

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Valley Junction Commercial Historic District

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 100-318 Fifth Street (even side 300 only) and cross streets [N/A] not for publication

city or town West Des Moines [N/A] vicinity

state Iowa code IA county Polk code 153 zip code 50265

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Signature of certifying official/Title
State Historical Society of Iowa

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	53	17
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____ buildings	
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____ sites	
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____ 2 _____ structures	
		_____ objects	
		53	19
		_____ Total	

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A _____

1 _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade/Specialty Store _____

Commerce/Trade/Specialty Store _____

Commerce/Trade/Financial Institution _____

Commerce/Trade/Restaurant _____

Commerce/Trade/Restaurant _____

Domestic/Multiple dwelling _____

Domestic/Multiple dwelling _____

Social/Civic _____

Domestic/Single dwelling _____

Social/Meeting Hall _____

Industry/Processing/Extraction/manufacturing facility _____

Recreation and Culture/monument/marker _____

Health Care/Clinic _____

Transportation/rail-related/train depot _____

Government/city hall _____

Street Furniture/object/gazebo _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian, Italianate _____

foundation Brick

Late Victorian, Queen Anne _____

walls Brick

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals, Classical Revival _____

roof Asphalt
other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce
Community Planning & Development

Architecture

Period of Significance

1893-1967

Significant Dates

1893
1938

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Cross, Charles C.
Crow, Barney

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: # Main Street Valley Junction

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 11.94

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>[1][5]</u>	<u>[4][4][0][6][0][0]</u>	<u>[4][1][3][4][3][2][0]</u>	2	<u>[1][5]</u>	<u>[4][4][0][6][0][0]</u>	<u>[4][1][3][4][3][4][0]</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	<u>[1][5]</u>	<u>[4][4][1][2][0][0]</u>	<u>[4][6][0][2][7][3][0]</u>	4	<u>[1][5]</u>	<u>[4][4][1][1][2][0]</u>	<u>[4][6][0][2][6][8][0]</u>
							<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title James E. Jacobsen

organization History Pays! Historic Preservation Consulting Firm date January 18, 2017

street & number 4411 Ingersoll Avenue telephone 515-274-3625

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50312-2415

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Refer to attached list

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

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

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6. Function or Use Continued:

Historic Functions:

Social: Meeting Hall
Recreation and Culture/Theater

7. Narrative Description:

Architectural Classification, Continued:

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals/Italian Renaissance
Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals/Tudor Revival
Modern Movements/Moderne
Modern Movements/Art Deco

Materials, Continued:

Foundation: Concrete
Walls: Wood/Weatherboard
Metal/Aluminum
Metal/Steel
Stucco
Concrete
Ceramic Tile
Terra Cotta
Stone
Roof: Synthetic
Rubber

Description:

The City of West Des Moines, originally Valley Junction, is the largest western suburban community that borders on the City of Des Moines. Des Moines is Iowa's capitol city, and is situated just south of center in the state. West Des Moines was buffered from Des Moines by the presence of the flood-prone Walnut Creek bottoms and for that and other reasons failed to be annexed by the larger city. West Des Moines enjoyed the proximity of fairly flat topography to the west and north and this factor enabled it to expand, particularly after World War II. As Valley Junction the suburb's original downtown and focal point, that historical name and location continues to represent and interpret the origins of its successor city.

The downtown is proximate to the Raccoon River which flows eastward just south. Railroad tracks also border the district along its south end. The southward open area between Railroad Street and the river is both a floodplain as well as the former site of the substantial rail yards and shops that spurred the town's founding. This area is rapidly being redeveloped for residential, recreational and commercial/industrial uses.

The Valley Junction downtown is a tightly arranged linear commercial district, three blocks in length with short extensions along two cross-streets. As a historic district, this one is very much self-defining, being almost completely composed of brick business buildings and the district is not simply linear, being oriented along the north-south running Fifth Street, but it is thin, being almost completely confined to the half-blocks that are adjacent to that main street. Cross streets, Maple and Elm, are commercially built up in proximity to the main north/south commercial

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street. District buildings are contiguous save for four alleyways that are roughly centered in each of the four principal half blocks. These link back block parking areas and provide supplemental artistic and special events spaces. Building setbacks are uniform, being set a dozen feet back from street curbs. There are scattered frontage trees but these are small in scale. Ornamental planters are also small in scale and visually unobtrusive. A south end commemorative arch is the gateway to the district, a function that is underscored by the northward one-way traffic flow on Fifth Street. Most store buildings have lower level rear additions but by and large most buildings do not extend the full length of their lots and the city has acquired these open spaces for parking. Separate secondary buildings are also few in number.



Figures 1, 1a: District location (black rectangle, left) and district boundary (Iowa Geographic Map Server, 2016, annotated)

Fifth Street is the spine of the historic downtown and commercial building infill the east halves of Blocks 5 and 10 and 19 to the west, and the west halves of Blocks 4 and 5 to the east. Lots are 50 feet in width and of varied depths depending on the block (85 to 145 feet). The southern most blocks (4 and 5) contain 10 lots while nine lots are standard further north. Commercial buildings tended to closely adhere to the lots or half lots so single storefront buildings predominated. Block 4, the east side of Fifth Street in the 100 block is just 8 lots long due to the presence of a former railroad depot property that intruded into the plat at its south end. Thus the lengths of block by block district streetscapes vary across in length.

Absent the expected courthouse despite the scale of the commercial buildings (both horizontally and vertically) this district is a non-county seat downtown that thrived, never burned, and rebuilt and expanded itself continually, right up to recent times. Built up too late for pressed tin cornices, the dominant commercial architectural

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language of the district is defined by corbelled brick cornices, parapet-level ornamental blank recessed panels, panel and pilaster facade combinations and the use of a limited though varied range of brick colors. The earlier buildings were clearly designed and built by the same talents based on the rhyme of the building fronts.

The other visually dominant exceptional presence is that of very substantial two and three story blocks, some notable fraternal and patriotic edifices, three substantial bank buildings, and one combination hotel/theater building and a 1953 replacement city hall/fire station. A good number of larger business blocks contain two or more storefronts. As is the case with most downtowns, corner lots are the locations for the largest and or most elaborate commercial designs. Valley Junction's downtown delivers on this tradition and as one ventures northward, corner locations were opportunities to express later-date modern styles, if only in a single-story massing.

Entering the district at its south end, single-story store buildings are dominant, particularly to the east side of the street. Most narrow two-story buildings have rear stair access but blocks share a front stair entrance. A limited range of facade brick colors is a key distinguishing visual factor and denotes increment blocks that are of uniform design apart from brick color (104-106, 112-114, 201-203, 208-210, 209-211 Fifth Street). This factor would likely be even more noticeable if some buildings had not been painted. The main brick color palate includes reddish, blonde, golden, gray, red-purple and a dark brown-black hues. Fifth Street veneer colors tend to vary from secondary facades on side streets. The best examples are 143-145 Fifth Street (blonde-gold contrast) and 136 Fifth Street (gray-red contrast).

The heart of the district is at Fifth and Maple streets. This intersection contains the three-story Wegener Block (143-145 Fifth Street) and its movie theater (the marquee survives) and the Raaz bank block (201-03 Fifth Street). A long string of ornamented two-story store buildings infills the west side of the 100 or south block and the original city hall/fire station building (137 Fifth Street) adjoins the Wegener Block to the south. The north side of Maple Street, to the east is the one cross-street example where two-story store buildings cluster.

North of Maple Street on Fifth Street the visual effect is more modern, which is to say inter-war in feeling. The best district Moderne/Art Deco examples book-end the west side of the 200 block (200, 234) and single-story storefronts are dominant on the north side of Maple Street to the west and its south side to the east. They pepper the east and west sides of the 200 block, to the south to the west and to the north to the east. Two east side two-story buildings have post-World II facades (205, 207 Fifth Street), two bank buildings have Classical Revival style facades (228, 219 Fifth Street) and the American Legion Building has a triple-bay stone Moderne style design (217 Fifth Street). Elm Street store buildings are all single-story later designs. Finally only the south two-thirds of the west side of the 300 block consists of Elm Street store buildings, the 1953 city hall/fire station building (318 Fifth Street) and two historic residences one of which (312 Fifth Street) was converted for commercial use within the district period of significance.

Other buildings of interest are the downtown's only historic service station (200 Fourth Street) and its largest and best preserved automotive garage (300 Fourth Street).

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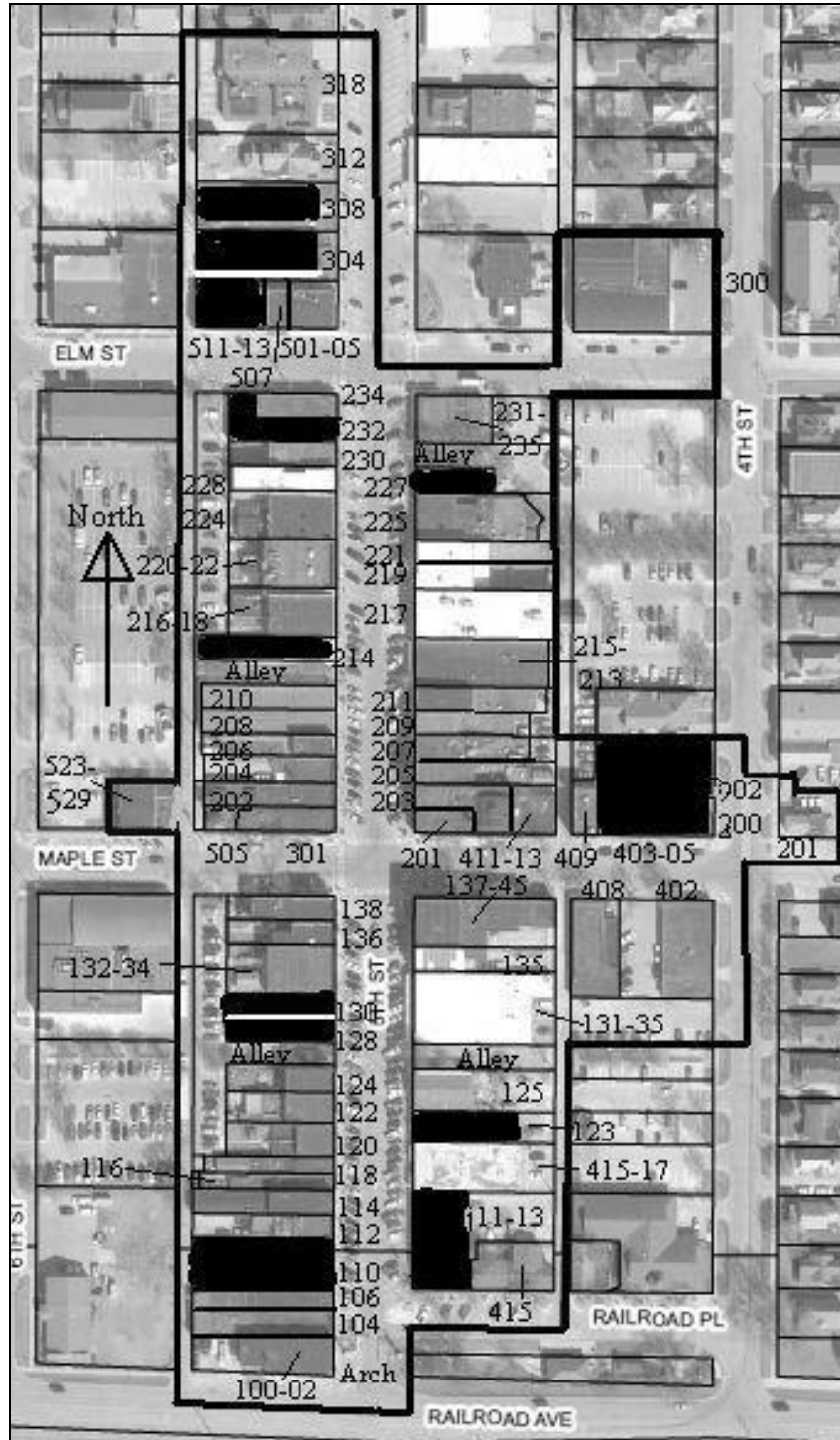


Figure 2: District boundary with contributing and non-contributing buildings
(black infill, the arch is a non-contributing structure)
(City of West Des Moines, 1916, annotated)

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The district buildings trace each period of district growth with numerous good examples of each period of growth. Still modernization efforts made on older buildings within the district period of significance also visually interpret those same periods of growth. A notable absence is almost any ornamental storefront cast ironwork. While some of this material is simply not visible little of these materials are seen in historic images. Clear span storefront bays are readily covered by a beam and several beam and rosette examples are to be found (100-02, 106, 136 and 209 Fifth Street). Round steel columns flanking entrances are more commonplace. Steel plates support many transom/storefront caps. Storefronts largely represent 1950s+ installations of aluminum framed systems with covering of transom levels for use as signage space. More recent Main Street related storefronts, employing a larger scale framing in wood or steel and commonly painted black, also account for numerous frontages. Newer buildings post-dating the district period of significance number just three; 110 (1970), 232 (1988) and 308 (210) Fifth Street.¹

Most of the more substantial buildings have full basements, none of which have been determined to be of limestone construction, brick being the material of choice. The single-storefront buildings are clear span structures as are the corresponding sections of the larger blocks.

Building Ages and Styles:

The oldest buildings number 19 (100-02, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122, 130, 137, 201, 203, 205 (altered), 206, 207, 209, 214, 216-18, 221, 304 (residence) Fifth Street; 409 Maple Street-this count includes an engulfed residence at 304 Fifth, built in 1900) and date to 1893-1901. Six of these are double storefronts, four of which occur in two-story plans. Ten are two-story buildings. Unpainted brick exteriors are of a reddish, dark brown, purplish and a blonde color range. There are three clusters of heightened construction activity, these being 1893-94 (5 buildings), 1896-98 (6 buildings) and 1900-01 (8 buildings). What typifies the majority of these buildings is the use of a recessed upper wall panel or panels that are framed by pilasters and corbelled brick lines below and above. The most ornate example is 114 Fifth Street, built in a purplish brick in 1900. Also common is the use of multiple rectangular recessed plain brick panels across the parapet base. Highly ornamented brick parapet fronts substitute for the absence of any pressed metal cornices. A typical two-story single storefront example is 219 Fifth Street which is significant for its being the first of two bank buildings to jump northward, going up between frame residences close to Elm Street. A second bank building (230 Fifth Street, completely remodeled in 1920) did the same on the opposite side of Fifth Street in 1901. Four examples might loosely be classed as Italianate style designs (120, 201, 216-18 Fifth Street and 409 Maple Street). Queen Anne examples are 100-02 and 206 Fifth Street, both of which have lost their upper bay windows. Classical Revival style examples are 137 and 203 Fifth Street. The latter two examples employ a quoin effect and the 137 and 203 both employ a zigzag belt course as a parapet base. The 203 Fifth Street example is the earliest example of a near-corner design that wraps around a pre-existing building to present facades onto two streets. Pediments are rare occurrences in the district but 137 Fifth, the city hall, has a square-cut date stone as does 203 Fifth Street. The Odd Fellows block has a name stone centered in its parapet front. The wonder of these earliest buildings was that their construction coincided with a national depression.

¹ This series accounts for 65 primary buildings, including the three newer ones. There is one moved in building (depot) excluded and five secondary buildings also excluded.

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It would be expected that the years 1902-09 were substantial up-building years for the downtown but just 7 surviving buildings (104, 112, 124, 128, 132-34, 136, 224-26 Fifth Street) date to those final major years of local railroad shops and yards improvements. All but one of these buildings were built mostly on the north end the west side of the 100 block. All of the buildings were built 1904-07, nicely correlating with the final major railroad relocations and investments. All but one of these buildings was two story and all but one (132-34 Fifth which was a triple storefront) were single storefronts. All had purplish or dark brown colored brickwork. All employed a combination of upper wall recessed panels with flanking pilasters and elaborate brick parapets and cornices. Two examples are late Queen Anne in style and have one or two bays set into single-plane upper brick fronts (132-34, 136 Fifth Street). The exception within this group was the two-story double storefront block that was built in 1905 at 224-26 Fifth. Its broad upper facade was a plane wall plane, a modern hint, with a broad parapet that was ornamented with teardrop-like shallow elongated brackets.

With the entry of European powers into the Great War, architectural prosperity in this country boomed and most downtowns reflect an increase in commercial construction. Six buildings (106, 138, 143-45, 204, 211, 312 Fifth Street, the last listed being a former residence) date to 1911-15 and all but one date to 1913-15. Three buildings represented the continuing trend of building up the west side of the 100 block, with two of the three being on the north end of that block. Brick colors were blonde, light and dark brown or purple. Two buildings were simply duplicates and doublings of earlier ones. 106 Fifth was a single-story garage front. 211 Fifth was two stories high with inset wall/window panels and an ornate parapet, a distinction being a shallow square cut pediment. 204 Fifth was the only single-story double storefront built to date, a precursor of the modern store type. Finally the districts first modern commercial design, a Classical Revival style two-story corner building was built at 143-45 Fifth. It was so modern that the local newspaper actually castigated its appearance. Then immediately across the street east arose the district's most substantial edifice, the three-story Wegener block. It combined a hotel and movie house and its upper ornament generally reprised the district template of recessed wall/window panels but with more elaborate brick tracery and belt courses. It too is perhaps best classed as Classical Revival in its style.

Commercial district construction between the world wars was bi-nodal with 9 buildings (202, 219, 220-22, 228, 230 (altered) Fifth Street, 501-07, 509-13 Elm Street, 201, 300 Fourth Street) going up on the heels of the war, 1919-27. Two of these were the warring north-end banks, built or re-built facing each other at 219 and 228 Fifth Street. Both two-story buildings employed Classical Revival designs, the former in blazing white terra cotta, the latter in white ceramic brick. The third example, another single-story storefront (230 Fifth) was later eclipsed by a 1964 bank extension. The final example, an auto garage (300 Fourth Street) was built to the east of the downtown in 1923. The other five examples date from 1924-27. Each is notable in its own right. The service station at 201 Fourth Street was built in 1927 and is a rare surviving example of a simple and early type. 202 Fifth was the first single-story modern store design with an unelaborated upper front laid up using polychrome brick. 220-222 Fifth was the district's second three-story edifice in the form of the Ashworth Masonic Hall. Its raised attic or hall level wasn't a true third floor and at any rate it was lost in the rebuilding after a 1946 fire. It was designed in the Renaissance Revival style. Its construction locked in the evolving architectural dominance of the 200 block of Fifth and its west side in particular. The other two examples (501-05-07 and 509-11-13 Elm Street) were purely modern, being in the form of single-story multi-storefront. Even the corner or east end building ignored Fifth Street and the six storefronts all fronted onto Elm Street, forming what was at the time the northern terminus of the downtown. The west section was built almost immediately after the east one, ca.1924-25.

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The second inter-war era for construction was 1932-42 and 7 buildings (111-13, 123-25, 225, 234 Fifth Street; 403-05 (altered), 408, 411-13 Maple Street) date to this period. Starting in 1937 infill buildings were built on the east side of the 100 block of Fifth Street. 123 Fifth is a single story double storefront that date to ca.1937 (its facade is covered over). 111-13 Fifth was an industrial amalgam located at the south end of the district. 408 Maple was a concrete block meat locker building (1938). Most prominent and modern Vandenburg's Art Deco style drug store (234 Fifth, 1939) with its prominent corner location on Elm Street. 225 Fifth was an Art Deco style medical clinic, the first building type in the district. It had structural glass window infill and curved entry walls, all set into a low-profile design with no parapet cap at all. A single-story double storefront at 411-13 Maple (1937) represented a conversion of a frame warehouse to commercial use on a developing cross-street. 111 Fifth was the last to be built of this group, a fire forcing the need to rebuild.

The final period of district up-building followed World War II, 1946-57 with the construction of 14 new buildings (202 Fourth (altered), 115-17, 127, 131-35, 200, 208, 210, 213-15, 217, 227, 233-35, 318 Fifth Street; 400-02, 513-21 Maple Street). Like the wartime buildings these tended to be of concrete block construction due to building materials restrictions. Given that the west side of Fifth Street was by this time substantially built up, all but 2 of these new buildings were built on the east side of Fifth Street. Those on the 100 block replaced frame buildings while those in the 200 replaced frame store buildings or houses. Two new buildings represented the continuing commercialization of Maple Street, those one was a replacement for a burned building. The pace of construction was low level yet constant with just about a new building going up each year. All but three of these buildings were low-profile multiple storefront modern designs mostly without parapets. The two exceptions to the latter point were a chain store at 213-15 and 131-35 Fifth Street. Brick colors were red or blonde. Several examples were incremental expansions, being built in iterations and the two most notable ones combined angled individual storefronts with triple-storefronts (111 built in 1942 and doubled with 113 in 1946, 131-35 and 233-35 Fifth Street). Two industrial buildings were of concrete block construction and were built on the lower east side of Fifth or on Maple Street west of the downtown (127 Fifth and 513-21 Maple streets). Two other buildings were notable. The new city hall/library/fire station (318 Fifth Street) kept the growing's suburb's administrative heart downtown but had to be built in the 300 bloc. It embodied a striking Modern design with an angled front wall. Seward's Pharmacy (200 Fifth Street, 1946) was a Moderne design with a curved corner wall and an entry with aluminum canopy and storefront. This was the final key corner location to be built up, replacing a landmark frame building. It nicely book-ended Vandenburg's Art Deco pharmacy just across the street to the south. It replaced a frame store building that fronted east on to Fifth and it retained that street address in contrast to its counterpart at 501 Elm Street. Moderne style examples are 200, 225 and 234 Fifth Street. Modern designs are 230 and 318 Fifth Street.

District Methodology, Boundary and Evaluation Standards:

This application utilized a complete review of available local newspapers, 1893-1920, 1939-41, 1943-65 along with other sources. A key resource was a composite panorama of 1968 downtown photographs that enabled a precise analysis of building integrity. Another critically useful database was a directory of all district businesses, 1893-1968. This database documented nearly 1,100 district businesses. The list used a WORD table format that was sortable by business name, type of business, and first and last dates in operation. The address for each business was also documented and this made it possible to link businesses with specific buildings. An invaluable resource was property

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ownership, using Transfer Book indexing entries. The buildings in the district had a very high correlation with property ownership. This source was critical in matching newspaper references to specific lots and buildings.

The goal was to define a concise and contiguous commercial district that included buildings built for commercial use as well as those residences that had been visibly converted for that same use within the district period of significance. Just two residences not yet so converted were included so as to also include the 1953 City Hall building, deemed to be integrally significant to the district. It was not possible to also include the 1965 post office located a block further north.

A contributing building had to be visible or background integrity had to be established. Buildings had to retain the same massing attained during the period of significance. Storefronts had to have been in place as of 1966 or had to have been rehabilitated and reopened using the lines of the 1966 storefront. General district weak points are upper facade windows and transom voids. A number of buildings have single-light window infill and many transoms remain covered and used for signage but neither condition by itself rendered a building non-contributing.

Summary of Non-Contributing Building Evaluations

Address	Deficiency	Reversibility
106 Fifth Street	Newer oversized overhead door in storefront	yes
110 Fifth Street	New construction	no
111-113 Fifth Street	Fenestration alterations since 1967	?
123-35 Fifth Street	Complete vertical board covering of storefront	No, overhead garage door as of 1973
128 Fifth Street	Loss of upper story, new storefront	no
130 Fifth Street	Added story and upper windows behind boomtown front	no
214 Fifth Street	New storefront	maybe
227 Fifth Street	New storefront	no
232 Fifth Street	New construction	no
304 Fifth Street	Non-commercial residence as of 1967, porch then enclosed with band of windows	yes
308 Fifth Street	New construction replaced residence	no
509-13 Elm Street	Metal and wood facade covering	yes
208 Fourth Street, 403-05 Maple Street	Conversion of wood storage shed into apartments, changes in fenestration, change of south warehouses into storefronts-counts as two buildings	no

Just two early buildings (205, 207 Fifth Street) had their upper facades modernized completely during the 1950s but both are deemed to be contributing given that these transformations interpret changing commercial architectural and marketing tastes and were done within the period of significance. 230 Fifth Street was re-fronted as a modern style bank addition in 1964 and similarly interprets successful bank growth and is contributing. Four buildings have the equivalent of slipcovers on portions of their buildings. Two of these involve simple metal or wood claddings on their oversized parapet fronts (131-35 and 213 Fifth Street). The bank building at 219 Fifth Street has an

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awning over its parapet front but the original survives beneath it. 523-29 Maple Street is a concrete block multi-storefront building that has wood cladding over its storefront.

The entire east side of the 300 block of Fifth Street was excluded from the district due to new construction or post-1967 residential commercial construction. The auto garage at 300 Fourth Street, to the east of that half block was excluded due to extensive changes in fenestration and the presence of intervening open space relative to the district. A railroad era boarding house at 409 Railroad was excluded due to fenestration and storefront alterations. These are deemed to be reversible changes however. The relocated railroad passenger depot at 415 Railroad Street was included and deemed to be contributing only on historical grounds despite the fact that its present location causes confusion as to where the actual depot was located historically. A multi-storefront single story building at 529 Elm Street was excluded due to a new front and altered fenestration.

District Historical Integrity Evaluation:

The district retains a good representation of all seven aspects of historical integrity. Substantive alterations entail upper level windows, covered transoms and storefront alterations. Two buildings have smaller window sash inserted into a reduced opening but the openings remain discernible (100-02 and 122 Fifth Street). One building (409 Maple Street) has smaller window sash set within a blocked down window opening (due to lowered ceiling). One building has an unframed single-light plastic insert set into the original opening (112 Fifth Street). Two buildings have added upper level windows (130 Fifth Street and 400 4th Street). All of these changes are reversible and no original windows, apart from some storefronts frames and glass, survive. Storefronts generally retain their original dimensions and almost all of these retain original or early window/door relationships. Changes entail added brick kick plates, covered transoms, and replacement materials. A faux Victorian color palette with fixed awnings dominates the district as would be expected in a participating Main Street downtown. There are a few slip screens that cover entire storefronts (519-25 Maple Street, 507 Elm Street and 123-25 Fifth Street). The first is a known concrete block front while the others are known former garages so their historic storefronts are undetermined. Almost all transoms are covered but many likely survive intact.

Integrity of location is vested in its relationship to the vacated railroad grounds to the south, its market proximity to Des Moines and its now protected proximity to its floodplain. The commercial core remains concentrated within the district. The commercial function of the district strongly contrasts today with the more traditional retail and service offerings of nearby strip-malls and arterial commercial locations.

Integrity of design is measured by its retention of its relatively full range of historic commercial architecture and its compelling presence of substantial brick store buildings. It is further attested to by the dominance of localized facade ornamentation, brick colors and post-war storefronts. Facades necessarily bear the burden of this integrity test and these are compromised by upper level window size reduction, window infill, reflective glass, or storefront replacements. A few slip screens cover storefronts but mostly occur on the transom level of storefronts. Parapets are almost uniformly intact given that they were of corbelled brick originally. The vast majority of district buildings are deemed to be contributing on the basis of their intact ornamental brick work, fenestration pattern, and sympathetic storefront lines that date to within the period of significance.

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Integrity of setting is conveyed by a nearly intact massing of brick commercial buildings largely oriented to its principal thoroughfare. Apart from added parking and alleyways to those parking areas to the east and west, the downtown remains distinctly different from its residential surroundings. Streetscapes are open and visible with just a handful of small-scale trees in the sidewalks. Substantial and/or more ornate corner buildings survive and frame each block front and the key intersections. Continued commercial use with no empty storefronts maintains the historical function of the district.

Integrity of workmanship is best expressed by the exterior brickwork of the upper building facades and in the postwar storefronts. The distinctive district brickwork specialty is the use of rows of rectangular recessed brick panels, set beneath the parapet level, or upper storefront panels that frame the windows, often in combination with end wall pilasters. Brick color also plays a key role in building design and workmanship with virtually every major building deviating from the normative red brick color to show off. Art Deco and moderne styles employ curved walls, structural glass some curved walls and these key attributes survive. Known interior features include vaults and pressed tin ceilings.

Integrity of feeling is reflected in the architectural evolution that continues to express how the downtown expanded and how its sub-sectors had their own specializations. The commercial vitality of the district injects daily life and activity into the downtown as do the numerous special events.

Integrity of association is vested in the certainty that historical figures, if resurrected, could readily locate the downtown and the specific buildings with which they were associated back in time. It is also rooted in the very survival of the original city name, "Valley Junction" which has always retained its currency as a reference point to this downtown.

Future Plans For The District:

This application coincides with the development of a new master plan for West Des Moines as well as the development of design controls or recommendations for signage. It is also being developed with an eye towards fostering community appreciation for the history of the city's original downtown. It is hoped that this informed and heightened historical awareness will translate into a bolstered public participation in the local Main Street program. As for future plans, it remains the intention of the local Main Street to continue to foster and promote a diverse and financially successful retail and services function that is a continuation of the downtown's historic story.

Building Descriptions, Evaluations and Histories:

201 Fourth Street, Spear's Service Station, 1925:

Evaluation: Contributing building and a rare surviving example of this property type within or near the district.

Description: This utilitarian filling station consists of a brick office/canopy with a hip roof (14 feet by 22 feet) that fronts west onto 4th Street, and tile grease house

History:

The E. L. Royer Construction Company gained ownership of this lot in early 1925 and built this service station in association with the Standard Oil Company, matching a station on 5th Street. This was the town's second Standard station (*Express*, February

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(15 feet by 25 feet) that has parapet walls on three sides, an overhead door on the south end and metal industrial windows on the east wall. A poor photo from 1954 shows the brickwork painted white.

Alterations: The original building gained a 15 feet by 27 feet concrete block addition prior to 1937. The service area has been enclosed but not so as to obscure the original design.

202 Fourth Street, Iltis Lumberyard Lumber Shed, 1953:

Evaluation: Non-contributing due to the enclosure of sidewalls and residing. This is counted as two buildings.

Description: Two-story former open-sided lumber shed

Alterations: Converted into apartments recently.

19, 1955 with 50-year old reprint). J. Floyd Spear was the proprietor by 1927 through 1954 (*Express*, April 20, 1954). Sammon's Standard Service (1960) and Bob's Standard Service (1965) followed and it was vacant as of 1968.

History: See 403-05 Maple Street.

300 Fourth Street, Valley Auto Company/Service, 1923:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building within the district. The south windows retain their transoms and some windows, while shortened, have recessed brick panels that show the original window void.

Description: This is a double-vaulted roof brick and concrete block garage building that measures 100 feet by 100 feet. It has pedimented east/west end walls. The north addition is concrete block. The core building was likely veneered with a wire-cut polychrome brick, now painted

Alterations: Then north addition is metal clad on its north wall and west windows have been infilled. The 1937 Sanborn shows the original building, the 1941 map shows a 1939 north addition on the west half of Lot 8 along with a concrete block extension to the northwest. The plan was squared off in 1939. The building was painted after 1947.

History:

Elmer D. Brunn (1876-1957) and William Stewart (1869-?) were railroad engineers who founded the Valley Auto Company in 1916 and built an initial garage at 333 Fifth (*The American Contractor*, March 18, 1916). The company acquired the Olmstead & Grossup garage in 1918 (*Express*, August 18, 1918). They expanded to this site in 1923 and built this building and remained here until 1968. Contractor Glenn McAvoy built a 50 feet by 65 feet addition on Lot 8 to the north that displaced a bungalow in 1939. The core building at that time was 60 feet by 100 feet (*Express*, December 7, 1939). A filling station first occupied the east part of the lot and a post-1937-this area remains open. Ray D. Spencer (1889-1955) purchased the company in 1937.

100-101 Fifth Street, steel gateway, new:

Evaluation: Non-contributing due to its recent vintage and non-historical nature.

Description: Commemorative steel gateway arch on brick piers.

Alterations: Not applicable

History: Not applicable

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100-02 Fifth Street-Seyfert Block/St. Joe Hotel, 1900:

Evaluation: Contributing building and a prominent gate-way building despite the loss of bays.

Description: This is a late Queen Anne style two-story painted brick hotel with double front stores. Ornament includes bracketed parapet base on two fronts, projecting south chimney, sealed oriel windows both floors south wall, steel beam and brick columns in the storefront. A two-story brick rear wing (30 feet by 24 feet) is original or a pre-1920 addition. The core measures 48 feet by 105 feet. The upstairs housed 18 sleeping rooms until a 1984 fire gutted that level and five apartments replaced them.

Alterations: Changes are the loss of four bay windows on south upper wall and angled corner, east wall, enclosed corner entry and upper windows replaced and shortened (the upper window change is the only major change post-1968). Permits note remodels in 1979, 1985. The present storefront and removal of the bay windows is associated with the post office occupancy. A new south wood stairway is now being built.

History:

Harry L. Seyfert built the core building in 1900 (*Express*, February 23, April 27, 1900). Thurlow Barr bought it in September 1940 and made it a rooming house (*Express*, January 1, 1942). The St. Joe Hotel was briefly the Rocket Hotel by 1950 and the Tamarack Hotel by 1955. The *Leader Magazine* was a tenant 1955-60 and a novel (Tom Duncan's Gus The Great) they published featured the building and resulted in a local renaming of the block. The post office relocated here and the present building exterior is the remodeled building altered for that purpose, mail services there dating from mid-February 1952. The changes included a street widening that allowed for head-in parking (*Express*, May 21, 1951; February 24, 1952). The Tamarack Apartments (8 units) replaced the hotel by 1968. Other businesses included billiard halls, restaurants, beverage companies and most notably the post office, 1955-63. Two key clubs, the El Rio and Warriors were here 1940-49.



Figure 3: 1904 view 100-102 Fifth Street, looking northwest, interurban station at lower right (Valley Junction *Express*, September 16, 1904)

104 Fifth Street, Harry L. Seyfert Building, 1904:

Evaluation: This building is counted separately due to History:

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its retention of its storefront. It is a contributing building.

Description:

This is a single-story red brick storefront (core measures 19 feet by 96 feet). The lower range of the boomtown front is ornamented with three recessed rectangular panels set horizontally. The parapet base is corbelled outward. The right-hand angled entry and storefront predate World War II. The interior retains a plaster ceiling above a drop ceiling.

Alterations: The 1920 Sanborn shows a concrete floor, no basement and buried gas tanks. Permits indicate remodelings in 1970 and 1976. A frame rear garage addition extends to the alley, covers both 104-06 Fifth.

106 Fifth Street, Freel Auto Service Garage, 1915:

Evaluation: This building is counted separately despite its history of shared function and ownership and the fact that this addition transformed the whole into a garage/factory. It is a non-contributing building because of the modern garage door alteration.

Description: This is a single-story red brick storefront (core measures 19 feet by 96 feet). The upper facade treatment largely matches that of 104 Fifth save to the slightly taller recessed panels and the absence of a parapet base treatment. This storefront retains its steel beam with rosettes but the storefront with its modern garage door replacement is post-1968. The brick color also matches. The rear addition is of tile construction.

Alterations: This addition also extended the plan of 104 Fifth to the south and the two buildings were opened up internally. Permits show remodelings of systems in 1972-76.

Harry L. Seyfert owned this and the lot north until 1919 and built this building to house his pool hall. Hayes barber shop (1908+) (*Express*, March 16, October 5, 1905). E. B. Rigler was the contractor. With the completion of 106 Seyfert's Auto Co. (1915-19), Freel Auto Service (1920-24), Clegg Garage (1929), Valley Tire & Battery (1932), Western Silo Mfg. (1937-65) and one of the first antique stores, Americana Gift Bazaar (1968). Despite its name Western Silo made and sold building kits for farm out buildings and garages in particular.

History:

Harry L. Seyfert built an addition to 104 Fifth in April 1915 and it housed his automobile company until the sale of the lot (*Express* April 22, 1915). Carey Freel acquired the property in late March 1919 and to house his new auto that sold Chevrolet automobiles.

Described as a double garage it was functionally an addition to 104 Fifth to the south and wrapped around that shorter building on the west end. After this building was finished it shared tenants with 104 Fifth (*Des Moines Western World*, November 27, 1919; *Express*, March 29 1919).

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Figure 4: 104-06 Fifth Street showing a pre-fabricated building example at the 110 Fifth Street location, 1957
(West Des Moines *Express*, June 13, 1957)

110 Fifth Street, Antiques Mall, 1957, 1970:

Evaluation: Non-contributing due to age.

Description: This single story shed roof double front frame building is a metal wall cladding of what was an open storage shed built by the Western Silo Co.

Alterations: This open shed was simply walled in with a stud wall and metal panel cover. The unified rear addition, covered with board & batten and painted purple, covers the backs of 104-110 Fifth.

History:

The two-story gable front frame Adams Hotel first and long occupied this lot from 1893 until as late as 1920. It likely burned. Western Silo Co built an open sided storage lot.

111-13 Fifth Street, Tuttle Coal Company, 1945, 1959, 1984:

Evaluation: Non-contributing due to alterations.

Description: Historic buildings are subsumed within this complex but the current concrete block facade is of recent coinage. The core plan measures 40 feet by 98 feet. The rear portions of the buildings have been clad in vertical boards further obscuring historic features.

Alterations: Permits note the south end warehouse construction (111, dated October 13 1959), a general remodeling 1974, a 40 feet by 16 feet by 20 feet and 120 feet addition (dated June 17, 1975), a pitched roof (1984), and electrical work (1986).

History:

Clyde Tuttle built a 36 feet by 64 feet concrete block addition north of his business at 111 Fifth in the fall of 1945 (*Express*, September 13, 1945). This concrete block factory was built ca.1943 to house a concrete block factory, being enlarged to the south in late 1959. Tuttle Coal Co. was the occupant 1932-45 (owner as of 1943), followed by Hoy's paint store (1947), Building Products Company, a concrete firm, which built the south portion (1959) was here 1950-65 followed by Rhiner's Plumbing and Heating (owner as of late 1960, 1968) (*Express*, January 1, 1948).

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Figure 5: Former state liquor store at left, 111-113 Fifth at right, ca. 1974 image looking east

112 Fifth Street, Ashworth Building, 1907:

Evaluation: The window change is apparent and the storefront is faux historic, but the scale and brickwork make this a marginally contributing building.

Description: This is a two story dark brown brick single storefront with a core that measures 25 feet by 42 feet. A rear addition (pre-1920), also two stories, adds 40 feet in depth. The upper facade features unusual vertical recessed brick panels on either side of the two second story windows. Two rectangular panels define the parapet base and are in line with the two lower window-panel combinations. There is south wall fenestration. The storefront retains only its hidden steel beam.

Alterations: Monolithic glass has replaced the 2/2 windows. The last historic storefront had a centered angled recessed entry, two-tone tile covering and higher tavern side windows. A recent garage, deck and stair system are at the back of the building.

Permits include a bathroom addition (1959), an aluminum canopy (1962, gone), systems upgrades 1966, 1971, 1976-78.

History:

The Ashworth brothers built two-story on the Ed Adams site in 1905 (*Express*, October 26, 1905). The new saloon had tile floor 196 incandescent lights, Budweiser sign (*Express*, January 25, 1906). Dated to 1915, the Ashworth brothers acquired the half lot in April 1906 and it appears that this building replaced its frame predecessor in the fall of 1907 (*Express*, September 26, 1907). Tenants were Emahiser's Barber Shop, Drexel Cafe (1917-19), Goode's Cafe (1929), Frank's Place (1937-45), Benny's & Jean's (1950), Harmony Tavern (1955-66), Dooley's (1971-68+).

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114 Fifth Street, Callibreath Building, 1899:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This two-story purple-red brick single storefront closely mimics the ornamentation of 112 Fifth and matches the brick color on 104-106. As with 112, pilasters formed by the use of recessed panels divide the three upper windows into half-bays and very narrow vertical recessed panels flank each window opening. Above, three recessed panels align with the half-bays and form the parapet base. The two-story core measures 25 feet by 67 feet while a one story rear addition (pre-1920) adds 78 feet to the plan and is covered with metal cladding and block at its west garage end. The storefront pre-dates 1968 and has a left-hand upstairs entry. The transom is covered but intact structural elements include round a steel column and probable transom beams and glass.

Alterations: Bodenstern Mfg. did three months of remodeling work when it first occupied the building in 1948. It received a permit for \$1,000 in repairs (*Express*, August 26, 1954). The 1920 Sanborn shows a veneered rear wing. Wood paneled doors have replaced aluminum doors present as of 1968. Upper 1/1 windows have been replaced with metal 1/1 windows.

