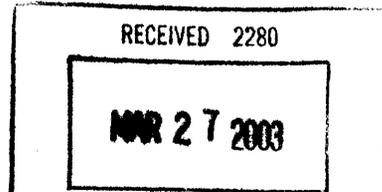


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form**



This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. ~~See NATIONAL PARK SERVICE~~ Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Architectural and Historical Resources of the Nevada Central Business District

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

- Early Settlement, 1853-1868
- Railroads and Prosperity, 1864-1912
- Civic Boosterism, 1913 -1928
- Depression and War, 1929-1945

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Mariys A. Svendsen

organization Svendsen Tyler, Inc. Date April 2002

street & number N3834 Deep Lake Road telephone (715) 469-3300

city or town Sarona state Wisconsin zip code 54870

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 and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. () see continuation sheet for additional comments).

Donell J. Soltz March 26, 2003
 Signature and title of certifying official Date
 STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

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.

Gabson H. Beall 5-9-2003
 Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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Continuation Sheet

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Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts

i. Introduction

In 1998-1999 the Nevada Historic Preservation Commission completed a Planning for Preservation Project (CLG Grant # 19-98.002) designed to guide preservation survey and planning efforts for the city of Nevada. The report for the project prepared by consultant Molly Myers Nauman in 1999 identified four historic contexts that should be used in future survey work in the community. Because of Nevada's size, it was recommended that survey work be undertaken in phases. The first area recommended for an intensive level historical and architectural survey was the Central Business District (CBD), which according to Nauman retained "the strongest sense of time and place." The area recommended for survey extended a block either side of 6th Street from I Avenue to M Avenue.

In the spring of 2001 the City of Nevada received a Certified Local Government Grant to survey the CBD and to identify potential historic district(s) and buildings individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. That summer, the Nevada Historic Preservation Commission retained Marlys Svendsen with Svendsen Tyler, Inc. of Sarona, Wisconsin to complete the CBD survey. That fall volunteers were recruited and trained to assist in the project, all of the buildings were photographed, and historical research was completed on the area. Preliminary boundaries were established for a potential downtown historic district and historical research was completed on each of the buildings within the bounded area. Buildings in this area were determined to meet eligibility for National Register listing under Criteria A and C. Iowa Site Inventory Forms were completed along with site maps and photographs for both contributing and non-contributing buildings in the potential district. In addition, several buildings outside of the commercial district, but within the survey area, were identified as having the potential for National Register listing under Criterion C. Iowa Site Inventory Forms were completed for these properties as well.

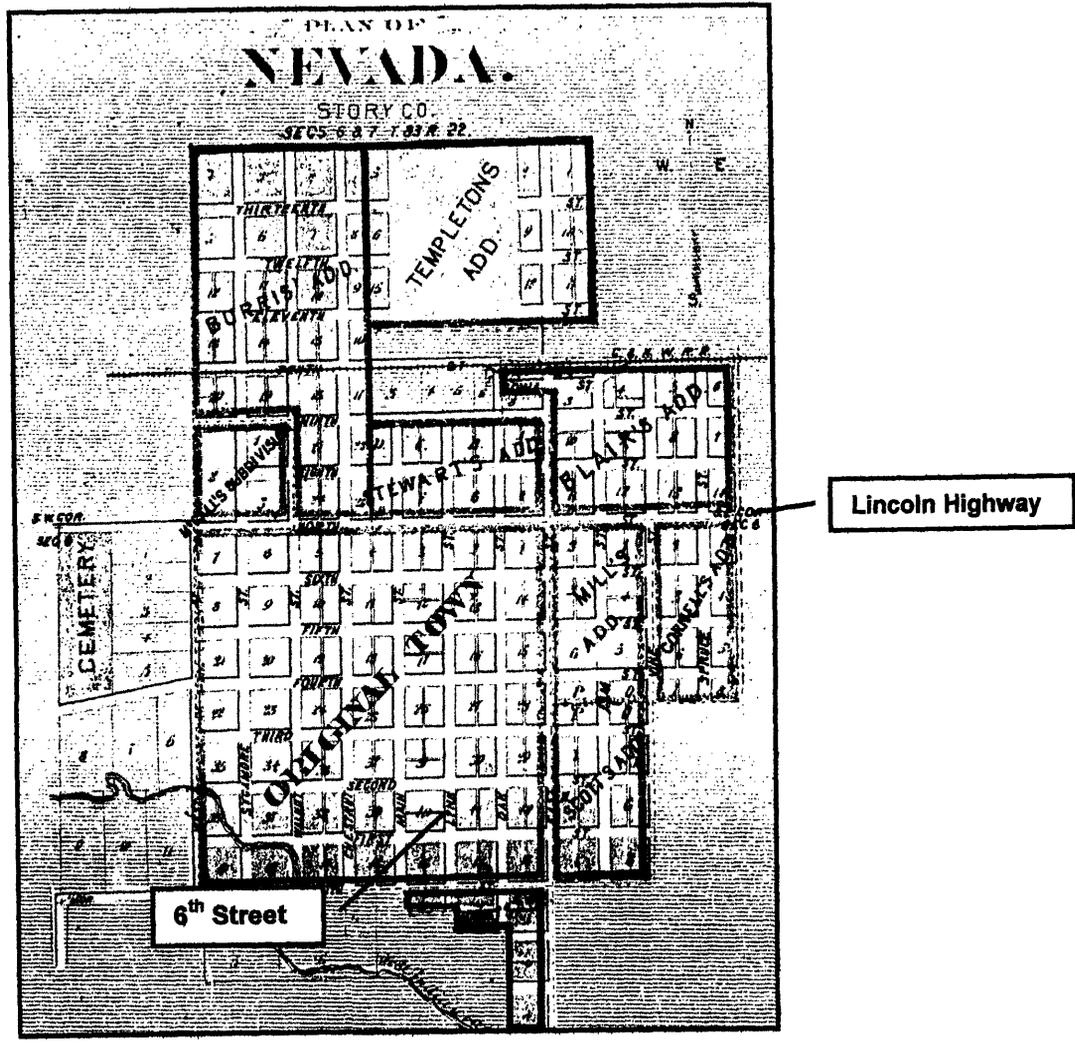
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Figure 1: Map of Nevada showing the Original Town Plat established in 1853 and filed February 23, 1854.¹



¹Map from "Plan of Nevada, Story County," A.T. Andreas' *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa*, Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1875.

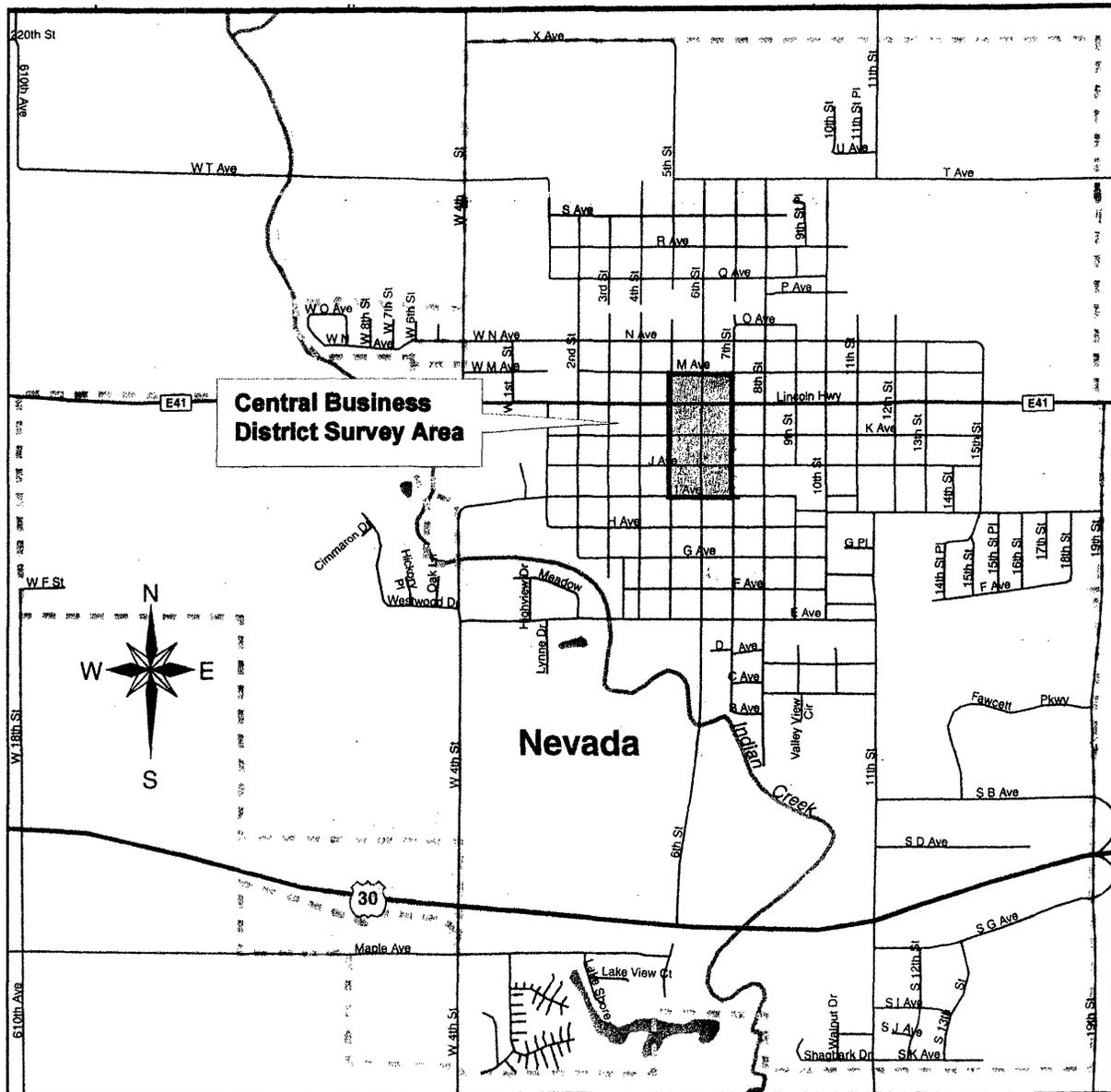
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Figure 2: Map of Nevada² showing boundary for Central Business District Survey, 85-019



²Map from Ames, Boone, Nevada and Surrounding Area Directory. Cedar Rapids, Iowa: McLeod USA, October 2000/2001.

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During the course of preparing the MPD for the CBD Survey Area, Svendsen determined that it would be appropriate to divide one of the historic context periods proposed by Nauman into two separate periods that more accurately reflected development trends. The original Railroads and Prosperity, 1864-ca.1929 historic context was revised to include two chronological periods. As a result of this revision, the information for this report was organized using the following historic contexts:

- Early Settlement: 1853-1864
- Railroads and Prosperity: 1864 – 1912
- Civic Boosterism: 1913 -1929
- Depression and War: 1929 – 1945

At some future time, a separate Lincoln Highway Era context should be prepared for the period 1913 – 1945.

ii. Description and Overview of Development of Central Business District Survey Area

Nevada, Iowa is the county seat for Story County, a largely agricultural county located approximately 30 miles north of Des Moines and 10 miles east of Ames near the geographic center of the state. The town was laid out in the summer of 1853 and the Original Town Plat filed on February 23, 1854. The Original Town Plat comprised 160 acres in the northwest corner of Nevada Township. It was laid out in 49 city blocks bounded by L Avenue (North Street) on the north, E Avenue on the south (South Street), 1st Street on the west (West Street), and 8th Street on the east (East Street). A low- land described as a "slough" by early residents and historians was located in the center of the town plat roughly between 5th and 6th streets and H and I avenues. Two public half-squares were established north and south of this low land. The Story County Court House was eventually built on the north half-square and a city park established on the south half-square. The Story County Hospital located on the latter site in 1951.

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The Central Business District Survey (CBD) Area spans portions of the north central section of the Original Town Plat and the south edge of Stewart's Addition. The survey area extends south from M Avenue to I Avenue and between 5th and 7th streets. Nevada's main street, 6th Street, runs north and south through the center of the survey area. At the south end of the business district is the Story County Court House square, which now comprises all of Block 12 between 5th and 6th streets and I and J avenues. The present day Nevada City Hall is located north of L Avenue along the east side of 6th Street. Other public buildings in the CBD include the Nevada Public Library at the northwest corner of K Avenue and 7th Street and the Nevada United Methodist Church at the southwest corner of the same intersection. No structures in the CBD are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The CBD Survey Area comprises Nevada's downtown blocks stretching along 6th Street surrounded by residential and institutional properties. The physical layout of the CBD is relatively flat with a slight downward slope from north to south towards I Avenue. There are no creeks, rivers, or other topographic features of consequence in the survey area today.

The Original Town Plat consisted of a grid system of streets of varying widths aligned with the compass points. Streets were originally laid out with widths of 70 feet. In 1872 several years after incorporation of Nevada, the width of 6th Street was widened to 90 feet between the court house and M Avenue. The widths of other streets in the CBD continue to have widths of 70 feet. Alleys throughout the Original Town Plat measure 20 feet and run in a north-south direction except in the blocks containing and/or facing the public half-squares (12, 17, 31, and 40). Here east-west alleys bisect the blocks. As a result of the location of alleys, the CBD Survey Area contains lots and buildings that face onto north/south streets for the most part. Exceptions include a few buildings that front onto the lettered avenues, which are located on parcels carved out of the rear sections of platted lots.

By the year 2002 nearly 150 years after Nevada was founded, the CBD Survey Area has evolved

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to contain a series of fully developed commercial blocks generally consisting of one and two-story masonry buildings with several contemporary one-story banks, a movie theater, several at-grade parking lots, and a hotel. The blocks surrounding the business district contain a half-block church campus, a public library, and several dozen single-family and multi-family dwellings. A business incubator complex is located in a former warehouse building at the north end of the survey area while a complex of county office buildings is at the south end.

iii. Development Patterns and Historic Contexts

During the first one hundred years following Nevada's platting, the CBD Survey Area underwent several phases of commercial development. The physical development patterns and historic settlement trends sprang from the original decisions made in the platting of the town and changed in response to historic events. A discussion of these development patterns based on major historic trends and watershed events follows.

Early Settlement (1853-1864)

Nevada was established as the county seat of Story County on June 27, 1853 when locating commissioners selected a site that was central to the county. The new town site was named "Nevada" by Commissioner Joseph Thrift of Boone, a participant in the California Gold Rush of 1849 whose fondness for the Sierra Nevada Mountains suggested the name. Unaware of the commissioners' decision, Dr. Jenkin W. Morris, a land speculator from Des Moines, purchased the town site land on July 1, 1853. Satisfied with the decision to locate Nevada here, Morris accepted the plat and a sale of town lots was arranged. On September 8, 1853 the first lots in Nevada were sold. Morris gave the first buyer, T.E. Alderman, a lot located immediately south of the public half-square reserved for the court house in Block 17 facing Main Street or 5th Street on the condition that Alderman would erect a building here. By October Nevada's first building had been constructed by Alderman - a cabin that provided lodgings for his family while serving as a general

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store, tavern, and Nevada's first post office.

Initial lot sales favored property located in the south half of the town site.³ Property Transfer Records in the Story County Auditor's Office do not pre-date Nevada's incorporation and do not allow an independent confirmation of this claim. Historical accounts indicate that within a year of the town site being established, a handful of log cabins were erected with several facing the north half-square in Block 40. After two years, Nevada's population stood at about 300.

