

City of Waseca Historic Survey Report

Reconnaissance Survey of Three of the City's Oldest Residential Neighborhoods
& Comprehensive Survey of Waseca's Historic Central Business District



Prepared for the City of Waseca Minnesota
Prepared by Thomas R. Zahn & Associates, LLC
August 2012

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In the summer of 2011, the City of Waseca requested the services of a qualified consultant team to assist in preparing reconnaissance surveys for two historic residential areas and an intensive survey for the City's historic central business district. Building upon the *City of Waseca Historic Context Study* completed in 2010 by THOMAS R. ZAHN & ASSOCIATES, LLC, the ASSOCIATES were selected to provide planning services in the completion of the proposed survey projects.

In the late spring of 2012, the City expanded the survey scope to include a reconnaissance survey of the residential structures that lined State Street North from 3rd Avenue to 11th Avenue. The four survey areas are shown on the following map.

Survey Areas Map



Introduction

Waseca County was first settled in 1854, when the Sutlief brothers placed the first claim in what would become Wilton Township. The area became known for its lakes, timber, and fertile soil. Though it remained primarily agricultural, small communities did spring up, including the Clear Lake Settlement. In 1867, the Winona & St. Peter Railroad announced plans to run a line through the area, and land speculator and Waseca founder Ira Trowbridge convinced railroad executive W.G. Ward and surveyor J.H. Jenkins that the best path for the railroad ran just south of Clear Lake and Loon Lake. These three men (later united as a family when one of Trowbridge's two daughters married Ward and the other Jenkins in a double wedding) became the town founders of Waseca, which literally grew up around the railroad. The town expanded quickly, adding a second railroad line in 1877 and becoming the County seat in a highly contested 1870 election. Waseca, the city created from the early vision and determination of Ira Trowbridge, soon became the dominant economic force of the area.

The Central Business District

Beginning as it did, as a land speculator's town centered around a rapidly expanding railway, Waseca was designed to be commercially successful. While the farms of the area created valuable commodities, and the railways ran a transportation network, commerce and industry provided the "third leg of the stool" — goods and services that residents and visitors needed, from dry goods stores for farm families to hotels for visitors. The strong business community is what made Waseca into a thriving city, rather than merely a railroad junction.

When the railroad went through town in 1867, the town's commerce and industry sprang up literally overnight, in order to meet the needs of the influx of settlers and workers. The town was platted with Second Street (renamed State Street in 1928) as the Main Street, with four blocks at the town's center providing a planned downtown core. The street was open at both ends to farmland, enticing area farm families into town on their way to and from the train station, cementing the relationship between agriculture, transportation and commerce.

While the first buildings along Second Street were wooden, multi-purpose structures, as the railroads expanded and the town got busier in the early 1860s, they were replaced by Waseca's characteristic brick 2-3 story buildings. The properties generally had glass storefronts below, with offices or apartments above. Following an extensive fire in 1881, the downtown expanded exponentially, and public services including street paving were developed. Though there was another large fire in 1899, the central historic core of the City mainly dates from the 1880s-early 1900s. Even today Waseca displays a relatively well-preserved downtown core along State Street.

The Residential Neighborhoods

As in most communities, Waseca's residential neighborhoods grew out in all directions from the community's early settlement commercial and industrial core. Some of the community's oldest and most architecturally interesting residences are located within a few blocks of the downtown. The Augenbaugh House at 831 3rd Avenue NE, the Philo C. Bailey House at 401 2nd Avenue NE, the Roscoe F. Ward House 804 East Elm Avenue, and the William R. Wolf House at 522 2nd Avenue NE are residences that represent four of Waseca's six National Register-designated properties.

