

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FINAL -
Signed

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 Clinton Downtown Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly between S. Water & S. Third Sts.; Elm St. to the CRX RR R.O.W. N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Clinton N/A ☐ vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Vermillion code 165 zip code 47842

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

1/25/00
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)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
46	14	buildings
1	1	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
48	15	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE:

SOCIAL:

Meeting Hall

DOMESTIC:

Single Dwelling

RECREATION/CULTURE: Monument/Marker

RECREATION/CULTURE: Theater

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-Related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE:

SOCIAL:

Meeting Hall

DOMESTIC:

Single Dwelling

RECREATION/CULTURE: Monument/Marker

RECREATION/CULTURE: Museum

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN:

Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN:

Renaissance

19th & 20th c. AMER.:

Bungalow/Craftsman

19th & 20th c. AMER.:

Commercial Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

STONE

walls

BRICK

WOOD: Weatherboard

roof

ASPHALT

other

STONE

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

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

c.1880 - c.1935

Significant Dates

N/A

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:

Clinton Downtown Historic District
Name of Property

Vermillion IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 31

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	6
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4	6	5	7	3	0
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4	3	9	0	0	6	0
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Zone

Easting

Northing

2

1	6
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4	6	5	9	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	3	8	9	8	9	0
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3

1	6
---	---

4	6	5	9	6	0
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4	3	8	9	5	6	0
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Zone

Easting

Northing

4

1	6
---	---

4	6	5	6	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	3	8	9	5	6	0
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☐ 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 Camille Fife, President
organization The Westerly Group, Inc. date 3/31/99
street & number 556 W. 1175 N. telephone 812-696-2415
city or town Farmersburg, IN 47850 state zip code

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or 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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Architectural Classification (Cont.)

Materials (Cont.)

Commercial Style

foundation: Brick
Concrete

Narrative Description

The Clinton Downtown Historic District comprises the core of the traditional commercial district of the town. All of the district is located within the original town plat. The district is compact, including three and a half blocks from north to south and two and a half blocks east to west. The land is relatively flat, elevated on a bluff approximately fifty feet above the level of the Wabash River which is located just east of Water Street, the eastern district border. To the north, the railroad line of the former C. & E. I. Railroad (now CSX) forms an angled border, running approximately northwest/southeast. The buildings to the north, east and south of the district are primarily residential, or modern commercial, with some churches, schools, the library and other institutional buildings. The Downtown Historic District is not the only commercial center in the town, although it is surely the oldest. Some distance to the northeast of the original town is a four to five block commercial district which has been traditionally associated with early twentieth century Italian immigration.

Historic buildings in the Downtown Historic District fall into two major types: Late nineteenth century or turn-of-the century structures, which evoke Italianate and other similar styles; Early twentieth century buildings of brick and stone which utilize Classical Revival or Commercial Style detailing and are of substantial size and massing. Many of the latter were constructed with a very fine glazed common brick or the popular wire cut and rug finished bricks. In addition, there are some utilitarian buildings, such as warehouses and a few large modern structures. The major streets tend to be wide, with few amenities.

The spacing of the buildings in downtown was once very dense. This historic appearance is still present along portions of South Main Street, Mulberry, and Blackman Streets. However, the ravages of time, as well as fire, have taken a number of Clinton's buildings, and thus there are open spaces at present along a number of the streets. With one exception, all of the buildings within the district are commercial. Most are two stories, and of brick with stone trim or pressed metal decoration. Some terra cotta trim can also be seen. Some of the most interesting, architecturally, are the buildings at 141 and 137 South Main, along with their neighbors. An

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interesting and contributing sculptural object commemorates a former governor of Indiana, Claude Matthews. Just to the southeast of the district is a fountain which celebrates Clinton's Italian heritage, but it is not within the historic period of significance and thus has not been included.

List of Resources

North side of Vine Street

1. 225 Vine Street, Clinton City Hall, No Style, c. 1975 (N/C)

This is a rectangular, one and a half story tan brick building with a recently completed addition on the east side.

2. 227 Vine Street/102 Main Street, C. & E. I Passenger Depot, Renaissance Revival/Craftsman, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #1)

This outstanding building is of brick, laid in a running bond. The building has a long rectangular plan with two main divisions, separated by a pass through or sally port. The southeast section includes the men's and women's waiting rooms, the station master's office and the telegrapher's post, as well as rest rooms. The northwest section was a passenger baggage storage and claim area and is presently used for storage. The building foundation is of ranged field stone, rock faced with a natural cement mortar. There is a basement beneath the western waiting room. The building was designed with wide, overhanging eaves supported by open brackets and has a hipped roof which is slightly bellcast, typical of the genre. The windows, for the most part, are round arched with fanlights. The main doors and the enlarged baggage room doors also have similar heads and treatments. The baggage room contains two, wide loading doors of matched novelty siding with chamfered frames. There are bay windows on both the south and track side elevations, with diamond pattern lights in their transoms.

Running along the track side elevation is a raised platform, now covered in asphalt and brick laid in a herringbone pattern beneath. This brick walk is present on all sides of the building, with the exception of part of the south east side beneath the bay window, which is planted in grass.

South side of Vine Street

3. 222 Vine Street, No Style, c. 1930, (N/C)

This small, one story commercial building has full light display windows, a brick bulkhead and a modern metal sided parapet.

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Clinton Downtown Historic District

North Side, Mulberry Street

4, 5. North east corner of Third and Mulberry Street, Bogart Park, Vernacular, c. 1945 (C) Claude Matthews bust/memorial (C). (Photo #8)
This is a simple, city pocket park which was constructed before 1948, with an interesting monument located within it. There is a brick building located within the park, but it is separately numbered (on Third Street) and thus is listed in that section. The park is a rectangular plan with a single central walk of concrete and play equipment randomly placed on the two sections. While the park is modest, it represents an early example of an urban pocket park in a small, Indiana community. There is a concrete plinth which supports a part of the decorative stone cornice which portrays Claude Matthews, a former Governor of Indiana from this town. The portrait was once located on an Indianapolis building (see Indiana Save Outdoor Sculpture Project.) and there is a marble plaque with a poem by James Whitcomb Riley entitled "Claude Matthews" inscribed. The portrait was sculpted by Henry M. Saunders. The park contains a small, movable storage building and several pieces of play equipment, which have not been included in the resource count.

