

Pocatello Downtown Historic District



Walking Tour



Pocatello
Historic
Preservation
Commission



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Introduction and Guide to Pocatello Architecture

This guide has been developed in response to the interest shown in Pocatello's historic architecture. It provides a sampling of the architectural landmarks which give Pocatello its unique sense of place. Designed to provide an adventure into the past, this brochure will hopefully convince readers that such valuable "old friends" are worth keeping. Pocatello is a unique city, not only in the name it shares with no other, but because of its Downtown Historic District.

This district is architecturally and historically significant and is one of the region's most diverse and well-preserved urban streetscapes. Founded in 1882 and named for a chief of the Shoshone-Bannock Indian tribe, Pocatello began as a collection of boxcars and construction workers' tents on the Indian reservation where 40 acres had been

set aside for the railroad. A special act of Congress on September 1, 1888 created the original townsite and a temporary business district was developed.

Pocatello owes its foundation to the railroad industry. With the construction of the Utah

Northern route in 1878 and the Oregon Short Line in 1882, Pocatello's future as a north-south junction point became assured. The appellation "The Gate City" was acquired because of Pocatello's early importance as a junction point and rail route through the mountains.

This overview addresses the Downtown Historic District. Sixteen buildings are highlighted in this brochure, though there are many other historical structures. The Downtown Historic District is composed primarily of one and two-story commercial buildings. Many of the buildings are architecturally significant to the district