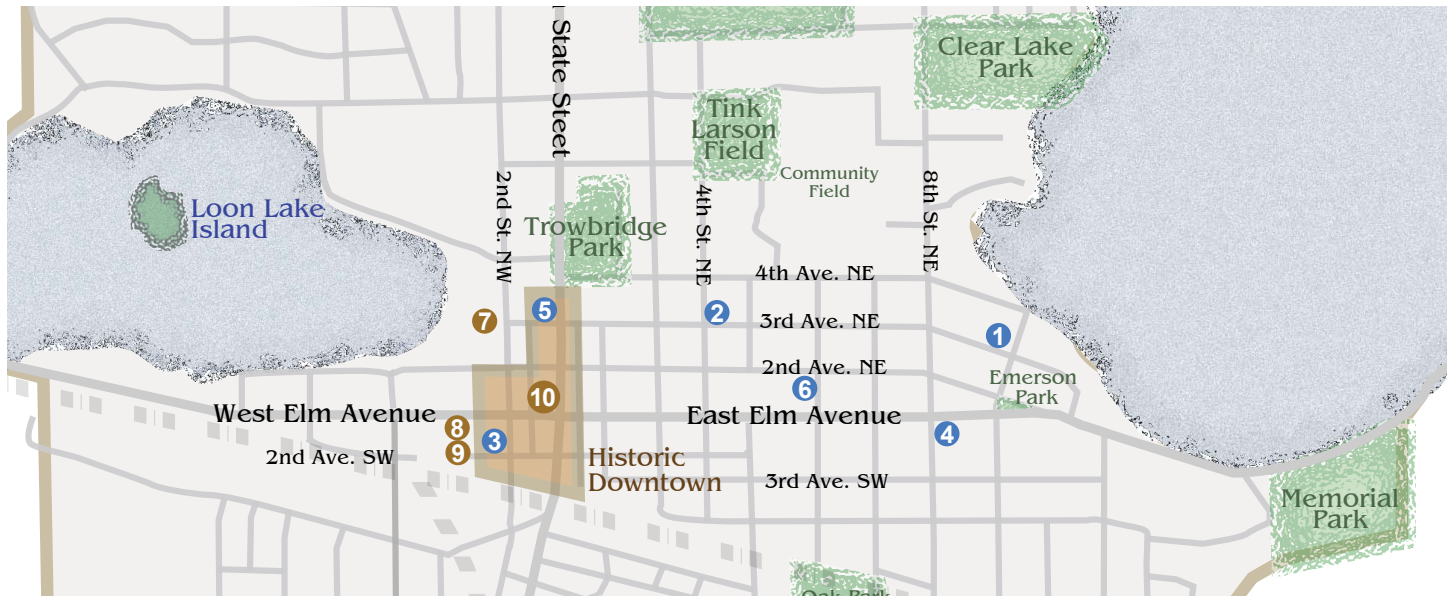
Historic Preservation in Waseca

Since its inception in 2001, the Waseca Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) has been extremely active. The HPC is charged with creating a comprehensive historic preservation program, promoting the historical resources of the City, reviewing alterations to historic properties, and designating additional historic sites. The Commission works closely with the Waseca County Historical Society. Waseca became a Certified Local Government (CLG) in 2009 providing a potential funding source for future preservation planning initiatives.

Waseca has several structures on the National Register of Historic Places. It appears that the City was one of the last in the State to be surveyed by the State Historic Preservation Office in the 1980s before that program was

discontinued due to funding cuts. These surveys led to several successful National Register nominations, as well as several more Register-eligible sites.

All but one of Waseca's National Register listings were completed in 1982 by Peggy Korsmo-Kennon and Jan Brown of the Waseca County Historical Society, following up upon the 1981 SHPO survey.



The following is a listing of current properties on the Register (date added is in parentheses following the building name):

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. John W. Aughenbaugh House/Masonic Temple (1982) | 831 3rd Avenue NE |
| 2. Philo C. Bailey House (1994) | 401 2nd Avenue NE |
| 3. W.J. Armstrong Company Wholesale Grocers (1982) | 202 2nd Street SW |
| 4. Roscoe P. Ward House (1982) | 804 East Elm Avenue |
| 5. Waseca County Courthouse (1982) | 307 North State Street |
| 6. William R. Wolf House (1982) | 522 2nd Avenue NE |

In addition, there are several sites currently considered Register-eligible:

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 7. EACO Mill (owner opposed) | 212 3rd Avenue NW |
| 8. Minneapolis and St. Louis Depot | 231 West Elm Avenue |
| 9. Railroad storage structure/freight depot | South of the MSL depot |
| 10. Historic central business district | along State Street |

Initiating a preservation planning process in 2009, the City became a Certified Local Government (CLG), and the newly-empowered Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) began work on a number of preservation priorities. The HPC applied for and received a CLG grant through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) of the Minnesota Historical Society to develop the *City of Waseca Historic Context Study*, which was published in the spring of 2010.

With the completion of the Historic Context Study, Waseca took the important step of joining preservation to planning, promoting a vibrant future for the community by building on the resources of its past. The historic contexts defined and developed in the report provide a framework within which the City can evaluate its resources and plan for future development, while continuing to secure the unique character and spirit inherent in Waseca's history.

