

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 Fairmount Commercial Historic District

other names/site number 053-201-56000

2. Location

street & number See Continuation Sheet N/A  not for publication

city or town Fairmount N/A  vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Grant code 053 zip code 46928

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 36CFR 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.)

[Signature]  
Signature of certifying official/Title

2-1-99  
Date

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 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

Name of Property

County and State

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, district, site, structure, object

Table with 3 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, and Resource Type (buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total). Values: 31, 5, 0, 0, 0, 0, 31, 5.

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Department Store, Financial Institution, Specialty Store, Business, Professional, Meeting Hall, Auditorium

COMMERCE/TRADE: Financial Institution, Specialty Store, Professional, SOCIAL: Meeting Hall, RECREATION/CULTURE: Music Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN, 19th & 20th c. AMER.: Commercial Style, LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate, LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

foundation: STONE: Limestone, walls: BRICK, METAL: Cast Iron, roof: SYNTHETICS: Rubber, other: METAL

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
COMMUNITY PLANNING &
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1884-1945

Significant Dates

1884
1887
1902

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic 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:

Fairmount Historical Museum, Fairmount and Marion Public Libraries

Fairmount Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Grant \_\_\_\_\_ IN \_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 3.78

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 16 | 614400 | 4474660 |  
Zone Easting Northing

3 | 16 | 614580 | 4474460 |  
Zone Easting Northing

2 | 16 | 614590 | 4474660 |

4 | 16 | 614400 | 4474460 |

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 Elizabeth Morton, Ball State University graduate assistant  
organization Historic Fairmount, Inc. date 06-29-98  
street & number PO Box 257 telephone 765-948-5720  
city or town Fairmount state IN zip code 46928

**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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Location, Street and Number:

205-101 S. Main, 102-124 N. Main, 124-102 S. Main, 101-123 N. Main, 107 W. 1st, 119-117 W. Washington,  
110-108 E. Washington

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**Fairmount Commercial Historic District  
Grant County, Indiana**

**Materials**

“Other” continued:

chimneys: brick  
windows: glass, wood  
window trim: limestone, cast iron, wood  
doors: wood, glass, aluminum

**Narrative Description**

The Fairmount Commercial Historic District is a four-block area containing late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century one- and two-story brick commercial buildings. It reflects the economic optimism and growth caused by the short-lived natural gas boom of the late 1880s and 1890s in east-central Indiana. It also reflects the subsequent economic moderation after natural gas ran out in the early 1900s. The district includes an elaborately ornamented two-story building with a cast-iron upper register and Romanesque Revival buildings, as well as sparsely ornamented one-story early twentieth-century commercial buildings. The nineteenth-century buildings, which replaced small frame buildings and houses, were erected for the new businesses that formed to meet the needs of the growing population of workers in the new factories. These buildings survived because the end of the gas boom meant funds for and the need for additional buildings were limited. While Fairmount continued to serve as a local commercial center, the buildings erected after 1904 reflect this moderation of economic prospects through their minimal ornamentation.

Fairmount is in Fairmount Township, in southeastern Grant County, Indiana. Grant County is bounded by Wabash and Huntington counties on the north, Wells and Blackford counties on the east, Delaware and Madison counties on the south and Tipton, Howard, and Miami counties on the west. Fairmount, ranging in elevation from 860 to 880 feet, sits on gently rolling fertile land. The topography and natural resources influenced the development of the town. Back Creek passes through Fairmount, just west of the commercial district. As a source of water, it attracted early settlers. Within a few years water-powered saw and grist mills were built near its banks. In the nineteenth century the town became a shipping point for locally produced grain and livestock to markets in Chicago and Cincinnati. The land surrounding Fairmount is still used for raising corn, soybeans, and cattle. The discovery and exploitation of natural gas in the Trenton rock more than 900 feet below Fairmount transformed it into a bustling boom town in the 1890s.



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The district has historic integrity in terms of location and setting. The southern half is part of the Original Plat of Fairmount surveyed in 1850 and Stanfield's Addition laid out in 1859. The northern half is part of Baldwin's Addition laid out in 1852. The historic street grid and rectilinear lots can still be seen in the orientation and footprint of the buildings. The district is located at the intersection of the primary north-south (Main) and east-west (Washington) streets in Fairmount. It stretches one block north and one and half blocks south of Washington Street and one-half block deep on either side of Main Street. It is bounded on the north by First Street, on the east by the alley between Main and Walnut streets, on the south by the alley south of Adams Street on the east side of Main and Adams Street on the west side of Main, and on the west by the alley between Main and Mill streets.

The intersection of Main and Washington streets has been the focus of local commercial activity since Joseph Baldwin opened a dry goods and grocery in one room of the house he built on the east side of Main Street about 1848. Unlike nearby gas boom towns, Fairmount retains the bustling feeling and association of a rural commercial hub. Its almost fully occupied storefronts house a wide range of services and businesses, including a barber shop, weekly newspaper, two banks, a hardware store, a furniture and appliance store, a flower shop, and several antique and gift shops.

The district also retains integrity in terms of design, materials, and workmanship in the upper registers of the buildings, with many examples of decorative patterned brickwork, and pressed-metal window hoods and cornices. Even a few faded painted advertisements remain on side elevations of 116 South Main and 115 South Main. (In 1891 the local newspaper commented on the "fine" large wall sign recently painted on Flanagan and Henley's business block at 101 South Main). However, some of the historic storefronts have been covered with siding or Carrara glass or enclosed with brick, but historic elements, such as cast iron columns, first-story cornices, and transom windows are still visible. Recent preservation efforts have recaptured the historic character of several storefronts.

While the district contains buildings constructed over the span of six decades, it has a cohesive appearance. The qualities which visually distinguish the district from the surrounding residential neighborhoods are the form of the buildings (rectangular with shallow pitched roofs), their spacing (adjoining each other and flush with the sidewalks), their materials (brick compared to the mostly frame houses), and their height (several are two-stories with pediments). The town's only stoplight is at the intersection of Main and Washington, first installed about 1939 on two posts. Most of the buildings along South Main Street are two-stories tall, creating unified cornice lines. The regular spacing of the tall rectangular upper-register windows reinforces this unity. Just as they were historically the buildings at the northern end of the district are one-story tall, creating a unified horizontal appearance. Throughout the district buildings range from one-lot widths to three-lot widths. However, the facades of many of the two and three lot-wide buildings, are divided visually into one-lot widths

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through the placement of ornamentation and windows. Thus regularity exists in both the horizontal lines (cornice heights) and the vertical divisions of the buildings. As it did historically, the absence of mature shade trees also visually separates the commercial district from the surrounding neighborhoods with houses and churches of the same era.

Several late nineteenth-century commercial building styles are represented in the district. The Italianate style, a popular nineteenth century commercial building style in the Midwest, is represented by the Scott Opera House (1884) at 116 South Main Street, the M.A. Hiatt Building (1900) at 108 North Main Street, and the narrow one-story brick building at 107 South Main Street (ca. 1880). These brick buildings have the characteristic tall narrow windows topped with decorative window hoods. The metal cornice on the Opera House with its brackets, modillions, dentils, and round finials at each end, is also characteristic of Italianate commercial architecture.

The Romanesque Revival style, popular in the late nineteenth century for commercial as well as public buildings, is represented in Fairmount by the two-story brick buildings at 111 South Main Street (built between 1898 and 1902) and 113 South Main Street (1893). Both have the Romanesque Revival round arches and rock-faced stonework. The most prominent feature on both buildings are the pairs of large round-arch windows with limestone trim on the second floors. 113 South Main Street has rock-faced limestone piers at each side of the building, while the piers at 111 South Main are brick.

The most notable of the late nineteenth-century buildings in the district is the ornate Bogue Block (1889) at 102-106 South Main Street, a two-story brick building with a white painted cast-iron second-story front facade. The combination of different stylistic details, including the classically-styled metal cornice with dentils and modillions, baroque-like shell motifs in the cornice and above the north elevation windows, and an eastern-inspired gold-colored onion dome above the corner entry makes it an exuberant example of Victorian commercial architecture.

Many buildings in the district lack definitive characteristics of historical styles and are classified as commercial vernacular. They have a modest amount of ornamentation created by patterned brickwork and limestone trim. Fine examples of late nineteenth-century commercial vernacular include the two-story brick J.W. Dale Block (1889) at 121 South Main Street, the two-story brick Fairmount Block (1901) at 124 South Main Street, 120 South Main Street (ca. 1895) and 122 South Main Street (1893). The Dale Block combines metal window hoods with Queen Anne-style window panes and transoms. On the Fairmount Block, recessed brick creates the appearance of dentils in the cornice, while corbelling and alternating horizontal courses of projecting brick create the appearance of panels and columns. Limestone banding unifies second-story front facades of 120 and 122 South Main. A raised row of brick outlines the three small evenly spaced circular windows near the cornice of 122 South Main, while recessed brick creates decorative panels on 120 South Main.



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There are also several early twentieth-century commercial vernacular buildings. These include the small one-story brick Lewis Shoe Shop (1922) at 110 East Washington Street, the two-story brick building at 101 North Main Street (built between 1911 and 1913), and the one-story barrel-roofed brick building at 115 North Main Street (rebuilt after a 1943 fire) with its stepped-gable false front. Recessed brickwork creates two panels above the store windows at 110 East Washington. The south elevation of 101 North Main has brick corbelling and simple limestone lintels and sills.

