

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Springfield Public Square Historic District (Amendment and Boundary Increase)

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number E. side Public Square, pt of the 300 blk Park Central East, N. side 200 blk W. Olive, pt of the 300 blk E. Olive. [N/A] not for publication

city or town Springfield [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Greene code 077 zip code 65806

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Mark A Miles

DECEMBER 18, 2009

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:)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources Within Property		
		Contributing	Non-contributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>21</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>		sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>		structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>2</u>		objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>25</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

5

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store
COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store
COMMERCE/TRADE: Office Building
COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant
RECREATION AND CULTURE: Theater
TRANSPORTATION: Road Related
LANDSCAPE: Square

Current Functions

COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store
COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store
COMMERCE/TRADE: Office Building
COMMERCE/TRADE: Restaurant
RECREATION AND CULTURE: Theater
LANDSCAPE: plaza

7. Description

Architectural classification

Other: Downtown Commercial Building
Other: Automobile Related Building
Other: Modern Movement landscape

Materials

foundation concrete
 walls brick
terra cotta
 roof not visible
 other metal
stucco

See continuation sheet []

Narrative Description See continuation sheet [x].

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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.

Areas of Significance

Commerce

Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1890-1959

ca. 1970

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: Larsen, L. P.

Architect: Hunt, Frank

Architect: Halprin, Lawrence, & Associates

Narrative Statement of Significance

See continuation sheet [x].

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography See continuation sheet [x].

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other:

Name of repository:

History Museum for Springfield

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: 15 acres

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	474000	4118300	15	474320	4118250
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	474320	4118100	15	474160	4118015

[x] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title See continuation sheet
organization _____ date Oct. 27, 2008
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state Missouri zip code _____

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 FOP for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name see continuation sheet
street & number _____
telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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Springfield Public Square Historic District (Amendment and Boundary Increase)
Greene County, MO
Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

Summary: The Springfield Public Square Historic District (amendment and boundary increase) encompasses the public square and a group of 28 commercial buildings located on the east half of it, the 300 block of Park Central East, and several blocks of Olive Street. Recent removal of a modern canopy from the buildings on the square remedied integrity issues for those properties, which in turn provide a link with intact properties on the adjacent streets. All of the buildings in the boundary increase were built for commercial use and all continue in that function today. The vast majority are like the buildings in the original district, examples of the Downtown Commercial Building property type described in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, MO." The group also includes good representative examples of another property type from that document, Automobile Related Buildings. Five buildings on Olive Street housed business that catered to automobile owners during the period of significance. Three of those were parking garages, one was a gas station and garage, and one was a repair facility. All of the buildings in the boundary increase are of masonry construction, and several feature refined stone and terra cotta ornamentation. Construction dates vary widely. Several of the buildings were built in the late 1800s and remodeled to their current form in the early to mid-20th century, and others were built to replace older buildings in the 1920s and 30s. Construction dates for the buildings being added range from ca. 1890 to ca. 1952. The original district included 6 contributing buildings, 3 non-contributing buildings and 1 previously listed building. This boundary increase adds 32 resources and changes the status of one building in the existing district from non-contributing to contributing. Of the resources in the boundary expansion/amendment, 25 are contributing, 3 are non-contributing and 5 were previously listed. Included in this count is the Park Central Square which is counted as a contributing site containing a contributing structure and two contributing objects.

Elaboration:

The boundary increase adds properties on the east and north sides of the square. Park Central East (originally St. Louis Street) intersects the square to the east, and Park Central North (originally Boonville Street) leads north out of the square. Jefferson Street is a major north-south road that marks the eastern edge of the boundary increase. Also included in this area are three blocks of Olive Street, which runs east-west directly north of the square. The square and Park Central East are lined with side-by-side commercial buildings, all of which sit

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directly on the sidewalk and share walls with adjacent buildings. The square itself contains a landscaped center, with paved streets along its outside edges. The landscaped area, which was installed in 1970, has concrete retaining walls, grassy areas and brick paving, as well as a small open pavilion and a larger fountain.

Jefferson Street has few buildings facing it in this area, and only one building in the boundary increase has a Jefferson Street address. The Frisco Building, at 309 Jefferson, is a large office building that faces east to Jefferson, with a small parking lot between it and the street. The property directly south of the Frisco building contains the other large office building in the increase, the Woodruff Building, at 333 Park Central East.

Olive Street is less densely developed. It contains a mix of property types and building sizes, and fewer retail properties than on the square or Park Central East. The two large theaters in the boundary increase have large blank back walls that face Olive, and there are five surface parking lots as well. The two larger lots are outside the boundaries, and two of the three that are in the boundaries are historic. The two westernmost lots on the south side of the street were used for parking during the period of significance. The 300 block of East Olive, at the east end of the increase, has a grouping of automobile related buildings, which include two commercial garages and an auto showroom. The 200 block of West Olive, at the west end of the increase, has a row of one- and two-story brick buildings that historically housed a combination of retail and automobile related businesses.

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Individual property descriptions. The historic dates and names given below are based upon review of Sanborn Maps, City Directories, and historic photos. Several of the buildings were remodeled during the period of significance; for those buildings, the historic name and construction date are based upon the time that they took their current form. In other words, an 1890s building that received a new façade ca. 1914 has been assigned a construction date of 1914. Historic names are based upon the first known occupants, and the year they were first known to be associated with the property is in parentheses. The property numbers continue the numbering system of the original district, which includes properties 1-10. Note also that property #3 has a revised description. [c] denotes a contributing resource; [nc] is non-contributing. Individually listed properties are noted as such.

**3.) 137 W. Park Central Square. National Shirt Co, ca.1952 (this front).
Revised description; the status of the building is being changed from non-contributing to contributing.**

A two-story two part commercial block with a stuccoed second story and low display windows that wrap around to the north side wall, which faces College Avenue. (The storefronts are currently boarded over.) This 19th century building has been remodeled numerous times over the years, and it was initially believed that the most recent changes were done after the end of the period of significance. It was thus counted as a non-contributing resource in the original nomination. Subsequent research has revealed that those changes were completed before 1956, the end of the period of significance for the district. Photos in the collection of the History Museum for Springfield show that the ground floor was remodeled ca. 1939, and the upper floor was done in the early 1950s. A History Museum photo dated April, 1956 shows that the building today looks much as it did during the period of significance. (See photos 13 and 14.)

The ground floor of the building retains many elements that were added to it in the mid-20th century, including large enameled metal wall panels, and a small rectilinear cornice along the top of the first floor. The north part of the cornice contains a row of light fixtures that were added when the ground floor was remodeled in the late 1930s. The building reached its current form as the home of the National Shirt Shop, which moved in around 1939 and stayed at that location into the late 1950s. The words "National Shirt Shops Coast to Coast" can still be seen in the terrazzo floor of the recessed corner entrance of the ground floor. Second floor elements which survive from within the period of

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significance include smooth stuccoed walls, the framework for a rooftop sign, and tall aluminum-framed windows along the north and east walls. The structure for the rooftop sign is the oldest intact feature on the building; it shows up in photos taken in the early 1900s. [c]

11.) 222 Park Central North, ca. 1890. Salvation Army (1920).

A three-story two part commercial block with painted brick walls, a flat roof and simple late Victorian styling. The ground floor has an open storefront that is early but not original; it has open display windows with newer wooden sheathing at the transom and bulkheads. The upper two floors of this corner building are filled with evenly spaced windows that are covered with plywood. The window openings, which are intact, have segmental arched tops and cast iron sills, and those on the second floor of the façade have ornamental metal lintels as well. Sanborn maps indicate that the building had a cornice along the top of the façade prior to 1933; there is currently only a simple band of molding a few feet below the roof line. The current storefront may have been installed about the same time the cornice was removed, and those appear to be the only changes of note since then. [c]

12.) Public Square, c. 1835, 1970.

In 1835 John Polk Campbell donated 50 acres, including 2 acres for a public square, for the Greene County Seat. Since that time, the square has undergone several permutations. The site was briefly the courthouse square (c. 1836-c. 1861), but for much of the late 19th and early 20th Century, the square was simply a large open space used for horse/wagon parking and public gathering. From c. 1871 to 1882 a large wooden bell tower with speaker's platform occupied the center of the square, and was replaced by a stone monument to Civil War General Lyon (monument removed in 1884). The square was also home to the Gottfried Tower, a metal tower topped by a copy of the Statue of Liberty, and electrified with bright lights from 1899 to 1908. Neither tower took up much space, and much of the square continued to be used as parking for neighboring stores and government buildings. In 1911, the city built a roundabout for the trolley system in the center of the square. This large, round, concrete slab was known as "the pie" occupied the square in 1947 when the site was opened to cross traffic and the corners used for public parking. In the mid-1960s, the city once again looked at reconfiguring the square.

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Today, the center of the square features a formal landscape that was dedicated in 1970 as part of an urban redevelopment project that began in the late 1960s. It was designed by Lawrence Halprin, a nationally prominent landscape architect. The Halprin design includes low concrete retaining walls around the perimeter of the space, with a sunken courtyard of brick in the center. A large fountain near the east side of the square features roughly textured concrete, and the west side has an open pavilion and a large abstract metal sculpture. Mature trees and simple lawns are located between the edges of the courtyard and the paved street that circles the square.

