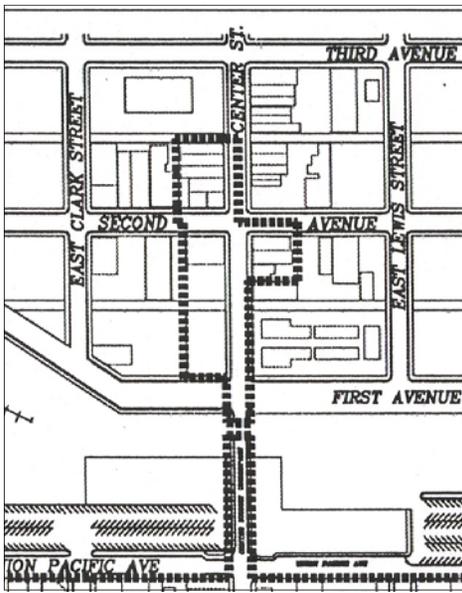


East Side Downtown Walking Tour Brochure



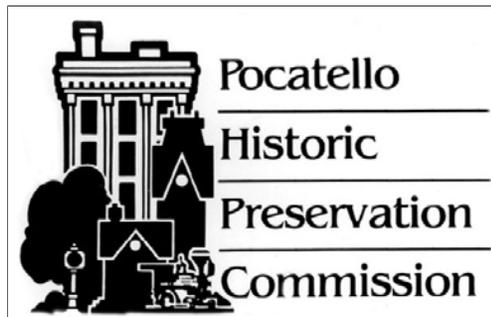
Boundaries of the east side of the
Downtown Historic District.

Acknowledgements:

Source: Eastside Downtown Historic District Nomination

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Historic Significance—The East Side Downtown Historic District is historically significant for its association with Pocatello’s ethnic communities, early development of the City as a commercial center in southeast Idaho, and the development of local government. The district is architecturally significant as a nearly intact commercial streetscape from the period 1900-1940 and for its representation of local styles and types of architecture from that period.

Ethnic Heritage—The East Side Downtown and nearby residential area to the north developed into a multi-ethnic neighborhood beginning as early as 1885, when “Chinese quarters” can be documented in the area. As Pocatello developed into a major railroad junction, railroad work attracted numerous ethnic groups. As early as the 1890s African Americans, Greeks, Italians, and Japanese came to Pocatello to work for the railroad. Alongside the ethnic neighborhood an ethnic subeconomy developed. The East Side Downtown served these communities with specialized grocery stores and a few ethnically-specific clubs, services, and lodging houses. Ethnic businesses flourished in the early development of the area and remained important into at least the 1930s. By 1940 the ethnic neighborhoods had come to be seen as “undesirable” which fueled post-World War II efforts by the Pocatello Housing Authority and the Chamber of Commerce to clear the area for commercial investment. A large portion of the former ethnic residential neighborhood has been demolished and/or rebuilt for commercial use. The East Side Downtown Historic District is one of the remnants that survives to document the ethnic community’s part in Pocatello history.

Commercial Development—Pocatello was established in 1882 as a division point for the Oregon Short Line railroad. It developed into a major commercial center for southeast Idaho because of its location at a rail junction. The East Side commercial area was at the eastern edge of the original right-of-way for Pocatello Junction. Pocatello’s first commercial streetscape developed on the east side as a series of frame buildings with storefronts facing the railroad tracks. East Center developed next and by the 1890s commercial development had also begun on Center west of the tracks. West Center and the area around it eventually became the main Pocatello downtown, while the East Side experienced development more slowly and in a series of phases connected with ethnic settlement. Between 1900 and 1920 Pocatello experienced a local economic and population boom. Much of the current streetscape on the East Side developed in the latter half of the period, after a viaduct created one of the few links between west and east Pocatello. Before 1912 the East Side had only a few brick buildings, most of which have been demolished. The East Side experienced a phase of growth and development with the new availability of automobiles beginning locally around 1910. Because the area was close to Yellowstone Highway (now Fifth Avenue) and had more vacant lots than the West Side commercial district, the East Side was a natural location for automobile garages and dealerships.

