

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FINAL

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Attica Downtown Historic District

other names/site number 045-025-681-06000

2. Location

street & number See continuation sheet not for publication

city or town Attica na vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Fountain code 045 zip code 47918

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Paul R. Roberts

8-5-93

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
State of 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:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 50 | 11 | buildings |
| 0 | 0 | sites |
| 0 | 0 | structures |
| 0 | 0 | objects |
| 50 | 11 | Total |

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

SOCIAL: meeting hall

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

GOVERNMENT: post office

COMMERCE/TRADE: business

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

RECREATION AND CULTURE: theater

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

GOVERNMENT: post office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN: Victorian

EARLY REPUBLIC: Federal

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

WOOD: Weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other METAL: Tin

METAL: Cast Iron

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c. 1840-1942

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Louis Simon

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Approximately 7.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1 | 16 | 478780 | 4460580 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 2 | 16 | 479050 | 4460260 |

| | | | |
|------|---------|----------|---------|
| 3 | 16 | 478840 | 4459920 |
| Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 4 | 16 | 478500 | 4460080 |

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 Linda Weintraut & Jane Nolan

organization Weintraut & Nolan

date December 30, 1992

street & number 800 Sugarbush Ridge

telephone (317) 873-6692

city or town Zionsville,

state Indiana

zip code 46077

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name _____

street & number _____

telephone _____

city or town _____

state _____

zip code _____

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

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

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2. Location:

Roughly Perry Street between Jackson and Ferry streets, and Main and Mill streets between Third and Brady streets.

7. Description:

Architectural Classification:

MID-19TH CENTURY: Gothic Revival

MODERN: Art Deco

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

Narrative Description:

Attica Downtown Historic District is located in the town of Attica in Fountain County in westcentral Indiana. Fountain County is bounded on the north and west by Warren County, on the east by Tippecanoe and Montgomery counties, and on the south by Parke County. Attica is located in the northern portion of the county along the Wabash River.

Fountain County is set on a plain that is transversed by the Wabash River. Geologically formed during the last Ice Age, glaciers scoured and flattened much of the land that is today known as the Tipton Till Plain. The Wabash River forms the northwestern boundary for the county.

Attica Downtown Historic District is a compact area that historically has been the commercial heart of the town. Perry Street is the central corridor of the district that stretches from Ferry Street to Jackson Street. (See accompanying map). To the west of the district lies the Wabash River, the tracks of the railroad, and the path of the Wabash and Erie Canal. These three routes of transportation provided the impetus for much of Attica Downtown Historic District's growth as a commercial center.

The properties of Attica Downtown Historic District form an entity distinct from that of the surrounding area. At the periphery of the district on three sides, two-part, two and three-story commercial blocks give way to one story modern businesses or to residential areas. (See photos 1, 2, 5, and 8). To the west, vacant lots, one-story businesses, and industrial properties distinguish themselves from the downtown character of the district. (See photo 9). These properties of this downtown district form a cohesive area that projects an aura of the historic past of Attica.

Attica Downtown Historic District first grew as a result of Attica's transportation advantages. Most of the district was part of the original

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town plat which was laid out along Perry Street. Perry Street ran parallel to the river, the canal, and later the railroad tracks. In fact, the course of the river probably affected the slight bend in Perry Street. Mills, factories, and warehouses located along the canal, while the commercial district grew to the east along Perry Street. A few buildings date to the canal era: the McDonald House (1840), a commercial building at 113 South Perry Street (c. 1845), a commercial building at 210-212 South Perry Street (c. 1850), and the Revere Hotel (1853).

The next period of significant growth occurred after the Panic of 1870s. The majority of the buildings are two-and three-story, two-part commercial blocks of Italianate and Victorian architecture, but some excellent examples of Gothic Revival are located in the district. (See photo 2). The one hundred block of North Perry Street offers a good streetscape of these styles.

