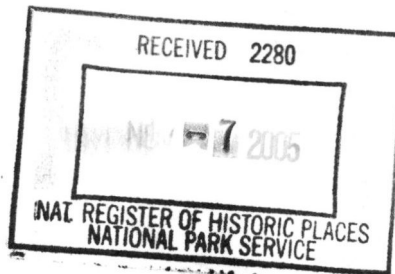


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name New Ulm Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Minnesota Street between 1st South and 3rd North Streets ☐ not for publication N/A

city or town New Ulm ☐ vicinity N/A

state Minnesota code MN county Brown code 015 zip code 56043

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ 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 ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Britta L. Bloomberg 11/1/05
Signature of certifying official Date

Britta L. Bloomberg, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Minnesota Historical Society

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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

12.21.05

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
63	15	buildings
		sites
		structure
1		objects
64	15	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

4

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/ Trade: business, professional,

organizational, financial institution

specialty store, department store,

restaurant

Social: meeting hall

Government: post office, city hall

Recreation & Culture: theater, museum

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/ Trade: business, professional,

organizational, financial institution

specialty store, department store

restaurant

Social: meeting hall

Government: post office, city hall

Recreation & Culture: theater, museum

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Queen Anne, Romanesque

Revival; Late 19th & Early 20th Century

Am. Movements: Commercial; Modern Movement

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone, Concrete

walls Brick, Stone, Concrete, Stucco

roof Asphalt, Metal, Slate

other

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 5 Page 1

5. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

At the time the Hummel-Maltzahn-Boesch Block was listed in the National Register, it counted as one building. This is the reason that the number of properties previously listed is noted as 4, although the list of contributing and noncontributing properties on pages 7:58 and 7:59 notes 5 contributing buildings.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The New Ulm Commercial Historic District encompasses the core of the central business district of New Ulm, a city of 13,500 people in south-central Minnesota. The district is located on a natural terrace about five blocks west of the Minnesota River. The district is comprised of seventy-six properties, most located along Minnesota Street, a north-south street that runs roughly parallel to the river. These properties represent downtown New Ulm's remaining concentration of intact historic commercial structures, encompassing parts of nine city blocks. Asphalt-paved alleys bisect the blocks, providing rear service entrances to the buildings.

The properties in the district include sixty-three contributing buildings, one contributing object, and fifteen noncontributing buildings. Four buildings are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the United States Post Office, the Boesch Hummel Maltzahn Block, the Grand Hotel, and the Kiesling House. The majority of buildings were built for commercial use as retail stores, banks, office buildings, and hotels, with living quarters, offices, or lodge halls on the second and third stories. In addition to the commercial structures, the district also includes two public buildings, the U.S. Post Office and the New Ulm Municipal Building.

Only two properties predate 1862, when much of New Ulm was destroyed during two battles with Dakota Indians—part of the larger conflict that enveloped southwest Minnesota now referred to as the U.S. Government-Dakota Conflict. Most buildings were built between the early 1880s, after a cyclone swept through town, and 1948, as the city's businesspeople responded to better economic times following the Depression and World War II. Three buildings in the district are noncontributing because they were built after 1953, postdating the period of significance.

The buildings exhibit a wide range of historic architectural styles. Outstanding examples include the Italianate Grand Hotel, the Romanesque Revival Masonic Block, the Queen Anne Louis Buenger block, the Art Moderne Retzlaff Service Station, and the 20th Century Commercial-style South Side Garage. The United States Post Office, often classified as German Renaissance, represents the interaction between the federal government's architectural staff and the local German-American city leaders. The main facades of many structures are finely detailed above the storefront level with ornate cornices and parapets, carved stonework, decorative brick, and terra cotta.

Most structures are built of brick, typically relying on locally manufactured products by the New Ulm Brick and Tile Company, the Stoeckert brickyards, and nearby Springfield's Ochs Brick Company—founded by Casimir Ochs, a local architect/builder who constructed the Meridian Block on Minnesota Street in 1886. American Artstone is evident in primary building materials, such as the Arbes Store and the Retzlaff Service Station. In addition, it was used for decorative work on George's Ballroom, Retzlaff Auto, the City Meat Market, and the South Side Garage. Several Artstone facades have been obscured or demolished, including the Erd/Eibner building and a series of 1936 storefronts altered by State Bank and Trust.

As a group, the buildings retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Many have few alterations except for changes to their storefronts and additions to the rear. Several noncontributing buildings maintain elements of the original design, obscured by heavy layers of stucco. They

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

represent buildings that may be considered as contributing to the district's significance in the future if their exterior alterations are reversed.

Individual Properties

A brief description of each property in the district follows. The properties are arranged by street address, moving generally south to north within the district. They are identified by street address on the accompanying map. Addresses in parenthesis are historic street numbers.

512-514 1st S

Graff Garage

1918

1 Contributing Building

This one-story 20th century commercial style building was constructed using a dark brown brick from New Ulm Brick and Tile Co. The rectangular floor plan measures 95 x 55. Used as an automobile sales and repair business, the front is divided into two sections. To the west, the original building shows four bays. Roll up garage door entrances use the three west bays (with only the middle being an original opening). The fourth bay, on the east, was added in 1923, and shows a plate window with an entrance door. An additional section was added to the east side, showing a large plate glass window with an additional plate window on the east facade.

Dr. J. P. Graff, a veterinarian, opened a livery business in 1902. In 1909 he entered the automobile business, selling Buick, Paige, and Jewett lines. He opened his auto repair garage and showroom in 1918, valued at \$15,000. In 1923, he made a substantial addition for additional show space. As described in 1925, "The garage building . . . is of brick construction and measures 55 x 100 feet." Typical of many business leaders, he was active in community affairs, serving as mayor from 1909 to 1912, county commissioner, and state representative from 1931 to 1934.¹

By 1925, Graff moved out and Walsh Motors took over the building. Allis-Chalmers sold tractors and farm equipment from the site in 1940.²

26 South Minnesota

Standard Oil Co. Filling Station

1952

1 Noncontributing Building

The one-story building is set back from the street. The exterior is sheathed in wood shingles with the primary entrance on First South with a secondary service entrance. The roof is hipped with two large projecting hipped dormers. Rectangular windows are grouped in fours on the first floor, threes on the second floor. A freestanding sign, reading "Olde World Deli and Catering," stands on the corner of South Minnesota and First North.

¹ *Brown County Journal*, 31 March 1922.

² *New Ulm Review*, 5 Feb 1919; "Name of Graff in City Directory," *New Ulm Review*, 3 June 1925; 20 November 1947.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 3

As suggested by the nearby Graff and South Side Garages, the automobile made a significant impact on downtown New Ulm after World War I. Standard Oil Company opened a service station on this site in 1918. In 1952, that building was replaced with a brick veneered rectangular structure. Olde World Deli incorporates some elements of that building within the structure, but the exterior has been extended and drastically altered. In November 2004 Olde World Deli and Catering was located in this building.

21 South Minnesota

South Side Auto Garage

1911, 1926 (new front)

1 Contributing Building

This one-story commercial building was originally used as an auto garage. The main facade is a brown brick veneer—sold under the brand name of “Hy-Tex” in the 1920s. The streetfront has three bays, divided by brick piers. The central bay was originally a garage-entry door, now replaced with wood and small paned glass. The two side bays are enframed wall windows with a transom ribbon of prism windows above the plate glass. This level is capped by an Artstone storefront cornice. The brick wall above is decorated with four cast swags. The detailing is particularly well preserved, including an Artstone cast raised cornice with an “X” pattern and a stepped roofline, capped with Artstone.

The South Side Auto Company built this garage in 1911—a joint effort of E. G. Hage, Albert Everling, E. L. Larson, and J. C. Siebenbrunner. J. C. Siebenbrunner opened the South Side Garage in 1914. A newspaper article described it, “The building, 45 x 165 feet, is constructed of Aufderheide brick. The main office is arranged on the north side of the building in a space 18 x 45 feet in size. . . . Two doors lead from this office into the L shaped driveway, which runs the full length of the building. During the winter months from 60 to 80 cars are stored in this garage.” At first, Siebenbrunner sold Oakland automobiles. In 1926, he made improvements to the front, adding plate glass windows and altering the front with Craftsman oriented flourishes. The new brick front was of “Hy-tex”—a brick with four slightly different colorizations made at New Ulm Brick & Tile. Locally made Artstone was used for trim.³

Siebenbrunner remained at this location through 1944.

20 South Minnesota

Chicago House

1884-1889; 1901; 1931

1 Contributing Building

The two-story section of this building, located on the south half of the lot, was built between 1884 and 1889 by Mathias Siebenbrunner. It is finished with red brick. The streetfront has been largely obscured by a heavy coat of buff-colored stucco with a wood-shingled pent roof. Windows are fixed plate glass and their placement does not reflect a historic pattern. The upper facade shows three rectangular windows with one-over-one glazing and stone

³ *New Ulm Review*, 21 April 1926.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 4

sills and lintels. The wall terminates with rows of decorative brickwork and corbelling below the cornice. On the south facade, there is an obvious mark against the wall, showing an earlier outside stairway to the second floor.

The saloon, known as the Chicago House, was built by Mathias Siebenbrunner. He was born in 1857 in Chicago, coming to Sigel township in 1861. After working on a Chicago & Northwestern bridge crew, he operated his own business at this location for thirty years. Newspaper reports from 1901 show that Siebenbrunner completed improvements to the property that year, probably alterations to the Minnesota Street facade, as historic photographs show different segmental arched window openings and a different cornice line.⁴

(18 South Minnesota)

Siebenbrunner Grocery

1931

1 Noncontributing Building

The property at 20 South Minnesota now includes what was formerly 18 South Minnesota, a one-story brick building on the north side of the lot. It was built in 1931 by Herman Siebenbrunner and intended as a stand-alone building. Its streetfront has been altered to match 20 South Minnesota with the exception of a gable in the pent roof over the entry. Above that, though, there is evidence of the earlier design, with a multihued brown brick, two header courses of brick with buff-colored diamond-shaped insets between them, and battlement-like parapet wall at the top.

The *Brown County Journal* noted, "Herman Siebenbrunner expects to establish a new grocery on vacant lot between Math. Siebenbrunner building, occupied by Veigel soft drink parlor, and C. H. Engelbert Hardware store." He hired Weilandt & Stegemann as general contractors. Initially, it was occupied by the Purity Store. It was used as a "soft drink" parlor during Prohibition, then as Herm's Liquor Store during the 1930s and 40s. In the fall of 2004, the Dental Health Clinic used the building for its services.⁵

17-19 South Minnesota

Professional Building

1946

1 Noncontributing Building

This building was constructed in 1946. It is a one-story steel-framed, concrete block building with a full basement. The streetwall has a brick veneer with a large rectangular fixed glass plate window. There is a slightly recessed entry with tinted glass windows and metal framing. The cornice is a wood-shingled pent eave. The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.

⁴ *Brown County Journal*, 3 July 1931.

⁵ *Brown County Journal*, 1 May, 19 June 1931.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 5

The Ochs family had purchased the lot in 1924 with announced intention of building a “splendid new building block.” However, it was not until 1946 that the Professional Building was built by Ford Ochs for approximately \$12,000.⁶

16 South Minnesota

Engelbert Hardware Store

1902

Contractor: Herman Schapekahn

2 Contributing Buildings

This commercial building uses a red brick veneer with a general floor plan of 45 x 80 feet. It was built in two sections. The older portion, constructed in 1902, is a two-story structure of 25 by 68 feet. The streetfront has been largely obscured, covered by a dark stained batten siding with a new brick bulkhead. There are two fixed glass plate windows and a slightly recessed entry on the south portion of this wall. Two wood piers, though, are in evidence. The upper facade, however, clearly shows the original design. It features three windows across the second floor with one-over-one sash with heavy stone sills and lintels. There is decorative corbelling along the cornice. Along the north wall, observable from the street, the building shows the remnants of two ground floor windows—only stone sills and lintels remain—while the second floor shows one single and two coupled windows. There is a block addition to the rear, approximately 15 feet wide.

In 1912, the Engelberts built a one-story addition on the south side of the lot. The storefront again has been completely obscured by vertical batten siding, new brick bulkheads, and replacement plate glass windows and doors. At the rear of the lot, the Engelberts built a one-story rusticated concrete block garage/ warehouse in 1933. It has a shallow pitched shed roof and two sliding doors on the east wall.

H. W. Engelbert opened a hardware store with John Schmidt on South Minnesota Street in 1898. After purchasing the interest of his partner, Engelbert built this building in 1902 at a cost of \$3,800. Herman Schapekahn was the general contractor. He sold the firm to his sons, C. H. and W. E. Engelbert in 1912. At that time, the Engelberts added a one-story addition to the south side for use as a farm implement warehouse and salesroom.⁷

In 1933, Engelbert “constructed a warehouse costing \$1200 for use of the Wagner Hardware Co. between Center and First South.” In 1940, it was the Andrew Wagner Hardware Store. In November 2004, Classic Trends Beauty Shop and Crafts & More conducted business at this location.

⁶ *New Ulm Review*, 30 January 1924; *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 7 June 1946.

⁷ *New Ulm News*, 22 March 1902; *Brown County Journal*, 23 March 1934; *New Ulm Review*, 17 April 1912.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 6

13-15 South Minnesota

Schoch Block

1911

1 Contributing Building

This two-story commercial building is sheathed in a medium red brick. The street facade has been substantially altered, now finished with a heavy layer of stone and stucco. There is a slightly recessed entry with glass plate and metal finish, placed slightly off center of the main block. There is an additional single entry door on the south edge of the facade, leading to the upstairs. Above the storefront is a wood-shingled pent roof, capped by a sign reading "American Legion Post 132." Fenestration includes four sets of paired rectangular windows across the second floor with one-over-one sash with stone sills and lintels. Three painted brick piers separate the front bays. There is elaborate decorative brick corbelling along the cornice.

A 1926 newspaper article described the building: "The two-story building measures 25 x 75 feet and has a full basement. The second floor was remodeled so as to be used as a living apartment for the family. . . . Two full plate glass display windows at the front of the building finish the front." Historic photographs show that the building was divided into two storefronts when first built.

The building provided space for numerous businesses, including the Schaefer Brothers Tin Shop, Berg's Grocery, Al Veigel's Lyric Cafe, Swanberg's Dutch Oven Cafe, the Gamble Stores, and City Meat Market. In recent years, the American Legion has operated at this location.⁸

9 South Minnesota

American Theatre

1912

1 Contributing Building

This one-story building, formerly a movie theater, has a ground plan of 100' x 40'. The street level has been substantially altered from the period of significance. The original entryway has been filled with a reddish brick and a rough-edged wood siding in former window space. The current entry is a single entry door of plate glass and metal. There is a wood-shingled pent eave. The upper facade shows more integrity, although encased in stucco. The distinctive roofline is a stepped gable (as is the roofline of the entire building), with arcaded arches and decorative brickwork, and terminates with stone coping. The triple gable window, though, has been enclosed and now has a louvered vent. The interior does not reflect the period of significance, particularly after the sloped theatre floor was leveled.

The building was constructed for use as a movie theater by Emil Hage in 1912 at a cost of nearly \$12,000. First known as the American Theatre, it became known as The Lyric in 1919. It underwent extensive renovation around that time with installation of a concrete floor, using plans by architect Carl Heers. This expanded its seating capacity to 572. The Lyric, wrote a local newspaper reporter, "has the appearance of a theatre found in the

⁸ *New Ulm Review*, June 22, 30 1926.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 7

largest cities. When the front . . . is lighted up at night it presents an effect seldom found in a city the size of New Ulm." The theatre went through a variety of owners, including C. F. Woodmansee during the WWI era and Theodore Melzer in the 1920s. In 1926, the brick exterior of the Lyric Theatre was covered with stucco and the triple windows on the front gable were enclosed.⁹

In 1950, the name changed to The Hollywood until closing its doors in 1956. In November 2004, Ein Prosit and Patricia Leonard Photography conducted business at this location.¹⁰

8 South Minnesota

F. C. Schnobrich Meat Market

1893

Contractor: Herman Schapekahm

1 Contributing Building

This two-story commercial building uses a red brick veneer—now painted—with a general floor plan of 25 x 74 feet. Two piers visually anchor the facade, giving it a strong vertical orientation. The storefront windows and bulkhead have been replaced with wood panels, now with two rectangular sliding plate windows. There is a single entry door in the center, flush to the sidewalk, with a fixed rounded canopy above it. The upper facade has four spaces for windows on the second floor, now filled with wood panels. These have heavy stone lintels which, when unified with a rusticated stone block, create a beltcourse across the facade. The entablature has inset rectangles with fancy brickwork, topped by corbelling. The facade is capped with an elaborate pressed metal cornice. The building has several additions, including a two-story brick warehouse/ slaughterhouse to the rear, built in 1907.

Joseph Schnobrich, a native of Muttersdorf, Bohemia, opened a meat market in 1881, operating it with his sons until 1899 when his brother, Frank C. Schnobrich, took over management. At its peak, the market employed up to eight people (five at the store and three delivery boys). A new front was added in 1919, as the *Review* stated, "The show windows have received a new base of imitation marble in red and white, furnished by Saffert-Gugisberg. The cement work was done by Puhlmann Bros. contractors." A 1924 description states "Two roomy display windows and a double entrance aid in lighting the store."¹¹

Frank and his son, Arthur, operated the market until 1935. A fire destroyed the neighboring building to the south in the early 1990s. At that time, Kemske Paper Company, owners of this property at the time, built a one-story storage/ loading dock facility on that lot.

⁹ *New Ulm Review*, 15 December 1926, reported that the Lyric added a new canopy and new plate glass entrance doors. A ca. 1925 photograph shows that the brick was exposed at that time, but in a 1927 photograph of the newly-completed City Meat Market, the exterior of the Lyric is covered with stucco.

¹⁰ *New Ulm Review* 3 July, 7 August 1912, 16 April 1924; *New Ulm Journal*, 27 July 1956.