115-17 Fifth Street, Iowa State Liquor Store, 1957:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building, being one of a number of early single-story commercial buildings built in the district.

Description: This is a later single-story double storefront veneered in a blonde-gold colored brick. The core measures 50 feet by 109 feet. The storefronts are mirror imaged with book end entrances, intervening elevated rectangular windows and a substantial blank wall segment. Both storefronts now have fixed awnings.

Alterations: The existing storefront plan likely dates to October 1959 (permit). Permits note electrical work in 1966 and 1978. The double storefront appears to have been re-fronted.

History:

The Ashworth Brothers acquired this half lot in late 1899 and put a new front on the building (*Express*, January 5, 1899). Two years later Contractor J. F. Martin removed the rear buildings and built a brick veneer bowling alley addition. However the present rear addition is of concrete block construction (*Express*, September 27 October 4 16, 1901). Early tenants were Williams & Griffis Restaurant (1899), Walker & Vandenburg Restaurant, Ed Adams pool hall, followed by Johnston's Restaurant (1910), Leland Cafe (1919-22), Valley *Express* (rear, 1917-19), Valley Furniture Exchange, and upstairs the Des Moines Box Mfg. Co (1922-29, known as Factory B after a larger plant was built in Des Moines). Bodenstern Mfg. Co, a metal fabricator, was established in early May 1946 and occupied the ground floor (*Express*, January 9, 1947; July 15, 1948).

History:

Clyde Tuttle built this concrete block building to house the Iowa State Liquor Store #44 which occupied it as of 1957-68. The building was later divided into two storefronts.

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116 Fifth Street, Boyd's Building, 1894:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a very plain light brown brick single-story building. A wood cornice, certainly of recent vintage, copies one present as of 1968 and this caps a fixed awning that covers the transom front. The parapet front is low-cut and lacks ornamentation apart from a tile coping. The storefront has a right-hand side entry with transom and the storefront was present as it as of 1968. Transom area structural elements likely survive. The core building with a 7 feet offset wing, measures 17 feet by 53 feet. The rear addition, of varied length, adds 66 feet to the depth.

Alterations: The 1968 storefront has gained a fixed black awning and wooden door with wooden screen door. Permits date to 1979 and contractor Greg Arganbright built a \$55,000 800 square feet brick addition (permit dated May 23, 2000).

118 Fifth Street, Boyd building, 1894:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This one-story painted brick single story building largely matches is south counterpart. While unelaborated, its upper front brickwork is framed by slightly projecting stack bond rowlocks along the inner sidewalls. A deeper angled wooden cornice forms the parapet base and a brick signage area is similarly framed at each end by an identical bricked feature. A second wooden cornice caps the storefront and there is no transom, that area now being covered by the signage area above. The storefront entry is centered with flanking brick columns and this storefront was present as of 1968.

Alterations: The current brick storefront is present behind a clapboard covering. An aluminum double door opening as of 1968 has been downsized to a single door. A frame gable roof rear addition extends the plan to 89 feet, the width being 16 feet. Permits include a walk-in cooler (fall 1959), the repair of unspecified fire damage in mid-1965, the repair of the building front in April 1917, plumbing work in 1983, electrical and heating work in 1985 and a storefront alteration in April 1985.

History:

Thomas Boyd acquired this property in May 1894 and construction started in early June. The narrow storefront was split in early (*Express*, April 12, May 24, 25, 1895). Tenants were Newton's Barber Shop (1895), a restaurant (Sanborn 1897), Meadow's restaurant (1910), Hay's, Hilger's and Townsend's barber shops (1919-37), Randolph's, McMurray's and West Side produce or poultry (1937-45), Symphony Photo Art Studio (1947-50), Rhiner's Plumbing (1960-79), Hawkeye Builders (1968).

History:

Paired partial-width rear wings on 116-118 Fifth hint at a near-simultaneous construction with a unified design. Tenants were a barber shop (Sanborn 1897), Kilpatrick's Saloon (1909-10), Silverstein's Men's Furnishings (1915), tailor Charles Adams (1919), Gordon's confectionery (1922), Carl Glas cigar factory (1935) and the Valley Junction Coney Island Restaurant (1932-37, Stamatelos restaurant aka, the West Des Moines Coney Island (1937-65) and Crigler Refrigeration (1968).

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120 Fifth Street, Boyd's Block, 1894:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a double storefront two-story light brown colored brick building. The storefronts are of unequal width, the south front having three, the north four upper windows. Pilasters divide the two and front the sidewalls. The style is Italianate due to the narrow window scale. These feature soldier brick semi-circular arches and stone sills. The parapet is ornate with a band of recessed squares that surmount a complex corbelled base. The upstairs front entry is centered on the plan and accounts for the uneven split in the facade layout. The core plan measures 35 feet by 44 feet. Early 1/1 windows survive and the storefront with twin angled centered entries matches the dimensions as they were in 1968. Round steel columns (1919) survive and it is more than likely that transom components also remain.

Alterations: The storefronts had ceramic tile kick plates as of 1968-these are now brick. Awnings have been added and doors replaced. The building gained a new front in 1919 (*Express*, November 20, 1919).

Permits indicate systems upgrades (1976-77), a remodel by Superior Sales (1977) and fire damage repair in September 1983. A one story shed roof rear wing, 24 feet in depth, is of recent date. The entire roof was removed by high winds ca.1996.

122 Fifth Street, Mary E. Moore Building, 1893:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building despite window changes that are reversible.

Description: This two-story double storefront block is built of darker brown brick, now painted a dark green. The upper facade is locally unusual in that it is not sub-divided by pilasters nor is it ornamented apart from the use of rowlock caps on its semi-circular upper windows and a corbelled parapet base. The parapet front echoes that of 120 Fifth to the south with the use of a band of recessed squares as adornment. It also remains a single storefront with a angled centered and recessed entry. The upstairs entry is at the left. The core measures 31 feet by 60 feet. An open roofed patio and single-story rear addition extend the plan by

History:

Owner Thomas Boyd acquired this lot in mid-1894 and doubled his "block" to the south adding this storefront enlarging the whole to 31 feet by 50 feet in dimension (*Express*, October 26, 1894). The Glas family owned the building 1925-54 and operated a cigar factory, confectionery and a beverage shop over those years. Thompson's Laundry was a problematic early tenant, removed 1900 (*Express*, June 29, 1900). Replaced with Kamp's men's clothing (*Express*, August 3, 1900). Shobart's City Barbershop with baths was here 1895-97 (Sanborn), and was followed by Haye's barbershop (1908), Keturokis Watches (1929), Cozy Cafe (1935-47), Square Deal Lunch (1947-60), Mary's tavern (1965) and Fabri-Craft Upholstery (1968). In the north storefront a church was present in 1897 (Sanborn). It was long vacant (1937-45) and became a tavern, Penrod's (1940), Mary's (1955-61) and Dan's (1962-68+). It was gutted by 1983 fire when it housed Andy's Restaurant and Pub and ABC Auto Repair (Fredrickson, p. 186).

History:

Mary E. Moore acquired this half lot in early 1893 and built this building likely that year. Sereno S. Farrington's Cash Fair Store was here in 1897. The Cash Fair Store-Fully occupies the Moore Block in 1894, in south half of Boyd's Hall (*Express*, April 12, 1895), buys own bldg. (*Express*, September 10, 1899) but stays put (*Express*, March 31, 1899). Farrington acquired this half lot in mid-December 1896. Postmaster M. L. Mott to move post office to south room of block (*Express*, September 28, 1894, February 19, 1897). Moses Jacobson acquired this half lot in late May 1903 (and retained it until 1953) although his clothing store occupied this building 1895-96 and

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36 feet.

Alterations: The building was completely remodeled by contractor Barney Crow in 1954, with two modern upstairs apartments and a new storefront (*Express*, April 1, 1954). The upper windows have been replaced by monolithic glass infills and reduced panel surrounds. The present storefront has removed a stucco transom covering present as of 1968 and a faux historic storefront replaces an aluminum and glass one of that date. A brick kick plate (present 1968) survives. The rear addition is recent in date.

125 (123) Fifth Street, garage, pre-1937:

Evaluation: Non-contributing due to wood-covered facade and certain new double storefront layout.

Description: This is a single story concrete block garage building with a stepped parapet front. The core measures 32 feet by 60 feet and there is a south end rear concrete block wing (16 feet by 14 feet) that is original to the building.

Alterations: Permits note a remodel in 1981, an exterior remodel in 1982-83 and added a canvas awning (1983).

124 Fifth Street, Ashworth Building, 1907

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a two-story marginally late Queen Anne style design, executed with a purple-brown brick. A single storefront plan (25 feet by 52 feet), it is unusual for its single shallowly angled offset upper bay window. Also unusual to the district is the use of wrap-around raised brick to flank the sides and cap of the bay and to extend the semi-circular arch on the left-hand upper window. The parapet treatment is also noteworthy, being shallow in height and having a pointed bracket base, with a band of single brick recessions across its front. This pattern is found on other brick buildings to the south. The north wall is fenestrated on the upper level and the district's sole cast iron fire escape remains on that frontage. The building has no rear extensions. The storefront has a centered angled recessed entry. The windows (1/1) are likely replacements in kind.

returned 1917-35. He used it for warehouse purposes until 1954 when remodeled.

History:

Louie Hancock acquired the north half of this lot from blacksmith John Lahiff in early 1924 and the Ashworth brothers got the south half in late 1928. Frank Hancock's glove factory (1925) and his men's furnishings (1927) were here. Shoemaker Sam Soltat was here in 1932 but the address is otherwise not found in later years. An unidentified auto repair company occupied this concrete block garage as of 1937 (Sanborn),

History:

The frame Moore-Farrington Block first occupied this half lot. The Ashworth brothers acquired the property in April 1906 and built this building a year later (*Express*, September 19, 1907). Tenants included Townsend's (1917), Lee's (1927-32) and Rash's (1937). Taverns followed; Dill's (1943-55) Harold's Place, Norma's Lounge (1960) and Hughes' (1965-68) barbershops.

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Alterations: An aluminum storefront is now faced with wood and a stucco covered transom area has been reopened. Permits note alterations (1963, 1965), an exterior remodel (1980) and an electric marquee (1982, gone).

126 Fifth Street: [alleyway west side]

Evaluation: vacant lot-alleyway, not counted

Description: This was the earliest of what became four public alleyways linking the downtown with parking in the back.

Alterations: Demolition permit to Don Sammana (*Express*, July 1, 1954). Permits note an outside phone booth (1959) and an electric marquis for the Iowa Farm Market (1966).

127 Fifth Street, Ozimek Machine Shop, ca.1951:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a utilitarian concrete block single story double storefront. The building might be frame construction and as such has a very substantial massing at least vertically and the stepped symmetrical facade provides a boomtown visual obscuring of the simple gable massing. The facade is not ornamented and the twin mirror-image storefronts are subordinated by the high blank front wall. Entrances are to the outside of the rectangular store windows, these being separated in tern by a centered expanse of plain brick wall. The core measures 42 feet by 60 feet.

Alterations: A permit for a \$1,375 addition was issued to Frank Ozimek in 1955 (*Express*, June 9, 1955).

128 Fifth Street, Mott's Building, ca. 1898:

Evaluation: This is a non-contributing building due to the loss of its upper story and its replacement facade.

Description: This is a single-story frame gable roof single storefront. Historically this was a two-story building as late as 1968. The present building has a new brick facade.

Alterations: \$2,000 in alterations by VFW (*Express*, May 2, 1957). Permits note electrical work (1968), plumbing (1983).

129 Fifth Street, alley east side

Zurilla Condon's frame building first occupied this site (*Express*, December 10, 1897).

History:

The assessor dates this building to 1955. Frank Ozimek acquired ownership in mid-1951 and likely built this building. The Ozimek machine shop was here 1960-68+.

History:

L. Mott owned this half-lot 1896-98 and his building housed Frederick's cigar factory until 1900 (*Express*, November 23, 1900). McQuaid's grocery opens late 1900 (*Express*, November 23, 1900). Later tenants included Mallory's cigar store (1908), Moses Jacobson, clothing (1909-10), Howland's tobacco shop (1920), Mann's barbershop (1922), Rowland's Billiards (1922), Valley Cigar Store (1925-32), Valley Junction Plumbing (1927-32), Eat More Cafe (1946), Vigger's Restaurant (1948-50), VFW Post 8879 (1960+).

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Evaluation: Not counted as it is vacant land.

Description: No building present.

Alterations: Building demolished 1974.

130 Fifth Street, George Pringle Billiards, 1897:

Evaluation: This is an extremely close call. On one hand this is an early frame survivor in the face of all possible odds, one that remained intact until 1984. On the other hand the addition of a second story and faux Italianate upper facade windows on its boomtown front redefines the building. For now it is a non-contributing building.

Description: This was historically a single-story frame boomtown front building and remained so as late as 1968. The core plan measures 22 feet by 60 feet. The storefront with its centered entry was present as of 1968.

Alterations: The building has gained a story and faux Italianate style windows have been added on the upper level. The storefront has gained an awning. Permits indicate a substantial interior remodeling in 1984. A rear chain link fence dates to this year.

131-33-35 Fifth Street, McIntyre Furniture, 1953:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building. The wood slip screen simply obscures the original parapet.

Description: This is a single-story brick triple storefront building. The special feature of this facade is the angled pattern of each storefront segment, each of which ends with a single door opening. This typical '50s treatment is repeated in one other district building (233-35 Fifth). The core measures 75 feet by 120 feet and a north end garage wing extends an additional 22 feet. There is an original wood garage door in that wing. A broad flat canopy covers the entire frontage and a "boomtown" low level wood sign base extends above the actual parapet cap along the entire front.

Alterations: The new building had no canopy and no raised wood parapet—simply a brick front with three separate structural glass transoms centered on each storefront. Permits note electrical work in 1971, 1982 and heating and electricity in 1987.

132-34 Fifth Street, Thurtle Block, 1905:

History:

This was a vacant half lot as of 1897, 1920 and 1937 (Sanborn Maps). The Thatcher Building was here as of 1900 (*Express*, November 23, 1900).

History:

F. N. Eaton owns this half lot as of 1894 and operates a drug store here until 1901. It was the first store to have a telephone (*Express*, July 30, 1897; November 8, 1901).

A 1922 photo shows this building as it is while the 1920 and earlier fire maps show it consistently single story in height. The assessor date is 1890. For now it assumed that Pringle enlarged the building, which he occupied 1920-45. Townsend's billiards were in the shorter building as of 1908. A 1907 account notes that the Ashworth's removed a frame that had long housed Townsend to 4th Street and that he would build a brick building (*Express*, September 26, 1907). An early antique shop, West Des Moines Trading Post, was here 1920-68+.

History:

McIntyre Furniture occupied a 25 feet by 142 feet single story building that they built in 1946 and this building was incorporated as the northern third of the enlarged one (*Express*, May 2, 1946). Barney Crow was the contractor and Paul Williams did the masonry work. The new firm sold home furnishings, Mautz paints and Kelvinator appliances (*Express*, October 1, 1953; August 4, 1955). This triple front modern storefront was built by, replacing several very old frame store buildings. The business remained here through 1968.

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Evaluation: This is another close call as to integrity. The very distinctive design feature was the upper bay window effect now lost. The bricked in storefronts are daunting if only because of the red brick color mismatch. Despite these negatives, this is judged to be a contributing building.

Description: This is the most substantial two-story block in the 100 block, west side. Originally a triple-storefront plan, the upper facade employs broad pilasters to define bookend half bays and an oversized central bay. These do not align with the present double storefront and its centered entrances. The brickwork steps out each parapet base to form still recessed spandrels that remain subordinate to the pilaster side frames. The parapet itself is then brought flush with the latter, and has a base of broad square-cut corbelled brackets. The side windows are broadly cut and the two central bay windows are actually nearly flush set three-sided bay windows (these echo that found on 124 Fifth). The bay panel effect is also bordered across each base with corbelled brick courses that bring the wall plane to flush. The storefront was substantially bricked in by 1964 with a centered row of three single doors, the center one being the upstairs entry. The ceiling was lowered at this time (*Express*, November 5, 1964). The original windows were 6/1 or 4/1. A now separate gable roof brick single story addition (pre-1920) is offset south and measures 15 feet by 31 feet).

Alterations: The bricked-in central storefront, present by 1968 has been opened with twin openings that lead to recessed entrances. The south storefront reduced windows have been enlarged downward to match the north storefront. Replacement windows include transoms. Windows have been replaced with "palladian" sets eliminating the bay window effect. Brick rear addition, now separate, likely dates to Pollard-Walton expansion (*Express*, June 18, 1914). Permits for 132 note electrical work in 1971 and plumbing work in 1984. Permits for 134 note a lowered ceiling, tile floor and a new front in 1964 and

History:

Albert M. Thurtle acquired this property in late 1898 and built this block in 1905, his contractor being R. E. Rigler (*Express*, August 10, October 5, 26, 1905; February 8, 1906). Iverson's restaurant occupied 132 1914-22 and 134 1917-20. Tenants of 132 were Gamber the plumber (1915-16), Samuelson's tin shop (1912-22, back of plan), Pollard's Hardware (1913), Pringle's billiards (1917), Jewell lunch (1919), McLaren Furniture (1929-32), Iowa State Liquor Store (1935), Oasis Tavern (1945), Spot Cafe (1955-65), Lee's Lunch Blue Moon Cafe (1960-71). Tenants of 134 were Horning's Billiards (1915), Vandenburg Drug (1915-40), Rite-Way Cleaners (1940), Flower's Tavern (1940), VFW Lounge (1950), West Side Recreation Center (1960). The entire ground floor was vacant in 1945.

Alterations, Continued:

a general remodel in 1977. The building has an apparent new and recessed west wall given that it no longer engages the rear brick wing.

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Figure 5: Substantial brick outbuilding, view northeast (Jacobsen, 2016)

136 Fifth Street, Seyfert Block, 1905:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building given that the wooden parapet is simply a slip screen that hides the intact brick one.

Description: This two-story purple-brown brick single storefront building is distinctive for its twin three-sided bays and its steel storefront beam with decorative rosettes. The only other brick ornament is a saw tooth parapet brick base that is singular to the district. The bays are boldly profiled in contrast to shallower examples found to the south of this example. The storefront retains a round steel column. A two-story concrete block addition represents a pre-1920 41 feet long addition and a more recent partial-width block addition is brick-faced on its west side and extends the core plan (20 feet by 40 feet) by 48 feet. A frame garden shed without foundation is not counted.

Alterations: The 1968 aluminum storefront with a left-and upstairs entry has been replaced (1978) with a wooden one, with broader transom area and a brick kick plate is now wood-faced. An antique entry door is not original. Permits note a barber shop conversion (1961), aluminum siding (1974), plumbing work (1977), demolition of a warehouse and storefront remodeling (October 1978).

History:

William Bellairs owned this half-lot in 1896 and a building was sold to Harry L. Seyfert bought the half lot in mid-1904 for \$2,000 (*Express*, July 22, 1904). The 1897 Sanborn locates a two-story frame metal-clad building on this site. McConnell and Cahill's restaurant occupied both storefronts 1905-08. The facade design likely post-dates 1904 given the bay windows. A. M. Thurtle announced plans to build at this location in the spring of 1905 although he didn't purchase the site until 1918 (*Express*, March 30, 1915). Harry L. Seyfert moved the ironclad two-story frame O'Connell & Cahill's restaurant building (shown on the 1897 Sanborn) to the rear of this property where it stands today. He intended it to house a kitchen down and lodging upstairs. Contractor E. B. Rigler did the moving and built this block (*Express*, October 5, 1905). Seyfert purchased the William Smith hardware stock and moved it here in December along with furniture stock. The Model Restaurant occupied the front. The finished building featured a golden oak staircase and the now lost rear wing contained the first and only freight elevator in town. This building was north of the Thurtle Block (*Express*, November 9, October 5, 1905; February 8, August 23, 1906). A most notable tenant was the town's first movie house,

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the Nabob Theater, in late 1909. The storefront was rebuilt with central ticket booth and flanking entries. It closed in August 1914 and its storefront was replaced (*Express*, November 18, 1909; February 24, 1910; August 20, 1914). Tenants were Vermeulen Billiards (1905-10), True & Pollard Hardware (1904+), Pollard & Thurtle Hardware (1927-32), Soltat Shoes (1937+). Sikking Restaurant (Square Deal Cafe) (1943-47), P& L Auto Service (1947), Anderson Grocery (1950), Thrifty Market (1955-60), Skinner's Barbershop (1961-65), Rex's Barbershop (1968-71). The frame rear building might be Wm. Bellair's store (*Express*, February 28, 1896).

137 Fifth Street, Valley Junction/West Des Moines City Hall and Firehouse, 1900, 1901:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building. Individually listed on the National Register 1982.
Description: This two-story brick Classical Revival style public building is laid up with a distinctively light brown toned brick. The contrasting darker ground level brick tracery is unusual to the district. The simple functional design reflects its original purposes. The storefront has the double-door fire doors with flanking smaller 1/1 lights and a left-and entry. The lower brick trim work that frames the openings projects beyond the wall plane as do side wall pilasters. The facade is otherwise a recessed panel. A brick-bracketed stone belt course set at the upper sill level divides the facade. The semi-circular window jack arches are made up of soldier bricks. The high parapet has the aforementioned brick band, a corbelled base, and a centered elongated name stone and a curved pediment with the date "1905" which curiously post-dates the building completion by four years is a recent addition. The comparable upper facade to this one with its distinctive mirror image serpentine brick band is 216-18 Fifth, the IOOF Block, the two being of comparable dates. The core measures 25 feet by 51 feet, and a single-story rear garage section adds 23 feet to the depth.

Alterations: The firehouse doors were placed on rollers in early 1919 to speed up fire response time (*Express*, January 16, 1919). The water office moved downstairs

History:
The town purchased a half lot in late September 1900. J. F. Martin designed the whole building and the ground floor was first built, by contractor H. J. Roush (*Express*, September 21, 1900; *Des Moines Gazette*, September 27, 1900). The recent rehabilitation revealed that the first building phase was the two-story front part and not simply the lower story. The upper story was in place by February 1901 (*Express*, February 1, 1901). The completion of a taller building to the north necessitated a higher hose tower and bell tower in early 1914 and metal ceilings inside are first noted at that time (*Express*, April 9, 1914). The city offices remained here until a replacement building was finished at 318 Fifth in 1953 and McIntyre Furniture used the building as a furniture warehouse (1960-75+) after a few years of vacancy.

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and the interior stairs were removed (*Express*, January 9, February 13, 1947). Larger fire engines forced the widening of the entrance to the south, removing a pilaster. Permits note remodeling, plumbing, electrical and heating work in 1985-87. The building was completely remodeled to house the Valley Junction Foundation in 2010 at the cost of \$750,000. RDG were the architects, and Weitz Construction the contractor. This work restored the enlarged front door.

138 Fifth Street, Ashworth Block, 1911:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This corner two-story building is distinctive for its style (Classical Revival) and design. Double-fronted, its north Maple Street frontage is faced with a red brick while the facade is a gray-brown colored pressed brick. The local newspaper castigated the building's appearance, finding it both "squatty" and tall enough to be three stories and lacking harmony with near-by buildings (*Express*, June 22, 1911). The design is classical with a base, column and capital vertical separation. The storefront covers the east facade ending with an angled corner entry. The second floor has paired double window sets that broaden the facade visually. An attic is separated by corbelled brickwork and stone belt courses above and below from the pedimented parapet and has matching smaller window sets. Stone (the newspaper said concrete) belt courses run just under the upper window sill level and as previously noted. The north wall is fully fenestrated and two of three upstairs windows are paired sets. The ground floor has two ceiling height single light openings. The core plan measures 20 feet by 45 feet. A two-story frame metal-clad addition (17 feet by 41 feet) is certainly a relocated former frame store building. An interesting design feature, apparently original is the use of a transom space above the angled corner entry.

Alterations: Windows (1/1) have been replaced with reflective glass and the storefront is a wood replacement (1996-97). Permits note electrical work

History:

This corner was the location of the town's first merchant, one John McGrayel in 1892. The metal clad west end of the plan dates to pre-1897. This was yet another Ashworth property during the probable period of its construction. The H. S. Chase chain grocery occupied an earlier two-story frame building in 1897 and the Ashworth purchase dated to mid-1901 (*Express*, June 28, 1901). The remodeling of the storefront, adding an angled corner entry, followed suit, the work done by contractor J. Frank Martin (*Express*, September 6, 1901). In mid-1911 the old building was removed to Sixth and Elm streets and this building was built by the Ashworths (*Express*, June 2, 29, 1911, December 30, 1965). Chase remained until 1916, being followed by Walton Hardware, 1917-18; Elmer Spencer grocery, 1918-50) and Spencer Auto Company, 1929; it was vacant 1955-60. Goodwill Industries followed in 1960, with Hoffman House Antiques here as of 1968. There were no separate store spaces along the south side of Maple Street within this building plan.

Alterations, Continued:

1979-80 and a comprehensive \$101,000 renovation in 1996-97 by contractor Gene Gretman.

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Figure 6: 138 Fifth Street looking southwest, ca.1911
(Jordan House Library and archives)

143-45 Fifth Street, Wegener Block, 1913:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is the only three story block on the east side of Fifth and the reduced profile of the Legion building, 220-22 Fifth, leaves it the largest district building. It is a Classical Revival style design. Planned combination hotels and movie theaters are uncommon. It mirrors its corner counterpart to the west (138 Fifth, 1911) by using contrasting brick colors for its primary and secondary facades. The former is a modern gold-blond color while the latter is a mottled brown color. The three-story plan is distinctive within the district because it doesn't use the recessed panels or pilaster framing so otherwise common. The facade brickwork is plainly laid up and the parapet too is unadorned. A most elaborate brick belt course divides the floors at the actual floor level (not the usual sill level) and it features staple-like two-sided corbelled brackets that extend above and above it. Second story windows have stone sills and jack arches but the third floor windows are distinctively framed completely by projecting brick brackets (in lieu of stone sills) and a continuous cornice above. All but

History:

Edward L. Wegener acquired the lot in late March 1913 and immediately started a \$20,000 three-story block. Rainy weather delayed progress after the foundations were done (*Express*, April 10, 1913). It is claimed that the original plan was for just two stories and that work had begun on the second story as of mid-May 1913 (*Des Moines Tribune*, May 13, 1913). The Lyric Hotel functioned until 1935, and became the 15-unit Lyric Apartments that remain in operation. The Lyric Theater or movie house operated until 1960, gaining an addition to the east that added seating and enlarged the stage in 1920 and added a automatic music machine a year earlier (*Express*, March 27, 1919; January 8, 15, 1920). Rowland's billiards departed the building in late 1918 (*Express*, September 26, 1918). The most notable tenant was the post office that was here for 30 years, 1931-52 (*Express*, February 14, 1952). The Salvation Army followed, 1955-60 as did an Evangelical Temple in 1965.

Alterations, Continued:

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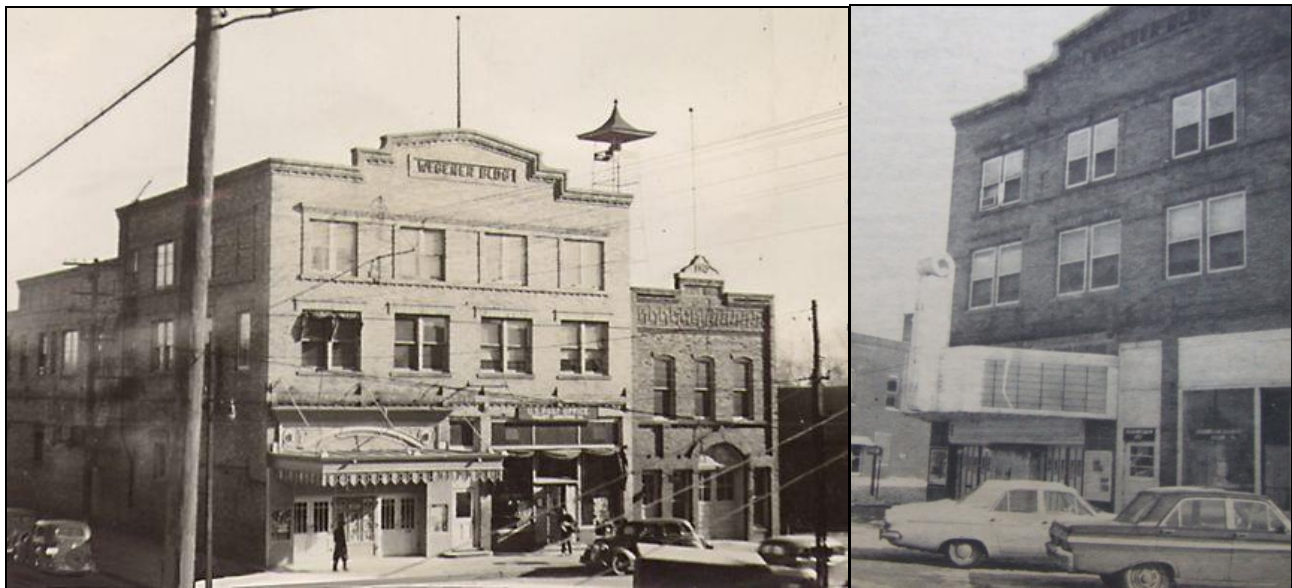
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four north windows are paired sets. These elaborations continue the full length of the north side wall. Windows are vertically aligned. The west core measures 50 feet by 47 feet, a two-story addition (pre-1920) was full-width for just 28 feet and added 73 feet along the north lot line. A 24 foot-square single-story addition with distinctive darker rowlock courses was also present by 1920. A concrete bloc garage squared off the plan in 1984. There is a single door north entry in the larger addition.

Alterations: The present theater marquee dates to 1940 (*Express*, August 22, 1940) but lost its vertical

element in 1968. An awning fire scorched the facade of the post office in 1946 (*Express*, December 19, 1946). The theater added a curved screen in 1954 (*Express*, March 4, 1954). A fire between the floors caused little loss in 1918 (*Express*, April 25, 1918). Permits note electrical work in 1968, a new canopy in 1979, a 1,200 square feet addition in 1984. The original canopy was replaced post-World War II and the present one remains. A most substantial loss, ca.1968 was the removal of the substantial pediment that bore the building name.



Figures 7, 8: [left] Photo looking southeast, ca.1940 (Valley Junction Main Street); [right] Complete theater marquee, looking northeast (West Des Moines *Express*, February 18, 1971)

200 Fifth Street/505 Maple, Seward Pharmacy, 1946, 1949:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building. It is counted as one building, treating 505 Maple as an addition.

Description: This is an Moderne style single-story building with a separately leased rear Maple Street storefront. The style is imparted by a rounded corner and angled entry, the brickwork being laid up with soldier brick, a rounded aluminum canopy and block glass vertical panels that flank the entry. The west end of the plan has no parapet. A soldier block band

History:

Druggist W. J. Seward acquired this property in late June 1946 and built this Modern style building. A. H. Dyke ran a general store in an earlier two-story frame building, 1895-1907, while Askew (or Irwin-Askew) was here 1914-50 in an earlier two-story frame building. Seward Pharmacy followed 1939-68+, changing the name from Askew to Seward in 1950 (*Express*, September 9, 1948; April 8, 1954). Tenants of 505 Maple were the West Des Moines YMCA

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underscores the concrete coping. The core plan measures 25 feet by 98 feet. The storefront at 505 Maple is a brick faced concrete block extension (1949). The present storefront matches that of 1968. Alterations: Seward Pharmacy added a 32 feet by 29 feet concrete block rear warehouse addition in August 1949, costing \$5,000. It later became separate leased storefronts (*Express*, October 6, 1949-see 512-21 Maple). A 1950 remodeling mentions the replacement of south side siding (*Express*, June 22, 1950).

201 Fifth Street, Herman Raaz First Valley Junction Bank, 1893:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building. What might be termed a later addition (203) is treated as a separate building.

Description: This two-story brick block with its angled corner and entry is distinctive for being the oldest surviving brick building, the first brick building on the east side of Fifth Street as well as for having an elevated ground floor level. The plan measures 22 feet by 94 feet. The south facade is that of the brick veneered original while the west primary facade is a replacement likely borne of the bank race that took place on upper Fifth in 1919-20. Not to be outdone white enameled brick and corner pilasters were added here along with the south window arches and some triangular inserts below the parapet. It lost its name and date plate and gained a Classic Revival entry hood. The altered front including the angled wall were made to emulate other district parapet treatments with bands of recessed square panels and a row of diamonds formed from raised brick along the parapet front. This is an Italianate style design with a darker brown brick color. The west facade originally had twin single windows up and down with a left-hand entryway. The display window substitution likely dates to 1920. The south facade is nearly fully fenestrated but a mix of larger and shorter openings on the ground floor is not vertically aligned. The 1900 vault survives.

Alterations: The west facade was re-veneered with a polychrome brick in 1921 when white ceramic brick was used to highlight the pilasters as faux columns.

(1960) and no listing 1968. At times this building was also addressed as 500 Elm.

Alterations, Continued:

It is probable that this became a separate storefront at a later date. Remodelings followed in 1970, 1975 and gained awnings in 1986. Permits for 505/09 Maple note electrical work (1978, 1984) and two awnings and a door hood (1984).

History:

This building was started in late September 1893 and the upper floor was to have housed the Odd Fellows, but did not finally do so, but was a dance hall. The local newspaper was housed in the basement and Seyfert's drug store was also a first tenant. The six-week completion estimate was overrun and the brick veneer was being put on the next August (*Express*, September 29, October 27, December 15, 1893; April 13, July 27, August 10, 1894). The dance hall fell pray to offices (*Express*, October 5, 1894). The Hawkeye Investment Company was officed here once Raaz became its agent and the *Express* departed (*Express*, February 1, 1895). Seyfert's drug store departed in 1897 and the bank gained its first substantial brick vault (*Express*, August 13, 1897). A new vault followed in 1899 (*Express*, November 11, 1898; February 17, 24, 1899). This professional presence would dominate the block for all of its history and included the Valley Junction Commercial Club (1915-17) and Corner Bank Insurance (1943), Hawkeye Telephone (1908-14) and the Booster newspaper (1925). By 1950 417 Maple was set off as a separate leased storefront. The bank became the West Des Moines State Bank in 1938 and occupied the building until 1960 when a new bank opened on Grand Avenue (*Express*, January 14, 1960). Eight apartments were added upstairs by 1968.

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Structural glass infills (present as of 1968) on four south storefront windows have been replaced with glassed sash. The south facade is painted white below the parapet base line. An exterior basement entry has been closed off as has south entrance. Permits note electrical work 1982, 1985 and what appears to have been exterior basement stairs and "hollow sidewalk" were infilled in 2014 at a cost of \$10,000, Hildreth Construction.

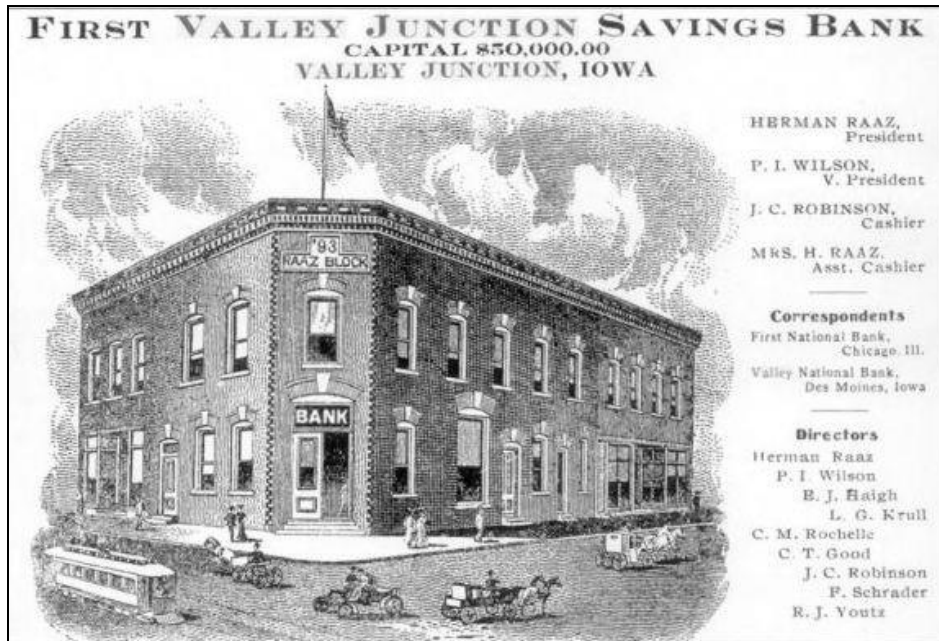


Figure 9: 201-203 Fifth Street, looking northeast
(Jordan House Library and archives)

202 Fifth Street, Peter Pan Grocery, ca.1927:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building, being counted as one unified storefront design.

Description: This single story red/brown brick double storefront has stone or concrete sidewall foundations, a centered double recessed entry for its narrow storefronts, the latter substantially being those present as of 1968 save for a Carrara glass kick plate. The core plan measures 25 feet by 135 feet, the south half of the plan extending 12 feet further than the north half. The upper facade is plain, being separated from the storefront by a stone/concrete belt course and a

History:

The assessor date is 1940 which seems quite late. The 1950 Sanborn clearly shows this brick building. A. H. Minnis owned the property 1923-57 so that family is certainly the builder. Peter Pan Grocery (1927-50), Way's Food Market and Saville's AG Food Store (1955-68) tenanted this building.

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course of soldier brick. The parapet base is slight projected beyond the wall plane and there is a stone/concrete coping. This store has retained its aluminum/glass display windows and wooden doors present as of 1968.

Alterations: New storefront (*Express*, April 27, May 25, 1939). There are two over-sized north-facing shed

203 Fifth Street, 415-17 Maple, Herman Raaz Block, 1900:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building. Despite shared ownership and a shared functional history, it is separately counted because of its distinctive design and date stone. Its twin west and south facades are counted as one building.

Description: This two-story brick Classical Revival style building wraps around its corner (201) precursor. Its core measures 22 feet by 134 feet and it has an L-shaped footprint with two Maple Street storefronts as well as an upstairs hall, then offices and now apartments. Its brickwork is a redder color. Three broad upstairs windows have semi-circular soldier brick arches. A distinctive feature is the use of darker brick to highlight an arch cap, to form a saw toothed band with borders at the parapet base and as brackets for the stone coping. The date stone is centered within a square-cut pediment. The Maple Street facade originally had the same window arches (these have been shortened from the top). The darker brick forms a faux quoin treatment and also a band of strongly projecting bracketed arches from the parapet front. There is also a similar pediment without a circular insert with four stone inserts. Windows on this frontage are paired with two broadly separated sets. Alterations: Both storefronts have been substantially bricked in with a too-red brick but this work predates 1968 at least on the south facade. The west transoms were then covered with paneling but the canopy was present with the current storefront. Permits note electrical work in 1966 and 1984. A curious raised roof section now gives this building a "theater" profile from the alley way.

Alterations, Continued:

roof skylights on the back of the plan but these are invisible to the public, save from the alleyway. The partial Carrara facade was lost since 1968. No permits found but at some point the storefront was divided.

History:

This block was banker Herman Raaz's response to the construction of a second local bank and his removal from the Hawkeye Investment Company (*Express*, August 18, 1899). The architects were Proudfoot and Bird of Des Moines (*Express*, August 25, 1899). The 1893 and 1900 buildings were remodeled to conform to each other. This building contained a large upstairs hall. Raaz converted the hall into 16 suites and professional offices, adding six skylights, and linked the upper levels of 201 and 203 with an east end door (*Express*, August 12, 19, September 9, 1904). George Youngerman was the contractor. A. D. Reddish's dry goods was the first storefront tenant, along with the Valley Junction Wallpaper Co. Tenants included Swan's Dry Goods (1925-37), it was vacant in 1943, housed Brown's Jewelry and Marybelle's Beauty Salon (1944-55) and the West Des Moines Development Corporation and Chamber in 1965 but was again vacant as of 1968. Tenants in 414 were Miller's Millinery (1909-10), Stalker Millinery (1910), Arthur Thornbury Contractor (1915), Thornbury Millinery (1914-22), Swan Millinery (1919), McLaren Furniture (1925-27), Booster Express publishing (1929-45), Cletus' Barber Shop (1955), West Des Moines Beauty Shop (1960-68+). Tenants in 417 were Shawhan Harness (1910), Valley Furniture (1915), Soltat Shoes (1919) Garlick Jewelry (1937), Kenyon Construction Co. (1955), Swan's Hall (1940), *Express* until May 1951 (*Express*, May 2, 1951) and the West Des Moines Water Works (*Express*, July 19, 1951). Swan's Apartments (all upstairs, six units, 1937 to 1955), West Des Moines Library (1960), Glenn Construction Co. (1960-68+).

