

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name N/A

other name/site number Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District

2. Location

street & town Generally bounded by the 200 block of Cedar St.; the 100 block of Lake St.; 100-115 Wyoming St., and 101-204 First St. N/A not for publication

city or town Pleasant Hill N/A vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Cass code 037 zip code 64080

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Mark A. Miles 06/16/04
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ 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.) _____

Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

Cass County, MO
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
53	10	buildings
1		sites
2		structures
	2	objects
56	12	Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related
TRANSPORTATION: road-related
COMMERCE: specialty store
COMMERCE: professional
COMMERCE: financial institution
COMMERCE: restaurant
COMMERCE: business
INDUSTRY: energy facility

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related
TRANSPORTATION: road-related
COMMERCE: specialty store
COMMERCE: professional
COMMERCE: restaurant
COMMERCE: business
INDUSTRY: energy facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Jacobethan Revival
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone
walls brick
concrete
roof other
other metal

Narrative Description

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

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

Cass County, MO
County and State

8. Description

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1865 - 1959

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

U. S. Treasury

Fuller, Albert B.

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other Name of repository:

Pleasant Hill Historical Society Museum

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

Cass County, MO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ~19.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/5 3/8/9/2/1/5 4/2/9/3/8/6/0
Zone Easting Northing

2 1/5 3/8/9/3/5/0 4/2/9/3/9/6/0
Zone Easting Northing

3 1/5 3/8/9/4/7/0 4/2/9/3/8/8/0
Zone Easting Northing

4 1/5 3/8/9/5/4/2 4/2/9/3/5/9/0
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property Tax No.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kerry Davis, Architectural Historian and Elizabeth Rosin, Partner
organization Historic Preservation Services, LLC date April 2004
street & number 323 West 8th Street, Suite 112 telephone 816-221-5133
city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64105

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

name/title see continuation sheet for list of property owners
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

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

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Cass County, Missouri

HISTORIC FUNCTION: (cont.)

RECREATIONAL: theater

GOVERNMENT: post office

CURRENT FUNCTION: (cont.)

RECREATIONAL: music facility

GOVERNMENT: post office

WORK IN PROGRESS

VACANT

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: (cont.)

OTHER: One-part Commercial Block

OTHER: Two-part Commercial Block

MATERIALS: (cont.)

Walls: ceramic block
stucco
wood

Foundation: concrete

Other: stone
wood
limestone

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: (cont.)

Peterson, Everett L.; architect

Curtis, Conrad J.; associate architect

McDonald, J. L.; contractor

Rollins, W. B. & Co.; engineers

Stafford, George; contractor

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Cass County, Missouri

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION STATEMENT

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District is located within the boundaries of the City of Pleasant Hill, Cass County, Missouri. The 19.5-acre District is a roughly trapezoidal area generally bounded by the alleyway behind Cedar Street to the north, the alleyway behind Lake Street to the east, Commercial Street to the south, and Second Street to the west. The District includes fifty-three contributing buildings, one contributing site, and two contributing structures. With only twelve non-contributing resources, over 82 percent of the sixty-eight resources contribute to the significance of the Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District. Three vacant lots are scattered throughout the District, one of which has been historically vacant since 1893.¹ Despite these small gaps, the District continues to clearly communicate its historic setting and landscape.

The small city of Pleasant Hill occupies the ridge and slopes located between Big Creek (to the west) and Duncan Branch (to the east) in northeast Cass County. State Highway 7 bisects the City, which is generally bounded by State Highway 58 to the south and county road W to the north. The District encompasses the majority of the central business district, which is concentrated along the blocks adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad alignment² that diagonally bisects downtown. Pleasant Hill's residential neighborhoods ring the District to the north, east, and west.

The arrangement of the commercial area reflects a development pattern of juxtaposed street grids that often resulted when railroad tracks ran near an existing town. One set of platted additions created a system of streets on axis with the alignment of the tracks, but skewed to the prevailing sectional grid. Further to the east, other additions created a grid of streets oriented to the cardinal axes. The resulting arrangement of streets and larger, irregularly shaped lots interspersed throughout the City's central business district clearly reflects these merged influences. The placement of the railroad tracks and the arrangement of streets are circulation features that define the spatial organization of downtown Pleasant Hill. Given the significance of these cultural landscape elements to the historic context they are counted as contributing structures to the historic district.

The District's setting and its historic buildings reflect its mid-nineteenth century establishment and a near-century of commercial and community development. Over 73 percent of the extant buildings served a commercial function, several of which had mixed uses and included second-story meeting halls, professional space, and residential apartments. Interspersed among the commercial properties are buildings of various functional types, including three industrial, two recreational, and two governmental

¹ The lot at 125 South First Street has been vacant since a fire destroyed much of this block in 1893.

² The use of the term railroad alignment includes open space, grade, tracks, and associated railroad infrastructure.

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Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Cass County, Missouri

resources. The fifty-six contributing resources include structures and buildings constructed between 1865 and 1959. Of the twelve non-contributing resources, six were constructed during the period of significance but suffer from a loss of integrity.³

The District also includes five contributing resources that are less than fifty years of age. Though not completed until the late 1950s, these buildings all have strong associations with the "Big Build," which transformed the northern quarter of the Pleasant Hill central business district into a modern commercial and civic center between 1945 and 1959. All retain a very high degree of integrity and convey significant associations with the District's context for Community Planning and Development.

The commercial buildings along First, Wyoming, and Lake streets occupy deep rectangular lots, generally measuring 125 by 25 feet, with uniform setbacks. The mid-twentieth century buildings, regardless of function, are typically free-standing, occupy larger lots, and have deeper, varied setbacks. Paved streets, steep curbs, concrete sidewalks, and tall lampposts characterize the streetscapes throughout the District. Gravel shoulders flank the streets along the southern edge of the District. Adjacent to the northeast section of the railroad tracks, the City maintains two open triangular lots as parks, both of which contain non-historic park structures that include a gazebo and a fountain. A historic stone retaining wall surrounds the larger of the two parks, which is known as Depot Park and is at the southwest corner of Paul and Lake streets.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND PROPERTY TYPES

Dating from the late 1860s through the mid-twentieth century, most of Pleasant Hill's commercial buildings are simple structures of one or two stories. The traditional building material is dark red brick. Commercial building designs with various, sometimes subtle, stylistic references dominate the District. While the majority of contributing resources are one- and two-part commercial block buildings with no discernable style, thirteen resources (19 percent) represent a formal architectural style. These buildings retain architectural features and physical forms that reflect the design trends popular during their period of construction. The earliest of these buildings express the Late Victorian Italianate style through pressed metal, bracketed cornices and decorative cast-iron window hoods. Most of the high style buildings reflect the popularity of the various revival styles during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Examples in the District include Jacobethan Revival, Colonial Revival, and Classical Revival. Modern Movement buildings make up the balance of high style examples in Pleasant Hill, exhibiting the influences of the Moderne, Art Deco, and International styles. The remaining fifty-five resources (81 percent) have no discernable style, with one- and two-part commercial blocks being the most dominant vernacular building type in the District.

³ Two of these six resources are believed to retain their historic fabric intact beneath non-historic claddings. In the future, if the non-historic materials are removed, these properties should be re-evaluated to determine if they would be contributing elements to the historic district.

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Some façades have been altered with inappropriate infill or siding. The majority of changes reflect the modernization of the first-story display windows and entrances. The replacement of display windows and the covering of transoms above the storefronts are the most conspicuous alterations, although many alterations of this nature have left the original openings and spatial relationships of the storefront intact. Other changes are reversible, such as the addition of awnings and the application of wood or metal sheathing over the original openings. The second stories often retain their original integrity and are the principal means by which to identify the building's original appearance and style.

DISTRICT PROPERTIES

1) Railroad Alignment *Date of Construction: 1865* *Contributing Status: C*
Pacific Railroad; Missouri Pacific Railroad; Union Pacific Railroad

The historic railroad alignment bisects downtown Pleasant Hill on a diagonal northwest/southeast axis and defines the spatial organization of downtown Pleasant Hill. Two parallel sets of tracks occupy the gravel grade, which is approximately fifty feet wide. Automatic crossing gates shield traffic from the at-grade crossings of Wyoming and Commercial streets. Sections of a stone retaining wall flank the alignment at the adjacent property lines north of Wyoming Street.

The railroad alignment retains a high degree of integrity and clearly conveys its character-defining historic features. Given the importance of this cultural landscape element to the significance of the historic district, it is counted as a contributing structure.

2) Street Network *Date of Construction: 1865* *Contributing Status: C*

The street network spans approximately four blocks in each direction from the depot and is diagonally bisected (northwest/southeast) by the historic railroad alignment. The street configuration to the north and east of the railroad alignment follows a standard cardinal grid axis. The street configuration to the west and south of the railroad alignment follows a grid skewed on axis with the railroad alignment. Where the two grids merge along the northeast edge of the railroad alignment, streets intersect at acute or obtuse angles and the lots are odd shaped. Street widths are a standard sixty feet within each grid; however, at these irregular intersections road widths increase to as much as ninety feet. Concrete curbs and sidewalks and light posts flank the streets throughout, with the exception of lower First Street (south of Commercial Street) where gravel shoulders replace the sidewalks and curbs. The network includes: the 100 block of Wyoming Street; Commercial Street between Second and Locust streets; the 100 block of Second Street; Boardman Road between Cedar and Pine streets; the 100 block of Lake and Taylor streets; the 200 and 300 blocks of Cedar Street; the 200 block of Paul Street; and the 300 and 400 blocks of Locust Street.

The street network retains a high degree of integrity and clearly conveys its historic, character-defining features. Given the significance of this cultural landscape element to the historic context, it is counted as a contributing structure to the historic district.

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3) 100 Wyoming St. Date of Construction: 1903 Contributing Status: C
Missouri Pacific Depot

This one-story brick railroad depot has a rectangular footprint. The gable-on-hip roof features a prominent cross gable that intersects toward the northwest end. This cross gable and the large gabled dormer at the opposite end of the building feature Jacobethan design elements, specifically gable parapets. Fenestration defines the asymmetrical elevations. The front elevation includes two pedestrian entrances and three freight entrances. The original two-over-two light, double-hung wood windows are intact throughout the building. Window openings at the more formal northwest end of the building feature dressed limestone lintels and sills. Window openings at the more utilitarian southeast end of the building feature segmental soldier brick arches and stone sills. Additional character-defining features include continuous limestone sills and lintels that span the cross gable wall, the Palladian windows in each gable, very wide eaves, and historic paneled wood doors. (Photo # 1, 2, 3, 20)

This building retains a very high degree of architectural integrity. It clearly conveys its historic associations and is a contributing element to the historic district.

4) 101 Wyoming St. Date of Construction: 1904 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide and the side (northeast) elevation is four bays deep. Historic stucco covers the exterior walls throughout. Fenestration defines the bays. Flanking the recessed entrance are two single plate glass display windows. These windows rest on three-foot-high painted glass block bulkheads that curve inward to the entrance. Additional character-defining features include the plain pilasters that rise from the ground above the front wall at the building's front corners. Although plywood covers the window openings on the secondary elevation, this is reversible and does not significantly affect the building's integrity. (Photo # 2)

A modern metal outbuilding (101a Wyoming Street) occupies the space between this building and its neighbor at 107 Wyoming Street. This structure is a non-contributing element to the historic district.

The existing façade and the stucco wall treatment date to the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. This property retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations and is a contributing element to the historic district.

5) 107 Wyoming St. Date of Construction: 1925 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two storefront window openings that rest on three-foot-high brick bulkheads. Plywood covers the storefront windows and the transom window above the entrance door. Additional character-defining features include the course of header brick that surmounts the façade parapet wall and the oblique brick joinery on the bulkhead corners. (Photo # 2)

Although non-historic materials cover the window openings, this building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

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6) 109 Wyoming St. Date of Construction: 1896 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two aluminum-framed plate glass windows. The storefront windows rest on brick bulkheads once covered with structural glass. Plywood covers the storefront transom window. Additional character-defining features include the corbelled brick cornice "brackets" and the historic wood-framed entrance with a three-quarter-light door and transom window. (Photo # 2)

Although non-historic materials cover the storefront transom opening, this building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

7) 111-113 Wyoming St. Date of Construction: 1891 Contributing Status: NC

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. New wood clapboards clad the front elevation, which is six bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by modern fixed windows.

The accumulation of alterations compromises the building's architectural integrity and inhibits its ability to convey its historic associations. It is non-contributing to the historic district. (Photo # 2)

8) 115 Wyoming St. Date of Construction: 1866 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is two bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays and includes paired one-over-one light, double-hung aluminum windows with header brick sills. The first story features a wood- and aluminum-framed plate glass storefront window system with a recessed entrance at the east end bay. The storefront window rests on a brick bulkhead. Adjacent to the storefront, the entrance to the second floor occupies the west end bay of the front elevation. Additional character-defining features include the buff-colored glazed brick façade, stone coping, and the historic wood-framed four-light entrance door at the west end bay. (Photo # 2, 3)

The existing façade dates to a 1949 remodeling project that occurred during the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. This building retains its architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

9) 114 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays. Flanking the recessed entrance are two aluminum-framed plate glass windows that rest on brick bulkheads. A plywood sign covers the storefront transom opening, above which is a pent roof. Additional character-defining features include the side parapet walls that step down toward the rear of the building. The storefront configuration is not original. Archival evidence documents that this change was made circa 1940. As such, it is a historic alteration that has gained significance in its own right. (Photo # 4)

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Although non-historic materials cover the transom opening, this building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations and is a contributing element to the historic district.

10) 116 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance in the north end and two aluminum-framed plate glass windows. The storefront windows rest on a brick bulkhead. Plywood covers the storefront transom window, above which is a pent roof. Additional character-defining features include the side parapet walls that step down toward the rear of the building. The storefront configuration is not original, but it is a historic alteration that has gained significance in its own right. (Photo # 4)

Although non-historic materials cover the transom opening, this building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations and is a contributing element to the historic district.

11) 118 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: NC

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint that is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and consists of an entrance door flanked by aluminum-framed plate glass windows. These display windows rest on three-foot-high brick bulkheads. Vertically grooved pressed wood siding covers the remainder of the façade. (Photo # 4)

The accumulation of non-historic alterations compromises the integrity of the building. It no longer conveys its historic associations and it is non-contributing to the historic district.

12) 120 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: NC

This brick one-part commercial block building has a rectangular footprint that is two bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and consists of an entrance door and an aluminum-framed plate glass window that rests on a three-foot-high brick bulkhead. A brick pier rises above the top of the storefront at the south end. Vertically grooved pressed wood siding covers the remainder of the façade. (Photo # 4)

The accumulation of non-historic alterations compromises the integrity of the building. It no longer conveys its historic associations and is non-contributing to the historic district.

