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National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

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This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Resources of Oakes, North Dakota

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Commercial Development in Oakes, North Dakota, 1886-1941
Residential Development in Oakes, North Dakota, 1886-1941

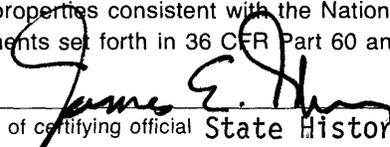
C. Geographical Data

Corporate limits of Oakes, Dickey County, North Dakota

N/A See continuation sheet

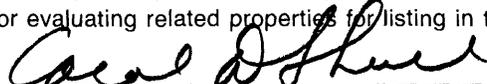
D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

 James E. Sperry August 28, 1987
Signature of certifying official State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota) Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

 Carol D. Shuler 10-16-87
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register Date

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION

The multiple property group for Oakes is organized with reference to two contexts, general historical commercial development and residential architecture in the entire historic period. More historic themes were explored in a reconnaissance survey of Oakes, but too few members were found to represent individual themes as would be necessary to establish eligibility requirements on the basis of comparison with like others. A few properties representing non-commercial and non-residential themes, such as educational and religious facilities, were found to warrant research on the basis of their historic association, integrity, and the aesthetic quality of their architectural design. Amendment to the present nomination will introduce these contexts and properties will be appropriate in the future.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Oakes, North Dakota, in Dickey County is a small town of 2112 (1980 Census). Ellendale, the county seat, lies ten miles south and eighteen miles west from Oakes. Dickey County is in the southeastern portion of the state which is dominated by comparatively flat terrain, a result of continental glaciation. Agricultural activity dominates the economy of the county, with grain and livestock operations most common.

Two waterways pierce the county in north-to-south paths, Maple Creek in the west and, in the east, the James River which passes two to three miles west of Oakes. Several transportation routes serve the community. State Highway 1 coincides with Seventh Street in Oakes, bisecting the town into east and west halves. The primary business thoroughfare, Main Avenue, runs east-west and joins Dickey County Road #3 to connect Oakes with the western part of the county. Oakes is unusual in the state in that three railroads, Burlington Northern, Soo Line, and Chicago and Northwestern, currently own rail lines in the town.

PREHISTORIC OAKES

Archeological excavations have been fruitful along the James River, although no prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Oakes have been recorded (Schneider, 1977: 12-15; Esca-Tech Corporation, 1980: 16). The prehistory of the Oakes area is not well researched and has potential for yielding sites in undeveloped areas within and surrounding the town. Prehistoric sites found would necessarily belong to larger geographical contexts revolving around the James River drainage. Thus, prehistoric sites discovered in or around Oakes would be less appropriate for the present context's narrow areal focus.

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STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS (continued from cover form)

FUR TRADE AND EARLY EXPLORATION IN THE OAKES AREA

Early Euro-American exploration of the area around Oakes included the 1839 expedition of Fremont and Nicolette (Black: 98) and Oakville, a trading post established in 1818 (Wemmett's). No known sites relating to the fur trade in the Oakes area have been found through literature search (Tweton REAP) or through survey (NDCRS files).

EARLY SETTLEMENT OF OAKES 1882-1886

Earliest recorded land transfers leading to permanent settlement of the area around Oakes occurred during the early- to mid-1880s (ESCA-Tech: 138-150). A stagecoach line ran through what is today State Route 1 in Oakes as early as 1880, introducing prospective settlers to the locale. Rural Dickey county in 1885 and 1886 contained many small collections of speculators, all hoping their settlements would coalesce into viable towns. Oakes, one of these sites, was platted in 1886. The event occurred just four years after the first known settler constructed his earth shanty in a present-day Oakes business location. Perhaps contributing to Oakes' solvency was the establishment of railroad service within months after the town was platted. Chicago and Northwestern tracks linked the burgeoning community to distant markets and goods.

By 1930 only a handful of pre-railroad-era buildings were extant in Oakes. Many of these buildings were erected in stillborn communities and moved into Oakes once its future was secured through railroad service. Those structures included the former print shop of the Hudson Herald, W.H. Marsh Block (from Ludden), the Clark Building (a former Ludden bank), a laundry building with pressed metal front (from Hudson), and the C.M.C. Store (from Columbia). Others were thought to have been transported to Oakes but as early as 1930 were too altered to be recognizable (Black:100). The tentative nature of Oakes' pre-railroad built environment has left few, if any, sites with sufficient integrity to represent that period of the town's history (Klinger: 9). Survey of the town has not revealed any structures in the town predating 1886.