Although most of the buildings of the Attica Downtown Historic District fit into the above classifications, a few deviate from this overall trend. Two Neo-classical banks, a Neo-classical Masonic Temple, a Colonial Revival post office and an Art Deco theater were built after the first world war and reflect the architectural styles of the day. (See photos 3, 8, and 9).

As a whole, the Attica Downtown Historic District illustrates the commercial development of the town. The district of 61 properties has integrity. The ratio of contributing to non-contributing properties is approximately 5:1 (50 contributing to 11 non-contributing). All properties are buildings. Renovations to storefronts and to the exterior of some buildings have occurred, but they in no way detract from the historic aura of the district. Instead, this main street district is distinguished by the integrity of many of its first floor facades.

The following properties are numbered moving from north to south along Perry Street. The numbers increase likewise moving from east to west along first the north side of each street and then the south side of each street beginning with first Main and then Mill streets.

1. 128 North Perry
 (C) c. 1870, Italianate

 2. 124-126 North Perry
 (C) 1853, c. 1900, Victorian

 3. 122 North Perry
 (NC) 1890, c. 1960, Modern

 4. 120 North Perry
 (NC) c. 1900, c. 1960, Modern
- | |
|----------------------------|
| Revere Hotel Photo 1, 2 |
| Photo 1, 2 |
| Photo 2 |

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5. 118 North Perry
(NC) c. 1890, c. 1960, Modern Photo 2

6. 114 North Perry Street
(C) 1880 Gothic Revival Photo 2

Brick pilasters rise three stories to a slightly projecting metal decorated cornice with brackets, dentils, and a paneled frieze. On the third floor a larger central pointed-arched double-window has a stone sill, and it has a window hood with a scalloped edge on the intrados. Two similar but slightly smaller lancet windows flank it. The second floor windows are similar in detail to the third story windows, except that these windows are without hoods. The first floor displays good integrity; a central recessed door--unfortunately modern--is flanked by central display windows.

7. 112 North Perry Street
(C) 1880, Gothic Revival Photo 2

This building was constructed at the same time as 114 North Perry and is similar to it.

8. 110 North Perry Street
(C) c. 1870 Italianate Photo 2

9. 108 North Perry Street
(C) c. 1870, Italianate Photo 2

10. 106 North Perry Street
(C) c. 1870, Italianate Photo 2

11. 104 North Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate Photo 2

This building forms a continuous facade with 100 North Perry.

12. 102 North Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate

This building forms a continuous facade with 100 North Perry.

13. 100 North Perry Ziegler Building
(C) c. 1870, Italianate

The businesses at 104, 102, and 100 form a continuous facade. This two-story, two-part, brick commercial block rises from the sidewalk to a heavy metal cornice with brackets, modillions, scrolling, and corbeled dentils. The section of the building at 100 North Perry is three ranked with segmental arched, 1/1 windows on the second floor with heavy hoods

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and masonry sills. Large plate glass windows on the first floor lead to a recessed center glass window display with flanking entrance doors.

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 14. | <u>2 South Perry</u> | Bank |
| (C) | 1920, Neo-classical | |
| 15. | <u>106 South Perry</u> | Photo 3 |
| (C) | 1875, Italianate | |
| 16. | <u>108 South Perry</u> | Photo 3 |
| (C) | 1875, Italianate | |
| 17. | <u>110 South Perry</u> | Photo 3 |
| (C) | c. 1920, Neo-classical | |
| 18. | <u>112 South Perry Street</u> | Photo 3 |
| (C) | c. 1920, Neo-classical | |
| 19. | <u>202 South Perry Street</u> | Photo 3 |
| (C) | c. 1875, Italianate | |
| 20. | <u>206-208 South Perry Street</u> | Photo 3, 4 |
| (C) | c. 1890, Late Victorian | |
| 21. | <u>210-212 South Perry Street</u> | Photo 4 |
| (C) | c. 1850, Federal | |

This two-story brick building with side gable roof, is a two-part commercial block. The northern gable end has a parapet with paired chimneys. Five ranked on the second story, the replacement windows have masonry sills and lintels. Two separate businesses, each with its own entry and display windows, occupy the first floor. Striped awnings adorn the first floor.