¹¹ *New Ulm Review*, 1 October 1924; "Schnobrich Bros. Dissolve Partnership," *New Ulm Review*, 14 April 1932; "New Front at Schnobrich's," *New Ulm Review*, 23 April 1919.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 8

6 South Minnesota

John Zischka Saloon

1914

Contractor: Keute & Kaiser

1 Contributing Building

This two-story commercial building uses a red brick veneer with a general floor plan of 74 x 25 feet. The first floor has been altered with newer tinted plate glass, a single entry doorway, and a permanent awning above the storefront. There is an additional entrance on the south side of the front facade. Fenestration includes four rectangular windows, grouped as pairs, across the second floor with one-over-one sash with stone sills and substantial lintels. The windows are set in a recessed space capped with a row of decorative corbelling along the cornice. A simple brick beltcourse finishes the top of the facade.

John Zischka opened a saloon at this site around 1900. In 1914, a fire swept through the building. He proceeded to replace the gutted structure with a new brick two story building. A newspaper account stated that the building was twenty-five feet wide by seventy-two feet long. During Prohibition, it became John Zischka's soft drinks, but returned to Zischka's Liquor Store after repeal of the Volstead Act. Following his death in 1934, his wife continued to run the store while living upstairs. His son, Herbert, took over the business and operated it as Zischka-Hamann Liquors until 1973. It later became known as Danny's Bar.¹²

2 South Minnesota

Schoch-Reinhart Block

1905

Gronau and Puhlmann

1 Contributing Building

This two-story commercial building, located on the southwest corner of South Minnesota and Center Street, uses a red brick veneer with a general floor plan of 50 x 100 feet. A pilaster on the corner, opening the entry from both streets, anchors the storefront facing Minnesota Street. There are plate glass windows with metal framing. A former window space, on the south side, has been filled with vertical wood siding. Above the window level, there is a band of small paned prism glass, probably not original. Fenestration on the upper facade includes a set of three pairs of windows across the second floor with one-over-one sash on the north facade (Center Street) and a single window flanked by two pairs on the east facade (South Minnesota Street). The second story windows feature decorative hoods with a fine shell pattern. There are decorative modillions along the cornice and a stringcourse above and below the second story windows.

The store was built in 1905 by Bernard Reinhart and L. Schoch. It was first used by George Hauenstein for the Red Front Grocery. In that same year, William Bierbaum and William Backer purchased the business. Backer soon sold his interest to Herman Held, who remained a partner until 1913. At that time, Joseph Dietz bought the

¹² *New Ulm Review*, 1 July 1914; *Brown County Journal*, 24 April 1915.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 9

building from Reinhart. The building was used as a grocery for many years, although ownership and name changed regularly. It operated as the Red Front Grocery through 1919

From 1926 through 1934, R. A. Schmucker ran "The Corner Drug Store" at this site. Piggly Wiggly reverted its use to a grocery until 1957, when Coast to Coast Hardware opened. The southern portion was a separate storefront for many years. For example, during the 1920s, it was a showroom for Graff's Auto Sales. In 2004, it was occupied by Design Directions Interiors Ltd.¹³

1-5 South Minnesota

City Meat Market

1927

Contractor: Puhlmann Brothers

1 Contributing Building

The building, located at the intersection of Minnesota and Center Streets, is two-stories high with a polychrome brick veneer. The three storefront entrances vary. 1 South shows a wood bulkhead with three glass plate windows, with access gained through a recessed entryway with a segmental arch. 3 South, now Subway, repeats the window pattern, followed by two single entry doors divided by a brick pier. 5 South, now Ein Prosit, has a reddish color brick as the bulkhead material, with a single entry glass door with a transom above. Fenestration includes a second story row of six pairs of one-over-one windows along Minnesota Street (eight on Center Street) with a stringcourse above and below. The wall surface is varied with diamond-shaped light colored insets below the cornice and raised brick rectangle under the windows. The cornice features a raised row of modillions. In the rear of the building, the third floor has an open balcony with wood railings.

The City Meat Market was built in 1927 by Rosa Schnobrich. After nineteen years in business, conducted at 13 South Minnesota from 1914-1927, she purchased the William J. Winkelmann Block in October 1926. The fifty-foot-front building extended 110 feet on Center Street where it joined property previously purchased by Mrs. Schnobrich from the Mary Lehmann estate. At the same time, Everling Electric, occupying 5 South, remodeled their front to match City Meat Market to "completely harmonize with that of the Schnobrich meat market and thereby adding a second story to their building."¹⁴

Some newspaper accounts suggest that parts of the older Winkelmann Block remain within the building. However, the Brown County Journal reported, "The massive new building, reared on the site of the old structure at the corner of Minnesota and Center Streets, measures 50 x 110 and contains two stories and a full basement." It continued, "Construction material is Twin City and New Ulm brick with Sheffield tile, while artstone was used for trimming."¹⁵

¹³ *New Ulm News*, 22 April 1905; *Brown County Journal*, 18 March 1905; *New Ulm Review*, 23 July 1924, 22 December 1926.

¹⁴ *Brown County Journal*, 30 December 1927.

¹⁵ *Brown County Journal*, 9 Sept 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 10

The sales room occupied a space 26 x 40 feet with a 14-foot ceiling in the front. The building's new equipment included display counters, wall case for meat, and two large meat coolers. In the rear of the coolers was the sausage manufacturing room with all the sausage making machinery and equipment. There were three smoke houses, each measuring 6 x 10 feet; two were equipped for gas and sawdust smoking, while the third was used for smoking ham and bacon with wood. Also, behind the main building was a barn that temporarily housed cattle, poultry, and hogs until the animals were slaughtered.

Following Schnobrich's death in 1929, two sons, Oscar and Hugo, continued the business, followed by a third generation, Howard and Russell Schnobrich, sons of Oscar. Oscar Schnobrich died May 1, 1966. Russell Schnobrich died April 23, 1967, and Howard Schnobrich died May 28, 1969, but the fourth generation continued in the business with Todd Schnobrich, son of Howard. In 1972, Schnobrich's City Meat Market changed hands, but remained in the founding family. The new owners were Alfred Reiner and Linus Weyman—Russell Schnobrich's son-in-law.

Nick Gulden ran a plumbing and heating supply business in the basement of the north half and a grocery store operated in the south half of the building. In 1940, telephone directories show a number of businesses in this building. These include Joe's Grocery at 3 S. Minnesota and W. O. Moll Plumbing in the basement of 1 S. Minnesota. Westinghouse Electric Refrigerators were sold at 5 S. Minnesota.

**405 Center
George's Ballroom
1947**

**Contractor: John Mueller
1 Contributing Building**

George's Ballroom is a sprawling complex, approximately 175 x 165 feet and forty feet high. The steel beam frame is finished with a cream-colored brick with Artstone trim around the windows and doors. The most prominent exterior feature is the neon sign, designed and built by A.B.C. Sign Company of Mankato, over the single entry bar entrance on Center Street, with a secondary single entry bowling alley and double entry ballroom entrances. Windows on the first floor are glass block with paired one-over-one sash windows on the second floor. The wall is broken by simple brick piers. The German Street facade has a series of window groupings with two rollup garage doors and a large double entry service door on the southeast corner. The roof is flat. On the southwest corner, there are remnants of pigeon coops, a garage, and a garden plot. The interior featured a bar, dance floor (70 x 86 feet), and bowling alley (50 x 130 feet). It featured high quality interior finishes such as terrazzo floors. It had a second floor apartment of 36 x 80 feet.

George Neuwirth operated his "amusement" business, complete with bowling alley and bar, at 506 Center Street during the 1930s and early 40s. He began his building project in 1945, obtaining special permission from the Civilian Procurement Administration in the immediate postwar controls. "George's Greater Amusement Center" opened in October 1947, featuring a ballroom, eight bowling alleys, and "the longest bar in the northwest." with 32,000 square feet. It had a capacity for 3000 patrons, with 164 booths in the dining area. Otto

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 11

Nielsen of Wahpeton, North Dakota, did extensive painting in the interior, with eleven mural panels in the ballroom.

In 1949, Neuwirth added a 45 x 103 foot addition with space for booths and a secondary bar. For the next decade, the ballroom was a popular stop for local and touring bands, ranging from Harry James and the Dorsey Brothers to local favorites, the Six Fat Dutchmen. In 1965, the Ballroom hosted the National Poultry and Pigeon Show, suggesting the importance of Neuwirth's hobby of pigeon breeding to his life.

The bar and bowling alleys closed in the early 1960s although the ballroom remained open on a sporadic schedule until 1991. The building fell vacant for more than a decade, leading to substantial damage to the interior. Neuwirth died in 1995. The ballroom complex was sold at auction after a tax forfeiture in 2004.

506 Center

Jacob Pfenninger Store

1871

1 Contributing Building

The building is a two-story brick building. The Minnesota Street facade is encased in stucco, yet many of the architectural details are still evident. The streetfront has four fixed glass plate windows flanked by entry doors. The east door, glass, leads into the laundromat. The west door provides access to the upstairs. Above the sign, the upper facade shows the outlines of three arched windows—although two have been filled and stuccoed, leaving the center window space to be filled with a smaller, inappropriately sized replacement window. There is a pressed metal cornice with dentil and paired brackets. The west wall, observable from Center Street, has been stuccoed. Overall, the building's integrity has been compromised by the stucco and storefront alterations.

The building is one of the oldest within the district, erected in 1871 by Jacob Pfenninger, an owner of the Eagle Mill. In its early years, the brick store was leased to Cheap Charley's, a general store. Following the disastrous 1881 cyclone, when Cheap Charley's lost most of its inventory, the Burg Cigar Factory moved into the building.¹⁶

The Burg Cigar Company was established in 1871 by Capt. Frank Burg, who came here in 1868 after learning the cigar maker's trade in Chicago. In 1883 Mr. Burg moved his factory into this large two story brick building on Center Street, using the front for retail sales and the back for manufacturing. Frank Burg's cigar factory on Center Street—Minnesota's largest outside the Twin Cities—manufactured around 2,500,000 cigars a year, employing seventy workers. Visiting the factory in 1908, a reporter noted, "The mills and breweries are always pointed out as the very best evidences of the city's thrift and industry. . . . And yet we have in this line plants that give employment to far more people than some of the more pretentious institutions and contribute, week in and week out, very materially to the city's prosperity." Its principal brands were "La Signorita," the "Blizzard," and the "Commercial Club." In 1898, Burg installed plate glass windows on the Center Street facade.¹⁷

¹⁶ *New Ulm Review*, 26 April 1883.

¹⁷ *New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1908; "A Clean Place," *New Ulm Review*, 16 October 1901; *New Ulm News*, 18 June 1898.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 12

During the 1930s, this building was owned by George Neuwirth, operating it as an "amusement center" with a bar and bowling alleys. In 1937, he remodeled the streetfront, installing large plate glass windows, altering the primary entry from the center of this facade to the right, and covering the front with stucco.¹⁸

In the fall of 2004, Der Mietwaschsalon Laundromat operated at this location.

509 Center

Zischka Building

1927

1 Contributing Building

It is a two-story brown brick commercial building, built with the dark brown "Hy-Tex" brick popular in New Ulm during the 1920s. The streetfront has three bays, divided by brick piers. It consists of a central entry, with a flush glass and metal door, flanked by plate glass display windows. There is a molded stone (or Artstone) cornice above the storefront. The upper facade shows beltcourses above and below the second-story windows. There are triple diamond shaped inserts just below this cornice line, which is unadorned molded stone. The upstairs windows are double hung sash with one-over-one sash. The cornice is stepped, capped with a buff-colored stone coping.

Historic photographs show that the building had a central garage opening flanked by plate glass display windows with prism transom windows above them.

This building was built by John Zischka in 1927 at a cost of approximately \$25,000, and opened as the Chrysler Garage under the management of the Martinka family. The entire first floor was used for garage purposes while two five-room and one six-room apartments were located on the second floor.¹⁹

After Martinka moved to a new garage on North Broadway in 1932, the New Ulm Grocery Co. used the rooms for storage for several years. The New Ulm Furniture and Upholstering Co., owned by Leonard Nordby, moved into the building for two years beginning in 1936, when Kemske Paper Company took over the building where they still operate, printing legal blank forms and selling stationery and office supplies. R. R. Kemske started the company in 1914.²⁰

513 Center

George Kuhlmann House

1874

1 Contributing Building

This is a fine example of Italianate architecture. The well-executed window treatments show a full arch on the ground floor and segmental arches on the second floor. The primary door repeats the theme with a full arch

¹⁸ A 1937 photograph shows work on the streetfront in progress.

¹⁹ *Brown County Journal*, 30 December 1927.

²⁰ *Brown County Journal*, 30 December 1927.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 13

transom. There are hood molds with a keystone above the windows. Windows are glazed 2/2. The cornice line is broken by slight corbelling and raised decorative brickwork in a triangular pattern.

George Kuhlmann, an attorney, built this house in 1874. At the time, he was one of two lawyers in Brown County, briefly serving as county attorney. Following the death of his wife in 1879, he sold the home to another attorney, A. Blanchard. The 1901 directory lists Carolyn Blanchard and Charles & Martha Hornburg living here. The 1911 directory shows Adolph Frenzel lived at this address. The 1921 directory lists Dr. H. C. Edmiston. The 1930 and 1940 directories list Arthur Teynor at this address.

518 Center

F. H. Retzlaff & Sons

1924

Contractor: Weilandt & Stegemann

1 Contributing Building

The one-story brick building was constructed in 1924 with a rectangular floor plan. The Retzlaff building is framed with steel and concrete with a dark brown Hy-Tex brick manufactured by the New Ulm Brick & Tile Company. The streetfront has a recessed glass and metal entrance on the west end of the facade, placed between two brick piers. These twin piers are matched on the east edge of this facade. Along Center Street, window and transom spaces have been filled with only a single glass plate window just east of the primary entrance. There is a molded storefront cornice of Artstone. In the upper facade, there is an inset Artstone sign reading "F. H. Retzlaff & Sons." The wall ends with a row of brick modillions. In the central parapet, which extends across the middle third of the building, there is an Artstone panel reading "1924." On the west wall, now facing the parking lot of the Brown County Historical Society, there is a large glass and metal window as well as evidence of additional windows, now enclosed. It has a full basement, used initially to store automobiles.

This was built in 1924 for Retzlaff Motor Company based on drawings by Herman Stegemann. Retzlaff was one of the earliest Dodge dealerships in the region. When constructed, it cost approximately \$24,000. Historic photographs show that that original configuration of the streetfront had two single entry doors, glass plate windows, and a wide transom of prism glass. As described by a newspaper account, "the structure will be of brick with dimensions to be 70 x 75 feet. The front . . . will be all plate glass and the side toward the post office will be the same. An addition was built to the rear in 1947."²¹

²¹ *New Ulm Review*, 23 January 1924; 20 March 1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 14

**2 North Broadway
United States Post Office
1909**

Architect: James Knox Taylor

Contractor: Stewart and Hager, Janesville, Wisconsin

1 Contributing Building (National Register of Historic Places)

The New Ulm Post Office building was built in 1909. The structure is of alternating courses of deep, red rough brick and grey-white terra cotta stone, a manufactured concrete stone. Below the first floor, the exterior walls are of brick and granite to the ground level. The main entrance is on Center Street and faces south. On this side the doorway has a Doric pediment and cornice, and squared columns. An additional entrance is on Broadway, facing west. A driveway and parking area are provided around the building on the two off street sides. The building is one and one half stories high with a steep slate roof and steeply stepped end gables topped by long blunt finials that are well above the roof ridge. The end gables have matching stepped-up windows. The broad side facing Center Street has three steep roofed gables. In each, there are corresponding pairs of oblong windows. The center gable on this side is as high as the roof ridge, and a brickwork design graduates up the stepped roof to the finial peak. This design matches the rounded window tops of the gable. The gables to either side of the center one on the broad side are lower and are decorated with scrollwork instead of stepped sides, and they are topped by pedimented pinnacles. All three gables on this side also have a circular stone inset on the same level above the windows.

The building reflects a German Renaissance style in the stepped gables, the decorative details, and the combined use of brick and stone. Renaissance Baroque details are evident in the decoration, such as scrolls, cartouches, and in the feeling of upward thrust, steep roof pitch, and the use of materials. Overall measurements of the structure are 72' 5" long, 55' wide, total height 59'.

In 1909, the federal government erected the post office building on the corner of Center and Broadway, designed by John Knox Taylor. Funds for the post office in New Ulm were approved by Congress in 1906, and the site was purchased the same year. Originally, the appropriation was for \$30,000. When the tentative plans were received in New Ulm, there was a most vigorous protest because they "showed a lack of architectural beauty." A subsequent omnibus bill added \$20,000 for a total of \$50,000. New plans were drawn. The contractors were Stewart and Hager of Janesville, Wisconsin. The building was completed and opened in 1910.

A 1914 visitor noted, "The Federal Building at New Ulm differs so much from the average . . . building that post office inspectors have been known to give up in despair trying to find the post office. In construction it is absolutely distinct . . . the architecture being decidedly in keeping with the Fatherland. It is said to be the first instance on the part of the government where a deviation was made in the architecture of a government building and it immediately attracts the attention of the visitor."²²

²² "As They Saw Us," *New Ulm Review*, 19 August 1914.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 15

The post office building, now the home of the Brown County Historical Society, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**12 North Broadway
Retzlaff Motor Company
1938**

Architect: Edward F. Wirtz

Contractor: John Heymann

1 Contributing Building

This one story commercial building is located on the east side of North Broadway adjacent to the Brown County Historical Society Museum. It is laid out in a rectangular plan in an east-west orientation. The basic construction is a brick veneer with the primary facade, facing North Broadway, finished with Artstone cast stone panels.

This front shows two garage bays, with roll up doors, on the right (viewed from the street) and an extension with a slightly lower roof to the left. It uses several elements of the Art Moderne style, including the curved corners, the entry area with a curved porch roof, and the vertical bands. The single pane windows reinforce the verticality. The rear of the building has a row of windows on the north elevation. The south elevation has a single entry door. The roof is flat and sheathed with built-up asphalt roofing.

In 1937, the Retzlaff Motor Company built a new garage to handle its expanding business. One of the earliest regional Dodge dealers, hardware merchant Retzlaff first used a simple metal-clad structure for service and sales, located behind his store on North Minnesota. Within a few years, a separate company, the Retzlaff Motor Company, organized under his son, Armin F. Retzlaff. In 1924, the firm opened a new showroom on Center Street.

