer there) their dwelling rooms were converted into waiting and reception rooms for his gallery. He continued operating the gallery until his death in 1906.

305 and 307 South Main Street, 1882, Charles Neumeister Building

Charles Neumeister came to Alma from La Crosse in 1876, he married Theresa Tritsch and the same year entered into partnership with her brother Frank and opened a mercantile store. Charles left the partnership in 1879 and later in 1882 had this three story red brick Italianate building built. The main part of the first story was for his grocery and variety store with the addition on the southside for the feed store he operated. In 1889 the building was converted into a hotel, the Commercial Hotel; and in 1899 Charles started a domestic and foreign exchange business which later in 1900 was incorporated into the New Bank of Alma after Hunner and Ginzkey's bank had failed. He was running the bank at the time of his death in 1906 but Theresa continued running the store. The exterior of the building features tall rounded windows with keystone arches, in the front, segmental arch windows on the side, four dormers, a keystone arch over the door on the second level entering onto the wrought iron veranda and a gabled roof with wide eaves and brackets and a parapet. The building retains its original appearance except that the first story in the front has been covered with stucco and a clapboard sided porch has been added to the south.

310 South Main Street, 1862, Gottfried Huber's Wholesale Wine and Liquor Business

Charles Boehme built this building in 1862 when he came to Alma, however he only occupied it until 1879 when he had the building immediately to the south built and moved his general store there. In 1894 Gottfried Huber purchased the building which was at that time only a one story brick building and completely remodeled it with J. L. Stohr doing the work. He added one and a half more stories, put in a new front and covered it with a brick veneer. When the work was completed Huber moved his wholesale wine and liquor business in. In 1896 Henry, his son, fitted up a shop in the building for cigar making. In 1903 Henry and Otto bought their father's wholesale liquor business and conducted it in connection with their cigar factory. The building has a wrought iron veranda on the second story.

314 South Main Street, 1876, Tritsch Mercantile Store

Frank Tritsch, the first white boy born in Alma, and his brother-in-law Charles Neumeister entered into partnership in 1876 and had this two story solid brick building with arch windows with keystones and an elaborate brick cornice constructed with Oenning and Giesen doing the brickwork. It housed their mercantile store which they conducted together until 1879. At that time Neumeister left the partnership and John Adam Tritsch joined his son Frank and together they ran a mercantile in the building until John died in 1898. Frank continued to run the business alone until 1909 when he took his sons Oscar and Frank A. into partnership with him, the firm being named Frank Tritsch & Sons. In 1911 when Frank died, his widow and five children organized the Tritsch Mercantile Company which ran the store until 1930.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

609 South Main, 1922, Fred Lehman Residence

After living in the house he built next door (north) for one year, Fred Lehman decided to build another bungalow on this site. He hired a local mason, Wm. Wilk, and together they erected this fine 24' x 24' house. The lower first story is faced with brick, and from there up, the rest is sided with cedar shingles. There is a full open porch on the west side supported by two brick piers, and featuring a tie beam, king post and knee braces, and exposed rafter ends. The one brick chimney on the south side of the house is crowned. Four shed dormers -- two each on the west and east sides -- add dimension to the otherwise gabled roof. The windows downstairs are of the twelve over one variety; upstairs they are eight over one. Much exposed oak trim and woodwork is found throughout the interior including a built-in hutch with leaded glass and beveled mirrors, a brick fireplace with an oaken mantle, and of course, oak flooring. The original decorative hardware is still in place; brass door handles, heating ducts and light fixtures. This house is one of the best surviving examples of the bungalow style in western Buffalo County.

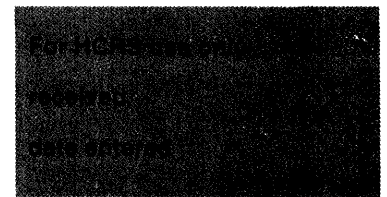
101 North Second Street, 1883, E. F. Ganz Residence

This fine example of a red brick Queen Anne house was built in 1883 by John Mecklenburg, the stone mason, as a residence for himself. In 1897 Edwin F. Ganz bought the house and it has remained in the Ganz family ever since, it now being owned by E. F.'s daughter Olga. Ganz had taught school for 13 years before moving to Alma from his birthplace in Waumandee. In 1890 he bought the Buffalo County Journal and was the editor and publisher of it for 23 years. He was also the postmaster for the years 1897 until 1913. His interest in education continued after the move to Alma; he served on the school board and was one of the most ardent promoters of the Buffalo County Training School which was built in 1902, serving on its board from 1902 through 1934. However the greatest legacy that Ganz left proved to be the Buffalo County Journal; through its pages he recorded occurrences with a historical perspective, since his object was to encourage people to remember and honor the pioneers who had settled this county. In 1913 the family moved to their stock farm, Buena Vista Farms, on the bluff above the city. He continued to write articles and obituaries for the paper after he sold it to Theodore Buehler and Frank Stroebel. After they left the house it was occupied by Dr. Jacob Tenney as a residence and doctor's office. The house retains its original appearance. It is of solid brick construction with a gabled roof and bargeboard. The north front of the house has a large four window bay with an open porch with wooden pilars on brick supports on the south part of the front. There are segmental arch windows and there is a circular window over the entrance. The wood shed in the back is attached on the second level with the summer kitchen below being attached by bricked passageway to the first level. The interior features double molded woodwork, domes and hooks in the ceilings for the original kerosene lamps, a lathed walnut handrail with bannisters, wainscotting and a foyer with twin entrance doors.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

205 North Second Street, 1882, Dr. George Seiler House

Dr. George Seiler was born in Schaffhausen in Switzerland and attended the universities of Zurich and Prague to complete his medical studies. In 1868 he came to America, settling first at La Crosse, then Fountain City, finally coming to Alma in 1875. In 1876 he married Anna, the daughter of Charles Schaettle, and in 1882 they had this red brick Queen Anne house built with Oenning and Giesen doing the brick work. It remained their residence until 1903. The exterior features a gabled roof with bargeboard, bay windows, arch windows with keystone and a pillared front porch added in 1891 by Ulrich Walser for Dr. Linaker who purchased the house from Dr. Seiler. There is a large wood frame barn with stone foundation behind the house.