South Side, Mulberry Street

6. 254 Mulberry Street, Commercial Style, c. 1900/1960, (N/C) (Photo #9)
This is a one story commercial building with two store fronts. Both have been parged with concrete and/or changed from the original. The entire west side of the building has a separately constructed concrete block wall attached.

7. N/A Mulberry Street, Commercial Style, c. 1900, (C) (Photo #9)
This is a one story, frame commercial building with four bays and a side gabled roof. It originally had a plain frieze according to a 1905 photograph; the brackets have been added in recent times. There are three display windows and a recessed entry.

8. 242A Mulberry Street, Italianate, c.1880, (C) (Photo #9)
This is a one and a half story frame building with a combination hipped and low gabled roof and a plain boxed cornice. The original siding is wide clapboard with a covering of brick pattern tar paper on the rear and wide aluminum siding on the front. A door (rear) has a transom and a wide surround, as do other interior doors. It has had a modern mansard canopy added and new windows and door.

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9., 10. 242 Mulberry Street, Italianate/modern, c.1902, c.1998
(C) (N/C) (Photo #9)

This is a five bay, two story building with a decorative, projecting cornice of pressed metal with brackets, floral motifs and other features. There is a non-contributing modern concrete block garage behind this building.

11. 232 Mulberry Street, Italianate, c. 1895, (C) (Photo #9)

This is a two story building with a brick facade on the ground floor, shingles on the second, and an original pressed metal cornice with brackets in two sizes and larger brackets at left and right. The alley elevation is of common brick with minor fenestration.

12. 110 Mulberry Street, (Second Building east of S. Water Street) c. 1910, Commercial Style, (C) (Photo #10)

This is a one story brick building with a modern storefront infill. There is a single modern door. The parapet is flat with a concrete coping, stepped down at the right and left sides.

13. 110 Mulberry Street, (same address as above, SW corner of S. Water Street), No Style, c. 1920/1970 (N/C) (Photo #10)

This is a one and a half story brick and concrete building with a cladding of metal siding and several large oversize garage doors.

North Side of Blackman Street

14. 259-237 Blackman Street, Scott-Martin Block, Moose Home, Commercial Style, (C), 1907

This is a rectangular, two and a half story building. The first floor consists of three storefronts with an entrance to the second floor. The entries are divided by cast iron columns with floral motifs, and there is a cast iron lintel. The spaces have been changed with stucco bulkheads and smaller windows with blocked transoms. The second floor facade combines red and yellow brick with the latter used as decorative "quoins" on the ends and between the windows which are one/over/one light with dressed stone heads and unified stone sills. There is a metal cladding on the upper parapet.

15. 235 Blackman Street, H. H. Wisehart Building, Commercial Style, c. 1915 (C) (Photo #16)

This is a two and a half story, eight bay building with two storefronts on the ground floor. The building is constructed of tan, wire cut brick with a flat parapet with short pilasters above a corbeled frieze and with stone

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coping. Below the frieze is a brick paneled area. The second floor windows have dressed limestone heads and sills and five/over/one light windows. The ground floor has a superficial cladding of vinyl siding in the transom area and large display windows with two entries.

16. 225 Blackman Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C)

This is a two and a half story brick building of a dark red-brown, wire-cut brick with a stretcher bond. The upper parapet is flat with two raised plinths, left and right, and stone coping. The second floor contains two four light windows with oversized, rock-faced stone lintels and sills. The ground floor has a new mansard canopy and brick infill in the bulkheads. There are two storefronts, each with their own entries and a third entry at right to the upper floors.

17. 123 Blackman, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C)

A one and a half story brick building, this structure is in poor condition. It has three major bays divided by brick pilasters, between which are corbel tables as a frieze. The ground floor left contains large display windows at left and a personnel door at right. The middle bay contains an oversize garage door at left with multi-lights and a boarded up display window at right; the third bay contains two boarded up display windows.

South Side of Blackman Street.

18. 300 Blackman Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C)

This is a one story commercial building with a glazed brown brick facade. The ground floor store front is of cast iron with decorative columns. The main entry is canted to the corner with an oversized pole supporting the lintel. There are display windows on two facades of the building.

19. 258 Blackman Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #15)

This is a two and a half story brick building with a flat parapet, concrete cap and raised corner pilasters. There is a corbel table with brick "brackets" and a stone sign frieze above the second floor window line. The windows have oversized rock-faced stone heads and rock-faced stone sills with modern infill windows. The ground floor has a modern mansard canopy and modern glass storefront display windows and doors.

20. 250 Blackman Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #15)

This building has a brick facade and two second floor bays with oversized, rock-faced stone window heads and brick sills. The upper parapet is brick with a flat roof and concrete coping. The plain frieze has been stuccoed. The ground floor has brick cladding and modern windows and doors. This is

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one of five similar buildings on this block, all separated by brick pilasters.

21. 248 Blackman Street, Mark W. Lyday Building, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #15)

This building is similar to its neighbor, except that the window heads are narrower and the sills are of rock-faced stone. The ground floor has an aluminum canopy and recessed store front with metal pan cladding and aluminum trim.

22. N/A Blackman Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #15)

Like its neighbors, this is a two story brick building. The upper floor windows are filled in with modern siding and small windows, and their heads and sills are of dressed stone. The ground floor has an aluminum storefront with metal pans in the transoms.