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 22. | <u>214-216 South Perry Street</u> | I.O.O.F. Building |
| (C) | c. 1870, Italianate | Photo 4 |

This seven-ranked symmetrical building constructed of brick with stucco applied over it, rises three stories to a stepped gable with masonry coping above a slightly pitched gable roof. On the second and third stories, the double-hung, round arched windows have hood molds and masonry sills. On the third floor a central double lancet window surmounted by a roundel of tracery and a quatre-foil vent above it dominates the facade. To each side of the central window, two smaller windows flank a central taller, stilted arched window. The windows on the second floor are all the same size and are similar in detail to those on the third floor. Two businesses on the first floor are separated by a central doorway that leads to the upper floors. The first floor has been altered.

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23. 220 South Perry Street
(NC) c. 1970, Modern
24. 133 North Perry Street
(NC) c. 1955, Modern Photo 5
25. 129 North Perry Street
(C) c. 1890, Late Victorian Photo 5
26. 127 North Perry Street
(C) c. 1890, Italianate Photo 5

This three-story, white-painted brick building has a projecting metal cornice with brackets and dentils that rests on a slightly sloping flat roof. A pair of elongated double-hung windows with masonry lintels and sills marks the second and third floors. Cast iron pilasters anchor each end of the first floor and display windows flank a central wooden door opening. The first floor has excellent integrity.

27. 125 North Perry Street
(C) c. 1890, Italianate Photo 5

This building forms a continuous facade with 127 North Perry.

28. 123 North Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate Rolphing Building
Photo 5
29. 121 North Perry
(C) c. 1870 Italianate Photo 5
30. 119 North Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate Photo 5
31. 117 North Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate Photo 5, 2
32. 109 North Perry
(C) 1890, Italianate Photo 2

The pressed metal cornice has been removed from this two-story brick building. On the second floor, four tall rectangular windows each have masonry sills and corbeled shouldered pediment hoods with scrolls in the pediment. Luxfer glass separates the first and second floors. The first floor has remarkable integrity. Cast iron pilasters mark each end of the building and an entry door to the second floor is located to the right side of the building. A recessed entrance door to the first floor is flanked by large display cases.

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33. 107 North Perry
(C) 1890, Italianate Photo 2
34. 105 North Perry
(C) c. 1870, Victorian
35. 103 North Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate
36. 101 North Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate
37. 107 South Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate Photo 6

This two-story brick building has a simple metal cornice with brackets that projects slightly from the steeply sloping flat roofline. An attic floor is marked by two evenly spaced quarter-round lunette windows. On the second floor, tall rectangular windows with masonry sills and segmental arched brick lintels are covered with shutters. The first floor has display areas that lead to a central doorway.

38. 109 South Perry
(C) c. 1870, Italianate

This building forms a continuous facade with 107 South Perry.

39. 111 South Perry
(C) c. 1860, Federal Photo 6
40. 113 South Perry
(C) c. 1845, Federal Photo 6
41. 201-203 South Perry
(C) c. 1890, Italianate Photo 7
42. 205 South Perry
(C) c. 1890, Late Victorian Photo 7
43. 207-209 South Perry
(NC) c. 1950, Modern Photo 7
44. 211 South Perry
(C) c. 1890, Late Victorian Photo 7
45. 213 South Perry
(C) c. 1890, Late Victorian Photo 7

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46. 215-217 South Perry Masonic Temple
(C) 1922, Neo-classical
47. 219-221 South Perry
(NC) c. 1970, Modern
48. 223 South Perry
(C) c. 1880, Late Victorian
49. 225 South Perry
(NC) c. 1890, Late Victorian
50. 106 West Main Street
(C) c. 1910, Late Victorian
51. 102 East Main Street
(C) c. 1910, Late Victorian.
52. 106 East Main Street
(NC) c. 1910, Late Victorian
53. 109 West Main Street
(C) c. 1910, c. 1970 Modern
54. 107 East Main Street Attica Post Office
(C) 1935, Colonial Revival Photo 8