In addition to commercial buildings, the district includes two houses, 107 West First Street, a one-and-a-half story frame gabled-ell, and 205 South Main Street, a two-story frame Queen Anne built between 1891 and 1893. 205 South Main was the home Dr. Charles Moore and then Dr. Daniel Holliday. In 1930 the house became the Fairmount Public Library. The commercial district once extended south of 205 South Main. The two-story brick Sutton Block (built between 1898 and 1900) was at 217-219 South Main and the three-story brick Odd Fellows Block (1902) was at 213-215 South Main. The Odd Fellows Block burned in 1958. Both houses are reminders of the earlier intermingling of dwellings and commercial buildings during the first decades of the town's development, and the adaptive commercial use of houses, such as Joseph Baldwin's dry goods and grocery store he operated from a room in his house about 1848.

The appearance of the district during the time period when it achieved significance (1884 to 1945) was that of a thriving small commercial center. From the time it was laid out in 1850 until the discovery of natural gas in 1887 brought rapid development of manufacturing and population growth, Fairmount was a small town surrounded by farmland. Its few businesses catered to the needs of the several hundred residents of the town and surrounding farms. In the decade following its official organization as a town in 1870, there were only a few dry goods stores and groceries, a tin shop, cobbler shop, tailor shop, drug store, and hotel. The businesses were housed along Main Street between First Street and Adams Street in mostly one-story wood buildings interspersed with houses. However, a sketch in the 1877 atlas records the presence of at least one two-story brick commercial building on Main Street, the drugstore of Dr. P.H. Wright (105 South Main). The streets and sidewalks were mud in wet weather, dust in dry. To make the sidewalks less treacherous, planks were laid on the sidewalks. Later the sidewalks were covered with large stone slabs.

Development of the downtown was gradual until the discovery of natural gas in 1887. After its discovery Fairmount began to grow rapidly as men flocked to work in the newly erected glass factories. To house the many new businesses that sprang to meet the increased demand for goods and services, several substantial two-story brick buildings were constructed over the next decade and a half and the character of the commercial district began to emerge. These 1890s buildings replaced smaller frame ones. The 1890 *Indiana State Gazetteer and Business Directory* noted that "Fairmount is rapidly increasing in population and commerce;

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several new buildings and factories have recently been erected, which gives it every appearance of prosperity." The Bogue Block (1889) and J.W. Dale Block (1889) were among the first multi-lot block buildings. The gas boom era construction ended with the Borrey Block (1900), M.A. Hiatt Building (1900), Fairmount Block (1901), Odd Fellows Block (1902), and Masonic Temple (1904). From 1902 to 1904 articles in the *Fairmount News* record the failure of gas and the closing of several factories.

Postcards from the turn of the century show mostly two-story brick and a few one-story wood commercial buildings along both sides of Main Street one block north and south of Washington Street. The center of the district was anchored by the onion dome on the Bogue Block and the pyramidal roof on the corner tower of the Borrey Block, located diagonally across from each other at the intersection of Main and Washington.

The arrangement of the facades of the two-story brick buildings in Fairmount followed the typical late nineteenth-century pattern. The cornices were ornamented with a parapet of brick or cast iron and most had decorative pediments and/or finials. The upper-story one-over-one or two-over-one wood sash double-hung windows were regularly spaced tall rectangles. The storefronts provided access to the businesses, display space for goods, and natural lighting, with large plate glass display windows topped by transom windows. Cloth awnings enabled shop keepers to control the amount of solar heat and light the interior received. The one-story wood buildings had similarly arranged storefronts. Cast-iron columns supported the weight of the facade and were also decorative elements. Most of the brick appears to have been left unpainted, although some were painted. Businesses advertised their presence by painting their name on the front elevation, by painting their name and wares on the display windows, and/or by hanging small signs perpendicular to the storefront.

Turn-of-the-century postcards show the interurban tracks in the middle of brick Main Street. Wood poles, taller than the two-story buildings, placed at the outer edge of the sidewalk carried telephone lines along Main Street. There were few trees in the downtown, although an early photo of the Dale Block shows three regularly spaced trees the height of the building along the sidewalk. Historical photographs show that several styles of street lamps have been used in the district, ranging from single to multi-globe light standards.

Photographs from the 1920s show little change in the appearance of the district. Despite the end of the gas boom, merchants remained in business. Unlike nearby towns created by the boom, such as Matthews, Fairmount had served a purpose as an agricultural trading center and shipping point before the boom that it continued to fill afterwards. And not all of the gas boom era factories closed. The Snider Canning Company and Fairmount Glass Factory continued to operate in Fairmount. The 1920s photographs show the storefronts still had their large glass display windows and transom windows and cast iron columns. Awnings were still widely used and windows on the second-stories were still in use. Signs remained modest in scale, although a

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few advertised services for automobiles, unheard of during the gas boom era. The 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance map shows only one narrow vacant lot front at 118 North Main Street.

A photograph from the late 1940s or early 1950s, taken about the time a local young man James Dean became a Hollywood movie star, shows the buildings still closely resembled their turn-of-the-century appearance. Most storefronts retained their large windows and awnings and signs were modest in scale. A few storefronts had been "modernized." The November 22, 1945 *Fairmount News* noted a store "was completely remodeled, with an art glass front, giving it a metropolitan appearance." Because of their age, the light green Carrara glass and aluminum windows and doors on the Masonic Temple at 110-112 North Main Street, and on 111 and 113 South Main are now part of the historic fabric of the district.

Since that time other buildings have undergone alterations. For example, the storefront at 101-105 South Main was covered with a shingle overhang and the wood bulkheads covered with brick. In spite of alterations, the pattern of recessed entry ways that characterized historic storefronts can still be found on many buildings. As in many historic commercial districts, some of the second-story window openings have been filled in, or reduced in size. The rear elevations of some of the buildings have also been altered with additions such as the one story concrete addition behind the J.W. Dale Block at 121-123 South Main.

The loss of a few historic buildings has introduced two gaps in the historic streetscape. The two-story brick Borrey Block (1900) that anchored the northeast corner of Main and Washington was destroyed by a fire in 1967. It was replaced with a one-story concrete block building. The uniform two-story height that existed on each corner of the intersection was broken. The loss of four one-story buildings between 115 and 105 North Main to make a parking lot and bank drive-through lane created a gap in the block on the west side of North Main. In addition to the loss of the buildings fronting Main Street, small outbuildings at the rear of the lots that were shown on the 1927 Sanborn map have been removed.

The surrounding environment has also changed. Interurban service to Fairmount stopped in the 1930s. The interurban tracks were removed and the space filled with concrete leaving their legacy to be rediscovered. The brick streets were paved. The several types of historic streetlights have been replaced with mercury vapor lights and the wood poles that held telephone lines are gone.

The current conditions of the buildings in the district range from excellent to fair. The 1889 Bogue Block at 102-106 South Main has been meticulously maintained and carefully restored. It features many original elements, including the art glass transom window above the corner entry containing the word "BANK" that is visible in an 1890s photograph. The storefront of the southern two-thirds of the J. W. Dale Block at 121-123 South Main Street has recently been restored. Four second-story windows remain boarded up and await future



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repair of the original sashes. Several of the historic buildings with altered storefronts that not been restored to their historic appearance are nevertheless well-maintained.

The most common physical problem of the historic buildings in the district is deteriorating brickwork. Most buildings have sections with missing or deteriorated mortar that needs repointing. Several buildings have spalling and crumbling bricks that need to be replaced. Areas of paint on a few of the painted brick buildings are flaking off and need to be repainted.

The following is a block by block description and brief history of the 31 contributing buildings and 5 non-contributing buildings in the district. The addresses are the current ones. These do not always match historic address numbers shown on Sanborn maps, as slight changes in address numbering have occurred in the past 105 years. The legal lot descriptions from the Grant County Auditor's Office are provided, but vary in their specificity.

**South Main Street (west side)**

**124 South Main Street (contributing)**

The Fairmount Block was erected between July and November 1901 by John A. Hunt and Cornelius R. Small. Located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Adams streets, it occupies the southern forty feet of Lot 8, Block 2 of the Original Plat. Immediately prior to its construction a tiny one-story frame office was the only building on this part of Lot 8. Before the frame office building David Stanfield's frame house, the second in Fairmount, sat on this lot (see Photo 1).

Described after its construction as "one of the handsomest blocks in the city" by the *Fairmount News*, the Fairmount Block is a two-story brick commercial building with limestone trim and a limestone foundation. The front facade is pressed red brick, while a softer red brick was used for the rear and side walls. Decorative brickwork divides the facade horizontally and vertically. At the cornice line, recessed brick creates dentil-like blocks below a band of limestone trim. Below these, recessed brick creates panels. Projecting brick creates a pilaster at each corner that extends slightly above the cornice. The corner pilasters rest on columns of square roughcut limestone blocks alternating with narrow blocks of smooth stone. A pair of projecting brick pilasters above the center entry extend to the limestone pediment with "FAIRMOUNT BLOCK 1901" in raised letters.

On each half of the second story are two tall rectangular double-hung wood windows. Between the center pilasters is a tall narrower rectangular double-hung wood window. There are six segmental-arch tall rectangular windows in the second-story south elevation. The upper halves of all the windows are currently

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boarded up. Bands of limestone trim at the top (thicker and recessed) and bottom (narrower and projecting) of the second-story windows horizontally unify the front facade.

The first floor, now a single space, was originally divided into two storefronts. The 1903 city directory lists Hunt and Langsdon operating a "Furniture and Undertaking" business at 124 South Main. (Hunt had been operating a furniture and undertaking business at least since 1896 when he and John Ferree opened a store.) A central stairway, since removed, provided access to offices on the second floor. Early office occupants were Walter L. Jay, an attorney, A.R. Long, an attorney, O.R. Scott, an insurance agent, and C.M. Wilson, a dentist. A door on the south elevation now provides access to the second floor and five apartments. In the 1950s, when fear of atomic bombs prompted bomb shelter construction, concrete shelters were poured in the northern half of the basement. The concrete tops of the shelters serve as the floor on this side of the building.

