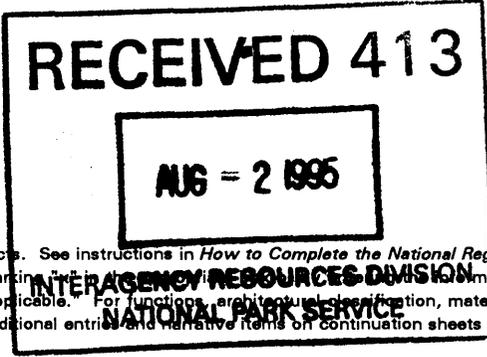


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate column. 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 Priest River Commercial Core Historic District  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number: Roughly bounded by Wisconsin, Montgomery, and Cedar streets and Albeni Road  
city or town Priest River n/a not for publication  
state Idaho code ID county Bonner code 017 zip code 83856  
n/a vicinity

### 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] Signature of certifying official  
25 JUL 95 Date  
John R. Hill, State Historic Preservation Officer  
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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall 8/31/95  
Entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Property Name Priest River Commercial Core Historic District

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**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>   </u>	<u>   </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u>   </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>   </u>	<u>   </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: n/a

\_\_\_\_\_ n/a

**6. Functions or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: Specialty store

\_\_\_\_\_ Department store

\_\_\_\_\_ Restaurant

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

Cat: COMMERCE/TRADE Sub: Specialty store

\_\_\_\_\_ Department store

\_\_\_\_\_ Restaurant

NOT IN USE

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

No style

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD/BRICK MASONRY

roof ASPHALT/METAL: Aluminum

other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Property Name Priest River Commercial Core Historic District

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**B. 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.)

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1912-1924

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1912

1924

\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

Property Name Priest River Commercial Core Historic District

County and State Bonner County, Idaho

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than 5. ac.

UTM References

1	<u>1/1</u>	<u>5/0/6/9/6/0</u>	<u>5/3/3/6/0/5/0</u>	3	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	4	<u>/ /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / /</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 Robin Bruce, Director

organization Western Historical Services date September 16, 1994

street & number 731 Dundee Drive telephone (208) 773-4021

city or town Post Falls, Idaho state Idaho zip code 83854

**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 (see list appended to this nomination, as Appendix A)

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

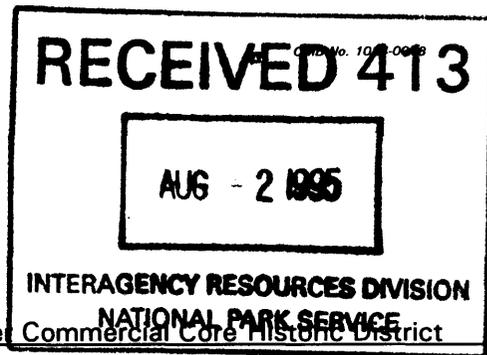
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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Name of Property Priest River Commercial Core Historic District

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### Introduction

Situated near the confluence of the Pend Oreille and Priest rivers, Priest River is located in southwestern Bonner County, Idaho (Sec. 25, T56N, R5W, Boise Meridian). The city's commercial core occupies a gentle slope that rises north from the Pend Oreille River to US Route 2 (also known as Albeni Road). That route connects eastern Washington State's largest city, Spokane, with Sandpoint, the county seat of Bonner County. US-2 is the main east/west thoroughfare through Priest River and essentially follows that route's historic alignment. US-2 is situated just north of (and passes parallel to) the northern perimeter of the Priest River Commercial Core Historic District (hereafter, the District), essentially bypassing the commercial core area. The main north/south corridor through the District is Main Street, while High Street comprises the main east/west route. Priest River currently has a population of approximately 1,600 residents. Since the town's founding in the early 1890s, the logging industry has been the economic mainstay of the community. However, mining, agriculture, and tourism have also played major economic roles in the development of Priest River, with tourism in recent years commanding an increasingly prominent position in the economic importance of the city.

The District includes buildings situated in Blocks 3, 4, 7, and 8 of Gillingham's Addition to Priest River and two properties located in the Burlington Northern Right-of-Way, with the District roughly forming an irregular rectangle. The period of significance for the District spans the years between construction of the Citizen's State Bank (1912), the earliest building identified as contributing to the significance of the District, and construction of the Interstate Telephone Company Building (1924), the newest building named as a contributing property within the District. During the period of significance, the commercial core experienced its heaviest growth, with that prosperity shaped by multiple themes.

Historic maps of the years 1912 and 1924 indicate there were considerably more commercial buildings within the boundaries of the District than are now present. A number of those buildings, however, appear to have been of modest dimensions and simple construction, with some, such as blacksmith shops, representing services or trades that became obsolete as new technologies became available (Sanborn Map Company, various years). Although these small enterprises, as well as some other larger commercial buildings, no longer exist, the contributing buildings (both occupied and vacant) that constitute the present District appear to historically have been the most important buildings within the central commercial core during the period of significance. These buildings retain exterior integrity and have maintained their ability to convey their historic associations.

### Criteria for Evaluation

Although individual commercial establishments and small strip malls have recently been constructed (within the last twenty years) adjacent to (north and south of) US-2, Priest River's historic commercial core still serves as the town's principal commercial district. The commercial core contains a significant

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concentration of buildings linked by physical development to the town's historic and present central business district. The commercial core's configuration, which historically and currently features a major through highway that bypasses the commercial core, has contributed to the core's relatively unaltered appearance. Unlike many small towns in more populated or heavy urban areas, road-widening and construction of alternate high-density motor vehicle traffic routes have not impinged on the town's historic layout. In addition, new construction has mainly been confined to development along US-2. As a result, modern visual intrusions within the District have been minimal, and the town has retained to a significant degree its historic spatial arrangement and massing of commercial buildings in the business core.

Over the years, storefronts in Priest River's commercial core have been periodically modified to accommodate different business enterprises and changing popular styles. Such alterations are an inherent part of the dynamics of change, growth, and recession that characterize the economic and social development of municipal development. Within the District, most alterations have been confined to street-level facades. None of the buildings named as contributing to the District's significance have had their storefronts totally re clad.

### Contributing Properties

A number of buildings evaluated as contributing to the District's significance are associated with trends and themes in local history that experienced sequential periods of financial growth and downturns (such as lumbering and mining). Buildings that were constructed primarily in response to "boom" cycles, and that subsequently fell vacant during "bust" years, may exhibit more evidence of physical deterioration than do service-oriented buildings that have been continuously occupied since the period of significance. But unless lack of upkeep irretrievably overwhelms the ability of the property to convey a sense of its historic association, vacancy or neglect should not disqualify a building from inclusion in the District as a contributing element. Eligibility requirements for contributing properties within the District were evaluated based on their ability to convey a sense of their historic association in the following areas:

1. **Physical Integrity:** All of the buildings within the District must retain exterior physical integrity, and integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association.
2. **Expression of Theme:** During its period of significance, Priest River was influenced by the growth of both extractive (agriculture, lumbering, mining) and service industries (commercial trade, transportation, and tourism). Unlike many small western towns that developed primarily in response to a single industry, such as mining or agriculture, for example, multiple economic events have molded Priest River's commercial core. Buildings and structures that retain the ability to convey associations relating to those themes are one of the requirements for

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evaluation. (This criterion is discussed in Section 8 of this nomination).

With the exception of the Beardmore Building, the properties included within the District represent vernacular rather than high-style architecture. Pragmatism and expediency rather than stylistic or artistic concerns clearly influenced building construction in Priest River's commercial core during the period of significance. This reflects the nature of commercial growth typical of small western towns where boom and bust cycles associated with extractive industries called for rapid construction, usually employing locally available materials. Consequently, no single architectural style dominates the architecture of the commercial core, and building design within the district can best be described as eclectic.

