

EXTRA COMPLETE FILE COPY

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Downtown Nappanee Historic District
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number see continuation sheet
city, town Nappanee
state Indiana code IN county Elkhart code 039 zip code 46550

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s), district, site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 26, Noncontributing 14 buildings, 14 Total
Name of related multiple property listing:
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Patrick R. Kalitor
Date: 1-7-90
Indiana 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.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
entered in the National Register.
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain:)
Signature of the Keeper
Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: businessTRANSPORTATION: rail-relatedGOVERNMENT: post office, city hallHEALTH CARE: hospital

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: businessTRANSPORTATION: rail-relatedGOVERNMENT: post office**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

ITALIANATELATE 19th and 20th C. REVIVALSOTHER: Neo-Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestonewalls BRICKSTONE: limestoneroof OTHER: compositionother CONCRETEASPHALT**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE  
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1874-1939

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Frazier, Henry F.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

see continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

**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

**Specify repository:**

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory

**10. Geographical Data**

Acres of property 9.2

**UTM References**

A	1, 6	5, 8, 3	3, 8, 0	4, 5	8, 8	2, 6, 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		
C	1, 6	5, 8, 3	3, 5, 0	4, 5	8, 7	9, 9, 0

B	1, 6	5, 8, 3	5, 9, 0	4, 5	8, 8	2, 2, 0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		
D	1, 6	5, 8, 3	6, 0, 0	4, 5	8, 7	9, 9, 0

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title <u>Laura Thayer, Historic Preservation Consultant</u>	date <u>January 3, 1989</u>
organization _____	telephone <u>812/372-6806</u>
street & number <u>3905 N. 500 W.</u>	state <u>IN</u> zip code <u>47201</u>
city or town <u>Columbus</u>	

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Street and number

Roughly, the area bounded by Walnut Street on the North,  
Clark Street on the west, Elm Street on the east, and the  
B & O Railroad tracks on the south.



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The Downtown Nappanee Historic District is located in the center of the city of Nappanee, which is situated in the southwestern corner of Elkhart County, Indiana. The city straddles the Locke-Union township line. Main Street (State Road 19), which runs north-south, defines the township line.

Nappanee is located on the highest point in an area which is chiefly swampland. The downtown was once surrounded by ponds on three sides. These have been filled.

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The historic district, which comprises most of the commercial district of Nappanee, includes "the square," the local reference to the intersection of Main and Market Streets (U.S. 6), the buildings adjacent to the square, and those on Main Street between the square and the B & O Railroad tracks.

Most of the buildings in the historic district are contained in the original plat (see map of original plat). The exceptions to this are the U.S. Post Office (building number 14), and the buildings bounded by Main, Market, Clark and Walnut (the block in the northwest corner of the district). With the exception of a few commercial buildings which do not contribute to the character of the district, the area surrounding the district is residential.

The historic district is composed of one and two story brick and frame structures. Some of the 19th century buildings in the district, which are of frame construction, have been altered to the extent that they no longer contribute. These include buildings 9, moved from Locke in 1881, building 33, an early drugstore, and building 36, originally a hotel.

At least two of the buildings which survive from the 19th century contribute to the character of the district: the building at 152 E. Market Street (building number 10), moved from Locke in 1881; and the Italianate Bechtel Building (building number 15, photo 34), built in 1888.

The district began to take on much of its present character during a building boom which started in 1899. This is when the Neoclassical Dietrich Block (building 31, photo 36) was started. In the first decade of the 20th century, a number of the other buildings in the district were constructed, including Kaufman's Department Store (building 23, photo 14), the Neoclassical First National Bank (building 35, photo 18), and Yoder's Garage (building 29, photo 35), Italianate in style. In this same decade, the streets were first paved (with brick), and brick sidewalks built.



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During the nineteen teens and twenties, a number of distinctive buildings, reflecting architectural characteristics of the times, were constructed. The B & O Depot (building 17, photo 24), and, to a lesser degree, Price Hospital (building 13, photos 6 and 33) exhibit details of the Prairie Style of architecture. The Farmers and Traders Bank (building 22, photo 28), is an excellent example of the Neoclassical style, popular with bankers in the early 20th century. The Hartman Brothers Building (number 20, photo 26) and the building at 106-112 South Main Street (building 21, photo 14) suggest the Chicago style of architecture, while buildings 7 (photos 3 and 32), 26, 27, 28 (photo 30) and 32 have Arts and Crafts detailing. The sole Art Deco style building is located at 110 East Market Street (building number 8, photo 3). The Post Office (building 14, photos 7 and 8) is an outstanding example of the Colonial Revival style, popular with the U.S. Postal Service in the 1930s.

A more detailed description of the buildings in the district is listed below. The numbers of these buildings are keyed to the map.

Bldg. No.

Description

1. Wisler Building, 152 West Market Street (third building from the left in photo 1). The building was constructed in 1925 for Ed Wisler with clay tile block and salvaged timbers. A two story concrete block addition was added in the 1930s. The four-bay facade is brick, with stepped inset panels at the top of the building to suggest a cornice. The building has stone coping. In the center near the top is a stone tablet with the date, "1925." Under a metal panel above the store front, the original luxfer glass is intact. The store front has been altered. The pressed metal ceiling inside the building is also intact. The Nappanee Post Office occupied the east half of this building from 1926 to 1935, when the present post office (building number 14) was constructed.
2. Huffman Bakery, 108-110 West Market Street (fourth building from the left in photo 1). The two story brick building was constructed in two phases in the early 1900s. Other materials include stone trim, luxfer glass and terra cotta tile. The store fronts have been altered. This was the home of Huffman Bakery, established in Nappanee around 1890.



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- 3. 106 West Market Street (fifth building from left in photo 1). This is a two story, early 20th century brick building. Decorative brickwork forms a "cornice" at the top of the building. Window openings have been altered (blocked down), and the keystones defining the tops of the original openings left in place. This building does not contribute to the district.
  