13) 122 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1895 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two plate glass windows. Non-historic brick and stone veneer frames the first-story openings. Wood shingles clad a pent roof that covers the transom window. Additional character-defining features include the original pressed metal, bracketed cornice and the brick corbelling that forms three recessed panels that embellish the upper façade wall. (Photo # 4)

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The alterations to the storefront and transom are reversible and the building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

14) 124 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The storefront fenestration includes a recessed entrance flanked by the original wood- and steel-framed plate glass windows. These windows rest on dressed limestone bulkheads. Surmounting the storefront is the original leaded glass transom window with operable hopper vents. A concave limestone molding frames the storefront. Above the limestone molding, dentillation and a central medallion embellish a flat limestone cornice. Flanking the limestone frame are brick pilasters distinguished by a scroll and garland motif at the top. Additional character-defining features include the peaked parapet wall; the peaked limestone sign panel with letters in relief that read, "Citizens Bank"; limestone panels on the base of each pilaster that read "1884" and "1913"; and the original wood-framed full-light entrance door and transom window. (Photo # 4)

This building retains a high degree of integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

15) 126 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays. Flanking the center bay entrance are two plate glass windows that rest on three-foot-high brick bulkheads. The wood frame storefront is a modern reconstruction of the original configuration. A plywood sign covers the transom window. Additional character-defining features include brick pilasters that rise above the parapet at each end of the upper façade wall; the soldier brick entrance surround; and the stone parapet coping, pilaster caps, entrance threshold, and corner blocks. Historically, the narrow space between this building and 128 South First Street was known as "Wall Street." Local sources indicate that this space was left between the buildings to allow management and employees of the J. C. Jones Lumberyard to walk directly from the lumberyard on Second Street to the commercial businesses on First Street. (Photo # 4, 8)

The alterations to the transom are easily reversible. This building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations and is a contributing element to the historic district.

16) 128 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1905 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint with a clipped corner entrance. While the front one-third of the building is two stories in height, the rear two-thirds of the building is only one story. The front elevation is three bays wide and the side (northeast) elevation is eleven bays deep. Fenestration defines the bays and includes the historic one-over-one light, double-hung wood windows with limestone lintels and sills. The first story includes the original wood-framed plate glass display window and the original three-quarter-light wood entrance door, both of which retain their original leaded glass transom windows, flared brick lintels, and limestone keystones. Additional character-defining features include a projecting band of limestone with dentils and limestone parapet coping at the cornice level. Historically, the narrow space between this building and 126 South First Street was known as "Wall Street." Local sources indicate that this space was left between the buildings to allow

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management and employees of the J. C. Jones Lumberyard to walk directly from the lumberyard on Second Street to the commercial businesses on First Street. (Photo # 4, 8, 10)

Although two non-historic windows now replace the original fenestration on the second story, the historic size, shape, and rhythm of openings remains intact. This building retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

17) 130 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1900 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Fenestration defines the storefront, which is three bays wide. Openings include panel wood doors flanking a polygonal three-part bay window. The wood storefront system is a reconstruction of the original configuration and includes fixed transom windows at each bay. Additional character-defining features include the original pressed metal cornice and the historic faux stone pressed metal siding. (Photo # 4, 8, 10)

This building retains its architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

18) 132 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1900 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two non-historic wood-framed storefront windows that rest on brick bulkheads. Plywood covers the storefront transom window. Additional character-defining features include the original pressed metal, bracketed cornice; cast-iron pilaster caps; and the raised central decorative parapet panel. (Photo # 4, 10)

Although non-historic materials cover the transom window, this building retains sufficient architectural integrity to clearly convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

19) 134 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1895 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Fenestration defines the storefront, which has three bays. Openings include three-quarter-light panel wood doors flanking a polygonal three-part bay window. The wood-framed storefront windows rest on a brick bulkhead. Paint covers the transom window glass. Additional character-defining features include the original pressed metal cornice, historic pressed metal siding, and the historic three-quarter-light entrance doors. (Photo # 4, 9, 10)

This building retains its architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

20) 136 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays. The first story features the original cast-iron three-part storefront, which includes one plate glass display window, a recessed entrance in the center bay, and a recessed entrance to the second story in the north end bay. Plywood covers the transom windows. Filling the upper-story

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openings are non-historic one-over-one light, double-hung windows and plywood infill. Additional character-defining features include the original pressed metal cornice and the original cast-iron window hoods and sills. (Photo # 4, 10)

Although the second-story windows have been replaced and plywood covers the storefront transom, the building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

21) 138 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Historic pressed metal siding covers the front elevation. The first-story storefront features the original cast-iron posts; a wood frame four-part display window system; and a recessed double-leaf entrance in the north end bay. The second story has a single bay consisting of a tripartite one-over-one light, double-hung vinyl window. Additional character-defining features include the historic full-light entrance doors and stone parapet coping. (Photo # 4, 10)

Although the second-story windows are non-historic, the historic size, shape, and rhythm of the fenestration remain intact. This building retains its architectural integrity and continues to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

22) 140 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1868 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block rises three stories and has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide and the side (southwest) elevation is four bays deep. Fenestration defines the bays. The upper stories and side elevation feature single two-over-two light, double-hung wood windows with segmental arch brick hoods, brick keystones, and limestone sills. The first story features the original three-part cast-iron storefront. The storefront includes a historic wood-framed display window flanked by entrances to the storefront and upper stories. The storefront window rests on a brick bulkhead. Historic stucco covers the cast-iron and brick storefront elements. Archival evidence documents that the stucco was added before circa 1940. Additional character-defining features include the segmental storefront arches with keystones; the historic two-part wood transom windows; and, across the southwest elevation, the brick corbel belt course that aligns with the storefront cornice molding. (Photo # 4, 10, 11)

The removal of the cornice and the application of stucco to the storefront occurred over fifty years ago. As such, these are historic alterations that have gained significance in their own right. The building retains architectural integrity and continues to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

**23) 204 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1950 Contributing Status: C
Sinclair Fuel and Service Station**

This concrete block one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Fenestration on the asymmetrical front elevation consists of single vehicular entrances in the two west end bays and a three-part storefront featuring a pedestrian entrance flanked by plate glass display windows. This storefront wraps the corner and includes a display window in the first bay of the side (east) elevation. The display windows rest on concrete block bulkheads.

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The overall free-standing box shape of this service station defines its architectural form. This building retains its architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district. (Photo # 11)

24) 215 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1925 Contributing Status: C
Benson Brothers Lumber Company

This property contains three resources. The primary contributing resource is a brick, false front commercial block with a rectangular footprint. Plank lumber covers the front elevation and stucco covers the secondary elevation. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays. Flanking the storefront's recessed central entrance are aluminum-framed plate glass windows that rest on bulkheads clad with plank lumber. Plywood covers the five window openings of the side (southeast) elevation. Additional character-defining features include the stepped false front wall. A non-historic visor porch roof shelters the storefront. (Photo # 12)

A gravel drive to the southeast of this building leads to a utilitarian storage yard. Two secondary resources are located in the lumberyard behind the main building. At the northeast edge of this yard is a contributing wood frame coal/lumber shed with a gable roof. This shed features historic paneled wood doors and sections of non-historic metal siding. A modern non-contributing shed with metal siding and a shallow shed roof is located at the southwest edge of this lot, along South First Street.

Overall, this property retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations. The primary building and the shed on the northeast side of the yard are counted as contributing resources to the historic district. The non-historic shed on the southwest edge of the lot is a non-contributing element to the historic district.

25) 201C S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1926 Contributing Status: C
J. R. Prewitt & Sons Manufacturing, Inc.

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Two phases of construction produced the current footprint. Distinguishing the primary and oldest portion of the building is a pair of identical broad stepped parapet walls. Historic additions flank each end of the earlier center section. Openings include a pedestrian entrance and a vehicular entrance. Concrete and glass block fill the display windows that occupy the remaining bays. Additional character-defining features include corbel courses of brick at the top of the parapet walls and soldier brick lintels above window openings in the original portions of the building. (Photo # 12)

Although the display windows now contain non-historic materials, the size and rhythm of the openings remains intact and the infill is easily reversible. This alteration does not inhibit the building from conveying its historic associations and it is a contributing element to the historic district.

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26) 201B S. First St. Date of Construction: 1948 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is seven bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays. Flanking a pedestrian entrance at the center bay are four display windows that have plywood and/or brick infill. The two outermost bays contain tall vehicular entrances with overhead doors. Additional character-defining features include the cast stone lintels and parapet coping. (Photo # 12)

Although the display windows now contain non-historic materials, the size and rhythm of the openings remains intact and the infill is easily reversible. This alteration does not inhibit the building from conveying its historic associations and it is a contributing element to the historic district.

27) 201A S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1965 Contributing Status: NC

This concrete one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is five bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays. These bays include a pair of tripartite picture windows, a pedestrian entrance, and a vehicular entrance flanked by two display windows. Concrete block fills the display windows. Additional character-defining features include the scored pattern of the concrete façade to simulate brick. (Photo # 12)

This building was constructed after the period of significance and is non-contributing to the historic district.

**28) 135 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C
Knorpp's Opera House**

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide and the side (southeast) elevation is eight bays deep. Second-story fenestration defines the bays and includes the original single two-over-two light, double-hung wood windows with limestone hoods and sills. The first story includes the original cast-iron storefront entry that features a clipped corner entrance. The cast-iron post, entrance stoop step, and floor are intact, as are the wood frame entrance, sidelights, and fixed transom sash. Non-historic stone veneer covers the remainder of the storefront. Additional character-defining features include the original pressed metal, bracketed cornice and the original service entrance openings at the northeast end of the southeast elevation. These entries feature the same decorative limestone hoods as the remaining openings on the building. (Photo # 10, 12)

Although non-historic stone veneer covers a portion of the storefront, this building continues to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

29) 127 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1908 Contributing Status: C

The temple front configuration defines the Classic Revival style of this brick one-part commercial block. The building has a rectangular footprint and a symmetrical front elevation that is three bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two original one-over-one light, double-hung wood windows. The character-defining temple front features dressed limestone columns

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flanking the recessed entrance, a terracotta entablature, and a terracotta pediment with modillions. Additional character-defining features include the a wood-framed arched window with leaded glass above the entrance, a limestone water table, terracotta window surrounds, and terracotta sign panels that read "P - H - B - Co. -," "1887," and "1908." (Photo # 7, 10)

This building retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

30) 123 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1924 Contributing Status: C
Wherritt Building

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint with a clipped corner entrance. The front elevation is two bays wide and the side (southeast) elevation is seven bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays. Fenestration on the front (southwest) elevation consists of a non-historic Plexiglas storefront window and the original three-quarter light wood entrance door and transom window opening. Fenestration on the side (southeast) elevation includes the original one-over-one light, double-hung wood windows and four historic panel wood doors with intact transom sash. Additional character-defining features include the oblique brick joinery on the clipped corner wall junctions, the modest crenellation surmounting the front façade parapet, soldier brick lintels, and header brick windowsills. (Photo # 6, 10)

The replacement of the storefront display window does not significantly impact this building's architectural integrity and it clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

31) 121 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1894 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Second-story fenestration defines the bays. Tall, narrow one-over-one light, double-hung wood windows fill the second-story openings. The first story features a non-historic three-part wood storefront system. The storefront configuration includes a double-leaf entrance door flanked by two storefront windows. Pilasters with small, paired brackets divide the first-story storefront bays. The nine-light, fixed wood windows rest on wood-paneled bulkheads. Additional character-defining features include the original pressed metal, bracketed cornice that features a raised center pediment that reads "DRUGS," and the original cast-iron window hoods and sills. (Photo # 3, 6, 10)

This building retains its architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

32) 119 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1907 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two aluminum-framed plate glass windows that rest on brick bulkheads. Corrugated metal covers the storefront transom window. Additional character-defining features include the course of header brick that surmounts the front parapet wall, the historic full-light entrance door and transom window, and the oblique brick joinery on the bulkhead corners. (Photo # 3)

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The non-historic materials covering the transom window opening do not significantly impact this building's architectural integrity and it clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

33) 117 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1885 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two aluminum-framed plate glass windows that rest on brick bulkheads. Wood shingles cover the storefront transom window, above which is a pent roof. The storefront configuration is not original and dates to a circa 1940 alteration that has gained significance in its own right. (Photo # 3)

Although non-historic materials cover the transom, this building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

34) 115 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1885 Contributing Status: NC

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint and a pent roof. The front elevation features a single bay, which is defined by a central recessed entrance. Plywood siding and unfinished plank board trim cover the remainder of the façade. (Photo # 3)

The alterations to this building compromise its architectural integrity and it no longer conveys its historic associations. It is non-contributing to the historic district. In the future, if the non-historic materials are removed from the façade, this property should be re-evaluated to determine if it would be a contributing element to the historic district.

35) 113 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1885 Contributing Status: NC

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint and a tall pent roof. The front elevation is three bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two modern storefront display windows. Plywood siding covers the remainder of the façade. (Photo # 3)

The alterations to this building compromise its architectural integrity and it no longer conveys its historic associations. It is non-contributing to the historic district. In the future, if the non-historic materials are removed from the façade, this property should be re-evaluated to determine if it would be a contributing element to the historic district.