23. 238 Blackman Street, Hays & Balmer Building, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #15)

This building is nearly intact, except that the transoms are blocked with plywood and there are some modern aluminum mullions in the display windows. The second floor windows have the larger heads, rock-faced stone and a stone sign panel in the frieze.

24. N/A Blackman Street, Miller & Pike Building, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #15)

The last building in this line, this structure has a nearly intact second floor with rock-faced heads and sills and a stone sign panel. The ground floor has been re-clad in a modern brick, and two new doors and a new transom have been added. There is glass block infill in the display windows.

25. 128 Blackman, Commercial Style, c. 1920, (C) (Photo #17)

This is a one and a half story brick building with a concrete block parapet and clay cap; the balance of the roof is gabled. There are two entrances at front with a display window in filled with glass block and with a concrete sill. The side windows are small and there are two entrances. Evidence of former, segmental arched windows is evident on the painted front facade.

North Side of Elm Street

26. 255 - 221 Elm Street, Commercial Style, c. 1900, (C)

This is a single two story building with three ground floor store fronts, unified by a modern mansard canopy. The second floor windows have stone

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sills and heads. Most have been in filled with modern, smaller windows. The ground floor fronts have modern display windows, left and right. The center front has a recessed opening and wooden bulkheads. The brick is primarily wire cut.

27, 28, 29. 111 Elm Street, Commercial Style, c. 1920, (C), (N/C), (N/C) (Photo #18)

These three buildings have been unified on the second floor with a modern cladding. The second floor front facades of the two western buildings suffered some fire damage and were not re-built. The ground floor retains the original brick as does the east and west side of the building. On the interior, the eastern building retains an original wood floor, the center building retains a pressed metal ceiling and original brick in the party walls, and the third retains an original west wall with steel casement windows.

West Side of South Third Street

30. 335 So. Third Street, Ford Agency Building, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #19)

This is a one and a half story brick building of wire cut brick with much detailed and decorative brick work. The ground floor consists of two facades, one on Third and one on Elm, with multiple display windows and upper transoms which contain prism glass on the third street facade and on the main door entrance. Other transoms contain multiple lights. There is an addition to the north with wood framed display windows and a central, multi-light garage door. The upper part of the building has had a new concrete block cladding. The main building has panels of cross laid brick enframed within panels with stone blocks at the corners. This has been a Ford Agency since 1912, according to local sources.

East Side of South Third Street.

31. N/A (c/o 335 S. Third Street), Modern, c. 1970, (N/C)

This is a one story, flat parapet building with a deeply recessed modern entrance and two display windows.

32. N/A S. Third Street (c/o 258 Blackman St.), Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C)

This small building has a two story facade on Third with two upper windows, both with a unified row of brick soldiers as heads and dressed stone stills. There is a corbel table above with a course of stone as a cornice. The ground floor front has been in filled with brick.

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33. 130 S. Third Street, Craftsman, c. 1930, (C)
This is a one-story, tan, wire-cut brick building with a rectangular plan and a flat roof. There are four bays on the Mulberry Street facade. The windows have brown brick soldiers at their heads, and there is a row of similar soldiers as a water table. A modern addition has been added to the west side of the building, c. 1970.

34. 128 S. Third Street, Queen Anne, c. 1900, (C)
This is a one and a half story frame residential building with a brick foundation. The foundation of the front verandah is of rock-face cast block, and there are three round, concrete columns on square bases supporting the porch roof. The building has a cross plan with a combination pyramidal and cross gabled roof. There are replacement windows, and the building has been sided in aluminum.

West Side of South Main Street.

35. 355 So. Main Street, No Style, c. 1980, (N/C)
This is a one story brick building with a modern fixed canopy, flat roof and large garage door on one side.

36. 345-335 So. Main Street, No. Style, c. 1900/1970, (N/C)
This large brick building has been extensively remodeled on the front facade with a rubble stone cladding and a diamond pattern perforated metal covering on the second floor and above.

37. 315 So. Main Street, Masonic Hall, Italianate, c. 1900, (C)
This is a two and a half story building with a flat parapet, projecting processed metal cornice below and four windows on the second floor front facade, with dressed stone heads and a unified stone belt course as a sill. The windows have been in filled with glass block. Below, the store front has a modern mansard canopy with the entrance to the second floor at left and a retail store at right.

38. 301 So. Main Street, Commercial style, c. 1960, (N/C)
This two story building has concrete coping and a tan brick facade with narrow second story windows below a flat parapet. The main floor is comprised of aluminum framed display windows and a large modern double door. There is stone cladding around the bulkheads and left and right of the store front.

39. 249 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #12)
This is a two and a half story brick commercial block with a seven bay

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second story facade. The roof is a flat parapet with concrete coping, below which is a projecting row of corbeled brick. Below this is a plain frieze and a decorated projecting cornice, which serves as the window head for the second story front windows (and one bay on the side). In addition, there are brick and stone pilasters with mock capitals and bases between the windows. The ground floor has been clad with a perforated metal paneling in the area of the sign frieze and below the second floor window line. The store front is recessed with aluminum frame display windows. The original brick has been retained, but painted.

40. 247 So. Main Street, Italianate, c. 1880, (C) (Photo #12)

This is a two story brick building with a three bay facade. There is a flat parapet with a projecting pressed metal cornice with brackets and a raised decoration in three panels across the front. The brackets have small pendants. The windows on the second floor have segmental arched openings with decorated, projecting cornices with short labels containing roundels. The windows have four/over/four lights. The ground floor contains a single store front between two cast iron columns. There is a new, oversize sign frieze covering the original facade, and the windows and door are aluminum.

41. 221 So. Main Street, Modern, c. 1980, (N/C) (Photo #12)

This two story bank building has a metal parapet, brick piers and walls, and a recessed opening to the north.