- 3. Relationship to the Commercial Core:** A third requirement for inclusion of a building or structure as contributing to the significance of the District is that the property must represent economic themes important in the development of Priest River, or illustrate social themes that occurred as a result of economic growth and activity (the IOOF building is an example of the latter).

### Physical Descriptions of Contributing Buildings

Descriptions of the following properties that are named as contributing to the significance of the District are arranged by Block (3,4,7,8), followed by the Burlington Northern Right-of-Way and beginning with Block 3. The descriptions correlate with the sketch map. The contributing properties are numbered 1-10, and the noncontributing properties are numbered 11-18. Descriptive information regarding the properties described below was appended from the 1994 Valuation Summaries located in the Bonner County Assessor's office, Sandpoint, Idaho; from a reconnaissance survey of properties included in the District by Marylyn Cork in 1989 (available from the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office and the City of Priest River); and from a pedestrian survey of the District by the author of this nomination.

1. The Presta Building, 221-225 Main Street  
contributing  
1914

Today known as Mercer's Memories and Antique Mall, this building currently houses antique retail stores. When viewed from its primary (west) facade, the one-story brick masonry building gives the appearance of a two-story structure. The building steps down from the main facade to the rear facade. The flat roof is composed of built-up tar. The building is constructed on a poured concrete full basement, which is unfinished. The north and south facades contain no architectural or artistic adornments other than several small, above-street-level arched windows that are presently boarded over. The primary facade, however, contains noteworthy stylistic features, particularly its decorative brick

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work. A single row of corbelled brick extends the width of the building below the coping. Raised brick work in a diamond motif with brick medallion embellishments grace each end of the main facade. Two smaller raised circular brick designs are located on either side of the central adornment, which features raised brick work in a large circular pattern. The central design features a raised diamond pattern in its center. Below those treatments are two inset horizontal brick panels, which are partially obscured by cloth awnings of recent addition.

The building's commercial spaces were designed in a three-bay division, with each bay measuring approximately 24 ft. wide. The building is approximately 80 ft. deep. This plan accommodated separate spaces for individual businesses under one roof. The storefront of the Presta building has been modified from the original, particularly the middle bay. Vertical wood siding has been attached to what appears to be the original brick masonry construction of that bay. Each of the three bays is accessed by an original recessed entry doorway which is flanked by bay storefront windows. The Presta building exhibits good exterior integrity and is still used in the function for which it was designed (commercial retail trade).

2. Bargain Barn and Priest River Mercantile, 207-209 Main Street  
contributing  
1913

This building may have originally been the Kaniksu Mercantile. Constructed in 1913, the building is located at 207 and 209 Main Street. It is a one-story building of brick masonry construction. It rests on a poured concrete foundation with a partial basement in the rear third of the building. Of simple design, the building is divided into two storefronts. Square brick piers mark the north and south corners of the primary facade, while an identical third pier denotes the dividing wall between the two storefronts. A single row of corbelled brick--which extends the full width of the building--is the only other decorative feature.

The flat roof is composed of built-up tar. The building adjoins the Kenco Auto Supply Building to the north. A vacant lot is situated on the south facade, where once another commercial building (since razed) adjoined the property (Sanborn Map Company 1928). Consequently, there are no window or door openings on the south facade. The storefronts of the two buildings have been completely altered from the original. Currently the storefronts feature modern aluminum-frame, fixed-light, floor-to-ceiling windows, with aluminum-frame full-length glazed doorway openings situated in the center of each bay. Each bay of the primary facade measures approximately 30 ft. The building has a depth of 90 ft. The exterior condition of the building is good.

Although the storefronts of the building have been compromised from the original, the building still retains its ability to convey its original function (retail trade and commerce) through the integrity of its remaining qualities of location, setting, feeling, and association.

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3. Kenco Auto Supply, 205 Main Street  
contributing  
1905

This two-story brick masonry building was constructed in 1915. The flat roof is built-up tar. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation and has a partial poured concrete basement. The aluminum-frame, fixed-sash windows on the storefront level of the building are not original; however, the window casings appear original, as do the placement of the doorway openings. The central doorway entrance is located off-center from (north of) the midpoint of the building. A pedestrian doorway on the south end of the main facade accesses the second floor, which contains two apartments (now vacant). Utilization of square brick piers at each corner of the main facade and in the center add a feeling of visual solidity to the building. Other decorative elements on the street-level portion of the building are brick stringcourses placed over inset wood panels. The building measures approximately 40' x 90'.

Decorative elements on the upper level include square piers in each corner of the main facade. The piers are similar to those on the lower level, a feature which unifies the design of the building. Decorative brick work in the form of three horizontal inset brick panels with corbelled brick cornices are placed beneath the coping. Below each panel is a pair of one-over-one double-hung, wood sash windows set beneath a segmental arch. The windows are flanked by wood shutters, which are not original. The north facade (adjacent to High Street) features upper-level treatments identical to the main facade, except that one pair of windows has been replaced with one-over-one double-hung, aluminum sash windows. The storefront level of the north facade contains two one-over-one double-hung, wood sash windows flanking a doorway that has been covered over. A one-story, flat-roofed building has been attached to the rear facade (the date of the addition is unknown).

The building exhibits good exterior integrity, and storefront modifications have been minimal. Although there has been an addition to the building, it is attached to the rear facade (which never served as public access), and is of smaller scale than the historic property; thus it does not visually overwhelm the building.

4. Community Service Building, 309 High Street  
contributing  
1920

This small, one-story, false-front building is located at 309 High Street. Constructed in 1920, the wood frame building is set on a poured concrete foundation. The building is 13'-0" x 27'-0". The front-gabled structure is clad with asphalt siding of imitation brick pattern, which appears original. Four brackets support the projecting cornice. An off-center, one-light, two cross-panel door and large fixed-wood frame window are located on the primary facade. The window has recently been boarded over.

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The building exhibits fair exterior integrity. Although this building is of modest design and simple construction, it appears little modified from the original. It is representative of the variety of architecture dating from the period of significance that is present in Priest River's commercial core. The building is presently vacant.

5. IOOF Building, 216, 218 Main Street  
contributing  
1914

The IOOF building is a two-story, flat-roofed structure that is divided into two bays of unequal size for commercial businesses on the lower level, and the International Order of Odd Fellows meeting hall on the upper level. The brick masonry building is set on a poured concrete foundation. The flat roof is composed of built-up tar. The building measures 50'-0" x 60'-0". The northern storefront is presently vacant and the southern storefront is occupied by a tavern.

The IOOF building's most noteworthy stylistic features are achieved through the use of decorative brick detailing. The coping consists of a row of headers layered between a row of stretchers. Below the coping, a series of closely placed, evenly spaced corbelled bricks distinguish the roof line. A stringcourse of stretchers lies below the corbelling. Beneath the top stringcourse, a block pattern was achieved using cut bricks to form the design. A second stringcourse of stretchers matching the top stringcourse in design frames the block motif. A third stringcourse of stretchers marks the storefront level of the building. Square brick piers are placed at the north and south corners of the primary facade, with a third pier marking the division between the two storefronts. The piers extend slightly above the roof line of the building. The use of imbrication in simple, contrasting vertical and horizontal designs, coupled with the rather massive appearance of the piers, gives the building a sense of cohesiveness. Fenestration on the upper level consists of three pairs of one-over-one double-hung sash windows placed beneath flat arches.

The storefronts on the first floor have been extensively altered. Materials that are incompatible with the original treatments cover both storefronts. Windows in the north bay of the building have been completely sheathed in vertical cedar board, while the low wall beneath the windows has been faced with insulbrick. The entry doors are not original. It appears that the present storefront claddings have covered, not replaced, original fabrications. Despite alterations, the original fenestration of the building is clearly evident, and sequential modifications have not overwhelmed the building to the point that its original function is unclear. Although there are some broken windows on the building's upper level, the building retains good exterior integrity.

