

G-15 N.P. 1024-0018  
EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received AUG 2 1984  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Idaho Falls Downtown <sup>M.P.A.</sup> ~~multiple resource area~~ (partial inventory: architecture)

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number an area roughly bounded by F, Memorial, Yellowstone, and Market streets <sup>13 ind. sites</sup> N/A not for publication

city, town  Idaho Falls N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state  Idaho code 016 county Bonneville code 019

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> multiple resources	N/A being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple ownership

street & number N/A

city, town N/A N/A vicinity of state N/A

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bonneville County Courthouse

street & number C and Capital streets

city, town Idaho Falls state Idaho 83401

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Idaho State Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1972  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Idaho State Historical Society

city, town Boise state Idaho

## 7. Description

SEE individual inventory sheets

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The city of Idaho Falls lies at an elevation of 4,707 feet in the upper Snake River Valley in Bonneville County. Located in the middle of extensive irrigated farmland, Idaho Falls is the economic, governmental, and cultural center for the county and much of the surrounding area. Idaho Falls was established as a cross-roads for trade and travel. Its location on major transportation routes to the north and east makes the town a gateway to both Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. Across the Snake River to the west are the lava beds of the Snake River plain and the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory site. To the south, Interstate 15 connects Idaho Falls with Blackfoot, Pocatello, and finally Salt Lake City, to which Idaho Falls owes much of its early development.

The Idaho Falls Downtown multiple resource area, roughly bounded by Yellowstone Avenue and the railroad tracks on the southeast, Memorial Avenue and the Snake River on the northwest, F Street on the northeast, and Market Street on the south, makes up the current central business district of Idaho Falls. One building, the Idaho Falls Public Library, lies just outside these general boundaries. This building acts as a terminus for a major boulevard running from the Snake River down through the business district and is visually connected with the business district. The multiple resource area is densely developed with commercial and governmental buildings that front on sidewalks or have minimal landscaping. The Snake River, running just beside Memorial Avenue, and the railroad tracks, beside Yellowstone Avenue, formed two boundaries for the development of this commercial district and encouraged building along a southwest-northeast axis. Prominent among Idaho Falls' historic resources are well-preserved examples of commercial and institutional architecture. The buildings documented in this nomination are representative of the styles and types of commercial architecture from the period between 1894 and 1940.

The earliest business district of Idaho Falls, then known as Eagle Rock, grew up during the 1880's along Eagle Rock Street just to the southwest of the multiple resource area. Early businesses buildings were frame or log, fronting on board sidewalks and dirt streets. These buildings were replaced around the turn of the century with brick and stone commercial buildings, still fronting on boardwalk and dirt streets. At the same time, the business district began to grow north- and eastward, eventually forming a twenty-block area of dense commercial development. Within the period covered by this nomination the commercial area gained paved streets and concrete sidewalks. No buildings from the original section of the business district along Eagle Rock Street survive. The land in the multiple resource area, into which the business district began to expand beginning in about 1895, preserves the town's earliest extant commercial architecture and forms the area of this multiple resource nomination. Within the boundaries of the Idaho Falls multiple resource area are examples of various styles and types of buildings, ranging from very simple brick commercial buildings to highly ornate and monumental civic structures. All buildings in the area are either commercial or governmental in their historic and their current use.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Idaho Falls Downtown multiple resource area  
Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

The commercial and governmental architecture of Idaho Falls is small scale and greatly varied, consisting mainly of two- and three-story buildings. The historic buildings are of brick, terra cotta, cut stone, and lava rock. Newer structures of various materials have been introduced into the fabric of the city and many of the older buildings have been covered over with metal storefronts and other masking materials. Recent revitalization efforts have made changes in the street plan, adding planters, trees, and curved curbing. No parts of the area have a concentration of unaltered historic buildings sufficient to allow for nomination of a downtown historic district. Future restoration work may eventually allow for district nominations.