Supervising Architect, Louis Simon
Supervising Engineer, Neil Melick

Six steps lead from the street to the one-story, five-ranked brick building with a slightly projecting masonry cornice with dentils on the street elevation. The rear two-thirds has a slightly sloping flat roof; the front section has a hip roof. Masonry quoins are located on both sides of the facade. Two 12/ 12 windows with plain masonry window surrounds and projecting masonry sills with brackets flank a central double wooden white door with six lights in each door. The transom above the central door has five vertical lights in it. The door surround with fluted pilasters rises to a segmental plain masonry pediment. Centrally located above each of the windows are four decorative masonry roundels.

55. 111 East Main Street Photo 8
(C) c. 1860, Victorian
56. 112 West Mill Street
(NC) c. 1960, Modern

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57. 106-108 West Mill Street
(C) c. 1900, Late Victorian
58. 107 West Mill Street Devon Theater
(C) 1938, Art Deco Photo 9
59. 101-105 West Mill Street
(C) c. 1880, Italianate Photo 9
60. 101-103 East Mill Street
(C) c. 1870, Italianate
61. 105 East Mill Street McDonald House
(C) c. 1840, I House/ Federal

This two-story, side gable, blue-painted clapboard building dates to the canal era. The second floor is four ranked with replacement 1/1 sash windows with modern shutters. A central doorway separates the first floor into two sections. Each section has a central door flanked by a 1/1 replacement window. Originally a home, the McDonald House has variously served as a shop and a restaurant.

8. Statement of Significance

The Attica Downtown Historic District meets criteria A and C and is primarily significant for its association with the history of commerce and for the architecture of its commercial buildings. Attica's early development was typical of many other towns along the Wabash River. However, with the advent of the Wabash and Erie Canal, Attica established its supremacy over nearby rival towns and became the central marketplace for the surrounding area. In addition to commercial and architectural significance, the presence of a theater and several fraternal clubs gives the district entertainment/recreational significance on a secondary level.

Architecturally, the Attica Downtown Historic District provides a fine streetscape of commercial buildings that suggests the aura of Attica's historic past and reflects its stages of commercial growth. Only four structures remain from the canal era, the first and most rapid period of expansion. Beginning in the late 1870s, Attica's commercial district experienced a second period of growth that is dominated by Italianate and late Victorian architecture as well as two excellent examples of the Gothic Revival style. The few twentieth century structures represent the late Victorian, Neo-classical, Colonial Revival, and Art Deco architectural styles.

The Attica Downtown Commercial District has local significance in the area of commerce and architecture and meets Criterion A, being associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad

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patterns of our history. The district's period of significance extends from 1845 to 1942.

The territory from which Fountain County was formed was ceded to the United States government in 1818 by two treaties signed by United States commissioners and chiefs of the Potawatamie and Miami Indians. On December 30, 1825, an act of the Indiana General Assembly carved Fountain County out of Warren and Montgomery counties. The new county was named for Major Fountain of Kentucky who was killed near Fort Wayne in a battle with the Miami Indians.

Although Covington became the county seat, Attica was the first town in the county to be platted. On March 19, 1825, several months before the county was established, Daniel Stump surveyed the original plat near an old Kickapoo settlement. He laid out an orthogonal grid street pattern parallel to the winding Wabash River that extended from the corner of Brady and Washington Streets west to the Wabash River, then north to Ferry Street and east to the alley running west of the old Revere House. (The present historic district is included within the original boundaries). While the commercial district lay close to the Wabash River, Attica residents built their homes in the hilly part of town east of the commercial district.