36) 111 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1870 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is four bays wide. Defining the bays are the first-story pilasters and the second-story fenestration. The first story features the original cast-iron four-part storefront. The storefront includes two wood-framed plate glass windows with fixed transoms. The display windows rest on the original wood bulkhead, which retains its historic decorative moldings. The storefront entrance occupies the second bay from the north and contains a historic three-quarter light panel wood door and transom window. The original recessed entrance to the

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second floor occupies the north end bay and retains the original fixed transom. Filling the upper-story openings are non-historic, single one-over-one light, double-hung windows. Additional character-defining features include the original pressed metal, bracketed cornice; upper-story cast-iron window hoods and sills; and cast-iron entrance step and floor. (Photo # 3, 5)

This building retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

37) 109 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. The first story features an aluminum-framed plate glass storefront window system. The storefront consists of a recessed entrance in the south end bay and plate glass display windows that rest on a three-foot-tall brick bulkhead. Second-story fenestration defines the bays and includes non-historic single one-over-one light, double-hung windows. Archival evidence documents that the building's current appearance dates to the circa 1925 renovations to the second-story façade and the circa 1949 renovations to the storefront. Additional character-defining features include three courses of limestone that form continuous belt courses at the cornice level and at the second-story window sills and lintels; and the oblique brick joinery on the bulkhead corner. (Photo # 3, 5)

Alterations to the storefront occurred over fifty years ago and its current appearance is a historic alteration that has gained significance in its own right. The building retains architectural integrity and continues to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

38) 107 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1880 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Historic stucco covers the front façade wall. The first-story storefront features a wood- and steel-framed plate glass window system that rests on stucco-covered brick bulkheads. The display windows flank the storefront's recessed entrance. Adjacent to the storefront, the entrance to the second floor occupies the south end bay. Corrugated metal covers the storefront's transom window. Second-story fenestration defines the five bays and includes single one-over-one light, double-hung wood windows. Additional character-defining features include a recessed rectangular panel across the full width of the building at cornice level, a mosaic tile entrance floor, and a historic paneled wood door and screen door. (Photo # 3, 5)

Although corrugated metal covers the storefront transom window opening, this alteration is easily reversible and the building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

39) 105 S. First St. Date of Construction: 1881 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is four bays wide and the side (northwest) elevation is six bays deep. The front elevation features a wood- and steel-framed plate glass storefront window system. The storefront configuration consists of a recessed entrance flanked by display windows that rest on brick bulkheads. Plywood covers the storefront transom

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window. A historic photograph documents that alterations resulting in the storefront's current appearance date to circa 1930. Adjacent to the storefront, the entrance to the second floor occupies the south end bay. Second-story fenestration defines the bays and includes single two-over-two light, double-hung wood windows with cast stone lintels. Additional character-defining features include the corbelled brick "brackets" at the cornice; the original segmental arch window openings with decorative limestone hoods and sills that are intact on the first story of the northwest elevation; the bead board ceiling over the storefront entrance; and the historic paneled wood door with a leaded glass transom window at the entrance to the second floor. (Photo # 3, 5)

An alteration to the storefront occurred over fifty years ago and its current appearance is the result of a historic alteration that has gained significance in its own right. The plywood that covers several window openings does not affect the overall ability of this building to convey its historic associations and it is a contributing element to the historic district.

40) 101-103 S. First St. Date of Construction: c.1870 Contributing Status: C

This open lot at the southeast corner of Wyoming and First streets measures approximately 45 by 125 feet. It has an asphalt surface that meets the grade of Wyoming Street on its west side.

This site, which is at the heart of Pleasant Hill's commercial district, has historically been public open space. A public well was established here circa 1870. Although not potable for humans, for decades water from the well served innumerable teams of horses. By the end of the nineteenth century, the site had evolved into a public square that contained a bandstand during the late 1890s and a public scale during the first decade of the twentieth century. A small gas station was constructed on a portion of the lot during the early twentieth century.⁴ Subsequent removal of the gas station restored the property as open space within the landscape of Downtown Pleasant Hill. (Photo # 3)

This open lot is a significant cultural landscape feature in the commercial streetscape of South First Street. It retains its historic integrity and is a contributing element to the historic district.

41) Depot Park Date of Construction: c.1992 Contributing Status: NC

This triangular site is formed by the intersections of Paul, Lake, and Boardman streets. A historic stone retaining wall surrounds the perimeter of the park. In addition to the Booth Public Library (125 South Lake Street; property number 42), which is located at the southeast corner of the site, this park features a non-historic wood frame one-story gazebo that has a circular footprint. The ten-sided structure has a conical roof with a raised center that forms a monitor roof. Providing access to the gazebo platform is a ramp on the northeast side and a set of steps on the southwest side. Additional character-defining features include the turned balusters, the decorative brackets at the top of each support post, and the wood shake shingles that clad the roof. A free-standing cast-iron clock is approximately ten feet tall and stands at the northeast corner of the site. The clock features a decorative base and a chamfered post. A raised panel with decorative scrollwork surmounts the round face of the clock. Other elements in the park

⁴ Archival sources indicate that the gas station was constructed between 1913 and 1928. It was demolished before circa 1960.

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include a historical marker with a bust of Colonel Hiram Bledsoe of the Confederate Army (1825-1899) who is buried in the Pleasant Hill Cemetery. (Photo # 20)

This open site and its structures and objects are less than fifty years of age and are non-contributing to the historic district.

**42) 125 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: 1948 Contributing Status: C
Booth Public Library**

This concrete block Modern Movement building is one-story tall and stands at the southeast corner of Depot Park. This building has an irregular footprint and running bond brick facing. Moving from south to north, filling the south half of the front façade is the original wood frame fixed-sash window with twenty-four lights (eight across; three high); the double-leaf entrance doors, and a blank façade wall that projects forward at the north end. The flat roof of this projection extends south to shelter the entrance. The low-slung horizontal form of this building distinguishes its style. Additional character-defining features include the intact, original, wood sliding sash windows on the north elevation; the intact, original building plaque adjacent to the entrance; and the header brick windowsills. (Photo # 19)

This building retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

43) SE Lake and Locust St. Date of Construction: c.1992 Contributing Status: NC

This fountain structure has a circular footprint and a conical shape. The flat stones are situated within a concrete basin.

This object is less than fifty years of age and is non-contributing to the historic district.

**44) 300 Commercial St. Date of Construction: 1939 Contributing Status: C
Municipal Power Plant**

This two-story brick government building has an irregular footprint. Distinguishing the building's form are multiple roof heights and façade wall depths. The asymmetrical front elevation contains nine bays. Fenestration and brick pilasters define the rhythm of the bays. Fenestration includes modern fixed-sash windows and stucco panel infill within the original window openings. The primary pedestrian entrance occupies the sixth bay from the north end. Large, single vehicular bays occupy the two south end bays. Additional character-defining features include limestone windowsills and parapet coping, decorative limestone blocks that embellish the façade wall, and soldier brick lintels. (Photo # 13)

Replacement of the windows has not altered the size, shape, or rhythm of the original fenestration. This building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations and is a contributing element to the historic district.

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**45) 124 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: 1938 Contributing Status: C
Pleasant Hill Post Office**

This brick one-part commercial block features Colonial Revival styling. The building has a T-shaped footprint. The symmetrical front elevation is five bays wide and the side (north) elevation is six bays deep. Fenestration defines the bays and includes non-historic double-hung windows with fifteen-over-fifteen light faux muntins that match the original glazing pattern. The entrance occupies the center bay of the front elevation. A formal entrance surround enframes the double-leaf glass doors and the original wood frame transom window, which consists of a string of five arched lights. The entrance surround features pilasters, an entablature, and a flat cornice with dentils.

Additional character-defining features include a stone belt course and parapet coping, flared brick window lintels with stone keystones, and a soldier brick water table. (Photo # 18, 19)

This building retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

46) 120 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: c.1930 Contributing Status: NC

This concrete block and brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Synthetic stone veneer covers the front elevation, which is four bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays. Aluminum-framed plate glass windows flank the storefront entrance. A secondary entrance door occupies the north end bay. Additional features include a non-historic full-width porch with a shed roof. (Photo # 15)

The accumulation of non-historic alterations compromises this building's architectural integrity. It no longer conveys its historic associations and is non-contributing to the historic district.

47) 116-118 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: c.1910 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation features two storefronts and is four bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays and includes the two recessed entrances in the center bays. Flanking the entrances are aluminum-framed two-part plate glass display windows that rest on three-foot-high brick bulkheads. Additional character-defining features include the blond brick façade wall, the header brick windowsills, the original wood-framed full-light door in the north entrance, and the intact entrance door transom. (Photo # 15, 17)

This building retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

48) 114 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: c.1905 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed wood-framed entrance flanked by two aluminum-framed plate glass windows that rest on brick bulkheads. Plywood covers the storefront's original transom window. Additional character-defining features include the oblique brick joinery on the bulkhead corners and the modest brickwork that surmounts the façade wall. (Photo # 15, 17)

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This building retains a high degree of historic integrity and clearly conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

49) 112 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: c.1910 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Historic stucco covers the façade wall. The first story features an aluminum-framed storefront that angles inward to the recessed entrance at the north end. The plate glass display windows rest on a very short, header brick bulkhead. Archival evidence documents that alterations resulting in the storefront's current appearance occurred circa 1948. Adjacent to the storefront, the entrance to the second floor occupies the north end bay. Second-story fenestration consists of a single multi-light steel window with an operable casement sash. Additional character-defining features include the shallow pilasters that rise the full height of the façade wall and above the parapet. (Photo # 15, 16, 17)

The façade alterations date to the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. As such, they are considered historic and have gained significance in their own right. This building retains its architectural significance and conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

**50) 108-110 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: c.1909 Contributing Status: C
People's Theater**

This brick and reinforced concrete two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The vertical neon sign and large entrance awning distinguish this building's function and form. The symmetrical front elevation is four bays wide. The contrasting colors of the blond and dark brown brickwork define the bays of this elevation. Movie poster display cases flank the recessed entrance, which contains two sets of double-leaf entrance doors. A ticket window and single, fixed display windows pierce the side walls of the recessed entrance space. Fenestration includes the original three-light casement windows at the second story. Additional character-defining features include the patterns created by the contrasting colors of the brickwork at the front elevation; the soldier and header brick that frames each opening in the façade; the projecting pier containing the historic neon sign that reads "PEOPLE'S"; and the historic marquee canopy suspended by cables over the entrance. (Photo # 15, 16, 17)

This building underwent a complete remodeling in 1948, at the height of the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. This building retains a high degree of architectural integrity. It clearly conveys its historic associations and is a contributing element to the historic district.

51) 106 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: 1891 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance flanked by two aluminum-framed plate glass windows that rest on brick bulkheads. Wood plank siding covers the storefront transom window opening. Additional character-defining features include the oblique brick joinery on the bulkhead corners and at cornice level, as well as the historic metal cut-out sign letters affixed to the upper façade wall that read "SHORTRIDGE." (Photo # 15, 16)

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The existing façade dates to circa 1947, during the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history, and has gained significance in its own right. Although non-historic materials cover the transom opening, this building retains sufficient architectural integrity to convey its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

52) 104 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: 1891 Contributing Status: C

This brick two-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Blond brick veneer covers the first-story storefront wall sections. The storefront configuration features an entrance door flanked by two aluminum-framed plate glass windows that rest on three-foot-high brick bulkheads. The entrance to the second floor occupies the north end bay. Historic stucco covers the upper half of the façade wall. Filling the single bay of the second story are paired one-over-one light, double-hung windows. Additional character-defining features include the storefront's historic half-light entrance door and the full-light entrance door at the north end bay. Archival evidence documents that changes to the building's façade were made in 1948. (Photo # 15)

The façade alterations date to the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. As such, they are considered historic and have gained significance in their own right. This building retains its architectural significance and conveys its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

53) 100 S. Lake St. Date of Construction: 1891 Contributing Status: C

This brick one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint with a clipped corner. The front elevation is five bays wide and the side (north) elevation is five bays wide. The front elevation features two aluminum-framed storefronts flanking a pair of recessed central entrances. The plate glass display windows rest on brick bulkheads. Wood siding covers the storefront transom window. The side (north) elevation retains the original elaborate cornice brickwork and cast-iron window and door hoods. Additional character-defining features include the oblique brick joinery on the clipped corner wall junction and a course of angle-laid brick at the cornice of the front elevation. (Photo # 14, 15)

The existing façade dates to circa 1947, during the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history, and has gained significance in its own right. Although wood siding covers the storefront transom and one of the storefront windows, this does not inhibit the building from conveying its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

**54) 306 Cedar St. Date of Construction: 1911 Contributing Status: C
Tucker Inn**

This brick two-part commercial block has a rear-facing L-shaped footprint. The front elevation is five bays wide and the side (east) elevation is eight bays deep. Second-story fenestration defines the bays and includes the historic one-over-one light, double-hung wood windows with stone lintels and sills. Moving from east to west, the first story features a two-part plate glass display window, a pair of pedestrian entrances, a single display window, and a display window with brick infill. The front elevation features two storefronts. The two storefront entrances occupy the central bays. Flanking the storefront entrances are two wood-framed plate glass windows that rest on brick bulkheads. Plywood covers most of the

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storefront transom window openings. Additional character-defining features include terracotta coping tiles and the historic paneled wood entrance doors and screen doors. (Photo # 14, 18)

Although plywood covers some transom window openings, this does not inhibit this building from conveying its historic associations. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

55) 215 Cedar St. Date of Construction: 1955 Contributing Status: C
L & M Skelly Service Station

This concrete block and brick one-part commercial block has a front-facing L-shaped footprint, which is formed by a projecting brick addition at the west end of the original rectangular block. Single vehicular entrances occupy the three west bays. A non-historic plywood storefront fills the three east end bays. This storefront features a pedestrian entrance flanked by single one-over-one light, double-hung windows. Additional character-defining features include the terracotta coping tile that caps the parapet walls. (Photo # 22)

A non-historic front-gabled shed with corrugated metal siding stands adjacent to the east of the primary building.

Although this building is less than fifty years of age, it retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly expresses its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

56) 209 Cedar St. Date of Construction: c.1959 Contributing Status: C

This concrete block one-part commercial building has a rectangular footprint. The asymmetrical front elevation is defined by its recessed storefront. The storefront consists of a glass entrance door with a full-height, three-part, aluminum-framed display window to the east. Aluminum siding covers the wall above the storefront. Rough-faced brick covers the remaining façade wall. (Photo # 22)

Although this building is less than fifty years of age, it retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly expresses its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

57) 207 Cedar St. Date of Construction: c.1955 Contributing Status: C

This concrete block one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint with a clipped corner entrance. Painted slab limestone covers the front elevation, which is two bays wide. The side (east) elevation is seven bays deep. Fenestration defines the bays. On the front elevation, fenestration consists of the clipped corner entrance with a square support post at the east corner and an aluminum-framed two-part display window in the west bay. The display window rests on a low bulkhead. Multi-light steel sash windows with cast stone sills fill the bays of the secondary elevations. The front façade wall has a flat parapet that hides the building's gabled roof. (Photo # 22)

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Although this building is less than fifty years of age, it retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly expresses its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

58) 205 Cedar St. Date of Construction: c.1948 Contributing Status: C

This concrete block one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. The front elevation is three bays wide. Storefront fenestration defines the bays and includes a recessed entrance at the center bay. The original storefront configuration is intact at the east end bay and consists of an aluminum-framed plate glass window that rests on a glass block bulkhead. However, the west end bay now consists of a band of glass block aligned across the top of the storefront wall. Stucco covers this storefront wall. Original light-colored brick forms a wide belt course above the storefronts. Historic stucco covers the upper façade wall. Additional character-defining features include the course of header brick that caps the flat parapet. (Photo # 22)

The storefront alterations do not significantly impair the integrity of the building or its ability to convey its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

59) 203 Cedar St. Date of Construction: 1948 Contributing Status: C

Allen Motor Company

This ceramic block one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. What appears to be a single building when viewed from the front is actually two separate buildings sharing an integrated façade. Brick veneer covers the front elevation, which has four bays. Fenestration defines the bays. A modern aluminum-framed storefront system occupies the original vehicular entrance at the center bay and an original two-part display window is intact to the west. At the east end of the façade, replacing the original two-part display window are a pedestrian entrance and display windows. The display windows rest on brick bulkheads that feature header brick sills. Stone belt courses span the cornice and the stepped parapet of this building, which includes 201 Cedar. Additional character-defining features include the course of header brick that caps the parapet wall. (Photo # 22)

Although non-historic materials fill two of the original bays, the size, shape, and rhythm of openings remains intact and could be restored. The building retains sufficient architectural integrity and continues to convey its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

60) 201 Cedar St. Date of Construction: 1948 Contributing Status: C

Allen Motor Company

This ceramic block one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. What appears to be a single building when viewed from the front, is actually two separate buildings sharing an integrated façade. Brick veneer covers the front façade and wraps around one bay on each side elevation. The front elevation is three bays wide. Fenestration defines the bays and consists of a center bay entrance flanked by three-part aluminum-framed display windows. The display windows rest on brick bulkheads that feature header brick sills. In the side (west) elevation, a display window occupies the first bay and two

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vehicular bays pierce the rear portion of this elevation. Stone belt courses span the cornice and the stepped parapet of this building, which includes 203 Cedar. Additional character-defining features include the header brick course that caps the parapet walls. (Photo # 22, 23)

Although plywood covers two display windows, this building retains its architectural integrity. It clearly conveys its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history and is a contributing element to the historic district.