RAILROADS AND SETTLEMENT OF OAKES

One of the most important events affecting the settlement of Oakes was the arrival of railroads. City establishment was aided in 1886 by the joint efforts of two rail companies, the Chicago Northwestern, which was building a line northward from Columbia, South Dakota, and the Northern Pacific, which was building a line southward from LaMoure. The companies agreed to join their lines at a proposed townsite of Oakes, named after a Northern Pacific official. The two lines were connected after the town was platted in the late summer of 1886, sparking a boom of speculation and growth. A year later, in 1887, Oakes became a division headquarters for a third rail line, the Minneapolis and Pacific (later the Soo Line), thanks to the lobbying efforts of local banker Thomas F. Marshall and other prominent Oakes residents. In 1893 another branch of the Northern Pacific was built westward from Milnor to Oakes (Granger and Kelly: 12).

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The rail lines which converged on Oakes in 1886, 1887, and 1893 physically linked the area with major cities in the Midwest. They brought people and supplies for settlement and profits for speculators. Railroad companies directly advertised to prospective town and farm settlers. Railroads also facilitated the export of farm products by joining local farmers and national markets. They gave viability to commercial activity by serving the network of retailers, distributors, service people, salesmen, inventory, and manufacturers and consumers. In addition to providing transportation services, railroads served as Oakes' primary communications link to the rest of the world through early mail and telegraph service. Both the Soo Line depot and the Chicago Northwestern and Northern Pacific's shared depot were hubs of activity as freight and passengers were loaded and unloaded there several times each day (Granger and Kelly: 12-3).

Physically, Oakes developed with its primary focus on the railroad tracks. The Original Town plat grid sited 17 blocks and streets adjacent to the north-south run of the Chicago and Northwestern tracks. Grain elevators, warehouses, and industrial concerns were established along both the Chicago Northwestern and Soo Line tracks where they had ready access to freight services. Residential neighborhoods were developed first close to the tracks and were then expanded outward, generally to the east, as the town grew. The railroad aided growth of Oakes, which had a population of 866 in 1900, 1,125 in 1905, and 2,200 in 1909 (Granger and Kelly: 13).

By the turn of the century, Oakes was a bustling railroad community served by several passenger and freight trains daily. During the 1920s-1949s the rise in automobile and truck use and the construction of good roads caused gradual reduction in the dependence of rail service for some sectors of the town's economy. The importance of downtown hotels, restaurants, and stores located near the tracks on First and Second (presently Fourth and Fifth, respectively) Streets declined. In their place expansion along Union (Main) eastward to State Route 1 signified the rising importance of automobile and truck traffic. Railroad passenger service was eventually eliminated and freight service was gradually reduced to large scale hauling (Granger and Kelly: 13).

Three sites remain today that represent the railroads' tremendous importance to the early history of the community. These three sites, together with the tracks themselves, are important as Oakes' most direct physical link to its railroad history. The sites include two depots standing on or near their original sites: the circa 1905 woodframe Soo Line Depot on the northern side of the Soo tracks near the southern edge of town, and the circa 1915 brick Chicago Northwestern Depot on the western side of the Chicago Northwestern tracks at their intersection with main street. The third site associated with this historic theme is Oakes Historic Park at the southwestern edge of town which contains two railroad related structures: a circa 1900 woodframe Northern Pacific depot which was moved to Oakes from the nearby town of Verona and a circa 1900 Soo Line caboose, also moved into the park. All three of the depots surveyed in Oakes are basically intact, a condition which is becoming increasingly rare in the state.

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COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN OAKES 1886-1902

Oakes experienced impressive commercial growth from 1886-1902, the period of fledgling development, though little today represents that period. Hotels located along the railroad tracks offered short term accommodation for travelers and salesmen, as well as longer term quarters for business people. Henry Vinkle erected a \$10,000 hotel in 1887 at the corner of Main and Fourth Streets. Other hotels built before 1890 included the Argyle House and two built by Dan Lynch and George Ladd.

The town's important commercial agricultural activity was indicated by the three grain elevators sited along the Chicago and Northwestern tracks in 1887. A number of livery barns, owned by Frank Mellinger, O.H.P. Moore, J.B. Andrews, and W.J. Roberts, also served agricultural commerce. Oakes' contribution to farming was underscored by its selection as host for the Central Dakota Agricultural Association's first annual exhibition in 1888 (Black: 100-102; Klinger: 9-10).

During its early years, Oakes developed rapidly as revealed by gazetteers and business directories. Although not listed in the 1885 Polk Gazetteer, by 1896 the town had established itself as a thriving community with five churches, a bank, roller mill, five elevators, four hotels, two newspapers and 600 residents. Along with an assortment of tradesmen and professionals, Klein and Sutmar offered dry goods, Ranka Johnson operated a prominent laundry, Edgar Mayhew processed dairy products at his creamery, and Ritterbush and Sons (Alonzo and William) constructed many new buildings (Polk, 1896: 1363).

A scant two years later several signs of expansion were in evidence. Mayhew's creamery added cheese processing capabilities. An opera house and several restaurants had opened. Livestock production was added to the list of agricultural endeavors for the first time. E.W. Bittman established a dry goods/general store in competition with Klein and Sutmar, one of his many commercial efforts in Oakes (Polk, 1898:1443-4).

