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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

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NPS Form 10-900
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

OMB No. 1024-0018

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Downtown Aledo Historic District
Other names/site number: _____
Name of related multiple property listing:
_____
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 100 and 200 Blocks of North College Avenue; 100, 200, and 300 Blocks of South College Avenue; 100 and 200 Blocks of East Main Street; 100 Block of West Main Street; 100 Block of Northwest 2nd Avenue; 200 Block of Southeast 2nd Avenue; 100 and 200 Blocks of Southwest 2nd Avenue; 100 Block of Northwest 2nd Street; 100 Block of Southeast 2nd Street; 100 Block of Southwest 2nd Street; 100 Block of Southeast 3rd Avenue; 100, 200, and 300 Blocks of Southeast 3rd Street; and the 100 Block of Southwest 3rd Street

City or town: Aledo State: Illinois County: Mercer
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___B X C ___D

DSHPO 4-18-16

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

for Edson H. Beall 6·7·16

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [x]

Public – Local [x]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [ ]

District [x]

Site [ ]

Structure ☐

Object ☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
75	5	buildings
1	1	sites
		structures
		objects
76	6	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE
SOCIAL
GOVERNMENT
EDUCATION
FUNERARY
RECREATION AND CULTURE
LANDSCAPE
TRANSPORTATION

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE
SOCIAL
GOVERNMENT
EDUCATION
RECREATION AND CULTURE
LANDSCAPE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/ITALIANATE
LATE VICTORIAN/SECOND EMPIRE
LATE VICTORIAN/STICK/EASTLAKE
LATE VICTORIAN/ROMANESQUE
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/LATE CLASSICAL REVIVAL
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/TUDOR REVIVAL
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ITALIAN RENAISSANCE
MODERN MOVEMENT/MODERNE
MODERN MOVEMENT/ART DECO
MODERN MOVEMENT/CONTEMPORARY

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _____

WOOD
BRICK
STONE
METAL
GLASS
CONCRETE
OTHER

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Downtown Aledo Historic District (DAHD) is the original town center for commerce, transportation, education, government, and recreation in Aledo. The District is roughly bounded by SW 3rd Avenue to the west, NW 3rd Street to the north, SE 3rd Avenue to the east, and SW/SE 4th Street to the south. The DAHD encompasses 28.8 acres with seventy-five contributing buildings, one contributing site, five non-contributing buildings, and one non-contributing site. The existing seventy-six historic resources were constructed between 1868 and 1966. The District is composed of one and two part commercial blocks, social halls, auto garages and service stations, recreational, educational, and government buildings. The period of significance is from 1868, the construction date of the oldest building in the District, to 1966, the fifty year cutoff for the National Register of Historic Places.

Narrative Description

The City of Aledo is located in Mercer County, Illinois, 30 miles southwest of the Quad Cities, 16 miles east of the Mississippi River, and 185 miles southwest from Chicago. Aledo has served as the county seat of Mercer County since 1857, two years after Aledo's establishment in 1855.

The Downtown Aledo Historic District (DAHD) is approximately 28.8 acres, roughly bounded by SW 3rd Avenue to the west, NW 3rd Street to the north, SE 3rd Avenue to the east, and SW/SE 4th Street to the south.

The composition of the District is predominantly commercial with some government, transportation, recreation, and educational buildings. The DAHD is made up of, 66.2% commerce, 13.2% transportation, 1% social, 2.4% education, 2.4% recreation, 1% landscape, 1% industry, 7.2% government, 3.6% agriculture, 1% religious, and 1% residential buildings. The areas north, south, east, and west of the district are residential.

Once farmlands and swamps, the topography of the District is relatively flat, though it sits almost at the highest point in Mercer County. The Mercer County Courthouse located in the DAHD is at the highest point and almost the geographical center of Mercer County.

The street pattern is a standard grid on a general north-south alignment. There are only two alleys in the District, located on the south side of Main Street in the block directly to the east and the block directly to the west of College Avenue. There are two primary thoroughfares through the downtown District, College Avenue (north-south) and Main Avenue (east-west). College and Main are the widest streets in the District at 85' and 50' in width, respectively. The orientation and layout of the streets remains unchanged since the earliest development in the District. Historically, streets were wider to allow for the larger horse-drawn carriages and ox-drawn wagons, street vendors, commercial activities such as horse sales, and the expansive wood, canopied entries which once lined the commercial storefronts of the district. Today, the extra width along College and Main has been converted to parallel parking. The auxiliary streets in the district are much narrower at 25' in width.

Additionally, Route 17 (SE 3rd Street) runs through the district near the southern boundary. Illinois Route 17 is a rural, arterial east–west state road that runs east from the former ferry crossing in New Boston at the banks of the Mississippi River to State Road 2 west of Lowell, Indiana. Route 17 did not exist until 1918, well after the establishment of the District. Historically, Route 17 was known as Fifth Street. It should be noted the historic street names were changed on August 5, 1963 to the existing street names today.

Lastly, Aledo was serviced by the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad (Galva Branch). Aledo also served as a passenger and freight stop on the Rock Island Southern Railroad (Northern Division). Both lines ran east to west through the District with the C. B. & Q. Depot located in the center of the downtown district and the R.I.S. Depot located just to the east of the downtown. Remnants of these lines remain today.

The buildings in the District follow national trends in architectural styles and building forms popular at their time of construction. Each building reflects its construction date based on architectural details and construction methods. During the development of the DAHD, styles such as Classical Revival,

Romanesque Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Stick/Eastlake, Art Deco, Moderne, and Contemporary were frequently employed.

Today, the Downtown Aledo Historic District remains intact and appears much as it would have looked when fully developed at the end of the period of significance. The District retains a high degree of integrity making it eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The majority of the properties are intact and have sustained little if any exterior modifications. Most alterations that did occur, that are visible from the public right of way, are window replacement or removal and the installation of synthetic siding over original cladding.

The following are descriptions for each of the existing contributing and non-contributing resources including their historic building name, address, date of construction, architect/builder, primary architectural style, and building type as identified above. Listed addresses correspond to the addresses listed with the Mercer County. A "Building Key" is located in the "Additional Documentation" section of this nomination.

If a building is listed with two dates, the later date is for an addition or remodeling.

*Abbreviations Note: ST: Street; DIR: Direction; NO: Street Number; C: Contributing; NC: Non-Contributing; NRHP-Listed: Individually-Listed on the National Register

DOWNTOWN ALEDO HISTORIC DISTRICT								
	Historic Name/ Use	**Street**	**Dir.**	**No.**	**Building Date**	**Building Type**	**Architectural Style/Details**	**Contributing /Non-Contributing**
1	Button House	College Avenue	N	101	1868	Two-Part Commercial Block	Second Empire	C
2	McCreedy Bldg	College Avenue	N	107-109	1938	Two-Part Commercial Block	New Traditional: Classical	C
3	The Davis Building	College Avenue	N	108-112	ca. 1907-1913	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
4	Bakery	College Avenue	N	114	ca. 1907-1913	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
5	United States Post Office	College Avenue	N	117	1917/1918	Government/ Post Office	Neoclassical	C
6	Print Shop	College Avenue	N	118	ca. 1907-1913	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
7	City Hall	College Avenue	N	120	ca. 1907-1913	Government/ City Hall	Late Classical Revival	C
8	Mercer Carnegie Library	College Avenue	N	200	1915	Education/ Library	Late Classical Revival	C

9	Aledo Public High and Grade School	College Avenue	N	201	1921	Education/ School	Late Classical Revival	C
10	A. M. Byers & Co.	College Avenue	S	100-104	1870	Commerce/ Financial Institution	Romanesque Revival	C
11	Dry Goods and Notions Store	College Avenue	S	101	ca. 1870	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
12	Dry Goods and Clothing Store	College Avenue	S	105	ca. 1870	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
13	Buggie and Shay Shop	College Avenue	S	106	ca. 1895	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
14	Dry Goods Store	College Avenue	S	107	ca. 1885-1894	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
15	The Palace Drug Store	College Avenue	S	109	ca. 1880	Two-Part Commercial Block	Romanesque Revival	C
16	Knights of Pythias Hall	College Avenue	S	110	1890	Two-Part Commercial Block	Romanesque Revival	C
17	Standard Oil Station	College Avenue	S	112	ca. 1913-1928	Road-Related/ Filling Station	Italian Renaissance	C
18	Standard Oil Station	College Avenue	S	112	ca. 1940	Road-Related/ Service Station	Moderne	C
19	Union Hall Building	College Avenue	S	113	ca. 1880	Two-Part Commercial Block	Romanesque Revival	C
20	W.C. Galloway Grocery Store; Ben Franklin Building	College Avenue	S	119	ca. 1869	Two-Part Commercial Block	Unknown with Contemporary False-Front	NC
21	Murphy Furniture Store and Billiards	College Avenue	S	125	ca. 1885-1894	Two-Part Commercial Block	Romanesque Revival/Contemporary	C
22	Calderone's Grocery Store	College Avenue	S	129	ca. 1913-1928	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
23	Farmer's State Bank of Western Illinois	College Avenue	S	201	1995	Freestanding; Commerce/ Financial Institution	Contemporary	NC
24	Grocer and Social Hall	College Avenue	S	205	ca.1880	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
25	Paints and Wall Papers; Drug Store	College Avenue	S	207	ca. 1894-1901	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
26	Grocer	College Avenue	S	213	ca. 1901-1907	Two-Part Commercial	Richardsonian Romanesque	C

