NPS Form 10-900-b
(June 1991)

OMB No. 10024-0018

NRHP LOCK MO

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B.)* Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900 a).

_X_ **New Submission** ___ **Amended Submission**

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of West Plains, Missouri

B. Associated Historic Contexts

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

NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN WEST PLAINS, MISSOURI: 1839-1952

D. Form Prepared by

name/title Becky L. Snider, Ph.D. [for Downtown West Plains, Inc (417) 256-4433]

organization Becky L. Snider Consulting LLC date February 2003

street & number 507 South Garth Avenue telephone 573-256-1105

city or town Columbia state Missouri zip code 65203

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the standards and sets forth the requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A. Miles 06/02/03

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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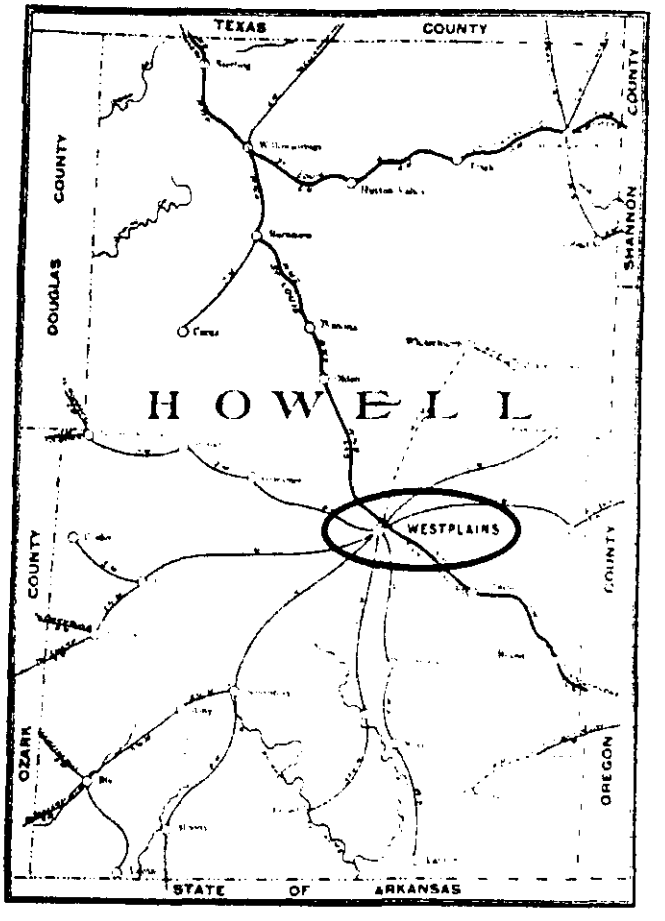
INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION

The town of West Plains, in Howell County, Missouri is rich in historic resources dating from the mid-nineteenth century. It is located in the center of Howell County in the heart of the Ozarks. The town, which is the county seat of Howell County, is located approximately 25 miles north of the Arkansas border, and 100 miles southeast of Springfield, Missouri. West Plains began as a small trading post, but it grew into a livestock and agricultural trading center by the late-nineteenth century with establishment of a major railroad line through town in the early 1880s. Later, as the crossroads of three major highways, West Plains continued to thrive. Many of the town's most notable buildings resulted from its status as the governmental seat of Howell County and as the major commercial center for south central Missouri.

Figure One. County Map, 1904.
Source: The State of Missouri: An Autobiography by Walter Williams, 1904, p. 407.



West Plains' proximity to major transportation routes made it a convenient base for a wide variety of commercial enterprises. The Burlington Northern Railroad runs through town; the tracks are located to the north and east of the central business district. In addition, U. S. Highway 63, U. S. Highway 160, and State Highway 17 all converge at West Plains. Highway 63, which runs roughly north and south through Missouri, is located to the south and west of the commercial center. Highway 160 enters West Plains from the southwest, follows Highway 63 around the center of town and then continues on to the northeast. Highway 17 enters West Plains from the south, follows Highway 63 and Highway 160 around town, follows Highway 160 out of town, and then splits off and runs due north to Mountain View, Missouri.

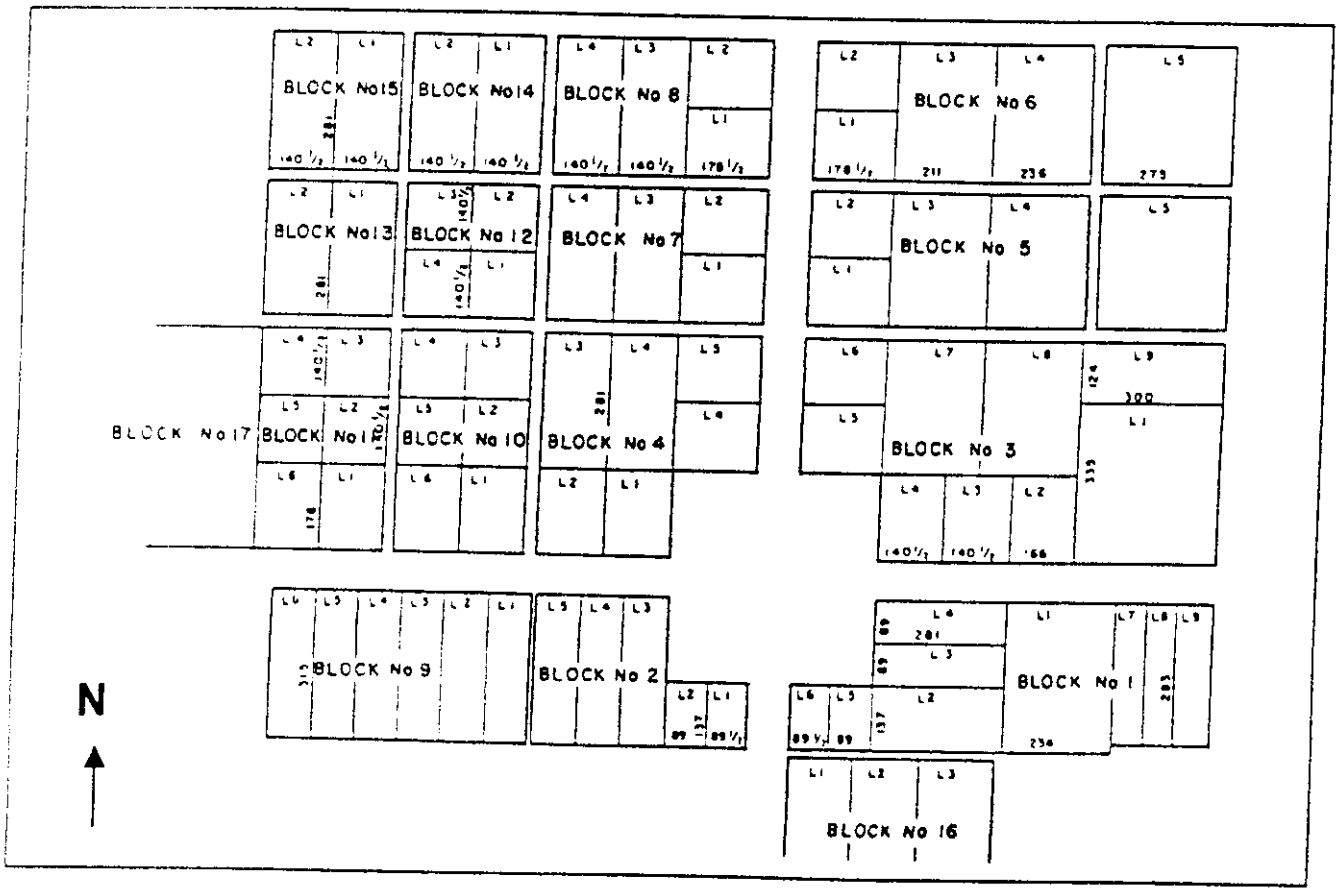
West Plains' historic commercial center occupies a gently rolling stretch of ground directly south of the Burlington Railroad tracks. The commercial center is anchored by the Howell County Courthouse and radiates out to the north, west and east from the courthouse square. However, two corridors of newer commercial activity have also developed along Business 63, also known as Porter Wagoner Boulevard, northwest of the commercial center and around Southern Hills Shopping Center on Preacher Roe Boulevard, southwest of downtown. The campus of Southwest Missouri University at West Plains is located due west of downtown; the Civic Center is located to the east; and residential areas extend in all directions around the historic commercial center.

Downtown West Plains is laid out on a north-south grid, and it is organized around the Courthouse Square. (See Figure Two) The town plan chosen for West Plains, the Lancaster courthouse square, is unusual in Missouri. According to Marian M. Ohman, the author of Missouri Counties, County Seats and Courthouse Squares, "Missouri had seven Lancaster plans....Missouri's plans come from Madison, Greene, Stoddard, Osage, Cedar, Ripley and Howell counties. Six of the seven are found in the southern one-third of the state."[1] In her book, Twenty Towns, Ohman describes the features of the Lancaster plan, which is named after an eighteenth century model from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She states "In this design only four streets open to the central square. They enter at the middle of the four blocks surrounding the central square rather than at the corners."[2] (See Figure Three.) In West Plains, the courthouse square itself is referred to as Court Square. The four streets that enter onto the square are Washington Avenue from the north, West Main Street from the west, Aid Avenue (also known as South Main) from the south, and East Main Street from the east.

The greatest concentration of historic commercial buildings is in downtown West Plains on the courthouse square and to the north along Washington Avenue between the square and Broadway. As a result, the survey that was done in 2000 focused on this central commercial corridor. This area also encompasses the majority of the original town of West Plains. The boundaries of the survey area also corresponded to the boundaries of the West Plains

[1] Marian Ohman, Missouri Counties, County Seats and Courthouse Squares, (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Extension Division, 1983), p. 31.
[2] Marian Ohman, Twenty Towns (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Extension Division, 1983), p. 150.

