

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

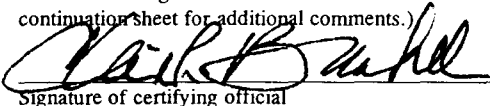
street & number 100 block of N. Main St and 100 block of Broadway not for publication N/A

city or town Cape Girardeau vicinity N/A

state Missouri code MO county Cape Girardeau code 031 zip code 63702

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official

12 June 2000
Date

Claire F. Blackwell, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

 entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

 determined eligible for the
National Register
 See continuation sheet.

 determined not eligible for the
National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Cape Girardeau County, MO
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) Category of Property (Check only one box)

| | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object |

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count).

| Contributing | Noncontributing |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 17 | 4 buildings |
| 0 | 0 sites |
| 0 | 0 structures |
| 0 | 0 objects |
| 17 | 4 Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National

Register 0

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

Historic and Architectural Resources of Cape Girardeau, Missouri

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| COMMERCE/TRADE | Specialty Store |
| COMMERCE/TRADE | Restaurant |
| COMMERCE/TRADE | Department Store |
| SOCIAL | Meeting Hall |
| | |
| | |

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| COMMERCE/TRADE | Specialty Store |
| COMMERCE/TRADE | Department Store |
| COMMERCE/TRADE | Restaurant |
| | |
| | |

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Spanish Colonial Revival
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Tudor Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

| | |
|------------|---------------------|
| foundation | STONE |
| roof | ASPHALT/TERRA COTTA |
| walls | BRICK |
| other | METAL/Cast Iron |
| | CONCRETE |

Narrative Description

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

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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.)

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions).

ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1880-1950

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository: Historic Preservation Program, Department of Natural Resources

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A 16 276740 4131800 C 16 276830 4131670
B 16 276850 4131790 D 16 276770 4131680

☒ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Philip Thomason

organization Thomason and Associates date December 21, 1999

street & number P.O. Box 121225 telephone (615) 385-4960

city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37212

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

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 Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District
name of property
 Cape Girardeau County, Missouri
County and State
Historic and Architectural Resources of
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

DESCRIPTION

The Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District is located near the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown Cape Girardeau, Missouri (1990 population 34,438). The district is situated along the 100 block of North Main Street and the 100 block of Broadway. The buildings are representative of the property type of Commercial Buildings ca. 1850 to 1950 as described in the multiple property nomination, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Cape Girardeau, Missouri." The district is composed of twenty-one (21) buildings, all but one constructed between ca. 1880 and 1930. Most buildings are two-stories in height, and were built to house commercial businesses and offices. Although many storefronts have been remodeled with added materials, the buildings retain much of their upper facade detailing and decoration. The buildings illustrate common commercial building designs of the period, and include influences of the Italianate, Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival styles. These buildings continue to be used for commercial purposes and collectively are the largest grouping of historic commercial buildings retaining integrity in the downtown area. Seventeen of the twenty-one properties are considered contributing to the character of the district.

The buildings within the Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District are located along streets adjacent to the Mississippi River and the tracks of the Burlington Northern Railroad line (originally the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad). The downtown commercial area was established near the river as the city developed as a shipping point and distribution center during the steamboat era of the mid- to late 19th century. Buildings in the district were constructed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries when the city experienced rapid growth and commercial expansion. During this period, railroad connections enhanced Cape Girardeau's importance as a regional commercial and industrial center. The city's commercial activity increased dramatically and the commercial district expanded along Main Street and Broadway.

Construction of one- and two-story brick buildings along the riverfront occurred as early as the 1840s. By the Civil War, numerous brick buildings lined Main and Water Streets between Broadway and Independence Street. As the city prospered in the late 19th century, almost all of these buildings were replaced with larger and more substantial brick buildings. There are no ante-bellum commercial buildings located within the proposed historic district. The oldest building remaining in the district is a two-story brick commercial building built ca. 1880 at 115 Broadway. This gable roof building originally housed a jewelry store on the first story and its upper floor most likely served as housing for the store's proprietor. Over its long life, the building's storefront has been altered with added siding materials and upper story windows have been replaced with one-over-one vinyl sash windows.

Another early building in the district is the three-story brick building located at 120 Broadway. This building was constructed ca. 1890 with a corner storefront entrance. Its original occupants include a sewing machine and organ shop on the first floor, a Christian Church on the second floor, and a Masonic Hall on the third floor. The building remained the home of the Masonic Lodge for several years. The building retains its original corner entrance with cast iron pilasters, upper facade two-over-two wood sash windows with brick jack arches, and a sheet metal cornice.

