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OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SUBJECT
TO CHANGE

National Register of Historic Places
Nomination Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Colfax Spring City Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly Division St. to Front St. between Elm St. and Locust St. not for publication N/A

city or town Colfax vicinity N/A

state Iowa code IA county Jasper code 099 zip code 50054

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 _____ nationally _____ statewide x locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

State Historical Society of Iowa

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Colfax Spring City Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Jasper, Iowa
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property (do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>28</u>	<u>12</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>32</u>	<u>16</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0 (none)

"Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture" MPD (2002)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: Specialty Store

COMMERCE: Financial Institution

COMMERCE: Restaurant

COMMERCE: Business

GOVERNMENT: City Hall

GOVERNMENT: Fire Station

GOVERNMENT: Post Office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: Specialty Store

COMMERCE: Restaurant

COMMERCE: Business

EDUCATION: Library

INDUSTRY: Communications Facility

VACANT/NOT IN USE

DOMESTIC: Multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Beaux Arts

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Tudor Revival

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Late Gothic Revival

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Prairie School

MODERN MOVEMENT

MIXED

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

STUCCO

roof BUILT UP

other CONCRETE

STONE

CERAMIC TILE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Colfax Spring City Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Jasper, Iowa
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

HEALTH/MEDICINE

Period of Significance

1881-1960

Significant Dates

1881

1960

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson

Harris, F.A.

Colfax Spring City Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Polk, Iowa
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property about 11 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

(Enter coordinates to 6 decimal places; place additional references on a continuation sheet)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

	Latitude	Longitude
1	<u>41.676928</u>	<u>-93.246979</u>
2	<u>41.677978</u>	<u>-93.247129</u>

	Latitude	Longitude
3	<u>41.676351</u>	<u>-93.243868</u>
4	<u>41.678867</u>	<u>-93.246143</u>

☐ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jennifer James, MAHP organization Jennifer James Communications, LC
street & number 4209 Kingman Blvd. telephone 515/250-7196 email jenjames123@gmail.com
city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50311 date November 29, 2017 REV

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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

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

Photographs: Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Various, to be attached
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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6. Function or Use (continued):

EDUCATION: Library
INDUSTRY: Communications Facility
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: Extractive and Manufacturing Facility
AGRICULTURE: Processing
RELIGION: Religious Facility
RELIGION: Church-related Residence
RECREATION: Outdoor Recreation
SOCIAL: Meeting Hall
HEALTHCARE: Medical Business/Office
LANDSCAPE: Park

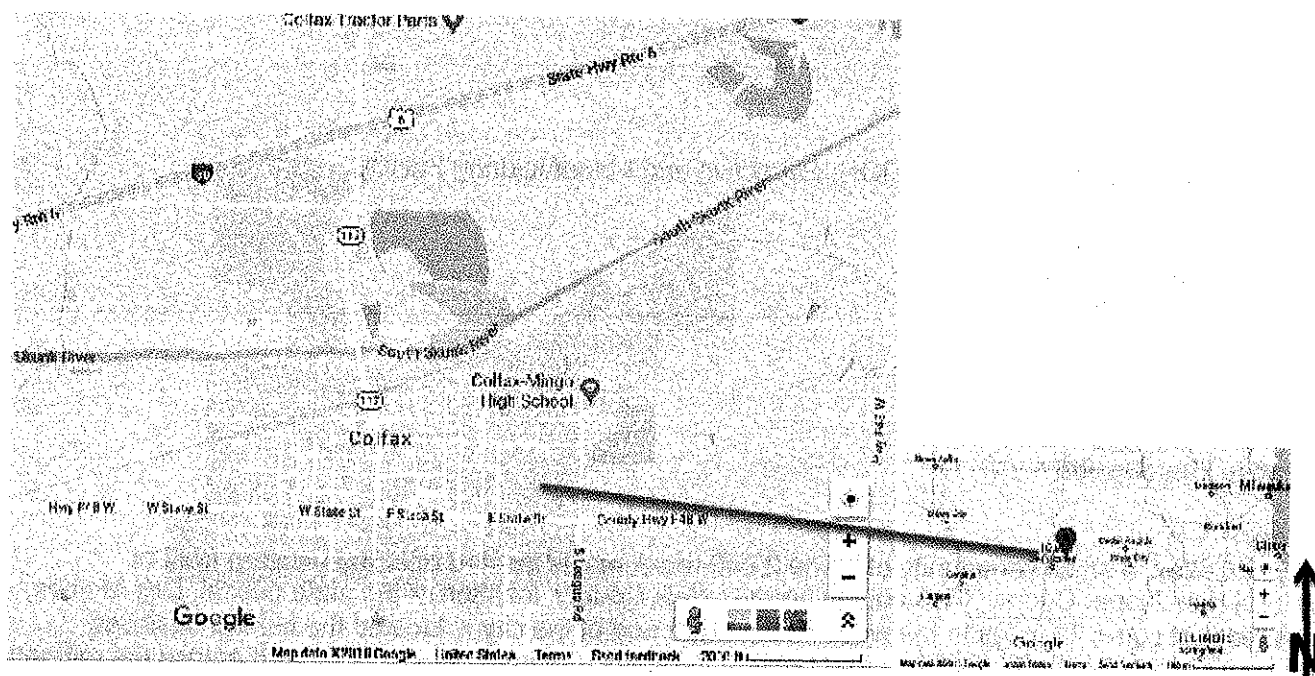
7. Narrative Description

Summary

The city of Colfax, a small community of some 2,000 residents, is located near the western front of agricultural-rich Jasper County. This county borders Polk County, location of the state capital, Des Moines, which is located some 23 miles to the west. At the north end of the city is located the central business district, south of the South Skunk River and railroad in Colfax; the area directly north and across the railroad tracks is an industrial and agricultural processing district. The community was platted as a railroad and farm-to-market town in the 1860s, the subsequent discovery of mineral water led to mineral water-related health resort growth (medical, commercial, industrial, and social growth). The district reflects the community's expansion from small railroad farm-to-market town to a mineral-water-supported small city of several thousand; after changes in medical field led to a marked decline in mineral water usage, the community further expanded its farm-to-market sector in the late interwar and post-war eras to retain commercial viability. The commercial district retained local importance until the interstate freeway was opened in 1960. The contributing/noncontributing status of the properties within the district is summarized in Table 1 at the end of this section.

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Figures 1 and 2: Iowa map showing central location of Colfax east of capital city Des Moines, south of Interstate 80 and the South Skunk River. (Google, 2018)

Topography

Jasper County adjoins Polk County, home of Iowa's state capital and most populated city, Des Moines. Colfax is situated on the western edge of Jasper County, some 23 miles east of Des Moines. The central business district and historic core of the city is located south of the South Skunk River, which flows south toward the Mississippi River. The topography of this corner of Jasper County tends to be flat and mostly farmland with some large hills such as the steep residentially developed incline on the east side of Colfax, east of the central business district. The compact business district, measuring several acres, is relatively flat but the grade begins rising steeply to the east. Downtown is surrounded by older tree-lined residential neighborhoods to the east, south, and west. To the north are railroad tracks that run at an angle to cardinal point north; these rail tracks separate the business district from the small industrial district to the north that includes a large abandoned factory complex, modern city water works, mostly modern Jasper County Fair Grounds, a former concrete block manufacturing plant, and an agricultural stock sale barn complex. Directly north of the industrial zone is the South Skunk River; a bridge provides crossing over the river on North Walnut Street, also known as Highway 117. North Walnut Street/Highway 117 is the main route into the city from Interstate 80, traveling south. East-west passage to the town occurs along State Street, formerly Highway 6.

The nearly triangular Original Plat, as it is officially recorded, is a railroad-oriented grid street system, which

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County and State Jasper, Iowa

is surrounded by subsequent plats, most laid out with true east-west orientation, such as those to the south bounded by Division Street. The Original Plat largely developed over time into the downtown central business district, with mineral spring hotels and sanitariums, parks, churches, and the public library clustered on the outer edges.

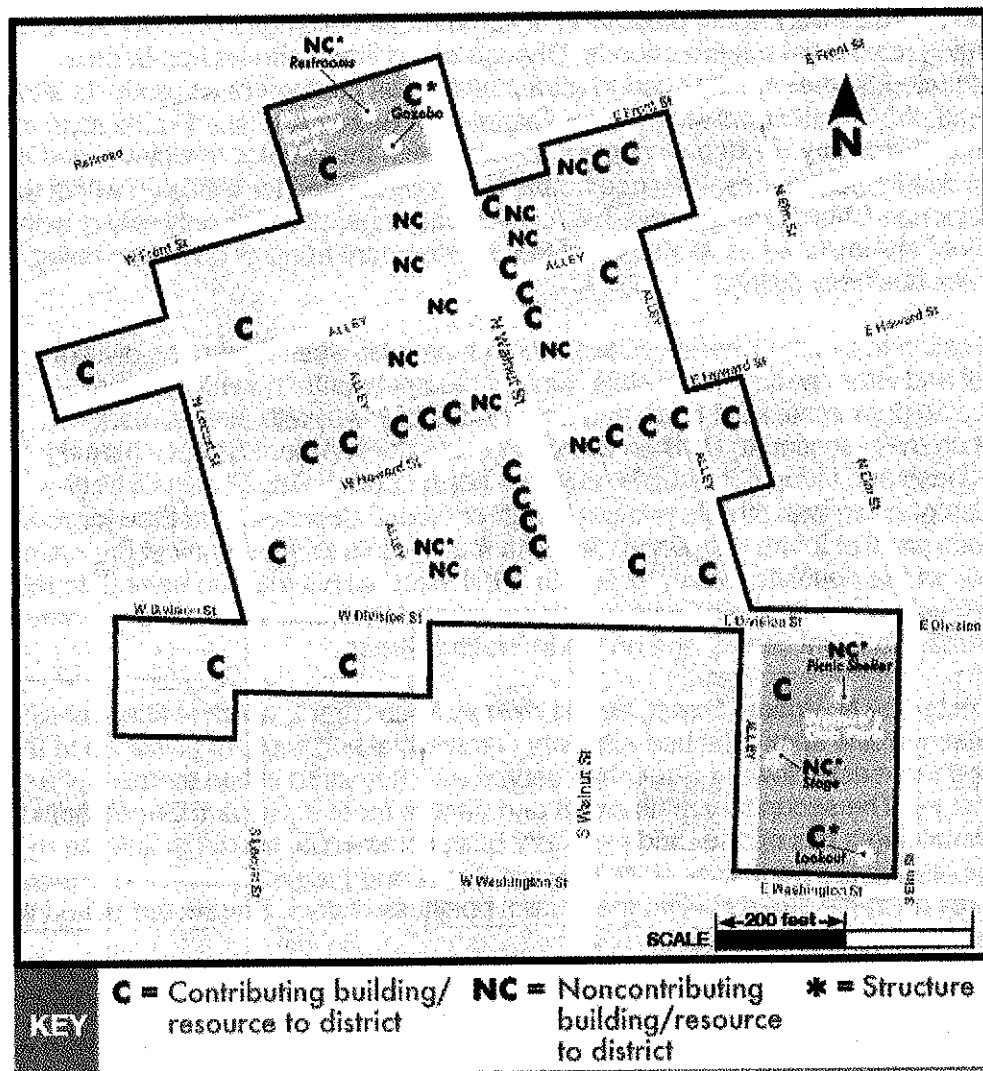


Figure 3: This historic district map shows boundary in black line with contributing and noncontributing properties marked C or NC; structures are marked with an asterisk. (base map: Google, 2018)

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The Colfax "Spring City" Downtown Historic District roughly encompasses the city's historic downtown located along a two-block-long section of N. Walnut Street with portions of the first block west and first block east of the side streets Front, Howard, and Division, plus two buildings on Locust Street. This area contains nearly forty commercial buildings dating mostly from the 1880s to the 1960s that range from one to three stories in height, with one- and two-story buildings predominating—plus two church buildings and two public park landscapes. These streets contain the largest proportion of commercial buildings in the city and clearly stand apart from the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Change along these streets has been a constant through time, necessitated by merchants' need to attract and retain customers as products and technology ever evolve. Overall, the architectural styles span Italianate to Beaux Arts and Prairie style to Modernistic. Some late-nineteenth-century residential houses remain within the greater downtown and a few near the potential historic district boundaries; only one house is recommended for inclusion within the district, the 1890s First Presbyterian Church Parsonage. Two church buildings, of which only one is actively used by a religious organization, are included as examples of the development trend of churches being established on the fringes of the business district.

A note about directional orientation in Colfax: Division Street, which runs east-west, marks the division between the original town plat and later cardinal-point plats. Since an early-twentieth-century street renumbering, Division Street also demarcates the north and south sides of town, with streets marked "North" or "South" depending on their location to Division Street. So, too, does Walnut Street—running "north-south" through the business and industrial districts, and true north-south below Division Street—divides the east and west sides of town, with streets marked "East" or "West" depending on their location to Walnut Street. Front Street runs parallel to the railroad tracks, with shallow lots located against the railroad tracks and standard-depth lots on the opposite "south" side with "east-west" alleys that run behind. In the blocks behind Front Street, alleys run "north-south," with development and business fronts concentrated on Howard Street, which runs parallel to Front Street, and on North Walnut Street.

The commercial district is bisected by N. Walnut Street, also known as Main Street, which is lined mostly by one-, two-, and three-story attached and semi-attached masonry commercial buildings, most set up to the sidewalk. N. Walnut Street as it intersects Howard Street has served as a key intersection for the Colfax downtown for more than a century. The secondary main street and parade route is Howard Street, both the first East and West blocks, containing a mix of one- and two-story brick commercial buildings and the most densely built brick commercial blocks: the north side of W. Howard Street and the south side of E. Howard Street. Concrete sidewalks exist on these streets within the central business district. Streets are paved with asphalt; some alleys are paved and others are gravel.

The northern boundary of the district runs along Front Street, which aligns with the railroad tracks. Here, historic masonry buildings are located on the south side of the street and stand one story in height with a mixture of freestanding and semi-attached; the north side of Front Street is mostly open land, including historic rail right of way including the Mineral Springs Park. Division Street forms the southern boundary, both the first East and West blocks. Here, buildings vary from two freestanding churches (one with historic

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parsonage), the public library, some houses, and Woman's Club Park with tiered earthen amphitheater—all set back from the street with grassy lawns. Locust Street forms the west boundary, and Elm Street is the easternmost street. Most commercial buildings front N. Walnut Street and E. and W. Howard Street. Redevelopment of vacant lots where mineral springs-related hotels had once stood and lots made vacant due to fires have seen some post-1965 infill development on these scattered sites.

Building Count

The district contains 28 contributing buildings and 2 contributing sites and 2 contributing structures, and 12 noncontributing buildings, plus 4 noncontributing structures, for a total of 48 resources. The initial development of narrow buildings that have been expanded or given the appearance of expansion by common façade treatments complicates the building count. Separation via structural devising walls, the historical building record, as well as the duration of the functional relationship has been taken into consideration in counting buildings.

Property Types, from "Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture" Multiple Property Document

The Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District appears to meet the registration requirements as a "Property Type I: Commercial Districts," under Criterion A as established in the "Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture" Multiple Property Document (2002). The Colfax district appears to be eligible under Criterion A: "Districts will be associated with the settlement and growth of the town or development of a neighborhood over an extended period of time and will have served an important role in the survival of the town or neighborhood." (Nash 2002: F.39)

As the Colfax commercial district expanded, the earliest frame buildings gave way to brick and other masonry buildings, much of it manufactured locally. (At least one brickyard operated in Colfax at the turn of the twentieth century, and at least two mid-twentieth-century concrete block plants operated in the industrial district). Architectural styles reflected the time of construction, ranging from Italianate, Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman, Late Gothic Revival, Mediterranean Revival, and utilitarian Modernistic post-World War II commercial buildings. Des Moines-based architects designed at least three extant buildings, but the designers of most of the commercial buildings remain unknown. For the mid-twentieth-century buildings, one main local builder has been identified.

In the MPD, Nash identifies the following building types, which for the purpose of this nomination have been adapted to the Colfax commercial district:

- First-generation buildings (late 1860s through 1890s) in the district consisted mainly of wood frame buildings that included commercial storefronts and specialty buildings, housing (detached single-family, boarding houses, and hotels) and churches. Most of these buildings have been removed from the survey area by fires, replacement by masonry or stucco commercial or church buildings, and/or disuse. A few houses remain, including the Presbyterian church parsonage.
- Second-generation buildings (1880s through 1920s) in the district were built mostly of brick with some

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stucco cladding used as well, in a variety of styles popular at the time, including Italianate, Classical Revival, Tudor Revival, Late Gothic Revival, and Mediterranean Revival styles. Unlike some of the frame houses they replaced, these commercial buildings were mostly built up to the public sidewalk. A few extend to the rear alley line, but most retained the rear of the lot for small commercial outbuildings, none of which survive. Others are built on fractions of larger lots resulting in shallow or narrow buildings with overall small building footprints. The typical second-generation commercial building in the district is a two-story double storefront attached brick, with ground-floor retail/service space owned or leased by merchants and service professionals, with second-floor professional offices, living space, or rental hall. Fraternal organizations played a role in the construction and expansion of at least three commercial buildings in the survey area. The potential historic district contains several rare-surviving 1880s and early 1890s Italianate commercial blocks, including three with cast-iron storefronts, one of which is an Italianate double storefront with elaborate metal cornice—potentially the only extant cornice. Later buildings in this era reflect influences of the automobile including auto service stations and garages, plus an early auto dealership. The presence of these auto-related buildings reflects the routing of the River-to-River Road through Colfax via Howard Street; later, the route was included as part of the state's busiest highway, U.S. Highway 6 (briefly renumbered as U.S. Highway 32 in the interwar era) which was routed south of the business district.

• Third-generation buildings (post World War I through 1960) in the district generally reflect continued influences of the automobile on both design and use. This era saw most remaining frame buildings redeveloped, particularly on the northern edge of downtown and the industrial district, as fires continued to damage and destroy buildings and returning World War II veterans expanded and opened businesses. The downtown commercial district saw two eras of shifting commercial traffic: in the 1920s through early 1950s to the south along the Highway 32/Highway 6 route and then 1960s through present to the north at the Interstate 80 interchange. Also during this era, many existing older buildings were expanded and/or modernized via "facelifts," reflecting the continual need for merchants to modernize and adapt to new technologies. Architectural influences span from Prairie Style to Modernism. Within the period of significance, tornados, fires, and floods caused damage that led to rebuilding or removal of a number of buildings. Tornados included a 1921 twister that removed the roof of at least two buildings, including the 1880s frame Presbyterian church, leading the congregation to build a new masonry structure, completed in 1923. Numerous fires have occurred, including the very destructive April 28, 1913, fire that destroyed several frame buildings on W. Front and W. Howard streets and perhaps others, a number of fires in the 1940s through 1960s fires that struck buildings along N. Walnut Street; in both cases, fire "wiped the slate clean" for redevelopment. The need for parking within the business district also led to the removal of a few buildings within or near the period of significance to create a bank drive-through with enclosed second-story stairs and rear parking lot behind the original location of the First National Bank, 1 E. Howard Street. In 1978, the bank demolished the downtown's largest commercial block in order to build a modern one-story office, drive-through, and parking lot. Historic floods such as the 1930s flood brought the river into downtown and may have affected buildings. (Chapman scrapbook, Colfax Historical Society Collection) Recent catastrophic flooding (in 1993, 2008, and 2010) has damaged some historic buildings and may have contributed to the removal of a few. Most civic and religious buildings have historically been located on the southern end of the commercial district, on or near Division Street. Civic buildings include the 1892 City Hall

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(9 N. Walnut Street), Colfax Public Library (25 W. Division Street), and Colfax Woman's Club Park with amphitheater and stage (13 E. Division Street). Two historic churches remain in this area as well, along with one historic parsonage associated with the Presbyterian Church. The streets all contain sidewalks and very few curb cuts. Alleys, some paved and some gravel, continue to provide service access to all the buildings.

For most Colfax buildings, the masonry structure from the period of significance remains largely intact and represents an important physical feature. In addition, some of the buildings were constructed of locally manufactured brick or concrete masonry units (CMUs or concrete blocks). As the historian Nash notes in the MPD, changes are commonplace for commercial buildings and often include first-floor storefront remodeling, upper-floor window alteration, and slipcover fronts. The presence of these predictable changes does not disqualify a building from contributing to the district. (Nash 2002: F.39) Buildings classified as noncontributing represent modern infill construction beyond the period of significance or appear to lack sufficient historic integrity. However, several of these noncontributing resources could become contributing upon resolution of integrity issues, as is noted in Table 1: Physical and Historical Attributes of Resources.

Using the MPD's property classification system, the district contains no first-generation commercial wooden building but the Presbyterian parsonage is included here (Type II; 1860s through 1890s). Roughly three-fifths of the buildings are second-generation masonry buildings (Type III; 1870s through 1920s). Another one-fifth are third-generation buildings or buildings substantially remodeled during this era (Type V; 1920s through 1960s). Six contributing freestanding specialized-use buildings and two sites (Type IV) exist: Colfax Presbyterian Church, Colfax Methodist Episcopal Church, Colfax Public Library, Shipley's Standard Oil Gas Station, Colfax Feed Mill, and Orlich Produce building, plus Woman's Club Park landscaped amphitheater and the Mineral Springs Park with a gazebo sheltering a mineral springs drinking fountain. Fourth-generation modern infill buildings are scattered, some representing infill after fires destroyed earlier buildings (Type VI; 1970s through present).

System for Counting Buildings and Sites

The initial development of narrow buildings that have been enlarged or given the appearance of expansion by common façade treatments complicates the building count. Separation via structural devising walls, the historical building record, split ownership, as well as the duration of the functional relationship have been taken into consideration in counting buildings. However, future research may determine that some resources should be counted differently.

Integrity of the Potential District

"Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture" MPD lays out integrity considerations, which relate to the Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District. These considerations assist in understanding changes that have taken place within the district over time and to individual buildings over time. The considerations state:

"When viewing a district of buildings and secondary resources, it is necessary to understand that most commercial districts are composed not of just one building type or another. Most likely there will be a mix of building types, construction periods, and remodeling face-lifts present, representing

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an evolution of the district over time. Evolution and change over time are fundamental characteristics of nearly all Iowa commercial districts, especially at the street level.

Judgments about the integrity of the district will take into consideration the expected alterations and typical motivations of Main Street tenants and owners. Change is a constant on Main Street because merchants treated their storefronts as an important way of inviting shoppers—both pedestrian and rolling—to stop in and buy something. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century merchants have generally linked attracting customers with having an updated and remodeled storefront composed of the latest materials and styles. Storefronts at the street level show more alterations than on the upper floors. Alterations range from stylish updates that reference specific popular architectural influences to piecemeal projects conducted over a longer period of time, perhaps by several tenants or property owners. Large upper floor window sashes are replaced by smaller windows and the excess space bricked in or filled with plywood. Sometimes these windows are simply covered over. Stamped sheet metal cornices are often missing at the roofline.

Since change is a historical factor present from Main Street's inception, a greater degree of alterations can be accommodated in a commercial district before the integrity of the district is seriously compromised. Essential characteristics such as massing, surviving of the historic pattern of fenestration and storefront composition, and contribution to the street's overall profile are key components. Where a building's façade is hidden behind new[er] materials, much of the original historic fabric may still be present underneath since merchants had little motivation to spend more on a remodeling project than was commercially practical or necessary. Still, the application of an overlay material like metal siding or Perma-stone may have necessitated removal of projecting architectural elements. Inspection behind the cladding should be performed where possible in order to gauge the extent and condition of original features intact underneath. If a building is completely hidden behind materials that were applied after the period of significance and no inspection underneath is possible, then that building will be non-contributing to the district. If the cladding was applied within the period of significance, then the building might be considered contributing if the remodeling reflected the context of continued progress and success in the commercial district and the desire to update an older building to reflect that progress.

Empty lots on Main Street may reflect the generalized failure of the town to grow and thrive as expected, but they also might reflect the occurrence of a catastrophe, frequently a fire or tornado. The nineteenth-century desire to locate a town along a good river, as a source of drinking water and power for riverbank industries, has resulted in seasonal flooding in most Main Streets that remain in the flood plain. The impact of empty lots in a commercial district must be evaluated in light of each lot's individual history....