Figure Two. West Plains Original Town, platted 1858.
Source: Twenty Towns by Marian M. Ohman, 1985, p. 150.



West Plains 1858 (Lots drawn in 1985)

Figure Three. Types of central courthouse squares. Howell County's square follows the Lancaster square plan.
Source: Missouri Counties, County Seats and Courthouse Squares by Marian M. Ohman, 1983, p. 29.

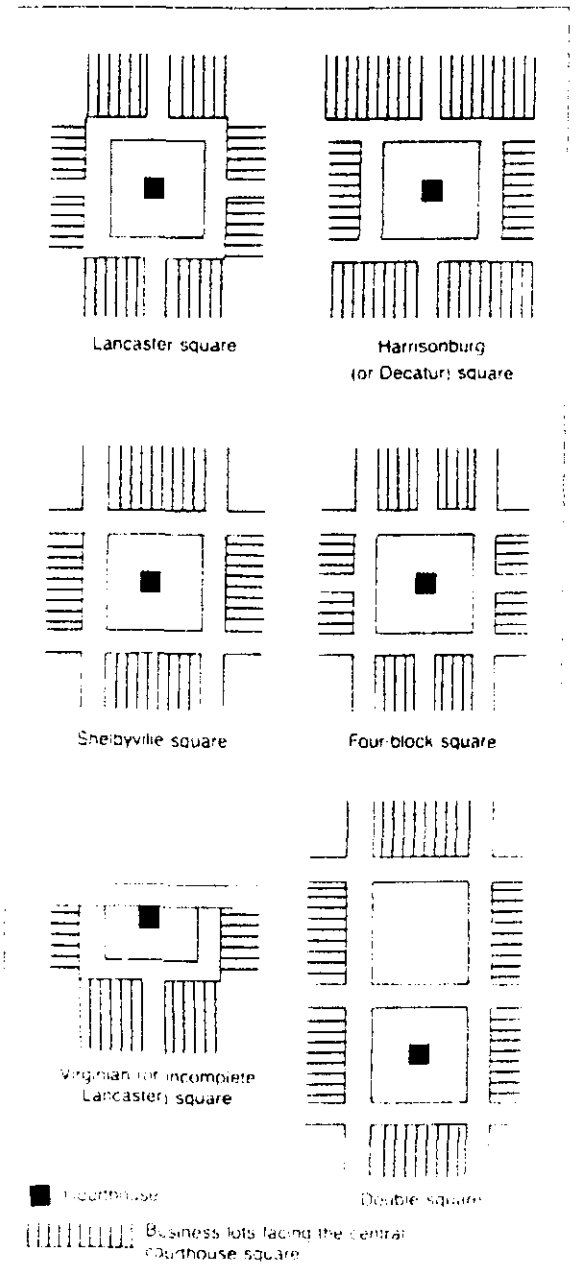
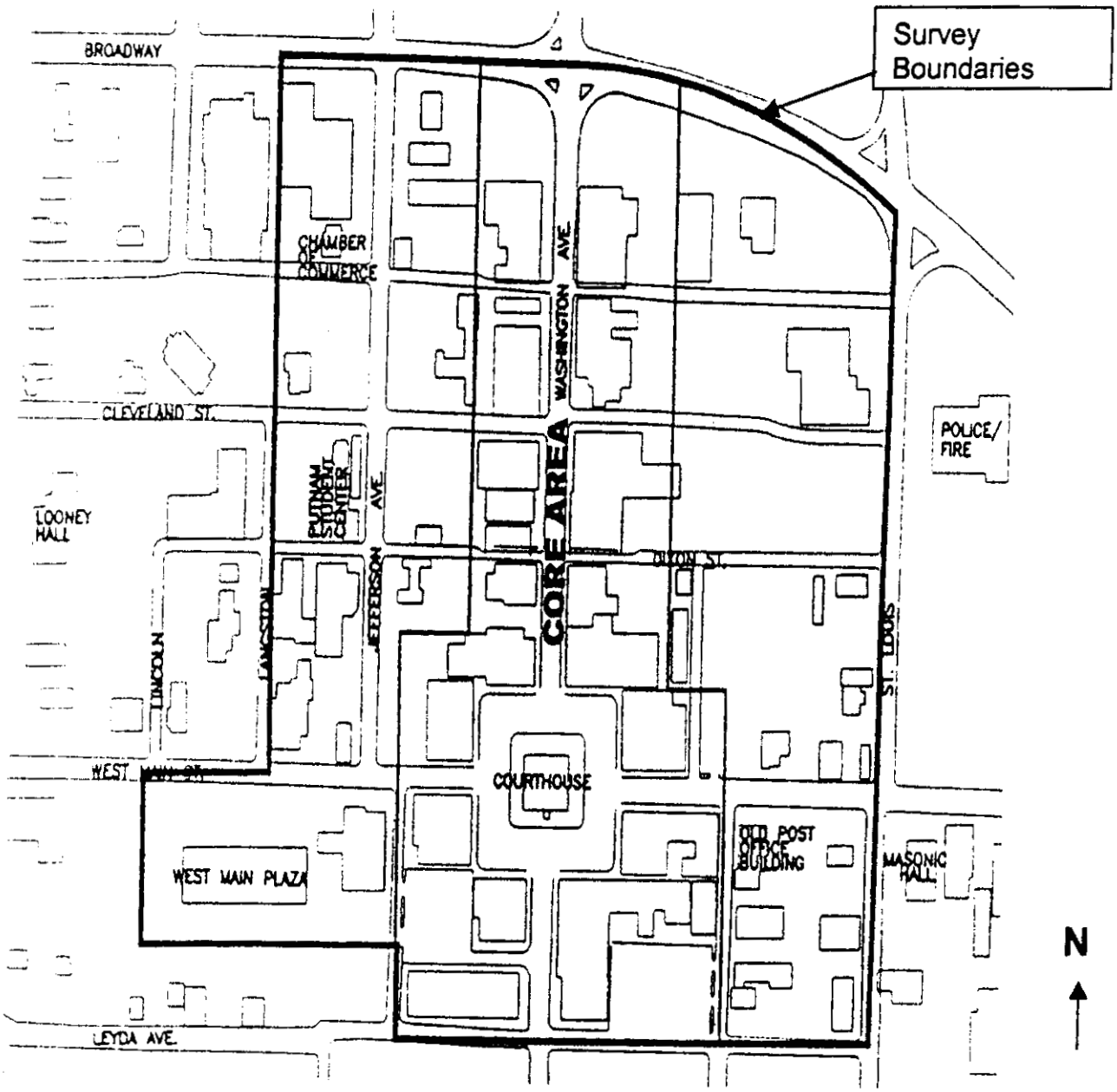


Figure Four. Survey of Downtown West Plains, Survey Boundaries



central business district, which was established in 1998, and to the boundaries of the "downtown district," which were recommended by Brenda Spencer, a preservation architect hired by the City of West Plains to work on downtown revitalization and design guidelines. (See Figure Four.)

As part of the survey done in 2000, 130 buildings in the downtown area were recorded and researched. The majority of buildings in the survey area are commercial buildings, but there are also a few houses and two churches within the survey boundaries. Fifty-eight of the 130 buildings surveyed were constructed between 1901-1952. Only two of the buildings in the survey area were constructed prior to 1883 while thirty-eight buildings were constructed between 1883 and 1900. Thirty buildings in the survey area were constructed after 1952.

Eighty-four buildings in the survey area were judged to be eligible for listing on the National Register either individually or as part of an historic district. Nineteen buildings in the survey area were specifically identified as individually eligible for listing on the National Register. Furthermore, it was determined that the core of the downtown area including the Courthouse Square and Washington Avenue contained a sufficient concentration of intact historic buildings to merit National Register designation as an historic district.

The Multiple Property Documentation form is being used to lay the foundation for the systemic nomination of historic resources throughout West Plains, Missouri. The multiple property listing "Historic and Architectural Resources of West Plains, Missouri is organized around the commercial architecture of the city. One historic context and one property type has been developed for this listing. Other property types were identified in the survey report but they were not presented in this cover document either because the resources have yet to be adequately surveyed, or the theme did not fall within the scope of this listing. Future amendments to this multiple property listing may develop these property types or other historic contexts. It should also be noted that the potential for historic archaeology throughout the community is strong; evaluation of such potential is highly recommended, but is beyond the scope of this project.

NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN WEST PLAINS, MISSOURI: 1839-1952

Settlement and Pre-Railroad Development: 1839-1882

West Plains' first period of development spans from 1839, the year the first permanent settlement was established, to 1882, the year before the railroad arrived in West Plains

The first permanent European settlement in the West Plains area dates to 1839 when Josiah Howell and his family came to Missouri from Smith County, Tennessee and settled in several locations around present day West Plains.[3] Within the next few years, several more families moved into the area. In 1848, the area, then part of Oregon County, was surveyed and section lines were established. West Plains was established in 1850 with the opening of a post office in the home of Josephus Howell.[4] However, the original plat for West Plains was not filed until 1858.

Oregon County circuit judge, John Woodside, named the post office West Plains because of its location in the plains west of Thomasville, the nearest town.[5] Howell County was officially organized in 1857. "Benjamin Alsup, James Ellison and Joseph H. Russell were the first county justices, Joseph Howell the first clerk. Judge Woodside was the first circuit attorney."[6] The first Howell County Courthouse, a small wooden building, was constructed on the square in West Plains in 1859.[7] By 1860, census figures indicate that the county had a population of 3,169 and approximately 150 people had settled in West Plains.[8] Howell's Addition, the first expansion to the original town of West Plains, was platted in 1860.