- 4. 102 West Market Street (sixth building from left in photo 1). This one story building was constructed in 1937. It originally had a vitrolite facade (photo number 39), but has been covered in aluminum siding. It does not contribute to the district.
  
- 5. B & B Restaurant (building at far left in photo 2; building on right in photo 13). This one story brick structure replaced an earlier B & B Cafe at this location. The building does not contribute to the district.
  
- 6. 104 E. Market Street (on far left in photo 3; center building in historic photo 32, taken in the 1910s). This is a one story brick building, constructed about 1910. The building, which has decorative, stepped inset panels on the upper facade, originally had luxfer glass above the store front. This glass may be intact under the new pent roof. (This pent roof extends across the facades of buildings 6 through 9) The store front has been altered.
  
- 7. Wisler Building, 106-108 East Market (second building from left in photo 3; on right in historic photo 32, taken in the 1910s). This is another Wisler Building; the other, building number 1, is discussed above. This one was constructed in 1914 and is a two story brick building with a four bay facade. The windows are double hung with stone sills and lintels. Above each of the windows is a rectangular brick panel of a herring bone pattern, with small square stones at the corners. The original luxfer glass may be intact under the new pent roof. The store front has been altered. The post office was located in the west half of the first story from 1914 to 1926.
  
- 8. 110 East Market Street (third building from left in photo 3; seventh building from right in historic photo 33, taken in the 1930s). This, the only Art Deco style building in the historic district, was probably

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constructed about 1930. The two story brick building has a two bay facade, and double hung windows with stone sills. The brick is turned vertical from the top of the windows to the top of the building. There is a stone coping, which is lower over these vertical brick sections. This detailing suggests a zigzag surface, characteristic of the style. The store front of this building has been altered.

9. 112 East Market Street (photo 4; sixth building from the right in historic photo 33, taken in the 1930s). This one story frame structure is one of the oldest buildings in Nappanee, having been moved from Locke in 1881. Though it has a new brick facade, and the rest of the building has been covered with a vertical aluminum siding, the original configuration is discernable. The building was moved to Nappanee by Enos Newcomer, who had a jewelry store. The building does not contribute to the district.
10. 152 E. Market Street (photo 5 and 40; fifth from right in historic photo 33, taken in the 1930s). This one story wood frame building, moved from Locke in 1881, retains its 19th century store front. The upper part of the facade and the west side of the building have been covered with metal siding. Much of the 19th century interior, such as wood paneling, is intact. The building, one of the oldest in Nappanee, represents the link between Locke and Nappanee.
11. 154-156 East Market Street (third building from right in photo 6). This is a two story brick building with a five bay facade, thought to have been constructed in 1920. The original windows are intact, but the facade has new vertical siding and the store front has been altered. The building does not contribute to the district.
12. 158 East Market Street (second building from right in photo 6). This is a one story brick building, constructed about 1955. It does not contribute to the district.
13. Price Hospital, 160 East Market Street (building at far right in photo 6 and historic photo 33, taken in the 1930s). The building is a one story brick building with a four bay facade, raised basement, decorative brick cornice and stone coping. The windows and exterior doors have stone trim. The building's simplified classical

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detailing was commonly found in commercial buildings at the turn of the century. The building, constructed in 1913, was designed by a local architect, Henry F. Frazier.

14. U.S. Post Office, 202 East Market Street (photo 7). Constructed in 1935, the post office is Colonial Revival in style. The building is a one story brick structure with a five bay facade, a raised basement and a side gable roof. Details include a fence and belvedere on the roof, a dentiled cornice, multi-paned windows with splayed brick lintels and stone keystones and sills, a segmental arch door opening, and a stone water table. The building has a high degree of integrity and is an excellent example of the type of post office being constructed during this period. The interior of the building is largely intact, particularly the lobby (shown in photo 8), which features a Depression-era mural on the west wall. The mural, one of 42 done in Indiana as part of the Public Works of Art Project, was painted by artist Grant Christian.
15. Bechtel Building, 151 East Market Street (photo 10; historic photo 34, taken about 1900). The Bechtel Building is a two story brick structure with a eight bay facade. Windows are double hung and have stone sills and pressed metal heads. There is also a bracketed, pressed metal cornice. The first story originally had large plate glass windows, the first in any building in Nappanee. These were removed in 1958, when the building was remodeled to its present appearance. Other alterations include the removal of a roof "pediment" which had the name "Bechtel" and the date "1888," and the removal of pressed metal finials, one at either end of the cornice.
16. Old City Hall (photo 20). The Old City Hall is a two story structure of decorative concrete block. It has a four bay facade and a hip roof. The first story has been altered and a pent roof added.
17. Baltimore and Ohio Depot, South Main Street and B & O Railroad (photos 23 and 24). The one story brick and stone structure, designed in the Prairie Style of architecture, has a low hip roof and wide eaves. The building also features decorative brick banding, round arches, and star-like designs in many of the windows. It has excellent integrity.

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18. 105 West Lincoln Street (photo 25). This building was constructed in 1914, but remodeled in 1976. It is a one story building with metal siding and a mansard-like roof. It does not contribute to the district.
19. 158 South Main Street (building on left in photo 26). This is a two story brick building with a two bay facade. It was constructed in 1935.
20. Hartman Brothers Building, 156 South Main Street (building on right in photo 26). The original Hartman Brothers Building, constructed in 1881, is behind the northern two-thirds of the building. The southern third is also a 19th century building, but slightly smaller in scale. The two buildings were integrated by the new brick facade in 1914. Nineteenth century exteriors with segmental arch windows can still be seen on the north, west, and south sides of the building. The store front has been altered. A luxfer glass transom may be behind metal panels above the store front. The building has stone banding, stone window sills and lintels, and luxfer glass transoms above the paired double hung windows with common transoms. Stone inserts between the second story windows and cornice carry the inscriptions "1881," "Hartman Bros.," and "1914." Much of the original pressed metal ceiling, as well as other 19th century interior features, are intact.
21. 106-112 S. Main Street (building on left in photo 27). The building, constructed about 1910, is a two story brick building with a four bay facade. The store fronts have been altered. The original luxfer glass transom is intact on the northern half of the building and may be intact on the southern half of the building. The building has stone banding, stone window heads and sills, and a dentiled cornice. Grouped windows are double hung.
22. Farmers and Traders Bank, 104 South Main Street (building on left in photo 28). This is a two story Neoclassical building with a stone facade. It was constructed in 1915. It has fluted Ionic columns paired with Doric pilasters supporting a full entablature. Centrally located on the ground floor is a pedimented entry. There are tall narrow windows, one each on either side of the entry. The second story has one large window. The aluminum windows in all the window openings are new. There is also an aluminum and glass



