

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name Boots Court

Other names/site number Boots Motel

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Route 66 in Missouri

2. Location

Street & number 107 South Garrison Avenue

N/A	not for publication
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City or town Carthage

N/A	vicinity
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State Missouri Code MO County Jasper Code 097 Zip code 64836

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Bu K D Q DEPUTY SHPO 8-8-12
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Boots Court
Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
2	0	structures
1	0	objects
5	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement / Streamlined Moderne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE block
walls: CONCRETE block, STUCCO

roof: ASPHALT rolled
other: _____

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Boots Court
Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri
County and State

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Areas of Significance

Transportation

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1939-1972

Significant Dates

1939, 1946

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Boots, Arthur and Ilda

Neely, Plese

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Boots Court
Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri
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Acreage of Property 0.34 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 37.178259 -94.314240 3 _____
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

2 _____ 4 _____
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

___ UTM _____ NAD 1927 or ___ NAD 1983

1 _____ 3 _____
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

2 _____ 4 _____
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (On continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (On continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gail E Emrie
organization _____ date 6/15/2022
street & number 8052 N. Devonwood Lane telephone 417 234 1927
city or town Fair Grove state MO zip code 65648
e-mail Gailemrie53@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Boots Court

Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log:

Name of Property: Boots Court

City or Vicinity: Carthage

County: Jasper

State: Missouri

Photographer: Gail Emrie

Date

Photographed: 01/10/2022

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 16: East elev 1939 bldg looking W
- 2 of 16: North elev 1939 bldg looking SE
- 3 of 16: South elev 1939 bldg looking NW
- 4 of 16: East elev 1946 bldg looking SW
- 5 of 16: North and West elev 1946 bldg looking SE
- 6 of 16: South elev of 1946 bldg and parking lot (contributing structure) looking N
- 7 of 16: Privacy wall (contributing structure) looking E
- 8 of 16: Boots Court sign (contributing object) looking N
- 9 of 16: Detail of Black Glass ornamentation on NE corner office looking SE
- 10 of 16: Detail of south wall 1939 bldg foundation garden with curbing and (contributing structure) window and neon ornamental arch looking N
- 11 of 16: Detail of 1939 bldg office window looking W
- 12 of 16: Interior of 1939 bldg room 8 looking N
- 13 of 16: Interior of 1939 bldg office looking S
- 14 of 16: Interior of 1939 bldg bath looking E
- 15 of 16: Carport west end of 1939 bldg looking N
- 16 of 16: Setting from front of office looking E

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

1. SITE MAP: Boots Court, Jasper County, Missouri. (Google Maps January 17, 2022)
2. Photo Map Exterior. Boots Court, Jasper County, Missouri. (Emrie)
3. Photo map interior 1939 Building, Boots Court, Jasper County, Missouri. (Emrie)
4. Location Map (USGS 7.5 Minute Series, Carthage Quadrangle) Boots Court motel evening view showing neon. Photo looking NW from Garrison Ave. (Harvey)
5. a. Existing floor plan 1946 building.
5b. Existing floor plan 1939 building. (Courtesy HUNTER & MILLARD ARCHITECTS, INC.)
6. Elevations. (Courtesy HUNTER & MILLARD ARCHITECTS, INC.)
7. Boots Court motel evening view showing neon. Photo looking northwest from Garrison Ave. (Harvey)
8. Contributing Object, Boots Court neon sign. Restored in 2013. Setting shows former Boots Drive-in across the street. (Harvey)
9. Contributing structure parking lot on south side of property. (Emrie)
10. Setting looking north from in front of office. (Emrie)
11. Detail north elevation of 1939 Building showing closed in carport on left, Unit 3 window (3 Over 1), neon arch around window and open carport on right. (Emrie)

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12. Neon sign above office door. (Emrie)
13. Interior of office 1939 Building looking south. (Emrie)
14. Interior connecting units 1 and 2 1939 Building. Stage one of motel construction design. Note rounded corners on plaster walls, floor furnace in far room, plain wood door (probably homemade). (Emrie)
15. Interior Room 11 1946 Building. Note wood floors and trim, square corners, floor furnace. (Emrie)
16. Interior basement laundry area 1946 Building. (Emrie)
17. Tunnel from 1946 basement to 1939 Building. (Harvey)
18. Boots Motel sign before restoration (contributing object). (Harvey)
19. Route of US 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles. (Special Resource Study ROUTE 66, USDI, 1995)
20. Route 66 in Missouri map. (Keenoy)
21. Map showing US 66 alignments in Carthage, MO. Boots Court was on north/south jog of old US 66 (from 1920s to 1950s). (Whittall)
22. Late 1940's post card image of Boots Court. (Johnson)
23. 1950's postcard image of Boots Court. (Seelen)
24. 1993 image of Boots Motel showing gable roofs installed in the 1970s. (Johnson)
25. Detail of lighted neon around parapets and windows. Southeast corner of 1939 Building. (Halla)
26. 2018 photo of Boots Court at night with period automobile, conveys atmosphere and feeling of Route 66 in the md-twentieth century. (Harvey)
27. Carthage 1930s Route 66 motel, Red Rocks (formerly White Court), 12906 Old Rt 66. (Whittall)
28. Carthage 1950s Route 66 motel, Kel-Lake Motel, 13071 St. Hwy 96. (Whittall)
29. Carthage 1950s Route 66 motel, Best Budget Inn, 13008 State Hwy 96. (Whittall)
30. Circa 1955 photo of accident at "Crossroads of America", junction of Highway 71 and US Rt 66. Boots sign in background. (Whittall)
31. Streamlined Moderne Industrial Design. 1934 Chrysler Airflow and Union Pacific Railroad's M-1000. (Petrany, 2020)
32. Boots Drive-In circa 1950. Built by Arthur Boots in 1946. (Johnson)
33. Boots Drive-In 2022. (Google Maps, 8 FEB 2022)
34. North and West elevations of 1939 building. Tunnel air access is located on the rectangular extension. (Emrie, 2022)
35. 66 Drive-In theater. (Google Maps, Feb 8, 2022)
36. Connecting door between motel rooms 1 and 2 looking north. (Emrie)

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Boots Court

Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri

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Route 66 in Missouri

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SUMMARY

Boots Court motel is located at 107 South Garrison Avenue, Carthage, Jasper County, Missouri. (Figure 4) The motel consists of two single story buildings, one built in 1939 and the other in 1946, with rolled asphalt flat roofs and exterior masonry stucco walls. (Figure 1) 1939 and 1946 are noted as Significant Dates as they are the construction dates of the two buildings. It is an example of Streamlined Moderne commercial architecture popular from the 1920's to the 1940's. The smooth white stucco walls have curved cornices and corners. The flat roof is surrounded by a short stucco parapet with rounded corners and top. The east walls of the 1939 building and parapet are accented with horizontal bands of inlaid black Carrara glass tiles and green neon lighting. (Figure 7) The original office windows are metal multi-light casements. (Photo 1) Windows on the 1939 units are original wood three-over-one double hung. Windows on the 1946 building are probably original eight-over-eight wood double hung. Some doors appear to be original. Both buildings are of the same style and materials. Both are one story in a basically rectangular plan with flat roofs. (Figure 7) The original building, consisting of the office and eight rental units, was built in 1939 by owner and designer Arthur Boots. An additional building containing five units was built in 1946. (Figure 1, 5) The 1939 block of motel rooms has a double row room layout with eight back-to-back units alternating with integrated covered parking spaces. The building runs east-west under a single flat roof. The separate 1946 addition, built behind and perpendicular to the original building has five units with doors all facing east. (Figure 1) The design is symmetrical with the center three units projecting out the furthest, and the two end units set back approximately three feet. (Figure 5a) The Boots Court sign, a contributing object, is the original metal sign with neon light detailing. (Figure 8) Two contributing structures are the paved parking area surrounding the buildings with concrete landscape curbing and the concrete block privacy wall on the north boundary, all within the historical boundary. The period of significance, 1939 – 1972, begins with the construction and opening of Boots Court and ends at 1972, when the Interstate 44 was completed in Missouri, replacing Route 66 and bypassing Carthage. Roadside commerce suffered from the loss of traffic, but Highway 71, an important north-south highway continued to go through Carthage. Boots Court operated as roadside lodging on Route 66 throughout the period of significance.

Boots Court is also an intact example of motor court lodging serving automobile tourism and roadside commerce on US Route 66 in Missouri as discussed in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) "Route 66 in Missouri." It meets the registration requirements set forth in that document in Section F under Lodging, subtype Motor Courts and Motels.

The property includes five contributing resources built during the period of significance: the 1939 original motel building, the 1946 one-story original building, foundation landscaping and parking lot as seen in 1940's post card photo, the original Boots Court metal sign on Garrison Avenue (1940), and historic privacy wall on the north property boundary (1950's).

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Boots Court

Name of Property

Jasper County, Missouri

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

SETTING

Boots Court is on a commercial street, one block west of the Carthage Courthouse Square Historic District (NR listed 1978) and five blocks northwest of the courthouse square. It is in an area with mostly one-story commercial buildings of mixed styles and vintage. The setting is very commercial, with few trees or shrubbery. (Photo 16) Most lots are asphalt covered with commercial structures of varying age. Historic post cards show the evolution of the corner of Garrison Avenue and Route 66 during the period of significance from a predominantly residential area to a commercial district with a predominance of auto and travel related businesses. (Figure 30) The earliest image has mature trees in the background and a house on the north side. (Figure 22) The later postcard from the 1950's still shows mature trees behind the motel but the house in the background has been replaced with a commercial brick structure. (Figure 23)

Boots Court occupies a level lot on Garrison Avenue just south of Central Avenue (also identified as Historic Route 66). (Figures 1, 4). The lot measures roughly 130 feet by 60 feet, covering just over three tenths of an acre. (Figure 1) A retaining wall begins at the southeast corner of the 1946 building basement, tapering toward the east. The lot originally sloped downward to the alley on the west side. The 1946 building has a basement that is level with the alley. The five motel units are above it. The lot was filled level with the five units requiring a retaining wall between the Boots Court lot and the lot to the south. (Figure 9)

The motel complex has five contributing resources. Two contributing buildings: the **1939 building** is centered on the lot perpendicular to Garrison Avenue, and the **1946 building** faces east (Garrison Avenue) abutting the west boundary of the lot along the alleyway. The office, which extends from the main block of the 1939 building, faces east and is set back 30 feet from Garrison Avenue. The public façade on the east is white stucco with two large windows extending cross the office front. (Photo 1) The roof line, parapet, windows and doors on the office walls and east façade of the motel units are accented by banding of inlaid black glass tile. (Photo 9) Green neon lighting outlines the roofline of both buildings. (Figure 7) The **lot** is otherwise paved parking with landscaping, gardens and concrete curbing (contributing structure) surrounding the building on all sides. The lot was probably paved in 1946 when the rear building was constructed. (Photo 10) The 1939 **Boots Court metal sign** (contributing object) is centered in front of the office just inside the right of way along Garrison Avenue. (Photo 8) The **Privacy Wall** (contributing structure) was built in the 1950's- 60's, within the period of significance. It is on the north boundary beginning 30 feet east of Garrison Avenue. The first 25 feet of the wall has two rows of pierced breeze block along the top edge. The breeze block is rectangular with two 'X' pattern cutouts in each block. The rest of the wall extends to the northeast corner of the 1946 building. (Photo 7)

Early photos of the motel show garden beds surrounding the edge of the motel, beneath the sign and along the outer edges of the parking area with raised white curbing. The gardens were planted in a pattern with shrubs varying in height creating a visual rhythm. Red awnings (non-extant) extended over the windows. Red and green metal lawn chairs were lined up on either side of the office door completing the color theme of black and white building, green neon, red awnings, green shrubbery, and red neon

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Boots Court

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sign. (Figures 22, 23) The gardens remain and have been replanted with shrubs consistent with the 1940's postcard images.