Modern buildings added to Main Street after the period of significance for the district will generally be non-contributing to the district unless they are of exceptional historical or architectural significance. Modern buildings that otherwise qualify may become contributing resources once they are 50 years old." (Nash 2002: F.38-39)

While many cosmetic changes and at least two parking lots have been the result of merchants and property owners remodeling or rebuilding to attract customers and tenants during the period of significance, other

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changes have occurred due to a number of fires, severe flooding, and tornadoes. As previously mentioned, natural disasters have damaged and destroyed buildings within the district and others that could have contributed to the district. Despite such alterations, the district as a whole retains a significant group of buildings containing essential physical features set within the historic layout along the Original Town plat railroad-oriented grid street system and the true east-west Division Street to represent the significance to the community. Examining the seven aspects of integrity demonstrates this:

Location: The district and buildings within it remain in their original locations.

Design: The grid and alley layout of the commercial district was laid out to be a railroad farm-to-market town, but was reshaped in part by nineteenth-century developers and merchants seeing the need and opportunity for commerce along Howard Street. Buildings within the district range from utilitarian to popular stylized architectural statements. These groupings of buildings and the streetscapes they create, particularly along N. Walnut and E/W Howard streets, and along E/W Division Street, contain intact historic groupings of buildings. All elements of the district contribute to the form, plan, space, setting, and style of a Midwestern commercial district developed and continually redeveloped from the mid nineteenth century through the mid twentieth century.

Setting: The character of the district oriented toward the railroad tracks remains intact. Sidewalks, streets, and alleys remain in place and operational. The commercial district remains ringed by late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century residential neighborhoods to the east, west, and south, and the industrial district to the north. The loss of commercial buildings within the historic district boundaries due to fire, tornado, flooding, and neglect, much of which occurred during the period of significance, has been mitigated to a degree by infill commercial development, much of which is built up to the sidewalk and contains windows along sidewalks—retaining the set-back and massing of historic downtown buildings.

Materials: The buildings within the district retain character-defining features and historic fabric, including decorative brickwork, stucco, glazed tile, perma-stone, cast-iron storefront systems with columns, original/early fenestrations including storefront windows with transoms and stained-glass windows, and decorative cornices and parapet walls. Some historic fabric has been lost over time, as is customary for commercial districts that have remained viable (some missing cornices, upper-level window changes, and storefront window and entrance doorway remodeling)—although some of these changes should be considered historic given that they occurred during the period of significance. Other changes are cosmetic, with cover-up materials merely obscuring original materials, as demonstrated by the successful circa-2012 Main Street façade restorations that revealed long-hidden cast-iron storefronts including the Colfax Mineral Water Co.'s extraction facility (12 W. Howard Street).

Workmanship: The craftsmanship of the district is seen in the handwork of masons who neatly laid brick (including locally produced bricks), clay-tile, and concrete block (including some locally produced CMUs) walls with tidy fenestration openings and some decorative inlaid patterns and detailing on parapet walls, as well as some detailed cast-stone accents. Stuccowork is also found in the district. The craftsmanship of

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stoneworkers is found less frequently, but is represented in masonry buildings featuring carved and chiseled stone elements. Two buildings (Colfax Presbyterian Church and Colfax Methodist Episcopal Church) contain stained-glass windows and may still contain interiors reflecting the work of highly skilled craftspeople.

Feeling: Collectively, the buildings within the district portray Colfax commerce through the decades—and reflect the continual evolution that typify Midwestern retail-oriented commercial nodes as well as the ever-unfolding history of the local economy as reflected in the Colfax downtown. Architectural details on the retail buildings and streetscapes within the district continue to express the unique historic character of the area and help visitors to experience the history and importance of the Colfax “Spring City” Commercial Historic District as a place of commerce, industry, professional offices, and residences in upper levels.

Association: Viewed together, the buildings retain a high degree of association because the surviving physical features and streetscapes directly connect visitors to the history of the district as an important commercial destination. Due to the work of the Main Street program and a new generation of building owners, merchants, and residents, the historic district is slowly undergoing a retail and housing renaissance.

Prior study and local support for historic preservation

Through the decades, residents have recognized the importance of the community's unique coal mining and mineral springs history and documented it via written histories (including the 1966 *Centennial History of Colfax* and 2009 *Spring City: A Pictorial History of Colfax, Iowa* published by the Colfax Historical Society), oral histories, scrapbooks, and photograph and postcard collections, along with other historical items housed in the new Colfax Historical Society Museum, built after the 2008 South Skunk River flooding damaged its prior home.

Colfax Main Street formed in 2009, to continue the economic development efforts of prior organizations combined with historic preservation, following the 2007 closure of the largest employer, the long-time Monroe Table & Chair Co., and the 2008 flood. A Main Street Iowa façade grant, 2011-2013, brought architectural expertise from Des Moines architecture firm RDG in sensitively removing cover-up siding and related post-Period of Significance modern materials that obscured the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century architecture beneath 12 storefronts, including the Colfax Mineral Water Company Building, an 1890 Italianate brick two-story commercial block with an intact rare-surviving cast-iron storefront. The façade unveilings led to the 2014 Colfax Main Street-supported “Colfax ‘Spring City’ Commercial Historic District Study Area Survey: An Intensive Architectural and Historical Survey of Downtown Colfax, Jasper County, Iowa,” undertaken through a joint initiative with Main Street Iowa/Iowa Economic Development Authority and Iowa State Historic Preservation Office. The survey found a potential historic district, the Colfax “Spring City” Commercial Historic District. Colfax Main Street then produced a self-guided walking history and architecture tour and proposed the Downtown Colfax Preservation Ordinance, approved by the Colfax City Council in 2016, with specific design guidelines. The preservation ordinance will reinforce the design guidelines set forth by the Main Street Iowa façade grant program.

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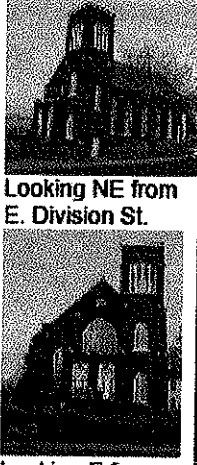
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This nomination was supported by the Colfax Main Street program through a matching grant from the Historical Resource Development Program from the State of Iowa, building upon a prior historical and architectural survey completed in 2014. The author wishes to acknowledge and thank current and past State Historic Preservation Office reviewers Sara Andre, Ralph Christian, Paula Mohr, and Laura Sadowsky as well as Ann Schmid of Iowa Economic Development Authority for their invaluable feedback on this nomination and the prior survey. The author also extends acknowledgments and hearty thanks to the following Colfax (and beyond) community members for their cheerful assistance with research and review: grant coordination and community resource assistance from Colfax Main Street president Cindy Van Dusseldorp and executive director Rebecca Evans, as well as past director Emily Perry; volunteer photographer and Colfax Mayor David E. Mast; local historian and author Larry Hurto; current and former business and/or property owners Brad M. Magg, Brenda Weirick, Karen and Doug Cross, and Lowell Coburn; Kevin Williams and Joy Conley of Colfax Historical Society; Jill Miller of Colfax Public Library; Jill Ingraham of Jasper County Auditor's Office; and oral history contributors Connie Berkey, Russell Briggs, Glen Britt, Bob Brown, Doug Cross, Aretta Franz, Virginia Hunter, Sharon Mindham, Mary Pratt, Karen Russell, and Judy Sullivan. And special thanks to Stephen J. Stimmel, AIA, for assistance with searching the Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson archives for architectural drawings and information about the Des Moines-based architectural firm's early-20th-century work in Colfax. And last but not least, special thanks to the elected officials who wrote letters of support for the HRDP grant: State Sen. Chaz Allen, Colfax City Council Member Karla Jones, City Council Member and Colfax Main Street Vice President Brad M. Magg, Colfax Mayor and Past President of Colfax Main Street David E. Mast.

A note about building dates: Some of the earliest buildings have "circa" dates; many historical references do not include addresses—a reflection of the commercial district's relatively small size, and key years of local newspapers (especially in the 1880s and 1890s) are missing from the local and state library collections. (Schmitt)

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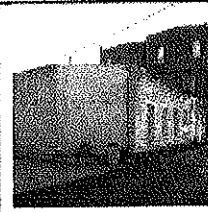
Table 1. List of Physical and Historical Attributes of District Resources

#	Photograph	Address	Historic name	History & Description	Evaluation
	(All photos taken December 2017-January 2018 by David E. Mast)	Includes historic address if known & legal description	The use is provided as a common historic name if no other names are known	Includes construction date ((A)=Assessor's date), architect/builder (if known) & brief description. Iowa Site Inventory Forms exist for most buildings within the district, and contain additional detailed historical information; see "Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District Study Area Survey," James 2014. *Note: post-Period of Significance is abbreviated as post-P.O.S.	C = Contributing NC = Non-contributing * Note: NC buildings/structures hidden behind modern cladding should be reevaluated if cladding is removed in the future
	Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District	Roughly bounded by Elm to Locust streets, Front to Division streets		1881 – 1960 period of significance	Eligible for NRHP
	East Side of N. Walnut Street				
1	 Looking NE from E. Division St. Looking E from N. Walnut St	2 N Walnut St. Historic address: 527 S. Walnut St. Original Plat Parcel B Pt off Lots 6 & 7 Blk 8	First Presbyterian Church	1923, midcentury remodeling F.A. Harris, architect, Des Moines (Frederick/Fredric Arthur Harris); Con Jacobsen, contractor (Marshalltown) Masonry 2-story dark brick Late Gothic Revival church; façade is dominated by crenulated bell tower and front gable with large marbled-glass windows. Victorian parsonage remains standing behind church, but under separate ownership and address (12 E. Division St.). Church sustained a fire that led to remodeling to replace damaged interior as well as stained-glass windows. Circa-1961 work reoriented the front stairs. (Colfax Tribune, May 10, 1923)	C (Contributes as a reflection of the historic trend of churches clustering at the edges of the commercial district)

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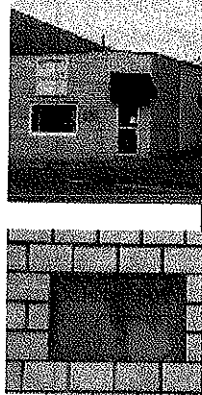
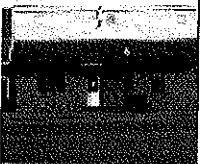
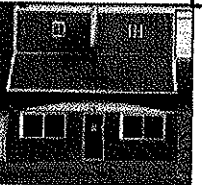
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2		100 N Walnut St. Original Plat Lots 10-11 Blk 7	First State Bank of Iowa	1979 (A) Detached 1-story bank branch with rear drive through canopy. Corner site, built up to the sidewalks on N. Walnut and E. Howard. Built on the site of the Ryan Hotel/ Centropolis Hotel/ Colfax Sanitarium.	NC (post-P.O.S.)
3	 (112 is on the right)	112 N Walnut St. Historic address: 535 S. Walnut St. Original Plat Lot 9 Blk 7, ex E. 61.5 ft & Ex 27 ft x 88.5 ft NW Corner	Masonic Hall Building	1884 Three-story two-part red brick Italianate commercial block with ornate carved window heads. One of three downtown brick 3-story buildings constructed; one of two extant. By 1884, the Masonic Riverside Lodge No. 389 occupied the third floor; with the construction of the adjoining Kennedy Block, the Masonic hall was extended over the third floor of the two buildings and later expanded with Order of the Eastern Star to occupy both second and third floors.	C
4	 (114 is on the left)	114 N. Walnut St. Original Plat 27' x 88.5' NW Corner Lot 9 Blk 7	Kennedy Block and Masonic Hall Extension	1889 Semi-attached two-part 3-story red brick Italianate commercial building with cast-iron columns at the storefront and ornate stone window heads and brick corbeling near the cornice line. One of three downtown brick 3- commercial buildings constructed; one of two extant. By 1899, the Masonic Riverside Lodge No. 389 and women's Order of the Eastern Star occupied the third floor of 112-114 N. Walnut Street and later expanded by 1911 to occupy the second and third floors of 112-114 N. Walnut Street.	C
5		114A N Walnut St. Historic address: "Behind Star Theatre"	Hopkins & Stock/ Colfax Garage	1912 One-story one-part commercial block 60x50-foot auto garage with flat roof and cant northeast corner with rusticated concrete-block walls. Original garage door opening(s) have been infilled with plain concrete block. The building is located behind (at the rear of)	C

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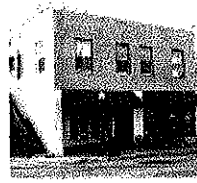
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		Original Plat East 61.5' Lot 9 Blk 7		112-114 N. Walnut Street and is accessed via two alleys. (<i>Colfax Clipper</i> , August 15, 1912)	
6		116 N Walnut St. Historic address: 118 and also 120 N. Walnut St. Original Plat Tract 20' x 70' SW Cor Lots 7-8 Blk 7	John Hahn Insurance Agency Building	1949 Elmer Fitzgerald, contractor (Colfax). Simple Moderne 1-story 20x70-foot corner office with cant entrance on alley; concrete block with facade clad in buff glazed tile (baked enamel brick) that continues onto adjoining Tavern Building, 118 N. Walnut. South alley elevation is of concrete block with pilasters. Stone plaque on west elevation states "John H. Hahn Insurance Agency, est. 1898." Hahn—Colfax mayor, longtime fire chief, and county board president— was a key player in the rebirth of the commercial district. Hahn retired from his insurance business in 1951. (<i>Colfax Tribune</i> , August 4, 1949; November 29, 1951)	C
7		118 N Walnut (Historic: 120-122 N. Walnut) Original Plat S 56' Lots 7-8 Blk 7 Ex Tract 20' x 70' SW Cor & Ex 10" NW Corner of Tract	Melvin Guy Tavern Building	1949 Simple Moderne 1-story (or 1.5 story) 35x70-foot commercial storefront with cover-up facade materials over original buff glazed tile that continues onto adjoining Hahn Building, 116 N. Walnut. (Built as double storefront from tavern and barbershop; beneath the existing shingled projection, the underside is open and shows the tile facade.) (<i>Colfax Tribune</i> , August 4, 1949)	NC (due to integrity; if cladding is removed, building could be re- evaluated)
8		124 N. Walnut Original Plat S 21.4' of N 64' Lots 7-8 Blk 7	Barrett Television and Electrical Store Showroom	1953 22x60 w rear addition 20x 17. Concrete block construction with roman brick facade that matches the adjoining. Constructed on the site of the former L&M Café, which was destroyed by fire in July 1951. This was constructed as a showroom for the business that	NC (due to integrity; if cladding is removed, building could be re- evaluated)

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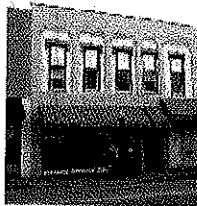
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9		126 N Walnut St. Original Plat N 42.6' Lots 7&8 Ex N 22' of Lots 7-8 Blk 7	Barrett Television and Electrical Store	occupied 126 N. Walnut. 1951 Concrete-block 2-story 21 x 60 commercial building. First floor was constructed as front sales room with large display window and rear shop; upper level constructed as owner's apartment with a large picture window. West façade has original brick veneer (narrow Roman style bricks) with decorative quoining on the north façade; modern roof gable added to original flat roof. A post-P.O.S. one-story commercial building adjoins to the north. (Colfax Tribune, May 3, 1951)	C
<i>West Side of N. Walnut Street</i>					
10		3 N. Walnut St. Assessor's address: 5 N. Walnut (included with 2-story commercial block) Original Plat Lot H Blk 9 (estimated)	Shipley's Standard Oil Company / Brown & Son Trucking Depot	c. 1925 with 1950s addition This 1-story stucco 1920s-era house-type filling station with 1950s concrete block garage addition is sited at an angle to fill the irregular lot on the northwest corner of N. Locust and W. Division streets. The building adjoins at an angle the preexisting 2-story building at 5-7 N. Walnut. The original gas station canopy and hipped roof have been removed; a modern gable roof covers the building and addition. Proprietor Clyde Shipley died in February 1952; in the 1950s it was converted to a trucking business.	C
11		5-7 N. Walnut St. Original Plat Lot G Blk 9 (estimated)	Davis & Davis Building / Boss Meat Market	1913 Semi-attached stucco-clad ("reinforced concrete") Prairie-style influenced 41x70-foot 2-story double storefront with upper level apartments. Stuccoed piers frame the storefronts, which feature a recessed centered entrance flanked by windows set on bulkheads. Second story has four bays with stone or concrete sills. Low-slung cornice/drip course has been removed. Small angled filling station abuts to the south elevation, where second-story exterior staircase is located. (Colfax	C

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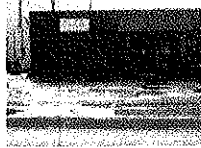
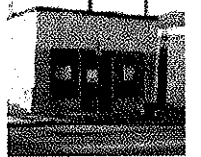
12	 9 N. Walnut is the left half of the unified facade	9 N. Walnut Historic address: 503 S. Walnut St. Orig Plat Lot F Blk 9	Colfax City Hall, Library & Fire Department	<i>Clipper</i> , March 20, 1913) c. 1893; façade remodeled various. Queen Anne-style 2-story two-part painted brick commercial block with flat roof (24x70). Shares a unified façade with storefront to the north, 11 N. Walnut, which was likely built under separate ownership. First-story features storefront with door to second-story staircase "centered" in the unified façade. Window bay sizes on second floor are slightly irregular between 9 and 11 N. Walnut, however, the continuous brickwork and repeated detailing (corbeling above recessed window bays; tall windows topped with ornate East Lake-carved stone window heads) provides the appearance of a larger building. The fire department departed midcentury and the building was converted to commercial use. Storefront has changed over time.	C
13	 11 N. Walnut is the right half of the unified facade	11 N. Walnut Historic address: 504 S. Walnut St. Original Plat Lot E Blk 9	Post Office Building	By 1893 Queen Anne-style 2-story two-part painted brick commercial block with flat roof (20x60). May have been built in late 1880s by J.R. Rogers, who was mentioned in an 1888 newspaper story about construction projects as considering building a large 2-story brick south of Cain Opera House, with store rooms below and offices above. (<i>Clipper</i> , "A general epidemic of improvement..." September 22, 1888, as cited in Schmitt 1880s 10-20?) Current building served as a post office storefront in Colfax, representing the growth of mail delivery and the community. Shares a unified façade with former City Hall to the south, 9 N. Walnut. First-story features storefront with door to second-story staircase "centered" in the unified façade. Window bay sizes on second floor are slightly irregular between 9 and	C

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				11 N. Walnut, however, the continuous brickwork and repeated detailing (corbeling above recessed window bays; tall windows topped with ornate East Lake-carved stone window heads) provides the appearance of a larger building. Storefronts have changed over time.	
14		103 N. Walnut St. Historic addresses: 101 and 103 N. Walnut St. Original Plat Lot F Blk 10 and Original Plat N 35' Lot 13 & S 1/2 Lot 14 Blk 10	Weirick Drug Store	1880s, with circa-1960s remodeling, and 1980s façade recladding Built as the corner Henry Fellows Pharmacy and adjoining Dixon Block (2 buildings), a drugstore has continuously operated here since 1881. The American Legion remodeled the second floor into a legion hall in the post-war era and the pharmacy expanded north into the second storefront. (James 2014: ISIF Appendix)	NC (due to post-P.O.S. brick veneer and metal siding; building could be re-evaluated if cladding is removed)
15		107 N. Walnut St. Original Plat N 35' Lot 13 & S 1/2 Lot 14 Blk 10	Medical office	1998 (A) 1-story metal and brick commercial office.	NC (due to post-P.O.S. age)
16		113 N. Walnut St. Original Plat N 1/2 Lot 14 Blk 10	Junis Sweet Shop	C. 1945 Built as a stuccoed 1-story small commercial storefront with recessed centered entrance and flanking storefront windows for Charles P. and Emma Junis's confectionary. PermaStone partially clads façade. Currently a residence. (James 2014: ISIF Appendix)	NC (due to post-P.O.S. storefront changes; building could be re-evaluated if a rehabilitation back to the c. 1945 appearance is proposed)
17		121 N. Walnut St. Historic address 117-119 N.	Walter Luther Building	1949-1950 1-story double storefront with an early Modern Movement flat roof and polychromatic enameled panels with side and rear brick elevations. Built by contractor Van	NC (Integrity due to post-P.O.S. metal siding on façade and metal gabled roof; building could

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		Walnut St. ORIGINAL PLAT SOUTH 70' LOTS 1-2-3 BLK 10		Der Veer Construction of Pella by grocery Walter Luther as infill after fire destroyed frame buildings. Longtime home to Taylor Drug. (James 2014: ISIF Appendix)	be re-evaluated if cladding is removed)
18		123 N. Walnut St. ORIGINAL PLAT NORTH 50' LOTS 1-2-3 BLK 10	Office building	1975 1-story small masonry office built against the Walter Luther Building; office built on lot left vacant after fire destroyed the former 2-story Mason/Luther Grocery Building (non-extant).	NC (Due to post-P.O.S. age)
<i>West Side of Locust Street</i>					
19	 View SW from S. Locust St.  View SW from W. Division St.	13 S. Locust St. Weston's N 74 1/3 Ft of E 105 1/3 Ft Lot A	First Methodist Church	1914, speculatively a Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson design Third-generation church building, this one a well-designed Classical Revival symmetrical 1-story brick church with raised basement built on the corner of W. Division and S. Locust streets. The plan is rectangular, with a projecting cant temple-front double-door entrance facing the commercial district and reached via a broad set of steps. Stained-glass windows provide color against the buff brickwork. Almost certainly architect designed. Exterior appears to match appearance of Des Moines church designed by Proudfoot & Bird; see James 2014.	C (As a reflection of the historic trend of clustering of churches on the edges of the commercial district; building may be eligible for individual listing through Proudfoot & Bird MPD)
20	 View SW from N. Locust St.	121 N. Locust St. Original Plat South 1/2 Lots 1- 2-3-4 & East 10' Lot 5 & North 1/2 E/W Alley	Colfax Feed Mill	1947 The mill occupies a 40-foot wide x 110-foot long footprint fronting N. Locust Street with secondary south façade facing a south gravel alley. The mill consists of four contiguous sections, per the Jasper County Assessor's Office and exterior inspection. The four sections, all painted white, are, from east to west: two-story hip-roofed	C

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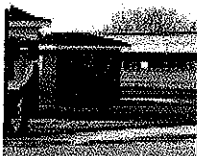
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		Abutting Blk 12		concrete-block office and owner's apartment fronting N. Locust Street; one-story shed-roof concrete-block connector; two-story main mill structure of concrete block first story and frame gable-roofed second story; and one-story rear concrete block shed-roofed rear elevator bins bay.	
<i>North Side of Front Street</i>					
21		12 W. Front Street Pt Sw 1/4 RR Row Centrally Assessed	Mason House Park / City Park / Mineral Springs Park	1890, later landscaping First known as Mason House Park, after the mineral spring hotel that was located across the street on E. Front Street; the hotel constructed a wooden gazebo with a publically accessible mineral water well and landscaped the park to greet visitors entering the town from the railroads directly north. The city had the New Deal brick gazebo built in 1933. The park pavilion with drinking fountain served as a gathering place for visitors and local citizens. The land remains under railroad ownership.	C (C site under Criterion A—Medicine as rare-surviving mineral well with C mineral well drinking fountain gazebo and NC restrooms structures)
21a		12 W. Front Street	Mineral Springs Park gazebo	1933 Frank Evans, contractor; unskilled labor provided by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) New Deal program. Further study may reveal a link between New Deal funding and President Roosevelt's use of mineral water cure for polio. Variegated red brick with cement trim hexagonal mineral fountain house; at the center is a drinking fountain (currently inoperable due to state code) connected to a mineral spring well. This sturdy version replaced a circa-1890 wooden fountain gazebo erected in Mason House Park by the owners of the now-nonextant Mason House	C