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204 Fifth Street, 1915:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building, being counted as one unified storefront design.

Description: This is a second single-story red brick double storefront with a core that measures 28 feet by 45 feet. The facade is covered and the storefronts, of unequal size, are identical in layout and materials to those of 1968. The parapet/transom line is covered but the parapet proper is set above a line of square cut corbelled brackets and there is a tile coping. The back of the plan consists of short extensions that were present as early as 1937.

Alterations: Tours Bakery remodeled the electrical system in early 1966 (north storefront), and other electrical work was done in 1986.

205 Fifth Street, 1897, 1940 re-fronting:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building and is separately counted. It is contributing because its permastone front interprets post-war modernization efforts within the district. A concrete block gable roofed outbuilding is non-contributing.

Description: This two-story brick building is old but its permastone covering redefines it as a 1940 store building (*Express*, April 25, 1940). The core measures 25 feet by 60 feet with a narrower single-story rear addition that adds 39 feet to the plan. The facade retains three 1/1 windows and these have gained faux arches and key stones while stone sills have been buried flush. The storefront transom area remains intact but covered with a shingled canopy. The aluminum/glass storefront was present as of 1968 but was later extended north to eliminate a left-hand upstairs entry. A facade ghost are twin angled parapet level pilasters that remain visible.

Alterations: A rear addition (24 feet by 60 feet) dates to 1900 (*Express*, February 9, 1900). Facade largely replaced 1940 (*Express*, April 25, 1940). Permits note window replacement upstairs (1961), the permastone might date to 1961 when the marquee and storefront were remodeled by B. Crow, contractor. Later permits note a carport (non-extant, 1967), the mansard canopy (extant, 1979), all systems updated (1983), an attached

History:

The assessor date is 1920 but is too late. G. H. Chase acquired the property in August 1915 and the 1920 Sanborn depicts the front part of this building. Tenants were Gordon's tobacco (1915-22), Joice Confectionery (1925), Penrod's barbershop (1919), Farris' electrical (1927), Rost Candy Shop (1927-32), Franklin's Hamburger shop (1932), Charles Pigneri's Valley Shoe Shop (1935-68); Tip Top Coffee Shop (1935-43); Pigner Shoe Repair (1937-45) and Holm Bake Shop (1945).

History:

M. O'Carroll was the owner when this building, certainly raised up simultaneously with 207 to the north, was being rushed to completion in late 1897 to house John W. Woods who had just sold his dry goods company and had started anew (*Express*, November 10, 20, December 17, 1897). It just missed being included in the 1897 fire insurance map. Subsequent tenants were Barnes' second hand goods (1920), Falk/Snapshot Photo Studio (1925-37), Circle Cafe (1932) and The Tavern (1937 to present and 1940 re-fronting). In 1992 the last named business expanded north into 207 (which explains the loss of the upstairs entrance).

Alterations, Continued:

garage (14 feet by 22 feet, 1983) and three awnings and a vertical marquee (1984), The Tavern was extended into 207 in 1992 at a cost of \$110,000, Fox Construction the contractor, and finally in 2007 the same contractor did a \$25,000 phase one remodel.

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206 Fifth Street, Irwin Block, 1896:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This two-story painted brick building is an excellent example of squeezing a design into a narrow plan. The odd central window set, variously three (now) or two windows (1968) begs a missing element and there was indeed originally a prominent bay window present that made the style late Queen Anne (see Figures 30, 100). This feature was lost early and is not drawn on the 1920 Sanborn Map. The sidewalls project in pilaster fashion. Successive belt courses cap the transom area and there are twin single 1/1 side windows and the central set. These have cast stone wrap-around lintels and the north window is the point of interest in that the window is set cheek and jowl against the side wall and the lintel is cut off to fit. The upper facade is plain

Alterations: A concrete block garage addition extends the plan to the alley. A cast iron spiral staircase leads to the rear roof. Permits note a neon sign, 1968, and a bathroom in 1982. A large central bay has been removed-need to determine when.

207 Fifth Street, 1898, Sorensen Electric & Heating Company, 1952:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building, representing an early post-war commercial remodeling.

Description: This two-story brick building of early vintage is redefined as a post-war remodeled building due to its new brick veneer. The core measures 25 feet by 60 feet. Three upstairs windows have been reduced in size, have steel plate lintels and stone sills. There is no parapet or facade elaboration. The new front is carried down to cover the lost transom area. Originally a darker soldier brick band capped the storefront but the brick has been painted.

Alterations: Sorensen received a \$250 permit in 1954 for an addition (*Express*, August 26, 1954). Permits note a general remodel (1968) and the application of an awning and shutters (1977).

History:

Druggist W. T. Irwin acquired the parcel in early 1896 and built the building that same year to house his drug store that contained the town's first soda fountain. The storefront had a side entry and a residence upstairs (*Express*, April 21, May 8, June 10, 1896; May 24, 1897). Tenants were Penrod's barbershop (1917), Morrison Chiropractic (upstairs, 1925-37) Carl Glas tobacco (1929), Helen's Flowers (1932), Garlick Jewelry (1932-35), Krull Clothing (1935), Jacobsen Clothing 1937-45) and Denny's Cafe (1964-68).

Description, Continued:

with only a stone/concrete coping. The storefront has a centered angled entry and a left-hand upstairs entry, the aluminum/glass materials being present as of 1968. The side entry is rather deeply recessed. An iron-clad rear addition was present by 1920. An awning obscures the transom area.

History:

Dennis Hynes was the original owner when this building, certainly raised up almost simultaneously with 205 to the north, the contract being let for a 25 feet by 40 feet two story block in mid-November 1897 (*Express*, November 12, 1897). It just missed being included in the 1897 fire insurance map. Ed Sorensen put on a new brick front in 1951 to house his electric and heating company (*Express*, May 2, 1951; February 7, 1952). Main tenants were Robison's Grocery (1915), Long's Grocery (1922), Blome Grocery (1924), Hasting's Drugs (1929). It was vacant in 1932, housed Sorenson Electric and Heating in 1955, and several laundromats 1960-68. The American Legion and Auxiliary occupied the upstairs, 1935-43. The 1920-37 Sanborns indicate an upstairs hall.

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208 Fifth Street, Jacobson's Clothing Store, 1953:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building, being separately counted due to its separate tenancy.

Description: This is a light brown brick single story and single storefront building. It measures 25 feet by 138 feet. The brickwork is unadorned. There is a metal coping. The 1968 storefront survives intact, having gained only a square wooden cornice in lieu of a lost awning. A single story rear addition extends to the alley across 208-210.

Alterations: Rear addition as noted. Permits note systems replacements in 1969 a remodel in 1976 and 1983.

209 Fifth Street, Burt Building, 1900:

Evaluation: This a contributing building. While identical to 211 it is separately counted due to its earlier age and brick color. A minor metal gable roofed storage shed is not counted.

Description: This two-story brick building retains its facade, one that resembles other fronts with its twin recessed wall/window set panels. These panels begin just below the stone sill level and the caps of the panels are corbelled out forming minor cornices. The parapet base has a projecting brick base, a delicate band of triangular brackets that continues in front of the pilasters, and finally twin elongated recessed brick

Alterations: The parapet has lost a very shallow centered pediment present in 1968. Permits note partition work in 1967; and electrical work in 1985.

210 Fifth Street, Banner 5¢-\$1.00 Store, 1952:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building, being separately counted due to its separate tenancy.

Description: This building is identical in every respect to 208 Fifth.

Alterations: The only changes apart from the rear addition (see 208) is the loss of a double door (1968) and the addition of a boxed wooden cornice in lieu of an awning. Permits note electrical work 1966, 1979 and 1985.

History:

Harry Jacobsen acquired this half lot in 1945 and built 210 to the north in 1952 and then built this building ca.1953 to house his clothing store that was here 1955-69+.

History:

L. J. Burt owned the property 1898-1902 and this building is dated to ca.1900. The second floor contained offices and Dr. Charles Burt and others were there as late as 1945. Harry Young's Wallpaper (1932-45), Olsen Paint and Wallpaper (1960-68) and Berard Materials (1965-75).

Description, Continued:

panels in the parapet front, the whole being capped with a stone coping. The storefront retains its steel beam with end rosettes, the transom is covered and the aluminum and glass storefront present as of 1968 remains. There is a left-hand upstairs entrance. The core measures 24 feet by 42 feet, with a 60 feet long rear single-story addition (pre-1950).

History:

Harry Jacobsen acquired this half lot in 1945 and built this building 1952, obtaining the permit for a \$15,000 building in mid-July (*Express*, July 10, August 14, 1952). The earlier building was moved south to allow for its construction. Tenants were the Banner 5¢-\$1.00 Store (1955-65) and the (Banner) Ben Franklin Store (1964-68+).

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211 Fifth Street, Burt Building, ca.1913-14:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This two-story brick building is a copy of 209 to the south save for the use of a slightly browner brick. The core measures 24 feet by 60 feet with a single-story rear concrete block garage addition (pre-1950) that adds 63 feet to its depth. It retains the shallow pediment lost in 209. The 1968 storefront appears to survive. At that time the transom was covered and now is behind a fixed canopy.

Alterations: A single permit notes plumbing work in 1976.

212 Fifth Street: [west side]

Evaluation: This is a vacant lot-alleyway so it is not counted

Description: No building.

Alterations: Building demolished 1974 for a public walkway linking the downtown and parking.

213-15 Fifth Street, Western Auto Company, Des Moines Hardware, 1942, 1946:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: The north half (215) is an early wartime single-story concrete block building, the north half being added in 1946. The current storefront and aluminum canopy date to 1963. The raised parapet is sheathed in corrugated steel.

Alterations: Permits note a general remodeling in 1963 with a new storefront and a marquee at that time, B. Crow being the contractor. A new canopy was installed in 1978. Separate permits for 213 and 215 indicate that the building was double fronted after 1975 but the current building retains one centered entry.

214 Fifth Street, Seyfert Building, 1897:

Evaluation: This would be a contributing building if the original storefront components have been simply covered up. Otherwise it is non-contributing.

Description: This is a single-story brick building with a frame storefront veneer. The core measures 24 feet by 71 feet. A concrete block addition (1976) adds 68 feet to the depth. The 1968 storefront had a metal or asphalt front covering, a structural glass infilled

History:

The Burt family owned this half lot and built this building, matching the facade of 209 to the south. The new Burt Building nearly burned down in mid-1914 (*Express*, June 18, 1914). A different brick underscores this supposition. Tenants were Robison Grocery (1910), Mason Jewelry (1914-32), The Tavern (1937), Iowa State Liquor Store (1943-57), Newburn's Clothing (1957), O'Callighan's Appliance (1960), George's Valley Meats (1965), and Valley Antiques (1968).

History:

A two-story building formerly on this parcel last housed Hickman Sporting Goods in 1968.

History:

William den Hartog acquired this property in 1940 and built this building to house his Des Moines Hardware. This building was specially designed for his business (*Express*, July 13, August 20, 1939; June 9, 1955). The building suffered heavy damage in a 1942 fire and was immediately replaced with this building, adding 211 Fifth in 1946 (*Express*, May 7, 1942; April 11, 1946). As of 1947 there was no canopy and the transom was infilled with glass block. It was re-fronted in 1963. Western Auto was here (1942-46, moving a block north), Des Moines Hardware occupied the enlarged building in 1946, Coast to Coast Hardware followed (1968-70).

History:

H. L. Seyfert, owner as of July 27 who breaks ground days later for new one-story brick drug store-an unidentified Des Moines contractor built the building. John F. Crosby is contractor for the interior woodwork (*Express*, July 30, August 6, 20, 1897).The core building is brick. Pollard Hardware was here 1917. Carmody Drugs was here 1919-65. West Side

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transom and an off-centered recessed entry that largely matches the present one. A key difference is the incorporation of a separate (structural glass filled) window into the entryway.

Alterations: A new structural glass and an ivory and green carrara storefront was installed in 1940 and has been lost. Garmer and Stiles were the contractor (*Express*, April 25, 1940). Permits note heating work and a remodeled storefront in 1968, electrical work in

216-18 Fifth Street, Fraternal Hall, Odd Fellows Block, 1897-98:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a distinctive Italianate fraternal building design executed in a light brown brick. The facade has a tri-partite division with side wall and centered pilasters defining two mirror halves including twin storefronts. These terminate vertically with a stone sill level belt course. The upper facade consists of two recessed panels. Three elongated windows are evenly spaced and are capped with jack arch brickwork. A serpentine brick band caps each panel and a narrow stone belt course and centered name plate define the cornice/parapet level. There is a very slight flat pediment. The original windows were likely triple 1/1 window sets. The storefronts have raised floor levels and front steps which is unusual in the district. The existing storefronts were present by 1968.

A one-story rear addition (21 feet by 35 feet) behind 218 predates 1920.

Alterations: A \$5,000 permit was issued for 218 for a new storefront in 1954 and 216 received a new aluminum and glass storefront as well (*Express*, April 8, July 20, 1954). Upper windows were replaced prior to 1968. Permits note an aluminum and fiber glass

217 Fifth Street, American Legion West Des Moines Post 620, 1949-50:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This stone veneered two-story is Moderne in style. It measures 50 feet by 136 feet. The facade has a central entry that is flanked by engaged fluted quarter-round columns. Twin storefronts with corner entries flank this opening. Three rectangular window sets are on the upper front. The facade is veneered with rectangular limestone slabs. The

Recreation (1965), Midwest Buying Services (1968) and PDQ Drug (1969) followed.

Alterations, Continued:

1969 and 1974, interior partitions and electrical work 1975 and a 24 feet by 37 feet rear concrete block addition by contractor M. A. Knutsen in November 1976.

History:

C. S. Yeaton announced plans in early June 1897 to build a 50 feet by 80 feet two story block with upstairs hall, the plan contingent on contracting the town's "secret societies" to use it for at least three years. The architect was C. C. Cross of Des Moines (*Express*, June 4, July 2, 9, August 20, December 17, 31, 1897; January 14, 1898), "finest brick building in the town" (*Express*, March 16, 1898). The IOOF acquired this lot in late July 1907 and might have substituted its name-stone in the pediment. Yeaton and Burnette grocers occupied both storefronts 1897-99 when they sold the building and business to Fred Rapp (*Express*, December 1, 1899). Martin Bros hardware exited and were replaced by Miller Bros. shoes (*Express*, July 20, 1900). Vass Hardware was here 1914-43, Lambert Hardware, 1946-65, and Valley Hardware 1964-68. Larson Cleaners was here (216) 1954-68+.

Alterations, Continued:

awning (281-1965, gone), the demolition of a lean-to (1978), electrical work (1979), an awning (1982), plumbing and (1982-83).

History:

The West Des Moines American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps envisioned this building 20 years before it was built and began to raise money. Two frame residences were demolished in 1940 (*Express*, May 9, 1940). The site was where the World War II honor roll memorial had been erected and remained as of early 1947 when the back of the lot was offered as a

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cornice is not elaborated and the coping is of brick. The original upper windows were Chicago style windows. Notably the upper facade retains the original carved inscription.

Alterations: The regrettable window replacements consist of four 1/1 metal sash set in a row. The back of the building has been completely remodeled with a porte cochere. Permits note remodeling by West Des Moines Parks Dept. 1976; electrical and heating work 1985, the community center conversion cost \$570,000 and entailed the removal of interior walls and the installation of a sprinkler system, Covenant Construction Services the contractor. Second floor mechanical renovation, \$10,000, OPN architect, Edge Commercial contractor. \$131,000 cost by Edge Commercial, unspecified, 1910. Flood damage repair \$129,000 by Koester Construction. Elevator installation by Brocon Services, \$58,000, 1993.

History, Continued:

resistant to qualify for air raid shelter purposes (*Express*, May 22, 1952). The building inscription curiously failed to credit the drum corps and confusion as to actual ownership would delay gifting the building to the city.

public parking lot (*Express*, January 30, 1947). Architects of Des Moines prepared an initial design with a facade that was along the lines of the actual building. Robert N. Nelson, employed by Brooks Borg Architects, prepared the final plans, dated June 4, 1949, under his own name. Lack of government approval delayed building and all new plans were developed in 1947 and the group obtained ownership of the lot in early April 1940. This building, contained two small storefronts. The legion hall was upstairs and kitchen, club and dining rooms were downstairs. Garmer and Stiles were the general contractor with a \$69,000 building cost (*Express*, July 14, 28, August 4, November 3, 1949; January 19, February 9, 1950). Sub-contractors and suppliers included the J. C. White Concrete Co., Drake Roofing, O'Dea Hardware, Groves Sheet Metal, Pittsburgh Des Moines Steel, Carr and Moehl millwork. Initial tenants were the Strandberg Real Estate (1950-68), Flamingo Lounge (permit, 1965), H&R Block and C & C Tap (permits, 1968) and Brown's Jewelry (1968). The Legion gifted the building to the city as a community center in 1974 (*Des Moines Register*, July 11, 1972). This was the only commercial building that was suitably fire-



Figure 10: Newly finished 217 Fifth Street
(*Des Moines Register*, February 5, 1950)

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219 Fifth Street, Security Savings Bank, Ashworth Bank Building, 1919:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building because the form largely remains visible and the cornice and upper entryway survive under their coverings.

Description: This two-story white enamel trimmed brick bank copied then popular side columns, a side-columned entryway and a prominent parapet front. All this was accomplished using brick, with white brick forming the columns. The core measures 22 feet by 59 feet with a 16 feet long one-story rear addition (1921-36). There are paired 1/1 windows set into twin recessed wall panels and separated by a pilaster. Windows flank the centered entrance.

Alterations: The brickwork has been painted and a faux mansard covering obscures the cornice. A second canopy hides the top of the Classical entry. This is a Classical Revival style design.

History:

The bank determined to build a new building (see 221-25) and a race developed with First National to see who finished first, Security winning by a goodly margin despite strikes and other setbacks. The white enameled front, laid up in July was copied in part by the Valley Junction Savings Bank to the south. The new building was occupied in late November 1919 (*Express*, April 10, July 10, August 7, October 16, November 20, 1919). This was the only town bank to fail, going into receivership in October 1934 (*Pella Chronicle*, October 9, 11, 1934). The Ashworth brothers regained the property in 1935 and their real estate office occupied the building 1937-45. Later tenants were Tenants were O'Connor Monuments (1947), the West Des Moines Public Library (1947-50), Kaser Construction Co. (1950), Replogle Culvert (1955-60), Kay Shannon Original Creations (1955-60), General Binding Corp. (1960), West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce (1968) and Schertle Gallery (1975).

220-22 Fifth Street, Ashworth Memorial Masonic Temple Block, 1925, 1946:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is the district's other former three-story edifice, being reduced to its present form due to 1946 fire. The style is a simplified Italian Renaissance Revival based the recurring arch pattern and the insertion of carved stone ornament. The plan is tripartite. The triple storefront is centered and has brick book-end walls the separation being distinguished by a stack bond/soldier course framing. This is no transom component. A broad stone belt course caps the lower floor and is set just beneath the upper sill level. There are five upper windows, two narrow flanking ones and three broader centered ones and these are each framed by a row of infilled arched decorative panels set flush.

These have distinctive angled brick infilling within the arches. Keystone inserts cap each arch. A carved stone cornice and a bolder and more elaborate stone cornice define a parapet base that includes a substantial nameplate that is flanked by square stone

History:

Charles and James Ashworth acquired this lot in 1908 and donated it for this building transferring ownership to the Gweneth Masonic Lodge on July 2, 1924. This lot held a residence as of 1897 and a small shed as of 1920. Architects were Dougher, Rich and Woodburn of Des Moines. A February 1946 fire gutted the upper interior resulting in \$75,000 in damage. Store tenants were left relatively unscathed the north half of the ground level. Ted Lovejoy was announced as the contractor for an all-new two-story building in late April but insurance payments delayed reconstruction (*Express*, April 25, 1946). Tenants in 220 were Peter Riley's Department Store (1927-45), Campbell's Department Store (1945-65) and the Spinning Wheel Fabric Shop (1968). Those in 222 were Valley Tailors (1927), Ely Beauty Salon (1929-40), Clardy Real Estate (1945-46), and Penrod's Barbershop (1925-68+).

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inserts. Originally the facade had a recessed plane attic level and this was lost to the fire. The 1968 storefronts survive intact, save for the addition of a fixed shingled awning. A partial south end bay contains a shared upstairs entrance with 216-18 Fifth to the south. There is a

Alterations: An aluminum and glass modern storefront was installed in mid-1945 (*Express*, July 19, 1945). Building third floor or attic area destroyed and replaced with lower present roof.

224-26 Fifth Street, 1905:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a two-story purple-brown brick colored double storefront building. The upper facade is longer design is simply executed with a plain running bond pressed brick main wall that is fenestrated with four openings, the outer two being broad but single sash, the inner two being paired sets. The parapet is stepped out from the main wall plane across its base and sets of long and short pendant brick brackets ornament the upper parapet. The longer of are arranged in groups of three at each end and in the center, two centered within each of the two halves, and five or seven shorter ones between those points. The original windows were 1/1 and replacement windows are 6/6 lights. The 1968 storefront remains in place, absent the loss of an aluminum flat canopy.

Alterations: M. G. Silver bought the building and remodeled it to house his department store, permit for \$7,000 (*Express*, February 25, July 1, 1954). Loss of canopy, post-1968. Permits for 224-26 note electrical work 1986.

221 Fifth Street, Security Savings Bank, 1900:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a two-story brown bricked building, and one that follows the district pattern of ornamenting an upper facade with recessed brick panels. This is an early use of upper level paired window sets. Two of these are separated at the ends and middle by the panels. Five (vertical rectangles) panels cover the parapet front. Two elongated ones

Description, Continued:

Colonial Revival fan arch transom, a segmental arch cap with key stone an elaborately carved secondary "lintel" and a continuation of the main upper facade fenestration and wall treatments above that. The building retains its glass fraternal sign. There are no rear additions although there is a substantial concrete block second floor exit base and a very substantial "T"-shaped chimney.

History:

Charles Ashworth purchased the lot in early 1901. The construction date is known because of some lost glasses dropped near "the new Ashworth building under construction just south of the First National Bank." The foreman was E. B. Rigler and the face brick was laid up in mid-August (*Express*, August 3, 10, October 5, 1905). The six-unit Kinlane Apartments occupied the upstairs of 224 as early as 1932. Tenants in 224 were Albert Minnis, grocer, 1905-40; Blighton Auto Repair, 1927, Ward's (Ward Nazum) Food Market (1947-54), and Silver's Department Store (1955-68+). Tenants in 226 were the Des Moines Gas Company (1917), Polonetzky Tailor (1932-40), Larson Cleaners (1954) and Silver Department Store.

Description, Continued:

The core measures 51 feet by 71 feet. A south brick addition measures 24 feet by 30 feet and pre-dates 1920. A lesser north addition pre-dates 1937 (11 feet by 30 feet).

History:

This building is significant to the district because it was the first to "leap frog" northward along the east side of the 200 block of Fifth Street. The town's second bank was begun in June, the architect being Charles C. Cross and Frank A. Gutterson of Des Moines. It was in the hands of the plasterers by early July! (*Express*, April 28, 1899; June 1, 8, 29, July 6,

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have centered teardrop brick pendants that intrude downward. The parapet cap is corbelled out to a bold profile. A limestone belt course runs full width along the upper sill line. The 1968 storefront survives with twin round steel support columns. The transom was Alterations: The power company did a comprehensive remodeling in 1953 that included an aluminum/glass storefront, the new display windows being lowered to floor level. Barney Crow was the contractor and the cost was \$2,000. This storefront survives intact with covered transom (*Express*, October 22, 1953; January 7, 1954). Permits note a remodel (1968) and heating upgrades in 1971.

1900). Bank offices were upstairs and the vault and fixtures came from the defunct Des Moines Savings Bank. See 219 Fifth. The Des Moines Electric Light Co., later Iowa Power and Light, replaced the departed bank and was here 1920-75+.

Description, Continued:

then and remains paneled shut. The plan matches 217 in its dimensions and a narrow single-story rear addition across the rear of both plans. This building was fully fenestrated on both upper side walls due to upstairs offices and the windows survive on the north wall.

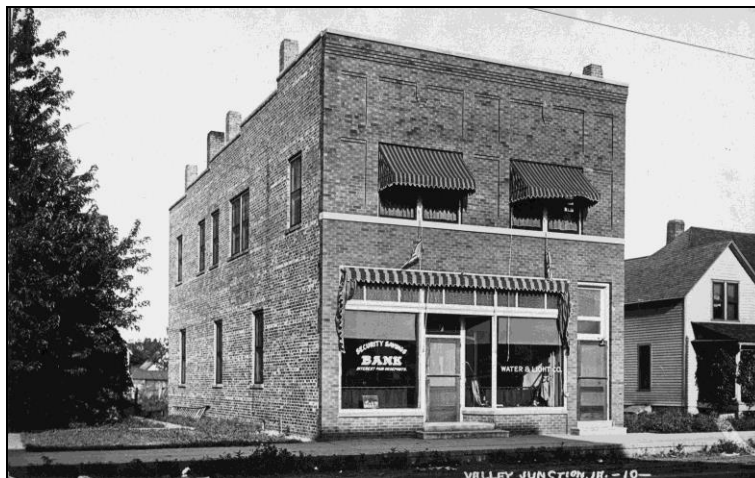


Figure 11: Newly completed 221 Fifth, looking southeast, 1900
(Jordan House Library and archives)

225 Fifth Street, Dr. Fred Sternagle Medical Clinic, 1940:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a large pre-war single story medical clinic. It's curved entry angles put it into the Moderne architectural style. This engaged column treatment would be used in the post-war American Legion building. The full fenestration uses arrow brick piers to define matching window sets, with a centered long window flanked by square end ones. A narrow aluminum transom capped four tiers of structural glass. The original storefront including an Alterations: The window frames, canopy and curved walls have been painted black and a black metal cornice has replaced or covered the stone coping.

History:

Dr. Sternagle acquired this lot in late 1939 and built this Art Deco styled clinic (*Express*, November 7, 9, 1939). Original or early tenants were Dr. Sternagle, Dr. Andrews and Dr. Higgins. It was formally titled the West Des Moines Internal Medicine Clinic by 1975.

Description, Continued:

aluminum rounded canopy survives save for the lost structural glass block. The building footprint measures 50 feet by 96 feet and has substantial light wells on either side of the center of the plan. The front

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Permits note a 1960 rear storage addition, partitions in 1968, heating upgrades in 1975, and plumbing and heating work in 1982.

227 Fifth Street, 1947:

Evaluation: The building front was completely replaced in 1985. This is a non-contributing building.

Description: This one-story building has been re-fronted. The original storefront had a left-hand entry, aluminum cornice, and structural glass bordering its doors and windows and forming a kick plate. The cornice was plain with a stone coping. The plan measures 25 feet by 60 feet.

Alterations: Permit for a \$5,000 25 feet by 60 feet brick, steel and glass block building by Reed's Ice Cream Co. (*Express*, December 12, 1946; January 30, 1947). Permits as 227 by West Des Moines

228 Fifth Street, First National Bank, 1901, 1920:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is an excellent and well preserved example of a Classical Revival bank building design, veneered with cream colored terracotta. The facade has a centered pedimented entry that is positioned within a recessed central wall plane section. The "mezzanine" above the entry is fully fenestrated, originally with multi paned lights set into three sets. Sidelights flank the entrance. The whole facade is recessed between projecting side wall pilasters. These are paneled vertically. Column-like square cut columns with capitals are then set inside each side wall. The parapet consists of a broad frieze band with circular modillions a cornice, a belt course, the name plate with flanking large circular modillions, and a cap of alternating shells and scrolls.

Alterations: The facade matches its 1968 appearance save for the replacement of a half sized side window with night deposit box below, with a full size replacement and the expected loss of a projecting bank sign. Permits note the construction of a \$7,000 25 feet

office core and a centered narrower rear wing were built by 1941 and a rear full-width addition, 30 feet deep was present by 1950.

History:

Reed's Realty owned the lot from late 1939 and this was a Reed's Ice Cream store from ca.1947 until 1962, after which it housed the West Des Moines Waterworks.

Alterations, Continued:

Waterworks note a marquee (1962), remodeling into offices (1962, contractor Barney Crow), electrical and heating upgrades (1983) and the remodeling of 24 feet by 83 feet in 1985.

History:

Leland Windsor and Simon Casady obtained this half-lot in late April 1900 and announced plans to erect a two-story brick building (*Express*, April 27, July 19, 1900). The bank was founded in 1901 by James Mullane and built its first building on this site by 1904. The old bank gained new end foundations and walls, retaining only sidewalls and structural ground floor (*Express*, September 4, 11, 1919). This re-built building was designed and built by the Lytle Construction Company, Sioux City. The 1920 Sanborn map shows the building "drawn from plans." The building was dedicated 2-21-20. The bank occupied the building as of 1968, became a branch bank in 1971 and was vacated in 1991 (*Des Moines Register*, July 11, 2001).

Alterations, Continued:

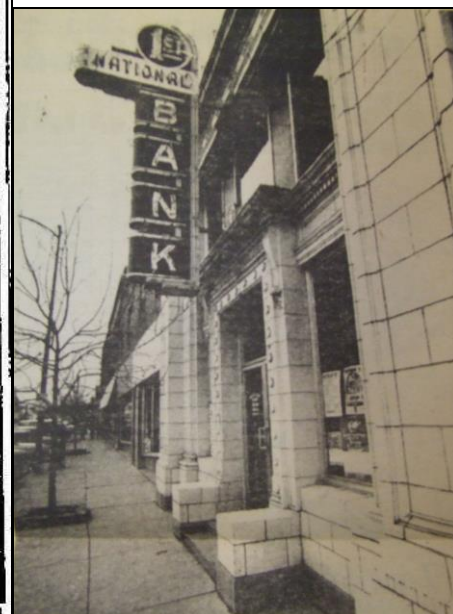
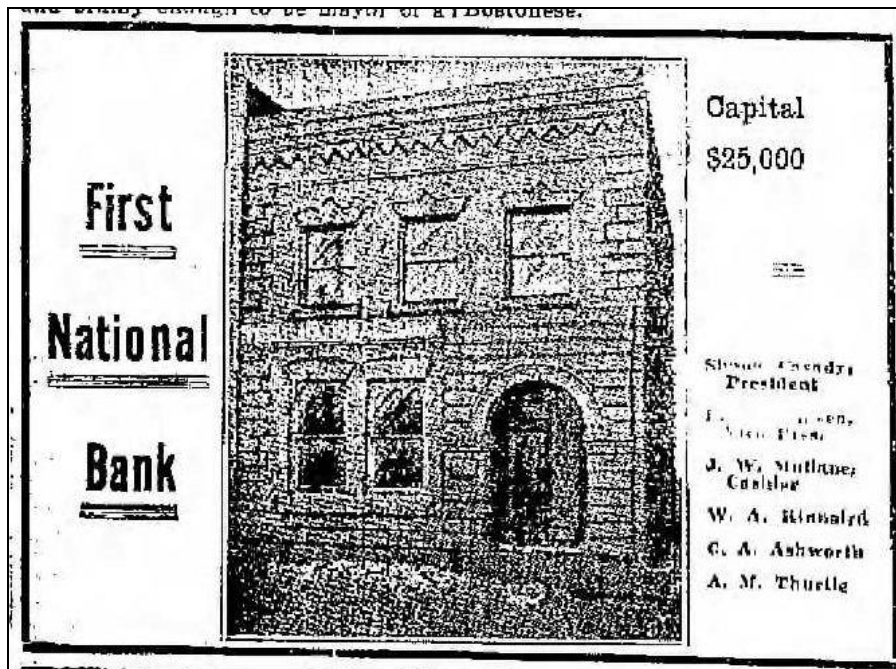
by 54 feet concrete fully fenestrated block addition in 1949 (permit dated June 29) built by contractor H. H. Kilburg. Electrical and plumbing work dated to 1975 and an interior stairway was altered in 1978.

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Figures 12, 13: [left] Original 228 Fifth Street appearance, 1911 (Des Moines *Daily News*, June 18, 1911) [right] Bank and signage looking south, 1980 (Des Moines *Register*, February 23, 1980)

229 Fifth Street, vacant alleyway:

Evaluation: Not counted.

Description: No building is extant, paved alleyway.

History:

The 1950 Sanborn shows a vacant half lot.

Alterations: Demolished or always vacant prior to 1965.

230 Fifth Street, Charles Martin Bldg., 1920, First National Bank Annex, 1964:

Evaluation: This is a close call concerning integrity.

While the facade still retains the theme of the annex design, the fenestration of the facade greatly alters it.

Description: This single story Modern style building was presumably re-fronted with a brick and tile facade, the design of which emulated a series of columns. The side and rear walls appear to indicate concrete block construction and all new work however. The building retains its 1968 facade

Alterations: The original annex design consisted only of alternating single light window bands. A door was added in the 1970s and a window unified the final northernmost two original windows in the 1990s.

Permits note Contractor Knudsen renovating this building in late 1964. Other electrical work followed

History:

Clarence Martin from Redfield planned a two-story brick store (25 feet by 60 feet) with upstairs offices in the fall of 1919. Work started in mid-October with J. F. Martin as contractor and the 1920 Sanborn shows the building "drawn from plans." The plans apparently changed and a single-story building resulted, occupied early August (*Express*, October 2, 16, 1919; January 15, August 5, 1920). The building was re-built to house Harry Trevillyan's confectionery and news stand who was followed by the Great Atlantic & Pacific Grocery Store #1112 (1927-29). Graves' restaurant was here in 1932 and the Fisher family resided here as of 1937 with no 1943 listing. The Assessor dates the building to 1950 which is too late. The First National

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in 1966.

232 Fifth Street, 1988:

Evaluation: This 1988 building wraps around 234 in front and rear and includes a storefront, the whole being counted as one non-contributing building.

Description: This single story single storefront is new construction within the district. The lot was vacant as of 1968.

Alterations: Not applicable.

234 Fifth Street, Vandenburg's Drugs, 1939:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is a corner single story Moderne style glazed enamel tile veneered drugstore design with an angled corner entry. Square cream colored tile covers the east bay (main facade) and a rear north-facing Maple Street storefront. Rectangular tile covers the parapet fronts (presumably on the Maple Street front as well which is obscured by a metal slip screen), save for over the angled entry where square tile and a light green rectangular tile form alternating horizontal bands. The same green tile is run vertically between stacks of rectangular tile. The double storefront effect results from the inclusion of a brick north sidewall that separates the two storefronts. Two sets of three elevated windows are on this wall. A rear Elm Street store area measured 12 feet by 25 feet. The foundation is of concrete block (*Express*, March 28, 1949).

Alterations: Building permit for a \$10,000 building (*Express*, December 31, 1939). The 1968 storefront is still intact apart from the loss of a presumed aluminum cornice and flat square cut hood that wrapped around

233-35 Fifth Street/420 Elm, Cornwell Building, 1955:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This triple angled storefront plan mirrors and reverses that located at 131-35 Fifth. The plan measures 50 feet by 70 feet. The facade brickwork is a thin Roman brick that is laid in running bond with a

Bank acquired the building in late December 1962 but the Valley Meat Market was here 1935-1964 and Rhiner's Plumbing and Heating remained as of 1965 and there is no individual listing in 1968. The bank altered the storefront ca.1965+.

History:

A two-story frame residence/storefront stood here as late as 1920 and a garage occupied the west half of the lot, fronting onto Elm Street.

History:

The architects were Wetherell and Harrison of Des Moines. Garmer and Stiles were the general contractor. The glazed enamel tile and structural glass came from Carr Glass and Paint. Chelious Vandenburg acquired this property in January 1931 and built this building in 1939. His Vandenburg Drug was here 1940-68, moving from 132 5th (*Express*, February 15, 1940). A rear 508 Elm Street storefront first housed Marion Tuttle's beauty shop.

Alterations, Continued:

the main facade, also an angled raised wing (its shadow in the tile has left a white cover over the gap) that was used for signage. The north elevated windows, originally infilled with structural glass, have been replaced and the Maple Street parapet covered as noted. Permits note the repair of a wall and the closing up of an opening, with door jamb repair in May 1965, electrical work in 1975 and 1984, with the addition of an awning in early 1984.

History:

Clarence W. Cornwell built this building to house his real estate and insurance business and occupied the north storefront. Clayton Ridgway was the contractor. Initial additional tenants were the Omar Retail Bakery

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consistent one brick width overlap relative to adjacent courses. There is a thicker boxed cornice. Pilasters separate the storefronts and each entry is on the right-hand side. The current aluminum class storefronts were extant as of 1968. There is a fourth Elm Street storefront with door and double-display window and this served the bakery. Two rear entrances serve as many store areas.

Alterations: The Cornwell Law Office updated the electrical service in 1966, heating in 1961 and 1971 and electrical as 231/233. Dr. Conningsby revised the plumbing in 1969. Carriage Florist had electrical work done in 1981. Morrissey Jewelry did the same in 1986.

300 Fifth Street (see 501 Elm):

304 Fifth Street, ca. 1900:

Evaluation: Non-contributing due to the absence of commercial alterations prior to 1968.

Description: This is a two-story frame cubic house with cropped hip roof and a wrap-around porch on the south and east sides. The porch has been infilled within the period of significance with solid bands of windows and twin entry doors.

Alterations: Eventual commercial changes opened up the porches and added a front ramp, as well as adding a substantial rear addition. This 46 feet by 30 feet rear addition was built in 1978 along with all systems upgrade, An ADA compliant bathroom followed in 2002.

308 Fifth Street, 2010:

Evaluation: Non-contributing due to its recent construction.

Description: This is a single story frame side gable office building built after the district's period of significance.

Alterations: N/A

312 Fifth Street, McLaren Funeral Home, conversion 1942, 1946:

Evaluation: These count as two contributing buildings because this building was visibly altered to meet commercial use needs during the period of significance.

and Crivaro's barbershop (*Express*, November 24, 1954; May 26, 1955). Omar Bakery appears apparently as a rear occupant in 1955-65, Long Auto Parts, Cornwell Lawyers and an optometrist are present by 1960, Hukill Optometry, McLennan Law Office are here as of 1968. 420 has always been a barbershop, Crivaro's (1955) and Paullin's (1965-75+).

History:

This was a private residence past the period of significance and was minimally altered for commercial use subsequent to that. It was built by either W. Bolster who acquired the property in the fall of 1899 or banker Albert Raaz, who followed in the fall of 1903.

History:

A single-story T-plan cottage was demolished on this lot in 1967 and a new building more recently replaced it. L. C. Long likely built the cottage, being the first lot owner in late 1899.

History:

This two-story frame house was likely built ca.1906 by F. G. and Ella Young who then acquired the property. The McLaren Funeral Home Tudorized the house by

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Description: This is a two-story frame Classical Revival style residence with a deeply pedimented front gable, a cross-gable roof, each side gable having returned eaves. There is a Palladian-like front attic window set. The house was modified in 1946 with the addition of a permastone Tudor Revival style entry porch with other facade window and door replacements to match. The house exterior is clad with broad siding. A two-story carriage house has a first
Alterations: The Tudor porch replaced a full-width front porch 1946 (*Express*, August 1, 1946). The basement was rebuilt in 1994 after the 1993 floods. Systems upgrades date to 1968-69, 1979-80, 1985, 1987, repairs 1978, change of bathroom and kitchen, 1978, remodel 1979-80

adding a front addition, ca.1946. By 1978 it was termed the company's "Annex."

Description, Continued:
story concrete wall with a frame second story. An interesting end wall roofing design uses lower and steeper end gables to form twin shed roof effects, the whole being bracketed in Craftsman style. It postdates 1920 and pre-dates 1937. Its former east side garage openings are now infilled and covered with wood shakes. A stucco/tile carriage house dates to ca.1942 and is contributing. It represents the funeral home conversion.



Figure 14: Garage/apartment, view northeast (Jacobsen, 2016)

318 Fifth Street, West Des Moines City Hall and Fire Station, 1953-54:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building, one that attests to the growing administration and fire safety needs of the city as well as the continuing downtown focus of locating these services, adding to the northward expansion of the downtown on Fifth Street.