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door in the entry. The interior has been altered to some degree. The front (easternmost) room of the bank was originally open to the second story. A new floor has been added between the first and second levels in this room. Much of the original detailing is intact in the second level, including the pressed metal ceiling. The basement vaults are also intact and are used for storage.

23. Kaufman's Department Store, 102 South Main Street (building on right in photo 28). The building is a two story brick structure with a four bay upper facade. The first story originally featured cast iron columns, which have been replaced with brick columns. The size of the window sash has been changed, but the window openings remain the same. Windows have stone lintels and sills. There is a date stone with "1902" above the windows, and a dentiled, bracketed brick and stone cornice. This building was sandblasted in the 1970s.
24. 106 North Main Street (building on far left - only partially shown - in photo 30). This one story aluminum, glass, and tile building was constructed in 1960. It does not contribute to the district.
25. VFW Building, 110 North Main Street (building second from left in photo 30). This is a one story building with a stone facade, constructed in 1950. It does not contribute to the district.
26. 152 North Main Street (building third from left in photo 30). This building and the two buildings to the north (buildings numbers 27 and 28) were constructed a few years apart, but are integrated in style, with Arts and Crafts detailing. Building number 26 was constructed in 1913, number 27 in 1926, and number 28, around 1915. All three are two story buildings with tapestry brick facades, luxfer glass (most of which is intact), decorative brickwork, and stone detailing. The store fronts have been altered.
27. Movie Theater, 154 North Main Street (fourth from left in photo 30). See Building number 26 for description.
28. 156-158 North Main Street (fifth from left in photo 30). See Building number 26 for description.
29. Yoder Garage and Livery, 160 North Main Street (sixth

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from left in photo 30; historic photo 35, taken about 1910). This is a two story brick building with new siding on the facade. The pressed metal cornice is intact. The store fronts and window openings have been altered.

30. 111 N. Main Street (center building in photo 13). This is a one story brick building constructed about 1920.
31. Dietrich Block, 101 South Main Street (photo 11; far left of photo 15; historic photo 36, taken about 1900). The largest building in downtown Nappanee, the Dietrich Block occupies one eighth of a block on the southeast corner of Main and Market Streets. The main facade of the building is on Main Street. The Neoclassical style building is a two story brick structure. The building is elaborately detailed on the second story, with wood columns and medallions and pressed metal banding and cornice. Part of the pressed metal parapet has been removed (see historic photo 36). Two sections of the parapet, one each on Main and Market Streets, contained the inscriptions "C.H. Dietrich" and "1900." Part of the parapet has remained intact, but much of this has been covered with aluminum panels (see photos 11 and 15). The store fronts have been altered on both the Main Street and Market Street sides of the building. Architect for the building was Henry F. Frazier
32. 107 South Main Street (second building from left in photo 15; second building from left in historic photo 37, taken about 1920). This is a one story brick building with a triangular parapet and stone trim and coping. The store front has been altered. The building was constructed about 1910.
33. Jacob Walters Drugstore, 109 South Main Street (third building from left in photo 16 and third from left in historic photo 37; photo 17). One of the oldest buildings in Nappanee, the front of this wood frame structure was constructed in 1881 by Walters for his drug store business, which he moved to Nappanee from Locke. The rear of the building (photo 17) was moved here from Locke. The front of the building has been covered with vertical wood siding and the rear with horizontal asphalt siding. The building does not contribute to the district.

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34. Metzler's Shoes, 111 South Main Street (fourth from left in photo 16). This building, a one story brick structure constructed in 1929, received an aluminum facade in the 1960s. The building does not contribute to the district.
35. First National Bank, 151 South Main Street (fifth from left in photo 16; fifth from left in historic photo 37). Constructed in 1908, the Neoclassical First National Bank is one of the more architecturally elaborate buildings in the district. It is a two story brick structure with limestone pilasters separating the three bays of the first story, and supporting a limestone entablature between the first and second stories. Second story windows have limestone lintels and sills. There is a limestone entablature topped by a dentiled pediment above these windows. On the frieze is the inscription, "First National Bank." On the pediment is the date, "1908." The window sashes have been altered. The bank failed during the economic depression of the 1930s.
36. 153 South Main Street (sixth from left in photo 16; sixth from left in historic photo 37). Under the 1986 permastone facade is the wood frame Nappanee House, the oldest extant commercial building built in the city (in 1876). Deteriorating wood clapboards are visible on the south side of the structure. The building does not contribute to the district.
37. 155 South Main Street (seventh from left in photo 16). The building is a two story brick structure with stone trim, constructed about 1930. The store front and second story window sash have been altered.
38. 157-59 South Main Street (eighth from left in photo 16; eighth from left in historic photo 37). This two story brick building was constructed about 1900, but received a new brick front in the early 1900s. The later facade is sympathetic to the older one. The old segmental arch windows can be seen on the south side of the building. The building was used as a livery, and later as a garage. It now houses a retail store.
39. Nappanee Carriage Works, 201 South Main Street (photo number 19; historic photo 38). This three story brick building, constructed in 1900, housed an important Nappanee industry. The building formerly had an



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elaborate pressed metal facade, which has only in this decade been replaced with a new brick front. The north and south sides of the building are intact; however the character of the building has been irrevocably altered. It does not contribute to the district.