Initially, Attica grew slowly. Settlers arrived by means of the Wabash River and by stage routes from Williamsport and Covington. The river, however, was the primary commercial outlet to the outside world. In high water, crude rafts loaded with corn, wheat, apples, and other surplus agricultural products traveled down the Wabash to the Ohio and then to the Mississippi River to the waiting markets in New Orleans.

Commercial enterprises marked the early development of Attica. By the end of 1825, there were three general stores, a hotel, and three saloons in town. George Hollingsworth, one of Attica's earliest residents, began operating a pole ferry service at the ford used by the Kickapoos on the Wabash River in the 1820s. It continued to operate until 1843 when it was replaced by a horse ferry system. In 1826, a cabinet shop, a tannery, a fanning mill factory, a still-house, and a grist mill were erected. By 1830, another grist mill, a small distillery, and the Indiana House hotel were opened. The hotel became the headquarters of the stage lines when they were in town. None of these early wood structures remain today. From the mid-1830s through the mid-1840s, other businesses and amenities came to town, including additional grist and saw mills, and a water system. William Farmer opened a hotel, the Attica House, later called the Revere House, which remains.

The canal era began in Indiana when the state was granted land for the Wabash and Erie Canal by the federal government in 1827. The Indiana General Assembly, encouraged by the federal money, adopted a massive internal improvements plan in 1836. The canal, the longest in the world,

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was part of a 468 mile system that linked Toledo to Evansville connecting the navigable waters of the Ohio River and Lake Erie. The proceeds from every alternate section of land five miles in width were set aside to aid with the construction of the canal that would go through Attica. The canal company bought a sixty-foot wide tract of land paralleling the Wabash River and placed the canal on the outer edge of the Wabash river's flood plain. The actual canal was forty feet wide and twenty-six feet deep with an eighteen foot towpath on one side and a five foot berm on the other.

The influx of money from the construction of the Wabash and Erie Canal in 1847 influenced the rapid population growth of Attica in the 1840s and 1850s. Of the large numbers of Irish laborers who built the canal, many settled in Attica, contributing to its growing population. Other immigrants, mostly German and Holland Dutch, arrived in the prosperous little town by canal packets that docked at the convenient landing at the foot of Main Street. Today, the names of Attica residents still reflect its Irish, German, and Dutch heritage. By 1849, Attica had enough residents to qualify as a town, and by 1850, the first official census, there were 1,006 people living there. During the 1850s, the population of Attica increased by seventy percent.

Attica came alive as a trade center with the construction of the canal that ended the isolation of the region and opened up access to markets in the East. The canal proved a much less expensive and efficient route for commerce and transportation than the seasonally navigable Wabash River or the almost impassable roads. The heyday of the canal brought prosperity to Attica, and it became one of the leading commercial towns in the northwestern part of the state, rivaling Lafayette. Numerous warehouses, grain houses, a pork packing plant, and boat stores that catered to the canal barge traffic, located next to the canal. Cargo carried in the barges consisted mostly of corn and other grain, although coal, wood, tobacco, salted meat, barrels of pork, and kegs of gunpowder and beer were transported as well. Even agricultural implements manufactured by Cyrus McCormick in Chicago were routinely hauled.

The trade associated with the canal spurred development of other businesses in town. Attica was a place to shop for the boatmen, and travelers found respite at two new hotels, the St. Charles House and the Revere House. (The original Revere House burned in 1846, but was rebuilt in 1853. The Revere House, with an altered facade, remains today). There are also three Federal style buildings in the district that hark from the canal era. McDonald House, built in 1840 on Mill Street as a residence, was later used as a small shop. Two other buildings at 113 and 210-212 South Perry Street housed small businesses and were built in 1845 and 1853. Several flour and grist mills were built along the canal because of its reliable source of water power. There was enough business to open the Bank of Attica, the first chartered bank in Fountain County in 1854, although it failed in the crash of 1857.