108 South Second, 1897, P. E. Ibach Residence

This is Alma's reigning Queen Anne house, and might rightfully be called the premier example of the style in Buffalo County. It is another of the several homes known to be built by Ulrich and Anton Walser. Peter E. Ibach, a distinguished local businessman, had this house constructed above what was to become his prosperous mercantile store and exchange bank (located at 121 South Main). The cornerstone laying ceremony, held in early June of that year, was attended with a great deal of pomp by a brass band and the Frohsinn Singing Society. According to the Buffalo County Journal: "Dr. Seiler read the dedication, in the form of a poem written by himself. Different documents, papers and coins were enclosed in the stone."

The house is dominated by a polygonal turret with a tent roof. Located on the southwest corner, the turret features a weathervane finial and a stained and beveled glass window with a border of small square panes. (This latter feature is found as a transom over other windows throughout the house.) Fishscale shingles are to be seen on all gable ends and porch skirt roofs, as well as on the turret itself. The windows have an architrave trimmed with dentils. Spindle and spool friezes stretch between the decorative porch posts of the veranda, which in turn rests on brick piers with a lattice-like base.

A bay window on the southwest first story affords an unparalleled view of the old Ibach store, a wedge of Main Street, and the resplendent Mississippi below. The scene from that window looking into the house is equally splendid. Miss Esther Ibach, the remaining family member, grew up in the house around the turn of the century and still uses it for her residence. The parlor, the music room, the bedrooms are little changed from their original appearance, retaining period furnishings and embellishments. The interior trim shows the happy marriage of master craftsmen and the finest lumber sawable, procured from the Laues' mill. Outside is a 1½ story frame barn and also a stone washhouse to the east. The present structure is in excellent condition and merits special attention.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

505 South Second Street, 1902, Buffalo County Training School

Anton Walser and his crew built this massive solid red brick building in 1902 after receiving the contract from the building committee of the Buffalo County Training School. It is a two and a half story building with a deck roof and gabled extensions on the north and south. The basement was built using stone from the land just above the building; the five feet of foundation above the ground level is dressed with stones from Winona. The brick used is from Wabasha. All the inside woodwork is #1 oak and the floors are of yellow pine. Other features are an arched entrance, horizontal stone bands and a bracketed cornice. It functioned as a teachers' training school until the summer of 1967, primarily training teachers for rural Buffalo County schools.

600 South Second Street, 1897, Anton Walser House

Anton Walser was one of the six Walser brothers who came to America from their birthplace in Haldestein, Canton of Graubunden, Switzerland. They came to Alma in the 1880's, all being carpenters and builders. All of the brothers left except for Anton and Ulrich who together built many of the finer houses in Alma. Anton and Ulrich started out by building the church at Tell and both brothers married in a double ceremony in 1889 shortly after the church was built. They went on to build houses for P. E. Ibach, Dr. J. T. Tenney, Charles Schaettle and their own houses. In 1902 Anton built both the Buffalo County Training School and Frank Tritsch's house. He resided in this house which he built in 1897 until 1905 when he was forced to leave Alma for the climate of the state of Washington due to his poor health. This large frame house with stone basement and three stories was built with some features of the Queen Anne style. It has various levels of roofs intersecting into another, with a shingled curved wall dormer in the front. There is a two story bay to the south, and the windows have carved wood lintels, with some stained glass. The return eaves are decorated with brackets and there is bargeboard in the open gables. The upper story is shingled with the rest being sided. The front porch is at street level but it enters on the second story which is on the level with the street. It is for this reason that the house appears smaller viewing it from Second Street and greatly increases in size when viewed from Main Street.

IX. Inventory of Historic District Property Owners*

<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
101 East Elm (N 1/2, Lot 5, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Pearl Ruben	121 North Main	Contributing
100 North Main (Lot 1, Bl. 3, Plat of Alma)	Willard Breckow		Contributing
101 North Main (Lot 1, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Gerald Schreiber	111 South Main Alma, WI 54610	Contributing

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*if the address of the owner is not indicated it is the same as the property.

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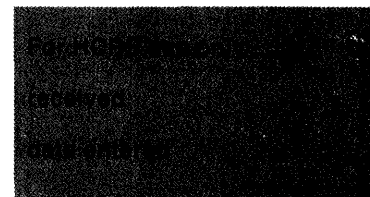
7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
104 North Main (Lot 2, Bl. 3, Plat of Alma)	Alvin Mueller		Contributing
105 North Main (S 1/2, Lot 2, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Specialty Products	Arcadia, WI 54612	Contributing
106 North Main (Lot 3, Bl. 3, Plat of Alma)	Lorene Gustafson		Contributing
107 North Main (N 1/2, Lot 2, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Louis and Naomi Caputo	Rt. 3, Box 173A Mauston, WI 53948	Contributing
110 North Main (Lot 4, Bl. 3, Plat of Alma)	Lion's Club c/o Tom LeCleir		Pivotal
111 North Main (Lot 3, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Carl Parks		Pivotal
115 North Main (S 1/2, Lot 4, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	David & Linda Niccum	Box 201 Cochrane, WI 59622	Contributing
117 North Main (N 1/2, Lot 4, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Gerald Schreiber	111 South Main Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
118 North Main (Lot 5, Bl. 3, Plat of Alma)	Ruth Byington	1005 South 2nd Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
119 North Main (S 1/2, Lot 5, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Pearl Ruben		Pivotal
121 North Main (N 1/2, Lot 5, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Donald Ruben		Pivotal
200 North Main (Part of Lot 1, Bl. 4, Plat of Alma)	John O'Malley	Box 926 N. Locust Prescott, WI 54021	Contributing
201 North Main (Lot 1, Bl. 7, Plat of Alma)	Steven Fernholz		Contributing
204 North Main (Part of Lot 1 & S 26.5', Lot 2, Bl. 4, Plat of Alma)	Kevin & Lori Larson		Contributing