40. South Main Street (second building from left in photos 19 and 21). This structure, which developed over a period of several years, includes an elevator and a one story brick section with a loading dock. Construction on the structure took place between 1923 and 1952. Due to alterations and the late date of the section fronting on Main Street, it does not contribute to the district.

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The Downtown Nappanee Historic District is significant in the areas of commerce and transportation. The district represents the commercial development of Nappanee, a city built on opportunity created by the construction of a major rail line, and perpetuated by the establishment of a U.S. highway and a state highway.

The commercial area of Nappanee has thrived since the mid 1870s, when the B & O Railroad established a station at this location on a newly built line. The line, which extended B & O service to Chicago, represented an incredible opportunity for both established towns and for new towns, like Nappanee, which sprang up in its wake. The area immediately north of the railroad became a commercial center for the growing population of the new village, for farm families and residents of small settlements for miles, and for visitors who came to Nappanee to conduct business.

In the early 1930s, U.S. 6 and State Road 19 were routed along the two main streets of Nappanee, Market and Main. The importance of rail transportation had already begun to decline in relationship to the growth of shipping by truck. Because of the designation of these highways, Nappanee was able to maintain its position of importance as a transportation center and continue to grow.

Elkhart County was established in 1830. However, the southern part of the county, including the townships in which Nappanee is located, remained largely unpopulated until the 1860s. This was partly because of the lack of navigable waterways to that area, and partly because much of the southern part of the county was swampland, and not well suited for farming. By the early 1870s, there were only a handful of farm families living in the area which was to become Nappanee.

In the book, "They Called it Nappanee," James Weygand writes:

"Of all Elkhart County, the Nappanee area was the least desirable. While dense forests covered the whole county, the northern half had rivers. And open spaces or prairies where the grass grew belly high to a horse. And needed only to be turned by the plow for bountiful crops of corn or wheat or oats. . . .

In the southern half there were only dense woods and swamps. No rivers. No plains. Just woods, and woods - beech, maple,

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walnut, hickory, poplar, oak, cherry. Where Elkhart County and Kosciusko County met, and stretching southward was the nothingness of the tamarack marsh. Low-lying land almost perpetually under water, in which only the tamarack thrived."

Of the early settlers of the county, Weygand writes: "They were farmers; those who had a choice settled on the northern prairies. As they filled, newcomers moved southward. Late arrivals came to the Nappanee area."

In 1870, there were seven farmsteads, three log cabins, four frame houses, and a population of 35 to 40 people in the area which was to become Nappanee. The sole business was Daniel Metzler's broom and shoe making shop.

The B & O line that went through Elkhart County in 1874 was only the second eastern railroad to serve Chicago. It was a time when railroad companies were engaged in a race to claim business offered by the big markets. The B & O was more interested in getting a straight, fast shot to Chicago than in providing service to lesser cities along the way. In Indiana, the only city of any consequence included on the route was Auburn in DeKalb County.

Two railroads went through Elkhart County at this time, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern; and the Cincinnati, Wabash, and Michigan. These two lines directly connected Elkhart, the largest city, and Goshen, the county seat, to Buffalo, Cincinnati, and Chicago, as well as points along the way. These connections were almost essential to the survival of these cities. Other cities and towns competed fiercely for access to new lines.

Cutting through the extreme southwestern corner of the county, the B & O ignored all established towns, including Locke, founded in 1867, located only two miles north of the line.

The citizens of Locke were determined to benefit from the railroad. A station (called Locke or Locke Station in early B & O schedules) was established at the intersection of the railroad and the Locke-Union township line. Locke businessmen understood the significance of having access to the railroad, but were unable to procure land for the purpose of erecting a depot.

The men who owned the land in the vicinity of the railroad, Daniel Metzler, Henry Stahly, and John Culp, Jr., also

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recognized the significance of the railroad. In December 1874, they platted a new town on the line, donating 5 acres for the location of a depot. George T. Ager, later county surveyor and newspaperman, surveyed the original plat. Fifty lots were laid out. The potential for a town at this location was recognized immediately, and the lots sold quickly, mainly to Locke businessmen.

In 1873, Locke was a thriving village with an estimated population of 200. In his memoirs, Dr. Willard Price wrote of Locke and the beginnings of Nappanee.

"The village of Locke was quite a trading center. It had a grist Mill, Mr. Fike was the miller; several stores: George Eby drygoods, Jim Lake groceries, David Lamb furniture and undertaking; a two room school, U.B. Church, Blacksmith shop with a Mr. Haines as blacksmith. . . .

"Our grinding of wheat for flour or corn for cornmeal was usually done at Locke grist mill but once in a while we would take a load of wheat and corn to the Hawks mill in Goshen. That was an all days trip in the wagon. . . . In 1873 (sic) the B & O was built and finished through our country and on Dec. 24, 1873 the first B & O engine passed over the road. Of course this was a great improvement and a station was established to take care of Locke's business, although over 2 miles away. They called it Locke Station. As time went along they saw how unhandy it was and would be to haul all their freight by wagon from Locke Station to Locke. So George Eby determined to build a storage over at the railroad and do the hauling as was convenient and not have to be there every day as the train arrived. Some suggested he'd kill Locke if he started that and so it wasn't long until his whole store was moved over and he named the place Nappanee after a town in Canada whence he came when he settled at Locke Indiana. . . . It wasn't long until Nappanee absorbed all of importance in Locke in a business way on account of the railroad facilities until Nappanee has become a manufacturing city of 3500 people and a thriving trading center on the longest highway - U.S. #6." (Price, Willard A., "My Memories," 1944.)

The founding of Nappanee marked the beginning of the demise of Locke. Most of the businesses of Locke moved to Nappanee within a few years. A number of stores and houses were physically moved.

The Locke post office was closed in 1893. After that, Locke

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was nothing more than a small settlement with very little business activity.

Nappanee, on the other hand was booming. In 1880, the estimated number of people was 600. By 1890, the population had grown to about 1500. Nappanee had become the third largest settlement in Elkhart County. It remains so to this day. (Elkhart and Goshen, both first settled in the 1830s, are the two larger settlements.)