**61) 101 N. Boardman Rd. Date of Construction: 1948 Contributing Status: C
Crowe Motor Company**

This ceramic block one-part commercial block has a rectangular footprint. Brick veneer covers the front façade and wraps around one bay on each side elevation. The symmetrical front elevation is five bays wide and the side (south) elevation is four bays deep. Fenestration defines the bays and includes the center bay entrance flanked by two large display windows. A single additional display window occupies the first bay of each side elevation. Plywood and brick fill the display windows. The primary façade wall terminates in a broad stepped parapet that hides the barrel-shaped roof. Additional character-defining features include stone parapet coping, a stone belt course that wraps the first bay of each side elevation, and header brick windowsills. (Photo # 22, 23)

Although plywood and brick fill the storefront window openings, the size, shape, and rhythm of the original fenestration remain apparent. This building retains architectural integrity and continues to convey its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

**62) 201 Paul St. Date of Construction: 1959 Contributing Status: C
Pleasant Hill Bank**

This Modern Movement one-part commercial block is brick and has an L-shaped footprint. Fenestration consists of the original aluminum window system. Moving from west to east, there is a band of seven fixed-sash windows aligned at the top of the façade wall, a series of full-height display windows that wrap the corner, and a blank façade wall at the east end bay that is set back. The low-slung horizontal form of this building distinguishes its style. Additional character-defining features include the dark brown face brick; the three original, aluminum can-light wall sconces mounted on the east end; and a sheltered drive-through banking window on the west elevation. (Photo # 21)

Although this building is less than fifty years of age, it retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly expresses its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

**63) 203 Paul St. Date of Construction: 1959 Contributing Status: C
Pleasant Hill City Hall**

This Modern Movement government building is brick and has a rectangular footprint. Due to a change in grade, the rear portion of the building steps up significantly. The front elevation features a single

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opening that consists of an aluminum-framed two-part display window. Defining the west elevation is an aluminum-framed display window system containing the double-leaf primary entrance. The east elevation features six asymmetrically placed single fixed windows. The building's low-slung horizontal form distinguishes its style. Additional character-defining features include the salmon-colored face brick and the aluminum cut-out letters affixed to the façade wall that read "CITY HALL." (Photo # 21)

Although this building is less than fifty years of age, it retains a high degree of architectural integrity and clearly expresses its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history. It is a contributing element to the historic district.

64) 212 Cedar St. Date of Construction: 1948 Contributing Status: C
Memorial Building

This brick two-story building has a rectangular footprint. The front and rear façade treatments are almost identical. The symmetrical front elevation is three bays wide and the side elevations are five bays deep. Fenestration defines the bays. A double-leaf entrance door fills the center bay on the first story. Multi-light, steel sash windows with operable outer casements fill the remaining openings of the building. The brick façade projects slightly forward in two short steps. Two continuous bands of limestone encircle the building at the water table and at the cornice level. Additional character-defining features include the stepped front parapet, stone coping, and header brick windowsills. (Photo # 5, 21)

This building retains a high degree of architectural integrity. It clearly conveys its historic associations with the "Big Build" period in Pleasant Hill's history and is a contributing element to the historic district.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District includes the historic business and civic center of Pleasant Hill, Cass County, Missouri. It is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for the areas of COMMERCE and COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, Criterion C for the area of ARCHITECTURE, and Criteria Consideration G for its inclusion of significant resources that are less than fifty years of age. The District comprises the contiguous commercial, industrial, social, and governmental resources that retain architectural integrity and continue to reflect the forces that shaped approximately one hundred years of development in downtown Pleasant Hill. This collection of buildings documents the evolution of functions and design present in Pleasant Hill's central business district from the mid-nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. The District's resources communicate historic trends in downtown development, physically representing the spectrum of building technology, design, stylistic features, form, and function that define the history of Pleasant Hill. In addition to general trends of community evolution, the resources in the District document pivotal events in Pleasant Hill's history — the arrival of the railroad in 1865, which effectively relocated the original town; the devastating fires of 1888, 1891, and 1893 and subsequent rebuilding; and the "Big Build," a massive community development campaign that began in 1945 and substantially concluded by 1959. The 1865 railroad alignment that bisects this concentration of resources is particularly notable. It forms a unifying axis that physically defined the organization of downtown Pleasant Hill and spurred its subsequent development.

The District includes fifty-three contributing buildings, one contributing site, and two contributing structures. Over 82 percent of the sixty-eight resources contribute to the significance of the Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District. The District's period of significance is 1865-1959. The start of this range reflects the initiation of construction of the railroad alignment. The end of this range reflects the culmination of the "Big Build" development campaign as evidenced by the completion of the buildings along the 200 block of Paul Street that constitute the Pleasant Hill Civic Center. The period of significance also acknowledges historic alterations made to buildings as specific functional needs and commercial styles evolved and accepts the buildings that experienced such alterations within the period of significance as being contributing elements to the District.

The inclusion of contributing resources that are less than fifty years of age necessitates that the District also be nominated under Criteria Consideration G. As required, the District's historic context clearly defines the property types that are eligible for inclusion in the National Register as part of this nomination, and all of the resources within the District boundaries have been assessed to evaluate their significance to the District as part of that historic context. Because the District represents a continuum of events that defined both its significance for Community Planning and Development and for Architecture, and because the majority of properties in the District are over fifty years of age and "date to the discrete period with a defined beginning and end" defined as the Period of Significance, the National Register guidelines do not

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require that either the District or the less-than-fifty-year-old resources demonstrate "exceptional importance" as is normally required when Criteria Consideration G is applied.⁵ Therefore, Criteria Consideration G as applied to this District allows the inclusion of resources that are less than fifty years old and that meet the thresholds for significance and National Register eligibility defined for this particular historic district.

ELABORATION

**THE EVOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PLEASANT HILL AS A
REGIONAL COMMERCIAL HUB: 1828-1959**

THE EARLY YEARS OF PLEASANT HILL (1828-1865)⁶

The first permanent settler of present-day Cass County, David Creek, arrived from Indiana in 1828 and established a homestead near what is now Pleasant Hill. Many of Cass County's first settlers arrived during the early 1830s and established farmsteads in the vicinity of an ancient trail along the crest of a ridge between the valleys of Big Creek and Duncan Branch.⁷ The establishment of a mill on Big Creek in 1832 drew additional settlers and, by 1833, created the nucleus of the Pleasant Hill community

Responding to increased settlement in the area, the Missouri Legislature established Van Buren County (present-day Cass County) in 1835 as a detachment from Jackson County. Local businessmen William Ferrell and William Wright filed papers in January 1844 for the "Original Town of Pleasant Hill," which featured twelve rectangular lots flanking the ridge-top road identified as Main Street. By 1859, the community had sufficient numbers of citizens to incorporate.

The rural settlements of the County were barely established when conflict over the issue of extending slavery into the Kansas territory interrupted their growth. The Kansas-Nebraska Act, which left the decision to Kansas Territory voters of whether to allow slavery in their future state, prompted partisan efforts to control the election of either a pro- or anti-slavery legislature, foretelling the Civil War and ushering in a decade of turmoil. As hostilities escalated in 1858 and 1859, a general exodus from the region began.

⁵ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: National Register Publications, 1998), 43.

⁶ For an expanded discussion of the early settlement of "Old Town" Pleasant Hill, please refer to Historic Preservation Services, LLC, *Historic Resources Survey, Pleasant Hill, Missouri*, December 2003, City of Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

⁷ This ridge now carries State Highway 7.

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During the Civil War, federal troops occupied Pleasant Hill and the surrounding area became a battlefield as pro-slavery Bushwhackers raided and burned federally occupied buildings. On August 25, 1863, Brigadier General Thomas C. Ewing, in an effort to stop guerilla activity along the border, issued "General Order Number Eleven," which established martial law in the four Missouri counties bordering the Kansas territory, including Cass County. The order required all civilians to leave their homes and to move to Union Army outposts. Federal and Kansas volunteer troops then confiscated livestock and burned farms and businesses throughout the border area in an effort to destroy any shelter or foodstuffs accessible to the southern guerrilla forces. At the close of the Civil War, the town of Pleasant Hill was little more than a ruin.

BOOM YEARS: THE ARRIVAL OF THE RAILROAD (1858-1870)

In the years leading up to the Civil War, "railroad mania" swept the nation. Widespread projecting, promoting, and speculating took place with towns fiercely competing for the favor of railroad companies and convenient access to new rail lines. Connection to the railroad was a matter of economic life or death for many growing rural communities. The companies often profited from such competition by choosing routes that ran through the towns pledging the highest bids.⁸ Towns in the Kansas City region raced to establish the first rail connections with the East, hoping to become the "great commercial funnel to the Plains."⁹ Although the Hannibal & St. Joseph line spanned the state of Missouri by 1859, it lacked a river crossing to points west. Evidenced by its name, the Pacific Railroad Company¹⁰ held grand intentions of becoming a transcontinental line. The planned route would travel west from St. Louis, staying south of the Missouri River. Pleasant Hill and Kansas City were among the towns that fought hard for the Pacific Railroad's western terminus.

Pleasant Hill's financial offers, rapid growth, and solid role as a regional commercial hub attracted railroad planners. As early as 1858, Pacific Railroad Company agents purchased dozens of acres of land for right-of-way and new commercial development near Pleasant Hill. The railroad would travel just a mile to the southwest of town, down the hill through the small settlement of Wyoming.¹¹ Area residents greatly anticipated the coming of the railroad; however, when the company suspended construction at the outbreak of the Civil War, track had been laid only as far as Sedalia, Missouri.

Immediately following the Civil War, the Pacific Railroad Company resumed grading and laying tracks.

⁸ Sherry Lamb Schirmer and Richard D. McKinzie, *At the River's Bend: An Illustrated History of Kansas City* (Woodland Hills, California: Windsor Publications, Inc. in association with the Jackson County Historical Society, 1982), 41.

⁹ Rick Montgomery and Shirl Kasper, *Kansas City An American Story* (Kansas City, Missouri: Kansas City Star Books, 1999), 65.

¹⁰ The Pacific Railroad Company was later known as Atlantic Pacific (c.1866-c.1876); Missouri Pacific (c.1876-c.1982); and Union Pacific (c.1982-present).

¹¹ Middleton, A7.

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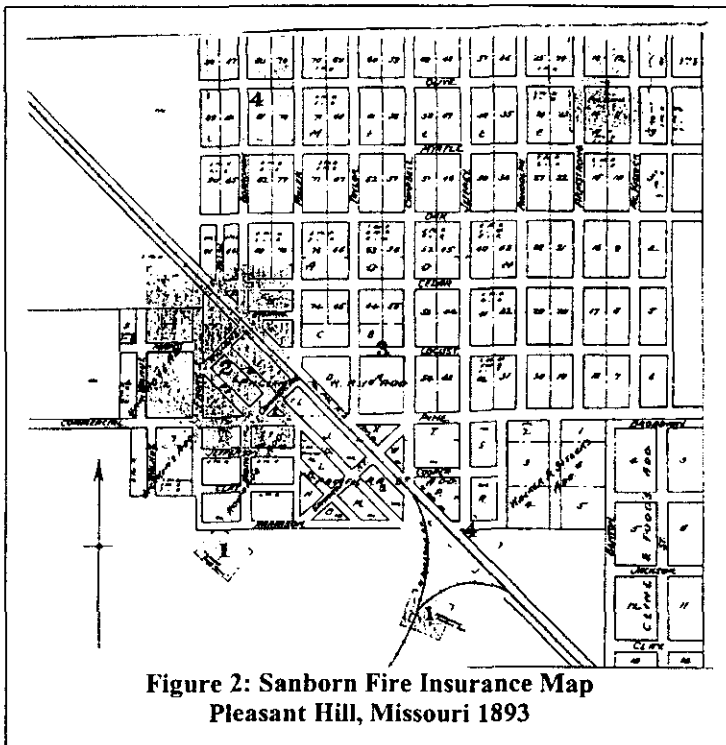
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Though commercial development had become stagnate during the previous five years, Pleasant Hill's position as a regional trading hub remained intact. The resumption of railroad plans through Pleasant Hill fed the physical and emotional need to rebuild after a decade of conflict and destruction.

By June 1865, the road reached Kingsville, with grading complete through Pleasant Hill. The flanking acreage purchased by the Pacific Railroad Company seven years earlier had been surveyed and platted into commercial lots, effectively engulfing the town of Wyoming with what quickly became known as "New Town" Pleasant Hill.¹²

The Pacific Railroad Company began the sale of their widely advertised lots in June 1865. A 1913 account from George D. Hope recalled the sale as having "the usual accompaniment of brass band and free lunch."¹³ The lots reportedly went for "big prices" because "money was beginning to come in plentiful to the 'New Town' Pleasant Hill." As a result, Hope and two business partners "concluded that there would be considerable building [in Pleasant Hill] and immediately made [their] plans to open a lumber yard."¹⁴ Anticipation ran high and within four months of the sale, six additional plats were filed for approximately sixty blocks, extending in each direction from the Pacific Railroad additions.