EXTERIOR

Exterior changes to Boots Court during the period of significance include the alterations to the office when the gas station part of the business closed circa 1940, the 1946 addition, paving of the parking area, building of a privacy wall on the north boundary, modification of the metal sign (since restored), and changes of historic neon lighting over the office door. After the period of significance alterations to the property have included building gable roofs on both buildings (since removed), enclosure of half of one carport, shingled overhangs over doors on the 1946 building, exterior door replacements and awning removal. The most significant of the alterations, the gable roofs built over the flat roofs were removed, restoring the original buildings' profiles.

Approaching the business from either direction the first thing noticed is the Boots Court sign centered in front of the motel office along the street right of way. (Figure 8) The rectangular metal sign is red with white borders across the top and bottom. It is mounted on a white pole approximately 20 feet high. "BOOTS COURT" is printed in sanserif white letters. The stacked words are centered within the red rectangle with BOOTS in a smaller type size than COURT. The letters are outlined in white neon lighting. Below the large rectangle hangs a smaller blue rectangular sign: "AIR CONDITIONED". Below this is a small round blue sign supported by a bracket from the white pole. This sign has white Art Deco lettering shaped into the circle stating "RADIO IN EVERY ROOM". This is the original sign Arthur Boots had in front of the motel. Air conditioning and a radio were luxury accommodations in the late 1930's and 1940's. The sign was restored to its original condition in 2013. (Figures 8, 18) ¹ The property can be entered via curb cuts on Garrison Avenue on either side of the Boots Court sign.

The property has two buildings: the original 1939 building holds the office and eight motel units with drive thru carports, and the 1946 building with five linear units at the back of the lot (Figures 2, 5). The 1939 building is a long rectangle with a smaller extension in the front. It is centered lengthwise on the lot with asphalt drives on the north, south and west sides. Both the 1939 and 1946 buildings have a flat roof with a short parapet surround on three sides. (Figure 6) The walls are of smooth white stucco with rounded corners and bullnose edges. (Photos 1,4)

1939 Building

Exterior

Façade (East Elevation)

The east facing office entrance is the main façade. (Photo 1) The office is a 16' x 11' block extending east from the 30' x 100' rectangular main block of the motel building. The office was originally built as a

¹ Harvey, Deborah. Interviewed with Gail Emrie. Personal Interview. Carthage, MO, January 10, 2022.

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Boots Court

Name of Property

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gas station with the motel units attached to the rear wall. Arthur Boots' motel business was likely so good he closed the gas station and used it as the motel office.² The concrete in front of the office shows where the pumps had been. (Figure 7) According to Robert Boots, Arthur Boots' son, the eight units in the 1939 building were constructed in two phases.³ The exteriors of both are the same, but the interiors have some variations. Units consist of a room, bath with shower, and a closet. Rooms are back-to-back, one on the north and one on the south side of the building. Directly behind (west of) the office are two rooms. West of the rooms is a drive through carport, which is one car width wide. The rooms open directly to the carport. This configuration is repeated four times: unit-carport, unit-carport, unit-carport, unit-carport. (Figure 5b) Original landscaping with concrete curbing remains along the edge of the building foundation. (Figures 7,9) In addition to the original neon lighting along the base of the parapet, historic neon arches installed during the period of significance, grace each window on the north and south sides of the building. (Figure 11, Photo 10)

The office façade (east elevation) is made up of two symmetrical bays on either side of the entrance. Each bay has a single large window with an operable casement window above a knee wall. (Photo 1) The door appears to be the original wood door, solid two-panel below and divided 9-light window above. The door is sheltered by a non-historic shed roof overhang covered with asphalt shingles. A six foot by three-foot red concrete stoop is in front of the door. The walls are ornamented with inset Carrara black glass tile horizontal banding. (Photo 9) Thick six-inch bands wrap around the front and sides of the office and extend along the east sides of the main block at floor and ceiling height. Two thinner three-inch bands run above and below the front windows also extending around the office and across the front view of the main block. Vertical stripes of black tile ornamentation are placed on the rounded corners of the office extension and the east corners of the main block. The ornamentation consists of three parallel vertical stripes with pointed ends set between the horizontal bands that define the top and bottom of the windows. The three stripes are symmetrically placed with the center stripe slightly longer than the two outer stripes. (Figure 7) Original green architectural neon outlines the base of the parapet, wrapping around three sides of the building. (Figure 26) Historic white neon signs stating "Cabins" and "No Vacancy" installed during the Asplin era (probably 1950's) are above the door. (Figure 12) Small flower beds remain, flanking either side of the front stoop.

The east elevation also contains two blind bays of the main block of the building. (Figure 7) The east wall of the main block extends eight feet beyond the office on both sides. Black tile bands and neon on these bays are as described above. Vertical stripe tile as described on the office corners is also on the southeast and northeast corners of the main block.

² Route 66 Oral History Project Missouri State University Interviewers: Tommy Pike, Michelle Hansford, Jerry Benner Interviewee: Robert Boots Interview date: April 26, 2006 Transcribed by: May 2012 / Technitype Transcripts. Route 66 Oral History Project, Special Collections and Archives, Missouri State University. Accessed Jan 9. 2022.file:///C:/Users/gaile/Downloads/rt66_75.pdf

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North Elevation

The north elevation continues the neon outlined parapet and white masonry stucco walls with rounded corners. (Photo 2, Figure 6) It is made up of nine bays. The east bay is the office wall. It has the previously described black inlaid tile decoration and neon light outlining the parapet. The original sixteen-light metal window is slightly left of center and has been altered to accommodate a window air-conditioning unit. A small flower bed runs along the base of the wall. The main block of the building is made up of eight bays of alternating window and carport bays. Each pair expressing a motel unit. Each pair has a wall on the east with a centered window and a carport opening on the west. (Photo 15) The easternmost unit bay is an exception; the carport opening has been enclosed on this unit. (Figure 11) The carports have openings with rounded corners, concrete floors and masonry stucco walls. Most exterior windows in the main structure are original wood three-over-one double hung. (Photos 5, 10) Due to damage some original windows are replaced with non-historic windows. The center bay of the north elevation window is boarded over. Some windows are fitted with window air-conditioning units. Exterior room doors are on the east wall of the carports and do not appear to be original or historic. Each entry door has a slightly raised concrete stoop. Exterior lights on either side of the carport openings are non-historic. (Photo 15) All windows on the exterior wall have the historic Streamline Moderne arched neon light surrounds. (Photo 10) Small original landscaping beds with rounded concrete curbing and small bollards are placed along the base of the exterior wall of each room. (Figure 11) The beds are planted with shrubbery consistent to landscaping in the 1940's and 1950's photos.

South Elevation

The south elevation, mirroring the north, continues the neon outlined parapet and white masonry stucco walls with rounded corners. It is made up of nine bays. (Photo 3) The east bay is the office wall. It has the previously described black inlaid tile decoration and neon light outlining the parapet. A 'ghost door', a former entry to the gas station restroom that has been removed and stuccoed over, is west of the office metal multi-light window. (Photo 3) The two lower tile bands do not extend across the former door space. The main block of the building is made up of eight bays, alternating motel unit wall bay and carport bay, each pair expressing a motel unit. (Figure 9) Each pair has a solid wall on the east with a centered window, and a carport opening on the west. The carports have openings with rounded corners, concrete floors and masonry stucco walls. Some of the windows are original 3-over-1 double hung. However, due to damage after the period of significance some have been replaced with non-historic windows. The east bay of the south elevation window has been replaced with a 1-over-1 double hung window and the center bay window has been replaced with a single glass pane. Window air-conditioning units are also in some locations. All north and south facing windows have the arched neon light surround. (Figure 25) Carports have original 3-over-1 double hung windows to motel rooms and small rectangular bathroom windows. A bathroom window in both the center and west carport have been boarded over. Small landscaping beds with rounded concrete curbing and small bollards are placed along the base of the exterior wall of each room. (Figure 11)

³ Route 66 Oral History Project MSU. 2006.

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Boots Court

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West Elevation

The west elevation is a plain white masonry stucco wall with no parapet. (Figure 6) Electrical conduit runs up and across the wall. A 3' x 2' x 18" boxed in utility unit is attached at the base of the wall near the center. There is also an air vent to the tunnel next to this unit. (Figure 34) The 'tunnel' was Arthur Boots first concept of air-conditioning. The lot originally sloped to the west. He built a tunnel opening from the west that went under the center of the 1939 building. His intent was to use a large fan to draw cool air into the tunnel and push it into the rooms. This did not work and the idea was abandoned.⁴ The tunnel still exists and opens into the basement of the 1946 building. (Figure 17) The tunnel is currently the designated tornado shelter.

Interior

The 1939 building is little altered from its original plan and finishes. (Figure 5) All rooms have plaster walls with rounded corners and bullnose edging. (Photo 12) The building contains some of the original hardware and light fixtures.

The office plan is original and is divided into three rooms. The office space, entered from the east main door, extends across the width of the building. (Photo 13, Figure 13) The space west of the office is divided into two small rooms, a lavatory on the south and a small storage room on the north. The space has original plaster walls, black tile base, and wood trim. Floors are linoleum tiles. Wood doors and trim appear to be original. The office counter appears to be from the period of significance.