City Council members took steps to manage such growth by passing a resolution in 1893 excluding livery stable operation from Union (Main) and Second (Fifth) Streets (Klinger: 11). Through the resolution Councilmen sought to limit contact between animals and businesses with sensitive inventories, such as restaurants. Considerations of sanitation led to the resolution, which in turn influenced future development of the town. The ordinance differentiated zones of usage which created distinct business areas within the town. After 1893 the bulk of Oakes' commercial activity congregated along Union and Second Streets, those reserved for non-livery businesses. The influence of the ordinance is seen today on these two streets which continue as the most densely populated with commercial houses.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN OAKES AFTER 1902

The City Council passed another resolution in 1902 which caused dramatic changes to the face of downtown Oakes. The order prohibited construction of wooden buildings in the business area (Klein: 12). Oakes Councilmen believed the town was on the brink of even

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more accelerated growth and the measure was a way to guard against the threat of fire. The Council's hunch was accurate, for from 1902-1908 Oakes businessmen sponsored an unprecedented volume of construction. Buildings constructed during this period are most important in defining the town's historic character. These buildings differ from their late-nineteenth-century counterparts. The buildings completed from 1902-08 possess masonry (as opposed to wood) exteriors and larger scale, as well as carrying designs which exhibit more obviously the influence of an architect.

Several commercial buildings remain to convey the architectural exuberance of Oakes' boom period. Most notable are the Romanesque-styled Oakes National Bank block and the Klein and Sutmar Block with an unusually ornate pressed metal exterior in the Italianate mode. Other buildings no longer standing testified to a rich architectural diversity during the short period. Townspeople erected a brick schoolhouse in 1904 with surprisingly complex massing. The facade was symmetrical, but had two boxy wings projecting forward from the primary central block. The central portion stood behind an entry tower, and all three masses had hipped roofs. The building strongly resembles the Hancock Brothers' 1908 design for the McLean County Courthouse in Washburn, North Dakota.

On Union (Main) Street, the First National Bank was draped in neoclassical regalia for its 1906-07 construction. Four large Corinthian columns and heavy use of stone trim characterized the building. Religious properties from the period also were superior in their design. The extant United Methodist Church, completed in 1908, displays fine craftsman styling. In the same year Oakes' Catholic parish finished a three-story brick school. The hipped roof of the demolished structure was crowned by a large dormer with a Palladian motif.

Several buildings appeared during this time with non-stylistic architectural interest. Dr. Boardman's hospital (1906) was a three-story affair built with locally produced concrete block and surmounted by a mansardic roof and fully arched dormer windows. Boardman was important to the town for having installed Oakes' first telephone system (1901) and for introducing X-ray equipment in an earlier facility in 1904.

Oakes' leading building contractors, Ritterbush and Son (Alonzo and William) began manufacture of concrete blocks, such as those in Boardman's hospital, in 1905 (Klein: 13). By listing architectural services among their activities in 1906, Ritterbush and Son attempted to broaden their offerings further (Polk, 1906: 1897). Members of the family moved to Bismarck after the first World War to continue architectural practice with VanHorn Architects, one of the state's oldest architectural firms. The Bismarck company subsequently reorganized under the names VanHorn and Ritterbush, Ritterbush and Sons, and Ritterbush Associates. Presently, members of the Ritterbush family continue to operate the firm. Ritterbush and Son were active in Oakes as early as 1896 (Polk, 1896: 1363). The firm is the most important building contractor in the first quarter century of Oakes growth.

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Additional construction projects during the 1902-1908 period include the Oakes Mill (1907), City Hall (1907), and a \$30,000 water and sewage system in 1905-6. Published costs for improvements show that many modest business houses were built for \$5000-10,000, while some reached \$30,000 during the period. Dwellings ranged from \$1,500-3,000, with some as high as \$8,000. ("Improvements 1907..." Oakes Times: 1/9/08; Klein: 13).

The escalated rate of construction can be seen in the amount spent annually on new and remodelled buildings. Starting in 1902, when the Council's ordinance began to reshape the expanding downtown area, the following amounts were recorded:

1902:	\$ 52,000	1906:	\$ 86,000
1903:	65,000	1907:	150,500
1904:	82,000	1908:	149,700
1905:	65,000		

These amounts include both commercial and residential improvements (Black: 103; "How Oakes is Growing..." Oakes Times, January 28, 1909). In no other period of Oakes history does the rate of commercial construction compare with that experienced during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Changes in the built environment of Oakes after 1910 relate less to commercial expansion and more to technological innovation. For instance, 1912 marked the advent of municipally owned street lights and electric service, as well as the opening of the first automobile dealership. By 1914 the success of the automobile was indicated by the conversion of Moore Brothers' Livery into a parking garage. A 1914 order by the City Board of Health prohibited the use of privies on properties with frontages which abutted city sewers (Hansen: 18-21)

One notable exception to the trend of reduced commercially-related construction after 1910 was the North American Creamery on the Soo Line tracks. The first World War increased European demand for dairy products to which the Creamery responded by doubling its business space with a new building completed in 1917. American entry into the war also contributed to the success of the operation. Thus, by the second decade of the twentieth century the Creamery was the largest employer in Oakes (Hansen: 23, 29). The North American Creamery building remains today with relatively good integrity. While some window replacement is evident, the building's Craftsman elements, particularly the projecting piers and detailing, is intact. The former owner of the North American Creamery, Walter T. Noonan, is of historical importance as one of the wealthiest people in Oakes, locally esteemed and closely associated with the Creamery.