The state of Missouri was divided during the Civil War and Howell County, like many other counties in southern Missouri "was overrun by both the Union and Confederate armies."[9] Howell Countians were divided in their sympathies, but Confederates outnumbered Unionists. Union sympathizers were at risk for their lives and were often forced out of their homes. Other residents of West Plains, both Unionists and Confederates alike, simply chose to leave the area. The growth that marked the 1850s ended abruptly with the onset of the Civil War. One history of the area noted that "by 1863, West Plains was a 'ghost town.' The curtains swung in the breeze,

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[3] Dorotha Reavis, "Howell County History: 1839-1866" West Plains Gazette Number 1, Spring and Summer, 1978. p. 23.

[4] James W. Goodrich and Lynn Wolf Gentzler, eds. Marking Missouri History. (Columbia, Missouri: The State Historical Society of Missouri, 1998), p. 236.

[5] Alice Carey Risley, "Pioneer Days in West Plains and Howell County" Missouri Historical Review, Vol. 23, no. 4, p. 575.

[6] Ibid., p. 576.

[7] Marian M. Ohman, Encyclopedia of Missouri Courthouses, (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Extension Division, 1981), n.p.

[8] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Schedule for Howell County, Missouri, Washington, D.C., 1860. (Microfilm copies on file with the State Historical Society of Missouri.)

[9] Reavis, p. 28.

doors were standing open and weeds were waist high in the streets."[10] That same year renegades burned the town. According to local historian, Alice Carey Risley, "Not a house was left standing."[11] The Howell County Courthouse was also destroyed.

West Plains' former inhabitants returned and start rebuilding their homes and businesses in 1866. According to one history, at that time, "there were only 78 families living within the boundaries of Howell County."[12] Despite its troubled beginnings, West Plains once again began to grow, and many new settlers made their way to the area. Although hostilities between residents continued after the war and were fueled by the widespread activities of the Ku Klux Klan in the area, time and the hardships of living on the pioneer helped residents put aside their differences. Captain William Monks, a Union Veteran, was the first to build a house in West Plains after the war.[13] He served as head of martial law in Howell and Oregon counties. The second Howell County Courthouse, a small frame building south of the courthouse square was constructed by T.E. Britton in 1869,[14]

By 1870, West Plains was once again on the way to becoming the commercial center for Howell County. Its population had almost recovered to its pre-war number of 150, and it could boast "four retail stores, one whiskey dealer, one shoemaker, one tavernkeeper, two wagon makers, a blacksmith, a brick mason, one school teacher and three physicians."[15] By that date, the area's first permanent newspaper, The South Missouri Journal, later known as the West Plains Journal, and the area's first church, a Methodist church, also had been established. In 1873, the areas first two steam mills were erected. B.F. Olden and Sam A Risley, the publishers of The South Missouri Journal, along with J. H. Maxey established the first steam saw mill, and C. T. Bolin erected the first steam flouring mill in the area.[16]

Ten years after West Plains was resettled, the town's population had increased more than 100 percent. The rapid recovery of the town was reported in the Missouri State Gazetteer and Business Directory of 1876-7, which listed the town's population at 700.[17] Census figures for 1880, which list West Plains' population at 351, tend to contradict the population numbers published in the 1876-7 Gazetteer. Despite this discrepancy, West Plains' population was clearly growing quickly. By 1890 census figures cite the town's population as 2,091, an increase from the 1880 census numbers of more than 500 percent.[18]

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[10] Ibid., p. 28.
[11] Risley, p. 576.
[12] Dorotha Reavis, "Howell County History: 1865-1899" West Plains Gazette. Number 2, Spring, 1979, p. 9.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ohman, Encyclopedia of Missouri Courthouses, n.p.
[15] Terry Fuhrman Hampton, "The History of West Plains: A Decade by Decade Account" West Plains Gazette, Number 30, Winter, 1987, p. 14.
[16] Risley, p. 577
[17] R. L. Polk & Co., Missouri State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1876-7, (St. Louis: R. L. Polk & Co., 1987) p. 742.
[18] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Schedules for Howell County, Missouri, 1880, 1890.

Despite the boom in West Plains' population and economy, the town was still very isolated in the 1870s. This fact is well illustrated by Terry Furhmann Hampton, the author of "The History of West Plains: A Decade By Decade Account." She states that:

> In 1874, West Plains had eight stores, one hotel, one printing office, four churches, two schools (one private and one public), one steam flour mill, one good jail and one miserable courthouse....
>
> With all the gold in Fort Knox one could not have obtained a store-bought dress. The only meat for the table was wild game. Butter, lard, beef or milk could not be bought in the stores. Coffee had to be transported overland by wagon, making it scarce and expensive. It was sweetened with honey or sorghum molasses.
>
> Mail deliveries were supposed to be made twice a week, if the creeks weren't up or the mail contractor's time hadn't expired before the new one materialized.[19]

In the late-1870s, the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Memphis Railway Company began laying tracks through southern Missouri. The original route called for the railroad to go through Willow Springs, White Church, Peace Valley and Thayer in Howell County, bypassing West Plains. A group of prominent West Plains citizens, including Judge B. F. Olden, O. H. P. Catron and B.F. Bolin journeyed to Kansas City and lobbied for the tracks to pass through West Plains. They were successful and "put West Plains on the map."[20]

Although the West Plains section of the railroad would not be finished until 1883, the anticipation of its arrival brought many new settlers to the area in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Two additions to West Plains were platted in 1882. Foust's Addition, which included part of Washington Avenue, extended the boundaries of the town north to the railroad tracks; Johnson and Catron's Addition expanded the town westward. (See Figure Five.)

Many new businesses were established in West Plains during this period, but the town's remote location made obtaining consumer goods as well as building materials very difficult. All of the buildings constructed during the town's first period of development were either log or frame construction, but even those building materials had to be acquired elsewhere or cut down and milled by the builder. The town's first lumberyard was not established until 1882. Furthermore, many of the commercial buildings that were constructed prior to the 1880s were not very substantial, and fires claimed many buildings.

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[19] Hampton, p. 20-21.

[20] Michael Cochran, "The Advent of the Railroad" West Plains Gazette, No 16, March-April 1982, p. 14.

Figure Five. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for West Plains, Missouri, 1900.
Source: Sanborn Map Company. (In the collections of Ellis Library, University of Missouri-Columbia)

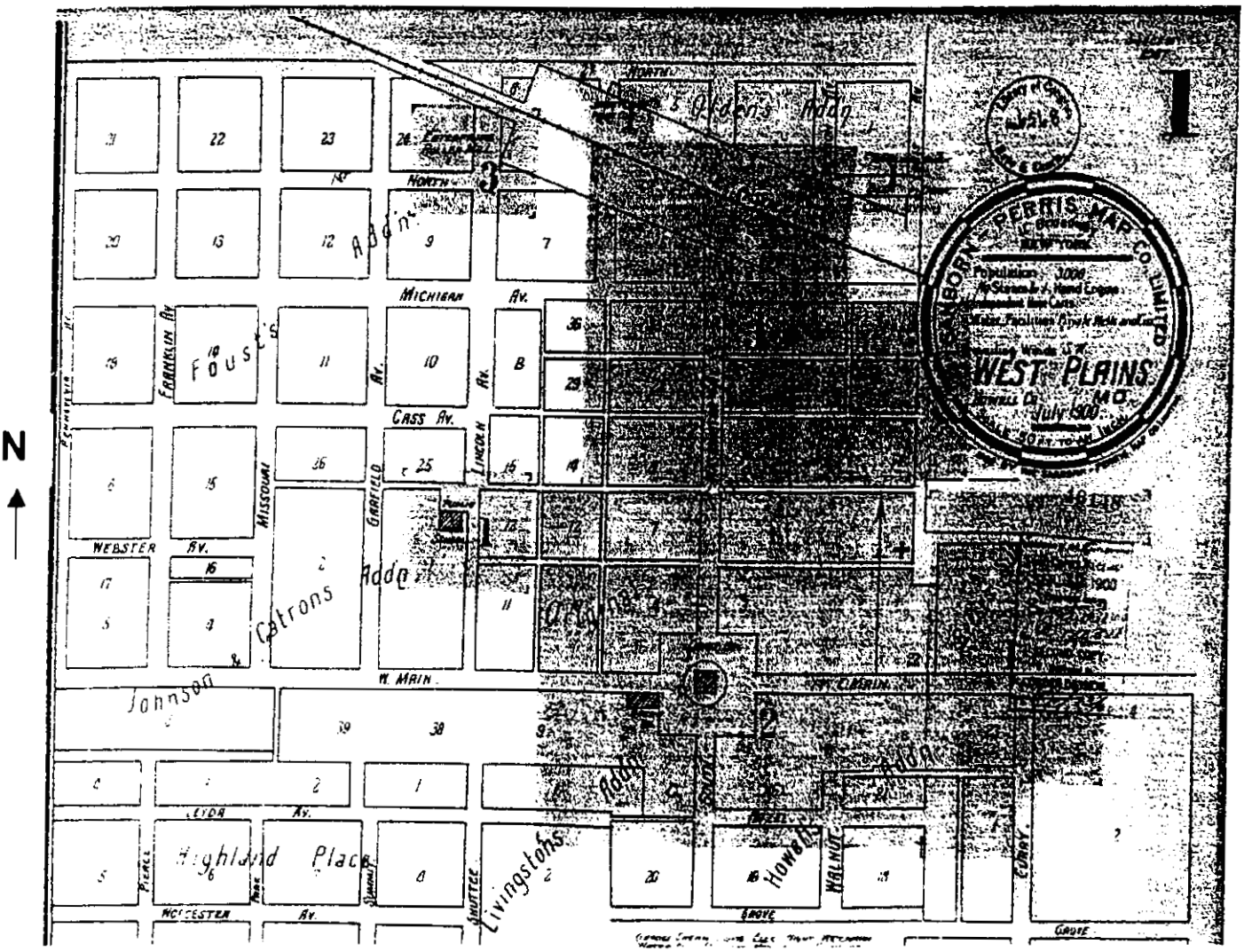
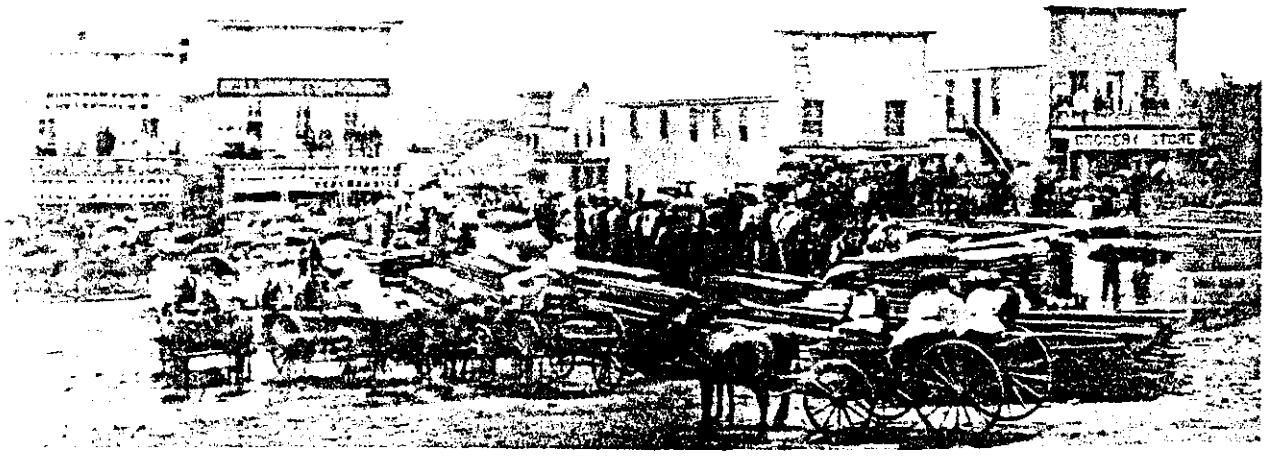