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
207 North Main (Lot 2, Bl. 7, Plat of Alma)	Alton Nelson	Knapp, WI 54749	Contributing
208 North Main (N. 23.5', Lot 2 & S. 20', Lot 3, Bl. 4, Plat of Alma)	Gerald Schreiber	111 South Main Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
210 North Main (S. 25' of the N. 30', Lot 3, Bl. 4, Plat of Alma)	Kathryn Noll	Route 1 Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
211 North Main (Lot 3, Bl. 7, Plat of Alma)	Herb Marcum		Contributing
212 North Main (Lots 4 & 5, Bl. 4, Plat of Alma)	Richard Krackow	Arcadia, WI 54612	Contributing
215 North Main (Lot 5 & N. 47', Lot 4, Bl. 7, Plat of Alma)	John T. Runions		Pivotal National Designated Site - 1979
301 North Main	Marion Fernholz		Contributing
305 North Main	Stephan Mark Saxton, David Hamberg, and David Giancristforo		Contributing
100 South Main	John Hanson	Qwik Trip #820 P. O. Box 2107, 2306 Commerce St. La Crosse, WI 54601	Non-Contributing
101 South Main (N. 29.5', Lot 5, Bl. 9 except E. 291', Plat of Alma)	Peter Schultz		Pivotal
103 South Main (N. 2', Lot 4, S. 20.5', Lot 5, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Norman Radke		Contributing
104 South Main (S. 25', Lot 4, Bl. 2, Plat of Alma)	Ben Schwartz		Contributing
105 South Main (N. 24' of the S. 48', Lot 4, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Ray & Doris Dobberphul		Contributing
109 South Main (S. 24' of the S. 48', Lot 4, Bl. 9 Plat of Alma)	Ray & Doris Dobberphul	105 South Main Alma, WI 54610	Contributing

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<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
110 South Main (Lot 3, Bl. 2, Plat of Alma)	Diane Townsend- Anderson	604 South Second Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal
111 South Main (Lot 3, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Mrs. Thomas (Elsie) Hovland		Contributing
114 South Main (Lot 2, Bl. 2, Plat of Alma)	Gary Kline	913 Riverview Drive Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal
115 South Main (Lot 2, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Mrs. A. L. (Evelyn) Bautch	P. O. Box 43 Nelson, WI 54756	Pivotal
117 South Main (N. 16', Lot 1, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Jeffrey B. Langreck	Route 1 Cochrane, WI 54622	Contributing
120 South Main	Tenney Telephone Co. c/o President		Non-Contributing
121 South Main (S. 34', Lot 1, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Alma Lodge #184 Free and A. Masons	c/o Glenn Turton 205 North Second Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
200 South Main	Morris Jensen		Non-Contributing
204 South Main (N. 20', Lot 4, & S 1/2, Lot 5, Bl. 1, Plat of Alma)	Community Clinic c/o Dr. Walton		Contributing
209 South Main	American Bank c/o Alan Kirchner	1211 S. Main Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
210 South Main (S. 30', Lot 4, Bl. 1, Plat of Alma)	Paul J. Rosenstiehl	Route 2, Box 30 Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
211 South Main	Alan Kirchner	1245 N. Riverview Dr. Alma, WI 54610	Non-Contributing
213 South Main	Alan Kirchner	1245 N. Riverview Dr. Alma, WI 54610	Non-Contributing

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<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
215 South Main (Lots 1 & S 1/2, Lot 2, Plat of Alma)	Curtis Loewenhagen		Contributing
301 South Main (Lot 9, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger's Addition)	Delvan Deneff		Pivotal*
302 South Main	Stephen Parks c/o Carl Parks	Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
303 South Main	Wayne Loewenhagen		Non-Contributing
304 South Main (N. 37', Lot 2 & S. 36', Lot 3, Bl. 23, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Jerome & Marvilla Baecker	602 North Second Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
305 South Main (Lot 7, S. 9', Lot 8, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Clarence Clark	801 South Main Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal
310 South Main (S. 13', Lot 2, N. 14', Lot 1, Bl. 23, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Gladys Kilmer		Pivotal
312 South Main (S. 36', Lot 1, Bl. 23, c/o Mayor Probst and Wenger Addition & part of Government Lot 4, Section 2, T21N, R13W)	City of Alma	505 South Second Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal
314 South Main (Part of Government Lot 4, Section 2, T21N, R13W)	City of Alma	505 South Second Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal
316 South Main (Part of Government Lot 4, Section 2, T21N, R13W)	David Sannes & Barbara Anderson- Sannes	Route 2, Box 74 Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal

*On National Register of Historic Places, 1979.

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<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
321 South Main (Lots 5 & 6, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Wendall Hagen		Contributing
323, 330 South Main (N. 25', Lot 3, S. 25', Lot 4, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Ralph Knospe	1140 N. Riverview Dr. Alma, WI 54610	323 Pivotal 330 Non-Contributing
331 South Main (S 1/2, Lot 3 & N. 17', Lot 2, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Sam J. Holtzman & Elfa Hacker	331 South Main Alma, WI 54610	331 Contributing
401 South Main (Lot 1, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Gloria Miller		Contributing
403 South Main (Lot 2, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Naomi Kruse		Contributing
405 South Main (Lot 3, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Melvin Kurtzweg		Contributing
407 South Main (Lot 4, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Lenus Koenig	835 1/2 East Grand Eau Claire, WI 54701	Contributing
409 South Main (Lot 5, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Rolland Zirzow		Contributing
411 South Main (Lot 6, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Lynn C. Kepner	540 E. Division River Falls, WI 54022	Contributing
501 South Main (Lot 1, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Robert and Dorothy Hartman		Contributing
503 South Main (Lot 2, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Alton Loewenhagen	607 South Second Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
505 South Main (Lot 3, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Dan McHone	2438 18½ Ave., NW #5/312 Rochester, MN 55901	Contributing
507 South Main (Lots 4 & 5, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Fred Borgwardt	705 North Second	Contributing
509 South Main (Lot 6, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Margaret Fodor		Contributing