The center square was part of a larger redevelopment plan that included creating a pedestrian mall with modern canopies on all four sides. The pedestrian mall and canopies were installed in the early 1970s, based on a later, non-Halprin plan. In 1984, the pedestrian mall was removed and the streets around the square reopened to traffic. The canopies around the outer square have also been removed. The center, sunken plaza, remains largely intact. The site has seen some modifications to the plaza paving. A handicap access ramp, small historical plaques, and new vegetation have also been introduced. Overall, however, Halprin's design for the center square is largely intact retaining the geometric layout, terraced retaining walls, water feature, and other elements. Though this configuration of the square dates after the period of significance for the larger district, the square is considered contributing because of its continued use as an open public space and for its design by master landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. Square--Site [c]; Pavilion--structure [c]; Fountain--object [c]; sculpture--object [c]

13.) 154 N. Park Central Square, 1914. Nathan Clothing Company (1914).

A large two-story brick two part commercial block with Craftsman styling. Located on a prominent corner of the square, the building has two main elevations, the south, which faces the square, and the west, which faces Central Park North. Each of those walls has a small bracketed terra cotta cornice and a band of large windows at the second floor. Those multi-light wood-framed windows are original and in good to fair condition. The lower level of the façade and the front bay of the side wall have open storefronts that are early but not original. A large metal framework atop the building has been used for signs throughout its history. The sign has a tall narrow torch to each side and the word DRINK in the center. The torches are original; the word drink is not. [c]

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14.) 155 N. Park Central Square, 1914. State Savings and Trust-Record Exchange (1920).

A small two-story two part commercial block with simple Classical Revival detailing. The façade is sheathed with ornamental terra cotta, including a shaped parapet, a small cornice, and a band of trim around the second floor window opening. That opening has newer windows with some wooden infill, but no changes have been made to the opening itself. The ground floor storefront was infilled with brick in the 1970s or 80s. That infill includes a large arched doorway and very narrow windows. The storefront design significantly affects the historic character of the property, but the building is considered contributing due to the retention of second floor features and decorative terra cotta cladding. [c]

15.) 156 N. Park Central Square, 1914. Queen City Bank, (1920).

This is a small two-story two part commercial block with Classical Revival styling. It is faced with smooth blocks of pale limestone and ornamented with classical elements of the same type of stone. A clean-lined bracketed cornice runs along the upper façade the ground floor storefront is frames with pilasters and a classical entablature. Each of the wide pilasters that flank the storefront opening is topped with a single triglyph. The second floor has a large intact window opening that is filled with a stucco panel, and the ground floor has an open storefront that is early, but not original. This long narrow building has a one story rear ell that runs back to Olive Street on the north. That wall has a small newer storefront and a separate retail space. [c]

16.) 159 N. Park Central Square, 1916. Electric Theater (1916).

The front of this one-story Streamline Moderne movie theater is tucked into the northwest corner of the square, and the theater itself sits back from the front section, between Olive and the Square. The front wall is approximately 50 feet wide, with a tall parapet above an open ground floor. The parapet, which extends up a full story above the top of the building, has an open framework of horizontal bands, and the ground floor features a central ticket booth flanked by wide openings and curved side walls. There is a bare brick section above the ground floor where the original marquee most likely was located; it was probably removed to make room for the 1970s canopy. The ticket booth and all of the ground floor fenestration appears to be early or original. [c]

17.) 101-103 E. Park Central Square, 1914. Rep's Department Store, (1914).

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A three-story two part commercial block with Classical Revival styling, pale terra cotta walls and a flat roof. A matching terra cotta cornice runs along the top of the façade. The upper floors are divided into an even grid, with large window openings separated by terra cotta trim with simple classically derived ornamentation. The window sashes are newer, in original openings. The ground floor storefront openings are generally intact, with newer storefront components. [c]

18.) 104-105 E. Park Central Square, 1914. Holland Building (1914).

A large five-story two part commercial block with terra cotta and brick walls and classical revival styling. The ground floor was remodeled in the 1940s and the upper floors have seen no changes of note since the 1910s. The two elevations that face the square and Park Central East have similarly high levels of architectural detailing. Each is topped with a large terra cotta cornice and each has wide banks of 1/1 double-hung wood windows that are early or original. This building was individually listed 11/15/00.

19.) 107 E. Park Central Square, ca. 1909. Holland Banking Company (ca. 1896) Dixie Frock (1930).

A three-story two part commercial block with stucco walls and a modern storefront. The elevations facing the square and the Park Central East were remodeled in the last 15 years. This building dates to the late 1800s, and was remodeled to tie to the building next to it around 1909, when it was home to Holland Banking Company. It was separated back to a single shop front in the late 1920s. [nc]

20.) 108 E. Park Central Square, ca. 1909. Holland Banking Company (ca. 1896) Weaver Shoe (1930).

A three-story two part commercial block with stucco walls, and a storefront made of new materials. The window openings, which appear to date to ca. 1909, are infilled and stuccoed over. The upper facade is missing a cornice or other element. This building dates to the late 1800s, and was remodeled to tie to the building next to it around 1909, when it was home to Holland Banking Company. It was separated back to a single shop front in the late 1920s. [nc]

21.) 109 E. Park Central Square, ca. 1909. Walk-Over Boot Shop (1920).

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This building may have been built in the late 1800s; that building was either replaced or remodeled to the current form ca. 1909. It is a three-story two part commercial block with Classical Revival styling and limestone walls. The storefront is made of new materials with original openings. The 1/1 windows are modern, but similar to the originals and a good fit for their openings. The roofline features an ornamental stone balustrade that is early or original, and most other facade detailing is intact. [c]

22.) 110-111 E. Park Central Square, ca. 1909. Levi-Wolfe Clothing, (1909). 1910.

A wide three-story two part commercial block with Classical Revival styling and terra cotta ornamentation. Intact terra cotta elements include a heavy bracketed cornice, ornamental spandrel panels between the second and third floors, and a small secondary cornice at the sill line of the second floor windows. The ground floor has a newer storefront that is largely open, with brick piers and bulkhead panels, and a stucco band runs above the storefront. The upper window openings of the façade are intact, and filled with newer windows and stucco panels. [c]

23.) 300 Park Central East, ca. 1909. Glasgow Tailoring (1920).

A one-story one part commercial block with glazed terra cotta walls. The sidewall of the building faces a narrow alley and the façade faces north to Park Central east. There is a storefront on the front bay of the sidewall as well as on the façade. The walls around the storefronts are sheathed with large rectangular blocks of terra cotta and the stepped front parapet is topped with molded terra cotta coping. Fluted piers flank the storefront, and a simple molded band runs along the top of the storefront openings. The front and side storefront openings are intact, and filled with newer, mostly open storefronts. This is one of a pair of matching one-part commercial blocks that originally were part of a row of five similar stores; the other three stores recently saw extensive modern alterations. [c]

24.) 301 Park Central East, ca. 1937. Three Sisters, (1938).

A one-story broad front commercial building with limestone walls and Art Deco styling. The wide building has an open storefront that features a deeply recessed entrance that is lined with tall open glass display cases, all of which appear to be original. The cases have very low granite bulkhead panels and tall glass display

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windows. The ornamental terrazzo floor of the recess has the words "Three Sisters" in Art Deco style lettering to each side, and the floor in front of the door has a stylized portrait of three women, one blonde, one redhead and one brunette. [c]

25.) 302 Park Central East, ca. 1909. Laura Hubble Baby and Art Shop (1920).

A one-story one part commercial block with glazed terra cotta walls. The façade is sheathed with large rectangular blocks of terra cotta, and the stepped front parapet is topped with molded terra cotta coping. Fluted piers flank the storefront, and a simple molded band runs along the top of the storefront. The storefront opening is original, and filled with a newer storefront that has a stucco signboard and open display windows. This is one of a pair of one-part commercial blocks that originally were part of a row of five similar stores; the other three stores recently saw extensive modern alterations. [c]

26.) 307 Park Central East, 1959. Walgreen Drug Co. (1938).

A two-story commercial building with a wide façade covered with metal panels. The first floor of this building was constructed in 1938 for Walgreen's Drug Store, who stayed there into the 1950s. The second floor was added for the Marx Clothing Company in 1959. The ground floor is much as it was in the 1930s, with a patterned terrazzo floor and early or original display windows. [nc]

27.) 311-315 Park Central East, 1902. Marx-Hurlburt Building (1902).

A three-story two part commercial block with simple Classical Revival styling. The walls are brick, and the ground floor has open storefronts that appear to be newer, but similar to historic. The upper floors have 1/1 windows that are topped with single light transoms. The windows are probably newer, but are similar to original, and an early cornice runs along the top of the façade. Individually listed 9/02/03.

28.) 317 Park Central East, 1912. Netter-Ullman Building (1916).

A wide three-story two part commercial block with red brick walls. The façade has a simple stepped parapet and light colored stone accents. The ground floor is filled with tall open storefronts and the upper floors have wide banks of 1/1 windows. Individually listed 04/18/03

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29.) 325 Park Central East, 1926. Gillioz Theater (1926).

The entrance of this large theater is a very narrow two-story Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style façade with a large marquee and recessed doorway. The narrow front section leads back to a larger auditorium section, set at the back of the lot, and backing up to Olive Street to the north. The building has recently seen a comprehensive rehabilitation and is in excellent condition.