While the storefront has been altered, the central location of the recessed entry has not been changed. Two metal columns flank the entry. The oak and beveled glass front door was originally in the corner entrance of the Fairmount State Bank building at 101 North Main built between 1911 and 1913. The space occupied by transom windows is now covered with painted stucco and the plate glass display windows have been replaced with windows in metal frames.

**122 South Main Street (contributing)**

This two-story brick building was constructed in 1893 (see Photo 1). It occupies 20 feet north of the mid-point of Lot 8, Block 2 of the Original Plat. In 1898 it was occupied by a "Gent's" store run by Miller and Haas, whose signboard below the cornice is visible in a historical photograph.

The building originally had a pressed-metal cornice above a narrow band of limestone. The cornice has been removed leaving the band of limestone. Below are three evenly spaced small round windows outlined and connected by bands of recessed brick and roughcut limestone. The facade and trim are all painted the same color beige. Below each round window is a tall rectangular double-hung wood window with a flat arch and lintel of limestone. A band of roughcut limestone about one foot from the top of the three windows connects them and also connects with the limestone trim on 120 South Main Street. The storefront has been partially bricked in around a picture window. A painted wood beam with four rosettes covers the cast iron beam between the first and second floors. Part of the rear of the building has been torn down and a second-story wood porch and a new entry built.



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**120 South Main Street (contributing)**

This two-story brick building was erected between 1893 and 1898 (see Photo 3). It occupies the 6 and 2/3 feet of the north side of Lot 8, Block 2 of the Original Plat and the 12 feet 10 inches of the south side of Lot 5, Block 2 of the Original Plat. In 1898 the first floor was a furniture store and a "Club Room" occupied the second floor.

The building is the same height as 122 South Main Street. Below the unadorned cornice recessed brick creates a small rectangular center panel and diagonally placed brick creates three evenly spaced smaller panels below. The limestone trim outlining the second-story windows at 122 South Main continues onto 120 South Main to outline its two tall rectangular windows. However, the top portions of these windows have been bricked in and the lower portions replaced with a horizontal picture window topped with an awning. The original storefront is mostly intact. The transom windows (by Solar Prism Co., Cleveland, Ohio) are in place but have been painted. The large display window is still open, although the glass panes have been replaced. The recessed entry on the north is in its original location.

**116 South Main Street (contributing)**

Erected in 1884 by Joseph H. Parker, this Italianate-style two-story brick building housed Parker's hardware store in the first story and Levi Scott's (later Parker's) Opera House on the second (see Photo 3). It occupies all but the north 16 and 1/2 feet of Lot 5, Block 2 of the Original Plat. It replaced a small brick building in which Scott had organized the town's first bank.

Parker and Scott both played important roles in the economic development of Fairmount in the 1880s and 1890s. In 1877 Scott opened a dry goods store and in 1882 he established the Fairmount Bank (reorganized and renamed the Farmer's and Merchant's State Bank in 1886). He served as its cashier until it went bankrupt during the Panic of 1893. Scott was the treasurer of the Fairmount Manufacturing Company organized in 1886 to manufacture corn planters and ditching machines. As directors of the Fairmount Land, Gas and Improvement Company organized in September 1892, both men were involved in attracting industry to Fairmount during the gas boom. Scott served as secretary/treasurer in the Dillon Glass Company organized in 1891, and Parker served as president.

Except for its missing pediment, the upper register of the building is intact. The overhanging pressed-metal cornice is composed of modillions and dentils. Brackets at each end support finials and two brackets in the center originally supported the pediment. Four regularly spaced tall rectangular two-over-two double-hung wood windows are topped by limestone hoods with incised scrollwork and keystones (see Photo 4). Between

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the windows and the cornice are four recessed brick panels. On the north elevation of the second story are faded advertising signs. The storefront has been largely bricked in and has much smaller display windows.

The entrance from Main Street to the Opera House on the second floor is at the southeast corner. Stairs led to the vacant space that a local non-profit preservation group, Historic Fairmount, is working to restore. On April 14, 1892 the *Fairmount News* noted, "Fairmount has a splendid opera house...[it] is one of the nicest and best arranged to be found in any place this size in this section. It has a seating capacity for about 600 persons, and is equipped with nice scenery and good stage apparatus." A few months later, on October 1, 1892, a fire that started in a nearby livery barn severely damaged the Opera House. The auditorium, stage and fixtures were a "complete wreck" because the roof collapsed. Facing economic hard times after the failure of the Farmer's and Merchant's Bank in 1893, Scott sold the Opera House to Parker, who spent \$2,500 to repair the damage. He reopened it as Parker's Opera House. At the turn of the century magic shows, public meetings, dances, performances by traveling theater groups and by local groups, and a church fund-raising bazaar were held there.

**114 South Main Street (non-contributing)**

This one-story concrete block building with a brick veneer front facade replaced Beasley's Drug Store, a one-story frame building built before 1892 (see Photo 3). The building does not have a front door or windows. Entry to the building is from 116 South Main Street. It occupies the north 16 and 1/2 feet of the north side of Lot 5, Block 2 of the Original Plat.

**112 South Main Street (contributing)**

T.P. Latham erected the two-story brick Latham Block between 1893 and 1897 for his harness and carriage business (see Photo 5). It replaced his one-story frame building on the same lot, the southeast 20 by 85 foot section of Lot 4, Block 2 of the Original Plat. Although his frame building was not damaged by the October 1, 1892 fire, it may have spurred him to construct this building. In 1902 Mrs. Latham sold the building to F.O. Gephardt and it became a saloon and later a pool room.

A brick parapet with two recessed brick panels extends above the roof. A pediment once sat above the center of the parapet. There are two tall rectangular one-over-one double-hung wood windows in the second floor facade. Bands of limestone outline and unify the windows' flat arches and lintels, giving it an appearance similar to 120 South Main. The south elevation facing the alley was built of soft brick. It has seven two-over-two double-hung wood segmental-arch windows with stone sills.

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The historic appearance of storefront has been restored. Brick piers with blocks of rock-faced limestone at the base, midpoint and top, frame the sides of the storefront. The cast iron beam, with decorative circular rosettes, forms the storefront top. The recessed central entry is flanked by large display windows and wood bulkheads. A cloth awning covers the upper storefront.

**110 South Main Street (contributing)**

This small one-story brick building was built between 1898 and 1902 on part of northeast portion of Lot 4, Block 2 of the Original Plat (see Photo 5). It replaced a frame building, one of the "two old buildings" torn down during the October 1, 1892 fire to protect the nearby Bogue Block from the flames. In 1902 it housed a jewelry store. By 1909 the storefront had been divided with a jewelry store in northern half and a millinery in the southern half.

The pressed-metal cornice is composed of a row swags between shell-motif end panels. The upper storefront has been covered by metal siding whose vertical lines are similar in appearance, if not material, to the wood siding shown in a 1922 photo. Although the north half of the storefront has been bricked in the storefront entry is in its original central location. A striped cloth awning covers the southern two-thirds of the storefront.

**108 South Main Street (contributing)**

This two-story honey-colored brick building was erected in the spring of 1902 by E.D. Lewis and Joseph W. Parrill for their furniture and undertaking business (see Photo 5). It replaced a frame building torn down during the October 1, 1892 fire to protect the adjoining Bogue Block. Although the legal description in the County Auditor's office is vague, the building sits on the northern portion of Lot 4, Block 3 of the Original Plat.

Identified by a now missing pediment nameblock as the "1902 Block" the building is a combination of historical and "modern" styles. The classically-inspired pressed-metal cornice is similar to the one on the adjoining Bogue Block. It has a row of modillions, a row of dentils and a row of swags. The large segmental opening in the second story contains a large Chicago-school-like window that spans the entire facade between the brick pilasters at each corner. Slightly darker brown brick was used for the pilasters and the arch above the window. The window sill is a band of rough-cut limestone. The storefront, which had been altered, has been restored. The recessed entry is on the right and large glass display windows above wood bulkheads are on the left. A cloth awning covers the upper storefront.

**102-106 South Main Street (contributing)**

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The most ornate and well-preserved commercial building in the district, the two-story brick Bogue Block was erected in 1889 (see Photo 6). Also historically referred to as the Bank Block, since 1893 it has housed the Citizens Exchange Bank. It was organized July 15, 1893 after its predecessor the Farmer's and Merchant's State Bank went bankrupt. The names in the three pediments above the cornice (106 is "Levi Scott," 104 is "Bogue Block," and 102 is "Fairmount Bank") suggest Levi Scott and Robert Bogue were both partial owners. On January 1, 1892 the *Fairmount News* reported that the "Bank Block" and McDonnell Block (now the J.W. Dale Block at 121-123 South Main) together cost \$25,000 to build.

The most striking feature is the gold-painted onion dome above the corner entry at Main and Washington (see Photo 7). The dome is supported by the elaborate cast iron second-story facade facing Main. This facade suggests chiseled stone columns between the windows. The elaborate pressed-metal cornice, which continues around the corner entry along the north elevation, is composed of dentils, modillions, and a shell-motif. Between the second-floor windows and the storefront is a simpler cornice with dentils. The upper register of the middle section ("Bogue Block") is slightly more ornate than the flanking end sections. It has a small second-floor balcony. Instead of balloon-like art glass transoms above the second-story windows, its stained glass transoms are more intricate. Above these windows are two small lion heads painted gold.