The *Brown County Journal* described the new building: "A modern brick building, to be used for shop and service station purposes, will be erected, forming an ell-addition, 45 x 130 feet, to the present structure. It will provide more space, greatly needed, for the repair and service departments of the garage. It will prove a great convenience for patrons, offering them a main entrance to the shop, directly from Broadway."²³

The building is now owned by Brown County and managed by the Brown County Historical Society.

**18 North Broadway
Fesenmaier Service Station
1937**

1 Contributing Building

This one-story flat roofed brick building was constructed as a service station. The front section measures roughly 42 x 55 feet. On the North Broadway streetfront, there are three roll-up wood garage doors with multiple

²³ *Brown County Journal*, 10 June 1937.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 16

square windowpanes. There is a single entry door on the south portion. On the south wall, visible down the alley, there are two windows with glass block. At the rear, there is an additional roll-up garage door. The rear also has a two-story attached structure. It is wood-framed with pressed metal siding and a slightly sloped shed roof. There is a tripartite folding wood door on the south wall with two upstairs two-over-two windows.

Robert Fesenmaier, who operated a hardware store in the Masonic Block, opened a service station on North Broadway in 1937. A note in the county assessor's records states that the shed structure in the rear dates from 1887—one of several buildings owned by the Retzlaff family. While the date is questionable, it was clearly moved to this location at the time that the service station was built. In 1967, New Ulm Tire moved into the building. It is now owned by the Retzlaff family.

1 North Minnesota

G. A. Ottomeyer Block

1886

1 Contributing Building

The Ottomeyer Block is a two-story brick building constructed between 1884 and 1889. The Minnesota Street front shows a stone bulkhead and piers with fixed plate glass windows and a central recessed entry with a single entry glass and metal door. The storefront has a pent eave wood shingle cornice with a gable over the entry. This cornice extends around the Center Street corner where there is another gable. The signband now is covered with panels of brown cast stone. The upper facade has three symmetrically placed rectangular one-over-one windows. These are in a recessed wall between two brick piers. The frieze has a decorative rectangle of raised brick. The wall is capped by stone coping.

Along Center Street, there is a clear demarcation between the 1914 storefront (with a single window) and the oldest section of the Ottomeyer Block. From this point west, there are seven rectangular windows with stone sills and lintels. In this section, the cornice shows decorative brickwork and corbelling as well as a cornice between the first and second floors. There is a modern glass plate entry door on the ground level to the rear.

The block was built by Henry Buessmann in 1886. There have been two important changes to the building within the period of significance. In 1914, Ottomeyer rebuilt the entire front in tandem with F. W. Eibner's neighboring store. A newspaper account stated that he used "Toledo pressed brick." Then, in 1917, a substantial addition was built on the rear, costing approximately \$8,000.²⁴

G. A. Ottomeyer used the building for his dry goods store until at least 1915. The upstairs were divided into various office suites. Between 1919 and 1923, the building was home to Schulke's Department Store. When that firm moved into the Crone Block, the Fred Meine Clothing Company took over the space, remaining for several decades. By this date, Nos. 1 and 3 North Minnesota had been combined into a single interior space, as a newspaper account refers to it as "a double front." In the fall of 2004, it housed the New Ulm Chamber of Commerce.

²⁴ *New Ulm Review*, 25 March, 19 December 1914; *Brown County Journal*, 4 September 1920.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 17

2 North Minnesota

Brown County Bank

1871

Spoerhause and Zeiher

1 Contributing Building

The Brown County Bank, along with the adjacent Behnke Store, is among the oldest commercial properties within the district. The building is a rectangular two-story block with its primary entry on Minnesota Street. This facade is framed by two brick piers. The streetfront has been substantially altered, with permastone covering the bulkhead and painted concrete blocks filling the former window space. Two relatively small plate windows serve as replacements. The entry door, on the north side of the facade, is recessed with its old transom space filled with vertical wood siding and a louvered vent. It appears that a wood support beam on one side remains from an earlier configuration. The signband is gone, leaving an exposed steel beam. The upper facade has three bays created by two raised brick piers. Three round arched windows are located in each bay with a header brick surround and a keystone at the top. The windows are ill-fitting replacements, leaving the top half of the space filled with wood panels. The top of the bays show brick pattern work, followed by a course of raised dentils. The frieze has six recessed areas with the wall capped by brick and metal coping. The general fenestration continues along the south wall, except for a first-floor entrance reached by stairs. At the rear, a two-story brick addition, built after the period of significance, is used as office space.

This was built for the Brown County Bank at a cost of \$9,000. In November 1871 the business moved to its new corner location. The masonry was done by Spoerhase and Zieher, carpentry by Bergmann & Company. A newspaper report cryptically states that the plan was made by an architect from Mankato without naming the firm.²⁵

In June 1874, the bank was sold to Chadbourn Brothers, Rochester businesspersons, who operated it as a private bank until July 1, 1892, when a reorganization took place. During the 1881 cyclone, the storm removed the roof, which was promptly replaced. The bank continued its operations until August 1931 when its assets were transferred to the Citizens Bank. The upper floor was used for professional offices, notably dentists L. G. and Kurt Bell during the 1930s and 40s. After that, the building was used by a variety of businesses, including Herzog Commercial Printing and Kolb Real Estate.²⁶

Historic views show that the original streetfront had three bays with tall arched windows capped by a keystone. Essentially, it stylistically repeated the existing second floor window arrangement. The New Ulm News, on 31 August 1901, noted that there were new plate glass windows. Subsequent historic photographs show a configuration typical of the early 20th century with a door on the north side (as it is now) and plate glass display windows.²⁷

²⁵ *New Ulm Plaindealer*, 29 December 1871; *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 7 June 1947.

²⁶ *Brown County Journal*, 14 August 1931.

²⁷ "Old Brown County Bank," *New Ulm Daily Journal*, June 7, 1947.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 18

**3-5 North Minnesota
Schoch-Ottomeyer Block
1898
Contractor: Herman Schapekahm
1 Contributing Building**

This two-story brick building was constructed in 1898. It has two wide bays, with individual storefronts, with a narrow central bay, divided visually by brick piers. The north storefront, now occupied by Jacobs-Meidl Music, has a heavily stuccoed new facade dominated by a full arch with a painted piano keyboard across the top of the arch. The entry is recessed with plate glass windows, metal trim, and a very narrow kickplate of brown brick. The central entrance is also finished with a stucco surround and has a single glass plate door. The other storefront, on the south portion of the facade, is now part of the New Ulm Chamber of Commerce. Its kickplate is granite with a recessed entry with glass and metal. Above the entry is a gabled pent eave overhang. While the streetfront is discordant, the upper facade is more harmonious, with three rectangular windows in the outer two bays and a single, one-over-one window in the central bay. These share a rusticated stone sillcourse and lintel course. The cornice is corbelled. The piers terminate at roofline on the Chamber of Commerce side (with sheet metal coping), but extend up a foot on the Music Store section (with stone coping).

This business block was built in 1898 by Dr. Louis Schoch and Alexander Ottomeyer. As a newspaper article noted, "Schoch and Ottomeyer will have a front of 57 feet with two unusually wide business rooms and they will be divided by a hall. Of course, the front will have large plate glass and the rooms will be among the finest and most desirable in the city. The second floor will be divided into suites of offices. The entire building will be heated from the basement and will be lighted by electricity. The South room of the block will be occupied by G. A. Ottomeyer with his dry goods stock. Work on the new block will be commenced at an early day and when completed will add much to the appearance of that end of the block."²⁸

Later, on noting that the construction contract was given to Hermann Schapekahm for \$4,263, the paper related, "Alex Ottomeyer was in Minneapolis examining brick for the Schoch-Ottomeyer block, and it is thought they will use a light colored mottled pressed brick."²⁹

The building has been used for a variety of retail businesses and offices. One upstairs office, above 5 North Minnesota, was the scene of the Gebhard Murder, one of the city's most notorious crimes.

²⁸ *New Ulm News*, 2 April 1898.

²⁹ *New Ulm Review*, 6 April 1898; 4 May 1898; 10 December 1898; 29 May 1901.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 19

4 North Minnesota

Henry Behnke Building

1871

1 Contributing Building

The Henry Behnke Store is a rectangular two-story block. The streetfront has a central entry with a single entry door—flush with the outer wall—flanked by plate glass display windows. There is a second door on the south portion for access to the upstairs rooms. The signband is coated in stucco. The second floor has four arched Italianate windows with a brick drip hood. The windows are ill-fitting replacements, leaving the top half of the space filled with wood panels. The frieze has six recessed areas with the wall capped by brick and metal coping.

The store was built in 1871 at a cost of \$8,000. Although Behnke died in 1879, the store remained in the family through the turn of the century. In 1913, the Reliable Drug Company opened in the building and operated into the 1940s. The upstairs rooms were rented as offices to various doctors and real estate agents.³⁰

Historic views show that the original storefront had a three bay front, divided by Corinthian support columns with tall arched windows. The arch surround was similar to that found on the existing second floor windows of the adjacent Brown County Bank.

6-8 North Minnesota

Hummel/Maltzahn Block

10-12 North Minnesota

Boesch Block

1890

Architect: C. T. Struck

Contractor: Gillman (Minneapolis)

2 Contributing Buildings (National Register)

This is probably the most conspicuous building in downtown New Ulm and is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This was erected as two separate buildings—the Boesch Block (10-12) and the Hummel/Maltzahn Block (6-8).

The streetfront retains its original four bays, divided by brick and stone piers. Each has been altered uniquely, but all retain the basic recessed entryway with plate glass. On the northern portion of this facade, there is a double pier framing a ground-level entry, capped by a stone balconette and a round stone arch with keystone on the second floor. Four large copper roofed bay windows decorate the second level of the facade. There is an additional one-over-one window on the south portion of the wall with a stone lintel. Cut stone is also used as decoration on the second level. Above the windows, a row of corbelled brick leads to an elaborate false-front metal cornice that incorporates panels that carry the names of persons first associated with the building and the

³⁰ *New Ulm Plaindealer*, 29 December 1871.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 20

construction year of 1890. At the rear of the building, the wooden stairways and second level covered walkways for the apartment units are intact.

In April 1890, Werner Boesch, Edward Maltzahn, and William Hummel jointly agreed to build a new commercial building on North Minnesota Street, hiring Minneapolis architect Carl T. Struck. Struck also designed the Brown County Courthouse and had relatives living in town. The primary contractor was a Gillman of Minneapolis, with local mason Henry Hanschen completing the brickwork.³¹

The three owners were prominent businessmen. Boesch had been a partner in the Eagle Mill, for example, selling his interest a few years before construction of this building. William Hummel helped to found the local creamery and owned an adjacent building. The cost to the owners to erect this brick structure was Boesch, \$13,500, Hummel, \$6,200, and Maltzahn, \$5,500, for a total cost of \$25,200.

In October 1890, when the building opened, streetfront businesses included F. Behnke Grocery, the Pfefferle Drug Store, Maltzahn's Saloon, and Hummel's general store. The second floor of the Boesch Building was rented by Dr. L. A. Fritsche for his medical offices. Occupants in 2004 included Lasting Impressions and Erbert & Gerbert's.

9-11-13 North Minnesota

Masonic Block

1891

Architect: Frank Thayer

Contractor: Herman Schapekahm (Henry Hanschen, mason contractor)

1 Contributing Building

The Masonic Block is an imposing three-story Romanesque Revival style brick building. The facade is divided into five bays by pilasters, with a wide center bay flanked by two narrow bays, then two large bays. The three storefronts are distinct. Only the Willow Tree (13 N.) retains a recessed entry with glass plate windows. The others have been significantly altered with brick and metal panels. Fenestration is different on each level. The narrow bays, with entry doors on the ground floor, have round arched windows on the second and third floors. The two larger bays on the northern portion show sets of four identical one-over-one rectangular double hung windows with stone sills and lintels. The top floor fenestration is similar to the one below except it features round arched brick lintels and flat stone sills. There are broad arches on the second and third floors in the southernmost bay, with surrounds of brickwork on the second floor and stone on the third. All windows on the third floor have been boarded. A band of decorative brickwork is inset above the third floor windows and corbelled bricks serve as an elaborate terminus to the building with the cornice sign reading, "Masonic Block." The wall is capped with stone coping.

The building was constructed as a joint venture. Most prominent among the three partners was the law firm of Lind & Hagberg. John Lind was serving in Congress at the time and had recently built a new home on the corner

³¹ *New Ulm Review* 2 July, 13 August 1890; *New Ulm Review*, 20 March 1912.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 21

of Center and North State Streets, employing architect Frank Thayer. It is now on the National Register of Historic Places. His partner, C. A. Hagberg, was born in Rockford, Illinois, studied under Lind, and became his junior partner in 1884. While Lind maintained his offices here, he ran three times for governor, losing close elections in 1896 and 1900, but winning in 1898. The two other partners included Jacob Klossner, a hardware store owner, and a local Masonic Lodge.

The partnership hired Thayer as architect, while Herman Schapekahm and Henry Hanschen served as contractors. Construction costs were \$17,100.³²

In 1926, hardware merchant Robert Fesenmaier added a substantial two-story brick addition to the rear, valued at \$13,000. A local paper described the work, "Materials will be used . . . to harmonize with that of the old building. The new addition will measure two stories high and 20 x 85 feet."³³

The building has hosted a variety of businesses, including Klossner's Hardware, later owned by Fesenmaier, the Backer Shoe Store, and the Meile and Henningson Insurance offices. In 2004, the building's tenants included Furth Meile Insurance, Nierengarten & Hippert Law Office, Willow Tree Store, and the Masonic Hall.

14 North Minnesota

Roos and Sommers Block

1871

1 Contributing Building

This is a three-story, rectangular, painted brick commercial building. The streetfront has a recessed off-center entrance and single metal frame glazed door. Flanking the inset area are large rectangular plate glass display windows with metal frames. A second entry door is located on the south edge of the wall. The signband is sheathed in diagonally laid wood boards and painted.

The upper facade is framed by two stone block piers, now painted a dark gray. The second and third stories have four narrow windows across with a shallow segmental arch—the second floor with two-over-two double sash windows, the third with one-over-one. The second floor windows have stone sills and lintels, divided from the third floor by a thin stone beltcourse. The cornice has raised brick modillions and dentils. The capitals of the piers rise about two feet above the roofline with decorative brickwork and a peak hipped cap. These appear in the oldest photographs of the building.

Along the north facade, visible through the alley, on the second floor, there are two sets of paired windows—with a shallow segmental arch—plus an additional single window.

Charles Roos, first mayor of New Ulm, and Charles Sommers erected this building in 1871. A damage report, following the 1881 cyclone, referred to it as "C. Sommers 3-story stone building" and early photographs show a stone exterior wall on the south side, hidden after 1890 by the neighboring Boesch Hummel Maltzahn Block. In

³² *New Ulm Review*, 22 July 1890.

³³ *New Ulm Review*, 31 March, 21 April 1926; *Brown County Journal*, December 28, 1926.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 22

the 1880s and 1890s, it was used as a dry goods store and grocery. Sommers retained an interest in the building until it was sold in 1899 to Otto and August Hummel, who operated the Hummel Brothers Clothing Store at this location for fifty years.³⁴

15 North Minnesota

Amann's Saloon

1894

1 Contributing Building

This two-story flat roof brick commercial building was built in 1894. The street elevation has two brick piers on the outer edges. The streetfront has two plate glass windows on either side of a central recessed entry with two wood columns. Above the windows, there is a wide transom area filled with decorative glass. A brick beltcourse separates the ground floor from the upper facade. The second floor has three piers. This is followed by a recessed spandrel with decorative brickwork under each of the four windows. These are one-over-one, double sash with stone sills and lintels. Above the windows, a thin brick beltcourse separates the cornice, with stepped brick with modillions and dentils, capped by metal coping. Along the alley wall, located on the south, the beltcourses continue to the back of the building with multiple second floor windows.

Andreas (or Andrew) Amann ran a saloon on the site. In 1894 he moved off an earlier wood-frame structure and built this two-story brick building. In 1899 Amann completed a brick addition to the saloon with an estimated cost of \$1,000. It has generally kept its original use. By 1914, Anton Bartl acquired the business, operating a bar through the 1940s. It operated in 2004 as the B & L Bar.³⁵

16-18 North Minnesota

Meridian Block

1886, 1948 (new front)

1 Contributing Building

Although the building dates from 1886, a new front was installed in 1948, transforming an elaborate storefront akin to the nearby Boesch Hummel Maltzahn Block into a more sedate 1940s commercial look. However, the changes took place during the period of significance and the building is considered contributing to the district.

This rectangular two-part block is sheathed in a cream-colored brick face. The streetfront has two primary bays, divided by a central doorway. This lower facade is sheathed in granite panels for a sleek visual effect. Both storefronts have a slightly recessed entrance. The windows in the south entrance are multipaned fixed glass windows with wood muntins. Above the first level, there is a broad signband, terminating in a row of scalloped granite. The upper facade is a cream-colored face brick. The wall is broken by seven rectangular one-over-one double hung windows with narrow stone or cast sills. Above the windows there is a belt course created by a repetition of the scalloped granite or cast material. The frieze has subtle patterned brickwork with the wall

³⁴ *New Ulm Review*, 13 February 1924.

³⁵ *New Ulm Review*, 25 April 1894; *New Ulm News*, 4 August 1894.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 23

terminating with a simple terra cotta coping. The south wall, along the alley, shows the original brickwork, now painted, a wall chimney, and multiple segmental arched window openings. After World War II, a two-story addition extended the building to the rear alley. This red brick wing has multiple doors and windows.

The Meridian Block, as it was known, was built in 1886 by two partners, Casamir Ochs and Werner Boesch. Ochs was an architect/ contractor, later founder of the Springfield Brick Company. Historic photographs show a quite different primary facade facing Minnesota Street, similar to the slightly later Boesch Hummel Maltzahn block.

The building has been used for a variety of retail stores during its history. During much of that same time span, F. H. Behnke operated a grocery store on the street level of the north half, living on the upper floor with his family.

For more than thirty years, from 1911 to 1944, the New Ulm Publishing Company and Review had its offices in the south portion. During World War I, its owner and editor, Albert Steinhauser, was arrested and charged under federal espionage laws for his strongly worded anti-war editorials. The building's street facade was altered in 1948 when Pink's Clothing Store and Alwin Electric acquired the property. The building underwent storefront renovations in recent years and was occupied by the Larkspur Restaurant (16 N) and Haar Friseure (18 N) in 2004.