Buildings constructed along N. Main Street during the 1890s include the two-story brick buildings located at 120 and 122-124 N. Main Street. The building at 120 N. Main Street was designed with a stucco surface on the upper facade scored to resemble stone, with random inset brick courses, and a brick and stucco cornice. The adjacent building at 122-124 N. Main Street was constructed with an expanse of seven one-over-one pedimented wood sash windows on the upper story, and a decorative sheet metal cornice with brackets and floral medallions.

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From 1880 to 1920, Cape Girardeau's population grew from approximately 5,000 to over 10,000 residents. By 1930 the population had reached over 16,000. The downtown commercial district expanded to meet the needs of the growing community and larger brick buildings appeared along Main Street replacing earlier one- and two-story buildings. Many of these buildings were designed with Colonial Revival detailing and vernacular "Brick Front" design elements. Common Colonial Revival style designs include quoins, jack arching over windows with keystones, and classical pilasters. The two-story building at 116 N. Main Street was constructed ca. 1900 and is representative of this style, and features windows with terra cotta pediments, jack arches, and keystones, and a decorative sheet metal cornice. Brick Front refers to buildings constructed from ca. 1910 to ca. 1940 with traditional storefronts and upper facades displaying rectangular windows, corbelled brick cornices, and decorative brick panels.¹ This building form has also been referred to as "Tapestry Brick." The Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District retains the most intact collection of Brick Front style buildings in the city. Decoration on many of the buildings includes transoms of tinted leaded glass known as Luxfer glass, and terra cotta panels.

At the turn of the century, a two-story brick building was constructed at 123 N. Main Street that reflects this design style. The building retains a large Luxfer glass transom made of opaque glass squares above the main entrance and a rectangular Luxfer glass transom over a secondary entrance on the main facade. Original marble bulkheads remain extant on the building's storefront, and the building has a recessed brick panel and corbelled cornice. Other buildings constructed during the decades of the early 20th century include the two-story brick building at 125-127 N. Main Street, which was erected ca. 1930 with Carrara glass bulkheads on its two storefronts and a decorative brick cornice.

Tudor Revival and Spanish Colonial influences were utilized in commercial building construction in the early 20th century. A two-story brick Tudor Revival influenced building was constructed at 105-107 N. Main Street ca. 1920. and was designed with a checkerboard pattern of alternating concrete and brick squares on the upper facade, and paired casement windows set in arched concrete moldings. This building has been occupied by Hecht's Department Store since its construction. The Hecht's Company also erected the two-story brick building at 109 N. Main Street. This building reflects Spanish Colonial influences with its stucco exterior, small central cast iron balconet, and a ceramic tile roof.

Due to the economic impact of the Great Depression and America's involvement in World War II, little new construction occurred in the district during the 1930s and 1940s. In these decades some modernization of storefronts took place, such as the addition of Carrara glass tiles on several of the buildings. The latest construction in the district occurred in the mid-1950s. At this time the First National Bank, which was constructed ca. 1905 at 113-117 N. Main Street, was razed and a one-story brick veneer commercial building was built on the site. The only other non-contributing buildings in the district are pre-1950 buildings that have been extensively altered in recent decades.

All of the buildings within the district are presently occupied and continue to be used for commercial purposes. Several now contain restaurants, and numerous buildings retain their open floor space and original pressed metal ceilings on the first floor. Much of the upper floor space is presently vacant or underutilized, and there is interest in apartment conversions in these areas. Cape Girardeau has an active Downtown Merchants Association which has worked on several beautification projects along Main Street in recent years.

¹Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1985), 240.

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INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS

Contributing buildings are identified with the designation "C" while non-contributing buildings are identified as "NC."

1. **105-109 Broadway** - One-story brick commercial building constructed ca. 1925 with three storefronts. Each storefront has an original recessed entrance with a single-light glass and wood door and original single-light transom. Display windows are original aluminum and glass design resting on original Carrara glass bulkheads. Above the storefronts across the building's facade are decorative brick panels with an alternating soldier/sailor course design. The building has an added wood shingle Mansard style canopy that extends across all three storefronts. (C)

2. **111-113 Broadway** - One-story brick commercial building built ca. 1940 with a flat metal roof, a concrete foundation, and an exterior of common bond brick. The building has two storefronts. The 111 storefront has a recessed entrance with a single-light glass and wood door and an aluminum display window on an original brick bulkhead. The 113 entrance has a single-light glass and wood door and has an aluminum and glass window resting on an aluminum bulkhead. Above the storefront is a soldier course lintel. (C)

3. **115 Broadway** - The two-story brick commercial building at this location was built ca. 1880. The building has an altered storefront with a recessed entry, ca. 1980 solid wood door, and vertical board and batten siding on the first floor. On the first floor are two large arched recessed panels covered with stucco. Arched display windows are inside the entryway. Window openings have original stone sills and header course segmental arches. The second story has replacement one-over-one vinyl sash windows. Window openings have added board and batten arched hoods. The building has two interior brick chimneys, an asphalt shingle gable roof, and an exterior of common bond brick. At the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice. Due to the extent of alterations to both the storefront and upper facade, this building is including as non-contributing. (NC)