Included within the Context Study's many findings were recommendations to complete survey work for Waseca's architecturally rich downtown area and the older residential neighborhoods that surround it.

The Surveys

Previously, the only survey activities in Waseca were through part of the Minnesota Historical Society's statewide survey in 1986. That survey focused almost exclusively on the downtown core and some scattered sites. The HPC, in conjunction with the Historical Society, had identified some locally significant homes, but there was no local designation process. The need to better catalog, recognize, and preserve residential resources emerged as a key recommendation of the City's recent Context Study. This concern was reinforced by recent threats to some of the most prominent resources along Elm Avenue.

The Residential Surveys

Correspondingly, the HPC applied for, and was granted, a CLG grant to do a reconnaissance-level survey for some of the City's inner-core residential concentrations. These residential neighborhoods were prioritized due to two factors: they are the oldest neighborhoods in the City, and as such they hold the bulk of the most significant historic residential resources. In some cases, they hold the most threatened properties.

The larger residential district, referred to as the East Residential Survey area, is defined by the downtown district to the west, the center line of 4th Avenue NE to the north, 5th Avenue SE to the south and 12th Street SE to the east. It is composed of approximately 520 properties ranging in construction dates from 1865 (614 3rd Avenue SE) to as recent as 2008 (615 2nd Avenue NE).



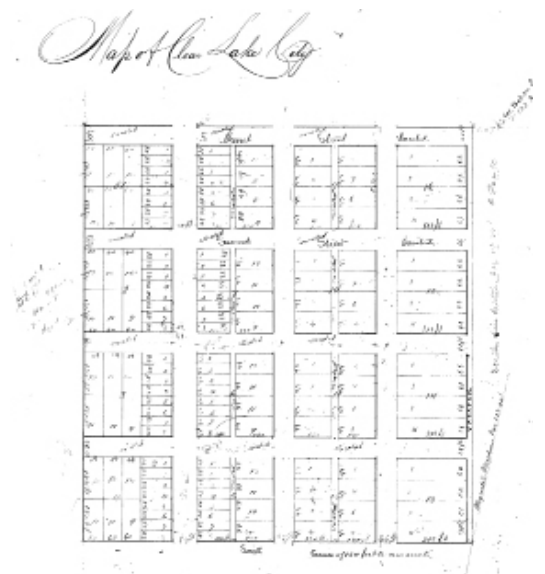
While 614 3rd Avenue SE, believed built in 1865, may be the oldest remaining home in the East Residential Survey area, it has lost much of its original appearance with “down-sized” modern windows, a modified entry and artificial siding.

A smaller residential area, referred to as the SouthWest Residential Survey area is located in the City's southwest neighborhood defined by 5th Avenue SW to the north, the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern/Canadian Pacific rail line to the east, 7th Avenue SW to the south and 7th Street SW to the west. This area is composed of approximately 90 homes ranging in date of construction from an 1878 Homestead “cottage” design at 609 4th Street SW to a circa 1995 split-level house at 613 6th Avenue SW.



609 4th Street SW retains most of its 1865 charm with its original wood lap siding and original window and door placement.

The SouthWest residential district was selected for survey because the easterly part of that neighborhood was within the original Clear Lake City plat.



In April 2012, per the consultants' suggestion, the HPC decided to expand the scope of the reconnaissance survey area to residential properties north of the downtown core. Following approval of the expanded scope, in May 2012, the consultants performed an additional reconnaissance survey of the residential structures that line North State Street from 3rd Avenue to 11th Avenue.

The North Residential Survey area is made up of approximately 54 homes ranging in age from an 1868 structure at 511 State Street North to the 1990 modern home at 600 State Street North.



Built in 1916, the Moonan/Driessen House at 610 State Street North is a Tudor Revival Mansion that retains good integrity and is in very good condition.

The Residential Survey Deliverables

The deliverables of the reconnaissance surveys included individual property survey forms that will also be filed with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). These forms include:

1. Location information including address, TRS Quarter-Quarter, USGS Quad, UTM Coordinates and Legal Descriptions;
2. Property Information including Architectural Style, Date Constructed (when available), Historic Contexts, and Use;
3. A brief description of each property;
4. Integrity rating;
5. Condition rating;
6. Current digital photographs of each property;
7. Historic designation status; and
8. Historic designation recommendations where needed.

The Central Business District Survey

The consultants have long felt that Waseca's core downtown area, the blocks along North and South State Street, was a significant historic resource. The area is congruent, maintains good integrity, and although there are some vacant storefronts, is a relatively active commercial area. The survey confirmed this assertion.