Description: This is an excellent and very well preserved Modern style example of a combination city hall and fire station. Easily ignored when looking straight on at the building is the angled south front wall. The design focuses on the mix of angles and setbacks and the uneven parallel roof lines with a broad soffit edge and contrasting vertical elements

History:

The First Lutheran Evangelical/Congregational Church was on this site until its demolition for the construction of this building. A new church was begun at 12th and Ashworth in 1950 (*Express*, May 25, 1950). The Fire Department acted to acquire this site and gave it to the city. A \$136,000 bond issue passed in late 1952. The architects were Keffer & Associates. The general contractor was Kenworthy & Fehm of Ankeny, Goff Plumbing, Furlong & Baker Electrical were the other primary contractors. The new building was occupied by the city, library, water

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(chimney and north end hose tower, the latter centered on the firehouse plan). The varied facade elements south to north consist of a blank brick wall, the aluminum entryway, a series of columns and long windows, and finally the twin doors of the fire station. Alterations: The building exterior is barely changed since its 1968 appearance. The roof soffits are broader and noteworthy lettering for the city offices and fire department have been removed. Permits note systems upgrades in 1966, 1974, 1975, general remodeling 1972, a new roof and a \$67,000 remodeling for Human Services in 2002. The assessor record notes a 1993 masonry addition demolition due to flood damage.

420 Elm Street, 1921-36:

Evaluation: This is a vacant lot and is not counted.

Description: This paved area is located east/behind 233-35 Fifth Street.

Alterations: N/A

501/503, 505, 507 Elm Street, 1924-36:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This is an early single-story multiple storefront brick building that long formed the downtown's north end, the building fronting south on Elm Street. The plan measures 42 feet by 75 feet. The facade brickwork lacks any ornamentation apart from a corbelled brick coping. There were four storefronts for much of its history, the 503-05 entry having paired entries. Entrances are centered, recessed and angled and the kick plate angles are a rare district example of open gap brickwork. The storefront infill was present as of 1968. Transom areas were then covered and awnings now cover those areas. A particular point of interest is the back or north wall with four elevated coal chutes. A narrow alley provides access.

Alterations: No permits have been found.

509, 511, 513 Elm Street, Thompson and Green Building, 1946:

Evaluation: This is a non-contributing building given that 513 had a garage front and its integrity is in doubt, the three storefronts are otherwise completely covered with a wood cladding.

Description: This building matches its eastern

department and fire department in early February 1954 (*Express*, February 28, May 29, October 9, November 6, 1952; April 30, May 7, 1953; February 4, 1954).

The building was vacated by city government 1996.

The Department of Human Services replaced city hall in 2002. Pegasus Gallery occupied part of the building in May 1996.

History:

Former residential lot.

History:

A. H. Minnis owned this lot as of time that this building was built. Tenants at 501: Montgomery Clothing (1929), George's Shoes (1932), Rhiner Plumbing Heating (1937-45), AC Ice Cream (1966-65), Town & Country Imports (1968). Tenants at 503: Phillips Chiropractic (1922-29), Joyland Inn Rest. (1932), Modern Beauty (1945), Cliff Shoes (1955-68+). Tenants at 505: Falk Photos (1925), Gavin or Gavin/Meadows barbershop (1927-37), Green & Thompson's barbershop (1945-50), Cliffs barbershop (1955-60) and Rabern's Barbershop (1965-75+). Tenants at 507 were Valley Pentecostal Church (1937), Cornwell Insurance (1945-50), Valley Florist (1955-65), New Style Beauty (1968).

History:

Truman L. Thompson acquired this property in August 1944 and built this building in 1946 (*Express*, April 11, 1946). Hank Chapman, barber, was an original tenant. Tenants at 509 were Pappas' Shoes A. C. Ice

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counterpart in terms of massing and contains three storefronts. At present the entire building exterior is covered with metal, wood or stucco. It is of concrete block construction. The plan measures 42 feet by 70 feet.

Alterations: The original building measured 25 feet by 50 feet so it was enlarged at some point. It was converted for YMCA use in 1955 (*Express*, December 1, 1955).

Cream (1944-50), Thoma's Photo 1955), YMCA (1955-75+). Tenants at 511 were Dale Radio Electric (1950-68+). Tenants at 513 were Becker appliance and farm accessory store (1946), Phillip's Upholstery (1950), Burke Auto Repair (1955), West End Auto Shop (1960-75+).

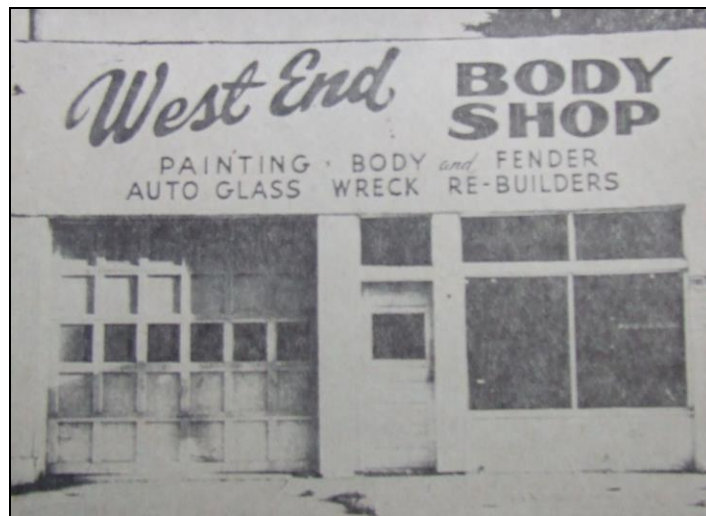


Figure 15: 513 Elm Street looking north, 1967 (West Des Moines *Express*, November 2, 1967)

400-02 Maple Street, West Des Moines Express Building, 1954:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This single-story brick/concrete block double storefront measures 50 feet by 98 feet. Each storefront has a centered entry and shorter flanking display windows. The front is unadorned apart from a wooden cornice set at the lintel level. Sidewalls are fenestrated on the core and the rear (1960) addition has garage doors on both sidewalls along with other openings. The brick is rose-light brown in color.

Alterations: The building was enlarged to the south with a concrete block addition in 1960 (permit dated July 20, 1960).

History:

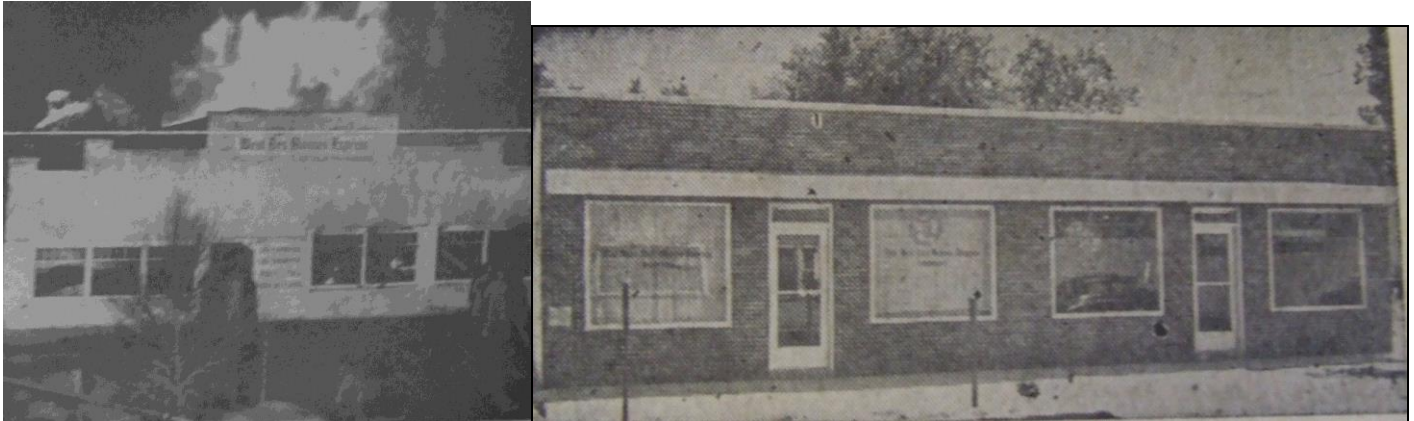
An April 1953 fire destroyed the former Held/Morgan Auto Garage, a frame/stucco building (ca.1927) that housed the West Des Moines *Express* newspaper and the Colonial Petroleum company in the back (Des Moines *Tribune*, April 8, 1953). The newspaper immediately bought the lot and built this concrete block double front building and remained here as late as 1975. The building included a 25 feet by 24 feet tenant space within its 50 feet by 80 feet plan (*Express*, November 30, 1953).

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Figures 16-17: 1953 fire destroys former garage, and replacement double storefront
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

401-03-05 Maple Street, Iltis Lumber Company, :

Evaluation: The main south building retains its historic horizontal siding underneath and could be made contributing, for the present there are two non-contributing buildings. Added upper windows alter the appearance.

Description: This is a two-story frame parapet roofed corner commercial building having former single-story lumber sheds attached on the west side. These are counted as one building.

Alterations: A fire destroyed the north wood shed (see 402 Fourth) in 1955 and it was rebuilt. The building exterior has been recently re-clad with vertical siding and the south frontages of the additions to the west have been also fenestrated or altered in their fenestration. Added upper level windows mark an apparent apartment addition. Later permits note heating and plumbing work in 1985 in 403-05.

408 Maple Street, West Des Moines Frozen Food & Locker Services, 1938:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building.

Description: This brick/concrete block single-story utilitarian locker building consists of several sections of varying height. The core building with its storefront offset to the west has a 29 feet width. A second major rear addition (post-1941) has a 48 feet width and both sections a 98 feet depth. A final addition with a 19 feet width post-dates 1950. The core original facade has a stepped pediment, left-hand

History:

H. A. Bechtel struggled in early 1909 with the Town Council to establish an "independent" lumber yard that could compete with Des Moines yards-an ordinance barred such a fire hazard within 200 feet of residences. He prevailed, built a range of buildings and began to produce concrete block as well. Iltis, a Des Moines chain, curiously replaced his operation a year later and served as the town lumber source well beyond the district period of significance (*Express*, March 11, 18, April 1, May 13, June 10, 17, 1909, September 8, 1955).

History:

The west one third of the double lot was acquired by Donald Reid and this building was constructed. Ray Brinton is credited as founding the firm and building this building in 1938, operating it for eight years until C. J. Carlson acquired it in 1950 (*Express*, July 15, 1954). The firm sold the parcel in 1975 as West Des Moines Locker Service.

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raised entry, and a paired 1/1 window set and square

Alterations: Stuccoed with a white finish 1939 (*Express*, October 26, 1939). Permits note the construction of a 927 square foot addition, apparently an interior work item (permit dated April 5, 1984), with electrical work in 1982-84.

409 Maple Street, Raaz Building/Joice Apartments, ca.1900:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building despite the window reductions as noted.

Description: This two-story brick Italianate style building has a prominent cornice that is set above a band of corbelled stack bond brick brackets. There are four upper front windows. The storefront (extant as of 1968) has twin right-hand entries, the

Alterations: The regrettable change was a shortening of all of the upper front and west side windows likely in 1985. Permits note unspecified work by contractor Barney Crow in 1955, undetermined damage from the adjacent Iltis Lumber fire of September 8, 1955, a new building storefront in 1960 (permit dated December 9, 1959), a canopy in 1982 and, a 1,250 square foot alteration in 1985.

Description, Continued:

display window to the west of it. This building had sidewall fenestration, still open on the alley (west) side. The rear additions have mostly eaves level small windows and an alley garage door.

History:

Banker Hermann Raaz acquired this lot in late 1899 and built this building on its west end, close to his bank building. Tenants were Des Moines Photo Co (1905), Valley Vulcanizing (1919), Ralph and Robert Joice Photography (1914-25, upstairs), upstairs residential use resumed in late 1910. Peggy's Beauty Shop (1927) and Joice Beauty Salon (1929-68+).

Description, Continued:

easternmost for upstairs egress. The transom area, covered in 1968, is obscured by a fixed awning. The brickwork is painted with highlights. This is a free-standing alleyway building having west and north fenestration and a rear frame stairway.



Figure 18: 409 Maple Street, ca. 1920 photo looking northeast
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

411-13 Maple Street, J. H. Swan Building, pre-1937, re-fronted 1945:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building, being counted as one separate building due to its unified design and later construction relative to 201-03 Fifth.

Description: This single-story brick fronted double storefront is present by 1937 (Sanborn) and was

History:

This building had its origins as a single-story frame warehouse that was re-fronted at a later date. Luzetta Swan obtained ownership of the parcel in 1938. Tenants in 411 were Payne's Complete Electrical

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remodeled into its present form in 1945. Its frame east wall and metal covered north/rear wall betray its humbler and earlier origins. The plan measures 40 feet by 43 feet. The facade is plainly wrought and one minor point of interest is the slightly raised concrete foundation that underscores its front. There is a third left hand entry into 201-03 Fifth. The two storefronts, likely extant as of 1968, have centered entrances. Only the doors have been replaced.

Alterations: This is credited as a new building with white brick front and a modern aluminum and steel storefront in mid-1945 (*Express*, July 19, 1945). No other permit record was found.

513, 515, 517, 519, 521 Maple Street, Thompson Building, 1948:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building. Given that the actual facade is a known factor, the coverings and canopies are deemed to be reversible elements. The whole is treated as one building due to presumed simultaneous construction and unity of design and materials.

Description: This is a one/two-story concrete block cluster of buildings, the central section being taller with lower bookend wings. The building has the same five narrow storefronts it started out with. The two-story core measures 34 feet by 49 feet, the west section 13 feet by 35 feet and the east one 22 feet by 28 feet. The front is devoid of ornamentation. Windows on the upper levels and other non-facade fronts are industrial metal sash.

Alterations: The most impactful change was the addition of full-length wooden canopies across the storefront level and the upper front of the taller portion. In addition vertical boards cover the storefronts. Permits note electrical work in 515 (1966 and unspecified work (1967).

415 Railroad Street, Rock Island Railroad Passenger Depot, ca.1910-20:

Evaluation: This is a contributing building. While this building was never in or near the district, it retains its architectural merit despite its move and does serve to preserve the district's railroad association, although visitors are potentially confused as to where the station and related tracks actually were.

Service (1945-46), Jim Stefan's Refrigeration Service (1946), Complete Electrical Service (1950), Kramer Appliance (1951-54), West Des Moines Service Co. (1960), Elliott's Business Machine (1965), Aldridge Home Improvement (1968). Tenants in 415 were The three G's Koffee Shop (1946), Valley Coffee Shoppe (1950-55) and Melodee Records (1960-75+).

History:

Truman L. Thompson owned the lot when this was divided in mid-1947. A building permit for a \$4,000 concrete block business building was issued in late 1946 (*Express*, January 30, 1947). It consisted of five narrow storefronts. 513 tenants were Haye's Flowers (1955), B&M Cafe (1955-65); 515's tenants were Chapman barbershop (1950), Hukill barbershop (1955-65) and Phil's barbershop (1968), 515's tenant was Hazard Roofing (1950-68); 517 was occupied by Johnson's West Des Moines Cleaners (1947); 519's tenants were the Switchmen's Union (1950-55), and McElderry law office (1960-68); 521's tenants were Harry Hoy's paints (1950) with no subsequent listings found.

History:

This depot was located two blocks east and was relocated to this site in 1983, losing its east end bathroom addition.

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Description: This single-story frame depot consists of its longer now west wing, an off-center office bay, and shorter east wing. The interior plan is open but the building retains 4/4 lights and interior trim. The exterior has replacement siding across its base and stuccoed upper walls. Station signage is on the east gable end.

Alterations: The building was moved to site 1983 and gained a rear wing. The low foundation is concrete block and a reconstructed south wooden deck emulates the depot function.

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District Property List and Tabulation:

Address	Year Built	Main Building contributing	Main Building Non-contributing	Secondary Building Contributing	Secondary Building Non-Contributing	Historic name, style if applicable, notes
4th Street						
201	1927	1				Spear's
202	1955		1			Iltis
300	1923	2				
5th Street						
Gateway arch					1(S)	Non-contributing structure
100-02	1900	3				St. Joe Hotel
104	1904	4				Seyfert
106	1915		2			Freel Garage
110	1970		3			
111-13	1940s		4			
112	07-15	5				Ashworth
114	1900	6				Callibreath
115-17	42-49	7			1	Boyd's
116	1894	8			2	Boyd's
118	1894	9				Boyd's Block
120	1894	10				
122	1893	11				
123-25	-1937		5		3	
124	07-09	12				
Alley-126	N/A					Not counted
Alley-129	N/A					Not counted
127	1951	13				Ozimek Machine Shop
128	1910		6			Mott's
130	1897		7			Pringle
132-34	1905	14		1		Former brick wing now free standing, see Figure 5
131-33-35	1953	15				
136	05-06	16				Seyfert, tiny shed not counted
137	1900-01	Not counted				City Hall, Fire Station NRHP
138	1911	17				Ashworth
143-45	1913	18				Wegener

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Address	Year Built	Main Building contributing	Main Building Non-contributing	Secondary Building Contributing	Secondary Building Non-Contributing	Historic name, style if applicable, notes
200	1946, 49	19				Seward Pharmacy, incl. 505 Maple
201	1893	20				Raaz, Includes 417 Maple
202	1927	21				Peter Pan
203	1900	22				Raaz, Includes 411-15 Maple
204	1915	23				
205	1897	24		1		
206	1896	25				Irwin
207	1898, 1952	26				Sorenson
208	1953	27				Jacobson
209	1900	28				Burt
210	1952	29				Banner
211	13-14	30				Burt
Alley-212	N/A					Not counted
213-15	1942, 1946	31				WDM Hardware
214	1897		8			Slocum
216-18	1897	32				
217	1949-50	33				Am Legion
219	1919	34				Security State Bank
220-22	1925, 1946	35				Masonic
221	1900	36				Security State Bank
224-26	1905	37				
225	1940	38				Sternagle
227	1947		9			
228	1901, 1920	39				First National Bank
Alley-229	N/A					
230	1920, 1964	40				C. Martin, bank addition but now separate
232	1988		10			Includes 508 Elm
234	1932	41				Vandenburg Drugs
233-35	1955	42				
304	1900		11			

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308	2010		12			
312	1913, 1946	43		2		McLaren Funeral Home, garage with apartment, see Figure 14
318	1953-54	44				City Hall
Elm Street						
420-lot	N/A					Not counted, vacant lot
501-05-07	1924-36	45				
509-11-13	1946		13			
Maple Street						
400-02	1954	46				WDM Express
403-05	1920s		14			Iltis
408	1938	47				WDM Locker
409	1900	48				Raaz
411-13	1937	49				
513-19-21	1949	50				
Gazebo	1986				2(S)	Moveable structure at 521 Maple
Railroad Place						
415		51				Moved in
Totals		51	14	2	3 buildings, 2 structures,	

The district includes 51 primary contributing and 2 secondary contributing buildings (total 53, not counting one NRHP listed building); 14 primary non-contributing buildings and 3 secondary non-contributing buildings (total of 17) and 2 non-contributing structures for a total resource count of 72 buildings and structures.

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Architects, Continued:

Douglas [Albert James], Rich [Herbert E.], Woodburn [Chester C.]
Gutterson, Frank A.
Keffer and Associates
Nelson, Robert N.
Proudfoot and Bird
Wetherell and Harriuson

Builders, Continued:

Garmer and Stiles
Kenworthy and Fehn
Martin, J. Frank
Ridgway, Clayton
Rigler, E. B.
Rousch, H. J.
Youngerman, George

Statement of Significance:

The commercial core of Valley Junction, the original downtown and center point of present-day West Des Moines, is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, on the local level, for its historical significance under Criteria C, architecture) and Criteria A, history, commerce and community planning and development. The district period of significance is 1893-1967. This time span concludes with the National Register 50-year cutoff point for unexceptional significance. The economic vitality of this downtown district, unlike most other comparable downtowns, continued in a sustained and ever-evolving way to and beyond that point in time (1967).

Its significant architecture embraces a contiguous and cohesive range of primarily brick (with a few surviving frame) commercial buildings that fully represent the spatial and architectural evolution of the downtown over time. This range includes an impressive array of well preserved substantial and elaborate commercial examples that are not usually found in a non-county seat Iowa downtown context. The majority of the buildings are two stories in height, although there is one three-story example and a few early single-story buildings. The majority of and the largest examples of the latter are post-World War II concrete block designs with brick facings. The topography is flat and the district layout is linear with commercialized cross streets. The developing buildings adhered strictly to the established plat so that almost without exception, the width cadence is that of a half-lot (25 feet) or full lot double-storefront (50 feet). The Masonic Block (220-222 Fifth) is the only obvious exception with its upstairs south end stairway hyphen that it shared. The district substitutes corbelled brick parapets and cornices for pressed metal ones exclusively. Its upper facade ornamentation adheres to a localized trend that patterns recessed brick panels in rows across the upper facade and/or the parapet frontage. The majority of commercial buildings lack any formal stylistic lines. Blocks, corner buildings, banks and public buildings are the exceptions. Architectural merit rests on ornamental brickwork, brick coloration, and scale and massing. It is also supported by the unusual survival of multiple examples of each

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phase in the district's development, including several original frame examples. Pure stylistic examples are rare. These buildings reflect at least some association with formal architectural styles:

Italianate Style: 201, 216-18 Fifth Street, 409 Maple Street
Queen Anne Style: 100-02, 124, 126, 132-34, 136 Fifth Street
Classical Revival Style: 137, 138, 143-45, 201 (as remodeled), 203, 228, 312 (residence) Fifth Street
Renaissance Revival Style: 220-22 Fifth Street
Art Deco Style: 225, 234 Fifth Street
Moderne/Modern Style: 200, 217 225 230, 234 Fifth Street

This downtown was fortunate, the fire threat never impacting more than a single building and few of those at that. As such the district's commercial architecture consists of substantial surviving buildings from each of its successive building phases. At the same time, the long-term financial prosperity of the downtown meant that the storefronts of even the earliest buildings were replaced wholesale, particularly post-World War II and there are no original historic storefronts and no structural cast iron structural materials, apart from beams that cap the storefronts. Six buildings retain visible steel beams with rosettes above their transom lines (100-02, 106, 136, 206 209, 216-18 Fifth Street).

The district's architecture directly interprets its historic function and development in a more direct manner than most districts do. Several developmental rules applied to this downtown. First, the "lower district" being the 100's on Fifth Street between Railroad and Maple streets, was the saloon zone, the realm of railroad workers who were off on a tear. It was also the light industrial or services part of the town and community. Normally stables and blacksmith shops are off of the main street, relegated to the periphery of the downtown. Here they had front-row seats. The second rule of this downtown was that the west side of the main street was always the more substantial, the street side where brick buildings first arose. This trend, overlaid on the first one, translated to the east side of the 100's block always being of predominantly frame construction. This of course results in no original surviving frame buildings. A third trend is that this downtown always had its share of frame rookeries and retains a few today. Many still survive near the downtown, having been moved and rebuilt as residences or additions to residences. The fourth trend is that this downtown had to expand north being landlocked to the south so its architectural story expands in that direction and in general the newer the building the more likely it is located towards the district's northern reaches. This northward gravitation was slow and fitful and as late as World War II it remained confined to the two blocks between Railroad and Elm streets.

Its commercial significance is based on an over-scaled solid and broad-based retail, commercial and service history that transformed as Iowa's first alternative/retail incubator commercial attraction, one that was increasingly dominated by female entrepreneurs and property owners. Few if any comparable or even county seat Iowa communities could have survived both the post-World War peacetime transition or the Great Depression without the loss of one of its three banks. Faced with the loss of the railroad that belatedly gave birth to it, the town re-branded itself as West Des Moines and developed a mix of industries and other job sources. This district's exceptional commercial history is measured by the extensive and broad based range of businesses that occupied its buildings over time. The vitality of this history out-lasted the district period of significance but was challenged by major railroad strikes and economic downturns.

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With regard to community planning and development, Valley Junction was an exceptional example of a railroad town that was created out of whole cloth in the depths of the recession years of 1893-95. Its emerging urban model was atypical inasmuch as the downtown was not platted with the expected narrower commercial lots and employed a linear downtown model nor was the plat located centrally in an undeveloped tract where it might have expanded evenly in all directions. Hemmed in by the railroad and the Raccoon River to the south, the capital city on its eastern boundary, and lowlands immediately west, it could only grow northwest and away from its downtown focal point. Never having suffered a major fire, the growing town rebuilt its commercial core in brick, favoring the west side of Fifth Street over its opposite side. As the primary suburban challenge to the continued westward expansion of Des Moines, West Des Moines played a growing urban partnering role with that considerably more substantial urban neighbor. Blocked from expanding directly west, municipal growth required the annexation of lesser communities to the northwest and beginning in the late 1940s the seeds of a remarkable urban growth explosion were planted. The original downtown would continue to serve as the administrative and municipal center of the growing city into the 1900s, retaining the city hall and fire department, housed in new quarters in the north end of the original downtown. Valley Junction was the first suburban retail community to be accepted in an experimental manner by the highly successful Iowa Main Street economic development program and it has won enumerable national and other awards.

The Comparative Urban Iowa Context:

The contextual template for this Iowa town pretty much does not exist apart from this example. The context consists of non-county seat towns that are established late relative to other railroad-influenced communities, continue to thrive throughout their histories, and are built up with a substantial and architecturally impressive commercial architecture that rivals that to be found in more substantial county seat towns. Add to this the equally unusual role of suburban emergence cheek and jowl with the state's capital city, survival and growth without annexation, and a more recent explosive growth as one of Iowa's largest urban communities, and this is the making of an unusual town story. Few if any towns or cities change their name mid-stream, but in this case Valley Junction never really lost its value as a brand or a community identity, and even as the old town core was left behind with exponential westward expansion the old name would never die away and re-emerged during the 1960s as a recognized brand for another new kind of urban retail mix, one that welcomed female entrepreneurial and real estate investment energies.

West Des Moines/Valley Junction has four key descriptors for use in identifying comparable urban case studies. These are the following:

- not a county seat community
- a relatively late date of establishment (late 1880s to World War I)
- very close proximity to a major city
- sustained population growth throughout its history
- a present day population that is comparable to the state's larger cities

Not a county seat community:

This criteria overlaps considerably with the date of incorporation, a newer community likely having missed out on earlier county struggles to win the county seat role. By further implication, the third criteria of proximity to a major city also precludes any chance that any other county community could have ever in the running for this key

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status. The comparable test for this criteria is whether a city is now a county seat. There are 27 cities that lack that status and which have current populations of at least 5,000 persons. The size, while subjective, eliminates a greater number of the states 947 cities and towns. The range in size for the 27 communities is from 5,811 persons (Sheldon) to 58,965 persons (Ames). West Des Moines is the second largest city on this list.

A relatively late date of establishment (late 1880s to World War I):

Just 7 other cities have comparable incorporation dates, these being Ankeny (1903), Bettendorf (1903), Eldridge (1900), Grimes (1894), North Liberty (1913), Norwalk (1901) and Urbandale (1917). It is interesting to note that four suburban communities post-date World War II (Clive, Hiawatha, Johnston, Pleasant Hill). Of the 7 early cities, three are comparable in population (Ankeny, 45,582), Bettendorf (33,217) and Urbandale (39,463).

Very close proximity to a major city:

Eleven of the 27 cities are located within the capitol city metropolitan area but just 4 of these were so historically close that the proximity resulted an early date of establishment and a comparable growth pattern similar to West Des Moines. Of the 7 comparable early-date new communities previously identified, the two best examples, adding propinquity and comparable present day population are Bettendorf and Urbandale.

Sustained population growth throughout its history:

This criteria excludes those cities that were close enough to urban centers so as to experience explosive growth during World War II or more recently as they were engulfed by an expanding urban center. Cities like Ankeny or Johnston, Waukee or Norwalk all being close to Des Moines, or Marion which is close to Cedar Rapids, or North Liberty and Coralville, both being close to Iowa City, are the relevant examples. Two comparable cities meet all four criteria, these being Bettendorf and Urbandale.

West Des Moines is Iowa's tenth largest city (2010 census figures) out of 21 cities that have populations in excess of 20,000 persons. It surpasses both of the comparables in size (Bettendorf, 33,217; Urbandale 39,463) (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_in_Iowa).

Bettendorf:

The 1901 incorporation of Bettendorf is a bit misleading given that two territorial-era villages combined to reorganize at that time in conjunction with the recruitment of the Bettendorf Iron Wagon Works at that time. The population doubled in the next decade (to 2,178 as of 1910), and did the same between 1910 and 1950 (to 5,132), and then doubled the next two decades (11,534 in 1960, 22,126 in 1970). Its postwar growth spurt was industry-fueled in the form of the American Aluminum Company of America delivering thousands of new jobs beginning in the late 1940s. The 1980 population was 27,381 and it would take 30 years to achieve subsequent sluggish growth (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bettendorf,_Iowa; <http://www.bettendorf.org/egov/apps/document/center.egov?view=item&id=2145>;

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http://www.bettendorf.org/egov/documents/1449692139_42653.pdf; http://qctimes.com/news/bettendorf-s-downtown-transformation/article_60428510-5f11-5310-a496-f7650e08249b.html).

Bettendorf's historic downtown is optimistically described as being located along Grant and State streets from 6th to 23rd streets, a very spread-out affair. One overlap was a combination frame city hall and fire station, built in 1907 (non-extant). The construction of the new Interstate 74 highway bridge across the Mississippi River (2012-18) resulted in the demolition of 50 business buildings and what was apparently the heart of the historic downtown. Remnant buildings, located mostly on the north side of State Street are scattered single-story survivors. There are no Sanborn Maps for the community and no summary photographs for the lost downtown were to be found.

Urbandale:

Urbandale developed as a coal mining village and experienced interurban fever in 1905 when hopes were pinned on its becoming a hub on a developing interurban line. Formal incorporation occurred on the eve of World War I but population growth wasn't noteworthy until post-World War II with just 1,777 people comprising its census rolls as late as 1950. The coal mines were closed by the 1930s and there was never a substantial downtown. What there was occupied the north side of Douglass Avenue between 67th and 71st streets. Today surviving commercial buildings are largely of late construction date and single-story in scale. There are no Sanborn Maps for the city (<http://www.urbandale.org/412/Urbandales-History>).

District Descriptive Analysis:

Figure 19 illustrates how the Valley Junction plat was placed immediately adjacent to the corporate line (southwest corner) of the Des Moines corporate boundary ("A"). The claim was that the new town was five miles distant from the city but that measure was based on the downtown county courthouse location and not the distance from the Des Moines west boundary. It further illustrates how the railroad's southwardly direction and subsequently its yards and shops, were forced west of the downtown proper by the presence of a horseshoe remnant of the Raccoon River ("B"). The Raccoon River's proximity hints at future flooding problems. Today that river runs considerably further south than this figure depicts. The original junction depot location ("D") was the focal point of the original town plat and the developing downtown. Finally "C" locates the interurban link between the two cities (1898) and the only east/west running road to the north of "C" is what became the White Pole Road or highway and finally Ashworth Road. The future Grand Avenue runs across the detail of the larger image and Vine Street is the only east/west street that continues west apart from Railroad Street. First or 1st/63rd Street ("A") is the west Des Moines boundary but note how residential plats extend from Valley Junction east of that street into Des Moines proper. The angled road east of town was the sole highway approach from Des Moines prior to the westward extension of Grand Avenue and the building of a new Walnut Creek Bridge in 1913 (Des Moines *Tribune*, August 17, 1913).

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Figure 19: Area map, 1902(Atlas of Polk County, 1902)

Figure 20 identifies key streets in and around the district and it shows the considerable distance that lay between downtown and the railroad shops and yards to the west. The original town plat (Figure 20) consisted of two even rows of seven rectangular blocks, the blocks being oriented north south with intersecting north-south running alleys. The plat was bordered on the south by Railroad Street, was bisected by the parallel Maple Street and its north boundary was Elm Street. The standard lot measured 50 feet in width by 145 feet in depth and no provision was made for narrower commercial lots. The north tier of blocks consisted of 18 lots numbered in clockwise fashion. The south tier was slightly longer and contained 20 or more lots. The developing town oriented to the pre-existing depot and Block 4, the future southeast quadrant of the downtown was shortened by two lots, allowing for depot grounds. Railroad Street at this point wrapped around the north side of the depot grounds between Fourth and Fifth streets. Streets were 66 feet in width while alleys were 16 feet wide. Note that the easternmost residential plats were actually in Des Moines as First Street was the joint boundary. Note that First Street terminated at Locust Street so other routes had to be used to use the county road that bridged the Raccoon River at the lower right of the map.

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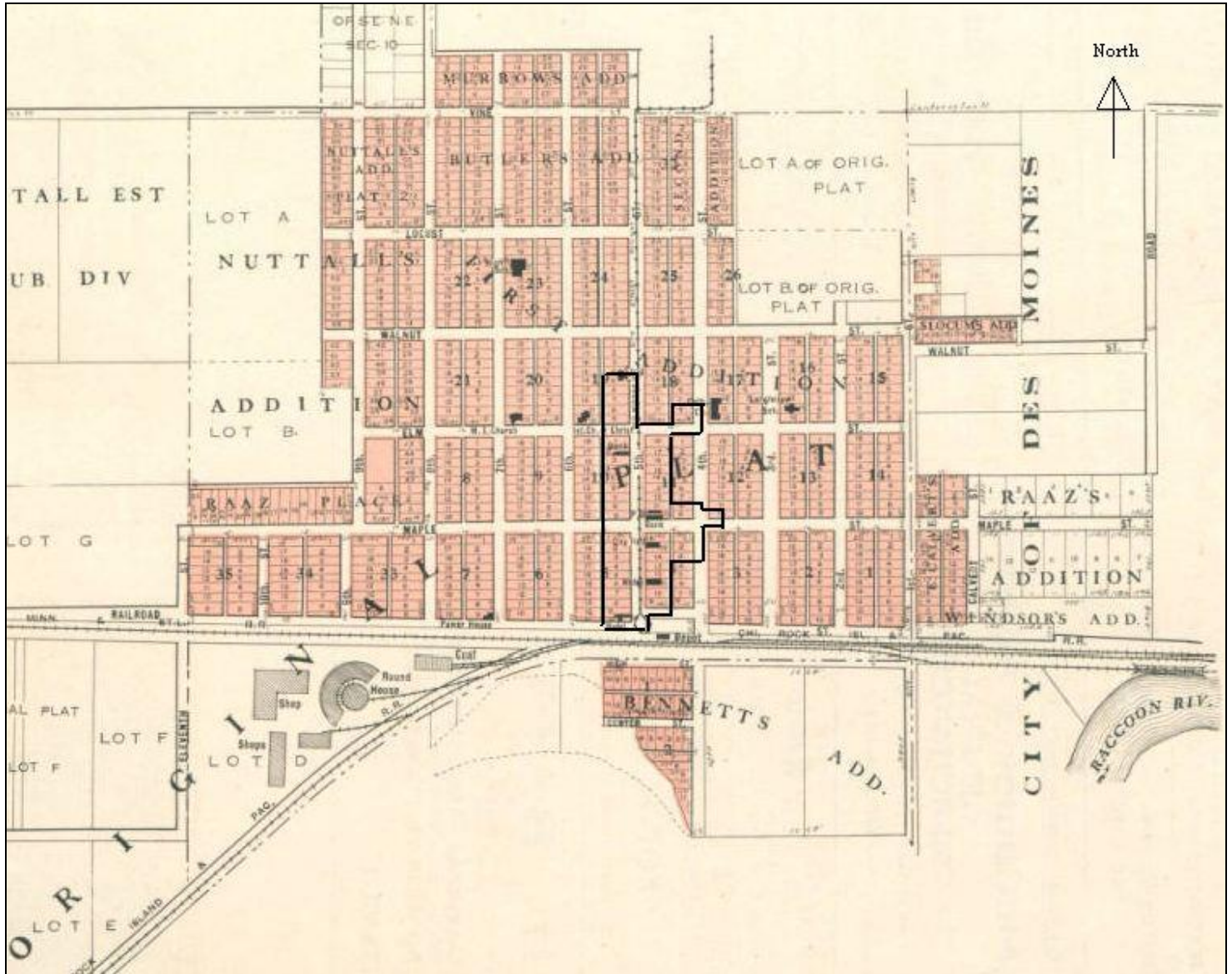


Figure 20: The earliest Valley Junction plats as of 1914 (district boundary annotated)
(Atlas and Plat Book of Polk County, Iowa 1914, p. 39)²

The downtown simply overlaid atop the pre-existing village site at Fifth and Maple streets. All lots were of one size regardless of intended use. Fifth Street did not align with the first depot site nor was it a major through street heading north. Fourth Street north of Vine Street played that role (Figure 20). As late as early 1906 it wasn't even opened north of Vine Street. Fourth Street did both of these things and it would serve as a secondary commercial street within the downtown. Elm Street was the key traffic feeder into the downtown once automobiles began their

² This map is in error showing the interurban continuing north on Fifth Street to the north of Vine Street. The line deviated east to Fourth Street so as to avoid the hill on the other street.

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ascendancy. District growth, at least in the form of brick buildings initially favored the 100's block of Fifth and with one exception favored the west side of Fifth Street (Valley Junction *Express*, January 11, 1906).

In Figure 20 the growing town is shown right on the cusp of the good roads movement. Residential plats, actual or hopeful, extend south and east of the town proper. The interurban line with its loop at the south end of Fifth Street is nicely depicted as are the Rock Island shops and yards, located three blocks west and south of the downtown.

A curiosity was the railroad depot property that intruded into the south end of Block 4 (Figure 20), the east side of lower Fifth Street. Likely a pre-existing depot ground it never contained the actual depot but Railroad Street had to wrap around it to the north. The interurban loop circled its west end and the loop impeded any street improvement on the south end of Fifth Street. The Rock Island complicated things in 1907 by laying a brick walk over the car loop along the east side of Fifth. From the start, many had favored routing the interurban around Block 5 to free up Fifth Street. With the new walkway in place the *Express* urged the railroad to at least "park" the vacant land (Valley Junction *Express*, May 23, 1907).

The extant buildings of the district were erected in five phases. These successive periods were the following:

Table 1, Dates of Extant District Buildings, 1893-Present

Phases	Buildings
1893-1901	19
1902-1909	7
1911-1915	6
1919-1925	9
1932-1942	7
1946-1957	14
Post-1968	3
Total	65

Table 2 excludes the move-in depot and five secondary buildings within the district and ignores any lost buildings. The striking sub-patterns are a substantial initial up-building with a building hiatus in large part between 1901 and World War I. With reference to national economic depression cycles, this town is noteworthy for its very establishment and substantial initial brick construction in the face of the 1893-95 depression. There was some substantial construction following the post-war transition and a similar response post-depression. The final major building up followed World War II and the exhaustion of vacant lots as of the late 1950s set the stage in part for the dispersal of new commercial construction to nearby arterials and away from the core downtown. This final building period is more architecturally dominant at the human or streetscape scale because most historic storefronts (aluminum frame, glass infill, brick kick plates) date from these years and two entire building fronts were completely modernized. As with all downtowns, storefront replacements and façade replacement were favored beginning in the latter 1930s.

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The all district businesses database covering the founding of the downtown through 1967 enumerates nearly 1,100 individual businesses that comprised the economic heart blood of the district. Some of these lasted a few months, others many decades.

Table 2: Representative Headcounts by Business Type, 1893-1968

Business Type	Number
Barbers	38
Confectioners	21
Drugs	20
Dry goods/General	23
Furniture	13
Groceries	58
Hardware	14
Jewelers	5
Meats	22
Restaurants/Cafes	85
Recreation:	
Saloons/beverages	32
Billiard Halls	24
Transportation Related:	
Auto-related	24
Auto garages	5

While these tallies include miniscule and short-term firms along with substantial double-store fronted long-term ones as well as reiterations of partner mixes and changing ownership, the point to be made is that a non-county seat town fostered a 75-year commercial vitality that was the envy of many a larger community. There wasn't a retail or service classification that wasn't well represented within Valley Junction's downtown mix at any point of its commercial history.

The same database is helpful in documenting the impact of national financial depressions on the town's business. While the data is based upon a city directory sampling, dates for the last listing of a business are indicative of waves of business closings. Fifteen local businesses vanish after 1919 and 31 more did so in 1920, during the very difficult post-war peacetime transition years. Some 58 businesses disappear in 1929 alone as do 37 more in 1932. Twenty more disappear in 1937. The truly telling statistic however is that Valley Junction lost but one of its three banks in 1934 and the two survivors remain in business today. Yet another measure of hard times was the use of two storefronts by two minor churches during the years 1932-37.