4. **117-121 Broadway** - This three-story brick, ca. 1885 commercial building has a chamfered corner entrance with a metal corner post with a Corinthian motif capital. The entrance has an aluminum and glass door set in a frame with fluted cast iron pilasters, four-light transom, and single-light sidelights. An original glazed tile floor is in front of the entrance. The building has an exterior of common bond brick. The Broadway elevation (N) has ca. 1960 added stone veneer bulkheads and large wood and glass display windows with original two-light transoms. A secondary entrance on this facade has original paired single-light glass and wood doors. The building has a plain sheet metal cornice. The second story has original two-over-two wood sash windows set in segmental arched panels, with stone sills and two rows of arched header brick. Third story windows on this elevation are covered with wood panels and their arched transoms are painted. These windows have three rows of arched header brick and stone sills. Also on this elevation is a metal fire escape on the third and second floors. The building has a hipped metal roof.

On the Spanish Street (W) elevation, first floor windows are original two-over-two wood sash with added awnings. A secondary entrance on this elevation has a single-light glass and wood door in a recessed paneled frame with an air conditioning unit in the transom opening. Another entrance on this facade has a ca. 1990 aluminum and glass door with an original arched fanlight transom with three rows of arched header brick with a central keystone. This third entrance sets between two brick pilasters that extend to the roofline. On this elevation second and third story windows are the same as those on the north elevation, except above the third entrance are paired two-over-two windows on the second floor, and the third floor has paired six-light wood casement windows with a three-light transom. The building has a rear ell wing. The interior of the first floor has a pressed metal ceiling. (C)

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5. 105-107 N. Main Street - This two-story brick building was constructed in 1919 with Tudor Revival influenced detailing as Hecht's Department Store. The building has a large recessed entry with original glass and metal display windows on marble bulkheads. The main entrance has paired aluminum and glass doors. Above is a large tri-part arched transom. The arched entryway has a decorative plaster ceiling with angel and garland motif designs. An original glass and metal light fixture hangs from the center of the ceiling. In the center of the entryway is an original freestanding octagonal display case. This display case is of glass and metal design and rests on a marble bulkhead. It is topped with a hipped metal roof with trefoil cresting around the rim. The floor of the entryway is marble tile with the word "Hecht's" written in contrasting tile on either side of the display case. Across the storefront is a canvas awning. The second story has three sets of paired ten-light casement windows with arched fanlight transoms. Each window has a metal railing in front with the letter "H" set in a center circle. The windows have arched concrete molding and are set in concrete panels. Concrete pilasters rise from the bottom of the transoms to the roofline. Above the windows is a checkerboard pattern of alternating concrete and brick squares. Flanking the three center windows are eight-light casement windows with concrete sills. The building has a hipped pyramidal roof of slate and a sailboat shaped finial. On the main facade (E) is a hipped roof dormer with a decorative multi-light fixed rectangular window. (C)

6. 108-110 N. Main Street - This two-story brick commercial building was built ca. 1930 with two storefronts. Both storefronts have recessed entries with ca. 1970 aluminum and glass doors and display windows resting on wood bulkheads. A third entrance leading to the upper floor is at the south bay of the building and has an original four-panel wood door. The 108 storefront entrance has an original seven-light transom of opaque glass. The 110 storefront has an eight-light transom that has been covered with wood panels on the interior. The 110 storefront also has part of the original tile floor at the street level. The second story has original one-over-one wood sash windows. The building has a flat metal roof. The letter "M" is inscribed in brick below the roofline. (C)

7. 109 N. Main Street - The two-story brick commercial building at this location was constructed ca. 1920 with Spanish Colonial style influences. The building has a recessed entry storefront with aluminum and glass display windows resting on brick bulkheads. The main entrance has a glass and aluminum door. Above the entrance is a louvered transom. A canvas awning extends across the storefront. The second story has a stucco exterior with a small central cast iron balconet. Leading to the balconet are original six-light French doors. These doors have a terra cotta surround with banded Doric engaged columns, jack arches, cornice, and a circular cartouche. Flanking the balconet are two eight-light wood casement windows. Separating the first and second floors and beneath the second floor windows are terra cotta belt courses. At the roofline are two quatrefoil attic windows. The building has a parapeted ceramic tile roof with brackets at the eaves. (C)

8. 111 N. Main Street - Constructed ca. 1930, this two-story brick building had its storefront rebuilt ca. 1987. The upper floor windows have been enclosed with brick. Inscribed below the roofline is the letter "D." The building no longer displays its original character and is included as non-contributing to the district. (NC)