On the north elevation facing West Washington the soft red brick, recently repointed, is unpainted. There are seven tall one-over-one double-hung wood windows on the second floor and six on the first floor. The three rear first-floor windows have a transom opening above the windows. A door near the northwest corner provided access to the upper floors. Reddish mortar was used in the brick arches and belt courses connecting the windows to create greater contrast with the other brickwork. The round-arch shell-motif tops above the windows and door are identical to ones on the Fairmount Friends Church built in 1892.

The interconnecting second-floor apartments and offices indicate the building was constructed as one. Twelve-inch brick partition walls evenly divided the first floor into three approximately 22-foot wide storefronts. The use of different numbers of second-story windows (four at 106, three at 104 and two at 102) and the three pediments above each storefront visually reinforces the original three storefront division. As the bank has grown, openings have been cut in these walls and now the three storefronts are connected. The storefront 102 retains the two original plate glass windows, wood frames and bulkheads, and art glass transoms in a balloon-like pattern. The restoration of the altered storefronts at 104 and 106 was based on the features of 102. However, since the interior is now occupied by one business, the center doorways originally at 104 and 106 were not recreated. The original wood tellers counters and metal grilles, which Levi Scott purchased in Cincinnati in December 1889, are still used in the bank lobby at 102 South Main.



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**West Washington Street (south side)**

**Parking lot**

This parking lot between the Bogue Block and the alley was once the site of three one-story brick buildings erected in the late 1890s. These buildings, which housed a steam foundry, barber shop, and pool room in 1902, replaced a one-story frame dwelling that was on this site in 1893.

**West Washington Street (north side)**

**117 West Washington Street (contributing)**

This one-story concrete-block building with a brick facade was erected between 1916 and 1926. It sits on a southeastern portion of Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition, behind 101 North Main Street (see Photo 8). Now joined to 101-103 North Main, it originally was used as a warehouse. It replaced a small narrow one-story frame building that was used as a music store and later a laundry.

The only decorative feature is the center panel created by the vertically-scored recessed brick. The storefront has not been altered. The recessed entry door is on the right and a large wood frame display fills the left two-thirds of the storefront. A striped metal awning covers the storefront.

**119 West Washington Street (contributing)**

This one-story panel-faced concrete-block building with a brick facade was erected in 1922 for the Citizens Telephone Company (see Photo 8). It sits on a southeastern portion of Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition, behind 101 North Main Street. A one-story frame dwelling sat on this site in the 1890s and early 1900s. Organized in 1902, the first switchboard of the Citizens Telephone Company was on the second floor of 102-106 South Main. In 1909, the Citizens Telephone Company purchased its rival, the Fairmount Telephone Company, organized in 1897. The combined company outgrew its quarters and in 1919 purchased this lot for \$800.

Like the adjoining building at 117 West Washington, this building has been joined to 101 North Main. Slightly lighter color brick creates three rectangular panels above the storefront and the lintels above the three evenly spaced windows placed to the left of the door. A striped metal awning covers the door and another covers the three windows. The west elevation has four windows filled with glass blocks.



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**North Main Street (west side)**

**101-103 North Main Street (101 contributing, 103 non-contributing)**

This building was created in 1964-65 by joining two separate early twentieth-century buildings: the two-story red brick building at 101 North Main, and the one-story brick building at 103 North Main. A gold-colored metal grill panel was placed above the storefronts facing North Main Street to create the appearance of a single two-story building. The corner entrance of 101, similar to the one still used at the Bogue Block, was bricked in with buff brick and the main entrance moved to the north side of 103 North Main. The buildings sit on the southeast corner of Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition.

The two-story building at 101 North Main, originally known as the Bank Building, was constructed between 1911 and 1913 to house the Fairmount State Bank, organized in 1902 as the Fairmount Banking Company. During its early years the bank had its offices at 111 South Main. By 1911 it had grown to be the largest bank in Grant County outside of Marion, the county seat. The Bank Building replaced a two-story frame building that was a grocery store and general store in the 1890s and early 1900s. The Odd Fellows Hall was on the second floor of the frame building until the Odd Fellows Block was built in 1902 at 213-215 South Main.

The one-story brick building at 103 North Main, known as the Baker Block, was constructed between 1909 and 1916. By 1916 it housed a drugstore in the southern half of the building and a restaurant in the northern half. It replaced a one-story frame building that was a restaurant and bakery in the 1890s and early 1900s.

The second-story facade of 101 North Main is still intact under the metal grill. Historical photos and the north elevation show that corbelled brick created a simple cornice line suggesting battlements. There are two tall rectangular windows with flat limestone arches and sills. The front entrance was in the corner facing the intersection of Main and Washington. Although bricked in, the cutaway corner can still be seen. The second story of the south elevation has six one-over-one wood sash windows similar to the ones on the front elevation (see Photo 8). At the street level at the rear of the building are two doors separated by a nearly square window and then five similar windows to the corner. Striped metal awnings shade the storefront windows.

The original storefront of 103 North Main was replaced in 1964-65. The replacement storefront has narrow vertical windows in metal frames. The north elevation has been covered with buff stucco.

**Parking lot**

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The drive-up bank window lane and parking lot were historically the site of several commercial buildings. In 1893 there were a one-story brick building that housed John Harvey Wilson's Bee Hive general store at 105, a one-story frame drugstore at 107, Haisley and Parrill's meat market in a one-story brick building at 109, and a one-story frame barber shop at 109 1/2.

**115 North Main Street (contributing)**

Originally two two-story brick buildings that had been joined together, this one-story barrel-roofed brick building was rebuilt following a fire on November 11, 1943 that destroyed the roof, upper story, and interior (see Photo 10). The two-story building on the south half was A.D. Bryan's hardware store built before 1893. The two-story building on the north was built between 1898 and 1902, replacing a one-story frame building. The building currently sits on portions of Lots 4 and 5, Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition.

In 1906 S.B. Hill opened a meat market at 115 North Main (the building sat where 117 North Main is today). Together with his brother James and his son Clem, Hill ran a meat market and later a grocery store until it was purchased by A.L. Ross and Sons in 1956. In 1957 the name was changed to Driskill's Market. At some point, the adjacent Blue Ribbon Dairy Bar, at 117 North Main closed. Archways were constructed between the two buildings and the supermarket expanded. The rear addition on the northern half that extends to the alley was originally a meat locker.

Except for a metal awning, the exterior matches the sketch of the remodeled storefront published in the *Fairmount News* when the store reopened in 1944 after the fire. The accompanying article noted "a new front has been added, giving the building a distinct appearance." A prominent decorative feature is the brick stepped-gable false front. A signboard was and is centered above the storefront. The double door entrance is in the southeast corner of the building. Large display windows in metal frames are intact. Between the ground and windows are knee-high panels of black Carrara glass. There are no windows on the south elevation.

**117 North Main Street (contributing)**

This one-story brick building was built between 1927 and 1944 (see Photo 11). It replaced a one-story frame building that was a meat market for many years. By the 1950s the current building was the Blue Ribbon Dairy Bar. Some time after Driskill's Market purchased 115 North Main, the buildings were joined together with arched openings. The original vertically-incised brick was set in reddish brown mortar. Smooth brick and off-white mortar fill the former storefront space. The only entrance to the space is through 115 North Main. A slight brick overhang and brick panel near the cornice are the only ornamentation.

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**119 North Main Street (contributing)**

This one-story brick building was constructed between 1909 and 1916 (see Photo 11). It sits on 14.05 feet of Lot 4, Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition. It replaced a one-story frame building that had been the *Fairmount News* printing office in 1893, and later a confectionery store.

A plain band of limestone tops the front facade above two slightly recessed brick panels. The storefront had large glass display windows and transom windows above wood bulkheads on either side of the recessed center entry. The storefront was later filled in, but has recently been returned to a more historic appearance. The recessed center entry is flanked once again by glass display windows. Inside the original pressed-metal ceiling is in excellent condition.

**121 North Main Street (contributing)**

This one-story brick building occupies the south quarter of Lot 1, Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition. It was constructed before 1893 by the Hollingsworths (see Photo 11). Henry Hollingsworth purchased Lot 1, Block 3 in 1876 and constructed three buildings on it, including the gabled-ell house at 107 West First Street, a now demolished one-story frame shop on the corner of West First and North Main that housed Maria Hollingsworth's millinery shop, and this brick commercial building that housed Hollingsworth and Sons boot and shoe shop.

The original recessed central entry storefront with its wood and glass door, large glass display windows and wood bulkheads is intact, but in poor condition. A wood shingle awning supported by two square wood columns covers the transom windows. Vines on the front and north elevations obscure any decorative brickwork.

**123 North Main Street (contributing)**

The middle section of this one-story brick gas station and garage was constructed in 1927 by Charles F. Nabor (see Photo 12). The rear section was added by 1944. The small concrete block office facing Main Street was erected in the mid-1950s when the Town of Fairmount purchased the building and used it as a police station and fire barn until a municipal building was erected in 1970. The building sits on 73 and 1/2 feet of the east end of the northern three-quarters of Lot 1, Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition.

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The organization of the building and lot is typical of early twentieth-century gas stations. Pumps were located on the corner, in front of a small office with a horizontal window. Two garage bays provided space for car repairs. At the corners of the garage bays the bricks were laid in a criss-cross pattern (see Photo 13).