From 1855 to 1860 Nevada "built up slowly but considerably."⁴ Speculation saw Stewart's Addition recorded in March 1856. It included a two-block strip along the north boundary of the Original Town Plat. When discussions for the Waterloo and Des Moines Railway progressed to the incorporation phase the following year railroad promoters looked to this north side tract for a right-of-way route. The north section of the CBD Survey Area includes two blocks of Stewart's Addition. Other factors disrupted the flow of settlers. The Panic of 1857 slowed immigration for a time. The next several years saw several groups of Nevada residents depart for the Pike's Peak gold fields.

In 1857 Nevada's first newspaper, the *Advocate*, began regular publication. The January 29, 1857 edition provides a glimpse of the physical appearance of the pioneer community. It proudly reported that Story County had fifteen grist and saw mills in operation. The reporter went on to write that "Nevada boasts of many neat and substantial buildings mostly erected after the steam saw mill was erected, in the fall of 1858 [sic]; that arrangements are being made for putting up from seventy-five to a hundred buildings the next summer."⁵

New business houses took root in Nevada with the arrival of each wave of new settlers. Merchants faced difficulties in maintaining provisions given the fact that the nearest railhead was in Iowa City

³*Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Story County, Iowa*, (Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co.), 1890, pp. 192-193.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁵Allen, William, *History of Story County, Iowa*, (Des Moines, IA: Iowa Printing Co.), 1887, p. 23.

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some 115 miles to the east. This, combined with the fact that the frontier economy was frequently cashless, made for rapid turnover among merchants. The fluid nature of the business sector is reflected by a description of events during this period: "During the year 1859 many changes in business firms occurred, some failed and left the country; new men started in and others changed their occupations."⁶ Federal Census records show modest growth for Nevada with population reaching 350 by 1860.

During these years and continuing until Nevada was incorporated in 1868, a rivalry developed as to where new business houses should be erected. As one historical account described it, before and during the Civil War building "still clung largely to the south side."⁷ Those with property on the south side favored locations here while those who owned property north of the court house half-square encouraged development here. By the mid-1860s it appeared that advocates of the south side were winning out with nearly two-thirds of Nevada's business interests located on and around the half-square in Block 40.

The Early Settlement period saw development in the CBD Survey Area confined to a mixture of commercial and domestic building stock. Small-scale, largely frame commercial buildings were constructed along the blocks immediately north of the court house facing Linn Street (6th Street). These early buildings were utilitarian in design serving the basic needs of the new settlers. Among the merchants listed in the earliest directory of Nevada businesses in 1857 were five lawyers and land agents, three surveyors, six dry goods and hardware stores, one furniture dealer, one druggist, and one boot and shoe dealer. The construction trades included no masons or brick makers yet and only one carpenter.

The first Storey County Court House was erected in 1855 on Block 25 at the intersection of 5th Street and I Avenue southwest of the site of the current court house. The building was destroyed in a New Year's Eve fire on December 31, 1863. A replacement structure was erected the following

⁶Ibid., p. 27.

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year on the same site.

Railroads and Prosperity: 1864 – 1912

The waning days of the Civil War saw the decade-long trend that had focused business development on the south side come to an abrupt end. On July 4, 1864 celebrants greeted the much heralded arrival of Nevada's first train. While all Nevadans welcomed the advent of this transportation advancement, north side property owners saw the arrival as especially good news. With the railroad's right-of-way passing five blocks north of the court house half-square, the blocks in between were seen as favoring business locations. A depot was soon erected near the intersection of 8th Street and the tracks with ancillary buildings constructed nearby.

The north-south rivalry continued until 1868, the year that Nevada was formally incorporated. That year a group of civic-minded citizens determined to settle the matter of rival business centers once and for all. According to an 1890 account the matter was resolved as follows:

The rivalry over the location of the permanent business center continued to distract the town until in 1868 a number of citizens united in a private movement to grade Linn Street [6th Street] and induce business men to locate upon it from the present court house site to the railway. The matter was so energetically pushed that it was soon acknowledged that Linn Street was the main thoroughfare.⁸

The resolution of the location of Nevada's business center combined with the end of the Civil War and the arrival of transcontinental railroad connections saw Nevada expand at a faster rate in the late 1860s than the previous decade. Population tripled growing to 982 by 1870. Two years later in 1872 in an effort to solidify the relocation of the business center to the north and to provide for an improved business district, Linn Street (6th Street) was widened from 70 to 90 feet. This complex task was accomplished by a creative arrangement whereby private property owners on the west side of 6th Street north of the court house half-square vacated the 20 feet at the west end

⁷ibid., p. 27.

⁸ibid., p. 193.

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of each of their lots that faced the street. In return, property owners on the east side of 6th Street paid for moving existing buildings back to align with the new street right-of-way. The *Story County Representative* reported that after the street widening “Nevada will be in possession of as handsome a business street as any town of its size in the State. The business part of town is solidly built and the stores are commodious and equipped with all the modern improvements.”⁹

The final factor in confirming 6th Street as Nevada’s principle commercial thoroughfare came in 1877. Since the arrival of the railroad in 1864, the depot had served as a magnet for business development. Its location at the head of 8th Street had drawn business to the nearby blocks threatening to displace 6th Street as Nevada’s main street. 6th Street proponents lead by several property owners and businessmen petitioned the railroad to relocate the depot to the intersection of Linn Street (6th Street). The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad agreed on the condition that land on the south side of the tracks would be made available for siding and a stipend of \$1,500 would be paid the railroad. The terms were accepted, conditions met, and in 1877 the depot was moved to the north side of the tracks between Linn and Main streets (6th and 5th streets). 6th Street’s status as Nevada’s main street went unchallenged in subsequent decades.

None of Nevada’s earliest commercial buildings in the CBD Survey Area associated with the Railroads and Prosperity Period (1864 – ca. 1929) survive intact. Only portions of several buildings erected prior to 1872 may survive in rear sections of subsequently rebuilt buildings. These include the M.L. Borgen Furniture Factory & Store at 1122 6th Street and the Boyd and Childs Building at 1034 6th Street. Both of these buildings received fire damage and were subsequently rebuilt all or in part and, as a result, carry construction dates from the decade of the 1880s. Many of Nevada’s first-generation buildings were lost to fires, most notably those that occurred on December 2, 1880 and January 25, 1882, both of which destroyed major portions of the west side of 6th Street north of J Avenue. These conflagrations each destroyed a dozen

⁹“Nevada, a Brief Sketch of the Town – Its Business Men and the Country Surrounding It,” *Story County Representative*, August 22, 1872, p. 1.

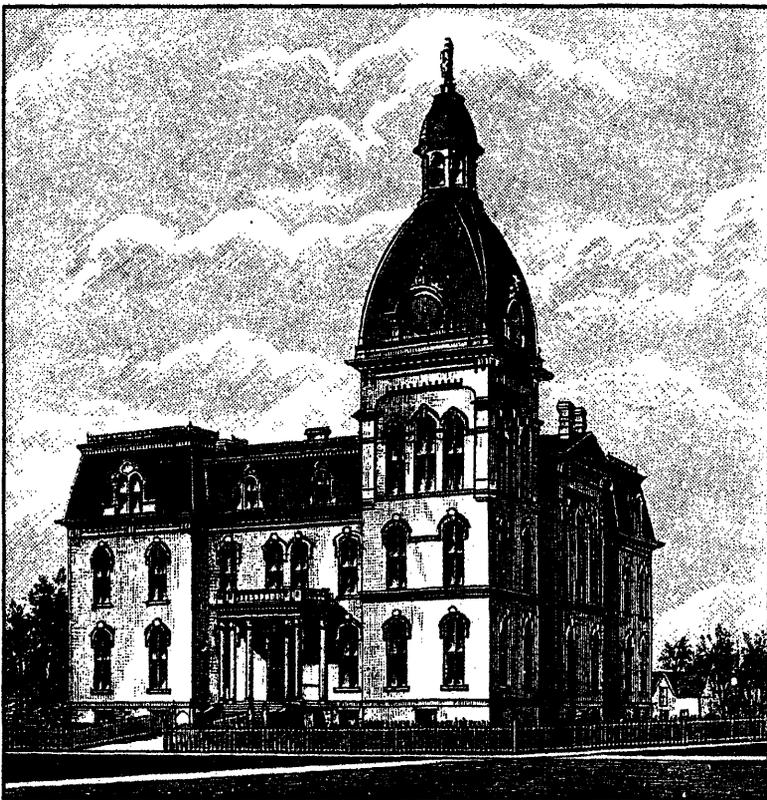
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buildings. In some cases the same building owners were affected twice within little more than a year's time.¹⁰ Other first generation buildings succumbed to poor construction. Most, however, were replaced by larger structures designed to take advantage of economic booms.



Story County Court House (non-extant)¹¹

With the future of 6th Street settled during the decade of the 1870s, a fine new court house was planned and erected on the public half-square. The third Story County Court House was designed by prominent Des Moines architect William Foster and erected at the southwest corner of Linn Street (6th Street) and Court Avenue (J Avenue) in 1876-77. The mansard roofed brick and stone building (non-extant) was built for \$40,000, its construction affirmed by county voters on the first referendum election two years earlier.

The decade of the 1870s saw population in Nevada rise steadily and in 1880

Federal census takers recorded 1,541 residents, a 50 percent increase for the decade. The downtown responded to this growth by constructing a series of handsome new commercial blocks. Completion of the court house in 1876-77 was soon followed by the erection of two commercial blocks on the east side of 6th Street, the I.O.O.F. Lodge #104 Building at 1117-1119 6th Street and the Ringheim Block at 1001-1005 6th Street. The I.O.O.F Lodge was substantially altered some years later but the Ringheim Block survives largely intact. Construction of these buildings was part of a downtown building boom that would last for nearly two decades in downtown Nevada.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 84, 87-89.

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The story of the Ringheim Block is instructive in understanding Nevada's second phase of commercial development that saw the replacement of modest frame buildings with more substantial and less fire prone masonry structures. Second generation replacements like the Ringheim Block were frequently designed with greater aesthetic interest as well. The Ringheim Block was built diagonally across the intersection from the new court house by I.A. Ringheim, an immigrant from Norway by way of Decorah. Upon settling in Nevada in 1865 he became a partner in a dry goods business with Iver Johnson known as Johnson & Ringheim that was located in a modest frame building at the northeast corner of J Avenue and 6th Street. By 1876 Ringheim was the sole proprietor of a flourishing business. The following year with business booming Ringheim initiated plans to erect a masonry building to house his expanding operation.

To allow construction to proceed without interruption of Ringheim's business, the building in which it was currently housed was temporarily moved south into Court Street (J Avenue) while the new building was erected. Newspaper accounts describe the relatively brief construction period required for completion of the Ringheim Block. The project began with the accumulation of stone on site in January (January 31, 1877, *The Nevada Representative*) followed by the building removal in early spring (March 28, 1877 and April 4, 1877, *The Nevada Representative*). The basement was excavated soon thereafter (April 11, 1877, *The Nevada Representative*) with the laying of the foundation a month later (May 16, 1877, *The Nevada Representative*). Brickwork was completed by late summer with the tin roof enclosing the structure by early September. The newspaper praised it writing "among the bricks erected this season, it stands at the head for beauty, size and substantial appearance" (September 12, 1877, *The Nevada Representative*). By October, advertisements

¹¹Ibid., front piece.

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Ringhelm Block, 1001-1005 6th Street

confidently announced the store's November 1st opening (October 17, 1877, *The Nevada Representative*). Total cost was \$16,000.

Examination of the dates of extant commercial buildings in the CBD Survey Area (See Table 1: Downtown Historic District Buildings by Decade, p. 51) reveals that the largest number date from the late-1870s through the mid-1890s. Of the approximately 40 buildings located in the immediate downtown in 2002, half were built before 1895 and one-third were erected in a single ten year period between 1877 and 1887. General population growth continued but at a slower pace during the decade of the 1880s increasing to 1,662 by 1890. Much of the building boom, however, can be attributed to reconstruction following the two disastrous fires that struck the west side of 6th Street in 1880 and 1882, and a separate fire in December 1887 that damaged buildings on the east side of 6th Street. The wisdom of masonry construction for restricting the spread of fires was shown in the second fire where one building veneered in brick standing just 20 feet from the fire received

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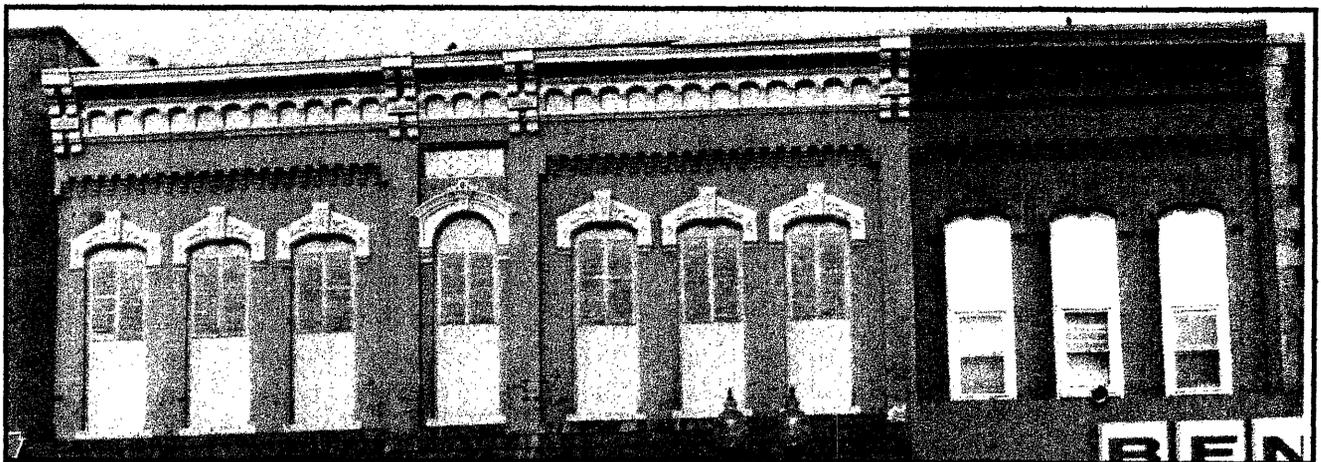
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only modest damage and halted the further spread of the fire.¹² To further protect against fires, the first municipal waterworks in Story County was installed in Nevada in 1888.

Once rebuilding commenced, nearly all of the replacement buildings were two-story brick structures with either single or double bay fronts. Most were trimmed in cut-stone, cast iron or pressed metal. Frequently the names of owners were cut in stone and the construction dates embossed in metal placards. Elaborate metal cornices with pediments and brackets set off the rooflines of the new buildings and tall double-hung windows with ornamented hoods decorated their facades. Building construction on lots outside of the fire-damaged areas saw a similar pattern during this period.

Several buildings from the 1880s stand out as good examples of these building practices. The first, the Boyd and Childs Building at 1026-28 6th Street, was completed in 1881. It is an example of a Late Victorian Italianate Style commercial block. While the storefronts have been significantly modified, the second floor and cornice retain most of their original features and decorative



Second Floor and Cornice Detail, Boyd and Childs Building, 1026-1028 6th Street

¹² Ibid., p. 88.

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elements. These include segmental window hoods each with keystones that have a floral relief pattern and the original embossed metal cornice that features a series of segmental arches and various horizontal moldings. The balance of the front façade contains brickwork patterns that are frequently found on Nevada commercial buildings from this period including vertical piers setting off window groups and entrances and dentil like corbeling designs.