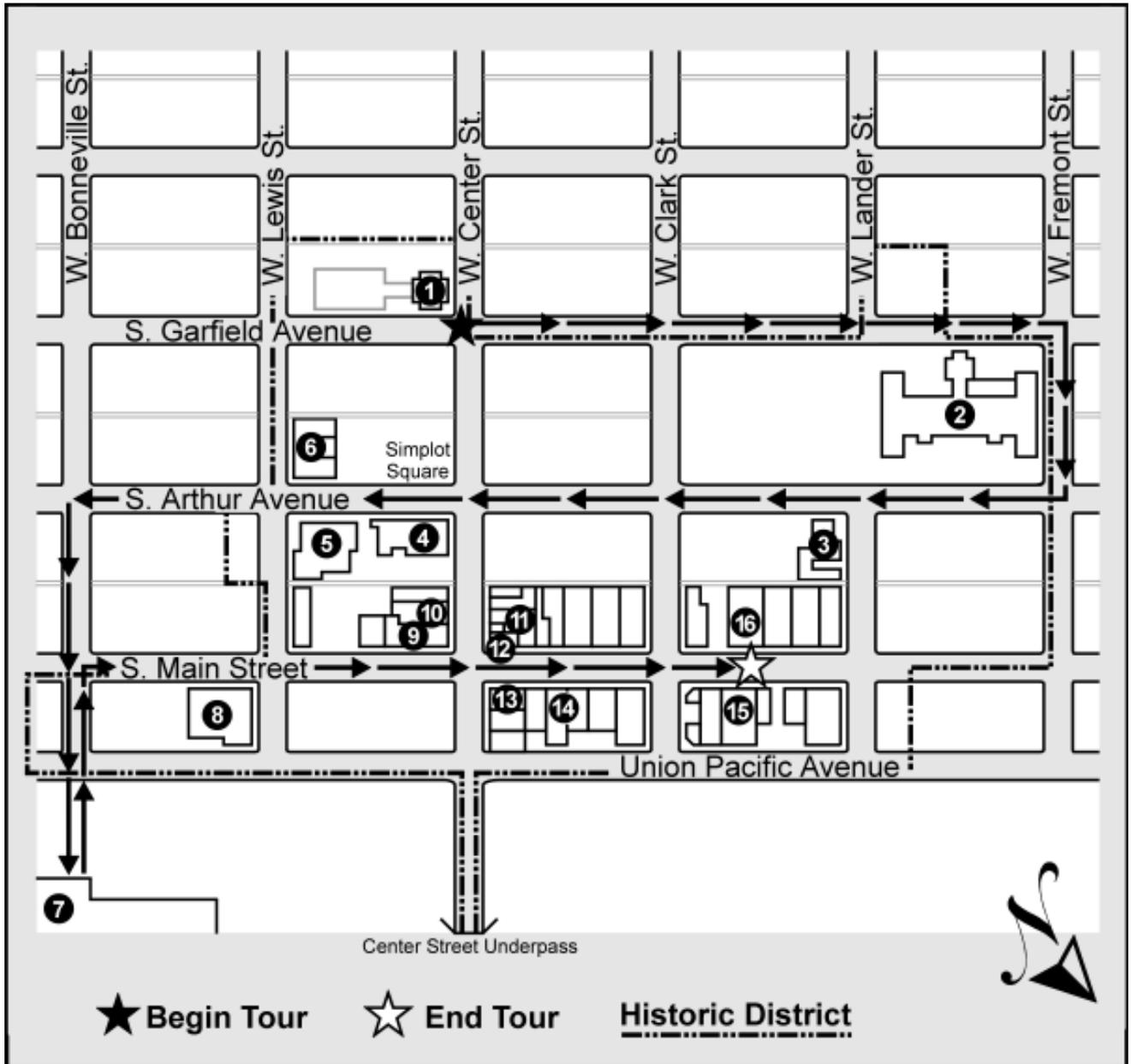


while others have undergone major facade changes which have altered their historic value. This brochure concentrates on those properties possessing the most intact architecture. The primary building material throughout the district is brick, although hand-hewn stone and terra cotta were also used. The predominant facade line on the top of many second floors is accentuated by a sheet metal cornice. A variety of architectural styles are represented in the district, including Gothic Revival, Romanesque Revival, Sullivanesque and Art Deco, as well as many adaptations of early 20th-century commercial styles with classical details rendered in either sheet metal or terra cotta.

Downtown Pocatello features a unique blend of the old and the new. Together these diverse elements combine to convey a strong sense of historical continuity. One of the oldest buildings in the district is the Idaho Furniture Block (The Paris) which was built in 1892. Built of rusticated sandstone, this building is in excellent condition. One of the newest buildings in the district is the Idaho First National Bank (now US Bank) which was completed in 1982. These newer buildings have a distinct place within the district as do those which have undergone remodeling or removal of some of the original fabric from the building. In recent years, many property owners have renovated their buildings in a manner sympathetic with the original architecture. The general trend in the area now seems to be toward rehabilitation rather than redesigning or disguising of the historic facades as evidenced by recent restorations.



Downtown Historic District West Side Map





1. Carnegie Library 101 N. Garfield

Built with a \$12,000 grant from Andrew Carnegie (Pittsburgh, PA steel magnate and philanthropist), this was Pocatello's first library and an outstanding example of Palladian Villa architecture. The cornerstone was laid on October 16, 1907 and contains a letter from Carnegie, names of the mayor and city council members, coins of 1907, and copies of three local newspapers. A modern addition built in 1993 allows the historic library to continue serving the community.



2. Pocatello High School 300 N. Arthur

This building is an excellent example of the workmanship and attitude of the people who designed and constructed it. Originally the high school was constructed in 1892 of rusticated sandstone. Twenty-five years after a major fire in 1914, the building was essentially rebuilt in 1939 as a W.P.A. effort. Frank Paradice, a prominent Pocatello architect, re-designed the building in an Art Deco style featuring elaborate brick and terra cotta details. During the 1991-92 school year the school's centennial was observed. In the mid-90's an interior restoration modernized the building so it can continue to be used as one of the community's three high schools.



3. Trinity Episcopal Church 248 N. Arthur

Completed in 1898, this church in Gothic Revival Style was the first stone Episcopal church in Idaho. It is one of the few 19th-century stone churches remaining in the state. Buttresses, lancet windows and arched portals add grace to the structure.



4. Valentine Building 100 S. Arthur

Also designed by Frank Paradice and built in 1916, the Valentine Building is of Neoclassical Revival style. It is distinguished by the white terra cotta facades and fine details, and is one of the best examples in the state of a terra cotta facade. The Valentine Building was constructed to house the First National Bank. Carl Valentine was a sheep rancher who, through his banking and real estate activities, became one of the most prominent businessmen in Southeastern Idaho.



5. Federal Building 150 S. Arthur

This is the only building in the district which was built as a government facility. Constructed in 1916, the Federal Building is in excellent condition with the upper floors currently housing several professional offices. Originally this structure served as Pocatello's post office and federal office building.



6. North Building Northwest corner of Lewis & Arthur

Originally owned by George H. North, an early Pocatello clothier, the North Building on the northwest corner of Lewis and Arthur was built in 1916. Constructed of cream-colored brick, the structure has a sheet metal cornice. Commercial space is rented on the ground floor and apartments are located in the upper-story.



7. Union Pacific Depot

The first floor of the Oregon Short Line passenger depot is constructed of dressed grey ashlar; the remainder is of red brick. Three massive round arches mark the street-side entrance; the brick over the arches is laid in a decorative herringbone pattern. Unaltered on the exterior, the depot also retains a great deal of its early interior design. In addition to housing the passenger depot, the building contained the offices of the Montana and Idaho divisions of the Oregon Short Line. U.S. President William Howard Taft attended the station's dedication, held on August 20, 1915.



8. Fargo Building 200 S. Main (Station Square)

Designed by Pocatello architect Frank Paradice and built in 1916, this two-story cream-colored brick building is topped by a sheet-metal cornice on both street facades. The second floor windows are all double-hung sash, and an atrium provides light for the second floor apartments. An addition to the south side of the building was completed before 1937 and features the same design as the original structure. The building originally opened on October 7, 1916, and housed the Fargo-Wilson-Wells Mercantile Company.



**9. Central Building - 105 S. Main
(formerly Harrison's Jewelers)**

The Central Building was designed by Pocatello architect Frank Paradise and was completed in the summer of 1929. The two-story commercial building features gold-brown contrast with black, blue, ivory, and gold terra cotta trim. Except for minor storefront window and sign alterations, the building is unaltered.