19 North Minnesota

Liebold Building

1881

1 Noncontributing Building

The building is a three-story, rectangular form brick building, although the street facade is encased in vinyl siding. The streetfront has a slightly off-center recessed entry, with glass plate windows, metal surrounds, a single entry door, and fixed plate transom. The first floor is sheathed with polished granite panels. The large sign band holds an electrified sign for Radio Shack. The upper facade has three sets of one-over-one paired windows with a glass transom above. The third floor repeats the pattern but without the transoms.

The building was constructed for Charles Liebold. It was used by the Bingham Bros. as an office for their business. For many years, the building was used by American (Railway) Express, 1901-1939. Western Union also used this for their office between approximately 1899 and 1926. Historic photographs show a quite different facade, with Italianate round-arched window hoods.

Historic photographs show that the front was altered after 1920, with installation of the current window configuration and the installation of a cream-colored brick or tile on the surface. The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.³⁶

³⁶ *New Ulm Review*, 20, 27 May 1891; "Local Telegraph Company," 17 March 1926.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 24

20 North Minnesota

Charles Gebser Store

1886

1 Contributing Building

The Gebser store is a two-story brick building. The street level on Minnesota Street shows an asymmetrical recessed entry. The wood bulkhead and plate glass windows, with fixed transom panes, are recent replacements. The storefront frieze has an appropriately scaled sign. This is capped by a beltcourse with modillions. The second floor has three evenly spaced rectangular one-over-one double hung windows with stone sills and lintels. The modillioned brick beltcourse is repeated above the windows, with the wall capped with three recessed rectangles with decorative brick work, then a corbelled cornice with sheet metal coping.

The Charles Gebser building was first used as a bookstore with a small cigar factory in the rear. Prominent tenants through the years include Eugene Koehler, a barber, and Kemske Printing Company. In 2004, it was occupied by Interior Motives.³⁷

22 North Minnesota

Gebser's Hall

1894

1 Contributing Building

Gebser's Hall was constructed in 1894. It is a two-story brick structure. The street level has been substantially altered with vertical batten board siding and a small fixed window on either side of the central entryway. On the south of the main facade, there is a separate single glass doorway with metal trim and a plate glass transom above. A wood-shingled pent eave hangs over the storefront cornice. The first floor has rusticated stone piers on either side with a heavy stone course above it. The second floor has four even-spaced rectangular one-over-one windows with a recessed rectangle below each. Underneath these windows is a sillcourse. The lintel is a heavy rusticated stone with a crenellated pattern joining them across the entire front. Decorative brick on the corbelled cornice complete the effect of this facade. Historic records show the building maintains a high degree of integrity except for the storefront level.

Hugo Gebser constructed the building in 1894, next to that of his brother, Charles, for use as a saloon. The upstairs held a popular hall. For example, in 1897, the Unitarian Church met here, while in 1907, the ladies of Germania Lodge used the hall for a fundraising "kaffeekranzchen" for the Hermann Monument museum. In 1911, the Knights of Pythias met here.³⁸

³⁷ *New Ulm News*, 28 March 1894; *New Ulm Review*, 4 April 1906.

³⁸ *New Ulm News*, 2 January 1897; *New Ulm Review*, 10 April 1907.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 25

Businesses located in this building included the Columbia Clothing Store, Louis Windhorn Sign Co. (1930-31), Leander Schlumpberger Grocery (1933-1939), and Kloeckl and Penkert Grocery (1940s). In 2004, it was operated as Mowan's Bar.

21 North Minnesota

Retzlaff Hardware

1892, 1910, 1912, 1940

1 Contributing Building

This building had a new facade in 1940, combining two older structures. This is a two-story flat roof rectangular commercial building with one-story section at rear. The streetfront has double recessed entrances with glazed metal frame double doors with rectangular transom and sidelights. Underneath, the kickplate is a polished stone. There is a large, curved fabric awning over the ground floor. The upper story is sheathed in large panels of precast concrete divided by narrow horizontal banding. There are six sets of evenly spaced multipaned double sash windows. Under the cornice, an inset sign marker reads, "F. H. Retzlaff, 1887." This refers to the date of the founding of the Hardware Store not the construction date of the building.

At the rear of the building, there are two large additions, portions of which date from the nineteenth century. The northern section with a shed roof, measuring 52 by 28, was constructed in 1993. The older section is one-and-a-half stories with a slightly sloped shed roof. Siding included vertical wood boards on the west wall and pressed sheet metal on the north and south walls.

In 1887, F. H. Retzlaff opened a farm implement business in New Ulm after learning the trade by Samuel Peterson, building a store at 21 North Minnesota in 1891, with showrooms on the main floor and the family living above. It was a two-story brick structure approximately 25 x 100 feet, located on the south half of the lot. By 1910 he added a two-story addition on the north portion of the lot.

By 1907, he was selling automobiles, requiring additional space. A newspaper article states, "Retzlaff's auto sales got its start in a frame, sheet-iron covered building at the rear of the hardware store." Another referred to "a metal-clad structure, 40 x 50 feet, and two stories high, was erected in the rear of the hardware and implement store, in 1912, exclusively for garage purposes."³⁹

In 1919, his sons, Armin and Waldemar, joined the business. Armin, in charge of the automobile division, oversaw the construction of a new sales display room and garage at 518 Center and then a service station at 12 North Broadway. The two older buildings were extensively remodeled in 1940 to create the present unified facade. A newspaper account stated, "This was damaged by fire . . . and the whole building was modernized and a new front added."⁴⁰

The family still operates the business.

³⁹ *Brown County Journal*, 30 September 1927.

⁴⁰ "Retzlaff Recalls 50 Years Hardware Business," *New Ulm Journal*, 10 June 1937.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 26

**24 North Minnesota
Wicherski Shoe Store
1890**

1 Contributing Building

Ernst Wicherski began a shoe store at this location on May 29, 1865. The existing building was constructed in 1890, although it incorporated elements of the older structure but added a second story and new front. A 1925 newspaper report stated, "The building used for the store was a dwelling house, one part of which was arranged as a store and the opposite side . . . used for living quarters." Historic views show that the building was divided into two storefronts.⁴¹

It is a two-story building, sheathed in brick. The street level has been substantially altered, covered in vinyl siding with an off-center, slightly recessed entry. There is a single entry solid door with glass panel. There are paired rectangular windows on the north of the entry and a tripled set on the south side. On the south edge of this facade, there is an additional single entry. Above the storefront, there is a sign that runs the width of the building. The second floor, however, remains substantially intact. There are four rectangular windows with modern one-over-one glazing. The brick window hoods have nearly flat segmental arches. The facade terminates with two courses of brick modillions leading to a corbelled brick cornice.

Management of the shoe store passed from Ernst to his son, Emil, then to another son, George, who operated it until 1944. Wicherski's closed in 1947. That year, John Myster opened a popular sporting goods store at this location. The north half of the building was used for nearly forty years by cigarmaker John Schneider. In 2004, the primary occupant was Joni's Restaurant & Catering.⁴²

**27 North Minnesota
J. C. Penney
1956**

1 Noncontributing Building

This is a one-story, rectangular commercial building. The streetfront displays large metal frame plate glass display windows with a polished granite kickplate. These flank a slightly off-center recessed entry. It has a double entry glass plate door. There is a retractable fabric awning above first floor. The upper wall is clad with buff-colored cast panels. Most striking is the sign pier extending from the cornice. The flat roof has metal coping. The north facade and rear wall of building are brick. The building is noncontributing because it was built after the period of significance.

⁴¹ *New Ulm Review*, 27 November 1890 notes that Wicherski raised building one floor; "Wicherski Shoe Store," *New Ulm Review*, 21 January 1925.

⁴² "Wicherski Shoe Store Closing Out," *New Ulm Journal*, 12 November 1947.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 27

The J. C. Penney store first opened a local retail outlet at 206 North Minnesota Street in 1921, moving to 126 North Minnesota in 1925. This building was constructed in 1955. The company closed this store in 1991. In the fall of 2004, the building was the home of New Ulm Telecom.⁴³

28 North Minnesota

Somsen Block

1915

Contractor: Puhlmann Brothers

1 Noncontributing Building

The Somsen Block, built in 1915, stands at the corner of North Minnesota and First North Streets. The exterior reflects a major remodeling that was completed in 1972, outside the period of significance. It is a two-story rectangular building, sheathed in stucco. The primary entrance features two round arches leading to a recessed entry, finished with tinted plate glass and single entry glass doors. The arches are edged with a header row of light reddish-brown brick. The arch theme is repeated along the first floor of the north wall with brick outlines on the blank stuccoed wall. There are two large plate glass windows with metal trim on the second floor facing Minnesota Street with single rectangular windows extending down the First North facade. A single row of header bricks creates a sillcourse with a double row above the windows as a lintelcourse. A raised cast cornice with modillions, original to the building, is still in evidence.

Historic views show the building with a multihued pressed brick from New Ulm Brick & Tile and cast trim, probably Artstone. The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.

Henry Somsen Sr., a prominent lawyer and civic leader, built this block in 1915. In its early years, it held the Columbia Clothing Store, owned by F. P. Zschunke. Upstairs, the New Ulm Commercial Club had social rooms. Somsen expanded the building to the rear in 1926, with work completed by contractors Heers and Cordes. The two-story addition measured 22 x 50 feet at the cost of \$10,000. The Burg Company, a clothing store, occupied the ground floor space for many years. The State Bond & Mortgage maintained an office here. In the fall of 2004, the building was the home of Sandy's Hallmark Store.⁴⁴

26 North Broadway

Arbeiter Hall

1873

1 Contributing Building

Arbeiter Hall is a substantial two-story brick building located on the southeast corner of First North and North Broadway Streets. The primary entrance faces First North with three bays, divided by unadorned brick piers. This

⁴³ *Brown County Journal*, 4 December 1920; "Landmark raised," *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 3 March 1955; "Penney Store Opens," *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 8 March 1956.

⁴⁴ *New Ulm Review*, 24 November 1915; *New Ulm Review*, 22 April 1908; *New Ulm Review*, 1926; *New Ulm Review*, 21 August 1952.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 28

facade shows two broad full arches, detailed with a raised brick soldier course of bricks, in the westernmost bays. These are filled with a low bulkhead, now stuccoed, and rectangular fixed glass plate display windows. Above the windows, metal panels fill the recessed window space. The entrance is flush with the outer wall and has a single entry glass door with metal framing. The eastern bay has two paired rectangular windows with Italianate window hoods of brick. The second story has three sets of paired windows with the same Italianate window hoods with stone sills. The bays are finished on the top with a row of brick modillions. The cornice is finished with a molded course, capped by a frieze with recessed horizontal rectangles (squares above the piers) and stone coping. The central structure measures 110 x 65 feet and has a full basement. The fenestration continues along the North Broadway facade, but with five bays. The double arches are repeated on the north section, with other ground floor windows—one in each bay—the ground floor windows do not have hoods. On the second floor, the windows are single rather than paired. To the south, there is a one-story addition with an arched central entry flanked by two plate glass windows. Above, a sign reads “Pediatric and Adolescent Dentistry.” The south wall has three fixed plate windows with heavy stone sills. This section was used as an automobile service garage and modified to conform to the architecture of the rest of the building.

The town gained a new venue for public events in 1873 with the opening of Arbeiter Hall on the corner of Broadway and First North. The local Arbeiter Verein organized in 1871, primarily as a workers’ insurance association, with members making contributions that were paid out during disablement or death. The new hall was magnificent—a two story brick building with a large hall on the first floor and smaller meeting rooms upstairs. A bar was located in the basement.

The hall became a burden to the new society, which sold it in December 1877 to investors Meinhard Epple, Phillipp Gross, Quirin Scheible, Julius Guetling, and Joseph Bobleter. These men changed its name to Union Hall and reopened with an elaborate production of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.⁴⁵

In 1889, the building was sold to local band director B. Gruenenfelder, joined in the purchase by John Henle, Lorenz Flor, E. W. Baer and George Paul. The Second Regiment Band used the hall as their headquarters, often hosting dances and presenting concerts. In 1898 the owners expanded twenty-five feet to the south, providing additional seating and an expanded back stage.⁴⁶

In 1904, the owners hired Herman Schapekahn to make additional changes, as noted, “Plans for a contemplated change in the Union opera house . . . will make a desirable improvement. The floor will be lowered to the street level and the entrance will be changed to the corner of Broadway and 1st North street, making a round corner resting on a granite column, similar to the Buenger furniture store. [saloon is in basement].”⁴⁷

After WWI, this building, located on a busy intersection, was turned into a service station and automobile repair by the Kretsch Auto Company. Space now included a show room with a large display window facing First North and a drive-in central bay. To the rear, Kretsch built a one-story flat roofed garage. In 1930, Kretsch made

⁴⁵ “Union Hall,” *New Ulm Review*, 5 February 1879; “Annual Picnic for Arbeiter Verein,” *Brown County Journal*, 21 August 1942.

⁴⁶ *New Ulm News*, 7 May 1898.

⁴⁷ *New Ulm News*, 14 February 1904.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 29

substantial renovations following a fire that gutted the building. A drive-through was opened on the northwest corner. Robert Radke purchased the building in 1937, continuing to use it as a service station. In 2004, occupants included the Meyer Studio and the Carlson-Tillisch Eye Clinic.

Historic views show that the original design had a central entrance on the ground floor with paired rectangular windows on either side—with stone lintels but without the current arches and hoods. There was a gabled parapet on the roofline above the entryway.

**100 North Broadway
New Ulm Municipal Building
1919**

**Architect: W. W. Tyrie (Tyrie & Chapman)
Contractor: Thomas Construction Company
1 Contributing Building**

New Ulm's City Hall was constructed in 1919. It is a two-story building with a rectangular floor plan. The exterior is sheathed in a dark brown brick made by New Ulm Brick & Tile Company. The primary facade, facing North Broadway, has a central entry surrounded by cast Doric pillars and an elaborate cartouche under an arched hood. The front is broken into three bays using raised brick quoins. The entrance is flanked by two paired windows and a single window on the outer edges. All have a simple stone sill and are capped with a brick lintel with a keystone. This is repeated on the second floor. The treatment continues on the First North facade. That side, however, has a single door with round entry. A space that formerly held a large entrance for the fire department has been filled with a series of metal and glass plate windows. Above the second floor, there is a molded beltcourse and a row of soldier brick above. The frieze on the Broadway facade has buff-colored terra cotta work with an inset terra cotta sign reading "Municipal Building." The wall is capped by stone coping. On the north, there is a one-story brick addition with a plate glass display window.

In November 1895, the city built a small municipal office building—a one-story brick structure with a fireproof vault located at 109 North Broadway. Within a few years, this space proved to be inadequate and the fire and police departments began to pressure the city council to erect a new structure. Finally, voters approved a city hall bond issue in April 1918 by a vote of 572 to 384. The City Council then selected from among three sites, choosing the corner of Broadway and 1st North. The property was purchased March 12, 1918, for a price of \$17,000.

The architectural firm of Tyrie and Chapman completed drawings for the building. The architects were already well-known in New Ulm, previously having designed the new public high school on North State Street. Bids were opened on July 22, 1918, and the general contract was awarded to the A. C. Thomas-Guthrie Construction Co. of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 30

St. Paul. The final construction cost was \$123,000. The New Ulm City Hall/Fire Station was dedicated and opened to the public on November 21, 1919.⁴⁸

The building remains in use by the City of New Ulm. In 1978, the building underwent extensive renovation, costing \$460,000. The work included upgrading mechanical and electrical systems, removing of a central stairway and adding an elevator, relocating of city council chambers to the New Ulm Public Library, removing interior vaults, and adding new windows.

**504-510 1st N
Fritsche Block
1925**

**Contractors: Otto Tappe, Puhlmann Bros.
1 Contributing Building**

This imposing three-story building has several elements of the 20th century commercial style. The brick is a dark brown, from the New Ulm Brick & Tile Yards. The streetfront has two primary recessed entry bays with plate glass display windows, flanking a narrow central door. Each entry area leads to two doors—there are four stores on the ground floor. The kickplate is a combination of concrete and glass block. The west entry, though, has extended a silver metal and glass entry door. The wide signband is sheathed in a corrugated metal, painted dark brown. The second and third floors have eight evenly spaced windows, each with fixed plate glass above and a moveable lower pane. Both floors have a buff-colored sillcourse, probably of Artstone. In the frieze, the brick is multihued, with spaced diamond-shaped stone insets and an inset stone sign reading “Fritsche.” Above the molded cornice, a central parapet has an inset sign reading “1925.” The wall is finished with stone coping.

Dr. Louis Fritsche was a prominent physician, historian, and community leader, serving several terms as mayor. Trained at the University of Berlin, he received the first official medical license in the state of Minnesota. He was actively involved in politics, serving four terms as mayor. In 1917, he was removed from office by Governor Burnquist for pro-German sympathies, subsequently winning vindication with re-election in 1920. The German Red Cross gave him special recognition for his postwar relief efforts. He was also active in the formation of the Farmer-Labor Party in the 1920s.

In 1925, he expanded his medical office with the construction of this office building. A newspaper article described the building: “The most substantial addition to New Ulm’s many beautiful business blocks during the past year is the large, three-story and full basement structure erected by Dr. L. A. Fritsche in the rear of his North Minnesota street business block. The total cost has been estimated at approximately \$35,000. The building measures 85 x 50 feet. The first floor is divided into four commodious storerooms. Practically the entire second floor will be occupied by an extension of the Fritsche Clinic. The third floor has been arranged to accommodate

⁴⁸ *Brown County Journal*, 16 February 1918, June 12, 1920; “Contract for City Hall is Let,” *New Ulm Review*, 24 July 1918; “New City Building Dedicated Friday,” *New Ulm Review*, 22 November 1919.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 31

four living apartments.” Other accounts attribute the construction of the building to Puhlmann Bros. (probably the brickwork) and Otto Tappe (probably the general contractor).⁴⁹

Louis Fritsche, joined by his sons in the medical profession, erected a new building on First North for his clinic. The Fritsche Clinic gained a national reputation during these years, drawing some of the finest specialists to the city and enhancing the town’s reputation as a medical center. In the 1930s, the regional Works Project Administration office was located in this building.⁵⁰

**100 North Minnesota
State Bank & Trust
1936, 1972 (new front)
1 Noncontributing Building**

The State Bank building is an unusual amalgam of older buildings combined into a single large commercial structure. Located on the northeast corner of North Minnesota and First North Streets, it is a two-story building sheathed in stucco, painted white. Its dominant motif is the six broad segmental arches, framed with a double row of dark brown soldier brick. These arches lead to slightly recessed spaces used for plate glass and metal windows and doors. The upper facade has a beltcourse with two rows of brown brick just under the row of sixteen fixed plate windows, capped with full arch patterns laid with brick and a building-wide lintel course. The cornice is relatively unadorned, with the double row of soldier brick under metal coping. These themes are repeated down the First North facade of the building.