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<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
601 South Main (Lot 1, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	Russell Smith		Pivotal
603 South Main (Lot 2, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	Gary and Ruth Wick		Contributing
605 South Main	Sidney Moham		Non-Contributing
607 South Main (N. 30', Lot 4, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	Esther Marty Estate	c/o Carol Peterson Route 2 Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
609 South Main (Lot 5, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	John and Donna Abernathy		Pivotal
611 South Main (Lot 6, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	Harvey Schweitzer		Contributing
105 East Orange (Lot 6, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Mrs. L. W. (Esther) Ambuehl		Contributing
100 North Second (Lot 10, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	John Tuxen	Route 1, Box 264 Cochrane, WI 54622	Contributing
101 North Second (Lot 1, Bl. 13, Plat of Alma)	Olga Ganz	225 Bowman Road Wis. Dells, WI 53965	Pivotal
102 North Second (Lot 9, Bl. 8, Plat of Alma)	Sharon Kaste		Contributing
103 North Second (Lot 2, Bl. 13, Plat of Alma)	Vernon Martzke		Contributing
105 North Second (Lot 3, Bl. 13, Plat of Alma)	Fred Glander	204 North Second Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
107 North Second (Lot 4, Bl. 13, Plat of Alma)	Clairville Bauman		Contributing
109 North Second (Lot 5, Bl. 13, Plat of Alma)	Barry Ritscher		Contributing

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<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
200 North Second (Lot 10, Bl. 7, Plat of Alma)	Julia Furrer Estate		Pivotal
202 North Second (Lots 8 & 9, Bl. 7, Plat of Alma)	Selina Buehler		Contributing
203 North Second (Lots 1, 2 & S. 8', Lot 3, Bl. 14, Plat of Alma)	Florence Averbeck	2804 Jordan Place La Crosse, WI 54601	Pivotal
204 North Second (Lots 6 & 7, Bl. 7, Plat of Alma)	Fred Glander		Contributing
205 North Second (N. 42', Lot 3 & Lot 4, Bl. 14, Plat of Alma)	Glenn Turton		Pivotal
209 North Second (Lot 5, Bl. 14 & S 1/2, Lot 1, Bl. 15, Plat of Alma)	Donald Becker		Contributing
101 South Second (Lot 5, Bl. 12, Plat of Alma)	H. Gregory Green		Pivotal
103 South Second (Lot 4, Bl. 12, Plat of Alma)	H. Gregory Green		Contributing
105 South Second (Lot 3, Bl. 12, Plat of Alma)	Mrs. Beatrice Herold		Contributing
106 South Second (Lots 7 & 8, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Mrs. Donald DeMarce		Contributing
108 South Second (Lots 9 & 10, Bl. 9, Plat of Alma)	Esther Ibach		Pivotal
109 South Second (Lot 2, Bl. 12, Plat of Alma)	Dana & Sharon Heal		Contributing
111 South Second (Lot 1, Bl. 12, Plat of Alma) c/o Mr. Kaste	United Methodist Church of Alma		Contributing
200 South Second (Lot 6 & N. 25', Lot 7, Bl. 10, Plat of Alma)	Roger Mueller		Contributing

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201 South Second (Lot 5, Bl. 11, Plat of Alma)	Kurt Sommerfeld		Contributing
203 South Second (Lot 3, Bl. 11, Plat of Alma)	St. Lawrence Catholic Church c/o Rev. Connolly	206 South Second Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
204 South Second (Lot 8, Bl. 10, Plat of Alma)	Robert & Beverly Wemette		Contributing
206 South Second (Lots 9 & 10, Bl. 10, Plat of Alma)	St. Lawrence Catholic Church		Contributing
300 South Second (Lot 10, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	William Kaste		Contributing
303 South Second (Lot 9, Bl. 25, Probst * Wenger Addition)	David Stiehl		Contributing
304 South Second (Lots 11, 12 & 13, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Walter Kalmes		Contributing
307 South Second (Lots 6, 7 & 8, Bl. 25, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Alfred Herrmann		Contributing
308 South Second (Lot 14, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	County of Buffalo	County Clerk Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
310 South Second (Lot 15, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Beulah Knutson & Gerald Robinson	513 North Main Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
312 South Second (Lot 16, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Thomas Bentz		Contributing
313 South Second (Lots 4 & 5, Bl. 25, Probst & Wenger Addition)	County of Buffalo	County Clerk Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
314 South Second (Lot 17, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Michael R. Tryggstad		Pivotal
317 South Second	American Developers, Inc. c/o Alan Kirchner	211 South Main Alma, WI 54610	Non-Contributing

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<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
318 South Second (Lot 18, Bl. 24, Probst & Wenger Addition)	Wm. F. Noll		Contributing
400 South Second (Lot 12, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Larry Balk	801 North Main Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
404 South Second (Lots 9 & 10, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Mrs. Norbert (Wilma) Noll		Pivotal
407 South Second	County of Buffalo	County Clerk Alma, WI 54610	Non-Contributing
408 South Second (Lot 8, Bl. 1, Lower Addition)	Mrs. Wilma Wenger		Contributing
411 South Second (Lot 6, Bl. 14, Lower Addition)	David Bautch	115 South Main Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
500 South Second (Lot 12, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Gary L. & Suzanne Haigh		Contributing
501 South Second (Lot 1, Bl. 13, Lower Addition)	St. Paul & St. Luke United Church of Christ c/o Blanche Snyder		Contributing
502 South Second	Mrs. Robert (Nora) Hanson		Non-Contributing
503 South Second (Lot 2, Bl. 13, Lower Addition)	St. Paul & St. Luke United Church of Christ	501 South Second Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal
504 South Second (Lot 10, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Wayne Loewenhagen	Route 2 Alma, WI 54610	Contributing
505 South Second (Lots 3 & 4, Bl. 13, Lower Addition)	City of Alma	City Clerk Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal
506 South Second (Lot 9, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Erwin Karrow		Contributing
507 South Second (Lot 5, Bl. 13, Lower Addition)	Jerry Wald	Route 2 Mondovi, WI 54755	Contributing
509 South Second (Lot 6, Bl. 13, Lower Addition)	Walter & Marguerite Klee		Contributing
510 South Second (Lot 7, Bl. 2, Lower Addition)	Mrs. Robert (Anna Mae) Veneigh		Contributing