42. 219 So. Main Street, Italianate, c. 1890, (C) (Photo #12)

This commercial building is of brick construction, two and a half stories tall, with a three bay facade. The upper parapet is flat with an ornate, projecting cornice consisting of two large scrolled brackets, with a rank of small brackets between which are decorative geometric panels. The second floor windows have pedimented hoods with small labels and plain stone sills. There are small window boxes on the windows. The ground floor has a remodeled store front with cast iron columns left and right.

43. 215 So. Main Street, Italianate, c. 1890, (C) (Photos #11,12)

A large, two and a half story building, this brick block has a seven bay facade on the second floor. There are two recessed store fronts on the ground floor. The southernmost has display cases with glazed brick bulkheads and a curved roof at the entrance, as well as two round head doors. The store front is separated by cast iron columns. The northern one has modern metal paneling in the sign frieze, timber and stucco bulkheads, and a recessed central entrance. It is also enframed by cast iron columns. At the center is the entrance to the second floor, which

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also has cast iron columns left and right. The upper part of the building has a flat parapet covered by metal siding where a cornice was once present. The second floor windows have heads and sills exactly like their neighbor to the south and are blocked by plywood.

44. 201 So. Main Street, Italianate, c. 1890, (C) (Photos #11,12)
This two and a half story building retains five of what were probably seven second story windows. It has an excellent projecting pressed metal cornice exactly like the one two buildings to the south, but in good condition. The second story windows are also the same as the two buildings adjacent. The ground floor storefront, which opens on the southwest corner of S. Main and Mulberry streets, has been remodeled with modern vertical board novelty siding. There is also a large, two story sign on the left of the facade on Main Street.

45. 147 So. Main Street, No Style, c. 1980, (N/C)
This is a one story, gable front, brick building.

46. 145 So. Main Street, Commercial Style c. 1915, (C) (Photo #5)
This is a two and a half story brick building with a flat parapet, concrete coping, and two raised pilasters left and right. In the center panel is a pressed metal projecting cornice with dentils, below which is a three bay window panel with rock-faced stone heads and sills, all unified in a belt course between the pilasters. The ground floor store front has been remodeled, c. 1925, with maroon carrera glass and black glazed tile. Cast iron columns frame the store front.

47. 141 So. Main Street, Citizens Bank/ Robb & Gilmore Building, Classical Revival, c. 1910, (C) (Photos #5,7)
This building has an upper brick facade, a flat parapet with two raised stone plinths left and right, and stone coping. There is a projecting limestone cornice, similar to the metal one on the building to the south, with dentils. Below this is a belt course of carved limestone and three windows, each with limestone heads and sills. Another stone belt course divides the second and first floors, the lower of which is distinguished by a limestone facade consisting of three bays. The upper belt course is three transoms, below which is a classically inspired cornice and central entrance flanked by Doric columns and two display windows with stone bulkheads. Surrounding this is a stone and cast iron lintel and cast iron columns. An entrance to the upper floors is between this building and its southern neighbor, flanked by the cast iron columns.

48. 139 So. Main Street, Italianate, c. 1900, (C) (Photos #4,5)

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This is a two and a half story brick building with a wide, projecting, pressed metal cornice containing geometrically formed brackets and decorative panels. The seven bay second floor facade has a unifying belt course of rock-faced stone which serves as the window heads and another, narrower course which serves as window sills. The store front below is separated by a dressed stone course and an iron lintel. The store front has been remodeled with permastone and new windows and doors.

49. 137 So. Main Street, Italianate/ Classical Revival, c. 1900,
(C) (Photos #2,4,5)

This small two story building has an ornate second floor and projecting cornice of pressed metal. The upper parapet is flat with a decorative cornice which has large side brackets and smaller ones between. Below are two rows of different size dentils and three windows, the center of which is a three-light bay with ornate head and base and floral swags above the windows. The side windows are double with pedimented heads with floral swags and projecting bases. Below this, flanked by two cast iron columns, is the store front, which has been remodeled with a new brick facade.

50. 125 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photos #2,4)

This is a two and a half story brick commercial block of paricolored, glazed brick construction with a six bay second floor facade. The upper parapet is flat with two raised plinths left and right, all with concrete coping. Below this is a tan terra cotta belt with a cornice and a row of dentils between round, tapered mini columns. The windows are unified top and bottom by belt courses of rock-faced (heads) or dressed limestone (sills). Below, the store front has been remodeled with two main entrances between which is the entrance to the second floor, and there are full light display windows flanking the three doors.

51. 111 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #4)

This building has much in common with its neighbor to the south except that it is of red brick with red terra cotta as a projecting cornice in the frieze. The window heads are the same, as are the sills, except that there is a row of egg and dart stone or terra cotta below the sill. The ground floor has been covered with a modern vertical board sided facade. The original front is evidently still present. The second floor has twelve bays.

52. 111 So. Main Street, Commercial style/ Classical Revival, c. 1915,
(C) (Photo #4)

This building shares the same address as its neighbor but was built at a different time. The facade is eight bays with a high, flat parapet with

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four raised plinths all topped by concrete coping. Below this is a projecting cornice with modified brackets, probably of pressed metal. Then, there is a course of corbeled brick to imitate dentils. The windows have individual, dressed stone heads and a unified, dressed stone course as sills. The store front has been remodeled, part of it covered in the same manner as its neighbor, but two cast iron columns are visible. The store continues around the corner on vine street.

So. Main Street, East Side

53. 300 - 306 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1920, (C) (Photo #14)
This large commercial block is of brick, two story, with an eight bay facade on main street and a longer side the cross street. It is of a re-brown brick, stretcher bond, with a flat parapet, except on the corner, where a plinth is raised. It has concrete coping. There is a pressed metal cornice with dentils and a plain frieze similar to others found on Main Street. Below this is a four course corbeled frieze and the windows, which have dressed stone heads and a unified stone course as sills. The store fronts below have been remodeled with a modern mansard canopy, but retain recessed openings and at least one decorated cast iron column with a floral motif.