Fifty stockholders met in June of 1901 to organize the State Bank of New Ulm, with Joseph Eckstein as the first president. The new financial institution opened on August 1, 1901. In 1914, the bank acquired the Buessmann building—built in 1871—where it maintained its operations. In 1925, a writer described the bank as “a two-story brick building, 25 by 100 feet with a double display front, center entrance, and a full plate glass window on the south side.” After the major fire in January 1936, the bank was rebuilt, along with other buildings on the south end of this city block.⁵¹

In 1965, the State Bank expanded into the former Schleuder Jewelry and Bee Hive buildings (102 and 104), doubling its size, and adding drive-in banking at the rear. In 1972, following acquisition of Muesing Drug (106), the bank combined all fronts under a new facade. It was occupied by the Valley Bank in 2004.

The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.

⁴⁹ *Brown County Journal*, 10 April 1925, 6 May 1925.

⁵⁰ *Brown County Journal*, 10 April 1925; *New Ulm Review*, 23 January 1924.

⁵¹ “New Banking Home,” *New Ulm Review*, 1 April 1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 32

101 North Minnesota

Olsen Block

1906

Contractor: Puhlmann & Gronau

1 Noncontributing Building

This two-story brick building was constructed in 1906. Although the core of the building remains intact, subsequent alterations have compromised its historical integrity. It is encased in stucco that obscures original detailing. There are two primary storefronts, recessed with glass plate and metal with a single glass entry door. At the center of the facade, there is a single entry door to the upstairs. First and second floors are divided by a broad slightly raised beltcourse. There are eight rectangular windows, four on each side, on the second story of the Minnesota Street facade with five unevenly spaced windows on the First North wall. There is a single entry glass plate door at the west end of this facade. The wall is capped by a raised band at the cornice. The building is noncontributing due to changes made after the period of significance.

O. M. Olsen was born in 1852 in Lillehammer, Norway, coming to America with his parents in 1865. In 1876 he came to New Ulm to work in the City Drug Store, later working at the Pioneer Drug Store for Dr. Carl Weschcke. Then, in 1887, he established the Model Drug Store in the Meridian Block — currently home of the Larkspur on North Minnesota Street. Olsen remained a prominent businessman. In 1907, he built a substantial business block at the cost of \$10,000 on the corner of First North and Minnesota Streets. He was one of the first stockholders in the Citizen's State Bank, holding the post of vice-president from 1905 to 1914, when he was chosen president — a post he held until 1929. At the time, it was the largest financial institution in the city.⁵²

By 1917, Dr. Louis Fritsche acquired the building for a medical clinic on the second floor. As the practice grew, he built the larger clinic building next door, also retaining this office.

The street level remained retail space. After Olsen's departure, The Fair Store, selling clothing, opened its doors. In 1922, Leo Schueller and Frank Tauscheck opened a men's clothing store, with Ben Green acquiring Schueller's interest the following year. At the time, the store was described, "The building measures 25 x 70 feet and affords ample room for the display of stock. Two large front display windows are arranged, one on either side of the front entrance, while a large window on the south side of the building is also used by the firm for display." In 2004, the building was occupied by Skillings Technology and the New Ulm Eye Center.⁵³

The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.

⁵² *New Ulm Review*, 16 January 1930. *Brown County Journal*, 3 July 1931.

⁵³ *Brown County Journal*, 19 January 1907; *New Ulm Review*, 10 April 1907 [Photograph]; "Local Young Men Join Partnership," *New Ulm Review*, 7 October 1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 33

105 North Minnesota

Citizens Bank of New Ulm

1914; 1973

Architect: Vosejпка Associates (Richard) (1973)

Contractor: Arthur Luebbert (1973)

1 Noncontributing Building

Citizens Bank is an expansive two-story structure that incorporates part of an older 1914 building with significant additions on the north side, all encased in a new Modern Movement facade in 1973. The Minnesota Street elevation is a series of overlaid, interpenetrating rectangular forms with a central brick tower dividing the facade. Materials include plate glass, brick, and vertical wood siding. There is a large clock on the southern portion of the facade. The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.

The Citizens Bank was organized in 1875 under a state charter with businessman Michael Mullen serving as first president. It became a private bank in 1883, operating as such until 1908, when it reorganized under a state charter. The original bank building was located at 120 North Minnesota Street.

In 1913, it purchased the current property and built a new facility, designed by Arthur Moorman of St. Paul. The building had a front of buff Bedford stone. This new Citizens State Bank opened at its present location to the public in May 1914.

In the early 1970s, the bank acquired the adjacent 112-year-old Dakota Hotel, razing this historic structure. The revamped building, designed by Vosejпка Associates, expanded to this new lot on the north and sheathed the exterior in a series of overlaid, interpenetrating rectangular forms. It opened in September 1973. Later, it acquired the former Stengel building on lot to the north, housing Esser & Sons Restaurant, tore it down, and extended the building north.⁵⁴

108 North Minnesota

Erd Building

1861

1 Noncontributing Building

Although this is one of the most historic buildings in New Ulm, its streetfront bears little resemblance to the original constructed by Frank Erd in 1861 or the later Artstone front installed by Willibald Eibner in 1938. It is a three-story brick structure with the exterior covered with stucco. Original windows and window surrounds have been replaced with tinted fixed glass plate. There are two ground floor entries, both glass and metal.

The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance. A historic photograph shows that the original building had three stories with five rectangular windows on the

⁵⁴ "After 50 Years of Service," pamphlet, BCHS.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 34

second and third floors, an elaborate cornice, and a stringcourse with modillions. The heavy stone lintels and sills are still seen.

The Erd building is one of the most historic in the city. Built in 1861 by Francis Erd, the basement was used as a refuge for women and children during the Dakota War. Originally, the structure was two stories high. In 1870, Erd completed a substantial addition, valued at \$4,000, raising a third floor. The building was used by the Adolph Seiter Delicatessen when Willibald Eibner bought the business in 1883. In 1899, Eibner completed an addition to the rear of the building. In 1929, he added a substantial addition valued at \$5,000. At times, there were sections for making Eibner's beloved ice cream, a large bakery, and candy making facilities. Following the downtown fire of 1938, Eibner rebuilt the front portion of the restaurant. It proved to be a popular restaurant for many years, finally closing in 1976. Major remodeling occurred in 1949 and 1959.

Alois Eibner sold the business in 1970 to Gerhard Christ, and Christ continued to use the Eibner name for the business. In 1978 the business was sold to Vern Clobes, who changed the name to Haus Messerschmidt. The interior was completely remodeled, and the exterior of the building was designed after the oldest inn in Germany. The Haus Messerschmidt Restaurant closed in early 1982, and a short time later opened as the Garden Room Restaurant, later Ming Garden.⁵⁵

**110 North Minnesota
Crone Brothers Clothing
1869
1 Contributing Building**

The building is a three-story Italianate brick structure, now painted. The streetfront has been substantially altered, with tinted plate glass display windows and doors with metal trim. This level is sheathed in a gray stone-like material. The signband is flat and unadorned with a stucco finish. The upper facade is framed by two brick piers with recessed centers. The second story has round arched windows with wood frames with four-over-four glazing. The window surrounds are a raised header brick, now painted, with a keystone. There is a beltcourse of raised brick between this and the third floor. Third floor windows repeat the fenestration of the second floor except for a raised sillcourse. This, in fact, might be present but obscured on the second floor. The cornice is a combination of corbelled brick and molded modillions.

The Crone Brothers Clothing Store was the largest retail businesses in New Ulm for many years. Theodore Crone Sr. established a general store in New Ulm in 1857. Following the Civil War, he erected a two-story brick building, now part of the adjacent structure to the north. In 1871, he added a third-story. This building was constructed in 1873 and opened as a clothing store.⁵⁶

Although the northern building (112-114) was sold in 1923, Carl Crone, grandson of the founder, continued to run a clothing store here. In 1946, Herbergers acquired the business. They hired Edward Wirtz as architect to

⁵⁵ "Eibner's has colorful past," *New Ulm Journal*, 12 December 1976.

⁵⁶ "Crone Store Is Leased To Pink," *Brown County Journal*, 17 February 1933.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 35

create a unified front to the three buildings. The work was completed in late 1947 by contractors Weilandt and Stegemann.⁵⁷

A historic photograph shows that the building originally had a one-story portico over the sidewalk and a slightly extended facade on the front.

**(112-114 North Minnesota)
Theodore Crone Dry Goods
1873
1 Contributing Building**

The building is a three-story Italianate brick structure, now painted. The streetfront has been substantially altered, matching that of the Herbergers buildings on the north and south, with tinted plate glass display windows and doors with metal trim. This level is sheathed in a gray stone-like material. The signband is flat and unadorned with a stucco finish. The second story has round arched windows with wood frames with two-over-two glazing. The window surrounds are a raised header brick, now painted, with a keystone. The sills appear to be stone but are heavily painted. There is a beltcourse of raised brick between this and the third floor. Third floor windows repeat the fenestration of the second floor except for a raised sillcourse. The cornice is simple with brick dentils and stone coping.

As noted under the description for 110 North Minnesota, Theodore Crone Sr. erected a two-story brick building in 1869, adding a third-story in 1871. In 1923, Adolph Schulke acquired the buildings, opening a "Ladies Ready-to-Wear" store. The following year, he remodeled the display windows with a "stroll front." As the local news said, "These windows are all plate glass, arranged with polished mirrors, and afford unusual display room, the windows being 15 feet high and 18 feet deep." The investment was substantial, amounting to \$14,000. By 1933, Jack Pink took over this space for a department store, but moved to 18 North Minnesota in 1946. That year, Herbergers acquired the Crone buildings along with the old Stuebe/Neumann block to the north.

In 1989, Marktplatz Mall was constructed to the east. The sprawling steel framed building is sheathed in brick on the exterior. It contains parking on the ground level with retail space on the first floor. Herbergers added 10,000 square feet to the rear, opened up walls and walkways out the back of this building into the new mall. It leased an additional 7,000 square feet in the mall in 1992, expanding retail space in this attached area.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 18 November 1947. "Friendly Spirit plus Unfailing Service," *New Ulm Review*, 9 January 1924; *New Ulm Daily Journal*, October 11, 1941; "Herbergers Take Over Crone Store," *New Ulm Daily Journal*, June 3, 1946.

⁵⁸ "Mall readied for official opening," *New Ulm Journal*, 19 October 1989.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 36

**115 North Minnesota
Baltrusch Building
1873
Noncontributing**

This two-story brick building was constructed around 1873. The primary facade, facing Minnesota Street, is now finished in a faux-German, half-timbered style that was popular in New Ulm in the late 1970s and early 1980s, replete with a heavy white stucco and dark wood beams.

The street level shows a two-part plate glass window on the north with a recessed single entry glass door on the south. The entry is finished with dark-stained wood boards. The ground level and second story windows are separated by a narrow wood and metal balcony, set on four wooden brackets. The second floor has a central single door entry with a glass transom above, flanked by one-over-one double hung aluminum framed windows. Above the windows, decorative panels are intended to evoke German folk art. The wall terminates in a simple, unadorned cornice. Remodeling, with use of stucco and rustic beams, has eliminated much of the property's architectural integrity. The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.

The building was first used as a dry goods and grocery, owned by C. Baltrusch. A damage report following the 1881 cyclone noted, "Baltrusch's two story veneered general store was struck several times by lightning and is almost a total loss." Rebuilt, between 1882 and 1886, it was owned by the Eagle Mill Company and possibly used as offices. By the late nineteenth century, a series of milliners ran shops at this site, beginning with Agnes Olding as early as 1892, followed by Sarah Pfefferle in 1893, then Mrs. W. O. Arndt in 1920. A 1925 newspaper article described the building, "The present location is 75 x 25 feet in size. A double display front with a center entrance is afforded." Hats were sold in the front room, while a trimming room, measuring 25 x 25 feet, followed to the rear. A beauty shop operated here as well. By 1941, the millinery rooms were converted into the Palace Restaurant, run by Herman Bergmeier. It later became the Ulmer Cafe.⁵⁹

**(116-118 North Minnesota)
Stuebe Meat Market and John Neumann Store
1898
Architect: Henry Gerlach
Contractor: Herman Schapekahm
1 Contributing Building**

This two-story brick building, now painted, was constructed in 1898. The streetfront has been substantially altered, matching that of the Herberger's buildings on the south, with tinted plate glass display windows and doors with metal trim. This level is sheathed in a gray stone-like material. The signband is flat and unadorned with a stucco finish. The upper facade is broken into three bays by brick piers. The two wider outer bays have three narrow rectangular windows, while the middle bay holds a single window. All have one-over-one glazing.

⁵⁹ "Arndt Millinery," *New Ulm Review*, 27 May 1925; *New Ulm Review*, 15 August 1906.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 37

There is a thin raised sillcourse and wide stone lintels. The cornice is corbelled with a frieze of recessed panels with patterned brickwork. The coping is stone.

This building was built for John Neumann, a dry goods merchant, and Charles Stuebe, a meat supplier and butcher, whose businesses predate this store and incorporate some elements of old structures. It was designed by Mankato architect Henry Gerlach. In 1897, the two men announced plans for a new brick block. As construction proceeded under guidance of Herman Schapekahm, the local news reported, "Stuebe and Neumann were unable to get Minneapolis brown brick in time and will use New Ulm pressed brick." They also noted the changes to the block, observing: "The new Stuebe meat market building will soon be 75 ft deep, two stories, with a one story addition in the rear. These improvements, with the lowering of Crone's double building and the Post office building, and putting in plate glass fronts, will make that whole business block one of the most attractive in the state."⁶⁰

In 1914, Emil Metzinger leased the Neumann store, prompting the owner to make substantial storefront improvements. "The store fronts as they were built years ago did not provide for displays such as must be made to move merchandise in this age," noted a local reporter. After Metzinger left town to live in Florida, his brother-in-law, M. J. Bieber, took over management. In 1930, Salet's Department Store moved into this retail space where it operated through the 1940s.⁶¹

In the 1920s, Stuebe's closed and the building was taken over by Woolworth's Store, which remained at this location through the 1940s. Following WWII, Herbergers acquired the building.

117 North Minnesota

Reim Jewelers

1907

Contractor: Otto Tappe

1 Contributing Building

1 Contributing Object

The Reim Jewelry Store, built in 1907, is a two-story brick structure with a light cream-colored brick. The ground level floor on Minnesota Street is dominated by triple arches with brick headers creating an arcade-like visual effect. The arches are finished with a single row of light brown brick headers. The bulkheads are stucco. Rectangular glass plate windows on the south fill the two south arches, while the north arch has a recessed entry. It has two glass plate doors—one entering the store, while the north door leads to stairs for the upstairs. A letter sign reads "Patterson's" above the arches.

The second floor has four evenly spaced one-over-one double hung windows. The sills and lintels are Kasota stone—the lintels are quite heavy and the stone is rusticated. The cornice is elaborate, with two rows of

⁶⁰ *New Ulm News*, 2 October 1897, 5, 19 March, 16 April, 21 May 1898.

⁶¹ *New Ulm Review*, 25 March, 8 July 1914.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 38

alternating modillions and dentils between two simple piers, terminating in a full-width row of modillions, then dentils on the cornice.

This site originally held the Frederich Beinhorn store. In 1905 C. G. Reim bought the building with the intention of opening a jewelry store. Shortly afterward, the building collapsed and had to be rebuilt. Reim operated his store here until 1938, when he retired from the store in 1938 and his son-in-law, Mickey Church, acquired the business. Church sold the store to Pat Patterson in 1963. It was operated in 2004 as Patterson's Jewelry.⁶²

In 1910, Reim installed a freestanding electric clock in the front of the store. The clock is considered a contributing object to this property.

**119 North Minnesota
Backer Harness Shop
1897**

**Contractor: Herman Schapekahm
1 Contributing Building**

The building, two-story and rectangular in floor plan, was constructed in 1897. It is now joined with 121 North Minnesota as part of Lambrecht's Gifts. The streetfront has been significantly altered, encased in a vinyl siding up to the second story window sills. There are two fixed glass plate windows with metal surround, with a slightly recessed single glass door under a gabled entry portico. The upper facade reflects the original look of the building, with three one-over-one double sash windows. The sill is a simple stone block while the lintelcourse is a heavy rusticated stone. The wall terminates with a corbelled cornice, a stone beltcourse, then capped with three inset sections with patterned brick work. The coping is stone.

Fred J. Backer was born in Seibelsdorf, Bavaria, emigrating to Brown County in 1872. In 1889, at the age of 19 years, Fred Backer found employment with John Henle and Charles Marti, as a harness maker's apprentice. After a brief apprenticeship, he returned to New Ulm and established a harness and leather goods business on North Minnesota Street. It carried an extensive stock of harnesses as well as a full and complete line of trunks, valises, horse robes and leather goods. In 1897, Backer built a two story brick block, 25 x 45 feet, valued at \$4,000, moving the original wood shop to the rear of the lot. The building was constructed by Schapekahm Bros. & Co.⁶³

Historic views show a window on the south half with a recessed double entry on the north side of the storefront. A 1925 newspaper account described the building, "The new structure measured 25 x 60 feet, having a full plate glass front and a side entrance. A full basement was put in and the second story was finished for living quarters for the owner." In 1909 a forty foot extension was built.⁶⁴

⁶² *New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1925.