						Block		
27	Wehner Bro's Furniture Store	College Avenue	S	217	ca. 1901-1907	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
28	Masonic Hall	College Avenue	S	219	1901	Two-Part Commercial Block	Romanesque Revival	C
29	Carlson Apartments	College Avenue	S	301	1913	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
30	Residence	College Avenue	S	303	ca. 1885-1894	Domestic/ Single Dwelling	L-Form	C
31	Mercer County Jail	College Avenue	S	309	1909	Government/ Correctional Facility	Jacobethan	NRHP
32	Farmers National Bank	Main Street	E	101	ca. 1913-1928	Commerce/ Financial Institution; Two-Part Commercial Block	Temple-Front; Late Classical Revival	C
33	Books and News	Main Street	E	109	ca. 1875	Two-Part Commercial Block	Romanesque Revival/Contemporary Storefront	C
34	Will Hall	Main Street	E	110	1881	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
35	The Peterson Building	Main Street	E	112	ca. 1880	Two-Part Commercial Block	Early Classical Revival	C
36	Drug Store and Stationary	Main Street	E	113	ca. 1875	Two-Part Commercial Block	Romanesque Revival/Contemporary Storefront	C
37	Wallen Block	Main Street	E	114	ca. 1875	Two-Part Commercial Block	Early Classical Revival	C
38	Grocer	Main Street	E	115	ca. 1870	One-Part Commercial Block	Unknown with Contemporary False-Front	C
39	Detwiler Bros. Hardware Store	Main Street	E	118	ca. 1885-1894	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
40	Public Restrooms	Main Street	E	121	ca. 1875	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
41	Dry Goods Store and Offices	Main Street	E	122	ca. 1885-1894	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
42	Dry Goods & Notions Store	Main Street	E	125	ca. 1880	Two-Part Commercial Block	Early Classical Revival	C
43	Emrick & Owsley Building	Main Street	E	127	1904	One-Part Commercial	Late Classical Revival	C

						Block		
44	Store	Main Street	E	129	ca. 1913-1928	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
45	Marquis Bros.	Main Street	E	201	ca. 1882	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
46	Dry Goods and Notions Store; Grocer	Main Street	E	203	ca. 1880	Two-Part Commercial Block	Early Classical Revival	C
47	Stevenson Brothers Grocery Store/Stevenson Flats	Main Street	E	212-218	Ca. 1889	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
48	Thede Building	Main Street	E	221	ca. 1900	Two-Part Commercial Block	Unknown with Contemporary Storefront	NC
49	Filling Station	Main Street	E	222	ca. 1928-1936; ca. 1940	Road-Related/ Filling Station	Italian Renaissance/Moderne	C
50	Garage	Main Street	E	222-224	ca. 1913-1928	Road-Related/ Garage	N/A	C
51	Berglund Park	Main Street	W	100 Blk.	2014	Memorial/Park	N/A	NC
52	Store	Main Street	W	103-105	ca. 1913-1928	Two-Part Commercial Block	N/A	C
53	Butcher and Grocer	Main Street	W	126	ca. 1907-1913	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
54	Harness Shop, Furniture Shop, and Undertaker	Main Street	W	132	ca. 1907-1913	Two-Part Commercial Block	Italianate	C
55	Store	Main Street	W	133	ca. 1913-1928	One-Part Commercial Block	N/A	C
56	Harness Shop	Main Street	W	134	ca. 1885-1894	One-Part Commercial Block	Contemporary (Storefront)	C
57	Livery	Main Street	W	137	ca. 1885-1894	Agriculture/ Animal Facility	Contemporary (False-Front Façade)	C
58	Agricultural Implements	Main Street	W	138	ca. 1875	One-Part Commercial Block	Unknown with Contemporary (False-Front Façade)	C
59	Davison Chevrolet Motor Company	Main Street	W	202	1926 (ca.1913-1928)	Road-Related/Auto Sales & Garage	Late Classical Revival	C
60	Vulcanizing Shop	Main Street	W	210	ca. 1913-1928	Road-Related/ Auto Garage	Late Classical Revival	C
61	Veterinary Stable	Main Street	W	212	ca. 1913-1928	Stable	Late Classical Revival	C
62	Veterinary	Main	W	214	ca. 1913-	One-Part	Late Classical Revival	C

		Street			1928	Commercial Block		
63	Standard Oil Station	Main Street	W	222	ca. 1950	Road-Related/ Filling Station	Moderne	C
64	Auto Garage	2nd Avenue	NW	116	ca. 1913-1928	Road-Related/ Auto Garage	Contemporary (Façade)	C
65	Aledo Opera House	2nd Avenue	SE	108	1904	Freestanding; Recreation/ Music Facility	Italianate	C
66	Kistler Hatchery	2nd Avenue	SE	202	ca.1940	Agriculture/ Animal Facility	Hatchery/Chicken Coop	NC
67	Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Railroad Passenger and Freight Station	2nd Avenue	SE	204	1869	Train Depot	Stick	C
68	Bolton Brothers Electric Company	2nd Avenue	SW	104	ca. 1901-1907	Industry/ Energy Facility	Late Classical Revival	C
69	City of Aledo Water Works Pump House	2nd Avenue	SW	203	ca. 1913-1928	Government/ Public Works	Unknown with Contemporary elements	C
70	Commercial	2nd Avenue	SW	204	ca. 1950	One-Part Commercial Block	Contemporary	NC
71	Auto Garage	2nd Street	NW	110	ca. 1913-1928	Road-Related/ Auto Garage	Contemporary (False-Front Façade)	C
72	Billiards	2nd Street	SE	105	ca. 1901-1907	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
73	Johnson Creamery	2nd Street	SW	107	ca. 1928-1936	Agriculture/ Processing	N/A	C
74	Commercial	2nd Street	SW	108	ca. 1960	One-Part Commercial Block	Contemporary	C
75	Original City of Aledo Water Works	2nd Street	SW	109	1889	Government/ Public Works	Late Classical Revival	C
76	Veterans of Foreign Wars Post	3rd Avenue	SW	106	1961	Freestanding; Social/ Meeting Hall	Contemporary	C
77	Mercer County Courthouse	3rd Street	SE	100	1894	Government/ Courthouse	Romanesque Revival	NRHP
78	Central Park	3rd Street	SE	100 Blk.	ca. 1913-1928	Landscape/Plaza	Contemporay	C
79	Frontier Communications	3rd Street	SE	200 Blk.	Ca.1960	Freestanding	Contemporary	C
80	Mercer County Farm Bureau	3rd Street	SE	206	1940	Freestanding; Commerce/ Office Building	Art Deco	C
81	Filling Station	3rd Street	SE	210	1940	Road-Related/ Filling Station	Moderne	C

82	Tastee-Freez	3rd Street	SE	300	ca. 1950	One-Part Commercial Block	Contemporary	C
83	Furniture Shop and Undertaker	3rd Street	SW	103	ca. 1901-1907; ca. 1913-1928	Two-Part Commercial Block	Late Classical Revival	C
84	Murphy Funeral Home	3rd Street	SW	103	1938	Religious/ Chapel	Late Classical Revival	C

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.)

[x] 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.

[x] 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.)

[ ] 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
EDUCATION
TRANSPORTATION
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance
1868-1966

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Encompassing 160 years, the Downtown Aledo Historic District (DAHD) endures as a locally significant district as the heart of local commerce, Mercer County government, local and regional transportation, education, and local community culture for the City of Aledo since its founding 1855. The period of significance is from 1868-1966, reflecting the date of construction for the oldest building in the District, up until the 50 year cut off for the National Register of Historic Places. The District is eligible Criterion A for Commerce, Education, Entertainment/Recreation, Transportation, and Politics/Government and Criterion C for Architecture.

The District, which continues to function as it has historically with a mixture of commercial, industrial, governmental, educational, recreational, social, and transportation resources, has sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

History and Development of Aledo

On January 31, 1835, the Illinois legislature established Mercer County. Although, the county was created in 1825, the county government wasn't completed until 1835, after a large influx of veterans from the 1832 Black Hawk War settled in the area. At this time the town of New Boston was also established, after being laid out by Abraham Lincoln just one month prior, and was chosen as the first county seat. Only a year later in 1836, the county seat was moved to a more central location in Millersburg. The county seat remained in Millersburg until 1847 when it was moved to Keithsburg, located on the bank of the Mississippi River. Finally on August 3, 1857, by popular vote of the residents of Mercer County, the seat was moved to Aledo, the geographic center of the county, where it remains today.

After the survey for the Great Western Air Line Railroad through Mercer County, land speculation began for the establishment of new towns. Aledo was one of these, founded in the fall of 1855 by Levi Willits and Judge John S. Thompson. Before Aledo's founding, the area was composed of vast prairies and only two log cabins.