54. 248 So. Main Street, Commercial Style/ Classical Revival, c. 1915, (C).

This corner block building has a wide projecting cornice at the top of the parapet consisting of several rows of molding and a course of dentils. Below, there are two oversized windows, now infilled with glass block and four one/over/one light windows with dressed stone heads. The ground floor has been remodeled with a mansard canopy, vertical board siding and brick bulkheads. The building serves as the Legion Home Post 140 headquarters.

55. 246 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1915, (C)

A two and a half story brick building, this structure has a flat parapet, raised plinths on the left and right corners and a projecting stone cornice below the parapet. In addition, several rows of corbeled brick divide the cornice and the fenestration, which consists of six windows, each with flat dressed stone heads and a unified course of stone as sills. The store front ground floor has been covered with a metal siding and flat metal canopy, below which are full light display windows with stone sills and brick bulkheads, with the main entry left of center.

56. 228 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1915, (C) (Photo #13)

This building appears to have once been a theater. It is a six bay, two

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and a half story brick structure with a flat parapet and raised plinths left and right of the front facade, all stone capped. The upper frieze contains a stone projecting cornice with a double row of corbeled brick below, similar to that on the building at 300-306 So. Main. The windows have flat dressed stone heads and a unified course of stone as sills. Below this is a belt course of stone and a cast iron lintel separating the second and first floors. The first floor has cast iron columns with floral motifs left and right of the main entrance and flanking the door to the second floor, which has a large transom and a wood panel door with four upper lights, all of which appears original. The main part of the facade contains two doors with a unified, multi-light transom. The balance of the facade is covered with vertical board wood siding and concrete with vertical striations. There is a shingle covered canopy with a metal frame, much deteriorated over the center of the first floor.

57. 226 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1925, (C) (Photo #13)
This modest, one and a half story building is faced in yellow brick with a flat, concrete coped parapet, below which are three courses of corbeled brick and a single, tripartite window with a metal awning. The store front has been remodeled with an enlarged sign frieze and new windows and doors.

58. 224 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1925, (C) (Photo #13)
This two and a half story commercial building may have been remodeled from an earlier structure. The facade is of brown, wire-cut brick with a corbel table below the flat parapet, and a brick course imitating dentils below. The facade has three windows with flat stone heads, below which is a store front with aluminum frame transoms, display windows and doors. One door leads to the store, the other to the second floor.

59. N/A So. Main Street, Modern, c. 1990, (N/C)
This is the drive-through facility for the bank across the street, located in the empty lot next to #224. It is a one story brick building.

60. 150 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #6)
This is a one and a half story building with an upper, flat parapet roof of brick with a concrete coping, a metal lintel supported by two decorative metal columns and two cast iron columns, left and right of the recessed store front. The transom has been covered in modern siding as has most of the store front, however, the original awning hardware is still present.

61. 146 So. Main Street, Commercial Style, c. 1910, (C) (Photo #6)
This building is a twin to its neighbor and shares a party wall and one cast iron column, except that in this building the entire metal column can

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be seen. The recessed entry is probably original but has had new windows and cladding installed.

62. 100 So. Main Street, Modern, c. 1980, (N/C)
This one story building is of metal and concrete and sits back from the street.

Water Street, West Side

63. 101 So. Water Street, C. & E. I. Freight Depot, Craftsman, 1912, (C) (Photo #3)
This outstanding building has been damaged by fire, but still retains its historic character. A companion building to the passenger depot to the north east, it is construction of hard brick in a stretcher bond, with two wings joined together in a wedge-shaped configuration, one side of which is parallel to the arc of the adjacent railroad line. The east wing of the building is parallel to Water Street. Like its companion structure, the Freight Depot has a hipped roof, slightly flared at the eaves, which are wide and have open brackets all around as supports. Most of the windows and doors have been blocked with plywood, but the window sills are of dressed stone with flat heads located well under the wide eaves. There is a large, concrete platform for freight handling on the track side and a bermed, raised platform on the south side of the building, where a side track was once located to facilitate loading and unloading.

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Statement of Significance

Summary

The Clinton Downtown Historic District is significant under Criterion A for its association with the commercial development of this Wabash River town in East Central Indiana, especially during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth. In addition, it gains significance because of the presence of two resources connected with a rail-related transportation artery which provided a spur to the local economy after the Civil War. This railroad was an important factor in the growth of a coal industry in the region and brought a migration of Italian and other ethnic immigrants into the community at the turn of the century. Clinton's Downtown Historic District recalls the vitality of the community during these years of intense growth and commercial activity.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Eventually the Hoosier town of Clinton would become the largest city in Vermillion County, but its earliest years are shrouded in vagueness. For example, historic accounts indicate that it was laid out in 1824, probably by William Harris, on the West bank of the Wabash. Another source gives the date of 1818, naming Mr. Harris as a government survey River,¹ or², A third states that it was laid out in 1828 by a government surveyor named George Rodgers.³ Although the town was platted at least five years before, according to Bowen's history of 1913, it wasn't recorded until 1829, by a man named Lewis P. Rodgers. However, most accounts agree that the town was named in honor of De Witt Clinton, a governor of the state of New York who

¹ Lewis Pub. Co. *Biographical & Historical Record of Vermillion County, Indiana...* Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1888, p. 234; Bowen, B. F. & Co. *History of Parke & Vermillion Counties, Indiana...* Indianapolis, IN: B. F. Bowen & Co., 1913, p. 374.

² Cline & McHaffie. *The Peoples Guide, A business, political and religious directory of Vermillion County, Indiana...* Indianapolis, IN: Indianapolis Printing & Publishing, 1874, p. 168.

³ Vermillion County Historical Society. *History and Families*. Paducah, KY: Turner Publishing Company, 1990, p. 91.