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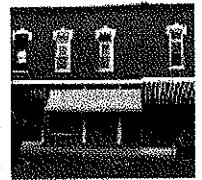
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				mineral springs hotel across the street. Fountain not currently operable due to state law. (Colfax Tribune, May 11, 1933; October 8, 1936 photo)	
21b		12 W. Front St.	Mineral Springs Park restrooms	c. 1980s brick restroom facility.	NC (post-P.O.S. construction)
<i>South Side of Front Street</i>					
22	 Look SW from E. Front St.	11 E. Front St. ORIGINAL PLAT LOT 6 BLK 7	Garage	1951 (A) Simple concrete block garage or warehouse building. Large garage door has been recently infilled and cornice added. Rear alley access.	NC (Integrity)
23		13 E Front St. Historic addresses: 15-17 E. Front St.; 228 Front St. Original Plat Lot 5 Blk 7	Garage / Jones Produce & Hatchery Building	c. 1910s-1920s facade Appears to have been built pre-1906 Sanborn map as a brick building used as a pool hall, then rebuilt or re-faced in the 1910s-1920s for use as an auto repair garage, and converted into a produce and hatchery business. One-story semi-attached early-twentieth-century commercial building with variegated brown wire-cut rug face-brick façade with three bays in an asymmetrical arrangement.	C
24		15 E Front St. Historic address: 19-21 E. Front Street; 229 Front Street Original Plat W 6" of Lot 3 & All Lot 4 Blk 7	I.N. Paschal Livery / Willis-Jones Airplane Repair Shop / Garage / Colfax Locker Plant	1889, with c. 1918 and 1937 façade updates Wide stuccoed stepped parapet (false front?) above a steel beam with decorative cast-iron rosettes defines this commercial building with three bays with later brick piers. Converted to a locker plant in 1937; façade retains much of the same look as 1937 opening photo.	C

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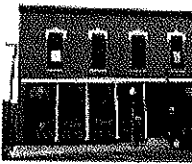
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25		33 W Front St. Original Plat Lots 6-7-8 & W 35' Lot 5 Blk 10	Orlich's Produce Building / Iowa Power and Light Co.	1945 Moderne asymmetrical 1-story corner polychrome brick freestanding produce and creamery building with flat roofs. Set back from street, with dual truck entrances, one each facing east and west. Façade has non-original porch addition and gable roof, from conversion to residence. Rear built up to alley and contains original steel-frame windows. Built to accommodate the buying of eggs, poultry, and cream, as well as selling of feeds.	C
<i>North Side of Howard Street</i>					
26		4-6 W. Howard St. (4 W. Howard now part of 103A N. Walnut) (Historic: 106-107 Howard St.) Original Plat Lot G Blk 10 and part of Lot F	Henry Fellows Block and Knights of Pythias Hall / International Order of Odd Fellows Hall	1888-1889 A 40x50-foot attached 2-story two-part brick commercial block with three storefronts, staircase to second floor, and upper-level living space. Although ownership is now fractured, the shared façade built by Henry Fellows (first floor) and Knights of Pythias (second floor) warrants consideration of these parcels as one. The Odd Fellows were using the hall by the 1899 Sanborn map.	C
27		8 W. Howard Historic address: 106 Howard St. Original Plat E 19.87' Lot H Blk 10	Henry Fellows Block Extension	1889 (may have been completed 1890) A 20x50-foot attached 2-story two-part brick commercial block with a single storefront. The storefront contains cast-iron columns set on a concrete step from the sidewalk. Windows rest on a bulkhead and extend upward. An awning partially obscures the view at the top of the storefront. This portion of a half-block-long row constructed by owner Henry Fellows appears to have been built for tenant Kizer-Wood Hardware Company for use	C

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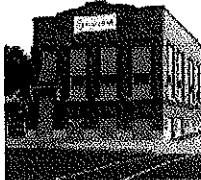
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				as an agricultural implement wareroom. (<i>Clipper</i> , September 14, 1889, "Henry Fellows is arranging..." cited in Schmitt 1880s: 11-10)	
28		12 W. Howard St. Historic address: 105 Howard St. Orig Plat W 40.33' Lot H Blk 10	Colfax Mineral Water Company Building	1890 Italianate brick 40x50-foot 2-story two-part commercial block built on the corner of Howard and the north-south alley. The wide four- bay storefront is defined by thin ornate cast-iron columns that frame large windows set on bulkheads. Second-story windows are topped with decorative carved stone window heads. The façade design matches the adjoining Fellows Block and Fellows Block Extension; both were built by Henry Fellows, owner of the drug store at 101 N. Walnut and president of Colfax Mineral Water Company.	C (This building retains integrity and significance for individual NR nomination under Criteria A and C as a rare-surviving cast-iron building constructed for a rare-surviving mineral water commercial/industri al building, the Colfax Mineral Water Company bottling works)
29		20 W. Howard St. Historic addresses: 16-20 W. Howard St. (1942 Sanborn) Orig Plat Lot C Blk 10	Everett & Baker Ford Garage / Star Theatre / Triangle Bowling Alley	Circa 1920, 1937 theater remodel, 1958 bowling alley remodel This 50 x 146-foot one-story commercial auto garage has a brown brick asymmetrical façade that wraps the west elevation on the alley. A vaulted roof (rounded) is echoed in the wide curved parapet on the façade, which is outlined in brick and features decorative stone/concrete squares incorporated into the brickwork at the corners. Three brick piers define the façade's five historic bays. These bays have been infilled with brick likely during the period of significance as the building morphed from auto garage to movie theater to bowling alley.	C (Contributing despite its enclosed windows, which relate to the conversion to theater and then bowling alley)
30		24 W. Howard St. Historic address: 102 Howard St. Orig Plat	Bumgardner Funeral Home & Furniture Store	c. 1910 (2-story); c. late 1920s (rear 1 story); 1950 expansion and façade. Funeral home director M.O. Bumgardner remodeled the former <i>Colfax Clipper</i> 2-story building in 1949-1950, building (or rebuilding) the one-story section as a furniture store addition. Bumgardner added	C

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		Lot B Blk 10		a unified brick façade on W. Howard Street and stone-look cladding on the west elevation. The furniture store closed in 1960. (Colfax Tribune, "M.O. Bumgardner Erecting Building," October 13, 1949; Des Moines Register, auction ad, January 7, 1960: 20G)	
South Side of Howard Street					
31		23 W. Howard St. Historic address: 29 W. Howard Orig Plat Lot N Blk 9	Colfax Telephone Co. Building	1911, 1950s rear addition Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, Des Moines architecture firm Buff glazed brick 1-story corner commercial block on raised basement, with tall window openings (windows may remain behind plywood covering) on Howard and Locust. The building has remained a telephone/communications building, transitioning from use as a telephone office and exchange with operators on staff to an equipment building. The small rear concrete-block addition was added during the period of significance. (Drawings in Proudfoot archive, Brooks Borg Skiles, AE)	C (This building may be individually eligible for NRHP under Proudfoot & Bird MPD)
32	 Looking SW from N. Walnut St.  Looking E from W. Howard St.	1 W. Howard St. Historic addresses: 13-15 N. Walnut St. and 1-3-7 W. Howard St.; 505-506 S. Walnut St. and 125-126 Howard St. Original Plat Lot A Blk 9	Cain & Rowles Block / Cross Building	1889, with conversion to apartments c. 1946; 1953 PermaStone This prominent two-story two-part corner commercial block fronts N. Walnut (attached to row of commercial buildings) and W. Howard streets (built as detached on this elevation). Constructed with a second-story opera house, it was converted to professional offices after the untimely death of original owner W.P. Cain in the late-nineteenth century. The Cross family purchased the L-shaped building circa 1946, converted the upper level to apartments, opened a popular sporting goods and jewelry store on corner, and modernized the first story exterior with first-story PermaStone veneer	C (Building contributes to the streetscape pattern as an example of a nineteenth-century building remodeled in the post-war era, despite some vinyl siding on part of 2 nd story over stucco)

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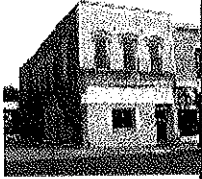
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				still intact and second-story stucco (covered on 2 sides by vinyl siding. (Colfax Tribune, April 30, 1953; Cross)	
33		1 E. Howard St. Historic address: 1-3 Howard St. Original Plat Lot A Blk 8	Dart Block / First National Bank Building	c. 1882 Italianate business block with 1954 bank remodel and midcentury rear drive-through addition, plus c. 1980s north red brick veneer. This 2-story 40x70-foot commercial block with clipped corner entrance to bank was extensively remodeled midcentury under Moorman Co. architects of Minneapolis with Permastone-type veneer, plus rear drive-through and stairs addition. The building would be a contributing building, having been nearly continuously occupied by a bank since construction, but the modern red-brick veneer on the north elevation has compromised the midcentury context. (Colfax Tribune, April 29, 1954; November 25, 1954)	NC (Due to integrity; building could be re-evaluated if exterior red brick cladding was removed)
34		7-9 E Howard St. Orig Plat Lot B Blk 8	Chapman Building	1923 Brown brick 1-story 44x60-foot double/triple storefront with stepped parapet. Brick piers divide the symmetrical façade into three bays. Larger fenestration openings remain in place, but have some infill material in the transom areas. Constructed by bath house owner Ed Chapman after fire damaged 1880s prior structure. Used as bakery and variety store. May contain original mineral spring in basement. (Colfax Tribune, October 4, 1923)	C
35		11 E Howard St. Historic address: 11-13 E. Howard St.; 132-133 Howard St.	Company Double Storefront	c. 1882 Italianate 2-story two-part commercial block with rare-surviving cast-iron storefront and intact cornice (original?). Second-floor five bays feature ornate carved stone window heads. Brick and stone are painted; rear 1-story addition provides 44x60-foot footprint. Integrity diminished	C (This building retains integrity and significance for individual NR nomination based on Criteria A and C)

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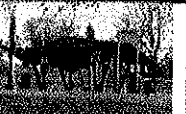
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		Original Plat Lot C Blk 8		somewhat with recent window replacement. Four investors formed a company in winter 1882 to construct the building. (<i>Colfax Clipper</i> , February 4, 1882, as cited in Schmitt 1880s)	
36		15 E Howard St. Historic address: 134 Howard St. Orig Plat Lot D Blk 8	Broughton Block	Pre-1882, 1970s bank remodel Early brick Italianate 2-story commercial block built as semi- attached on corner of north-south alley between E. Howard and E. Division streets. Second story contains decorative carved stone window heads and saw tooth brickwork at cornice line. Painted masonry; alley is secondary façade.	C
37		17-19 E. Howard Historic address: 135-136 Howard Orig Plat Lot K Blk 8	C. W. Crisman Block / U.S. Post Office (circa 1911 - 1961)	1902 Two-part 2-story 57 x 80-foot brick double storefront with Beaux Arts details including brick quoining on the corners of the façade, ornamented stone/concrete keystone window heads over six window bays, and accentuated brick cornice. Built up to public sidewalk on Howard with deep purple face brick and north-south alley; alley east elevation is red brick with multiple segmental-arch- top window and door openings. Smaller western storefront (17 E. Howard) was home to the post office from at least 1911 Sanborn map through construction of the new 1961 standalone U.S. Post Office; larger storefront (19 E. Howard) contained a hardware store from the 1900s through 1963.	C
South Side of Division Street					
38	 Looking south from W. Division St.	25 W. Division	Colfax Carnegie Public Library	1912-1913 C.A. Rawson, architect, of Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, Des Moines architecture firm; W.J. Witterell, contractor (Webster City) Tudor Revival-style 1-story red brick side-gabled Carnegie library set on a raised basement, with centered projecting front gabled vestibule reached by a concrete	C (This building is individually eligible for NRHP under Proudfoot & Bird MPD)

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	 Looking SW from Division St.			walk and stairs. Exterior is nearly intact from original design; interior contains most original finishes and built-in shelves and checkout desk, which have been clad in plywood veneer (reversible). J.H. Hahn was member of the building committee. (<i>Colfax Clipper</i> , April 24, 1913)	
39	 Looking NW from S. Elm  Looking SE from near Division St.	E. Division/ S. Elm	Woman's Club Park	1938 landscape, various structures WPA project: Following a fire in its clubhouse and inability make repairs during the Depression, the Colfax Woman's Club donated the large sloped lot to the city for a park. In 1938 WPA workers terraced the steep slope to create an outdoor amphitheater sloping to a bandstand (original either remodeled or nonexistent). This appears to be the "look out," ground-level folly that provides a sweeping view of downtown (circular brick wall at the top of southeast corner). (<i>Colfax Tribune</i> , August 11, 1938; October 20, 1938)	C (C landscaped site under Criterion A-Social History; C "look out"; NC picnic shelter and NC stage)
39a		E. Division/E. Elm St.	Woman's Club Park lookout	1938 Circular brick walls; appears be the "look out," ground-level folly that provides a sweeping view of downtown (circular brick wall at the top of southeast corner). (<i>Colfax Tribune</i> , August 11, 1938; October 20, 1938)	C
39b		E. Division/E. Elm St.	Woman's Club Park stage	c. 1938 or later, remodeled 1980s Stone base, three freestanding walls with screening	NC (Due to integrity; the stage could be re-evaluated if 1980s cladding were removed)
39c		E. Division/E. Elm St.	Woman's Club Park picnic shelter	c. 1970s	NC (Due to post-P.O.S.)

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<i>North Side of Division Street</i>					
40	 Looking north from E. Division St.	12 E Division Original Plat Parcel A, Pt of Lots 6 & 7 Blk 8	First Presbyterian Church Parsonage	1893, midcentury remodel Queen Anne style 2.5-story frame parsonage for First Presbyterian Church. Footprint is mostly square, with irregular hipped roof and front asymmetrical gable. Exterior changed to current appearance during the period of significance (includes removal of front and rear porches, construction of rear 1-story addition, application of metal siding, construction of one-car detached brick garage occurred circa 1961).	C (Integrity may be improved by removing the siding)
41		14 W. Division St.	House and garage	1900 (A) 1- story frame house with aluminum siding located behind storefronts on N. Walnut/W. Howard streets. Appears to have been a dwelling and not a commercial use.	NC (Due to residential nature not related to areas of significance)
41a		14 W. Division St.	Garage	1977 (A) 1-story metal-sided auto garage	NC structure (Due to post-P.O.S. age and residential nature not related to areas of significance)

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places as a "Property Type 1: Commercial District" that meets registration requirements set forth in the "Iowa's Main Street Commercial Architecture" Multiple Property Document (2002) under Criterion A—Commerce and Criterion A—Health/Medicine by reflecting the historic and continual development and growth of the Colfax downtown. The district also contains buildings related to its role as the commercial heart of a mineral water health resort community that also served as a farm-to-market community, and surviving buildings and a site are representative of this heritage. The district represents the commercial retail heart of Colfax since the area's platting in 1866-1867, when mercantile operations began. The period of significance is 1881, marking the approximate year of construction of the oldest building, through 1960, when the Interstate 80 freeway opened north of the district. The small town experienced a period of immense growth in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and grew into a small city of more than 2,000 residents due to leading business people and medical professionals who capitalized on railroading, coal mining, mineral water production, health resort development, and tourism. Through the decades, the downtown has served as the place for residents, farmers, coal miners, health resort visitors, and travelers to buy necessities, sell goods, ship produce and stock, bank and deal-make, seek health and wellbeing, find professional legal and medical assistance, enjoy entertainment and culture, gather socially, and engage civically and patriotically. As a whole, the buildings in the district reflect changing patterns of commerce as merchants, tradespeople, and professionals adapted to new methods of marketing and delivering goods and services in response to the evolving needs of customers, the evolving demands from suppliers, changes in transportation and tourism, and the waxing and waning of coal mining and mineral water use.

The Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District is also significant under Criterion A—Social History for its role as the gathering place for residents and the wider rural community for socializing, cultural activities, and entertainment. Over the years, the sidewalks and wide streets within the commercial district have provided an important public space for shoppers, health resort visitors, travelers, and parade-goers to gather. The addition of the nonprofit Colfax Woman's Club, plus the standalone Carnegie library, provided public green space that further augmented the social, cultural, and civic opportunities within the commercial district. The commercial district provided residents and visitors with entertainment and performing arts venues in the form of an opera house, movie theaters, and bowling alley all located in surviving buildings, plus the Woman's Club Park with natural amphitheater and stage. The city also has a rich history of fraternal and women's organizations, which is evident in the built environment of the commercial district. Fraternal organizations such as the Masons and Odd Fellows gathered in the upper rooms of commercial buildings downtown; evidence of this social activity remains in extant (standing) buildings that contained these and other such fraternal halls. Women's associations and clubs also flourished and have left a visible imprint on the commercial district via the construction of the library, Colfax Woman's Club Park, and continual annual maintenance of the Mineral Spring Park gazebo and grounds.

Finally, selected buildings are significant under the MPD via Criterion C—Architecture as intact examples of their vernacular type; resources by the work of a well-known architect; or artistic renditions of influential

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architectural styles applied to Main Street buildings. (Nash 2002: F.42-43) The church properties within the district are included as a reflection of the historic trend of churches building on the edges of the commercial district—in particular, the southern border has five churches on or near Division Street—and as such, the properties are included under Criteria Consideration A as buildings deriving primary significance for their historical role within the commercial district.

Background: Railroad Development and the Growth of Colfax: 1866-1875

Across Iowa, the nineteenth century was a time of tremendous town development. Railroads expanded exponentially across the state, laying thousands of miles of tracks that connected existing communities and spurred development of new towns. (Donovan and Grant) Colfax was one such new railroad town, developed as a market point surrounded by rich farmland with the closest town at the time, Prairie City, some six miles south. (*History of Jasper County*: 497) Two years prior to the arrival of the first railroad, stagecoach stop owner R. N. Stewart established in 1865 the Colfax post office near today's downtown; Stewart selected the name Colfax, likely in honor of then-Speaker of the House of Representatives Schuyler Colfax (1863-1869), who later served as U.S. vice president under Ulysses Grant (1869-1873). (*History of Jasper County*: 673; U.S. Postal Service) In fall 1866, three stores opened in Colfax: the West & Kennedy general store, Parker grocery, and Newton & Richey dry goods store; speculation suggests that plans for the railroad's path may have been known and perhaps spurred this initial business development. (*History of Jasper County*: 497)

The first Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad trains ran from Newton into "Colfax Station" in late July 1867; a Davenport newspaper reported the news under the headline "Gratifying," given the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad's past history of broken promises for delivering a rail line. (*Davenport Daily Gazette*, July 17, 1867) As noted in the *Colfax Centennial History*, "The railway had been proposed through western Jasper County for many years, but it was not until the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific [CRI&P] incorporated in June of 1866 and took over the halted Mississippi and Missouri line [M&M] that actual right-of-way titles were given." Railroad pioneer Abel Kimball of Davenport purchased land at the point of the rail stop and, nearly simultaneously with the completion of the Newton-to-Colfax rail line, filed the "Village of Colfax" plat dated July 22, 1867. ("Village of Colfax"; *Centennial History*: 3; Harlan: 122) (Note that two histories give the date of the plat as 1866, which may indicate that the plat was made well in advance of it being filed; *History of Jasper County*: 497; Weaver: 350) The 1912 history of Jasper County, edited by former Colfax mayor and Iowa Congressman James B. Weaver, describes the newly platted Colfax as a town "started solely as a railroad station of the ordinary character." (Weaver: 351)

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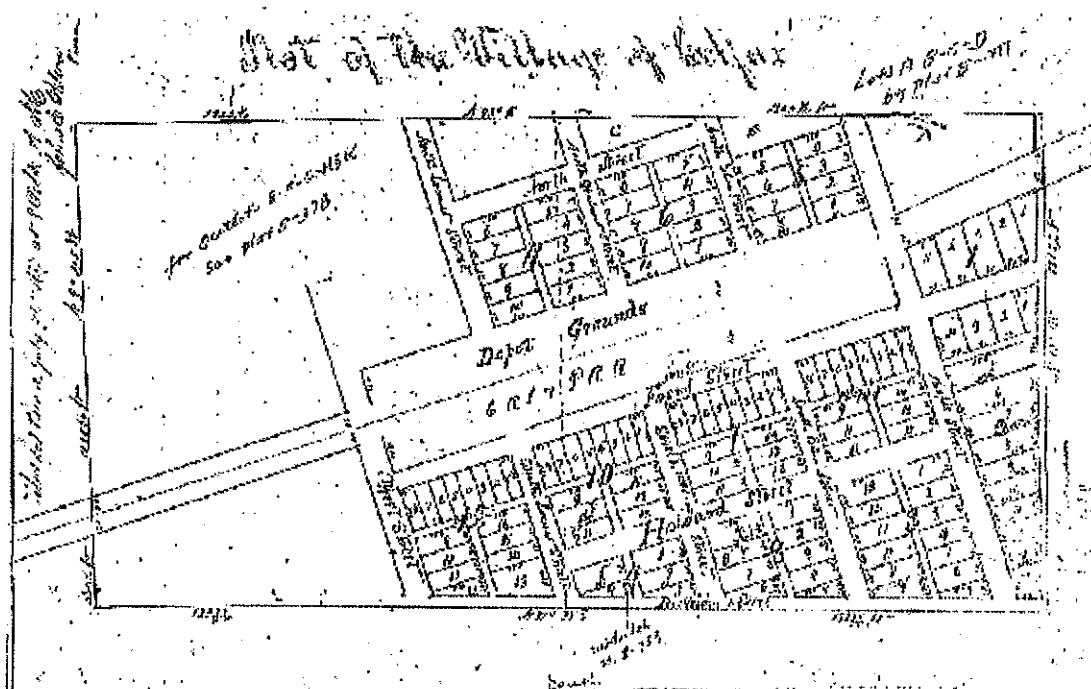


Figure: "Plat of the Village of Colfax," as laid out by surveyor Charles C. Turner and filed by property owner Abel Kimball in July 1867. ("Village of Colfax" map)

Kimball, who worked first for M & M and then for the CRI&P, hired Newton surveyor Charles C. Turner to lay out the village. The 12-block plat contained more than 130 lots, all oriented toward the angled path of the CRI&P rail line, rather than aligned to cardinal directions (true north). (As will later be discussed, Turner's son and daughter-in-law, medical doctors Lewis C.S. and Alice B.S. Turner, moved to Colfax in the 1880s and became important leaders.) In the center of the village plat stand the "Depot Grounds," with three east-west streets—North (north of the tracks), Front (immediately south of the tracks), and Howard (south of Front)—running parallel to the tracks. A fourth east-west street, Division Street, runs true east-west on the southern border of the plat. Five streets run perpendicular to the tracks: West, Locust, Walnut, Elm, and Maple streets. Turner laid out lots in two different gridded platting styles: Narrower Front Street lots (oriented approximately north-south) face the Depot Grounds and abut a rear approximately east-west alley. The remaining lots were oriented approximately east-west, with approximately north-south alleys subdividing the blocks. Front Street's unique lot layout may have been envisioned as the original linear main street, bisected by Walnut Street. The rectangular blocks and non-Front Street lots vary in size due to the placement of the true east-west-oriented street Division Street forming the southern boundary, and a true north-south-oriented alley forming the eastern boundary.