The slowing of commercial activity, as measured by construction dollars, was paralleled by the simplification of architectural design on buildings erected after 1910. Buildings constructed after that date continue to be fewer in number and less ornate. By the close of the historic period very plainly ornamented buildings were the rule, as

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seen in the U.S. Post Office on Main Street built in 1934 (32 DI 22).

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE IN OAKES

The residential architecture in Oakes was recorded on the basis of age and style, among other variables. Surveyors found certain styles occurred more frequently which were popular during the period of heightened construction activity. The most numerous occurrences of particular styles came from a period around the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Of 155 houses surveyed in the town, 80 (51.6%) exhibit styles common during the period of heightened business activity. In great abundance are Homestead style and Princess Anne, the latter a modified version of the Queen Anne style. No examples of architect-designed buildings bearing styles popular in 1880s North Dakota, such as French Second Empire, Greek Revival or Gothic Revival styles were found. Two occurrences of the Italianate style were recorded and may be seen as stylistic links with Oakes' earliest years.

Dwelling styles popular after 1910 include Bungalow forms, Craftsman, American Foursquare, and Prairie styles. These are less numerous than the number of homes recorded representing the earlier period of commercial development (Granger and Kelly:19-20). One particular home, the House of 29 (former Noonan residence) is exceptional in its ornate design when contrasted to homes built either before or after 1910 in Oakes. The house is a large stucco-walled Craftsman styled home. While the garages on most homes recorded in the survey were functionally styled with little reference to the dwelling, many of the simpler Craftsman styled homes have garages which echo the features of the dwelling on site, as does the House of 29.

CONCLUSION

Both in the area of commercial development and residential architecture, the number, age, and style of recorded properties correlate well with the historical information about the town as revealed in documents. The primary survey document providing current information about the built environment was Granger and Kelly's 1987 reconnaissance survey of Oakes in which 227 historic buildings were recorded.

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type COMMERCIAL BUILDING

II. Description

Commercial buildings in Oakes, as in most small-sized North Dakota towns, are generally no higher than three stories, more often one or two stories in height. Structurally, the earliest buildings (late nineteenth-early twentieth century) were supported by wood frame and were covered in horizontal wood siding or pressed metal simulating brick or stone. Brick buildings became more common after 1910 throughout the state. In Oakes, masonry construction identifies downtown commercial blocks erected after 1902, the date in which a building ordinance aimed at reducing the threat of fire required the abandonment of wood construction.

III. Significance

Commercial properties in Oakes are important reminders of several development trends which characterized the community's growth. Properties from the three historic periods of Oakes existence suggest, perhaps reveal, the nature of development during the period in which they were erected.

Business blocks from the first period, 1886-1902 are typical of any emerging community in North Dakota. These buildings are simple in ornament and aesthetic expression. Their plainness bespeaks the progress of the town's business, which was in an embryonic stage.

IV. Registration Requirements

Commercial properties in Oakes can be both historically significant and architecturally significant. Generally, the amount of integrity necessary for eligibility will depend upon the type of significance. Architecturally significant properties will require a greater amount of physical intactness of the design features which makes them important. Historically significant properties may sustain more alteration and be eligible if it can be shown that an important figure in Oakes' commercial development is best associated with a particular business place, or that a particular business block is a site of historic importance in the commercial growth of the town either as the scene of an event or as a pivotal enterprise. The following aspects of integrity should be considered in evaluating individual structures:

See continuation sheet F 1

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- State historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency

- Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository: Division of Archeology and Historic Preservation, SHSND

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II. Description, continued

From 1886 to 1902, the period of early settlement, business buildings exhibited starkly unadorned exteriors. Two stylistic designations describe the exterior design of most buildings during this period. The boomtown style, a second- or third-story treatment in which a parapet is created by the vertical extension of the cornice above the roofline, was vastly popular in North Dakota's developing towns from 1880-1900 for a number of reasons. It gave the illusion of a more massive structure while its aesthetic allowed little or no ornament to complete the entire facade. The style offered businessmen a chance to market themselves behind an apparently solid structure without consequently obligating them to purchase expensive decorative elaboration. This false front style was inexpensive, well within the capabilities of the average carpenter, and allowed rapid completion of construction.