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was known, among other things, for his association with the success of the Erie Canal in that state.

Clinton was incorporated c. 1848, and then re-incorporated in 1879. The town was located on the Wabash river, where ready access to markets for agricultural products was provided by water transport up and down this regional artery. But the river was an inconstant traveler. Steamboats were marooned during low water, or frozen in winter blasts. Entrepreneurs sought more reliable forms of transportation. Inspired by the success of New York's Erie Canal, Indiana embarked upon an ambitious plan to build the 468 mile Wabash & Erie Canal in the 1830s, the nation's longest such waterway.

The Wabash & Erie Canal did not pass through Clinton. Its route meandered east of the city on the opposite bank of the river. Perhaps this is one reason why early growth was slow. Passengers on the Canal who wanted to visit Clinton would disembark on the eastern shore, then (after 1852) travel across the Wabash via a wooden, covered bridge. This structure was large enough to permit two way wagon traffic and was supported by large piers of dressed and coursed stone. The bridge, which was supported by tolls, operated from 1852 until 1899 at the foot of Elm Street. In 1900, it was replaced by an iron bridge at the same location which survived until part of it collapsed in 1961.⁴

The City of Terre Haute, located fifteen miles south of Clinton, has always been a competitive factor in the latter's growth and development. During the first half of the nineteenth century, farmers and others often chose to look south toward the larger city for their commercial activity, rather than traverse the Wabash westward to Clinton.

During this early period, Clinton's major industrial activity was located along the river, much of it on both sides of the present Water Street. To our knowledge, none of these early structures (within the District or its vicinity) have survived. Commercial ventures were also located near the river, and Main Street was only marginally developed. Prior to the Civil War, the major industry of the town was pork -- pork packing and shipping via the steamboats traveling the Wabash River. Early settlement during this era included members of the Whitcomb family (a Whitcomb from Vermillion County would later become Governor of the State) and others, Americans who traveled west from Vermont and other eastern states, or who

⁴Vermillion County Historical Society. *History & Families*. p. 91.

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traveled the short distance east from areas of nearby Illinois.

The Civil War changed the town of Clinton and its surrounding area. Prior to this event, small businesses and industries had prospered in the largely agricultural town, most dependent upon the local population and steamboat travel. Wagon makers, blacksmiths, a tanner, a boot maker, a cooper, a furniture maker and several mills populated the town and its near surrounds. West of Clinton was an iron furnace, and within the town were grain elevators and the previously mentioned pork packing houses.⁵ In spite of this activity, the town population was small, with only 250 inhabitants in residence prior to 1868.⁶ The onset of railroad transportation through the town, first begun in that year, would transform the town forever.

Excitement thrilled the towns of Vermillion County when a prominent resident, Josephus Collett, Jr., assisted by several others, held mass meetings throughout the county to promote the construction of a north/south railroad which would link Terre Haute to Danville, Illinois, and through this juncture, connect the county to the larger markets, especially Chicago. The road would be called the "Evansville, Terre Haute & Chicago". Construction began after the citizens of the county voted for a tax for the purpose in 1869, and the railroad was completed under Mr. Collett's management in 1870. For reasons which are now obscure, only Clinton enjoyed the privilege of having the line pass through the center of town, probably because the railroad crossed the river, as it does today, just at the north end of the downtown area. Other small towns in the county were by-passed by a mile or so, leaving only Clinton, Terre Haute and Danville to prosper from the association.⁷ And prosper they did.

The line was leased to the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad in 1880 and later acquired by that company, which continued to operate the railroad until the late 1960s when it was merged into the Louisville & Nashville line. By 1985 it had become part of CSX Transportation, which presently operates the line as a through freight transport. The brick passenger Depot on the northwest corner of Vine and So. Main Street was constructed

⁵ Bowen, pp. 377-378.

⁶ Ibid., p. 374.

⁷ Lewis, pp. 221-222.

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by the C. & E. I., c. 1910, to replace an earlier frame building which probably dated from the earliest years of the line in Clinton. Its companion building, the Freight Depot on Water Street, and the railroad Right-of-Way, was constructed in 1912. In 1915, the C. & E. I and its related branch lines had eighty-eight depots in Indiana. By 1989, that number was down to six, and Clinton was the only town to retain two such buildings.⁸ Today the number may be even less. The two C. & E. I. buildings are cornerstones of the Clinton Downtown Historic District.

The years of abundant growth in Clinton began with this line. In 1870, the population had doubled to 564.⁹ By 1890, the population was under 1,800 persons, but by 1910, it had swollen to 6,289 according to the United States Census. In 1912, according to the City Directory, the population was over 8,000.¹⁰ Between the years 1870 and 1920, most of the buildings in Clinton's Downtown Historic District were built. The earlier period of construction is clearly obvious and represents the influx of agriculturally related economic development first spurred by the presence of the railroad. These buildings can be found on Mulberry, west of So. Main, especially on the south side of the street where some of the town's oldest remaining structures are located. In addition, buildings of the Italianate and Renaissance Revival styles located on So. Main Street also recall this era.

Several local newspapers were begun during this time period, the earliest being the *Exponent*, which survived for a few years beginning in 1873. Many local newspapers emerged and then died. But, by the first decade of the twentieth century, *The Clintonian*, a semi-weekly successor to the short-lived *Republican*, was publishing daily from its offices and print shop at 235 Mulberry. In 1919, the office was moved to 422 So. Main Street. The office has again moved (out of the historic district), but the newspaper continues to publish local and regional news.

Toward the latter part of the nineteenth century, new industrial activity

⁸Francis H. Parker, *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage*. Muncie, IN: Ball State University, 1989, p. 26.

⁹Vermillion County Historical Society, *Historical Scenes in Vermillion County, Indiana...n.d.* Vermillion County Hist. Soc., p. 7.