George Boyd and T.P. Child erected this building after the 1880 fire destroyed an earlier building on the site. The partners operated a meat market here, a use that continued until the turn of the 20th century. By then Mrs. W. J. Zahn operated a cigar factory on the second floor producing local brand cigars with such names as “Special Binder,” “Magnolia,” “Nevada Concert Band,” and “Maceo.”

A second building from the decade of the 1880s that maintains much of its original design is the Ambrose and Sons Store at 1109-11-15 6th Street. Constructed in 1887 this triple-width, mid-block commercial building is also an example of the Italianate Style. As originally configured the building was divided into two shop spaces – one single width (#1115), and one double width (#1109-1111). The building is constructed of reddish brown brick with stone window hoods and a sheet metal cornice that has a simple design with widely spaced brackets and dentils between. A row of brick corbeling extends the full width of the building below the cornice. Each of the second floor’s eleven window openings has a segmental arch with a stone window hood that features a floral design. The tall openings have stone sills and some contain the original 1/1 sash while others have been partially closed with louvered panels and reduced size 1/1 double-hung sash.

E.B. Patton constructed this building in ca. 1887 but it is best known for an important early occupant, Ambrose and Sons, a dry goods and clothing store headed by John Wesley Ambrose. Three of J.W.’s sons, Harry, William, and Frank, eventually joined the firm that had “The Big Store” as its motto. By 1900 the father and all three sons were actively engaged in the business with boot and shoe sales located in the north shop space and general merchandise sales in the double-front

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Ambrose and Sons Store at 1109-11-15 6th Street

store to the south. By the 1920s the business had grown to include a fourth shop space in the adjacent Patton Block to the south. Several years after J.W. Ambrose died in 1923, the business was renamed H.G. Ambrose Stores. In 1927, millinery goods were sold from #1105, dry goods at #1109, men's furnishings at #1111, and shoes at #1115. In later years, the business went through a series of name changes that reflected changes in merchandise, marketing, and ownership - Ambrose's Dry Goods and Ready-to-Wear in the 1930s, Ambrose's Store during the 1940s and 1950s, and Ambrose's Department Store in the 1960s and 1970s. The business closed during the late 1980s.

The third building from the 1880s that maintains much of its original appearance is the Briggs Block constructed in ca. 1888. This prominent corner block is an example of a Late Victorian Queen Anne Style commercial building. Like many of the significant buildings in the downtown, the most intact portions of the Briggs Block are its masonry work and embossed sheetmetal work in evidence on the second floor walls, window openings, cornice and turret. The building's brick walls have projecting brick pilasters or piers used to divide the walls into sections – three equal sections facing

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K Avenue and two nearly equal sections separated by a narrow section facing 6th Street. A stone beltcourse separates the two levels and serves as a contiguous sill for the six window openings that are evenly spaced across both the 6th Street and K Avenue facades. A row of brick corbeling extends between the windows and cornice. Separate masonry name blocks announce the building's name "Briggs" and "Block". Each of the windows has an elaborate window hood. The original windows had a configuration that included a transom over a divided light double-hung sash.

The building's original metal cornice and corner turret are its most significant features. Both remain well preserved. The corner turret has a circular shape with four tall and narrow double-hung 1/1 windows. A wide band of stippled metal sheeting wraps the turret wall above the windows and beneath the cornice. The pattern of the embossed metal cornice includes semicircular fan shaped designs set between boxed brackets and beneath small modillions. The turret roof is conical



Briggs Block-W.L. Tipton & Sons Drug Store, 1102-1104 6th Street

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shaped with fluted sections terminating in a decorative finial. Larger fluted, boxed brackets mark the entrance bay's position along the cornice and the outer edges of the building along both 6th Street and K Avenue.

From its first construction a portion of the Briggs Block has served as a drug store. Samuel E. Briggs operated a pharmacy and stationery shop at #1102 when the building opened in 1888. A hardware store and tin shop was located next door at #1104 by the mid-1890s. By 1901, #1104 had been converted to Long & Son Clothing Store with Briggs Drug Store remaining in the corner shop space. In 1910 #1104 held a newsstand and art sales with the drug store continuing next door. By 1917, the corner shop space was being leased to William L. Tipton who operated W.L. Tipton & Son Drug Store here. Tipton's prospered from this location adding a line of wallpaper and paint to the traditional pharmacy offerings. The occupants of #1104 continued to change frequently. By 1927, this space held the Cash Grocery Store, one of nine local grocery stores. The W.L. Tipton and Son Drug Store continued at #1102 until the late 1990s expanding to #1104 by the early 1970s.

Other buildings constructed during the 1880s that survive within the downtown include:

- M.L. Borgen Furniture Factory & Store (ca.1880) at 1122 6th Street
- W.B. Patton Block (1880) at 1105-1107 6th Street
- J. Ray Block (1884) at 1108-1110 6th Street
- Sellers Novelty Store (ca. 1885) at 1006 6th Street
- City Drug Store (ca.1885) at 1014 6th Street
- Union Block (1885) at 1024 6th Street

When new two-story buildings were constructed in the downtown during the late 1870s and 1880s, owners were faced with deciding how to best use the second floors. Sometimes offices were established or apartments created especially if the building owner had need of this type of space for personal use. In other cases meeting halls were created to house one of the many fraternal

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organizations or civic clubs that were active in Nevada during this period. Examples of extant fraternal buildings include the I.O.O.F. Building (International Order of Odd Fellows Lodge #104) constructed in 1877 at 1117-19 6th Street. Another was the Opera Hall at 513-517 L Avenue completed in ca. 1880. Its upper level (non-extant) served not only as an opera house but as headquarters for the Knights of Pythias and later the American Legion. Several downtown meeting halls erected during this period served as a Masonic Hall. The Union Block at 1024 6th Street was built in 1885 and its upper level served as the Masonic Hall until ca. 1911. At that time the Masonic Lodge moved across the street to the upper level of the I.A. Ringheim Building at 1001-1003 6th Street, which had been constructed in 1877 to house the general store. The upper level was completely remodeled to accommodate the change but the exterior was left largely unchanged.

Railroading was closely linked to the prosperity in Nevada's business community through the end of the 19th century. It had played a critical role in deciding the location of Nevada's business center in the 1860s by selecting right-of-way at the north end of the town and in the 1870s with the removal of its depot to Linn Street. The 1880s and 1890s saw the railroad serve as a catalyst for developing and maintaining businesses along 6th Street. Rail freight shipments promptly received from eastern manufacturers and Iowa wholesalers kept retailers readily supplied. Communication via twice-a-day mail deliveries kept Nevada readily in touch with news, fashion, and business of the day. Traveling salesmen or "commercial travelers" made Nevada a regular stop filling rooms in local hotels while they took orders for goods from local shopkeepers. Most importantly, the railroad provided the necessary transit connections for marketing the agricultural products of rural Nevada residents. Records of shipments originating in 1878 tallied nearly a half-million dollars¹³ for the sale of wheat, corn, rye, flax seed, oats, butter, eggs, pork, and cattle originating in Nevada. These sales put cash in the pockets of farmers and enabled them to shop at main street businesses in Nevada.

¹³*Watchman Discusses Market Prices, Nevada's Railroads – 100 Years Ago,* *The Nevada Journal*, ca. 1979 clipping in Nevada Public Library vertical files.

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Prior to 1900 the chief element of rail service lacking in Nevada was a north-south rail line. Despite several highly promoted north-south railroad planning efforts, the east-west trunk line of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was the only line to serve Nevada through the 1890s. Late in the decade promoters from Iowa Falls and Des Moines convinced Nevada residents to support the establishment of a north-south route under the auspices of the Des Moines, Iowa Falls and Northern Railroad. Sufficient subscriptions were obtained to pay for acquiring right-of-way through Nevada Township, and Nevada voters approved a 2½ percent tax. The tax was made contingent on location of a depot within ¾ mile of the court house and the requirement that all passenger trains stop in Nevada. The depot (non-extant) was built in ca. 1900 seven blocks south and east of the downtown, and most of the line was completed by 1902. In 1911 the north-south line, which by then had reorganized as the St. Paul and Des Moines Railroad, was acquired by the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad. It became an important link to Iowa's capital and points north.¹⁴

The decade of the 1890s began with a "general era of national prosperity" according to historian W.O. Payne. He writes, "The decade of the Nineties was ushered in with the biggest boom in real estate which Story County had yet enjoyed."¹⁵ The decade began in Nevada with construction of a new county jail and sheriff's residence (both non-extant) in 1891. Both were located south of the Story County Court House thus expanding the public square from a half-block to a full block. County buildings have remained on this square since then providing a firm book end for the south end of the business district.

Payne notes that the years 1891 to 1894 saw "very rapid building of modern homes, and the general character and appearance of the residential portions of the town were affected much thereby. By 1892 population had increased another nearly 400 people to 2000 allowing Nevada to reorganize as a city of the second class the following year. Street improvements were made, sidewalks built, and the first electric lights were installed in downtown Nevada."¹⁶ The ordinance

¹⁴Payne, W.O. *History of Story County, Iowa, Volume I*, (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co.), 1911, p. 457.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 485.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 438.

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requiring the installation of sidewalks was passed in 1892 but it was three years before they were completed.¹⁷ In the spirit of community betterment, the editors of *The Nevada Journal* frequently commented about measures to improve Nevada. One such issue involved the recommendation that it was time that Nevada put up street signs and number its buildings. The editorial speculated that it would be a great convenience to the public to number buildings speculating “That might be too big a jump toward city airs all at once, but we might have the streets [sic] names tacked up at the crossing of each street.”¹⁸

The downtown building boom begun in the late-1870s and 1880s continued into the 1890s. Seven buildings survive along 6th Street from the first half of the decade including two particularly well-preserved structures – the Padellford Block (ca. 1893) at 1202-1210 6th Street and the Schworm Building (ca. 1895) at 1017-1021 6th Street.

The Padellford Block is a fine example of a Late Victorian Italianate Style commercial building. This building was constructed in ca. 1893 after E.M. and L.H. Padellford acquired the parcel. The building was first used as retail shop space for a bakery, restaurant, and grocery on the first floor and a barber shop in the basement. The most intact portions of the Padellford Block are its masonry work and embossed sheetmetal work in evidence on the second floor walls, window openings, and cornice. Brick pilasters or piers vertically divide the south half of the block (#1202-1204) from the north half (#1206-1210). Four window openings are evenly spaced along 6th Street, one is in the angled wall at the corner, and five more extend along L Avenue. Each of the openings has 1/1 double-hung windows, a stone sill, and a cast iron entablature lintel with brick brackets. The building’s original metal cornice survives as its most significant feature. The pattern of the embossed metal cornice includes floral shaped designs set between boxed brackets with a wide crown molding along the upper edge. Larger fluted, boxed brackets mark the entrance bay’s position along the cornice and provide a mounting location for the building’s name - “Padellford

¹⁷“We Do Improve,” *The Nevada Journal*, June 13, 1895, p. 1 and “Cement vs. Brick Walks,” *The Nevada Journal*, July 18, 1895, p. 1.

¹⁸“Needed Improvements,” *The Nevada Journal*, April 12, 1895

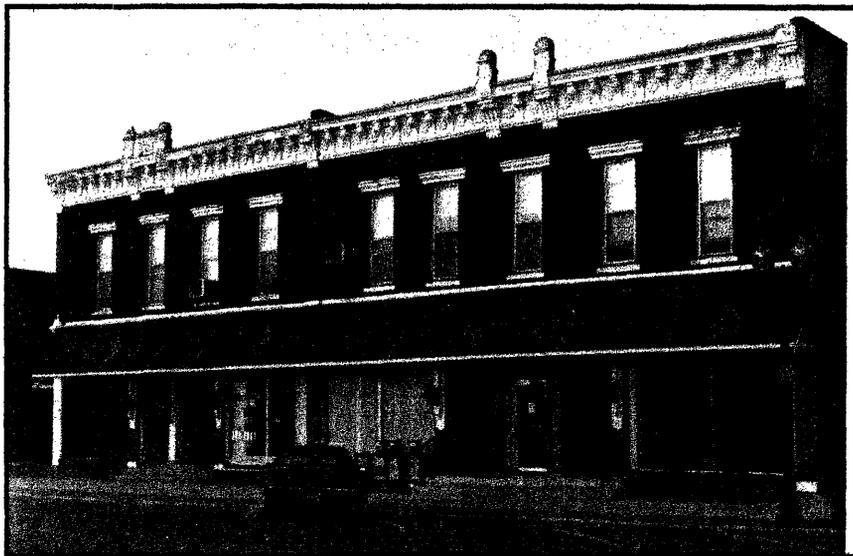
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Block." A well-executed course of brick corbeling and dentils extends along the lower edge of the cornice.



Padellford Block, 1202-1210 6th Street

When originally built by L.H. Padellford, the building contained a bakery and restaurant at the corner and a grocery store next door. A barber shop was located in the basement. By 1900 Padellford operated a hotel and restaurant in the north section known as the Transient House & Restaurant

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with the other businesses continuing next door. Before World War I, the corner shop space was converted to a billiards hall in the rear and a cigar store in the front. This Nevada Cigar Store occupied the corner shop and Johnsen's Produce Market was next door at #1204. In 1936 directories show the Nevada Cigar Store continuing here but #1204 was occupied by Wildman & Son, a printing business. The compiler of that year's city directory, Directory Service Company of Mason City, handled its advertising through its Nevada office also located at #1204. Wildman & Son did printing for this directory and possibly other local directories.

In the meantime a firm that would become one of Nevada's most important employers located on the second floor of the building and portions of the first. The Reuben H. Donnelley Corporation, a national direct mail and directory publisher established a branch operation in Nevada in 1922 with their purchase of the M & F Mailing Systems, a company founded in Nevada in 1919 by L.F. Martin and Don Fowler. By the time Donnelley acquired the business D.L. Harrington and Martin were the business's co-owners. The robust business of the R.H. Donnelley Corporation during the 1930s was credited as a major factor in reviving Nevada's economy ahead of other county seat towns in the state during the Depression.¹⁹ Harrington went on to eventually head the R.H. Donnelley Corporation as president in 1951.

The second building from the 1890s is the Schworm Building at 1017-1021 6th Street built in ca. 1895. It was one of the buildings erected following the fire on the east side of 6th Street in December 1887 that wiped out the half-block of buildings north of the Ringheim Block. It is a doublewide mid-block commercial building built in the Italianate Style. As originally constructed this structure was two identical, side-by-side narrow front buildings with a shared entrance for the second floor located in the south half suggesting that this building section was the first to be constructed. The building's original sheet metal cornice and highly decorated window hoods remain intact. Wide cornice brackets are located at the building center and outer edges in line with brick piers. Single brackets are widely spaced separating panels outlined by rope moldings. A heavy

¹⁹"An Editorial," *The Nevada Journal*, May 22, 1947.

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crown molding spans the full width of the double front. Matched rows of brick corbeling extend the width of each half of the building above the second floor windows. Each of the six second floor openings has a 1/1 double-hung window set beneath a flat arch with a pedimented hood.

Like many of Nevada's downtown buildings, an exact construction date for this double front building is difficult to determine. Using Story County Property Transfer Records, city directories, and Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Maps for the period, it appears that the south half may have



Schworm Building, 1017-1021 6th Street

been built as early as 1891 with the north half in place by 1896. Louis Schworm owned the south half and operated a shoe store in the north half of the building from ca. 1896 through ca. 1905. Businesses frequently changed in the shop spaces in subsequent years. They included Schworm's shoe store and a paint store in ca. 1901 followed by a music store and a meat market in ca. 1910.