The Central Business District Survey Deliverables

The deliverables of the comprehensive survey included individual property survey forms that will also be filed with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). These forms included:

1. Location information including address, TRS Quarter-Quarter, USGS Quad, UTM Coordinates and Legal Descriptions;
2. Property Information (when available) including Architectural Style, Date Constructed, Historic Contexts, Historic designation status, and Use;

3. A description of each property;
4. A history of use and ownership (as available);
5. Integrity information;
6. Condition assessment;
7. Current digital photographs of front and back; and
8. Historic designation recommendations where needed.

The Survey Methodology

As stated above, the neighborhoods chosen for survey were identified as likely to hold the highest concentration of historic residences, and also to have the most potential threat to the properties. In addition, the HPC was interested in determining if there were any individual sites or residential historic districts that might be locally significant and/or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The consultants began field work on the residential reconnaissance survey and the downtown comprehensive survey primarily in September 2011. Both field work and form compilation continued through the spring of 2012. The fieldwork for both the residential and downtown surveys included field notes taken on each property, as well as one or more digital photograph(s) per property. The fieldwork was compiled into a database of the properties surveyed.

The Inventory Form

The database, in turn, led to the creation of individual inventory forms for each property. The inventory form is based on the Minnesota Architecture-History Inventory form guidelines issued by the Minnesota SHPO, as revised after the consultants met with SHPO staff. The forms for both the residential and downtown properties include the following information:

Address: Current street address of the property. Please note that street names in the city were changed to a quadrant-based, numeric system in March 1928, presumably to increase postal efficiency and ease of location. Only Elm Avenue retained its name. The addresses cited are the current addresses on this system.

Inventory Number: Inventory numbers were added to the forms, as assigned by the Minnesota SHPO.

Property Identification Number (PIN), Legal Description: The PIN and legal descriptions were compiled by HPC members from County records. The consultants verified this information when it was unclear. Due to the change in street names/numbers noted above, this information is especially important in accurately identifying property locations.

TRS Quarter, USGS Quad and UTM Coordinates: This information was collected by the consultants through standardized GPS systems.

Style: The building style was determined by the consultants, based on standard architectural terminology. The industry standard for determining architectural style is *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia and Lee McAlester, though other sources were utilized as well.

Date Constructed: Construction dates were collected by the HPC Chair from County Assessor notebooks. In many cases, the construction dates were unclear, as these records are incomplete. In these cases the field is marked “nd” for “no date.” Often it appears that these dates may have been estimated. Where this appears to be the case, or where the date is missing, the style of the house can give a clue to the date range; for example, one can be reasonably sure that an Italianate dates from between 1865-1900.

Description: Property descriptions were written from field notes, with photo verification. In general, the description strives to provide an accurate verbal description of the house, including any further explanation of style needed, description of materials, and a summary of the most visible alterations made to the home.

Integrity: Each property was ranked for its historic integrity, with a summary assessment of “Very Good,” “Good,” “Fair,” “Poor,” or “Very Poor” historic integrity. It should be noted here that integrity is a very subjective evaluation, based on the close relationship between a property’s historical significance, period of significance, and its ability to convey that significance based on its current physical situation. In general, the homes with higher integrity manage to successfully demonstrate their original sense of place, regardless of subsequent alterations. In most cases, the more substantial the change to the house (e.g. significant additions, wholesale fenestration changes, entrance alterations), the lower the integrity. Integrity should NOT be confused with condition; a house with very low integrity may be extremely well-cared for, or a house may be unchanged from its original construction but in very poor condition. The integrity rankings were delineated as follows:

Very Good: Virtually unchanged from their original configuration. Original features, such as doors, windows, and ornamentation, are in place. There are no significant additions or alterations. Materials are original. The house presents an excellent sense of place.

Good: The house has been changed, but the original sense of place is evident. Often, changes have been made (again, usually in additions, windows and entrances — and almost always in materials), but these changes have usually been thoughtful and are sometimes early in the home’s history. One still gets a sense of the house and its history.

Fair: Alterations have been made, usually to several aspects of the home. These changes are more evident than the home’s original construction materials and configuration. Despite the loss of original features, the overall massing and form of the original building are apparent.

Poor: Significant alterations have been made to the property, stripping it of most of its architectural integrity. While some original window and door openings may remain, they may have been infilled or downsized with modern, standardized replacements. Significant material changes have been made.