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<u>PROPERTY</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>EVALUATION</u>
600 South Second (Lot 12 & N. 35', Lot 11, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	David Bautch & Jas. Hartman	115 South Main Alma, WI 54610	Pivotal
601 South Second (Lots 1 & 2, N. 5', Lot 3, Bl. 12, Lower Addition)	Albert & Clarice Ebersold		Pivotal
604 South Second	St. Paul & St. Luke United Church of Christ	501 South Second Alma, WI 54610	Non-Contributing
605 South Second (S. 45', Lot 3, Bl. 12, Lower Addition)	Gladys Stohr		Pivotal
606 South Second (Lot 9, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	Mrs. Chas. (Ann) Sphar and Mrs. Frank (Alma) Kohler	2668 Hope Road Cottage Grove, WI 53527	Contributing
607 South Second (Lot 4, Bl. 12, Lower Addition)	Alton Loewenhagen		Contributing
609 South Second (Lot 5 & N. 12', Lot 6, Bl. 12, Lower Addition)	George & Mildred Bai		Pivotal
611 South Second (S. 38', Lot 6, Bl. 12, Lower Addition)	Mrs. Adolph (Mary) Brinkman		Contributing
100 Swift St. (Lot 7, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	Albert Schafer		Non-Contributing
102 Swift St. (Lot 8, Bl. 3, Lower Addition)	Fred Schneider		Non-Contributing

X. Inventory Sheets for Properties Outside of the District Follow

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				Well preserved Upper
Specific dates	1855-1955	Builder/Architect	See Forms	Mississippi River city

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

I. Introduction

Alma is a unique small upper Mississippi River town in Wisconsin that has changed little since its significant heyday in the 1870s and 1880s. During this period, Alma played an important role in the history of the Wisconsin lumber industry as the river port adjacent to Beef Slough, the key Mississippi River staging area in the transportation of logs and lumber from the vast pineries of the Chippewa Valley. In the late 1860s, Beef Slough was the focus of a contest, known as the Beef Slough War, between rival logging interests which ultimately contributed to Frederick Weyerhaeuser's ability to gain virtual monopolistic control of the Chippewa Valley pineries. The visible remains of the Beef Slough booming operation have disappeared, but Alma, the rough-and-tumble little river town that served Beef Slough, survives as a tangible reminder of the life of those early days. Tangible evidences of that era are most apparent in the historic district in Alma's central area. There are also eleven sites outside of the district important to the city's history.

II. Historical Development

Transportation is the most common theme running through Alma's historical development. A variety of Indian tribes passed through the area before the coming of European explorers, using the nearby Mississippi, Buffalo and Chippewa Rivers for their highways. Fur was the first great commodity exported from these valleys by the French in the late seventeenth century. Well over one hundred years later, in 1823, the steamboat "Virginia" successfully ascended the Mississippi to Fort Snelling at present day St. Paul. This ushered in the era of settlement by providing water access for large numbers of people and goods. The east bank of the river in present day Buffalo County, Wisconsin, was a neutral ground for several Indian tribes. In the 1800s they included the Santee Sioux, the Winnebago, and the Chippewa. Similarly, a mixed group of pioneers claimed the area during the middle of the century, including Germans and Swiss and Yankee Americans. In 1848 a steamboat brought the first settlers, Victor Probst and John C. Waecker, to the location of Alma, which they called Twelve Mile Bluff for a prominent rock outcrop twelve miles below the mouth of the Chippewa River. In 1855 when the village was first platted, the name was changed to Alma. Early settlers here made their living by trading cordwood to passing steamboats in exchange for necessities. Arrivals over the next decade had their sights set on the nearby farm country to support themselves; they relied on the settlement as their point of arrival and departure, and also as their source of supply. The small frontier community grew in response to this trade. What was perhaps Alma's first industry involved the processing of local grain--John Hemrich's brewery at the lower end of town. As in other parts of Wisconsin, wheat became the dominant crop grown locally. The bountiful harvests these early farmers were able to trade became ever more valuable by the outbreak of the Civil War. Buffalo County's wheat production was second in the

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property Alma Hist. District, 34.6; inventoried resources, 2.15. Total 36.74
Quadrangle name Alma, Wis.-Minn. Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References - for Alma Historic District:

V	1 5	5 8 16	4 7 10	4 19 0 18	2 19 15
	Zone	Easting		Northing	
X	1 5	5 8 16	6 18 10	4 19 0 17	4 13 10
Z	1 5	5 8 16	3 16 10	4 19 0 18	3 10 10

W	1 5	5 8 16	8 10 10	4 19 0 17	4 18 10
	Zone	Easting		Northing	
Y	1 5	5 8 16	3 12 10	4 19 0 18	2 13 10

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Anderson-Sannes & Michael William Doyle, Research Historians

organization Alma Historical Society, Inc.

date August 1980

street & number 505 S. Second St., P. O. Box 87

telephone 608/685-3290

city or town Alma

state Wisconsin 54610

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Richard M. Menn

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

date

11/3/80

For HCRRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

See continuation sheet for listings

Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

state by 1870 and was rated first in the years 1889 and 1899.¹ The figures were not lost on Alma which because of its suitable levee moved much of the commodity. Local historian, Lawrence Kessinger, summed up things this way:

"The situation of Alma for shipment of wheat and staple products and the distribution of all commodities of trade was not surpassed by any place between La Crosse and St. Paul on the eastern bank of the river, as long as there were no railroads in the neighborhood. At the time when wheat fields were rapidly extended, the yield was heavy and occasionally prices extremely high, the whole of this staple produced in the Beef (Buffalo) River Valley up to Mondovi and vicinity, from Canton, Nelson and Maxville (townships), poured into our warehouses, as also a considerable share from Big Waumandee (Valley), all of Little Waumandee and the greater part of Belvidere (township)."²

Kessinger's remarks were published in 1888, three years after the Chicago, Burlington and Northern Railroad connected the city with La Crosse and indirectly to St. Paul and Chicago. Just as steamboats replaced the canoe as the most prevalent mode of transportation in the Mississippi Valley, so too did the railroads supercede the steamboat.