**Figure 2: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map
Pleasant Hill, Missouri 1893**

Typically, the grids of town streets throughout the Midwest were oriented by compass points. When the Pacific Railroad was laid out through Pleasant Hill in 1858, it cut a diagonal swath through the axial grid of the township. In addition to laying out the railroad alignment, the railroad company platted two additions flanking the tracks. These additions created First, Second, Boardman, Wyoming, and Commercial streets, all of which are on axis with the alignment of the tracks, but skewed to the prevailing sectional grid. Further to the east, the railroad company's additions defined Lake, Taylor, and Locust streets, following the conventional grid

¹² Middleton, A13. According to Middleton, the town of Wyoming was platted by 1844. Pleasant Hill's Wyoming Street is a reference to the original settlement.

¹³ Middleton, A21.

¹⁴ Ibid.

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oriented to the cardinal axes. When the community of Pleasant Hill relocated its commercial center to the vicinity of the railroad stop shortly thereafter, the City continued to plat streets following the conventional axial grid begun on the ridge top. The resulting arrangement of streets in the City's central business district clearly reflects the juxtaposition of these merged influences (See Figure 2).

Haphazard street grids were an all too common byproduct of railroad development in small towns throughout the middle and western United States. In their quest for expansion, the railroad companies were primarily concerned about the speed of construction. The tracks followed alignments that were the easiest to engineer and the cheapest to build, as well as those that offered the most political sway. Beyond the platting and sale of commercial blocks adjacent to the tracks, little thought, if any, was given to community planning. Likewise, communities were so desperate for the economic boost a railroad station would bring that they did not concern themselves with the implications of odd intersections, lot shapes, and lot sizes.¹⁵

Railroad crews completed the new railroad alignment through Pleasant Hill in July, working their way toward crews concurrently rebuilding tracks southeast from Kansas City, Missouri.¹⁶ They met in Independence, Missouri and the first train passed through "New Town" Pleasant Hill on September 20, 1865 on its way from Kansas City to St. Louis.

Even before a depot could be constructed, the promise of the railroad brought new investors to Pleasant Hill and business houses previously established in "Old Town" began moving to "New Town." Within four years, thirteen additions were made to the City of Pleasant Hill, expanding "New Town" in all directions. Residents even moved homes not destroyed during the Border and Civil wars to "Middle Town" and "New Town."¹⁷

By 1867, the City quadrupled its pre-Civil War population and boasted 2,200 residents — more than twice Harrisonville's population at the time. Pleasant Hill's surge past Harrisonville in regional importance prompted some of the City's residents to campaign to form a new county with Pleasant Hill as the county seat.¹⁸

¹⁵ John W. Reps, *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning in the United States* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1965), 389, 392.

¹⁶ The line from Kansas City to Independence was completed in 1864, but was destroyed by Sterling Price's Raid later the same year. Missouri Pacific Historical Society, *Missouri Pacific (Railroad) History* [article online]; available from http://mopac.org/history_mp.html; Internet; accessed 02 December 2003.

¹⁷ Middleton, A21. "Middle Town" is Middleton's reference to the area between "Old Town" and "New Town" Pleasant Hill.

¹⁸ The new county was to be named Richland County.

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While some businesses and residents stayed in "Old Town," "New Town" rapidly took shape as the commercial and civic heart of Pleasant Hill. A streetscape of wood frame buildings interspersed with brick commercial blocks emerged along First and Wyoming streets. The enormous amount of construction during this short period supported three local lumberyards: Scott-Hope; William Myers; and Farmer-Jones, the predecessor of J. C. Jones Lumber Company.



1869 Bird's Eye View
Pleasant Hill, Missouri
(Library of Congress Railroad Map Collection)

Within five years, Pleasant Hill boasted three druggists, nine doctors, two banks, two newspapers, a meat market, numerous mercantile and dry goods stores, as well as a jeweler, a wholesale harness and saddle dealer, and at least two beer breweries and a beer garden. Carpenters, undertakers, various merchants, and stove and tinware salesmen operated shops in these newly constructed buildings. At least five mills and factories operated around the clock, shipping a variety of goods to locations as distant as Texas and New

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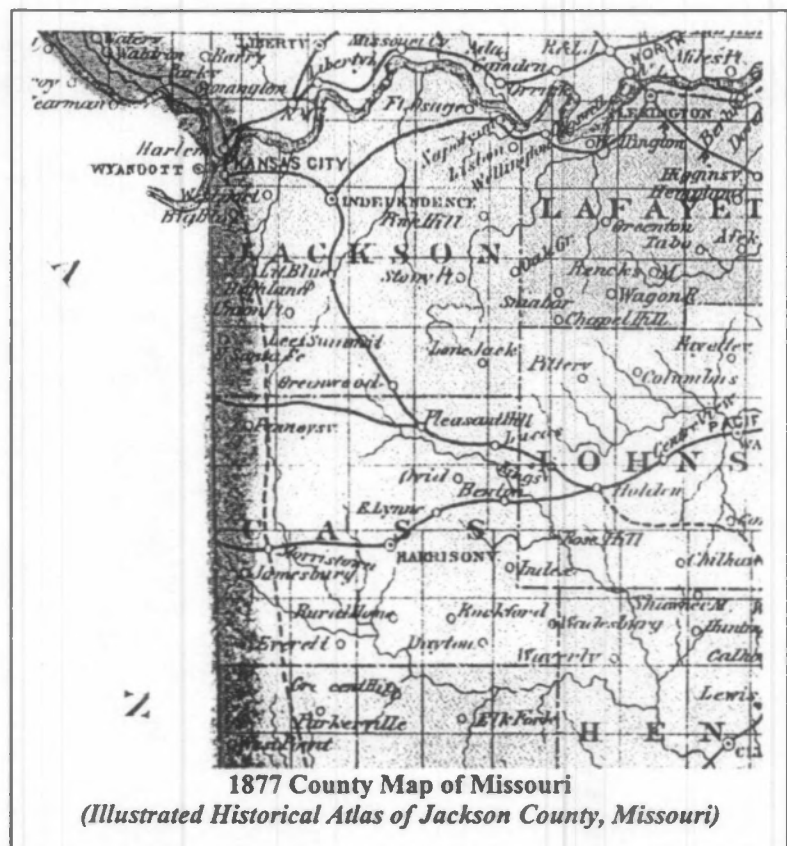
York. New saloons and hotels prospered with the combination of steady stage and rail traffic and a booming population.

THRIVING COMMERCIAL HUB OF CASS COUNTY (1870-1900)

Widespread railroad expansion across the nation quickly blanketed Missouri. Of the 114 counties in the state, only 6 were without a railroad at the end of the century.¹⁹ Regional hubs like Pleasant Hill reaped the benefits of this expansion. In addition to daily stage lines to and from various inland locations, Pleasant Hill boasted three rail connections by the end of the nineteenth century. The growing number of businesses in Pleasant Hill reflected prosperous times. Despite national economic depressions in 1873 and 1893, Pleasant Hill's access to multiple transportation routes ensured a stable local economy during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

In 1869, Kansas City's new bridge across the Missouri River and its pending connection to the Hannibal & St. Joseph railroad had St. Louis fearing diminished trade with the west.

As a result, the St. Louis owners of the Pacific Railroad Company pushed for the completion of a branch line from Pleasant Hill to Lawrence, Kansas. Concurrently, Pleasant Hill feared a pinch on their regional trade due to the construction of the Ft. Scott and Gulf Railroad forty miles to the west and of the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Lines twelve miles to the south. Eager for additional railroad access, the City pledged \$50,000 toward the Pacific Railroad branch line.²⁰ Completed in 1871, the St. Louis, Lawrence &



¹⁹ Howard L. Conrad, ed., *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri: Railroads* (New York, Louisville, and St. Louis: Southern History Co., 1901) [book online]; available from <http://tacnet.missouri.org/~mgood/history/railroads.html>; Internet; accessed 10 November 2003.

²⁰ Belton, Grandview, and Kansas City Railroad Co., "Belton's Railroad History 1880's to 1960's" (Belton, Missouri: Smoky Hill Railway & Historical Society, Inc., 2003) [article online]; available from <http://www.orgsites.com/mo/beltonrailroad/LBR-43.doc>; Internet; accessed 10 November 2003

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Denver²¹ line was twenty miles shorter than the earlier route through Kansas City, effectively bypassing it. The additional line further boosted Pleasant Hill's growth and confidence as the most rail-accessible point in the county at the time.

Within a decade, the Atlantic Pacific Railroad Company (previously Pacific Railroad Company) completed a second branch line south from Pleasant Hill through Harrisonville for the Lexington & Southern Railway Company. All freight from Kansas City bound for the Missouri, Kansas & Texas line (which ran through Harrisonville) now passed through Pleasant Hill. With three railroad lines through town, traffic was such that the *Local-Dispatch* warned readers against leaving horses unhitched with "trains passing through almost every hour."²² Railroad maps from the era show Pleasant Hill as a hub with "spokes" in four directions.

Pleasant Hill's robust economy expanded and diversified, supporting numerous competing businesses, including dozens of grocery stores and meat markets, seven clothing houses, five saloons, and five hotels. One- and two-part commercial buildings lined the blocks adjacent to the railroad tracks and from the retail center, industrial businesses extended along the tracks in each direction. Local businessmen formed trade groups and commercial clubs, striving to build on Pleasant Hill's commercial power to attract new industries and businesses to town.



In addition to retail businesses and professional services, Pleasant Hill rose to prominence as a leading manufacturing and wholesaling center in the region. Inland mills and manufacturing enterprises could not compete as railroad access had become essential for business success. Such transportation connections brought Noah Hunt and his flour mill works from Lone Jack to Pleasant Hill in 1897.²³ His Pleasant Hill Milling Company thrived and became one of the leading milling enterprises in the region. The Kellogg

²¹ The 1887 *Commissioners Official Railway Map of Missouri* shows this line as the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad. By 1901, it was known as the Kansas City, Clinton & Springfield railroad.

²² Middleton, A40.

²³ Ibid., A77.

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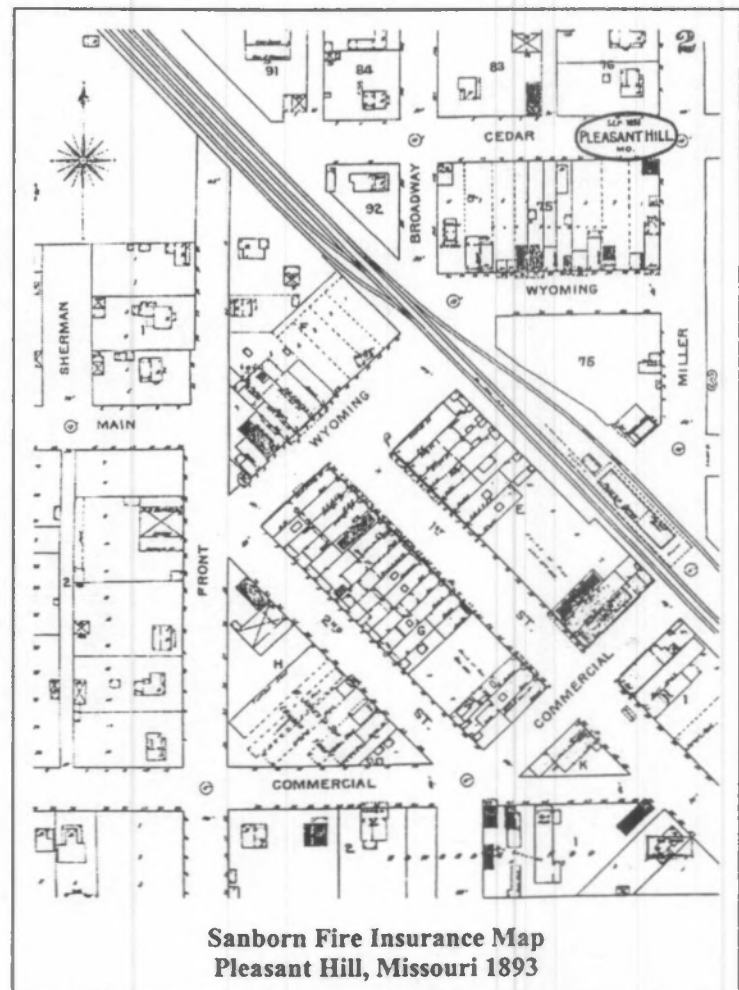
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Cut Flower and Plant Company became the "largest greenhouse west of the Mississippi."²⁴ A carriage factory, a woolen mill, a cigar factory, an electric belt manufactory, two canning factories, a bottling works, a marble works, a brick works, a chair factory, and a wagon scale manufacturing company all took advantage of the commercial synergy created by multiple transportation routes.

While commercial growth was solid within Pleasant Hill, the economy of the region remained largely dependent on agricultural production, which grew steadily. During this period, Cass County consistently reported corn and hay yields that were better than the statewide average.²⁵ As the shipping point for the surrounding agricultural region, most area harvests passed through Pleasant Hill. In addition to widespread cultivation, livestock was a significant component of the regional economy and stockyards developed along the railroad tracks in Pleasant Hill. According to Missouri State Agricultural census data from the period, there was more than one milk cow and three pigs for every person in Cass County.²⁶ To be at the center of the regional livestock trade, T. A. Simpson established his prize-winning Hereford stock farms at Pleasant Hill during this period.

The cohesive appearance of downtown Pleasant Hill changed drastically during the final decades of the nineteenth century as fire plagued the City on numerous occasions. With no city water system or fire department, many of these fires almost burned out of control. Three in particular proved significantly destructive to the downtown commercial district. The first occurred on July 13, 1888 and destroyed a row of seven frame buildings on the east



²⁴ Ibid., A35.

²⁵ Missouri Agricultural Statistics Service, *Missouri State and County Agri-facts* (Jefferson City, Missouri: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1999) [census statistics online]; available from <http://agebb.missouri.edu/mass/agrifact/index.htm>; Internet; accessed 18 November 2003.

²⁶ Ibid.

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end of Wyoming Street, just west of the railroad tracks. The second engulfed four buildings on the southwest side of First Street on the night of February 13, 1891. Less than three years later, on the night of July 15, 1893, a third fire destroyed an additional six buildings on the southeast side of First Street. Six weeks later, Pleasant Hill's fire department formed.