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Unfortunately, the canal boom did not last very long for Attica, a town that placed undue confidence in the waterway. The scandalously financed and poorly engineered canals needed constant repairs and suffered numerous water shortages. Only ten years after the canal reached Attica, the tolls collected barely covered the cost of repairs. Rate-cutting competition from the railroads loomed early in the canal era, but Attica spurned a proposal for the New Albany and Salem Railroad (later called the Monon) to be routed through Attica. Instead, the railroad went through Lafayette and became part of the Big 4 network. Soon Lafayette overshadowed Attica, becoming the largest town in the region and reaping the benefits of good transportation.

Luckily for Attica, just as the canal system was declining, the Toledo, Wabash and Western Railroad came through town in 1858. Railroads proved to be the fastest and most efficient means of transportation during the Civil War, although the tremendous volume of men and materiel did keep some parts of the canal in service. Nevertheless, there was little expansion in Attica's commercial district in the 1860s. Only three buildings were built during that decade.

The Wabash and Erie Canal company sold out in 1873 after a long decline in productivity, although the canal remained in public use until the mid-1880s when it closed permanently. Still, in 1872, P. T. Barnum managed to bring his circus to Attica with three elephants, a good menagerie, a band, clowns, and the famous Tom Thumb. However, the days of booming business on the canal were over. In his 1879 memoirs, Attica resident O. A. Martin noted that the grain warehouses, pork packing plants, woolen and grist mills, the brewery, and the soap factory along the canal had closed.

In the late 1870s, Attica, as well as the rest of Indiana, experienced a period of renewed development. New construction markedly affected the appearance of the Attica Downtown Historic District creating the distinct atmosphere it has today. With Perry Street as the central corridor, the commercial district expanded considerably just as the enterprises along the canal disappeared. In three decades, thirty-eight of the extant buildings were constructed. This expansion attests to Attica's significance as a commercial center for the entire region, because the population of the town remained static. Residents of Attica alone could not have supported the new businesses.

In the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, the architectural character of the Attica Downtown Historic District was set. During that period, wooden structures were replaced with brick ones and vacant lots were filled by two- and three-story two-part commercial blocks. The Italianate style predominated; the I.O.O.F. building, the Ziegler Building, and the Rolphing Block are excellent examples as is the row of Italianate buildings along the 100 block of Perry Street. The Ziegler Building and the Rolphing Block have maintained their original first

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floor facades to a large degree. There were also numerous buildings in the Victorian style and two outstanding examples of Gothic Revival architecture, with nicely hooded windows, constructed in 1880 at 112 and 114 Perry Street. The architectural styles blend into an harmonious whole with few modern intrusions.

These commercial buildings housed small businesses, light industry, hotels, taverns, and men's clubs. Sanborn maps indicate that grocers, bakers, drygoods merchants, milliners, tailors, tobacconists, shoemakers, furniture and carriage makers sold their wares, and bankers, doctors, lawyers, and insurance men conducted their business in the offices and shops of the district. Attica also boasted a new flour mill, carriage factory, wagon shop, and a sawmill.

After the Civil War, men's fraternal organizations became popular in Attica. The construction of the I.O.O.F. in 1870 and, later, two lodge halls on Perry Street demonstrates their influence in town. These organizations provided social gathering places for their members and usually supplied burial insurance as well. Women often formed auxiliary groups. The meeting rooms for the fraternal organizations occupied the upper floors of the buildings while shopkeepers utilized the store front shops on the first floor.

New banks, business, and industry located in Attica in the 1880s and 1890s. Although most were located on the outskirts of town, they did their banking, and their employees did their shopping in the commercial district. By 1881, there was a new flour mill with a capacity of 200 barrels a day, Fisher, Arbogast & Company carriage works, the Hess & Harvey wagon factory, which also made farm implements, Schuessler's foundry and machine shop, and Trullinger's drain tile factory. The Attica Bridge Company, a firm that employed 100 people, moved to St. Louis in 1913.