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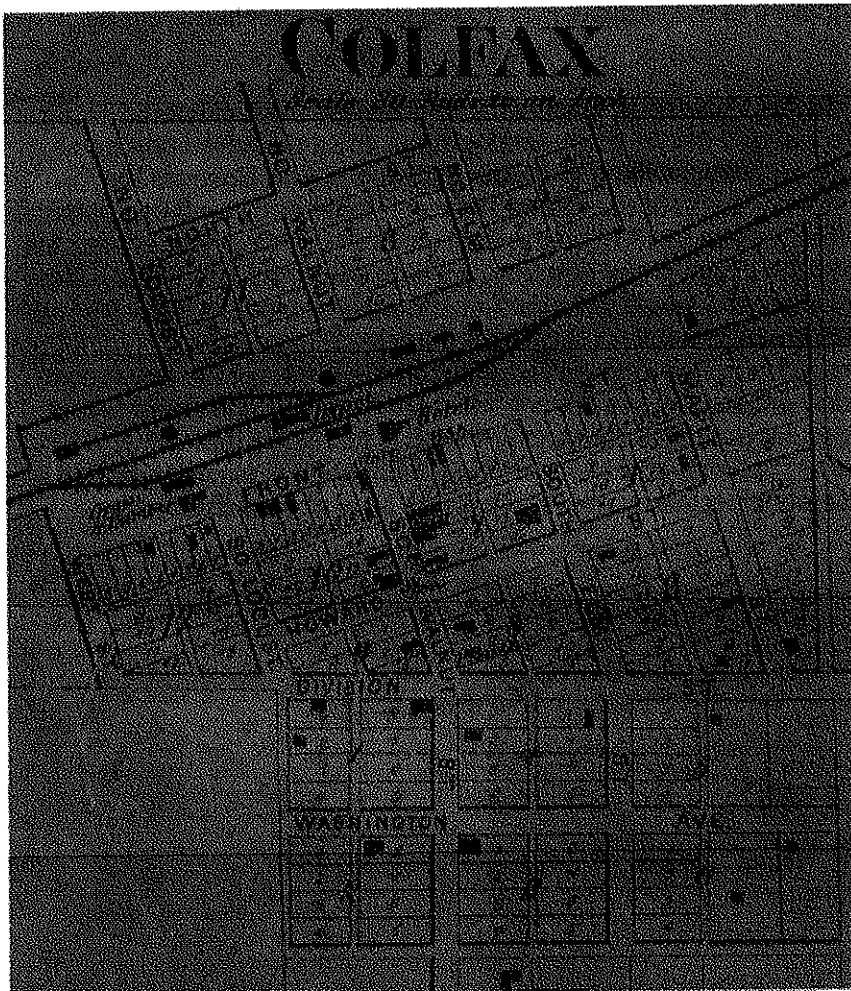


Figure: This 1871 map of Colfax shows platting oriented toward the railroad in the Original Plat, with subsequent platting using directional orientation. (Warner)

Grid plans were widely used in the Midwest and West for their ease in reproduction and accurate division of property. (Francaviglia: 97) In comparing the platting of Colfax with nine other early Jasper County communities represented on an 1871 Jasper County map, Colfax was late to platting. Colfax was by far the smallest and newest plat well behind county seat Newton, platted in 1846, and Clyde, 1857; Galesburg, 1855; Green Castle, 1855; Jasper City (later Kellogg), 1865; Lynnville, 1856; Monroe, 1856; Newton, 1846; Prairie City, 1856; and Vandalia, 1853. (Dates of platting from Weaver: 361-362) The majority of these other communities were laid out in grids of uniform square blocks, and six included one or more public squares. Colfax, in contrast, featured the previously described hybrid of grid styles, no public square, and polygonal

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lots and blocks at the south and east boundaries of the Original Plat due to cardinal direction oriented platting for additions.

As of the 1871 map, Colfax's commercial district featured at least eight businesses, most clustered along Front Street and Walnut Street south of the railroad tracks. Early photographs show detached and semi-attached frame buildings, with services such as blacksmithing and flour milling grouped closer to the railroad tracks and retail stores a block removed, south of the railroad tracks. These early land use patterns continued, such as Dr. J.R. Ryan's drug store, begun in 1867 on the east side of N. Walnut Street near the intersection with E. Howard Street; in 1884-1885 Ryan expanded from a frame storefront into a three-story complex for retail, professional offices, and a hotel—downtown's largest commercial block. (Hurto: 9) And the 1869 site of the Presbyterian church three blocks south of the railroad tracks at the corner of Walnut and Division streets set in motion the local trend of churches in Colfax locating on the edges of the downtown, and by the early twentieth century coalescing around Division Street. Most later platting and street layout followed cardinal points, resulting in the irregular quadrilateral shape of what is today the downtown commercial district and adjoining industrial/railroad district. However, the Colfax original plat established a pattern of rectangular blocks and east-west lots bisected by alleys. (Wamer, "Map of Jasper County"; McAlester: 100-101)

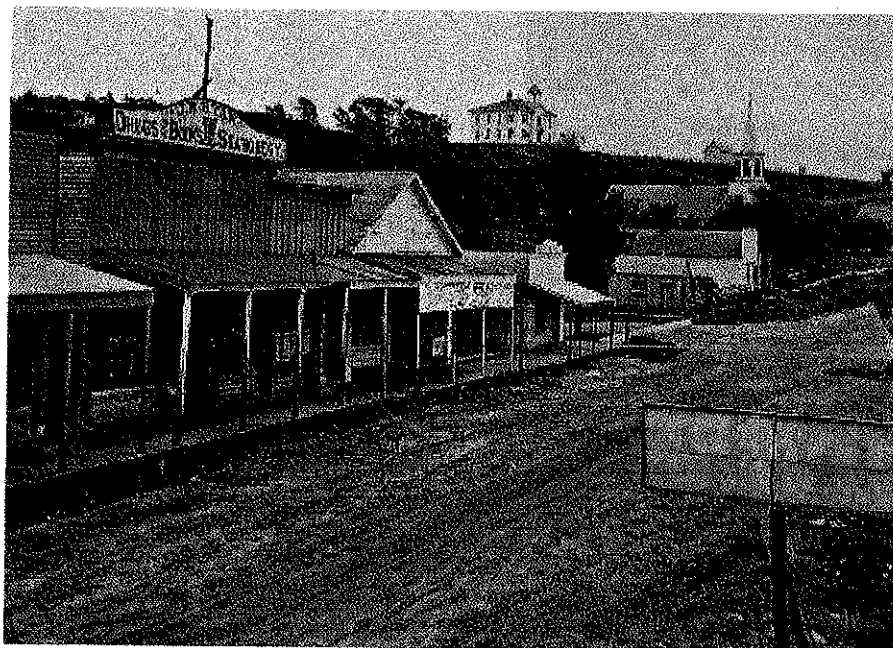


Figure: This circa-1878 photograph of the east side of N. Walnut Street looking southeast shows Colfax as a frame (wood) town. In the foreground is Dr. J.R. Ryan's pharmacy, established 1867, plus a bakery and meat market. The church steeple is the earliest First Presbyterian Church, built in 1868. (Hurto: 9)

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In fall 1875, an accidental discovery of mineral water by coal prospectors would set in motion a series of commercial ventures that would come to rapidly change Colfax's economic development and expand the downtown commercial district. Before examining the specific events in Colfax and how this unplanned find was parlayed into economic gain, it is important to look at the mid-nineteenth-century nationwide interest in water as a medical treatment and as a medicine. Two competing philosophies involving water persisted in the United States at the time of the Colfax water discovery: hydropathy and mineral water as a therapeutic treatment. During the early nineteenth century, hydropathy as a medical regime gained traction in the United States, as documented by Susan Cayleff in her book *Wash and Be Healed: The Water-Cure Movement and Women's Health*. Hydropaths dismissed mineral water as a drug and frowned upon the indulgent, frivolous lifestyle provided at stylish spas; however, the hydropathy movement was losing traction by the post-Civil War era, as mineral springs were increasing in popularity. Cayleff documents how hydropaths working with patients in home and at special sites away from home involved them in actively participating in their healing by advocating adjustments to lifestyle: various applications of water, dietary changes, frequent exercise and bathing, and wearing loose-fitting clothing. Future research may indicate whether hydropathy was practiced within Colfax hotels and sanitariums. Some of the hydropath techniques continued through the decades as hydrotherapy, and appear to have been advertised in some Colfax establishments, such as Hotel Colfax in the 1910s and Ball Sanitarium and Health School in Colfax in the 1930s. (Cayleff: 28, 162-163; "The Health Seekers' Playground": 16; Ball Clinic brochure, Colfax Historical Society file) Further research into water cures and hydrotherapy may be of interest by exploring the treatments offered at various Colfax hotels and sanitariums and comparing with the research by Cayleff.

Mineral water as a medical treatment had been documented in Europe for centuries, and was of particular interest in U.S. physicians in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Aron: 19) "The list of diseases that mineral waters allegedly cured was legion.... The continued endorsement of the medical profession no doubt helped to encourage the opening of more springs and seaside resorts," in the eastern United States in the 1830s and 1840s, according to research by history professor Cindy S. Aron, author of *Working at Play: A History of Vacations in the United States*. Fresh air as a therapy, slower country life as a counterpoint to hectic urbanity, the need for rest and relaxation, and the growing middle-class trend of taking vacations made possible the flourishing of American mineral spring resorts (as well as seaside and mountain resorts) in the east such as Saratoga and various hot springs in Virginia. (Ahearn: 41)

So important were mineral water springs that the federal government acquired two hot springs areas to protect these resources and make them available to the public: in 1832 the U.S. Hot Springs Reservation, which came to include a military hospital (designated in 1921 as Hot Springs National Park in Arkansas) and in 1902 the U.S. Sulphur Springs Reservation (later designated Platt National Park, and then in 1976 incorporated into the Chickasaw National Recreation Area in Oklahoma). As noted by the National Park Service in an article about "healing waters" within the National Parks system:

"Each park was initially set aside as a United States Reservation by congress (Hot Springs in 1832 and Sulphur Springs in 1902). Equally anomalous as units of the National Park system, the two parks contributed to the emerging National Park System and illustrate the changing values of what was deemed worthy to be a "National Park."

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"Taking the cure" at mineral spring resorts became highly fashionable in Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries, when thousands visited such famous spas as Bath, Aix-les-Bains, Aachen, Baden-Baden, and Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary). As mineral springs were found in America, they too attracted attention. Places like Saratoga Springs in New York and White Sulphur Springs in Virginia (now West Virginia) were developed privately, but Congress acted to maintain federal control of two springs west of the Mississippi.

"Hot Springs in the Arkansas Territory comprised 47 springs of salubrious repute emerging from a fault at the base of a mountain. In 1832 Congress reserved four sections of land containing Hot Springs "for the future disposal of the United States." After the Civil War the Interior Department permitted private entrepreneurs to build and operate bathhouses to which the spring waters were piped, and the Hot Springs Reservation became a popular resort.

"In 1902 the Federal Government purchased 33 mineral springs near Sulphur, Oklahoma Territory, from the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations to create the Sulphur Springs Reservation, also under Interior's jurisdiction...." (NPS, "Two of a Kind: Hot Springs and Sulphur Springs")

After the Civil War, mineral water continued to be of high interest to medical providers and a populace hungry for healing, including injured Civil War veterans. In 1873 alone, two different physicians published compilations of mineral springs: Dr. J.J. Moorman, M.D., physician at the White Sulphur Springs and medical school professor, published *Mineral Springs of North America: How to Reach, and How to Use Them* and Dr. George E. Walton, M.D., medical school lecturer, published *Mineral Springs of the United States and Canada*. The books are part travel guide, part medical handbook, listing perhaps scores of springs mostly east of the Mississippi, with no springs are listed for Iowa. (Moorman; Walton) However, at least one mineral spring was in operation in Iowa by 1873: Spinneyville Mineral & Magnetic Spring Infirmary near Davenport, operated by Dr. Spinney, which advertised "Come and Be Healed!" in an 1873 Des Moines newspaper. (*The Daily [Des Moines] Republican*, February 26, 1873)

Against this backdrop, coal prospectors from Colfax drilling for samples hit water in 1875. As detailed in a 1912 United States Geological Survey (USGS) report on underground water resources in Iowa, "The drill, located on the south bank of the South Skunk River about a mile east of town, had reached a depth of 315 feet when water began to flow from the top of the hole. Drilling was discontinued, and this coal prospect hole became the first of the 'mineral springs' which furnish the water so widely known as Colfax Mineral Water." (Norton: 710-11) The prospectors sent samples of water for chemical analysis, which found the water to be highly mineralized. The content included various salts and other minerals, and it was declared "highly magnetic." (*History of Jasper County*: 497) The 1878 history of Jasper County states that

"It was not long till invalids began to hear of and to test the virtues of the water, and so satisfactory was the result in many cases that the Colfax mineral water grew rapidly to repute, and a hotel was erected in 1876 to accommodate the people who began to flock hither. The business has increased so steadily that additional room has been required, and in January of last year [1877] the proprietors, Messrs. Dixon, Leighton & Gray, erected a building three stories high and 36x115 feet in size, which has been thronged with boarders during the past Summer.... [A]nd a dozen buildings have sprung up hereabouts in addition to the hotel. It is stated that borings have been undertaken at

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other places in the vicinity." (*The History of Jasper County*: 497-498)

This early success prompted in 1878 two of the initial coal prospectors, attorney Sidney Williams and telegraph operator Joseph Stayer, to drill a second well two blocks east of downtown Colfax, at the southeast corner of Howard and Maple streets, where they erected a small bathhouse. The opportunity attracted S.W. Cole and son, hoteliers from Cedar Rapids, to build the Cole Hotel (later renamed the Grand) in 1880-1881, the first new mineral springs hotel within the town of Colfax. (Hurto: 34) And thus started the first mineral water-related business around Colfax, which would grow as the century progressed into a large water bottling and mineral-water-related health resort industry.

Colfax, which was too late in its mineral water discovery to be listed in the two 1873 guides, relied on print and word-of-mouth advertising to promote bottled Colfax water as a health elixir and Colfax hotels as places for healing and rest. Early newspaper accounts helped spread the word, such as an 1877 *Waterloo State Reporter* editorial, published on the desirable front-page upper right column, which described a first-person visit to the spring: "What's the use of going to the Hot Springs of Arkansas when there are springs right here in Iowa where you be cured of your rheumatism or other chronic complaints. The springs at Colfax are growing in popular favor as fast as their curative properties became known and ere long Colfax ought to rank with the most popular health resorts of the country...." Readers were urged to visit via the railroad. (*The [Waterloo] State Reporter*, January 24, 1877) Medical doctors also endorsed the Colfax water and hotels, such as an 1879 letter from Dr. W.A. Hines of Waterloo, who described his stay in detail and proclaimed:

My conclusion is that it will cure all diseases of the kidneys, stomach and bowels that can be cured.... From my observation I have no doubt but that this will soon become one of the greatest resorts for invalids in the United States. I believe that in two years from this time, if there are accommodations, at no time will there be less than two thousand patients here." ([*Waterloo*] *Iowa State Reporter*, "Colfax Springs," March 5, 1879: 2)

The first hotel in the commercial business district to have a mineral well was the track-side Mason House; local hotel owners William Mason and Martha Croft drilled in 1881 and began to provide mineral baths and ship water; in 1890 the Mason House created a park with a mineral water spring across the street from the hotel, adjoining the railroad depot—this park remains as the present-day Mineral Springs Park. Spurred by the Mason House success, the 1880s saw four large new hotels built within the town of Colfax, plus one rebuilt one mile east. Of these, only one was located directly downtown, that being local pharmacy owner Dr. J.R. Ryan's impressive 3-story brick Hotel Ryan at the northeast corner of Walnut and Howard (nonextant), which contributed to the successful growth of the commercial district. The nationwide financial panic of 1893 likely played a role in slowing hotel and overall commercial growth in Colfax. However, hotel owners consistently updated, redecorated, and even expanded their facilities to remain attractive within a competitive environment; the same held true with supporting commercial buildings, including mineral water-related doctor's offices and mineral water bottling.

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Significance – Criterion A – Mineral Water Related Commerce and Health/Medicine

Although Colfax was not the only Iowa community to discover mineral or other specialty water, in ensuing decades it became the only Iowa community to build and sustain a robust local economy around health resort tourism and bottling. An 1887 USGS compilation of United States mineral springs, written by Albert C. Peale, M.D., lists nearly 30 Iowa mineral springs and wells, noting:

"Mineral springs are not of common occurrence in Iowa, although many wells, both artesian and ordinary, are frequently mineralized. Neither Walton nor Moorman [1873 medical doctors who wrote books about mineral springs] mention any of the springs of the State. The present list is mainly the result of direct correspondence with the different spring owners and local authorities. The springs are of the same general character as in the adjoining States. The occurrence of acid springs is interesting from a geological point of view. **Colfax Mineral Spring is probably the most widely known of the places of resort.**" (emphasis added; Peale: 161-162)

The discovery of mineral or specialty water was no guarantee for economic development, as evidenced by other Iowa mineral spring establishments, which were either short-lived or never developed to the extent as Colfax. (For example, in circa 1882, former Colfax resident W. Carrothers established a short-lived mineral springs hotel, Eureka Springs Hotel, in the Jasper county seat of Newton, perhaps taking its name from the newly discovered mineral water in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. (*Clipper*, April 1, 1882, as cited in Schmitt 1880s)) In contrast, in Colfax, some 15 known hotels, sanitariums, and boarding houses, mainly located on the fringes of downtown and to the east, were built and operated; four of these remain extant in altered forms, although not contiguous to the commercial district. In addition, some 16 mineral wells operated as of the early 1900s, many within or near the commercial district, including at mineral spring hotels, bottling plants, and one at the Mason Park (now Mineral Springs city park), as shown in a 1912 snapshot of mineral water wells in Colfax via a USGS report. (Norton: 713-714) Approximately 4 of these springs sites are extant, two of which are located within the historic district (Colfax Mineral Water Co.) (See the James 2014 survey for detailed information about hotels and wells.)

The impact of this mineral water discovery on Colfax and the subsequent hard work by local business owners and outside investors had by the 1880s altered an average railroad stop into the beginnings of an extraordinary health resort and mineral water bottling point. Awash in mineral water, the 1880s and early 1890s Colfax saw rapid expansion in hotels and a move toward brick construction, along with additional well drilling and the first dedicated bottling works within town limits. Most hotels built during this era drilled wells to provide mineral water for drinking and therapeutic baths. By the end of the century, nearly 20 mineral water wells had been drilled, and hotels and sanitariums together boasted more than 1,000 rooms. (Hurto: 36) Although most hotel and mineral bottling buildings are nonextant, the rare surviving buildings and the commercial district's buildings pay homage to this growth. The expanding health resort and tourism industry led to the robust growth of the commercial district, as travelers sought goods and services; these extant commercial buildings help tell the locally important story of Colfax's "Spring City" era.

Hotel building and mineral bottling drew in entrepreneurs from outside the community. Des Moines businessman Webb T. Dart, who drilled a mineral well at the southeast corner of Walnut and Howard

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streets in 1882, established the first Colfax bottling works within town limits (remodeled beyond recognition as bottling works). His Magnetic Rock Springs Company shipped plain, carbonated, and flavored mineral water in bottles, barrels and kegs until his death in the late 1880s. The company was eventually purchased in part by Ohio native Cyrus Wells Crisman in 1890 and by 1891 he had full possession; he bottled water on the site until 1901, when he moved to a different location north of downtown; Crisman used his mineral water wealth to build the Beaux Arts Crisman Building on E. Howard Street, long-time home to the U.S. Post Office. (*Clipper*, April 18, 1891 in Schmitt 1890s: 13-14; Hurto: 34-37; Schmitt 1880s) Colfax druggist Henry Fellows and two other investors drilled a well downtown in 1890 for their Colfax Mineral Water Bottling Co. (extant), which branched into bottled sodas and carbonated waters; this building remains in excellent condition and is an important local contributing building to the district. And at the end of the century, in 1899, local bottler Thomas E. Jordan moved from the Old M.C. Springs Bottling Works near Hotel Colfax to a new well downtown (nonextant). (Sears and Webster: 139; Hurto: 35-36)

Reinforcing Colfax as a tourism destination, in 1889 the community raised funds to bring the first permanent Chautauqua to Iowa, on grounds located about 1 mile east of downtown, near Hotel Colfax. The initial Chautauqua organizational meeting took place at the (old) First Presbyterian Church in February 1889, attended by 200 some people. In order to secure Colfax as the Iowa Chautauqua location, the community needed to raise \$2,000; at the meeting, local subscribers stepped forward to promise \$3,000, and the lease was immediately signed. Key shop owners, hotel owners, and mineral water bottlers were among subscribers, including general store owner R.C. Broughton, druggist Henry Fellows, and opera house co-owner W.M. Rowles; all three of their buildings remain extant in the district, with the Broughton Block retaining important elements of its nineteenth-century design. (*Colfax Clipper*, "The Chautauqua Mass Meeting," February 23, 1889, from the Dr. Alice Turner Scrapbook) In 1896, the Chautauqua relocated to Des Moines, and local business leaders including bottler C.W. Crisman secured an agreement with the Methodist Iowa State Epworth League to have Chautauqua-like summer camp events at the grounds. The *Clipper* noted that the cross-promotional opportunities would reinforce both the league's programming and Colfax mineral water and general business interests. (*Clipper*, January 15, 1897 in Schmitt 1890s, 19-8)

Related to the health resort industry, Colfax by the 1880s and into the midcentury attracted and supported at any one time *at least* three pharmacies as well several doctors and dentists. Retailers also prospered, selling groceries, clothing, and tourist souvenirs including postcards and pictorial china keepsakes, such as porcelain plates with images of the hotels. (Hurto: 127-128; Colfax Historical Society pictorial souvenir and postcard collections) Liveries transported guests and their luggage. And entertainment venues from the Cain Opera House (now Cross Building) completed in 1889 to horse races at a driving park to billiards halls in operation by the 1899 Sanborn map added to the list of things to do. As noted by Aron, as the nineteenth century progressed, health seekers visited mineral springs, seaside resorts, and/or mountain resorts to seek not only healing, but also retention of good health and amusement, what she calls the three Rs: recuperation, restoration, and recreation. (Aron: 23) A circa-1900 advertisement for Colfax-based McMullen Hotel and Mineral Spring exemplified the three different types of customers visited mineral springs: "A quiet homelike retreat for the invalid. A pleasant resort for the tired man of business on his vacation. And headquarters for pleasure seekers." (emphasis added; undated newspaper advertisement in Dr. Alice

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Turner "hotel" scrapbook)

Individual bottlers and hotels actively advertised in newspapers, and a mineral water association worked to protect the Colfax water "brand." In June 1890, Colfax bottlers and hoteliers formed a mineral water protective association to secure a copyright on the name "Colfax Mineral Water," with one of the Colfax Mineral Water Company partners, O.K. Bales, serving as secretary of the association. The group estimated that nine-tenths of the water sold under the name "Colfax Mineral Water" was bottled outside of Colfax. "Customers have no guarantee that they are getting Colfax Mineral Water unless the bottle bears the label of a responsible bottler in Colfax, Iowa." (*Clipper*, June n.d., 1890 in Schmitt 1890s: 12-22) Colfax Mineral Water Company advertisements show that the company sold direct as well as worked with dealers such as grocery stores and beverage distributors. The advertisements also show a wide variety of health claims. Early Colfax Mineral Water Company newspaper briefs/advertisements spoke of specific medicinal use and local dealers, such as a Burlington newspaper mention that ran in several issues in 1892: "La grippe [influenza] has left one with a deranged system. Colfax water, supplied by the Colfax Mineral Water Company, Colfax, Iowa, will cure you. H L. Wigert, local agent." (*The Burlington Hawk-Eye*, January 1, 1892: 7; May 11, 1892: 3) Also that year, the Waterloo paper *The Courier* ran a story about merchant W.M. Sindlinger handling Colfax Mineral Water Company mineral water and ginger ale, sold by the glass, bottle, or case. Health claims included relief from "disordered stomach, liver, or kidneys... nervous headache, scrofula, diseases of the skin, incontinence, wakefulness, overwork, private diseases of the male or female, and weak back. It stimulates and strengthens the digestive and secretory organs—the sources of most illness—and develops a health of body and mind that can only be realized by experience." (*The Courier*, February 3, 1892: 9) The Colfax Mineral Springs Water Company appeared at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition with mineral water; it was one of three Iowa water operations, the other two being Lake View Medical Spring with spring water and White Sulphur with sulphur water. (*World's Columbian Exposition*: 36)

Architectural Response to Mineral Water and Tourism Growth, 1880s-1890s

The mineral water discovery led to an 1880s building boom. The need for local building supplies led to the development of local brickyards. Entrepreneur W.P. Cain, who built the Cain & Rowles Opera House Block (Cross Building) and supplied the bricks for his opera house project as well as others during the late 1880s and early 1890s, until Cain's untimely death. The following are extant buildings from this era:

- In circa early 1880s, Henry Fellows or another early resident erected a two-story brick storefront, 101 N. Walnut Street (now part of Weirick's Pharmacy; extant but substantially remodeled) (1932 article on history of downtown says E.O. Stone built the building, the first brick structure in town; *Colfax Tribune*, "History Of Early Day Of Our City," by S.C. Paschal, October 27, 1932)
- In circa 1881, merchant R.C. Broughton erected a two-story brick storefront, 15 E. Howard Street. (*Clipper*, February 4, 1882, as cited in Schmitt 1880s)
- In circa 1882, Webb T. Dart constructed a two-story corner brick building, 1 E. Howard Street; it was purchased by Wesley Jordan in 1889. (*Clipper*, March 30, 1889: "We are pleased..." cited in Schmitt 1880s:

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11-4) (extant but substantially remodeled)