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During the Depression years, commercial tenants frequently doubled-up in business spaces. The 1936 city directory shows that the Paris Cleaners, the American Railway Express Co., and Knudson Insurance were all located in the north half. By the end of World War II both halves of the building appear to have been acquired by members of the same family and/or business partnership, Renati and Cesare Stefani and Ermido Cerretti. The building remained in their hands or those of their families through the 1970s.

Other buildings constructed during the decade of the 1890s that survive within the downtown include:

- Dillin-Norris Building (ca. 1890) at 1002-1004 6th Street
- Unnamed building (ca. 1895) at 1009 6th Street
- Jack's Cafe (ca. 1895) at 1011 6th Street

At the turn of the 20th century, Nevada's population stood at 2,472 showing an increase of nearly 50 percent during the previous decade. Despite economic volatility during the 1890s in response to a national panic, inflating land values, and several seasons of poor growing conditions, Nevada appeared poised for expansion. Positive signs at the beginning of the new century included the fact that operations of the Des Moines, Iowa Falls and Northern Railroad, the new north-south line, were fully up and running shortly after 1900 and the completion of double-tracking along the route of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad through Nevada and Story County by 1901. New depots, visual reminders of both the importance of railroads and community progress, were in place for both railroads shortly after 1900.

The year 1900 also saw construction of a public library (non-extant) at the northwest corner of 7th Street and K Avenue. An example of the Classical Revival Style, the two-story building was an indication of Nevada's growth and progress during the previous two decades. The second floor of the building housed the offices for city government until the 1970s. The library was replaced by a

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new building in 1990.

In 1907 the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church approached the city of Nevada regarding plans to locate institutions affiliated with the church in the community. They would include the state headquarters for the Adventist Church, an Adventist sanitarium, and an Adventist academy. In 1908-09 the Adventist sanitarium later known as the Iowa Sanitarium opened. It was a 40-bed facility that served as the only hospital in Story County until 1916. In keeping with Adventist philosophy, the Sanitarium emphasized disease prevention and health maintenance. Soon after the Sanitarium opened, the Adventist academy known as the Oak Park Academy was established on adjacent grounds. Though these facilities were important in Nevada's overall progress, because they were located in the southeast edge of town some distance from the central business district, their role in its development was indirect.

The first decade of the new century saw economic trends continue on a generally upward spiral. By 1910 population stood at 2,138, having slipped slightly since 1900. During the decade rural property values for the county's 2000 farms rose nearly 100 percent.²⁰ This growth along with population increases in the previous decade encouraged the founding of a new state bank in Nevada during the decade. In 1909 the first plans for installation of a city-wide sewer system were advanced in a referendum that went unapproved until 1912 when the Adventist sanitarium and academy pledged financial support.²¹

Despite the general prosperity of the decade, only three buildings constructed between 1900 and 1909 survive within the downtown. They include the Smith & Bricker Building (ca. 1900) at 1013 6th Street, the Belknap Block (1901) at 1136 6th Street, and the Peoples Savings Bank (ca. 1905) across the street at 1137-1141 6th Street.

²⁰ibid., p. 448.

²¹ibid., p. 450.

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The Belknap Block, an example of the Neo-Classical Revival Style popularized during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, is the best preserved of these three buildings. It occupies a prominent corner at the intersection of 6th Street and K Avenue. The building is constructed of mottled reddish brown brick with a darker brown brick used for the piers that separate its three bays and the window arches. The cornice consists of a series of cut-stone and metal crown moldings of various depths, diamond-pattern brickwork, and a plain metal coping. The section above the center bay has a semi-circular pediment lined with a double row of dark brown headers with the building name and date,



Belknap Block, 1136 6th Street

“Belknap Block” and “1901,” carved in decorative stone scrolls. The second floor openings have contiguous semi-circular arches, two per bay, with 1/1 double-hung windows with short semi-circular transoms. A stone beltcourse forms a continuous sill for the windows.

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When the building was constructed in 1901, S.A. Belknap operated a furniture and carpet store here along with an undertaking business. Belknap appears to have owned the new building only briefly. Over the next several decades parts of the building housed a restaurant, grocery store, billiards hall, cinema, and offices. During the 1920s and 1930s the R.H. Donnelley Corporation took out a long-term lease for space in the former Belknap Block. The Donnelley Corporation's roots in Nevada stretched back to shortly after World War I when Lester Martin and Donald Fowler organized a mailing list service known as the M & F Mailing System business. The business compiled and sold mailing lists such as automobile owners to interested advertisers. The company grew quickly and in 1921 David L. Harrington, Martin's brother-in-law, joined the business as a partner. The following year Martin and Harrington sold M & F Mailing System to the Reuben H. Donnelley Corporation, a sales, printing and direct mail company specializing in the publication of telephone directories. Both Martin and Harrington assumed executive positions at the Donnelley Corporation.

Acquisition of M & F Mailing System came the same year that the Graham Act was passed at the federal level ending competition in the telephone industry and allowing AT & T to emerge with 90% of the telephone business. The act had the effect of shutting out competition in the directory business as well, allowing the Donnelley Corporation to expand dramatically. By the end of World War II, the building housed about 200 women to compile mailing lists of automobile owners and type city directory entries. The operations of the company soon spread to other downtown buildings as well. In 1951 former Nevadan David L. Harrington was elected president of the Donnelley Corporation. By the 1970s the Donnelley Corporation had relocated to new consolidated quarters and the former Belknap Block had returned to use as a furniture and appliance store.

Several years after the Belknap Block went up in 1901, a new bank located across the street. The Peoples Savings Bank located at 1137-1141 6th Street was Nevada's third bank. This prominent corner commercial building is an example of a Prairie School Style bank design. It is constructed of rust brown colored brick on the second floor and grayish brown brick on the lower level with dressed

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limestone trim. On the lower level, brick is laid in protruding bands and recessed rows to accent the horizontal design. A stone beltcourse separates the first and second floors with the short 1/1 windows grouped along the beltcourse to achieve a subtle ribbon-like effect typical of Prairie School designs. On the first floor the design of the multi-light display window openings remains relatively intact. The original entrance to the bank is located between the display windows for #1137 and #1141. It retains its original semi-circular arched transom hidden behind the fixed canvas awning. Sometime between 1926 and 1930, a 2-story brick addition to the bank building was erected at the east end. This section contained offices and had a separate entrance onto L Avenue, which by that time was the paved route of the Lincoln Highway through Nevada.

This building was constructed by the Peoples Savings Bank in ca. 1905. Little is known about the short-lived bank. Its story is likely similar to those of hundreds of other small savings banks established in Iowa in the decades before and after the turn of the 20th century. In describing the history of banking in Iowa, historian Howard Preston identifies the stock savings bank structure as one of the most popular types of banks. He notes that “of the 1,185 stock savings banks in the United States reporting in 1917 to the Comptroller of the Currency, 892 were in Iowa.”²² The popularity of stock savings banks was a result of its capacity to transact nearly all types of banking business and the need in smaller communities – those with populations of 10,000 or less – to have only \$10,000 of capital stock. Preston notes that Iowa led the nation in the number of banks in 1909 with 1,365. Of these 572 fell into the category of savings banks, of which 61 percent had capital of less than \$25,000. Most would have been unable to organize under the higher thresholds set for state and national banks at the time.

Iowa historian Leland Sage described the economic back drop at the turn of the 20th century in the state as the “Golden Age of Agriculture.” This was a period of growing prosperity extending from 1897 through 1920 when the total number of banks nearly doubled from 1,014 in 1897 to 1,923 in 1920.²³ It was against this backdrop that the Peoples Savings Bank was formed and flourished for a time. By 1927 the bank had gone into receivership and the following year the building and vacant

²²Preston, Howard H., *History of Banking in Iowa*, (Iowa City, IA: State Historical Society of Iowa), 1922, p. 155.

²³Sage, Leland, *A History of Iowa*, (Ames: Iowa State University Press), 1974.

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land to the east was sold to O.C. Melohn, a local gravel contractor. Space in the building was leased to a number of businesses in subsequent years including several bakeries on the first floor and office space on the second floor for a number of Nevada's professionals including several attorneys, insurance agents, doctors, and dentists.

Individual leadership continued to be a critical factor in encouraging downtown development as the century opened. George and Oscar J. Benjamin, editors and publishers of the *Nevada Journal*, had the Nevada Journal Building constructed at 1133 6th Street in 1905. The one-story brick building is a well-preserved example of a Classical Revival Style design, one of only two examples of this style to survive in the downtown. Its light brown brick is trimmed with dressed limestone. Four stone pilasters, each with a shallow square shaft and simplified Ionic capital, are set on short brick pedestals, which are evenly spaced across the front. The pilasters flank the windows and entrance while supporting a plain entablature above the entrance and low pediment. The name of the newspaper that was published from this building appears carved in the entablature – “Journal”. Masonry patterns in the front façade are surprisingly detailed given the building's modest height.

The Benjamin brothers had settled in Nevada in 1895 founding the *Nevada Journal*, a weekly newspaper, the same year. It is likely that construction of the new building to house the *Journal* and its commercial printing operations came about the same time that the newspaper was expanding from a weekly to a twice-weekly publication. A tri-weekly schedule was added later and in June 1929 the newspaper became a daily paper with an evening edition (*Nevada Evening Journal*). According to George Benjamin's obituary, “Nevada was the smallest town in the state to claim the distinction of a daily.”²⁴

The success of the *Journal's* expansion is reflected in other commercial development the Benjamin brothers sponsored. Construction of the new Peoples Savings Bank discussed previously was underway next door to the north at the same time the Journal Building was going up. The older of

²⁴Obituary for George A. Benjamin, *The Nevada Journal*, October 4, 1959.

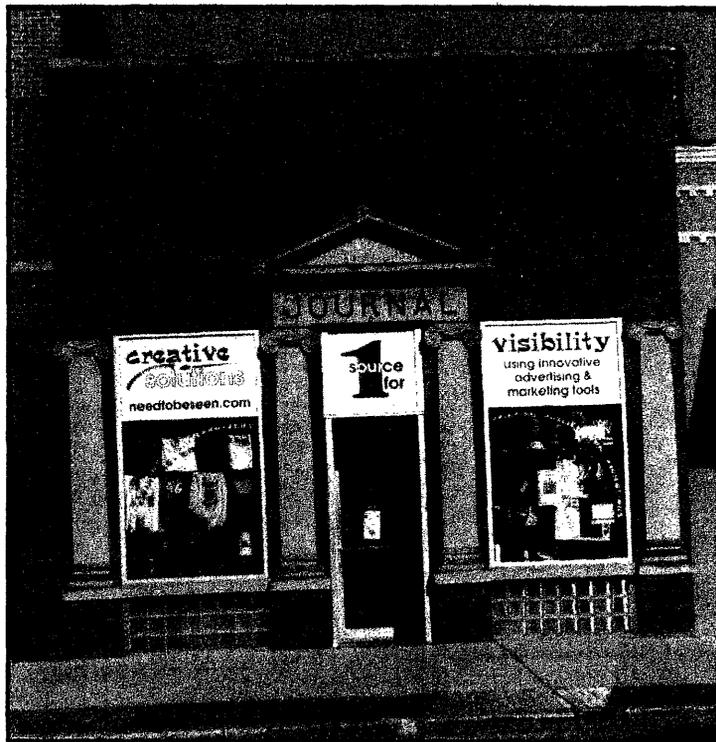
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the two Benjamin brothers, Oscar J., served as an investor in the bank project and as a bank board director. Both brothers were also important stockholders in the Story County Mutual Telephone Company. In 1926 they acquired the adjacent parcel to the south of the Journal Building and constructed a one-story commercial building on speculation. In 1935 O.J. Benjamin bought the next



Nevada Journal Building, 1133 6th Street

building to the south at #1129 although this acquisition may have been more a “fire sale purchase” than the result of a business boom. In either case, by the mid-1930s the Benjamin family controlled three adjacent parcels along the east side of 6th Street.

Civic Boosterism (1913-1929)

The second decade of the 20th century was a period of transition for Nevada. The era of railroads had reached a turning point with the buyout of the St. Paul & Des Moines RR (formerly Des Moines,

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Iowa Falls & Northern) by the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific RR in 1911. Although railroads would continue to be important in the Nevada economy for many decades, the introduction of automobiles into the transportation habits of Story County residents would soon have a profound impact on the community. This important shift was marked by the announcement in 1913 of plans to establish a transcontinental highway known as the Lincoln Highway, which would pass through Nevada. Efforts to see this road improved through Nevada and Story County introduced a period of boosterism on all levels – local, state and national. Lessons learned in promoting the Lincoln Highway would be translated to other civic projects such as the construction of a new hotel and the building of a new theater.

But first came the highway. In 1912 Carl Fisher, builder of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and founder of the Indianapolis 500, proposed the idea of building the “Coast-to-Coast Rock Highway” that would extend from New York City to San Francisco. Its construction would be supported by communities along the route, and it would be completed by 1915 in time for the Panama-Pacific Exposition. The idea won the support of many in the automobile industry while stimulating the imagination of thousands of Americans. Henry Joy, one of the road’s early supporters and president of the Packard Motor Car Company, proposed that it be named as a tribute to Abraham Lincoln. On July 1, 1913 the road was renamed the “Lincoln Highway” and a sponsoring organization, the Lincoln Highway Association, was established.

This 3,000-plus mile route passed through twelve states with Iowa stops in Clinton, Cedar Rapids, Marshalltown, Tama, Nevada, Boone, Carroll, Dennison, Missouri Valley, and Council Bluffs. Campaigns to pave the Lincoln Highway saw “seedling miles” paved in concrete in various Iowa locations. A national organization rallied members at the local and state levels to see the highway improved in the years between 1913 and 1925.

Passage of the Federal Highway Act of 1916 and a similar measure in 1921 saw federal matching funds flow to states for use on primary roads including the Lincoln Highway Route. In November

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1925 named highways such as the Lincoln Highway were reassigned numbers as part of a U.S. highway system. The idea of commemorating President Lincoln by naming a transcontinental highway in his honor persisted, however. On September 1, 1928 thousands of roadside markers bearing the inscription "This highway dedicated to Abraham Lincoln" were installed by Boy Scouts all across America. Though the Lincoln Highway route through Nevada and the balance of the state was officially designated U.S. Highway 30, the Lincoln Highway name remained popular.

The original east-west route established for the Lincoln Highway through Nevada crossed 6th Street along L Avenue two blocks north of the Story County Court House and three blocks south of the Chicago and Northwestern RR tracks. Paving of the Lincoln Highway route through Story County did not occur until 1929 although the blocks through town were paved earlier. The immediate effects of the establishment of the Lincoln Highway on downtown were minimal since the route was already substantially developed. All four corners of the intersection of L Avenue and 6th Street contained substantial buildings. By the end of the decade, however, several automobile garages had located east and west of 6th Street along the south side of L Avenue.

The Civic Boosterism Era saw downtown development trends continue those established in the opening years of the 20th century. Building occurred mostly in the north end of the CBD, a trend favored by several factors. Leadership by the Benjamin brothers described above was one reason. Another was the simple fact that the north end provided the most vacant land. An examination of Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Maps for 1910 and 1916 shows vacant parcels and frame buildings being replaced by new masonry structures between these years. Many of these sites were small, mid-block locations more suitable for buildings of a commensurate size. The trend towards building such structures is clearly visible on the facing blocks of 6th Street immediately south of L Avenue. Here five one-story, single width commercial buildings were constructed between ca. 1915 and 1919 at 1124, 1126, 1128, 1129, and 1132 6th Street.