The motel room and carport on the north directly behind the office has been altered (probably after the period of significance). A connecting door to the office visible in Figure 14 has been added to Room 1 at an unknown date. In addition, the north end of the carport has been enclosed and is accessible from the northeast motel room.

The 1939 motel units were built in two phases. The two phases' interiors are similar but have slightly different layouts. (Figure 5b) The first four units (directly behind the office) have two approximately 12' x 12' back-to-back rooms, a drive through carport, another set of back-to-back rooms and another carport, all under the same flat roof. The back-to-back rooms have mirrored floor plans. (Figure 5b) The rooms are entered on the west from the carports. The interiors have plaster walls with rounded corners and bullnose edging. The floors are concrete with tile or carpet coverings.

The first rooms' floor plans have a bedroom on the exterior wall with a small hall centered on the wall shared with its paired room. Figure 14 shows the hall looking into the connecting room. (Figures 5, 14, 36) The bath is located off the hall on the west (carport) side of the unit. The other side of the hall has a small closet. The rooms have two windows, one opening on to the carport and one on the exterior wall. Original interior doors are handmade of plywood. The bathrooms have original hexagonal tile floors, white tile showers with black glass tile trim and base, and a window opening into the carport. Some fixtures are original. Each room has the original floor furnace.

⁴ Route 66 Oral History Project MSU. 2006.

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The 1939 second phase units have the same room size, surfaces, windows, furnace, bath fixtures, doors and windows as the first units. (Figure 5b) The floor plan is slightly changed; the units do not have the small hall and connecting door. Instead, the baths and closet are in one block against the carport wall. East of the bath is an alcove with a wood counter space. (Photo 12) Arthur Boots advertised this as a 'Kitchenette'.

1946 BUILDING

Exterior

The rear 1946 two-story building, roughly 18' by 60', contains five motel rooms. (Figure 5a) The building has a walkout basement facing west. The main façade on the first floor faces east with five motel units in a linear design. The basement contains a garage, storage and work space. The exterior of the building is white stucco with rounded corners. The flat roof is surrounded on the north, east and south sides by a short parapet.

East Elevation

All motel rooms face east on the main façade. (Figure 6, Photo 4) The symmetrical east elevation is made up of eleven bays, five window bays and six door entry bays. The north and south ends mirror each other on either side of the centered door to the stairs. Each room is expressed by a window bay and an entry door with a concrete stoop and hip roof overhang with asphalt shingles bay. (Figure 9) The north and south ends of the façade each have two mirrored bays (window and door bays) expressing a motel room. The section (bays 3 thru 9) has three window bays and four door bays. There are window bays at each end and one in the center. They are separated by paired doors. The south pair of doors are room entries. The north pair has a room entry door on the north and basement stair entry on the south. (Photo 4). Historic postcard photos show a sheltering roof over the door of the first bay but it is unclear if it has the same profile as the existing roof. (Figure 22, 23) All room windows are wood double hung six-over-six, and appear to be original. (Photo 4) Exterior lights by unit entry doors are not historic. The six panel white entry doors are not historic. (Photo 4) Original architectural neon lighting extends along the front façade at the base of the parapet on the end rooms, consistent with the 1939 building. (Photo 4)

West Elevation

The west elevation consists of the walkout basement level and the rear wall of the first floor. (Photo 5) The first floor has nine bays, having large double hung wood 8-over-8 window bays fitted with a window air-conditioning unit and small bathroom window bays, expressing the five motel rooms and their internal arrangement. The bathroom windows are covered over and fitted with exhaust fans. From north to south the arrangement is large window bay, two small window bays, large window bay, sign, large window bay, two small window bays, large window bay. A center bathroom window may be covered by a sign. The basement level consists of seven bays. The original five garage openings have been altered. (Photo 5) The north (left) bay is a garage with a wood barndoor. The second bay is a garage opening with a non-historic garage door with a window installed. Bays 3 has an original four-

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over-four wood window. Bay 4 has a historic wood entry door. Bay 5 is an enclosed former garage opening with a boarded over window with an air conditioner installed in the opening. The garage space openings in the two south bays are also covered over. The sixth bay has a non-historic entry door installed within the garage door space. The seventh bay has a possibly former window that is now boarded over with a small metal vent installed. The original design had five parking spaces for the motel rooms upstairs. The third bay was an enclosed space with an entry door and window. Three of the garage openings have been enclosed but the outline of the door openings remains visible.

This elevation also has electrical wiring and utility boxes, guttering along the roof line, downspouts and three overhead exterior lights over entry doors. A non-historic 4' x 6' electrical sign is hung at roof level at the center of the upper floor. The sign is white with black letters 'Boots Motel', the two words stacked and beneath them a black arrow extending across the sign pointing south. Within the arrow is 'Right at Light'. (Photo 5)

North Elevation

The north elevation is a plain white stucco wall with parapet. (Photo 5) The privacy wall connects to it on the east side. The wall has been painted with large black block letters: 'BOOTS MOTEL; TURN RIGHT AT LIGHT'.

South Elevation

The south elevation is a two story plain white stucco wall with parapet. The second story has also been painted with large black block letters 'BOOTS MOTEL'. (Photo 6)

Interior

The five motel units are of the same basic plan, rectangular room with bath and closet cut out of a rear corner. (Figure 5a) The two units at each end are flipped and the center unit has the stairs to the basement cut out of the space. All rooms have large east and west windows, and a small bathroom window. The rooms have original plaster walls, wood floors, wood trim and some original wood interior doors. (Figure 15) The rooms contain some original hardware and light fixtures. The rooms have original built in desks. The black and white baths have a wall mount sink, toilet and ceramic tiled floor and shower. Some bathroom fixtures and tile are original. The basement has a concrete floor and walls. The unfinished space is broken into three rooms, a garage/storage space, laundry/utility space and storage. (Figure 16) The 'tunnel' is accessed in the center laundry room. (Figure 17) Wood stairs from the exterior east door lead down to the center room where laundry facilities are located.

ALTERATIONS

The Boots Court complex is largely intact. The contributing structures and object are original and in good condition. The gravel drive which Arthur Boots' son, Bob, recalls raking every day was paved, probably in 1946 when the rear building was constructed.⁵ The historic red awnings seen in historic pictures are no

⁵ Route 66 Oral History Project MSU, 2006.

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longer hanging. The metal awning frames are stored in the basement of the 1946 building but lack cloth coverings. The two buildings have had some alterations over the last eighty years. In the late 1970's Rachel Asplin installed gable roofs over the flat roofs of both buildings. (Figure 24) The gable roofs were removed in 2013 finding the original flat roof with parapets intact. The office had an original exterior door to a restroom which was removed and covered with stucco, probably in the 1940's. (Photo 3) Other alterations to the 1939 building occurred after 1991 when Rachel Asplin died. A door between the office and Room 1 was opened up and the north half of the first carport was enclosed. (Figure 11) Some doors, windows and room fixtures were damaged by renters and required replacement. (Photo 3) The 1946 building also had damage to doors and fixtures which required replacement. The largest alteration of that building was to the west elevation of the basement where parking garage entries have been enclosed. Neon on the building exterior is original with recent repairs.⁶The neon sign over the office door is historic from the Asplin ownership era. (Figure 12) Exterior lights on both buildings have been replaced with non-historic fixtures.

INTEGRITY

Boots Court is an intact example of the Streamlined Moderne style of the Property Type Lodging: subtype Motor Courts and Motels included in the Rt 66 in Missouri MPDF. The design and layout of the Boots Court has not been greatly altered. The removal of the 1977-78 roof modifications has restored the buildings to their original profile. The Boots Court motel retains the verve and style of Moderne roadside architecture found on Route 66 in the late 1930's and 1940's. The motor court retains its original integrity of design, location and commercial setting. The building remains in its original location with slight changes to the neighborhood since the end of its period of significance, 1972. During the period of significance, 1939 to 1972, the area evolved from a predominantly residential neighborhood on the north edge of the Carthage business district to a thriving commercial area. The buildings retain the original integrity of design and workmanship with no significant alterations to materials, or historic details. Other than the enclosed carport and the opening between the Office and Room 1, the buildings' layouts are unchanged. Boots Court continues to exude the atmosphere of quality roadside travel lodging and the feeling of energy and excitement associated with travel on 'America's Main Street', Route 66, in the mid twentieth century. The Streamlined Moderne character defining features- rounded corners, design, black tile banding, flat roof with parapet, architectural neon, metal and neon sign, are intact and convey the atmosphere associated with the original Route 66 tourist court. Boots Court has received much needed maintenance and restoration over the last ten years by the previous owners, Deborah Harvey and Priscilla Bledsaw. The exterior and interior retain much of the same feeling and association as when the buildings were first built (Figure 26). The setting, design, workmanship and association are iconic Route 66, taking travelers back in time when there was a "radio in every room."

⁶ Harvey, 2022.

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Significance

SUMMARY

Boots Court, 107 South Garrison Avenue, Carthage, Jasper County, Missouri, is significant at the local level under Criterion C for ARCHITECTURE as an excellent example of Streamlined Moderne Style. It is also significant at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Transportation and Commerce. Constructed in 1939 to capitalize on the heavy travel Rt. 66 received, Boots Court is associated with the "Automobile Tourism and Roadside Commerce, Route 66 in Missouri, 1926 – 1981" context of the "Rt. 66 in Missouri MPDF, meeting the description and requirements of the Lodging Property Type subtype: Motor Courts and Motels.

The period of significance begins with the construction in 1939 and closes at 1972, when Interstate 44 is completed across Missouri, taking the bulk of traffic previously on Route 66 and bypassing Carthage.⁷ The modern architecture, radio or television in rooms, and covered parking by the door are intact features that appealed to travelers during that time period of significance. 1939 and 1946 are noted as Significant Dates as they are the construction dates of the two buildings.

ELABORATION

HISTORY OF CARTHAGE, MISSOURI AND ROUTE 66

Carthage, Missouri is the county seat of Jasper County, in the extreme southwest corner of the state. The town, with a courthouse square and active business district, was thriving when the Civil War began. In 1861 the Battle of Carthage took place. Much of the town and surrounding area suffered severe damage as a result. During the continuation of conflict every building in the town was destroyed to prevent federal forces from sheltering in them. After the war the community began rebuilding and recruiting new settlers.⁸ Jasper County is part of the Tri-State Lead and Zinc mining belt. The opening of lead and zinc mines in nearby Webb City and Joplin in the late nineteenth century brought money and people to the area. Men in Carthage with money to invest became wealthy overnight. Large, gracious homes were built and businesses prospered. In the 1880s the first marble quarries were opened. Carthage Marble Quarries became one of the largest sources of high-grade light grey marble in the country. Carthage was the richest town per capita in the United States in 1890. The mining industry continued to boom through the early 1900's. The 1920's and 1930's saw a new source of energy and commerce when Route 66 and Highway 71 were built, intersecting in Carthage at the corner of Garrison

⁷ "The History of Route 66," Springfield Missouri Convention & Visitors Bureau, accessed August 3, 2022, <https://www.springfieldmo.org/about-springfield/the-history-of-route-66/>.