9. 112-114 N. Main Street - This three-story brick commercial building was constructed ca. 1880 and has two storefronts. The 114 storefront has a ca. 1980 recessed storefront with aluminum and glass display windows. The entrance has a ca. 1980 wood paneled door. The 112 storefront has a recessed entry with a ca. 1970 glass and aluminum door and display windows. Display windows rest on ca. 1980 wood bulkheads. The transom areas above the windows across both storefronts has been enclosed with wood panels, and a canvas awning extends across both storefronts. The second and third floors have a stucco exterior and six-over-one original wood sash windows set in segmental arches. Windows have stone sills and stone hood molding. The building has a mansard style roof of asphalt shingles. At the eaves are original brackets. (C)

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10. **113-115 N. Main Street** - The building at this location replaced the First National Bank which was razed in 1955. This existing one-story brick veneer building has two storefronts and was built in 1956. Because this property is less than fifty years of age, it is included as non-contributing to the character of the district. (NC)

11. **116 N. Main Street** - This ca. 1900 two-story brick commercial building has a storefront with a ca. 1980 recessed entry with an aluminum and glass door and display windows. The transom area above the entrance and windows is enclosed with wood panels. An added canvas awning is over the storefront. The second story has three original six-over-six wood sash windows with arched transoms. Windows have segmental arches and wood sills. Above the windows is a large rectangular recessed brick panel. The building has a ceramic tile roof. (C)

12. **118 N. Main Street** - The two-story building at this location was constructed ca. 1880. In recent years the original storefront has been removed, and the upper facade has been covered with synthetic stucco. In addition to these changes the original windows have also been replaced. Due to the cumulative effect of these alterations, this building is non-contributing to the district. (NC)

13. **119-121 N. Main Street** - This four-story brick commercial building was constructed in 1923. The building's storefront has a ca. 1990 recessed entrance with paired aluminum and glass doors and display windows resting on concrete bulkheads. The first floor has a stucco exterior. The second story has replacement ca. 1990 single-light rectangular fixed windows with arched transoms. Above the second story windows is a short shed roof canopy. The third and fourth floors have one-over-one anodized aluminum sash windows with concrete sills and corner blocks. At the roofline is a terra cotta cornice. (C)

14. **120 N. Main Street** - This two-story brick commercial building was built ca. 1890. The building has a ca. 1970 storefront with an aluminum and glass door, and aluminum and glass windows on stone veneer bulkheads. Above the windows and entrance is an original decorative transom. An added metal awning extends over the entire storefront. The second story has four original two-over-one wood sash windows. Above the storefront is a stucco surface scored to resemble stone. Beneath the windows is a brick beltcourse. The two windows in the south bays are enclosed within a two-course brick arch. Above these windows is a concrete and glazed tile panel. The exterior of the upper facade is of stucco with random inset brick courses. At the roofline is a brick and stucco cornice, a clay tile roof and corner piers with glazed tile panels. (C)

15. **122-124 N. Main Street** - The two-story brick commercial building at this location was erected ca. 1890 with two storefronts. The 124 storefront has a ca. 1990 recessed entrance with two aluminum and glass doors and aluminum and glass display windows. The 122 storefront has a recessed entrance with an aluminum and glass door and aluminum and glass display windows on bulkheads with ca. 1940 Carrara glass. In the entrance is vertical board siding. Between the two storefronts is a secondary entrance that leads to the upper floors. This entrance has a glass and aluminum door with a single-light transom. On the second story is an expanse of seven one-over-one wood sash windows with stone sills. Above each window is a decorative metal grille. At the roofline is a decorative sheet metal cornice with brackets and floral medallions. Above the windows the building has original pedimented sheet metal cornices. (C)

16. **123 N. Main Street** - This two-story brick commercial building was built ca. 1925. The building has a ca. 1970 storefront with a glass and aluminum door and glass and copper display windows resting on original marble bulkheads. Above the entrance and windows is a large Luxfer glass transom of opaque glass squares in a metal frame. A secondary entrance at the north end of the building has an original glass door covered with wood panels. Above this entrance is a rectangular Luxfer glass transom. The

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building's second story has original paired one-over-one wood sash windows with concrete sills. In the upper facade the building has a recessed brick panel and corbelled cornice. There is concrete coping at the roofline. (C)