On March 20, 1856, a public sale of lots was held at which time 112 lots were sold. Local history states the auction was lively due to the two barrels of whiskey supplied by the auctioneer.

At the auction Willits and Thompson agreed to donate the sales from the first fifty lots to the establishment of a college or seminary in Aledo. The first building constructed was a hotel at the corner of Seventh (E Main Street) and Maple (NE 2nd Avenue) Streets in the summer of 1856. The first store was a dry goods, groceries, and hardware establishment erected on South College Avenue.

Aledo was originally christened as DeSoto after the Spanish explorer, Hernando de Soto, who first discovered the Mississippi River in 1541. The founders soon realized there was already a village by the name DeSoto in Jackson County, Illinois and promptly changed the name to Aledo.

The founders of Aledo were both significant for their roles in the history of Mercer County and Aledo. Levi Willits was one of the first settlers and a businessman from New Boston. Willits operated a general store in New Boston with William Drury for many years and invested in real estate throughout the county.

Thompson was one of the earliest lawyers in the county and a circuit court judge. After being defeated during a run for Congress, Thompson focused on the completion of the Great Western Air Line Railroad. Thompson reorganized the company under the American Central Railroad and secured new subscriptions from townships, villages, and private residents. The line would have been built as the American Central had Thompson not secured a more advantageous agreement. Thompson created a deal with the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Railroad where the Railroad would complete the line from Galva to Keithsburg and would lease the tracks for ninety-nine years. After the railroad was built, Thompson moved to San Jose, California where he continued his profession as a lawyer and became president of the Rock Island & Southwestern Railroad. Under his purview, a new line was built from Rock Island to New Boston, crossed the Mississippi River, and connected with trunk lines built by Senator James Harlan to Kansas City.

Aledo became a passenger and freight stop for the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Railroad (C. B. & Q.) and Rock Island Southern Railroad (R.I.S). The Galva Branch (Galva to New Boston) of the C.B. & Q. was completed in the spring of 1869. The C. B. & Q. operated in Aledo until the merger in 1970 when it became the Burlington Northern Railroad and continued through the late 1980s at which point service had declined and the tracks removed.

The Rock Island Southern Railroad was completed in 1910 and ran from Monmouth to Rock Island with passenger and freight service. The R.I.S. lasted only a short period with the abandonment of passenger service in 1926. In 1929 a trestle near Burgess burned, breaking the line in two, and over the following two decades the line gradually receded towards Rock Island as trestles rotted away and collapsed. R.I.S service finally ended in February of 1952.

The original depot for C. B. & Q. built in 1870 remains and has been restored to its historic appearance.

By the end of 1856 there were over one hundred completed buildings in Aledo. During December of 1857, a schoolhouse and two new colleges were under construction and Aledo had eight stores, two hotels, three churches, and two fraternal organizations. At this time the Aledo Weekly newspaper was established. In 1858, just two years after its founding the population reached 700.

Aledo was incorporated on August 15, 1863. The first mayor was Simeon Macy, a pioneer druggist and one of the first dentists in the area. In 1869, the first permanent banking institution, Bailey and Byers was established and continued under its successor, the Aledo State Bank, until 1931. At this time the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Railroad was completed and in response over thirty new structures were completed in Aledo. The downtown district flourished with dry good stores, grocers, hardware stores, drug stores, photography galleries, bakeries, a book store, agricultural warehouses, wagon and carriage

shops, furniture stores, a steam planing mill, lumber yards, grain elevators, flour mill, and blacksmith shops.

In September of 1872, it was decided to organize as the Village of Aledo. By 1874, the second permanent financial institution, the Farmers' Bank was established and continued as the National Bank of Aledo. Additionally, a tile and brick factory and the Aledo Literary Society opened the same year.

An interesting note in Aledo's history is its strong temperance view beginning in the spring of 1876. The ordinance allowed no saloon to be located within the village limits or the sale of alcoholic liquors by pharmacists. The ordinance has since been revoked, but an exact date could not be found.

At times the growth of the village was sporadic, but by the end of the 1870s Aledo was seeing steady and substantial growth. A special census taken in January 1877 identified the population at 1,826 with 295 residences, 77 businesses, 7 churches, and 5 public buildings.

Between the late 1870s and early 1880s Aledo grew and continued to prosper through the addition of a grain elevator, flour mill, carriage and wagon shop, marble yard, brick and tile works, town hall, and fire engine house. By 1880, the population within the limits of Aledo was 1,500. With unincorporated areas the population was over 2,000. The same year, the Mercer County Fairgrounds opened and through present day continue to house the annual county fair. On April 21, 1885, the City of Aledo was officially incorporated under the Municipalities Laws of Illinois. By the end of the 1880s Aledo had accomplished its first large infrastructure project: the original Aledo Waterworks and reservoir was constructed in 1889 by the United States Wind Engine and Pump Company based in Batavia, Illinois.

In 1890, the Aledo Electric Light and Power Company, Aledo Business Union, the Thief Detective and Mutual Aid Association, and the Mercer County Coal Company were established. The Aledo Business Union worked with merchants to promote Aledo and educate business owners on proper advertising.

During the early 1890s it was also decided to dedicate a block of land to build a new Mercer County Courthouse. In April of 1893, due to the the large volume of county business, the County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution authorizing the construction of the new courthouse which would cost no more than $60,000. The board also stipulated that the citizens of Aledo contribute $10,000. The citizens pledged over $12,000. The cornerstone of the courthouse was laid in April 1894 funded through this public-private partnership brought about by the willing cooperation of the Mercer County residents. The existing Mercer County Courthouse was completed in 1894.

Fourteen years later, in the spring of 1908, the Mercer County Board of Supervisors voted nine to five to build a new jail. This facility would be the third Mercer County Jail built since the county's establishment and the first in Aledo. Plans for the new jail were prepared by C. F. Drury of the architectural firm of Whitsitt and Drury, of Moline, Illinois. The building was finished in December of 1909 and opened soon after. The Mercer County Courthouse and the Mercer County Jail are individually-listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

During the beginning of the 20th century, residents of Aledo worked to raise a $100,000 endowment for William Vashti College in 1911, expanded the sewer system (first laid in 1908), and commenced work on paving the downtown streets during the spring on 1912.

Beginning in 1915 and continuing over the next decade, various civic and educational additions were made to the City of Aledo. In 1915 the Mercer Carnegie Library was constructed, in 1917 the new Post Office opened, a new Aledo Public High and Grade School opened in 1921, and in 1924 the Illinois Military Academy moved to Aledo and was reorganized as the Roosevelt Military Academy. The Roosevelt Military Academy purchased the buildings and campus of the former William & Vashti College (1908-1917). The College was founded by and named after William Drury and his wife Vashti Drury. William was a long time resident of Mercer County and business partner of Aledo founder Levi Willits.

By the will of Mr. Drury, the school was to be located in that city or town of Mercer County which would offer the largest bonus for its location. Aledo offered more than any other locality in the county and secured the school. Drury wanted to offer students the opportunity of a complete classical or scientific education at a non-denominational school, but also an education that would equip students for a particular employment.

At the beginning of the 20th-century, the Aledo City Hall moved from its existing two-story brick building into its current building at 120 North College Avenue. This building was originally inhabited by the Aledo Machine Company and built between 1907 and 1913. When City Hall moved into the building, the first floor storefront was remodeled and the City Hall plaque installed.

Growth continued into the 1920s when Kraft Cheese built a branch factory in the downtown district in 1927. At the height of production, the factory purchased 300,000 pounds of milk a month from local farmers.

In the 1930s and 1940s few buildings were constructed except for automobile garages, service/filling stations, the Aledo Hospital and College View Hospital in 1933, and the Mercer County Farm Bureau Building in 1940. Since the mid-1930s until present day growth and development has continued but at a slower rate than what occurred in the 19th-century.

Few properties were constructed during the mid-20th century. One noteworthy building constructed ca. 1950 is the Tastee-Freez located at 300 SE 3rd Street. This Tastee-Freez is significant as the first Tastee-Freez in the United States.

Tastee-Freez was founded in 1950 by Leo S. Moranz and Harry Axene in Joliet, Illinois. Moranz invented a soft serve pump and freezer which surpassed existing technology, allowing for quicker service and a higher quality product. Their Harlee Manufacturing Company produced the machines that franchisees would buy and use in their respective locations. Moranz and Axene allowed stands to use the Tastee Freez name in exchange for rent paid on the soft-serve pump needed to operate each freezer. Tastee-Freez franchises originally focused on iced milk and other frozen dairy-based desserts. By 1952, 315 locations existed and by 1957 there were almost 1,800 Tastee-Freez franchises across the country. Today, there are only 23 Tastee-Freez locations in operation.

The Tastee- Freez was one of the last few buildings to be constructed in the District until the 1990s.

At present day, the DAHD continues as the heart of city. Since its establishment the District has been supported by the local economies of agriculture, dairy farming, and brick yards. Due to these local

economies the DAHD remains lively and vibrant, with a well preserved building stock which embraces the 148 years of building tradition.