⁶³ *New Ulm News*, 20 March, 14 August 1897; *New Ulm Review*, 25 January, 18 August 1893, 24 March 1897, 7 January 1925.

⁶⁴ "Backer Harness Shop," *New Ulm Review*, 7 January 1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 39

Like many local merchants, Backer was active in community affairs. He served as a vice president and director of the State Bank of New Ulm.

In 1931, employee Charles Janni purchased a half interest in the business, becoming the sole owner six years later. He changed the name of the business to Charles F. Janni Harness Shop. Ralph Vogelpohl and Charles Janni formed a partnership in 1945, and in 1960, Vogelpohl bought Janni's interest and changed the name of the shop to Vogelpohl's. When the leather repair business shrank, Vogelpohl placed more emphasis on the retail business and added the gift line about 1952. Vogelpohl sold the business to his son, Bradley, in 1976. The building now holds Lambrecht's Gift Shop.

120 North Minnesota

Wagner Furniture; Citizens Bank

1878, 1946

1 Contributing Building

This rectangular two-story block faces North Minnesota Street. Remodeled extensively in 1946, the exterior is sheathed in a light brown brick. The first floor shows a plate glass front with a recessed central doorway. The bulkhead and window surrounds are brown polished granite. A fixed awning hangs over the storefront. The second floor shows four evenly spaced paired windows with modern metal framing. Above the windows, an inset beltcourse of cast material extends across the facade. This material is repeated in a large rectangular decorative inset in the upper facade, with the wall capped by simple metal coping.

This building incorporates two historic structures. Charles Wagner built a furniture store at 120 North Minnesota Street in the 1870s. His sons later sold it to H. L. Saverein. Carl Heers completed a brick addition to the store in 1898, probably as contractor. In 1901, John H. Forster purchased Saverein's stock and continued to operate a furniture store. He purchased the south half of the building in 1914, acquiring the other half in 1916 from Wagner's estate. In 1944, the company incorporated, with his sons, Hugo and Harold, joining the firm. The following year, Forster's acquired the Buenger Furniture and Undertaking Business. Forster's furniture company went out of business in 1991.

The adjacent Citizens Bank building also held the upstairs offices of the Minnesota and Dakota Cattle Company. It also held Korbel's Millinery Shop for many years. In 1946, Forster Furniture Company substantially remodeled the building, as described, "The wall between the present furniture store and the old Citizens Bank building . . . will be removed and new fronts will be placed in both buildings." In 2004, Eleanor's Clothing Store occupied the site.

Although the building reflects a much later period than that of its initial construction, these changes took place during the period of significance and exhibit post-WWII architectural tastes.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ *New Ulm News*, 10 December 1898; "Work Starts Today," *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 13 May 1946; "Wagner's Furniture Store One of New Ulm's Early-Day Buildings," *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 30 December 1950.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 40

(121 North Minnesota)

Loheyde Shoe Store

1884; 1895 (second story)

Contractor: Henry Hanschen (1895)

1 Contributing Building

The building, two-story and rectangular in floor plan, was constructed in 1884 with a second story added in 1894. It is now joined with 119 North Minnesota as part of Lambrecht's Gifts.

The streetfront has been significantly altered, encased in a vinyl siding up to the second story window sills. There are three fixed glass plate windows, with entry gained only through 119 North Minnesota. The upper facade reflects the original look of the building, with three one-over-one double sash windows. The sill is a simple stone block while the lintels are a heavy rusticated stone. The wall terminates with a corbelled cornice, capped with three inset sections with patterned brick work.

The building was constructed for Henry Loheyde, a native of Germany who came to New Ulm in 1857 after a brief residence in Cincinnati. In the aftermath of the Dakota War, he moved to Saint Paul but returned to this city in 1869. The *New Ulm Review*, in January 1884, stated that Loheyde intended to erect a large two-story brick building for his shoe store, however, only one story was constructed at the time. In 1895, bricklayer Henry Hanschen put on the second story, with the addition of a "new front" with plate glass windows. Historic views show a window on the south half with a slightly recessed entry on the north side of the storefront.⁶⁶

After Loheyde, the building was operated as a millinery shop for many years, first under Martha Eichmann, followed by Anna Rinke and Hattie Baltrusch.

123 North Minnesota

Weigand Hauenstein Building

1899

1 Contributing Building

The three-story building exhibits a simple formal facade with painted brick exterior. The three bay main facade, divided by four brick piers, has a glass plate front with a recessed center entry. There is an additional single door on the north edge of the streetfront. The bulkhead appears to be wood. The signband has been covered with a horizontal vinyl or metal siding material. The second and third floors are linked visually using recessed spaces between the piers, capped with a segmental arch. There are three rectangular windows on these floors with rusticated stone sills and lintels. Windows are one-over-one. The wall terminates with rows of corbelled brick at the cornice with stone coping. The roof is a gently sloped shed roof.

Weigand Hauenstein, the brother of brewer John, operated a saloon on this site, retiring in 1896. In 1899, he tore down the building and constructed this three story brick structure, valued at \$6,000. It was leased to Frank Burg, Jr. who operated it as a saloon and bowling alley from 1899-1906. By 1911, it was known as Frank Nenno's

⁶⁶ *New Ulm Review*, 31 January 1884; *New Ulm News*, 4 May, 10 August 1895.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 41

saloon. After 1915, the building was operated as a saloon by Anton Henle. It is listed as the Red Owl Store from 1926-1941. By the 1950s, Stevenson's department store used the building. In 2004, Bookshelves and Coffee Cups occupied the building.⁶⁷

125 North Minnesota

Pioneer Drug Store

1868, 1881

1 Contributing Building

This two-story building is rectangular in form. The primary facade, facing Minnesota Street, is a gray-toned brick. The ground floor features a central recessed entry with a glass door, flanked by plate glass windows. The bulkhead is covered with burgundy colored metal panels. This material is repeated in the storefront cornice. On the second floor, three windows with Italianate drip moulds break the wall, with a simple brick stringcourse below and brick piers on the sides. Windows are one-over-one sash with aluminum framing. Above the windows, there is a raised cornice, approximately three feet below the actual roofline. Overall, the building retains its essential integrity despite some alterations.

Dr. Weschcke was a pioneer physician and druggist who came to New Ulm in 1860. After studying at the University of Berlin and the University of Greifswald, he practiced for a short time in Germany, but left in 1860 for America and came to New Ulm. From the time of his arrival in New Ulm until 1867, he was the only physician in this vicinity. During the Dakota War, Weschcke attended to the wounded during the first attack on New Ulm. Shortly afterwards, Weschcke was appointed surgeon in the U.S. Army, and until the latter part of 1863 rendered medical services to the soldiers at Fort Ridgely and other outposts. In 1868 Dr. Weschcke went to San Francisco but returned to New Ulm during the latter portion of the same year to continue his practice. He played an active role in the city's civic life, serving as a councilman, and then for fifteen years as mayor, between 1878-1881, 1885-1889, and 1896-1904. Dr. Weschcke died October 13, 1906.

He opened the Pioneer Drug Store in 1868. The 1881 cyclone severely damaged the building, virtually demolishing the Minnesota Street facade. It was purchased by Andrew Eckstein in 1886. In 1912, Eckstein sold the business to William G. Alwin. The Epple Bros. owned the business after 1919. In 1922 the interior was destroyed by fire. In 1955 Alfred Polta purchased the store and changed its name. It closed in 2000.

126 North Minnesota

Ben Franklin Store

1971

1 Noncontributing Building

This is a one-story, rectangular commercial building. On the streetfront, the first floor is sheathed in red brick. There are large metal frame plate glass display windows flanking the entrance with three glass plate doors and a

⁶⁷ *New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1899, reported that Weigand Hauenstein put \$6,000 of improvements into "brick building occupied by F. Burg."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 42

rectangular transom above. The upper wall is clad with smooth cast stone panels. It has a flat roof with metal coping. The rear wall of building is brick.

The Ben Franklin Store first opened in New Ulm at 20 North Minnesota. In 1956, Clement Bezdichek, a Glencoe resident, bought two older buildings on the southeast corner of North Minnesota and Second North. He proceeded to make considerable changes to the old Mansoor and J. C. Penney stores, installing a new storefront with plate glass windows. In 1971, a fire severely damaged the building.

The building is noncontributing because it was built after the period of significance.

127 North Minnesota

Weiser Block

1916

Contractor: August Puhlmann

1 Contributing Building

The Weiser Block, built in 1916, is a two-story brown brick building, located on the corner of North Minnesota and Second North Streets. The street level features a central recessed doorway with plate glass display windows and a single entry door. Two brick piers frame the sides of this level. Above the sign, the signband is covered with corrugated metal panels. This fenestration is continued around the corner on First North. The upper facade shows two sets of paired windows, all one-over-one sashes, on the Minnesota Street facade with nine similar windows along First North Street. Below the windows is a molded terra cotta belt course. Above the windows, there is another belt course with a frieze of brick and diamond shaped terra cotta insets. The raised cornice extends across the front of both 125 and 127 North Minnesota. Under the cornice is a cast stone sign reading "Weiser Block." The wall terminates with terra cotta coping and a shallow battlement parapet. The building was remodeled in 1956 and 1970.

Dr. George Weiser tore down the Peuser Barber Shop building and built this business block in 1916, although it was not completed until the spring of the following year. Its estimated cost was \$8,000. The *New Ulm Review* stated, "A two-story building will be erected there during the coming spring. . . The first floor will be arranged according to the plans of parties who have already secured a lease on the quarters for a modern and up-to-date candy kitchen and fruit store. There will be a full basement connected with the fruit store and the upper floor will be suitable for office purposes." BCJ noted that there were improvements to the front of this building in 1922, around the time that the Candy Kitchen opened at this location. A local newspaper account stated, "The Weiser block is a pretentious, prosperous looking brick structure. . . . The building . . . is 25 by 95 feet. A center entrance leads to the store . . . Display windows across the front and on the side of the store on Second North Street are constructed of green and white tile, and furnish display room for toothsome sweets." During the 1930s and 40s, the building was home to the Silver Latch Cafe. In 2004, the building housed the Gutentag store.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ "Brick Block Will Replace Landmark," *New Ulm Review*, 9 February 1916; *Brown County Journal*, 12 February 1916; 31 December 1917; 29 December 1922.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 43

**412 2nd N
Stoll Plumbing
1902**

1 Noncontributing Building

This two-story frame building was erected in 1902. The Second North exterior is finished in a heavy coat of stucco with dark wood beam in a faux-German, half-timbered style popular in New Ulm during the 1970s and early 1980s. On the street level, there is a single entry glass door flanked by two rectangular fixed windows. On the west side of this facade, there is an additional single entry door. Above this level, there are three wood flower boxes. The second floor shows asymmetrically placed one-over-one windows with modern metal framing—two sets of coupled windows and one single window. In the rear, the exterior is sheathed in pressed tin. Windows are mixed but generally one-over-one sash. The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.

This building was erected in 1902 and used first by Charles Stoll and Sons plumbing company. Within a few years, plumbers Nick Gulden and M. H. Hippert moved into the space. After Hippert sold his interest, Gulden took on a series of partners, including his brother, Alois, and W. S. Vercoe. When they dissolved their partnership in 1924, Vercoe moved to a building at 221 North Minnesota Street while Gulden took over space in the basement of 1 South Minnesota. By the 1940s, it had been converted into a restaurant/bar run by William Kuester.⁶⁹

After their departure, August Berndt used the building for his tin shop. It was described as “a two-story tin-covered building and measures 18 x 35 feet. The main entrance leads to a work room that is 18 x 35 feet. Tinner’s tools of all kinds are stocked for use of the three men who are employed by Berndt.” The article notes that Hanford Produce Company used some of the space for storage. For many years Augie’s Tavern, run by August Scharbach, operated here. In 2004, it was the home of Sperl’s Tax Service.⁷⁰

**510–512 2nd N
Volksblatt-Brown County Journal Building
1897**

1 Noncontributing Building

This building is a rectangular, two-story (plus a basement), brick structure with a flat asphalt roof. It has been substantially altered from its historic appearance, now covered in stucco with two single entry glass plate and metal doors on the streetfront with several double and single panel plate windows. Second story features three fixed glass plate windows with slightly raised, green painted sill and lintel courses. In the rear, the original sloped roofline of the Volksblatt building is in evidence. Historic photographs show that the building originally had three large gabled dormers (roughly matching the spacing of current second-story windows) on a sloped roof. The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance.

⁶⁹ “Gulden Plumbing Shop,” *New Ulm Review*, 10 February 1926.

⁷⁰ “Berndt Tin Shop,” *New Ulm Review*, 25 November 1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 44

The *New Ulm Volksblatt*, a German language newspaper, was founded in 1892, partially to give an alternate public publication from the Turner-oriented *New Ulm Review*. In 1897, Philip Liesch purchased the newspaper and built this office/ printing plant at that time. The following year, he began an English-language paper, the *Brown County Journal*. The *Volksblatt* ceased publication in 1921. In 1937, following its acquisition by William Merrit and W. L. Hullinger, the paper changed its name to the *New Ulm Daily Journal*, reflecting its new publication schedule.

In 1899 George Doehne made a \$700 brick veneered addition to the *Volksblatt* office on the east side of the building. In 1929, Liesch built an addition to accommodate a new printing press. In 2004, the Mueller-Lowther law firm had offices in the building.⁷¹

200 North Minnesota

Farmers & Merchants Bank

1914

Architect: Albert Moorman

Contractor: Kaiser & Keute

1 Noncontributing Building

The Farmers and Merchants Bank building is located on the northeast corner of North Minnesota and Second North Streets. The rectangular, two-story building has a twenty-five foot front on Minnesota Street. The streetfront is faced with gray stone panels with a light gray on the second floor. There is a single entry with glass plate and metal, flanked by a glass plate window on the south. On the Second North facade, this front section has paired two-panel commercial type awning windows with glass block above. This is repeated on the second floor in the front section. Flower boxes are fixed under these windows. The remaining section of the building, roughly forty feet down Second North, shows the original 1914 brick exterior, now painted, with four brick piers. Windows on the ground floor repeat the construction of the newer front, with glass block and metal and glass awning style windows. The second story has Chicago style windows with double-sash, three-over-one glazing. In the spandrel between the floors, there is a rectangle of raise brick above each window. The composition roof is flat. The building is noncontributing due to substantial facade alteration that postdates the period of significance. However, much of the original fabric remains.

The Farmers and Merchants Bank organized in May 1914, with brick manufacturer Fred Aufderheide chosen as its first president. The bank erected a 25 by 80 foot two-story brick building. Arthur Moorman, a Saint Paul architect, drew the plans while a local firm, Kaiser and Keute, served as contractor. A contemporary newspaper account stated that the bank used Aufderheide "light-colored brick" and Bedford Stone trim. Total cost was approximately \$9,420.⁷²

In 1957, the bank substantially altered the North Minnesota Street facade, with work completed by Heymann Construction Co. Changes included a new stone panel exterior on the Minnesota Street entrance, glass block

⁷¹ *New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1899.

⁷² *New Ulm Review*, 29 April 1914; *New Ulm Review*, 1 July 1914.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 45

windows, and a large clock hung from the southwest corner. In 1969, the bank moved its operations to a new building at 322 North Minnesota Street, now known as Alliance Bank.

201 North Minnesota

Doehne Block

1887

1 Contributing Building

This two-story brick commercial building stands on the northwest corner of North Minnesota and Second North with a prominent slanted corner entry and window framed by two brick piers. The building wall is broken by two other brick piers on the north edge, above an entry door, with the south wall showing a central pier with decorative brickwork as its capital. The streetfront has been altered with a corner single entry glass door and fixed plate glass windows. Historic views show a full arched front on the corner. Former window space has been enclosed and finished with stucco. In addition, a row of vertical wood boards with clipped arches has been overlaid the first floor facade on Minnesota Street and approximately thirty feet down Second North. A plate window has been installed on this facade, near an original arched entry on the west. The second floor shows narrow one-over-one windows with stone sills and lintels. The cornice, with its slight overhang and decorative modillions, suggest the Italianate style.

This building was erected by mill owner George Doehne in 1887. Born in Waldeck, Germany in 1834, he came to Brown County in 1861. In 1874, Doehne left the farm and moved with his family to the city, where he engaged in the lumber business and established a planing mill. About two years later, he joined with partners Jacob Pfenninger and Werner Boesch to run the Eagle Mill. He owned a grand home at 124 South German Street, now on the National Register of Historic Places.⁷³

His son-in-law, Dr. O. C. Strickler, kept his medical office on the second floor. The ground floor has held a variety of businesses, including Henry Crone's Dry Goods in the late nineteenth century, Mrs. Follman's Millinery in the 1900-1920 period and Brey's Grocery during the 30s and 40s. Alterations were made to the streetfront in 1980 and 1999. In 2004, Roth, Herzog, and Associates maintained offices here.

202 North Minnesota

Schell's Hall

1894

Architect: Henry Gerlach

Contractor: Otto Tappe

1 Contributing Building

This two-and-a-half story brick commercial block was constructed in 1894. The streetfront has three rusticated stone piers—framing piers on the outer edges plus a pier on the south portion, setting apart a single entry glass plate and metal door. The transom above this door has been covered with batten board siding. The storefront has

⁷³ *Brown County Journal*, 10 Nov 1922.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 46

been enclosed and stuccoed with two fixed glass plate windows to the south of a single entry door. There is a shed-roof eave over the first floor with a flat, black-painted frieze above. The upper facade shows three windows with the outline of a fourth window. There is a full stone sill course under the windows. Above it, there is a heavier course of rusticated stone. Most striking is the central window (now enclosed with vertical wood siding) with a full stone arch. The frieze has recessed panels below the cornice, which is finished with a double stone beltcourse with modillions and decorative brickwork.

At the rear of the building, there is a one-story, slightly sloped shed roof addition, formerly used for storage of farm implements and as a tin shop. The exterior is sheathed in pressed metal sheets with the remains of two windows on the north wall, now enclosed and a single entry wood door on the east wall.