17. 125-127 N. Main Street - Two-story brick commercial building constructed ca. 1930 with two storefronts. Each storefront has a recessed entry with a glass and aluminum door, and aluminum and glass display windows resting on original Carrara glass bulkheads. Transoms above the doors are enclosed with wood panels. A large canvas and metal awning extends across the facade above the windows and entrances. Between the storefronts is a secondary entrance that has an original wood panel door with a rectangular upper light. Above is a transom of structural glass blocks. The second story has ca. 1950 two-over-two horizontal light wood sash windows with brick sills. A soldier course brick beltcourse is above the windows. In the cornice are two rectangular and one square panel of alternating soldier and sailor brick design. There is concrete coping at the roofline. (C)

18. 126 N. Main Street - This two-story brick building was constructed ca. 1905 with Colonial Revival influences, and it has housed a jewelry store since its construction. The building has a ca. 1960 storefront with a recessed entrance with an aluminum and glass door, aluminum and glass display windows, and aluminum bulkheads. A large metal awning with "Lang's Jewelers" in large letters extends above the entrance. Separating the two floors is a decorative terra cotta cornice. The second story has a central projecting tri-part bay window flanked by original single-light glass and wood windows. Windows have dentilled molding and transoms with decorative diamond lights. Above the windows are concrete lintels with central keystones. The center window has a triangular pediment. At the roofline is a terra cotta cornice with modillion blocks and dentils. (C)

19. 130 N. Main Street - This two-story brick, Tudor Revival influenced commercial building was constructed in 1916. The building has a ca. 1990 recessed storefront with glass and wood display windows on original brick bulkheads. The main entrance has a ca. 1990 glass and metal door. A large four-light transom extends above the entrance and display windows. A secondary entrance with a ca. 1990 glass and metal door leads to the second floor. A beltcourse of alternating sailor and soldier brick divides the first and second floors. The second story has a projecting gable wall dormer with half timbering, and ca. 1990 multi-light sash windows. (C)

20. 132-134 N. Main Street - This two-story brick commercial building was constructed as the Buckner-Ragsdale Co. store in 1916. The building has a central recessed entrance with ca. 1980 paired aluminum and glass doors flanked by aluminum and glass display windows resting on tile bulkheads. Above the windows and entrance is a flat metal sign with the words "The Buckner-Ragsdale Co." In front of the entrance at the street level is an original tile walkway with "The Buckner-Ragsdale Co." written in contrasting tile. The upper story has ca. 1980 one-over-one vinyl sash windows with concrete sills. Above the windows are decorative brick panels. Between the windows are diamond-shaped concrete panels. At the roofline is concrete coping. (C)

21. 137-141 N. Main St. - This ca. 1925 two-story brick commercial building contains three storefronts. Each storefront has a recessed entry with aluminum and glass display windows on Carrara glass bulkheads. The entrance of the 137 storefront has an original wood and glass door with a metal push bar with the word "Hales" on it. The middle storefront has Carrara glass at the top of the display windows topped with the word "Hales's" in wood block Art Deco style lettering. In the center of the entrance is an original glass and metal hanging light fixture. The other two storefronts have entrances of glass and aluminum doors. The corner storefront was altered ca. 1970 with formica bulkheads, aluminum and glass display windows and door, and wood panels over the transom. Black glazed tile is on the first floor between the storefronts and at the corners. The second story has ca. 1980 vinyl clad one-over-one sash windows with brick sills. A soldier course brick beltcourse is above the windows. In the cornice are two rectangular and one square panel of alternating soldier and sailor brick design. There is concrete coping at the roofline. (C)

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District is significant under National Register Criteria A and C for its historical and architectural significance. The buildings that comprise the district are representative of the commercial building property type and meet the registration requirements set forth within the historic context of 19th and early 20th Century Commercial Buildings in Cape Girardeau, ca. 1850-1950. The district is the largest grouping of contiguous pre-1950 commercial buildings remaining in Cape Girardeau, and it is significant under Criterion A as representing the growth and development of traditional commerce in the city's downtown area. Buildings within the district housed several prominent early 20th century businesses such as the Buckner-Ragsdale Store and Hecht's Department Store.

The Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District is also significant under Criterion C as one of the few contiguous areas of turn of the century commercial buildings in Cape Girardeau that retain much of their original design and detailing. The district contains a variety of architectural styles of the period such as Italianate, Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival. Cape Girardeau has experienced the loss and alteration of many pre-1950 commercial buildings, and only a few concentrations retain their early 20th century sense of time and place. The Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District is the largest grouping of intact turn of the century commercial buildings in the city with seventeen of the district's twenty-one buildings contributing to the district's character.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Cape Girardeau became established as a regional trading and distribution center along the Mississippi River in the mid-19th century due to heavy steamboat traffic. Commercial and industrial activity clustered around the river's edge and most commercial buildings in the city were constructed along N. Main and Water Streets, near the Mississippi River and the all important river trade. Throughout the late 19th century, Cape Girardeau's commercial activity remained centered in the downtown area, which parallels the Mississippi River. Toward the close of the century, the steamboat era began to fade and rail transportation became the key to the city's economic success. Cape Girardeau's first railroad appeared in 1881, and direct service to St. Louis was available by 1904.