**West First Street (south side)**

**107 First Street (contributing)**

This gabled-ell one and a half story frame house was erected by the Hollingsworths before 1893 in the middle of Lot 1, Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition (see Photo 12). Henry Hollingsworth purchased the lot in 1876 for \$850. By 1893 it was the home of Joshua Hollingsworth. On the northeast side of the house at the corner of Main and First, Maria Hollingsworth operated a millinery store in a small frame building. By 1909 a passageway joined the house to the frame building.

The house was moved to the rear of the lot and placed on a concrete block foundation between 1923 and 1927 to make room for the gas station at 123 North Main. It now sits on 58 and 1/2 feet of the west end of the northern three-quarters of Lot 1, Block 3 of Baldwin's Addition. In 1923 the house was purchased by Dr. Joseph P. Seale and his wife, Carrie. His office was located nearby at the southwest corner of Main and First streets.

The gable ends facing both West First and North Main streets have two two-over-two wood sash windows in the upper section and three in the lower section. A small concrete porch in the ell shelters two entry doors, one into each gable section. The house has been covered with asphalt siding, but still has a metal roof. A small garage was added to the west side of the house when the house was moved.

**South Main Street (east side)**

**205 South Main Street (contributing)**

Dr. Charles Moore, a physician, built this two-story frame Queen Anne house between March 1891 when he purchased Lots 2 and 3, Block 4 of Stanfield's Addition from his grandfather-in-law Thomas Baldwin, and 1893. (Across Main Street was the home and office of Dr. Alpheus Henley, another physician and one of the leading promoters of Fairmount during the gas boom.) After the deaths of both Dr. Moore and his wife, Mary Baldwin Moore in 1897, ownership interest in the property was consolidated by Mrs. Moore's brother, Stephen G. Baldwin of Marion, Indiana. In 1902 Stephen Baldwin sold the house to Dr. Daniel A. Holliday for \$5,000.



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He lived in the house and practiced medicine in the office on the north side of the property until his death in 1918. Since 1930 it has housed the Fairmount Public Library.

The irregular massing and the decorative woodwork in the gables of the house are characteristics of the Queen Anne style. The diagonally placed trim in the front, side and rear gables is intact. There is a bay window on the first floor, a pair of windows on the second and a small window in the gable. The roof on the front portion of the house is metal, while the roof on the rear (east) is slate. The foundation is brick. The pyramidal roof on the rear tower and the one-story wrap-around porch have been removed. A smaller entryway with a pedimented gable roof and decorative woodwork similar to that in the gables was built. Although the interior rooms have been altered to meet library needs, the original woodwork in the front entry is intact.

**East Adams Street (south side)**

     Adams Street      (contributing)

This small one-story house sits on the approximate site of the one-story frame office shown on the 1893 Sanborn map. The office was Dr. Daniel Holliday's when he lived in the house at 205 South Main, located on the same northwest quarter of Block 4 of Stanfield's Addition. The house has a concrete block foundation, metal siding and asphalt shingle roof.

**South Main Street (east side)**

**121-123 South Main Street (contributing)**

Constructed in 1889, this two-story brick building has housed a hardware store for 100 years (see Photo 14). Edward L. McDonnell purchased the lot (Lot 7, Block 1 of the Original Plat) on April 30, 1886 from William R. and Lizzie Woolen for \$2,000. (The purchase may have included Woolen's house, which was on this corner of Main and Adams streets in the 1870s.) During McDonnell's ownership, the McDonnell Block housed the Post Office in the southern half of the building. A dentist, George R. Dale had an office in the building, and Mrs. N.A. Wilson ran a millinery shop here. The Knights of Pythias Hall occupied the southern half of the second floor. A door on the south elevation, now bricked in, provided access to a stairway.

McDonnell sold the lot and building to James W. Dale on July 20, 1899 for \$10,000. Dale renamed the building, putting up a pediment that reads "1889 J.W. DALE'S BLOCK" (see Photo 17). For many years Dale and later his sons operated a hardware store here. Between 1898 and 1902 a two-story brick warehouse was



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added to the rear and a rear extension added to the northern third of the building. Another, more recent concrete block addition extends the building to the alley.

The pressed-metal cornice on the front facade has a row of small dentils. Brackets in the cornice mark the first floor stairway and support the nameblock. Five of the six windows in the second floor are still topped by pressed-metal hoods. Currently the northern two windows and the transom window above the stairway retain the original Queen Anne style sashes (see Photo 16). The four remaining windows are boarded up and painted the same gray as the bricks, which historically were unpainted. The second-story elevation facing Adams Street has four windows in the original portion and two in the addition. The windows are topped by pressed-metal hoods.

The storefront on the southern two-thirds of the building has recently been restored (see Photo 15). When the brick filling the storefront was removed, four original cast iron columns and some of the wood bulkheads were uncovered and restored. Missing sections of the bulkheads were reconstructed based on the originals and replacement plate glass display windows installed. The recessed central front entry is flanked by a pair of cast iron columns. A second pair of cast iron columns to the south historically flanked the entry to the southern section of the building. Wood bulkheads and display windows fill this entire section of the storefront since this doorway was not recreated. A striped cloth awning covers the storefront.

The storefront on the northern third has been filled with brick except for the entry on the right side. From the 1920s through the 1950s this section of the building was a movie theater, the Royal Theater in the 1920s and then the Palace Theater in the 1940s and 1950s.

**115-119 South Main Street (non-contributing)**

Known during the gas boom as the Central Hotel (1891), Scott House (1893), Hotel de Marsh (1895), Columbia House (1898), and Grand Hotel (1899), this two-story brick building was erected between 1884 and 1886 by the partnership of Jonathan Winslow, Levi Scott, Nathan Edwards, and William Woolen (see Photo 14). It sits on Lot 6, Block 1 of the Original Plat. During the gas boom it housed newly arrived workers as well as prospective factory investors. The 1893 Sanborn suggests the hotel was on the second floor, with an office, sample room (bar), dining room, kitchen and hallway on the first floor in the 119 section of the building. Storefronts at 117 and 115 were occupied by a boot and shoe store and a clothing and gentlemen's furnishings store, respectively.

A short parapet is supported by corbelled brick. The second story originally had seven tall rectangular windows with limestone lintels and flat arches. While the limestone trim is still intact, the five window openings

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on the southern two-thirds of the facade have been partially bricked in and filled with small metal sash windows. The two window openings on the north side are boarded up. The windows in the north elevation along the alley have also been boarded up. A faded advertising sign is on the north elevation (see Photo 18).

The storefronts have also been altered. Originally they had large glass display windows, wood bulkheads and prism glass transoms. The storefronts at 117 and 119 have been covered by stone veneer and the display windows greatly reduced in size. The windows are filled with glass blocks. The storefront at 115 has undergone some rehabilitation. The changes include larger display windows on either side of the slightly recessed center entrance and a pair of fluted columns flanking the entry.

**113 South Main Street (contributing)**

The Wilson Block, a two-story pressed red brick Romanesque Revival building, was built in 1893 (see Photo 19). N.A. Wilson purchased the lot, the south 23 feet of Lot 3, Block 1 of the Original Plat, on May 15, 1893 from William Pearson for \$2,300.00. Wilson operated a grocery store at this location in 1895. By 1897, M. Harris, Clothier, occupied the first floor. The second story had space for ten offices, occupied by doctors and dentists. In 1898 the Fairmount Telephone Company's telephone exchange was on the second floor. A cistern in the basement is still filled with clear water, suggesting a house was on or near this site.

Corbelled brick brackets support a plain limestone parapet that rises above the roofline and extends north across 111 South Main. Below, decorative brickwork divides the facade vertically, with pilasters at each corner and one in the center. Rock-faced limestone columns with geometrically patterned capitals support the three pilasters at the storefront level. (The corner columns remain but the center one has been removed.) On either side of the center pilaster are round-arch windows with rock-faced limestone trim above the arches. Replacement windows fill the space below the arch. On the south wall facing the alley are eight segmental arch windows with wood frames on the second floor. The windows on the first floor have been bricked in.

At some point the storefront at 113 was connected with 111 South Main. A new wall now separates the spaces again. The storefront was modernized in the 1930s by filling the upper third with light green Carrara glass, covering the transom windows. The center column was removed and the storefront filled with aluminum display windows and door. The second-floor stairway on the left has a new wood door.

**111 South Main Street (contributing)**

This Romanesque Revival building was erected between 1898 and 1902 (see Photo 19). (By 1907, N.A. Wilson owned this building, but original records leave it unclear whether he built the building or purchased it

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from someone else.) Early occupants were the Fairmount State Bank (1906) on the first floor, and Sanford A. Hockett's photo studio on the second floor. A brick foundation in the basement appears to have been constructed to support a bank vault. The building occupies 23 feet in the middle of Lot 3, Block 1 of the Original Plat.

The arrangement of the second-story facade is similar to 113 South Main, but the use of lighter brick rather than limestone trim, gives it a more restrained appearance. A simple limestone parapet connects both buildings. Historical photographs show an elaborate pediment once extended above the parapet at 113. Bricks create a center and corner pilasters that divide the facade in half. The storefront columns supporting the pilasters are the lighter-colored brick. In either half of the second story is a large round-arch window with the lighter brick trim. A band of the lighter-colored brick across the facade connects the windows.

Originally the storefront contained a round arch window opening similar in appearance to the second floor windows. It was covered when the storefront was modernized in the 1930s. Light green Carrara glass fills the upper third of the storefront. Aluminum windows and door replaced original materials.

**109 South Main Street (non-contributing)**

This narrow one-story building sits on part of Lot 3, Block 1 of the Original Plat. The front (west) elevation is covered with stained diagonal wood siding (see Photo 20). Of concrete block construction on a concrete foundation, it replaced a one-story frame building.