One thing railroads could not do as well as their waterborn counterparts was to cheaply and efficiently move huge quantities of virgin timber downstream to waiting lumber mills. At the north end of Alma a sluggish channel of the Chippewa River known as Beef Slough empties into the Mississippi. Recognizing its potential as a sorting harbor for the millions of pine logs yearly banked along the upper reaches of the Chippewa, three local entrepreneurs, Conrad Moser, John Hunner and Frederick Laue, Sr., in conjunction with three other investors, incorporated the Beef Slough Manufacturing, Booming, Log Driving and Transportation Company in 1867. Their efforts were soon thwarted by the milling interests up river at Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls, through a series of confrontations, legal and otherwise, which have come to be called the "Beef Slough War." Eventually the downstream advocates through some legislative chicanery won the day and a significant number of logs were successfully floated to Beef Slough where piers and catch booms had been erected. The facilities proved to be ideal for sorting and rafting logs. However, the conflict that periodically threatened to erupt into violence was so detrimental to business that the company foundered. In 1870 the Mississippi River Logging Company

¹Schafer, Joseph. A History of Agriculture in Wisconsin. Madison, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1922. p. 95.

²Kessinger, Lawrence. History of Buffalo County, Wisconsin. Alma, by the author, 1888. p. 615.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

was organized in Iowa by Frederick Weyerhaeuser, who learned of the bankrupt Beef Slough Company boom and operations. In all, more than five billion board feet of timber was rafted out of the boom at Beef Slough between 1867 and 1889. During its height in the 1880's over 600 men were employed there, located at nine separate camps, spread out along the slough's twenty mile length.³

This encapsulated history represents an event which was of key significance to the development of Alma. Many local men found employment at the Slough through the spring and the summer and "removed to the woods" during the winter to work in the pineries. Lumber was inexpensive due to the proximity of the city's two sawmills to their source of supply. As a consequence, dozens of residences and stores were erected during this period. Businesses which catered to the operations of the Slough flourished, especially bootmakers, hardware dealers, carpenters, butchers, general store operators and, above all, the village's two breweries and the dozen saloons and hotels. By 1885 the village of Alma was chartered as a city.

Activity at the Slough began to taper off after 1889 when the main sorting works were relocated downstream on the Minnesota side of the river, at the West Newton Slough. Even though logs continued to be stored at the Beef Slough harbor in the 1890's the number of men employed there was greatly reduced. With the ending of that decade and the century, Alma's importance to the logging industry came to an end.

The next major event of importance for Alma occurred during the 1930's with the construction of Federal Lock and Dam No. 4. Here again the local workforce was tapped in large numbers, along with many others from all over the country. The dam was one of a series on the upper river which provided for a nine foot navigation channel. When the Alma dam was completed in 1935 it had a beneficial effect on the city's economy, softening the adverse impact of the Depression. Several houses were built during this period including the Alfred Hermann residence, 307 South Second and the Harry Tenney residence at 312 South Second. The Alma Sewage Disposal Plant, 100 West Disposal Street, also finished in 1935 made possible both modern sanitation for the city and cleaner river. The 1930's can be considered Alma's second major boom period. Construction of the lock and dam put Alma back on the map, and underscored its significance as a river community. Today the presence of the dam is an important factor in the recreational attraction of the city, having created an excellent fish habitat.

³Curtiss-Wedge, Franklyn. History of Buffalo and Pepin Counties, Wisconsin. Winona, Minnesota, 1919. pp. 51-54.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

III. Notable Alma Residents and Their Businesses

When the Beef Slough Manufacturing, Booming, Log Driving and Transportation Company was organized in May of 1867, Frederick Laue, Sr., was one of its founders and was on the Board of Directors. Laue was already operating what would prove to be Alma's single largest industry--the Laue sawmill and lumber yard; a business he would continue to operate until his death in 1896. His residence was at 1111 South Main (NRHP, 5-14-79). Other figures connected with Beef Slough include John Ehing, residence 107 North Second, a boat builder at Beef Slough during the 1880's and 1890's; Jacob Berni, residence 911 Riverview Drive, who worked there as a dropper, catching stray logs and returning them to the slough to be re-raftered; and Duncan McKenzie, residence 109 North Second, who worked there as a scaler until 1878 when he was appointed Inspector for the 9th Lumber District, a position he was to hold until 1889. All of the residences associated with these men are extant.

In addition to the activities at Beef Slough, Alma was busy also with the grain business and the resulting commercial activity. Only one of the original grain warehouses remains unaltered, the one used by William Heise at 304 South Main. Heise came to Alma in 1876 and was involved in the grain business even after the railroad came through, but not in the same volume as before. His residence, still extant, was at 103 South Second. Tester and Polin's store was not the first store to open in Alma but it proved to be the most significant. After operating their business in the same space that W. H. Gates had built and operated as Alma's first store at 101 North Main, they purchased and relocated in the large brick building at 215 North Main (NRHP, 5-14-79) and the corresponding warehouse at 212 North Main in 1866. Their efforts to develop Alma and the surrounding area centered around the trading of grain and produce in exchange for needed goods found in their store. The success of their enterprise created a supportive environment for other people who started businesses in Alma. These include Charles Schaettle, residence 202 North Second and store 204 North Main, and the Tristch brothers, residence and first store 313 South Main, and later store 316 South Main. All of these building are extant.