Individually listed 07/09/91.

**30.) 333 Park Central East, 1910-1959 (Current form dates to 1959).
Woodruff Building, (1910).**

A ten-story office building with limestone cladding at its base and enameled metal wall panels on the upper floors. The limestone on the lower floors dates to the 1940s; the metal panels were installed on the upper floors in 1959.¹ This building was constructed in 1910 and enlarged and remodeled several times over the years. A major remodeling project in 1959 brought it to its current size and appearance. The building occupies a prominent corner lot at Park Central East and Jefferson Street. It has nearly identical detailing on the two street elevations.

(See photo 8.) Each wall is clad with smooth limestone blocks at the first and second stories, and the upper floors are filled with wide banks of metal-framed windows. Narrow piers between the window bays are covered with dark turquoise enameled metal panels. Slightly recessed metal spandrel panels below the windows are of a lighter shade of the same color. The upper floors have horizontally-divided aluminum windows that were probably installed about the same time as the metal panels. The lower floors feature Art Deco style ornamentation that includes brushed aluminum or stainless steel wall sconces, and an accented entryway off of Park Central East. The exterior has seen no changes of note since the 1959 remodeling project. [c]

31.) 309 N. Jefferson Street, 1910. Frisco Office Building, (1910).

A wide four-story office building with painted brick walls and a flat roof. This is the only building in the boundary increase that sits back from the sidewalk; it has a small parking lot in front of it, with additional parking to the rear. It is C-shaped, with the legs of the C facing away from Jefferson Street to form an open court at the rear of the lot. The wide façade has vertical brick piers between

¹ "Woodruff Building Expansion Job Starts," Springfield Daily News, March 7, 1959.

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bays, and a small shaped parapet above the entrance bay, which is off-center in the wall. The walls are filled with wide banks of windows; the window openings are intact, and the sashes probably date to the 1950s. Historic post cards show that the three-part composition of the current window groupings matches that of the historic windows. [c]

32.) 312-342 E. Olive Street, 1925. Franklin Springfield Motor Company, (1925).

A two-story automobile-related building with tan brick walls. There are two traditional storefronts and a former drive door that has new glass and metal infill. The new infill echoes the lines of the garage door that originally occupied that opening. The storefronts are early or original, as are the paired 1/1 wood windows of the second floor. A small corbelled brick cornice tops the façade. Individually listed 11/15/06.

33.) 313 E. Olive Street, ca. 1951. Nicholson Answering Service (1952).

A small one part commercial block, with painted brick walls and a flat roof. This tiny one story commercial building is tucked into a corner formed by two walls of the large commercial garage at 313 E. Olive. The façade is nearly filled with an open storefront that has a central door and a small open transom. The storefront is early or original, but boarded and painted over. The east side wall has a pair of small windows that appear to be early as well. [c]

34.) 311 E. Olive Street, ca. 1926. Singmar Garage (1927).

A one-story Spanish Colonial Revival style commercial garage, with painted stucco and brick walls. This Automobile Related building has a central arched drive door, flanked by small storefronts, all of which appear to be original. Each storefront has an early prism glass transoms and each is sheltered by a shallow hood with terra cotta mission style roof tiles. The display windows of the storefronts are covered with painted plywood, but the openings and framing all appear to be original. The roof tiles and walls are all painted the same shade of gray. The upper façade has a shaped parapet over the central drive door, and inset latticework panels above the storefronts. Ornamental stone or concrete coping marks the tops of shallow piers that run along the sides of the façade. [c]

35.) 301 E. Olive Street, ca, 1927. Cantrell Building (1928).

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A two-story two part commercial block that was originally a garage, gas station and office building. This large example of the Automobile Related property type has simple Beaux Arts styling, most evident in the smooth limestone ornament of the façade, which contrasts with the gold brick of the walls. Simple carved stone string courses run along the tops and bottoms of the second floor windows, and matching coping can be found at the roofline. Similar detailing wraps around to the front part of the west wall, which faces a small alley. A central bay of the front second floor windows is accented with large stone quoins and topped with a square medallion of the same stone. The ground floor door that leads to second floor offices has an arched stone surround with a large keystone. Two thirds of the front bay of the ground floor originally housed an open drive for the gas station; that drive has since been enclosed with glass. The original corner post for the drive through opening is still in place, and matching stone quoins outline the edges of the opening and the corner post. A very deep rear ell runs along the alley and wraps around the back of the neighboring building. That part of the building was the commercial garage in the 1930s, with capacity for 80 cars. [c]

36.) 213 W. Olive Street, ca. 1927. Oliver's Garage (1935). This two story brick building was built around 1901 as a traditional two part commercial block, and expanded and remodeled to become an automobile-related property in the late 1920s. Sanborn maps show that in 1927, a very large three-story parking garage and warehouse was added to the back of the property. The addition connects to the back wall of the narrow original building, which was then altered to create a drive-in entrance to the new parking garage. For that change in function, a wide new drive door was installed in the ground floor of the original Olive Street façade, and the interior of the ground floor became a driveway to the back section. The wide drive opening remains in place today, with some newer frame infill, a garage door and a small pedestrian door. The upper floor of the Olive Street façade appears to be in its original form, with a corbelled brick cornice and a row of windows that have flat limestone sills and lintels. The windows have 6/6 double hung wood sashes that are early and relatively intact, albeit in poor condition. [c]

37.) 215-217 W. Olive Street, ca. 1901. Central Shoe and Leather (1927). This is a two bay commercial block built ca. 1901. Although each bay has a separate storefront and entrance there is no seam in the brick between the two sections, and Sanborn maps show that they were connected internally

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throughout the period of significance. The east bay, at 215, is two-story, and the west bay is one-story. The facade is of red brick and the two-story section has a corbelled brick cornice. Both sections have open storefronts that appear to be original, and there is a pedestrian door on the east edge of the ground floor, which presumably leads to stairs for the second floor. Each storefront has a deeply recessed entrance, and limestone-clad bulkhead panels that are early or original. The display windows are probably newer, in original openings. Sloped canvas awnings shelter the storefronts and each of the second floor windows. The second floor windows in the taller section have flat limestone sills and lintels that are similar to those of the building to the east, which was built around the same time. There is a modern second floor addition to the one story bay, but it is set back from the street, and all other elements of the facade, including storefronts, are highly intact, making this a contributing resource. [c]

38.) 219 W. Olive Street, ca. 1901. Wood Auto Repair (1920).

A two-story two part commercial block with red brick walls and glazed terra cotta detailing. A group of three windows is centered in the upper facade and the ground floor contains an open storefront. The 1/1 window sashes are newer, but similar to historic units, and the opening is unchanged. An ornamental band of terra cotta trim surrounds the window opening, which also has a terra cotta sill. Pale terra cotta or stone coping tops the facade, and a matching string course runs along the top edge of the windows. The storefront opening of the ground floor is also outlined with terra cotta trim. The storefront is early or original, with metal framed display windows and limestone bulkhead panels. A canvas awning shelters the ground floor of the facade. [c]

39.) 221 W. Olive Street, ca. 1927. Olive St. Body Fender, Body & Top Works (1928).

A one-story commercial garage with dark brick walls and a symmetrical facade. This is one of the more intact examples of the Automobile Related property type in the downtown area. The facade fronts on Olive Street, and the west side wall faces a narrow alley. A simple corbelled cornice runs along the top of the facade, which has a wide central entrance flanked by large display windows. The display windows have limestone sills with very low brick walls below them. The side wall, which faces an alley, has two large display windows near the front that match those on the facade, except that they are covered with painted plywood. A wide

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garage door opening is set farther back in the wall, and the back half of the building has a row of large window openings that have some frame infill. A sloped canvas awning runs along the top of the storefront for the width of the façade. [c]

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Summary: The Springfield Public Square Historic District (Amendment and Boundary Increase) expands the historic district boundary to include 33 resources (25 contributing, 3 non-contributing, and 5 previously listed) on the Springfield Public Square and adjacent Park Central East and Olive Street. The recent removal of 1970s canopies from the buildings on the northeast quarter of the square addressed earlier integrity issues for those properties, which in turn provided a link to additional eligible properties on the streets that run east and north of the square. Like the buildings within the original district, the buildings in this area are significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce. This document also changes the status of one building in the original district from non-contributing to contributing, as additional research has shown that it took its current form within the period of significance for the original district. The majority of the properties in the boundary increase meet the registration requirements laid out in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF), "Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, MO." Like the buildings in the original district, most of the properties are examples of the property type Downtown Commercial Buildings with similar historic functions; retail and office use has dominated the area for the better part of the last century. The increase also includes uses that were not represented within the original district; intact resources within the increase include two theaters and five buildings that historically housed automobile related businesses. The latter are good examples of the Automobile Related Buildings property type, also described in the cover document. Although businesses that catered to automobile owners operated in the commercial centers in Springfield beginning in the early 1920s, few such resources have been listed in the National Register to date. The inclusion of those properties, as well as the added commercial buildings elsewhere, provides a more complete representation of early 20th century commerce in Springfield. The period of significance for the boundary increase is c. 1890 to 1959, reflecting the dates of construction for the earliest buildings through the 50 year closing date for properties where activities begun historically continue to have importance but no more specific date can be identified. Though built after the period of significance of the larger district, Park Central Square and its extant shelter, statue and fountain are counted as contributing and significant under Criterion C: Landscape Architecture with a period of significance of 1970, the date of construction. Designed by master landscape architects and urban planners, Lawrence Halprin & Associates, the

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square meets Criterion Consideration G as an exceptionally significant example of Modern Movement landscape design in Springfield and the state exhibiting the characteristic features of the “Halprin design vernacular.”