Beyond Commerce and Trade in the Downtown Aledo Historic District

As illustrated above, commerce and trade was stable and considerable from Aledo's founding. The first business district was located south of the railroad and gradually moved northward until the center of the district was situated at the intersection of College Avenue and Seventh Street (Main Street). In the Downtown Aledo Historic District, buildings from some of Aledo's first businesses exist today including the James Galloway & Son grocery store at (119 South College Avenue, built 1869) and the Button House (101 North College Avenue, built 1868). The first bank building in Aledo, built in 1870 for A.M. Byers & Co. (previously Bailey & Byers), still stands at the southeast corner of College Avenue and Main Street.

As Aledo grew so did the downtown district. The district expanded to include more than commerce and trade and became the heart of the City of Aledo including recreational, social, and educational spaces.

Recreation/Social

The Downtown Aledo Historic District is the main gathering location for recreational and social activities in the city. One of the earliest recreational properties in the district was the Aledo Roller Rink Co. in the now Aledo Opera House. The skating rink experienced a fire in June 1903 and reopened on February 26, 1904 as the Aledo Opera House. The Aledo Opera House was previously determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In the District, many of the two-part commercial buildings served as headquarters for fraternal organizations on the upper floors. Organizations included the Ancient Free & Accepted Masons, International Order of Odd Fellows, and the Ancient Order of United Workingmen. There is also a Veterans of Foreign Wars post in the District, constructed in 1961. Additional recreational and social spaces in the district include bowling alleys, billiards, and movie theaters, also located on the upper floors of the two-part commercial blocks, as well as Central Park. Central Park is located directly across from the Mercer County Courthouse on the north side of Route 17. The site was established as a public park between 1907 and 1913 and has served as a central location for events such as open-air markets, celebrations and parades, school band concerts, special events, and family gatherings for the residents of Aledo through present day.

Educational

Within the DAHD are two educational buildings, the Old Aledo Public High and Grade School and the Mercer Carnegie Library. The Aledo Public High and Grade School opened in 1921 as the third school building constructed in Aledo. The new school replaced the North Side Public School, the first substantial school built in Aledo in 1863 after the first school building was re-purposed as the first Mercer County Courthouse. Aledo Public High and Grade School served the community as a high school and grade school until the 1950s when the high school moved to Aledo High south of the district. The grade school closed at the end of the 2001-2002 schoolyear and Apollo Elementary opened that fall.

The Mercer Carnegie Library opened in 1915. Prior to the opening of the Mercer Carnegie Library, the Aledo Columbian Club maintained the public Rest and Reading Rooms for the city in the Davis Building (108-112 North College Avenue), financed by the merchants of the city. The grant for the Carnegie Library was secured by Congressman James A. McKinney a longtime businessman, banker, and real estate investor in the City of Aledo. McKinney was a personal friend of the supervisor of the Carnegie

Library Fund and was able to secure a $10,000 grant for the library. To receive this grant, the community had to furnish an approved site for the building and promise to levy taxes for the continued support and maintenance of the library.

To summarize the Mercer Carnegie Library's significance in the community, this nomination quotes the statement of significance in the Illinois Carnegie Libraries Multiple Property Documentation,

> *"The community library has become a fixture in towns across the United States. These structures in the cities and small towns of Illinois evoke a sense of permanence and a perception that they have always existed. In fact we are so accustomed to the familiar sight of local libraries with services administered by trained professionals that rarely do we consider the circumstances which brought these institutions into existence. The establishment of tax supported public libraries in Illinois fits into a movement that was occurring nationwide. Andrew Carnegie's contribution to this movement was the donation of over $40,000,000 for the erection of 1,679 public libraries in communities across the nation. Illinois was the recipient of 106 public library buildings, the third highest amount among the states…The structures built nationwide during the 1890's and early part of this century with money donated by Carnegie are representative of a significant period in library history. Taken together, these buildings are associated with a period characterized by the growing recognition of the library as a necessary and desirable public institution; an increase in the number of libraries located in smaller towns; the institution of taxes to support local libraries; the emergence of the library professional; and by changes in library design to meet the needs of smaller communities. The institution that we know today as the public library is the product of an on-going process. As a public institution it reflects the demands of the society it serves; and these demands in turn are a factor in determining the structure of the library building as well as the services it offers".*

The distinct relationship between the businesses and recreational/educational associations in the downtown district make it clear that the library is as relevant to the downtown as the storefronts, hotels, and banks. Furthermore, despite a 1902 American Library Association pamphlet advising placing libraries off the main street to get a less expensive lot and to avoid noise, the Mercer Carnegie Library was placed on a site off of a main arterial road (College Avenue). This placement demonstrates the library's role as a significant fixture of downtown Aledo.

In June 1974, the Mercer Carnegie Library was one of two buildings in Aledo named "Landmarks in Mercer County" by the Historic Sites Division of the Illinois Department of Conservation.

Together, the Aledo Public High and Grade School and the Mercer Carnegie Library incorporated and centralized educational services for the City of Aledo. Additionally, the presence of these facilities brought in a daily, supplementary population to the downtown which increased traffic and revenue throughout the commercial properties.

Architecture in Aledo

Aledo was first founded in 1855 and retains a significant amount of architectural fabric from the early shift from the "first frame businesses house" to the permanent and extant "fine brick structures", which were constructed within the first decade after the town was platted.

Buildings in the DAHD can be categorized by architectural style and building type. An architectural style is defined by common features that are distinctive in overall massing, floor plan, materials, and architectural detailing. These buildings may be architect-designed or display a conscious attempt to incorporate typical architectural features of the time period. Of the 80 principal buildings in the District, 75 can be classified as having an architectural style, whether a pure example, using select details, or a hybrid of styles. Architectural styles in the District include: Early Romanesque Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Stick, Italian Renaissance, Art Deco, Tudor Revival, Moderne, and Contemporary.

Many of the buildings in DAHD have also been categorized by commercial buildings types, established in the work of Richard Longstreth: One- and Two-Part Commercial Blocks, Temple Front, Garage, and Filling Station.

The following sections describe architectural styles and building types in the DAHD.

Notes:
The dates in parenthesis first indicate the time period during which the style was most popular nationally (N). Because of the varied rates in which popular architectural fashions spread across the country, the entrenchment of local building traditions, as well as the dominance of local tastes, dates may differ from national examples.

The second time period in parenthesis is the period in which this style is documented locally (L) in Aledo's extant buildings.

Architectural features listed under each architectural style are common characteristics, but may not be found in every building and may vary locally, regionally, and nationally.

Architectural Styles

Early Classical Revival (N. 1770-1850) (L.1875-1880)
Late Classical Revival (N. 1895-1950) (L. 1889-1938)

The Early Classical Revival style developed at the end of the 18th century and derived architectural inspiration directly from the ancient buildings of Rome and Greece. Early Classical Revival buildings are closely resembled by their successors during the Greek Revival Period. The doorway, cornice line, and type of column (Roman, Doric, or Tuscan Orders) are the three principal distinguishing features.

Late Classical Revival was inspired by the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago which promoted classical forms. Late Classical Revival relied on stylistic details of the Greek Revival style. Classical Revival style buildings often have massive columns with classical Corinthian, Doric, or Ionic capitals topped by a front facing pediment.

Both styles were frequently used for civic, institutional, commercial, and residential buildings. Wall materials range from wood, brick, stucco, or stone with smoother surfaces being more prevalent. Typical architectural characteristics include: a symmetrical façade; unadorned roof line; side-gabled roof, hipped roof, or gambrel roof; semi-circular transom or fanlight normally occurs above the paneled front door; broken pediment over the entry door; modillions and dentils line the cornice; double-hung windows with lintels above; windows are symmetrically arranged often in pairs or groups of three; and a doorway at the center of façade.

In the DAHD, there are twenty-five buildings or 31% of the District identified as Classical Revival. Of the twenty-five buildings, 16% are Early Classical Revival and 84% are Late Classical Revival. Excellent examples include the Mercer Carnegie Library at 200 North College Avenue, the Wallen Block at 114 East Main Street, and the rear of 118 East Main Street.

Italianate (N. 1840-1885) (L. 1880-1913)

A popular 19th-century style, Italianate was derived from the architecture of Italian villas and originated in England at the start of the Picturesque Movement. This style with its wide overhanging bracketed eaves was typically found on two and three story buildings. Typical architectural characteristics include: vertical proportions; tall, curved or arched topped windows and doors with hooded molds; decorative brackets; intricate wood or pressed metal cornices; stone trim with incised foliated ornament; and paired and single doors are common with large-pane glazing in the door itself.

There are eleven buildings or 13% of the DAHD identified as Italianate. Excellent examples of the Italianate style in the District include Detwiler Bros. Hardware Store at 118 East Main Street, the Marquis Bros. Building at 201 East Main Street, and 106 South College Avenue.