A second storefront treatment, the use of large plate glass windows, derived from retail building design popularized in Chicago. This treatment may appear at the storefront level of business buildings with simple boomtown treatments or more elaborate upper story decoration. The classic composition of bulkhead, display window, and transom appeared in the earliest commercial buildings in North Dakota, but unlike the boomtown cornice treatment, survived well into the twentieth century.

Thus, the design of early commercial buildings in Oakes were characterized by a lack of ornament which gave rise to two dominant visual themes: the solidity of the upper floor balanced against an open and transparent storefront. The largest of the early structures in the town broadcast this dualism well. The Cash Mercantile Company (Wright: 56), a 50'x 100' block built in 1893, was dominated by glass on its ground floor with four large window bays sandwiched between prominent glass doorways. Its upper floors seemed closed by comparison, with simple windows which lighted the Opera House and Academy of Music. The Roberts Block (Wright: 56), too, exaggerated the contrast between the glassed storefront level and the wooden upper level through the use of attenuated first floor framing posts, possibly composed of cast iron. Hotels (Wright: 41, 58), of which several served Oakes during the pre-brick period, emphasized the openness of the ground level through the use of galleries (canopied colonnades which project from the main wall surface). Grain elevators, on the other hand, emphasized their structural strength by minimizing the number and size of wall openings. A sense of massiveness was imparted by their large un-windowed surfaces (see early townscapes in Wright, 39-42).

The town's commercial construction boom caused many changes as reported by one eyewitness in 1906:

"The era of substantial building began in 1903 when the three brick blocks were put up in a row on the south side of Union Street and three bricks and a concrete block on the north side opposite. In 1904 came the Klein and Sutmar block, the brick school house, and the brick gas house. Last year the Boardman

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Hospital, the brick front adjoining the C.M.C. on the west, the concrete residence of Mrs. Robinson, and this year the First National Bank block, the John Kennedy block, the concrete block barn of Teal & Stanley, the Voight building of the same material on Second Street, and the Ritterbush, Westergaard and Bittman brick residences on East Union Street (Wright: 43)."

The overall change in the Oakes business district resulted in new aesthetics of exterior design. Reliance upon contrasting solid-void wall surfaces, the primary design scheme from 1886-1902, was supplemented by applied exterior ornament. Many buildings constructed after 1903 maintained a general distinction between upper and lower levels, but through the use of ornamental pressed metal and decorative design elements directed attention to all parts of the facade. Buildings became more than simply two vertical blocks; an enhanced architectural design caused commercial blocks to appear as unified wholes. The integration of visual composition was aided, in part, from the use of bricks as a construction material for the entire structure. The more obvious influence of architects in design of the buildings also contributed to the integration of visual cohesiveness in buildings erected after 1902.

The apparent competitiveness which led to the 1903-08 construction boom was signaled by an architectural elaboration which has no counterpart during the earlier period in Oakes. Buildings erected during this period boasted (or predicted) the success of the owner by pointing to the architectural sophistication of their designs. This period of Oakes Commercial development is marked by a heightened employment of high-style architecture which subsided as quickly at the close of the decade. Outstanding examples are the Greek-temple-like First National Bank, the Romanesque Oakes National Bank (32 DI 499), and the pressed metal Italianate upper floors of the Klein and Sutmar Block (32 DI 26) and the Oakes Times building.

At the same time in which these exuberant architectural expressions were erected, more modest brick structures were constructed. These common buildings were not quite as devoid of ornament as their boomtown counterparts. Their owners attempted to build inexpensively while engaging in the new unified design aesthetic. In this way modest structures from the 1903-08 period resemble the few buildings constructed in the remainder of the historic period, which are also reserved in their architectural character.

Business buildings constructed in Oakes between World Wars are generally of a simplified Craftsman, and later, Art deco styles. The latter style is represented by the Post Office (32 DI 22) whose outer bays form setbacks from the central entry bay at the building's front. Buildings representing other historic themes, such as the high school (32 DI 519) and the First Presbyterian Church (32 DI 465) are non-business public buildings which appear more architectural from the inter-war period.

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Boundaries for nominated commercial properties in Oakes will generally follow the lot lines, since most business blocks share walls with or abut walls against adjacent properties. Two factors, neglect and contemporary renovations, present the primary threats to the integrity of Oakes commercial properties. Neglect occurs most rapidly in abandoned buildings, of which Oakes has a few. The current business climate is such that little development of Oakes' downtown is underway. Store owners are hampered from undertaking remodeling which would damage the fabric of historic buildings by a weak agricultural economy and depopulation of the surrounding county farmland.

III. Significance, continued

Apparently inspired by competitiveness, the period 1903-1908 saw a dramatic increase in commerce as measured by new construction. Statistics on the economic change in commerce on the local level were not encountered in the research, but it was noted that either new businesses or established enterprises looking for larger quarters were responsible for construction of the new buildings. Adoption of the ordinance prohibiting wood construction was explained as a decision to safeguard the new economic growth. Such a law also demonstrates an effort among local officials and businessmen to reshape the commercial zone into a reflection of modernity (via style) and prosperity (via greater size and more costly construction).