The best preserved example of this building form, however, was built on a vacant parcel one block to the south. The Sanitary Meat Market at 1015 6th Street is an example of a vernacular commercial

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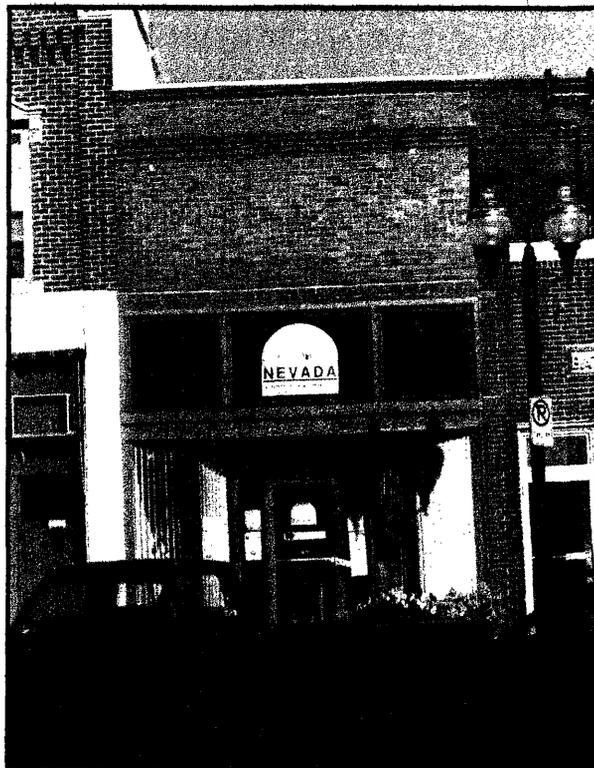
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building form referred to by contemporaries as the "Brick Front." The building is only 16 feet wide and is constructed of reddish brown brick. Two bands of stepped brick extend across the front beneath the parapet and above the storefront forming the building's only decoration. The original storefront has been modified slightly but the original configuration of the three-section transom above the display windows remains.

Anna Patrick and her husband, R. S. Patrick, acquired this site as vacant property in 1913 and likely constructed this building on speculation. Patrick operated a hardware store located at the



Sanitary Meat Market, 1015 6th Street

southwest corner of K Avenue and 6th Street at the time. The building changed hands several times during the next decade and by 1927, the Sanitary Meat Market was located here. A city directory advertisement that year stated that the Sanitary Meat Market offered quality, service, and

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cleanliness "At a Price That Saves." As a sign of poor economic times, the building was sold at sheriff's sale in 1935. The following year Christensen Hardware Co., one of four hardware stores in Nevada, opened here.

The only two-story building erected during this period was the Alderman Building located at 1036-1038 6th Street. The Alderman Building was constructed in 1913 by brothers Edward and U.S. Alderman to replace the pair of buildings previously on the site. Shortly after the new Alderman Building was completed, it housed the Palace Theater in the corner retail space, Grave Drug Store in #1036, a tailor shop facing K Avenue at the rear of the Palace, and a harness shop adjacent to the alley. The second floor held club rooms initially but soon was occupied by professional office space.

Plans for the Palace Theater were announced October 3, 1913 in the *Nevada Representative*. The north room of the Alderman brothers' new building was to be rented to A. H. Donhowe of Story City for showing moving picture shows. The article noted that "It startles one slightly to see the best corner in town rented for an amusement business; but the general public wants to be amused, and experience in the larger cities runs to the conclusion that the 'movies' take and pay for some of the best places on the best streets."²⁵ When the Palace opened on December 20, 1913, admission was a dime to see the silent films. Within six months, the Palace was showing "Edison's Genuine Talking Pictures," an early version of the "talkie" that was not introduced until 1927. The Palace Theater continued to operate through the 1920s. In later years the Alderman Building housed the Nevada Variety Store, Freeland's Grocery Store, and Dillin's Department Store.

Despite the events of World War I, population continued to grow during the decade of the 1910s. By 1920 population stood at 2,668 representing more than 20 percent gain in the previous decade. During the 1920s the impact of the Lincoln Highway on the CBD would become more evident. The 1926 Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Map clearly shows the changes completed. The former

²⁵"Movies Attract Early Nevadans," *Nevada Evening Journal*, October 27, 1979.

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Iowa Hotel at the northeast corner of L Avenue and 6th Street had been razed and replaced by two service stations. A third service station was located a block to the north at the southeast corner of M Avenue and 6th Street. Two more automobile garages were added at 521 L Avenue and 1221 6th Street. A battery repair shop at 1217 6th Street rounded out the automobile related businesses. The Dawson Hotel, a two-story brick building built with an eye towards housing cross-country travelers, was in place at 1211 6th Street. All of these buildings were erected between 1916 and 1926 and are non-extant in 2002 or modified beyond recognition.

The only surviving building in the CBD with a direct connection to the early years of the Lincoln Highway is the Bogie Inn at 618 L Avenue constructed in 1928 a half-block east of 6th Street. This plain two-story building is a utilitarian structure constructed of rectangular tile block that abuts the east end of the former Peoples Savings Bank. It has no ornamentation with a plain metal coping along the parapet and an asymmetrical window arrangement. By the 1930s Ernst and Edna Nelson were the proprietors of the Bogie Inn café here. The couple subsequently purchased the building.

The decade of the 1920s introduced a major new employer into the downtown, the R.H. Donnelley Corporation. As the business grew it expanded into several north end buildings and in some cases erected additions to house its operation. Before the decade was out dozens of new jobs were created, many for women workers. The Donnelley Corporation eventually occupied portions of the Belknap Block at 1136 6th Street and the Padellford Block at 1202-1204 6th Street.

General prosperity of the period saw a number of new buildings constructed with seven surviving from the decade 80 years later. An early building completed in the decade was a handsome new bank building for the Farmers Bank, one of Nevada's early financial institutions. The bank had its roots in the 1870s when Ottis Briggs established it. In 1897, Jay G. Dutton, Briggs' son-in-law, and J.A. Mills bought Briggs' interests. Dutton was named the bank's president, a position he held in ca. 1920 when a new stone-clad building replaced the bank's earlier Italianate Style building at 1018 6th

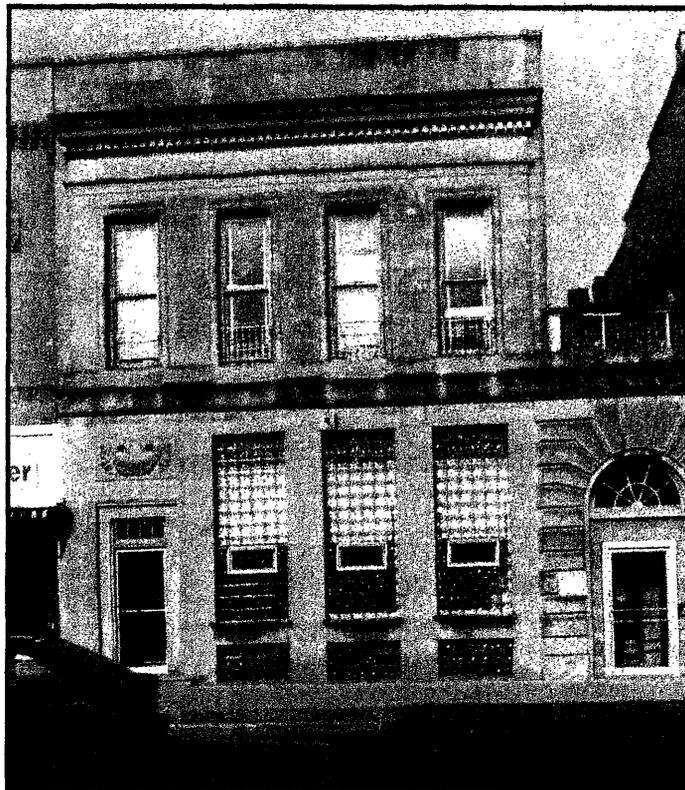
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Street. In 1928 the bank reorganized as the Farmers Trust and Savings Bank. Both Dutton and Mills died later that year. During the banking crisis of the 1930s Farmer's Bank closed, and in 1934 the state receiver transferred the building to the newly organized Nevada National Bank, the only local full service bank by 1936.



Farmers Bank, 1018 6th Street

The Farmers Bank is a moderately well-preserved example of a Classical Revival Style bank building. It is constructed of brick with a cladding of rectangular limestone tiles. The front façade has an asymmetrical arrangement that includes a small one-story entrance bay complete with a semicircular fanlight and beveled stone panels in the surround. A second entrance at the south end of the building leads to the second floor. It has a rectangular 4-light transom over the door with a carved stone design in the panel above the transom. Three tall window openings with wide stone

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sills are between the two entrances and a simple stone beltcourse extends across the full front of the building between the first and second floors. Four tall and narrow 1/1 double-hung windows are evenly spaced across the second floor. Each opening has a shallow, short wrought iron balcony. The Classical designed cornice includes a plain architrave, dentil molding, and wide crown molding.

As noted previously, the Civic Boosterism Era saw the successful lessons learned in the Lincoln Highway campaign translate to other projects in Nevada. The Nevada Community Club was organized before World War I to promote projects of community-wide benefit. The single most successful project sponsored by the club involved the planning, fundraising, and construction of a new hotel in the downtown. Planning for the project was underway for more than a decade and in March 1925, a representative of the Hockenbury System, Inc. of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania was retained to conduct a community survey to determine whether or not Nevada had the capacity to finance, build, and operate a successful hotel. Progress on the project was highlighted over the next year in various front-page articles in the *Nevada Evening Journal*.²⁶

In early May 1925 following a positive report by the Hockenbury System, J.G. Dutton, president of the Farmers Bank, was elected chairman of the executive committee of the fundraising organization. The committee included sixteen prominent business and community leaders, most of whom owned downtown businesses or buildings. Frank L. Campbell, an affiliate of the Hockenbury System, coordinated their efforts. By the end of May, the group launched an intensive six-day fundraising campaign that resulted in the successful subscription of over \$100,000 to finance construction of what was called the "Nevada Community Hotel" at the time. The three-story hotel would have 39 guest rooms, most with private baths.

The Community Hotel Company was formally incorporated in June 1925 and the Des Moines

²⁶ Articles appeared in the *Nevada Evening Journal*: "Hotel Survey is Under Way Today," March 20, 1925; "Dutton Will Head Hotel Committee," May 1, 1925; "\$100,000 Hotel Fund Subscribed," May 25, 1925; "Hotel Company is Incorporated," June 12, 1925; "New Hotel Plans Soon Ready for the Contractors," June 29, 1925; "Hotel Plans Soon Ready for Bids," July 22, 1925; "Work on Hotel Begins at Once," August 5, 1925; "Receiving Bids on Hotel Job Today," August 12, 1925; "Contract Let for New Hotel," August 14, 1925; and "You Name Nevada's New Hotel," August 19 and 24, 1925.

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architectural firm of Boyd & Moore retained to prepare plans and specifications for the hotel. The site selected for the hotel was the southeast corner of 6th Street and J Avenue that formerly was the location of the Hutchins Hotel, which had burned on July 15, 1908. The adjacent building to the south (the old Presbyterian Church) was also razed to make room for the new hotel. The site was directly across the street from the Story County Court House. Excavation of the site began in early August and bids were accepted by mid-month.

Community attention turned to naming the hotel later that month with suggestions published in the *Nevada Evening Journal* for several weeks. Eventually the name "Story" was selected as the winning suggestion. After the hotel was completed its name alternately appeared as the "Hotel Story" and "Story Hotel" in advertisements and city directory listings. Located just two blocks south of the Lincoln Highway route through Nevada, the hotel became a popular tourist stop as well as serving as accommodations for commercial travelers and businessmen visiting Nevada. Frequent guests were affiliates of the R.H Donnelley Corporation. The decade of the 1930s brought difficult times to the hotel as it did to other local businesses. At the end of World War II, the hotel was sold to a private buyer but continued in use as a hotel until the 1970s.

The Hotel Story is an unusual and well preserved example of a commercial building that contains attributes of more commonly associated with domestic buildings constructed in the Craftsman Style. *Its masonry work is executed in reddish brown pressed brick with matching mortar. The walls are laid in the American bond with every sixth course a header course. The first and second floors are separated by a double course of soldier (vertical) bricks. A similar soldier course is used to form the flat arches above the guest room windows and display windows. Brick piers vertically separate the display windows on the first floor.*

The building's short mansard roof is clad in metal tile. A wide decorative metal cornice extends around the building perimeter with large brackets widely spaced to mark window groups and modillions evenly spaced in between. Fenestration for the hotel is nearly entirely original and

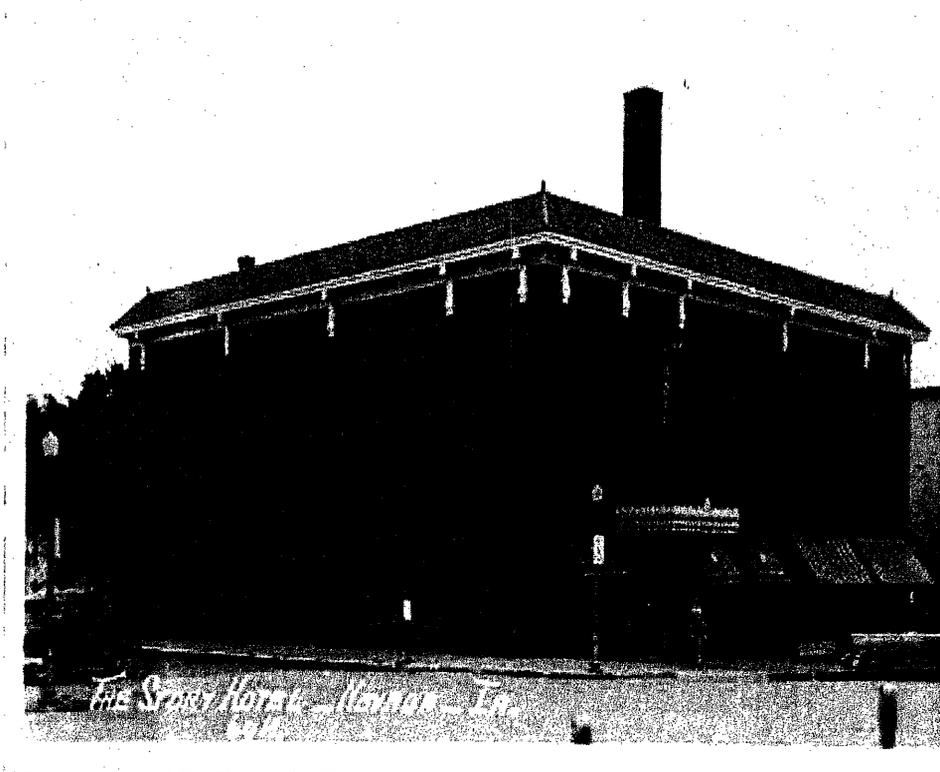
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includes 6/1 double-hung sash for the guest rooms. The original display windows that are still present in most of the first floor openings have narrow, multi-light casements flanking a large square fixed light with a multi-light transom above the group. On the first floor the hotel entrance is located at the north end of the west façade beneath the building's original metal canopy. The upper edge has a scalloped pattern with rectangular cut-work along the lower edge.