Figure Six. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new courthouse, constructed in 1883. The buildings in the background were on the east side of the square.
Source: West Plains Gazette, No. 30, Winter 1987, p. 23.



Railroad Era: 1883-1899

West Plains' second period of development spans from 1883, the year the railroad arrived in West Plains, to 1899. During this period, the town experienced a boom in both commercial and population growth that was never again to be matched. West Plains' population increased more than 800% between 1880 and 1900.

The arrival of the railroad to West Plains in 1883 was an event that was greatly anticipated; it changed the lives of West Plains' citizens, and it was directly responsible for the town's future prosperity. The tracks laid through West Plains in 1883 were not only the first railroad tracks to the town, but also they were the first tracks laid to the entire south central Missouri area. As Terry Furhmann Hampton notes in The History of West Plains: A Decade by Decade Account,

> Until the railroad came, West Plains was isolated. It was at least a three-day journey by wagon to the nearest railroad at Rolla or to meet steamboats coming up the White River as far as Norfolk in Arkansas.[21]

[21] Hampton, p. 22.

The coming of the railroad meant that southern Missouri citizens could travel more easily to other destinations throughout the state and the country, and also commercial goods could be bought and sold more readily. The arrival of the Kansas City, Fort Scott and Memphis in February, 1883 resulted in a period of enormous growth and prosperity for West Plains.[22] It also set off a building and commercial boom in the small rural community that has never again been matched.

Between 1880 and 1890, Howell County's population increased by 10,000, and many of the immigrants to the area settled in West Plains. According to census figures, the town's population jumped from 351 in 1880 to 2,091 in 1890.[23] One local historian noted that "after the coming of the railroad in 1883, new settlers emigrated into this area at an almost unbelievable rate, and vacant houses were almost impossible to find."[24]

In response to the enormous growth, West Plains began to expand in all directions. Many of the men responsible for bringing the railroad to West Plains, including prominent West Plains citizens such as O.H.P. Catron, and B.F. Olden, expanded their land holdings and platted additions. Three additions to the town of West Plains were platted by local landowners, between 1884 and 1890. Olden's Addition, which is due north of the courthouse square on the north side of the railroad tracks, was platted in 1884; Reese's Addition, which is due east of the square, was platted in 1888; and Livingston's Addition, which is southwest of the square, was platted in 1890. (See Figure Five.)

Although many settlers to West Plains came simply in search of a better life, many came in response to the opportunities that a burgeoning town offered an entrepreneur. New businesses of all types sprang up in and around West Plains in the late 1880s and early 1890s. Gradually, the rough conditions of the frontier were replaced by the amenities of a bustling town. Not only were the necessities of life readily available, but also luxuries such as jewelry and musical instruments could be purchased in West Plains. Furthermore, West Plains grew from a trading post for the agriculturally-based local community into the major commercial center for south central Missouri. By 1890, West Plains had:

> 2 banks; 1 college; 4 hotels; 2 saloons; 1 railroad depot; 1 sawmill; 7 doctors; 2 nurseries; 2 laundries; 6 shoe shops; 1 cafe; 8 grocery stores; 8 churches; 2 gunsmiths; 16 lawyers; 1 woolen mill; 1 cooper's shop, 2 brickyards; 1 pool hall; 1 dentist; 1 marble shop; 2 notion stores; 2 jewelry stores; 2 flouring mills; 1 broom factory; 3 barber shops; 3 school houses; 3 livery stables; 7 meat markets; 3 harness shops; 3 tinsmiths; 2 drygoods stores; 4 millinery shops; 3 clothing stores; 7

[22] The Kansas City, Fort Scott and Memphis Railway Company was absorbed by the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Company (Frisco) in 1901. Michael Cochran, The Advent of the Railroad," West Plains Gazette. Number 16, March-April, 1982, p. 16.
[23] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population Schedules for Howell County, Missouri, 1880, 1890.
[24] Dorotha Reavis, "Howell County History: 1900-1908" West Plains Gazette, Number 3, Summer, 1979, p. 29.

secret societies; 1 second-hand store; 5 real estate offices; 3 hardware stores; 5 blacksmiths; 1 bedspring factory; 1 photography studio; 1 boot and shoe store; 44 brick buildings; 1 candy store and bakery; 6 combination drygoods and grocery stores; 1 feed store and implement company; numerous boarding houses; 2 foundries and machine shops; 3 planing mills and lumber yards; 1 music store and sewing machine shop; 2 furniture and undertaking establishments; 1 daily, 1 bi-monthly, and 2 weekly newspapers.[25]

Prior to the construction of the railroad, the majority of the commercial buildings were located around the central square. With the arrival of the railroad in 1883, the development on the courthouse square continued and many frame buildings were replaced with handsome brick commercial buildings. In addition to the development of Court Square, the siting of the railroad tracks and the placement of the depot at the end of Washington Avenue on the north edge of downtown encouraged the establishment of businesses along Washington Avenue. As a result, Washington Avenue soon became the major commercial thoroughfare in West Plains.

Figure Seven. Washington Avenue in the 1880s.
Source: West Plains Gazette, No. 30, Winter 1987, p. 25.

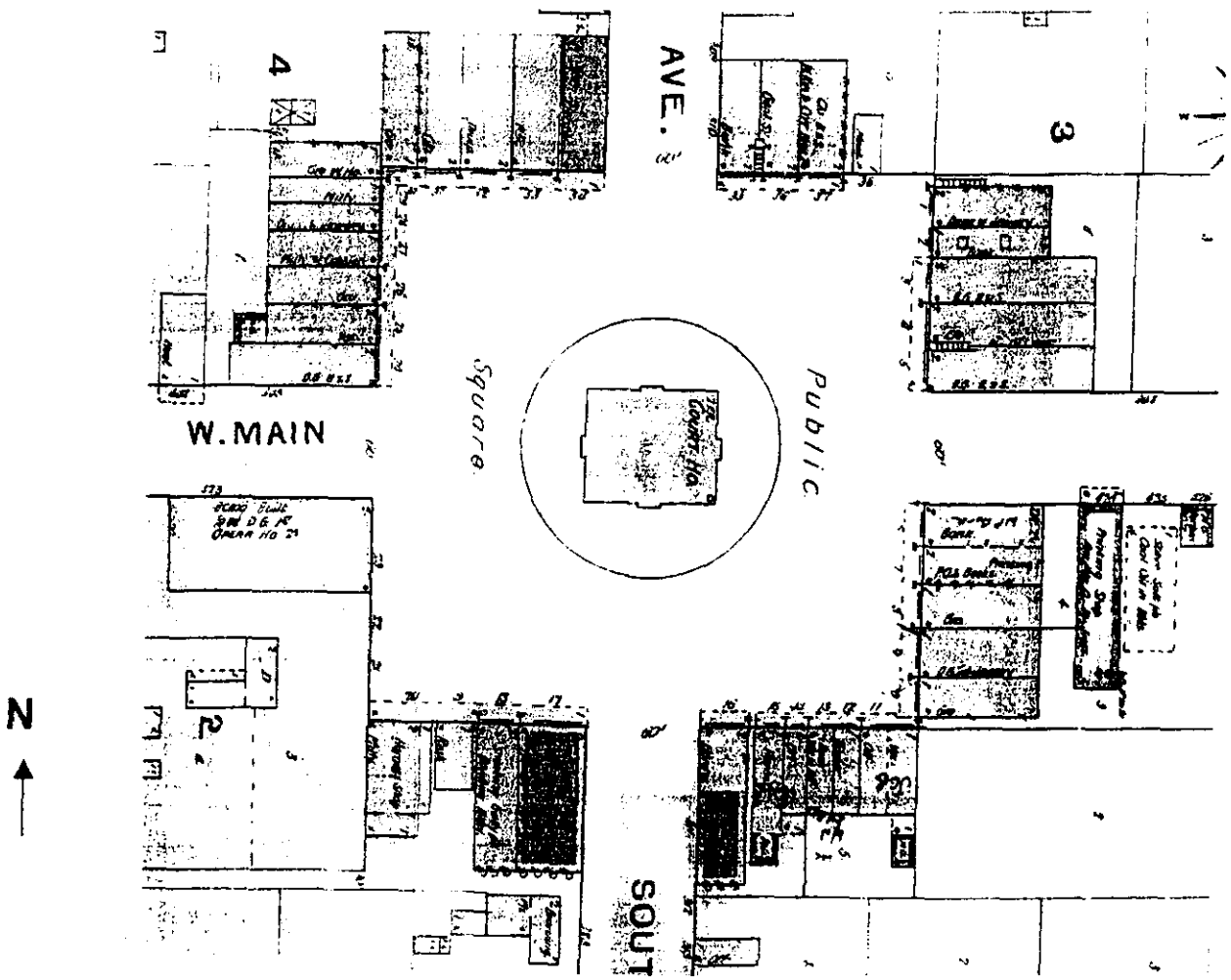
Washington Avenue in the early 1880s. The new railroad bed can be seen in front of the original depot (the building that appears to be in the middle of the street).