**107 South Main Street (contributing)**

This one-story building was erected between 1877 and 1893 of soft brick (see Photo 20). It occupies the north 8 feet 4 inches of Lot 3, Block 1 of the Original Plat. During the gas boom era it housed barber shops. Two tall rectangular windows flank the door. The windows and door have Italianate pressed-metal hoods. The original window glass has been replaced with single panes of reflective glass. Projecting bricks create dentils along the cornice.

**101-105 South Main Street (contributing)**

This two-story brick building was actually constructed as three separate buildings. They were joined together after World War II when the Edwards expanded their drugstore at 105 South Main. The buildings were probably all constructed before 1880. They occupy most of Lot 2, Block 1 of the Original Plat.

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The south section (105) was erected between 1874 and 1877 for Dr. Peter Wright. An 1874 deed conveyed part of Lot 2, Block 1 to Peter H. Wright for \$200. The 1877 atlas shows Wright's house and two-story brick drugstore called the Pioneer Drugstore. In 1878 Wright sold part of Lot 2, Block 1 to Nathan Edwards for \$4000, indicating the presence of one or more buildings on the property. In 1892 the *Fairmount News* described Edward's "elegant store" that "occupies a handsome two-story brick twenty by eighty feet in size." Nathan Edwards, his son, Xen, and his grandson, Phil ran a drugstore and soda fountain at this location until Phil sold it in 1964.

The building at 101 South Main was built by Jonathan Winslow between 1875 and 1880. Winslow sold the property to Sarah Oakley in 1883, and she sold it to Flanagan and Henley in 1889. John Flanagan had begun his merchant career in 1879, partnering for three years with E.N. Oakley. In 1883 Flanagan and his new partners, Alpheus Henley and Nixon, bought \$8,000 worth of goods and opened a dry goods store in a building at the corner of Main and Washington. By 1893 Flanagan had bought out his partners. He continued to operate the dry goods store until he sold the business in 1911. Flanagan was a leader in local business and civic affairs. He served as Fairmount State Bank president, Fairmount Mining Company director, Commercial Club president, and school board president.

The building at 103 South Main was probably also constructed during the 1880s. Although originally erected as separate buildings, the front facades of the upper registers of all three buildings are nearly identical in height and window style and placement, creating a uniform appearance. A simple dentiled brick parapet spans 101 and 103 South Main. The dentiled brick parapet at 105 South Main is a few inches lower. There are three tall rectangular windows with simple window hoods above each storefront. These windows, as well as the ones on the north elevation on East Washington Street, have been boarded up and painted white along with the bricks.

By the late 1960s the storefronts had been modernized by the installation of a shingle overhang awning spanning all three storefronts, the replacement of wood bulkheads with brick ones, and the installation of smaller display windows. The original storefront at 101 had a center entrance with a transom window flanked by large display windows topped with prism glass transoms. Doors in the center of 101 and at the right of 103 are intact but are not currently used.

**East Washington Street (south side)****108 East Washington Street (contributing)**

This one-story brick building was constructed between 1889 and 1892 by G.W. Reed from Baltimore. In 1892 W.B. Connor, a druggist, purchased the 18 by 42 feet building for \$1500. It sits on the northeastern portion of



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Lot 2, Block 1 of the Original Plat. In the 1890s it housed a drugstore, and then a clock store. A stair on the west separated it from 101-103 South Main Street. By 1902 the stairway was removed and a doorway opened in the wall between this building and 101-103 South Main Street. The storefront may have been raised about three feet onto limestone blocks at this time. Currently the storefront and entry way are boarded up. Two fluted cast iron columns in the center of the building are reminders of the original entry location.

**110 East Washington Street (contributing)**

The Lewis Shoe Repair Shop is a one-story concrete block building with a brick facade erected by William R. Lewis about 1922. It replaced a narrow one-story frame building in which Lewis had operated his shoe shop for many years. It sits on an 18 by 42 feet portion of the northeast corner of Lot 2, Block 1 of the Original Plat.

Slightly recessed vertically-scored brick creates two rectangular panels in the upper portion of the front facade. Below these panels a metal beam forms the top of the storefront. The storefront has been filled in with smaller windows surrounded by wood panels. The transom window space has been covered with a wood shingle overhang. There are no windows in the panel-faced concrete block east elevation.

**North Main Street (east side)**

**102-106 North Main Street (non-contributing)**

This one-story concrete block building was completed in 1969 (see Photo 21). It occupies the Lot 7 and 3 and 1/2 feet of Lot 6 in Block 4 of Baldwin's Addition. It replaced the Borrey Block (1900), a substantial two-story brick building with a corner tower that burned in 1967. The Borrey Block had three storefronts on Main Street with a hall and offices on the second floor, and two small one-story storefronts along East Washington Street. Before the Borrey Block was built in 1900, the only buildings on the lot were a few small one-story frame ones facing East Washington. This is the corner where Joseph Baldwin opened the first store in Fairmount about 1848.

**108 North Main Street (contributing)**

The two-story dark red brick M.A. Hiatt Building was built in 1900 by Marcus Aurelius Hiatt for his buggy, carriage and harness business (see Photo 22). It replaced his one-story frame building, which he moved to the "Busing lot" a few lots north to make room for this building. Hiatt had owned and operated a carriage and harness business since at least 1889. The Hiatt Building is located on part of the south half of Lot 6, Block 4 of



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Baldwin's Addition. In 1919 Hiatt and his wife, Lydia, sold the building to the Trustees of the Fairmount Lodge, owners of the adjacent building. Subsequently the second floor spaces of the two buildings were united.

The upper register of the building is intact. The metal nameplate "M.A. HIATT 1900" is centered near the top of the building. A historical photo shows that in appearance the M.A. Hiatt Building was a continuation of the Borrey Block at 102-106 North Main. Below the nameplate are two tall rectangular segmental-arch windows with projecting brick arches and keystones. The window area beneath the arches was bricked in and the windows filled with glass blocks in 1955-1956. Alternating blocks of projecting bricks create a quoin-like appearance each corner and in the center.

The wood bulkheads on either side of the center recessed entry were replaced with brick ones. A flat metal awning spanning 108-112 North Main hangs just below the transom window space. The transom window glass has been covered with painted plywood but the frames are still visible, as is the fluted cast iron pilaster with shell-motif capital on the right side of the storefront (see Photo 24).

**110-112 North Main Street (contributing)**

The cornerstone of the two-and-a-half-story brick Masonic Temple was laid on June 30, 1904 (see Photo 22). It was dedicated November 2, 1904, when the *Fairmount News* described it as "one of the neatest and most handsome finished [buildings] in the city." A fire on February 29, 1904 had destroyed the two-story frame building in which the lodge room was located. The first Masonic Lodge in Fairmount was organized in 1874. After six years it closed. The Masons reorganized in 1901 and by 1904 membership had grown from eight to 52. The building is on the north part of Lot 6, Block 4 of Baldwin's Addition.

During construction the *Fairmount News* noted the Masonic Temple would be a companion to the four-year-old Borrey Block and "will add much to the appearance of the east side of Main Street." Influenced by the popular Romanesque Revival style, the cornice line is an arcaded corbel table. A historical photograph shows there was once a parapet and pediment above this corbel table that has since been removed. Two large round-arch windows flank a rectangular window centered above the center stairway leading to the upper floors. Above this window in the space between the round arches is a limestone block with "MASONIC TEMPLE" in raised letters (see Photo 23). A band of roughcut limestone runs across the facade, outlining and connecting the window arches. The window sills are roughcut limestone. In 1955-1956 the window area under the arches was bricked in and the remaining window area filled with glass block. The first-floor windows on the north elevation facing the alley have been bricked in and the second floor windows spaces have been filled with glass blocks. Three segmental-arch windows at the top level retain their wood double-hung sashes.

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While the upper floors were reserved for lodge use, the first floor contained two storefronts, one on either side of the stairway. For several decades the post office was located in 112 North Main. The alteration of the storefront with light green Carrara glass and a flat aluminum awning that projects over the sidewalk is now part of the historic fabric of the building. Aluminum frames and doors replaced the original wood ones, and wood bulkheads were covered with brick. An aluminum Art Deco door surround highlights the center stairway.

**Parking lot**

This small parking area on the south part of Lot 3, Block 4 of Baldwin's Addition was the site of the one-story frame Busing & Co. Store, which sold candy, balloons, and cigars.

**118 North Main Street (contributing)**

This one-story buff brick building was erected in 1932 by Albert Morris who operated Morris' Cafe for many years (see Photo 21). It replaced a one-story frame building. It sits on part of Lot 3, Block 4 of Baldwin's Addition. Like its neighbor at 120 North Main, the building relies on decorative brickwork for its ornamentation. Slightly projecting courses of brick create two panels above the storefront. Criss-crossed bricks, identical to the pattern found on the gas station across the street at 123 North Main, are on the right corner of the large display window. The store retains its side entry to the south.

**120 North Main Street (contributing)**

This one-story brown brick building was built between 1916 and 1927 (see Photo 21). It replaced a one-story frame barber shop. It sits on the north 22 feet of Lot 3, Block 4 of Baldwin's Addition. The storefront retains its original configuration with a central recessed entry flanked by display windows sitting on short brick bulkheads. The transom window area is filled with glass cross-hatched to resemble prism windows. Above the storefront slightly projecting brick courses form two rectangular panels.