As a result of the railroad, Cape Girardeau's downtown area experienced considerable expansion and new construction in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. From the time of the city's first railroad in 1881 through the 1920s, new two- and three- story brick buildings appeared along Main Street replacing earlier one- and two-story buildings. Commercial activity also spread up Broadway replacing residences. These were primarily two-story brick commercial buildings that housed a variety of retail shops and businesses. The 100 blocks of N. Main Street and Broadway became an important business section of downtown Cape Girardeau offering goods and services such as groceries, drugstores, dry goods, barbers, furniture sales, jewelry, and books. The district was also an important place for social gathering with saloons, restaurants, and social halls established in the area. Among the earliest buildings of this era to be constructed is the three-story ca. 1880 brick building located at 120 Broadway, which housed retail shops on its first floor and a Masonic Hall in the upper stories.

The 1871 Cape Girardeau city directory reveals the intersection of Harmony (later Broadway) and Main as a particularly prominent location with Hinstedt & Co. Dry Goods, Gale & Philipson Dry Goods, photographer Lydia E. Fisher, Wilson & Co. Druggists, and C.H. Norris's seed store all situated in the vicinity. Further down Main Street, one could also find the Headquarters Saloon and E. S. Whitelaw and William C. Garrett, "Dealers in Dry Goods, Groceries, Hardware, Queensware, Clothing, Boots, Shoes, . . .

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" and a number of other products. Whitelaw and Garrett also manufactured handpowered looms at their location on Main Street between Broadway and Themis.²

The arrival of the railroad in Cape Girardeau in the 1880s greatly increased the city's industrial importance. Connections to St. Louis and other markets were available by 1904 and major industries flocked to the area. Most important among these was the International Shoe Company, established in 1907 just north of the downtown commercial district. The worlds largest producer of welt shoes, the International Shoe Company was the largest employer in the city and constructed employee housing on its factory lots. The Marquette Cement Company was another notable industry of the era. Begun in 1910 it became a major national producer of portland cement. As industry rapidly increased between 1904 and 1914, Cape Girardeau jumped from twentieth to eighth place in the state in manufacturing. The city's population rose as industry expanded, and generated increased commercial growth in the downtown district.

The railroad also played an important role in the city's commercial development, and a line parallel to the river was soon constructed after the turn of the century. In 1902 a passenger depot was constructed at the foot of Broadway, allowing greater access to the commercial district.³ In the early 20th century considerable improvements to the levees and landings enhanced the city's riverfront and brought greater recognition and appeal to the area. Paving of the riverfront for two blocks between Broadway and Independence was completed in 1912, and the Frisco Railroad line renewed its contract to operate trains along the river for an additional thirty years. As part of this contract, the railroad company constructed a large retaining wall, with concrete walkways or promenades on either side of the railroad tracks. By 1914, improvements such as modern "granitoid" sidewalks and paved streets were installed in the downtown area, and in 1921 a new passenger depot was erected on Main Street (now razed).⁴

Commercial expansion in the downtown area continued into the early 20th century, and Main Street became the dominant commercial corridor. In the first decade of the century, several two-story brick commercial buildings were erected along the 100 block of N. Main Street including the buildings at 116 and 123 N. Main Street, constructed ca. 1900. Vogelsanger Hardware was located at 116-118 N. Main Street, and by the end of the decade, Osterloh's Book and Stationery was located at the 123 address. Osterloh's remained in business until the 1960s. The 1906 Cape Girardeau city directory lists three hardware stores, four general merchandise stores, two grocers, two druggists, four jewelers, two musical instrument salesmen, and one furniture store on Main Street in addition to a variety of haberdashers, milliners, and tailors. The downtown area was also the center for the city's entertainment and social life with ten restaurants and saloons, three hotels, and two fraternal halls.

Many businesses established during this period were family based operations that became well-known throughout the city and remained family-operated for decades. These include the building at 126 N. Main, which housed a jewelry store on the first floor. The business was soon taken over by its young apprentice, Hugo Lang, and passed on through generations remaining as Lang's Jewelers today.

²Wiggin's and Weaver's City Directory for Cape Girardeau, 1871-1872.

³*Southeast Missourian* (Cape Girardeau) 31 December 1930.

⁴*Cape Girardeau (Missouri) Republican*, Tenth Anniversary Edition, 1914, 34-35; *Southeast Missourian* (Cape Girardeau) 4 March 1921.