The West Plains Bank, was one of the businesses that erected a new building on Washington Avenue in 1883. On April 13, 1883, a small group of West Plains businessmen, who recognized the important role the railroad would play in the development of their town, met to

[25] Hampton, p. 26 (based on information from an article published in 1890 in the Howell County Gazette.)

organize the town's first bank. "The main backers of the venture were B. F. Olden, O.H.P. Catron, T. J. Whitmire, H. T. Smith, and J. L. Thomas. They, along with a few other minor stockholders, raised $15,000 capital, the amount required by state law to open a bank."[26] These men were not only prominent businessmen in West Plains, but also they were responsible for much of the town's development in the late nineteenth century. The new bank, erected by the year's end, stood as an early example of the new prosperity West Plains and other towns along the railroad were experiencing. Furthermore, it was one of the first brick buildings in town and was the first brick building to be constructed on Washington Avenue. That building was listed on the National Register in 2001.

Figure Eight. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map for West Plains, Missouri, 1893.
***Source:* Sanborn Map Company. (In the collections of Ellis Library, University of Missouri-Columbia)**



[26] Toney Aid "Receivable in Payment of All Dues," West Plains Gazette, No. 2, Spring 1979, p. 24.

Ten years after the arrival of the railroad, West Plains had changed dramatically. By 1893, the year the first Sanborn map for West Plains was published, the West Plains Courthouse Square was beginning to demonstrate the prosperity of the town. (See Figure Eight.) In the center of the square was the county's new three-story brick courthouse, which had been designed in the Second Empire style by noted Missouri architect Henry Hohenschild, and was completed in 1884. Around the perimeter of the square, all of the frame commercial buildings, that had been built in the 1870s, had been replaced by substantial brick buildings. Furthermore, by 1893, all of the blocks along Washington Avenue between the square and the railroad tracks had some kind of development on them. In contrast to the square, however, Washington Avenue was a mix of residential and commercial development, and the buildings were predominately of frame construction.

On almost a weekly basis in the late 1890s, announcements in the local newspapers noted the commencement of or progress on the construction of new buildings in downtown West Plains. One such announcement in the October 25, 1896 Howell County News noted that "Half a dozen or more new brick buildings will be erected on Washington Avenue within a few months."[27] Occasionally, the contractor, carpenter or mason working on the project would be noted in the newspaper announcement. Although only four carpenters and two brick contractors were listed in the 1893 Missouri State Gazetteer and Business Directory, many more were undoubtedly working in West Plains at the time. Several contractors and builders were not listed in the Gazetteer, but they had advertisements for their services in the local papers during this period.

Contractor Tom Hyder appears to have built many of the brick buildings constructed in downtown West Plains in the 1890s. His name appears frequently in the announcements for new construction projects. An announcement in the August 2, 1895 Howell County News noted that "E. J. Hendrix is arranging to have a building erected on his lot on Washington Avenue. Tom Davis and Tom Hyder have the contract."[28] The building mentioned in the announcement appears to be the one story brick building at 305 Washington Avenue. The buildings directly to the north and south of this building (301 and 305A Washington) and the building at 307A Washington Avenue are also probably the work of Hyder as the brickwork on all of the buildings is almost identical.

Two of the most impressive commercial buildings constructed on the Courthouse Square during the Railroad Era, the Alsup/Risley/Skillman Block and the Catron Opera House, are extant. The Alsup/Risley/Skillman Block, located on the northwest side of the square at 24-27 Court Square is the only one of the large commercial blocks constructed in the late nineteenth century to survive today. Two other large commercial blocks, the Dixon Block and the Langston Block, succumbed to fire in the early twentieth century. Even though each section of the Alsup/Risley/Skillman Block was owned by a different businessman, the building has a common

[27] Howell County News, October 25, 1896, p. 3.
[28] Howell County News, August 2, 1895 p. 3.

facade with a continuous cornice which appears to be original. Each section is delineated by the style of the cast iron lintels over the second floor windows.

The Catron Opera House Building, located at 36 Court Square across the square from the Alsup/Risley/Skillman Block, was constructed in 1893 for O.H.P. Catron and Thomas Johnson. According to the Sanborn fire insurance maps, the opera house was known as Johnson's Opera House from 1893 until the early twentieth century. Thomas Johnson and O.H.P. Catron jointly owned a great deal of property in West Plains in the late nineteenth century and together the two men platted Johnson and Catron's Addition to West Plains. The opera house was used for theatrical productions, movies and graduations until the 1920s, and the West Plains Post Office was located on the first floor of the building in the early decades of the twentieth century. In the early 1940s, the opera house served as the armory. From the mid-1940s until recently, the opera house has been vacant. However, the entire block of buildings on the southwest side of the courthouse square are currently being rehabilitated and the opera house will

Figure Nine: The Alsup/Risley/Skillman Block, ca. 1914.
Source: West Plains Gazette, Volume 1, Number 1, Spring and Summer 1978, p. 57.

once again be used for public events. The Catron Opera House Building is one of the few extant nineteenth century second floor opera houses in Missouri.[29] Although the stage no longer exists, the auditorium and gallery are still intact. The building also represents one of the largest and most impressive buildings on the West Plains Courthouse Square.

By the late 1890s, the demand for commercial space on the Courthouse Square was so great that several enterprising businessmen developed a way to create more frontage onto the square. The corners of the square were opened up and pedestrian alleys or "arcades" were created. Not only did this provide more access to the square, but also it, essentially, made more lots located on the square. Three of the four West Plains arcades were created and developed in the years just prior to the turn of the century. Evans Arcade, located in the southeast corner of the square was developed by Judge W. N. Evans. Luster Arcade, located in the northeast corner of the square was developed by attorney C. R. Luster. Catron Arcade, located in the southwest corner of the square, was developed by banker/businessman O.H.P. Catron. However, a parking lot now exists in place of the buildings on the Catron Arcade. The fourth arcade, Elledge Arcade was developed in 1913.

One of the most intact commercial buildings in downtown West Plains is located on the Luster Arcade. The L. D. Harlin Building, at 2 Luster Arcade, retains its original brick cornice, wooden storefront, and cast iron sill. It was constructed in 1899 as a barbershop for L. D. Harlin and Will McBride.

L. Dewey Harlin was one of eight brothers in the Harlin family. Although Dewey only operated his barbershop in West Plains for a short time before he left town to pursue other interests, his older brothers, Tan and James Harlin became extremely successful businessmen in town. In 1904, Tan and James Harlin became founding stockholders in the Reed-Harlin Grocery Company and four years later, the brothers purchased controlling interest in the Howell County Bank which was located in West Plains. James Harlin served as mayor of West Plains for more than 30 years.[30]

The prosperity that many West Plains businessmen attained as a result of town's booming population and economy is demonstrated by the grand Victorian houses they had constructed during the Railroad Era. Some of the town's finest residences, including the Samuel J. Langston House (ca. 1884) at 117 Langston Street and the Ben Holloway House (ca. 1889) at 209 Aid Avenue, were built during this period on lots just beyond the major commercial area.

Two of the three churches extant in the downtown area were also constructed during the Railroad Era. As in most communities, they are among the most elaborate buildings in town. The First Presbyterian Church and All Saints' Episcopal Church were constructed within a year of each other and both exhibit Gothic Revival styling, most notably in the form of pointed arch window and door openings. The First Presbyterian Church, located at 116 Aid Avenue and constructed in 1887, is a sophisticated brick Gothic Revival side steeple church. In contrast, All Saints'

[29] This information is based on an unpublished inventory of historic theatres in Missouri compiled by the author.
[30] Michael Cochran. "The Harlin Brothers: An Ozark Dynasty," West Plains Gazette, No. 8, Fall 1980, pp. 13-31.

Episcopal Church, located at 107 South Curry St. and constructed in 1888, is a small Carpenter Gothic frame church. It is, however, one of the few churches of this style extant in Missouri.