In 1896, Harry L. Kramer, entrepreneur and owner of the Mudlavia Spa in neighboring Warren County, decided to move the offices of the Sterling Remedy Company to Attica. Famous for its laxative, "Cascarets," the company did a large mail order business, enough for Attica to have free city mail delivery. Kramer took over the old May Hotel on the corner of Perry and Jackson streets at the southeast part of the district. By the end of the century, the Sterling Remedy Company employed 150 people. The company continued to be a major employer in Attica until it moved to New York. The building has since been torn down.

Local businessmen, concerned about the city's economy, formed the Attica Land and Improvement Company in 1900. Their purpose was to attract business and industry to Attica by creating a favorable economic climate. The group successfully recruited the National Car Coupler Company in 1906. The company, later called Harrison Steel Casting Company, soon had the largest payroll in town. The Poston Brick Company located in the

northeastern part of town in 1907. It shipped bricks all over the United States, provided brick for twenty-five buildings at Purdue University in nearby Lafayette, and paved the streets of the Attica Downtown Historic District. During the construction of a new road surface on Perry Street in 1992, Poston paving bricks were found under the blacktop still in excellent condition. Neither of these large companies were located within the historic district, but their executives and employees patronized the businesses and promoted prosperity in Attica.

The Attica downtown commercial district continued to be the central marketplace for the region and continued to prosper into the twentieth century, although construction slowed somewhat. Several commercial buildings in the Late Victorian style were built in the 1910s and 1920s, two banks and the Masonic Temple were erected on Perry Street in the Neo-classical style. The United States Post Office, built in the 1930s, is an excellent example of Colonial Revival architecture. Movies served as an important and inexpensive form of recreation in the 1930s, and as the country emerged from the depression, Attica constructed a movie theater, the only Art Deco building in the district.

The Attica Downtown Historic District remained significant to local history throughout period from 1845-1942. There in the heart of the town, people came by horse, canal boat, wagon, train, and automobile to transact business, to work, to socialize, and to be entertained. The architecture creates a cohesive streetscape that reflects the periods of growth in the district and remains remarkably intact.

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Indiana, vol. 51. Typescript by Office of Public
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10. Geographical data

Verbal Boundary Description:

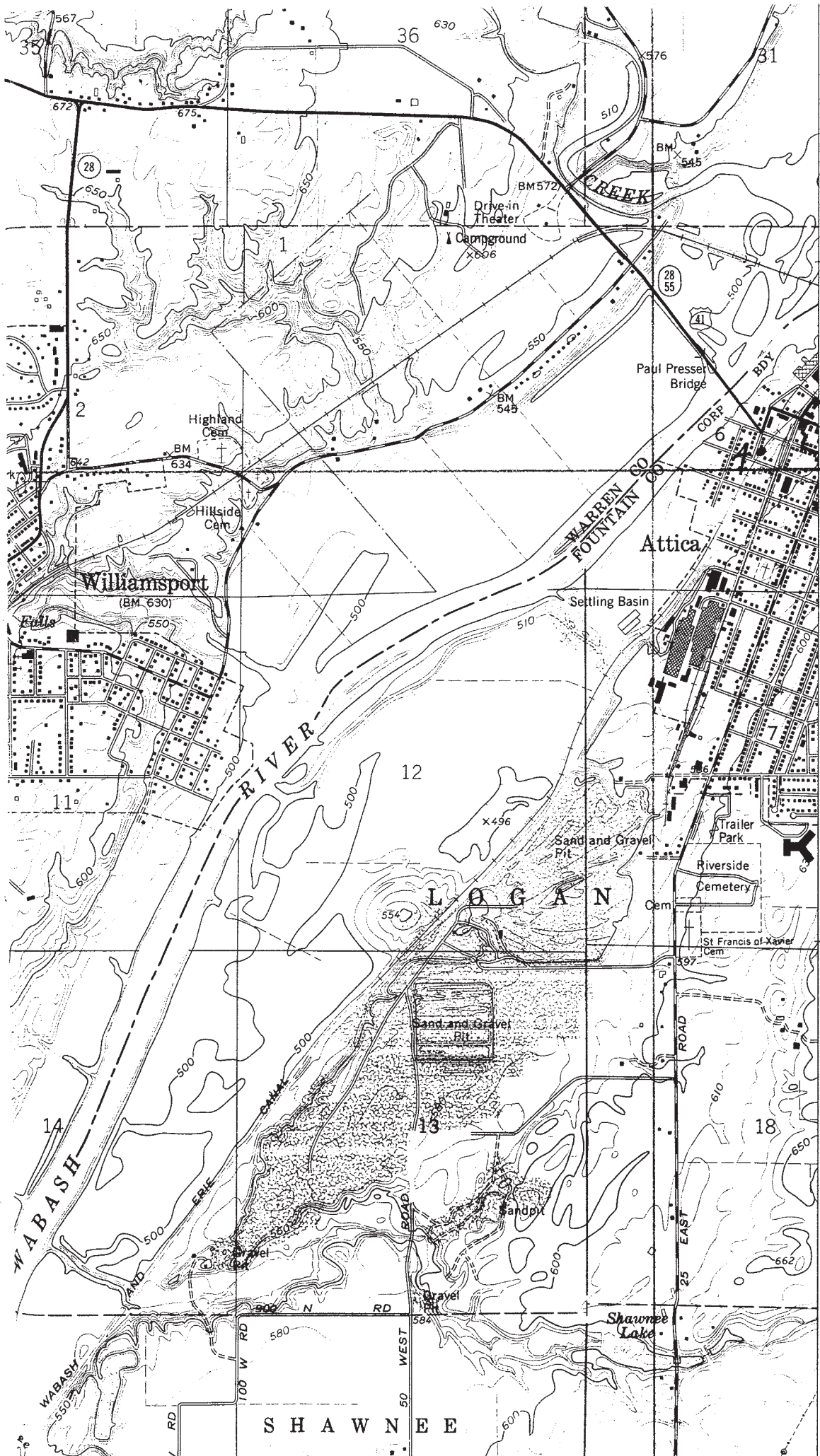
Beginning at the southeastern corner of the intersection of Third and West Ferry streets, proceed in an easterly direction along the southern edge of Ferry Street to the intersection of Ferry and North Fifth streets. Follow the western side of Fifth Street to point where it intersects with the southern edge of East Main Street. Proceed along this line until it intersects with the western edge Brady Street. Follow this line until it reaches the northern edge of East Mill Street and then proceed west until the point where this line intersects with an imaginary line extending northward from western side of the alley between South Perry and Brady streets. Follow the western side of the alley until it intersects with East Jackson Street. Proceed west along the northern edge of Jackson Street until it intersects with the east side of the alley to the west of South Perry Street. Proceed north to the north side of the alley south of West Mill Street. Turn west to include the property at 106-108 West Mill Street. Follow the western side of this property north until it intersects with the northern edge of West Mill Street. At this point proceed west to the eastern side of Third Street and follow the eastern edge of Third Street until it reaches the beginning point.

Boundary Justification:

The Attica Downtown Historic District is an entity distinct from the surrounding area. The area to the north is residential with some small businesses. (See photo 1, 2, 5). The area to the east is residential and has been identified as a potential historic district, Attica Main Street Historic District. (See photo 8). The area to the south has been listed on the National Register as the Brady

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Street Historic District, and the area to the west has industrial character. (See photo 9). Thus, the Attica Downtown Historic District with its main street aura is an area distinguished from its surroundings.



ATTICA
 17'30" DOWNTOWN
 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 FOUNTAIN CO., IN
 UTMS # 1, 2, & 3
 ARE ON ATTICA
 QUAD.
 UTM # 4 =
 445916478500 4460080

445916473500 4460080

4456000m.N.