One final reflection based on the same database is the substantial usage of the community name in business titles. While it is likely that most of these examples technically used the full "Valley Junction" brand in their titles, 28 firms used just "Valley" while 25 more used the entire brand name. A dozen used "West Des Moines" in their names after the 1938 corporate name change. Many of the pre-existing firms simply updated their titles in 1938. Obviously Valley or Valley Junction were both more popular in the original downtown. Two cases involved new firms that

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brought back the original name beginning in the 1950s and a third, Valley Auto Company, simply kept its name after 1938.

A final trend and not a surprising one is that historic public buildings are always located within this immediate downtown, being set cheek and jowl with commercial buildings and in a single building. The combination city hall and fire station is in the 100 block and its 1953 replacement, is a block to the north. The post office naturally skipped about the district with a series of increasingly long-term stays. The place to do business in the downtown, usually defined by where the bank and post office were located, started out at Fifth and Maple. The two new banks pulled the center point north, to the 200 block, where the Odd Fellows already had their substantial hall and where the Masons would then join them. The American Legion would do the same post-World War II. Here again the west side of the main street dominated, but the opposing side would play catch-up over time.

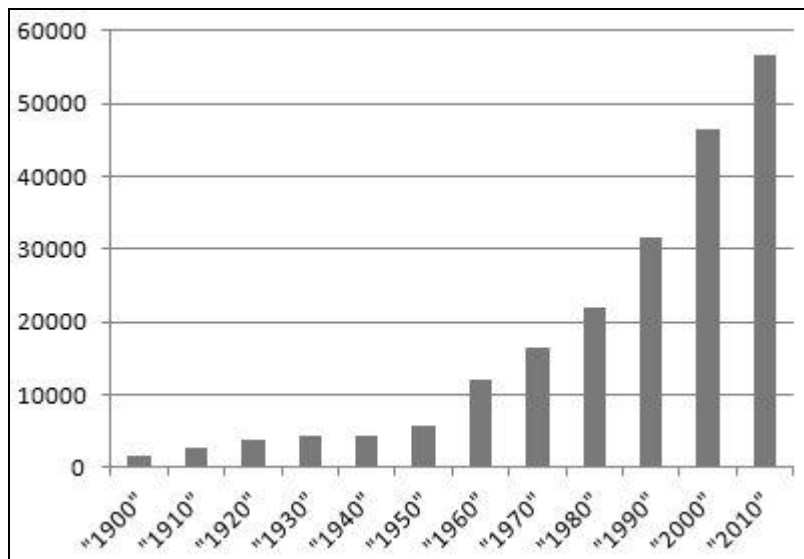


Chart 1: Valley Junction/West Des Moines Population Growth, 1900-2010
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Des_Moines,_Iowa).

Today West Des Moines is famous as the little burg that exploded as the dominant suburb outside the capital city. The seeds of this growth, as Chart 1 indicates relative to population, were planted from the onset of the founding of Valley Junction. It was land-locked by virtue of its being tucked into the corner wherein it had platted itself. So a join or die mission was the sole alternative to short-term annexation. It successfully redefined its economic base after the loss of the railroads and post-Depression and post-war initial urban growth set the stage for annexation and evolution as a stand-alone urban community that was self reliant in terms of schools, infrastructure and identity. Still, its Valley Junction starting point retained its status as city center until the early 1990s well after this historic district's period of significance ends. The current city now covers just under 40 square miles.

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Railroads can make or break a community, particularly when they make locational decisions for their coveted division points. The economics of abandoning established shops and yards for completely new locations defy ready understanding but this was the story of Valley Junction, located in the west central part of Polk County in Walnut Township. An entire new town would spring up with the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad relocated its facilities from Stuart and Brooklyn and plunked them onto a flat but flood-prone floodplain. While new towns were platted or even relocated to be on a rail line, Valley Junction's inception was unusual. It sprang from whole cloth once the railroad announced its intentions. In 1938 the railroad moved its facilities to Des Moines, leaving the town in the lurch.

Valley Junction was simply a rural station, located as the name states at the intersection of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, which turned southwest from the junction, and the West Des Moines and Fort Dodge Railroad which ran westward, both continuing from Des Moines proper. The developers with fiscal and entrepreneurial muscle would come from Des Moines in the incorporated form of the Hawkeye Investment Company. Twenty acres were purchased from Conrad and Minnie Youngerman on March 1, 1891. Its town plat was filed for record on April 10, 1891 and the town of Valley Junction would incorporate two and a half years later, on October 9, 1893 (Des Moines *Register*, December 29, 1999; [https://apps.polkcountyiowa.gov/ADM/TI/442%20Cnty%20Sec_Twn_Rng%201890-1919%2078-81%2025-B%20\(1-153\)/STITCHED_0018.jpg](https://apps.polkcountyiowa.gov/ADM/TI/442%20Cnty%20Sec_Twn_Rng%201890-1919%2078-81%2025-B%20(1-153)/STITCHED_0018.jpg)).

One year ago, vast fields of nodding grain held undisputed sway and spread as far as the eye could reach over the site now occupied by the progressive, energetic, wide awake and thriving burg of Valley Junction.

Emory English, Valley Junction *Express*, September 1, 1893

The substantial brick downtown strongly favored the west side of Fifth Street, the principal street. The exception curiously was the first brick building, a two-story brick bank block (201 Fifth) that Herman Raaz erected in the early fall of 1893, at the northeast corner of Fifth and Maple streets. Bank locations are the best measure of where the key commercial focus of a downtown lies and Maple Street became and long remained the center point of the downtown. Raaz' block included a south-facing Maple Street double storefront the following spring (Valley Junction *Express*, September 29, October 27, 1893; April 13, July 27, August 10, 1894).

The growing railroad facilities paralleled that of the town. There were two substantial lumber companies and a dozen houses were underway, four of these being located on a single block as of early October 1893. An early hotel, the Rock Island House, opened in December but it was on Railroad Street two blocks west of the depot and downtown, proximity to the rail facilities being the key determinant of location. The other, also catering to railroad workers, was on Fifth Street near the depot (Valley Junction *Express*, October 6, 20, December 15, 22, 1893).

Spring building has begun in real and rapid earnest. Contractors and builders have large forces of workmen busy all over town and already this month, numerous new houses

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besides four new business rooms have been built. This will be a great year for Valley Junction.

Valley Junction *Express*, March 9, 1894

The four new brick blocks were all on the west side of Fifth Street. Wooden sidewalks followed and in early May the last sidewalk gap in the downtown, on the east side of the street and north of Maple Street, was infilled. A triple-storefront brick was started at this same time. It was reported that the new block would have white pressed brick fronts but there is no evidence that these were in fact realized (Valley Junction *Express*, May 4, 11, 1894).

Something like a half a dozen or more new and neat cloth awnings have been placed in front of the various business houses in Valley Junction within the past week. These along with the large number put up last season helps the looks of our business street to a remarkable extreme. There is only one old countrified wooden porch along the entire business frontage on Fifth street and it should give way to something neat and attractive in the way of a cloth awning.

Valley Junction *Express*, June 1 1894

The growing town was thrilled to see the annual Des Moines city directory re-title itself as The Des Moines, Valley Junction and Polk County Directory. A new cast iron bridge was built to the south over the Raccoon River, opening by early 1895. It promised to deliver rural trade to the town. A warm winter had facilitated continued building into 1894 and the same level of activity was promised for 1895 (Valley Junction *Express*, June 29, July 13, November 23, December 27, 1894).

Saloons and their close cousin the pool hall play substantial roles in the history of Valley Junction, but the early saloon presence was brief in its endurance and closely limited in scope. At a very early point the council determined to limit all saloons to the south end of the downtown and for many years no more than three groggeries were allowed. The first mention of a saloon dates to January 1895 with John Fairgrave being the hearty entrepreneur. The first "gaming room" appeared in early 1896 and the newspaper called the attention of local authorities to the fact that it was illegal. The primary motivation to allow a saloon was tax revenue. When the first one failed for lack of patronage in mid-September the town lost \$50 a month in revenue (Valley Junction *Express*, January 5, 1895; April 17, September 12, 1896).

Parking or the lack thereof would be another constant theme in the town history and as early as Fairgrave's opening his saloon doors, the newspaper bemoaned the sufficiency of downtown hitching posts for visiting farmers. An idea for street macadamizing was also proposed by the same source, using the "surplus of tramps" to break up rock as a pavement of sorts (Valley Junction *Express*, January 25, 1895; March 27, 1896).

The first photo gallery is mentioned in July 1895. The two local lumber yards, both representing national brands, consolidated and their new yard was moved closer to the downtown, to the south block of Sixth Street (Valley Junction *Express*, April 21, 1894).

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The Raccoon River bridge was said to be busier than its south Des Moines proper counterpart. Building slowed in 1896 particularly with regard to new store buildings. The local editor looked back on where the town had come from, noting "The growth of Valley Junction from its very inception has been phenomenal to a remarkable degree in spite of the depression of the times, and with better times we expect to see the town stride forward with more momentum than ever. The nation had experienced a national depression, beginning in the early 1890s. As a result, Valley Junction was building when other communities were not, so its architecture is of particular interest (Valley Junction *Express*, May 29, August 9 September 4, 1896).

The pace of rail facility relocation picked up pace late in the year and it was noted that the town needed a railroad lodging house. Those having excess rooms were encouraged to provide housing for the refugee railroad workers (Valley Junction *Express*, November 13 1896).

The first two of many small-scale cigar factories were set up that winter. The first of several drugstore soda fountains were installed in May 1897. The first store to have a telephone line was Eaton's drug store, in late July 1897. It was at this time that the town council gave up on having electric power and street lights powered by it, and installed gas street lamps. Other gains that same year were the first dentist and first veterinary surgeon (Valley Junction *Express*, December 11, 1896; May 24, July 23, 30, August 6, October 23, 1897).

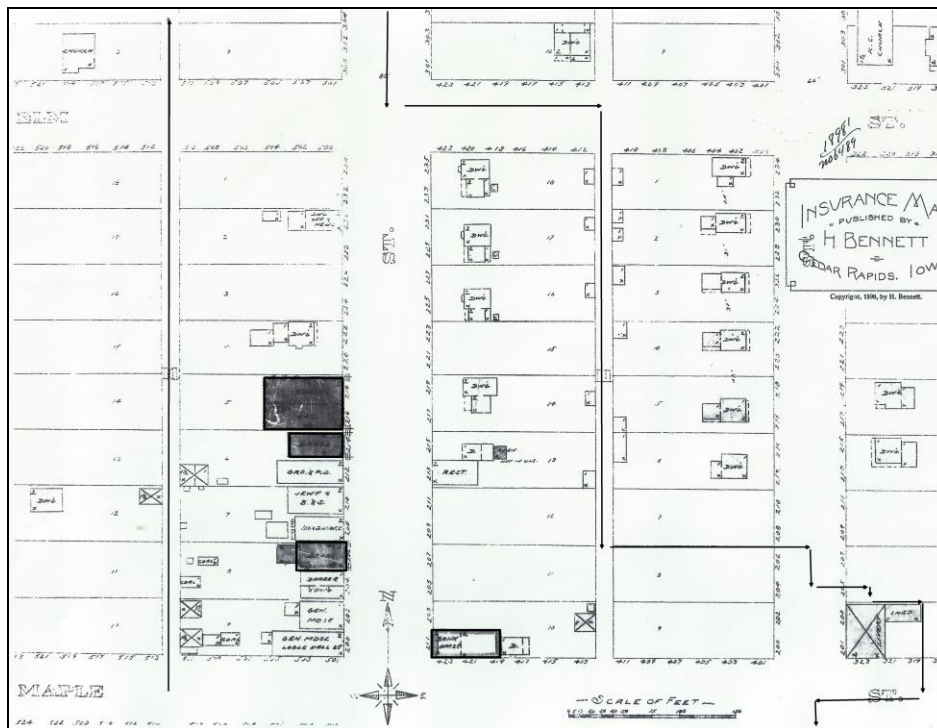


Figure 21: District as of 1897 with extant buildings marked with black squares (north part above Maple Street)
(Bennett Fire Insurance Company, 1897, district boundary added)

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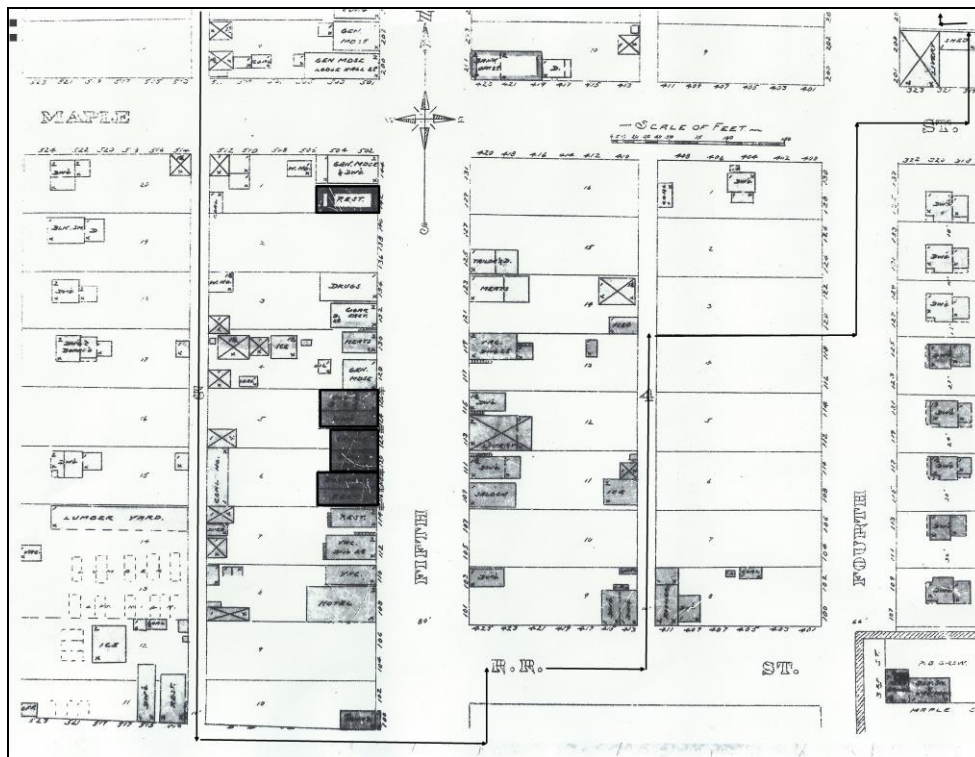


Figure 22: District as of 1897 with extant buildings marked with black squares (south part)
(Bennett Fire Insurance Company, 1897, district boundary added)

By 1898 the downtown was one and a half blocks in length with the majority of its storefronts being south of Maple Street and on the west side of Fifth Street. Figures 21-22 identify the scale and nature of the developing downtown and are annotated so as to identify still extant buildings from that time. There were nine brick store buildings all but one of which were in the latter group. There were a small number of peripheral businesses. These included a blacksmith shop on Sixth, along with a lumber yard, and a restaurant on Railroad Street, west of Fifth Street. To the east there was a livery at Fourth and Maple streets and a blacksmith at Third and Maple streets.

Here the northernmost two-story block (Dyke's Hall, 216-18 Fifth) housed a hardware and grocery with a hall upstairs. Bennett's Hall, to the south (214 Fifth) housed a drugstore, as did 206 Fifth. In the 100's block to the south, Boyd's Block (120 Fifth) was single story and housed a clothing store and a boots and shoes store. There was a church in 122 Fifth, a barber and baths business in 120 Fifth and restaurant and blacksmith in 116-18 Fifth. The election of a Republican president in 1896 meant a change in the local postmaster. L. Mott got the position and promptly moved the post office to the 200 block (*Valley Junction Express*, January 15, February 19, 1897).

The potential for flooding from three simultaneous sources, the Raccoon River to the south, Jordan Creek to the west and Walnut Creek to the east, was realized in early March 1897. The editor noted "Valley Junction has been given a sample of high water and we do not care for a repetition of the first few days of this week of wet walking that we enjoyed." There was a promised cure and the same source continued, "The town grade is now established and we should try at an early date to grade the streets to it and prevent a repetition of the inconvenience of the week past."

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Walnut Creek gave the town another drenching in late April. The lasting impact of the flooding was isolation from Des Moines when the road and rail bridges over Walnut Creek were washed out. These were replaced with brick and iron structures but the town was "in terror" early in 1898 that the floods would return, caused by ice or debris jams under the new bridges (Valley Junction *Express*, March 12, April 30, 1897; Des Moines *Daily News*, February 12, 1898).

Indications point to a repetition of the first summer's buildings in Valley Junction. Although the growth of the town has been steady and rapid, the year of 1893 was the banner building year and the improvements now underway if followed by others on through the summer as now seems possible, 1897 will eclipse all other years in our growth.

Valley Junction *Express*, April 2, 1897

Herman Raaz responded with a bank expansion, a wrap-around triple storefront building designed by the notable Des Moines architects Proudfoot and Bird. At the close of 1896 the railroad shops and their many workers were beginning to arrive in town. The shops were dismantled and moved along with a number of residences and a goodly number of Stuart's businesses simply followed their customers as well. The vast migration was only concluded by the early fall of 1898. Valley Junction was officially one of four division points in Iowa, the others being at Council Bluffs, Brooklyn and Davenport (*Daily Iowa Capital*, December 22, 1896; September 1, 1897; Des Moines *Gazette*, December 28, 1899).

Valley Junction is enjoying a great business and building boom at the present time which seems to be coming to the people of the Valley without any apparent effort on their part. Three new business blocks are now being built here and a large number of private residences are being erected in every part of the city. Since the railroad business took on a boom here a week ago there has not been hardly a man idle on the street who was willing to work...As a whole Valley Junction is now in a very prosperous condition.

Des Moines *Daily News*, August 21, 1897

The Des Moines newspaper the *Daily Iowa Capital* started a local column titled "Personal Notes Picked Up From the Suburb of the West." The burgeoning suburb was increasingly an irritant to Des Moines. An apparently serious effort was made to have one of two sites in close proximity to Valley Junction be selected as the location for what would become Fort Des Moines #3, the city's most substantial military plumb. This matter reached a crescendo when the Cook property, located north of the new town was the favored one by the army and the Iowa Adjutant General. Des Moines developer Frederick Hubbell favored the alternative Brown tract, south of the town and the Raccoon River as of November 1900. Another direct unpleasantness emerged in the fall of 1897 when it was claimed that the use of the Raccoon River as a sewer by the residents of Valley Junction was seriously impairing the source of Des Moines water works just downstream. The City of Des Moines passed a contamination ordinance but the Valley Junction folks ignored it as state law allowed the aggrieved city to control these problems but only within a five-mile radius. The Junction folks argued that the contamination source was more than five miles distant "by river." Thus initiated this row would continue until 1919 when a sewer treatment plant was finally arranged for (*Daily Iowa*

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Capital, September 4, October 20, 1897; *Valley Junction Express*, April 8, 1898; April 13, 27, November 9, 1900; *Des Moines Daily News*, October 23, 1896).

The Des Moines city officials are having another attack of the same old disease and they imagine that they are invested with authority to govern the whole of Polk County. A year ago they sought to intimidate the citizens of Valley Junction, to make water run uphill....

Valley Junction *Express*, July 22, 1898

Failed hopes for electric power have been referenced but it was the electric interurban that would bring that power source west and finally at the end of 1897, years of frustrated anticipation of rapid transit to Des Moines and the rest of the world were bolstered with tangible promises. The preliminary line survey was begun with construction to follow in the spring of 1898. The cars needed nothing steeper than a six percent grade to be successful. A route running south of the Raccoon River was threatened when Murrow Hill, located north of the town, proved to be a challenge but finally a work-around. The final route was determined by mid-April and the line entered town at the north end of Fourth Street, turned west to Fifth Street at Vine Street and continued south to downtown. The Fraternal Hall's initial gas plant was a failure and a new one was installed within weeks of opening the building. When druggist Harry Seyfert enlarged his building next door, a year later, he obtained his gas from the owners of the hall (*Daily Iowa Capital*, November 9, 1897; *Valley Junction Express*, November 19, December 17, 1897; April 15, December 23, 1898).

Valley Junction's growth by late 1897 resulted in an influx of chain or cash-only Des Moines firms. Most notable was the H. S. Chase grocery chain that was nicely ensconced on the corner of Fifth and Maple and remained there as late as 1916. Iltis Lumber similarly became the local lumber source in 1912 and remained as late as 1922 at 401 Maple. J. A. Garver opened a branch of his Des Moines based hardware company in town in mid-1898 and Houbrick and Company of Des Moines "launched into business" in the town in early 1899. The town's second bank was a Des Moines consortium, so much so that the bank fixtures were reused from a closed city bank. Cash only stores, while not necessarily coming from the big city, represented a change in doing business, declining to carry balances for their customers as other stores did. J. B. Bates was one of the first cash only stores, opening a meat store in November 1897. The cash only business practice became more popular as time passed, by World War II the next trend would be self service. Other businesses were branches of regional and national firms. C. L. Thompson used the cash only model and the *Express* noted:

Mr. Thompson has strictly adhered to the cash system and it has been a decided winner. It has enabled him to sell at close margins and at lower figures than competitors. When you pay cash you are not paying some bad account. This store has brought many new purchasers to Valley Junction from the surrounding community.

The Chicago and Minneapolis lumber companies were early examples. James Kelly opened a local branch of the American Laundry, a Des Moines firm, in late 1897 (*Daily Iowa Capital*, November 20, 1897; *Valley Junction Express*, November 12, 26, December 10, 1897; August 19, 1898; January 20, 1899; February 9, 1900; *Des Moines Daily News*, June 16, 1900).

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The spring building season in 1898 was well underway by mid-February. The *Express* noted "building lots have taken a jump in the valley in the year past. The permanent improvements made both in the business district and in the residential portion of town have stimulated the real estate men and lots are commanding a higher price than one year ago." Congestion was also resulting from a shortage of houses. In one residential block with eighteen homes, there were a dozen that housed two families and three held three families. The two homes moved in pieces from Stuart were reassembled on Eleventh Street close to the railroad shops. Nuttail's Addition, to the west of the downtown was particularly favored by builders and buyers due to its elevated flood-proof ground and its proximity to the shops. The housing pressure reinforced the commercial focus on Fifth Street, a Fourth Street store building was moved west a block and was replaced by a house. Meat store owner Peter Quirk went the other direction, building at Sixth and Maple where he was "away from the present business homes and a little nearer the residence portion of the town." He would have mixed results, his store being empty most of 1899. Things were improving so much that the Hawkeye Improvement Company announced that it would begin to enforce the prohibition of staking cattle on their unsold lots (*Valley Junction Express*, February 11, March 11, 25, April 8, May 27, August 19, 1898).

There was a bricked street crossing downtown at Fifth and Maple and a second one was laid across Railroad Street to reach the depot. The newspaper had poked fun at the range of house colors in the town when the contagion moved downtown. The editor reported "Dad Farrington has painted his place of business in a combination of colors that would rival Joseph's coat of old. It's paint, however, and has much improved the looks of the building which is among the oldest in Valley Junction." Old before it's time indeed (*Valley Junction Express*, April 15, May 27, 1898).



Figure 23: Early frame stores located on the future McIntyre Furniture store site
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

The long-promised interurban line finally displaced hack service with preliminary runs in late September and regular service beginning October 1. The new line cost a reported \$40,000 and had the heaviest grade steel rails of any municipal line. Some of the delay in running the track into town was caused by promised city grading of the streets. Finally the rails were laid with their grade to be raised once the grading work was done. Des Moines transit company president Polk purchased a town lot and built quarters for his carline workforce for overnight stays. Tongue

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in check or not, the *Express* noted that Postmaster Jordan was fretting that the mail boxes on the cars would cut into his salary as his pay as a fourth class postmaster was based on the quantity of franked letters (Des Moines *Daily News*, September 28, 1898; Valley Junction *Express*, September 16, 30, 1898; October 7, 1899).³

Postmaster Jordan has it in for the street cars. They are carrying Des Moines mail boxes and threaten to eat into his revenue as he derives his salary as a fourth class postmaster from the number of stamps cancelled....

Valley Junction *Express*, October 7, 1899

By the start of 1899 the downtown was sophisticated enough to attend to various urban concerns. Nine leading merchants including Quirk's isolated meat market pledged to go to summer hours between April 1 and September 1, closing at 7:30 p.m. Railroad pay days and Saturdays were exempt. Robbers began to pester Charles Waldron the local jeweler. Waldron held a prestigious position as local watch inspector for the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad and did a lot of watch making and repairing of railroad watches. His safe drew attention and in January 1899 three armed robbers were interrupted and pursued across the state before being captured in a lead-slinging shoot-out in Grand Junction. In late April thieves blew the door off of Waldron's old safe, not knowing about the new one in the front of the store that held everything of value. Two milliners residing upstairs later reported hearing a blast (*Daily Iowa Capital*, January 13, May 1, 1899; Valley Junction *Express*, January 20, February 9, May 5, 1899).

Half of a business man's time is spent in entertaining loafers. A loafer is a nuisance which it seems impossible to abate. Sometimes he is genteel and wears good clothes and is a very affable sort of a cuss, but he is a loafer just the same, and consumes your time and that of your employee, and smokes vile cigars, spills long yarns, spits on the floor or stove and maketh life miserable in various ways for the busy man. Every editor knows a dozen or more loafers whose obituaries he would gladly write.

Valley Junction *Express*, May 25, 1900

Much growth and expansion was anticipated in 1899 and the nearby discovery of coal was one more reason to be optimistic. One railroad related chimera was a two-story National Railroad YMCA reading room, to have been based on examples to be found in Kansas City, Chicago and St. Louis. Fund raising started but nothing came of the idea. The first business league was official as of March 1, but its central purpose was to amass comparative lists of unpaid bills within the downtown merchants, just one of whom had \$4,000 worth of these on his books. Two druggists installed the first soda fountains and new fraternal organizations flourished including a Rathbone Sisters' Lodge with 55 charter members. A telephone franchise was awarded although actual phone service took some time to come about and a municipal water and electric light works was awarded a franchise. The city-owned lot on Railroad Street just west of the downtown also had room for a city hall (Valley Junction *Express*, January 27, 28, March 3, 24, April 28, July 14, 28, 1899; Des Moines Iowa State *Capital*, January 30, 1899).

³ The Interurban Railroad Company was the first franchise holder. When faced with substantial paving assessments in 1915 ownership was shifted to the Des Moines City Railway Company (*Northwestern Law Reporter*, Volume 180, pp 288-290, "Interurban Ry. Co. vs. City of Valley Junction, et. al.")

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Some of the businessmen have filled in the street in front of their business places with ashes and will do away with the water and mud that collects there in wet times like the past two weeks.

Valley Junction *Express*, May 26, 1899

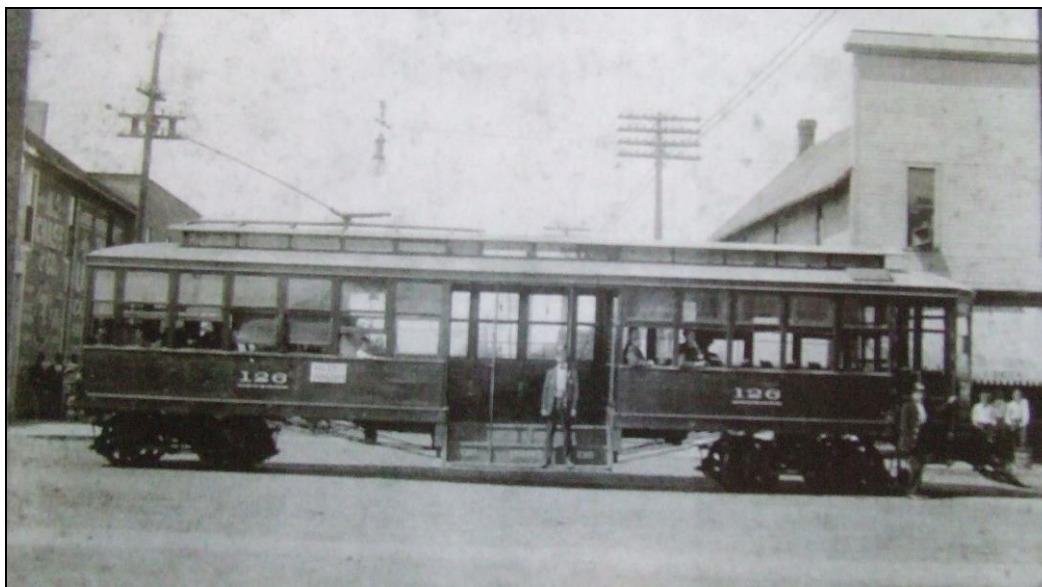


Figure 24: The new interurban car, 1900, Maple Street intersection looking west from Fifth (Jordan House Library and Archives)

Figure 24 depicts a later version of the special cars that the Des Moines Street Railway committed to the Valley Junction line. The front section was for female passengers, the rear end was a smoking lounge and there was a central vestibule. These cars had a 70-horsepower motor and rode like “a Pullman sleeper.” It is important to realize the pastoral beauty and challenging topography that greatly appreciated at this time. A dime paid for up to an 11-mile trip from East Des Moines west. The Epworth League of Des Moines held an evening trip to the town on the interurban and reported “a little time spend in the Junction for the crowd to get a good breath of the country air” (Des Moines *Daily News*, April 28, 1899; June 16, 1900).

The second bank, gained in 1899, was substantially the fault of banker Herman Raaz, who refused to cash the railroad company’s checks and forcing them to send a pay car loaded with cash on paydays. The new bank would be a Des Moines branch and Raaz opined that there would be little interest in another bank, one that wouldn’t really be a local bank if its ownership was mostly in the city. Raaz in response doubled down on his stock holdings in the Hawkeye Investment Company and became its agent. His gambit failed as he was relieved of his role as company agent in September and the new bank replaced him. The *Express* even celebrated his removal, noting “This is a step in the right direction and will bring the company in closer touch with the community.” Raaz was a Republican and

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when local Democrats organized a meeting in his hall without his authorization he locked them out (*Valley Junction Express*, April 28, August 11, 1899; September 11, 14, November 5, 1900).⁴

The year 1899 brought no surge in downtown buildings apart from a new livery barn, a substantial grain elevator, a power and light plant, and the first brick street crossings were laid at Maple and Elm streets. A great increase in construction costs failed to slow growth. The new city well was celebrated but the hotel's artesian well dried up likely because of it. An interurban link with Des Moines assumed serious form while the first of numerous hoped-for interurban extensions beyond Valley Junction were sure things. The first fire equipment for an as yet non-existent volunteer fire company was purchased. By year's end there was a company and \$100 rent was paid for its initial quarters (*Valley Junction Express*, September 19, 29, November 10, 15, December 22, 1899; March 30, 1900; *Des Moines Daily News*, July 29, 1899).

A recurring theme in the town history in later years was its comparatively lower taxes. Fast-growing towns have equally fast growing financial burdens if only in their overwhelmed school systems. The new town as of mid-1899 was virtually maxed out on its bonding and a new state law mandated that towns could not expend more money than they had in 1897. The town's school population had boomed to 600 students by this time. A second enlarged school building was now more than full and nothing could be done about it (*Des Moines Iowa State Capital*, June 9, 1899).

Much building was expected in 1900 and the downtown gained a new hotel, a bank, Raaz's hall building and concrete sidewalks were mandated by the council. The citizens reneged on the understanding that the city would promptly buy and operate the new water works. Ten 2,000 candlepower street lights for the downtown and 17 fire hydrants were byproducts of the new power and light plant. The street lights followed the "Philadelphia principle" being run under cloudy conditions but not during a full moon. The lights were turned on in late January and "they gave splendid satisfaction." Street lighting was a dynamic new thing and by year's end arc lights replaced the originals. Already the *Express* complained that the downtown streets were marred by the mix of telephone and light poles. The newspaper argued that these belonged in the alleyways but being a mere 16 feet in width, that wasn't an option. The community post office "became presidential" effective October 1, presumably having enough revenue to warrant the attention of political patronage. The first newspaper reference to a parking problem, the lack of hitching racks on the downtown side streets, dates to this year. Notably Des Moines constables raided Seyfert's drug store charging illegal liquor sales (*Des Moines Daily News*, January 29, February 27, September 26, 1900; *Valley Junction Express*, January 12, 19, 26, April 6, 27, December 7, 1900).

Marshall Denny tried to flush the brick crossings with a stream of water from hydrants and thus clean them, but the mud was almost too sticky to make the experiment a success. The mud here in the Valley has an elasticity that is surprising and it is a task to attempt to keep the crossings clear of mud.

Valley Junction *Express*, January 12, 1900

⁴ Valley Junction was Republican too and received the party's Tippecanoe Flag four times between 1893 and 1900 for showing the greatest single precinct party vote gain in the county (*Valley Junction Express*, February 2, 1900).

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The second town bank owners chose a site well north of the Raaz bank that straddled the two downtown blocks. Their substantial two-story brick building was on the west side of Fifth Street just south of Elm Street. It would later be joined there by the third bank, making upper Fifth an increasingly important downtown advantage in terms of location. Herman Raaz responded with a bank expansion (*Valley Junction Express*, April 13, May 18, June 1, 1900).

The new competing bank, the First National, would prove its own need by rapidly outpacing Raaz's bank. Established as a private bank in 1900, it nationalized a year later with capitalization of \$25,000 and had balances amounting to \$200,000 by 1907. It quickly became one of the state's stronger banks. Herman Raaz typically responded in 1908 by making his private bank a state one, as the Valley Junction Savings Bank with capitalization of \$50,000 (*Valley Junction Express*, January 23, 1907; December 24, 1908; February 4, 1909),

Given that Valley Junction was a new community of refugees, there were no community celebrations of traditional national holidays. Everybody simply went home to their hometowns. As late as 1902 there were no local formal Memorial Day or Fourth of July programs (*Valley Junction Express*, July 6, 1900; June 13, 1902).

This was the first major year of struggle between the wets and the drys and a temporary victory on the part of the former with the board of supervisors threatened to fill the town's streets with saloons. The Gilpna Brewing Company, owner of 22 Des Moines saloons alone wanted to open two in the Junction. The *Express* refused to panic, noting:

There seems to be an erroneous impression abroad that Valley Junction now has several saloons which open up under the consent petition. Only one has yet opened, that of Fairgrave & Cheisa, and while other liquor men have been in town looking over the situation none others have applied for permit to open up. The district in which they may operate has been limited by the town council to Fifth street below Maple, giving them but one block in which to obtain property owner's consent, which is sometimes a hard thing to do."

One saloon applicant lost council support when he appeared intoxicated seeking his license. In the end, the fall of 1900, the town reverted to just one saloon. That number doubled when the new St. Joe Hotel and Ed Wegener opened a bar there (*Des Moines Iowa State Capital*, May 18, 1899; October 5, 1900; March 9, 1901; *Valley Junction Express*, July 14, 1899; *Des Moines Daily News*, July 10, 1900).

One hard fast local collective memory of the town was that all saloons were relegated to lower Fifth, the 100's block. This council mandate is first referenced in mid-July 1899. There was also a limit of three saloons, likely governed by state law. The third saloon was approved in mid-1900 despite Councilman Kirsey's (he was a railroad man himself) concerns that "in a town like this the population of which was almost wholly of railroad men that the increase of saloons beyond a reasonable number would cause injury and possibly trouble for the employees from the railroad company. The *Express* noted that the opposite effect resulted, reporting:

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The number we now have has caused the trade to be divided up and to such an extent that a citizen remarked yesterday that they were easily the quietest places in town; so quiet in fact, that it was hard to see how their proprietors are coming out whole, much less enjoying any profit.

There were soon just two saloons within a few months (Valley Junction *Express*, July 14, 20, September 28, 1899).



Figure 25: 100 east side Fifth, ca.1900, Belleson's at left-149 Fifth, Fairgrave's Saloon is at the right (Jordan House Library and Archives)

The *Express* called for the substantial grading of the streets for flood control purposes when spring approached in 1900. It recounted how in the earliest days of the town, gum boots were sufficient responses to flood and mud, followed by graveled and crowned streets, a comprehensive grading of the streets from the standpoint of drainage. Also a storm/sewage system would supplement the town's electrical lights. In earlier and considerably more optimistic times the same source had lauded "our superior drainage, being so close to the [Raccoon] river, is a distinct advantage and it will not be an expensive thing to make it perfect." A curious condition for the downtown, south of Maple Street was that the grade was actually reversed with the south end of Fifth Street being nine inches higher than its Maple Street end (Valley Junction *Express*, April 27, May 16, 1899; March 9, 1900).

Comparable area towns suffered catastrophic fires but not Valley Junction, still without a fire brigade. The *Express* warned:

There are wooden rear ends of Fifth street business buildings that have been seasoning for some years and would burn without having to be sprinkled with kerosene, and even the business brick rear blocks are not proof against such a fire as might be easily kindled with the material lying loosely about the back yards.

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The council had intended to build a town hall on the water and light plant company lot but by the fall of 1900 a downtown lot was purchased on lower Fifth street and one half of a combination city hall and firehouse was built (the *Express* said this was one-story but recent examination of the building indicates that it was built in two full-height phases, front then back) (Valley Junction *Express*, August 24, September 21, 1900; Des Moines *Gazette*, September 27, 1900).

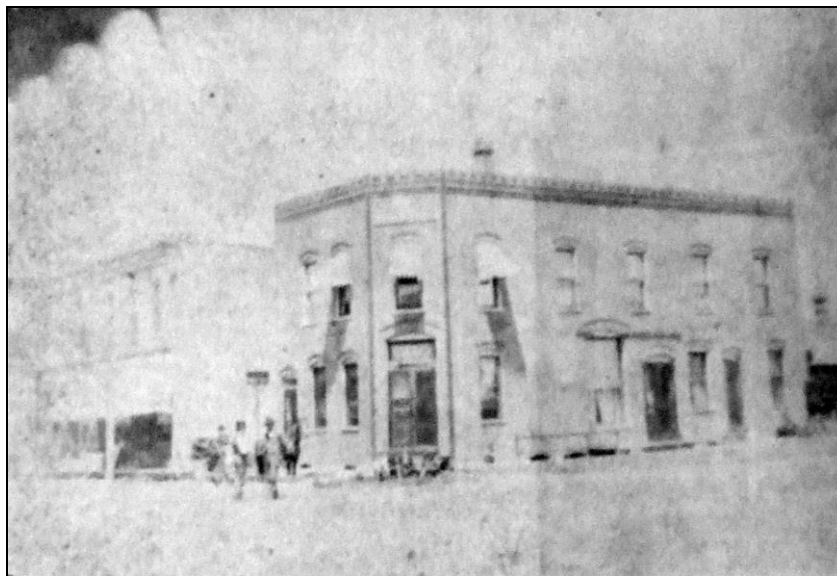


Figure 26: 201, 205, 207 Fifth, looking northeast, ca.1899
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

Merchants were beginning to set their own hours of operation. In early 1899 nine of the major retailers including the Chase grocery chain agreed on a 7:30 p.m. closing time summers and at 6:30 fall and winter. Wisely they stayed open on Saturdays and “three nights during payday.” The barbershops were next, two years later, closing on Sundays in mid-1901. Newspapers survive on advertising so it is no surprise that the *Express* encouraged the town’s merchants to capture a broader market by better informing the public as to their stocks and services. They needed to emulate the capital city’s big department stores by eschewing “spasmodic” advertising, spending time and money “to keep himself before the public.” It closed noting “The country merchant must in time learn to advertise judiciously or he will find his trade gradually slipping away from him” (Valley Junction *Express*, February 9, 1899; May 24, 1901; March 23, 1900; Des Moines *Iowa Capital*, February 9, 1899).

The 1900 census listed specific addresses and it is possible to do a headcount of downtown residents. That count found 154 business folk and their families and 54 boarders or servants as well, for a total of 208 downtown dwellers (1900 Federal Census).

Interurban service finally arrived in late 1900. The town never had a true streetcar service, but rather the line was a Des Moines service interurban extension, albeit with special elongated cars. The right-of-way followed Grand Avenue across Walnut Creek bridge, went south of Fourth Street to Vine Street, then west on Vine to Fifth. At the

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south end off Fifth at Railroad Street there was a loop. There were no interim stops. Service would be problematic depending on electrical power, intact bridges and the whims of the car company. Service came with what was thought to be a hefty ten cent fare. Hopes that Valley Junction would become a link in a chain of interurban stops never materialized.

District History, 1902-1909:

Railroad yard and shop expansions continued through this period and a national depression slowed things down 1906-07. These were relatively quiet years in terms of new store building construction.