Government Development—The development of the East Side as a location for governmental agencies and offices began as early as 1902-07, when the police station was located on the East Side just south of the present historic district and in a block that was otherwise occupied by houses of prostitution. City and county governmental buildings continued to locate in the area, creating a sense of the area as a governmental center. In 1912 city offices were located under the viaduct on the East Side and were later moved to the Church-White Building. In 1938 the City used PWA/WPA monies to remodel a series of brick stores at Center and 1st North into a municipal building.

East Side Downtown Architecture

The East Side Downtown Historic District presents a nearly intact commercial streetscape from the period 1900-1940. The district retains buildings on their original locations, with the consistent setback characteristic of the period. Many buildings present original or early storefront materials and configurations, and upper stories are mostly intact, giving the viewer a feeling of the district's historic associations from the presence of original fabric (brick, stone, concrete) and design elements (stepped brickwork, cornices, double-hung sash windows, terra cotta ornamentation).

The principal styles present in the district are Renaissance Revival, which was used extensively in Pocatello during the 1910s for commercial blocks, and Art Deco, which was used throughout southeast and south-central Idaho in both PWA/WPA and privately-funded projects, often for institutional buildings.

Two buildings in the district represent the work of a noteworthy Pocatello architect, Frank H. Paradise, Jr. Paradise was responsible for numerous local buildings, including many already listed in the National Register as part of the Pocatello Historic District (the West Side commercial area) and the ISU Administration Building. In his early work Paradise favored Renaissance Revival style. The Church-White Building is a good example of this early work, which retains original materials on both office and storefront levels. The former City Building is a good example of Paradise's later work, in which he used terra cotta to create Art Deco style ornamentation.



Church-White Building—NE Corner of Center and 2nd Avenue

This building was designed by Pocatello architect Frank H. Paradise, Jr. and was under construction in the autumn of 1915. This building housed the People's Market which opened in 1918 and the Tourraine Hotel from 1920-1975. It also housed the Mikado Pool Hall and Barbershop during the 1920's which served Pocatello's Japanese community. This building was also

McNichols Building, 251 E. Center—1915

This three-story brick commercial block in the Renaissance Revival style contains a protruding cornice and column-like courses at the building's corners. The building was completed in 1915 even though the parapet reads 1913. The store front has been radically remodeled with a modern awning, wood siding and small single-pane windows. The building has been occupied by a variety of office and commercial tenants.



Auditorium Opera House—237 E. Center—1900/1939

This is a two-story brick building with stucco applied to its front wall in an Art Deco style suggested by the outset piers which punctuate the front wall. The Art Deco features date from a 1939 remodeling after a fire. The building originally contained three stories, but the third story was removed during this remodel project. This building was constructed in 1900 as the Auditorium Opera House which offered road shows, local amateur shows, vaudeville, and films. After 1929 the theater showed mostly films. After 1939 the building use was converted to a furniture store and Southeast Furniture has occupied the building from 1944 to the present.

Idello Hotel 246/250/252 E. Center—1907-15/1919-21

This building first appears on the 1915 Sanborn map as a one-story brick building, but by 1921 two stories had been added and the building housed a hotel. This building is also associated with Greek, Japanese and Jewish businesses in early Pocatello history.



City Building, 210 E. Center—1915-21/1938

This one-story building is brick with Art Deco terra cotta facades along 1st and Center Avenues. Until 1938 these buildings housed a variety of businesses, including Jewish entrepreneur Nate Block's clothing store. In 1938 the buildings were acquired by the City of Pocatello and remodeled into a city office building using PWA/WPA monies and an architectural design by Frank H. Paradise, Jr. In this project the Federal monies allowed the City to create its first full-fledged municipal building.



309/321/327 E. Center—1915-21

This one-story brick building has a plain brick facade and retains the character, but not materials, of early twentieth-century storefronts. The building was erected between 1915 and 1921 and has housed cafés, bookstores, grocery and drug stores.