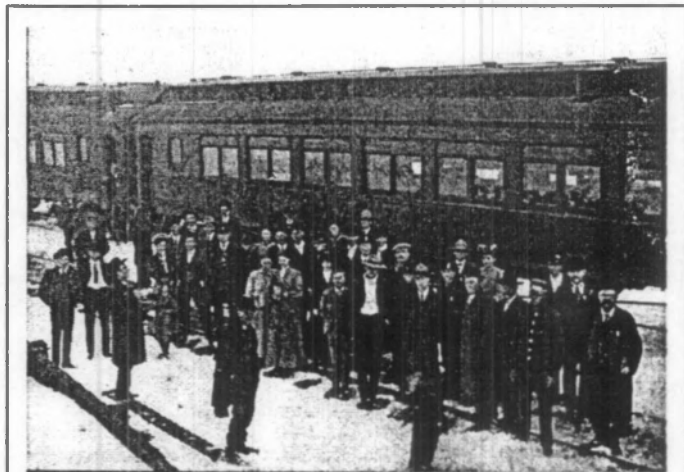
Constructed at 121 First Street in 1894, one of the earliest buildings to fill one of the gaps left by the fires was a two-story drug store and office building. Its description at the time as "a jewel in a pig's snout" references the poor appearance of the surrounding streetscape.²⁷ The gaping holes on Wyoming and First streets were slow to fill; as late as 1898, only six buildings had been constructed on the seventeen lots laid to waste by fire.²⁸

**Figure 3:
Population of Pleasant Hill²⁹**

<u>1867</u>	<u>c.1885</u>	<u>1890</u>	<u>c.1895</u>
2,200	3,000	2,200	2,500

EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY (1900-1929)

At the turn of the twentieth century, Pleasant Hill's commercial strength continued to lie in its transportation connections. The multiple railroad lines provided the underpinning for manufacturing and freight businesses and the regional roads facilitated the farm-to-market economic sector. Despite wartime restrictions, an agricultural recession, and the onset of the Great Depression, Pleasant Hill provided critical trade and employment opportunities for the surrounding region during the early twentieth century.



**Train Passengers at Pleasant Hill, circa 1910
(Pleasant Hill Historical Society Archives)**

Nationwide railroad expansion continued into the early twentieth century and Cass County boasted approximately two hundred miles of track along seven main and branch lines during this period. Rock

²⁷ Middleton, A76.

²⁸ It would take another two decades to fill most of these lots. The lot at 103-105 Wyoming Street remained vacant until circa 1995. The forward part of the lot at 125 First Street remains vacant to this day and is counted as a contributing element to the historic district.

²⁹ Middleton and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

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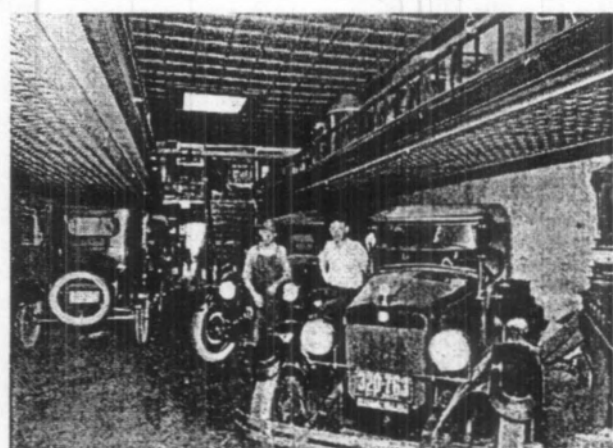
Island Railroad Company's new line to Kansas City from Johnson County, Missouri came to Pleasant Hill in 1904. Crews constructed a "Y" track to connect the new road with the Missouri Pacific (previously Pacific Railroad) tracks southeast of downtown and, shortly thereafter, erected a depot. With the loss of the Kansas City, Clinton, & Springfield line through town earlier that year, and Harrisonville's by then solid role as the railroad hub of the county, Pleasant Hill welcomed the new Rock Island line enthusiastically.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the railroad was the primary means of long-distance travel. However, the growth of the market economy across the rural Midwest during this period underscored the need for all-weather roads. Well-maintained roads provided farmers easy access to markets and made a significant difference in the economic health of rural trade centers such as Pleasant Hill.

Vehicular roads became increasingly important priorities for local and county governments and Cass County developed rock road initiatives as early as the mid-1890s. The City of Pleasant Hill responded by purchasing a rock crusher in 1904 for the specific purpose of improving City streets. The first road of its kind in the county, upon its completion in 1909, the North Rock Road began at the intersection of Cedar and Lake streets in Pleasant Hill, traveled east to Main Street,³⁰ then went north to the Jackson-Cass county line.

The nationwide fascination with the automobile reached Pleasant Hill and by 1909, about a dozen automobiles maneuvered the City's streets and Schultz' Garage became the first auto repair shop in town. What was initially deemed a passing infatuation became a valid means of transporting goods and passengers. As early as 1915, the *Kansas City (MO) Star* reported that diminished railroad passenger volume was resulting in higher rates for train travel.³¹ By the late 1920s, ridership diminished to the point that the Missouri Pacific began cutting passenger trains through Pleasant Hill. Further reflecting this shift, new taxi and bus services became available in Pleasant

Hill, three new filling stations opened, and an auto campground began hosting an average of three groups a night.



Knorpp Auto on South First Street, circa 1922
(Pleasant Hill Historical Society Archives)

³⁰ What is now State Highway 7.

³¹ Middleton, G19.

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As roads improved and automobiles became increasingly affordable, the car became ubiquitous in the United States. Jackson County's 1917 completion of the White Cloud Road – which connected North Rock Road to the Lee's Summit-Lone Jack Road³² – provided a hard-surface link between Pleasant Hill and Kansas City.³³ The rising number of automobiles in downtown Pleasant Hill led to traffic congestion by the mid-1920s. As a result, the City authorized parking regulations that prohibited parking down the middle of First Street³⁴ and established a parking lot at the northeast corner of Lake and Locust streets.

During the 1910s and 1920s, local, state, and federal highway projects responded to the growing demand for paved roads. Such projects profoundly affected and were often influenced by commercial centers like Pleasant Hill. The routing of highways through, around, or past communities created growth patterns that often changed a town's physical orientation and stimulated development away from the traditional town center.

While the railroad provided market transportation during the previous half-century, truck delivery of goods was on the rise and the automobile increasingly became the preferred mode of travel. At this time, Pleasant Hill experienced the beginning of a physical shift to the east of its established commercial center, ironically returning to the location of the town's commercial beginnings along Main Street. A 1912 resurfacing project map shows State Highway 7 continuing south along Main Street, with the route through downtown shown as a business "loop."

Constructed using a total of \$52,000 from local landowners along the route, as well as city, state and federal monies, the development of a permanent highway between Pleasant Hill and Harrisonville extended and improved State Highway 7 to the south. Landowners along Main Street anticipated the potential commercial and residential growth east of the town center and subscribed to pay for grading and the installation of culverts.



During the summer of 1929, road crews paved State Highway 7 with concrete slab, beginning in Pleasant Hill and continuing north to the county line. State Highway 7,

³² What is now Highway 50.

³³ Middleton, A75.

³⁴ Henceforth, diagonal parking along the curbs was required.

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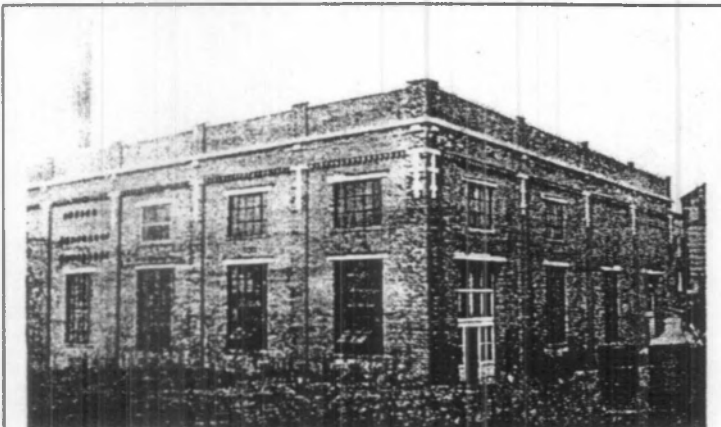
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which was already a well-traveled road, became a thoroughfare for traffic leading across eastern Cass and Jackson counties.

Due in large part to solid transportation routes, commercial and manufacturing investment marked this period in Pleasant Hill. As the twentieth century progressed, late nineteenth century commercial businesses evolved with the City's economy. The local mercantile or dry goods store became the dime store. Automobile service stations replaced harness shops and livery stables, and movie theaters replaced the opera house. New buildings and new businesses filled lots that had been vacant for decades, and downtown commercial lots doubled in value from \$250 in 1901 to \$500 in 1902.³⁵ By 1915, downtown buildings were selling for between \$4,000 and \$6,000.³⁶ A 1925 *Pleasant Hill Times* article reported that downtown Pleasant Hill property values had risen 60 percent from 1918 values.³⁷

In addition to new construction, this era of commercial growth resulted in numerous expansions and remodeling projects. Downtown building owners and retailers "modernized" their "old" nineteenth century storefronts by covering upper façades with pressed metal or stucco or by installing new storefront window systems that often included brick bulkheads and tinted prism transom glass.

Coinciding with downtown retail investment, Pleasant Hill's industrial sector grew significantly during this period. Existing companies such as McDonald Scale, Hunt Brothers Milling, and Kellogg's Flower & Plant expanded their facilities, modernized machinery, and improved infrastructure to bring water, electricity, and good roads to their plants. Many new manufacturing enterprises arrived in Pleasant Hill



Green Power & Light Company Plant, circa 1920
(Pleasant Hill Historical Society Archives)

during this time as well, often citing transportation connections and complementary businesses as the attractions to the area. By the 1920s, new industrial concerns in Pleasant Hill included a poultry plant, a slaughterhouse, two milk plants, a Coca-Cola distribution facility, a publishing company, and garment and glove manufactories.

One of the most significant investments was the development of the Green Power & Light Company plant in 1918. The power plant not only provided additional

³⁵ Middleton, B8.

³⁶ Ibid., C13.

³⁷ Ibid., D38.

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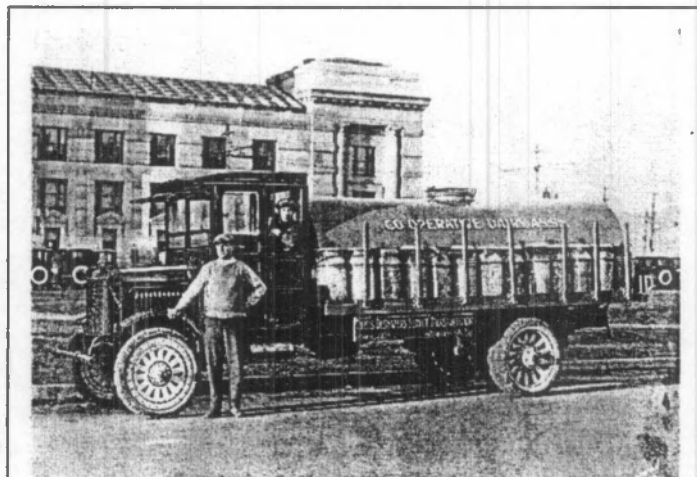
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electric service to Pleasant Hill,³⁸ it also provided power to over fifty towns and small cities throughout west central Missouri. To have a stable water supply for their power generation needs, the company constructed Baldwin Lake, which also served as a new City reservoir.³⁹ When the Green Power & Light Company was consolidated into the Missouri Public Service Company in 1927, the *Pleasant Hill Times* lamented the loss of the family business and heralded their achievements in Pleasant Hill: "[they have] been one of the greatest factors in the development the community...with[in] the last decade."⁴⁰

The national agricultural recession of the 1920s substantially affected rural Cass County. Farm ownership dropped 20 percent and tenant farming increased by approximately the same amount.⁴¹ *The Pleasant Hill Times* reported a drop in farm prices from \$120 per acre in 1920 to \$88 per acre in 1925. These values dropped an additional \$5 per acre by 1929.

Though the value of farmland and publicly traded agricultural products dropped, agriculture-related industries in Pleasant Hill prospered and provided a much needed economic lifeline for area farmers. Improved roads and proximity to Kansas City provided an additional boost to regional agriculture during this period. In Pleasant Hill, truck farming became common. Small ten-acre farms devoted to supplying produce for the Kansas City market developed along Main Street and the North Rock Road. As the farthest point from which truck-delivered milk could still be considered Grade A, Pleasant Hill's location became a great advantage for local dairies during such lean

times. The two milk plants in Pleasant Hill, which received a combined 3,900 gallons of milk per day during the early 1920s, reported increased volumes during the mid-1920s. Booth Farms & Hatchery Company, established in Pleasant Hill in the early 1920s, expanded rapidly during this period to become one of the largest hatcheries in the nation.⁴² *The Pleasant Hill Times* declared these industries extremely



**Pleasant Hill Cooperative Dairy Association's
Delivery Truck in Kansas City, 1920s
(Pleasant Hill Historical Society Archives)**

³⁸ Pleasant Hill began using electricity in 1903.

³⁹ The City struggled with poor water quality from its well-water works since 1911.

⁴⁰ Middleton, D48.

⁴¹ Missouri Agricultural Statistics Service, *Missouri State and County Agri-facts*.

⁴² Complementing the hatchery business, Booth established *The Standard Poultry Journal*, which circulated 150,000 copies per month by 1929.

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valuable assets to Pleasant Hill, providing a steady stream of cash for area farmers who came to town regularly to do business.⁴³

Figure 4: Population Of Pleasant Hill⁴⁴

<u>1900</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1913</u>	<u>1920</u>	<u>1925</u>	<u>1932</u>	<u>1960</u>
2,002	2,065	2,500	1,965	2,235	2,330	2,689

Improvements in public facilities and citywide services marked the period leading up to the Great Depression. In the downtown commercial district, "granitoid" sidewalks replaced the nineteenth century wooden plank walkways and electric lamp posts lined First Street. During the early 1910s, telephone service reached 750 Pleasant Hill residents, and six rural mail delivery routes served area farmers. By 1915, the City had macadamized First Street out to the eastern city limits. The public passed bond issues for the completion of new City water and sewer systems by 1919 and for the construction of the first local high school in 1923.

"Today the town has everything — electricity, gas, water, sewers, highways, mail delivery, over four hundred automobiles, it has...great greenhouses... it has the big milk plants, the big flour mills, the Standard Poultry Journal now circulating 150,000 copies monthly, the Belsaw Corporation, the huge Booth hatcheries, the biggest postal receipts of any town in the 6th congressional district save Clinton, the American Scale, Kansas City freight rate, bus and railroad service. It is within an hour by highway of the heart of Kansas City. These are elements of growth. And Pleasant Hill will grow."⁴⁵

Pleasant Hill Times, August 16, 1929

THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND WAR (1930-1945)

The Great Depression hit Cass County full force. Already suffering from recessions in the 1920s, the county's many farmers were particularly vulnerable. A regional drought from 1935 to 1937 compounded the austere conditions for farm families and dimmed hopes of immediate recovery. Many regional farmers lost their farms and a number of Cass County banks folded. Although Pleasant Hill lost several businesses and the growth of the previous decades slowed, the City's banks continued to be solvent and the local economy remained relatively steady. Recently improved transportation arteries and economic staples such as the milk plants, the hatchery, the mill, and other manufacturing concerns provided critical stability.