6. Runck's Garage, 208 High Street  
contributing  
ca. 1920

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Today known as Millward's Equipment Company, this one-story building is constructed of vitrified clay tile block and brick masonry set on a concrete foundation. The flat roof is composed of built-up tar. The spare lines and lack of adornment on this building suggest its original utilitarian function. The only stylistic feature is a low-stepped parapet that extends nearly the length of the south facade. The building measures approximately 100'-0" x 75'-0". The entrance doorway is located off-center on the primary facade. Storefront windows on either side of the entrance are not original. A bank of five multi-light, wood-frame windows (the lower halves have been boarded over with plywood coverings) are located west of the entrance doorway. One identical window (also boarded over) is located east of the pedestrian entry. A wood-panel utility door, which is set in the angled west (High Street) facade, appears original.

Modifications to the building have been slight. Although some original windows have been boarded over (probably as protection against vandalism), the building appears to have had few alterations since its construction. It exhibits good exterior integrity and clearly conveys its historic function.

7. Interstate Telephone Company, 212 High Street  
contributing  
1924

Built in 1924, this one-story, flat-roofed building measures 25'-0" x 30'-0". It is constructed of brick masonry set on a concrete foundation. Despite its modest size, this small building has classical overtones. Stylistic features include variation in brick color and regularly spaced brick pilasters. The main (south) facade is faced with variegated, light-colored brick laid in a stretcher bond pattern. Stringcourses of darker, solid-colored soldier bricks add interest and contrast to the facade. The cornice is concrete and extrudes downward slightly beyond the wall's top edge. A second identical treatment relieves the space between the cornice and the window and door openings, creating a double-awning effect. The building is accessed by a wood-frame, twelve-light door with matching sidelights capped with transom windows, all of which appear original. A brick pilaster separates the doorway from the adjacent window, which features an identical transom. A fixed-light, aluminum window has replaced the original glazing (which probably matched the present doorway treatment in appearance) beneath the transom.

The historic Interstate Telephone Company building has experienced minimal modifications and is very well preserved. It exhibits excellent exterior integrity, and is reflective of growth of the commercial core in response to changing technologies during the 1920s. Today it is known as the Office Services Building.

8. The Citizen's State Bank, 218 High Street  
contributing  
1912

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The historic Citizen's State Bank, currently the White Wolf Trading Company, is a small one-story building of brick masonry construction. The flat-roofed building is set on a poured concrete foundation. The simple stylistic features of this handsome building suggest the importance of its original function. The angled entry in the corner is oriented toward the intersection of Main and High streets, the heart of the city's commercial core. The glass entry door is accented by sidelights featuring glass panels capped by square four-light windows. A multi-light transom caps the doorway opening. Sheltering the entryway is a triangular pediment hood supported by brackets. On either side of the doorway, brickwork in a honeycomb pattern extends from the cornice to the base of the building, a vertical stylistic detail that adds the impression of height. Beneath the concrete coping, a wood cornice with asbestos shingles is supported by brackets that are of the same size and style as those supporting the hood. The west and south facades (facing Main and High streets) contain original wood frame windows set beneath flat arches. This building remains essentially unaltered from the original. It has been well maintained and exhibits excellent exterior integrity.

9. The Beardmore Building, 119, 113, 109 Main Street; 302, 306, 310 High Street  
contributing  
1922

The Beardmore Building (now vacant) is architecturally the most imposing property located within the District. The large two-story, flat-roofed building is of hollow-core, brick masonry construction set on a concrete foundation. The building measures 120'-0" x 105'-0". The lower level is divided into numerous storefronts which have been occupied by various business, service, and professional establishments over the years. The first floor reflects this commercial traffic; every storefront has been modified to varying degrees by a succession of tenants. Some storefronts have been sheathed in materials incompatible with the original; others retain most elements of the original design, including violet-colored transom windows. The building's east (Main Street) facade and its south (High Street) facade are nearly identical in appearance, except that the Main Street facade is longer.

The building's most impressive architectural embellishment is the stepped parapet, which is given added distinction by terra-cotta coping. Extensive use of terra-cotta is the building's most arresting artistic feature. A dropped cornice of terra-cotta supported by brackets complements the roof line. Above each bracket is a terra-cotta block containing a floral/leaf motif. Capping the corners of the building above the cornices are terra-cotta corner blocks with gargoyles executed in high-relief. Terra-cotta blocks, placed between the upper and lower levels, distinguish the spaces between the commercial bays. The fenestration on the upper level consists of a series of paired- and triple- wood frame, one-over-one double-hung sash windows, which are original. Most of the glazing on the upper level of the building is not intact.

Years of vacancy and age- and weather-related deterioration have caused serious damage to the interior of the Beardmore Building. However, the building has retained fair exterior integrity, and displays the

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evolution of building construction in Priest River's commercial core during the period of significance.

10. Priest River Grain Company, 325 Wisconsin Street  
contributing  
ca. 1920

Today known as the Panhandle Milling Company, the building is currently abandoned. The rectangular-shaped structure is oriented to the east/west along the Burlington Northern Railway tracks. The one-story, gable-roofed, wood-frame structure stands on concrete piers, which have replaced the original wood support posts. The roof is aluminum sheet metal, which is not original. Additions on the south facade originally served as feed-grading facilities and grain bins. Fenestration includes both wood frame, fixed-sash and double-hung sash windows. Loading docks with utility and pedestrian doorways are located on the primary (Montgomery Street) and secondary (Wisconsin Street) facades.

The structure exhibits excellent exterior integrity. Although no longer in use, the structure has been very well maintained. It conveys its historic function of grain processing, storage, and transportation.

### Noncontributing Properties

1. **Domestic Dwellings:** Presently and historically, domestic dwellings have always bordered, and occasionally been interspersed with, the buildings that comprise the commercial core of the city; no houses have been named as contributing to the District's significance. While some dwellings near the boundaries of the District date to the period of significance, they either 1) have been modified so drastically that their physical integrity has been compromised, 2) lack architectural or artistic distinction, 3) do not represent economic or social themes important in the development of Priest River, or 4) do not exhibit the evolution of commercial construction that led to the formation of the present District during its period of significance.
2. **New Construction:** Two buildings--the Priest River Medical Clinic and the Dental Clinic--of new construction (less than fifty years old) within the District that have been constructed in contemporary styles and do not contribute to the significance of the District. Although dissimilar in size, scale, design, and fabrication to the historic contributing and noncontributing properties within the District, these buildings do not compromise the ability of the District to convey its historic architectural forms and thematic associations. The location of these buildings are identified in the map.
3. **Incompatible Exterior Treatments:** Although historic, some buildings within the District fail to convey a sense of their historic associations because of excessive modifications to their

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exteriors. In some cases, such changes have completely destroyed or obscured significant character-defining features, such as the Wright Building (1907). That building's entire lower level has been completely covered with vertical-board siding that is incompatible with original fabrications. Similarly, other buildings have experienced exterior treatments that prohibit the property from conveying its historic function, and/or from indicating its age in relationship to other contributing properties within the District. Incompatible exterior treatments are particularly noticeable in single-story buildings where character-defining features are either exclusively or nearly exclusively confined to storefront-level elements. A.J.'s Country Kitchen located at 215 High Street is an example. The single-story building has been so altered that neither its historic function nor its historicity is suggested by its present appearance.

Some historic buildings within the District are problematic in terms of distinguishing contributing from noncontributing resources. These resources point to physical conditions peculiar in varying degrees to most potential commercial core historic districts; namely, that some historic buildings and/or storefronts have been completely covered over once or multiple times with materials incompatible with the original. When guidelines for evaluating significance and integrity are applied, these buildings do not meet the minimum criteria for National Register integrity. However, as is frequently the case with historic commercial/retail buildings, it appears that the original materials on these buildings were not removed or destroyed, but were covered over with different materials as successive tenants customized the building to advertise qualities distinctive to their enterprises (Jandl 1982, 1,4). Careful removal of later incompatible claddings could possibly restore an historic building's physical integrity, thus changing its status within the District from noncontributing to contributing.