Elaboration

The Springfield Public Square Historic District (Amendment and Boundary Increase), like the original district, lies within the original plat of Springfield laid out by John Polk Campbell in the 1830s. The area within the boundary increase includes late nineteenth century and early 20th century commercial buildings located on the east half of the square as well as Olive Street to the north, and Park Central Square East (St. Louis Street) and Jefferson Avenue to the east. Of those, only one building, 222 Park Central North (Boonville), retains its late nineteenth century appearance. The remainder of the contributing buildings in the boundary increase were either built or modified to their current form in the early decades of the 20th century.

The expanded Springfield Public Square Historic District offers a more complete representation of the central commercial district of Springfield, in geography as well as property type. The majority of the buildings being added were constructed before 1920, during a period of time of strong economic growth in Springfield and Greene County. That growth spurred the expansion of the commercial center outward from the public square onto the surrounding streets. The buildings within the increase also exhibit a greater diversity of commercial building types than within the original district. Contributing buildings in the increase include retail stores, a department store (Reps, 1914), large office buildings, movie theaters (Electric Theatre, 1916; Gillioz, 1926) and a number of automobile related resources.

Changes in architectural styles and building practices in that period effected a dramatic change to the appearance of the buildings facing the square. Many of the contributing buildings found there are late 19th century buildings that saw major architectural changes in the first two decades of the 20th century. A row of commercial buildings located on the southeast side of the square, for example, all received new facades ca. 1909. A photograph of that section of the square in taken 1907 shows a row of typical late nineteenth century brick commercial buildings, while a photo taken just a few years later,

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in 1910, shows a series of new Classical Revival style facades.² Several of those facades remain largely intact today, and they are contributing resources in the boundary expansion.

A series of major fires in that period also served to increase the popularity of “fire-proof” construction. All of the buildings on the northeast corner of the square were destroyed by fire in 1913. That fire, though catastrophic, instigated a major building boom on the square. Between 1914 and 1916, six new buildings were constructed on that quadrant, of three commercial types: retail, office and entertainment. The Holland Building (1914), on the corner of the square and St. Louis Street, is an intact classic revival five-story office building with two retail spaces on the ground floor. Nathan Clothing Co. (1914) anchored the other corner of the quadrant on Boonville. This building is locally better known as Barth’s, the retail store that moved to the building in 1935.³ Reps Department Store (1914), Queen City Bank (1914), The Record Exchange (1914) and Electric Theatre (1916) completed the rebuilding of the northeast corner of the square.

Eastward expansion of the commercial district during this period was strongly influenced by the construction of two large fireproof office buildings, the Woodruff Building at 333 Park Central East, and the Frisco Office Building, at 309 N. Jefferson. Those buildings were built in 1910 on Jefferson Avenue, in what was then a little-developed area of downtown. They were designed by the same architect, Frank Hunt, and, along with a small new building for the *Springfield Republican* newspaper (no longer extant), they opened for business on the same day, February 2, 1911.⁴ The grand opening was accompanied by great fanfare, with a coordinated open house that drew thousands of visitors and inspired effusive praise in the Springfield Republican: “A turning point in the Queen City’s history was felt to be marked by the magnificent buildings, for in them Springfield was seen to have left behind the garb of a ‘town’ to take her just place among the important business centers of the Southwest.”⁵

² The History Museum for Springfield-Greene County Archives. Photo #s1994-48-2, and #1994-84.

³ Richard’s Journal, Barth’s Building-154 Park Central Square. Accessed October 2, 2008. http://richgros.com/Springfield_History/Sites_HTML/barths.html.

⁴ “City Turns Out En Masse To Visit Beautiful Trio of Modern Fireproof Office Buildings,” Springfield Republican, Feb. 3, 1911, p. 1

⁵ Ibid.

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Both of those buildings were built by local businessman and civic leader John T. Woodruff, who was also an attorney for the Frisco Railroad. The ten-story Woodruff Building was lauded as the city's first skyscraper, and the largest office building in the Ozarks at the time. It contained nearly a million cubic feet, and when it opened, had 276 offices, as well as a barber shop, drugstore, pool hall, two elevators and the Greene County Court of Appeals.⁶ Woodruff wrote later in his memoir that the building, which was the first of many construction projects for him, was fully leased within a year, and that it had an annual income that was "ample" to meet expenses and cover the debt service.⁷ In the late 1920s, the Woodruff Building was sold to the Heer-Andres Investment Company, the owners of the Heer's Department Store in the original part of the district. The building continued to serve as an office building under Heer's ownership, and the company updated the interior and the lower two floors of the exterior of the building in the 1940s. A second update in late 1959 included an addition to the east and the application of enameled metal sheathing to all of the upper floors.⁸

John Woodruff also built the Frisco Office Building, which sits just north of the Woodruff Building. The Frisco Office Building was built to serve as the headquarters for the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad (Frisco). The Frisco Railroad was the largest employer in the city of Springfield from 1909 through World War II, and it played a major role in the economy of Springfield well into the later 20th century.⁹ The company had roots in the Kansas City Fort Scott and Memphis Railroad, which first came to Springfield in 1881, and later consolidated with the Frisco line. Early in the 20th century, the Frisco located one of the largest railroad maintenance shops west of the Mississippi in Springfield, which, combined with the headquarters and other office, made it the town's largest employer for decades.¹⁰

Woodruff wrote that the Frisco Building was designed specifically for the

⁶ John T. Woodruff, Reminiscences of an Ozarkian and Early Tourism Developments, 1941 (Reprint, Springfield: Southwest Missouri State University, 1994.) p. 141.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "Woodruff Building Expansion Job Starts," Springfield Daily News, March 7, 1959, p. 1.

⁹ Shanna Boyle and Julie March, eds., Crossroads at the Spring, (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Co. Publishers, 1997) p. 39.

¹⁰ Dick Grosenbaugh, A Million Hours of Memories: A Condensed History of Springfield, MO. Springfield: Springfield Sesquicentennial Committee, ca. 1979.

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railroad, to meet the needs of the company's many departments "from the general manager down to the least important office."¹¹ The Frisco Office Building differed from other downtown buildings of the time in that it had a larger than average lot, which allowed for a wider building, as well as open space between the building and the surrounding streets. Woodruff noted that although it was only four stories tall, it "contained nearly the same number of cubic feet as the Woodruff Building."¹² A postcard made shortly after the Frisco Building opened shows a simply landscaped lawn between it and the streets, with a low stone retaining wall near the edge of the property.¹³ The retaining wall survives, and the lot remains open, although surface parking has been added to much of the property.

The building on Jefferson served as Frisco headquarters into the 1960s, when it was sold and renamed the Landmark building, in honor of the property's early history. The lot was the site of the city's first high school, and before that contained an ash tree into which town founder John Polk Campbell had carved his initial to mark his property and the site of the town of Springfield.¹⁴ The building continues to serve as an office building today.

Development along St. Louis Street responded to changing commercial patterns. Downtown commercial development in the late nineteenth century had been centered between the square and the Frisco railroad station west of the square. With the construction of the Frisco and Woodruff Buildings, however, commercial development shifted east. This linked retail development to the affluent neighborhoods east of the square, bringing quality clothing and department stores to St. Louis Street. Stores opened on St. Louis Street in the 1910s include Netter-Ulman Department Store, and the Marx Clothing Store. Both of those buildings are individually listed in the Register.

The expanded district reflects changing tastes in the latter part of the decade, as well as an increasing number of chain retail stores. McGregor Noe Hardware, which had dominated the northeast corner of St. Louis and Robberson for decades, moved to a new location in the mid 1930s. This opened

¹¹ Woodruff, p. 142.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Historic Postcards of Springfield, Woodruff Building, Springfield Greene County Library. Accessed October 3, 2008, <http://thelibrary.springfield.missouri.org/lochist>.

¹⁴ Historic Postcards of Springfield, Frisco Office Building, Springfield Greene County Library. Accessed June 18, 2007. <http://thelibrary.springfield.missouri.org/lochist>.

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space for two new buildings at 301 and 307 Park Central Square East. These were modern one story stores with Art Deco details built in 1937 for two chain retailers: the Walgreen Drug Company and Three Sisters Ready-To-Wear Inc. Walgreen's operated in that location for nearly two decades, after which the building was taken over by the Marx Clothing Company, which added a second story to it in 1959. Although the ground floor is highly intact, the added upper floor makes it a non-contributing building.

The Three Sisters Ready-to-Wear building, by contrast, has seen few alterations. It has a simple limestone-clad façade and a deeply recessed entry lined with early or original display cases, and a highly ornamented terrazzo floor. Terrazzo was a relatively new flooring material at the time, having come into widespread use in the 1920s.¹⁵ It was embraced by local merchants in the mid-20th century, who prized it for its durability as well as the creative possibilities it offered. Terrazzo was especially popular as a flooring material for commercial entries, where business owners could quickly identify their business, and catch the attention of passersby. Just as 19th century business owners often spelled out the name of their business in ceramic tile mosaic flooring of recessed entries, 20th century merchants often used terrazzo for the same purpose.