Fewer commercial properties were constructed in Oakes during the remainder of the historic period. It appears that the commercial expansion of the first decade of the twentieth century provided an adequate amount of commercial space. The period between World Wars was difficult economically for townspeople and especially difficult for the surrounding farmers, upon whom local businessmen marketed their goods and services. The slowdown of economic activity is signaled by the lack of commercial buildings started during the period and the stylistic simplicity of those which were completed.

IV. Registration Requirements, continued

Setting and location: The setting in Oakes is intact in terms of massing, setback, and architectural diversity. Generally an integrity of location is necessary to ensure the survival of a building from the central business district. However, certain detached structures of extreme historic importance in the commercial development, particularly depots, may have been moved from their original locations and relocated within the town. Only a building of highest architectural or historic importance in illustrating the context could be considered eligible under such conditions.

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Design, workmanship, materials: Architecturally significant properties must possess the original design, workmanship, and materials on their second and third stories and nearly all of the material of their original storefronts. An exception to that standard applies to the properties from 1903-08. Since the effect of the applied ornament of the upper stories is so important in defining the architectural character of Oakes during that period, architecturally significant properties from the short boom period may be eligible with more severely altered storefronts if their upper floors are outstanding in design and relatively intact. Architecturally significant commercial properties from Oakes' other historic periods must retain their essential design characteristics, i.e., a combination of workmanship applied to materials, as outlined in the description, above. Those properties must have their original upper floors and nearly all of the material of their original storefronts, as well. Such integrity standards may exclude all properties from a particular period from eligibility. However, properties representing the early and later historic phases of Oakes' commercial development are comparable in aesthetic quality with properties existing in most towns throughout the state; even within the county it is believed that better better examples of design from those periods can be found.

Feeling and association: these aspects of integrity are present if the more fundamental integrity of design, workmanship, and materials exist. The feeling of and historic associations possessed by Oakes commercial buildings will not exist independent of sufficient materials, design, and workmanship.

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

I. Name of Property Type: Dwelling

II. Description: The historic character of residential architecture in Oakes is similar with that found in other North Dakota towns of less than 3000 people. Most houses exhibit styles which were popular throughout the state during the time of construction. The majority of homes recorded in Oakes are wood frame covered with horizontal lap siding, a combination similar to the general composition of North Dakota's historic dwellings. The houses are modest in scale and simple in plan. (Granger and Kelly: 21-23).

A particularly good record of early Oakes' most impressive residences is found in Wright, pp 47-51. Published as the Oakes Times Christmas Supplement in 1906, the images cover the first developmental period (1886-1902) and part of the second period (1903-1908). During these years settlement of Oakes was initiated and most of the town's historic buildings were erected.

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II. Description, continued

During this 20-year span, two house types were commonly constructed in Oakes, Homestead and Princess Anne. Homestead style applied to North Dakota architecture denotes a plainly ornamented residence built normally from 1870s until the first World War. Homestead houses are regular in their plan, usually rectangular or L- or T-shaped through the addition of wings to the main building block. Exterior materials are generally limited to horizontal siding, although later Homestead houses can be constructed of brick, concrete block, and faced in stucco. Ornament usually is restricted to bargeboards, decorative shingles on roof and/or wall surfaces, applied wide boards suggesting (falsely) timber framing, and turned porch posts and spindles.

The second popular historic decorative style was named Princess Anne. This name implies a reduction in the variety of both surface materials and visual composition which define the Queen Anne style. The distinction between Homestead style and Princess Anne is that the latter will exhibit a more complex massing which includes turrets, irregular bays, and rounded porches. This results in a more varied plan and roofline than is found in Homestead houses. Princess Anne houses required more skill on the part of carpenters and more expense in the cost of materials, causing the cost of the house to exceed the purchase price of a plainer Homestead house with comparable square footage. Because of their complexity, these houses tend to be larger on the average than Homestead style houses, which can range from as few as two or three rooms to eight or more rooms in size. The range of building materials appropriate to Queen Anne dwellings encouraged a diversity of materials for use in Princess Anne dwellings; the only two houses in the survey area with brick exteriors also exhibited Princess Anne Styling: 1016 Main Avenue (32 DI 523) and 1017 Main Avenue (32 DI 524).

Historic photos show that Oakes homeowners enhanced the visual appeal of their lots through the use of wrought iron or wooden fences and landscaping. At the time of Wright's photographic survey of the town barns were still not uncommon a feature of residential sites as viewed on the residences of, for instance, H.S. Nichols, Postmaster Bush, and Solomon Hunter. Carriage houses, such as the one belonging to Congressman Marshall, were also prominent out buildings on residential lots in Oakes. Insofar as these buildings could convert to use for machine storage, particularly for cars, they remained on sites. Granger and Kelly's 1987 survey noted no carriage houses inventoried (p. 21).