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The railroad, of course, was the reason for Nappanee. But two other factors were perhaps as important in getting the new village started and on the way to continuing prosperity: the village of Locke, and the surrounding forests.

Nappanee did not start from scratch. The people of Locke were there to promote a station on the railroad. Later, when Locke was more or less abandoned for the new town, most of the established businesses of Locke, and most of the people of Locke, moved to Nappanee, giving it quite a boost.

And the forests - the seemingly endless acres of virgin woods, containing trees of incredible dimensions - provided the resources for Nappanee's first and most important industries.

There were a number of sawmills operating in the area when the B & O came through. One of these was the Mellinger and Myers mill, which was built in 1873, and made ties for the railroad. Within two years, the mill had been purchased by three brothers, Frank, John, and Samuel Coppes, who were members of an area farm family. This sawmill grew into a world famous manufacturer of furniture and kitchen cabinets, and continues to operate in Nappanee today.

By 1890, at least five other sawmills had been established. There were also a lath and stave factory, several box manufacturers, and furniture manufacturers. In addition to these, there were factories producing bridge and ship timbers, and house moldings. Nappanee lumber and lumber products were shipped to all parts of the country.

There were other industries as well. Freese Creamery, the first creamery in Indiana, was established in 1882. Hartman Brothers manufactured charcoal from 1882 to 1890. Bricks were made by Fisher Brothers in the 1870s and 80s and by Delotter and Mellinger in the 1890s. A canning factory was built in 1894. And there were a number of elevators to



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accommodate the large amount of wheat being shipped through Nappanee.

The town prospered. In 1888, one of the local newspapers reported that, for the year,

"More grain and lumber was handled and more business transacted by our respective houses than any other place of our size within a radius of 100 miles.

"Nappanee ships and receives more freight and express and has a larger passenger traffic over the B & O Railroad than any other town on the line between Chicago and Defiance, Ohio." (The Nappanee News, vol. X, No. 39, 20 December, 1888.)

The combination of the railroad, which established Nappanee as a shipping center, and the success of the town as a manufacturing center ensured that it would also flourish as a regional commercial center. The group of buildings that comprise the business district of Nappanee today give us a portrait of day-to-day life in the early village, and of changes over time.

Building in Nappanee's commercial area began shortly after it was platted and continued in full force. The first issue of the Nappanee News (March 27, 1879) listed over 40 businesses, showing the incredible growth of the village, then just over two years old, and the importance of the commercial district.

The list included clothing, boot and shoe stores, dry good stores, the post office, a drug store, a blacksmith shop, a hotel, grain dealers, a hardware store, grocery stores, a carriage shop, restaurants, a livery, a building moving business, a jewelry store, a meat market, a millinery, a gunsmith, a barber shop, an attorney, a justice of the peace, a saloon, a billiard hall, a picture gallery, a plasterer, a newspaper, a furniture store, agricultural implement stores, and five physicians.

One of the earliest new buildings was the Nappanee Hotel, later the Napanee House. (The second "p" was intentionally omitted to save money on the sign, which cost \$1 a letter.) This structure was built in 1876 for owner, Samuel Hartman. In 1907, when the First National Bank (building number 35) was constructed, the Napanee House was moved from its original location to the next lot south. It survives today on South Main Street (building number 36, photo 16) behind a contemporary facade. This may be the oldest extant

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Section No. 8 Page 6 Downtown Nappanee Historic District

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commercial structure built in Nappanee. With its present appearance, however, it does not contribute to the character of the district.

Another early business was Hartman Brothers store. Samuel and Jacob had started a store in Locke in 1872. Tobias and John joined the business later. In 1876, the Nappanee store was opened. In 1881, the company moved to its present location at 156 S. Main Street (building number 20, photo 26). Although a new front was added on the building in 1914, much of the 19th century interior remains intact.

The store sold dry goods, clothing, shoes, boots, groceries, carpets, rugs, and curtains among other items. There were other dry goods stores in Nappanee, but Hartman Brothers did the largest volume of business. It was important not only in Nappanee, but in Elkhart County as a whole. The Goshen Democrat reported in 1904, "It is undoubtedly one of the largest, if not the very largest store in the county, especially in point of floor space. There are also additions, annexes and vast warehouses."

Stahley Hall, "home to public and civic gatherings, political rallies, town meetings, Union Sunday School, and traveling entertainments," was in the rear of the second floor of the building. After it was renamed Hartman Hall in 1887, dances, suppers, and band concerts were added. The hall was closed in 1892 and the space was taken over by the Hartman store.

The Hartman Brothers had a number of other business interests including their sawmill, charcoal factory, grain shipping, and growing and distilling mint. John Hartman was elected one of the first town trustees in 1889.

In the mid-1920s, after the deaths of the brothers, the store was broken up into three separate stores.

Jacob Walter's Drugstore (building number 33, photo 16) and Enos Newcomer's Jewelry Store (building number 9, photo 4) were opened in 1881. The rear of Walters' store and the front of Newcomer's store were among those structures moved from Locke. These early, moved structures have been altered and do not contribute to the character of the district, but are important to note, as they illustrate the historical link between Locke and Nappanee.

The building at 152 East Market (building number 10, photo 5) also moved from Locke in 1881, is a better representative of



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Nappanee's relationship with Locke. It has a higher degree of integrity than the other moved structures, and contributes to the historical character of the district. It may be the oldest building in the district.

The Bechtel Building (building number 15, photos 10 and 34) with two stores on the ground floor and offices and a hall on the second floor, was completed in 1888. The brick building had the first plate glass store fronts in Nappanee. (These have since been replaced.) Shively Brothers Hardware and Dry Goods was an early store in this building. With its ornamental pressed metal cornice and window heads, the building symbolized the growing prosperity of Nappanee.