- In circa 1882, an incorporated company erected the two-story brick double storefront, 11-13 E. Howard Street (extant) (*Clipper*, "Another Big Brick," February 4, 1882, as cited in Schmitt 1880s: 5-1)
- In late 1884, the Masons coordinated with the presumed owner, J.M. Kennedy, to add a third story to his brick storefront, 112 N. Walnut Street (extant) (*Colfax Clipper*, January 3, 1885, cited in Schmitt, "Department, Dry Goods, and Variety Stores...")
- In 1887, Mrs. Dixon erected a two-story brick storefront, 103 N. Walnut (extant and now part of Weirick's Drug Store and substantially remodeled). (*Clipper*, "New Building," March 19, 1887, as cited in Schmitt 1880s: 9-4)
- In 1888, the *Clipper* reported that J.R. Rogers proposed to build a large 2-story brick south of Cain Opera House, with store rooms below and offices above; this may be the Post Office Building, 11 N. Walnut. (*Clipper*, "A general epidemic of improvement..." September 22, 1888, as cited in Schmitt 1880s 10-20?)
- In 1888, livery owner I.N. Paschal erected a brick-veneered one-story livery, 15 E. Front Street. (*Clipper*, "Wednesday I.N. Paschal moved..." November 5, 1888 as cited in Schmitt 1880s: 10-24)
- In 1888-1889, W.P. Cain and W.M. Rowles built the two-story brick Cain and Rowles Block and Opera House, 1 W. Howard Street. The duo manufactured the bricks. (extant, remodeled post-WWII into the Cross Building with second-floor apartments) (*Clipper*, April 21, 1888, Schmitt 1880s: 10-1; Schmitt 1880s: 10-7; *Clipper*, April 13, 1889, "Cain's new opera..." cited in Schmitt 1880s 11-6)
- In 1888-1889, druggist Henry Fellows built behind his drug store the Henry Fellows Block and Knights of Pythias Hall, 4-6 W. Howard Street. (as cited in Schmitt 1880s)
- In 1889: Hardware store owner J.M. Kennedy replaced a frame one-story building with the large three-story brick Kennedy Block and Masonic Hall Extension, 114 N. Walnut Street. (*Clipper*, August 10, 1889, "Mr. J.M. Kennedy..." cited in Schmitt 1880s: 11-9)
- In 1889-1890, druggist Henry Fellows built a brick extension for tenant Kizer-Wood Hardware Company for an agricultural implement wareroom, likely 8 W. Howard Street. (*Clipper*, September 14, 1889, "Henry Fellows is arranging..." cited in Schmitt 1880s: 11-10)
- 1890: Henry Fellows to build brick extension onto his W. Howard streets properties to house his Colfax Mineral Water Co., 12 W. Howard Street. (*Clipper*, March 8, 1890, "Henry Fellows has inaugurated..." cited in Schmitt 1890s: 12-7; April 26, 1890, "Henry Fellows is excavating..." cited in Schmitt 1890s: 12-15)

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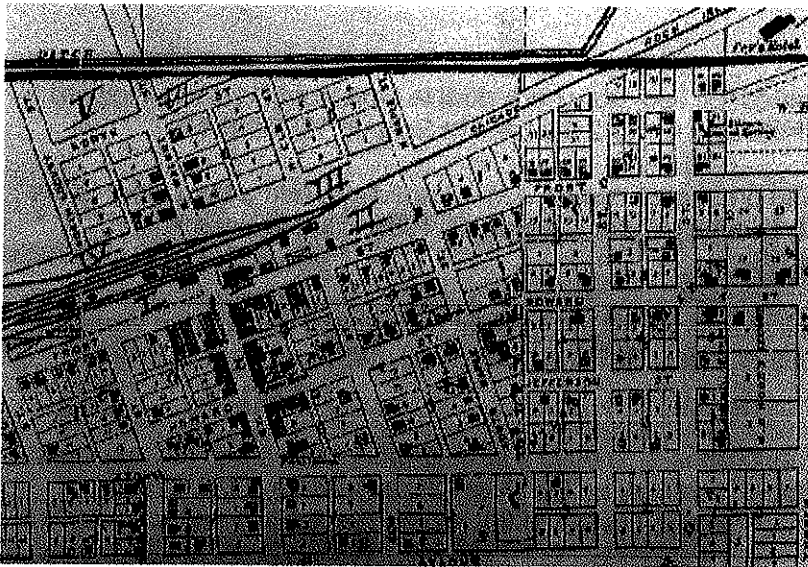


Figure: Circa-1885 map of Colfax. Darkened building footprints show existing houses and commercial buildings. (Colfax c. 1885 Map)

The 1890s saw continued growth, likely slowed somewhat by the 1893 nationwide financial panic. Hotel expansions and additional wells drilled for new competing bottling works occupied the business coverage in the *Clipper* newspaper. An 1890 special front page featured a summary of Colfax's business climate, with specific profiles of businesses. The itinerate author, G.G. Rinehart, headlined the report: "Colfax, Iowa, The Saratoga of the West, Headquarters of the Iowa Chautauqua, and the Rising Metropolis of a Prosperous Section—Manufactures, Investors, and Health Seekers Made Welcome." He went on to say: "On the famous Rock Island Road, in Jasper County, is located a little city that is rapidly assuming prominence as one of the leading health resorts in the United States... The population of Colfax has been steadily increasing with the permanent growth it has enjoyed in the way of substantial brick business blocks and residences of model convenience and modern improved architecture." (*Clipper*, August 16, 1900 in Schmitt 1900s: 12-36 – 12-37)

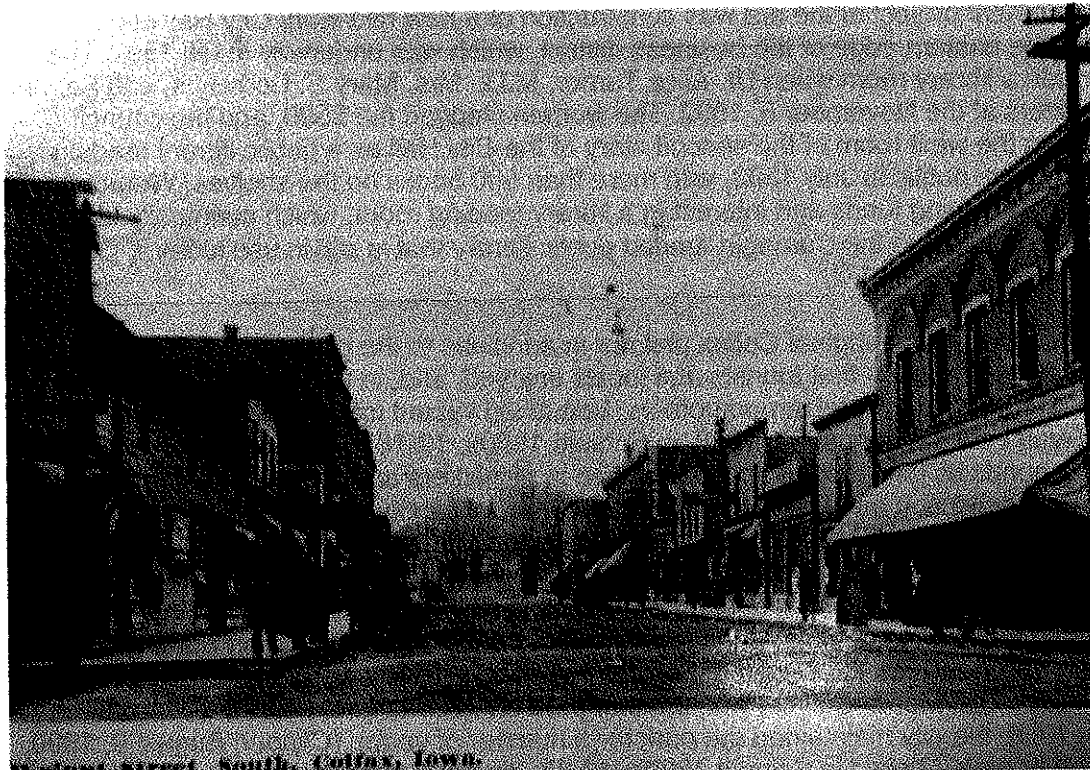
Druggist Henry Fellows' downtown Colfax Mineral Water Company with handsome facilities on W. Howard Street was part of an Italianate commercial row with cast-iron storefronts that extended behind his drug store and still looks much as it did when it was first constructed. Fellows' mineral water company was one of three Iowa water companies that brought their wares to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. (*World's Columbian Exposition*) And as a testament to the importance of advertising and newspapers in selling mineral water and tourism to Colfax, the owner of the *Colfax Tribune* newspaper in 1899 leased the publication to bottling works owner C.W. Crisman, who had purchased Dart's Magnetic Rock Springs operation, in order to advertise Colfax mineral water, the advantages of Colfax, and the benefits of Crisman's Colfax Bottling Works products. (*Clipper*, February 24, 1899, "Arrangements have been

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entered..." as cited in Schmitt 1890s: 21-17; Hurto: 35)



Walnut Street, South, Colfax, Iowa.

Figure: Undated postcard view of N. Walnut Street looking south from Front Street. Note the predominance of first-generation (or other early) frame buildings, with the 1899 brick Mason Block on the immediate right (nonextant due to fire). (Mast)

Growth of Government Services and Parkland, 1880s – 1910s

The growth in tourism and business swelled the local population. Colfax grew from a town of a few hundred in the 1870s to one of 2,053 by 1900. (*Clipper*, September 21, 1900 in Schmitt 1900s: 1-45) This required a new approach to local government. In 1887 the city built a water works and installed water mains and hydrants to provide drinking water and fire suppression, as fire was a constant threat in a town with many frame buildings built near the railroad lines. At the same time, the city purchased (additional?) fire equipment including hoses, hose trucks, ladders, and hook-and-ladder trucks for a volunteer squad. The city built a combination waterworks pump house and fire equipment storage building (location unknown). (*Clipper*, June 25, 1887 in Schmitt 1880s: 9-12 and *Clipper*, August 20, 1887 in Schmitt 1880s: 9-19.) In 1890, municipal leaders approved a franchise with Hawkeye Electric Light and Power Company to install and provide electricity, however actual installation appears to have occurred in 1894 by locally owned Colfax Electric Light and Power Co., incorporated in 1893 by Dr. H.A. Weirick as president, with office at 6

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W. Howard Street (extant). (*Clipper*, December 29, 1893 in Schmitt 1890s: 15-32)

Perhaps the largest government project of the era was construction of a new two-story City Hall at 9 N. Walnut Street (extant) on the eastern edge of the business district, which was underway in fall 1892. The project expanded to include a library room when Dr. Alice Turner, M.D., Mrs. Mary S. Corselius, and Fannie Wilson petitioned city leaders at the November 5, 1892. The women pledged the \$500, and the council voted to approve dedicating the west room of the second story of the City Hall as a public library reading room. The library opened to the public in July 1893, with more than 500 books on the shelves. Women took a lead role in raising and maintaining funds and interest in a library reading room, which eventually led to early 1900s organizing that resulted in the Carnegie-funded public library that is still in use today. ("Outline History of the Colfax Carnegie Library": 1-2)

Parkland had not been set aside in the original Colfax plat nor in additions to the plat, so by the 1880s hotels began to create park-like grounds that tourists and locals enjoyed, and, in the case of the Hotel Ryan, Mason House, Fry Hotel/Monte Colfax Hotel, among others, beautified vacant lots into parks. (*Clipper*, "Late attractions at the Hotel Ryan Park..." August 25, 1888, in Schmitt 1880s: 10-16) Historic postcards show hotels and Chautauqua grounds as landscaped spots attractive to picnickers and strollers. (Postcards from the Colfax Historical Society collection and David Mast) In 1890, the Colfax city council was presented with a lease from the CRI&P Railroad for use of rail grounds as a park, and a public drinking fountain was added. (*Clipper*, March 22, 1890 in Schmitt 1890s: 12-11) In time, the shady landscaped Mason House Park featured a frame springhouse containing a mineral well drinking fountain plus a band shelter; the *Colfax Clipper* reported that two thousand came and drank from the new park's fountain on Sunday. (*Clipper*, August 9, 1890, "The new park is..." cited in Schmitt 1890s: 12-33) Early success of the Mason House Park inspired the Fry Hotel/Monte Colfax Park, another park on railroad land north of Front Street; after the hotel burned in 1906, the city maintained the park for a number of years. (*Clipper*, August 9, 1890, "And we are to have another park..." cited in Schmitt 1890s: 12-33; Jasper County Writers Inc. Vol. II: 25) Of these mineral water-related parks, only the Mason House Park remains extant, now known as the city's Mineral Springs Park.

Local Coal Mining: Fuel for Railroads and Growth, 1880s-1890s

Coal mining played an important role in the early growth of Jasper County and factored into Colfax's commercial growth by the 1880s. Coal mining has been documented in Jasper County since the early 1850s (some sources say late 1840s), with mining increasing in the 1870s and beyond. (Williams: 325; *Centennial History*: 7; Hurto: 74-75) Iowa railroad expansion directly impacted the coal industry expansion, as noted by historians Dorothy Schwieder, Joseph Hraba, and Elmer Schwieder in their book about the African-American coal-mining town Buxton, Iowa, *Buxton: A Black Utopia in the Heartland*. (Schwieder et al.: 15) Mining in Colfax, as across the state, prospered from the 1880s through the 1910s, with some fluctuation in production. Coal production in Jasper County and specifically around Colfax increased dramatically during the late nineteenth century, as evidenced by figures from an 1894 Iowa Geological Survey report: In 1860 Jasper County ranked sixth in the state for coal production, with 2,336 tons produced; in 1893 Jasper again ranked sixth, with 293,400 tons produced. During the same period, in 1889

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Iowa ranked fifth in the United States for coal production (West Virginia ranked fourth). (Keyes: 522-525)

As mining grew in Jasper County, some local coalmine owners established offices in Colfax, some miners lived in Colfax and commuted to nearby mines, and other miners came to Colfax to trade and to be paid. At one peak in Colfax's mining era, in the late nineteenth century, some 1,800 miners were employed alone at Oswalt mines. Railroad spur connections and short lines such as tracks installed by the locally controlled Iowa Northern Railway Co., later Colfax Northern Railroad, were run to mines. In a 1905 Iowa Geological Survey, the "Colfax district" was noted as "the center of the most active and extensive mining operations in the county." Thus coal mining contributed to Colfax's commercial district through its employment of miners near the town, plus coal companies headquartered in Colfax —workers came to get paid in town and to trade. By the start of the new century, the city of Colfax had grown to a town of 2,053, more than double the 1890 population. In a newspaper article about the U.S. Census count, the *Clipper* noted that the town's population had increased by 25 percent every five years: 620 (1880), 957 (1880), 1,106 (1895). (*Clipper*, "The enumeration for the census..." September 21, 1900 in Schmitt 1900s: 1-45)

Railroads, 1900-1920s

Two main railroads served Colfax in this era: The Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad (CRI&P) with its depot in the 200 block of N. Walnut (nonextant) in the middle of its tracks north of downtown (a second depot one mile east served Hotel Colfax et al.), and the local Colfax Northern Railroad, with its depot in the 300 block of N. Walnut Street (nonextant). Rock Island continued to provide key passenger service, bringing patrons of the mineral springs as well as shipping out mineral water; Rock Island promoted Colfax and Colfax hotels, such as a spring 1911 advertisement that Rock Island ran in Iowa newspapers for Hotel Colfax, "The Carlsbad of America." (*Waterloo Evening Courier*, April 15, 1911)

The 1903 opening of the Inter-Urban Railway (renamed Des Moines and Central Iowa Railroad/D.M. & C.I. in 1922) brought a new transportation connection to Colfax. Incorporated in 1899, the Des Moines-based firm built its first road to Colfax, a 24-mile electric line. Plans for the Colfax extension were brought to the Colfax City Council at least by 1901, but controversy in 1902 and winter 1903 about whether to allow the inter-urban to run on Colfax city streets such as Walnut Street led to the Colfax line stopping at the Colfax city limits, at least for a time; further research could be conducted on this topic as to whether this tension, which resulted in January 1903 with Colfax firefighters driving off railroad workers with hose water, led to the inter-urban depot being located north of North Street, at 341 N. Walnut (nonextant). (*The Des Moines Daily Capital*, June 5, 1902; *Waterloo Daily Courier*, January 28, 1903) The company planned an extension to Newton, but it does not appear to have been built. (*Electrical World*, November 17, 1906)

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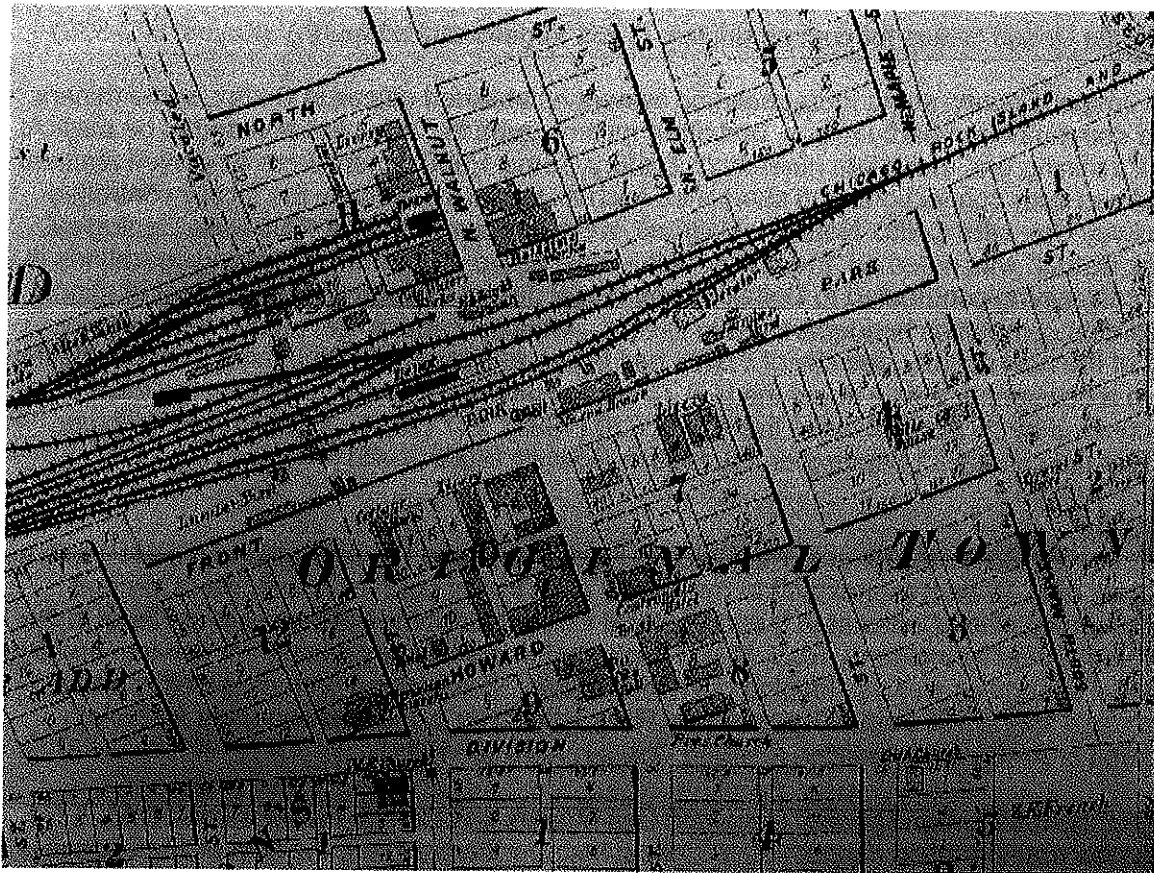


Figure: View of downtown Colfax from the 1901 Huebinger's Map of Colfax. The map shows commercial buildings, but perhaps accidentally omits half of the brick Centropolis Hotel (lot 10, Block 7 is unshaded) and two large three-story brick buildings on the east side of N. Walnut Street (lot 9, Block 7 is unshaded). (Colfax Historical Society collection)

Railroad historian Frank P. Donovan, Jr., described Colfax as important to the inter-urban line, which stretched some 24 miles from Des Moines east to Colfax (and later included a 34-mile line from Des Moines northwest to Perry):

Coal mines along the route provided considerable freight, while Colfax, then a popular health resort, accounted for a relatively heavy passenger business....

In its heyday, the Inter-Urban built up a flourishing freight business. ...There were also shipments of bituminous coal and of ice and milk, the milk being shipping in cans from way stations.... (Donovan and Grant: 86-87)

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Figure: This 1915 map shows three rail lines entering the city: Chicago Rock Island & Pacific (CRI&P), the short line Colfax Northern Railroad, and the Inter-Urban Railway (running parallel to the CRI &P). The tourism-driven River to River Road is shown in bold, running east-west through Colfax, with a secondary north-south route providing further farm-to-market access. (Huebinger's Pocket Automobile Guide: 146)

Highways, 1900-1920s

The growth of highways in Iowa began as automobile ownership rose in the 1900s. In 1909 to 1910, Colfax advocated to be included in the River to River Road, an early east-west highway that commercial boosters used to promote tourism and the use of autos. This led to the "auto row" boom of garages and gas stations, several of which remain extant in the district. A 1918 automobile guide described Colfax as a picturesque stop and praised the mineral water amenities and hotels:

Colfax, Ia. (pop. 2607, alt., 2,500 ft.) is famous for its mineral springs, the healing qualities of the water being quite wonderful. The bottling and shipping of this water to all parts of the U.S. both in carloads and small quantities, is a great industry. Colfax is also the location of the Iowa State Epworth League Assembly, with its 25 acres of beautiful shaded land and large auditorium. Many splendid hotels, sanitariums, and bath establishments are maintained at Colfax for the accommodation of its visitors and health seekers. (Automobile Blue Book: 1106)

The River to River route ran through Colfax via Howard Street, bringing auto traffic into the downtown. An

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early response to this new highway designation may have been the 1911 paving of 14 blocks within the city center including the central business district. (Des Moines Daily News, June 26, 1911) At least five auto-related garages and filling stations developed on Howard Street between the publication of the 1911 and 1923 Sanborn map; the Everett & Baker Ford Garage, 20 W. Howard, is the lone extant example. Although the highway name would change and the route through the city later would shift south of the business district, Colfax would remain on the key east-west highway route—the busiest highway in the state—until the interstate freeway system was opened in 1960. (In 1922, Colfax was part of the White Way 7 Highway; in 1926, Colfax was included in U.S. Highway 32; in 1931 the highway was absorbed into U.S. Highway 6; in 1960 Interstate 80 opened north of Colfax.) ("River to River"; "Whiteway-7"; Weingroff)

The north-south road through Colfax is Walnut Street within city limits, now known as Highway 117; this route received a modernized bridge over the South Skunk River in the early 1920s, making connection from the north easier. This transit improvement may have led to the development of a second Colfax "auto row" along E. Front Street, with three adjoining auto garages and a fourth in the alley behind. One of these auto garages began as the I.N. Paschal Livery (15 E. Front Street; extant) in the late 1880s, and was converted into an airplane repair business begun by two World War I flight instructors, and then by the 1923 Sanborn was an auto garage. Highway automobile traffic through downtown also led to the construction of gas stations. The city of Colfax invested in infrastructure to improve road conditions within corporate limits. In 1923, the city completed a 46-block, \$160,000 paving project. (Iowa City Press Citizen, November 24, 1923)