Community Development Era: 1900-1952

West Plains' third period of development spans from 1900 to 1952. During this period, growth was steady, and numerous public improvement projects modernized the town. Despite the upheaval of two world wars and a major explosion in West Plains, this period is marked by stability and general prosperity.

While the Railroad Era in West Plains is remembered as a time of great excitement, enormous population growth and widespread commercial development, the third period in the town's history was a time of stability and community development. During the first decade of the twentieth century, commercial development in West Plains continued at a steady rate. However, during this same period, population growth leveled off dramatically. Census figures for 1910 reported only 12 more residents in West Plains than were counted in 1900.[31] Despite this downturn in the population growth of the town, a steady number of new buildings continued to be erected and new businesses continued to be established in West Plains throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Furthermore, numerous public improvements were made possible by the town's continued prosperity in the early decades of the twentieth century. In contrast to the Railroad Era, which saw the construction of many of West Plains' finest commercial buildings, many of the most notable buildings erected during the Community Development Era were public buildings.

In 1900, the West Plains Chamber of Commerce was organized, and shortly thereafter, West Plains' commission form of government, one of the first of its kind in the state, was formed.[32] With the development of a system of local government in West Plains came a number of public improvements in the early decades of the twentieth century. Although the town had already begun to benefit from the public utilities that were established in the late 1890s including telephone service, electric lighting, home mail delivery, these services were improved and new services such as a public waterworks were installed in West Plains in the early 1900s.

When the State Capitol burned in 1911, Col. Jay Lynn Torrey and twenty-seven area businessmen joined the long line of groups from all over the state that tried, unsuccessfully, to have the capitol moved to their town. In addition to this disappointment, the decade of the teens in West Plains was also marred by the emotional devastation of World War I. Despite these setbacks, West Plains continued to grow. The town square was paved in 1914; a city swimming

[31] West Plains population in 1900: 2902; population in 1910: 2914. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Populations Schedules for Howell County, Missouri, 1900, 1910.

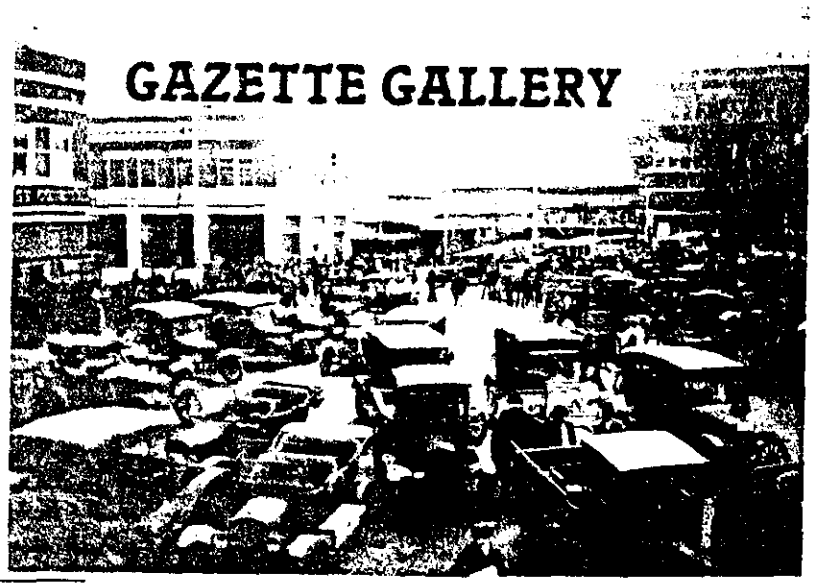
[32] Catherine Castner, "West Plains: Yesterday and Today," in 100th Anniversary, West Plains, MO Centennial, June 15-21, 1952, West Plains: Quill Print, 1952, n.p.

setbacks, West Plains continued to grow. The town square was paved in 1914; a city swimming pool was constructed in 1915; and the town's electrical system was connected to a hydroelectric generating plant in 1916.

Two of West Plains' most notable buildings, built by two of the town's most prominent businessmen, were constructed in the 1910s. In 1912, W. J. Zorn, the owner/editor of the Howell County Gazette. had the building at 102 Leyda Street constructed to serve as the offices of the newspaper. The building's corner entrance which is topped by a conical roofed oriel, and its elaborate stone detailing make it one of the most impressive and most memorable buildings in West Plains. A year later, the Aid Hardware Building, located at 1 Court Square was built.

In the late 1880s. C. T. Aid, a first generation American of German descent, was persuaded by William A Cook, a sales representative for Norval Hardware Supply, to partner with him in opening a hardware store in West Plains. The Aid and Cook Hardware Store opened in a building on the Courthouse Square in 1888. Five years later, Cook left the partnership and the store became Aid Hardware. Not only did C. T. Aid become a successful businessman in West Plains, but also, "the Aid family became one of the most prominent names in West Plains. C. T. Aid served as Mayor of West Plains and later served as President of the Chamber of Commerce that he helped organize."[33] The original Aid and Cook Hardware building, which was constructed in 1888, burned in 1912, but a new, bigger Aid Hardware Building was constructed in the same location the next year. Although the hardware store closed in 1998, the building, which is one of the largest buildings on the Courthouse Square, is still owned by the Aid family.

Figure Ten. The southeast side of the square, ca. 1916.
Source: West Plains Gazette, Number 11, March-April 1981, p. 31.



[33] James Newton. "Aid Hardware Serving the Community for over a Century," Ridgerunner, No. 12, Fall 1990, p. 6.

seen in Howell County in 1901. Although, at the time, it was quite a novelty and was received with much skepticism, it would only be a few years before West Plains' citizens began to purchase their own automobiles. A circa 1916 photo of downtown West Plains, shows the square jammed with automobiles. (See Figure Ten.) By the early 1920s, road building became a major focus for the economic development of the town. Not only did city officials work to improve the roads in town, but also the local farm-to-market roads. These efforts, coupled with the construction of the State Highway 63 through West Plains, helped to boost West Plains' status as an agricultural and livestock trading center, increased tourism, and it made the town an attractive manufacturing base.

In the early twentieth century, Howell County was one of the leading fruit-growing regions in the country and it was among the country's leaders in the number of peach orchards. Howell County fruit won several gold medals at the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis and West Plains prospered from the large volume of fruit shipments from the area. Although this industry faltered in the 1920s as a result of several seasons of poor weather, a railroad strike and prohibition, many of the area's farmers found new prosperity in raising feeder pigs and West Plains found its niche in the livestock industry. In the 1930s, regular auction facilities were constructed in West Plains and by the late 1950s, West Plains feeder pig market was said to be the largest in the region. Eventually, West Plains grew into the "Feeder Pig Capital of the World."[34]

West Plains convenient location on a major railroad line and several highways attracted a wide variety of manufacturers to the town in the early twentieth century. A number of dairy-related factories including the McCluer Cheese Company and the Midwest Dairy Products Corporation were established in West Plains during this period. However the largest factory to open during this period was that of the International Shoe Company which opened in 1946.

> A chance stop in West Plains by two International Shoe Company representatives on the way to Batesville, Arkansas, to discuss the possibility of establishing a factory there, led to the company's decision to locate in West Plains instead. The representatives had stopped at the J.C. Penney store, an outlet for their shoes; and the president of the West Plains Chamber of Commerce, also Penney's store manager, quickly called a chamber meeting.... The company first moved into the PWA-built armory and used that facility until they moved into their new building. They dedicated the new building May 17, 1946 at which time there were 289 employees. Ten years later analysts attributed a fifty percent increase in West Plains retail sales, primarily due to the influence of the shoe factory.[35]

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[34] Jim Cox, "The National Feeder Pig Festival or How West Plains Became the Feeder Pig Capital of the World," West Plains Gazette. Number 11, March-April 1981, p. 37.

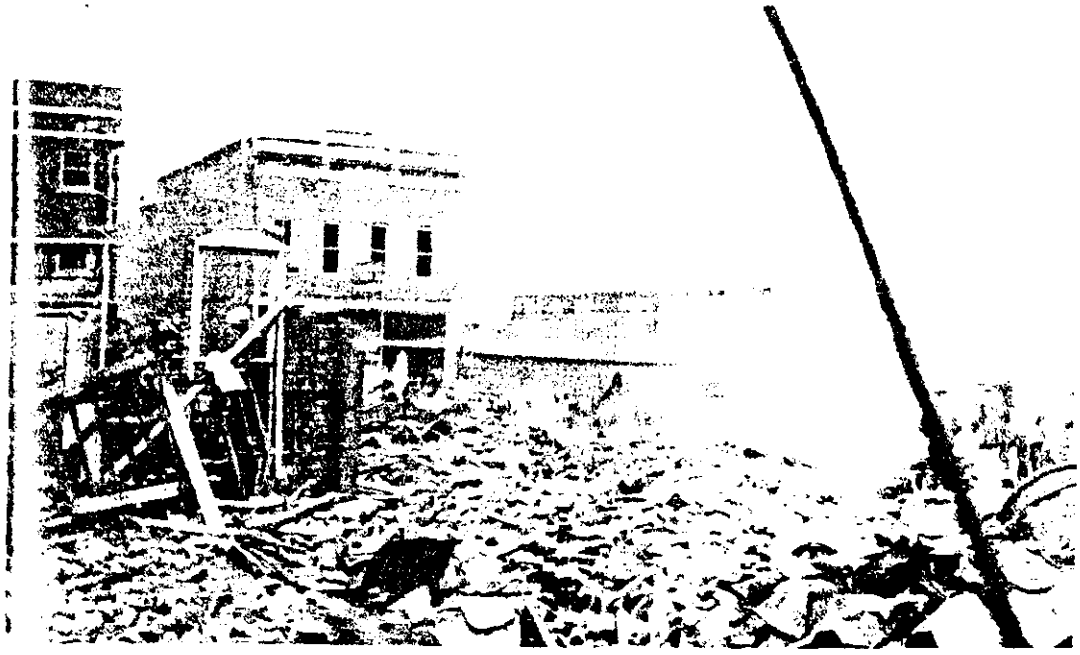
[35] Marian M. Ohman, Twenty Towns: Their Histories, Town Plans and Architecture. (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri - Columbia Extension Division, 1985), pp. 107-108.