The Pingle Building, the Linton Building and the Wright Building are all noncontributing buildings located within Priest River's historic commercial core that may have the potential to be contributing buildings. These three buildings adjoin one another and figured prominently in the economic life of Priest River during the period of significance. Although noncontributing, these buildings are consistent with the size, scale, design, feeling, and association of the contributing properties which comprise the District. Rehabilitation of these buildings to their historic condition (if undertaken) would be an important addition to the District. Priest River has an active preservation group, the Priest River Restoration and Revitalization Committee (PRRRC), which has expressed interest in restoring both contributing and noncontributing properties that lie within the boundaries of the District.

11. Priest River Medical Clinic, 217 Main Street  
noncontributing  
New construction
12. The Wright Building, 221 High Street  
noncontributing

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1907, 1921, 1937

Now vacant, the Wright Building's lower level was constructed in 1907, an upper level added in 1921, and an addition added to the rear (east facade) in 1937. The storefront level of the Wright Building (which faces both Main and High streets) has been completely covered over with vertical-board siding that has overwhelmed the building's character-defining features. However, the present siding appears to cover, not replace, the original building fabric.

13. The Pingle Building, 202, 204 Main Street  
The Linton Building, 206, 208 Main Street  
noncontributing  
1910

Visually, the Pingle and Linton buildings have the appearance of a single building (see photograph No. 15). For purposes of this nomination, the Pingle and Linton buildings are treated as a single property. The two-story Pingle Building presently houses a barber shop/styling salon. Constructed in 1910, the building has been completely re clad with materials incompatible with the original; however, it may retain most of its original claddings and decorative elements. The Linton Building presently houses a tavern on its storefront level. The two-story building was constructed in 1910. The entire building has been sheathed with material incompatible with the original. However, it appears that the building's original claddings and storefront fenestration is intact.

14. Dental Clinic, 214 Main Street  
noncontributing  
New construction

15. Priest River Tatoo, 220 Main Street  
noncontributing  
Lacks exterior integrity

16. Logger's Bar, 224 Main Street  
noncontributing  
New construction

17. A.J.'s Country Kitchen, 215 High Street  
noncontributing  
Lacks exterior integrity

18. The Keyser House, adjacent to (east of) the Panhandle Milling Company in the Burlington

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Northern right-of way  
noncontributing  
1895

This house was recently moved to its present location. Although the dwelling (constructed in 1895) is associated with one of the founding families of Priest River and has retained good exterior integrity, the building's present setting and orientation are not consistent with its historic arrangement. Moreover, inclusion of domestic dwellings is incompatible with the commercial nature of the properties included within the District.

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### Statement of Significance

The Priest River commercial core is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district under Criterion A. It is significant for the role it played in the economic development of Bonner County, Idaho, and in northern Idaho in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. During the period of significance (1912-1924), the commercial core contributed to the expansion of agriculture, tourism and recreation, mining, and lumbering in northern Idaho, and served as a manufacturing/processing, transportation, supply, trading, and service-related community for those industries. The contributing properties located within the District have retained physical integrity and have maintained their ability to convey their historic associations.

### Historical Background

In the late 1880s, the nucleus of the community of Priest River formed near a wetlands located near (east of) the present Priest River. After heavy flooding in the early 1890s inundated the fledgling community, the founders of the village moved the town to its present location (Estes 1961, 13). The following year (1891) construction crews laid the main line road of the Great Northern Railway (GN) through Priest River (the Great Northern Railway became the Burlington Northern Railway [BN] after 1951). Some laborers with the GN, principally immigrants from southern Italy, located in an informal community east of Priest River known as the "Italian Settlement" (Cork 1991, 42). Like the Italians, other groups and individuals participated in the development of the city's commercial core over the years (*Priest River Times* 15 February 1923, 1).

Completion of the GN line in 1892 enabled large-scale development, marketing, and transportation of the Priest River Valley's most important natural resource--its vast timber reserves. Commercial growth within the Priest River coincided with the enhancement of the timber industry. In less than a decade from its founding, Priest River had grown from a struggling community of homesteaders and settlers situated along the new GN main line to a thriving industrial community, with logging and timber product manufacturing forming the town's economic mainstay. Although in 1900 less than fifty citizens comprised the population of Priest River, by 1903 the population had reached 400. Three lumber mills then operated in Priest River: The White Pine Lumber Company (the largest of the three), the Graham and Robinson plant, and the Priest River Company (*An Illustrated History of North Idaho* 1903, 804). Those timber concerns were the first of many similar operations that eventually tapped the enormous timber resources of the Priest River Valley. In the first decade of the twentieth century those timber resources were estimated at "no less than 2,000,000,000 feet of saw timber" (*Sandpoint and Bonner County Directory* 1910-1911, 140). While boosters recognized the primacy of the region's timber resources, they also touted other natural resources in the area and evaluated the development potential of those resources relative to the growth of Priest River:

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Priest River's growth is dependent upon the development of the lumber industry....The prospects for the future growth of Priest River are as good as could be desired....The south line of the Priest River forest reserve is but six miles away. When this reserve is opened, its development will contribute very materially to the prosperity of the town. Dairying and fruit raising are industries that are beginning to be developed in surrounding territory. Stock raising and feeding is becoming a remunerative business. The mineral resources of the region promise much when mills are built for handling low grade ores.

There are several prospects in the vicinity of the town and in the Priest Lake section that are considered valuable properties and only await mills and transportation facilities to develop into paying claims. There is along both rivers [Pend Oreille and Priest] quite an extensive area of agricultural land now in a state of cultivation that is tributary to Priest River, and as the forests are cleared this area will grow (*An Illustrated History of North Idaho*, 1903, 804).

The commercial hub of the central Priest River Valley centered in Priest River. The city's commercial core originally extended on either side of the GN main line. Businesses (mostly of frame construction) extended along the north bank of the Pend Oreille River on South Montgomery Street. Those establishments, including the St. Elmo Hotel owned by one of Priest River's leading citizens, C. W. Beardmore, fronted the GN main line to the north (*Sandpoint and Bonner County Directory* 1910-1911, 142). Those businesses faced the Priest River Hotel and other commercial establishments that stood along Montgomery Street and fronted the GN main line to the south. That commercial core extended west along the GN main line from the southern terminus of Cedar Street to the southern terminus of Wisconsin Street.

With the exception of a small part of town which could be "reached by the hose from the Priest River Co's shingle mill," there were no pumping facilities or water reserves offering fire protection for the town (Sanborn Map Company 1903, 1-2). Consequently, before the city organized a volunteer fire department and acquired reliable fire protection equipment, periodic blazes altered the character of the commercial core. Some buildings within the present commercial core escaped destruction from earlier fires. However, most commercial buildings within the present business district were constructed following establishment of the Priest River fire department and after brick, stone, and other fire-resistant exterior claddings replaced wood as the dominant building material for businesses within the commercial core (Sanborn Map Company 1928, 1-2).