⁸ Mathews, Mary J. Carthage, Missouri: An Architectural Survey and Study in Historic Preservation, Department of Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, 1978, 2, accessed Feb. 14, 2022. <https://mostateparks.com/sites/mostateparks/files/Carthage%20Courthouse%20Sq%20Report.pdf> .

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and Central Avenues. Route 66 between Springfield and Joplin was paved in 1922.⁹ The highways brought a boom in roadside commercial development that lasted until the opening of the Interstate system which bypassed Carthage.¹⁰

US Highway 66, commonly referred to as Route 66, was the first paved highway between Chicago and Los Angeles. (Figure 19) The highway crossed Missouri, traveling from St. Louis to Joplin. The Missouri portion was completed in 1931, and the entire route was completed in 1938. (Figure 20) The highway generally followed an unpaved road system from St. Louis to New Mexico.¹¹ Route 66 went through Carthage, Missouri two blocks north of the courthouse square.¹²

The significance of Route 66 is not just its technological achievement and response to the increasing dominance of private motor vehicles. The highway has achieved a mystique as stated in the National Park Service document, *History and Significance of US Route 66.* "perhaps (it is) equally important to the American psyche, it symbolized unprecedented freedom and mobility for every citizen who could afford to own and operate a car."¹³

BOOTS COURT ON ROUTE 66 IN CARTHAGE, MO

As described in the *Architectural/ Historic Survey of Route 66 in Missouri Route 66 Phase 1 Survey* Boots Court Motel is one of the longest run businesses along Missouri's portion of Route 66. It has served travelers passing through Carthage since 1939.¹⁴ The business was conceived by Arthur Boots and his wife Ilda while they lived in Independence, Kansas. Boots decided in the late 1930's to leave his job in farm equipment sales to build a motel where two major highways intersected. After studying maps, he decided Carthage, Missouri, where Highway 71, a north-south highway, intersected Route 66, an east-west highway, was the place.¹⁵ He bought property on Garrison Avenue where Route 66 jogs south, converging with Highway 71 for three blocks, before turning west. Arthur Boots did not have any plans or drawings of the buildings before he began. According to his son, Bob Boots, he had ideas in his head and just built it as he thought I should be.¹⁶ Boots loved Streamlined Moderne and built his motel in that

⁹ Johnson, Maura. *Architectural/Historic Survey of Route 66 In Missouri, Summary Report, Route 66 Association of Missouri*, St. Louis, MO 63156. 1993. E-8.

¹⁰ Mathews, 1978, 1-4.

¹¹ Keenoy, Ruth and Terri Foley. *Route 66 in Missouri National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form*, United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places. 2009. Accessed Jan 8, 2022. <https://mostateparks.com/sites/mostateparks/files/Rock%20Fountain%20Court%20HD.pdf>.E-1.

¹² Whittall, Austin. "What to see and do in Carthage on your Route 66 road trip". Last updated: 24 July 2021. Accessed Jan 6 2022. <https://www.theroute-66.com/carthage.html>.

¹³ *History and Significance of US Route 66*, National Park Service. Accessed January 6, 2022. <https://ncptt.nps.gov/rt66/history-and-significance-of-us-route-66/>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "Route 66 Oral History Project MSU", 2006.

¹⁶ Ibid.

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style.¹⁷ Boots first built a gas station and four motel units attached in the rear. The gas station soon became the motel office. Boots was listed in the 1940 Carthage City Directory as running a gas station.¹⁸

In 1939 Boots Court was open and business was good. Four additional units were promptly built attached to the rear of the exiting building.¹⁹ The gas station part of the business was closed and the space became the motel office. Evidence of the gas pump location in the concrete and a “ghost door” on the south side of the office to a restroom are physical records of the gas station. (Photo 3) Boots Court is comprised of two buildings, the original built in 1939 and an addition built in 1946. The 1939 building has a row-on-row layout and the 1946 building has single row layout. (Figure 5a, 5b)

The motel was sold to Ples Neely in 1944. Ples Neely built the five-unit 1946 addition at the back of the lot abutting the alley. The same materials were used and Neely replicated Arthur Boots design. The exterior had the same white stucco walls, flat roof with parapet surrounding three sides, rounded corners and architectural neon. The interior rooms continued the black and white tile bath design but did not carry through with rounded interior corners.

World War II gas rationing had a negative impact on tourism. Pleasure auto travel was not an option for most families and roadside commerce suffered. Boots Court, however, did not suffer a loss of trade. Camp Crowder, 30 miles south of Carthage, Missouri, was established in 1941. By 1942, the first soldiers arrived for training. The camp was closed in 1947 after training tens of thousands of soldiers for World War II.²⁰ Carthage, being the nearest town of any size, housed families and wives of officers and enlisted men while they were stationed at the camp. Boots Court rented rooms by the week or month to officer’s wives and rarely had vacancies.²¹

Rachel and Ruben Asplin bought Boots Court in 1948. The Asplins owned and ran the business until 1991. During that time the buildings were well maintained. The history of the motel reflects the changing technology and culture during the mid-twentieth century. Expectations of travelers on Route 66 changed during these years. Chain motels that all had the same appearance became a common feature along the highways. Architect designed motels were taking the place of vernacular buildings.²² The Asplins changed the name from Boots Court to ‘Boots Motel’ in the mid-1960’s. The original metal sign was altered, replacing ‘COURT’ with ‘MOTEL’. (Figure 18)²³ The term “Court” had become outdated and the Asplins moved with the times to keep up with the Route 66 travelers’ tastes. Television came to

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Harvey, 2022.

¹⁹ “Route 66 Oral History Project MSU”, 2006.

²⁰ “Camp Crowder Photograph Collection.” Missouri State Archives. Accessed Jan. 13, 2022.

https://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/mdh_splash/default.asp?coll=crowder .

²¹ “Route 66 Oral History Project, MSU”, 2006.

²² Beecher, Mary Anne. “The Motel in Builder’s Literature and Architectural Publications: An Analysis of Design.” In *Roadside America: The Automobile in Design and Culture*, Edited by Jan Jennings, 115-124. Iowa State University Press: Ames, Iowa. 1990,119.

²³ Note: D. Harvey documented the sign change from researching police photos of accidents in front of the motel and observing the sign. She dates the change to 1964.

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Carthage in 1953. The motel that had enthusiastically advertised "A Radio in Every Room" now hung a sign out for "Television". (Figure 22) Following the end of the period of significance, Rachel Asplin had gable roofs built over the flat roofs of both buildings in 1977/78.²⁴ Pink neon lighting was installed outlining the gable ends. (Figure 24) Neon signs over the office door were also changed.²⁵ The gable roof and pink neon has been removed leaving the historic green neon around the parapet and neon arches around the windows.

Route 66 was declassified in 1985, being largely replaced in Missouri by the Interstate Highway System.²⁶ Interstate 44 (I-44) crossed Missouri diagonally from St. Louis to Joplin, generally following the Route 66 corridor. The cross-country route was completed in Missouri by 1972, replacing Route 66 as the state's southern east-west corridor. Some segments of the Interstate highway skirted the edges of towns and cities along the route. Carthage, however, was bypassed. I-44 went seven miles south of Carthage causing a loss of trade and income to the roadside commerce along Route 66 that had prospered for 55 years. Highway 71, a major north-south highway continued to provide some trade to the city. Rachel Aspin kept the motel in business until her death in 1991.

The motel's subsequent owner's clientele changed from travelers to local low-income renters. During this period the building suffered abuse and damage. Boots Motel was included on the Society for Commercial Archeology's list of the "10 Most Endangered Roadside Places" in 2011.²⁷ Sisters, Deborah Harvey and Priscilla Bledsaw, purchased the property in 2011 and began to restore the buildings to their 1940s' appearance.²⁸ The sisters began the process of listing on the National Register in 2011 and were told the gable roofs added in the 1970's had to be removed in order for the building to be eligible. They received grants from the National Park Service's Route 66 Preservation Program and the Missouri Route 66 Association in 2013 to restore the original roof line.²⁹ During their ownership from 2011 to 2021 the sisters restored much of the interior and exterior of the motel to its original design and use as a destination for travelers on Route 66.

Other roadside commerce in Carthage suffered the economic repercussions of I-44 bypassing Carthage. Many of the buildings that housed the auto travel trade remain. Extant motel buildings include: Red Rocks, an early stone eight cottage court (formerly White's Court and now rental units) at 12937 Old 66 Blvd; Kel-Lake Motel, a motel with all units under one roof at 13071 Hwy 96; and Best Budget Inn, a motel with all units under one roof at 13013 US RT, 66. (Figures 28, 29, 30) Other extant Route 66

²⁴ Building Permit #754, #4546, #4583. City of Carthage, Carthage, MO. 1945, 1977, 1978.

²⁵ Harvey, 2022.

²⁶ Keenoy, 2009. F-37, 38.

²⁷ Hacker, John. Group Adds Boots Motel on Route 66 to Endangered Roadside List, *The Carthage Press*. May 6, 2011 Updated Jun 12, 2015. Accessed Jan 10, 2022. https://www.columbiamissourian.com/news/group-adds-boots-motel-on-route-66-to-endangered-roadside-list/article_583d7162-c2b5-5145-8e06-1acfb5b5bea8.html 23.

²⁸ Harvey, 2022.

²⁹ Ibid.