The twenties were a decade of recovery in West Plains as in most towns across the nation. In the aftermath of the war, West Plains focused on ways to revive its economy. Mayor James P. Harlin led the town in this effort. Harlin served his first term as mayor between 1906 and 1908. In 1914, he was again elected to serve as mayor a position he would maintain continuously until 1944. When he retired, Harlin held a national record for years in office.[36]

On Friday, April 13, 1928 "the single most significant event in the history of West Plains" occurred.[37] An explosion in the Bond Dance Hall Building on East Main Street rocked downtown West Plains. The explosion killed thirty-seven, injured twenty-two, completely destroyed three brick buildings, and damaged almost all of the other buildings on Court Square. The brick courthouse was also damaged in the explosion and was deemed unusable. According to Terry Fuhrman Hampton, author of "The History of West Plains: A Decade by Decade Account,"

> "The courthouse was vacated after the explosion and for a period of eight years Howell County's offices were re-located in various buildings throughout West Plains – in the old Methodist Church on Washington Avenue, in banks, the Catron Opera house and other businesses.[38]

Figure Eleven: View of Downtown West Plains After Dance Hall Explosion
Source: West Plains Gazette, Volume 1, Number 1, Spring & Summer 1978, p. 13.



[36] Hampton, p. 32.
[37] "The West Plains Explosion" West Plains Gazette, Number 1, Spring and Summer, 1979, p. 11.
[38] Hampton, p. 46.

The middle decades of the twentieth century were marked by the shared tragedies of the nation – the stock market crash, the Great Depression and World War II, but it was also a time of continued development in West Plains. World War II cast a shadow over the nation in the 1940's, but one local historian noted "the economy was turning around from the depression years because of increased production of war materials and when the war finally came to an end, there was a new found prosperity.[39]

During this period, many of the town's most important public buildings were constructed with help from the federal government. In 1931, the government constructed the town's first freestanding post office building on West Main Street. This building, located at 204 East Main is one of the of the best examples of Classical Revival styling in West Plains. The Masonic Temple, located one block east and constructed ca.1940, is a more restrained Classical Revival building.

Two Public Works Administration construction projects, the fourth Howell County Courthouse and the West Plains Armory Building (ca. 1940) helped keep many local workers employed during the depression years. These two buildings, along with the Avenue Theatre, which was constructed at 307 Washington Avenue in 1950, are among the few Art Deco style buildings in West Plains.

In 1929, Howell County officials contracted Springfield architect, Earl Hawkins, to design a new courthouse. However, financing for the building was not secured until six years later. In 1935, Howell County voters approved a $50,000 bond issue, which would be matched by a $45,000 federal grant.[40] Although alternate sites for the new courthouse were considered, the Howell County Courthouse, which opened in June 1937, was constructed in the middle of the courthouse square on the same site as the previous courthouse. The courthouse, designed by Hawkins in the Art Deco style, is three stories tall, 82-feet square, and is constructed of Carthage stone. The cube-like building, with its chevron motifs and geometric detailing, stands in sharp contrast to the Victorian buildings on the courthouse square.

West Plains continued to thrive throughout the second half of the twentieth century. and now serves as a commercial, medical and cultural hub for south central Missouri. A 42-bed hospital, which opened in 1959, has expanded into a comprehensive medical center; the West Plains campus of Southwest Missouri State University continues the tradition of higher education in West Plains, and Civic Center West Plains brings thousands people from neighboring communities to town for sporting and cultural events, and brings tourists to town for conventions, trade shows and meetings.

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[39] Hampton,, p. 48.

[40] Marian Ohman, Encyclopedia of Missouri Courthouses, (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Extension Division, 1981), p. 92.

Chronology of Notable Events

1821 Missouri becomes a state.

1839 First permanent settlement in the West Plains area established by Tennessean Josiah Howell and his family.

1848 The Howell County area was surveyed by the U.S. Government and section lines were established.
Post office established in the home of postmaster, Josephus Howell.
West Plains founded.

1857 Howell County organized.

1860 Population of Howell County – 3,169; West Plains – 150
The towns first expansion, Howell's Addition, was platted.

1863 West Plains abandoned due to large amount of hostile activity in the area.
The town of West Plains was burned to the ground by three or four guerillas led by a man named Watson.

1865 Settlers returned to West Plains and began to rebuild.

1866 Howell County reorganized by the State government.
Captain William Monks was the first to build a house in West Plains after the war.
Monks was appointed head of "Martial Law" in Howell and Oregon County

1868 First newspaper in the county, The Type of the Times, established by Captain E. F. Hynes.

1870 The first permanent newspaper in Howell County, The South Missouri Journal, later known as West Plains Journal established.
Population of Howell County – 4,218, West Plains - 150.

1880 Howell County population - 8,814.
West Plains population – 351.

1882 Johnson and Catron's Addition and Foust's Addition platted.
Sam Henry established a lumberyard in West Plains.

1883 Kansas City, Fort Scott and Memphis Railroad constructed through West Plains.
2nd Howell County Courthouse constructed.
West Plains becomes a 4th class city.
First bank in Howell County, West Plains Bank, established.
Telegraph service began in West Plains

1884 Olden's Addition platted.

1890 Howell County Bank established.
Howell County population – 18,618, West Plains – 2,091.
West Plains College founded.
Four newspapers in operation in West Plains.

1893 Catron Opera House constructed.

1895 First National Bank established.
A fire destroyed several buildings on the southeast side of the square.

1900 Howell County population – 21,834; West Plains population – 2,902.
West Plains Chamber of Commerce organized.

1901 First automobile motors into West Plains.

1903 City waterworks system installed.
First steam saw mill in Howell County built by B.F. Olden, J. H. Maxey, and Sam A. Risley.
First steam flouring mill in Howell County built by B. F. Olden.

1906 "West Plains was in the midst of a construction boom."

1910 Howell County population – 21,065, West Plains population – 2914.

1913 Gazette Building erected by Will H. Zorn.
Aid Hardware Building burned and was rebuilt on the same site.

1914 James P. Harlin began his second term as mayor of West Plains.
Central High School constructed.

1920 Howell County population – 21,102, West Plains population – 3,178.

1928 Farmers Savings State Bank organized.
Four banks operating in West Plains.
West Plains explosion kills 37, injures 22, destroyed 3 buildings, and rendered the courthouse unusable.

1930 Howell County population – 19,672; West Plains population 3,335.

1931 West Plains Post Office moves from the Catron Opera House to a new building on West Main.

1936 3rd Howell County Courthouse constructed.

1940 Howell County population – 2,227, West Plains population - 4026.

1944 After serving 30 consecutive years as mayor of West Plains, James P. Harlin retired.

1950 Howell County population – 22,725; West Plains – 4,918.

1959 West Plains Memorial Hospital (now Ozarks Medical Center) opened.

1960 West Plains population – 5,836.

1970 West Plains population – 6,893.

1980 West Plains population – 7,741.

F. PROPERTY TYPES

Property Type A: Commercial Buildings, ca. 1839-1952

The category of commercial buildings is broadly defined to include all buildings whose historic function was related to trade or commerce.

Description: Commercial Buildings

Commercial Buildings in West Plains are predominately one-part and two-part commercial blocks that reflect building types and architectural styles prevalent throughout the country in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century. They are typically one to four stories tall; they are primarily of masonry construction; and they usually have large storefronts with display windows. Facades tend to be symmetrical and three to seven bays wide. Flat or slightly pitched roofs with parapet walls are most common. Commercial buildings two stories and taller generally have one or more storefronts on the first floor, arched or flat topped double-hung windows on the upper floors and some type of decorative embellishment near the top of the facade or at the roofline. In the downtown area, most commercial buildings are set directly on the sidewalk. In other areas, the buildings may be set back from the sidewalk or street.

The majority of commercial buildings in West Plains are relatively unstyled vernacular buildings, which are often referred to as "Brick Front" buildings.[41] However, some commercial buildings have ornamentation that bears allegiance to one or more architectural styles. In West Plains, the most prevalent architectural styles are Italianate and Late Victorian. Commercial buildings with Italianate detailing were built in West Plains between ca. 1883 and ca. 1900 and featured arched top windows, often with cast iron hooding, on the upper facade and brick, stone, cast iron, or sheet metal cornices with brackets at the roofline. Examples of this style include buildings at 24 Court Square, 36 Court Square, and 107 Washington Avenue. Commercial buildings in West Plains with Italianate or Late Victorian detailing date from ca. 1882 to ca. 1913. These buildings are often referred to as "Iron Front Commercial" buildings because they have an exuberance of architectural ornamentation, often in the form of classically-derived detailing such as cast iron pilasters or columns and pressed tin entablatures.[42] Additional ornamentation often also includes pressed tin facade panels and cast iron or pressed tin cornices. Although buildings with Late Victorian styling frequently have projecting bay windows or gabled pediments at the roofline, only a few such buildings were built in downtown West Plains. The W.J. and Ed Smith Building at 109-113 Washington Avenue is the only building in downtown West Plains that has bay windows.