**124 North Main Street (contributing)**

The one-story frame building at the northeast corner of East First and North Main was originally two buildings, both built before 1893, perhaps as early as 1883. (see Photo 21). In the early 1890s the building on the north was known as the Long and Kepler Block. 124 North Main occupies Lot 2, Block 4 of Baldwin's Addition. As it was historically, the building is set back from the sidewalk about two feet.

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Prior to Micajah W. Hunt's purchase on December 30, 1915, the buildings had housed a variety of businesses, including C.C. Lyons' (later a state senator) tailoring establishment, a drug and watch store, a furniture and undertaking store, a restaurant, a saloon and pool hall, and a movie theater. The 1916 Sanborn map shows that after his purchase Hunt had two interior walls removed to create a large showroom for his furniture and undertaking business. It is probable that at this time he also rebuilt the storefront with single center recessed entry and united the buildings under the stepped-gable brick false front, and a single slightly pitched gable roof. Although the brick false front has been covered with siding, and the wood bulkheads with brick, the storefront retains the same profile, light coloration, and configuration shown in a ca. 1915-20 photograph. A cloth awning currently spans the storefront. The finials at the corners of the false front are intact.

**Significant Dates (continued)**

1911-13: Fairmount State Bank erected, the last two-story brick commercial building  
1944: Hills rebuilds fire damaged store on North Main Street

**Statement of Significance**

The Fairmount Historic Commercial District reflects the impact of the gas boom, the burst of economic activity following the discovery of natural gas in 1886, on east-central Indiana towns. The gas boom transformed this region from an agrarian society to a more industrialized one. As in other towns in the gas belt, Fairmount's businessmen exploited the cheap energy to develop factories. The resulting influx of workers created a demand for more goods and services. Local businessmen erected commercial buildings for the growing numbers of merchants and professionals. Thus, the area of significance is "Commerce" and "Community Planning/Development" since it reflects the development of Fairmount as a local center of trade. It meets National Register Criterion A because it is largely the product of the gas boom, a significant era in Indiana history. The late nineteenth-century styles of these buildings express the economic confidence of this era. Unlike most other small towns in the gas belt that grew rapidly and then faded with equal rapidity, the Fairmount Commercial Historic District is physically (and economically) intact. Therefore it also meets National Register Criterion C as one of the most intact local examples of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial architecture in a east-central Indiana gas boom town.

The first white settlers arrived in this part of Grant County in the late 1820s. Many of the early settlers were Quakers from North Carolina leaving behind the slave-holding south and seeking economic opportunities. The first purchaser of land that would later encompass the northern half of Fairmount was John Benbow in 1831

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and 1832. Benbow entered the northwest quarter of section 29, township 23 north, range 8 east. In 1837, David Stanfield, who laid out the Original Plat of Fairmount, arrived in Grant County. He had a portion of his land surveyed and platted for sale as lots in December 1850. The Original Plat consisted of 15 lots on four blocks south of Washington Street, along both sides of Main Street. Fairmount Park in Philadelphia inspired the name of the new town.

The town grew slowly in its first decades. An early resident recalled that in 1853 there were only seven houses in Fairmount. The first merchant was Joseph Baldwin, who opened a store in a room of the house he built on the northeast corner of Main and Washington streets about 1848. Isaac Stanfield operated a store across Main Street on the northwest corner of Main and Washington, so this intersection has been the focus of local commercial activity for 150 years. A couple of small grocery stores, hotel, blacksmith shop, and shoe shop comprised the other early commercial businesses.

In addition to the merchants, the first industries built in the late 1840s and 1850s in Fairmount were tanneries and water-powered saw mills, woolen mills, and grist mills. These early industries processed and profited from the natural resources and agricultural products from the surrounding lands. Fairmount Township was heavily forested with oak, walnut, hickory, poplar, and beech when the first settlers arrived and many wild animals lived in the forests.

Fairmount was incorporated as a town in 1870. Its population was 337. As the town grew, several additions were platted, including Baldwin's Addition (1852) on land owned by Jonathan Baldwin that encompasses the northern half of the commercial district. By the 1870s several businesses serving the surrounding agricultural region were located near the intersection of Main and Washington streets, along with residences. Businessmen who would later play important roles in the gas boom economy, such as John Flanagan and Nathan Edwards, began their careers as Fairmount merchants in the late 1870s. The 1877 atlas listed a hotel proprietor, grain dealer, two physicians, carriage and wagon maker, miller, dealer in boots and shoes, and merchant among the residents of Fairmount township and village. Fairmount was far enough (nine miles) from Marion, the county seat, to allow merchants and tradesmen to make a living serving the local community.

The arrival of the Cincinnati, Wabash & Michigan Railroad in 1875 fostered the development of small industries in Fairmount. Prior to its arrival, the stagecoach between Marion and Anderson was Fairmount's commercial transportation link to the outside world. In 1875-76 Jonathan P. Winslow and Enoch Beals built the first grain elevator. In 1878 C.A. and Mark Wood built a factory to make oil barrel staves east of the railroad. In 1881 Jonathan P. Winslow and his son W.C. purchased the factory and converted it into a flax mill. A chair factory owned and operated by Brady and the Alfred Brothers opened in 1885-86 as did the Fairmount Machine Works owned by J.H. Harrington and M.A. Hiatt, and the Kimbrough Brothers saw mill.



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The establishment of these small factories contributed to the gradual growth of the commercial district in the 1880s. In 1882, Levi Scott established the first bank, the Fairmount Bank. In 1884 he opened Scott's Opera House in Joseph Parker's building at 116 South Main Street, to host traveling theatrical groups.

The pace of development escalated rapidly after the discovery of natural gas in nearby counties in late 1886. On March 4, 1887 local business leaders (Dr. Alpheus Henley, Levi Scott, Jonathan P. Winslow, C.R. Small, John Flanagan, Thomas J. Nixon, Dr. W.H. Hubbard, M. Mark, and the Kimbrough Brothers) organized the Fairmount Mining Company to drill for gas. On April 26, 1887 the first gas in Fairmount was discovered at 965 feet. Nicknamed "Jumbo" because it was larger than any other Indiana well, it produced 11.5 million cubic feet of gas a day. (When it caught fire in 1888, excursion trains brought visitors to Fairmount to see it burn.) On May 3, Walker H. Winslow was the first in Fairmount to use natural gas for fuel.

After the discovery of gas, Levi Scott and W.C. Winslow solicited funds to use in advertising the merits of Fairmount. Dr. W.H. Hubbard and John Flanagan solicited real estate donations to offer potential new industries and several stepped forward with offers of free land for entrepreneurs who would build factories employing a certain number of men. Other companies were also organized to drill for gas including: Citizens Gas Co., The Chicago Co., The Bates Co., and the Pittsburg [sic] Co.

Glass manufacturing, which took tremendous amounts of fuel, was the industry most frequently attracted to the gas belt. The first factory in Fairmount to exploit the cheap and seemingly infinite fuel supply was the Fairmount Glass Works, established in 1888-89 by W.C. Winslow, John Rau, Frank Taylor, and Charles Tigner. By 1892 it was shipping \$100,000 worth of glass jars annually. This factory was followed by the Dillon Glass Factory which made fruit jars (1889), the Big Four Window Glass Factory (1890), "Dinkey" Bottle Factory (1890), Bell Window Factory (1893), and Headley & Co.'s glass window factory (1894). A second railroad line, the Chicago, Indiana & Eastern Railroad, reached Fairmount in 1892. The factories were built close to the railroad lines on the east and south of town. In addition to fueling factories, the natural gas was used to heat and light homes and businesses.

Hoping to sustain the town's success in developing industries, the Fairmount Land, Gas and Improvement Company was organized in 1892 with a capital stock \$150,000 to attract additional factories. Directors were Alpheus Henley, Levi Scott, Joseph H. Parker, John Flanagan, Wesley C. Howe, William A. Beasley, O.R. Scott, Hiram Brownlee, and O.W. Lamport. They published a promotional map of Fairmount "The King City of the Gas Belt" promising "free gas, free sites and good water for factories." As an article in the April 14, 1892 *Fairmount News* stated "what we want now is men who have plenty of money to come here and we invite manufacturers, capitalists and retired businessmen to located with us."

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Workers flocked to the new factories, causing the population of Fairmount to double from 1,492 in 1890 to 3,205 in 1900. Some estimated the population reached 5,000 during the late 1890s. New businesses opened to meet the increased demand for goods and services. In 1890 there were three hotels, a bank, two weekly newspapers, two boot and shoe stores, three drug stores, a couple of restaurants and a confectionery, two harness stores, a jewelry store, a watchmaker, two hardware stores, two barbers, several dry goods and general stores, a furniture store, several grocers, a marble works, three milliners, a dressmaker and two tailors, livery stables, a photographer, two real estate agents, a dentist, a lawyer, and several physicians.

By 1890 several carpenters, plasterers, stonemasons, and painters lived in Fairmount. Although the designers of the commercial buildings are unknown, several men in town advertised themselves as architects/builders, including: Cyrus Hollingsworth, B.S. Bailey, W. H. Lindsey, J.B. Smithson, Asa Carter, and John S. Baker. The Fairmount Brick Works, established in 1891, could make 25,000 bricks a day and probably supplied many of the bricks for the commercial buildings. Limestone could be quarried locally for foundations.