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In 1903, Cape Girardeau businessmen established a Commercial Club to promote the city's commercial interests. A pivotal force in the business community, the Commercial Club headquarters were located in the heart of the commercial district at 102 N. Main Street.⁵

The blocks of Main Street also became the hub of the city's financial activity with several banks lining the corridor. Downtown banks included The Sturdivant Bank, the German-American Bank, First National Bank, and the Southeast Missouri Trust Co., all of which were located on Main Street. The Sturdivant Bank, the oldest bank in southeast Missouri, was established at 101 N. Main Street; the German-American Bank was chartered in 1902 on Main Street between Themis and Independence, and The Southeast Missouri Trust Co. was also located on Main Street. Organized in 1891, the First National Bank opened at 118 Main Street and erected a new building at 115-117 N. Main Street in 1905. At the time of its construction, this large stone Richardsonian Romanesque style building was considered "the most elegant and costly bank building in Missouri outside of St. Louis and Kansas City."⁶ This building was razed in 1956 and a one-story brick veneer commercial building was erected on the site.

The establishment of important retail stores, such as the Buckner-Ragsdale Store at 132 N. Main Street, drew regional customers and strengthened the downtown as the center of commercial activity. Completed in 1916, the two-story brick Buckner-Ragsdale building displays an upper facade with decorative brick panels and diamond-shaped concrete panels. The building also retains an original tile walkway with the company's name imprinted in contrasting tile. Soon joining Buckner-Ragsdale was Hecht's Department Store at 107 N. Main Street, which was built in 1919. This two-story Tudor Revival style commercial building displayed one of the most notable storefronts in the city. Its large recessed entry has an arched ceiling decorated with plaster and terra cotta in an angel motif, and an octagonal free standing glass display case sits in the center of the entryway. Like the Buckner-Ragsdale store, Hecht's offered quality merchandise to local clientele. A new type of commercial establishment, department stores provided customers with an innovative and unique experience, and Hecht's and Buckner-Ragsdale soon became anchor businesses in the downtown area, drawing a wide range of customers throughout the region.

During the decade of the 1920s, the 100 blocks of N. Main Street and Broadway remained an important business center. In 1928, the construction of a bridge over the Mississippi River improved access to the city and enhanced commercial activity. Little construction occurred in the downtown area of Cape Girardeau during the 1930s and 1940s. Throughout this period some attempts to "modernize" storefronts with added materials such as Carrara glass panels altered some of the storefronts; however, the majority of the buildings retain their original upper facade decoration. Cape Girardeau's downtown area has been impacted over the past several decades through the loss and alteration of many pre-1950 buildings. As a result, few concentrations of historic buildings remain. The Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District represents the largest contiguous collection of historic commercial buildings in the city that retain integrity. The district retains a strong sense of time and place and is representative of the traditional downtown commercial landscape. The buildings within the Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District continue to be occupied for business and office use, and are significant for their role in Cape Girardeau's commercial growth and development.

⁵The Daily Republican's City Directory of Cape Girardeau, MO., for 1906 (Cape Girardeau, MO: Naeter Brothers, 1906), 32; Cape Girardeau Republican (Cape Girardeau, MO), Tenth Anniversary Issue, 1914, p. 32.

⁶The Daily Republican's City Directory for Cape Girardeau, MO., for 1906 (Cape Girardeau, MO: Naeter Brothers, 1906), 38.

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UTM References (continued)

E. 16 276770 4131740
F. 16 276730 4131760

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District includes the following parcels on Cape Girardeau County Tax Map 21-107-00-13: parcels 1.00, 1.01, 2.00, 2.01, 4.00, 6.00, 7.00, 8.00, and 9.00; and the following parcels on Cape Girardeau County Tax Map 21-107-00-14: 1.00, 2.00, 3.00, 4.00, 5.00, 6.00, 7.00, 14.00, 15.00, and 16.00.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District includes all contiguous buildings retaining integrity along the 100 block of N. Main Street and the 100 block of Broadway. The southern boundary is drawn to exclude the buildings located at 101 and 102 N. Main Street, which are pre-1950 buildings that no longer retain integrity. The north side of the 100 block of Broadway is omitted due to the presence of post-1950 buildings and parking lots. Properties to the east and west of the district are also excluded due to the extent of alterations to pre-1950 buildings, and the several parking lots which are present in these blocks.