At least four stores within the expanded boundary have terrazzo entry floors that include the business name; F. W. Woolworth (134 Park Central, ca. 1954), National Shirt Company (137 Park Central, ca. 1942), Walgreen Drug Co. (307 Park Central East, 1938), and Three Sisters, (301 Park Central East, 1937.) The entry of the Three Sisters building is by far the most elaborate. On each side of the wide recess, black Art Deco style lettering against a red field spells out THREE SISTERS. Heavy black lines follow the curve of the recessed storefronts from each of those to the centered front doors. Just in front of the doors can be found a complex rendering of what was probably the store's logo, the stacked profiles of three women. (See Figure Three.)

Other chain retail stores also moved into the district in the time period. J. C. Penney Co. moved into 101-103 Park Central Square after the locally owned Reps department store closed in 1939. The National Shirt Shop occupied the corner of West Park Central and College in the early 1940s, after

¹⁵ Thomas C. Jester, ed. Twentieth Century Building Materials, (United States: McGraw-Hill, 1995) pp. 234-235.

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remodeling it with Streamline Moderne style display windows and wall cladding.

The district expansion also includes two movie theaters. The first is the Electric Theatre (1916) built on the northeast corner of the square after the 1913 fire. The second is the Gilloiz Theater on Park Central Square East, a classic "Movie Palace" built in 1926. The Gilloiz, listed individually on the National Register, has recently been fully restored.

The 1920s saw the addition of a new type of business property in the downtown area. As stated in the Multiple Property Listing, automobile related buildings were built in the 1920s around the edges of the downtown area to accommodate the large increase in personal automobiles.¹⁶ The expanded district includes several examples of this property type. A row of commercial buildings on West Olive includes two buildings built for auto repair businesses: Wood Auto Repair (1920) and Olive Street Fender, Body & Top Works (1928). That block also has a ca. 1901 two part commercial block at 231 W. Olive that was adapted for use in the automotive trade in 1927. What was probably a storefront on the first floor of the building was replaced with a wide garage door opening, which was used to provide access to a parking garage that was built on the rear of the property in 1927. The front section was also used as part of a repair business in the 1930s.

East Olive Street is also home to automobile related properties. Franklin Springfield Motor Co. (1925) at 312-314 East Olive Street, has the only extant automobile show room in downtown Springfield; it is individually listed on the National Register. The Cantrell Building (ca. 1930), just a few doors away, was built as a multi-purpose automobile facility, with a corner drive-thru gas station, a large parking garage, and offices. The gas station was in a recessed corner drive through, with the garage in the back and offices on the second floor. Although the drive-through part of the gas station has since been enclosed, its original openings and corner support posts are intact, and the rest of the building has seen few changes. Singmar Garage, built ca. 1926 at 311 E. Olive, is a large one-story parking garage that offers a notably intact example of intact Spanish Colonial Revival styling.

As was the case for the buildings and businesses of the original district, there was a general commercial decline during the latter half of the 20th century

¹⁶ National Register of Historic Places. Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri Multiple Property Listing. Greene County, Missouri. 05/21/1999, Section F Page 7.

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in the area being added. Businesses had difficulty competing with new strip malls nearer the new Post-War neighborhoods. The opening of the Battlefield Mall in 1970 took most of the remaining customers away from the downtown area, and a mid-1970s redevelopment project negatively impacted the integrity of the late 19th and early 20th century buildings on the square via the installation of a modern metal canopy across all of their facades. In recent years privately funded rehabilitation has restored the early 20th Century appearance of many of the district buildings. Some of the work completed in c. 1970 redevelopment projects has also been removed. Remaining, however, is an exceptional example of Modern Movement urban landscape design. The central square's sunken plaza (known as Park Central Square) is the work of master landscape architects and urban planners Lawrence Halprin & Associates (LHA). Though a "forgotten" Halprin work until recent threats brought the more recent history of the square to light, the design of Park Central Square is imbued with the characteristic features of Halprin's body of work.

LHA's design for the public square was part of a larger planning effort to revitalize the historic central business district and make it more competitive with modern auto-oriented commercial developments and suburban malls. A master plan for commercial development adopted in 1964 recommended the construction of a pedestrian mall on the public square and adjacent blocks. Halprin was apparently one of several urban planners contacted about the project with the earliest correspondence found dating from 1965. However, Springfield's Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority notified the company that the city had hired Urban Programming Corporation of St. Louis to develop a plan for downtown in 1967.¹⁷ A bond issue for the implementation of the plan failed in 1968, spurring a public-private partnership to redevelop the square.¹⁸ When public funding sources fell short, the Downtown Springfield Association (DSA) stepped in. The group, formed in 1965, pledged over \$500,000 (later matched with federal grants) to fund the beautification of the square and transform it into Park Central Square. It was through DSA that Lawrence Halprin once again became involved in the project.

¹⁷ "Park Central Square-The Lawrence Halprin Associates design." City of Springfield., <http://www.springfieldmo.gov/cityconnect/assets/halprinNarrative.pdf>. Accessed 12/8/2009.

¹⁸ Springfield-Greene County Library. "Historic Postcards of Springfield, Missouri: Public Square." http://thelibrary.springfield.missouri.org/loclist/postcards/public_square.cfm. Accessed 12/8/2009.

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LHA developed at least 24 concept drawings for the Park Central Square before finalizing the “Ultimate Plan” in late 1969 or early 1970 for Phase I of the downtown redevelopment project. The plan would literally transform the city’s open public square from parking lot to public plaza. The square was part of the original plat of Springfield dating from the 1830s and had, until 1861, been the site of the Greene County Courthouse. The county constructed a new courthouse on a nearby lot in 1857, briefly using the old courthouse to hold Civil War and other prisoners. A fire started by a “deranged local man” burned the building to the ground in October of 1861.¹⁹ From that time until the construction of the LHA-designed plaza in 1970, the square was essentially a parking lot and roadway. At various points, the center of the square contained a bandstand, the electrified Gottfried Tower, and “the Pie”—a roundabout for the trolley line with open spaces on the four corners. The first phase of Halprin’s design pushed roadways to the edges of the square, reclaiming the center as a public and social space. Later phases of the Halprin plan called for closing the square and neighboring streets to automobile traffic and building a two story canopy around the square’s buildings. The City implemented these plans in the 1970s, but from designs reconfigured by other firms.

By the mid-1960s, reclamation of urban spaces was a hallmark of Lawrence Halprin’s work. Halprin’s firm designed Springfield’s Park Central Square during a watershed period in his career. It was during the late 1960s and early ‘70s that Halprin created signature designs including Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco, the Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis, several public spaces and fountains in Portland, and Freeway Park in Seattle. Alison Hirsch, who studied three of Halprin’s threatened designs, noted that this period of Halprin’s work was of “particular importance because of its connection with and response to the widespread urban renewal projects in the country’s downtowns.” Halprin’s designs attempted to calm public uncertainty about rapid change. To reorient the public, “Halprin created spaces that recalled the history, the prehistory, the native ecology and the essence of an individual space, evoking a sense of *genius loci* and reestablishing a sense of order.”²⁰

While a significant departure in design and historic use, Lawrence

¹⁹ Marian M. Ohman. *Encyclopedia of Missouri Courthouses*. University of Missouri-Columbia Extension Division, 1981.

²⁰ Alison B. Hirsch, “The Fate of Lawrence Halprin’s Public Spaces: Three Case Studies.” Thesis in Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania, 2005, p. 4.

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Halprin and Associates' plan for Park Central Square drew on the *genius loci* or sense of place of the public square and the larger region. George McLaughlin, Halprin's project manager for the project, noted that the "Springfield square is different from traditional squares in that the streets enter it at the center of each side of the square rather than the more traditional corner entries. As such the square has a wonderful sense of enclosure."²¹ The design enhanced this sense of enclosure by creating a slightly depressed paved place "surrounded by grass terraces separated by concrete steps."²² Trees and other plantings on the terraces further emphasized enclosure and separation. The fountain, a focal point of the square, was also inspired by natural features of the region. McLaughlin wrote that, "While I was in Springfield . . . I spent time gathering more information and driving around to get a better sense of the area. It was during one of these drives that I saw water flowing over the fragmented limestone ledges that would become the inspiration for the fountain."²³ The flag poles that are part of the design were also inspired by locals. McLaughlin wrote that "Three flagpoles are located at the Southern side of the square. Everybody I talked to in Springfield wanted flags . . . As an added surprise, based on my understanding of the local patriotism, I specified a gold American Eagle be placed on the highest flagpole. They loved it."²⁴

Halprin's design philosophy drew inspiration from a place and its people, but the firm's designs were rooted in what George McLaughlin called the "Halprin design vernacular."²⁵ This "vernacular" was both in physical features and in design philosophy. McLaughlin noted that Springfield "wanted a Halprin project. So the idea was to give them a Halprin project" with all the features that the public associated with Halprin designs: fountains that people can play in, a sense of separation from traffic, sloping grassy terraces, concrete walls and blocks, even "Halprin" benches and pots—rough cubic shapes common in Halprin designs.²⁶ Central to the Halprin's design philosophy was the

²¹ George McLaughlin, "Park Central Square: The Real Story." The Cultural Landscape Foundation, May 8, 2008. <http://tclf.org/landslides/par-central-square-real-story>. Accessed December 12, 2009.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

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consideration of how people moved through a space. His designs provide opportunities for people to walk, pause, sit, play and gather. Park Central Square contains both the physical features associated with Halprin's design vernacular, and spaces that allow people to loll in the grass under a shade tree, pause to contemplate a work of art, or to dangle their fingers or toes in a cascading fountain.