The building was known as Schell's Hall after its first owner, brewer Otto Schell, and designed by Henry Gerlach, a prominent Mankato architect. Its second floor hall space proved highly popular, hosting meetings for bands, labor unions, the German American Alliance, and the local socialist organization.⁷⁴

In 1901, the New Ulm Hardware company, owned by Dr. L. A. Fritsche, moved into the Schell building under the management of C. A. Stoltz. The second floor was occupied by the Woodmen of America Lodge. The following year, a local newspaper reported, "Extensive improvements are to be completed as soon as possible in connection with the Otto Schell building occupied by the firm of Arnold & Fritsche. The present brick store building is 80 feet deep. An addition is to be built to the rear. The rear room will be used for the exhibition of agricultural instruments."

In 1916, Stoltz purchased the business and remained at this location until the end of WWII. Later occupants included Braunreiter & Lieb Hardware.⁷⁵

**203 North Minnesota
Buenger Furniture Company
1920
Contractor: Otto Tappe
1 Contributing Building**

This two-story commercial building uses a dark brown brick from New Ulm Brick and Tile. The primary streetfront has been substantially altered from the period of significance. Five bays across the front are divided by brick piers. The three northern and southernmost bays are filled with segmental arch fixed glass plate windows, with an arched band of reddish brick as lintels. Area surrounding the windows is a cream-colored stucco. The other bay has a recessed entry with plate glass and metal framing, leading to a single entry door. Historic views show a wide transom of multipaned prism windows.

⁷⁴ *New Ulm Review*, 25 April 1894, 1 August 1894; *New Ulm News*, 15 March 1902; *New Ulm News*, 14 March 1903; *New Ulm Review*, 5 June 1912; *New Ulm News*, 30 July 1904, noted that the evangelical association rented Schell Hall for services until a church could be built.

⁷⁵ "Stoltz Hardware," *New Ulm Review*, 23 April 1924.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 47

Above the street level, there is a long rectangular recess with decorative brick set in diamond shaped patterns. Second story windows have been filled with vertical boards, but show sill and lintel courses of buff-colored Artstone. Historic views show three sets of "Chicago-style" windows across the front with a central fixed pane flanked by two double-sash windows on either side. The upper part of the facade shows a frieze with repeated diamond-shaped patterned brick with Artstone insets of alternating diamonds and crosses. Below a battlement parapet, there is a dropped cornice with modillions and dentils, plus raised diamond-shaped Artstone insets. The coping is also Artstone.

The exterior was altered in the early 1990s when the street level plate windows were replaced,

The Buenger family operated a furniture store for many years on the corner of Third North and Minnesota Streets. In 1920, the business was reorganized and incorporated by Otto and Emil Buenger, P. W. Hackbarth, and F. J. Backer. The Buengers built a "first-class furniture store" at an estimated cost of \$65,000. The building incorporated brick from New Ulm Brick & Tile Co. and was the first steel framed building in New Ulm. To permit construction, four frame stores were torn down. Tenants included the Arndt millinery, the Sprenger clothing store, the Glaser tailor shop, and the Simmet and Arndt barber shop.⁷⁶

The new building also served as a funeral home. The basement was used for the morgue while the second floor had a casket display room and private chapel. The Buengers eventually purchased the Stuebe residence, on the corner of German and Second North Streets, and converted it into a funeral home. The Buenger Furniture Store continued in business until 1945, when the Montgomery Ward Company leased the building. The building was the home of The Christmas Haus in 2004.

204 North Minnesota

**Theodore Mueller Cigar Factory
1898**

**Contractor: Herman Schapekahm
1 Contributing Building**

The Mueller Cigar Factory is a three-story brick commercial building, built for Theodore Mueller in 1898. The facade is anchored by brick and rusticated stone piers on the outer walls. The streetfront has plate glass display windows flanking a recessed glass single entry door. There is an additional door on the southern portion of this wall, providing access to the upper floors. There is a wide signband sheathed in wood. The second floor has four windows—one-over-one—with a raised stone sillcourse and flush stone lintelcourse. Below the third story windows—segmental arched with casement openings—there is a strong stone sillcourse. The wall is finished with a heavy rusticated stone course, a row of corbelled brick with modillions, a band of decorative brickwork, and rusticated stone coping. The piers are finished with ball capstones.

Theodore Mueller was one of the leading cigar manufacturers in the state, producing 300,000 a year. "New Ulm's cigars," noted a local paper, "are smoked by all classes and conditions of men today, from eastern

⁷⁶ *New Ulm Review*, 31 March 1920; 3 Nov 1920; 28 May 1924; *Brown County Journal*, 15 October 1926.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 48

Minnesota to the western boundary of Dakota.” He learned his trade under William Gebser (20 North Minnesota) and Frank Burg (506 Center) and began his own firm in 1885, renting spaces on North Minnesota. Wishing to expand, he acquired the land, apparently before Henry Seifert purchased the adjacent lot to the north. Both erected buildings that were harmonious but somewhat different, both measuring around 25 x 80 feet. This was completed in 1898 for \$3,500.⁷⁷

Active in civic affairs, Mueller was a city councilor from the Second Ward for seven years. He discontinued the factory in 1935 and leased the building to Montgomery Ward Company. In 2004, the Country Loft and Doll Haus maintained businesses here.

206 North Minnesota

Henry Seifert Saloon

1898

Contractor: Herman Schapekahm

2 Contributing Buildings

This is a three-story brick commercial building, built for Henry Seifert in 1898. The facade is anchored by brick and rusticated stone piers on the outer walls. The streetfront has plate glass display windows flanking a recessed glass single entry door. There is an additional door on the southern portion of this wall, providing access to the upper floors. There is a wide signband with an exposed horizontal steel beam above it. The second floor has four windows—one-over-one—with a raised stone sillcourse and flush stone lintelcourse. Between the paired windows, there is a slightly raised brick pier finished with cast stone Corinthian capitals. In the spandrel between the second and third floors, there are rectangles of decorative brickwork created by recessed headers. Below the third story windows—segmental arched with casement openings—there is a strong stone sillcourse. The wall is finished with a heavy rusticated stone course, a row of corbelled brick, an additional rusticated stone course, a band of decorative brickwork, and rusticated stone coping. The piers are finished with ball capstones.

The second contributing building on the property is a one-story garage in the rear. It is a wood-framed structure with a peak hipped roof sheathed in sheet metal, a sliding entry door, and pressed metal siding. There is a small hipped dormer on the east side with a two-paned awning window. It was built sometime between 1905 and 1913.

The *New Ulm News* announced in April 1898, “Henry Seifert bought the 25-foot lot adjoining the Union hotel on the south for \$1850 and will build a brick business room.”⁷⁸

The building continued to be used by drinking establishments until the Depression era. Seifert maintained a connection until 1930. It was also run as the Deutscher Beer Garten. In 1935, Montgomery Ward Co. leased the Seifert and Mueller property for a new store. In the fall of 2004, Main Jiang House Restaurant operated at this site.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ “New Ulm’s Cigar Factories,” *New Ulm News*, 21 May, 27 August, 16 December 1898; *New Ulm Review*, 10 December 1898.

⁷⁸ *New Ulm News*, 16 April, 29 October 1898

⁷⁹ *New Ulm Review*, 1 August 1935.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 49

209-211-213 North Minnesota

(209) Weneeda Bakery

(211) E. W. Baer Hardware

(213) Ulrich Electric

1922

Architect: Albert Plagens

Contractor: John Mueller

1 Contributing Building

This rectangular two-story commercial building is divided into three storefronts. The building incorporates parts of two much older structures—the Follman Millinery (209) and Henle & Marti Harness Shop (211) were two-story brick buildings constructed before 1884. In 1922, Ulrich Electric Company built a new store at 213 North Minnesota. At the same time, F. W. Eibner (Weneeda Bakery) and Baer's Hardware Store remodeled the fronts of their adjoining stores, presenting a unified new front for the block. The block was built with a dark brown brick from New Ulm Brick & Tile Company and is trimmed with Artstone.

The streetfront has three bays, each with a different design. #209 is stuccoed with a single entry door, fixed plate glass window, stuccoed surround, and shingled pent eave; #211 is more open, with larger plate glass display windows, a recessed entrance with single entry door, and signband; #213 has a gabled eave over the bay, with smaller rectangular plate glass windows, a recessed entrance with single entry door, and a stuccoed extended bulkhead that holds flower planters. The signband is sheathed in wood shingles. The upper facade begins with a course of soldier bricks, repeated just below the windows with an additional soldier brick beltcourse, then a sillcourse of Artstone. There are twelve evenly spaced rectangular windows across the second floor with six-over-one double hung sashes. Above the window is a wide lintelcourse of Artstone. The frieze has six diamond-shaped insets, with a raised molded cornice above. The wall ends with a battlement parapet with diamond-shaped insets and buff-colored Artstone coping.

The southernmost portion of the building, #209, was the home of F. W. Eibner's Weneeda Bakery and Cafe, a popular dining spot in the area. It opened in 1902. In 1912, he added a thirty-five foot addition to the rear for new ovens. #211 held the Nicholas Baer Hardware Store. After Ulrich Electric Company purchased the open lot to the north, they began construction of a new building, enticing Eibner and Baer to create a unified front. As a newspaper account stated, "Mr. Eibner has desired a new front for some years . . . He prevailed upon John Henle, owner of the building, to also place a new front. The three fronts conform to the Buenger [203] and Saffert [217] buildings." As described, "The fronts of the three buildings are of similar hytex brick with stone trimming from the Saffert Construction Company." Total cost was approximately \$17,000.⁸⁰

The Weneeda Bakery and Cafe, the Baer Hardware Store, and Ulrich Electric continued to serve customers at this address through the 1940s.

⁸⁰ *Brown County Journal*, 29 December 1922; "Pioneer Business Concern Retained by Buenger Sons," *Brown County Journal*, May 28, 1924; "Outstanding Improvements," *New Ulm Review*, 31 January 1923;

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 50

210 North Minnesota

Grand Hotel

1876

1 Contributing Building (National Register of Historic Places)

The Grand Hotel is a three-story Italianate style brick building. As originally constructed in 1876, this building was two stories high and called the Union Hotel. In 1899, new owners added a third story and changed the name to the Grand Hotel. At the same time, the heating, plumbing, and lighting fixtures were upgraded, and a brick addition was extended from the rear. The building has had few exterior changes since then.

The facade is divided into three unequal size bays by pilasters, with the center bay narrower than the other two. Fenestration is different on each level. The first floor consists of a transomed central entrance with sidelights flanked by rusticated brick pilasters and large, paired plate glass storefront windows. All five of the first floor openings are set in semicircular brick arches; each window has a decorative cartouche as a keystone, and in the center of the arched doorway is a carved lions head. The formal balance of the Italianate style is accentuated by rusticated brick quoins. The window to the immediate right of the door was originally an entrance; it was altered after 1972 to conform to the remaining windows. A corbel table provides a horizontal division between the first and second floors.

The second story consists of six identical 4/4 double hung windows featuring stone sills and raised brick Gothic arches with keystones. The two center windows are paired. The remnant of a cornice is visible just above the keystones. Italianate detailing can be seen in the embellished window moldings at each floor, but particularly on the first two levels where the openings are tall and rather narrow.

The top floor fenestration is similar to the one below except the windows are one-over-one sash and have nearly flat brick arches with keystones. A row of corbelled brick in the form of dentils surmounts these windows, and there is a large round window centered in the facade. Additional corbelled bricks serve as an elaborate terminus to the building. The gable roof has a slight pitch and each wall has a parapet.

The west sidewall is broken on the third floor by five double hung windows, two of which are one-over-one sash. The east elevation features eight double hung windows on the first floor, seven on the second story, and six on the third level; all of these openings have stone sills and segmental brick arches.

Attached to the rear of the building is the 1899 one-story brick addition with a shed roof. It has two doors, one 4/4 double hung window, and another opening which has been partially enclosed with brick. The second and third floors of the back wall have several one-over-one sash and 4/4 double hung windows.

Although the Grand Hotel was sandblasted in 1970, it retains very good historic integrity because the building's original materials and architectural details are intact and clearly visible. In 1987 the building was painted, tuckpointed, and a new roof and sprinkler system was installed.

Phillipp Gross, born in Germany on October 12, 1809, was a baker by trade. In 1854 he came to America, remaining for nearly two years in Milwaukee. In 1856 he joined the colony that came to New Ulm. In the same year Gross began a hostelry in a two-story wood frame building called the Minnesota Haus, which became the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 51

Union Hotel in 1860. The hotel soon became a focal point of activity in New Ulm, including serving as a hospital during the Dakota Conflict of 1862.

Commercial activity in New Ulm increased after the Conflict largely because of an influx of settlers who took advantage of land offered through the Homestead Act. This period marked the beginning of development of the area into a producer, exporter, and processor of agricultural products. When the Winona and St. Peter (later the Chicago and Northwestern) Railroad entered the county in 1872, New Ulm became a regionally important center for processing and marketing grain. Business flourished for the Union Hotel, which served travelers until 5 July 1875 when it was destroyed by fire. Gross was undaunted, however, and he immediately built a new two-story brick hotel that he operated until retiring in 1885; his son-in-law then managed the property for a short time.

In 1899 Peter Manderfeld, the new owner of the Union Hotel, added a third floor, upgraded the interior, and changed the name of the building to the Grand Hotel. The expanded hostelry contained about thirty sleeping rooms, an office, a new kitchen to the rear, and a large dining room that occupied one-half of the first floor. With a refurbished interior and additional space for boarders, the Grand continued to play an important role in community life into the twentieth century. In the fall of 2004, it housed the Rhein River Arts Center, the Three Sisters Tea Room, and studios of KNUJ Radio on the second floor.⁸¹

212 North Minnesota

Grand Theatre

1920

Architect: Albert G. Plagens

Contractor: Otto Tappe

1 Contributing Building

This one-story rectangular brick building has a flat roof. The streetfront has a central entrance of glass and metal with a single entry door and four rectangular glass panels. The entry is decorated with a molded egg and dart motif. The bas-relief cast concrete panel on the front facade is striking, with its elaborate cartouches and swags. The wall terminates with a stone cornice.

Historic views show that there were twin double entry glass doors on the storefront with a wide fixed canopy overhanging the storefront.

The building opened as the "Grand Theatre," one of two major motion picture theaters in New Ulm in the early 1920s. George W. Schlottman, owner of the Grand Hotel, built the theatre next to his establishment in 1919 at a cost of \$16,000. At the time of construction, it was described as a building, 26 x 115 feet, with a 20-foot ceiling. An article in the *New Ulm Review* noted, "The front, which is built of Springfield brick in a pleasant combination of color shades, is decorated with a metal canopy, above which is an appropriate scene of carved stone. The

⁸¹ *New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1899; *National Register of Historic Places Nomination*.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 52

fringe of the canopy consists of colored art glass and the words, Grand Theatre." It went through several name changes, including the Nile theatre from 1928-1931 and the Time Theatre.⁸²

214 North Minnesota

Arbes Furniture

1918

Contractor: Otto Tappe

1 Contributing Building

The building is a two-story block commercial structure, now incorporated with the adjacent building to the north as a single front for the Lamplighter Restaurant. Although some elements have been added to unify the two storefronts, the buildings remain clearly distinctive. The Arbes streetfront shows a metal kickplate with fixed plate glass windows across the front—there is no street entrance. The signband is covered with a curved fabric awning with the name of the restaurant. The rest of the signband is sheathed with gray stained vertical wood boards. There is a simple overhang cornice above that. The upper facade fenestration has two bays, created by block piers with simple wood capitals. Each bay has two rectangular one-over-one windows, smaller than the original openings, with vertical wood boards used to fill the upper space. The sills are Artstone. Above the windows, there are two courses of Artstone, separating the second floor windows from the cornice. This last feature is made of Artstone as well, raised with modillions, with a short parapet above that, capped with concrete block.

The block building was constructed for John Arbes' furniture store in 1918. It represented, as the newspaper said, "a simple, but very becoming style of modern architecture. It is built of granite-finished cement blocks of different sizes, manufactured by Saffert & Gugisberg." This appears to be the oldest building in New Ulm using the block made by that company, later American Artstone Company. The building included a new and second hand furniture store with a workshop for furniture repair. The Arbes family lived upstairs. Originally, it measured 95 feet by 25 feet with 2,250 square feet of floor space and a "big show window." Architect Albert Plagens kept an office here during the 1930s. In the 1930s, it was acquired by Harvey Fiemeyer and became the Uptown Tavern.⁸³

(216 North Minnesota)

Dengler Store

1926

Architect: Albert G. Plagens

1 Contributing Building

This building was constructed in 1926 as a one-story brick structure, with the subsequent addition of a second floor. This building is now part of Lamplighter Restaurant. Although some elements have been added to unify the

⁸² *New Ulm Review* 10 December 1919; *New Ulm Review* 7, 14 January 1920; *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 27 July 1956.

⁸³ *New Ulm Review*, 5 February 1919.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 53

two storefronts, the buildings remain clearly distinctive. The Dengler store is a two-story structure with a rectangular floor plan. The exterior is sheathed in polychrome brick, probably made by New Ulm Brick & Tile. The streetfront shows a metal covered kickplate with three-panel plate glass windows above it. On the south portion of the wall, there are two single entry doors with metal surround. On the north wall, there are seven rectangular plate glass windows. On the upper facade, there are two sets of paired one-over-one windows with a simple sillcourse of headers and a lintel soldier brick course. Above the windows is a simple molded terra cotta or Artstone raised cornice. The wall terminates with sheet metal coping.

In 1926, John Dengler erected this building. For years, he operated a bakery in the building located just to the north of the present property. This has subsequently been demolished. Although the newspaper announced his intention to build a two-story building, for more than a decade, it remained one story. It cost \$8,000 according to the *Brown County Journal* and was used as an A & P grocery store.⁸⁴

The Lamplighter remodeled the building in 1993.

(217 North Minnesota)

Eppler Meat Market

1871 (ca.), 1918 (new front)

1 Contributing Building

The building, now joined with 221 North Minnesota, holds the Kaiserhoff Restaurant. It is a two-story rectangular block with a dark brown brick, locally made by the New Ulm Brick & Tile Company. The streetfront consists of a faux-German, half-timbered facade with white stucco and dark wood beams, including a band of unturned balusters below the window line. The whole is framed by two brick piers. There are two rectangular fixed glass plate windows. The main entrance is slightly recessed, located just off center. There is an additional entrance on the south edge of this facade, with a solid panel door. The door surround is exposed brick. On the storefront frieze, there is a large sign for the Kaiserhoff Restaurant. The upper facade is set apart by a thin stringcourse of Artstone. There are six rectangular windows—three-over-one double sash—with sill and lintel courses. Above the windows, the wall displays a crenellated section, with the wall capped by Artstone coping.