Another building that showed this prosperity and evidenced the demand for more store and office space is the large and elegant Dietrich Block (building number 31, photos 11, 15, and 36), constructed in 1900. It was designed by local architect, Henry F. Frazier, who was also the building's first tenant. Dietrich and Laudeman had a dry goods store on part of the site prior to construction of the Dietrich Block. The building that housed that business was moved into the street in 1899 so that the new construction would not interrupt business.

At least five buildings were moved into Main and Market Streets about this same time, so that new buildings could be constructed on the sites. The first building to be moved into the street was the wood frame Strohm Store (the old post office), which was on the site of the building at 107 South Main Street (building number 32, photos 15 and 37).

The streets of Nappanee, which had always been muddy and difficult to negotiate, were graveled in 1884. This improved the situation to some degree. Townspeople started clamoring for paved streets in 1899. Main and Market Streets were finally the first streets in Nappanee to be bricked, the work being completed between 1907 and 1908. This greatly aided the passage of automobiles, which first appeared in Nappanee in 1902.

The first garage in the town was built in 1910. This was the Yoder Garage and Livery, located at 160 N. Main Street (building number 29, photos 35 and 39). In addition to being a garage and livery, the building has, over the years been the location of a roller skating rink, a bowling alley, an automobile dealership, and the National Guard Armory. But its most significant role was as the first of the many

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garages that would be established in Nappanee as motorized transportation increased in importance.

While the automobile age was still in its infancy, however, the railroad was as important in Nappanee as it had ever been. In 1910, construction of a larger, more modern depot began. The first depot, a frame structure completed in 1875, was moved south of town. (It was later destroyed by fire.) The new depot (building number 17, photo 24) reflects influence from the Prairie style of architecture. Of Chicago origins, the style is appropriate for a building made possible because of Nappanee's ties with that city through the railroad.

Shortly after the construction of the depot, another new building, having some elements of the Prairie Style combined with classical details, also influenced by the Prairie style, was constructed. This one was Price Hospital at 160 E. Market Street (building number 13, photos 6 and 33). Constructed in 1913, the building was designed by local architect, Henry F. Frazier, who also designed the Dietrich Block. Much of the furniture and cabinetry was made by the local firm, Coppes, Zook, and Mutschler.

At the time of its construction, Price Hospital was considered very modern for Elkhart County. The building represents a transitional period in medicine, one in which a number of new developments were turning medicine into a highly technological field. Price Hospital is one of many small town hospitals that were springing up all over the country at this time to replace the facilities doctors had previously maintained on the first floor of their residences.

Dr. Willard Price memoirs reveal the hospital's regional importance:

"In 1913 our business was expanding so rapidly and the demand for surgery so big, especially after having done many major operations in the homes and rooms converted into operating rooms, that we decided to build a small building to use for an office and hospital with an operating room and a few beds. Here we did many major operations before any larger hospitals in surrounding towns - Elkhart, Goshen and Warsaw were built or available. Our hospital provided a place for the care of accidents and surgery for the different industries of the town as well as the local community as a whole. . . . It was a small unit in a large territory and appreciated by the community until Elkhart, Goshen and Warsaw came to our rescue

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and shared our burden."

Besides being a dedicated physician, Price was involved in a number of community activities, including being Nappanee's first mayor (1925-30).

Banking was an important activity in the bustling commercial center. The first building built specifically for a bank had been The Farmers and Traders Bank on South Main Street in 1889. By 1915, the bank was ready for a new building. The bank's first building, a brick Italianate structure, was razed, and temporary quarters were set up in the Wisler Building on East Market Street (building number 7). The new building, a Neoclassical, limestone structure, remains on the site to this day (building number 22, photo 28). The building is one of the more distinctive works of architecture in the district. It is also important as Nappanee's first bank, and for its associations with the Coppes family.

The bank was organized in 1884 in a building on the southwest corner of Main and Market Streets by Daniel Bechtel and Sons. Bechtel was responsible for the construction of the 1889 building. In 1891, the bank was purchased by Samuel Coppes and his son, Harvey, who built the 1915 building.

The town of Nappanee was incorporated in January of 1889. Although the town board talked of building a town hall soon after this, it was not able to do so for some years. The board met in various places around town, including the Hartman Building, the First National Bank, (building number 35, photo 18), and Price Hospital. A proper town building was finally completed on East Lincoln Street in early 1917 (building number 16, photo 20). When Nappanee was incorporated as a city in 1925, the Old Town Hall became City Hall. This building served as the center of city government until a new municipal building was constructed in 1971.

The other important government building is the U.S. Post Office. In the early days of Nappanee, the mail came in on the train twice daily. The first postmaster was Dr. J.S. Smith, who operated the post office out of his office on South Main Street. Within a few months, Smith had been succeeded by J.B. Peddycord, who, in 1879 constructed a one-story building on the site of building number 32.

Sometime between 1895 and 1898 the post office was moved into the Coppes Hotel, located just east of the Bechtel Building on East Market Street. (The hotel was demolished in the

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Section No. 8 Page 10 Downtown Nappanee Historic District

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1960s.) Between 1914 and 1926, the post office was located in the west half of the Wisler Block (building number 7, photo 3) on East Market Street. When the second Wisler building was constructed on West Market in 1926 (building number 1, photo 1) the post office moved into its east side. There it remained until the present post office building was constructed on East Market (building number 14, photos 7 and 8). The post office is an integral part of Nappanee's commercial history. For Nappanee, or any settlement, to have a hope for growth and success, a post office was as essential as transportation linkages.

The present structure is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival type of building the postal service was constructing in the 1930s.

The importance of Nappanee's business district as a regional commercial center is immeasurable. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the American way of life became more and more dependent on the railroad. New markets were opened to farmers, a factor which helped transform farming from a subsistence way of life to a profitable business. Industries grew rapidly as it became feasible to ship products all over the country. And people flocked to towns like Nappanee to buy the highly demanded goods brought by the railroad to local stores.

By the 1930s, when the golden days of the rails were fading, the highway replaced the railroad as a transportation route. The heavy traffic through the city seemed to assure that the commercial district would continue to thrive.