The impact of the gas boom on the built environment of Fairmount was observed as early as 1888 by the *Fairmount News* when it reported, "Fairmount is completely surrounded by new buildings and more are being built." The commercial buildings erected in Fairmount during the gas boom to house both long-established and new businesses were two-story brick buildings, ornamented with limestone trim and pressed-metal cornices and window hoods. They often replaced older small one-story frame buildings. The buildings in Fairmount were typical late nineteenth-century commercial buildings, much deeper than they were wide. To maximize the narrow front elevation, for both natural light and attracting customers, the storefronts were primarily glass. Large plate glass display windows were topped by transom windows filled with prism glass. Awnings allowed some control over the amount of natural light and heat. Cast iron columns supported the storefront and wall above. Above the storefront were offices, apartments, lodge rooms, and auditoriums. Stairways to the upper floor were often located in the front facades.

The first two-story commercial building in Fairmount for which a definite construction date is known is the 1884 Scott Opera House at 116 South Main. (The buildings at 101-105 South Main and 107 South Main may have been constructed as early as the late 1870s.) The popular late nineteenth-century Italianate style was used for both the Opera House and 107 South Main.

By 1889 the economic benefits of the natural gas discovery made possible the construction of the elaborate Bogue Block at 102-106 South Main and the McDonnell Block (now the J.W. Dale Block). Each two-story building contained three storefronts. The second floors were used for offices and meeting rooms. With its

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gold-colored dome, shell motifs, and art glass windows, the Bogue Block is an fine example of eclectic Victorian commercial architecture.

Over the next few years Fairmount did experience some of the "magical growth" predicted by the *Fairmount News* in April 1892. Brick commercial buildings were erected throughout the 1890s, including the ones at 120 and 122 South Main, 111 and 113 South Main. The Romanesque Revival style popular in the 1880s and 1890s inspired the facades of 111 and 113 South Main, with their round-arch windows and storefronts. A fire in 1892 on the west side of South Main did not seem to slow the building pace. Several of the buildings in the district lack definitive characteristics of historical styles. These commercial vernacular buildings have a modest amount of ornament created by decorative brickwork and limestone trim.

The building boom continued until 1904, about the time the gas boom ended. Warning signs of the depletion began to appear in the *Fairmount News* in 1902, with reports of gas wells filling with salt water and factories shutting their doors. (Just ten years earlier the newspaper had proclaimed in a headline "No Reason to Doubt That Gas Will Last for Ages.") However, the first years of the twentieth century saw the construction of the M.A. Hiatt Building (1900) at 108 North Main, the Borrey Block (1900) formerly at 102-106 South Main, the Fairmount Block (1901) at 124 South Main, the 1902 Block at 108 South Main, the Odd Fellows Block (1902) formerly at 213-215 South Main, and the Masonic Temple (1904) at 110-112 North Main. Like their predecessors, the facades of these two-story and two-and-a-half story brick buildings were enlivened with decorative brickwork and limestone details. By this time a solid wall of one and two-story commercial buildings had been built on either side of Main extending a block north and south of Washington.

Prosperity created by the gas boom lead to significant improvements in the infrastructure of Fairmount. Three weeks after a fire in October 1892 caused \$20,000 worth of damage on Main Street, a petition was circulated to create a public waterworks. The waterworks was constructed in 1894. In 1901 Main Street, Washington Street and Henley Avenue were bricked, replacing the gravel that had covered Main Street since 1862. The first cement sidewalks were poured in 1900. In 1902, a new street sweeper was purchased that swept dirt to the curb where it was then shoveled into wagons. The interurban electric train line first came to Fairmount in 1897, when a line was laid connecting Fairmount and Jonesboro. In 1899 the Union Traction Company built a substation powerhouse for the interurban on the northwest corner of Main and West First Street.

In 1897 the Town Board granted a franchise to Gilbert LaRue to construct an electric light plant. Electric street lights were first used on Saturday night, April 22, 1899. The Fairmount Telephone Company was organized in 1897 with 14 phones. By June 1900 it had 130 phones in operation. A second company, Citizens Telephone Company started in October, 1901 with 30 phone lines. In 1909, the Citizens Telephone Company



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purchased the Fairmount Telephone Company. Turn-of-the-century photographs show telephone poles along the west side of Main Street and on Washington Street.

Business directories and Sanborn Fire Insurance maps show that Fairmount continued to function as a commercial, educational, and religious center for the surrounding area in the twentieth century. The population, which had reached 3,205 in 1900, dropped as workers left seeking jobs elsewhere. In 1911 in "Facts About Fairmount" the local newspaper noted that the town "is a normal trading center for a radius of five to ten miles." It went on to list the many civic improvements made during the gas boom, such as the 25 miles of cement sidewalks, five miles of brick and macadamized streets, interurban line, and "modern" telephone system. However, the loss felt by the town when the gas was depleted is evident. The article concluded, "Fairmount wants more factories and is offering inducements to legitimate enterprise."

By 1920 the population had dropped to 2,506. However, a list from 1920 notes that there were two banks, two hardware stores, two meat markets and nine groceries, four shoe shops, four barber shops, three garages, four clothing stores, three drug stores, a jewelry shop, three furniture stores, and two tailor shops among the businesses in Fairmount. Additional commercial buildings were erected in the early twentieth century but none were as grand as those of the gas boom. With the exception of the two-story brick building at 101 North Main (ca. 1911-13), they were one-story in height. Ornament was limited to simple decorative brickwork. Vertically-scored brick was used on several of these buildings.

Although the depletion of local natural gas caused several of the glass factories to close, other factories continued to operate, such as Snider's Canning Company, which had built a factory in 1906 to produce catsup from locally grown tomatoes. The grain elevators, flour mill and lumberyards continued to serve the town and rural population as they had before the boom. And Fairmount continued to attract small factories. A headline in the November 22, 1945 *Fairmount News* proclaimed "Fairmount Secures New Industries: Prospects Are Good." The Gem Manufacturing Company (pressed glass), Twoson Manufacturing Company (steel and wire products) and Indiana Pattern Works brought to six the number of factories in Fairmount in 1945. A sampling of the businesses listed in a 1950s Chamber of Commerce pamphlet includes: three grain elevators, two lumberyards, four farm equipment dealers, two supermarkets, a department store, a ladies apparel store, two banks, two drug stores, three furniture stores, four restaurants, a theater, a dry cleaner, and newstand.

The current appearance of downtown Fairmount reflects both its gas boom heritage and subsequent economic slowdown after the natural gas was depleted. Only a few buildings have been destroyed, leaving just two noticeable gaps in the streetscape: the parking lot between 101-103 North Main and 115 North Main, and the 1969 one-story concrete block store at 102 -106 North Main. The bricks on Main and Washington and the interurban track on Main Street have been covered with asphalt. The district is visually separated from the



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surrounding residential neighborhoods by the form of the buildings (tall, narrow and rectangular), building materials (brick, pressed-metal, and limestone) building orientation (flush with the sidewalks and sharing walls), and lack of shade trees. The town's only stoplight is at the intersection of Main and Washington.

Compared to nearby small towns that prospered during the gas boom—Upland, Gas City, Matthews, Jonesboro, Gaston, and Swayzee—Fairmount has the most intact historic commercial district. In Fairmount the upper registers of most buildings retain their historic design and materials, with many examples of decorative brickwork, and pressed-metal window hoods and cornices. While some storefronts have been covered with siding or Carrara glass, or enclosed with brick or stone veneer, historic elements such as a cast iron column or cornice are still visible.

Recent preservation efforts have brought back the nineteenth-character of several storefronts. Fairmount also retains the bustling feeling of a rural commercial hub. Its almost fully occupied storefronts house a wide range of services and businesses, including a barber shop, newspaper, two banks, a hardware store, auto parts store, two record stores, a furniture and appliance store, a flower shop, and several antique and gift shops.

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Clippings from the Fairmount vertical file, Indiana Room, Marion Public Library.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the Fairmount Commercial Historic District is shown as the dotted line on the accompanying map titled "Fairmount Commercial Historic District."

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary was based on the historic concentration of commercial buildings along the inner half of the blocks facing Main Street as shown on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1893 to 1944, and on the remaining concentration of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial buildings within this area. The intersection of Main and Washington Streets has been the heart of commercial activity in Fairmount for 150 years, since Joseph Baldwin opened the first store on the northeast corner about 1848. The boundary extends to include the house at 205 South Main because it has housed important community services which visitors to the commercial district often use. During the gas boom era it was the home and site of the office of Dr. Daniel Holliday, and since 1930 has housed the Fairmount Public Library.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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**Fairmount Commercial Historic District  
Grant County, Indiana**

**PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE FAIRMOUNT COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT  
5 x 7 BLACK AND WHITE**

Photographer: Elizabeth Morton

Location of photograph negative: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Photo #:

- 1 Date of photograph: April 24, 1998  
Description of view: Streetscape, looking northwest at the west side of South Main Street. From left to right are: 124, 122, 120, 116, 112, 110, 108, and 102-106 South Main Street.
- 2 Date of photograph: April 24, 1998  
Description of view: Looking north down Main Street, standing in front of 124 South Main Street.
- 3 Date of photograph: April 24, 1998  
Description of view: Looking southwest at the front (east) and north elevations of 116 South Main Street (right) and at the front (east) elevation of 120 South Main Street (left). View shows the faded painted signs on the north elevation of 116.
- 4 Date of photograph: April 24, 1998  
Description of view: Looking west at one of the four two-over-two double-hung wood sash windows in the second story of 116 South Main Street.
- 5 Date of photograph: April 24, 1998  
Description of view: Looking northwest at (left to right) 112, 110 and 108 South Main Street.
- 6 Date of photograph: April 24, 1998  
Description of view: Looking southwest at the front (east) and north elevations of 102-106 South Main Street.
- 7 Date of photograph: April 24, 1998  
Description of view: Close-up of the onion dome topping the corner entrance of 102-106 South Main Street, looking southwest.