Architectural styles in downtown Idaho Falls often are merely suggested by details, which are combined eclectically. Fully developed examples of pure styles are rare. Among the styles represented are Romanesque Revival, as in the Odd Fellows and Hasbrouck buildings; Renaissance Revival, in Sites 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, and A; Beaux Arts Neoclassicism in the Idaho Falls city building; Neoclassicism in the Federal Building (Site B); Spanish Colonial Revival in the Bonneville Hotel; and art deco in the City Building, the Montgomery Ward Building, and the Idaho Falls Public Library. The Renaissance Revival style is represented in simple and ornate modes, in brick and terra cotta, and in early and late stages of use. The later Renaissance Revival buildings of Idaho Falls tend to exhibit an Art Deco-style influence. Even though its use is quite varied, the Renaissance Revival style was the dominant one for commercial architecture during the period of the thematic group. The craftsmanship exhibited in the architecture in general and in the elaborate terra cotta decoration in particular is of high quality and was the product of skilled artisans and workers.

The Idaho Falls business district between D Street and the alley south of Broadway and between Capital Avenue and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks was surveyed at the reconnaissance level by Jennifer Eastman Attebery, state architectural historian for the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, in April 1983. When it was discovered that no part of the business district warranted historic district designation, it was decided to nominate the individually eligible buildings within the central business district using the multiple resource area nomination format. Attebery and architectural historian Don Szymansky investigated the individually eligible buildings, documenting them further with investigations in local histories, newspapers, Polk directories, and Sanborn maps. The eligibility of buildings was determined according to their degree of alteration; their local, regional, or state representation of styles and construction, their historical association with the commercial development of Idaho Falls, and their age. Within the area boundaries there are well-preserved examples of buildings dating from 1934 and later. Among these, only the public library, which has 1938-1940 alterations, was judged to be of exceptional significance. Other recent buildings may be found eligible as they reach fifty years of age.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1894-1940      **Builder/Architect** unknown

### Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Idaho Falls Downtown multiple resource area includes a selection of thirteen individually eligible commercial and governmental buildings representative of the town's commercial architecture during its development as a trade center and transportation crossroads from 1894 through 1940. The nominated buildings are significant as a remnant of the early architecture and for their association with the commercial development of Idaho Falls. The selection of structures comprises the least altered, most representative of the building types and construction techniques observed in an overall inventory of the central business district.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property See individual inventory sheets.

Quadrangle name See individual inventory sheets.

Quadrangle scale N/A

UMT References See individual inventory sheets.

A 

Zone	Easting								

B 

Zone	Easting								

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The Idaho Falls Downtown multiple resource area is bounded by Memorial, F, Yellowstone, and Market streets and extends southeast to include lots 5 and 6 in block 23 of the Idaho Falls Original Townsite.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Don Szymansky, architectural historian AND Jennifer Eastman Attebery, State Architectural Historian

organization Idaho State Historical Society

date 25 April 1984

street & number 610 North Julia Davis Drive

telephone (208) 334-3356

city or town Boise

state Idaho 83702

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Merle Wells*

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 24 July 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*See Continuation sheet for listing*

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Idaho Falls Downtown multiple resource area

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

The town of Eagle Rock grew at the site of a toll bridge over the Snake River that was constructed by J. M. Taylor in 1864 and 1865. The gold rush to Idaho and Montana had resulted in an increase in the number of people needing to cross the river, and the junction of a Salt Lake-Montana road with a westbound connector to the Lander Road and the Oregon Trail became a natural location for a trading settlement. The rapid expansion of commercial ventures in the town after rail service arrived in 1879 and the location there of Utah Northern Railroad shops in 1880 allowed the town's population to stabilize and grow. The relocation of the railroad shops to Pocatello in 1887 resulted in a decrease in population in Idaho Falls, but as irrigated agriculture developed in the area, the town expanded to become the economic and trade center for the surrounding region and a religious center for Mormon settlers in southeast Idaho. In 1891 the town name was changed to Idaho Falls.

While physical development of the Idaho Falls business district was a gradual process, by 1921 the multiple resource area had a full streetscape of brick and stone buildings except in the northeast area of the present central business district. After 1921 the major building consisted of infill and the redesign of existing buildings. During the previous three decades, frame buildings were replaced, one-story buildings were expanded, and residential and industrial establishments were relocated outside the area and replaced with commercial buildings. These physical changes reflect the informal local planning that shaped many Idaho towns, with dense commercial development along a river or a railroad--in this case along both. These changes also reflect the rapid expansion of settlements that accompanied the advent of irrigation in southern Idaho.