Responding to the combination of drought and the Great Depression, federal relief programs came to the nation's aid. Numerous programs, such as the Works Projects Administration (WPA); the Public Works

⁴³ Middleton, D13, D35.

⁴⁴ Middleton and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

⁴⁵ Middleton, D59.

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Administration (PWA); and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) had a significant impact on local economic conditions and on the visual landscape. Through these programs, local governments received funding for construction of public buildings and infrastructure, both of which provided jobs and stimulated the economy.

Projects receiving PWA funds were usually major long-range construction programs that employed skilled workers and benefited the general public. A \$55,000 PWA grant enabled the City of Pleasant Hill to build the Municipal Power Plant in 1939 and to disconnect from the Missouri Public Service Corporation.

Additional Depression-era initiatives included large appropriations for existing federal departments, notably the U.S. Department of Treasury, which was responsible for the construction of all federal buildings during this period. In 1935, Congress appropriated \$60 million for the construction of federal buildings nationwide, \$68,000 of which was earmarked for the Pleasant Hill Post Office.⁴⁶ As part of this construction campaign, the U.S. Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture, later known as the Section of Fine Arts, commissioned works of art to decorate these public spaces. This program required that murals and sculpture reflect the culture and/or history of the local community and, by 1944, was responsible for the installation of artwork in over 1,100 postal facilities nationwide.⁴⁷ The mural that decorates the Pleasant Hill Post Office, *Back Home: April 1865* by Tom Lea, depicts the destruction and desolation of the region during the Border and Civil wars.



Detail of Back Home: April 1865
by Tom Lea

Although private construction and expansion generally stalled during this period, significant investment continued in Pleasant Hill. At least six downtown buildings underwent remodeling and Colonial Poultry and the Masonic Lodge constructed new buildings on Cedar Street.

The general disruption of private construction resulting from the Great Depression continued after the United States entered World War II. As the nation refitted for wartime production, public works efforts also ceased. During the war years, while a housing shortage in Pleasant Hill resulted in the relocation of at

⁴⁶ "\$68,000 for P.O. Here," *Pleasant Hill (MO) Times*, June 28, 1935. Pleasant Hill, Missouri: Pleasant Hill Historical Society Museum and Archives.

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least eleven bungalows from Belton, little change occurred to the infrastructure or the appearance of the downtown commercial district.⁴⁸

POST-WORLD WAR II PLEASANT HILL

By the end of World War II, Pleasant Hill's nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial district reflected the effects of the Great Depression and the rationed resources of the wartime period. As in many American cities in the late 1940s, poorly maintained older buildings received storefront "updates." An immense wave of new construction also significantly altered the appearance of downtown Pleasant Hill, particularly on the east side of the railroad tracks along Paul, Lake, and Cedar streets. The amount of post-war remodeling and new construction is not surprising. Almost twenty years had passed during which the Great Depression and wartime restrictions severely constrained construction and commercial opportunities. Thus, there was a real and psychological need for new clear symbols of progress.

Reportedly inspired by the American Legion War Dads cooperative efforts to construct a Memorial Building, the Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce sponsored and promoted what became known as the "Big Build." Beginning at the close of World War II in 1945, it was to be the "most ambitious project for town beautification ever undertaken in Pleasant Hill."⁴⁹ The heart of this community development project centered on the transformation of the nineteenth century Paul Street business block into a modern civic center.⁵⁰ The plan commenced in 1948 with the demolition of late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, the widening of Paul Street, and the construction of the Memorial Building. Coinciding with these improvements, numerous additional projects took place throughout Pleasant Hill during the same year, with the investment totaling almost \$1 million.⁵¹ New buildings under construction included James Rowe's new auto garage on Boardman Street, the Allen Motor Company dealership on Cedar Street, and the Booth Public Library on Lake Street. The People's Theater underwent a major remodeling, as did the neighboring commercial building at 104 South Lake Street and the Prewitt & Sons factory on lower South First Street. In addition, the construction of the State Highway 7 bypass and the Lake Pleasant Hill reservoir were both underway at this time. More construction occurred in Pleasant Hill during the "Big Build" than during any other period since the late 1860s.⁵²

The momentum of the "Big Build" continued through the 1950s, resulting in additional remodelings, new construction, and the eventual completion of the 1945 revitalization campaign. The development project

⁴⁷ Arkansas State University, *Post Office Mural from Pocahontas unveiled in ASU ceremony Oct. 20* (Jonesboro, Arkansas: University Communications Office, 2003) [press release online]; available from <http://asunews.astate.edu/Pocahontasmural.htm>; Internet; accessed 4 February 2004.

⁴⁸ Norma Middleton, "When the houses came rolling to town," *Pleasant Hill (MO) Times*, Pleasant Hill, Missouri: Pleasant Hill Historical Society & Museum Archives.

⁴⁹ Norma Middleton, "Pleasant Hill's new Civic Center," *Pleasant Hill (MO) Times*, April 25, 1990, p.10.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

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culminated in 1959 with the erection of the Pleasant Hill Bank and the Pleasant Hill City Hall buildings in the Paul Street Civic Center block.

The completion of the State Highway 7 realignment in 1949 effectively diverted traffic about a mile east of the downtown commercial district. Subsequent new construction and commercial development concentrated along the improved route and national trends materialized in Pleasant Hill as convenience stores, gas stations, restaurants, and new housing developments appeared along State Highway 7.



Aerial View of Pleasant Hill, Missouri, circa 1960
(Pleasant Hill Historical Society Archives)

ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN PLEASANT HILL: 1865-1959

LOCATION AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

During western Missouri's early settlement period, access to water, suitable building materials, and roads influenced the location, configuration, and physical appearance of towns such as "Old Town" Pleasant Hill. The arrival of the railroad and its alignments drastically effected the location and configuration of new and existing towns. While many new towns were born by the railroad, existing towns like Pleasant Hill physically moved to meet the new transportation line.

Railroad companies anticipated this shift and in addition to the right-of-way, they often bought supplemental acreage to plat into saleable commercial and industrial lots. Typically aligned parallel to the railroad tracks, the configuration of lots and streets in downtown Pleasant Hill, specifically along First, Front, Wyoming, and Commercial streets, reflects this development pattern.

PROPERTY TYPE AND MATERIALS

The evolution of Pleasant Hill's commercial center mirrored that of other growing commercial centers in the region. Most of the early commercial buildings were simple wood frame structures capable of housing various business functions. As soon as possible, often due to fire damage, owners replaced their first buildings with more permanent masonry structures. Most were one or two stories in height with local merchants and businesses occupying the ground floor. Rooms on the upper floors served as professional offices, assembly rooms, or residential space for the merchants' families or tenants.

After the Border and Civil wars, the cities and towns of western Missouri experienced a physical and emotional need to make order from the chaos of these conflicts. Through the boom years of the late nineteenth century, the shape of the downtown business center expanded as more retail shops, banks,

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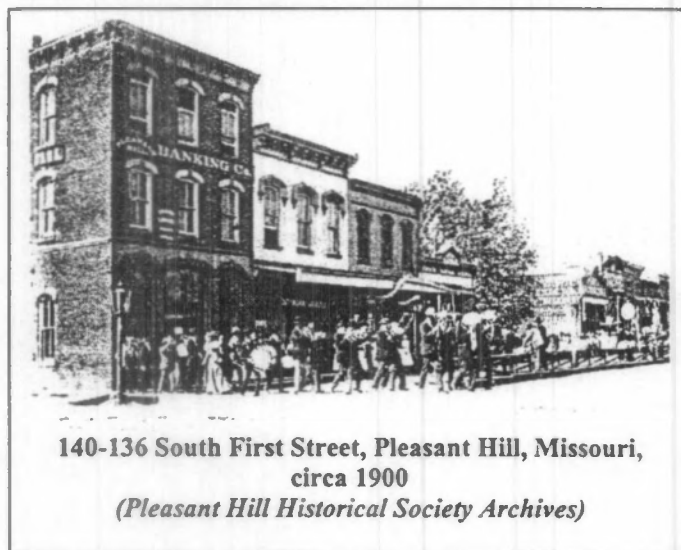
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industrial supply companies, offices, and hotels began to appear.⁵³ Within five years of the end of the Civil War and the subsequent arrival of the railroad, Pleasant Hill's central commercial district at "New Town" expanded two blocks from the Pacific Railroad depot in each direction.

Most nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings were built to be seen from the front rather than as freestanding objects. As a result, the main façade provided commercial architecture with its distinctive qualities. Sidewalls were often party walls shared with or secured to those of the adjacent structure. Walls at the end of blocks or facing onto alleys had simple, utilitarian design treatments. Lot dimensions determined form and commercial buildings filled most if not all of their respective lots. Most lots shared standard dimensions, were rectangular, and were much deeper than they were wide.⁵⁴

The composition of most retail and industrial building façades can be reduced to a few simple designs that reveal the major divisions of function. Those designed for human occupation, rather than industrial processing or storage, reflect an effort to provide the greatest possible amount of natural light and air



through the use of large display windows, transom windows, light wells, and skylights.⁵⁵ Those designed for industrial processing and/or storage, provided space to accommodate machinery, furnish shelter, and store goods, but had limited front office space. Materials such as doors, windows, cornices, decorative details, and stylistic expressions were secondary characteristics reflecting the basic composition of the building.⁵⁶ In downtown Pleasant Hill, the extant historic commercial buildings fall into two distinct types — one- and two-part commercial blocks and industrial facilities.

Whether executed in a popular style or a simple generic design, the downtown retail commercial buildings found in communities like Pleasant Hill most commonly took the form of one- or two-part commercial block types.⁵⁷

⁵³ Early accounts indicate that many of the first buildings on South First Street stood on pilings above the chronically flooded lowland of Big Creek.

⁵⁴ Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture* (Washington D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987), 17.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 24, 29, 31.

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The industrial buildings found in downtown Pleasant Hill are located at the edge of the retail district. Their design and materials are function-specific. The builders utilized both traditional and new construction techniques and materials in a variety of combinations to create efficient, functional space. Stylistic concerns were secondary for these building types, often resulting in a false front treatment, restrained brick pattern work, or no decorative embellishment at all. While several of downtown Pleasant Hill's industrial buildings include design elements that could be considered commercial, the absence of storefront display windows distinguishes them as being industrial in function.

Through World War II, the demand for cheap materials and improved construction techniques led to numerous innovations. Materials such as aluminum and concrete gained increased use and widespread acceptance. By 1930, improvements to concrete block included the introduction of a standard size and the use of a lightweight aggregate.⁵⁸ It became a quick, cheap, and easy substitute for the more labor-intensive traditional building materials. Growing communities like Pleasant Hill took advantage of these developments, especially for the construction of functional and industrial buildings.

LATE VICTORIAN STYLES

The prosperity during the decades following the Civil War continued into the early twentieth century, resulting in rapidly changing architectural styles. Late Victorian design reflected a new taste for decoration and the increasing desire to have the buildings themselves perceived as ornaments to the community. Downtown buildings typically featured applied cornices with patterned brickwork and corbels, elaborate brackets, dentils, and complex moldings carved from wood or made from pressed metal. Storefronts and window surrounds also featured cast iron, stone, or wood trim. Advances in technology allowed for the mass production of this type of architectural ornamentation. With access to rail lines, builders could easily order standard products from catalogs or purchase stock items at the local lumberyard or iron works.

The builders of the first permanent buildings in "New Town" Pleasant Hill adapted the popular styles of the time according to the skills and materials available in the new community. Surviving examples of "high style" Late Victorian style commercial buildings in Pleasant Hill include versions of the Italianate style.

HISTORIC ECLECTICISM

Beginning in the 1890s and continuing into the twentieth century, a shift in American architecture toward historic eclecticism occurred. The Eclectic Movement drew inspiration from American Colonial-era architecture as well as the architecture of Europe. Designs emphasized strict adherence to stylistic traditions and minimal variation and innovation. Chicago's Columbian Exposition in 1893 played a major role in popularizing these changes. The Columbian Exposition introduced classical architectural forms

⁵⁸ Richard Bergmann, "Blocks Like Rocks," *Building Renovation* (Spring 1995) : 49.

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and mass-produced building materials and products to the owners of businesses in rural and urban commercial centers. Among the revival styles represented in Pleasant Hill are Jacobethan Revival, Colonial Revival, and Classical Revival.

MODERN MOVEMENT

Concurrent with the increased popularity of Historic Eclecticism, a growing progressive movement occurred in architectural philosophy. The change rejected the sentimentality and ornamental excesses of the Victorian era and historic eclecticism. Recent technological advances, including steel and reinforced concrete construction, allowed freedom from the design restrictions of load-bearing masonry or wood-framed structures. Early Modern Movement styles evolved from these influences and it embraced and expressed the machine age, often using broad bands of windows and brick and/or terracotta veneers to emphasize building structure.

Prosperity in the 1920s brought a general acceptance of Modern Movement designs. As the sobering realities of the Great Depression set in, designs inspired by the austere Modern Movement began to appear in smaller communities nationwide. Buildings constructed in Pleasant Hill, especially during the "Big Build" period after World War II, exhibit the influences of Art Deco, Moderne, and International Style architectural design.

HISTORIC ALTERATIONS

During the first decades of the twentieth century, prosperity in Pleasant Hill spurred enhancements to existing nineteenth century façades and storefronts in an effort to modernize commercial space. A common early twentieth century alteration was the addition of new brick facing with decorative corbel courses. Around World War II, to achieve a much-desired modern appearance, the application of stucco and the installation of steel casement windows were also popular. At mid-century, the influence of Modern Movement styling was reflected in the installation of aluminum-framed display windows, structural glass, and tile bulkhead cladding. Many of these alterations were in response to citywide modernization efforts spurred by the "Big Build" project, which affected the appearance of downtown Pleasant Hill from 1945 through 1960. Buildings that exhibit alterations made before 1960 reflect the architectural evolution of downtown Pleasant Hill during the District's period of significance. Because these changes have gained historical significance in their own right, these buildings are included in the historic district as contributing resources for their illustration of these trends.

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Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Cass County, Missouri

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District is indicated by the heavy line on the attached boundary map.