Within historic Oakes two houses fit obviously into the Princess Anne category, the Mayor Bittman and Mrs. C.B. Fenton residences. The remainder illustrated in the Times Christmas Supplement are of the Homestead style. The Homestead style residences depicted in the publication show several influences from the Princess Anne style on building design. The houses contain the decorative features listed above. It is presumed that the Times Supplement

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contained images of all available Princess Anne homes and the more ornate Homestead style houses.

The findings of the 1987 survey suggests that the period of greatest residential construction was heaviest at the same time as the bulk of commercial construction, or until 1908. Of the houses recorded slightly more than 50% manifested either Homestead or Princess Anne styling. Of the remaining sites, 41.9% were of styles constructed probably exclusively after 1908: Bungalow, Box Bungalow, and Craftsman. These three designations overlap both temporally as well as in their decorative expression.

Box bungalows have been separated from the class of bungalows to gather data on a regionally common type defined by one story height, square or nearly square plan, and hipped roof. These structures, as were bungalows and Craftsman style homes, often were ordered from lumberyards and catalogue companies in precut kits. Due to the consistency in construction and marketing of Box bungalows, bungalows, and Craftsman style homes, many features of their interior decoration and exterior trim are identical. Identifiable exterior features include the emphasis of the porch (all three styles) and broad overhanging eaves (bungalow and Craftsman), while interior features include an abundant use of milled hardwood for decorative effect. This use presents itself in the form of trimboards (all three) and extends to built-in bookcases, inglenooks, colonnades, etc., on more elaborate homes.

The remaining styles recorded in the 1987 survey bridged both the Homestead-Princess Anne and the bungalow-Craftsman period. Prairie style, (Dutch) Colonial Revival, and American Foursquare together represented about 6% of the sites. Two incidences of Italianate style were noted, relatively late occurrences for the style.

III. Significance: Residences in Oakes have the potential to be significant on two bases, historic and architectural importance. Houses in Oakes with architectural significance are important, well preserved examples of prominent architectural styles during the period of construction. A matrix of architectural decisions, including style, date of construction, cost, source of design, and other details are important documents of construction practices and consumer tastes at various points in the town's development. Architecturally significant properties are the best representatives of that matrix. Often, homes of outstanding architectural design were the place where people of local historical significance lived. Many times the homes are the best preserved property with which to associate the person due to alterations to other properties where that person spent most of his or her productive life.

The best representative of the Homestead style in terms of ornateness and integrity is found at 1001 Hickory Avenue (32 DI 463) and was constructed

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about 1890. It, too, possesses one of the survey area's best Victorian-era porches. Two dwellings are outstanding representatives of the Princess Anne style in Oakes: The Bittman House (32 DI 525), at 1106 Main Avenue, and the home at 118 Eighth Street (32 DI 436).

Due to the more recent construction period for the bungalow-Craftsman style homes, several good examples of this stylistic period exist. A few of the homes employ an impressive diversity of building materials consistent with the Craftsman style's appreciation for individuation and hand craftsmanship; a good example is the house at 311 Fifth Street South (32 DI 337) with a distinctive fieldstone base. Another feature of note is the presence of garages on these sites which echo the house in exterior materials and silhouette. Noteworthy examples of this pattern include houses at 707 Main (32 DI 517), ca. 302 Seventh Street South (32 DI 413), 21 Eighth Street North (32 DI 423), 207 Seventh Street North (32 DI 397), and 817 Main Avenue (32 DI 520).

The 1987 survey of Oakes evaluated properties in the survey area primarily on the basis of architectural significance. The importance of individual properties also arises from the association with previous owners and events. Through documentary research and sufficient surviving materials the association with important individuals and/or events in Oakes history, those bases for significance can be established. An example of a house for which research should demonstrate eligibility is the former Thomas F. Marchall House (32 DI 432). Marshall, a locally prominent businessman and politician, constructed a Homestead style house with a rambling plan around 1890.

The former Walter T. Noonan house (32 DI 411), currently known as the House of 29, has a number of bases for significance. Historically, it was home to the town's wealthiest person and biggest employer. Its architectural importance, too differs somewhat from other architecturally significant houses. Where certain intact examples of a style would be important as representatives of a common dwelling style in Oakes, the former Noonan house is alone in its Mediterranean-flavored Craftsman styling. Its high aesthetic character sets it apart from other houses in town and suggests architectural significance because of its artistic quality.

IV. Registration Requirements: For dwellings to be eligible within the context they must 1) be an outstanding example of a particular style or some other relevant physical variable which is important in defining Oakes' historical development; 2) possess an outstanding artistic expression of a design even when few comparably styled properties exist; or 3) be the best property associated an individual, event, or pattern or events which are important in determining the character of Oakes. Properties significant on the basis of item 1 above must have the highest degree of physical integrity since other properties of the same character exist. Properties from item 2

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should have a high degree of integrity, as well, but since they are unusual, may sustain some slight alteration if the qualities for which they are important are intact. Finally, properties eligible under item 3 may have been changed somewhat more than properties from in items 1 and 2, as long as the property maintains the physical character necessary to convey the feeling and association which make it important.