Postcard of Hotel Story, 937 6th Street, ca. 1950 (from Iowa Lincoln Highway Association web site, <http://www.ia.net/~iowalha/postcards/default.html>, March 21, 2002)

Once the Hotel Story was completed, the only thing the 6th Street lacked to be considered a “modern” downtown was an updated theater. In 1928 this deficiency was resolved when the Circle Theatre was constructed 1114 6th Street by an independent local theater company. The Circle Theatre was originally constructed for use as both a legitimate theater and for silent films shown to the accompaniment of the “enchanted music from the mighty Wurlitzer” theater organ.²⁷ In addition,

²⁷“The Circle Theatre Opening Program,” Nevada, Iowa, October 17-18, 1928.

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the first floor contained two small retail shops and the upper floors contained apartments.

Like the new bank a block to the south, the Circle Theatre was designed in the Classical Revival Style. Built according to modern structural standards the three-story building had structural steel trusses to accommodate the wide openings required in a theater. Exterior walls were constructed of tile with a brick facing. The simple masonry trim consisted of terra cotta fan shaped panels above the second floor windows and brick corbeling to form the cornice. The second floor window openings contained narrow French doors with multi-lights grouped in double and triple pairs set beneath transoms. Each group has its original decorative wrought iron balcony featuring geometric designs. Windows on the third floor include tall, paired multi-light casement windows. A cantilevered rectangular awning extends across the full front. The original marquee was located above the center entrance and extended more than two floors in height. The innovative plan of the Circle Theatre building was designed to provide the building owner with rental income from retail spaces located to either side of the theater lobby and from apartments located on the upper floor. The Des Moines architectural firm of Wetherell and Harrison designed the Circle Theatre. Copies of the building's plans survive in the offices of the successor firm, Wetherell Ericsson Leusink Architects. Although no specific architect is recorded on the drawings, the lettering style makes it likely that Roland Harrison was the architect.

In October 1928 the Circle Theatre was the third theater to open in Nevada. Oscar H. Strine, a self-promoter and showman himself, was co-owner and secretary of the Circle Amusement Company. When the Circle Theatre opened it operated as both a movie house and a legitimate theater. The opening program published for the inaugural shows on October 17 and 18, 1928 announced plans for the theater with exuberance. It promised that vaudeville shows would appear along with movies Friday through Monday nights with "photoplays augmented by the pick of the unusual, in short novelties, choice comedies and news reel flashes, by airmail direct."²⁸ The spirit of boosterism prevailing at the time appeared in the program's congratulatory advertisements. The Nevada

²⁸Ibid.

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Community Club, for example, took out a full page ad stating that:

We are proud that the Circle Amusement Company chose the City of Nevada for the home of the finest and best equipped show house to be found in any city of its size in Iowa. This confidence in the growth and prosperity of our community merits our heartiest congratulations and most earnest cooperation.²⁹

By the early 1930s the Circle Theatre was in financial trouble and in 1933 the building was sold at sheriff's sale. Later in the decade the theater reopened as the "Show Place of Story County"³⁰



Circle Theatre, 1114 6th Street

under the management of Werner Grossman whose family retained ownership until 1975. In ca. 1970 the theater changed its name to Camelot Theatre and continued in operation until ca. 2000.

When the theater opened the retail spaces were occupied by Howard Tomlinson's Circle Barber Shop at #1120 and J.W. Larsen's jewelry store at #1114. By the 1930s, Lloyd Child operated Child's Jewelry Store and the other retail shop held Goldie's Beauty Shop. By 1956 the jewelry

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Advertisement, 1936 Nevada City Directory, front cover.

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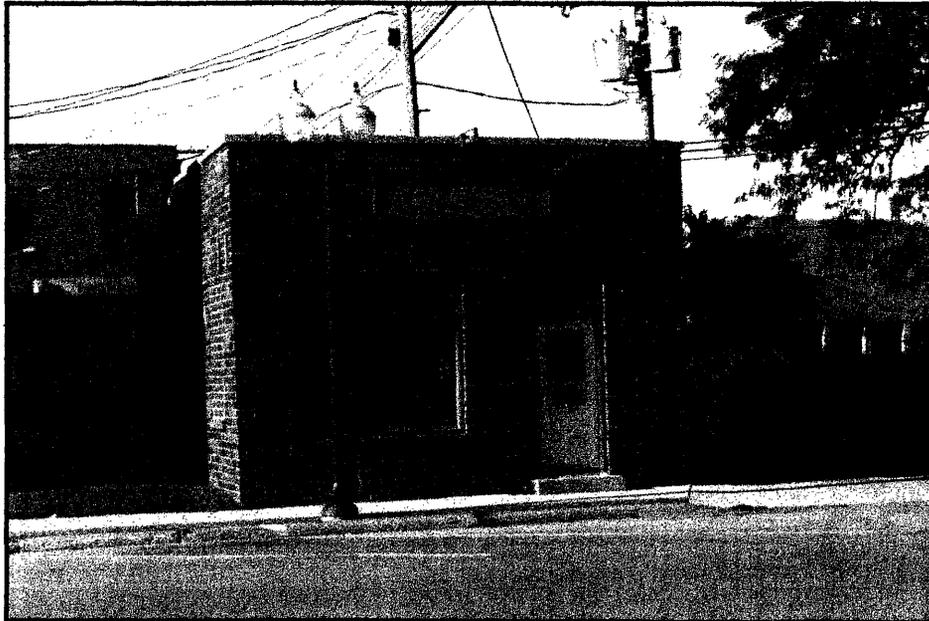
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store space had been abandoned and the lobby was enlarged for the Circle Theatre.

One of the last buildings to be constructed in the downtown during this period was the Nevada Poultry Company Building at 617 K Avenue. Constructed in 1928 next door to the Nevada Public Library, this small one-story building was built in a vernacular Brick Front form without reference to any specific architectural style. It is constructed of mottled tan and brown brick with an artificial



Nevada Poultry Company Building, 617 K Avenue

stone coping along the low parapet. The storefront remains intact in 2002 with only the inset signboard slightly modified. This building was first used as a retail outlet for the Nevada Poultry Co., which had its main creamery and poultry packing location for the sale of eggs and milk as well as a base for a home delivery service of these products.

Three other buildings constructed during the decade of the 1920s survive within the downtown in 2002. The *Representative Publishing Company Building* at 617 L Avenue was built when the printer moved from its former 6th Street location when the site for the new Hotel Story was cleared in 1925. The newspaper survived only a short time in its new quarters. The Iowa Railway and Light Co.

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Office and Store at 1124 6th Street and Tarman Banner Market were both completed in ca. 1925 as well.

The Civic Boosterism Era (1913-1929) came to an abrupt close on the eve of the Great Depression. Of the several dozen buildings erected during the 1910s and 1920s, at least 16 buildings survive in the four blocks along 6th Street between I and M avenues. Nevada's population stood at 3,133 in 1930, up nearly 500 from the previous decade. The impact of the agricultural recession that hit the state of Iowa and Story County at the end of the 1920s would not be reflected in population figures for another decade.

Depression and War (1929-1945)

The decade of the 1930s produced considerably slower growth and far less development in the CBD than previous decades. The spirit of civic boosterism waned as attention refocused on survival for many businesses. Story County Property Transfer Records register dozens of property turnovers, property consolidations, bank foreclosures, and sheriff's sale deeds during the decade of the Great Depression. Physical changes to commercial buildings in the CBD were largely confined to small building additions, storefront remodelings, and the addition of an upper level on several buildings. In several cases, retail tenants consolidated their operation with a compatible business in shared space to cut their overhead expenses or added a new line of sales to generate new business.

Banking was one of the business sectors to suffer the most in Iowa's small towns during the 1930s. Closure of the Peoples Savings Bank in 1927 served as a harbinger of what would come in the following decade. Then in 1934 the Farmers Bank closed, its assets turned over to the Nevada National Bank by the state receiver. In the wake of these closures, Nevada was in need of banking services. For a time, such firms as the Fawcett Investment Co met the demand for investment capital and loans. Edgar A. Fawcett, Sr. and his son Harold T. Fawcett offering farm loans and insurance products established this firm in the 1920s.

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Before the decade was out, several new financial institutions were founded that got their start with the aid of former Story County office holders. The Nevada Federal Savings and Loan Association had offices on the second floor of 1014 6th Street by 1936. One of the principals in this new firm was H.M. Vinsel who also served as the county treasurer during the 1930s. During the next several decades, the Nevada Federal Savings and Loan Association was headquartered on the second floor of the former Farmers Bank.

By 1939 another group of prominent Nevada businessmen formed a new full-service bank, the State Bank and Trust Company. With \$50,000 in capital, investors Edgar A. Fawcett, Sr. and his son Harold T. Fawcett, both active in the Fawcett Investment Co.; Glen G. Davis, a partner in Davis and Donnellan Lumber Co.; and John Hattery founded the new bank. Hattery was the first president of the bank and also its majority shareholder until 1977 when Harold Fawcett bought out his interest. Hattery had served as Story County Sheriff during the 1930s, his name frequently appearing on sheriff's deeds when properties were sold at tax sales. Harold Fawcett served in various capacities for the bank assuming the presidency in 1977. He retired as president and chairman of the board in 1991.³¹

The State Bank and Trust Company saw several expansions during the 1940s with new branches opening in McCallsburg in 1940 and Colo in 1943. A new building was constructed in 1962 on a portion of the current site at the southeast corner of K Avenue and 6th Street. In 1983 the bank merged with First National Bank in Ames with both banks organized as subsidiaries of Ames National Corporation, a bank holding corporation. By 1989 fifty years after its founding, State Bank had grown from \$50,000 in capital assets to \$8,000,000.³²

By the end of the decade, Nevada's economy and that of the downtown in particular were on the up

³¹Obituaries for Edgar A. Fawcett, Sr., November 12, 1953; Edgar Fawcett, Jr., June 15, 1965; and Harold T. Fawcett, February 4, 1999, *Nevada Journal*.

³²"Nevada Bank Marks 50 Years in Business," *Nevada Journal*, December 14, 1989.

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swing. A major contributing factor in reviving the local economy ahead of those of other county seat towns in the state was the robust business of the R.H. Donnelley Corporation during the 1930s.³³ By the end of World War II, the downtown workforce included about 200 women to compile mailing lists of automobile owners and enter city directory entries. The operations of the company were housed in several downtown buildings during this period including the Padelford Block and the Belknap Block at the intersection of 6th Street and L Avenue.

One retailing trend that first appeared during the Depression and War years was the development of regional or national franchise businesses. The importance of this trend remained relatively minor, however. Unlike cities like Marshalltown, Mason City and Ames that saw a succession of franchise stores come and go creating a brisk market for lease space, Nevada's modest retail base tended to favor home-owned businesses. Exceptions included the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co., a national grocery store franchise, which appears to have been one of the earliest such businesses to open in Nevada. It was located at 1026 6th Street during the late 1920s and 1930s but the economic difficulties of the Great Depression saw it close prior to World War II. Later, several other grocery, paint, automobile parts, and hardware outlets in the downtown had connections to regional franchise companies. Examples include the Gamble Store, a franchise hardware business with headquarters in Minnesota, that opened in the J. Ray Block at 1108-1110 6th Street in ca. 1940 and the Ben Franklin variety store, which opened a branch at 1036-1038 6th Street in ca. 1972. Competition from nearby Ames in the later half of the 20th century prevented the larger franchise chains from locating in the CBD.

Two public buildings erected in the CBD during the decade of the 1930s were the new Nevada Post Office at the corner of 5th Street and K Avenue just outside of the survey area and the First Methodist Episcopal Church at 1036 7th Street. The Post Office was constructed in 1937 and represented an expenditure of federal public works funds in Nevada. It replaced the former post office (non-extant) that operated from a storefront location at 1029 6th Street.

³³"An Editorial," *Nevada Journal*, May 22, 1947.

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Like the new post office, the First Methodist Episcopal Church was located along K Avenue. This brick church was constructed in 1931 following a fire. The first building of the "Methodist Episcopal Church of Nevada" was a frame structure erected south of the present church building, which is located at the southwest corner of K Avenue and 7th Street. It was replaced in 1893 with a red brick building on the site of the current church. On November 2, 1930 a fire destroyed this building. Following the fire, the congregation met at the old Opera Hall's second floor meeting hall north of the court house. Plans began soon after the fire to replace the building with congregation members preparing the site. The cornerstone was laid in May 1931 and the building completed for a cost of \$50,000 by the following October.³⁴

By 1940 Nevada's population stood at 3,353, up approximately 200 from a decade earlier. Despite the infusion of funding to erect public buildings such as the new post office and Methodist church, construction in the CBD had lagged. When this trend might have been expected to shift as the new decade began, the country became immersed in war and plans for major building were put on hold. Shortages of construction materials were experienced nationally and disruptions in the workforce caused by wartime operations to be suspended. As a result slow growth persisted through the decade of the 1940s with no buildings erected in the downtown along 6th Street during the Depression and War period surviving in 2002.

³⁴ *125 Years of Worship and Service, 1856-1981, United Methodist Church*. Nevada, Iowa: United Methodist Church, October 11, 1981 and "Centennial History," (Nevada, Iowa: Nevada Methodist Episcopal Church), 1956.

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Post-World War II (1945-2002)

The post-World War II period began with modest population increases. By 1950 Federal Census figures show Nevada with a population of 3,723, up 10 percent during the previous decade. This pattern continued through the second half of the 20th century with population nearly doubling to 6,658 by 2000.

Throughout the second half of the 20th century Nevada's Central Business District has continued to serve as the focal point of the business community despite several important changes. One of these shifts was triggered by the growing dependency of Americans on the automobile. This in turn led to the decline and eventually the abandonment of passenger train service through Nevada. The resulting growth in popularity of highway travel produced a corresponding increase in the amount of automobile and truck traffic through the downtown. As a result, in the late 1950s and early 1960s the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) began a public information campaign to encourage the relocation of the route for U.S. Highway 30 across the state. In Nevada this would mean moving the route from L Avenue to a new right-of-way approximately one mile south of the downtown. Part of the campaign included production by the IDOT of a 16-mm film shot from the bed of a truck that traveled the route. The film was designed to graphically demonstrate problems of congestion, traffic, and safety.³⁵ Scenes shot along the route in Nevada highlight the appearance of the community 40 years ago.

Two years later in 1960 the Iowa State Highway Commission adopted a plan to relocate the alignment of U.S. 30, a decision that marked an important shift for all Iowa communities along this historic route. In 1962-63 the new section was completed from Nevada to Colo and in 1964-65 from Nevada to Ames. The impact of this decision in the decades since relocation has been to draw services and facilities related to highway use away from the former Lincoln Highway route. In the downtown this has meant the closure of several service stations and garages. Relocation and/or

³⁵Interview with Hank Zaletel, Iowa Department of Transportation Library, Ames, Iowa, March 26, 2002.

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closure of other facilities such as restaurants, motels and automobile dealerships located along the route but outside of the immediate downtown has also had a deleterious effect on the CBD.

The twin problems associated with growth in popularity of the automobile in American cities – parking and traffic – also surfaced in downtown Nevada during the past half-century. Complaints about too few parking spaces were voiced before World War II. The attrition of building additions located on rear sections of lots facing 6th Street allowed several private parking lots to be created. A small municipal lot was established late in the century in Block G of Stewart's Addition north of City Hall and a second lot was built south of the Post Office and west of 5th Street in Block 18 just outside of the CBD. Merchants advocated for the installation of parking meters to encourage turn over of parking spaces. By the early 1950s they were installed along 6th Street from M to J avenues and along the intersecting blocks somewhat later. The thirty-year experiment did more harm than good, however, and in 1980 they were removed with a good deal of fanfare.