Early in the decade of the twentieth century, businesses along Montgomery and South Montgomery streets included a livery, barber shop, restaurant, lodging house, ice house, railroad pumping station, two hotels, general merchandise store, warehouses, offices, and the GN depot. Several domestic dwellings also stood near those business establishments. A few scattered commercial buildings, consisting mostly of boarding houses and hotels, stood along Cedar and High streets to the north and east (Sanborn Map Company 1903, 1-2). Notably, by 1903, Priest River contained at least seven hotels

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and boarding houses, including the Priest River Hotel on Montgomery Street, the St. Elmo Hotel on South Montgomery Street, and the Western Hotel located at the intersection of High and Cedar streets. The sizable number of hotels and boarding houses, compared with the town's relatively modest population, suggests that many single men were either employed or were looking for employment in Priest River's lumber mills. In 1903, the White Pine Lumber Company planing mill, shingle mill, dry kiln, lumber shed and offices were located approximately 1,350 feet west of Church Street, where the company occupied considerable space adjacent to (north of) the GN tracks. That industry's activities are representative of the extent to which the timber industry was then exploiting the region's forest resources, expanding its industrial logging/finishing operations in Priest River, affording employment opportunities in the region, and enhancing the economic base of the community:

The White Pine company has operated at Priest River about three years, and during that period has aided materially in the growth and development of the town....A noticeable feature is the splendid electric light plant. The water works is excellent and at once allays all thoughts of danger from fire....The mill furnishes employment for about one hundred men. The average cut is about 60,000 feet in ten hours. The company has constructed a number of neat and commodious cottages for the accommodation of some of its employe[e]s (*North Idaho News* 6 May 1904, 2).

Consignments for white pine lumber included markets in "Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, Iowa, and the Dakotas" (*Ibid.*). Undoubtedly, those timber resources aided in the development of the aforementioned Great Plains states, where timber resources were either scarce or nonexistent.

By 1910 Priest River's business district had permanently shifted north from Montgomery and South Montgomery streets to the commercial core's present configuration along Main Street (running north/south) and High Street (running east/west). Substantial business establishments that had been present along the riverine corridor in 1903 (including the Priest River Hotel) had either been razed or relocated by 1910 (Sanborn Map Company 1910, 2). Factors influencing the shift of the commercial core to its present location clearly included previous incidences of flooding and fire. However, the continued expansion of the timber industry, the importance of the location of lumber yards to the transporting capacity of the GN rolling stock, and the space requirements that those needs entailed eventually subsumed the city's original riverine commercial core.

In 1903, for example, the White Pine Lumber Company occupied considerable industrial space less than 1,500 ft. west of Church Street and adjacent to (north of) the riverine commercial corridor and the GN main line. Its space requirements illustrate development pressure in shifting Priest River's original business district away from the GN main line north to its present configuration (Sanborn Map Company 1903, 1):

The White Pine Lumber Company, Ltd., completed its Priest River mills last summer. It now

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cuts between seventy-five thousand and one hundred thousand feet of lumber per day. It will eventually become one of the largest mills in the state....The boom facilities on the river at this point are unsurpassed and the dry kilns have a capacity of forty thousand feet per day. This company owns twenty-seven thousand acres of timber land in eastern Washington and Idaho, and is composed mainly of eastern capitalists (*An Illustrated History of North Idaho* 1903, 804).

At that same time (1903), the Priest River Company Shingle Mill was also located along the banks of the Pend Oreille River. That establishment was situated immediately west of the White Pine Lumber Company. A large boarding house stood between the two industrial facilities (Sanborn Map Company 1903, 1). The mill, which was situated on a GN side track, produced a prodigious number of cedar shingles. That company, too, required considerable space along the railroad transportation corridor for the storage and transportation of its finished products (Sanborn Map Company 1903, 1):

The Priest River Company, whose buildings were erected in 1901, manufactures red cedar shingles. It has a capacity of one hundred thousand shingles per day of ten hours. In the sheds belonging to this company are stored at the present time five million shingles undergoing the air drying process preparatory to shipping (*An Illustrated History of North Idaho* 1903, 804).

Although the population of Priest River had not changed appreciably by 1910, orientation and density of the commercial core had permanently shifted north from the river and GN main line primarily to Main, Wisconsin, and High streets. Businesses along those streets included two banks, grocery stores, general merchandise stores, offices, a drug store, a barber shop, restaurants, hay and feed stores, stables, ice houses, and stage houses. By then, the number of hotels and boarding houses had noticeably declined, while the number of domestic dwellings had increased sharply (Sanborn Map Company 1910, 1-2). This change suggests that the mostly male, transient population of earlier years had given way to the more permanent settlement of families in Priest River. Clearly by 1910, expansion of the lumber industry along the east/west riverine and GN transportation corridor precipitated the reorientation of Priest River's commercial core toward its present configuration. Lumber yards then abutted the commercial core on the east as well as the west side of the business district. The western perimeter of the Priest River Company's shingle mill converged on the only remaining commercial establishment (the St. Elmo Hotel) along South Montgomery Street (Sanborn Map Company 1910, 2). Other businesses that had stood next to the St. Elmo just seven years before had been razed or presumably relocated north of the river to Wisconsin, High, and Main streets. Those commercial establishments included a sizable frame building which had contained a lodging house, restaurant, and barber shop. A livery and ice house had disappeared from that business district as well (Sanborn Map Company 1903, 2).

In addition, by 1910 nearby residences had been vacated or abandoned (Sanborn Map Company 1910,

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2). Noise, dust, and other disagreeable effects resulting from the encroachment of the lumber industry had likely impeded if not halted commercial and domestic expansion between Montgomery and South Montgomery streets after 1910. Moreover, as had been the case in the past, fire protection within Priest River was nonexistent: the only water facilities were wells; and there were "no steam and no hand engine, no independent hose cart, no hook & ladder truck[s]" (Sanborn Map Company 1910, 1).

During the first decade of the twentieth century, periodic fires destroyed major industries in Priest River and influenced the shift of the city's commercial core from the riverine and transportation corridor to its present location. In 1905 fire destroyed one of Priest River's premier industrial enterprises, the White Pine Lumber Company, and a significant portion of the town as well. In February of 1910, fire again consumed a large part of the city (Estes 1961, 53). Those disasters appeared to influence the choice of materials for commercial buildings in Priest River. As early as 1903, boosters predicted the replacement of wood by brick as a more suitable building material for buildings within a community where stockpiles of lumber and nearby forests posed high risk of fires.

Good brick clay is plentiful in the vicinity and a brick manufacturing plant is about to be put in operation. Frame buildings will in time give way to brick structures (*An Illustrated History of North Idaho* 1903, 804).

That prediction became a reality after the fire of 1910. By 1912 brick and stone exteriors replaced wood as the predominant exterior material for business establishments within the city's adjusted commercial core (Sanborn Map Company 1910, 1). At that time, Main and Wisconsin streets (both trending north/south) had emerged as the dominant commercial core for the City of Priest River. New businesses included the Charbonneau Hotel, constructed of stucco over metal lath (see Figure 1). The hotel stimulated expansion and prosperity within the commercial core during the period of significance and is presently listed in the National Register. A taxidermy shop, drug store and general merchandise store had also recently been constructed along south Wisconsin Street, while the Hotel Linton, billiards and tobacco establishments occupied frontages on Main Street (Sanborn Map Company 1912,3). The imposing Jurgens Brothers saw mill, planing mill and lumber yard occupied an area less than 1,200 ft. west of the city's commercial core. That enterprise extended from the GN main line to Albeni Road. On average, Jurgens Brothers milled 8,000 ft. of lumber in 29 hours. In addition to the planing mill, their assets included sorting sheds, sawdust bins, dressed lumber sheds, filing rooms, rough lumber sheds, an office, and stock piles of processed lumber (Sanborn Map Company 1912, 1).

However, the city's commercial growth appeared to experience its greatest expansion and prosperity before America's entry into World War I (1917-1919), during the war years, and immediately following. In addition to the importance of the timber industry during that period, agriculture, mining, tourism, and boosterism emerged as major themes in the social and economic enhancement of Priest River commercial core. In January of 1921, the town's leading financial institution, the Citizen's State Bank, exhorted the citizens of Priest River to do their part in advancing the continued growth of Priest

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River:

Watch Priest River Grow. If those who are predicting that business is going to the eternal bow-wows would spend just one-half of their time doing the things that stimulate and build-up, every town would be prosperous like Priest River. Let's whoop'er up stronger than ever this year and Watch Priest River Grow (*Priest River Times* 12 January 1921).