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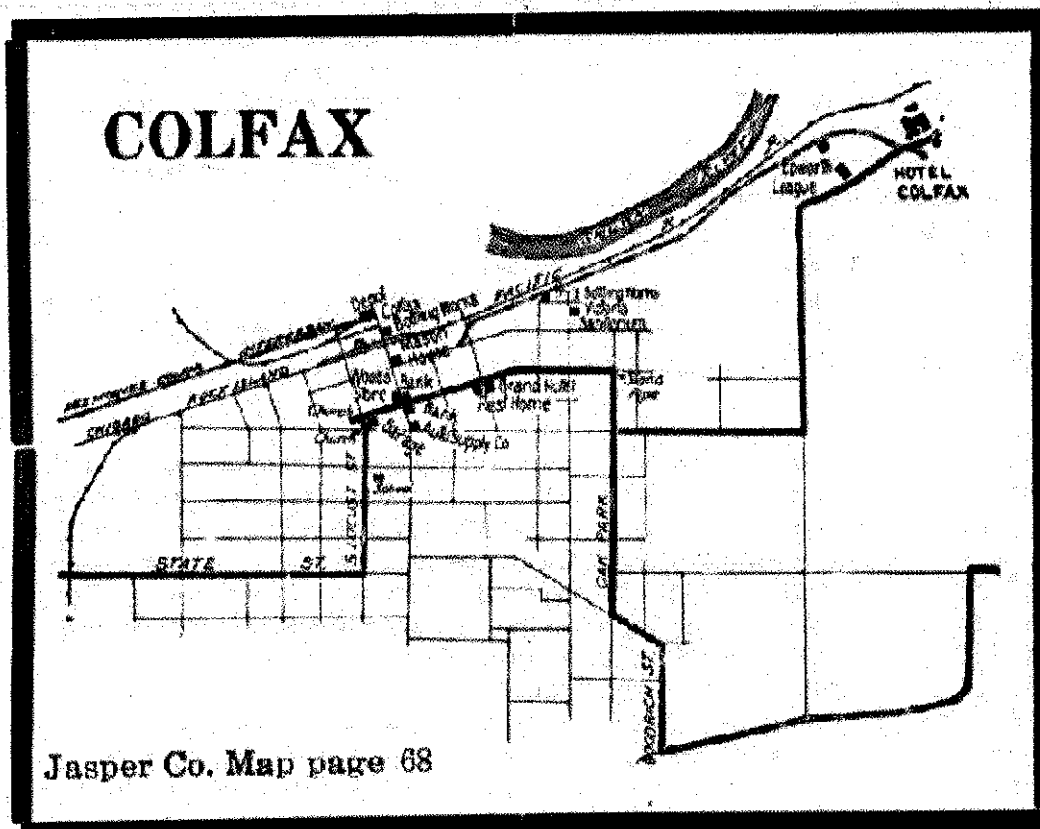


Figure: This 1915 map shows the River to River Road route through Colfax, which brought travelers into the downtown commercial district's Howard Street, with a spur to the east to Hotel Colfax and the Epworth League's Chautauqua-style grounds. (Huebinger's Pocket Automobile Guide: 146)

The improvement of roads in Iowa related to the rise of the auto industry. During the 1910s in Iowa, the auto industry grew exponentially. Period newspaper accounts lauded Iowa's leading status in auto ownership. "Iowa Still First in Cars Per Capita," with one car to every 6 people versus the 1:15 ratio nationwide, reported the October 5, 1919, *Des Moines Register* Sunday motorist news page. In 1920, Iowa again led in autos per person, and so did the capital city: A news item highlighted "Des Moines in Top Place" for having more autos per capita than any other U.S. city; Omaha came in second and Detroit third. (*The Des Moines Register*, January 19, 1920; *The Des Moines Register*, May 6, 1920) Automotive writer Robert Genat's *The American Car Dealership* looks in-depth at trends impacting auto dealership architecture. The advent of assembly line manufacturing and financing of car sales helped make auto purchases accessible to middle-class consumers, fueling sales demand in the 1910s and 1920s. (Genat: 9-17)

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While the auto industry seemed to be limitless in sales growth in the early 1910s, the demand for autos crashed against forces out of control of dealers or manufacturers. Several problems occurred in 1919 and into 1920: a shortage of raw materials to make auto parts, strikes by auto plant workers and railroad workers, and shortage of rail freight cars that combined to slow production, assembly, and distribution. (*The Des Moines Register*, "Some Troubles...", October 19, 1919) Used cars also competed with new cars. Genat notes: "With sales down, the manufacturers had a difficult time holding prices. Raw material costs remained high and reduced production cut into profits. Sales continued to decline and many manufacturers temporarily closed their doors." (Genat: 26) The economic slowdown hit extra hard in Iowa due to a parallel farm crisis caused by slumps in grain prices that led to a reduced cash flow, especially among potential rural buyers, at the same time as the Federal Reserve tightened credit. (*Motor Age*, January 26, 1921; Long 1988: E7) The farm crisis progressed in the 1920s, with the 1929 stock market crash ushering in the Great Depression, all of which hollowed out middle-class auto sales. (Berger xvii-xxiv)

Mineral Water, 1900-1920s

Mineral water continued to be an important part of Colfax's economy in the early twentieth century. A 1905 report found the mineral-water trade in Iowa was "flourishing" with output nearly three times greater than in 1904. Besides Colfax, two other Iowa springs reported sales: Boone Mineral Well in Boone and Red Mineral Spring in Eddyville. (Wilder and Savage) The mineral water industry was noted in a 1912 Jasper County history edited by former Colfax mayor General James B. Weaver as a key asset for Colfax: "But perhaps its greatest natural advantage is derived from its famous springs and the numerous hotels and sanitariums using the medicinal waters which gush from the bowels of the earth at different points in and near the city proper." (Weaver: 350) A 1912 USGS report praised Colfax's mineral water position in the state as "the most famous wells in the State, the Colfax artesian wells known as the Colfax Mineral Springs," and also noted that all drew on the same St. Louis limestone aquifer for the water. For competing Colfax bottlers, differentiation of product came from turning the water into value-added products such as flavored sodas and advertising in a crowded marketplace. In 1921, the state labor commission noted that: "Colfax leads in the bottling of mineral waters, having the two largest of seventy-six plants in the state. Des Moines and Dubuque tie in the number of plants bottling both mineral and soda water. Of the later, there are 102 plants in the state." (*Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette*, April 9, 1921)

Early in the century, investors and medical professionals continued to arrive from outside the community, attracted to the business opportunities that seemingly bubbled to the surface. Famed hydropath Dr. John H. Kellogg of Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan visited Colfax Sanitarium (formerly Hotel Colfax and not to be confused with the 1915 Colfax Sanitarium in the former Hotel Ryan) in summer 1901 as head of the parent institution with the American Association of Sanitariums; the association board had decided to secure and manage the Colfax Sanitarium/Hotel Colfax. (*Clipper*, July 26, 1901, "The American Association..." in Schmitt 1900s: 3-55; August 9, 1901 in Schmitt 1900s: 2-60) Dr. R. B. Habernicht, a Seventh-Day Adventist physician who knew fellow Adventist physician Kellogg, managed the Colfax Sanitarium/Hotel Colfax. "[Kellogg] made offers to Dr. Habernicht for the Colfax Sanitarium but it is said without success," reported the *Des Moines Daily News*, adding that Kellogg was turning his attention to Des Moines for a location; it is unknown if Kellogg on behalf of the association did find a site in Iowa. (*Des*

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Moines Daily News, August 6, 1901) The *Colfax Clipper* stated that the stumbling block was monetary: "The Sanitarium Committee from Des Moines, together with Dr. Kellogg, from the Battle Creek, Michigan, sanitarium, were at the Colfax Springs Sanitarium last Friday, but owing to the valuable improvements that have been made in that property during the past year, the conference was not able to meet the demands financially, and have deferred consummation of the deal until they are able to raise the money." (*Clipper*, August 9, 1901. "The Sanitarium Committee..." in Schmitt 1900s: 3-60) Unfortunately, in 1904 the sanitarium would close and be sold at sheriff's sale. (*Centennial History*: 10) Also in August 1901, the Grand Lodge Knights of Pythias voted unanimously to erect a hospital, hotel, and sanitarium, with Colfax a frontrunner. (*Des Moines Daily News*, August 16, 1901) In 1903, a three-story Pythian sanitarium was proposed, with the city donating land and Knights of Pythias lodges each assessed to raise funds for the \$24,800 project. (*Clipper*, August 1, 1903 in Schmitt 1900s 4-48) However, this plan appears not to have been built in Colfax.

Perhaps more importantly, a higher number of medical professionals per capita located in Colfax than in most towns of 2,000-some residents. At least three of these medical professionals included pioneering women doctors. Perhaps the first woman physician in Colfax was Dr. Alice Turner, M.D., (1859-1917?), who moved to Colfax in 1882, worked out of state with her physician husband, and returned again to run the Turner Rest Home; she was a leader in forming the public library and Colfax Woman's Club among other civic causes. Dr. Florence Brown Sherbon, M.D. (1869-1944), was proprietor of the Victoria Sanitarium (1904-circa 1916), where she also started a nursing school, served as a member of the state university extension service in the early 1910s and as president of the Iowa State Society of Medical Women in 1914-1915. She left Iowa in 1917 to become temporary chief and then chief of the Kansas State Board of Health's Division of Child Hygiene, 1917-1921, until she became a Kansas University professor, from 1921 to 1944. As of the late 1940s, Dr. Ellen Ferengul, M.D. worked with Dr. Royal Anspach at the Colfax Sanitarium.

The mineral water industry began to dry up during World War I and through the interwar era. One lens through which to view the industry is the Hotel Colfax, which debuted in 1909 as a remodeled luxury resort offering extensive mineral water treatments one mile east of downtown. The business enjoyed success, but it proved unsustainable in the face of World War I shortages including coal. It reopened as a Veteran's Administration hospital in 1921-1923, having undergone extensive remodeling to accommodate patients. However, high rent and low numbers of patients led to congressional investigation; remaining patients were moved to Knoxville and hotel furnishings were removed. And the shell of the hotel was left vacant until 1945, as will be discussed further below. (*Centennial History*: 10; Hurto 36-37) In contrast to the fate of Hotel Colfax, Dr. Royal G. Anspach, M.D., converted the Centropolis Hotel (formerly Hotel Ryan) into the Colfax Sanitarium in 1915 (not to be confused with the former Colfax Sanitarium/Hotel Colfax). Under Anspach's direction, the sanitarium operated as a combination health clinic, hospital, and convalescent home where mineral water was used as part of the regime. Staff included medical doctors and surgeons, dentist, nurses, and attendants; patients came with injuries such as broken bones and toothaches, expectant mothers delivered babies on the premises, and the chronically ill came for weeks-long treatment. (*Colfax Tribune*, "New City Mineral Well Now Completed," October 17, 1946; *Altoona Herald*, May 26, 1949; Colfax Historical Society business files; *Atlantic News-Telegraph*, January 30, 1951; Hurto: 57-59)

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Colfax, the Famous Health Resort of Iowa

Citizens State Bank
OF COLFAX, IOWA
GENERAL BANKING
Does any place have more water? A great many people are trying to find out. No wonder, for more and more people are being cured of their ailments by drinking the water from Colfax.

Purrox-Colfax
It will keep you in perfect health.

COLFAX MINERAL WATER
Colfax, Iowa.

The Mason House
100 Envelopes for 39c

D. C. Fry & Co.
Colfax, Iowa

Monte-Colfax
At Colfax, Iowa

S. M. Brown & Son
Lumber and Coal

THE Colfax Lumber Co.
SOLLS
Lumber & Building Materials

Victoria Sanatorium
Colfax Mineral Springs

Colfax Mineral Springs

The Grand Hotel
Colfax, Iowa

J. H. Chew
Nipples and Fancy Draperies

W. J. CUTLER
Exclusive Undertaking

Colfax Manufacturing Co.

COLFAX, IOWA'S GREAT HEALTH RESORT
Iowa State Epworth League Assembly, August 5th to 15th

"The Original" Colfax Mineral Water
In All Kinds of Packages

COLFAX BOTTLING WORKS
Colfax, Iowa

The Grand Hotel and MINERAL SPRINGS COLFAX, IOWA

S. M. BROWN & SON
Lumber and Coal

DR. N. T. WESTON
Cures Rheumatism, Stomach, Bowel and Kidney Troubles

Citizens State Bank
COLFAX, IOWA

THE Colfax Lumber Co.
Colfax, Iowa

Figures: Group advertising for Colfax appeared in Des Moines newspapers: left, Des Moines Daily Capital, 1904. Right, Des Moines News, June 27, 1909: 7.

Coal Mining, 1900-1920s

The number of Colfax-area mines winnowed in the first two decades of the twentieth century as coal was exhausted or became inaccessible such as due to water infiltration. The 1921 *Coal Field Directory* noted only three Jasper County mining companies, two based in Colfax; other mining may have been done within the county by smaller outfits or by companies based elsewhere. (*Coal Field Directory*: 229-230) The two Colfax-based coal companies offer interesting perspectives into local coal mining. In 1919 and 1921 bituminous coal miners went on strike, but were defeated. Less-competitive mines closed after the higher demand for coal during the war ceased. (Stromquist: 43) As observed by history professor Lisa L. Ossian in her book *Iowa The Depression Dilemmas of Rural Iowa, 1929-1933*, coal mining had been Iowa's second largest industry—but one wrought with various forms of instability, including labor unrest: "Mining officials usually considered the Iowa coal industry a sick one—suffering from too many mines and too many

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underemployed miners as well as a less profitable product with a damaged reputation for quality." (Ossian: 102-103; 189-190)

Architectural Responses to the New Century and Bank Failures, 1900-1913

The Colfax business community appeared to start the twentieth century with optimism. The desire to increase health resort tourism led hoteliers to form an association in 1899, one of number of commercial club organizations that formed into the early 1900s and 1910s to advertise and promote Colfax as a health resort, Colfax mineral water to purchase, and downtown retail and service businesses. A large new double storefront and office building was constructed 1901-1902 by bottler C.W. Crisman, who also had discussed building an opera house. The 1902-1903 arrival of Interurban service provided an additional means of bringing in customers and goods from Des Moines, as well as hauling out freight. The library applied for a Carnegie grant in 1903. However, the 1903-1904 failure of the Bank of Colfax caused the failure for a number of businesses and had a chilling effect on downtown business development for several years. This was in part due to the expansive investment and ownership in business ventures and properties by its cashier and general manager, George D. Wood, whose 1903 suicide precipitated the failure. The bank, founded in the 1890s, was located in the Dart Block, later purchased by Wood (1 E. Howard; extant but remodeled). As described in the 1912 history of Jasper County, edited by former Colfax mayor (1901-1903) and presidential candidate General James B. Weaver, the impact of the bank failure persisted for many years:

"Of the Colfax failure let it be said that the Bank of Colfax was a co-partnership banking house, doing business at the city of Colfax. ... The cashier was named George D. Wood, a fine looking, brainy businessman, in whom his uncle and all patrons of the bank had the utmost confidence. But in an unguarded moment he thought he saw a short cut - a "get-rich-quick" plan - and dealt in options on the Chicago Board of Trade, which concern has ruined so many hundreds of good businessmen. He turned out to be a "plunger" - he invested in anything and everything from stocks of goods to live stock speculations and finally the grain pit. The capital was supposed to be about \$75,000. He was badly involved in December 1903, and on the 4th day of that month he deliberately shot himself through the temple, ending his life instantly. There were over eleven hundred creditors to his bank, and these included bankers in the chief cities and towns in Iowa; widows and orphans in estate forms, and merchants. The total of all claims against the bank was, in round figures \$624,000, while the receiver... was only able to payout \$235,000, or about thirty-nine and sixty-five hundredths cents on a dollar of the claims in question.Banks at Marshalltown, Des Moines, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Washington, etc., all got fleeced, as well as one bank at Colfax, which suffered many thousand dollars of loss. In fact the business interests of the city of Colfax suffered for a number of years, before full confidence in money institutions could be restored." (Weaver: 266-267)

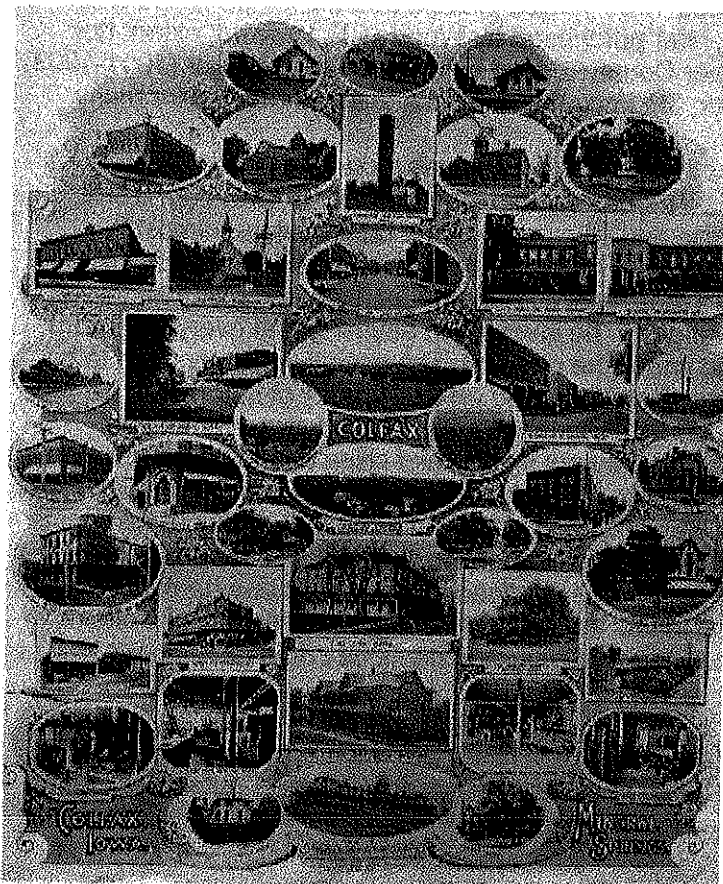
Comparing 1899, 1906, and 1911 Sanborn maps of the business district, two main new buildings appear to have been constructed between 1900 and 1910, and with some changes made to hotels outside of downtown:

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- In 1902, bottler C.W. Crisman completed a new large commercial block, 17-19 E. Howard Street (extant), down the street from his former bottling works. The double storefront with professional offices above features Beaux Arts detailing, a move toward new forms of commercial architecture downtown. (*Des Moines Daily Capital*, June 5, 1902) In 1900 Crisman had planned to locate his bottling works on the first floor and an opera house on the second floor. (Clipper, April 27, 1900 in Schmitt 1900s: 1-13)
- In late December 1902, hardware store owner A.A. Penquite purchased two lots west of Henry Fellows bottling plant for the purpose of erecting a three-story brick building for the company's hardware, implements, furniture, and undertaking goods. The 1906 Sanborn map shows that the existing agricultural implement dealership had been expanded, but remained one-story and frame. It is possible that Penquite's plans did not materialize due to problems with the Bank of Colfax; Penquite was a friend of banker George D. Wood, who embezzled bank funds and then killed himself in December 1903. In April 1904, Penquite retired, ahead of receivership. (Clipper, December 27, 1902, from Schmitt 1900s: 3-82; April 23, 1904, from Schmitt 1900s: 5-31; July 30, 1904 from Schmitt: 5-53)



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Figure: The 1904 state atlas included a full page of views of Colfax businesses, including hotels, mineral water bottlers, and business blocks in the downtown, a number of which remain. (Atlas 1904)

- By 1906 Sanborn, a brick building later occupied by a pool hall, 13 E. Front Street was erected.
- In 1909, *Colfax Clipper* publisher H.M. Robinson constructed a two-story brick commercial building (24 W. Howard; extant but remodeled) at the far west end of Howard Street to house his newspaper and printing business (this was later remodeled post-war into a funeral home). (*Des Moines Capital*, January 19, 1910)
- In 1910, Colfax residents agitated successfully for their U.S. Congressman Kendall to introduce a bill for the acquisition of a site and erection of a public government building to be used for a post office and other government offices, not to exceed \$50,000. ("Postoffice [sic] Building for Colfax," March 10, 1910 in Dr. Alice Turner African-American scrapbook) It appears the legislation did not pass, and so the Crisman Building filled this role until 1961.

The business community was again shaken in 1913 to 1914 by the sensational disappearance and slaying of Citizens State Bank cashier Mortimer B. Wheeler in December 1913, which led to temporary closure of the bank. The bank, located in the Hotel Ryan/Centropolis building (nonextant), was headed by bottler C.W. Crisman and attracted many farmers as depositors. (*Oelwein Register*, "Citizens Bank at Colfax is Closed," December 10, 1913) Wheeler had extended credit to business owners, including grocer George H. York, who owed the bank \$30,000 and was accused of drowning the banker in Des Moines. (*Waterloo Evening Courier*, "Wheelock Estate has Big Claim Against G.H. York," February 23, 1914) To defend himself, York claimed he was with a woman other than his wife, leading to his indictment on charges of "white slavery." (*Waterloo Evening Courier*, "May Deport for Slavery," January 14, 1914; *Cedar Rapids Republican*, "York Guilty of Slavery Charge," June 5, 1914) York was forced into involuntary bankruptcy and his store placed into receivership. The fallout affected others, including the Epworth League grounds and buildings, which were put up for collateral when the bank notes were recalled. (*Des Moines Daily News*, "De Puy Not Only Defendant Sued," May 29, 1914) The Epworth League facility, located near Hotel Colfax east of downtown, perhaps impacted by this and changing tastes in vacations, closed in 1917, ending nearly 30 years of summer lectures and programming that had brought untold thousands of visitors to Colfax through the years.

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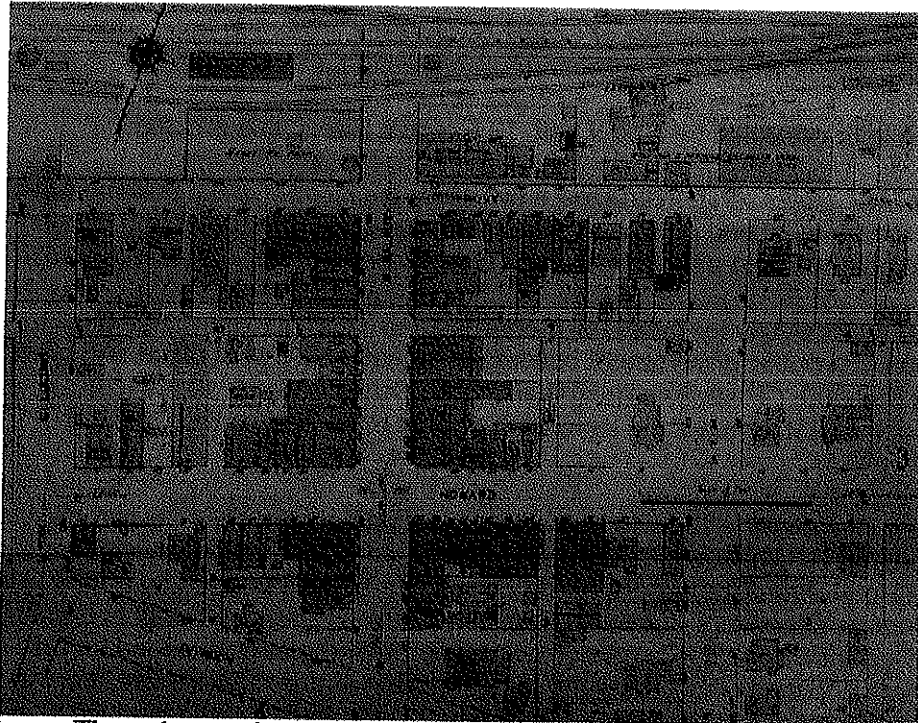


Figure: The color version of the 1911 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show most new commercial buildings constructed between the 1906 and 1911 maps were masonry (pink). (Colfax Historical Society Collection)

Architectural Responses to New Transportation and Technology, 1910s-1920s

The early twentieth century brought new technologies, more masonry buildings, and new revival architectural styles to the downtown commercial district. Churches also reflected growth, as members were able to afford replacing frame building with masonry during this era.

Fire and natural disaster continued to shape the commercial district as well as the industrial/agricultural area north of the railroad tracks. Some examples: Flooding reached W. Howard Street in 1911, breaching the new Colfax Telephone Exchange. (*The Pella Chronicle*, February 23, 1911) A spring 1913 fire destroyed three buildings valued at \$10,000—a frame residence and Star Livery on E. Front Street (the lots remain vacant), as well a frame store (approximately 121 N. Walnut) owned by merchant Sol Blotsky. (*Cedar Rapids Evening Gazette*, "Colfax Buildings Are Burned," April 29, 1913: 10) In February 1922, the E.R. Schlosser grain elevator and corn crib were badly damaged by fire. (*The Grain Dealers Journal*, "Grain Trade News," Colfax, Ia., February 10, 1922: 191) In 1922 (and 1921?), tornados damaged numerous commercial district buildings: "Two garages are down, the roofs of several other buildings have been carried away and the plate glass windows in the business block are blown to bits." (*Iowa City Press Citizen*, July 17, 1922; Hurto: 13) Affected buildings included the Ford garage on W. Howard Street (extant) and the second-generation frame Presbyterian Church, which the congregation elected to rebuild in brick in 1923.