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[41] Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, American Vernacular Design: 1870-1940. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988, p. 240.
[42] Ibid, p. 238.

After 1910, the majority of commercial buildings constructed in West Plains can best be described as Brick Front buildings. Although these buildings generally have little or no applied ornamentation, brick or stone patterning or detailing on the facade is common. This detailing can take the form of brick corbeling or cornices, decorative brick panels, sometimes referred to as tapestry brick, stone, brick or concrete string courses, and stone coping along the roofline.

Sub-type: Two-Part Commercial

Two-part commercial blocks are generally two to four stories tall, have flat parapet wall roofs, and, by definition, are characterized by a horizontal division of both use and appearance. The lower, generally single story zones of these buildings were designed to be used as public or commercial spaces, while the upper floors were used for more private functions such as offices or residences. Ground floor spaces tend to feature large display or storefront windows and doors with half or three-quarter height glass openings thereby encouraging passersby to look into the space, while the upper floors generally have smaller windows and no doorways on the facade.

Sub-type: One-Part Commercial

The One-Part Commercial Block, is general regarded as a fragment of the nearly ubiquitous Two-Part Commercial Block. Like the Two-Part Commercial Block, the One-Part Commercial Block generally is composed of a narrow storefront with large plate glass display windows, and a prominent cornice at the roofline. However, the One Part Commercial Block is only one story tall and often has a generous amount of wall space for signage or advertising in between the cornice and the storefront.

Subtype: False Front Commercial

The False Front Commercial or Boom-town Front building is similar in form to the One-Part Commercial Block, but it generally has a taller facade than the true One-Part Commercial Block. The facade of the False Front Commercial Building extends up beyond the level of the roofline and the side walls. In contrast to the One Part Commercial Block, which typically has a flat or parapet wall roof, False Front Commercial Buildings often hide a front facing gable roof behind the tall facade.

Significance: Downtown Commercial Buildings

Commercial Buildings in West Plains may be significant under National Register Criteria A and C, in the areas of COMMERCE and ARCHITECTURE. They will be eligible in the area of commerce for their role in the early commercial development of the city and in the area of

architecture as representative examples of early commercial architecture in a variety of architectural styles and types.

As discussed in Section E of the cover document, the city of West Plains' early commercial development was a result of the its status as the seat of Howell County government. The original Howell County Courthouse was constructed on the public square in 1859. The second courthouse, built after the Civil War, occupied a lot on the south side of the square.
Like the first two Howell County courthouses, West Plains' earliest commercial buildings were predominately simple frame structures. These buildings, which were located on lots facing the courthouse square and on the blocks in the immediate periphery of the square, were constructed to house traditional businesses of the period including hotels, general mercantile stores, and saloons.

In the 1883, after the railroad was built through West Plains, the town began to develop into a trade and shipping center for southern Missouri. Substantial brick commercial buildings quickly replaced the early frame buildings around the square and commercial buildings were constructed in the vicinity of the railroad depot. The third Howell County Courthouse, a large, brick, Second Empire building which was built on the pubic square in 1883-84, became the focal point of downtown West Plains. By 1890, the blocks around the courthouse square and several blocks beyond, particularly in the direction of the railroad, were filled with commercial buildings of all types.

The commercial buildings in downtown West Plains, which were built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, contained the most notable businesses in West Plains. These businesses provided goods and services of all types to West Plains citizens, to the residents of many surrounding communities, and to travelers and businessmen passing through West Plains by train and later by car. The first floor storefronts of buildings facing the courthouse square contained retail stores, banks, restaurants and saloons, and the upper floors were filled with professional offices, hotels, theatres, and meeting halls. Beyond the immediate perimeter of the courthouse square, the commercial buildings housed service-oriented business such as liveries and laundries, and industrial operations such as carriage factories and lumberyards. Buildings tailored to industrial businesses were often located near the railroad tracks and depot.

The downtown area is also the location of West Plains's largest and most notable buildings. These buildings reflect the prosperity and success of the businessmen who built them. Many buildings constructed in the late-nineteenth century are embellished with Victorian ornamentation such as cast iron or pressed tin cornices, Italianate brackets and projecting stone, brick or cast iron window lintels. Later buildings, those constructed in the early twentieth century, tend to be larger, but they have more restrained ornamentation.

Although a number of commercial property sub-types exist in West Plains, the majority of historic commercial buildings are related to the two-part commercial block, an architectural form that was nearly ubiquitous throughout the country in the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Sub-types tend to be fragments or extensions of the two-part commercial block form. Intact two-part commercial buildings have a facade that is divided into two distinct sections - a

lower more public section which was often used for retail businesses and an upper more private section often used for offices or residences. Two-part commercial buildings generally have full width storefronts with display windows and a recessed entrance on the first floor, regularly-spaced, double-hung windows on the second floor and some type of embellishment at or near the roofline. Emphasis on late nineteenth and early twentieth century Two-Part Commercial Blocks was on the facade, which was "often highly embellished with Italianate details."[43]

Two-Part Commercial Blocks were designed to fit within the constraints of the urban downtowns developing in the mid-nineteenth century. As architectural historian, Richard Francaviglia notes: the "'footprint' [of the Two-Part Commercial Block] had to be long and narrow to fit commercial lots; it was modular, that is, had to be built with regard to the structures located on the adjacent narrow lots on either side of it. These buildings were often called "blocks" even though they might occupy only one lot on the block."[44] In his book, The Buildings of Main Street, Richard Longstreth describes the Two-Part Commercial Block as "the most common type of composition used for small and moderate sized commercial buildings throughout the country."[45]

Registration Requirements: Commercial Buildings

Intact commercial buildings in West Plains are significant primarily for their association with the commercial development of the city, and for their architectural design. Commercial activities have been integral component of West Plains' development since the mid-nineteenth century. Surviving commercial buildings in West Plains include buildings constructed in the 1880s, as well as properties that were in use well after the standard fifty-year cut-off point for periods of significance.

To be individually eligible for registration under Criterion A, a building must have served in a commercial function for a representative portion of its early history, and appear today much as it did when it was used as such. Exterior appearances, in particular, should be relatively unchanged, especially on upper facades and other important elevations. The period of significance for buildings listed under Criterion A will correspond to the period of time in which the building was used for commercial purposes up to the fifty-year cutoff.

To be individually eligible for registration under Criterion C, a building should be a notable example of a particular architectural style or building type and/or reflect common local building and design principles from the period of significance. The period of significance for buildings listed under Criterion C will correspond to the construction date and/or the period in which the building took its current form. For example, a building constructed circa 1880 and significantly changed in 1910 would have a period of significance of ca. 1880-1910. A building eligible for consideration under Criterion C will exhibit a relatively high level of historic integrity of the exterior surfaces and

[43] Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street, (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1987), p. 24.
[44] Richard V. Francaviglia, Main Street Revisited. (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), p. 26.
[45] Longstreth, p. 24

finishes. Fenestration patterns and architectural detailing on the most prominent elevations, in particular on the upper facades of those elevations, should remain substantially intact. Ground floor alterations, which are quite common on commercial buildings, will need to be evaluated on an individual basis, but should retain openings and divisions consistent with historic storefront design.

Commercial buildings in West Plains may also meet registration requirements if they form a cohesive grouping to meet historic district criteria. To be eligible as a district, the buildings that form the district must be contiguous at their original locations; they must be of a significant concentration; and they must collectively retain the feelings and associations of the pre-1952 era. To be eligible as an historic district under Criterion A, a grouping of buildings will be located within a historic commercial area of West Plains, and they will reflect the growth and development of the community in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. To be eligible as an historic district under Criterion C, a grouping of buildings will be located within an historic commercial area of West Plains and the majority of the buildings within the boundaries of the district will retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association. Ground-floor alterations and interior remodeling will not be a major factor in determining the eligibility of commercial buildings since such changes are common in commercial buildings. However, intact storefronts and interior features will enhance the architectural significance of these properties.

G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA.

The historic resources of West Plains, Howell County, Missouri are located within the corporate limits of West Plains, Missouri.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS.

(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

The multiple property listing "Historic and Architectural Resources of West Plains, Missouri" is based on research and data from a survey of downtown West Plains which was completed in the spring of 2001. That project was funded in part by a grant from the State Historic Preservation Office. Local funding and project administration was provided by Downtown West Plains, Inc. In the fall of 2000, Becky L. Snider Consulting LLC was hired to develop an architectural inventory of the buildings in the downtown area of West Plains and to make recommendations for properties that may be individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and for potential historic district boundaries.

The survey consisted of the evaluation of all of the properties within a pre-determined area in downtown West Plains. This area, which is bounded on the south by Grove Street, on the north by Broadway, on the west by Lincoln Street and on the east by South Curry Street, represents the historic commercial core of West Plains. All properties within the survey area were photographed and evaluated for their historic integrity and a Missouri Historic Property Inventory Form was completed for each property. Furthermore, historical information about each building was compiled and included in the inventory forms.

A total of 130 buildings were inventoried in the survey of downtown West Plains. Of those, 69 were determined to retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for inclusion in a historic district and 19 buildings were determined to be potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Three buildings in the survey area have been individually listed on the National Register since the survey report was prepared.

Although historic buildings exist throughout West Plains, this survey, the first comprehensive survey of historic resources in West Plains, focused on commercial buildings within the above referenced boundaries. Additional buildings in the survey area, which include public, religious and residential properties, were also evaluated and conclusions about common property types and prevalent architectural styles among these non-commercial buildings within the survey were also presented in the survey report. However, additional survey needs to be done before additional historic contexts and property types can be developed and added to this Multiple Property Submission. Hopefully, subsequent projects will address these issues and additional individual properties or historic districts will be nominated to the National Register.

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