Romanesque Revival (N. 1840-1900) (L. 1870-1907)

Romanesque Revival in America was inspired in part by the medieval European style known as Romanesque, popular in Europe during the 11th and 12th centuries as a revival of earlier classical Roman forms. Two phases of this style have been identified in America. During the first, Americans experimented with early versions during the 1840s-1850s. The second phase came in the late 19th century when the style was popularized by Henry Hobson Richardson.

Buildings in the Romanesque Revival style are always heavy, massive masonry construction, usually with some rough-faced stonework. Wide, rounded arches of the kind found in Roman or Romanesque architecture are an important identifying feature, and they often rest on squat columns. There is frequently decorative floral detail in the stonework, and sometimes on column capitals. The style was frequently used for churches, university buildings, prisons, and mansions due to its strong sense of permanence.

Typical architectural characteristics include: masonry construction; round arches at entrance windows; heavy and massive appearance; polychromatic stonework on details; squat columns; and decorative plaques.

There are thirteen buildings or 16% of the DAHD identified as Romanesque Revival. Excellent examples include the Union Hall Building at 113 South College Avenue, 213 South College Avenue, and 109-113 East Main Street.

Second Empire (N. 1855-1885) (L. 1868)

The Second Empire style was popular throughout the United States in the 1860s and 1870s, used extensively in the northeastern and midwestern parts of the country. The Second Empire style had its beginnings in France where it was the style during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-70), known as France's Second Empire. Prominent exhibitions in Paris in 1855 and 1867 helped to spread Second Empire style to England and then the United States.

The Second Empire Style is recognized by the hipped roof form with dormers that allow for the maximum use of an attic area. Unlike earlier Italianate or Greek Revival styles that were based on historic precedent, the Second Empire Style reflected the latest French fashion of the day. Typical architectural characteristics include: a mansard roof with dormer windows with arched or pedimented tops; cornices at the top and bottom of the lower roof slop; decorative eave brackets; patterned shingle roof; iron roof crest; decorative window surrounds and dormers; quoins; and balustrades.

The Button House at 101 North College Avenue is the only example of the Second Empire style in the DAHD. Second Empire accounts for 1% of architectural styles in the District.

Stick Style (N. 1860-1890) (L. 1869)

The Stick Style is Gothic in its overall verticality but looks toward the Queen Anne style in its picturesque complexity, both in form and in detailing. The style was popularized in house pattern books by Andrew Jackson Downing in the 1860s and 1870s.

The most distinctive stylistic element of the Stick Style is the decorative stickwork or bands of wood trim applied horizontally, vertically or diagonally to the exterior wall surfaces. The exterior stickwork was considered to display structural honesty by showing the supportive wooden understructure on the exterior. A similar pattern of decorative wood trim appears in the trusses of the gables and cross gables and on the porch braces. Typical architectural characteristics include: steeply pitched gable and cross-gable roofs with decorative trusses in the apex of the gable peaks; cross gables; decorative trusses at gable peak; overhanging eaves with exposed rafters; wood exterior walls with clapboards; and horizontal, vertical, or diagonal decorative wood trim – stickwork.

The Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Railroad Depot at 204 Southeast 2nd Avenue is the only example of the Stick style in the DAHD. The Stick style accounts for 1% of architectural styles in the District.

Italian Renaissance (N. 1890-1935) (L. 1928-1940)

The Italian Renaissance Revival style developed at the very end of the Victorian period of architecture. Like the Romanesque styles and other later classically-inspired styles, the Italian Renaissance style looked to Italy and the ancient world for inspiration. This revival style was a dramatic contrast to the earlier Queen Anne Style. This more ordered style has a studied formalism, symmetrical composition, simple flat facades, and low pitched roofs. Typical architectural characteristics include: restrained decoration; rectangular form; minimal use of columns or decoration at the entry; wide roof overhang; rounded roof tiles; low-pitched hipped or flat roof; symmetrical façade; and roof line parapet or balustrade.

There are two buildings or 2% of the DAHD identified as Italian Renaissance. The two examples of Italian Renaissance in the District are the service stations at 112 South College Avenue and 222 East Main Street.

Jacobethan (N. 1895-1920) (L. 1909)

A popular romantic revival style from the first half of the 20th century, Tudor Revival was inspired by English Medieval architecture. In Aledo, the use of Tudor Revival is displayed in the subcategory style Jacobethan. Jacobethan is an architectural style which encompassed the mixed national Renaissance revival style popular in England beginning in the late 1820s. Jacobethan derived most of its inspiration and its repertory from the English Renaissance (1550–1625), with elements of Elizabethan and Jacobean. Typical architectural characteristics include: flattened, cusped "Tudor" arches; lighter stone trims around windows and doors; steep roof gables; tall decorative chimneys; front-facing gables that rise above the roofline; elaborate brickwork or stonework; quoins at the corners of the building; and rectangular window frames, containing small, leaded panes of glass set in casement sashes.

The Mercer County Jail at 309 South College Avenue is the only example of the Jacobethan style in the DAHD. Since the Mercer County Jail is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places it is not included in the percentage of architectural styles.

Neoclassical (N. 1895-1955) (L. 1917)
Neoclassical was a dominant architectural style for domestic, civic, and institutional buildings throughout the country during the first half of the 20th-century. This style is similar to Classical and Greek Revival but is more monumental and ornate compared to its simpler predecessors. Typical architectural characteristics include: temple-front entry on civic, institutional, and commercial buildings; columns are of the Ionic and Corinthian Orders; exaggerated broken pediments; Classical symmetry; and dentil cornices.

The Farmers National Bank at 101 East Main Street is the only example of the Neoclassical style in the DAHD. Neoclassical accounts for 1% of architectural styles in the District.

Art Deco (N. 1925-1940) (L. 1940)
The Art Deco style is defined by it distinctive sharp-edged looks and stylized geometrical decorative details. The development of this architectural style was an intentional break with past precedents in an effort to embody the ideas of the modern age. It was the first American architectural style to look forward rather than back, as with the preceding revival styles. Its name was derived from the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, held in Paris in 1925, where the style was first exhibited. Typical architectural characteristics include: sleek, linear appearance with stylized, often geometric ornamentation; low-relief decorative panels at the entrances, around windows, along roof edges or as string courses; smooth building materials such as stucco, concrete block, glazed brick or mosaic tile; stylized decorative elements using geometrical forms, zigzags, chevrons; strips of windows with decorative spandrels; and reeding or fluting around doors and windows.

The Mercer County Farm Bureau at 206 Southeast Third Street is the only example of the Art Deco style in the DAHD. Art Deco accounts for 1% of architectural styles in the District.

Moderne (N. 1930-1950) (L. Ca. 1940)

The Moderne or Art Moderne style is closely related to the Art Deco style. Both are part of the Modern Movement in architecture, a conscious break with traditional design in pursuit of a new aesthetic free from the styles and forms of the past. The Moderne style was influenced by advancements in the industrial design of ships, planes, railroad engines, and automobiles and featured smooth walls with little surface ornamentation, rounded corners and curved glass. Moderne buildings have flat roofs, and bands of windows with a horizontal emphasis. Some buildings of this style have simple pipe balustrades, panels of glass block windows, curved canopies, or aluminum or stainless steel detailing. Typical architectural characteristics include: smooth wall surface, usually stucco; flat roof; horizontal emphasis; curved corners or windows; and aluminum or stainless steel detailing.

There are four buildings or 5% of the DAHD identified as Moderne. Excellent examples of the Moderne style in the District include the Standard Oil Stations at 222 West Main Street and 112 South College Avenue.

New Traditional (N. 1935-Present) (L. 1938-Present)

The New Traditional movement was initiated by residential builders responding to public interest in traditional designs at a time when the architectural profession was relatively focused on experimental, modern styles. New Traditional describes buildings that take stylistic cues, freely borrowing from but not copying older styles. Architectural shapes and detailing tend to refer to traditional rather than modern influences. Typically, features of a historic style were either exaggerated or diminished, rarely precise in imitating its prototype, creating a new look which is reminiscent of a previously known style.

The McCreedy Building at 107-109 North College Avenue is the only example of the New Traditional style in the DAHD. New Traditional accounts for 1% of architectural styles in the District.

Contemporary (N. 1945-1990) (L. 1950-1995)

This style was the favored for architect-designed buildings constructed between 1950 and 1990. It occurs in two distinctive subtypes based on roof shapes: flat or gabled. It can feature wide overhanging eaves, roof beams commonly exposed, heavy piers may support gables, built with natural materials wood, brick, and stone, broad expanse of uninterrupted wall surface, and the absence of traditional detailing.

There are five buildings or 6% of the DAHD is identified as Contemporary. Examples of the Contemporary style include the Tastee-Freez at 300 Southeast 3rd Street, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post at 106 Southwest 3rd Avenue, and Farmer's State Bank of Western Illinois at 201 South College Avenue. Additionally, there are eleven buildings with Contemporary style false-fronts which make up 13 % of buildings in the DAHD. Examples include the W.C. Galloway Grocery Store at 119 South College Avenue, 115 East Main Street, and 116 Northwest 2nd Avenue.