But today, a new shopping area has sprung up east of the city. Fast food restaurants and shopping centers have taken some of the business away from downtown, where some stores are vacant. Business people and community leaders are determined to keep the downtown vital. Realizing that the basis for this vitality will be the preservation of the downtown historic district, the people of Nappanee have already made a number of efforts in this direction. Recognition of the historic commercial district is one of the important steps being taken.



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Van Dyke, Al. Nappanee, Indiana. Interview, 10/6/1988.

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Wentz, Carol. Nappanee, Indiana. Interview, 10/6/1988.

Weygand, James L. Nappanee, Indiana. Telephone interview, 11/23/1988.

Weygand, James L., et al. "They Called it Nappanee. A History 1874-1974."

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Section No. 10 Page 1 Downtown Nappanee Historic District

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Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at a point on the southwest corner of the intersection of Main and Walnut Street; thence south 148.5 feet to the southwest corner of the intersection of Main Street and the first east-west alley north of Market Street; thence east across Main Street and along the south side of said alley, across Elm Street, to the point which defines the northeast corner of Lot 1 of Hartman's First Addition; thence south 132 feet to the north side of Market Street; thence west 234 feet; thence south across Market Street and along a line 22 feet west of the east boundary of lot 33 of the original plat of Nappanee to the north side of the first east-west alley south of Market St.; thence west 60.5 feet to the southeast corner of lot 23 of the original plat; thence south across Lincoln Street to the northeast corner of lot 20 of the original plat; thence east 62.5 feet to the northeast corner of the property located at 151 East Lincoln Street; thence south 34 feet to the southeast corner of said property; thence west 62.5 feet to the west side of the first north-south alley east of Main Street; thence south to the B & O Railroad tracks; thence northwest along said tracks for 520 feet; thence north 100 feet; thence east 173.5 feet; thence north along the east side of the first north-south alley west of Main Street, across Market Street to the northeast corner of the intersection of said alley and Market Street; thence west along the north side of Market Street 60.5 feet to the southwest corner of lot 8 in Fahlstrom's First Addition; thence north 132 feet to the first east-west alley north of Market; thence east 60.5 feet along the south side of said alley to the northwest corner of lot 7 of Fahlstrom's First Addition; thence north along the east side of the first north-south alley west of Main Street to the northwest corner of lot 23 of Fahlstrom's First Addition; thence east along the south side of Walnut Street 132 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the historic district have been drawn to include the downtown commercial district of Nappanee during the period of significance, 1874-1939. The exceptions to this are that properties on the edges of the district which do not contribute to its historic character have been omitted. The B & O Railroad tracks were made the southern boundary. The area south of the tracks was undeveloped until the 1890s and is primarily residential, although there are some historic industrial sites in this area.



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The information as listed below will be the same for all photographs:

2. Nappanee, Indiana
3. Laura Thayer
4. October 1988
5. Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana  
Northern Regional Office  
903 West Jefferson Boulevard  
South Bend, Indiana 46625

Other information for individual photographs is as follows:

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Photo 1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. North side of W. Market St.<br/>Downtown Nappanee Historic District</li> <li>6. camera facing northeast</li> <li>7. 1 of 40</li> </ol>          |
| Photo 2 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. E. Market St.<br/>Downtown Nappanee Historic District</li> <li>6. camera facing northeast</li> <li>7. 2 of 40</li> </ol>                        |
| Photo 3 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. North side of E. Market St.<br/>Downtown Nappanee Historic District</li> <li>6. camera facing northeast</li> <li>7. 3 of 40</li> </ol>          |
| Photo 4 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Newcomer Building, 112 E. Market St.<br/>Downtown Nappanee Historic District</li> <li>6. camera facing northwest</li> <li>7. 4 of 40</li> </ol> |
| Photo 5 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 152 E. Market St.<br/>Downtown Nappanee Historic District</li> <li>6. camera facing southeast</li> <li>7. 5 of 40</li> </ol>                    |
| Photo 6 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. North side of E. Market St.<br/>Downtown Nappanee Historic District</li> <li>6. camera facing northwest</li> <li>7. 6 of 40</li> </ol>          |
| Photo 7 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. U.S. Post Office<br/>Downtown Nappanee Historic District</li> <li>6. camera facing northwest</li> <li>7. 7 of 40</li> </ol>                     |

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Photographs Page 2 Downtown Nappanee Historic District

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- Photo 8 1. U.S. Post Office - interior view showing lobby  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing west  
7. 8 of 40
- Photo 9 1. South side of E. Market St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southwest  
7. 9 of 40
- Photo 10 1. Bechtel Bldg., 151 E. Market St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing south  
7. 10 of 40
- Photo 11 1. Dietrich Block, 101 S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southwest  
7. 11 of 40
- Photo 12 1. South side of W. Market St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southwest  
7. 12 of 40
- Photo 13 1. East side of N. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northeast  
7. 13 of 40
- Photo 14 1. South Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southwest  
7. 14 of 40
- Photo 15 1. South Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southeast  
7. 15 of 40
- Photo 16 1. East side of S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southeast  
7. 16 of 40

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Photographs Page 3 Downtown Nappanee Historic District

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Photo 17 1. Rear of Walters Drug Store, 109 S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southwest  
7. 17 of 40

Photo 18 1. First National Bank, 151 S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing east  
7. 18 of 40

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Photo 19 1. East side of S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southeast  
7. 19 of 40

Photo 20 1. Old City Hall, 105 W. Lincoln St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southeast  
7. 20 of 40

Photo 21 1. S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northeast  
7. 21 of 40

Photo 22 1. S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northwest  
7. 22 of 40

Photo 23 1. B & O Depot, S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northwest  
7. 23 of 40

Photo 24 1. B & O Depot, S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northwest  
7. 24 of 40

Photo 25 1. West side of S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northwest  
7. 25 of 40

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Photographs Page 4 Downtown Nappanee Historic District