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business buildings in the area include gas stations, Boots Drive-in, 120 S. Garrison (Figure 32, 33), and 66 Drive-in Theater, 1763 old 66 Blvd (NRHP listed 2003).³⁰

Boots Court was identified as an important “roadside resource directly related to travel and tourism along Route 66 in Missouri”³¹ in the Rt 66 Survey and in the MPDF.³² The MPDF associated historic contexts are automobile tourism and roadside commerce on US Route 66 in Missouri. Boots Court is consistent with the MPDF motel description: “a single, elongated building or buildings with each room easily reached through an exterior door, with parking in front of the door.”³³ It is also consistent with the motel/ motor court category description in the *Architectural/ Historic Survey of Route 66 in Missouri Route 66 Phase 1 Survey*: “often located on the growing fringes of the urban center. Designed specifically for travel trade, they typically stood only one story tall, offering the advantage of ready access to an automobile parked just outside the door.”³⁴

Boots Court was designed and built to serve the travel trade on Route 66 and US 71. (Figure 21) The contributing resources are in good structural condition, retaining the same appearance they had in the 1940’s and 50’s. Both contributing buildings look as they did when they were built. The contributing object, the Boots Court sign, is original and was restored in 2013.³⁵(Photo 8) The historic concrete block privacy wall contributing structure on the north boundary is probably from the 1950s. (Photo 7) A picket fence is shown on that location in the 1940’s post card image. (Figure 22) The historic block wall may be visible in the 1950’s color post card. (Figure 23) Also dating it is the pierced breeze block along the top which is midcentury modern style. Original landscaping around the 1939 building, which includes concrete curbing around foundation gardens and historic parking lot is intact.

As described in the *Architectural/ Historic Survey of Route 66 in Missouri Route 66*, Boots Court Motel is one of the longest run businesses along Missouri’s portion of Route 66.³⁶ It has served travelers passing through Carthage since 1939 and continues to operate as a motel.³⁷ The Boots Court Motel is an early example of roadside motels with attached single-story units and covered parking. The location of the motel is on Historic Route 66 as it passes east-west through Carthage, Missouri. The Route 66 alignment through Carthage from 1926 to the 1950’s entered Carthage from the east along what is now Central Avenue. At Garrison Avenue it turned south, passed in front of Boots Court, and turned west between 3rd and 4th streets, proceeding west toward Joplin, Missouri (figure 21).³⁸

The one-story buildings embody the Streamlined Moderne style popular in the 1920’s -1940’s associated with the freedom and excitement of travel on Route 66, “America’s Main Street”, “The Mother Road”. The intact buildings and original sign retain the original materials used in the late 1930’s: concrete

³⁰ Whitall, 2021.

³¹ Johnson, 1993.5.

³² Keenoy, 2009.F-40,41.

³³ Keenoy, 2009.F-39.

³⁴ Johnson, 1993.

³⁵ Harvey, 2022.

³⁶ Johnson, 1993.2.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Whitall, 2021.

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stucco, metal windows, black glass tiles, metal signage and architectural neon. Robert Craig defines Streamlined Moderne as a “distinctive architectural style of the 1930’s that is determined by the progressive forms of automobiles and other transportation machines of the day.”³⁹

CRITERION A: TRANSPORTATION AND COMMERCE

Boots Court is proposed for listing under the MPDF “Route 66 in Missouri “. The building is significant under Criterion A under Transportation and Commerce. It meets registration requirements under the MPDF:

“To be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A, a property must retain a clear feeling and association with Route 66 in Missouri during the years of significance, 1926-1981. The property must also comprise sufficient characteristics of historic integrity including location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, and setting.”⁴⁰ Boots Court contributes to the Route 66 highway corridor's sense of time, place and historical development. The intact motel complex retains its historic integrity of:

- Location- All buildings and contributing structures are in their original location within the historic property boundary;
- Design- The exterior design of the buildings and contributing structures are little changed from their building date;
- Materials- Original exterior stucco, windows and doors have been preserved with some non-historic replacements. Original neon has been retained with modern repairs.
- Setting- Boots Court is on Historic Route 66 which is a commercial setting, similar to the period of significance;
- Workmanship- Much of the buildings and contributing structures retain the original workmanship. Restoration and repairs have respected the original surfaces and techniques.
- Feeling- Boots Court’s Streamline Moderne design has retained the feeling of an early motor court/motel with the verve of early travel on Route 66;
- Association- The signage, design and location on Historic Route 66 corridor has strong association with Route 66 era of travel;
- Period of significance between 1926 and 1981- Boots Court was built in 1939 on Route 66 in Carthage, Missouri to serve the travel industry.

³⁹ Craig, Robert M.. “Transportation Imagery and Streamlined Moderne Architecture.” In *Roadside America: The Automobile in Design and Culture*, Edited by Jan Jennings, 15-26. Iowa State University Press: Ames, Iowa. 1990, 15.

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TRANSPORTATION

Boots Court is eligible under Criterion A in the area of transportation and commerce as an example of property Type 5: Lodging, subtype Motor Courts and Motels per Section F. As described in the MPDF, highways created a need for roadside lodging and services.⁴¹ Route 66 provided a new area of commerce related to transportation. Boots Court was located and built to profit from this need. It falls within the description in the MPDF motel description: "a single, elongated building or buildings with each room easily reached through an exterior door, with parking in front of the door."⁴² Boots Court is associated with Route 66 in Missouri between 1926 and 1981, the period designated in MPDF and retains historic integrity as stated above.⁴³

Highways gave travelers the option of going by automobile instead of train. Travelers along the new highways needed food, shelter, gasoline and auto service. This was not simple for non-white travelers during segregation Jim Crow laws. Practices at Boots Court are not known but it is likely that the business followed the status quo serving only white clients.

COMMERCE

Convenient lodging for motorists evolved over time. "Most Americans who drove Route 66 did not stay in hotels but in accommodations that emerged as a result of the growth of automobile travel. The motel, the most common, evolved from other features of the American roadside."⁴⁴ The earliest, and most affordable was the tourist camp. Often located by a gas station, general store or café, travelers could pull over and camp on private property for free or at a minimal cost. Cabin camps started being built which could vary from primitive shelters to small individual cabins with furniture. The cabins evolved to cottages. Cottages had a wide variety of vernacular architectural styles: rustic, craftsman, Tudor, as well as a variety of imaginative constructions such as teepees.⁴⁵ The early businesses were small "mom and pop" operations built by local craftsmen in what is called "backyard design".⁴⁶ They tended to be a group of separate cabins clustered together with possibly an associated gas station, general store or restaurant. These were common in rural areas. Hotels and motels were more common in urban areas. Hotels were already available but tended to be in the town or city center, not on the outskirts of town and did not usually provide easy access to owners' automobiles. "Motor courts evolved by copying the form of cottage courts, but room units were totally integrated under a single roofline and often were in one building. They were single-story structures with or without garage facilities."⁴⁷ Motels, or courts as they were called then, were a new development, a new style of lodging conveniently located along the

⁴⁰ Keenoy, 2009. F40-41.

⁴¹ Keenoy, 2009. F-37, 38.

⁴² Keenoy, 2009. F-39.

⁴³ Keenoy, 2009. F40, 41.

⁴⁴ "Special Resource Study ROUTE 66 Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California", United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Denver Service Center, July 1995. Pages 60-62. Accessed Jan 6, 2022. file:///C:/Users/gaile/Desktop/route-66.pdf

⁴⁵ Beecher, 1990, 115-116.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 119.

⁴⁷ "Special Resource Study US Route 66...", 1995.

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highway. They were usually a one-story building with attached units and an office. The units usually consisted of a bed/sitter and a bath. Parking was conveniently located just outside the unit entrance.⁴⁸ Boots Court is an example of roadside lodging that evolved from the roadside gas station with a few units to a more modern motel style lodging. Boots Court is significant for Criterion A Commerce as a business that was built specifically at the junction of two highways in order to benefit from the commerce on Route 66.

CRITERION C- STREAMLINED MODERNE ARCHITECTURE

Boots Court is also locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture- Streamlined Moderne. Boots Court is an excellent example of an intact commercial building of the style in Carthage, Missouri. The building's architectural design is an expression of the period Route 66 was built; the modern aerodynamic design was related closely to automobile design popular from the 1920's through the 1940's.⁴⁹ The buildings display materials and workmanship appropriate to the Streamlined Moderne style. It retains its original integrity of design, decoration, floor plan and setting.

In the early twentieth century Bauhaus and International Style architecture stripped away decorative and historical elements of building design. The 1920's and 1930's saw the rise of "Art Deco", "Depression Modern" and "Streamlined Moderne" in product and architectural design.⁵⁰ Art Deco, originating in pre-World War I France was an exuberant and luxurious style used in graphic arts, product design and architecture. Depression Modern describes a more classic Art Deco outgrowth used commonly in Depression Era government architecture. Streamlined Moderne is more strongly associated with the rise of the "Machine Age." Machines were becoming an increasingly important part of American life. The machine, from the toaster on the kitchen counter, to the automobile in the drive and the locomotive diesel train engine, had captured the public's imagination. Architects and product designers began using modern imagery borrowed from the industrial designer. The automobile was one of the most influential elements in the development of Streamlined Moderne. The designer's "typology links function with associated formal language: parallel lines of speed, fluid forms, rounded corners and neon lighting, progressive and shiny building materials."⁵¹ The 1934 Chrysler Airflow, advertised as "Balanced like an arrow in flight", exemplifies the power of the Streamlined design.⁵² (Figure 32) Streamlined Moderne architecture was introduced to the American public in the 1934 Chicago World's Fair. The design board, which included Hubert and Daniel Jr. Burnham, and Raymond Hood, determined the entire fair should be modern and progressive. The Burnhams and Hood represented leading architects in Chicago from the Daniel Burnham Senior's firm. Lead architects for building designs were

⁴⁸ Johnson, 1993.4.

⁴⁹ Craig, 1990, 15-26.

⁵⁰ Craig, 1990, 15.

⁵¹ Craig, 1990,16.

⁵² Ibid,16.

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Louis Skidmore and Nathaniel Owings, who would later found Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, a world renowned architectural firm.⁵³

The style became strongly associated with all forms of transportation. Streamlined Moderne architecture became a popular style used for roadside commercial development in the American suburbs. Diners, fast food restaurants, motor hotels and retail outlets employed the modern style which represented progress and freedom of the road. The style was also commonly used for buildings that served the automobile and other forms of transportation: service stations, auto dealerships, bus stations and airports.

Robert Craig, of the Society for Commercial Archeology, states, "Streamlined Moderne was the architecture of the automobile,"⁵⁴ defining Streamlined Moderne as a "distinctive architectural style of the 1930's that is determined by the progressive forms of automobiles and other transportation machines of the day."⁵⁵ The style reflected an increasingly mobile society. Roadside buildings borrowed the language of auto design, echoing the aerodynamic shapes.

Streamlined Moderne architecture's machine inspired character defining features include: rounded corners, parallel lines, neon decoration, clean surfaces, and flat roofs with parapets. Building materials commonly used were stucco, metal, ceramic tile, glass brick and plaster.⁵⁶

The Boots Court buildings' Streamline Moderne character defining design elements include:

- smooth stucco walls which have curved cornices and corners;
- a flat roof with curved parapets on three sides;
- black glass tile parallel line detailing on the front facade;
- architectural neon;
- neon arch surrounds on windows on the north and south elevations of the 1939 building;
- casement multi-light metal windows and wood double hung;
- original Streamline Moderne metal and neon signage;
- integrated carports that emphasize the focus on the automobile.