Very Poor: In many cases, the home is all but indistinguishable from its original construction. It has been added onto, divided, or otherwise structurally altered. Windows and doors are not original. Significant material changes have been made, including new siding, new windows, new detailing, and concrete foundations. In many cases, the integrity is so poor that the original architectural style is masked or completely hidden.

Condition: Condition is another subjective evaluation, and is often not included in Minnesota Architecture-History Inventory forms. In this case, the consultants opted to utilize it because they found so many cases that condition and integrity did not match up, which seemed to be a significant threat to the residential housing resources. It should be cautioned, however, that condition assessments are only cursory descriptions as evidenced at the property during fieldwork. They should not be construed as definitive assessments of work needed. Conditions were listed as follows:

Very Good: Extremely well-maintained; no visible work needed.

Good: Close to Excellent, but some minor work required.

Fair: Generally well cared-for, but repairs or maintenance work needed.

Poor: Notable work needed; sometimes only deferred maintenance and sometimes more comprehensive.

Very Poor: bad condition, with significant damage and many issues.

Digital Photos: Each form includes a digital image of the property, as taken in Fall 2011 or Spring 2012.

In addition to the above listed inventory form fields, the downtown comprehensive survey also included:

History of Use: Information on the original owners and businesses (when found), and a chronology of business uses through time.

Physical Description: This provides a listing of the various architectural features and fenestration on the primary facade or facades that help define a building’s “style” and visual interest.

The Residential Reconnaissance Survey Recommendations

The consultant team feels that the survey was a successful compilation of data for nearly 670 residential properties and just over 80 commercial properties. This kind of survey, even at a reconnaissance level, provides invaluable data about a city's residential stock, and assists with setting preservation priorities.

The consultants recommend the following in preparation for potential National Register nominations, that:

- Full surveys be done of 106 4th Avenue NE (Trowbridge House); 505 3rd Avenue NE (the “First Electric House”); and 825 3rd Avenue NE (Augenbaugh’s daughter’s house).
- Properties in the East Residential Survey area needing further study due to architectural interest and integrity include:

110 4 th Avenue NE	203 9 th Street NE
610 4 th Avenue NE	300 9 th Street NE
219 3 rd Avenue NE	310 9 th Street NE
316 3 rd Avenue NE	204 10 th Street NE
409 3 rd Avenue NE	403 Elm Avenue E
607 3 rd Avenue NE	6700 3 rd Avenue SE
615 3 rd Avenue NE	801 3 rd Avenue SE
621 3 rd Avenue NE	812 3 rd Avenue SE
922 3 rd Avenue NE	822 3 rd Avenue SE
312 2 nd Avenue NE	908 3 rd Avenue SE
402 2 nd Avenue NE	517 4 th Avenue SE
601 2 nd Avenue NE	400 9 th Street SE
717 2 nd Avenue NE	

- Properties in the East survey area that merit further study due to age and integrity include:

202 3rd Avenue NE
302 3rd Avenue NE
602 3rd Avenue NE
809 3rd Avenue NE
402 2nd Avenue NE
607 2nd Avenue NE
708 Elm Avenue E
711 3rd Avenue SE
206 6th Street SE

- Properties in the Southwest survey area that merit further study due to age, architecture and integrity include:

604 3rd Street SW

610 3rd Street SW

609 4th Street SW

- Properties in the North survey area that merit further study due to architectural interest and integrity include:

329 State Street North

331 State Street North

500 State Street North

610 State Street North

614 State Street North

617 State Street North

621 State Street North

907 State Street North

- Properties in the North Residential Survey area that merit further study due to age and integrity include:

802 State Street North

815 State Street North

904 State Street North

- A full survey be done of Elm Avenue properties as a potential historic district. The consultants recommend a district that runs from the 600 to 1000 block of East Elm Avenue (601 to 1009 on the north side, 608 to 900 on the south side).

- The cluster of Italianates in the 300/400 blocks of 2nd Avenue NE and nearby be fully surveyed as a possible group nomination. This may be difficult, as a group nomination is generally a kind of use (e.g.: schools), rather than an architectural style. In addition, some of the houses are in relatively poor condition. This collection of Italianates, however, is a remarkable feature in the town's architectural history.

In addition, the consultants recommend that the HPC:

- Continue and expand the surveyed property file system created by Staff at the Historical Society, with additional help from the Waseca Abstract Company. Each house should have a file that, at minimum includes its inventory form, and that can be used to collect additional historical information as it is discovered. In the future, these files might be digitized.