Commercial Buildings Types

The commercial building, as a distinct architectural form, did not develop until the 19th century, although trading centers and market halls have been around since antiquity. Commercial buildings were typically freestanding or joined by party walls, with the commercial business on the first floor and offices or residences above. The commercial building, as a form, almost always fits on its entire lot, and is built to the sidewalk.

In *The Buildings of Main Street*, Richard Longstreth has developed a classification system for historic commercial structures built within compact business districts prior to the 1950s. His system uses building mass as the determining factor.

The commercial classification types outlined by Longstreth are generally applicable to historic buildings (or new buildings built in historic styles) on traditional, pedestrian-oriented commercial streets. Aledo's commercial area can be considered a traditional commercial district. In a traditional business district, commercial buildings are densely clustered together on small blocks on an orthogonal grid oriented to the street and sidewalk.

Many of the buildings in the DAHD are One- or Two-Part Commercial Blocks in a rich variety of architectural styles, encompassing over 148 years of development. Represented styles include Italianate, Romanesque Revival, Late Classical Revival, Moderne, and Contemporary.

Commercial Blocks: One & Two Part

Early commercial buildings in the late 1800s often appear as a one-part commercial block: a one or two-story box with ornamented façade or false-front façade. The first floor façade is comprised of plate glass windows, an entry and a cornice or tall parapet above. The false-front arrangement is often seen on smaller buildings of wood frame construction, built during that later half of the 19th century to "create the commercial core of new towns during their initial period of development".

In Aledo, the business district is comprised of One- and Two-Part Commercial Blocks. Commercial Blocks are one-to four-stories, typically built before 1950. However, a contemporary commercial structure may have been built on an infill parcel on a traditionally-commercial street. Whether or not, this type of building shares party walls with an adjacent building, generally only the front of a Commercial Block has any architectural detailing.

One-story commercial blocks are almost always One-Part Commercial. This distinction is made according to the visual arrangement of the principal façade. Two or more story Commercial Blocks may be classified as One-Part Commercial Blocks if the facade can be read as a single design element, with no projecting cornice or other strong horizontal design element dividing the first floor from the upper floors.

The buildings are located at the front of lot lines, along public sidewalks, and have display windows facing that sidewalk. There are usually no display windows, public entrances, or architectural treatment on the side facades, although occasionally a larger Commercial Block may have part or all of the side façades treated similarly to the front.

There are forty-nine Commercial Blocks which account for 60% of buildings in the DAHD. Excellent examples of the Commercial Block type can be found on the north side of the 100-Block of East Main Street or the west side of the 100 and 200-Blocks of South College Avenue.

Temple-Front

The Temple-Front commercial building is directly modeled after the ancient Greek and Roman Temples. These buildings are typically two to three stories in height and were most often for public, institutional, and religious uses. Temple-Front buildings are easily distinguished by a portico of four or more columns extending across the façade or by a recessed entry front by twin columns set in between of enframing wall.

The Farmers National Bank at 101 East Main Street is the only example of the Temple-Front building type in the DAHD. Temple-Front accounts for 1% of building types in the District.

False-Front

A False-Front is an applied or fake front façade. False-fronts are easily identifiable by the extension of the applied front façade above the building's roofline and lack of depth to the storefront. False-fronts usually reference popular or historic architectural styles.

As mentioned above in the Contemporary style, there are eleven buildings with false-fronts which make up 13 % of buildings in the DAHD. Examples include the W.C. Galloway Grocery Store at 119 South College Avenue, 115 East Main Street, and 116 Northwest 2nd Avenue.

Freestanding

Freestanding buildings are typically one story, occasionally two stories, but differ from Commercial Blocks in that they have architectural treatment on two or more sides. They are newer, having been built in the age of automobile access. The entry is usually accessible from the street, often oriented to a parking lot on the side or surrounding the building. The structure may occupy an entire city block and be surrounded by parking.

There are six Freestanding buildings which account for 7% of buildings in the DAHD. Examples of the Freestanding building type are the National Bank of Aledo building at 201 West Main Street, Farmer's State Bank of Western Illinois at 201 South College, and Frontier Communications at 206 Southeast 3rd Avenue.

Gas Stations And Other Road-Related Buildings

With the growing popularity and dependence upon the automobile that began in the 1920s, buildings serving automobile traffic, such as the gasoline station and the commercial garage, emerged along America's expanding network of roads and highways. In the mid-1920s, the automobile was one of the chief factors that boosted business in Aledo.

Along Main Street and College Avenue, major arterial roads through Aledo , was the steady development of a commercial district often catering to travelers. Consequently, a number of automobile service facilities located on and adjacent to Main Street and College Avenue.

It was at this time that major gasoline companies began to expand their facilities and created look-alike retail gasoline outlets in which logos, color schemes, signage, and building architecture contributed to a total design of their business. In the following years, architects were employed to create designs for gas stations using Colonial and English details that mimicked current suburban styles. A station in a historic revival style would blend into middle-and upper-middle class areas, where opposition to a gas station may have occurred.

Automobile service garages are simple buildings, usually one-story, sometimes two with an office or storage above. These building are most often masonry construction with a barrel vault or bowstring truss roof. Architectural styles used can range from Italianate, Late Classical Revival, Moderne, or Exotic Revivals.

There are ten road-related buildings or 12% of buildings in the DAHD. Examples of road-related buildings are the Standard Oil Stations at 222 West Main Street and 112 South College Avenue and the filling and service station at 222 East Main Street.

Conclusion

Aledo's commercial, social, educational, and transportation history is depicted through the notable architecture of the District. The DAHD represents the development of Aledo and Mercer County during the mid to late 1800s locally and regionally. Today, the Downtown Aledo Historic District, which continues to serve the community with many of the same services it provided historically, has sufficient social, recreational, commercial, educational, and transportation history and architectural integrity for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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Aledo Main Street Archives
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
Mercer County Historical Society Archives

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:
_x___State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 28.8

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 41.203425° Longitude: -90.749189°

2. Latitude: 41.203402° Longitude: -90.750398°

3. Latitude: 41.201719° Longitude: -90.751626°

4. Latitude: 41.200840° Longitude: -90.751644°

5. Latitude: 41.199067° Longitude: -90.750511°

6. Latitude: 41.199016° Longitude: -90.748102°

7. Latitude: 41.200607° Longitude: -90.746980°

8. Latitude: 41.202076° Longitude: -90.746914°

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

100 and 200 Blocks of North College Avenue; 100, 200, and 300 Blocks of South College Avenue; 100 and 200 Blocks of East Main Street; 100 Block of West Main Street; 100 Block of Northwest 2nd Avenue; 200 Block of Southeast 2nd Avenue; 100 and 200 Blocks of Southwest 2nd Avenue; 100 Block of Northwest 2nd Street; 100 Block of Southeast 2nd Street; 100 Block of Southwest 2nd Street; 100 Block of Southeast 3rd Avenue; 100, 200, and 300 Blocks of Southeast 3rd Street; and the 100 Block of Southwest 3rd Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries selected are based on historical written narratives, Sanborn Maps, and historic photographs which depict the location of the historic downtown Aledo.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Erica Ruggiero
organization: McGuire Igleski & Associates, Inc.
street & number: 1330 Sherman Avenue, Suite A
city or town: Evanston state: Illinois zip code: 60201
e-mail: erica@miarchitects.com
telephone: 847.328.5679 ext. 114
date: November 16, 2015

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Downtown Aledo Historic District

City or Vicinity: Aledo

County: Mercer State: Illinois

Photographer: Erica Ruggiero

Date Photographed: September 30, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of the Old Aledo Public High and Grade School looking northwest.
1 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Front (west) façade looking east of the Mercer Carnegie Library.
2 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Front (east) façade looking west of the United States Post Office.
3 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of North College Avenue looking southeast from the northwest corner of North College Avenue and Northwest 2nd Street.
4 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The Button House and 100-Block of North College Avenue looking northwest.
5 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of the Davis Building, McKinney Block, and north side of the 100-Block of East Main Street looking northeast.
6 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The Button House and 100-Block of West Main Street looking northwest.
7 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The west side of the 100-Block of South College Avenue looking southwest.
8 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The west side of 100-Block of South College Avenue looking northwest.
9 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The Standard Oil Service and Filling Station on Southeast 2nd street looking northeast.
10 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The north side of the 100-Block of Southeast 2nd Street (foreground) and 113-129 of South College Avenue (background) looking northwest.
11 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The west side of the 200-Block of South College Avenue looking west.
12 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The south side of the 100-Block of East Main Street looking southeast.
13 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The north side of the 100-Block of East Main Street looking northwest.
14 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The intersection of Northeast 2nd Avenue and East Main Street looking north.
15 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of the Stevenson Flats Building looking southeast.
16 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Front (west) façade looking east of the Aledo Opera House.
17 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy Railroad Depot looking southwest.
18 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Mercer County Courthouse looking southeast.
19 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Mercer County Farm Bureau Building looking south.
20 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of Tastee-Freez looking south.
21 of 22.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Standard Oil Filling and Service Station on West Main Street looking southeast.
22 of 22.