With respect to particular aspects of integrity:

Setting and location: The setting in Oakes' neighborhood areas is intact in terms of massing, setback, and architectural diversity. Generally an integrity of location is necessary to ensure the survival of a building representing the context. However, certain detached structures of extreme historic or architectural importance may have been moved from their original locations and relocated within the town and still remain eligible. Since integrity of setting is not an aspect of the physical circumstance of a property which made it important, it is not required for significance.

Materials, Workmanship, Design: These elements of integrity are essential in defining the importance of architecturally significant properties. Without all or nearly the entire arrangement of original materials and workmanship united in the significant design, the property does not possess the characteristics for which it is important. In residential architecture, properties with sufficient integrity shall possess the features which made them important during the period of their significance. In most cases this shall include formal elements (plan, massing, roofline, solid/void distribution), decorative elements (porches, trimboards, window and door surrounds, and other kinds of applied ornament which serve as distinctive features), and structural elements (exterior materials). The case in which a property loses of some decorative element while remaining eligible would require that the design is not much compromised and that the house remains the best representative of a particular class. This will require case-by-case evaluations within the relevant context. Other mitigating factors must be considered. For instance, an architecturally significant property which is the best example of the Homestead style in Oakes may lose its porch if it is still the best representative of the style after removal and if porches are not integral to the stylistic expression in the town. The same may be said for replaced window systems. Historically significant properties will be said to possess sufficient integrity if they represent architecturally the period in which they became important.

Feeling and association: these aspects of integrity are present if the more fundamental integrity of design, workmanship, and materials exist. The feeling of and historic associations possessed by Oakes residential buildings will not exist independent of sufficient materials, design, and workmanship.

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G. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

Properties in Oakes were surveyed in 1986-87 by Susan Granger and Scott Kelly under contract to the State Historic Preservation Office. North Dakota Cultural Resource Survey forms were used to record information on 227 sites in the town. The forms called for recording of physical, visual, and locational data about each property and each architectural feature on site.

A brief historical overview was prepared to determine which aspects of Oakes' historical development were prominent, and which historical themes identified by the SHPO were important in the town's development. Narrative histories of the community were consulted for general information. Historical written information of a promotional nature was found useful in identifying important historical figures and developmental trends. From that investigation periods of significance presented themselves rather straightforwardly.

Two property types were defined in the present contextual statement. Rather general in nature, these offer a field of like others against which to make comparisons. Such comparison would be impossible if property types were more specific. Registration requirements arose as the most logical means to implement the National Register eligibility criteria with regard to the survey results organized according to property types.

The survey and its results have been subjected to additional historical information in the preparation of this contextual statement. Only enough historical information was completed as was necessary to make these statements. While the information in the statement is believed to be quite accurate, much additional research could be undertaken to recognize architectural and historical significance. The following questions could be answered and submitted as amendments to this statement in an effort to establish other contexts.

1. Who are Oakes' first citizens? Why did they come to the town? What part did they play in its development? Are any houses left with associations to them?
2. Who are Oakes' leading historical figures? What were their contributions? Are there any houses left with associations to them?
3. How many properties can be associated with the construction firm of Ritterbush and Sons? How many remain? What is the architectural character of these properties? Does that architectural character change over time?

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4. How do the properties identified in the survey as meriting further evaluation in the context of Religion (United Methodist Church [32 DI 468], First Presbyterian Church [32 DI 465], and St. Mark's Episcopal Church [32 DI 433]) and in the context of Education (Oakes High School [32 DI 519]) compare with properties throughout the county/state?
5. How do the buildings of Oakes' commercial and residential areas compare with similar sections of other towns within Dickey County?
6. What is the ethnic/cultural identity of the people who farm in the lands surrounding Oakes? Has their presence had an effect on the development of Oakes, either as being the place of in-migration or as a retail marketing outlet for goods.
7. What is the economic relationship between the surrounding farmland and Oakes? What effect has the farm economy had on the economic health of Oakes? Can this relationship be observed and documented by the physical townscape?
8. What specific factors accounted for the decline of railroad traffic and for the increase of automobile traffic in the town. Are the two patterns correlated? What elements of the built environment reflect these changes? Did the elements on the built environment incite or result from change?
9. What specific factors of townbuilding not covered in this historic context, such as entertainment/social, governmental, communications, the Depression, etc., have an impact upon the development of the town? How does this matrix of historic influences compare with the townbuilding efforts identified in other North Dakota towns?
10. What other efforts at city planning, such as the 1902 construction material ordinance and the 1914 sewer ordinance, have an effect upon the physical environment?
11. In what ways did the railroad determine the design of the town? In what ways was its influence felt beyond the original town platting?

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