- Develop simple outreach information for homeowners, giving basic information about appropriate care and maintenance of their historic homes. Ideally, each home surveyed would receive a copy of their inventory form and some basic preservation/maintenance information.

- Hold a series of events that helps people understand their house style, its history, and appropriate preservation techniques. The information referred to above could be distributed at these events. Perhaps a "Preservation Housing Fair" could introduce homeowners to contractors and other home service providers with an emphasis on preservation.

- Utilize the local newspaper to start a periodic “What Style Is It?” column. That column could include information on the various housing styles, including photos of local examples, and give preservation tips.
- Expand the local designation process in order to protect historic resources that may not be National-Register eligible, but are otherwise significant. Several of the houses surveyed may be locally significant. Local districts may also be possible.
- Create relatively simple design guidelines for residential properties. Before doing so, the HPC should decide the extent to which the guidelines should be applied through City ordinance.
- Plans for additional survey work that covers additional neighborhoods, either throughout the city or in additionally determined, more contained areas.

The Central Business District Survey Recommendations

The primary study recommendation is that the City of Waseca designate the historic downtown core as a commercial historic district, and pursue National Register designation for the district. The district would include the City blocks that line State Street between 2nd Street East and 2nd Street West, 3rd Avenue North, and the rail line to the south.

Such a designation would have significant benefits, including:

- **Downtown revitalization:** Such a designation would encourage downtown revitalization. Waseca already has several examples of historic commercial properties — Zinnia’s in the old depot, the Armstrong-Miller building, and the Daily Grind in a former bank — that demonstrate successful adaptive use.
- **Federal Tax Credits:** Federal historic tax credits provide a 20% tax credit for significant rehabilitation done on income-producing properties. Such properties must be National Register listed, either individually or as part of a district. In some cases, these credits can be transferred and/or used by non-profits.
- **State Tax Credits:** The Minnesota tax credit is new as of last year. It provides an additional 20% tax credit, which can piggyback on the federal tax credit as the requirements are substantially the same. In some cases, the Minnesota program offers a grant in lieu of a credit.
- **Historic Tourism:** According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, cultural heritage tourism is defined as “traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present.” Heritage tourism has become big business, directly contributing approximately \$8 billion to the U.S. economy annually. Of these tourists, 81% classified themselves as cultural heritage travelers. Visitors to historic sites and cultural attractions typically stay longer and spend more than other tourists — \$623 per trip average compared to \$457. It is also a growing field, up more than 10% annually even during recent economic circumstances. The most important effect, however, is that this kind of travel is unique to a community’s specific circumstances, organically building upon its diversity and focusing on its unique sense of place.
- **Strengthening the local economy:** Downtown stores are local stores, and have a big impact on the local economy. For every \$100 spent at a community business, \$68 returns to the community in taxes, payroll, and other expenditures. This compares to only \$43 spent at a national chain, and of course, \$0 for online purchases. Organizations such as The 3/50 Project and even American Express’ shop local campaign are helping small businesses compete with larger entities.

The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota recently re-launched their competitive Minnesota Main Streets program. Minnesota Main Streets offers communities accepted into the program assistance with the training, tools, information, networking, and other resources needed to maximize revitalization efforts. There are four main points: design, economic restructuring, promotion, and organization. In 2011, the first full year of the program, the five communities accepted (Brainerd, Faribault, New Ulm, Red Wing, and Wilmar) have had fantastic results, netting 24 new businesses, 61 new full-time jobs, and 47 building rehabs, for a total of \$3 million in private and \$1.1 million in public investment. The consultants feel that Waseca could be a good fit for the program. Cities are accepted on a rolling basis.

In tandem with a National Register District nomination, the City of Waseca should also consider developing design guidelines for the downtown area. Such guidelines provide invaluable assistance to property owners in appropriately rehabilitating their properties. As businesses in the downtown core complete renovations, they could follow the design guidelines to the best of their ability, creating a sense of cohesion and increasing the property values by adding to their integrity and aesthetics. As well as providing resources, strong guidelines also provide visual references.

In addition, the consultants recommend that the HPC:

- Continue and expand the file system created by Staff of the Historical Society for surveyed properties. Each historic commercial property should have a file that at minimum includes its inventory form, and that can be used to collect additional historical information as it is discovered. In the future, these files might be digitized.
- Develop outreach programs to downtown business owners to assist them with preservation projects. Examples of such efforts include:
 1. having a City staffperson serve as liaison to assist with tax credit issues
 2. holding workshops and events regarding preservation and rehabilitation
 3. creating visual (mainly photographic) displays in store windows
- Utilize the local newspaper to feature a column on prominent downtown commercial buildings.