The Hawkeye Investment Company followed the advice of the *Express* and published several promotional articles noting that the company's "gilt edged holdings" had proven to be a remarkably good investment, noting "Many of the plain, unpretentious townspeople have snug homes, all paid for, from savings invested in Valley Junction property, and every one has more invested today than when the purchase was made because of the increase in value. The population had started at 200 in 1893, reached 747 by the start of 1895 and now stood at 2,000 residents. An excellent water supply, fuel (coal), superb railroad service and "an intelligent, progressive, up-to-date class [of citizens]" now made the town a natural for manufacturing. Two years later the *Express* predicted that the town "is destined to become one of the most important and consequently one of the most valuable manufacturing points in all of the great state of Iowa, or in the great and mighty west" (Valley Junction *Express*, March 10, May 4, 1900; February 7, 1902).

The first newspaper report of a fire district dates to late 1900 when Jacob Kamp built a frame enclosure over an exit. The fire district extended along Fifth from Railroad to Elm streets. Even with a volunteer fire company, fire insurance rates for the downtown jumped 25 percent in early 1902. Frame stores were grandfathered and would comprise a dominant proportion of the early downtown buildings. In fact, one of these still survives and others are scattered across the old town in the form of altered residences (Valley Junction *Express*, December 14, 1900; November 29, 1901; March 14, 1902).

The office of night watchman or marshal was established in mid-1902. The on again, off again power plant was permanently off at that time and the town lost its water service along with its electricity. Des Moines Street Railway president Jefferson Polk offered short term electrical power using his interurban as a delivery system. Coal gas had been explored as a backup power as early as 1900 and by 1902 350 town houses could be linked in with the laying of seven miles of mains (Valley Junction *Express*, May 9, July 11, 1902).

There was a distinct hiatus in downtown construction during 1901 with just two surviving buildings dated to that year. Construction was so reduced that the dominant local contractor H. J. Roush decamped to Oklahoma in search of greener building pastures (Valley Junction *Express*, August 2, 1901).

Annexation was to be a dominant Valley Junction context, one that first emerged in early 1902 when the town council voted to annex land to the north of the city boundaries. The gained ground totaled 240 acres and 300 residents. The expanded town limits were 9th Street west, the railroads south and Des Moines (First or 63rd Street, east). The Des Moines *Daily News* printed a tongue-in-cheek column that warned that the town would "finally

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determine to annex Des Moines” itself. Valley Junction and Des Moines were both in Walnut Township while Lee Township, encompassing the east part of the latter city had proven adept at capturing county offices. The *News* noted that for the first time in some time strong candidates, many having Junction ties, were posed to challenge Lee Townships’ dominance (Des Moines *Daily News*, February 20, December 11, 1902).

The *Express* complained in mid-1902 that local women were forming too many lodges and other organizations with “womanly energy [being] wasted in duties of the club and lodges.” It was all well and good in the city where socialite activists didn’t have to do their own work at home. And it was in the end pointless relative to social activism anyway, the same source continued, deepening its already too deep hole, as “At best a woman is a pattern off a man—she has not the vigor or original concept.” As was the case with most towns and cities it was the church men folk who envisioned soaring edifices while it was the church womenfolk who found the means to pay for them. The town churches all conducted annual eateries at the successive Iowa State Fairs in Des Moines but in 1905 the Methodists lost everything when theirs burned down. Along similar lines in mid-1905 G. A. Kester and V. G. Dingman went to blows over an unidentified woman. Dingman was tossed through the window of Smith’s barbershop Hollywood movie style (Valley Junction *Express*, July 18, 1902; July 27, September 7, 1905).

The local power company finally folded in mid-1902 and the town returned to the dark. This was problematic for the night watchman who could no longer see into now darkened businesses. Merchants were encouraged to keep safe non-electric lights alight in the rear part of their businesses (Valley Junction *Express*, June 27, July 18, 1902).

Statewide flooding came in mid-July 1902, the Raccoon River was three feet higher than previously recorded and only the railroad embankment kept the downtown from being deeply inundated, there was enough flood water to stop the interurban service on the upper end of Fifth Street. South of the town the flood depth was up to 30 feet. Two pumps labored for two days to remove the water from the Raaz bank building (Valley Junction *Express*, July 11, 1902).

Railroads could simply pick up their shops and division points as this town’s origin shows and they could relocate on a whim. Rumors of just that fate circulated in mid-1904 with a threatened relocation to Moline, Illinois, and obituaries were being written for the young town. The *Capital* demurred, citing reports from Des Moines merchants who had been to the Junction recently who reported “there isn’t a livelier town on earth and what’s more, business and thrift are on the increase instead of waning.” The *Express* called for a nickel car fare that would double traffic and benefit both cities. By mid-October the shops were busier than ever before and by early 1905 the workforce was the largest in the past five years with a monthly payroll of \$60,000 (Des Moines *Capital*, August 18, October 14, December 9, 1904; January 12, 1905; Cedar Rapids *Republican*, August 9, 1904).

The lower end of Fifth street is not nearly so troublesome to the local officials since the laying off of the shop men the first of August. Those let go in the first instance included a majority of the booze fighters and bum travelers who are never the easiest to get along with. The measures of retrenchment put forth by the Rock Island was notice to others also that the future might not be bright for those who looked upon wine when it was red, and things are quieter now in that line than for a year past.

Valley Junction *Express*, September 9, 1904

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The Rock Island had reduced its workforce by fully one-third, and completely closed its shops until September 1, 1904, but claimed that a major effort had been made to reassign many others to other positions. The *News* published an article titled "The Future of Valley Junction." Betraying a big-city perspective, it noted "Wise men predict that Valley Junction will double its population every five years until it is absorbed by Des Moines." A public meeting resulted in the aforementioned lower car fare and the construction of a road linking the three area coal mines to the town. The reduced car fares and the road would bring new residents to the town, including many miners but others who would be drawn there by lower rents and cheaper building lots. The *News* closed quoting J. T. Ashworth who said "The air is healthy here. We are high and the ride to and from the city each morning and evening is exhilarating. The scenery is beautiful. We have, in fact, a beautiful little town, with all the advantages of the country and all the advantages of the city, only lacking a five-cent fare." The lower fare was finally realized with a new franchise that became effective April 1, 1906. Chief among the city advantages were the major parks (Greenwood and Ingersoll), which would be all the more attractive with lowered car fares. A sign of growth was a modest increase in the postmaster's salary, but he lamented that his advantage would have been twice what he had were it not for the "knocking of certain Des Moines newspapers last summer, which caused temporary shrinkage" (*Des Moines News*, August 26, 1904; (*Des Moines News*, June 1, 1905; *Valley Junction Express*, February 15, 1906).

The feeling that Valley Junction, by far the largest and most resourceful of all the places tapped by the Des Moines streetcar system, is being unjustly treated, has so grown in the minds of the people that action could not well be delayed much longer.

Valley Junction *Express*, December 7, 1905

Bustling town or not, the volunteer fire company felt slighted by unpatronized entertainments that were needed to fund their operations. The company disbanded but a week later turned out to save the Methodist Episcopal Church, having to cut through the roof to save the edifice (*Valley Junction Express*, January 12, 1905).



Figure 27: Lower Fifth Street looking northeast, ca.1907-12
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

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The claim of 2,000 residents was verified in early 1905 and this qualified the town to be a city of the second class (a population over 15,000 were of the first class, lesser communities were simply incorporated towns) which required wards, separate voting precincts and ward-based aldermen. Hundreds of nearby residents, not credited to the town, lived beyond the boundaries to the south, west and north but are residents “for purposes of work and business.” The *News* for perhaps the first time now suggested that it would be timely to reduce the corporate name to “Valley” dropping “Junction” which “exactly fit when the town was first laid out, but it savors of a cross roads place, and conveys that impression abroad.” Actual second class status required elections under the new ward system but the council acted to prohibit all private sign posts located outside of the street curbing and prohibited allowing emptied delivery vehicles to remain in the streets. The *Express* cheered on these changes noting “It is time to put aside village ways.” Two years later the council acted to bar youths from local saloons and the *Express* suggested the ban might well include pool halls. Thus another long-enduring local issue was set in motion. Later that year billboards within the fire district had to be fireproof and all were taxed at 5 cent per square foot. Chase and West grocers were the first to respond, removing their sign from the vacant lot north of City Hall. In early 1909 slot machines were banned and it was noted that one pool hall had a “chance” change machine (Des Moines *News*, May 5, 1905; February 9, 1906; Valley Junction *Express*, August 10, 1905; March 7, November 7, 14, 1907; February 4, 1909).⁵



Figure 28: Upper Fifth Street looking northwest across Maple Street, ca.1908
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

⁵ When three wards were established the downtown was in the Second Ward with an eastern boundary on the alley to the east of Fifth and a western boundary of Seventh Street (Valley Junction *Express*, February 16, 1906).

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Lower Fifth gained three new brick buildings (104, 134, 136 Fifth) in 1904-05, and the two most substantial of these were clustered at the northwest end of lower Fifth. A contractor of special interest is E. B. Rigler who built all three and supervised the construction of the Ashworth Building (224-26 Fifth) in 1901. All of these examples used a darker brick and the three-two story buildings were noteworthy designs with respect to bay windows and parapet treatments. The *Express* credited him with raising up “handsome and honestly built structures” and predicted that “Valley Junction has fairly started on an era of permanent improvement growth and rapid growth. It is today one of the best towns for investment in real estate in central Iowa.” One building project exposed the nature of the early and flimsy construction techniques when a section of brick foundation wall, simply laid atop the ground with no footings, collapsed (Valley Junction *Express*, August 17, October 5, December 28, 1905).



Figure 29: 1908 overview looking northeast (*A Pattern Book*)

More business houses have been needed for some time. Parties desiring to open business here have found it impossible to procure a location.

Valley Junction *Express*, March 30, 1905

Growth in 1905 was indeed so pronounced that the *Express* tallied all of the categories of new building, finding 63 new houses and seven new business blocks. The town also gained its first flats with four units and “several double house of somewhat more pretentious style.” Of the latter five occupied vacant lots while two displaced frame stores. One brick store gained a second story and residence. The two largest new brick buildings contained 7 or 8 apartments. Railroad shop investment was \$90,000. Rail lines were graded to the growing count of coal mines. One direct result of the electrical failure was a community commitment to coal gas. A franchise was approved with the Capital City Gas Company in August 1905. The amount of trenching and the speed of the work to lay the needed mains was impressive. The town main had a 10-inch diameter and was laid along Elm Street. One worker could dig 40 feet of trench and the 3.5 miles of local mains would take just three weeks to dig. Laterals were being laid by late May 1906. A new main line had to be put in from East Des Moines. The local power plant had been refitted and now delivered a “thoroughly reliable” supply of water and electricity. In worthy newspaper fashion the *Express* upped the 1905 state census enumeration by including nearby residents, coming up with a revised population of 2,500 and adding the capacity of new homes for 300 persons, leveraged the estimate to 2,750. It is largely forgotten that gas and electricity were in direct competition well into the 1920s. Businesses could get free gas piping installed, paying only for the actual fixtures. Fraternal Hall switched from electric to gas lights in early 1908. Gas was the power source of choice by the *Express* as late as 1920 when a gas plant explosion in Des Moines forced the newspaper to scramble to find electronic powered linotype equipment (Valley Junction *Express*, July 27, November 16, December 28, 1905; May 31, 1906; February 6, 1908; April 29, 1920).

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The way Valley Junction is filling up with new business houses, it would seem that there will soon be less dependence on Des Moines for supplies. That's the best feature about the town's present prosperity... The way progress is being made this year it will be but a short time till all the old frame structures will be out of the way.

Valley Junction *Express*, October 19, 1905



Figure 30: Fifth and Maple, looking southeast, ca.1908-10
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

Historical images of the downtown are colorless but two likely frame store buildings on the east side of Fifth were lauded for their new red and green paint colors. Perhaps encouraged by the public praise the Valley Junction House and Glas' Cigar Store painted their fronts in yellow (Valley Junction *Express*, May 25, October 12, 1905).

Very few towns of this size have as good sidewalks and crossings. Sewage next. The paving in the business section [then next].

Valley Junction *Express*, May 10, 1906

The post office relocated to Raaz's bank block (201-03 Fifth) in late 1906. Contending sites were the Ashworth Building, rejected because it was frame, and the Burt Building, found to be too small. Rent at the chosen site was higher but included utilities. The *Express* noted "the new location will afford the best quarters the Valley Junction post office has ever had." A post office location is as good a measure of determining the heart of a downtown as are banks. It is curious that prior to the completion of a new building in the 400s block of Fifth in 1963, the location never moved north of 201-03 Fifth. It was at 122 Fifth as of 1894-97, at from 1931-52 in the Wegener Block (137 Fifth), prior to moving to the St. Joe at the extreme south end of the downtown (100 Fifth) in 1955 remaining until 1963 (Valley Junction *Express*, October 4, 1906).

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The southeast corner of Fifth and Maple streets remained vacant after the City Hall was completed in 1901 and the post office relocation pointed to the continued commercial domination of that intersection within the downtown. The vacant corner proved to be useful beginning in mid-1907 as a summer concert venue courtesy of the Valley Junction concert band. The lot was also a billboard venue until the new billboard tax and fire district restrictions (Valley Junction *Express*, June 27, November 14, 1907).

By early 1907 the *Express* was celebrating the town's position as "the second city in size and importance in Polk County." In expected booster style it claimed that the Rock Island had 1,200 employees, 95 percent of whom resided in Valley Junction with a monthly payroll of \$85-90,000. Of this amount \$65,000 covered train operations with 160 train crews ending their runs at this location, while \$20,000 covered shops operations. Three of four workers were skilled laborers. A 1907 article claimed there were 38 daily passenger trains that originated from the junction (Valley Junction *Express*, January 23, August 8, 1907).

The apparent impact of the national financial downturn of ca. 1907 was reflected in diminished construction in 1906, to just 40 new homes. Two of these were replacements lost to the major grain elevator fire of that year. The *Express* added another 200 persons to its population estimate and took pains to note that while fewer houses were build compared to '05 the new ones were of better quality and larger size. Notably annual progress reports on the part of the newspaper ceased with this one (Valley Junction *Express*, December 27, 1906).



Figure 31: Lower Fifth Street looking northwest from Railroad Street, ca.1910
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

In early 1907 the local editor decided to do for racial tolerance what he had tried to do in encouraging local women to stay at home rather than participate in clubs. He wrote "Not a Negro lives at Valley Junction a city of more than 3,000 people. Nor does one work here-no room for them. Perhaps such a condition does not obtain in another

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town in Iowa of equal population.” The newspaper was fair in its coverage of an assault by white coal miners on a group of African American miners. While stressing that the victims “don’t live here” the innocence of the victims was noted. Of course things would soon change and by 1917 through 1922 an African-American owned restaurant would be in operation at 110 Fifth (Valley Junction *Express*, March 2, 1907; June 25, 1908).

District History, 1911-1915:

With Europe descending into total warfare, American farmers enjoyed their first and last period of economic parity. That wealth was reflected in the general up-building of Main Streets across the state. This was not the experience in Valley Junction as the existing substantial downtown appears to have absorbed new and enlarged businesses. Virtually no new building took place downtown between 1916 and the years of the Great War. The major accomplishment was downtown paving in 1915.

The matter of organized labor is an important one relative to the subject town and little is known about its presence and influence. The *Iowa Unionist* enumerated the town’s “friends of labor” in mid-1907 and promoted the businesses that favored unions. The roster included Ed Wegener (St. Joe Hotel), Fred Henshaw (boots, shoes), Victor Arbuckle (grocer), Charles Waldron (jeweler), W. L. Stroup (grocer), C. E. Diehl (mayor), W. J. Rankin (city marshal), Carl Miller (drugs), Mrs. M. C. Swan (milliner), M. L. Jacobson (clothier), F. D. Gray (meats) and William Carmody (drugs). A rare fraternal hall directory from 1909 enumerated 19 organizations that used that dominant hall. Railroad unions were the Switchman’s Union and their auxiliary, and the Car Men’s Brotherhood. The Miner’s Union was another labor group (*Iowa Unionist*, July 19, 1907; Valley Junction *Express*, May 20, 1909).

The year 1908 brought the “big blow out” or a five-day long “Merchants’ and Firemen’s’ Street Fair and Carnival” in mid-September. For the first time the firemen led the way, the event being a major fund raiser to them. The local Henry Band provided music, the firemen were the “street patrol” and a curious precursor of much later carnivals was a lottery that selected a couple for a public wedding and a showering of housekeeping gifts and a “Queen of the Carnival.” The 22 queen candidates leveraged over 2,000 votes and Maria Fairgraves prevailed with 608 votes. She also had her choice of prizes. The Globe Amusement Company provided the core attractions including a merry-go-round, ocean wave and various shows were offered along with “a brilliant display of electric lights will be made on the streets and night will be like day.” Free attractions included “loop the gap” and slack wire and tight wire work. The event was densely thronged both days with “Fifth street [being] lined with booths and stands, concessions and attractions of all kinds...” The attendees were substantially from the city, conveyed on extra street cars and the only difficulty came the first night when a party of Des Moines ‘bums’ had to be dealt with (Valley Junction *Express*, September 3, 9, 10, 17, 24, 1908).

The carnival concept was reprised the next year when the Lachman Amusement Company held a carnival not downtown but on the Longfellow School grounds. It is not known if this was another fire company benefit but the *Express* used the event to draw social distinctions between town and city. It noted “It [Lachman] is a civil lot of people who make little noise, draw very moderate crowds and can’t attract the Des Moines ‘sporty’ crowds because their exhibition isn’t half wicked enough to prove attractive.” The last “business men’s” carnival, scaled down to fit inside a new auto garage, was held in February 1913 (Valley Junction *Express*, July 29, 1909; February 27, 1913).

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One casualty of the carnival was Ed Wegener who was charged with illegal liquor sales in his St. Joe Hotel saloon. He sold his license and said he would transform the space into a railroad workers' reading room (Valley Junction *Express*, October 22, 1908).



Figure 32: Lower Fifth Street looking northwest from Railroad Street, ca. 1908
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

There was another railroad shops shutdown scare in April-May 1908 with the shops in operation 18 days out of two months, with another closing in mid-June. All was back to normal by July 2 (Valley Junction *Express*, May 21, 28, July 2, 1908).

The first "full fledged commercial club" dates to mid-1909 with 100 members and jeweler C. R., Waldron as president. Also termed a booster committee, the first project was providing worker transportation to the distant cement plant so as to encourage their residing in town. A men's club had formed in 1904 with 70 members but it appears to have been just a social organization (Des Moines *Daily News*, June 10, 11, 1909; Valley Junction *Express*, November 4, 1904).

The saloon battle, even between the liquor men, was an on-going phenomenon. As of the fall of 1909 the saloon count was back to three, with two of these being on the east side of lower Fifth Street. Two rules applied to saloon operations, all adjacent property owners had to sign the application for a permit and no saloon could be within a block of a church. Ed Wegener, owner of the St. Joe Hotel and its saloon, made the first move buying the lot adjacent to Charles Adam's saloon which faced a license renewal. The Ashworth brothers, local landowners with an estimated half a million in land wealth, countered by threatening to erect a church at Fifth and Railroad. The *Express* joked that they brothers "would not only have built the church, but hired a minister and organized a church with themselves as the [sole] members." Wegener folded, signed the petition and peace and the three saloons reigned on (Des Moines *Daily News*, October 9, 1909).

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Figure 33: Lower Fifth Street looking northwest from Railroad Street, ca.1912
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

Growth projections had gone by the wayside since 1907 but the *Express* predicted a “big building boom” given that many Des Moines workers (chiefly railroaders) who chose to reside in the town. The new and massive Portland Cement plant (secured in June 1907), promising 500-600 new jobs, and expanding coal mines would translate into town growth. The newspaper found prospects for growth flattering and coached that the town “ must increase the amount off general business transacted here, as well as that passing through and handled here” (Valley Junction *Express*, June 6, 9, 1906; February 24, 1910).

The well established pattern of cooperation between Valley Junction and Des Moines (gas service, interurban, parks, job location, river pollution) also entailed education. Valley Junction paid the city school district \$1,800 each year to school their youth from the Walnut Hills area to the north. The city school there had been cut to just four grades so all but 25 of 200 eligible students had to walk to other city schools. The West and East Des Moines (and others) were finally in the throes of consolidation so a rumor floated to the effect that Valley Junction would join in. Valley Junction couldn’t keep up with its school building needs but there was no serious local support in a unified school district. In 1912 a deal was cut for town children living east of First Street, the east boundary to attend the new city Hanawalt school (*Iowa Unionist*, November 18, 1913; Valley Junction *Express*, September 11, 1913).

A Greek bakery was promised in early 1911 and it was reported that an oven was being built off the south end of Fifth Street. The *Express* explained the rationale, stating “These [Greek] people who do a large part of the yard and track work on the railroad, want a bread different from that furnished by American bakeries” (Valley Junction *Express*, February 16, 1911).

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Valley Junction Forging Ahead...

Des Moines' little sister, Valley Junction, is snugly in the list of the rapidly developing towns in Iowa that have cast off their village swaddling clothes. Really it is growing so fast that the cosmopolitan citizenship does not relish the appellation, "Junction," and it may be no surprise that in the near years they will insist on being geographical known as Valley City.

With six big coal mines almost within its limits fuel is cheap; the water supply abundant; the price of land is moderate and its transportation facilities could generally be improved upon. About forty passenger trains on trunk lines get their orders there a day, for it is one of the divisions of the Rock Island, and a stop for all Minneapolis and St. Louis trains as well. The repair shops of the Rock Island are located there and employ about 500 men the year round. Added to these steam railways is the more popular service of the Interurban that gives them a 33-minute service to Des Moines and the cars leave the terminal every ten minutes.

There is a constant demand for houses, in that more residences are the greatest need of the town. But they are being rapidly supplied. Forty or more new ones have been finished this summer and more are under way....

The merchant houses easily vie with those of Des Moines in all wares and the First National Bank ranks among the best in smaller towns of the state.

Another important fact that is not to be overlooked, and that is that Valley Junction is known throughout the country as one of the largest hog shipping points in the middle west. The stock yards belong to J. S. Stockton & Co. and their lowest average in several years has been 200,000 hogs...

Des Moines *Daily News*, June 18, 1911⁶

Newspapers normally laud a new building but *Express* minced no words in judging the new Chase and West grocery store (138 Fifth), stating "yet the architectural effect is not that good. It is squatty, ceilings are low, yet practically enough wall is carried up to make a third story. The top finish would look fine by itself but does not harmonize with the surroundings." Typically the displaced frame dwelling occupied the street during the new building construction and remained therein even as it was trundled off to its new Third Street location (Valley Junction *Express*, June 22, 29, 1911).

⁶ In 1906 Standard Oil established its bulk oil tanks that supplied the western part of the state. The coal mines were venerated until the sulphurous smoke discharge from one or more blackened buildings across the town in mid-1909. Later the coal slag from the mines was promoted for highway surfacing (Valley Junction *Express*, October 11, 1906; June 10, 1909).

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Figure 34: Lower Fifth Street looking south from Maple Street, ca.1910
(Jordan House Library and Archives)⁷

Valley Junction's successful story was duly noted in the 1912 Des Moines municipal history. Author Johnson Brigham used the same tagline of the town being the county's second largest city, and credited it with having 3,000 inhabitants (which gave it a third saloon once again in mid-1914). Johnson noted the railroad and coal field assets along with "electric lights, waterworks, gas, telephones, street cars, and practically all the conveniences of a modern city." The interurban service began in October 1908, gas service in August 1906 (Johnson, Vol. 1, p. 696).

The saloon battle approached its crescendo in mid-1911 when a new county law allowed just one saloon per 1,000 inhabitants in a community. Being under the 3,000 population level but well above 2,000 (leaving what the *Express* termed a "major fraction") the town's three saloons had to be reduced by one. R. G. Kilpatrick's Adams Place lost out (Valley Junction *Express*, July 13, 1911).

⁷ The house visible at the south end of Fifth Street is presumably one of a number of houses of disrepute that clustered south of the railroad tracks.

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Figure 35: Lower Fifth Street looking north from mid-block, 1910
(Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figure 36: Lower Fifth Street looking north from mid-block, 1910
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

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The town was gaining its long-awaited sanitary sewer/septic system in the latter part of 1911. The King Construction Company did the digging, starting along Railroad Street where trenches were the deepest, at 13-14 feet. In the alley west of Fifth Street ground water repeatedly collapsed the trench work. High water in the spring of 1912 delayed the completion of the system but it was complete by mid-year. The *Express* noted that the sewer system “will put the city in position of all the well managed smaller cities of the state and in a position to guard effectively against epidemic disease” (Valley Junction *Express*, September 7, October 19, 1911; July 11, 1912; Des Moines *Tribune*, May 13, 1913).

The town grew by 150 acres in late 1911, this being the area between the Des Moines limits and Eighth Street. The vote held at the end of October would potentially “put within the city and beyond the reach of either Des Moines or Clover Hill, a lot of choice building ground. It also would give Valley Junction the opportunity to route flood runoff east along Vine Street rather than down Fifth and Sixth streets as it presently coursed. Clover Hill was located west of the annexation. It had donned corporate clothes back in 1906 to prevent being absorbed by Des Moines or Valley Junction (Valley Junction *Express*, July 5, 1906; November 2, 1911).

The first reference to a Hispanic ethnic presence in town dates to early 1913 when a Tenth Street house occupied by a Mexican family, burned down (Valley Junction *Express*, February 13, 1913).

The major 1913 development for the downtown and for the east side of Fifth Street in particular was the construction of the three-story Wegener Block with hotel and movie theater that filled in the last open lot at the Maple Street intersection. The taller building north of City Hall necessitated a taller hose drying tower and bell tower so that the latter could still be heard to the north. Ed Wegener was the ambitious builder. His venture built upon two recent personal setbacks, the major one being the burning of his new coal yard in early 1912 with a loss of \$12,000, half of which was insured. The lesser one was a court decision that settled a 1911 dispute in which Wegener challenged the right of 15 others to remove sand from the Raccoon River (Valley Junction *Express*, April 25, 1912; March 9, 13, 1913; April 9, 1914; Des Moines *Tribune*, April 30, 1913).

Wegener’s ambition to build the town’s largest commercial block coincided with yet another outbreak of rumors that the Rock Island would remove its shops to Des Moines. Real estate investors were panicked and the *Tribune* reported that it wasn’t until mid-August that real estate values recovered “from their last depression caused by the rumors of a removal of the Rock Island shops from the town.” The same source noted that some townspeople discounted the severity of losing the shops, but advised a majority held “that the shops, if not dominating the destiny of the town, at least are a very necessary adjunct.” The upshot of the false removal rumor was the reverse, the consolidation of the origination point of all division Rock Island trains including the Short Line routes. This translated to 25 passenger trains in addition to the four M & St. L. trains daily. This translated in turn to even greater pay day receipts, the shops alone increasing by \$10,000 a month (Des Moines *Tribune*, May 13, September 18, 1913).

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There is just one bit of building for which the Valley Junction people hanker as a hungry pup longs for a bone. They make no secret of what it is they want, in fact they have been waiting for years. It is a new depot. There is not one of the many hundreds of loyal suburban dwellers who would not give a great deal to see a modern good-looking brick station replace the improvised sand shed which has served for a depot since—as Blackstones says—the mind of man knoweth not to the contrary.

Des Moines Tribune, August 17, 1913

The citizenry finally voted in early 1913 to purchase the local power plant for \$10,000 and promptly placed the Des Moines Electric Company in charge of it. The automobile's growing impact was reflected in the town's first "highway" project, an extension westward of Grand Avenue to Fourth Street from which point it would follow the interurban line via Vine and Fifth streets. A small self funded group of businessmen led by Ed Wegener obtained right-of way on Fourth Street, and graded and cindered the new route. Of course the real prize was a link to the newly-designated River to River Road, a developing cross-country highway. Their project was cited by the Des Moines *Daily News* as the Junction's "single biggest project" and one that would give Des Moines "an important traffic artery." Their next favored project was the paving of Fifth Street south of Vine to Railroad Street (Valley Junction *Express*, March 20, October 9, 1913; Des Moines *Tribune*, June 4, 6, 1913; Des Moines *Daily News*, August 19, 1913).

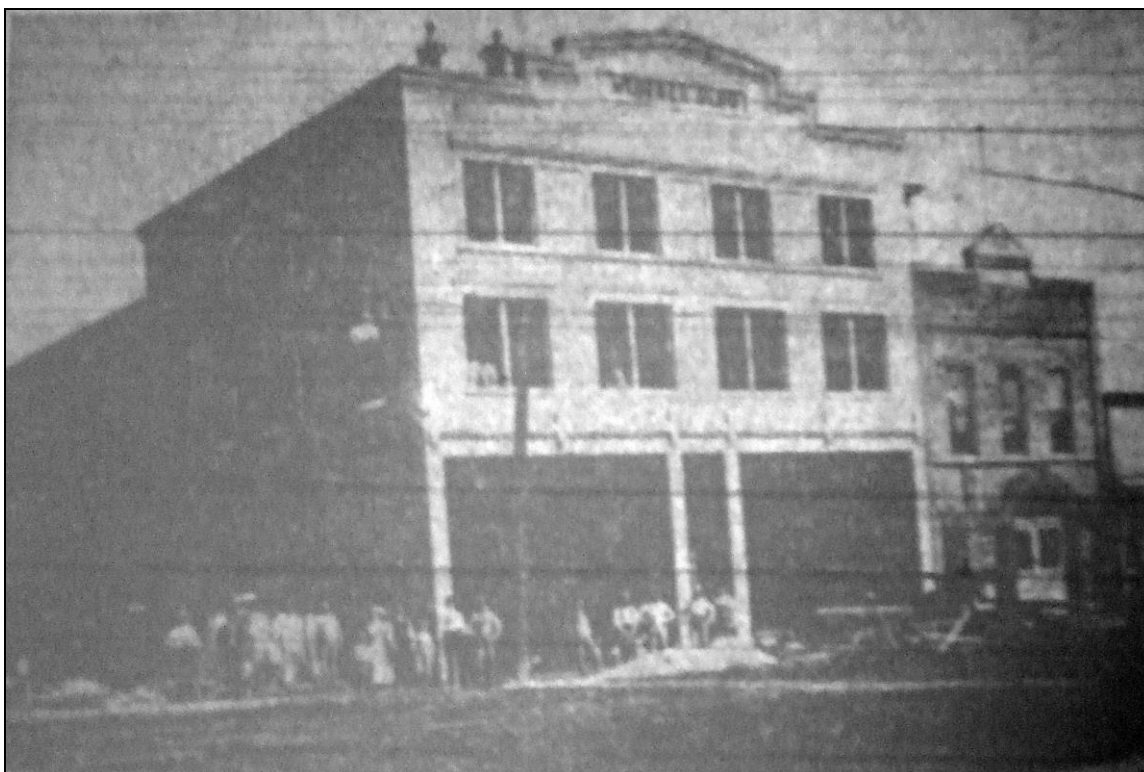


Figure 37: The nearly completed Wegener Block (*Des Moines Tribune*, August 17, 1913)

Valley Junction Not Jay Village But Regular City Assert Citizens

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Valley Junction doesn't intend to any longer permit vaudeville "comedians" to poke ancient fun at their city.

How this practice can be stopped, the citizens aren't sure but they are going to do something.

Jesse Compton, the new mayor is outspoken in his views. He declares the jokes about Valley Junction are in very poor taste, they are not timely and nobody, laughs at them but lowbrows.

Mayor Compton said Monday afternoon [the] city council might adopt resolutions urging various [Des Moines] theaters to instruct their actors to refrain from the little bursts of wit which originated several thousand years ago...

Des Moines *Daily News*, August 19, 1913

By mid-August 1913 the town was embarked on its own variation of the city beautiful movement. At least three major streets would be paved (Fifth, Third and Fourth, in that order) and Third Street would become a boulevarded entry-point for the town. These changes, new vehicular Walnut Street bridge on the Grand Avenue extension and the completion of the Wegener block would result "in a boom the like of which Valley Junction has never before experienced...[and] if the Valley Junction citizens elevate their home community to as high a plane as they now plan to do, Des Moines will have an example to follow rather than setting the pace the smaller town" (Des Moines *Tribune*, August 17, 1913)

The high water mark of the Valley Junction saloons was reached in late November 1913. The Iowa Supreme Court legal wranglings are complex but the bottom line was that the Des Moines saloons all closed temporarily pending a sorting out of the matter while those in the suburb remained open. The *Express* takes up the predictable result:

...By 8 o'clock the effect was evident on the Valley Junction streets and automobiles were lined up and each took away a liberal supply of bottled goods, mostly by the case. The street cars brought dense crowds, most of whom imbibed their fill, and many of them brought suit cases and baskets, in which they carried away their Sunday supply. The unexpected rush of business was not provided for, and stocks were soon run low. But early Monday morning dray loads began to arrive. The two local saloons did a rushing business, and put on a large force to help wait on the trade. They also employed two uniformed policemen and two plain clothes men, who kept good order, and did not permit the crowds to collect on the sidewalks, and orders to "move on" were frequent and well obeyed.

But while good outward order was maintained "plain drunks" were more in evidence. These were quickly run in, and the police gathered a liberal harvest of fines. This began to be more general Tuesday. The saloon men are doing their best to keep good order, and are succeeding better than would have been expected. What the outcome will be is hard now to predict...

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The supply of policemen came from Des Moines and the *Tribune* took time to note that Waldron's saloon (Godwin's was the other open saloon) alone was employing 22 bartenders and printed their names (*Valley Junction Express*, November 27, 1913; *Des Moines National Democrat*, November 27, 1913; *Des Moines Tribune*, November 30, 1913).

The Des Moines police chief J. W. Jenney intercepted five wagon loads of beer on West Grand Avenue, destined for William Godwin's saloon. Apparently this was but a fraction of that which was en route so it had no substantial impact on the continuing drama in the junction. The social problem was on board the interurban cars after six p.m. when the fairer sex began to return home from Des Moines jobs. By December 4 arrangements were made to reopen the saloons in Des Moines. The final word on the town's saloons is undetermined. The state entered into prohibition in 1916 well ahead of the national prohibition in 1921. A referendum on the matter held in October 1917 resulted in a 52 percent plurality for the wets locally and in a statewide vote as well but nothing changed. Sheriff's raids south of town netted a handful of gamblers and bootleggers in 1916. A mid-1918 raid, said to have struck a grocery at Fifth and Maple streets collared 19 gamblers (*Des Moines Tribune*, December 1, 1913; *Valley Junction Express*, December 4, 1913; July 27, 1916; October 18, 25, 1917; February 21, 1918).



Figure 38: The city seizes five wagon loads of Valley Junction beer (*Des Moines Tribune*, December 1, 1913)

The Liquor Trade

There is no use in shutting one's eyes to the fact that there is a considerable amount of illicit liquor sales in and about Valley Junction, and on a much larger scale in Des Moines. The empty bottles—empty except for the odor of recent contents—that are to be found about nearly every morning, afford ample proof.

Isn't it about time some concerted effort were undertaken to curb the traffic. This paper will be glad to render what assistance it can.

Valley Junction *Express*, January 2, 1919

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The year 1914 was hardly a boring one. Floodwaters stood a foot deep on Fifth Street in mid-May. New electric arc lights lined the downtown and the *Express* observed that the new lights were “a commendable enterprise especially for those catering to an evening business.” Omaha interests bought the Lyric Theater in August and the town’s two movie houses (the Lyric and Nabob) were reduced to that one. But the major story took place in mid-October when Charles Ashworth and Ed Wegener were kidnapped, Ashworth was held for three days before a bank clerk declined to cash a \$5,000 ransom check and the kidnapped overpowered the kidnapper, and Wegener disappeared supposedly having been abducted. It would be a full year before Wegener was finally found alive and well and hiding out in Missouri. It seems the whole thing was his scheme to force Ashworth to buy Wegener’s new and overly expensive building for which there was an outstanding \$14,000 mortgage. After a lengthy series of trials including state supreme court rulings, Wegener escaped culpability using an insanity plea. The whole saga remains one of the town’s great stories and it garnered statewide if not regional attention. He died in Burlington, Iowa in late 1940 but his impact back home was remembered as having been “prominent and colorful” (*Valley Junction Express*, May 11, July 2, August 20, 1914; *Hull Sioux City County Index*, October 16, 1914; *Cedar Rapids Republican*, July 14, 1915; *Boone News Republican*, December 9, 1915; *Emmetsburg Democrat*, January 9, 1916; *Moville Mail*, May 24, 1917; *West Des Moines Express*, December 19, 1940).



Figure 39: Lower Fifth Street looking northwest from Railroad Street, ca.1914
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

A double front brick building (208 Fifth, non extant) was built in 1915 as was the first of a number of business buildings, an auto garage, to be built at Fifth and Walnut streets, north of the downtown. A frame store removed from the downtown site to the east side of Fifth met the fire district requirements by simply being stuccoed and given a fireproof roof (*Valley Junction Express*, April 6, 1915).

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The town's asphalt paving plans (Fifth from Railroad to Hillside, Maple from Fourth to Sixth) encouraged the street railway to adapt their tracks in town to the final grades intended by the city engineer. The Grand Avenue westward extension to Fourth was paved with brick and Fourth itself was finally opened to intersect with it (Valley Junction *Express*, November 5, 1914; January 7, July 8, August 12, 19, 26, November 4, 1915).

Some unspecified municipal entity conducted a canvassing for new city names in May 1915. Recommendations included "Vallevue," "Des Moines Valley" and "Ashworth Valley." State Curator Edgar Harlan warned that a name change would cause legal and historical confusion but then went on to recommend "Leafland" given the town's use of tree types for its cross street names. He thought that name would reflect city beautiful instincts and that the specific street landscaping could match tree species with street names (Des Moines *Capital*, May 7, 14, 1915).



Figure 40: plowing lower Fifth Street preparatory to paving, looking northeast, 1915
(note no marquee on the Lyric Theater) (Jordan House Library and Archives)

The Road to World War and the Post-war Transition Years, 1916-31:

This section encompasses one focused phase of downtown up-building, 1919-25, and the years 1926-31 when very little all new construction took place.

New gas globe street lights were tested at Sixth and Elm streets, the street names being etched into each globe (Valley Junction *Express*, October 12, 1916).

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Well Improved City

The paving now nearing completion in the city, the installation of new street lights on a metropolitan scale, the sanitary and storm sewers, the up-to-date gas and electric services will make Valley the best served and improved city of its size in the state. It is costing a lot of money—in some cases too much—but it is all worth while. Modern improvements can not be had without paying for them. It is either pay or go without.

Valley Junction *Express*, August 2, 1917

One lesser yet notable community improvement was that of house and store building numbers. Store street numbers were only rarely used in advertisements but the city provided blackened iron plates that bore the building street number in white aluminum paint. There was some opposition based in part that the numbers would glow in the dark and one home owner tore down his posted plate and tossed it across the street (Valley Junction *Express*, September 27, 1917).

America's entry into the Great War profoundly impacted every community, if only with regard to the innumerable bond and stamp drives. The first local reflection, already well under way by April 1917 was a tripling of garden plots on vacant lots. Draft registration, conscription and the departure of legions of local men followed and many medical and other community leaders went into lengthy service. A Red Cross work room was operated from the non-extant Valley Hotel, Fifth and Elm streets. Volunteer women produced bathrobes, surgical masks, eye wipes and finally 50 Christmas boxes that were shipped off after the armistice. There are no references to anti-German hysteria but female German aliens were instructed to register at the local post office in June 1918. The town depot was designated a Red Cross Canteen Service in March 1918. The *Express* educated against a public perception that new construction was prohibited by the War Industries Board. In fact new work costing less than \$2,500 was discouraged for the duration. The end surprised most everybody but the "fury of the celebration here lasted the entire day." There was a brief campaign to rename a town street to honor James Lee, the town's first fatal war casualty in January 1919. In a lingering shadow of the war, in April 1920 the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen demobilized their service flag bearing 18 stars for enlisted members who had served (Valley Junction *Express*, April 12, August 2, October 18, December 6, 1917; January 31, March 7, June 13, October 17, 24, November 14, 21, December 5, 1918; January 2, 1919; April 22, 1920).

The influenza or Spanish Flue epidemic, closely associated with the closing and postwar years of the war does not seem to have struck Valley Junction very strongly. Instructions on avoiding the disease appeared in October 1918 and three deaths and the closing of local schools ("we don't want to copy Des Moines") dated to early December 1918 (Valley Junction *Express*, October 17, December 5, 1918).