The design features are carried through the interior design of the 1939 building, using rounded corners, clean surfaces and black and white color schemes. (Figure 22)

Carthage has three examples of Streamlined Moderne architecture: Boots Court, 66 Drive-In Theater, and Great Plains Federal Credit Union (formerly Boots Drive-In), 66 Drive-In Theater (NRHP listed in 2003) is described as Art Deco but also has Streamline Moderne features. (Figure 35)

The extensive use of neon for the 66 Drive-in sign, in combination with the curved top and streamlined styling, are typical of both the Art Deco style and roadside signage of the period.

⁵³ Wood, Andrew. Motel Moderne: Yesterday's Motels of Tomorrow''. Society for Commercial Archeology. <https://sca-roadside.org/motel-moderne-yesterdays-motels-of-tomorrow/> . Accessed January 6, 2022.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 26.

⁵⁵ Craig, 1990, 15.

⁵⁶ Craig, 1990, 16

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The small but elegant ticket booth, with its curved corners and glass block walls, continues the streamlined motif.⁵⁷

The former drive-in restaurant building, constructed in 1946 by Arthur Boots, is across the street from Boots Court. It had many similar features: rounded corners, white stucco walls, flat roof with surrounding parapet. It differs in the window design, having rounded windows. (Figure 32) The building is currently a credit union and has been modified with a drive-thru covered extension and resurfacing of the exterior. (Figure 33) The building has retained the character defining features of rounded corners, rounded ribbon windows that wrap around the corners, and flat roof, but lost former design features of parallel banding around the base windows and parapet, smooth surface treatments and original windows. Original signs that matched the Boots Court sign are gone.

CONCLUSION

Boots Court meets registration requirements under criteria A and C under the “*National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Route 66 in Missouri*”. Boots Court retains the atmosphere and associations of Route 66 between 1926 and 1981. It is an excellent local example of Streamlined Moderne architecture. The motel complex retains integrity of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and association. The buildings’ exterior design and room layout remain largely original. The contributing sign has been restored to its 1939 appearance. Specifically, as stated on page 39 of the MPDF:

“... to be eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A ... and/or Criterion C in the area of architecture ..., the associated building must have been associated with Route 66 in Missouri between 1926 and 1981. It must retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials and association as motor courts or motels.”⁵⁸

Boots Court, a Streamlined Moderne motor court, features white stucco walls with rounded corners and edging, flat roofs with parapets, black glass tile parallel accents, and architectural neon on all public facades. (Figure 26) The one-story motel buildings have served as roadside lodging for travelers on Route 66 during its period of significance, 1939 through 1972, and continues to operate as a motor court/motel today. It maintains the association of an intact commercial lodging associated with transportation on Route 66. Boots Court is a unique and important landmark on Route 66 in Missouri.

⁵⁷ Sheals, Debbie. 66 Drive-In Historic District, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places. 2002.

⁵⁸ Keenoy, 2009.F-40,41.

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Boundary Justification

Verbal Boundary Description:

N CAR LOT 228 AND S ½ OF LOT 229

Section 4 Township 28N Range 31W

The Boots Court boundary, as shown on Beacon map below, includes Lot 228 and the S ½ of Lot 229 in the North Carthage division. The property extends from the west edge of the public sidewalk on South Garrison Avenue to the alley. This is the historic boundary of Boots Court when built by Arthur Boots in 1939. The 1946 addition built to fit into the rear of the lot defines the north, west, and south boundaries. Historic photos also document east, north and south boundaries. The retaining wall on the south and privacy wall on the north of the lot sitting just inside Boots Court's lot also confirm the historic boundaries of the property.

Boundary Justification:

The boundaries are the same as those during the period of significance.



Source:

<https://beacon.schneidercorp.com/Application.aspx?AppID=151&LayerID=1976&PageTypeID=4&PageID=997&Q=667450408&KeyValue=14200410022011000>

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Figure 1. SITE MAP: Boots Court, 107 S. Garrison Avenue, Carthage, Jasper County, Missouri

37.178259 -94.314240. (Google Maps 8 FEB 2022)



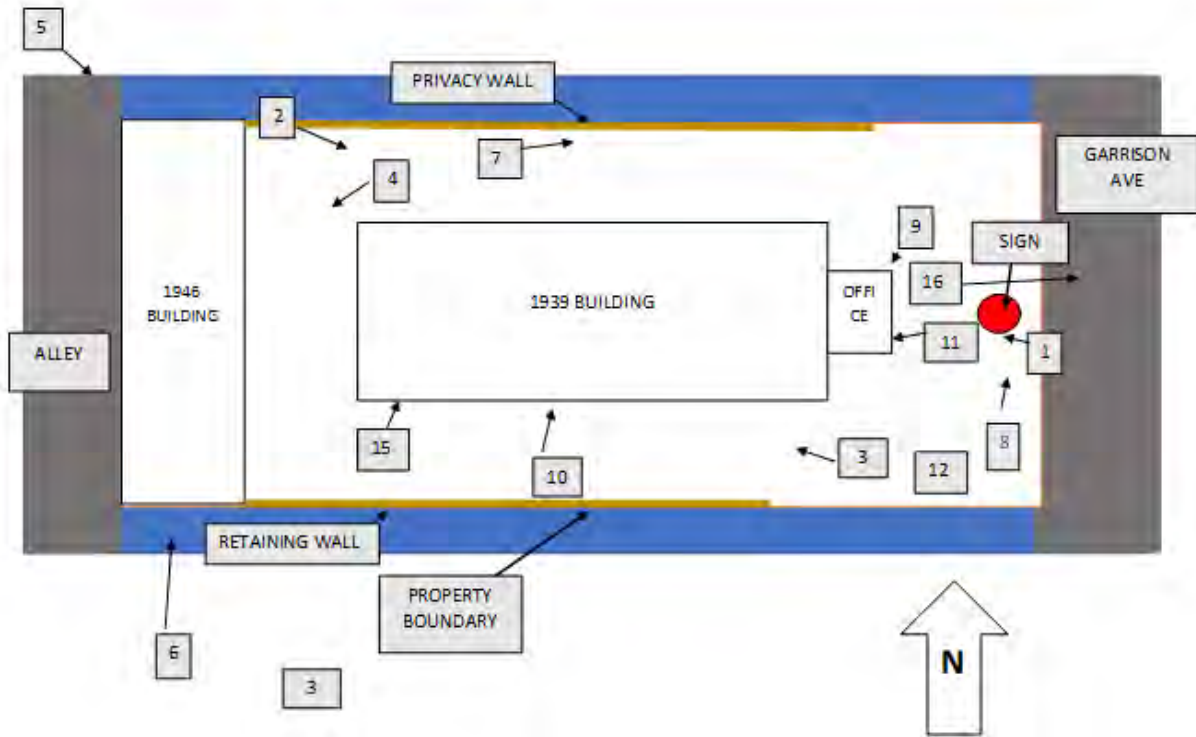
PROPERTY BOUNDARY

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Figure 2. Photo Map Exterior. Boots Court, Jasper County, Missouri. (Emrie)



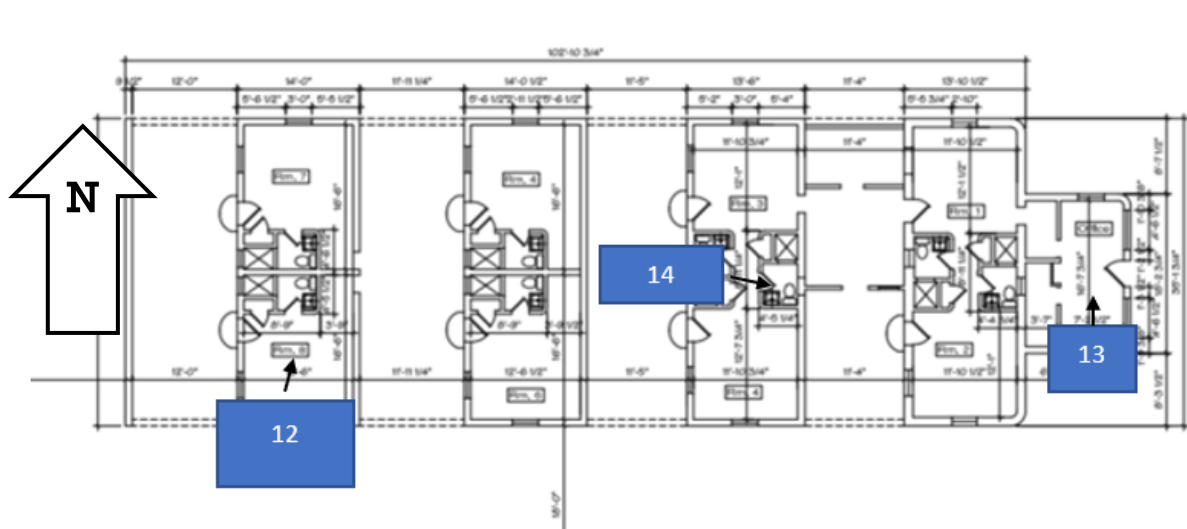
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Figure 3. Photo map interior 1939 building. Boots Court, Jasper County, Missouri. (Emrie)