That growth was dependent on the real and anticipated rewards associated with development of various services and industries representative of the themes that influenced Priest River's development. The following is a discussion of those themes:

### Railroad Transportation

Construction of the Great Northern (GN) railway facilitated development of Priest River and its environs. A debate over the location of a new GN depot in 1923, for example, is indicative of the importance of the GN to the community and to the region at that time:

The railroad company now wants to place the new building on the north of the tracks, so that passengers and others having business at the station will not have to cross the main line. As this is exactly what Priest River wants, it did not take long for an agreement to be reached ....The Commercial Club has the securing of this station to their credit. There are many other things to be accomplished. Your assistance is needed. Be at the Charbonneau Monday evening and help with the development of the best town in the Northwest--Priest River (*Priest River Times* 17 May 1923, 1).

However, in terms of the GN's relationship to the economic strength of Priest River, its value as a passenger transportation terminal was secondary to its importance for market transportation of the region's extractive resources:

The Humbird Lumber Company has a force of men at work cleaning the remainder of their Priest River Pole Yard, which is located between Main and Wisconsin Streets on the G.N. right-of-way....They are doing some loading for the Great Northern, and the balance of the poles will be shipped to Newport where the Humbird Company expect to maintain their principal pole yard (*Priest River Times* 30 March 1922, 1).

### Mining

The search for precious metals also stimulated the economy of Priest River early in the twentieth

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century:

The discoveries made in the new mining district on Priest river during the past month continue to cause excitement in Spokane and Priest River....The news of the rich strike leaked out and prospectors near Priest river have started a rush for the district. There are reported to be from eight to 25 men going in every day and the hills are being prospected for quite a distance around the original discovery (*North Idaho News* 29 July 1904, 6).

News of those and other mining prospects made Priest River, Idaho, a destination point for hopeful miners who were then flocking into the area:

Priest River, July 10.--There seems to be much excitement around town in regard to several valuable mines being discovered in the Priest Lake country. People from Spokane and other near-by places are daily leaving, and it is thought that some valuable mines will be discovered in the near future (*North Idaho News* 22 July 1904, 3).

Excitement in mining opportunities had not abated by the 1920s. At that time, both corporate and individual interests saw promise in mineral discoveries near Priest River. Early in the summer of 1922, Italian mining entrepreneurs were prospecting for gold and copper less than ten miles from Priest River (*Priest River Times* 29 June 1922, 1). Shortly afterward, the "Lucky Abe" mining group located on upper Priest River sold their mining interests to investors for \$40,000, with the understanding that one "of the clauses of the sale is that development work amounting to approximately \$300,000 must begin within thirty days" (*Priest River Times* 13 July 1922, 1). With Priest River situated less than twenty miles south of Priest Lake and the upper Priest Lake country, that community served as a transportation and service depot for mining activities in the area.

### Agriculture

Diversified agriculture, including hay, grain, and potato production, constituted an important element in the growth of Priest River during its period of significance. By 1910 hay was the chief agricultural commodity grown near the town; however, "all kinds of vegetables [were] raised and some fruits" as well (*Sandpoint and Bonner County Directory* 1910-1911, 140). By 1922, seed potato production had become an important business. That year the Bonner County Seed Potato Growers' Association announced their intention of doubling their acreage the following year and revealed plans "to erect a warehouse" in Priest River (*Priest River Times* 3 March 1922, 1).

Similarly, alfalfa and grass hay production, along with the cultivation of cereal crops constituted an important part of the city's economic base during the 1920s. Reflective of the importance of agriculture to the growth of the community, the Priest River Grain Company in the spring of 1922 installed, "a

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twelve-horse upright boiler at their warehouse and rolling mill on the Great Northern tracks at Wisconsin street, and expect to have it working before the end of the week" (*Priest River Times* 30 March 1922, 1). That structure (currently known as the Panhandle Milling Company) today conveys a sense of the importance of agriculture to Priest River and the commercial core. Hay production also continued as an important local crop, with the timber industry, which was then still dependant on animal force for facets of its logging operations, forming a major market for local hay producers:

Will Shaw sold 50 tons to the Humbird Lumber Co. for \$20. per ton at his barn, and refuses to sell any more at this price....Tony Naccarato delivered 25 tons of loose hay to Beardmore's camp for \$25 per ton, and Frank Anselmo is delivering some at the same price (*Priest River Times* 12 October 1922, 1).

### Tourism and Recreation

By 1910 the richness of northern Idaho's scenic woodlands stimulated tourism and recreation, thus contributing to the growth of Priest River's commercial core. C. W. Beardmore, one of Priest River's most resourceful entrepreneurs, ran a stage line to then remote Priest Lake. The stage service specialized in "attention given to outing and parties to Priest Lake, Idaho" (*Sandpoint and Bonner County Directory* 1910-1911, 142). Priest Lake also attracted the attention of one of Hollywood's most glamorous stars and controversial directors--Nell Shipman. Miss Shipman, who was a frequent guest at the Charbonneau Hotel, established a film production company at Priest Lake. During the 1920s, she stimulated tourism from Priest River to Priest Lake. In 1923, Shipman extended a blanket invitation to the citizens of Priest River to visit her camp at Priest Lake for a Fourth of July celebration:

Miss Shipman has invited all of Priest River and Coolin to come [to her camp]. Here is the opportunity for Priest River people to see wonderful Priest Lake, something which they should have done years ago (*Priest River Times* 5 July 1923, 1).

Shipman funded the entire outing, a celebration in which activities included "dancing all day on a large raft in the bay" and a day-long barbecue (Ibid.).

Even without the publicity of Shipman's celebrity status, by the early 1920s, Priest River's recreational "playgrounds" had already received considerable public attention, as had the country's national forests in general. The popularity of northern Idaho's national forests as recreation destinations indicates that tourist revenue undoubtedly contributed to the vitality of Priest River's commercial core:

Over a quarter of a million people used the National forests of Montana and northern Idaho for recreation during the season of 1921....Although up to this time the recreational use of the Forests has been considered of minor importance, it now looks as if some effort would have

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to be made to take care of the increasing number of visitors who are making the Forests their playground (*Priest River Times* 30 March 1922, 1).

### The Priest River Commercial Core

The Priest River commercial core experienced its most dynamic growth during the period of significance (1912-1924). That period saw construction of new commercial establishments and the retrofitting of existing buildings to accommodate different enterprises. New building construction included Elmer J. Petersen's addition (built, incidentally, of fire-resistant exterior materials) to the Bonner House (since razed), a "popular hostelry on Main Street" (*Priest River Times* 1 November 1923, 1):

The new part will set just behind and east of the present building. It will be a two story hollow tile building, 60 x 31, with a one story kitchen, 20 x 20. There will be a large basement for fuel storage and laundry. The ground floor will have sample rooms, wash rooms, living rooms, and kitchen. The second floor will have twelve bedrooms, with hot and cold water in each, making twenty-two bedrooms in all. The building is planned so that it can be added to on the west where the frame part now stands when the growth of the town warrants it (*Ibid.*).

That same year Mickey Powell who had formerly managed a restaurant in the John Hamberg building on Main Street moved in to the building previously occupied by the Mercantile Company. Powell opened a bakery and specialized in baked goods to order (*Priest River Times* 18 January 1923, 1). Similarly, the Northern Furniture Exchange opened a "secondhand furniture business in the Mike Presta building formerly occupied by the Star Pool Room" (*Priest River Times* 2 August 1923, 1). Earlier that year the Star Pool Room was the scene of a sensational "holdup" in which the proprietor, Dominick Naccarato, was "relieved...of his watch and \$280 in money" (*Priest River Times* 15 February 1923, 1).