While Halprin encouraged innovation, he also expected his team members to respect the Halprin vernacular and the company's national reputation. When commissioned to redesign Springfield's public square, Halprin entrusted McLaughlin to manage the project. McLaughlin "had been at the office for five years and was well versed in the Halprin vernacular" when assigned the project.²⁷ The strength of Halprin's vision was also seen in the firm's interaction with the community. Halprin's design process was rooted in community input and participation, but stayed true to his own vision. Hirsch wrote that:

Some may charge that Halprin manipulates the outcome of his design workshops to cultivate consensus based on his own ideals. In fact, Halprin does use his own visions to guide potentially opposing and confused participants into agreement, allowing these individuals to discover for themselves what Halprin may have already preconceived.²⁸

It is unknown how LHA incorporated public input into the design of Park Central Square. McLaughlin mentioned a "group meeting with . . . city and downtown association members" where potential designs for the square's sculpture were presented,²⁹ but evidence of local planning processes have not been researched. The executed plan, however, displays the characteristics of Halprin's innovative design.

As noted above, Park Central Square was designed during the period when Halprin created some of his landmark urban spaces. While relating to the people and history of a place, Halprin's urban landscape designs consistently incorporated certain features including terraces created by masonry steps (either grassy or hard-scaped), hard-scaped plazas for public gatherings, and notably cascading water features. Halprin also integrated art into his designs,

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Hirsch, p. 4.

²⁹ McLaughlin.

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collaborating with artists to create large works of public art. Though more rigidly cubist than some of his urban designs, likely inspired by the walls created by buildings around the site, Park Central Square contains all of these design characteristics. The originally flat square was excavated to create a depressed paved plaza. Grassy terraces created by concrete steps or retaining walls surround the plaza. On one corner is a gazebo creating an entry to the square. Trees were planted to provide shade and to enhance the sense of enclosure. A local donor provided funding for a sculpture and Halprin recommended Aristedes Demetrious³⁰ for the project. The abstract bronze sculpture still sits at one corner of the plaza. The focal point of Park Central Square, and most of Halprin's designs is the water feature. Halprin designed water features to be more than visually appealing.

A major theme in all Halprin fountains is user participation. Larry liked for people of all ages to wade or play in the fountains. As such, part of the design [for Park Central Square] was to make the fountain friendly to little feet. Grills were placed to protect most of the jets and lighting from damage.³¹

Though not as approachable as Halprin's Ira Keller Fountain in Portland, Oregon (also completed in 1970), Springfield's fountain's low terraced walls and mechanical systems designed to be "friendly" to feet are signatures of Halprin's design philosophy and aesthetic.

As noted above, Halprin was at the height of his career when commissioned to design Park Central Square. Halprin was already known for a previous work in Missouri, the landscape and fountain design for Northwest Plaza in suburban St. Louis County. The plaza was designed as an open air shopping area in 1963 and predates many of Halprin's significant urban landscape designs. The mall has since been enclosed and Halprin's design has been extensively altered and the fountain removed. Halprin was also involved in the development of the Kansas City Civic Center Master Plan between c. 1965 and 1968. His plans for a plaza spanning parking areas and roadways to

³⁰ Aristedes Demetrious was a long-time collaborator in Halprin designs before and after the completion of Park Central Square.

³¹ McLaughlin.

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connect local, state and federal government buildings in Kansas City's civic center were accepted, but the City was unable to raise funds for implementation. Park Central Square represents the only known, extant, Halprin landscape design in Missouri. It is exceptionally significant both as a characteristic work of a recognized master designer, but also as a relatively rare example of innovative mid-century modern public landscape architecture in Springfield and the state.

Called the "tribal elder of American landscape architecture" by the *New York Times* and "one of the preeminent place-makers of the 20th century" by the *Smithsonian Magazine*, Lawrence Halprin (1916-2009) was a recognized leader and innovator.³² His designs and design process won him notoriety, but also critical acclaim. His work garnered praise and awards including the AIA Medal for Allied Professionals, 1964; the Thomas Jefferson Medal in Architecture, 1979; AIA Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement, 1979; the President's National Medal of the Arts, 2002, and the Michelangelo Award, 2005, among others. Halprin is looked upon as a master landscape architect and urban planner whose ideas influenced a generation of designers and who transformed the urban landscape. He continued to have major national and international commissions, including some for the National Park Service, until just before his death in 2009.

In the body of Halprin's work, Park Central Square is relatively small and unknown, especially when compared to the number of highly acclaimed works designed and constructed in the same period. However, Park Central Square captures Halprin's design vernacular and represents the City's efforts to recapture a once vital urban area by redesigning a public space. Additional research is needed to understand Park Central Square in a national context, though it does connect to "LHA's urban design strategies that reacted to and worked with the city fabric (versus assuming a tabula rasa, or cleared site)."³³

³² Douglas Martin, "Lawrence Halprin, Landscape Architect, Dies at 93," *New York Times*, October 2, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/28/arts/design/28halprin.html>. Accessed 12/15/2009; quoted in Patricia Sullivan, "Urban projects won wide acclaim for American landscape Architect," *Washington Post*, October 28, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/27/AR2009102703857.html>. Accessed 12/15/2009.

³³ Correspondence from Elizabeth Meyer, Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of Virginia to Barbara Wyatt, Historian, National Park Service, 8/10/2009.

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The planning and implementation of the Park Central Plaza on what was essentially an undeveloped lot in the heart of the city is certainly a contrast with similar efforts in public urban landscape design under way in other areas of the state. Park Central Square, and many of Halprin's designs for commercial plazas and urban parks, integrates modern design with historic fabric unlike other urban renewal strategies based on land clearance and redevelopment.

Where Springfield was attempting to introduce modern design to complement and stimulate reuse of existing buildings, St. Louis was taking the other approach to urban redevelopment. Beginning in the 1930s with the clearance of historic buildings on the Mississippi Riverfront, St. Louis sought to create a "new" city. Land clearance in downtown St. Louis made way for the construction of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, a.k.a. "the Arch" (completed in 1965) and Daniel Kiley's associated landscape design, and public spaces such as Kiener Plaza (dedicated in 1966). Kiener Plaza contains many of the features characteristic of Modern Movement landscape architecture such as fountains and hard-scaped plazas meant to attract office workers and others exploring downtown and may be significant in its own right. Aloe Plaza West Expansion, another 1960s St. Louis park/plaza in downtown, contains similar features. While indicative of one approach to urban renewal in the 1960s, notably land clearance and suburbanization of urban streetscapes, these places display a different character and vision than Springfield's Park Central Square.

In contrast to St. Louis, Kansas City by the mid-20th century already had a wealth of public parks, parkways and green spaces. As a young city, Kansas City's leaders had embraced the City Beautiful Movement, commissioning George Kessler to design a system of parks and boulevards. The planning and implementation of the large system in the late 19th and early 20th centuries required slum clearance in some parts of town, but also pushed development into previously undeveloped land, charting the way for future growth. Kansas City, unlike St. Louis, did not have the challenge of creating vital urban landscapes throughout the urban core. Though additional research may find important mid-century public landscape designs in Kansas City, it appears from initial inquiries that most urban landscapes from the period in Kansas City were the result of private investment and development. The BMA Tower (constructed 1961-1963, NR listed in 2002), for example included two distinct landscapes. Near the building is a formal landscaped plaza with contrasting pavers laid in a grid pattern to accentuate the strong lines of the building. The

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second landscape is less formal with natural green space meant to blend with the neighboring public park lands. BMA Tower lies outside Kansas City's historic central business district. However, modern buildings constructed in the historic core—notably the Mercantile Bank and Trust Company and Commerce Bank Tower, included semi-public landscape features. Mercantile Bank (constructed 1973) incorporated a sunken plaza beneath their building, and Commerce Bank (constructed in 1964) included an interior atrium designed by landscape Architects Gordon Whiffen and Hare & Hare. While these places may share some elements of Modern Movement design, they are private rather than public urban landscapes in contrast to Springfield's Park Central Square.

By the 1970s, Springfield also had an extensive system of public parks. Historically, and today, the majority of Springfield's public spaces are geared toward recreation. Large parks containing playgrounds, ball fields, nature trails, and botanical gardens are scattered throughout the city. Some of these parks contain significant landscaping features, notably shelters and stonework associated with the Civilian Conservation Corps. None of the parks extant in 1970s, however, were located in the commercial core of the city. Unlike the pastoral and recreation facilities offered by the City, Park Central Square was geared toward the urban shopper, office worker, and community events. The park's grassy terraces and fountain offered a place to rest from shopping or take a break from work. The depressed plaza allowed people to be among, but separated from vehicles and the shopping and business-related pedestrian traffic around the edges of the square. The design also allowed the square to return to its original purpose—as a public gathering space for entertainment and community events.