1939 STRUCTURE

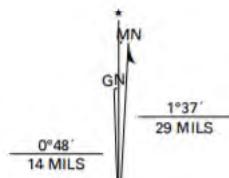
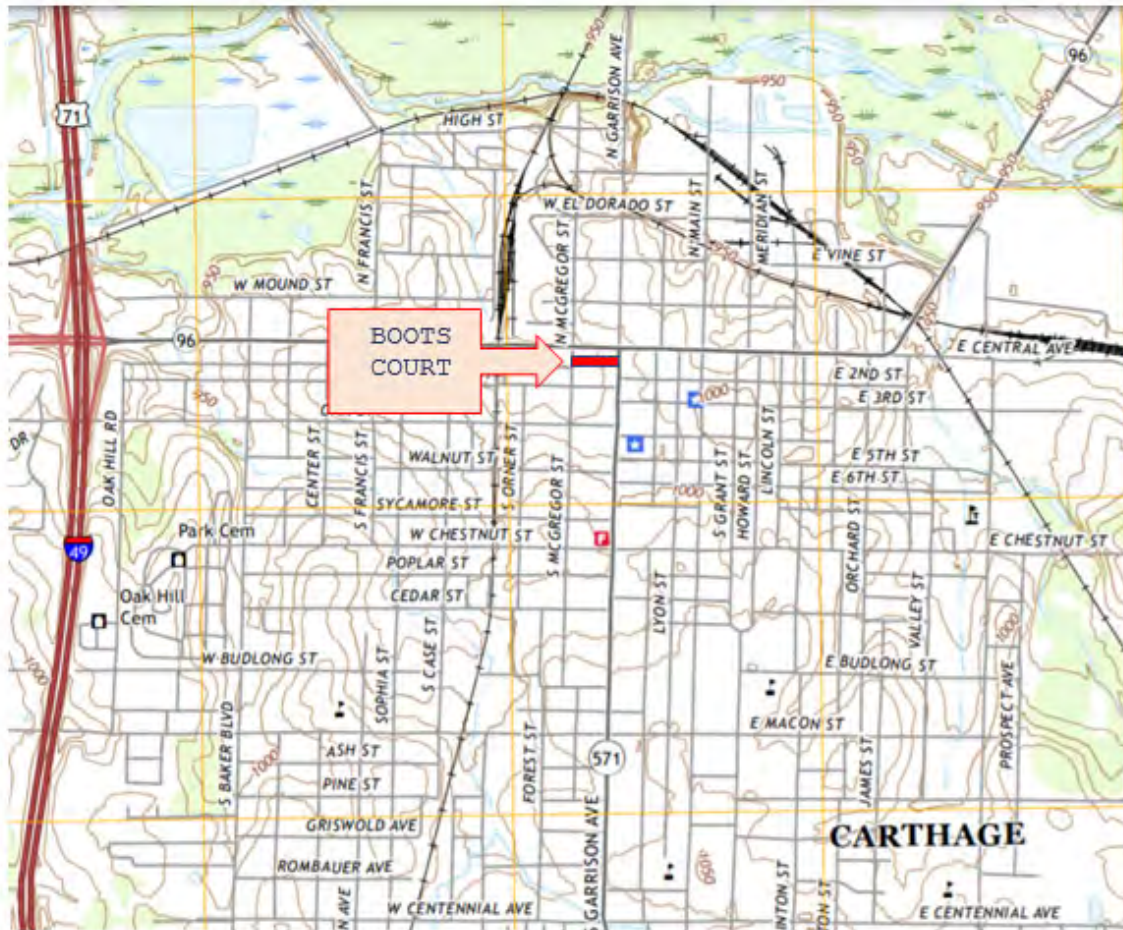


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Figure 4. Location Map, Carthage Quadrangle, 7.5 Minute Topo. Carthage, Jasper County, Missouri.
(USGS 7.5 Minute Series, Carthage Quadrangle)



UTM GRID AND 2017 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

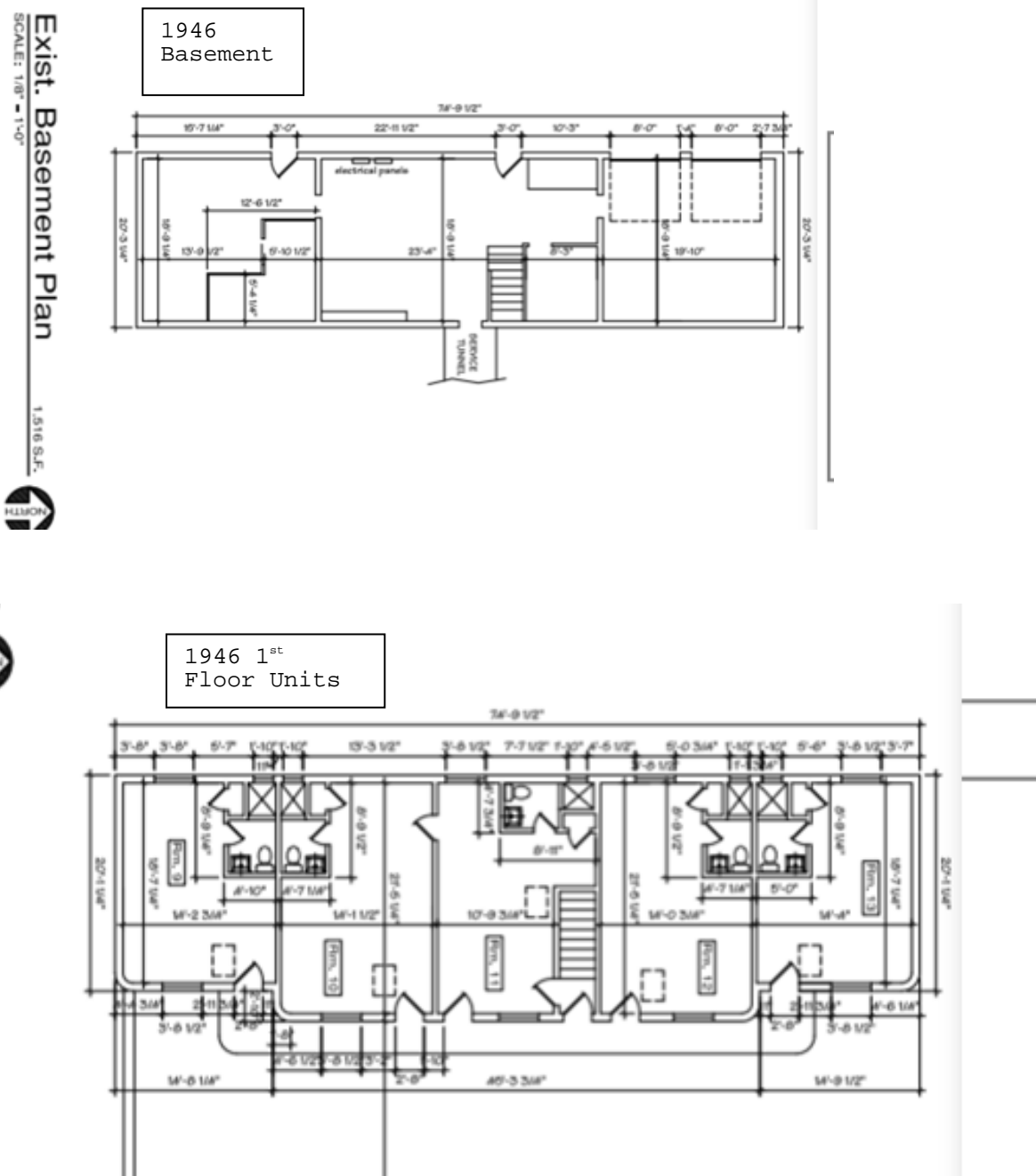
Source: USGS, U. S. Dept of Interior
<https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/59f195e2e4b0220bbd9d0767>

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Figure 5a. Existing floor plan 1946 building. (Courtesy HUNTER & MILLARD ARCHITECTS, INC.)

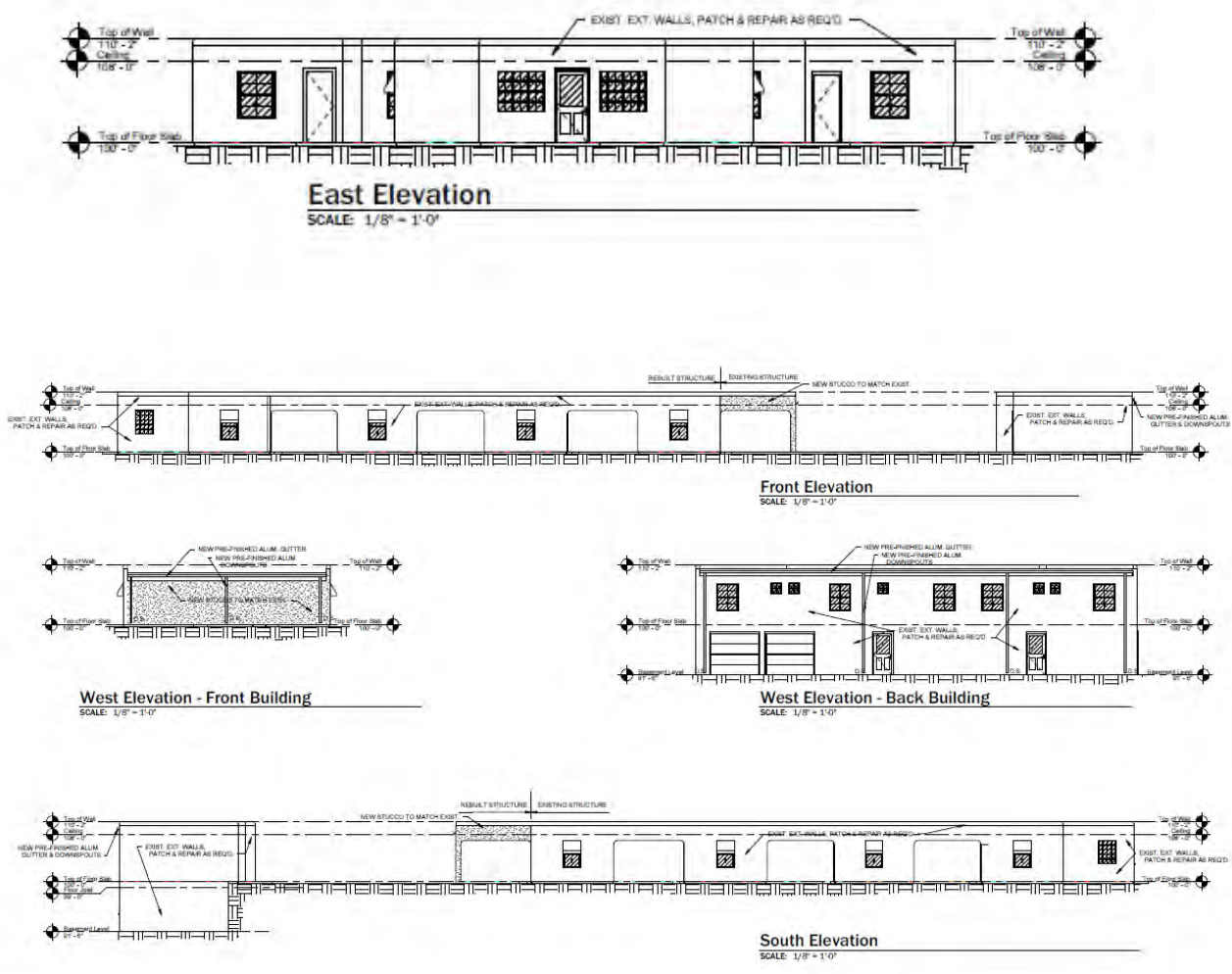


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Figure 6. Elevations. (Courtesy HUNTER & MILLARD ARCHITECTS, INC.)