Home front developments during 1917-18 included the replacement of the Business Men's Association with a Community Club, the establishment of a town Chautauqua Circle, a tease about re-bidding the post office location (nothing changed), the town's first fire truck was acquired, and a new main electrical power line was strung from Des Moines. The new fire truck needed to exit the fire house quickly so a rolling door was substituted in early 1919. New Fifth Street lights, presumably of the globe type, were turned on July 18 and "gave the city quite a metropolitan appearance. The street was brilliantly and evenly lighted." Freight service on the interurban was ended in early October. The *Express* observed "the completion of paving is already having the inevitable result of transferring

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business to the motor truck.” The sole 1918 improvement was new street signs (Valley Junction *Express*, February 22, May 17, July 5, 19, October 4, 11, 1917; August 22, 1918; January 16, 1919).



Figure 41: View looking south on Fifth from north of Maple Street, ca.1920
(note the interurban car on the turnaround at Railroad Street)
(Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figure 42: Lower and upper Fifth Street looking northwest across Maple Street, ca.1920
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

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The year 1919 was that of the great new bank building race. The First National and Securities Savings banks faced each other on the upper end of the 200 block of Fifth Street. The latter bank determined to build a new building immediately south of their first one and the First National said it would remodel. The remodel was not only a virtual new building but it featured a Classical Revival terra cotta front in keeping with then popular banking architecture. The Security Savings bank design mimicked the more ostentatious design, but used basic square-cut column forms covered with white enamel brick. The Valley Junction Savings Bank, not to be outdone, retuned its facades using the same white brick. In mid-October the *Express* observed “Both bank buildings are running a close race for completion and are already showing a big improvement in looks for the city.” The Security bank won, moving into its new quarters in late November. The First National building was ready only by late February 1920 (Valley Junction *Express*, April 10, 17, July 10, August 7, September 4, 11, 1919; October 16, November 20, February 26, 1920).

The first self-service grocery appeared in the form of the Peter Pan cash grocery which opened to a full business from the start. The *Express* noted “The store makes a point of selling cheap, and there is no magic about it. It is done by eliminating extra help and making no deliveries. The system has been popular where tried” (Valley Junction *Express*, April 3, 1919).

There was long a light industrial presence on the south end of the downtown, on Lower Fifth Street. This was the realm of liveries and bakeries. A branch of the Des Moines Paper Box factory was added to the mix in 1919 and it remained for a full decade. From the start it employed 28, mostly young women (Valley Junction *Express*, October 23, 30, November 30, 1919).

One well accepted local historical myth is that the Hispanic presence in Valley Junction resulted from the introduction of strike breakers of Mexican descent during the railroad strikes of the mid-1920s. A fatal 1919 altercation made reference to the town’s “Mexican colony.” The 1920 census locates Domato Gonzales who along with five other Hispanic single males, all railroad workers, lived behind 312 Fifth Street. Another ethnic presence in town was Chow You who operated a laundry on lower Fifth from 1910 as late as 1932. He lived with his two brothers at the laundry (135 Fifth, non-extant) as of 1920 (Valley Junction *Express*, August 7, 1919).

The post-war peacetime transition was difficult. Strikes shut down interurban service in August and a national coal strike started in November and continued through mid-December 1919. For street car service there were auto and regular train alternatives and the town suffered less than did the capital city, the *Express* noting the “coal proposition [is] not as critical here as other places.” Materials shortages, particularly gravel and concrete, inflation and lingering governmental controls hindered new construction. The *Express* noted “The way buildings are being started over town, it looks as if people have got tired of waiting for prices to come down. The only alternative is to build and keep rents up” (Valley Junction *Express*, August 14, November 16, December 11, 18, 1919; June 24, July 1, 1920).

Municipal paranoia was riled when the Des Moines post office sought bids to convert the town’s facility into a branch of the capital city’s postal organization under the guise of offering free delivery to homes with the promise that the sub-station would retain the local name. The *Express* enumerated past grievances against the dominant capital city, the most recent being a legislative effort to force Valley Junction to pay \$80,000 against shared sewer services. With regard to stopping the postal coup the same source advised “Let Valley people at once get busy and send

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remonstrance's to the department against this effort to obliterate our city as a self-governing identity..." (Valley Junction *Express*, October 30, 1919).

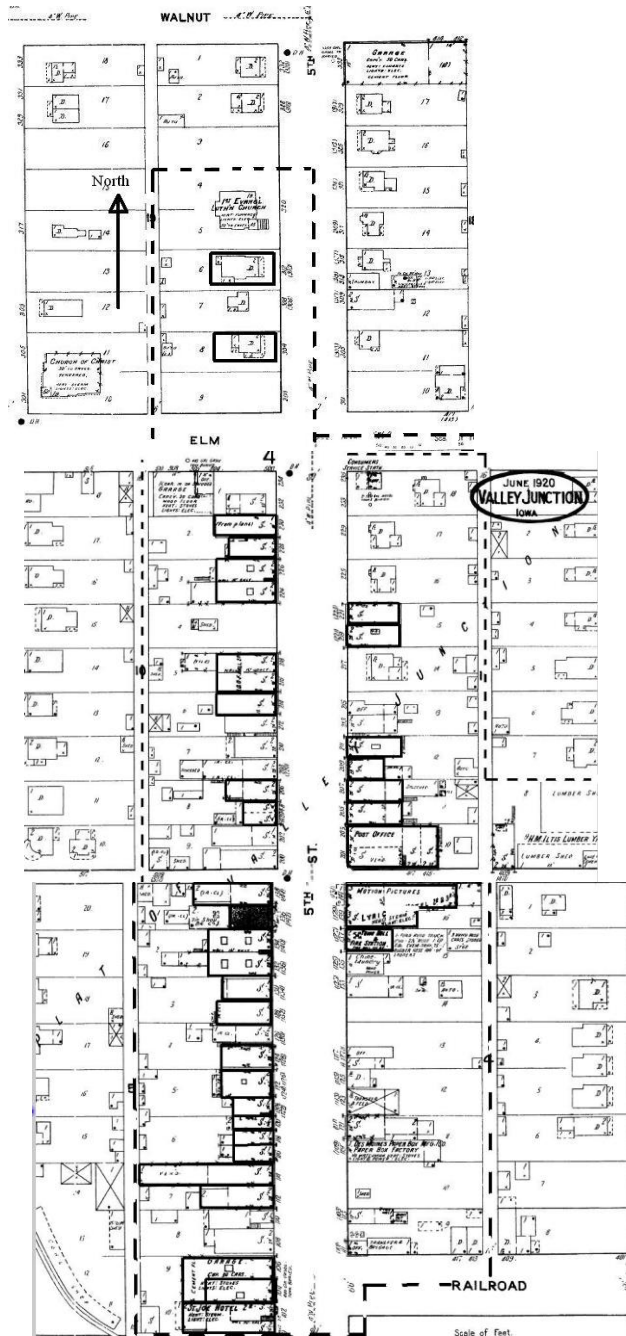


Figure 43: 1920 Sanborn annotated with extant buildings

A large frame rooming house located east of the Christian Church on Elm and Sixth streets burned and there was a movement to build a community center on the site. Such a hall was needed because of municipal growth and a

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growing community spirit. Lodges were too busy for this use and the high school auditorium was too far away. If the church chose to connect the basement and build a hall, it could serve a double purpose. Nothing finally came of the proposal and there would not be a community hall until 1972 when the city gained ownership of the Legion Building (Valley Junction *Express*, October 30, 1919; March 18, April 1, 1920).

Filling stations were popping up around the downtown, on Railroad and Maple Streets, at Fifth and Walnut a few blocks north. When the Standard Oil Company paid \$3,000 for a lot at the latter point the *Express* scoffed that the price “shows what a matter of location will do in enhancing prices. Quite as good building lots can be bought for a third of that or less” (Valley Junction *Express*, January 29, 1920).

Figure 43 depicts the expanded downtown and extant buildings are identified. The east side of the 100 block is comparatively under-developed while residences are still dominant in the same upper end of the 200 block. The west side of the latter block is nearly all commercial but one residence and a vacant lot remain. The 300 block remains residential.



Figure 44: "A Live town for live people" -upper Fifth Street looking south from Elm Street, 1924 showing the two new banks left and right (Jordan House Library and Archives)

In 1920 the Lyric Theater gained its first marquee, giving it a “metropolitan” appearance. Note that it functioned for seven years without a marquee. A battery of the 16th U.S. field artillery spent two days in town, camping south of the town. The unit was engaged in a cross-country march and combined some recruiting work along the way. Another interurban strike took place during the State Fair Time. The city council also rejected a proposed 7 cent fair hike at that time. An 8 cent fare was settled in December. By this time busses filled in for the lost transportation and the railroad restored shuttle train service as well. The state was paving the River to River highway but was dealing

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with concrete shortages. Railroad Street was paved and apparently straightened in early October (Valley Junction *Express*, July 15, 22, August 26, September 23, October 7, December 16, 1920).

Valley Junction was being boosted as of mid-1922 with the slogan "A live town for live people." Promotions included a tourist camp, a town band that had lapsed during the war, and a local minstrel show. In July the town finally had its first Chautauqua, importing the White and Myers Chautauqua show from Kansas City. These efforts coincided with the second (the first had occurred a year earlier) substantial railroad workers strike that involved 1,400 workers which began on July 1. The first organizational effort following the walkout was to register the strikers in a mass meeting in the Odd Fellows hall. Area coal miners also went on strike that same month. By early September after five months on strike businesses in Des Moines were burdened with accumulated credit allowed the striking families and a dozen groceries had closed. The Valley Junction retailers were no doubt also suffering. The strike would continue for 22 months and it is thought that the strike experience would finally convince the Rock Island to abandon its Valley Junction hub. On the railroad side of the strike, 200 African American strike breakers were at work in the Junction yards and shops and they drew the attention of the area Ku Klux Klan. A threatening letter was distributed and the county sheriff pledged the safety of the imported workers. Two Des Moines *Tribune* reporters gained notoriety by being blindfolded and taken to a Klan gathering outside of the city, a journalistic first it was claimed. Meanwhile at the Junction the picket lines had cooled, the imported police force had been reduced by a third and strikers and strike breakers were "hobnobbing." A tally of all downtown businesses shows that 15 disappear from the record in 1919, as do 10 more in 1920 and 36 in 1922. Disappearances thereafter are reduced to just a few annually (Des Moines *Tribune*, June 22, July 1, 25, September 6, 7, 1922; Jacobsen, "Master List").

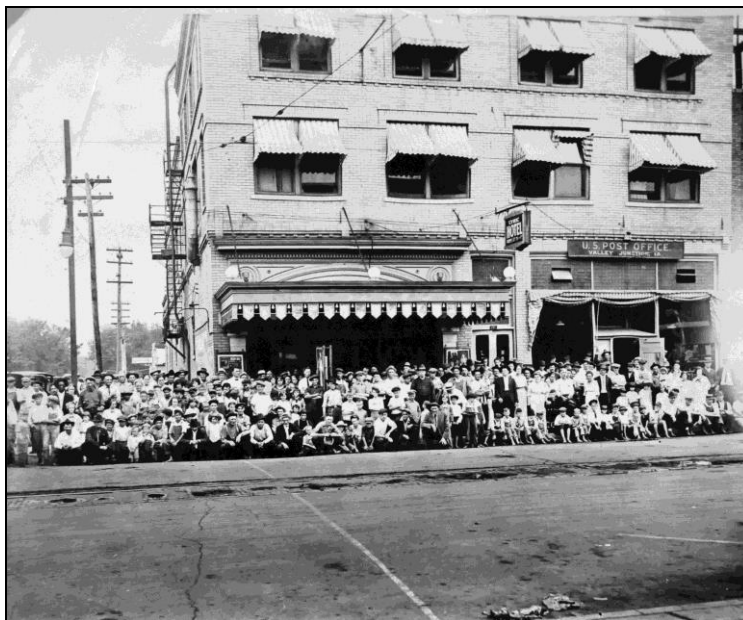


Figure 45: Ed Wegener provides a free movie experience to local rail and coal strikers, July 1922
(Des Moines *Tribune*, July 25, 1922)

The town's then mayor, Charles Mahoney, was Rock Island yard master so the city clerk, C. C. Williams, the incumbent in that position since 1913 and who was handsomely reimbursed for his good efforts at \$100 annually,

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pretty much kept the town on its budgetary track. Councilmen then drew no salary, being paid a buck per attended council meeting. The state municipal examiners termed the town to be a model for its low taxes and expenditures, retirement of public debt and otherwise living within its means (*Des Moines Tribune*, September 11, 1922).



Figure 46: Lower Fifth Street looking southwest across Maple Street, ca. 1922
(Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figure 47: The Klan parade south on Fifth Street, crossing Maple Street, looking northwest
(*Des Moines Tribune*, September 16, 1925)

In early 1923 the local commercial club attained a membership of over one hundred members for the first time and in 1924 the city gained its first Chamber of Commerce. A Women's Club organized in 1921, Rotary followed in 1926, Lion's Club in 1930 (*Des Moines Tribune*, February 6, 1923).

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The local Ku Klux Klan resurfaced with an "invitational" meeting held at the concrete plant. A parade the passed through the downtown and returned to its starting point, drawing 7,000 spectators (*Des Moines Tribune*, September 15, 1925).

The town's reputation was besmirched by a September 1929 liquor raid nabbed the town constable C. A. Brown at his home, seizing an impressive quantity of illegal booze and brewing and distilling equipment. The first recorded dynamiting of an ice jam on the Raccoon River occurred in the spring of that same year (*Des Moines Tribune*, March 13, September 6, 1929).

One small beginning in 1930 was the formation of an American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps. It would evolve as one of the town's notable institutions. Beginning in 1932 it entered state legion competitions and by 1935 it was placing first every year. The post was founded in 1929 and bought 207 Fifth in 1938. The post and corps had bigger ambitions but the war put them on hold as will be seen (*West Des Moines Express*, September 7, November 2, 1939).

The long-enduring campaign to rename the town enjoyed new support in early 1931. The Commercial Club pushed petitions favoring the new name of "West Des Moines" and realized half of its 800 signature goal within the first week. That number of signatures it was thought would carry the matter in a special election. The supporters predicted that under the new title the town would gain "significant state and national prestige" and that industries would be attracted to a suburban location having metropolitan advantages. The town had apparently already lost some if not all of the railroad shop function by this time as the petitioners also argued that the old name was no longer applicable as its railroad origin was already "past history." The issue went to a special election that fall and lost. The *Oelwein* newspaper conflated the name change with at least symbolically merging with Des Moines, reporting that "The city of Valley Junction decided by a vote of nine majority, that they did not want to become a part of Des Moines. They seem a little particular about their associates in a civic way" Another election was held in 1932 by which time the no votes prevailed by 258. The matter would remain dormant for six more years (*Des Moines Tribune*, May 27, 1931; *Oelwein Daily Register*, September 3, 1931).

District History, The Depths of the Great Depression and World War II, 1932-1945:

The Webber shootings of 1933 symbolically begins this time period. New construction was delayed until 1937 and most new buildings came along in 1940-42.

The loss of local newspapers for the years 1920-38 (and 1941, 1944) makes in extremely difficult to document a range of key local events, the main ones being the failure of the Security Savings Bank in late 1934 and the loss of the railroad division point, shops and yards by 1937. The bank failure involved the town's largest state bank at least in terms of outstanding loans. As of the end of June 1930 the failed bank loans were \$407,000 while those of the Valley Junction Savings Bank were valued at \$295,000. The latter bank was one of the first in the state to be reopened in May 1933 under the State Stabilization Act. The First National Bank of Valley Junction had assets that exceeded either bank and it passed through the hard times with minimal difficulty. It is significant that this small town lost but one of three banks while other towns lost all of their banks. It is also noteworthy that all three banks had survived the postwar transition in the early 1920s without difficulty, while many other banks were failing due to over-extension. A

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good measure of the impact of these years is business failures. The big impact in the downtown pre-dated the onset of the hard times with 58 businesses disappearing as of the end of 1929. Another 27 were gone by 1933. Losses surprisingly diminished with just 6 disappearances during 1935, but 21 more by 1938. One measure of the local impact of the Great Depression was post office receipts. These dropped so sharply that towards the end of 1933 the threat of being downgraded to a third class postal service was barely averted by a December get out your stamp drive. With regard to the loss of the railroad assets, they were finally removed to East Des Moines in 1936-37. The town mythos is that its residents were generally pleased to be rid of the railroaders. The local bars had reopened with the end of Prohibition in early 1933 and it is also likely that other industrial employers softened the job losses. In fact the railroad presence in town continued on a substantial level and railroad fraternal and labor organizations continued to have a strong presence well into the 1950s (Mason City *Globe Gazette*, May 19, 1933; Annual Report of the Superintendent of Banking, 1930, p. 28; Pella *Chronicle*, October 9, 11, 1934; West Des Moines *Express*, January 15, 1942; Jacobsen, "Master List").



Figure 48: Crime scene photo from Webber shooting, 1933, looking northeast
(Des Moines *Register*, March 2, 1933)

The wild nature of downtown Valley Junction received fresh energy in early March 1933. Butcher Ora C. Webber had an established reputation for handling intruders in his store using his shotgun and force of character. He also had a grudge against his son-in-law Edward Krieder. Webber finally gunned Krieder down in front of his own shop and Night Marshal Anthony Swatta had the bad idea of rushing out of the City Hall in to see what was happening. Webber shot Swatta but not before the marshal fatally wounded him. Webber shot and fatally wounded Swatta as well. Only Krieder, the original target, survived. Figure 48 locates the points where the victims fell (Des Moines *Register*, March 2, 1933).

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Figure 49: Flooded downtown, looking south on Fifth Street, 1935 (Des Moines *Register*, July 3, 1935)



Figure 50: May 1936 Vaudeville show-WPA-corner Fifth and Elm, north of First National Bank
(Iowa State Historical Society Archives)

Valley Junction got its own Iowa State Liquor Store in 1935, located at 132 Fifth Street, and first year sales totaled \$10,000 (West Des Moines *Express*, July 22, 1954).

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Figures 51-52: Post Office façade detail, ca.1936 (left), 1938 (right)
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

The loss of local newspapers during these pre-war years also means that the local perspective on finally obtaining a new urban title and identity. The West Des Moines Club was formed in 1935 to continue to push the name change idea and it was the club that paid for a special election. Pro-name change petitions garnered 1,123 signatures which were more than half of the qualified voter headcount. The opposition was organized and warned that the change would increase enable the county to make property assessments the same as in Des Moines, leading to higher taxes, and that the new name would pave the way for annexation by capital city. The Postal Department threatened that even if the town changed its name, the local post office name would not change due to potential confusion between the similar city names. A senatorial intervention quieted that concern. Voter turnout was heavy and the final tally was 828 to 498. There were three voting precincts, the City Hall serving as one of these. Mayor P. L. Riley exclaimed "I know this will help us. It is just what 'Valley' needed. We are ready to go to town." The city council acted later in the month to legally make the change and effective New Year's Day, 1938 the citizenry awoke in their newly re-titled city. The local American Legion hosted a celebration in their downtown building (Des Moines *Tribune*, December 8, 21, 1937; (Des Moines *Register*, December 1, 8, 1937).

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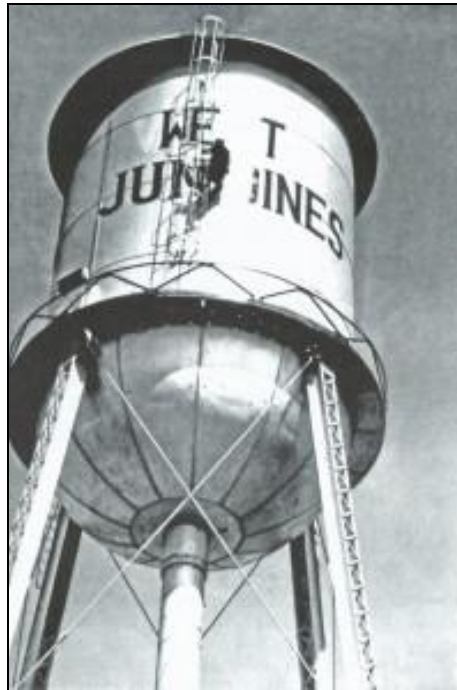


Figure 53: The iconic repainting the municipal water tower, 1937-38
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

Sign painters had a good deal of business as the iconic photo of adding the new municipal name to the water tower shows (Figure 53). The town began to flex its new muscle, forcing the removal of one of the oldest downtown landmarks, the frame Jackson and Lancer stables from the east side of Fifth Street, mid-block, as a fire hazard (Des Moines *Tribune*, November 24, 1938).

In early 1939 the Commercial Club wanted to remove two frame stores in the 100 block of Fifth for parking purposes, noting that "at times the parking problem along Fifth street becomes rather acute." Another traffic proposal was to widen Elm Street between Fourth and Sixth streets, given that that street "bears the brunt of the traffic coming in from Des Moines." The street was virtually single lane when parked cars lined both sides of it. A 24 foot width with 14 foot parking was sought. The contract was let that fall to do the widening as far west as Seventh Street. The Val Aire Ballroom was built this year and became the venue of choice for large community events (West Des Moines *Express*, March 16, April 6, October 12, 1939).

The phone and electrical franchises were renewed in 1939 by overwhelming majorities. The winter brought a massive blizzard in early March. One sign of better times was increased postal receipts, \$2,000 in 1938 over the previous year. The major development was the Vandenburg Drug Store. There hadn't been any building for some time and nothing so modern. Once the ceramic brick was being applied it was "receiving much favorable comment." The downtown was pushing north. Dr. Fred Sternagel bought lots across the street and built the town's first modern medical clinic a year later (West Des Moines *Express*, February 16, March 2, July 13, October 19, November 9, 1939).

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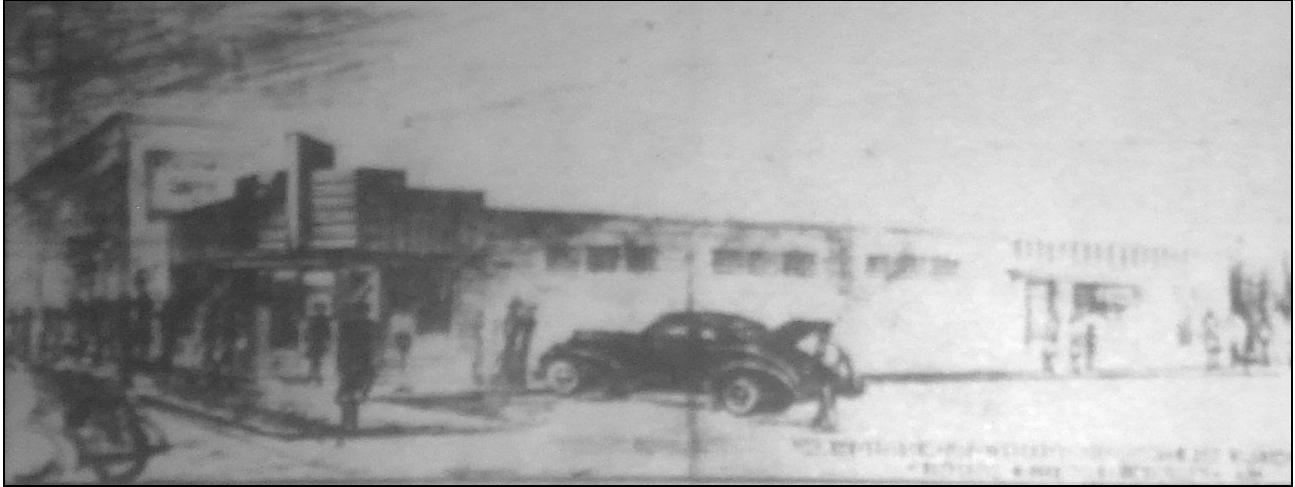


Figure 54: Architect's sketch. Modern style Vandenburg Drugstore, 234 Fifth
(West Des Moines *Express*, October 19, 1939)

By 1939 things were finally beginning to look up with 38 new houses, that same number being achieved in 1940 with 62 new homes during 1941. The Commercial Club called for zoning hoping that it would promote the infilling of vacant lots and larger store buildings to replace aging ones. Five hundred younger men registered for the first peacetime draft. The high school stadium was first used for community sings with 800 in attendance and summer concerts at the same locale drew 14,000 that season. Christmas decorations downtown were repeats of 1939 with lighted lanterns and evergreen swags. The Legion used its downstairs building (207 Fifth) to host a Christmas Inc. Toy Store, supplying repaired toys to those in need. Cards were mailed to families thought to be so in need (West Des Moines *Express*, March 21, May 23, June 6, August 22, October 17, December 5, 19, 26, 1940; January 1, 1942).



Figure 55: New Carmody Drugs block glass, carrara glass and concrete front (storefront non-extant)
(West Des Moines *Express*, November 14, 1940).

This was the year of glass or structural block downtown. Carmody Drug (214 Fifth) got a new front with the block and Dr. Sternagle's medical clinic employed "a liberal amount of glass block" in its front. The Christian

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Church, on the corner of Maple and Sixth burned in 1940 and finally was rebuilt elsewhere, freeing up the lot for downtown expansion. The Lyric Theater received its present marquee. Illuminated with "hundreds of light bulbs" it made a striking night time impact on the downtown (West Des Moines *Express*, July 11, August 22, November 7, 14, 1940).



Figure 56: Lower Fifth Street looking north, ca.1940
(Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figure 57: Curbliner on Maple Street, 1960 looking northeast (Courtesy of Earl Short)

Local newspapers are missing for 1941 so the events of a critical pre-war year are not at hand. Postal receipts that year were once again at record levels. The year also brought a record blizzard in early January. In early February a new fact of life, daylight savings time, was introduced. In early June curbliner electric bus service replaced the interurban cars. The new route left Fifth Street at Maple, west to Eighth, north to Vine and back east. Just under four

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inches of rain in mid-July stopped the bus service with the worst flooding since 1935. The first reported metals scrap drive took place in late July 1941 (West Des Moines *Express*, January 8, 15, February 5, April 16, June 4, July 17, 1942).

Fire destroyed the Western Auto Company in May 1942 and it was rebuilt using concrete block, presumably the only available building material given the onset of war. The block facade, scored into stacked square blocks was the second such storefront treatment after Carmody's new storefront (West Des Moines *Express*, May 7, July 17, 1942).

The Second World War would increasingly dominate all aspects of life in West Des Moines. A separate merchant's organization was formed in late June to sell war savings stamps. The first wartime scrap drive was held in mid-August but used a non-downtown location as a collection point. The city was under the authority of the War Price and Rationing Board #2 which also administered much of western Des Moines, a population of 50,000. It was officed in the Security Bank building (219 Fifth) after briefly using the City Clerk's Office in City Hall. At its height it had 11 employees and only closed down in late September 1945 just after VJ Day. The Red Cross was immediately north in 221 Fifth and initially there were 25-35 paid workers making bandages and other items (West Des Moines *Express*, June 25, August 13, 20, October 22, 1942; September 27, 1945).

The Memorial Day parade originated at Fifth and Railroad streets downtown, then marched north on Fifth to Walnut Street, finally halting at West Des Moines Elementary School. American Heroes Day was held downtown on July 18 with 5,000 in attendance. Its purpose was the sale of war bonds and stamps. A major entertainment was offered by the El Rio Club at 100 Fifth and the Legion Drum & Bugle Corps figured centrally in the parade (West Des Moines *Express*, June 4, July 23, 1942).



Figures 58-59: Heroes' Day, July 18, 1942
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

A major downtown feature was removed in October-November. Some 70 tons of steel rails were pulled up using Works Progress Administration workers. The city got the rails for a dollar from the transit company but their

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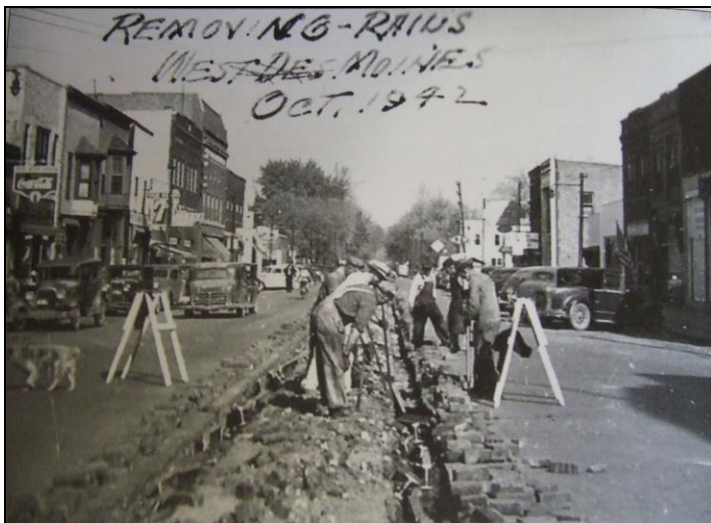
value was \$14 a ton so it was hoped that the proceeds could cover the cost of repairing the resulting ruts. Asphalt wasn't to be had so the removed brick and concrete was used (West Des Moines *Express*, October 22, November 12, 1942).

With the close of 1942 West Des Moines was hailed by the Iowa Taxpayer's Association as being the fifth lowest in municipal taxes of 71 comparable Iowa towns. The association was the harbinger of the later small government movement, pushing for low taxes and low municipal debt (West Des Moines *Express*, December 3, 1942).

The 1943 local newspapers are missing so any major events for that year are unknown. Flooding returned in late May 1944, said to be the worst since 1935. Considerable damage was inflicted on the downtown. The Minnis Grocery switched to self-service, the downtown got its first radio shop (511 Elm) and for the first time in a long time the city went Democratic for Franklin Roosevelt (West Des Moines *Express*, May 25, June 22, November 9, 1944).



Figure 60: Street car track removal, 200 block, south of Elm Street looking north (Jordan House Library and Archives)



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Figures 61, 62: Street car track removal, further south in 200s block looking north (left) and in the 100s block looking north (right) (Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figure 63: Wartime scrap drive with new theater marquee, looking east
Parachute Battalion was a 1941 prewar film while Valley of the Sun came out in February 1942
(Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figure 64: Servicemen's wives with the first baby boomers (note sign for parking upper left)

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Figures 65-66: Servicemen's photos in front of First National Bank, Cliff Kenworthy (left), Pat Curtiss (right) (Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figures 67-68: Three servicemen (left) and sailor (right) (Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figures 69-70: Red Cross workroom volunteers (left), soldier and sister in front of the workroom (221 Fifth) (Jordan House Library and Archives)

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Figure 71: Wintry street scene, 200 block looking north, 1943-44
(Jordan House Library and Archives)



Figure 72: Queuing for cigarettes at Askew's Drug, Fifth and Maple streets, looking northeast, 1944
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

The war wasn't anywhere near over when a wave of pent-up storefront changes was let loose. Glass and aluminum storefronts were installed on six buildings. When the Masons (220-22 Fifth) did the same with their twin

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storefronts, the *Express* noted "This will be quite an improvement and will be in harmony with the many new fronts that have been built here during the past few years." A frame warehouse rear addition on Maple Street (411-13 Maple) was remodeled into two new storefronts. Yet another all-new concrete block building was quickly finished at 113 Fifth Street (West Des Moines *Express*, July 19, September 13, 1945).

District History, 1946-1967:

New construction downtown largely ended in 1957 with the exhaustion of vacant commercial lots.



Figure 73: Lower Fifth Street looking southwest across Elm Street, ca. 1945 showing the undamaged Ashworth Masonic Building (center) before it burned (Jordan House Library and Archives)

The area rationing board shuttered its office in September 1945 as previously noted but it wasn't until early February 1946 that the Commercial Club resumed its prewar 11 meetings a year. Kaser Construction Company, a war contract enriched Iowa firm, relocated to West Des Moines and filled the void left by the rationing board. McIntyre Furniture Store built yet another modern concrete block store building at 133 Fifth in early 1946. It would later be tripled in size. The Masonic building was gutted on its upper levels a month later in what was the city's largest downtown fire to date, with a loss of \$75,000. A north end firewall saved everything in that direction. The *Express* warned that "On account of the scarcity of building materials, the high price and scarcity of labor, a fire-loss at this time s about the most critical hazard the town can face." The gutted building would stand a charred wreck for over a year and the council acted to enlarge the fire district which now ran from Railroad Street north to Walnut Street, and from west of Sixth Street east to east of Fourth Street (West Des Moines *Express*, January 22, February 26, March 7, 14, April 11, 1946; *Atlantic News Telegraph*, February 23, 1946).

Many Concrete Structures Are Almost Finished

Also Number of Fine New Fronts Adorn Our City:

All Improvements are in Business Section.

West Des Moines is now undergoing the greatest business building boom in its long history. These new improvements are right in the heart of the business district and

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embrace a number of new concrete business buildings, along with several new brick and glass fronts. Some of these new business buildings will be ready for business by the first of May-- and all of them by early June...

West Des Moines Express, April 11, 1946⁸

Recalling the city's first septic sewer system and being ever mindful of the overweening prideful independence of Valley Junction/West Des Moines, it is noteworthy that in 1926 the suburb had entered into a perpetual contract with Des Moines to handle its sewage treatment. A substantial up-front payment made the necessary connections possible and annual payments were made in successive ten-year periods. The third decade of the agreement was to have charged West Des Moines 50 cents a head of its population. Des Moines leaders and their legal department were surprised to learn about the arrangement claiming that perpetual agreements were illegal (*West Des Moines Express*, May 30, 1946).

Comprehensive planning and zoning emerged as a priority with the Commercial Club in May 1946. By year's end the council had appointed a planning commission and contracted to create the first plan. The club paid the \$2,000 cost. The club also considered renumbering the city's streets so as to be a continuation of Des Moines' numbered streets. This notion was rejected by the new planning commission (*West Des Moines Express*, May 16, June 6, November 21, 28, December 3, 5, 1946).

The speed and scale of municipal growth defines its history by the 1950s but the seeds of that growth were planted and growing. The point of transition seems to be between 1946 and 1947, being buoyed by wartime migration, a burgeoning birthrate and industrial recruitment. Looking forward to 1947 the *Express* noted the probable completion of a record 100 new homes, a new elementary school once construction materials were available, a new municipal plan and a population of 6,000. The city even hired its first civil engineering firm. Traffic control was intensifying downtown with U-turns being banned at Fifth and Maple streets (*West Des Moines Express*, December 26, 1946; January 30, 1947).

⁸ The new block buildings were 111-13, 135, 211 and 313-15 (outside district) Fifth Street and 411-13 Maple Street and 509-13 Elm Street.

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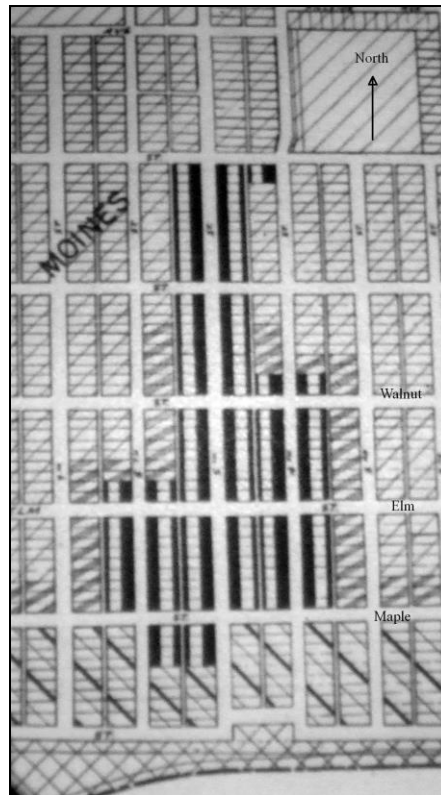


Figure 74: First zoning map, 1948
(West Des Moines *Express*, January 8, 1947)

The 1947 zoning map established a heavy industrial district to the south of Maple Street and an upside down "T" shaped commercial district between Maple and Elm streets. The latter extended to the alley east of Fourth Street between Walnut and Maple streets. Commercial buildings could still be built in the industrial area. Clearly the new plan foresaw commercial land uses spreading northward, and engulfing an existing cluster of filling stations and other stores that were along Walnut Street. Note the depot jog in Railroad Street at the bottom of the map (West Des Moines *Express*, January 8, 1947; March 4, 1948; Des Moines *Tribune*, January 16, 1948).

The year 1947 brought the first mention of a Chamber of Commerce queen. It also brought a major June flood with triple rises over as many weeks. The downtown had from two to ten feet of water and the third drenching caused authorities to close the streets around the downtown to restrain a deluge of spectators (West Des Moines *Express*, June 5, 19, 23, 1947; Fredrickson, p. 177).

One institution absent from West Des Moines was its own Iowa National Guard unit. The Guard was reconstituted postwar and a great many new communities were new participants. The local Legion pushed the idea and meetings were held but it would appear that the city's vets were satisfied with their wartime service and nothing more came of it (West Des Moines *Express*, July 10, 1947).

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The downtown gained 20 new street lights along Fifth Street from Railroad to Elm streets in mid-1947. Two-hour long parking was authorized a month later for the downtown from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. but it took 18 months to get the necessary warning signs so the parking restriction was not implemented until May 1949 (*West Des Moines Express*, July 24, August 7, September 15, 1947; May 19, 1949).



Figure 75: McLaren's Funeral Home (left, 312 Fifth) and the Lutheran Church, the future site of the new city hall and fire station, looking northwest, ca.1947 (Jordan House Library and Archives)

The Honor Roll remained standing as of the fall of 1947 when the American Legion offered the back of their vacant lot for public parking. The Legionnaires had wanted to build on their lot for years and had even finalized their building plans the previous fall but building restrictions remained in place. They even proposed to provide space for the nascent public library. By 1948 they termed it a "community building" and revised plans a third time removing a basement and other items. Bids were sought in late October 1948 (*West Des Moines Express*, August 1, 1946; October 2, 1947; October 28, 1948)

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Figure 76: The new American Legion Building, 217 Fifth Street, looking northeast
(Des Moines *Register*, February 5, 1950)

The public library finally gained a storefront presence in early 1948, occupying the former Security Bank Building (219 Fifth). Dial phone service displaced human operators in September. The city ranked first in lowest municipal taxes for all Iowa cities with populations of 3,500 to 7,000. The tax cutting mania was so popular that a local chapter of the Iowa Taxpayer's Association was formed in the fall of 1949. The issue of widening Maple Street from Fourth to Sixth streets was under consideration as was the removal of the oil storage tanks located on the former depot land at Fifth and Railroad streets, these being a serious fire hazard (West Des Moines *Express*, January 29, February 26, July 8, September 2, 1948; Des Moines *Register*, February 15, March 28, August 27, 1948; September 29, 1949).

There were two telltale indicators of municipal growth. The first was the passing of a bond issue for a new city hall in March 1948. The other was actual expansion in the form of annexations. The citizens of Clover Hills said no thanks for now in April but other areas to the north and northwest were added. Clover Hill finally dis-incorporated in early 1950. This accession caused the *Register* to note "West D. M. No Railroad Village Now." It added that since its name change in 1938 "the city rapidly has been outgrowing the valley that led to its original name." Initial growth in numerous substantial residential plats had extended the city boundaries to the north and west. The *Register* noted further:

Its state-owned liquor store does a volume of business out of proportion with the city's size, a result of shoppers from greater Des Moines...

In other respects, West Des Moines is typical of many other Iowa cities. Filling stations, modern drug stores, ice cream parlors and automobile dealers have pushed outward from the original two-block business district.

Individually owned grocery stores combine with a super market to furnish food.

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The 1940 city population of 4,253 was now thought to be 7,000 (*Des Moines Tribune*, February 18, March 30, April 1, 1948; *Des Moines Register*, April 2, 1950).

The Council wrestled with barring minors from taverns in mid-1949. The post office lease in the Wegener Building ran out and the new location as of February 1952 was at 100 Fifth, now known as the Tamarack Building. It had remained at 135 Fifth for just 30 years, since 1922. It just missed obtaining a second class rating in 1951. The *Express* newspaper office made the mistake of moving into 400 Maple, being replaced at 415 Maple by the city waterworks office (*Des Moines Register*, May 25, 1949; May 21, July 19, 1951; January 24, February 14, 1952).



Figure 77: The new city hall-fire station, looking southwest
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

Having all city offices in one location remained a local public virtue. Now paying rent for the waterworks, it fell to the volunteer fire department to take the lead. Recall that their quarters were first provided in the original city hall back n 1899-1900. Now they purchased the vacant Lutheran Church property at 318 Fifth for an impressive \$10,000 and offered the lot to the city for a new combination city hall, library and fire station. A new bond issue for \$136,000 was passed in November 1952. Construction began in mid-1952 and the new building was occupied on February 4, 1954. With the completion of the new American Legion building the city finally had three buildings that met air raid shelter standards, the other two being newer elementary schools (*West Des Moines Express*, February 28, 29, May 22, August 14, October 9, November 6, 1952; April 30, May 7, 1953; February 4, 1954).