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Figure: Circa 1916 postcard view of N. Walnut Street showing City Hall in the middle flanked by the new meat market stucco building and corner Cain & Rowles Block. Note the paved sidewalks. (Hurto: 10 and Mast)

Major construction projects of this era that remain extant include:

- In 1911, Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson-designed the Colfax Telephone Exchange Building (29 W. Howard) in a Mediterranean revival styling featuring polychromatic brickwork and stone accents.
- In 1912-1913, Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson also designed the Tudor Revival style Colfax Public Library, featuring side gabled design with walls of red brick laid in Flemish bond, stone beltcourse and stone window sills, exposed raft ends at the gables, and projecting front-gabled symmetrical entry with half timbering in the gable end.
- In 1914, the Methodist church replaced its frame building with a brick building of Classical Revival styling with a projecting angled temple front entrance; the design strongly resembles a Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson 1912 Des Moines church design.
- In circa-1915, the new stuccoed Davis & Davis / Boss Meat Market double storefront, 5-7 N. Walnut Street, brought simple Prairie School styling to downtown.

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- In circa 1920 (and perhaps as early as 1914), the brick Everett & Baker Ford Garage with gas pump was constructed at 20 W. Howard Street.
- In 1923, the First Presbyterian Church completed its new brick Late Gothic Revival edifice, designed by Des Moines ecclesiological architect F. (Frederic) A. Harris; it replaced its earlier frame building that was damaged in a 1921 tornado.
- In circa-1925, a stucco gas station was constructed on the corner of N. Walnut and W. Division streets (3 N. Walnut; extant); this building was enlarged in the 1950s with a concrete block garage addition for use by Brown & Son trucking company, continuing the transportation theme.



Figure: Circa-1920 view of Howard Street looking west toward the Christian Church, with new development on the western end of the street visible. (Hurto: 11)

Manufacturing Growth, 1900-1920s

Late into the first decade of the new century, Colfax leaders advertised their interest in attracting a larger manufacturing base. Previously, harness making, water bottling, and printing were primary industries. In a "New Industries Wanted" section of the 1908-1909 Iowa Bureau of Labor Statistics report, Colfax submitted a request for factories to locate in the city; interestingly, the larger and manufacturing-intense Jasper county seat Newton did not submit any such request.

"COLFAX. — The biggest little city in Iowa. We want factories. Consider the advantages

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before locating elsewhere.

"Colfax has the best and purest water supply in Iowa. The plan it owned and operated by the city.

"The Colfax Commercial Club desires to co-operate with legitimate concerns seeking factory or business locations, and will gladly give more specific information upon request." (Iowa Bureau of Labor Statistics: 241)

During this era, N. Walnut Street north of the railroad tracks and the downtown commercial district saw most of the industrial growth and expansion; this area is outside the bounds of the district.

- In 1901, water bottling company owner C.W. Crisman relocated his Colfax Bottling Works (successor to William Dart's Magnetic Rock Springs company) from 5-7 E. Howard Street to 310-314 N. Walnut Street (extant but remodeled in the midcentury). Crisman had a new well drilled at the pre-existing triple storefront previously occupied by S.C. Rush & Co. (a hardware and furniture business). (Sanborn; Census; Hurto: 70) By the time of the 1912 USGS report, 15 mineral wells, all drawing from the same aquifer, had led to a slowing of water output.

- In circa 1918, World War I flight instructors Clyde "Casey" Jones and George "Pat" Willis founded Jones-Willis Aircraft Co. airplane repair business, which operated from the former I.N Paschal Livery, 15 E. Front Street. Upon returning from wartime service, they purchased used airplanes and refurbished them. Willis and Jones died in a 1920 airshow plane crash; the company continued for at least another year after the founders' deaths. (Hurto: 32; Long, CIRALG Historic Sites Survey Form for Willis-Jones)

Depression and War: Hardships and Farm-to-Market Expansion, 1930s – early 1940s

The Great Depression caused hardships and business failures in all sectors of the Colfax business community, as throughout Iowa. Despite losses that included a bank failure, closure of mineral water-related businesses, and reduction in coal mining jobs, Colfax entrepreneurs started new businesses during this era and refocused the business community on the city's marketplace roots. Mineral water sales and health resort use declined during this era due to a variety of factors. The 1920s farm recession followed by the Great Depression hit especially hard in Iowa, reducing the incomes of potential customers and hotel owners. At the same time, the American water supply had improved, reducing the need to drink bottled water; attacks against mineral water and spa quackery by the American Medical Association and Food and Drug Administration cast aspersions; fewer physicians recommended visiting spas; and newer spas in warm climates such as California with beaches, golf, tennis, and skiing beckoned. (*New York Times*, January 28, 1940) In 1930, three hotels and two sanitariums continued operation in Colfax, but by circa 1945 only the Colfax Sanitarium remained. (Hurto: 37)

General tourism travel also declined. Fewer visitors meant fewer customers for the auto-intensive businesses. Highway route changes introduced a bypass of downtown Colfax and closed off S. Locust Street, further reducing access to Howard Street and the downtown commercial district. When in 1939 the Colfax Commercial Club and city erected two new road signs on Highway 6, they chose to promote the city

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as "Home of the famous health-giving Colfax Mineral Water." The Iowa Power & Light Co. paid for the painting and illumination, hence the underline, "Electricity is cheap in Colfax." (Colfax Tribune, "Erected Two Road Signs on Highway Advertising City," June 29, 1939 and "Tribune's Picture Review of 1939," January 4, 1940) As of 1930, only two bottling works remained; a 1931 fire destroyed the second plant, leaving only the Crisman family's bottling company north of the railroad tracks. The community lost a financial pillar when Citizens State Bank went into receivership by fall 1934 and was declared a defunct bank. (Colfax Tribune, "Receiver to Change Day at Bank," September 20, 1934: 1; "Citizens Bank Receivership to Pay 5% Dividend," November 1, 1934: 1) The community's other bank, First National Bank, remained open and joined the Federal Depository Insurance program. Coal mining was hit hard, too, throughout Iowa, as demand dropped. (Garvin: 129)

In the face of hardship, a number of entrepreneurs started agricultural-related business ventures downtown Colfax, as well as highway-related business (new gas stations, cafes, and entertainment venues) along the shifted Highway 6 route south of downtown. Without parallel, the most important business in or near downtown to open during this era was the Colfax Sales Barn, which debuted its auction November 1934 in the Close-to-Nature manufacturing plant north of the railroad tracks (335 N. Walnut Street, in the industrial/agricultural area north of the commercial business district) and continues operation today. (Colfax Tribune, November 29, 1934; May 14, 1936) The sales barn (also called a pavilion) provided regular livestock sales including hogs, cattle and horses. The sales barn helped cement Colfax as a key farm-to-market connection for Jasper County farmers. Sales barn traffic (initially held Fridays, later switched to Saturdays) brought a boost to other businesses in Colfax. In addition, the sales barn offered its facility as a place for special events such as the Jasper County Fair, which lost its Newton, Iowa, county seat fairgrounds in 1934 due to foreclosure. (Colfax Tribune, April 23, 1936)

Reinforcing the success of the Colfax Sales Co. auction business, other specialized agricultural supply and processing business began during this era, serving the farm-to-market needs of the community via storefront businesses in the downtown and industrial area. The Colfax Hatchery opened in 1934, with C. M. Christensen leasing part of the Crisman Block (19 E. Howard Street) for his hatchery business, then expanded by moving next door to 23 E. Howard Street. (Colfax Tribune, January 18, 1934) At least three hatcheries operated in downtown Colfax during this era, including Sam Jones of Jones Produce and Hatchery, who may have operated out of more than one location. During this era, E. Front Street turned from a mini "auto row" into an "ag row": Jones Produce (13 E. Front Street) converted a former auto garage; Colfax Locker Plant opened in 1937 in a former livery-turned airplane repair shop-turned auto garage (15 E. Front Street). The nearly-post-war summer 1945 opening of the new Orlich's Produce at 33 W. Front Street (one block west) and 1947 opening of the new Colfax Feed Mill at the corner of W. Front Street and 121 N. Locust Street completed the row.

Transportation changes both positively and negatively affected the downtown commercial district during this era. Declining revenues led to the Interurban passenger service to Colfax ending in 1933, with freight service halted in 1941, and the tracks pulled in 1946. (Donovan and Grant: 86-87) The rise of personal automobile ownership and creation of bus lines that served a network of cities including Colfax reduced

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demand for the Interurban and passenger rail. (*Iowa City Press Citizen*, January 11, 1924: 7) The bus stop moved from the Mason House Hotel to Highway 6 in 1934, reflecting the importance of the highway and the trend of new highway retail and commercial growth along the route through town, rather than in downtown. (Colfax Tribune, "Bus Station on Highway," August 9, 1934)

Review of newspaper coverage and comparison of 1923 and 1942 Sanborn maps shows that nearly all business development occurred within existing commercial buildings during these lean years. Some successful downtown Colfax businesses balanced "Main Street" retail with direct sales to the agricultural sector.

The following are major conversion and building projects during the Depression and World War II era that remain extant in or adjoining the district:

- In 1933, construction of the bungalow-esque Mineral Springs Park gazebo over the community mineral water fountain (12 W. Front Street).
- In 1937, conversion of a livery-cum-airplane repair shop-cum auto garage building into the Colfax Locker Plant (15 E. Front Street). (*Colfax Tribune*, "Colfax Storage and Locker Plant Opens," September 30, 1937)
- In 1937, conversion of the Ford garage into the Star Theatre (20 W. Howard Street), with modernistic touches to the façade and interior. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Opening New Star Theatre," October 7, 1937)
- In 1938-1939, construction and landscaping of the former Woman's Club clubhouse grounds into Woman's Club Park natural amphitheater (E. Division and S. Elm streets). (WPA project announced: *Colfax Tribune*, "Woman's Club Grounds to Be Greatly Improved," October 7, 1937) WPA labor also built an addition to the Colfax school (nonextant). (*Colfax Tribune*, "Facts Concerning Proposed Addition to Colfax Schools," February 24, 1938)

The Colfax parkland expansion and improvements funded by New Deal programs and involving the Colfax Woman's Club brought increased recreation and beautification to the central business district. At the business community's "front door," through its location next to the railroad depot, the Mineral Springs Park (formerly Mason House Park) received a new centerpiece in 1933: a new brick springhouse gazebo for the community mineral spring drinking fountain (all extant, but fountain is currently inoperable due to state well water regulations). This brick springhouse was built in May 1933 using labor furnished from the federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), a new program that was expanded under President Franklin D. Roosevelt after he took office in 1933. The *Colfax Tribune* reported on the front page: "Under the supervision of Frank Evans, a group of workmen started to build a new mineral water fountain at the city park, just across the street from the Mason House, west.... The old structure has served its purpose well, [but] time and weather had placed it in a condition that was not safe, making it necessary for something to be done. With unskilled labor provided by the R.F.C. and the brick already owned by the city, the cost of erecting the new fountain and building is at the lowest possible." ("New Mineral Water Fountain," May 11,

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1933) The Woman's Club oversaw the annual planting of flowers and upkeep. A 1936 front-page *Colfax Tribune* story about the mineral water fountain standing up to severe weather noted: "...Having been built of brick with cement trim, it shows little the wear of time. Thousands of people have visited the well since its erection and quenched their thirst with the health-giving mineral water, which flows constantly from the fountain in the center of the building. ..." ("Mineral Fountain Doing 'Well', October 8, 1936) [A side note: Roosevelt used mineral water hydrotherapy to address his polio, creating a "Little Whitehouse" in Warm Springs, Georgia. (Charleton) New Deal support of mineral water-related projects included the approximately \$1 million 1936-1938 Public Works Administration project "Hall of Waters" community mineral water hydrotherapy facility with mineral water bar in Excelsior Springs, Missouri.]

By circa 1936, funding was secured from Works Progress Administration (WPA) to create a half-block Woman's Club Park on the steeply sloped former grounds of the Woman's Clubhouse (the Mulock family home, which burned in the 1930s). Construction was delayed for two years, a source of community frustration. The *Colfax Tribune* reported in fall 1938 on the construction: "...The south and west part of the park will be terraced into a natural ampitheatre (sic), centering toward the west side, for some future time a band shell may be erected. On the north and east part of the lot, the ground will be leveled off for the use of picnickers and a shelter house will be erected here. At the top of the hill on the southeast corner a lookout house will be built." ("Started Work on Woman's Club Park," September 29, 1938) The park opened in 1939. ("New Shelter House at Colfax Park," July 20, 1939) These features still remain, with the terraces still present along with the brick walled "look out," the stage extant but remodeled, and a replacement picnic shelter.

Rebuilding for the Farm-to-Market Future Through the Arrival of I-80: 1945 – 1960

The post-war era saw tremendous commercial redevelopment and expansion aimed at providing commercial sales and services that catered to the surrounding rural/farm families and nearby small towns. The business community continued to build upon on its market town status. And returning World War II veterans returned home to start new businesses, build new buildings, and inject new ideas and savings into existing ones. A telling example of the Colfax commitment to agriculture: Other Jasper County communities made bids to gain the county fair in the 1940s and in 1964, but Colfax merchants and community leaders were able to retain the fair. (*Colfax Tribune*, December 31, 1936; *Newton Daily News*; *Jasper County Tribune*) In 1964 C. G. (Chance) Kintz deeded land behind the sales barn to the Jasper County Agricultural Society, ensuring the fair's permanence. (Russell)

This era saw the end to two great nineteenth-century Colfax industries: mineral water and coal mining. Many mineral water resort businesses in Colfax as in other mineral water-based resort communities struggled to attract health-seeking tourists throughout the Great Depression and World War II. Most mineral water-related resorts and related businesses were not able to reverse the general postwar decline in interest in water therapy as physicians shifted patients to antibiotics and steroids instead of mineral water, and health insurance and laws restricted resort and mineral water use and advertising. (Bullard: 109-111; Valenza: 145-147) The U.S. bottled water industry also declined as water sanitation and chlorination improved. (Chapelle: 111) After World War II ended, only one Colfax health care provider remained using

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mineral water, Dr. Royal Anspach's Colfax Sanitarium (nonextant), and one bottler remained, George Brenner's Colfax Mineral Springs Co. (extant outside of the district). Both would close during the midcentury. In 1946, the city re-drilled the Mineral Springs Park mineral well, for public access to local mineral water; however, the well was closed due to state regulations in the late twentieth century. (*Colfax Tribune*, "New Mineral Well..." October 17, 1946; Mast interview) Coal mining in Iowa also hit hard times. Most mines in Iowa had closed by the mid-1950s, notes geology professor Paul Garvin in his book *Iowa's Minerals: Their Occurrence, Origins, Industries, and Lore*. (Garvin: 129)

Transportation changes also affected downtown. The north end of downtown had become something of a backdoor to the commercial district by the early 1940s due to the loss of interurban freight and decline of passenger rail service and shifting of auto-related businesses to Highway 6 south of the downtown. (*Colfax Tribune*, May 9, 1946) Highway 6 had been the busiest highway in the state as of 1941, and business owners continued to locate new businesses and, in a few cases relocate existing businesses, along the highway route south of downtown. (*Colfax Tribune*, "No. 6 Highway Busiest Road in the State of Iowa," May 8, 1941) However, the presence of the Colfax Sales Barn and the newly created Jasper County Fairgrounds north of the railroad tracks brought renewed vitality to the downtown commercial district. The city conducted weekly street cleanings early Saturday mornings before customers began arriving downtown and asked residents not to park cars within the business district Friday nights. (*Colfax Tribune*, "City Requests No Parking of Cars on Streets Friday Nights," May 20, 1948)

The 1957 announcement that Interstate 80 would be constructed one mile north of downtown Colfax, with an interchange at Highway 117, appears to have halted Highway 6 business development; further research is recommended into whether this directly prompted downtown businesses and property owners to alter their buildings. In general, the downtown remained vital and bustling especially on Saturdays when rural customers came to town and auctions at the Colfax Sales Barns took place, until the opening of Interstate 80 in 1960 began to siphon off customers to Des Moines malls and discount stores. (Cross)

Post-WWII Architectural Responses, 1945-1960

The post-war era ushered a time of renewed growth and construction. Returning World War II veterans contributed to the regrowth, injecting their enthusiasm, muscle, and funds into new businesses, new construction, and remodeling of existing buildings. Property owners infilled vacant lots within the commercial district, replaced frame buildings with a mix of 1-story and two-story masonry buildings, and modernized older existing masonry buildings. New construction occurred on lots cleared by fires and limited razing of older frame buildings; on former residential lots to the east and west; and on former farmland and railroad holdings north of the railroad tracks. Remodeling of Italianate business blocks to fit streamlined modernistic ideals also occurred during this era. The desire to reinvest in downtown Colfax began even before the war officially ended in spring 1945, with two new produce buildings under construction and later in the year with the optimistic news that funding for a new government-owned post office was a possibility. (*Colfax Tribune*, "New Colfax Post Office on Probable List," October 11, 1945)

Favored new construction building materials included concrete block, brick, and glazed tile. In fact, in the

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early 1950s two concrete block manufacturing plants opened in Colfax north of the railroad tracks: the 1952-1953 C.W. Alford concrete block plant (appears to be nonextant; had been located north of the railroad tracks) and the larger \$60,000 1954 Clemco Block Co. concrete block plant, 353 N. Walnut Street (extant; occupied by Manatt's Ready-Mix Plant), built by Colfax native Dr. Carroll Clement of Kansas City, Missouri. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Plan to Manufacture Cement Blocks," November 20, 1952; "Open House at Clemco Block Co. July 29th," July 21, 1955; *Concrete*, Vol. 63, 1955) The *Tribune* noted in the 1952 story about Alford's plant: "The cement block business has for the past few years become more in demand and at the time the blocks were difficult to get, with all indications pointing to such a manufacturing plant [as] an important need."

New service and agriculture-related business buildings constructed in Modern Movement styles infilled vacant lots on the north end of the downtown commercial district and in the adjoining industrial area. Fraternal organizations also constructed new spaces for their gatherings on the edges of downtown. The post-war housing shortage influenced the decision by at least four merchants to design new construction or purchase their existing retail building to provide second-story apartments for themselves above their business location: Brownie's Café (Boss Meat Market Building), Colfax Feed Mill, Cross Jewelry and Cross Apartments (Cain and Rowles Block), and Barrett Electric and Television Building.

Fires continued to reshape the commercial district. In 1948 two frame buildings burned on N. Walnut Street. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Fire Burns Two Business Houses Tuesday," December 30, 1948) The empty lots were soon infilled with Modernistic construction: 1949 John Hahn Insurance Agency Office Building, 116 N. Walnut Street; 1950 Luther Building, 117-119 N. Walnut Street. A 1951 fire gutted the L&M Café building, leading to its demolition; in 1953 this became the site of an addition to Barrett Television, 124 N. Walnut Street. ("Raizing (sic) L&M Building," January 3, 1952) Two large brick blocks containing grocery stores burned in the 1960s: In 1962 the two-story brick Cragan Block/Harlan Building, 105-107 N. Walnut, housing the Hiatt meat and grocery market was destroyed; a modern one-story medical building with front parking lot occupies the lot. (*Colfax Centennial*: 20) The Croft Block/Luther Block, 125 N. Walnut Street, housing Easter's grocery store was damaged by fire, and was replaced by a 1970 one-story office building with side parking lot. At the south end of the commercial district, a 1945 fire at the First Presbyterian Church, located across the street from the fire station, led to interior remodeling and installation of new marbled glass windows to replace damaged windows. (*Colfax Tribune*, January 11, 1945; May 31, 1945; "To Resume Services at Presbyterian Church Sunday," September 6, 1945) First Presbyterian Church also reclad its parsonage in metal siding during this era.

The following are new construction and remodeling projects from this era that remain extant in or adjoining the commercial district:

- In circa-1945, the Junis family or other property owner constructed a masonry one-story storefront for the Junis Sweet Shop (113 N. Walnut Street) on the site of an old frame storefront; previously the shop had been located in an old frame storefront on the other side of the east-west alley. The *Colfax Tribune* noted in an August 1945 news brief that the application of cementitious stucco to the building was an improvement.

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(*Colfax Tribune*, "Junis Café Refinished," August 16, 1945: 1.) It is possible this building was built during the war years; it was constructed after the 1942 Sanborn map.

• In 1945, the American Legion completed its second-floor interior remodel of a N. Walnut Street commercial building for its own permanent American Legion Hall, 103 N. Walnut Street, with leasable space on the first story. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Open House' at New Legion Home Saturday, April 28," April 26, 1945: 1.)

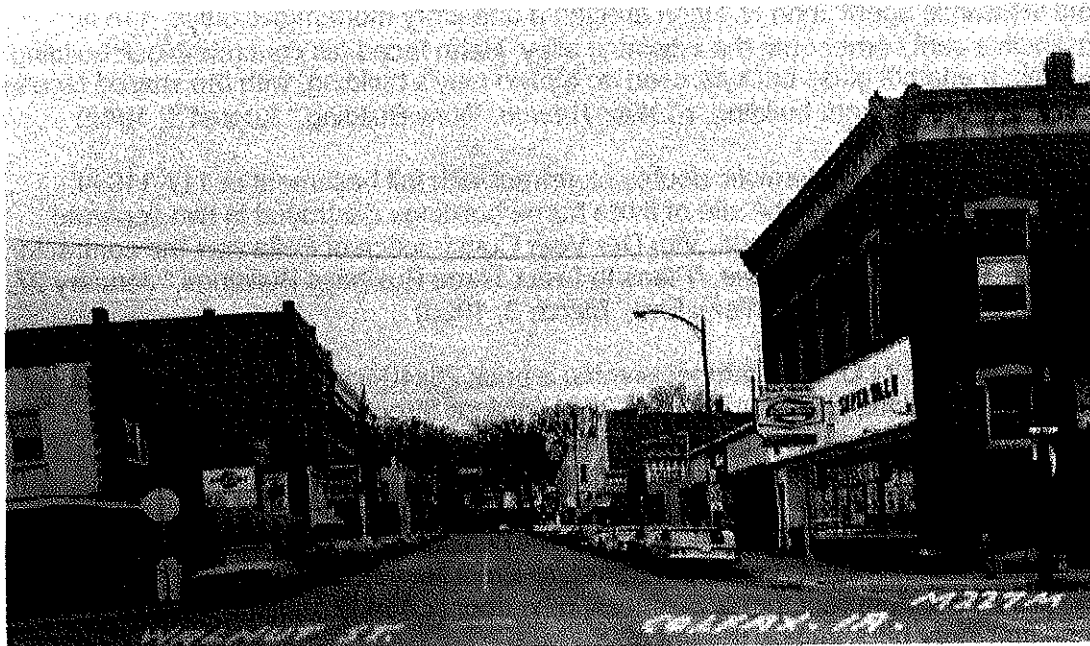


Figure: Midcentury postcard view of N. Walnut Street from the southern railroad tracks. The intersection in the foreground is Front Street at Walnut. Note the masonry buildings in the first block, which replaced (or refaced) frame buildings that had remained in service some from the late nineteenth century until post World War II. (Mast)

• In 1945, Mike Orlich erected the symmetrical Moderne red brick and tile Orlich's Produce Building (33 W. Front Street, at the corner of N. Locust Street), built on the former site of the Cottage Hotel. In 1947, success prompted expansion, with two additions added. In 1956, Orlich leased the building to Iowa Power & Light Co. for use as its shop and garage; Orlich planned to build a new produce facility along the Highway 6 route south of downtown. (*Colfax Tribune*: "Orlich Erecting New Modern Produce Building," June 21, 1945; "Orlich Produce Company Expanding Plant," June 24, 1947; "Ipalco To Move Warehouse," November 15, 1956)

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- In 1946-1947, the Guys built the concrete block and frame Colfax Feed Mill with front office and apartment (121 N. Locust Street, one lot south of W. Front Street) built on subdivided residential lots. (*Colfax Tribune*, August 1, 1946; March 4, 1947)
- In 1949, Melvin Guy erected a one-story modernistic double-storefront, 118-120 N. Walnut Street, for Laws Pool Hall and OK Barbershop, of concrete block faced with a buff-hued baked enamel glass brick and steel-frame windows. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Work on Guy Building Showing Progress," August 4, 1949)
- In 1949, real estate and insurance agent John H. Hahn erected a one-story modernistic office, 116 N. Walnut Street, with a distinctive cant corner onto the adjoining alley; Hahn faced his concrete-block building with the same buff-hued baked enamel glass brick as used on Melvin Guy's building, with the shared façade treatment creating the look of a much larger building. (*Colfax Tribune*, "New Building," August 4, 1949)
- In 1949-1950, Walter Luther erected a modernistic double-storefront with full basement at 117-119 N. Walnut Street (now 121 N. Walnut Street), on the site of three frame buildings destroyed in two separate fires. This building featured an enameled tile façade; Van Der Veer Construction of Pella was the contractor. Taylor Drug opened in March 1950. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Plans to Erect Three Business Buildings," January 27, 1949; "Taylor Drug Store to Have Opening This Week End," March 3, 1950)
- In 1949-1950, funeral home director M.O. Bumgardner erected a brick 25x40-foot furniture store addition between the funeral home, 24 N. Walnut, and Star Theatre, 20 N. Walnut Street, and remodeled the existing 2-story former newspaper building into a funeral home. (*Colfax Tribune*, "M.O. Bumgardner Erecting Building," October 13, 1949)
- In 1951, television sales and repair owner J. Barrett erected a new two-story brick and concrete block sales/shop/apartment building, 126 N. Walnut Street. ("J. Barrett to Erect New Business House," May 3, 1951) In 1953, Barrett added a new storefront for his business, next door at 124 N. Walnut Street; the two buildings share a common first-story brick façade treatment.
- In 1951, mechanic Frank Millburn replaced a frame auto repair garage he had occupied with a new concrete block building, Millburn's Garage (11 E. Front Street). (*Colfax Tribune*, October 4, 1951) In 1953, he built a one-story storefront addition to the south, 124 N. Walnut Street, with the same Roman brick façade treatment.
- In 1954, a rear concrete-block addition was added to the former Colfax Telephone Co. building, now owned by Northwestern Bell Telephone Company. The switchboard received record-number of calls in the post-war era, prompting the company to take out an advertisement asking for customer patience and understanding as the small switchboard handled 2,700 calls a day in 1946. (*Colfax Tribune*, Northwestern Bell Telephone Co. ad, August 8, 1946)

To keep up with architectural styles, some building owners modernized high-style Italianate and Victorian

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buildings by removing cornices, decorative window heads, and balconies, and/or applying stucco and faux stone (Permastone-type materials); and modernizing storefronts. The Cain & Rowles Block/Cross Apartments (1 W. Howard Street) is one such example; built as an opera house with first floor retail space, World War II veteran Royal Cross purchased the building in 1946 to house his business, Cross Jewelry & Sporting Goods, and a second-story apartment for his family. The Cross family modernized the exterior with Permastone-type material on the first story and cementitious stucco on the second story applied in or by 1953. (Cross) The same or near similar faux stone was applied to the First State Bank building (1 E. Howard Street) and Junis Sweet Shop/Frances Pratt floral and gift shop (113 N. Walnut Street).