For more than 30 years, Park Central Square stood as a unique monument to Modern Movement public landscape design in Springfield. In c. 2000, Springfield constructed Founders Park located approximately two blocks northeast of Park Central Square. Founders Park, constructed on lots historically containing historic commercial buildings, is dominated by large concrete blocks of varying heights and sizes designed to mimic the appearance of nearby Phoenix Limestone Quarry. Posted on the blocks is a timeline of Springfield history. On one end is an amphitheater, and surrounding the park are narrow green spaces containing native trees and plants. Like Park Central Square, Founders Park is a very urban space in contrast to the recreational and natural spaces that dominate Springfield's other parks, even their neighborhood

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and “mini” parks located in densely developed areas. Interestingly, Founders Park shares some design features seen in Park Central Plaza and other Halprin designs. Founders Park, like spaces designed in the Halprin vernacular, draws inspiration from the history and geology of its location. It also attempts to connect a very contemporary and abstract design to the history of a place through art and interpretive information. Founders Park also has a fountain designed, not for observation, but for interaction. Constructed more than 30 years after Park Central Square, the design of Founders Park indicates the significant and continuing impact that Halprin’s public urban landscapes have had on contemporary landscape architecture.

In the context of known public spaces redeveloped in the late 1960s and early 1970s in Springfield and Missouri, Park Central Square stands out. Though Springfield’s efforts to revitalize downtown through the creation of a modern public plaza ultimately failed, this was more a result of general commercial trends and attitudes than poor design. The Park Central Plaza has seen some changes through the years including modifications to allow for handicap accessibility, deterioration of the park’s features and plantings, and changes to the outer rim first to close then to reopen the square to vehicular traffic. The heart of the square, however, retains the characteristic features of the Halprin design vernacular and is an exceptional and significant example of public Modern Movement landscape design in Springfield.

Conclusion

The expanded Springfield Public Square Historic District offers a more complete representation of the central commercial district of Springfield. Additional business types in the increase include theaters, office buildings, and automobile related resources. Including the east half of the square gives a better representation of that vital symbol of the central city, and inclusion of the Frisco Office Building anchors the northeast corner of the district with a building associated with a business that was essential to the growth and prosperity of the city. Expansion of the district to the east and north creates a more representative group of Downtown Commercial Buildings, as described in the Multiple Property Listing for Springfield, Missouri. Though unrelated to the historic development and significance of the larger district, the 1970s Park Central Plaza is also significant. The design represents both the city’s efforts to

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reinvigorate the historic urban core and the prevailing design ideals and aesthetic of a leading 20th century landscape architect, Lawrence Halprin.

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UTM, continued

E. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	474000	4118015

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries are marked as a heavy dashed line on the scaled site plan in Figure One. They correspond to the property lines for the buildings of the district, plus the portions of the public streets shown within the boundaries on that map.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include all of the land associated with the buildings in the district that retains integrity. The increase adds intact commercial properties east and north of the public square. The new east edge of the district is marked by Jefferson Street, a major commercial artery that create a logical break; properties east of it include open land, as well as surface parking and a large parking garage. Surface parking lots are also located north and west of the new boundaries. A large 1970s building on the south side of the square forms a logical boundary there, and the west side of the square is included in the initial district.

11. Form Prepared By

Debbie Sheals, with Gail Emrie, Private Contractor
29 S. 9th St. Suite 204, Columbia, MO 65201
573-874-3779
October 27, 2008

Tiffany Patterson, State Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102
December 2009
(Lawrence Halprin/Park Central Square)

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Photographs

The following information is the same for photographs 1-12:

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Springfield
Greene County, MO
Debbie Sheals
May-August, 2008

List of Photographs

See photo key for description of camera angle.

1. Looking north from the square.
2. Northeast quadrant of the square.
3. From the west side of the square looking east to Park Central East (St. Louis St.).
4. Southeast quadrant of the square.
5. Longer view, with non-contributing south boundary to the right.
6. Looking east on Park Central East.
7. Looking west on Park Central East.
8. Looking west, from outside the boundary
9. Frisco Office Building, looking northeast.
10. Looking west on Olive St.
11. Looking east on Olive Street, from Boonville.
12. Looking west on Olive St.
13. Historic photo of the southwest side of the Square, from the History Museum for Springfield-Greene County. Photo number 1994-132, dated April, 1956.
14. Current photo, southwest corner of the square. Taken by Debbie Sheals, September, 2008

List of Figures/Illustrations

1. District Map
2. Photo Key
3. Photograph of the Three Sisters entryway floor.
4. Park Central Square, c. 1970
5. Springfield Park Central Square, c. 2008
6. Springfield Park Central Square, c. 2008

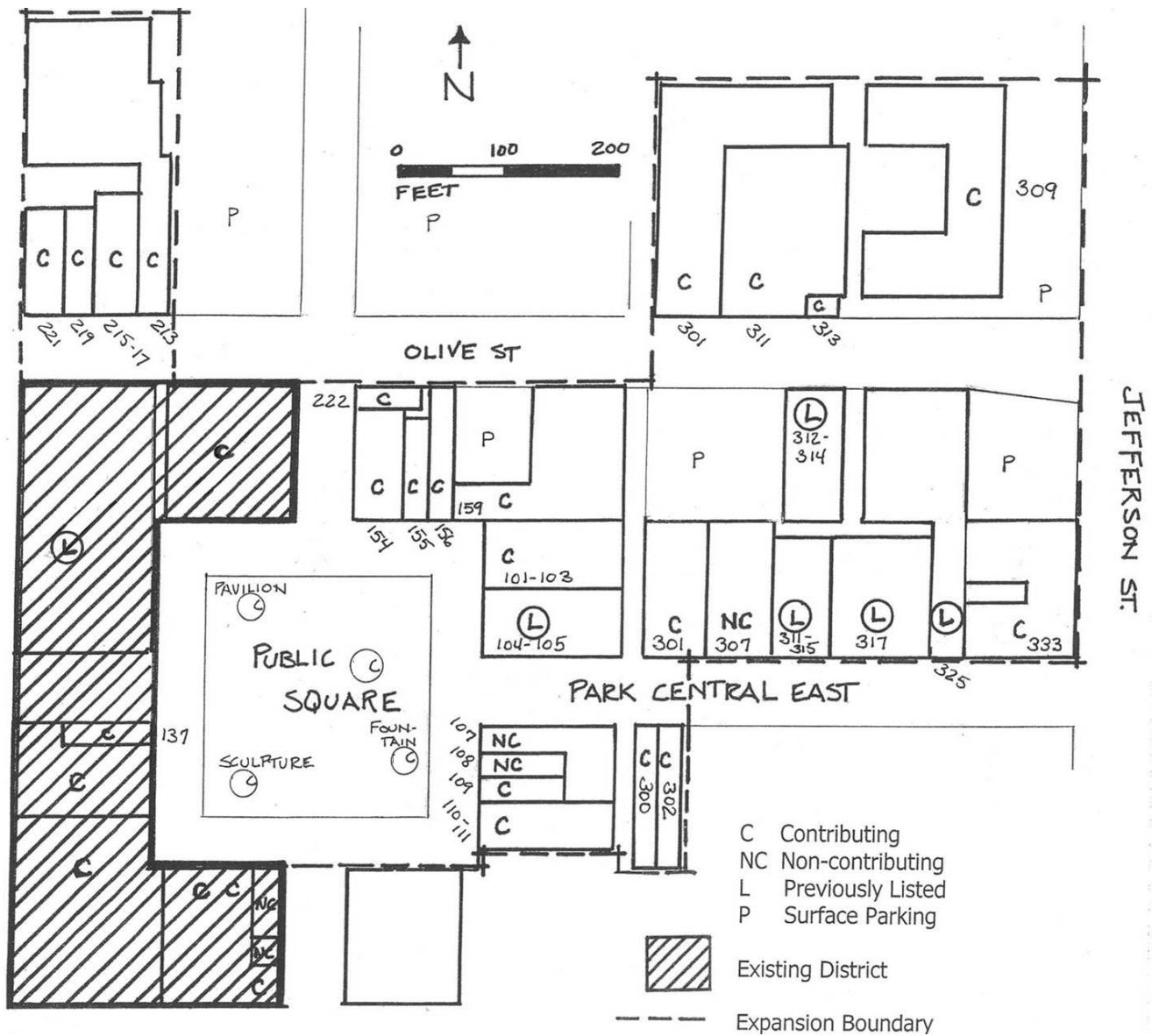
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Figure One. Boundary Map. Drawn by Debbie Sheals.



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Figure three. Photograph of the Three Sisters entryway floor.



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Figure four. Park Central Square c. 1970.



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Figure five. Park Central Square looking east northeast. Courtesy Tim Rosenbury.