Both the Sherman House at 301 South Main (NRHP, 8-14-79), operated by John and Mary Buehler from 1872 through 1898, and the Union House at 201 North Main, operated by Elizabeth Mueller from 1865 through 1900, provided accommodations for the farmers coming to Alma with their products. Their saloon rooms were lively places used by these farmers, the men from Beef Slough, the people involved in the river traffic and the residents of Alma.

Finally there were those who recorded these activities. These included J. W. DeGroff, residence 105 North Second, editor of the Buffalo County Journal from 1872-1890; E. F. Ganz, residence 101 North Second, editor of the Journal from 1890 through 1913; and Gerhard Gesell, the photographer who arrived in Alma in 1876 and maintained his last studio at 101 South Main. Gesell's work included many artistic landscape and documentary photographs taken before 1906, which are now in the Sound and Visual Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The collection has attracted a certain amount

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

of national attention by being featured in numerous publications. Gesell is also a progenitor of a famous line. His oldest son, Arnold, born and raised in Alma, became a world renowned child psychologist who founded the Gesell Institute of Child Development at Yale University. Arnold's son, Gerhard Gesell III, is a U. S. Circuit Court Judge in Washington, D. C.

IV. Areas of Significance

Architecture

Alma's architecture is diverse, consisting mostly of nineteenth century vernacular styles. After the turn of the century the city's prosperity dwindled as did its population, from a peak of over 1500 in the middle 1880's to about 1000 in 1920, which is what it is at present. This lack of sustained growth meant property owners tended to maintain and improve upon existing structures rather than replace them with newer ones.

Livelier styles are present, however, such as the Queen Anne residences of P. E. Ibach at 108 South Second Street and of Ulrich Walser at 711 North Second Street. These and several other houses in Alma built along similar lines were constructed by Walser, working with his brother, Anton, and their crew.

The Romanesque style is well represented by two brick buildings, the Tester and Schilling hardware store, 111 North Main, and the Buffalo County Training School, 505 South Second. Two buildings with the massing and detailed characteristics of the Italianate style are the Frederick Laue residence, 1111 South Main (NRHP, 5-14-79), and the earlier Hunner and Ginzkey Exchange Bank, 115 South Main.

Industry

The Alma of the late nineteenth century had a swagger of self-sufficiency. Its boom era peaked at the beginning of industrialization in the upper Mississippi Valley, and its industries were most vitally competitive in a decentralized, regional economy. Although the steamboat traffic and the coming of the railroad did much to connect the city with a larger trade area, Alma's industries were distinctly oriented to a local market. Notable examples of city industries include two industrial archeological sites, the Julius Wilke brickyard and lime kiln at the eastern end of Laue Street, and the Union Brewery in the 800 block of South Main. Another example is the cigar factory of Valentine Mueller located at 100 North Main, one of the several places in Alma where cigars were manufactured. Kessinger's perspective is again worth quoting:

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"...(ours) is an agricultural community and ... in fact almost every part of manufacture practiced in the county is directly connected with agriculture, be it for depending on the raw material (of) agricultural products, or finding in agriculturalists the bulk of costumers for its products."⁴

Unfortunately, many of the city's industrial buildings have left no visible remains, including the two saw mills, a flour mill, a boatbuilding shop and a soda water manufacturing plant. One later example still standing, though not in operation, is the Alma Dry Milk Co. plant at 302 South Main.

Transportation

Alma's importance to the surrounding rural area for its grain shipping facilities has already been addressed, as has its significance to the lumber industry because of the log rafting operations at Beef Slough. Also mentioned was its importance as a port of call for steamboats, among whose passengers disembarking were the thousands of immigrants that settled the area. Besides the properties already referred to in connection with the above, numerous hotels which temporarily housed the traveling public. The Burlington Hotel at 809 North Main is a good example since it is located directly across the street from the site of the old Burlington Depot.

Well-Preserved Upper Mississippi River City

Of other comparable communities in Wisconsin on the river north of La Crosse, Alma is noteworthy for possessing intact much of its original architecture. Roughly 80% of the 300 buildings surveyed in the Multiple Resource Area were built prior to World War II, with the overwhelming majority of that number constructed prior to the turn of the century. More than any other factor, Alma's dormancy through most of the past one hundred years has led to the preservation of much of the architecture, scale, and overall appearance that it had during its heyday.

V. Archeological Significance

The city of Alma has been shown to contain archeological sites dating to several broad time periods, both prehistoric and historic. Of the former, the presence of mounds and the appearance of ceramics at a number of habitation sites suggest that a major occupation of the area occurred during (probably Middle-Late) Woodland times. As no survey based on statistical sampling procedures has ever been undertaken in the area, there is no real basis for predicting site location or density. Among the prehistoric sites, however, a great deal of variation is apparent in the areas selected for both habitation and mortuary activities; except for the very steep bluffside, virtually every topographic setting represented in the area has been shown to contain archaeological material. Of the sites reported thus far, none has been fully evaluated as to its information potential. Certainly the mound groups (e.g. Bf-12) offer the possibility of very good data recovery as do some of the habitation sites (e.g. Bf-32). Given our very limited

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

knowledge of the archeology of west-central Wisconsin, data from sites such as these could not fail to provide important information. Important data categories with respect to study of the Alma area sites include the following: area culture history, subsistence/settlement systems, mortuary behavior (and socio-political organization), and cultural relations with other areas of the Upper Mississippi Valley.

VI. Preservation and Restoration Activities/Use of the Survey

The Alma Historical Society has already used information gathered by its survey to place three city properties on the National Register of Historic Places. These are the first such designated properties in Buffalo County and their owners have all applied for Federal matching grants to stabilize and restore the buildings. One of the three, the proprietor of the Laue House, 1111 South Main, has received notification of the award of his funding.