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Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District
Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri
Photos by: Thomason and Associates
Date: October 1999
Location of Negative: Historic Preservation Program, Department of Natural Resources

- Photo No. 1: Streetscape, 105-121 Broadway, view towards the west.
- Photo No. 2: Streetscape, 105-121 Broadway, view towards the southeast.
- Photo No. 3: 117-121 Broadway, view towards the south.
- Photo No. 4: 105-109 Broadway, view towards the south.
- Photo No. 5: Streetscape, west side of N. Main Street, view towards the northwest.
- Photo No. 6: Streetscape, west side of N. Main Street, view towards the southwest.
- Photo No. 7: 105-107 N. Main Street, view towards the west.
- Photo No. 8: 105-107 N. Main Street, view of recessed storefront ceiling.
- Photo No. 9: 109 N. Main Street, view towards the west.
- Photo No. 10: 113-115 N. Main Street, view towards the west.
- Photo No. 11: 119-121 N. Main Street, view towards the northwest.
- Photo No. 12: 125-127 N. Main Street, view towards the west.
- Photo No. 13: 137-141 N. Main Street, view towards the west.
- Photo No. 14: Streetscape, 108-124 N. Main Street, view towards the southeast.
- Photo No. 15: 108-110 N. Main Street, view towards the east.
- Photo No. 16: 112-114 N. Main Street, view towards the east.
- Photo No. 17: 116 N. Main Street, view towards the east.

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Cape Girardeau Commercial Historic District
Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri
Photos by: Thomason and Associates
Date: October 1999

Location of Negative: Historic Preservation Program, Department of Natural Resources

Photo No. 18: 118 N. Main Street, view towards the east.

Photo No. 19: 120 N. Main Street, view towards the east.

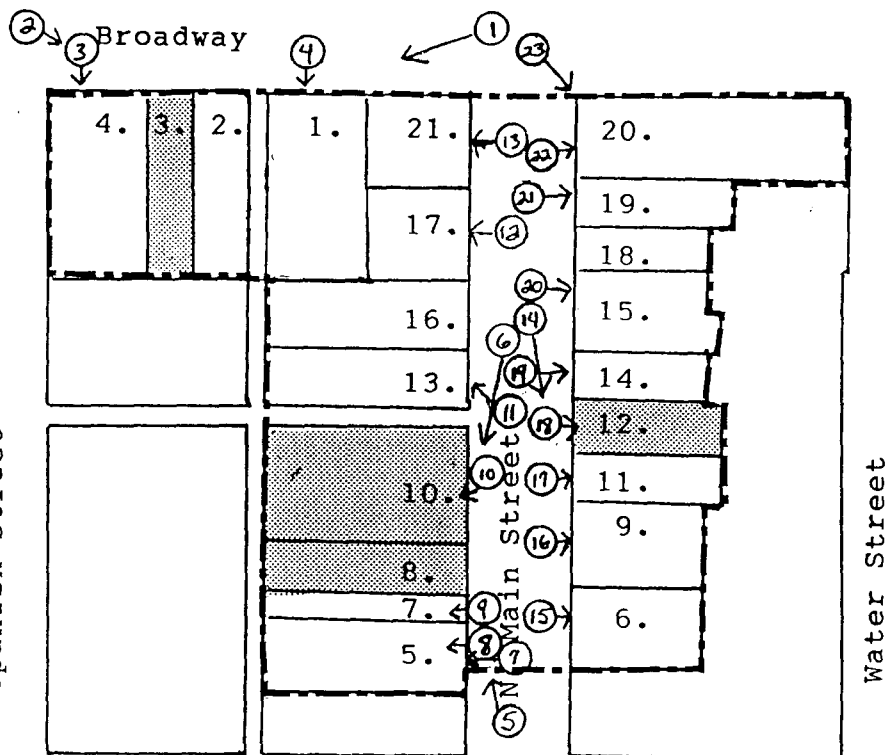
Photo No. 20: 122-124 N. Main Street, view towards the east.

Photo No. 21: 126 N. Main Street, view towards the east.

Photo No. 22: 130 N. Main Street, view towards the east.

Photo No. 23: 132-134 N. Main Street, view towards the southeast.

Spanish Street



Themis Street

Water Street

Burlington Northern Railroad

Cape Girardeau
Commercial Historic
District

Cape Girardeau County
Cape Girardeau, MO
Scale 1":100'
^N

Properties are keyed
to inventory numbers

Shaded areas denote
non-contributing
buildings

♂ = Photo Key

HISTORIC AND
ARCHITECTURAL
RESOURCES OF CAPE
GIRARDEAU, [CAPE
GIRARDEAU COUNTY]
MO

4132

CAPE GIRARDEAU
COMMERCIAL
HISTORIC
DISTRICT

- A. 16/276740/4131800
- B. 16/276850/4131790
- C. 16/276830/4131670
- D. 16/276770/4131680
- E. 16/276770/4131740
- 4131 F. 16/276730/4131760

HAARIG
COMMERCIAL
HISTORIC
DISTRICT

- A. 16/277960/
17' 30" 4131200
- B. 16/276030/
4131180
- 4130 C. 16/277930/
4131020
- D. 16/276050/
4131050

4129