Figure six. Park Central Square looking southeast. Courtesy Tim Rosenbury

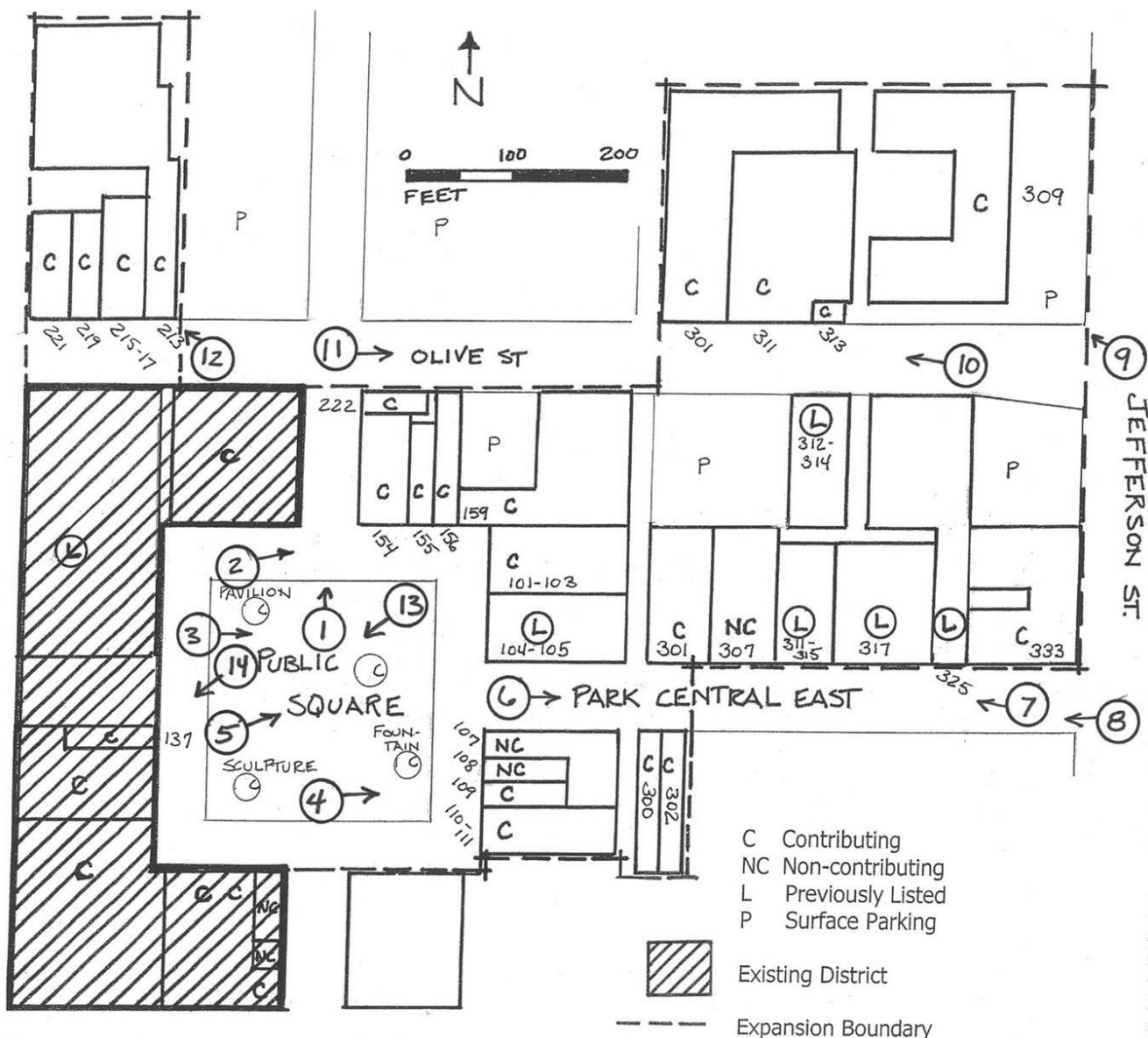
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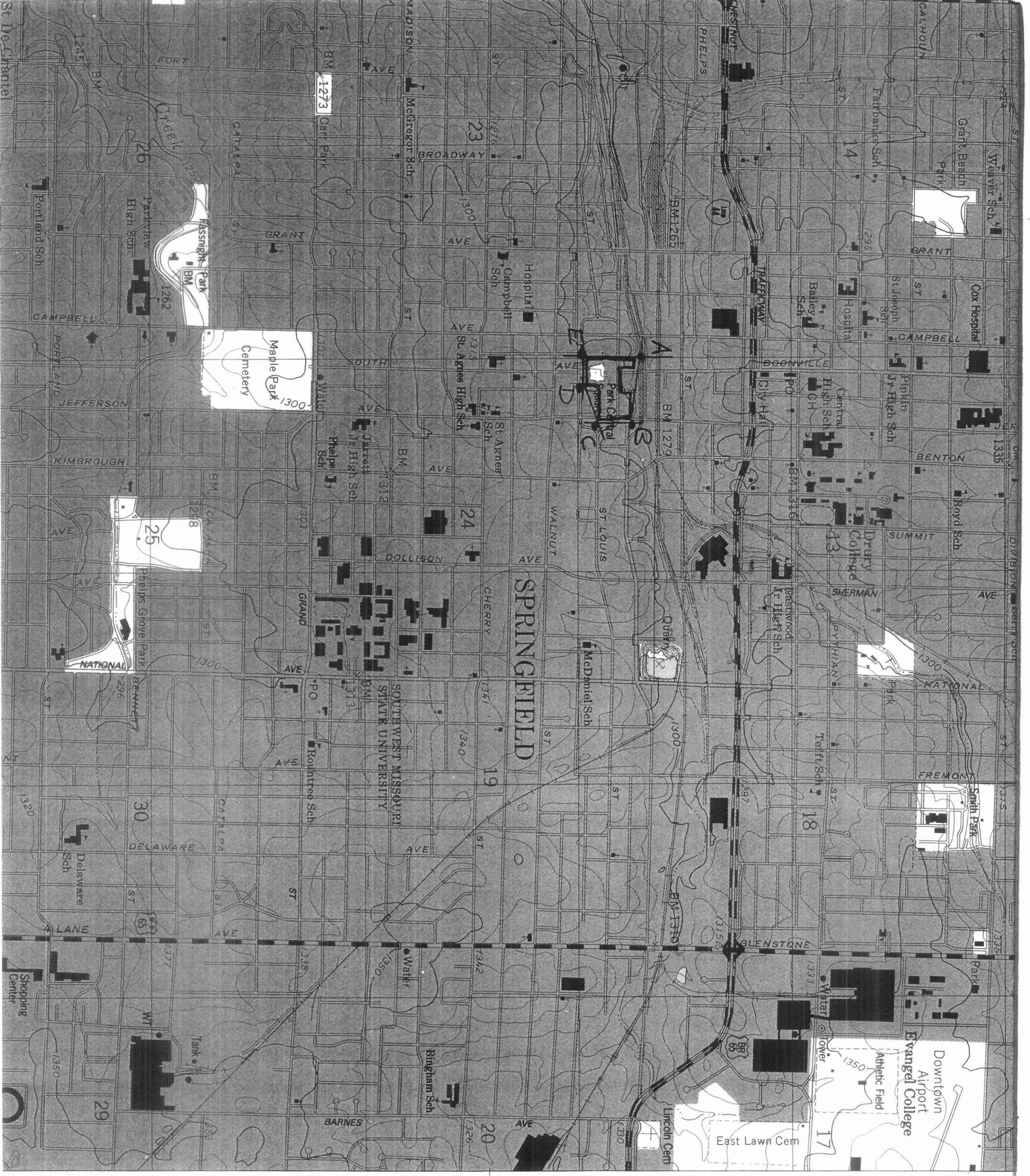
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Figure 2: Photo Key.





12'30"
 SPRINGFIELD,
 GREENE COUNTY,
 MO
 A
 15/474000/4118300
 B
 15/474320/4118250
 C
 15/474320/4118100
 D
 15/474160/4118015
 E
 15/474000/4118015

12'30"
 SPRINGFIELD
 PUBLIC SQUARE
 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 (BOUNDARY
 INCREASES)

DRINK

new home of the
The History Museum for Springfield - Greene County
Frisco Railroad Exhibit open now - September 20. Full museum remodel starting soon

ESTATE
JEWELRY
BUY SELL TRADE
Rosenbaum's JEWELRY



DRINK

new home of the
The History Museum for Springfield - Greene County
Frisco Railroad Exhibit open now - September 20. Full museum remodel starting soon

ESTABLISHED
JEWELRY
WATCHES

DownTown JEWELRY

STATE OF MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES







Marilyn's

NO PARKING
STOPPING
OR
STANDING

RESERVED
PARKING
ZONE

RESERVED
PARKING
ZONE



Marilyn's

Park Central South
To South Avenue

ONE WAY

ROAD CLOSED
FOR REPAIRS
4-11-10

100% OFF



Storefront with large glass windows and a striped awning. The letters "R.P." are visible in the window.

Starbucks storefront with a red awning. The Starbucks logo is visible on the glass door. A blue mailbox is located on the sidewalk in front of the building.

Storefront with a white awning and a sign that reads "Whiskers".

Street view showing more buildings, trees, and streetlights in the distance.



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J.H. D. MORRIS ARTS BUILDING - GILLIOZ THEATER

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GILLIOZ THEATRE
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STOPPING
OR
STANDING

30
MPH
SPEED LIMIT

W B G



WOODRUFF

DANIEL DAVIS

STOP

←



LANDMARK BUILDING

309
LANDMARK BUILDING

MED-TRANSIT

TRANSIT
MEDI-TRANSIT
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NO PARKING



Thinking of a
hand-dipped
Milk Shake?



SWEETS
the
VIOLENCE





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