Another sign of the role of the automobile appeared in the design of the new State Bank and Trust Building (non-extant) completed in 1963. It incorporated a much advertised drive-through window for customers. When this building was replaced in the mid-1990s by a larger bank, multiple drive-through lanes were included along with a parking lot with reserved spaces for bank customers.

Several changes were made to accommodate governmental offices during the post-war era. City Hall had been headquartered on the second floor of the public library and in 1974 moved to quarters on 6th Street north of L Avenue. County government continued to be housed in the 1876 court house at the southwest corner of 6th Street and J Avenue in the 1950s. An addition had been completed in 1928 but plans for further expansion during subsequent decades were put off because of the poor economy and World War II. After referenda to complete needed improvements to the court house failed in 1950 and again in 1952, plans to construct a new building were first proposed. In 1966 voters overwhelmingly chose to raze the old court house and construct a new building. The court house square continues to anchor the south end of the downtown in 2002.

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In addition to the dislocation changes associated with shifts in transportation during the post-war period, the downtown saw a decline in the general health of the CBD. One indication of this decline was growing vacancy rate in upper level spaces. Apartments and meeting hall spaces were poorly maintained or abandoned in some instances. The availability of alternative space on lower levels or outside of the CBD also contributed to this vacancy pattern. At the same time, competition led to the disappearance of traditional downtown retailers such as department stores, hardware stores, and clothing stores, left first floor locations available for professional offices and service businesses. These businesses tend to generate fewer customers than traditional retail establishments and the result has been a general reduction in foot traffic.

Two of the most important changes in the post-war period came at opposite ends of the CBD. During the 1960s and 1970s the Donnelley Corporation gradually consolidated its operations in existing and new buildings north of L Avenue. Employment continued to grow as the corporation expanded on a national scale. Closure of the Nevada branch of R.H. Donnelley Corporation in the 1990s was the single greatest loss to the employment base of the CBD during the second half of the 20th century.

At the south end of the downtown, two substantial buildings were rehabilitated as apartments after World War II. The Boardman Brothers Building located at 919 6th Street was converted to apartments by the 1950s. Next door to the north, the Story Hotel was closed to transient users in the 1970s with its guest rooms converted to apartment use. The recycling of single family dwellings for use as apartments also occurred in a number of the large houses along 5th and 7th streets east and west of the downtown corridor. During the 1960s to 1980s, some corner lots and mid-block parcels along east-west avenues saw residences cleared and new one-story office buildings and retail businesses constructed with adjacent parking lots. Another change in land use in the CBD during this period saw the addition of a major education wing on the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1966 following its merger with the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

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Summary

At the turn of the 21st century, downtown Nevada continues in its role as the heart of the community. The CBD Survey Area has evolved through fifteen decades to a relatively stable land use pattern that includes a core of commercial properties along 6th Street between I and M avenues with county government buildings at the south end. A mix of office buildings, residences, and apartment buildings continue to ring the downtown corridor. Table 1 below shows the date for buildings within the proposed downtown historic district and Table 2 includes population figures for Nevada taken from U.S. Census figures for the respective years cited.

Decade	Number of Buildings
Pre-1870	0
1870-1879	2
1880-1889	12
1890-1899	6
1900-1909	3
1910-1919	9
1920-1929	7
1930-1989	0
1990-2000	1

Year	Population
1850	0
1860	350
1870	982
1880	1,541
1890	1,662
1900	2,472
1910	2,138
1920	2,668
1930	3,133
1940	3,353
1950	3,723
1960	4,227
1970	4,952
1980	5,912
1990	6,009
2000	6,658

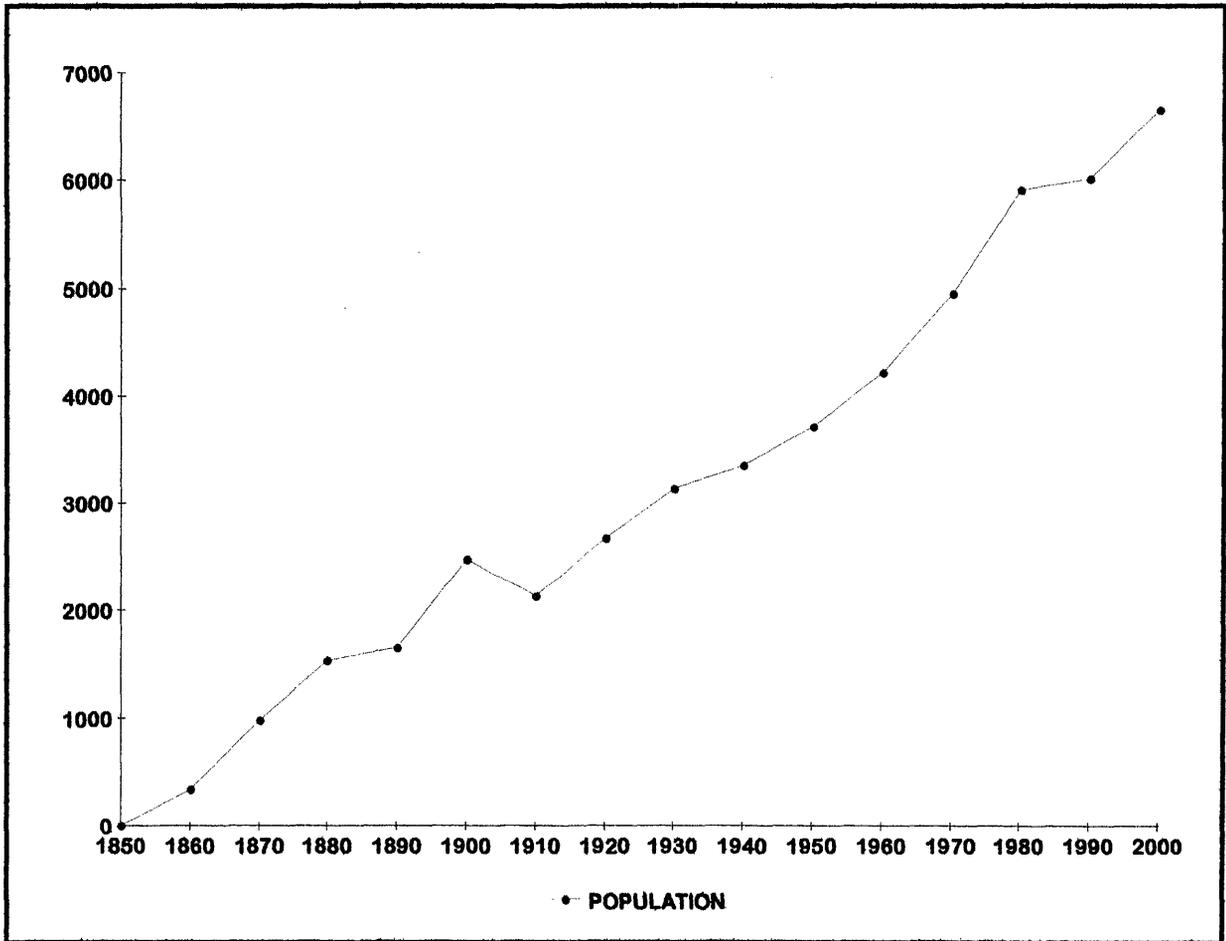
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Table 3: Nevada Population Change, 1853-2000



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F. Associated Property Types of the Nevada Central Business District (1853 – 1945)

i. *Property Type:* Commercial, Public and Institutional Properties in Nevada's Central Business District

ii. *Description:*

The historic resources in this property type are all located within the 8 blocks included in the CBD Survey Area. All resources date from the period 1877 to 1928 and are principally commercial buildings. The exceptions are typical of those that would be expected in a moderate sized business district that has historically included diverse uses. Historic commercial buildings include a theater, two banks, a hotel, and several dozen contiguous commercial blocks. Public buildings include a church and several former fraternal halls. None of the government buildings (a court house, jail, library, and city hall) are more than 50 years old. Fewer than 20 dwellings survive, many now leased and converted to duplex or apartment use.

The physical integrity of resources in the survey area ranges from well-preserved, nearly original condition, to substantially intact with minor alterations, to very altered or nearly unrecognizable. Nearly all of the buildings in the CBD have been modified to some degree.

iii. *Significance*

The historic resources for this property type represent noteworthy examples of vernacular commercial building forms from the late 19th through the early 20th centuries, as well as the work of at least two prominent Iowa architectural firms, Boyd and Moore and Wetherell and Harrison, both

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of Des Moines. Their work and that of other designers and craftsmen whose names are not known include examples of the Italianate, Queen Anne, Classical Revival, Craftsman, and Prairie School styles.

iv. Registration Requirements

a. Area of Significance

Significant resources are found under National Register Criteria A, B and C or combinations of them. No examples were found for Criterion D, although recommendations for further study were made in cases where historic archeological remains may exist.

Criterion A: Properties and districts should be associated with important commercial development trends in Nevada's Central Business District, important shifts in land-use patterns, changing retail practices, construction of the Lincoln Highway, and the development of civic and fraternal institutions in the city center. Individual buildings may be associated with other areas of significance including industrial development, ethnic history, transportation, and social history.

Criterion B: Properties should be associated with persons who made significant individual contributions to Nevada's commercial history.

Criterion C: Individual properties should illustrate architectural styles, building forms, building types, materials, or construction practices that represent the various periods of commercial development in the Central Business District. Individual properties may be associated with an architect or master craftsman. Historic districts should include collections of properties, some of which may individually lack significance, but as a group demonstrate important trends in local or neighborhood development.

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Criterion D: Properties that are likely to yield important information about commercial and/or industrial building practices for which written documentation is absent. Significant elements under this criterion could include sub-surface evidence of earlier buildings such as foundations, cisterns, privies, waste pits, steam heating tunnels, etc.

b. Levels of Significance

Properties will generally be found significant on a local rather than state or national level based on their association with downtown development.

c. Integrity Considerations

Individually significant buildings or contributing resources in historic districts in commercial areas are likely to have been altered more than residential properties. It is expected that commercial buildings (theaters, banks, retail buildings, office buildings, hotels, garages and service stations and commercial laundries) retain their original appearance in terms of basic shape, proportions, rooflines, and important features. The upper levels of their principal façade(s) should remain relatively unchanged in terms of placement and size of window openings, masonry detailing such as corbeling, and cornice design. Easily reversible alterations, such as the addition of fire escape ladders or covering of window, will not be defined as significant. The replacement of multi-pane sash with reconfigured windows is acceptable (e.g. 6/6 double-hung sash replaced by 1/1 double-hung sash), but changes in the shape or type of windows would be unacceptable (e.g. segmental arched double-hung sash by smaller, casement windows). Changes in window openings that are more than 50 years old will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine their impact.

Greater change is acceptable for storefront levels on commercial buildings because customarily the average life of a storefront in the United States is only about ten years.

The manner in which important storefront elements are treated will be

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evaluated. Such elements include the shop and/or upper level entrances, transoms, shop windows, beltcourses, ornamentation, and awnings. In general, modifications made to storefronts in commercial buildings more than 50 years ago will likely be considered significant in their own right if they have been preserved relatively intact. Sympathetic alterations made within the past 50 years will not automatically preclude a building from being eligible for the NRHP. These more recent alterations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine if they support or detract from a building's important overall design elements.

Alterations made to convert the use of commercial buildings are also commonplace in central business districts. They will likely be considered insignificant unless they resulted in the loss of important interior public spaces. In summary, integrity standards for commercial buildings assume that they have, by necessity, evolved and changed through time. This organic quality of business districts provides a slightly different set of integrity expectations for buildings.

Integrity standards for building types in the CBD Survey Area other than commercial buildings anticipate somewhat less organic change. For example, a church would be expected to retain its original shape and proportions with original window openings, doors, spires, and other architectural features preserved. Construction materials for foundations, walls, and windows would need to be original. The use of modern roofing materials is an acceptable alteration. In general, modifications made more than 50 years ago will be accepted as part of the historic appearance of a church. Additions or wings will be accepted if they are located along a non-principal façade, have sympathetic design elements and are constructed of compatible building materials. Treatment of entrances that have been altered to accommodate handicapped access will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine their impact on overall design.

Integrity standards for public buildings such as fraternal halls anticipate a fair amount of organic development. Like churches, fraternal halls are expected to retain their original shape and proportions with original window openings (not necessarily original sash), doors, and other

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important architectural features. Construction materials for foundations and walls should be original. The use of modern roofing materials is an acceptable alteration. In general, modifications made more than 50 years ago will be accepted as part of the historic appearance of one of these building types. Additions or wings will be accepted if they are located along a non-principal façade, have sympathetic design elements, are connected in a fashion that causes minimal alteration to the historic section of the building and are constructed of compatible building materials. The addition of exiting systems installed for public safety purposes is expected to be carried out on non-principal façades. Treatment of entrances that have been altered to accommodate handicapped access will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine their impact on overall design.

There are several dozen residences within the CBD Survey Area including one individually significant house. Like individually significant commercial buildings, it is expected that residences should be relatively unaltered, retaining their original appearance in terms of basic shape, proportions, rooflines, and important features. Principal façades should remain relatively unchanged with placement and size of window openings and primary entrances consistent with the original design. Residential buildings should maintain original porches though sympathetic modifications made more than 50 years ago will be accepted.

The presence of unobtrusive additions on non-principal façades and modern roofing materials will not automatically preclude a building from being eligible for the NRHP. Alterations made to convert single-family residences to offices, retail shops, or apartment buildings will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine if the changes support or detract from a house's important design elements. Easily reversible alterations such as the addition of fire escape ladders will not be considered significant.

By definition, historic districts are collections of buildings that when considered as a group rather than individually possess a sense of time and place. They may share building type, style, form, or

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material. They have a common period of significance that may extend through a few years or several decades. They consist of contiguous properties or multi-block areas with relatively few intrusions. Integrity for individual buildings as well as the setting as a whole should be high.

Buildings within historic districts are divided by definition into two categories: non-contributing and contributing resources. Non-contributing resources are those buildings that do not share a common heritage with the district as evidenced in building type, architectural style(s), form, materials, or period of significance. Non-contributing buildings are generally considered to be intrusive in nature and would not be missed if removed from the district. Buildings less than 50 years old are generally considered non-contributing.

The category of contributing resources can be further divided by definition into key buildings and supportive buildings. Key buildings within historic districts are those buildings that are individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Integrity standards for these properties should be the same as those established for individually eligible buildings outside of historic districts. Architectural integrity of supportive buildings may be somewhat less. For example, changes in window and door openings, cornice and beltcourse trim, or storefront changes may be acceptable. The addition of fixed awnings and changes in signage would also be acceptable for most key buildings and all supportive buildings.

A final issue of building integrity involves moved buildings and relates equally to buildings being evaluated for individual significance or as a part of a historic district. Moved buildings are rarely found suitable for National Register listing. The assumption is that a move destroys a building's significance by altering its original setting and context. No moved buildings have been identified in the CBD Survey Area. Should future research identify relocated buildings they should not automatically be precluded from being eligible for the National Register. Instead, they should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Moves made more than 50 years ago should be treated as historic alterations giving importance to other selection criteria. Moves should be considered

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detrimental if they resulted in the loss of significant architectural elements.

v. *Historic Districts and Individually Eligible Properties*

The Central Business District Survey Area contains approximately 70 buildings. Of this total, none are presently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. One potential historic district extends along portions of the 900 to 1200 blocks of 6th Street. The *Nevada Downtown Historic District** contains 39 primary buildings of which 16 would be categorized as key/contributing structures, 17 as contributing structures but not individually significant, and the remaining 6 as non-contributing structures. Another two buildings located outside of the district at 511 J Avenue and 904 7th Street appear to be individually eligible for National Register listing.