Remodeling activities were also representative of ways in which businesses in the commercial core accommodated to changing consumer demands and trade patterns:

The Bonner Hardware Company is the name of a new firm that will make its bow to the buying public in Priest River early next month. John Hamberg will operate the business in his adjoining buildings on Main Street, recently vacated by the Priest River Hardware Company and Mickey's Cafe. An archway will be opened between the two and the building occupied by the Cafe will be used for a large stock of furniture while the hardware, electrical goods, plumbing supplies, etc., will be handled in the other room (*Priest River Times* 18 January 1923, 1).

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New technologies also undoubtedly affected consumer product interest by connecting Priest River with regional as well as local influences. By the 1920s, Priest River had received telephone service. In 1923, the Interstate Utilities Companies finished work on "two new party lines in the Italian Settlement, one with 10 subscribers, and the other with 9" (*Priest River Times* 11 January 1923, 1). The utility predicted that new subscribers "will wonder how they ever got along without" the new and modern communications services (*Ibid.*). The Interstate Telephone Company served Priest River from a brick building located on High Street. The building is presently known as the Office Services Building and is a contributing element within the District.

The epitome of growth and commercial change in the Priest River commercial core culminated with the completion of the "New Beardmore Block" in 1922-1923. The building represented a departure from the vernacular architecture that had characterized the city's core development in preceding years. The design of the Beardmore building reflected architectural styling popular in the early decades of the twentieth century. Decoration was used to distinguish the building as an ornament to the community rather than simply to accommodate utilitarian commercial needs (Longstreth 1987, 37). Often, the analogy was "made between these new commercial 'palaces' and the palaces of merchant princes in Renaissance Italy" (*Ibid.*).

Clearly, Charles W. Beardmore represented something of a twentieth-century merchant prince as he presided over his varied commercial affairs from his suite of offices in his imposing new building located at the corner of Main and High streets. The three-story building was of hollow tile and brick construction, with terra-cotta ornament, including gargoyles, adorning the cornices. The Beardmore Block opened on a severely cold day in December of 1922 (*Priest River Times* 21 December 1922:1). However, cold weather and "snow underfoot" failed to detract eager visitors to Priest River's premier commercial establishment (*Ibid.*):

All day long the place was thronged with visitors inspecting the merchandise and admiring the new building. Souvenirs, calendars, bill folds, thermometers, and lead pencils were given to the visitors and Schillings' coffee was served by a demonstrator during the afternoon (*Ibid.*).

The Beardmore block was a full-service, remarkably self-contained commercial, professional, and residential establishment. The building housed commercial establishments, professional offices, corporate headquarters, entertainment facilities, and lodging. Commercial businesses mainly occupied the first floor. Those businesses included the Rex Theater, Priest River Hardware Company, general merchandise store owned by Beardmore, the Kaniksu Drug Company, a meat market, barber shop, and assay office. Corporate and professional offices were situated on the second floor. They included the C. W. Beardmore lumber, logging, sawmill, and general merchandise offices; dental and medical doctors' offices; and offices of the Diamond Match Company and the Western Union Life Insurance Company. A spacious lodge room, connected with a banquet room, lit by skylights dominated the center of the second floor. The balance of the second floor of the Beardmore Building consisted of

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National Park Service

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County and State Bonner County, Idaho

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seven four- and five-room apartments, each equipped with an electric range and bath (*Priest River Times* 31 May 1923, 10). The local newspaper concluded that the "building would be a credit to a town may times larger than Priest River" (*Ibid.*).

### Conclusion

The buildings and structure included within the District convey activities that influenced the development and commercial success of the District during the period of significance. Although the District is confined roughly to a four-block area, the small tract that encompasses the District presents in microcosm an array of themes that contributed to town development in the community of Priest River, Idaho.

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The District is located in Section 25, Township 56N, Range 5W Boise Meridian, Bonner County, Idaho, and lies within Gillingham's Addition of the incorporated City of Priest River, Idaho. The boundaries of the District are as follows: Beginning at the Burlington Northern (BN) Railroad tracks north to Montgomery Street, the boundary proceeds east to the alley between Main Street; hence north along the alley to Lot 4 Block 8 of Gillingham's Addition to Priest River; thence east along the boundary of Lots 4 and 5, Block 8 to Main Street; thence south on Main Street to the northern boundary of Lots 12 and 1 Block 7 of Gillingham's Addition; thence east along the boundaries of Lots 1 and 12 to Cedar Street; thence south along Cedar Street to the intersection of Cedar and High streets; thence west along High Street to the alley (trending north/south) between Main and Cedar streets; thence south along the alley to the BN Railroad; thence west along the BN to the point of beginning.

### Boundary Justification

The ten historic properties named as contributing to the importance of the City of Priest River Commercial Core Historic District are located along Main Street (trending north/south) and High Street (trending east/west). These commercial properties form a discrete and unified concentration of buildings that have retained the ability to convey their associations with the multiple economic themes that influenced the growth of Priest River, Idaho, during the period of significance (1912-1924). The irregular boundaries of the District were selected to incorporate the properties that have maintained exterior integrity and to exclude vacant areas and property types that either are not consistent with historic commercial development or that lack physical integrity. Eight noncontributing properties are also located within the District. Five of the eight noncontributing properties are historic. Of these, the Pingle, Linton, and Wright buildings, in particular, have retained their original size, scale, mass, design, feeling and association. They are consistent with and complementary to the architecture of the contributing properties within the District. Although the five historic noncontributing buildings have been partially or completely covered over with materials incompatible with the original, historic claddings appear intact. Some or all of the historic noncontributing buildings located within the District would appear to be likely candidates for rehabilitation. The Priest River Restoration and Revitalization Committee, Inc. (PRRRC) is an active volunteer historic preservation group in Priest River. Their interest in enhancement of the District could potentially result in the restoration of noncontributing historic buildings to their original fabrications.

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All photographs were taken on 24 July 1994 by Robin Bruce of Western Historical Services. The original negatives are in WHS' project files, 731 Dundee Drive, Post Falls, Idaho 83854. The number in parentheses corresponds to the number assigned to each property in the nomination.

**Photograph No. 1**

Overview of the District from the intersection of US-2 and Main Street, with Beardmore Building in right foreground.  
Looking south.

**Photograph No. 2**

Streetscape of Main Street, showing the intersection of Main and Montgomery streets in background.  
Looking south.

**Photograph No. 3**

Streetscape of High Street, from the intersection of High and Wisconsin streets.  
Looking east.

**Photograph No. 4 (1)**

Looking west/northwest.

**Photograph No. 5 (2)**

Looking west/northwest.

**Photograph No. 6 (3)**

Looking south/southwest.

**Photograph No. 7 (4)**

Looking south.

**Photograph No. 8 (5)**

Looking east.

**Photograph No. 9 (6)**

Looking north/northeast.