The buildings chosen for nomination are significant as excellent examples of the architectural styles present in downtown Idaho Falls. All of them are nearly unaltered and in good condition. The Kress Building, Idaho Falls City Building, and Idaho Falls City Library preserve beautifully crafted terra cotta decoration. Other buildings represent brick construction (the Douglass-Farr building and Hotel Idaho, for example), pressed galvanized sheet iron decoration (the Underwood Hotel), and lava rock construction (the Hasbrouck Building). The buildings represent the Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival, and Spanish Colonial Revival styles and the influence of Neoclassicism and Art Deco, as they were used in southeast Idaho. These styles are found similarly expressed in the commercial and civic architecture of other towns in the region, like Pocatello and Blackfoot.

Two Economic Recovery Tax Act applications and one Jobs Bill grant application for building rehabilitation or restoration have come from owners of downtown Idaho Falls buildings. In addition, other owners have expressed an interest in having their properties nominated to the National Register, even though they currently have no plans for restoration.

No districts are included in the multiple resource area because there is not a sufficient concentration of significant and contributory buildings in any part of the area. The nomination includes one building, the Idaho Falls Public Library,

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Idaho Falls Downtown multiple resource area  
Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

that has alterations dating from less than fifty years ago. These changes, which include excellent terra cotta design, are exceptionally significant as an excellent regional example of PWA-sponsored work.

The results of the reconnaissance and intensive-level surveys conducted in Idaho Falls are part of the Idaho State Historic Sites Survey. Data are provided to local planning agencies as requested.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Idaho Falls Downtown multiple resource area  
Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Clark, Barzilla. Bonneville County in the Making. Idaho Falls, 1941.

"Herman J. Hasbrouck" In James H. Hawley, History of Idaho, Pp. 560-61.  
Chicago: the S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1920.

Idaho Falls fire insurance maps. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1892-1948.

Idaho Falls Times. 6 April 1916.

Idaho Register, Idaho Falls. 1890-1910, and 31 March 1940.

Lovell, Edith Haroldsen. Captain Bonneville's County. Idaho Falls: The Eastern  
Idaho Farmer, 1963.

Post Register, Idaho Falls. 31 March 1940.

McCracken, Shirley H., to Merle W. Wells. 15 June 1983. Letter on file at  
Idaho State Historical Society, Boise, Idaho.

Madsen, Betty M. and Brigham D. North to Montana: Johns, Bullwhackers, and Mule  
Skinners on the Montana Trail. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press,  
1980.

Marker, Joe L. Eagle Rock, U. S. A. Idaho Falls: Idaho Falls Printing  
Company, 1962.

Polk's Idaho Falls City Directory. Colorado Springs, Colorado: R. L. Polk & Co.,  
Publishers, 1907-1933.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
received 8/2/84  
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 2

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Idaho Falls Downtown Multiple Resource Area  
State Bonneville County, IDAHO

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Bonneville Hotel

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

2. Douglas-Farr Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

3. Farmers and Merchants Bank  
Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

4. Hasbrouck Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

5. Hotel Idaho

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

6. I.O.O.F. Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

7. Idaho Falls City Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

8. Idaho Falls Public Library

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

9. Kress Building

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

10. Montgomery Ward Building

Entered in the  
National Register

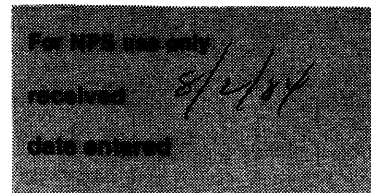
for Keeper

Melores Byers 8/30/84

Attest

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 2

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Idaho Falls Downtown Multiple Resource Area  
State Bonneville County, IDAHO

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Rocky Mountain Bell  
Telephone Company Building

Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper

*Helene Byers* 8/30/84

Attest

12. Shane Building

Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper

*Helene Byers* 8/30/84

Attest

13. Underwood Hotel

Entered in the  
National Register *for* Keeper

*Helene Byers* 8/30/84

Attest

14.

Keeper

Attest

15.

Keeper

Attest

16.

Keeper

Attest

17.

Keeper

Attest

18.

Keeper

Attest

19.

Keeper

Attest

20.

Keeper

Attest