Postscript, 1970s

By 1970, a decade after the opening of the freeway, the nature of doing business downtown Colfax had changed. Rather than a market town, Colfax had become a bedroom community of Newton to the east and Des Moines to the west. Business leaders advertised the community as an industrial suburb in a newspaper special section targeting economic development: "An excellent suburb to locate industry and manufacturing! Only 20 minutes from Des Moines, 1 mile south of Interstate 80, 20 minutes from I-35 and I-80 interchange, located on the Rock Island R.R., home of Monroe Table Co." (emphasis added, *Des Moines Register*, "Colfax. An Excellent Suburb..." ad, January 11, 1970: 1.) Many retail and service businesses in Colfax struggled or closed by the mid 1970s, due to changes in transportation (Interstate 80), retailing (discount stores and malls), and agriculture (consolidation of farms leaving fewer farm families as potential customers). (Cross)

Significance – Criterion A - Social History

The Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District is further significant under Criterion A—Social History. Many of the district's commercial buildings possess historical associations with civic, fraternal, and religious organizations via meeting rooms, lodge halls, and other gathering places that hosted important social and cultural activities. In the midcentury, three groups built or remodeled new meeting halls on the fringes of the commercial district, again shaping growth and development.

Fraternal groups:

The upper levels of downtown commercial buildings served as meeting halls for a number of fraternal organizations, as well as women's and children's Masonic groups. In fact, at least two organizations directly impacted the construction of commercial buildings in the 1880s, helping to shape the growth of the downtown district. Men, women, and youth lodge groups met through the period of significance, with the women's Eastern Star organization having its own hall within the space. (Berkey et al.) A new Masonic – Eastern Star Temple was planned as of 1966 on the eastern edge of downtown and was completed in 1970 (126 E. Howard Street, now used by a church). (*Centennial History*: 37-38; Jasper County Assessor)

- **Masons:** The Masonic order appears to be the pioneer fraternal organization in Colfax, founded under dispensation in 1878 and chartered in 1879. (*Annals of the Grand Lodge*: 411) The Masons met elsewhere until the completion of the "new Masonic building," a 3-story brick two-part commercial block at 112 N. Walnut Street. (*Colfax Clipper*, January 3, 1885, cited in Schmitt, "Department, Dry Goods, and Variety

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Stores...") In 1889, the Masons contracted to expand its hall into the new adjoining brick building, working with the building owner to add a third story to align with its existing third-floor hall. The downtown lodge remained the meeting place for men, women, and youth lodge groups met through the period of significance, with the women's Eastern Star organization having its own hall within the space. (Berkey et al.) A new Masonic – Eastern Star Temple was planned as of 1966 on the eastern edge of downtown and was completed in 1970 (126 E. Howard Street, now used by a church). (*Colfax Centennial History*: 37-38; Jasper County Assessor)

- *Knights of Pythias*: The Colfax Lodge No. 4, Knights of Pythias, founded in 1885, followed suit, constructing in 1889 and owning a second-floor hall above 4-6 W. Howard Street. In both examples, it appears that the fraternal organizations paid for the construction of their floor, directly influencing the development of buildings. The Knights moved to another building by 1899, perhaps the new Mason/Luther Block (nonextant; destroyed in fire), which had lodge rooms on the second floor. The local Odd Fellows lodge purchased the meeting space.
- *Odd Fellows*: The Colfax Lodge No. 476 Independent Order of Odd Fellows, founded in May 1884, purchased the vacated Knights of Pythias hall, 4-6 W. Howard Street circa 1899. (*Colfax Centennial*: 32) Previously the lodge had met at a two-story frame building north of the railroad tracks (nonextant) and a frame two-story commercial building on N. Walnut Street (nonextant). The Odd Fellows lodge continued meeting on W. Howard Street through the period of significance, renting out the lower level (4 W. Howard Street?) to tenants such as Dr. Lyle's medical office. The service group supported various relief and charitable efforts. (Schmitt 1880s; *Centennial History*: 32-33)
- *Redmen*: The Samoset Tribe No. 60, Improved Order of Redmen (later consolidated as Crow Tribe No. 25) (founded 1890s) had by the 1899 Sanborn map secured second-floor meeting space above the Rush & Cutter hardware and furniture store(s), 310-314 N. Walnut Street. The group remained there until Monroe Co. purchased the building in 1962 for factory expansion. Monroe donated land on the site of the former Mason House hotel, E. Front Street, and a new lodge room was secured in the rear of a lounge, located across the street from the district's northern boundary.
- *Other*: The 1880s and 1890s saw several other fraternal organizations established in Colfax: E.D. Duncan Post No. 253, Grand Army of the Republic (founded 1883); Knights of Labor (by 1886); Colfax Homestead No. 294, Brotherhood of American Yeomen (1899); and Colfax No. 8585 Modern Woodmen of America (1901). (Schmitt 1880s: 8-1; Hurto, "A Walk Through Colfax...": 7; *Colfax Centennial History*: 32-38) One or more of these groups may have met at above the Bank of Colfax/First State Bank of Colfax, 1 E. Howard Street. Sanborn maps show a meeting hall on the second story starting with the 1899 map. In the midcentury, Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts were among groups that used the space. (Berkey et al.)
- *American Legion*: The American Legion is another fraternal organization that met downtown and eventually owned its building. Famed World War I aviator Captain James Norman Hall, whose family was involved in Colfax mineral water bottling and who went on to author books including *Mutiny on the Bounty*,

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started the Colfax Legion Post 175 just days before Iowa's first statewide American Legion convention, held in Des Moines in 1919. (*Des Moines Daily News*, September 3, 1919) The group received its official charter in circa 1921, at which time the post name "Jones-Willis" was given, to memorialize World War I flight instructors Clyde Jones and Pat Willis, aviators who started an airplane repair shop in Colfax and perished in an air crash in August 1920. (*Des Moines Daily News*, August 17, 1920; *Centennial History*: 39) The Legion headquartered itself in rented second-story rooms downtown, beginning with the Crisman Building, then above the Harry DeBaggio movie theater, until financial difficulties reduced the group to meeting the basement of a member. In 1945 the post purchased the two-story commercial building, 103 N. Walnut Street, for use as legion hall, with rental storefront below, leased to Weirick pharmacy. The *Colfax Tribune* reported on the burning its mortgage two years later, in 1947. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Colfax Legion Plans Mortgage Burning Ceremony," April 3, 1947) In 1956, the Legion post purchased and remodeled the former Dick Produce Building (approximately 475 N. Walnut Street; nonextant) across the South Skunk River to accommodate the influx of new veterans. (Cross) The Legion supported baseball teams, Boy Scouts, patriotic community celebrations, and even built a swimming pool off Highway 117 (nonextant). (*Centennial History*: 39) Membership waned in the modern era, and the post gave up the Legion Hall in the late twentieth century.

Women's organizations:

Within the commercial district, two buildings and one structure/landscaped site embody the work of women's organizations in establishing education and cultural amenities for the community. These women's groups were established later than the first fraternal organizations.

- *Subscription Library Association*: Although not strictly a women's group, the Colfax subscription library association afforded women community leadership opportunities and allowed women's organizations the ability to volunteer their time. The 1892-1893 City Hall and Library, 9 N. Walnut Street, was site of the first Colfax public library reading room, established by the subscription library association headed by Dr. Alice Turner, M.D., and other locally important women leaders. The P.E.O. chapter, founded in 1896, and Woman's Club, founded in 1898, both helped support and guide the development of the library and the eventual construction of the standalone Carnegie-funded Colfax Public Library, 25 W. Division Street, completed in 1913—representing the culmination of a decade of work by key women and men, P.E.O., Woman's Club, and several women's church organizations. See the City Hall and Colfax Public Library building reports below for details.

- *P.E.O.*: The Colfax Chapter BA of the P.E.O. Sisterhood was established in 1896. Pioneering female physician Dr. Alice Turner, M.D., was the driving force behind the organization, establishing Iowa's 53rd chapter in Colfax to give mothers and housewives an outside interest to relieve monotony and improve physical and mental health. (*Centennial History*: 31) P.E.O., which stands for Philanthropic Educational Organization, began in 1869 at Iowa Wesleyan College in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, as the second sorority in the United States. The Colfax chapter initially met at the house of the first president, Mrs. Anna Goodrich, who lived on Front Street; future research could be done to identify which house and if it still stands. Members served as the first librarians in Colfax, contributed \$100 toward the purchase of the Carnegie-

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funded library site, assisted with cemetery upkeep, and supported national educational funding. Headquartered in Des Moines, the secret society supports women's higher education. In 1951, Mrs. E. O. Fatland became statewide president of P.E.O.; her husband was the longtime Colfax Sanitarium dentist. (*Colfax Tribune*, "P.E.O. Sisterhood to Celebrate Fiftieth Anniv.," January 2, 1947; "Mrs. O.S. Fatland Named State President P.E.O.," May 26, 1951; Townsend: 57)

• *Colfax Woman's Club*: The first woman's club founded in Jasper County, the Colfax Woman's Club was organized in and federated in 1898. Dr. Alice Turner, M.D., instigated the organization to benefit women and the community. The club had to overcome resistance: "...[T]he question of Women's Clubs was made a public debate with a minister taking the stand that if women did their housework and looked after the children and added to it an outside Club there would be no time for church work. However, a good doctor [Dr. Alice or her husband Dr. L.C.S. Turner?] came to the women's defense and said an outside Club activity could be the means of saving from insanity and that a woman's work was whatever she found it to do." (*Centennial History*: 35-36) Initially the club was open to all women, and membership quickly swelled to 75 women. In 1905, Dr. Alice Turner met with African-American hotel owner Anna Battles about establishing an African-American Woman's Club in Colfax. (See African-American club section below.) Early civic projects included supporting the public library and caring for the cemetery.

In 1928 the club purchased the large 1886 ("Hub") Mulock house and lots at E. Division and S. Elm Streets for a clubhouse, with plans to convert it into a large auditorium for public use. (Edwin H. "Hub" Mulock moved to Des Moines in circa 1907 and worked in the insurance industry, serving as mayor of Des Moines in 1928-1930, appointed head of the Iowa Emergency Relief Administration 1933-1935—possibly a source of some of the Colfax Depression-era relief projects, and president of the Central Life Assurance of Des Moines company 1938-circa 1949. (Iowa Insurance Hall of Fame)) Following a fire in the early 1930s, the group was unable to use the house and, with the Depression, unable to afford repairs. The house was torn down in spring 1936 and the land donated to the city for use as a public park, Woman's Club Park. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Colfax Woman's Club House to Be Razed," April 16, 1936; "City Accepts Gift of Woman's Club Grounds," September 1936; Jordan: 11)

A City Park Board, with the president of the Woman's Club as a member, drew up plans to terrace the grounds for a natural amphitheater, with grading accomplished by federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers. An October 1937 *Tribune* article reported that W.E. O'Neill, in charge of the WPA in Colfax, received word that the project had been accepted:

The project calls for grading of the south two thirds of the block of ground to form a natural bowl and the north third for picnic grounds. It also contains plans for a lookout house to be built at the peak of the hill in the southeast corner and a large shelter house for picnickers in the northeast corner.

The grading for the bowl will be egg-shaped and from a northeast to a southeast direction. There will be five twenty-foot terraces with a raise of 16 inches between each terrace. Seats will be arranged on either side of an aisle, which leads from the bandstand, which will be placed at a slant at the northwest edge of the bowl, to the lookout house....

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(*Colfax Tribune*, "Woman's Club Grounds to be Greatly Improved," October 7, 1937: 1-2)

Projects to benefit the community remained a top priority for the club throughout the twentieth century. During World War II, the Jasper County federated women's clubs, led by Colfax resident Mrs. John Davis, provided a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) recruiting station in Colfax at the Red Cross rooms, in the Colfax Public Library. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Will Launch WAAC Office," February 4, 1943) The 1966 *Centennial History* summarized public projects as, "They have worked for clean streets and alleys, garbage collection, city beautification, better schools, and less juvenile delinquency. As once reported, 'The Club has the bull dog tenacity to pull together under the most trying circumstances and conditions to put across their major projects which are and have been numerous and worthy.'" (*Centennial History*: 36) A 1976 history of Jasper County women's clubs listed projects of the Colfax club: Club members maintained a public restroom in the business section (at Mineral Springs Park?), assisted with downtown Christmas decorations, planted trees and painted the picnic shelter at the Woman's Club Park, assisted with "get out the vote" campaigns, and raised funds for these projects. (Jordan: 10-12)

Education also was an important aspect, with the club hosting lecture and study series. The Woman's Club in 1956 sponsored a club for younger women, Colfax LaFemme Club, which remains active today and continues civic project such as planting flowers at Mineral Springs Park. Recently discovered Colfax Woman's Club records are recommended for further study. (Berkey et al.: Judy Sullivan)

Significance – Criterion C – Architecture

The proposed Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District is notable in architectural terms for select examples of architecture, notably Italianate buildings with rare-surviving cast-iron storefronts and early twentieth century civic and church architecture.

A note about architects and builders in Colfax: Given the long span of time, many generations contributed to the building of downtown Colfax. Additional research into the professionals and craftsmen behind the buildings would be warranted. Below is a partial list of known building professionals whose work was represented in downtown; however, many newspaper references to new construction do not specify the building professional:

- *Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson, architects*: The highly regarded and most prolific Iowa architectural firm designed the 1911 Colfax Telephone Exchange Building (29 W. Howard Street; extant) and the 1913 Colfax Public Library (25 W. Division Street; extant). Architect Harry D. Rawson became a partner in 1910 at the Des Moines-based firm, and is listed as the project architect for the Colfax library. The firm was active in Jasper County, with its most notable commission being the Jasper County Courthouse (1909-1911). The Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson archive contains the telephone exchange drawings, which are dated 1910 (project #159, drawings in Drawer 102A and specifications in Box 002); it was one of three telephone buildings drawn by the firm, with the other two in Creston and Des Moines. The library drawings were drawn in 1912 (project #022, drawings in Drawer 102A and specifications in Box 001); the firm designed a number of Carnegie libraries, including the Sac Center Carnegie library in 1911. The firm's 1912 design of the Des

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Moines Friends Church (Quaker) strongly resembles the 1914 Colfax Methodist Episcopal Church (First Methodist Church), located across the street from the telephone exchange and library; Friends Church, E. 13th and Lyon, Des Moines (project #354, prints only Drawer 115, "tracings destroyed." Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson's archive also contains the following: 1910 Wheelock residence porches (project #159, drawings in Drawer 102A and specifications in Box 002) and 1919 building alterations for Doctor R.G. Anspach (project #1425, drawings in Drawer 95). The successor firm Brooks Borg Skiles AE LLP maintains the archive. (Stimmel; Long 1988; Shank: 127-132)

• *F. (Frederic) A. Harris, architect*: The Des Moines-based architect designed the Colfax First Presbyterian Church and oversaw construction (unclear if he acted as the general contractor). Harris billed himself as an ecclesiastical architect on plans he drew up for grocer John Luther's circa-1927 remodeling of the former Mason Block, 125 N. Walnut Street (nonexant; plans available in the Colfax Historical Society collection). Harris was prolific in designing churches and apartment buildings in Des Moines and Iowa in the 1910s and 1920s, as evidenced by numerous citations in *American Contractor* and *American Architect* trade magazines. However, many of his works have been demolished. This rare-surviving Colfax church building is important in that regard. (Shank: 77-78)

• *Elmer Fitzgerald, contractor*: Building contractor who constructed many midcentury concrete block buildings and additions in the commercial and industrial districts, as well as and ran concrete for the projects such as the Woman's Club Park wading pool and oversaw fire reconstruction at the Presbyterian Church in 1945. (*Colfax Tribune*, "Run Cement for Wading Pool, July 11, 1946: 1; Presbyterian Church reconstruction, May 31, 1945: 1)

Three late-nineteenth-century cast-iron storefront buildings meet Criterion C—Architecture: the Colfax Mineral Water Company, 12 W. Howard Street; the Double Storefront Building, 11-13 E. Howard Street; and the Kennedy Block/Masonic Lodge, 114 N. Walnut Street. Cast-iron became a desirable alternative to masonry in that it allowed construction of larger storefronts—very appealing to merchants who used storefront windows to advertise goods and entice customers. As noted by the National Park Service in a cast-iron preservation brief, "In the second half of the 19th century, the United States was in an era of tremendous economic and territorial growth. The use of iron in commercial and public buildings spread rapidly, and hundreds of iron-fronted buildings were erected in cities across the country from 1849 to beyond the turn of the century...." However, cast iron fell out of favor as a construction material by the turn of the twentieth century, supplanted by structural steel. The preservation brief goes on to state: "Regrettably, a large proportion of iron-fronts nationwide have been demolished in downtown redevelopment projects, especially since World War II." (Waite and Gayle)

The Colfax Public Library and Mineral Springs Park brick gazebo each appear eligible individually for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C – Architecture. The library, completed in 1913, embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction and representing the work of the master architectural firm: a Carnegie public library designed by the Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson architectural firm. The building appears to meet the registration requirements for a public building designed

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by Proudfoot & Bird et al., as set forth in the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) Form "The Architectural Legacy of Proudfoot & Bird in Iowa, 1882-1940." The MPD was approved June 28, 1989, by the Keeper of the National Register as a basis for evaluating properties designed by the various iterations of the "Proudfoot & Bird et al." architectural firm. The Colfax Public Library meets the registration requirements for significance, important subtype (public building), and integrity, as set forth by historian Barbara Beving Long. (Long 1988: F3-4) The 1933 brick gazebo housing the public mineral water drinking fountain, a government-funded work project, appears eligible as an example of civic architecture, which also relates to the mineral water history of Colfax.

The Presbyterian Church and Methodist Church both stand as intact examples of their styles: Late Gothic Revival and Classical Revival, respectively. The Presbyterian Church is no longer used as a religious building; the Methodist Church remains a functioning church and serves as an example of religious buildings clustering on the edges of the business district. Six churches remain on the edges of the business district, with two others being or appearing to be recently reconstructed (modern construction replacing older buildings) and therefore noncontributing. (All modern construction dates from Jasper County Assessor.) (*Colfax Tribune*, "Colfax Churches Have..." October 27, 1932)

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the Colfax "Spring City" Commercial Historic District is shown as the black line on the accompanying Figure 3 map entitled "Colfax 'Spring City' Commercial Historic District": roughly encompassing the central business district south of the railroad tracks, approximately bounded by Front Street (north boundary) to Division Street (southern boundary), to near or at Elm Street (eastern boundary) to Locust Street (western boundary).

Boundary Justification:

The district represents the heart of the commercial district that developed in Colfax, Jasper County. The commercial retail merchants and service providers with limited light-industrial uses and limited residential/institutional clustered largely between Locust and Elm, Front and Division streets; the historic buildings within the district boundaries are rare-surviving buildings surrounded by newer construction.

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Photograph Log

Colfax Spring City Commercial Historic District, Colfax, Jasper County, Iowa.
All streetscape photos taken December 2017–January 2018 by David E. Mast.

A CD-ROM of all images will be on file with Colfax Main Street and the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office.

Photo 1. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0001)
First Presbyterian Church and parsonage, camera facing northeast from Division Street at Walnut Street.

Photo 2. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0002)
N. Walnut Street facing north from Division Street.

Photo 3. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0003)
N. Walnut Street facing northeast from intersection with Howard Street.

Photo 4. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0004)
Masonic Lodge/Kennedy Building facing east. from N. Walnut Street.

Photo 5. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0005)
Rear garage facing southwest from intersection of alleys behind N. Walnut and E. Front Streets.

Photo 6. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0006)
Hahn Building facing northeast from N. Walnut Street and alley.

Photo 7. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0007)
N. Walnut Street from Front Street facing south toward central business district.

Photo 8. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0008)
Cross Building, City Hall, and Davis & Davis buildings facing southwest from intersection of Howard and N. Walnut streets.

Photo 9. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0009)
Cross Building, City Hall, and Davis & Davis buildings facing southwest from intersection of Howard and N. Walnut streets.

Photo 10. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0010)
Women's Club Park from highest "look out" point facing northwest from S. Elm Street looking over landscaped terrace seating for stage.

Photo 11. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0011)

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W. Division Street facing southwest, looking at Carnegie Library and Methodist Church, both built in the 1910s.

Photo 12. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0012)
Carnegie Library, facing south from W. Division Street.

Photo 13. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0013)
Methodist Church facing southwest from Locust and W. Division streets intersection.

Photo 14. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0014)
Colfax telephone exchange and Methodist Church facing south on Locust Street at W. Howard Street.

Photo 15. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0015)
W. Howard Street facing east at N. Locust Street.

Photo 16. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0016)
Colfax Mineral Water Co. building facing northeast from W. Howard Street.

Photo 17. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0017)
E. Howard Street facing east from N. Walnut Street.

Photo 18. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0018)
Storefronts facing south from E. Howard Street.

Photo 19. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0019)
Crisman Block/U.S. Post Office facing southeast from E. Howard Street.

Photo 20. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0020)
E. Howard Street facing west from N. Elm Street.

Photo 21. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0021)
E. Front Street "auto row" buildings facing southwest.

Photo 22. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0022)
Orlich Produce Building facing south from W. Front Street.

Photo 23. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0023)
N. Locust Street facing south from W. Front Street.

Photo 24. (IA_JasperCounty_ColfaxHD_0024)
Feed mill facing northwest from N. Locust Street.