VII. Historic District Significance

The primary significance of the historic district is that it preserves nearly intact the main part of Alma extant during the Beef Slough era, which was concurrent also with the city's prominence as a wheat shipping port. The district contains most of the original plat of Alma, registered in 1855. The first generation of settlers erected their business blocks (buildings) and residences in the area covered by this original plat. Some of the structures present today replaced these early buildings during the 1870's and 1880's, many however were built on undeveloped lots at that time. The first structures were built between Cedar and Olive Streets. The commercial core lies entirely within the district and where it ends on North Main, so does the district boundary. In addition, the city's public buildings and three of the four churches are located in the district. The residences of historical figures, as well as architecturally significant structures already referred to, lie within the district.

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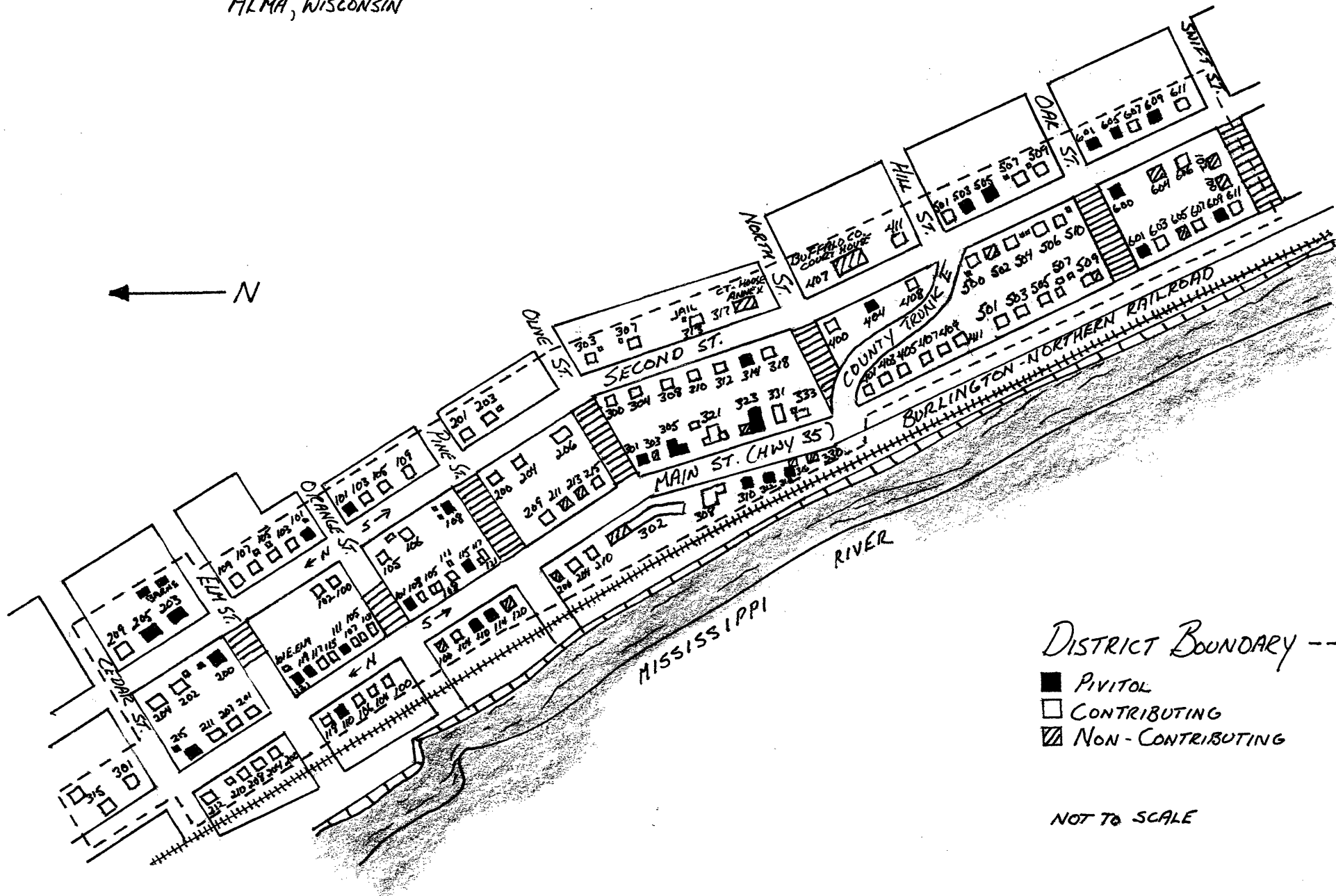
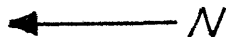
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ALMA HISTORIC DISTRICT

ALMA, WISCONSIN



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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Alma Multiple Resource Area
State Wisconsin

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Wilke, Juluis Brickyard, Lime
Kiln and Stone Quarry

Keeper

Ret

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

Attest

2. Berni, Jacob, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 5/13/82

Attest

3. Senn, John L., House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byers 5/13/82

Attest

4. Harry, Fred, House

~~Substantive Review~~

Keeper

Ret

Attest

5. Alma City Sewage Disposal Plant

Substantive Review

Keeper

Ret

Attest

6. Laue, Frederick, Jr., House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 5/13/82

Attest

7. Burlington Hotel

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Delores Byers 5/13/82

Attest

8. Tenny, Dr. J. T., House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 5/13/82

Attest

9. Alma Historic District

Substantive Review

Keeper

Martha Dwyer 5/13/82

Attest

10. Walser, Ulrich, House

Entered in the
National Register

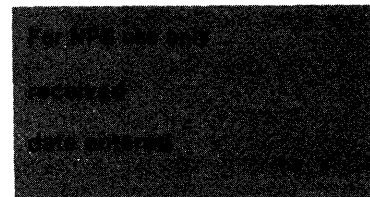
Keeper

Delores Byers 5/13/82

Attest

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Alma Multiple Resource Area
State Wisconsin

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Steiner, John, Store

National Register Keeper

Delores Byers 5/13/82

Attest

12. Union Brewery

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

13.

Keeper

Attest

14.

Keeper

Attest

15.

Keeper

Attest

16.

Keeper

Attest

17.

Keeper

Attest

18.

Keeper

Attest

19.

Keeper

Attest

20.

Keeper

Attest