Appendix I • Residential Survey Form Sample

Minnesota Architecture-History Inventory Form Inventory # WE-WSC-129

City of Waseca Residential Reconnaissance Survey

SouthWest Residential Area Survey Date Fall 2011

Property Location

Address **610 3rd Street SW** City/Twp Waseca/Woodville County Waseca
PIN 17.151.1230 T-R-S Quarter-Quarter T107N R22W Sec. 18 NE-SE
USGS Quad Waseca UTM Zone 15 Coordinates 459106 4880225
Legal BARNEYS ADD LOT 9 BLK 14 & E1/2 OF ADJACENT VACATED ALLEY

Property Information

State Historic Context Railroads and Agricultural Development, 1870-1940
Local Historic Context City of Waseca Context 8—Residential—1867-1960s
Date Constructed 1920 Historic Name Unknown
Style Craftsman
Description Early 20th-century 2½-story Craftsman with end gables and original fenestration; sheathed in stucco/decorative brickwork. Altered entry porch. Detached garage to south/back of house.
Integrity Good Condition Good Property Type Building
Historic Use Residential Present Use Residential
NR Status Not Listed NR Recommendation Merits further research due to architectural integrity.
References City of Waseca Historic Context Study, Spring 2010
Waseca County Historical Society survey files, 2011-12
Waseca County Assessor tax records, 2012

View looking west



Appendix II • Central Business District Survey Form Sample

Minnesota Architecture-History Inventory Form

Inventory # WE-WSC-007

Survey Name **City of Waseca Downtown Comprehensive Survey**

Survey Date Fall 2001-Spring 2012

Prepared by Thomas R. Zahn & Associates LLC

Property Location

Address **100 State Street North** City/Twp Waseca/Woodville County Waseca

PIN 17.100.1420 T-R-S Quarter-Quarter T107N R22W Sec. 18 NE-NE

USGSQaud Waseca UTM Zone 15 Coordinates 459366 4880608

Legal ORIGINAL PLAT S 30 FT OF LOT 12 BLK 8

Property Information

State Historic Context Railroads and Agricultural Development, 1870-1940

Local Historic Context City of Waseca Context 4 - Commerce and Industry

Date Constructed 1903

Historic Name First National Bank

Style Renaissance Revival

Integrity Good

Condition Very Good

Description

This turn of the 20th century 2-story Renaissance Revival commercial block is sheathed in cream brick and stone. The classically detailed building is crowned with a parapet balustrade. Decorative brick banding surrounds the structure below the roofline on the two major facades, facing State Street and Elm Avenue. The second story of the State Street facade displays four Roman-arched windows with brick crowns and stone sills. • The Elm Avenue second story windows have flat stone lintels and sills. The first floor is sheathed with stone and displays a columned and pedimented entry door on State Street flanked by two large window openings. A newer oval plaque is affixed to the building between the entrance and the southerly window that reads "1903". • The Elm Avenue facade has a similar window treatment with stone lintels and sills. The back, stuccoed facade displays shallow arched window openings and entry.

History of Use

This building housed the First National Bank from its construction with a barbershop in the basement with a public library in the back. By 1919 bank offices had replaced the library and by 1930 the barbershop had been replaced with a retail store. The bank occupied the space until 1971. The Waseca Emporium was in place along with the Central Natural Gas Company and a travel service in the 1970s. The second floor also housed an optometrist and beauty center. In 2007 the main space became the Daily Grind coffee shop.