¹⁰Vermillion Co. Hist. Soc., *History & Families*, p. 88; Bowen, p. 374.

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began to affect the commercial sector of downtown Clinton. By this time, a considerable number of brick structures had been erected, although some of the early frame structures probably still survived. The Clinton Paving Brick Company was established in 1893. Some of the officers included W. L. Morey, H. C. Dies, B. H. Morgan, M. C. Wright and J. W. Robb. The latter is probably the same man who was the Secretary of the Clinton Building and Loan Association, which was organized in 1882. In 1887, a second association was formed with offices in the building at 242 Mulberry Street, within the District. Mr. Robb (or his father) may also be connected with the bank building at 141 So. Main, since the facade of this building bears the raised inscription: Robb & Gilmore. Mr. Robb was, for a time, a partner with John H. Gilmore. The Citizens Bank, which occupied the building at 141 So. Main in 1912, according to a City Directory of that year, was incorporated in 1893. William L. Morey (see Clinton Paving Brick Company) was one of its directors in 1912, along with W. Robison, David McBeth, Matthew Scott, and Arthur B. Hedges. The latter was listed as Clinton's "Banker" in a 1900 Directory.¹¹

The Clinton Brick Paving Company became renown for its hard pavers, produced on the company's 65-acre plant outside of the town. In its first year, capacity of the plant was 40,000 bricks per day. Offices for the company were located at 242 Mulberry Street, within the present Historic District. When Clinton began to pave its main streets with brick in 1910, Clinton Brick pavers were undoubtedly employed. Imprints on many bricks around the C. & E. I. Passenger Depot bear the company name.

A second boom would encompass the town of Clinton at the turn of the century. It would bring large influxes of immigrant populations, especially Italian, to the town and influence both the character of its people and its structures.

Italian immigrants began to move into several coal-rich counties in west central Indiana toward the end of the last century. As early as 1878, an Italian coal miner entered the Vermillion County courthouse and declared his desire for citizenship.¹² However, it would be several decades before a mass of southern European immigrants would impact Clinton. Their presence would indelibly imprint the town with an Italian stamp. Today this

¹¹Booth, pp. 23, 39 - 41.

¹²Turner Pub. Co., *Vermillion county History and Families*, c. 1988, p. 106.

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influence is most widely recognized in a popular "Little Italy" festival, which draws people from the surrounding area as well as several states. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Midwestern states such as Indiana were exploiting their oil, gas and coal industries. Fuel was needed to stoke the fires of the new industries engendered by the rise of the automobile and improved manufacturing methods. From west central Indiana, the burgeoning railroads carried coal north to Chicago's vast steel mills. Vermillion County's mining industry began to surge somewhat after Clay County's declined. The latter had enjoyed a boom which began as early as 1858, but dwindled after the dawn of the new century.

The town of Clinton was strategically located to benefit from the surge of Midwestern coal mining. According to local sources, there were once as many as fifty-six coal mines which could be reached from Clinton, although all were not considered part of the Clinton Field.¹³ Within the latter, there were thirty-one mines in operation during the peak year of 1920. In 1921, over 15,000 people lived in Clinton, and it was estimated that about three-fourths of them were miners.¹⁴

Why so many Italian workers were drawn to Clinton is unknown. As previously described, the town was founded early in the nineteenth century by hardy pioneers who saw potential in the access to transport afforded by the Wabash River. Later, when the railroad passed through the town, the stage was set for further development of the area's rich resources. A study of naturalization documents conducted during the 1980s revealed that most of Clinton's late nineteenth and early twentieth century immigrants were from northern Italian regions, including Piedmont and Veneto.¹⁵ Undoubtedly, word of the opportunities in Clinton passed quickly among families and friends within that region.

Many factors contributed to the surge of emigration from Europe. Political turmoil in late nineteenth century Italy resulted in disastrous economic conditions for most of the population. Between 1861 and 1922, a period of sixty-one years, fifty-seven different governments held sway over the country. Although popular participation in government was mandated, only

¹³W. W. Wake, in *The Daily Clintonian*, December 24, 1963, reprinted in Turner, p. 108.

¹⁴*The Daily Clintonian*, June 19, 1987, Reprinted in Turner, p. 110.

¹⁵Turner, p. 106.

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10 per cent of the populace was eligible to vote in 1912.¹⁶ Many felt powerless to influence their own destiny. The shores of America called them in ever-growing numbers. In 1907, 285,731 Italians entered American ports. Like many immigrants before them, they offered reliable, inexpensive labor to businesses anxious to maximize profits,¹⁷ Clinton's coal industry included.

The peak period of Italian immigration to Indiana occurred between 1910 and 1930. These too were years of development for the city of Clinton. Four to five trains per day carried miners from Clinton to the various mines around the area. In 1910, Vermillion County ranked fourth among Indiana counties in coal production.¹⁸ During this era, freight cars full of Indiana coal were rapidly filled for transport north. One of the larger operations, the Dering 6 Mine, could produce an average of three to four thousand tons each day. More than thirty mines operated in the Clinton area - ample work was available for many men.¹⁹

Although a small neighborhood commercial development grew up on North Ninth Street, amidst the Italian neighborhood, the increased demand for food, clothing and other commodities also was felt in the main commercial center of town. This economic boom can be seen in the relatively large number of Commercial Style and Classical Revival commercial buildings which were constructed between 1900 and 1920 in downtown Clinton. Good examples of this era include the two buildings at 111 So. Main Street, the former theater at 228 So. Main, 300-306 So. Main, 258 Blackman Street and the five buildings east of it and 235 Blackman Street, as well as several others. They are distinguished by the simplicity of their design and the use of hard or glazed brick with limestone trim. In addition, a number of coal companies had offices within the historic downtown during this era, including the G. Edward Shirkie Coal Mine, The Miami Coal Co., Clinton Coal office and the Brazil Block Coal Co., to name a few.