FIGURE 1: GIS MAP OF DISTRICT

1. Latitude: 41.203425° Longitude: -90.749189°
2. Latitude: 41.203402° Longitude: -90.750398°
3. Latitude: 41.201719° Longitude: -90.751626°
4. Latitude: 41.200840° Longitude: -90.751644°
5. Latitude: 41.199067° Longitude: -90.750511°
6. Latitude: 41.199016° Longitude: -90.748102°
7. Latitude: 41.200607° Longitude: -90.746980°
8. Latitude: 41.202076° Longitude: -90.746914

ALEDO DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT
NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT BOUNDARY

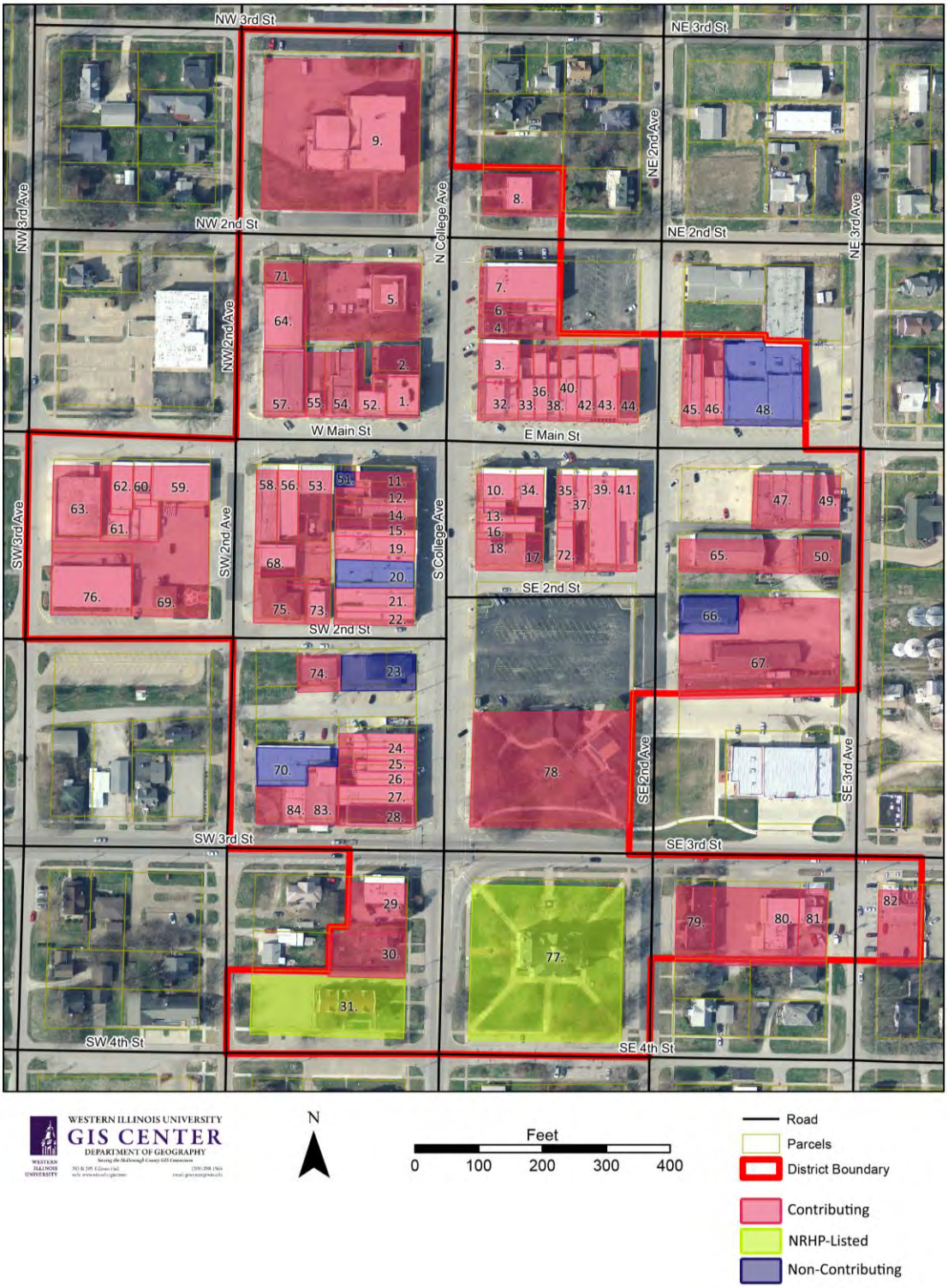


FIGURE 2: BUILDING KEY

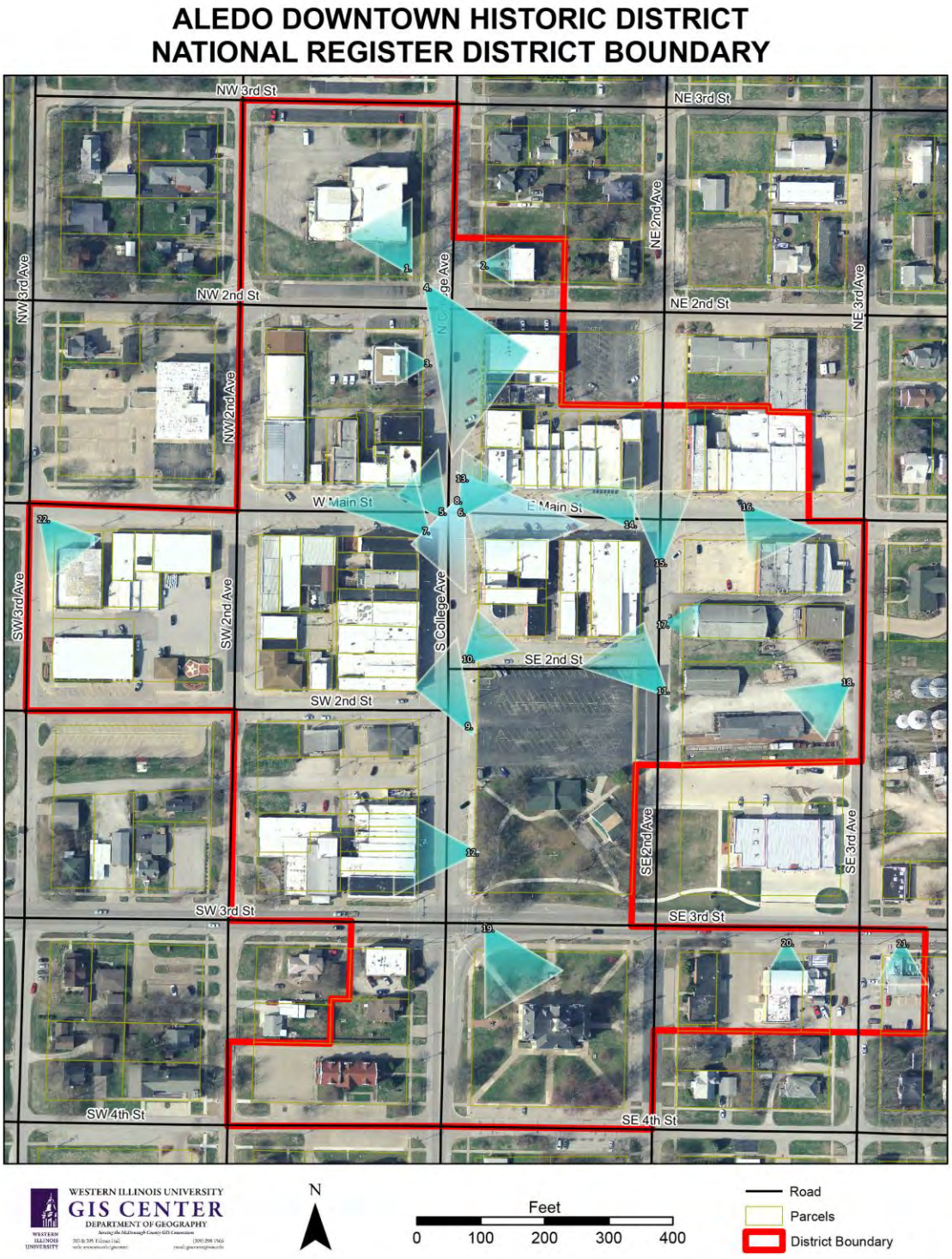


FIGURE 3: PHOTOGRAPH KEY *Photograph numbers mark the location of the camera.