HUNTER & MILLARD ARCHITECTS, INC. 1591 S. Main Street Joplin, MO 64804 417.524.5872 hunterandmillard.com Missouri Certificate of Authority: A-2009005317	Revisions <table border="1"> <tr><th>By</th><th></th></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table>	By										Restoration & Remodel of the Boots Court Motel 107 S. Garrison Ave. Carthage, MO 64936	PRELIMINARY Elliot D. Romo, Architect Missouri #44617	Drawn By Ralphyar Checked By Cheyenne Scale 1/8" = 1'-0" Date 04-28-2021 Job Number 2104	Elevations A5
	By														

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Figure 7. Boots Court motel evening view showing neon. Photo looking northwest from Garrison Ave. Concrete locating original gas pumps on lower right side of photo. (Harvey)



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Figure 8. Contributing Object- Boots Court neon sign. Restored in 2013. Setting shows former Boots Drive-in across the street. (Harvey)



Figure 9. Contributing structure, parking and garden curbing on south side of lot. (Emrie)



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Figure 10. Setting looking north from in front of office. (Emrie)



Figure 11. Detail north elevation of 1939 building showing closed in carport on left, Unit 3 window (3 Over 1), neon arch around window and open carport on right. (Emrie)



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Figure 12. Neon sign above office door. (Emrie)



Figure 13. Interior of office 1939 Building looking south. (Emrie)



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Figure 14. Interior of connecting units 1 and 2 in 1939 Building. Phase one of motel construction design. Note rounded corners on plaster walls, floor furnace in far room, plain wood door (probably homemade). (Emrie)



Figure 15. Interior Room 11 in 1946 Building. Note wood floors and trim, square corners, floor furnace. (Emrie)



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Figure 16. Interior basement laundry area 1946 Building. (Emrie)



Figure 17. Tunnel from 1946 basement to 1939 Building. (Harvey)



Figure 18. Boots Motel sign before restoration. (Harvey)



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Figure 19. Route of US 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles. (Special Resource Study ROUTE 66, USDI, 1995)

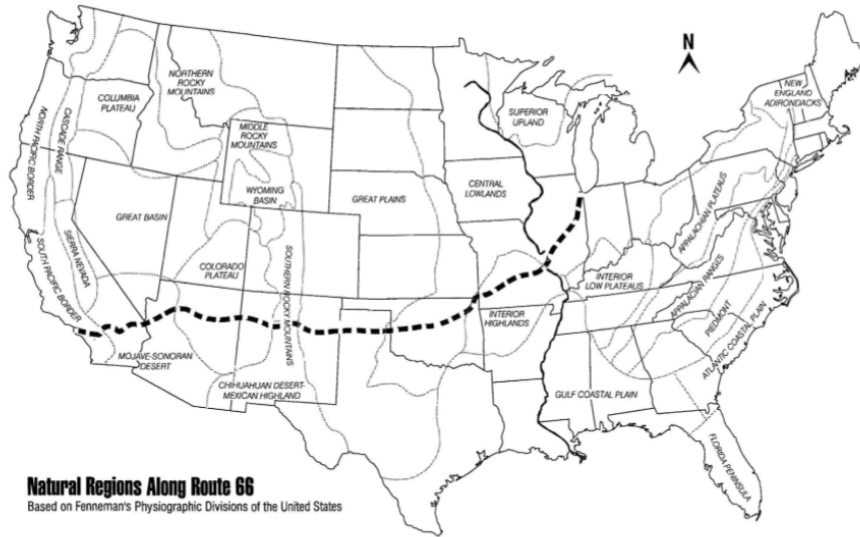


Figure 20. Route 66 in Missouri map. (Keenoy)



Figure 3. Route 66 in Missouri (left) and Illinois (right).
AAA Map, 1926.

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Figure 21. Map showing US 66 alignments in Carthage, MO. Boots Court was on north/south jog of old US 66 (from 1920s to 1950s). (Whittall)



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Figure 22. Late 1940's post card image of Boots Court. (Johnson)

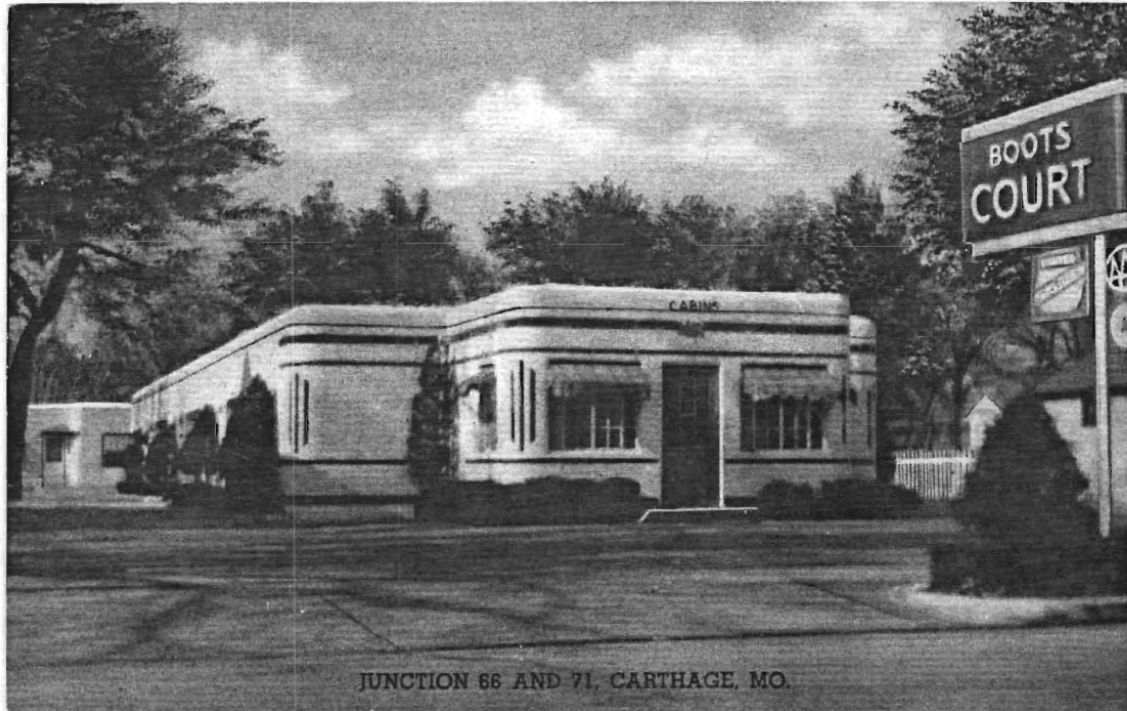


Figure 23. 1950's postcard image of Boots Court. (Seelen)



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Figure 24. 1993 image of Boots Motel showing gable roofs installed in the 1970s. (Johnson)



Figure 25. Detail of lighted neon around parapets and windows. SE corner of 1939 Bldg. (Halla)



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Figure 26. 2018 photo of Boots Court at night with period automobile. Conveys atmosphere and feeling of Route 66 in the md-twentieth century. (Harvey)



Figure 27. Carthage 1930s Route 66 motel, Red Rocks (formerly White Court), 12937 Old 66 Blvd. (Whittall)



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Figure 28. Carthage 1950s Route 66 motel, Kel-Lake Motel, 13071 St. Hwy 96. (Whittall)



Figure 29. Carthage 1950s Route 66 motel, Best Budget Inn, 13031 US RT 66. (Whittall)



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Figure 30. Circa 1955 photo of accident at “Crossroads of America”, junction of Highway 71 and US Rt 66. Boots Court sign in background. (Whitall)



Figure 31. Streamlined Moderne Industrial Design. 1934 Chrysler Airflow and Union Pacific Railroad’s M-1000. (Petry, 2020)



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Figure 32. Boots Drive-In circa 1950. Built by Arthur Boots in 1946. (Johnson)

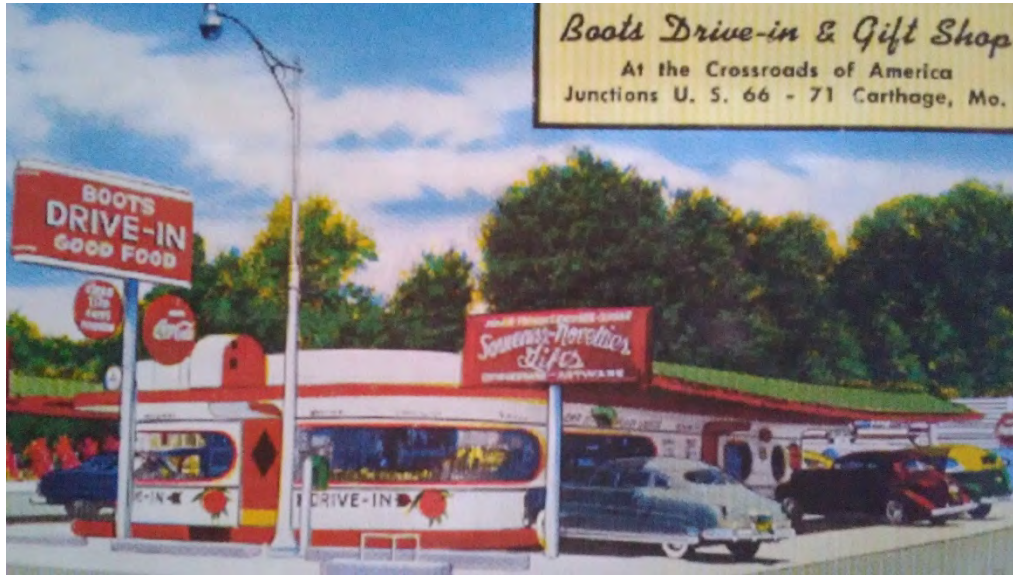


Figure 33. Boots Drive-In 2022. (Google Maps, February 8, 2022)



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Figure 34. North and West elevations of 1939 building. Tunnel air access is located on the rectangular extension. (Emrie, 2022)



Figure 35. 66 Drive-In theater. (Google Maps, Feb 8, 2022)



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Figure 36. Connecting door between motel rooms 1 and 2 looking north. (Emrie)















BOOTS
MOTEL

SPEED
HUMP



**BOOTS
COURT**

AIR CONDITIONED

**RADIO
IN EVERY
ROOM**

LendNation

**UNITED
MUFFLER**

**CUSTOM TRUCK
ACCESSORIES**













BOOTS COURT

AIR CONDITIONED

RADIO in every ROOM

66