The *Nevada Downtown Historic District* contains the best preserved commercial buildings in the CBD including examples of Italianate, Queen Anne, Classical Revival, Craftsman, and Prairie style building designs. Built during a period of more than five decades from 1877 to 1928, these buildings tell the story of Nevada' commercial and social center. As with most organically developed business districts, its buildings express the individual taste of their builders, the architectural styles and aesthetics popular over a considerable period of time, and the materials available for construction and subsequent remodeling. A sufficient number of contributing buildings survives to qualify for National Register designation as a historic district.

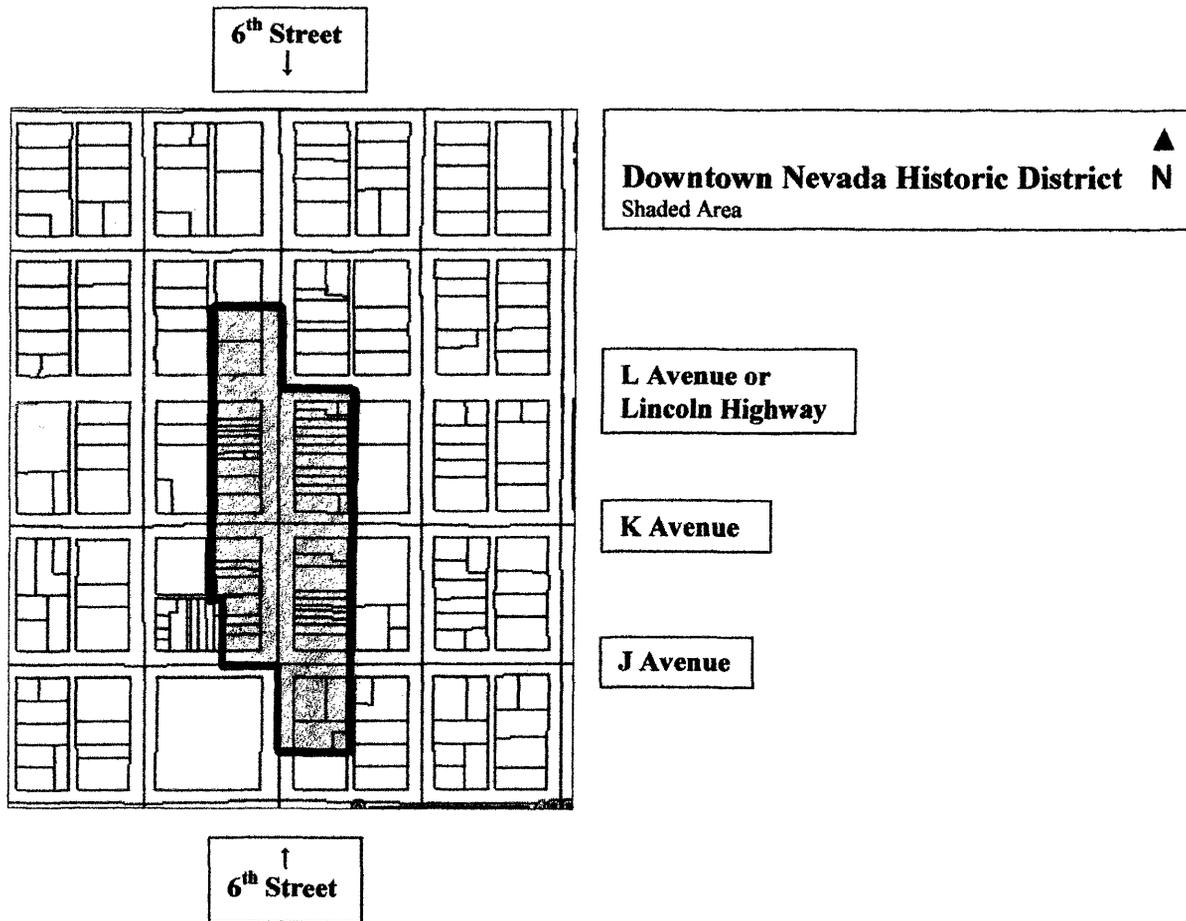
*Indicates the historic district being nominated with the submittal of this MPD.

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vi. Properties in the Central Business District Survey Area

Individual site forms were prepared for all buildings within a potential *Nevada Downtown Historic District* and for five additional buildings outside of the district but within the CBD Survey Area to determine their individual eligibility or their appropriateness for inclusion in the district. Each form contains recommendations for a building's contributing or non-contributing status in a potential downtown district.

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Table 3: All Properties in the Proposed Nevada Downtown Historic District and Select Properties in the Central Business District Survey Area

Site Number	Address	Historic Name & (Common Name)	Date	Individual Eligible/ Not Eligible	Historic District- Contributing/ Non-Contributing
85-01834	919 6 th Street	Boardman Brothers Building (Courthouse View Apartments)	1882	NE	C
85-03225	937 6 th Street	Hotel Story (Nelson Building)	1925	E	C/Key
85-01972	1001-1003 6 th Street	I.A. Ringheim Building (Arnold Motor Supply/Advantage Inc.)	1877	E	C/Key
85-03211	1002-1004 6 th Street	Dillin-Norris Building (vacant)	ca. 1890	NE	C
85-03210	1006 6 th Street	Sellers Novelty Store (vacant)	ca. 1885	NE	C
85-03224	1009 6 th Street	Unnamed Building (Parker Law Office)	ca. 1895	NE	C
85-03257	1010 6 th Street	Unnamed Building (Snack Time Restaurant)	ca. 1885	NE	C
85-03223	1011 6 th Street	Jack's Café (Tangles)	ca. 1895	NE	C
85-03222	1013 6 th Street	Smith & Bricker Building (Batman-Sayers Abstract Co.)	ca. 1900	E	C
85-01838	1014 6 th Street	City Drug Store (McFarland Eye Center)	ca. 1885	NE	C
85-03221	1015 6 th Street	Sanitary Meat Market (Nevada Chamber of Commerce)	ca. 1913	E	C/Key
85-01839	1017-1021 6 th Street	Schworm Building (Paperdolls)	ca. 1895	E	C/Key
85-01835	1018 6 th Street	Farmer's National Bank (Nevada Computer Center)	ca. 1920	E	C/Key
85-01844	1024 6 th Street	Union Block	1885	NE	C
85-01843	1026 6 th Street	Boyd & Childs Building-south section (Adventure Travel Agency)	1881	E	C/Key
85-03220	1025-1037 6 th Street	State Bank & Trust Company	1994	NE	NC
85-01842	1028 6 th Street	Boyd & Child Building-north section (Ben Franklin-south section)	1881	E	C/Key
85-03209	1038 6 th Street	Alderman Building-Palace Theater (Ben Franklin Store-north section)	1913	NE	C
85-01845	1102-1104 6 th Street	Briggs Block-W.L. Tipton & Son Drug Store (Traditional & Contemporary Ceramics)	ca. 1888	E	C/Key
85-01837	1105-1107 6 th Street	W.B. Patton Block (Lifetouch of Central Iowa & First Impressions)	1880	NE	C
85-01841	1108-1110 6 th Street	J. Ray Block (Allen L. Kockler Co.)	1884	NE	C
85-01846	1109-1111-1115 6 th Street	Ambrose & Sons Store (Subway & First Haley Realty)	ca. 1887	E	C/Key
85-01840	1114 6 th Street	Circle Theatre (Camelot Theater)	1928	E	C/Key
85-03219	1117-1119 6 th Street	I.O.O.F. Lodge #104 Building (vacant)	ca. 1877	NE	C
85-03208	1120 6 th Street	Tomlinson's Barber Shop (Flowers & More)	ca. 1910	NE	C

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Site Number	Address	Historic Name & (Common Name)	Date	Individual Eligible/ Not Eligible	Historic District- Contributing/ Non-Contributing
85-03218	1121 6 th Street	Tarman Banner Market (Karate for Kids)	ca. 1925	NE	NC
85-01848	1122 6 th Street	M.L. Borgen Furniture Factory & Store (S & M Appliance & TV)	ca. 1881	NE	C
85-03207	1124 6 th Street	Unnamed Building (McDaniel Insurance & Real Estate)	ca. 1915	NE	NC
85-03217	1125 6 th Street	Iowa Railway & Light Co. Office & Store (Midwest Insurance Consultants)	ca. 1925	NE	C
85-03206	1126 6 th Street	Unnamed Building (H & R Block)	ca. 1915	NE	NC
85-03205	1128 6 th Street	Unnamed Building (Edward Jones Investment)	ca. 1915	NE	NC
85-03216	1129 6 th Street	Unnamed Building (Rebarcak Family Chiropractic)	ca. 1919	NE	C
85-03204	1132 6 th Street	Iowa Railway & Light Corporation Bldg. (Varsity Cleaner)	ca. 1919	NE	NC
85-01847	1133 6 th Street	Nevada Evening Journal Building	ca. 1910	E	C/Key
85-01851	1136 6 th Street	Belknap Block (Jim Dandy Office Solutions)	1901	E	C/Key
85-03215	1137-1141 6 th Street	Peoples Savings Bank Building (Atwell Antiques & Hair Studio)	ca. 1905	E	C/Key
85-01849; 85-01850	1202-1210 6 th Street	Padellford Block-south & north sections (Golden Wok, Nevada Journal & Hair Design)	ca. 1893	E	C/Key
85-03203	1220 6 th Street	Unnamed Building (Nevada Economic Development Council)	ca. 1900	NE	Not in District
85-03251	904 7 th Street	Flickinger, Fred & Grace House	1919	E	Not in District
85-03248	1036 7 th Street	First Methodist Episcopal Church (Nevada United Methodist Church)	1931	NE	Not in District
85-03244	511 J Avenue	Representative Publishing Co. Building (Bappe Law Office & Bappe Apts.)	ca. 1925	E	Not in District
85-03258	513-521 J Avenue	Opera Hall (Miller & Loking Law Office)	ca. 1880	NE	Not in District
85-03227	617 K Avenue	Nevada Poultry Company (Audiozone Guitars & Drums)	ca. 1928	E	C/Key
85-03229	618 L Avenue	Bogie Inn (Upchurch Rentals)	1928	NE	C

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G. Geographical Data

The Central Business District Survey involved completion of an intensive level architectural and historical survey for 8 city blocks. The CBD survey area contained 69 primary buildings located in Blocks 2, 3, 12, 13, 16, and 17 of the Original Town Plat of Nevada and Blocks F and G of Stewart's Addition. The CBD Survey Area extends from M Avenue on the north to I Avenue on the south and from 5th Street on the west to 7th Street on the east.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

This Multiple Property Document Form (MPDF) "Architectural and Historical Resources of the Nevada Central Business District" was completed under the authority of the City of Nevada, Iowa and the direction of the Nevada Historic Preservation Commission. Funding was provided by the City of Nevada and a Certified Local Government Grant from the State Historical Society of Iowa. This MPDF serves as the final report for the Nevada Central Business District Study, the first in a series of neighborhood studies being completed by the Nevada Historic Preservation Commission in response to recommendations contained in "A Report on a Planning for Preservation Project for Nevada, Iowa" adopted in 1999 by the Nevada Historic Preservation Commission.

Marlys A. Svendsen with Svendsen Tyler, Inc. of Sarona, Wisconsin was retained by the City of Nevada to complete the CBD Survey. Svendsen served as principal for the project in the capacity of both historian and architectural historian. Svendsen holds a B.A. in history and political science from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Maxine Harms, member of the Nevada Historic Preservation Commission, served as project director coordinating work on the contract on behalf of the Commission and also serving as a volunteer researcher. Additional volunteers from the Commission and community working on various aspects of the project included Sue Atkinson, Janice Gammon (HPC chairperson), Teresa Haaland, Adrian Heintz, Bob Hobson, John Livingston, Paul Livingston, Paula Page, Phil Page, Tom Richards, and Linda Wright.

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Work on the CBD Survey was completed during an 11-month period that began in August 2001 and concluded in June 2002. A meeting was held with the Nevada HPC in August explaining the survey process, recruiting volunteers for completing black and white photography for the survey, planning the volunteer training session, and identifying individuals or historic collections that could prove valuable for the survey.

On October 9, 2001 Svendsen held a training session for volunteers and property owners interested in participating in researching buildings for the CBD Survey. Ten volunteers attended the 2-hour session. Volunteers selected individual buildings to research and Svendsen identified useful research techniques. Follow-up memoranda were circulated to volunteers and photocopies of the downtown portions of Sanborn maps for Nevada from 1886 through 1930 were placed in the Nevada Public Library for volunteers to consult.

Fieldwork on the survey extended from August through November 2001. In early September Phil Page photographed all of the buildings in the CBD Survey Area. Individual site numbers provided by the State Historical Society were assigned to each property and entered on photo log sheets. Iowa Site Inventory forms for previously surveyed properties located the CBD Survey Area were photocopied from the files of the State Historical Society of Iowa in Des Moines. For the most part, the Central Iowa Regional Association of Local Government's survey efforts completed between 1978 and 1980 generated these forms. The most valuable information contained in these forms were the nearly 25-year old photographs that helped document building changes.

Svendsen completed archival research at the State Historical Society Library in Des Moines, the University of Iowa Library Special Collections and Map Collections in Iowa City, and the Nevada Public Library. Research began with the compilation of a chain of ownership for each property based on Property Transfer Records obtained from the Story County Auditor's Office. This information was then cross-checked and compared with 20th century city directory entries and

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Sanborn fire insurance map records to confirm dates of construction. Research volunteers completed directory searches to determine businesses, their owners or proprietors and their competitors in some cases. Sanborn maps proved valuable in determining the longevity of buildings, their expansions or modifications through time, and the types of businesses occupying specific properties.

Other archival research included examination of county histories, biographical directories, obituaries, census records, historic photographs, newspaper records, and histories of local businesses. Vertical file information and scrapbooks of newspaper articles maintained at the Nevada Public Library proved especially useful.

In October and November Svendsen conducted field inspections of the properties in the CBD Survey Area. Based on these observations, she was able to make a preliminary determination that a portion of the CBD Survey Area qualified under Criterion C as a National Register historic district. By early December volunteers had completed research on approximately 45 properties Svendsen had identified in or near the potential district for further study. A computer-based Iowa Site Inventory Form (adopted by the Iowa State Historical Society in 1997 and revised in 1999) was then completed for each of the properties in the CBD Survey Area. Each form included two pages of standardized information for inclusion in the computerized database for Iowa's Statewide Inventory and one or more pages containing an architectural description, statement of significance and list of major bibliographical references. A sketch map for the CBD Survey Area identifying the location of each property and a 4"x6" black and white photograph were attached to each form.

Using the information gathered in the field and archival research, the development of the CBD was evaluated and individual properties assessed to determine both their eligibility for the National Register and their role as a contributing or non-contributing structure in a downtown district. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Evaluation, National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, National Register Bulletin 16A: How to*

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Complete the National Register Registration Form, National Register Bulletin 16B: How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form and Iowa's Survey Procedures and Guidelines Manual were used in these assessments.

Of critical importance in both individual and district assessments was the issue of building integrity. The assessments were based on knowledge of the existing condition of each of the properties and made with an understanding of building modification practices typically used in other parts of Iowa.

In April volunteers assembled multiple copies of the Iowa Site Inventory forms and copies of the draft report were circulated to members of the Nevada Historic Preservation Commission and reviewers familiar with the downtown. In June a final presentation on the CBD Survey efforts was presented for property owners, elected officials and other interested individuals.

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