The boundaries of the Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District encompass the concentration of historic resources that retain integrity and are significantly associated with the commercial and civic development of the community as described in the contexts presented in Section 8. The District's boundaries correspond to the rear lot lines of the included properties, all of which lie within the original limits of the town's first additions platted in 1865. The contributing resources define the historic setting and feelings of downtown Pleasant Hill, which is strengthened by the intact historic street network and the prominent, integral location of the 1865 railroad alignment. Beyond the boundaries to the north, and west, the character of the built environment abruptly becomes residential in nature. Non-historic vacant land to the southeast of the District also provides an obvious boundary. The commercial properties beyond the south and southwest boundary lines were considered for inclusion, but were determined ineligible for reasons of integrity and age. Likewise, the cohesiveness and density of the commercial district diminishes east of Lake Street forming another logical boundary.

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5. 15/398460/4293510

6. 15/389220/4293640

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Peasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Cass County, Missouri

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

Photographer: Kerry Davis
Date of Photographs: August and December 2003
Location of Negatives: City of Pleasant Hill, Missouri

Photograph Number	Camera View	Street Address/Location
1	SW	100 Wyoming Street; Missouri Pacific Depot
2	NW	Wyoming Street (101-115); view from Missouri Pacific Depot
3	E	Wyoming and First streets; view from Front Street
4	S	First Street (114-140)
5	NE	First Street (105-111)
6	NE	First Street (121-123)
7	NE	127 First Street
8	SW	First Street (126-130)
9	SW	134 First Street
10	NW	First Street, view northwest from Commercial Street
11	NW	First Street (204, 140)
12	N	First Street (201-215)
13	SE	300 Commercial Street
14	E	Cedar Street; view from Lake Street
15	SE	Lake Street (100-120)
16	NE	108-110 Lake Street; People's Theater
17	NE	Lake Street (116-110)
18	E	124 Lake Street; Pleasant Hill Post Office
19	N	Lake Street; view from Locust Street
20	SW	Depot Park
21	NW	Paul Street; view from Lake Street
22	NE	Boardman Road at Cedar Street
23	NW	View northwest from Paul and Boardman streets

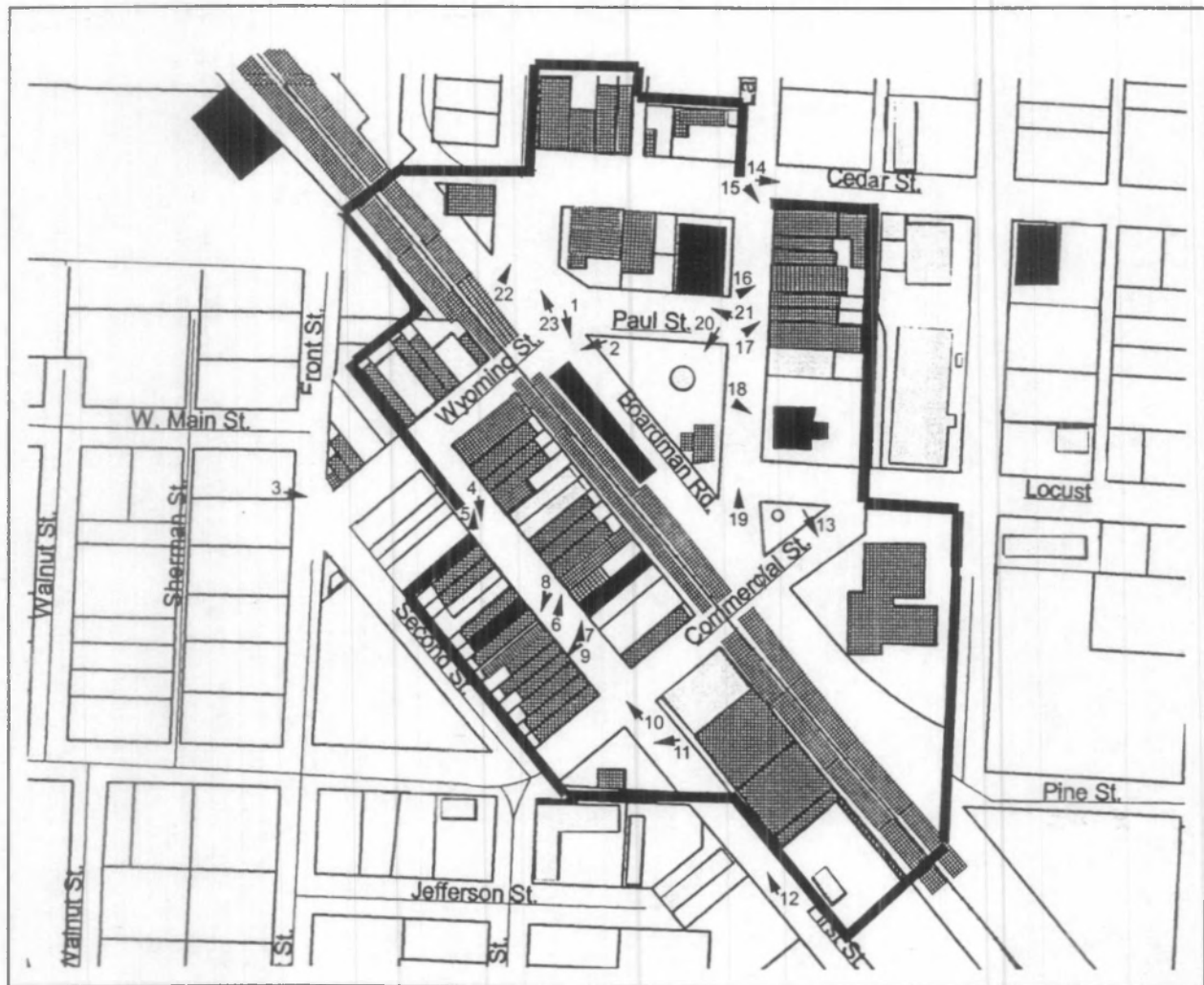
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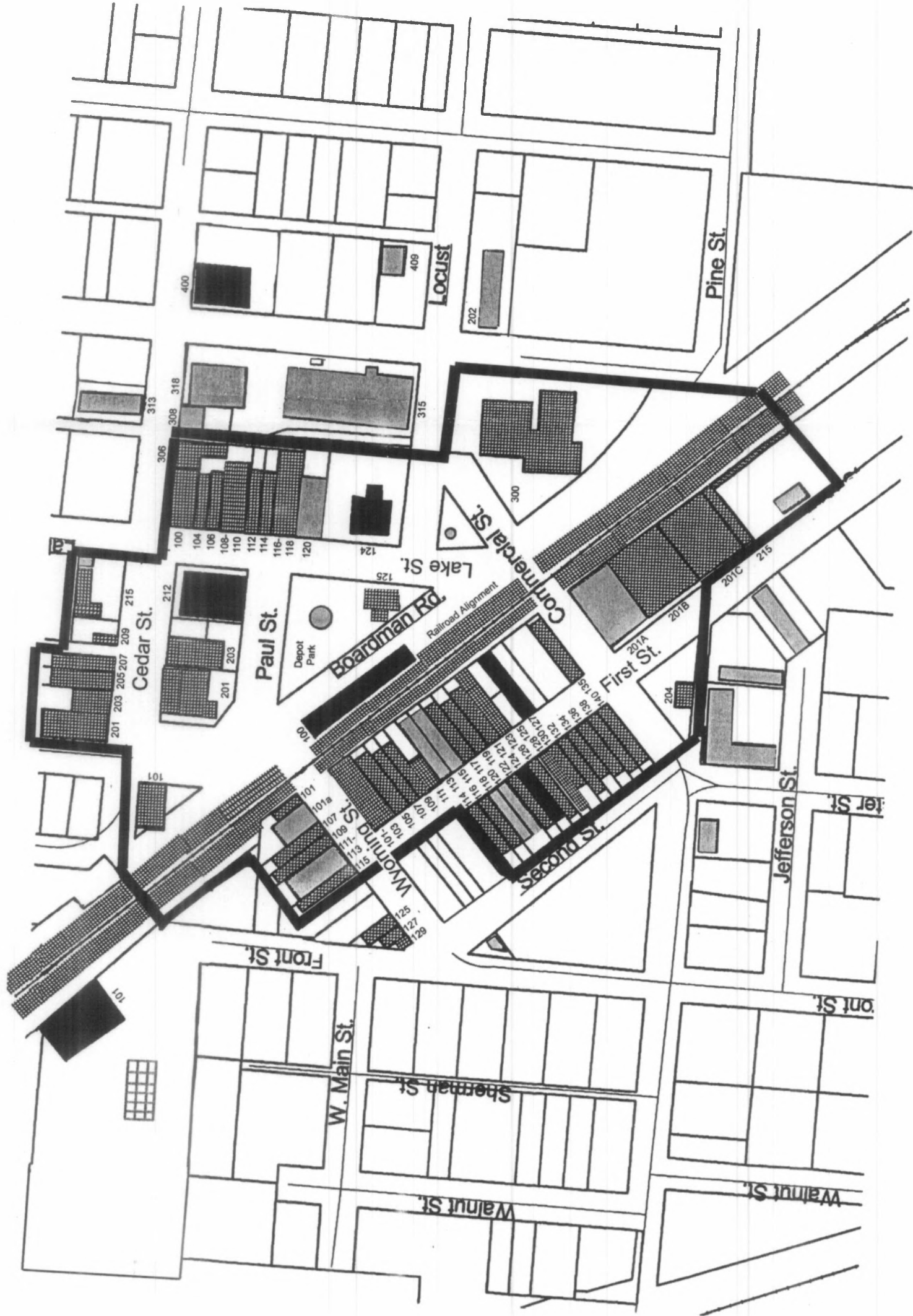
Section Photographic Documentation Page 52

Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District
Cass County, Missouri

**PLEASANT HILL DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT
PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION MAP**

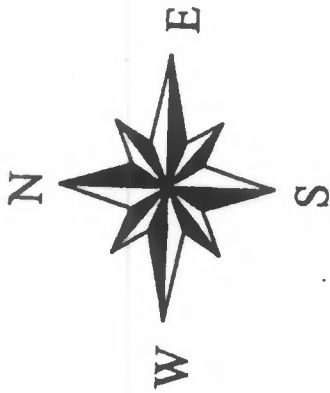


Pleasant Hill Downtown Historic District

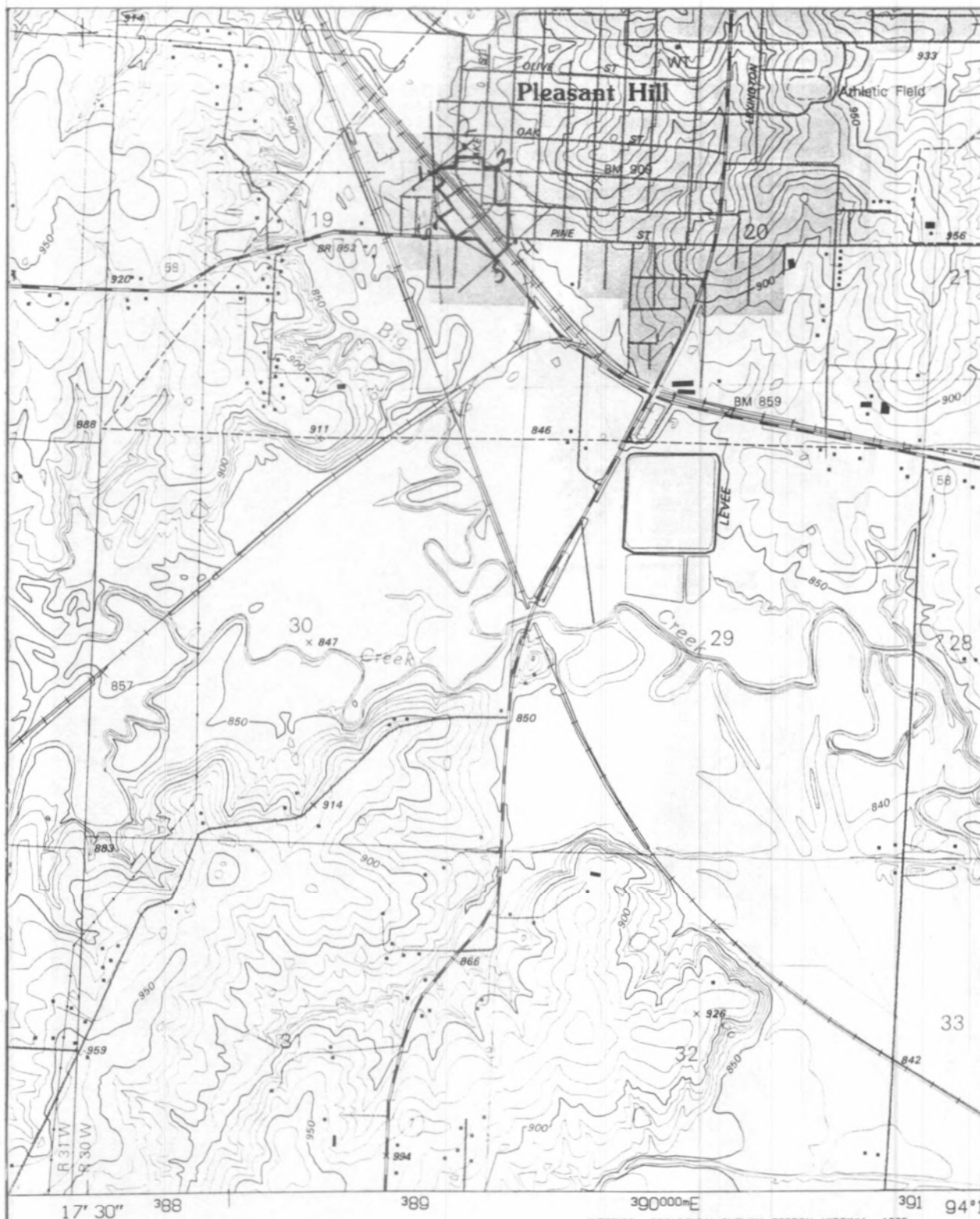


- Resource Eligibility**
- Individually Eligible
 - Contributing*
 - Non-contributing
 - Roads
 - Railroads
 - Parcels

* The street network is counted as a contributing resource, however this structure is not shaded to retain visual clarity.



1" = 200'



47° 30"

Pleasant Hill

Downstream

Historical District

4294

Pleasant Hill

Cass County, MO

UTM REFERENCE

① 15/389215/4293800

② 15/389350/4293960

③ 15/389470/4293880

④ 15/389540/4293590

⑤ 15/389460/4293510

⑥ 15/389220/4293640

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway hard surface Light-duty road, hard or improved surface

Secondary highway hard surface Unimproved road

Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3
4		5
6	7	8

1 Lees Summit
2 Lake Jacomo
3 Tarsney Lakes
4 Raymore
5 Strasburg
6 Peculiar
7 Harrisonville
8 East Lynne

MISSOURI

IA 22092

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

PLEASANT HILL, MO

38094-G3-TF-024

1990

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