Historic Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Downtown Aledo Historic District

City or Vicinity: Aledo

County: Mercer State: Illinois

Photographer: Carlson Studios

Date Photographed: N/A

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Part 1 Panoramic of the north side of the 100-Block of West Main Street.
1 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Part 2 Panoramic of the north side of the 100-Block of West Main Street.
2 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of Central Park.
3 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Farmers Band of Mercer County out front of the west side of the 200-Block of South College Avenue.
4 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: First locomotive to enter Aledo on March 8, 1869.
5 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Mercer County Autos Parade on July 18, 1912 in Central Park. Camera is facing northwest.
6 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Aledo Centennial Parade on July 4, 1955 on South College Avenue. Central Park is in the mid-ground and the 100-Block of Southeast 2nd Street in the background.
7 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Panoramic view of the Dan Laughlin Horse Sale on January 31, 1914 at the intersection of College Avenue and Main Street.
8 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of South College Avenue looking northwest from Route 17.
9 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking north on South College Avenue from the railroad crossing located between the 100 and 200-Blocks.
10 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Aerial view of Aledo. College Avenue is the multi-lane road which runs through the center of the photograph.
11 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: South College Avenue looking northeast from the roof of a building on the 200-Block. 12 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of Aledo looking northwest from the roof of the Mercer County Courthouse. 13 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: On the right is a view of East 7th Street (Main Street) looking west. On the left is a view of the west side of 100-Block of South College Avenue.
14 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of West 7th Street (Main Street) looking east from Southwest 2nd Avenue.
15 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of the north side of the 100-Block on East 7th Street (Main Street).
16 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Mercer County Farm Bureau looking southwest.
17 of 30.

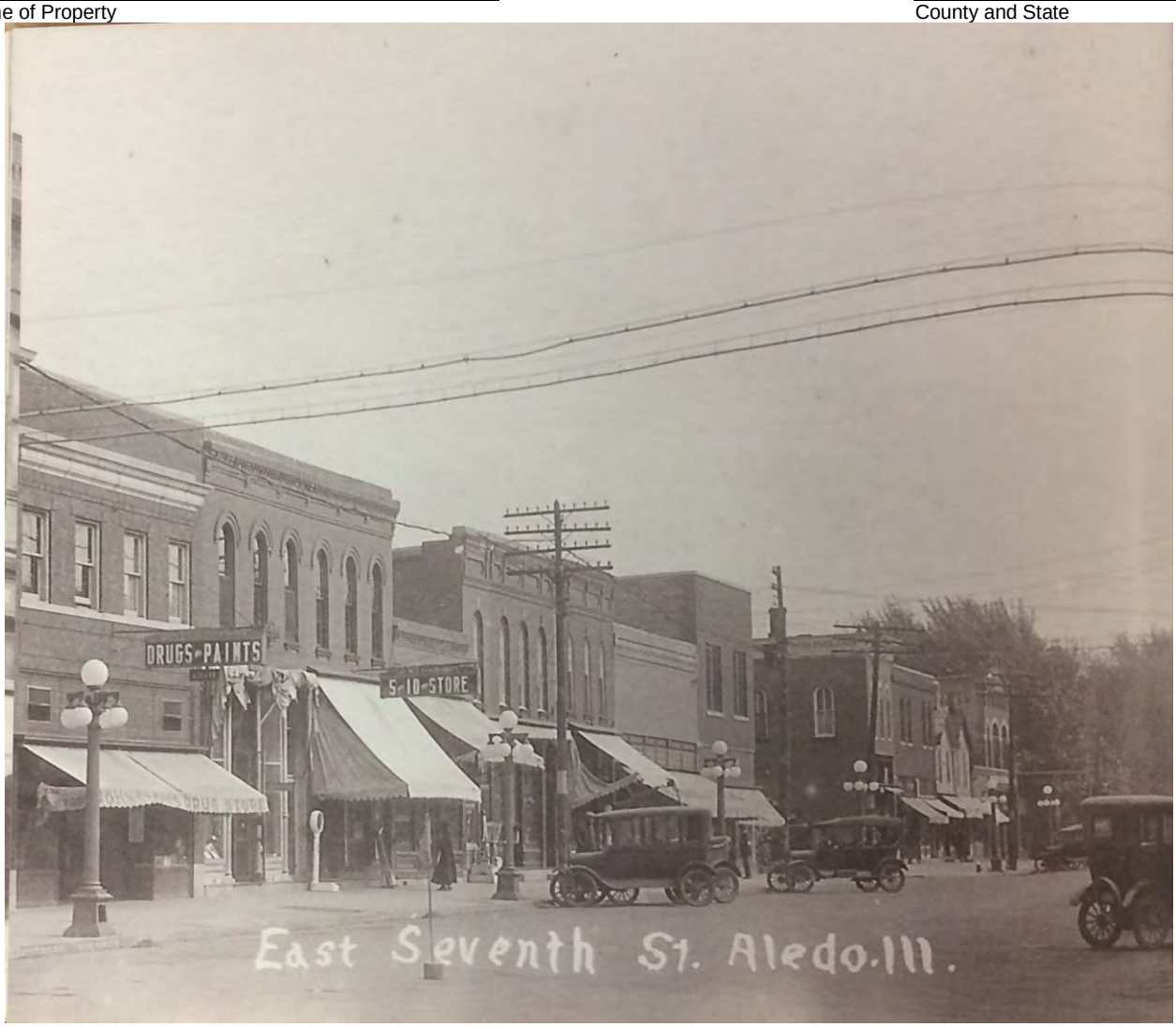
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The Aledo Opera House looking east.
18 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Wells Hardware on South College Avenue looking west.
19 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View Detwiler Bros. Hardware Store on East 7th Street (Main Street) looking south. 20 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Standard Oil Service and Filling Station at the southeast corner of East 7th Street (Main Street) and South Locust (Southwest 2nd Avenue).
21 of 30.

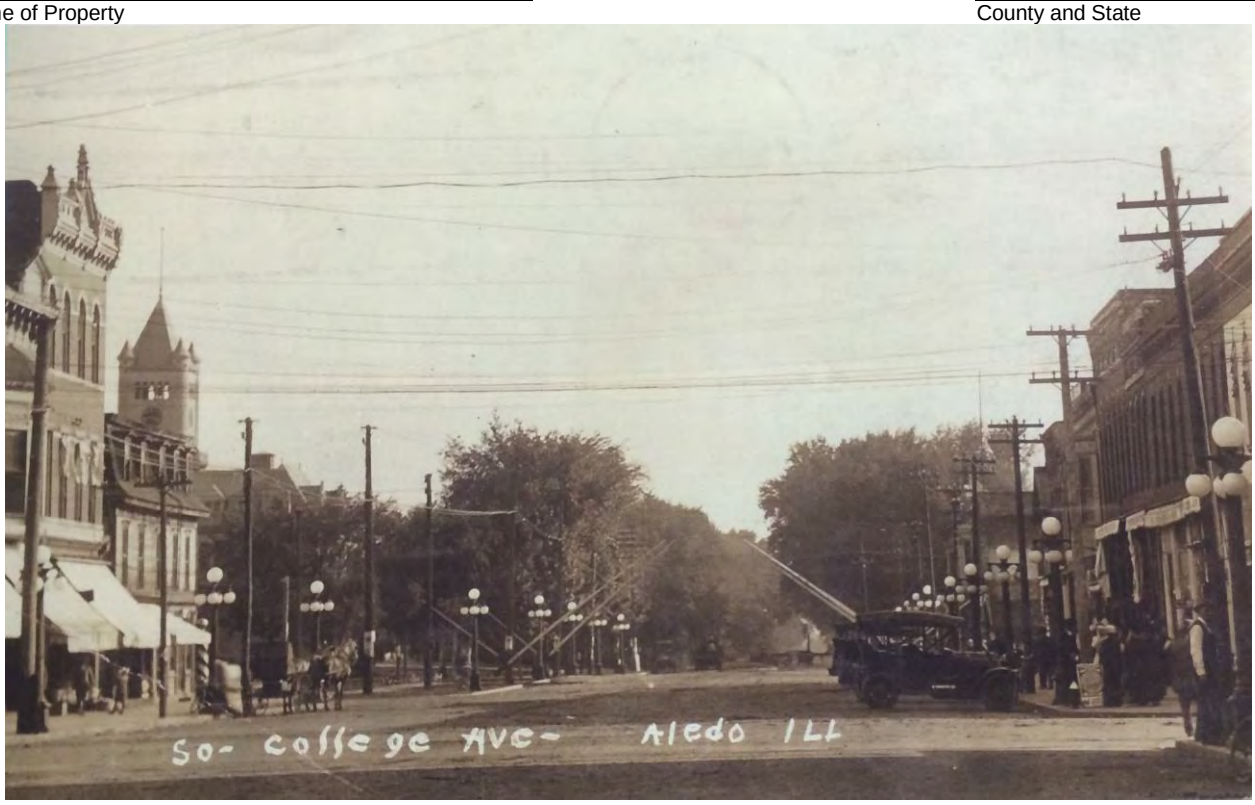
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Standard Oil Filling and Service Stations on Southeast 2nd Street looking northeast. 22 of 30.



Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of the north side of East 7th Street (Main Street).
23 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of the west side of the 100-Block of South College Avenue.
24 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View From right to left, 119, 125, and 129 South College Avenue looking west. The frame building for Calderone's Grocery Store was replaced by the family with the current masonry building in 1910s.
25 of 30.



Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of the South College Avenue looking south.
26 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The south side of the 100-Block of East 7th Street (Main Street) looking southeast.
27 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: The north side of the 100-Block of East 7th Street (Main Street) looking northwest. 28 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: View of 7th Street (Main Street).
29 of 30.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Historic comparison of the west side of the 100-Block of South College Avenue in 1875(left) and 1887 (right).
30 of 30.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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