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- Photo 26 1. Hartman Bros. Block, 156 S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing southwest  
7. 26 of 40
- Photo 27 1. West side of S. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northwest  
7. 27 of 40
- Photo 28 1. Farmers and Traders Bank, 104 S. Main St.  
(left); Kaufmans Dept. Store, 102 S. Main  
St. (right)  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing west  
7. 28 of 40
- Photo 29 1. N. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northeast  
7. 29 of 40
- Photo 30 1. West side of N. Main St.  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northeast  
7. 30 of 40
- Photo 31 1. Historic view - W. Market St. in the 1930s  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing east  
7. 31 of 40
- Photo 32 1. Historic view - North side of E. Market in the  
1910s  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing north  
7. 32 of 40
- Photo 33 1. Historic view - North side of E. Market in the  
1930s  
Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
6. camera facing northwest  
7. 33 of 40

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Photographs      Page 5      Downtown Nappanee Historic District

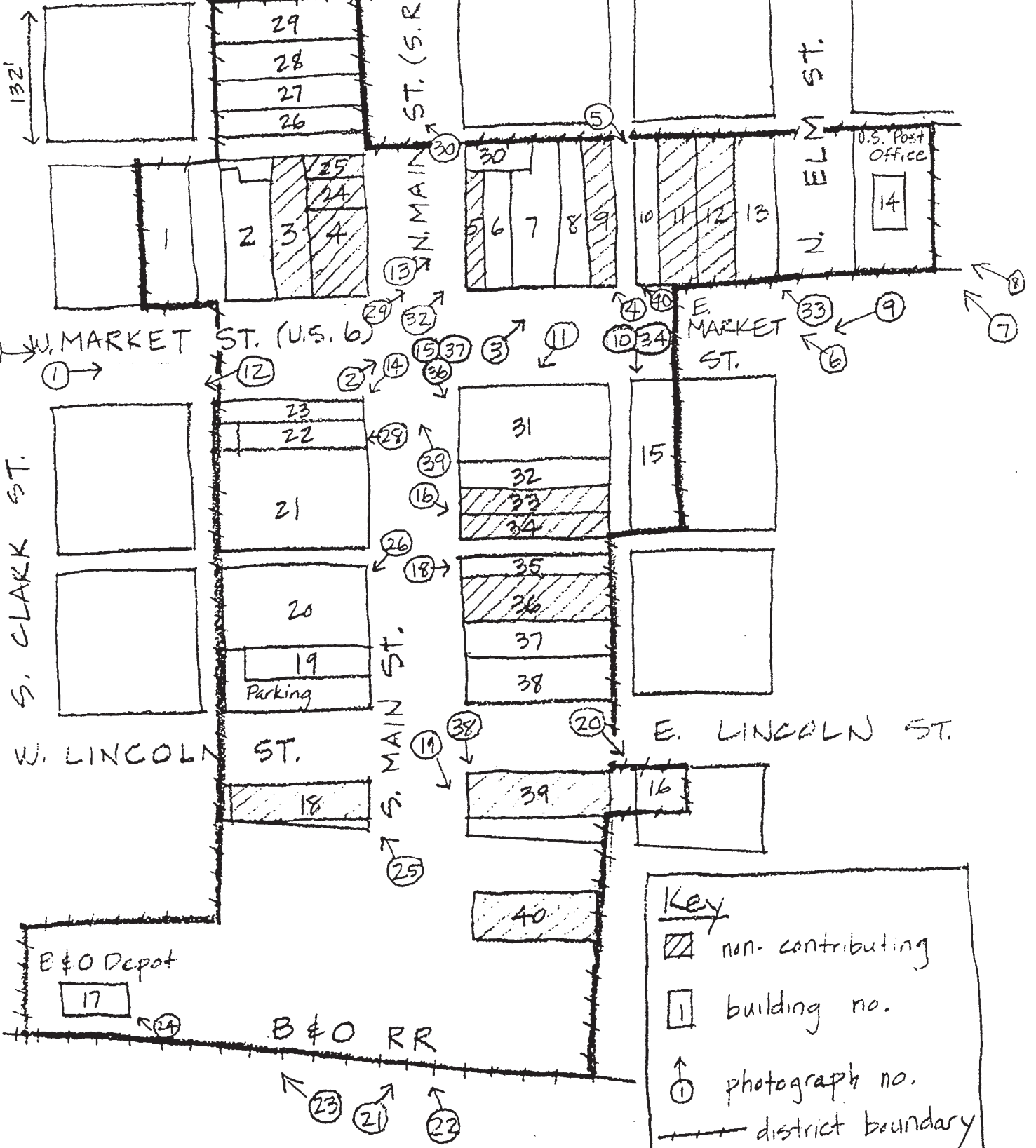
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- Photo 34      1.    Historic view - Bechtel Bldg., 1897  
                                Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
                                6.    camera facing south  
                                7.    34 of 40
- Photo 35      1.    Historic view - Yoder Bros. Garage and Livery,  
                                c. 1910  
                                Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
                                6.    camera facing southwest  
                                7.    35 of 40
- Photo 36      1.    Historic view - Dietrich Block, c. 1900  
                                Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
                                6.    camera facing southeast  
                                7.    36 of 40
- Photo 37      1.    Historic view - East side of S. Main St., c.  
                                1920  
                                Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
                                6.    camera facing southeast  
                                7.    37 of 40
- Photo 38      1.    Historic view - Nappanee Carriage Works, c.  
                                1900  
                                Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
                                6.    camera facing southeast  
                                7.    38 of 40
- Photo 39      1.    Historic view - West side of Main St., c.  
                                1970  
                                Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
                                6.    camera facing northeast  
                                7.    39 of 40
- Photo 40      1.    152 West Market Street  
                                Downtown Nappanee Historic District  
                                6.    camera facing northwest  
                                7.    40 of 40






W. WALNUT ST.

E. WALNUT ST.

132'



Key

-  non-contributing
-  building no.
-  photograph no.
-  district boundary
-  north

# DOWNTOWN NAPPANEE HISTORIC DISTRICT

12/88