**10. Kane Building
315 W. Center**

Built in 1914, this cream-colored brick building features a large, bracketed terra cotta cornice and a terra cotta parapet. It was designed by Pocatello architect Charles B. Onderdonk. The Kane Building was named after its original owner, James F. Kane, who came to Pocatello in 1890 and established the largest grocery store in the city. The building was the first in Pocatello to have a passenger elevator.



**11. Sonnenkalb Building
312 W. Center & 125 N. Main**

Designed by Pocatello architect Marcus Grundfor, this two-story cream-colored brick building was constructed in 1914 and 1915. Inter-connected with a secondary storefront at 312 West Center, the first floor of this structure originally housed the People's Store (a dry goods and clothing establishment). The second floor was occupied by professional offices, including those of the building owner Oscar Sonnenkalb, a German-born civil engineer, who was very prominent in the early development of Southeastern Idaho.



**12. Seavers Building
101 N. Main
(Myers/Anderson Architects)**

This building was constructed in 1900 and is in the Romanesque Revival Style. A large second-floor turret with crenulation crowns the building's unique corner entrance. This building is a great example of a restoration/renovation project of a structure formerly classified as "intrusive." Named for Charles Seavers, the building is best remembered as the Temple Pharmacy.



**13. Idaho Furniture Co. Building -
102 N. Main (The Paris)**

This two-story rusticated sandstone building, built in 1892, is an example of the Richardson Romanesque style and was one of the first stone buildings in Pocatello. This structure, along with the Pioneer Block Building, represented a true commitment to Pocatello's new downtown.



**14. Franklin Building
120 N. Main (Molinelli's Jewelers)**

This two-story building was constructed in 1915 and was named for its first owner, N.G. Franklin. The first floor contained the Bannock National Bank while the second floor served as a Knights of Pythias Hall. In the words of architect Frank Paradise, this Italian Renaissance Revival style building was "the first real terra cotta job in Pocatello."



**15. Petersen's Furniture
224 N. Main (Scott's Ski & Sports)**

Built in 1914 and constructed of cream-colored brick, this structure's facade is graced by a massive denticulated cornice. Originally owned by T.C. Martin, this building housed Petersen Furniture from 1921 to the late 1990's. Although the store front and transom windows have been remodeled, the original leaded glass P ornamentation on the second and third floor windows is intact.

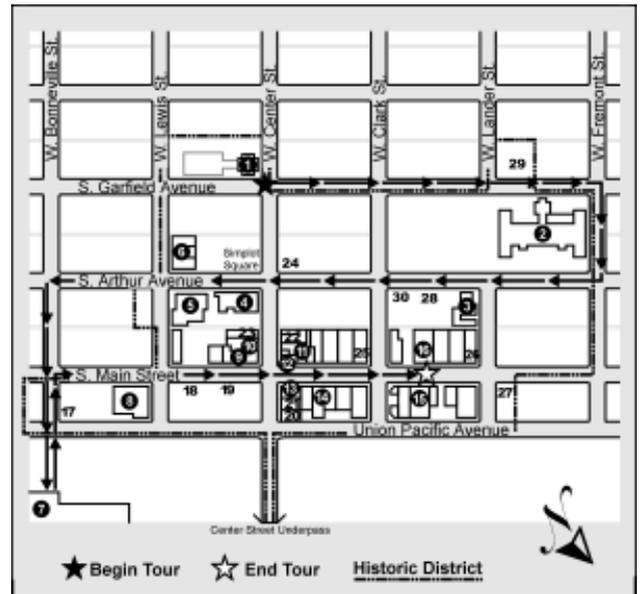


**16. "W.O.W." Building
233 N. Main**

Throughout the district you may find identification plaques at the top of buildings. These plates were often used to identify the year of construction, the owner, or the name of the establishment located within the structure. An interesting example of such a plaque is located on 233 North Main where the inscription of "W.O.W." can be seen. This building was constructed as a lodge hall for the "Woodmen of the World."

Other Significant Downtown Buildings

17. Yellowstone Hotel - 230 W. Bonneville (1916)
18. Kress Building - 150 S. Main
19. Hotel Nicollet - 122 S. Main (Whitman Hotel)
20. Bannock National Bank Building - 232 W. Center (1st National Bar)
21. Monarch Building - 244 W. Center (1909)
22. Walton-Curl Building - 308 W. Center (1892)
23. Ross-Davis Building - 323 W. Center (Pre 1927)
24. Carlson Building - W. Center and Arthur (Key Bank) (1919)
25. Lewis Building - 165 N. Main (1914)
26. Odd Fellow Building - 257 N. Main (1892)
27. Reuss Building (Landpost Building) - 306 N. Main (Oasis) (Pre 1896)
28. Fire Station One - 226 N. Arthur (1902)
29. Congregational Church - 309 N. Garfield (1904)
30. Eagles Building - 206 N. Arthur



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