During the years after the turn of the century, Clinton's population also enjoyed the benefits of the Interurban line. In 1903, the Terre Haute,

¹⁶James J. Divita, "Italians", p. 276-277.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 277.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Turner, p. 109.

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Indianapolis and Eastern Traction Company operated a line through downtown Clinton. The tracks crossed the Wabash River from the south on the Elm Street Bridge, then turned north at So. Main Street and traveled up to Vine Street where they turned west to Ninth Street and continued north. The passenger depot was located in the building at the south east corner of Mulberry and So. Main Streets after 1910. Until 1931, the train provided a fast, convenient way to travel the 16 miles to Terre Haute for Clinton citizens.

During the peak years, Clinton's downtown was a dense, six block area with buildings constructed cheek-to-jowl along So. Main and parts of west Mulberry and Blackman Streets. Nearly all of the buildings along So. Main, from the railroad to Elm Street, were constructed of brick, most at least two stories tall with extensive side and rear massing and plenty of office spaces on all floors. These offices and shops served a vital, diverse community, which included native citizens as well as immigrants and even some African-Americans (although the latter probably numbered less than 25 according to the 1910 census).²⁰

The Great Depression hit Clinton hard. The coal mines were feeling the competition with more efficient and clean petroleum-based fuels as early as the 1920s. Men were left out of work as mines closed. In the heart of the depression, large numbers suffered. Clinton would not see relief until after World War II. As with many other towns, local people sought escape from the numbing pain of economic decline. In downtown Clinton, three local movie houses supplied a steady stream of films and short subjects to enthusiastic patrons. These were all located on the east side of So. Main: The Wabash in the 100 block, as well as the Capitol and the Palace next door to each other in the 200 block. Today only one of these buildings survives, and the theater which it contained has been closed.

Like many Hoosier small towns, Clinton had its share of social groups and social service clubs. Today, the building at 317 So. Main reminds us of the Masonic tradition which continues to this day. Its second floor served as lodge facilities, while the ground floor was the local post office for many years. The Knights of Pythias, and later the Moose lodges, were present at 237 Blackman Street.

The construction of the Wabash Ordnance Plant in Vermillion County, near Newport north of Clinton, helped give the local economy a boost in 1941. An

²⁰Booth, p. 24.

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employment office for the plant was opened in the town and many were given jobs. Housing shortages did not cause wholesale destruction of existing buildings however, because they occurred during World War II when new construction was severely restricted. Work trains left the Clinton Depot filled with construction workers for the plant to the north.²¹

During these years, the automobile industry had become pre-eminent, and Clinton's downtown enjoyed the benefits of new businesses which sprung up as a result. Buildings were constructed to sell and repair cars, including the Ford Dealership at 335 So. Third, built in the 1920s. By 1950, two existing buildings in the district were dedicated to the automobile: The Liberty Building on the south east corner of So. Third and Blackman Streets, which sold Oldsmobile and used cars, and the Clinton Motor Sales Company across the street at 300 So. Third, which also displayed Oldsmobiles.

By 1948, Clinton's population was over 8,000. Most of the mines had closed, although there was still a large group of workers employed. Economic activity included machine and tool shops, garment factories, lumber companies, strip mining, gravel operations, and packing companies, as well as retail and wholesale stores and agriculturally related businesses. Both freight and passenger depots were active, and bus lines supplemented their transportation capabilities. The passenger trains were to be short-lived, however. Today, Clinton's railroads only operate freight lines through the town.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, Clinton's downtown suffered losses of buildings through fire and deterioration. Today, the former walls of structures are broken in several places, although a considerable number of these sturdy late-nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings remain to convey the character of the historic downtown. Anchored by the two fine railroad-related structures, the Clinton Downtown Historic District conveys in a compact, accessible fashion the feeling of this vital, diverse community, especially as it appeared during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Most notable are several large bricks which are emblematic of the commercial prosperity which coal and brick brought to this small river town. In addition, several rows of nineteenth century buildings speak of the years of agricultural endeavor, sparked by the railroad, which enlivened the community prior to the turn of the century. Clinton's historical character and diversity adds

²¹Ibid., pp. 68-74.

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significance to all of these structures and to the fabric of the district.

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Maps

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Sanborn Insurance Map, 1915

Above in the collection of the Vermillion County Public Library.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 26 Clinton Downtown Historic District

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the intersection of the south line of the CSX Railroad right of way and the east side of So. Third Street, continue in a southeasterly direction along the railroad right of way to the west side of So. Water Street and turn south along said street, continuing along the west side of the street to the intersection of Elm Street. Turn west, continuing along the north side of Elm Street to the west property line of number 335 So. Third Street and, turning north, follow this property line and the west property line of 300 Blackman Street, to the intersection of Blackman Street. Then turn east, continuing along the south side of this street to the east side of So. Third street and turning north, follow along the east side of this street to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The Clinton Downtown Historic District encompasses the central portion of the original town plat which has retained its historic character. Water Street, which serves as an eastern border, has few structures, all of them modern, between the street and the rustic park land which borders the river. The railroad serves as the northern boundary of the district. To a large extent, this artery was a traditional dividing line between the bustling commercial district and residential areas to the north. The southern boundary, Elm Street, is also clearly a line between the historic commercial area and residential sectors, with several modern commercial entities also present. So. Third provides the western boundary. With the exception of several buildings in the south part, which are located on this street, most of the structures on the west are institutional (schools) or residential in character and there is a logical separation between these areas and the commercial downtown. With few exceptions, the buildings within the district are of a commercial nature, now and in the past.



NORTH

CLINTON DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT

CLINTON, VERMILLION COUNTY, INDIANA

Prepared by: THE WESTERLY GROUP, INC. Farmersburg, Indiana March, 1999

LEGEND

BOUNDARY OF HISTORIC DISTRICT

NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

PHOTOGRAPHS