Present Use Commercial: Coffee Shop

Property Type Building

NR Status Not listed

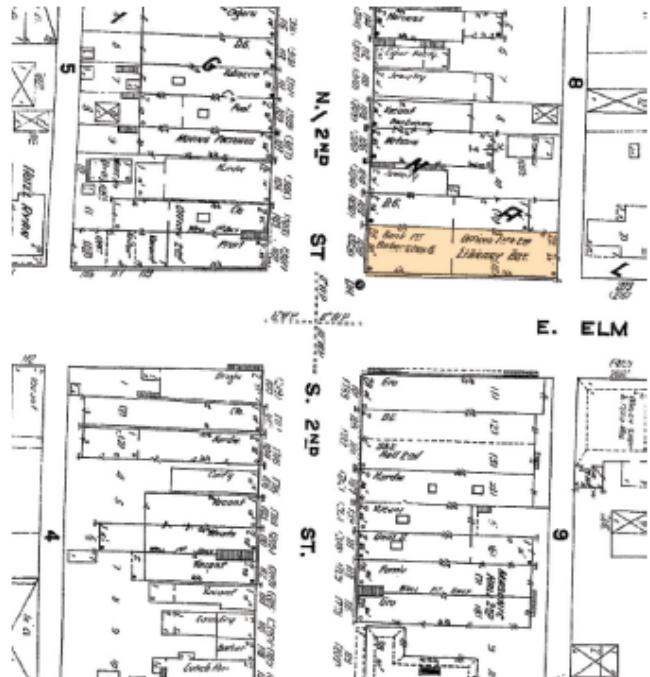
NR Recommendation Recommended for designation as part of a historic downtown commercial district



Front elevation along State Street North looking to the east/northeast



Back elevation looking to the west/southwest



The 1910 Sanborn Map shows the bank and library

Resources City of Waseca Historic Context Study, Spring 2010
Waseca County Historical Society survey files, 2011-12
Waseca County Assessor tax records, 2012

Appendix III • Historic Tax Certification Program Information

While there are many reasons to preserve, restore, rehabilitate, and recycle older buildings, financial incentives can be the most tangible. Financial incentives for rehabilitation have been developed on the local, state, and national levels. With the implementation in 2010 of the Minnesota rehabilitation program, improvements to historic commercial properties has never been more feasible for the property owner.

Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program Benefits

The Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program benefits the owner, the occupants, and the community by:

- Encouraging protection of landmarks through the promotion, recognition, and designation of historic structures
- Increasing the value of the rehabilitated property and returning underutilized structures to the tax rolls
- Upgrading downtowns and neighborhoods and often increasing the amount of available housing within the community.

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program

Historic Preservation Tax Credits are available to building owners interested in substantially rehabilitating historic buildings. Commercial, industrial and rental residential structures that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places or within a National Register district qualify for a 20% investment tax credit.

Federal Program Provisions

To qualify for the Investment Tax Credit, a property owner must:

- Have a certified historic structure. To be certified, the building must be listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places or be a contributing part of a historic district that is either listed on the National Register or certified as eligible for the National Register
- Use the building for an income-producing purpose such as rental-residential, commercial, agricultural, or industrial
- Rehabilitate the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" and "Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings." The National Park Service (NPS), with advice from the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, determines whether a project meets the standards.
- Spend an amount greater than the building's adjusted basis (roughly the current depreciated value of the building not including land value) on the approved rehabilitation project
- Complete the work in a timely manner. Projects must meet the minimum expenditure test within a two-year measuring period, but applicants may take up to five years to complete a phased project if the plans and specs are approved in advance of construction.
- Pay a fee to the NPS; the fee shall be no less than \$250 and no greater than \$2,500 and shall be based upon the qualifying rehabilitation expenditures.

Minnesota Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program

In 2010, the State of Minnesota enacted a 20% historic preservation tax credit program. Minnesota's State historic preservation tax credit will allow a state income tax credit equal to 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitating a qualifying historic property. The program mirrors the federal rehabilitation tax credit, a provision that has been in place since 1976. Projects are eligible to claim the State credit if they are allowed the federal credit, a program which requires properties to be listed in the National Register of Historic Preservation to qualify. Minnesota currently has over 1,600

listings in the National Register representing almost 7,000 individual properties. Projects must be income-producing to use the credit, therefore, homesteaded residential projects are not eligible. Our law also creates innovation in the tax credit market by allowing a developer to choose either a certificated, refundable credit or a grant, which will stimulate nonprofit use of the incentive, and also can be used against the insurance premium tax widening the investor pool.

The Minnesota program allows the project proposers to choose either the tax credit or grant option. The State grant, like the tax credit, comes at the completion of the project, and is equal to 90 percent of the allowable federal rehabilitation tax credit. The grant option may have some advantages in the syndication of tax credits, and allows participation by individuals, teams, and/or non-profit organizations as a partner in the rehabilitation of historic structures program.

Minnesota Program Provisions

The State provisions are the same as the federal provisions, with the exception that the tax credit would be available for a property that is any of the following:

- Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Certified as a contributing element of a National Register Historic District.
- Certified as historic by local heritage preservation commission or Certified Local Government.