**Photograph No. 10 (7)**

Looking north

**Photograph No. 11 (8)**

Looking north/northeast

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**Photograph No. 12 (9)**  
Looking north/northwest

**Photograph No. 13 (10)**  
Looking south

**Photograph No. 14 (11)**  
Looking south/southwest

**Photograph No. 15 (12 and 13)**  
Looking north/northeast

**Photograph No. 16 (14)**  
Looking east

**Photograph No. 17 (15)**  
Looking east

**Photograph No. 18 (16)**  
Looking east/southeast

**Photograph No. 19 (17)**  
Looking east/southeast

**Photograph No. 20 (18)**  
Looking south/southeast

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**Priest River Commercial Core Historic District**  
Priest River, Bonner County

Contributing Property Owners:

The Presta Building  
Ray F. Jr. and Diane E. Mercer  
Route 1, Box 96-A  
Priest River, ID 83856

The Bargain Barn and Priest River Mercantile Building  
Raadco, Inc.  
P.O. Box 307  
Priest River, ID 83856

The Community Service Building  
Thomas R. and Thelma M. Taylor  
Route 1, Box 81  
Priest River, ID 83856

The IOOF Building  
IOOF Bonner Lodge 67  
c/o Clarence Corning  
Route 1, Box 513  
Priest River, ID 83856

Runck's Garage  
Michael and Shelia Millward  
P.O. Box 1821  
Priest River, ID 83856

The Interstate Telephone Company Building  
Paul and Gayle Schlotterbeck  
P.O. Box 1019  
Priest River, ID 83856

The Citizen's State Bank  
Paul and Gayle Schlotterbeck  
P.O. Box 1019  
Priest River, ID 83856

The Beardmore Building  
B.C. and Nancy A. Turner  
P.O. Box 712  
Priest River, ID 83856

The Panhandle Milling Company  
Leslie Crosby  
Route 2, Box 373B  
Old Town, ID 83822

Non-Contributing Property Owners:

Priest River Medical Clinic  
Charles Falter  
P.O. Box 729  
Priest River, ID 83856

The Wright Building  
Jerry Walker  
1244 Carson St.  
Redwood City, CA 94061

The Pingle Building  
Jerry Walker  
1244 Carson St.  
Redwood City, CA 94061

The Linton Building  
Leona Mickelson  
HCR5 Box 74A  
Priest River, ID 83856

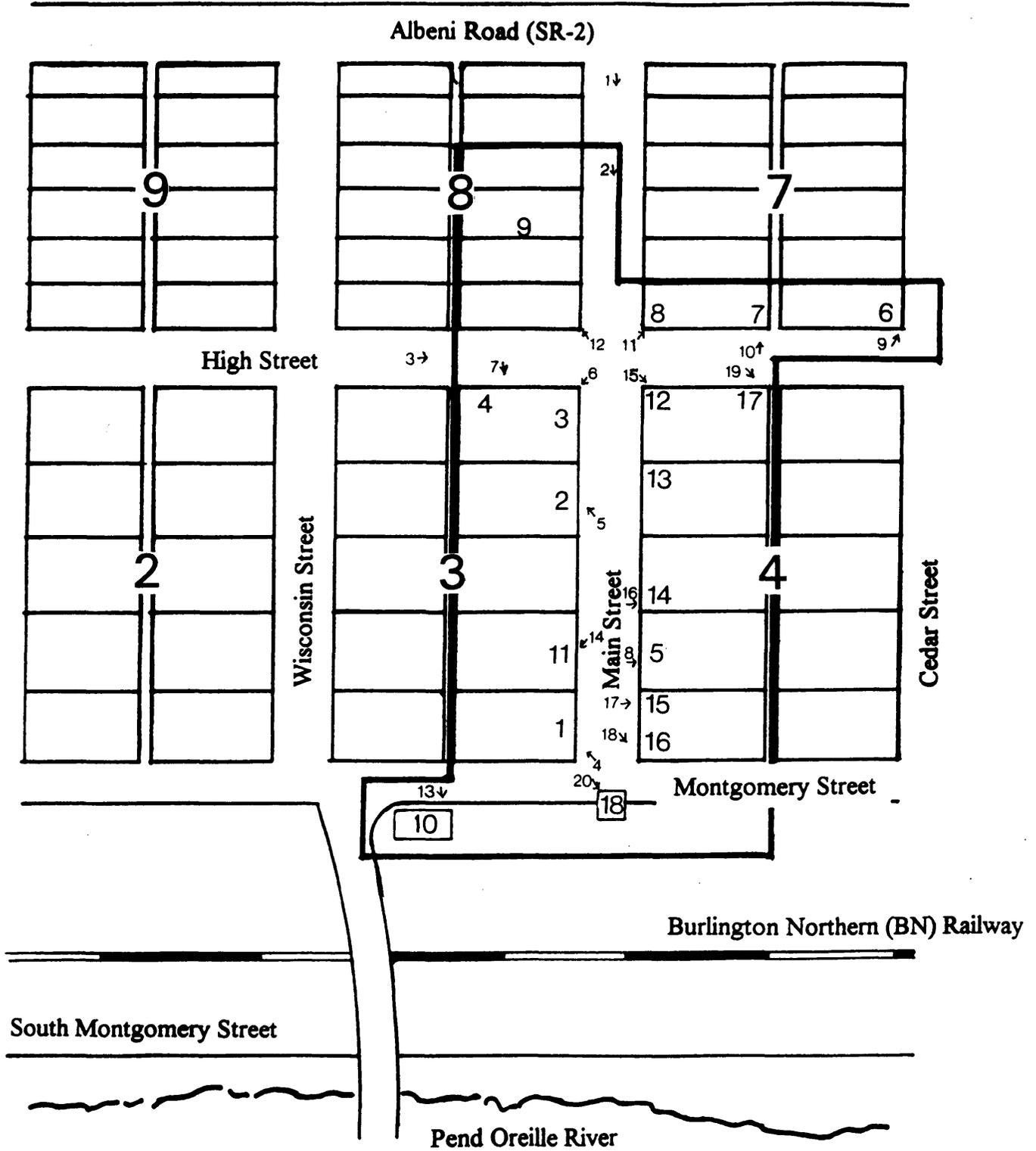
Dental Clinic  
Lon Peckham  
P.O. Box 218  
Priest River, ID 83856

Priest River Tatoo  
Calvin Renfo  
P.O. Box 656  
Priest River, ID 83856

Loggers Bar  
Gerald Abraham  
P.O. Box 87  
Priest River, ID 83856

A.J.'s Country Kitchen  
Priest River Chamber of Commerce  
P.O. Box 929  
Priest River, ID 83856

# Priest River Commercial Core Historic District Boundaries



No Scale

Gillingham's Addition to the City of Priest River, Idaho



MAIN STREET MARKETPLACE

TOWN OF

Context view, looking  
south down Main Street  
City of Priest River Comm-  
ercial Core Historic Dist.  
Bonner County, ID

1



407.0172 H N N H C

Context view, Main St.  
looking South  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
&



Always  
Make  
OPEN

407.0172 N111112

Context view, High St.  
Looking east  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core Historic  
District  
Bonner County, ID  
3



The Presta Building  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core Historic  
District  
Bonner County, ID  
4 (CP1)



The Bargain Barn and  
Priest River Mercantile  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core Historic  
District  
Bonner County, ID  
5 (CP2)



MEACANTILE

MOTOR AUTO PARTS

509

10

Kenco Auto Supply Bldg  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
6 (CP3)



CHINA 2007

The Community Service  
Bldg.  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
7 (CP4)



The IOOF Building  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
8 (CPS)



LUBRICATION

Williams

WILLIAMS

13  
Runcck's Garage  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
9 (CP6)



INTER  
ID  
Interstate Telephone Co. Bldg.  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core Historic  
District  
Bonner County, ID  
10 (CP7)



WHITE WOLF  
TRADING CO.

The Citizen's St. Bank bldg.  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
11 (CP 8)



7  
13  
The Beardmore Bldg.  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
12 (CP9)



PANHANDLE  
MILLING CO.

TRUCK  
ROUTE  
←

The Co-op Panhandle Milling Co.  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core Historic  
District  
Bonner County, ID  
13 (CP10)

que  
L. L.

IN

PRIEST RIVER  
MEDICAL CLINE



Priest River Medical Center  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
14 (NCP11)



19-WRIGHT-07

The Wright, Linton and Pingle Bldgs.  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core Historic  
District  
Bonner County, ID  
15 (NCP 12 and 13)



Dental Clinic  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
16 (NCPH)



Priest River Tautoo  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
17 (NCP15)



Loggers Bar  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
18 (NCP16)



A.J.'s Country Kitchen  
City of Priest River  
Commercial Core  
Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
19 (NCP17)



The Keyser House  
City of Priest  
River Commercial  
Core Historic District  
Bonner County, ID  
20 (NCP18)