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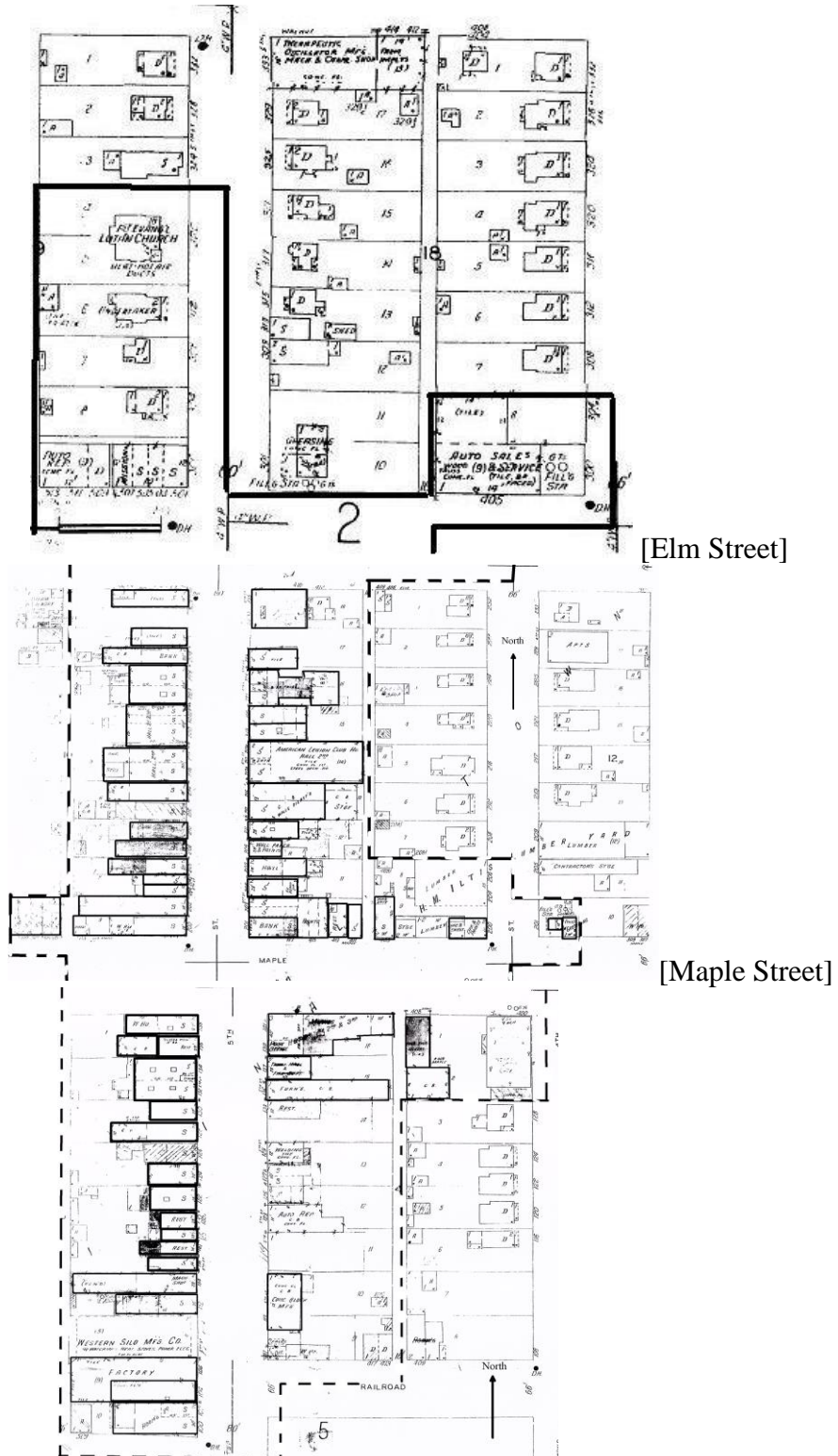


Figure 78: 1952 Sanborn Map

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The post office was designated a first class status in early 1953, setting the stage for obtaining a new federal building. The *Express* had moved and its new old building burnt to the ground. It rebuilt and for the rest of existence would reprint the photo of its burning home with the catch phrase "Polk County's hottest newspaper." Despite the disaster it never missed an edition. McIntyre Furniture opened its triple front newly enlarged building in October and the Council authorized mercury vapor lights for the downtown at that same time (West Des Moines *Express*, January 15, April 9, 20, October 1, 1953).

Downtown street improvements turned to the need to widen Fifth in the 300 block, minimally in anticipation of firehouse needs. The work was done that same fall. The triple-storefront McIntyre store was duplicated with the construction of the Cornwell Building (233-35 Fifth) on the southeast corner of Fifth and Elm streets. The Lyric Theater added a curved movie screen and could now offer first run films in cinemascope. The city tried to sell the old city hall but rejected all bids, finally leasing it to McIntyre Furniture as a warehouse. Comparable state liquor stores across the state showed no gains in sales if not losses but the store in West Des Moines enjoyed a five percent increase (West Des Moines *Express*, March 4, April 1, 8, July 22, October 7, November 25, 1954).

The first annual progress edition was produced in 1955 by the *Express* and the city started a newspaper scrapbook that covered major municipal events. The state liquor store never faltered however with 1956 sales trumping those of 1955 by \$20,000 (West Des Moines *Express*, October 1955; December 29, 1955; May 17, 1956).

In 1956 the fledgling YMCA moved downtown, to 509 Elm Street. A Downtown Business and Professional Association supplemented the Chamber, having been organized in mid-1955. Downtown traffic was the leading topic of concern. The first mention of one-way traffic, proposed for Fourth and Sixth streets just outside the downtown, was voiced. Today it is hard to realize that First Street had no link with Grand Avenue but terminated at Vine Street. The liquor store (211 Fifth) was lured southward to 115 Fifth by the promise of a new concrete block building, starting in 1957. The downtown gained three new buildings, all of concrete block construction (113, 233-35 and a rear addition to 209 Fifth) (West Des Moines *Express*, May 19, 1955; January 12, March 8, May 17, 1956; West Des Moines Scrapbook).

Recalling the 1950 *Register* reference to businesses moving outside of the downtown, this was becoming a major thing by 1957. Walnut Street, between Fourth and Sixth had attracted satellite businesses from the World War I years. As Grand Avenue belatedly got paved and the city expanded northward, arterial locations were too attractive and larger supermarkets and other buildings desiring large lots and larger parking lots, found no downtown space had they been desired. By the mid-1950s the new drugstores were locating along Grand Avenue where the Gateway Shopping Center developed. One irony was that Grand Avenue near Walnut Creek had flooded as severely as the downtown. Another blow was struck in 1959 when Des Moines' first mall (Merle Hay Plaza) opened to the distant northeast. A major departure was that of the West Des Moines State Bank, leaving 201 Fifth in favor of Grand Avenue (West Des Moines *Express*, August 6, 1950; January 3, 1957; August 6, 1959; January 14, 1960; Fredrickson, p. 60).

Downtown the first businesses to disappear to outside competition were the small grocery stores. These were gone by 1960. Drug stores were next, gone by the early 1970s. Antique stores, to be the wave of the retail future

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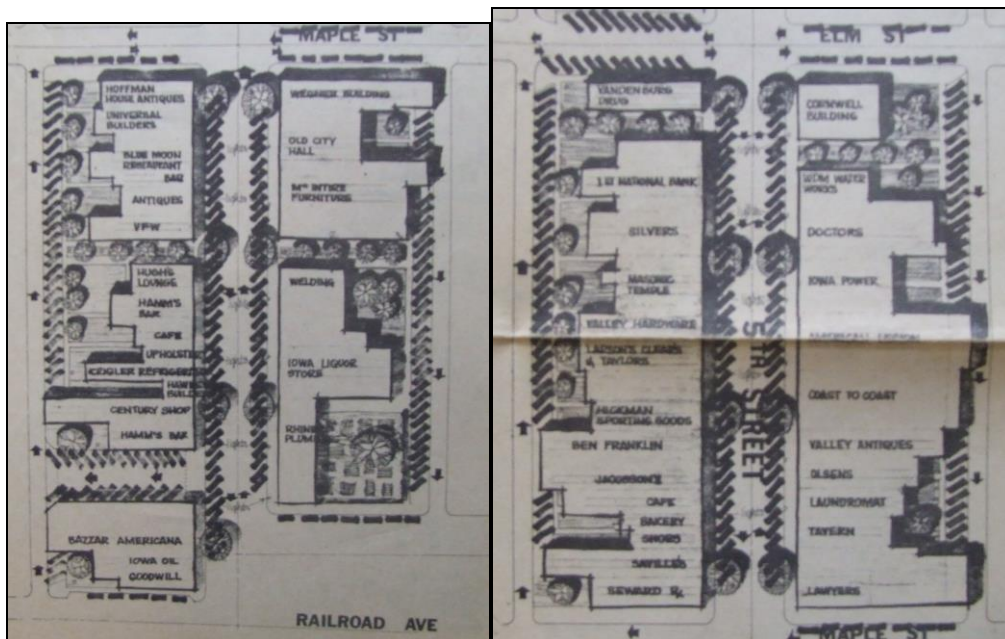
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were present as early as 1950 with the West Des Moines Trading Post (130 Fifth). By 1968 five antique or gift stores downtown. The claimed number of taverns runs as high as 11 but the 1943 directory lists six taverns, all but one being south of Maple Street. There were a great many more liquor licenses of course at private clubs, restaurants, the sole billiards hall, drug stores and so on. As late as 1975 there were just five named taverns in operation (City directories).

The iconic municipal water tower of 1938 name-change fame was replaced in early 1957. The city went to legal war with Des Moines over a projected series of water wells that were to be driven close to the Raccoon River and the ensuing legal struggle continued into mid-1958 when the two cities agreed to jointly construct a shared water reservoir. Des Moines claimed priority water rights (West Des Moines *Express*, January 10, June 20, 1957; April 10, 1958).

The television impact on the Lyric and all movie houses in general forced a major interior remodeling and the promise of new and better movies. The *Express* termed the Lyric "down but not out." Local postal receipts leaped by a third over those of 1957. A residential property at 321 Fourth was purchased for additional parking space. Crazy Days (or later, Crazy Daze) is first mentioned in October 1958 as a two-day downtown sales promotion. It was promoted by radio spots over three days and 51 businesses participated. Cash and merchandise prizes worth \$1,400 were awarded. Rain delayed a planned parade. This event continued yearly and by 1960 it had gained a distinct military presence with tanks, ducks, heavy artillery or navy displays as a part of the show. Auctions were added in 1960 and the 1961 event took on an atomic flavor. These events were conducted by the Retail Promotions Committee of the Chamber (West Des Moines *Express*, September 11, 17, 24, October Progress Edition, November 1, 1958; September 17, 1959; September 22, 1960; September 21, 22, 28, 1961).



Figures 79-80: The earliest downtown streetscape plan, 100 block (left) and 200 block (right) (West Des Moines *Express*, October 28, 1968)

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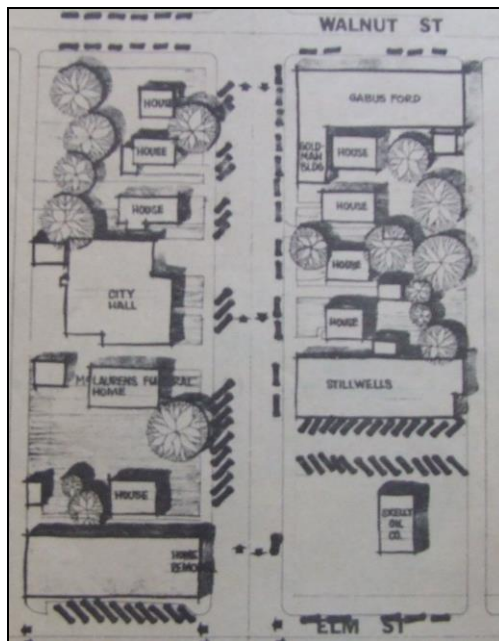


Figure 81: The earliest downtown streetscape plan, 300 block
(West Des Moines *Express*, October 28, 1968)

The downtown shifted to one-hour parking in mid-1959. The city had grown so far west that new ward boundaries were needed. The downtown was always in the First Ward or at least of late half in that ward. Now the west First Ward boundary shifted from Fifth to Seventh returning all to one ward, with voting continuing at the new City Hall. The West Des Moines Development Corporation was formed this year and would play a leading role in recruiting new industry over the next several decades. Its first industrial park was along Railroad Street near the downtown. The emerging role of women as entrepreneurs first achieved "critical mass" in the *Express* when 16 local female leaders were pictured in recognition of Business Women's Week. Beginning this same year Betty Hill Swander made her first real estate purchase (the Wedener Building) and by 1988 her downtown holdings numbered 20 properties with an assessed value of \$3.2 million. Two other female investors had comparable holdings downtown (West Des Moines *Express*, June 4, 18, October 3, 1959; Des Moines *Register*, July 25, 1968; April 9, 1988).

In early February 1960 the *Tribune* denounced West Des Moines mayor Chauncey Giles for failing to report all municipal traffic convictions to the state. The newspaper got Giles a state audit as a result of their calling him out. The *Express* termed the incident "another lively chapter in a 10-year old feud" and lauded its mayor "whose administration has thwarted our Big Brother of Locust Street in a number of its pet projects, such as sewers, annexations and news releases [Mayor Giles] has learned this week that you can't win 'em all." The *Express* closed with "(Meanwhile suspicion is mounting up that the *Tribune's* article is simply one of its long series to prove that nothing good can ever happen in the suburbs. Especially this one (West Des Moines *Express*, February 4, 1960).

In 1960 the city got its second bus line when the Des Moines bus service added a line to the Fairmeadows area. Spring Capacity Day was an added downtown promotion held in early April. The Chamber made another push for a new post office building and the Raccoon River bridge south of the city was knocked off line when it was struck by

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renegade pontoons. Dr. Fred Sternagel bought 228 Fourth Street for additional parking for the downtown. The cost of the purchase was to be offset by leasing reserved spaces for downtown workers (*West Des Moines Express*, March 3, April 7, 18, 21, May 5, 1960).

Grand Avenue was designated State Highway #90 in 1956 and plans were made to widen the Walnut Creek Bridge. When the avenue lost its highway status the bridge plans were shelved. Finally in 1961 the bridge was improved and became "the new doorway to West Des Moines." Previously the narrow bridge had created "a perpetual bottleneck" (*West Des Moines Express*, November 2, 1961).

In 1961 the city forced the removal of the unused above ground oil storage tanks located at the lower end of the downtown, as part of the plan to straighten and extend Railroad Street to serve as a truck route. The old depot grounds became a parking lot. Railroad was paved the next year but the original street that bumped north around the former depot grounds was left in place where it remains today as Railroad Place. There was a decided crackdown on parking enforcement in the downtown where two-hour parking was the rule on Elm and Railroad streets but a one-hour on Fifth from its south end to Elm and Maple Street close to Fifth prevailed. Finally in mid-May all parking was changed to the two-hour limit (*West Des Moines Express*, February 23, April 20, May 11, October 30, November 2, 23, 1961; June 14, July 19, 1962).



Figure 82: Aerial view looking northwest from Railroad and Third streets
(*West Des Moines Express*, October 25, 1962)

City Hall was full to bursting by 1962 and an option was taken on the C. W. Humphreys building to the southwest on the same block (525 Elm). A bond issue for a "public safety building" was defeated and the general preference to have all city services in one building was reiterated. A second story was considered in 1963 as a solution. The public library made a run for its own building, to be built close to the downtown at Fifth or Sixth and

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Walnut and voters even approved a bond issue that included the site purchase (such an inclusion was deemed illegal so the passage was voided. The water works office was never housed in city hall, but leased downtown space prior to buying 227 Fifth in 1961. The fire station was finally the first to depart the crowded building, obtaining its own building in 1968. The linking of First and 63rd streets at Grand Avenue finally became a reality. First Street was extended north from Vine Street, the suburb and the city each laying one of its twin lanes. Even today, the west half is signed as First Street, the east one 63rd Street. Grand Avenue was extended as far south as Army Post Road and it was being paved. There was an unsuccessful push to allow bars to have dances. The Chamber got its first own downtown building (417 Maple) (*West Des Moines Express*, July 19, 1961; January 18, February 13, October 2, 25, December 10, 1962; October 24, 1963 *Des Moines Register*, December 11, 31, 1962; *Des Moines Tribune*, August 7, 1963; Frederickson, p. 189).

Another feather in the suburb's cap was the opening of its new post office at 430 Fifth, still "downtown" but a block further north of the City Hall. The new facility would pull commercial expansion northward. The exciting news of 1963 was the discovery of ancient human remains at Ninth and Ashworth. Krazy Daze morphed into a Fall Festival that year. The 13th consecutive *Express* progress edition termed the downtown "Polk County's Largest Shopping Center." The Council ordered more street lights for Maple Street between Fourth and Sixth streets but deemed Fifth to be sufficiently bright, what with five 400 watt mercury vapor lights per block (*Des Moines Tribune*, February 16, 1963; *West Des Moines Express*, July 25, September 26, October 24, December 12, 1963; *Des Moines Register*, April 25, 29, 1963).



Figures 83-84: Blade sign example photos, October 1, 1964, 200 block Fifth Street looking north
(Courtesy City of West Des Moines)

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Figure 85: looking north from Maple Street, 200s block Fifth Street, October 1, 1964
(Courtesy City of West Des Moines)

The city manager form of government was adopted in 1964. In late 1964 the magazine *Business and Industry* highlighted the city's quest for new industry. The article described the co-dependency between suburb and capital city, noting:

West Des Moines is a municipality that blossomed west of Iowa's capital city of Des Moines. The city limits of the two cities are contiguous. Many streets run through both cities. The Freeway will link both cities and have exits on two Interstate highways.

To many Des Moines residents West Des Moines is a barnacle. True, West Des Moines does not have a hospital, nor an airport, nor a technical high school, nor a paid fire department, nor a college. It uses Des Moines hospitals, recreational buildings educational institutions, cultural centers and transportation.

But West Des Moines fights back and says it contributes to Des Moines cultural activities, patronizes its stores and service establishments, pays for its hospital services and for its transportation needs.

What is appealing about life in West Des Moines is that everything--most everything--is new...It is life in a small town near a big city. So they buy their houses in West Des Moines and work in the city...

The references to the [MacVicar] freeway and two interstate highways [Interstate 80, running east/west along the north edge of West Des Moines and Interstate 35, running north/south with a route to the near west of the city] were to revolutionary transportation arteries that would play a central role in pulling municipal growth west over time (*Business and Industry*).

The downtown lost its Lyric movie house in January 1967. By this time it was showing adult films and a police raid and confiscation of several firms led to a revocation of its license by the Council (*Des Moines Register*, January 14, 15, 22, February 7, March 14, 1967).

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In early 1968 the *Register* could proclaim of the growing city "Its Valley Junction Days Are Gone." As of 1947 the city encompassed two square miles. By 1968 it exceeded 17 square miles. The same source also ran another similar article that same year titled "New Image Presented by W. D. M." in which the typical resident 'wears a well-pressed business suit, owns a modern home and reasonably new car and has most of the other appendages associated with suburban living.' This image contrasted with the long-gone man "who worked for the railroad, wore the typical railroader's working clothes and lived in a modest house." The article otherwise stressed the remarkable growth of the city now with a population of 15,500, its push for industry and the increasing infrastructural demands that growth necessitated (Des Moines *Register*, March 10, July 25, 1968).

The first municipal history dates to the city's 75th anniversary celebration in 1968. Titled the "Junction Jubilee" the event and the historical booklet celebrated and acknowledged the Valley Junction origin and legacy. Downtown provided the central stage with a carnival filling the 100-200 block of Fifth and City Hall serving as the event headquarters (Des Moines *Register*, August 3, 1968; *ibid. Picture Magazine*, August 9, 1968, p. 20).



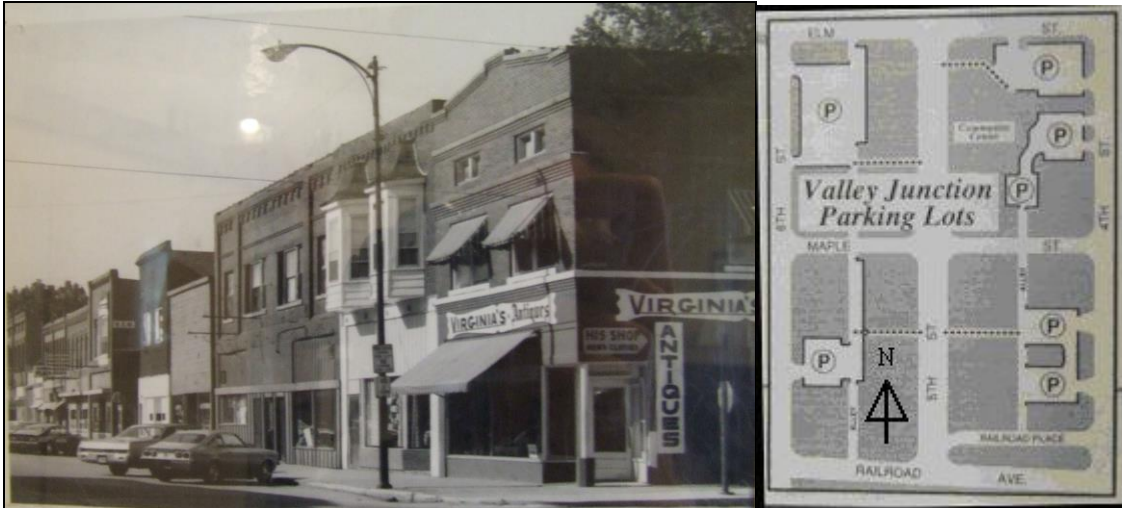
Figure 86: Upper Fifth Street looking southeast across Elm Street, ca.1968, The downtown main street became one-way running north in 1970 (Jordan House Library and Archives; Des Moines *Register*, June 2, 1970).

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Figures 87, 88: [left] Upper Fifth looking southwest from Elm, ca.1970, and [right] the parking-alleyway system, 1980

(Jordan House Library and Archives; Des Moines *Register*, February 23, 1980)

Post-1967 District History:

The continued currency of the name "Valley Junction" as a brand name for a technically eclipsed city name attests to the reality that the downtown area both survived as it evolved commercially and retained some degree of its "chip on the shoulder" sense of uniqueness and pride. The provision of access ways to rear street parking and an array of mall-like improvements helped to keep it vibrant. The provision of a long-sought community center in the former American Legion building (217 Fifth) reinforced the communal ties with the broader residential neighborhood. The Kiwanis Club transformed the remnant south end depot parcel as a railroad themed park in 1974 and a model railroad museum thrived during the early 1990s and built on the railroad theme. The nearby depot was relocated into a lot north of the little park in 1983.



Figure 89: Railroad and Fifth Street, looking northwest, work starts on Railroad Park, 1972
(Jordan House Library and Archives)

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The commercial evolution from regular service-retail to specialty shops continued to thrive as did a growing role played by female entrepreneurs and property owners. Increasingly the downtown developed a statewide and even regional market area that transcended its traditional local support base. By 1974 this non-local market accounted for half of retail trade. By this time there were ten antique stores and an antique mini-mall at 104-06 Fifth that housed 11 other dealers (West Des Moines *Express*, October 3, 1974).



Figure 90: Upper Fifth Street looking southeast across Elm Street, ca.1975, note southward one-way traffic and angled parking (Jordan House Library and Archives)

The local flooding tradition also remained loyal as Figures 89 and show

The early 1980s were hard ones as an agricultural depression gripped the state. Efforts were made to mandate a faux Victorian facade treatment and the district joined the Main Street Iowa economic development program. In early 1990 the *Register* noted "Valley Junction Sells Nostalgia and Service." The year 1991 marked the removal of the last district bank and the preparatory steps to relocate the official town center of West Des Moines to a more suburban locale (West Des Moines *Express*, June 20, 1989; June 21, 1991; Des Moines *Register*, October 24, 1986; July 12, 1989; February 1, 1990).

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Figure 88: "Modern Valley Junction" looking south from near Elm Street
(West Des Moines *Express*, June 23, 1993)



Figure 89: Aerial view looking northwest from Railroad (Des Moines *Register*, July 5, 1973)

The floods continued. That of 1973 was memorable as Figure 89 depicts. The city's worst flooding occurred on July 10, 1993. As a legacy it winnowed out many hobbyist merchants, leveraged massive state and federal investments in infrastructure and finally protected the community from flooding permanently. The *Register* captioned a 2003 article "Flood of Change: Revitalized Valley Junction Rises From the Floodwaters." There would be

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additional challenges, not the least of which was the opening of the mega-sized Jordan Creek Mall in the west part of the city. But the plucky downtown would continue to adapt and flourish (Des Moines *Register*, July 12, 2003).



Figure 90: Boating fun at Fifth and Elm streets looking south, 1993
(<https://www.google.com/search?q=Valley+Junction+1993+flood&safe...20-years-later>)

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Interviews:

Steve Phillips, November 11, 2016

Jim Miller

Nan Hagen

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10. Geographical Data:

Verbal Boundary Description:

The included legal parcels are:

Railroad Park Parcel 320/0412-000-000-enough of west end to include arch base
Block 4: Lots 1-3, 9-16
Block 5: Lots 1-10 (east half)
Block 10: Lots 1-9 (east half)
Block 11: Lots 8-9, 10-18 (west half)
Block 12: West 60 feet of Lot 10 and south 10 feet of west 20 feet of Lot 11
Block 19: Lots 4-9, 10 (east 73 feet)
Block 20: Lots 8-9

The district boundary begins at the midpoint of alley, south end of Block 5, runs east to the midpoint of Fifth Street, runs north to the east of the east pier support for the commemorative arch and continues to the center line of Railroad Place, runs east to the midpoint of the alley east of Fifth, follows the alley north to the south boundary line of 408 and 400 Maple Street, turning north at the intersection with the midpoint of Fourth Avenue, runs east so as to include the parcel that contains 210 Fourth, follows same parcel north and west to the same Fourth Street midpoint, follows same north to a point even with the north boundary of Lot 8, Block 10, follows that north boundary west to the midpoint of the alley east of Fifth, runs north along same alley to the midpoint of Elm Street, runs west along same to the midpoint of Fifth, runs north along same to the north boundary line of Lot 4, Block 19, runs west along same north lot line to the midpoint of the alley west of Fifth Street, runs south along same alley crossing Elm and Maple streets to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

This district boundary includes all contiguous pre-1966 commercial buildings that are historically associated with the district significance and that retain their historical integrity. Just three buildings that fail to meet these two standards are included so as to define as inclusive and exhaustive a district as is reasonable without including substantial open areas. Just one vacant lot (408 Maple Street) is included to simplify the district boundary by including a whole half block. While a separate parcel this inclusion reads as the back part of the lot for a contributing building. Any commercial building or converted residence now used commercially that otherwise post-date 1966 are not included. The only purposeful gerrymander is the inclusion of 300 Fourth Street, a well preserved auto garage example, that is diagonally contingent with the contiguous district.

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Maps:



Figure 91: District boundary with labeled streets
(City of West Des Moines, 1916)

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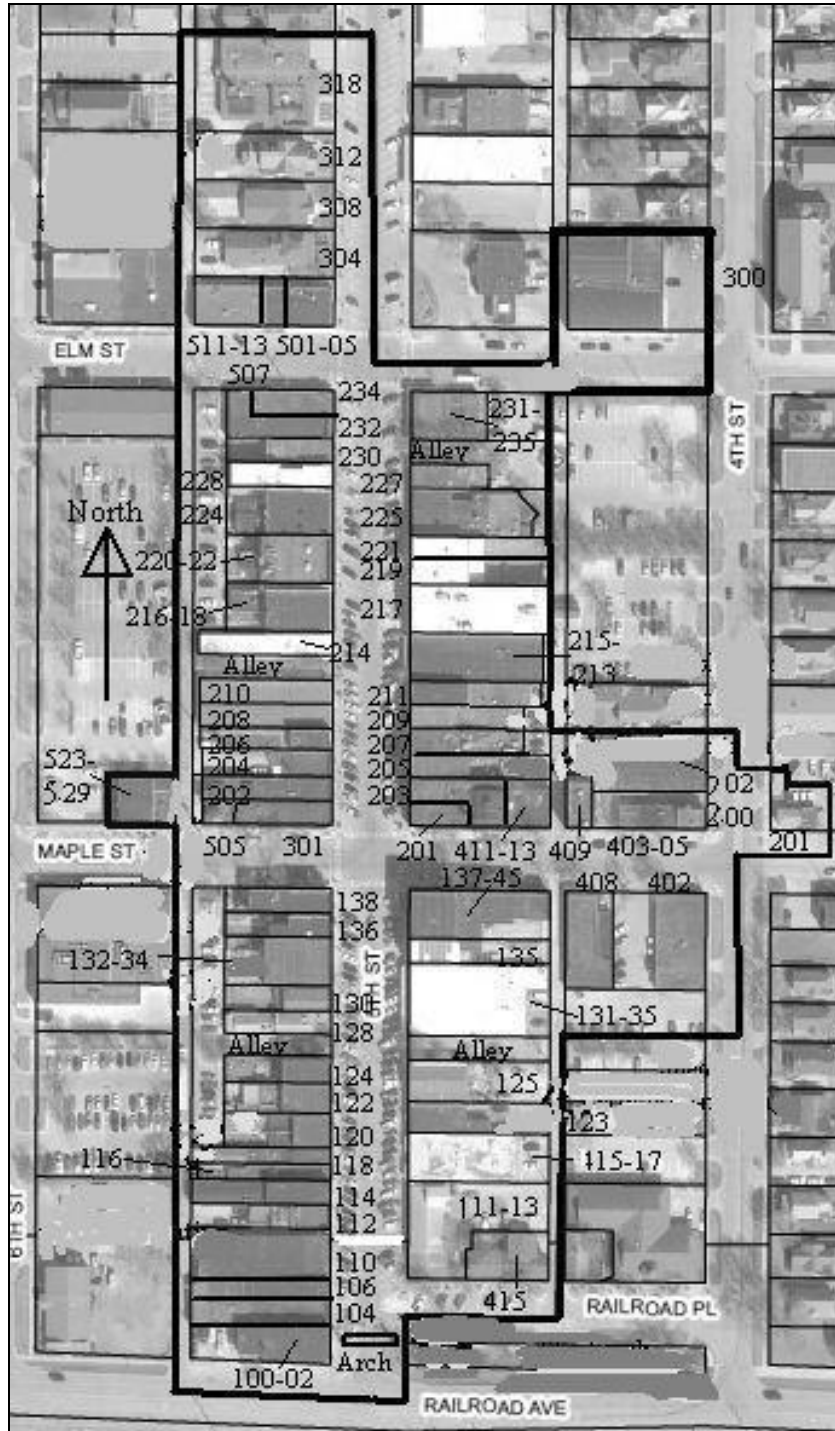


Figure 92: District boundary with building parcels and addresses
(City of West Des Moines, 1916, annotated)

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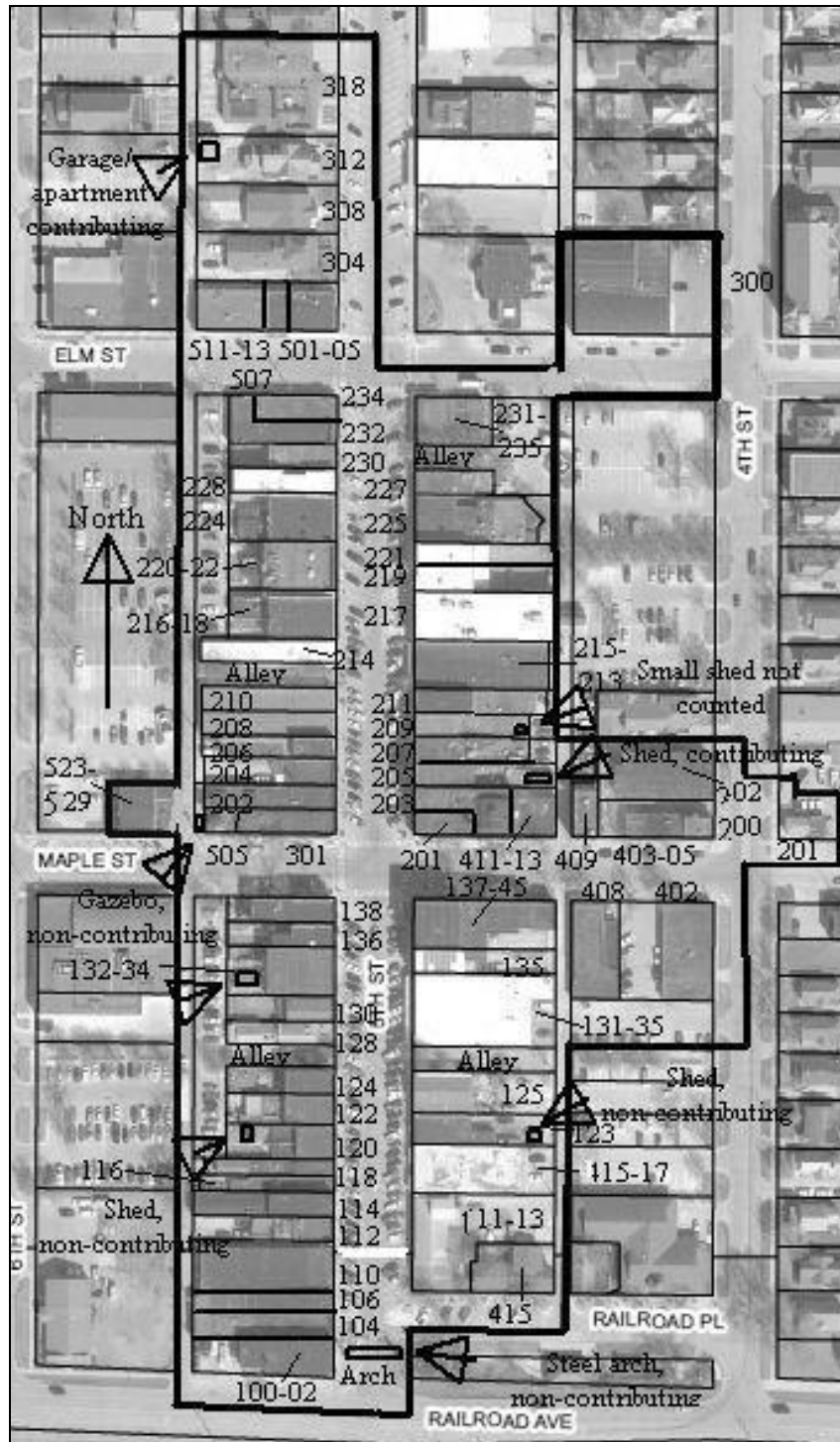


Figure 93: District boundary with secondary buildings and structures, with notations as to contributing and non-contributing evaluations (City of West Des Moines, 1916, annotated)

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Photographs:

Name of Photographer: James E. Jacobsen
Film Type: Ilford 100ASA
Date of Photographs: November 5, 2016
Location of Original Negatives: Valley Junction Foundation

Description of views:

<u>Frame:</u>	<u>Direction:</u>	<u>Descriptions:</u>
1	Northwest	West side of Fifth Street, arch, 100-124 Fifth
2	Northwest	West side of Fifth Street, 104-124 Fifth
3	Northwest	West side of Fifth Street, 120-130 Fifth
4	Southwest	West side of Fifth Street, 100-124 Fifth
5	Northwest	West side of Fifth Street, 132-210 Fifth
6	Southwest	West side of Fifth Street, 100-138 Fifth
7	Northwest	North side of Maple Street, 301-529 Maple
8	Northwest	West side of Fifth Street, 301 Maple-228 Fifth
9	Southwest	West side of Fifth Street, 301 Maple-218 Fifth
10	Northwest	West side of Fifth Street, 218-232 Fifth
11	Southwest	West side of Fifth Street, 210-234 Fifth
12	Northwest	North side of Elm Street, 501-13 Elm
13	Northwest	North side of Elm Street, 300 Fourth Street, 501-13 Elm
14	Northwest	West side of Fifth Street, 301 Elm-318 Fifth
15	Northwest	West side of Fifth Street, 301 Elm-318 Fifth
16	Northeast	North side of Railroad Place, 111 Fifth Street, 415 Railroad Place
17	Northeast	East side of Fifth Street, 111-135 Fifth Street
18	Northeast	East side of Fifth Street, 123 -145 Fifth Street
19	Northwest	North side of Maple Street, 200, 200-202 Fourth, 403-411 Maple
20	Southwest	South side of Maple Street,, 402-408 Maple, 137-45 Fifth
21	Northwest	North side of Maple Street, 409-505 Maple, 301 Fifth
22	Northeast	East side of Fifth Street, 201-211 Fifth
23	Northeast	East side of Fifth Street, 211-235 Fifth
24	Northeast	East side of Fifth Street, 219-235 Fifth

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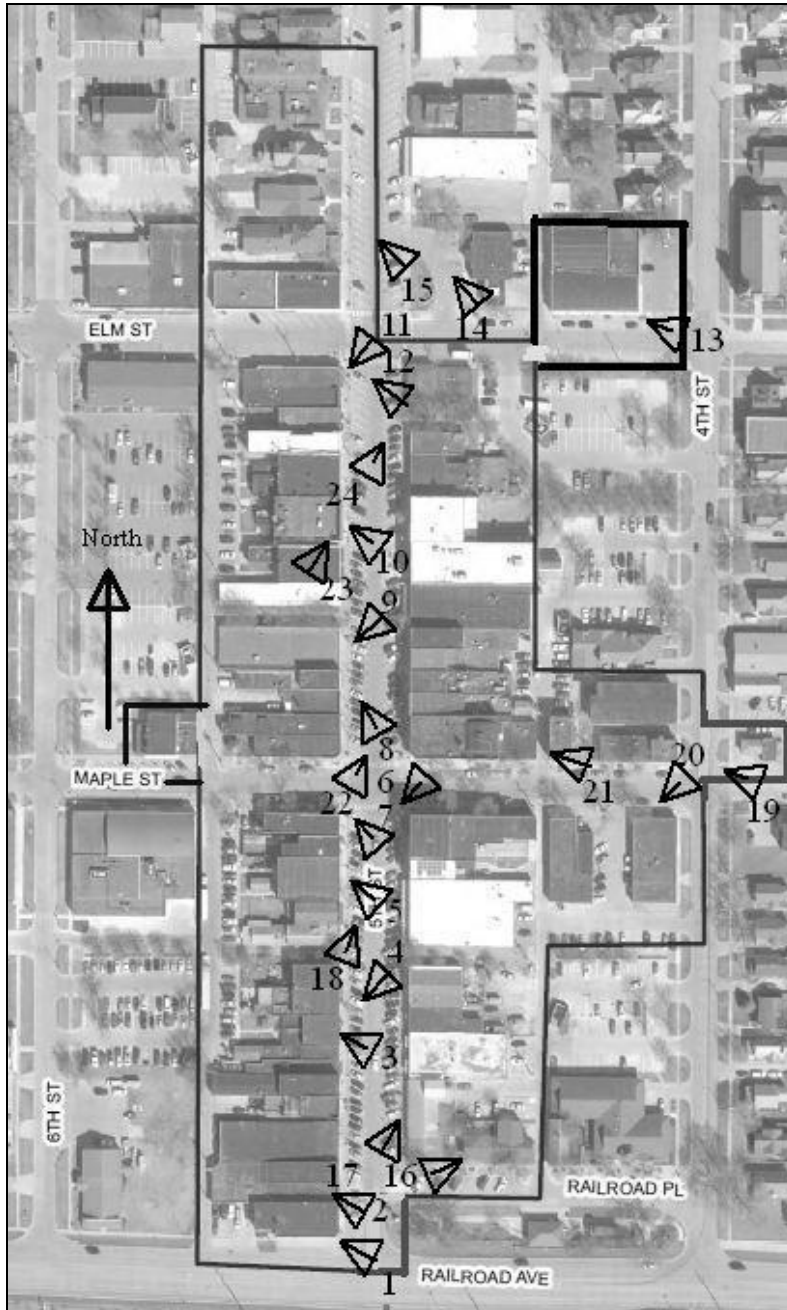


Figure 94: District photo map
(City of West Des Moines, 2016, annotated)