Historic photographs show a band of prism glass in the transom panel now covered by the sign. The cornice was also altered, although during the period of significance, by the removal of a stepped parapet and raised cornice with modillions and dentils.

Meinrad Eppler opened his meat market on this site around 1872. Born in Germany, he settled in New Ulm in 1866 and worked as a butcher. His building was severely damaged by the 1881 cyclone, with the *New Ulm Review* noting that, "M. Eppler and George Jacobs are making arrangements to rebuild their solid brick blocks as soon as the necessary material can be obtained."⁸⁵

⁸⁴ *New Ulm Review*, 17 March 1926.

⁸⁵ "Cyclone Zephyrs," *New Ulm Review*, 27 July 1881.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 54

Following his death in 1890, his family continued to operate the business. *The New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1899, reported that Mrs. E. Epple made a \$1,500 addition to the meat market. In 1902, the Epples sold the business to an employee, Andrew Saffert. Saffert, a native of Muttersdorf, also owned a farm outside the city, used to raise cattle. He purchased the building in 1909, adding a slaughterhouse in 1914 and sausage and cooking rooms. In 1918, he made major alterations to the primary facade. Work spaces extended back toward the alley, including smoke houses, a sausage manufacturing room, ice machines, and a slaughter house. In 1923, Saffert Meat Market employed sixteen people.

After Andrew's death, his son, Elmer, continued the business. The property was sold in 1976 to Don Veigel for expansion of the Kaiserhoff Restaurant. He razed a building on the south side and altered the front.⁸⁶

220 North Minnesota

Kiesling House

1861

1 Contributing Building (National Register of Historic Places)

The house is a simple one-and-a-half story structure with a rectangular floor plan set parallel to Minnesota Street. The house is wood-frame sheathed with clapboard. The roof is a moderately pitched side gable sheathed in asphalt shingles. There are two windows on the ground floor, both double hung with 2/2. A chimney of mortar and brick extends a few inches above the dwelling and is located on the south section of the roof. There has been an addition to the rear, creating an underground meeting room. Original cellar measures 10' x 10'.

The frame house erected in 1861 by Friedrich Kiesling was an important defense post during the Dakota Conflict of 1862. Kiesling was born in Kiffern, Germany, in 1829, coming to America and settling in New Ulm in 1860. He worked as a blacksmith. In August 1862, the house stood inside the barricades placed around the city to defend against two attacks by Dakota Indians. It is the oldest frame building in the City remaining at its original location. Kiesling lived until 1912. Used as a residence until 1970, it was given to the City of New Ulm. It is currently occupied by the Council for the Arts in New Ulm and used for meetings, art exhibits, and office space. For many years, the house sat in relative obscurity behind commercial buildings on Minnesota Street. Following its acquisition by the city, these were raised to create Kiesling Park. In 2004, the building was used by the Council on Arts in New Ulm

⁸⁶ *New Ulm News*, May 2 1902; "Saffert's closing market," *New Ulm Journal*, 13 October 1976; "39 Year Record in Business Shows Quality, Modernity," *Brown County Journal*, 23 March 1940.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 55

221 North Minnesota

Veigel-Moll Building

1946

1 Contributing Building

This building is now joined with 217 North Minnesota as one structure. It is a two story brick building. The street level shows a faux-German, half-timbered front with white stucco and dark wood cross beams and false pilasters. There are two simple single entry doors on the north and south ends. The entry to the first floor restaurant is a single entry door on the south side with three small windows. There are four sets of paired aluminum windows across the second floor with 3/1 glazing. Over these windows, a strong horizontal cross band extends across the entire facade. Above that, three diamond-shaped Artstone inserts decorate the area below the unadorned cornice. The roof is flat with a composite covering.

The building has a long history, with some elements dating as far back as 1871, when George Jacobs built a two-story brick block. The Jacobs Block suffered severe damage in the 1881 cyclone, although it was rebuilt. In 1924 W. S. Vercoe moved his plumbing shop to this address.⁸⁷

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Veigel, with their son, Don, operated the Kaiserhoff Restaurant on First North—noted for its barbequed ribs. In 1946, following Don's return from military service, they purchased the building with William Moll, a plumbing parts supplier formerly employed by Vercoe. They quickly remodeled the Minnesota Street facade, installing plate glass windows. Further renovations were completed in 1947, following a disastrous fire that gutted the interior. The restaurant used only the southern half of the building until 1963, when they acquired the whole building. Don Veigel built an addition on the rear in 1970, then, in 1976, acquired Saffert's Meat Market to the south.⁸⁸

225 North Minnesota

Louis Buenger Building (A)

1892

1 Contributing Building

This three-story building, constructed in 1892, is a good example of Queen Anne commercial architecture. Built of red brick, it has a rectangular floor plan and a strong vertical sense created by the brick piers. The streetfront has been substantially altered with vertical wood board siding. There are two fixed plate glass windows with a recessed entry on the south portion of the facade. Above this level, there is a band of transom lights. The second and third floors are divided into three bays by vertical piers, capped with soldier brick segmental arches. The windows in each bay are rectangular and one-over-one. There is a buff-colored rusticated stone sillcourse under the second floor windows. Lintels and sills above this are smooth stone. The spandrel between these floors is decorated with a recessed rectangle of dogtooth brick. This slightly recessed center wall

⁸⁷ "Vercoe Plumbing Shop," *New Ulm Review*, 20 January 1926.

⁸⁸ *Brown County Journal*, 19 March 1926; *New Ulm Review*, 23 August 1947.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 56

terminates with a row of corbelled bricks. Above that, there is a thin beltcourse of stone, with pattern brick on the cornice. There is stone coping.

The building was constructed in 1892 for Louis Buenger. Louis Buenger Sr. was born in Hanover, Germany, and came to Cincinnati in 1856. He settled in New Ulm in 1863 and opened his first furniture shop on the corner of Minnesota and 3rd North in 1876. In 1892, Buenger erected a brick building at 225 North Minnesota Street. Like other downtown merchants, he was active in community affairs, serving as a charter member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and a city council member.

In 1898, he retired and his eldest son, Louis J. Buenger Jr. took over the management of the business. The business was actively expanded when, a few years later, in 1902, the frame building was removed and the large three-story building was erected on the same corner.

P. W. Hackbarth, the elder Buenger's son-in-law, opened a shoe store at this location in 1903, remaining here until 1923. William Lindemann and Henry Dahms purchased the business and operated a shoe store here into the 1940s.⁸⁹

227 North Minnesota

Louis Buenger Building (B)

1902

Contractor: Herman Schapekahn

1 Contributing Building

Although built ten years after 225 North Minnesota, the exteriors were harmonized in material and design. This three-story building stands on the southwest corner of Third North and North Minnesota Street. It is an excellent example of Queen Anne commercial architecture. Built of red brick, it has a rectangular floor plan. Visually, it is dominated by the full tower on the street corner, supported by a polished granite Ionic column. An early drawing shows a conical cap to the tower, although it is not clear whether this part was ever built.

The streetfront has been substantially altered with wood panels and a rusticated brick bulkhead. There are two fixed plate glass windows with a recessed entry. The second and third floors are divided into three bays by vertical piers, capped with soldier brick segmental arches. The windows in each bay are rectangular and one-over-one. There is a buff-colored rusticated stone sillcourse under the second floor windows. Lintels and sills above this are smooth stone. This slightly recessed center wall terminates with a row of corbelled bricks. Above that, there is a thin beltcourse of stone, with pattern brick on the cornice. There is stone coping. Along Third North Street, there are three sets of paired windows on each floor, plus four narrow single windows—all with one-over-one glazing. There is a full height wood porch/ deck on the rear wall.

Built in 1902 by Louis Buenger, the building received praise during construction. The *New Ulm News* reported, "The design shows a very handsome front, with a round corner where the entrance will be and this will leave room for a very large plate glass show window. The building will have a full length basement which will give it

⁸⁹ "Hackbarth Shoe Store," *New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1924.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 57

four stories for furniture.” In another article, the reporter noted that “on the corners as supports to the upper stories there will be heavy columns of polished granite, something that has not heretofore been used in a building in New Ulm.”⁹⁰

In 1912, Louis J. Buenger left the business and moved to Minneapolis. It was at this time that Emil F. Buenger, a brother, took charge of the business, later joined by another brother, Otto J. Buenger. In 1920 they moved to a new building at 203 North Minnesota. After the furniture store moved out, Interstate Power Company opened an office here, remaining through the 1940s.⁹¹

301 North Minnesota

Lohmann Building

1885

1 Contributing Building

This two-and-a-half story building exhibits an imposing facade with light brown textured brick and fine detailing in the fenestration. The streetfront has three bays divided by half fluted pilasters—a central recessed entrance flanked by two glass plate windows. Along Third North, four rectangular windows have been filled, leaving their stone sills and lintels. Above the storefront, there is a sign for George’s Restaurant, covering the original transom space. The ground and second floors are divided by a soldier brick course and stone beltcourse. The second floor has four one-over-one rectangular windows on the Minnesota Street side, with stone sills and lintels. Along the Third North wall, there are four similar windows. All are nicely finished with brick corbelling. The second and third floors are divided by a stone belt course as well. This floor has four segmental arch windows with a brick cornice separating them from the lower floor on the main facade. Along Third North, this floor has four inset spaces filled with stone. The south and east walls are finished with a brick beltcourse, then a boxed cornice with modillions and dentils, then stone coping. Two wall chimneys project from the roofline on the Third North facade. There is a one-story brick addition to the rear.

The building, constructed in 1885 for Claus Lohmann, has traditionally been used as a saloon. For the first thirteen years, Goetsch and Ernest Lane ran a saloon, followed by Mike Ranweiler. Ben Reinhart acquired it in 1917, running a bar (or Refreshment Parlor during Prohibition) until 1944. After that, it was Pan’s Place and Liquor. It operated as George’s Restaurant in 2004.⁹²

⁹⁰ *New Ulm News*, 19 April 1902; 28 June 1902.

⁹¹ *Brown County Journal*, 10 January 1903; *Brown County Journal*, 17 April 1925; *Brown County Journal*, 8 January 1926; *New Ulm Review*, 11 May 1923.

⁹² *New Ulm Review*, 26 March 1919.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 58

New Ulm Commercial Historic District
Contributing Properties

1.	504-510	1st N	Fritsche Block	BW-NUC-199
2.	512-514	1st S	Graff Garage	BW-NUC-805
3.	2	Broadway N	United States Post Office *	BW-NUC-001
4.	12	Broadway N	Retzlaff Motor Company	BW-NUC-235
5.	18	Broadway N	Fesenmaier Service Station	BW-NUC-236
6.	26	Broadway N	Arbeiter Hall	BW-NUC-030
7.	100	Broadway N	New Ulm Municipal Building	BW-NUC-237
8.	405	Center	George's Ballroom	BW-NUC-847
9.	506	Center	Jacob Pfenninger Store	BW-NUC-296
10.	509	Center	Zischka Building	BW-NUC-848
11.	513	Center	Kuhlmann House	BW-NUC-849
12.	518	Center	F. H. Retzlaff & Sons	BW-NUC-297
13.	1	Minnesota N	G. A. Ottomeyer Block	BW-NUC-517
14.	2	Minnesota N	Brown County Bank	BW-NUC-518
15.	3-5	Minnesota N	Schoch-Ottomeyer Block	BW-NUC-520
16.	4	Minnesota N	H. Behnke Building	BW-NUC-519
17.	6-8	Minnesota N	Hummel Maltzahn Block *	BW-NUC-008
18.	9-13	Minnesota N	Masonic Block	BW-NUC-023
19.	10-12	Minnesota N	Boesch Block *	BW-NUC-008
20.	14	Minnesota N	Roos-Sommers Block	BW-NUC-521
21.	15	Minnesota N	Amann's Saloon	BW-NUC-522
22.	16-18	Minnesota N	Meridian Block	BW-NUC-523
23.	20	Minnesota N	Gebser's Store	BW-NUC-525
24.	21	Minnesota N	Retzlaff Hardware	BW-NUC-527
25.	22	Minnesota N	Gebser Hall	BW-NUC-526
26.	24	Minnesota N	Wicherski Shoe Store	BW-NUC-528
27.	110	Minnesota N	Crone Brothers	BW-NUC-535
28.	114	Minnesota N	Crone Dry Goods	BW-NUC-536
29.	116-118	Minnesota N	Stuebe Meat Market	
30.	117	Minnesota N	Reim Jewelers	BW-NUC-538 [+1 object]
31.	119	Minnesota N	Backer Harness Shop	BW-NUC-539
32.	120	Minnesota N	Wagner Furniture/Citizens' Bank	BW-NUC-540
33.	121	Minnesota N	Loheyde Shoe Store	
34.	123	Minnesota N	Weigand Hauenstein Saloon	BW-NUC-541
35.	125	Minnesota N	Pioneer Drug Store	BW-NUC-542
36.	127	Minnesota N	Weiser Block	BW-NUC-543
37.	201	Minnesota N	Doehne Block	BW-NUC-545
38.	202	Minnesota N	Schell Hall	BW-NUC-546
39.	203	Minnesota N	Buenger Furniture Company	BW-NUC-547
40.	204	Minnesota N	Mueller Cigar Factory	
41.	206	Minnesota N	H. Seifert Saloon	BW-NUC-548 [+ 1 bldg]
42.	209-213	Minnesota N	Weneeda Bakery	BW-NUC-066

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 7 Page 59

43.	210	Minnesota N	Grand Hotel *	BW-NUC-028
44.	212	Minnesota N	Grand Theatre	BW-NUC-026
45.	214	Minnesota N	Arbes Furniture	BW-NUC-549
46.	216	Minnesota N	Dengler Store	
47.	217	Minnesota N	Epple Meat Market	BW-NUC-550
48.	220	Minnesota N	Kiesling House *	BW-NUC-016
49.	221	Minnesota N	Viegel-Moll Building	BW-NUC-551
50.	225	Minnesota N	Louis Buenger Building (A)	
51.	227	Minnesota N	Louis Buenger Building (B)	BW-NUC-029
52.	301	Minnesota N	Lohmann Building	BW-NUC-552
53.	2	Minnesota S	Schoch-Reinhart Block	BW-NUC-952
54.	6	Minnesota S	John Zischka Saloon	BW-NUC-954
55.	8	Minnesota S	F. C. Schnobrich Meat Market	BW-NUC-951
56.	9	Minnesota S	American Theatre	BW-NUC-953
57.	1-5	Minnesota S	City Meat Market	BW-NUC-111
58.	13-15	Minnesota S	Schoch Block	BW-NUC-955
59.	16	Minnesota S	Engelbert Hardware Store	BW-NUC-956 [+ 1 bldg]
60.	20	Minnesota S	Chicago House	BW-NUC-957
61.	21	Minnesota S	South Side Auto Garage	BW-NUC-958

* previously listed

Noncontributing properties

1.	412	2nd N	Stoll Plumbing	BW-NUC-207
2.	510-512	2nd N	Volksblatt Building	BW-NUC-208
3.	19	Minnesota N	Liebold Building	BW-NUC-524
4.	27	Minnesota N	J. C. Penney	BW-NUC-529
5.	28	Minnesota N	Somsen Block	BW-NUC-530
6.	100	Minnesota N	State Bank & Trust	BW-NUC-531
7.	101	Minnesota N	Olsen Block	BW-NUC-532
8.	105	Minnesota N	Citizens Bank of New Ulm	BW-NUC-533
9.	108	Minnesota N	Frank Erd Building	BW-NUC-534
10.	115	Minnesota N	Baltrusch Block	BW-NUC-537
11.	126	Minnesota N	Ben Franklin	
12.	200	Minnesota N	Farmers & Merchants Bank	BW-NUC-544
13.	17-19	Minnesota S	Professional Building	
14.	18	Minnesota S	H.Siebenbrunner Grocery	
15.	26	Minnesota S	Standard Oil Service Station	

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1861-1953

Significant Dates

1862: U.S. Government–Dakota Conflict

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

See continuation sheets

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 1

8. Statement of Significance

The New Ulm Commercial Historic District is locally significant under National Register Criterion A for its association to the broad patterns of our history in the area of commerce. New Ulm played an important role in the economic development of south-central Minnesota, providing retail, service, and banking industries, as well as social and cultural opportunities. Its commercial function is represented by such structures as retail stores, banks, hotels, restaurants, professional offices, and newspaper offices. The district includes related buildings that enhanced the development of downtown commerce such as theatres, meeting halls, and governmental offices.

The district's architecture reflects the broad range of styles current in the United States and the Upper Midwest, showing the work of local architects, contractors, and brickmasons. The nine block commercial area contains seventy-six properties from five significant periods: two predate the Dakota Conflict; thirteen between 1863 and 1881, when a cyclone devastated the downtown; thirty-two between 1882 and 1912, the city's most pronounced period of economic and population growth; and twenty-one between 1913 and 1945. Three district buildings were erected between the end of World War II and 1953, although three others underwent major storefront alterations that stylistically place them in the postwar era. Only two buildings completely postdate the period of significance, both products of chain department stores: Ben Franklin and J. C. Penney Stores.

The period of significance begins in 1861, the construction date of the oldest buildings within the district. It ends in 1953 when International Milling Corporation closed its wheat flour operations in the city, leading to major economic changes within the community.

The district is significant within two statewide historic contexts established by the State Historic Preservation Office, "Early Agriculture and River Settlement 1840-1870" and "Railroads and Agricultural Development 1870-1940" and within three historic contexts established by the New Ulm Heritage Preservation Commission, "Commerce," "Civic Life," and "Social and Cultural Life."

Historical Background

New Ulm has a well-earned reputation as a "German" town, confirmed by the 2000 census. It reported that sixty-six percent of the city's residents claimed at least some German ancestry—the highest percentage of ethnic identification for any city in the country of more than 5,000 residents.

The city was founded in 1854 by the Chicago Land Company, an association of German-Americans under the leadership of Frederick Beinhorn. Beinhorn came to the United States from Braunschweig, Germany, in 1852, bringing with him the hope of organizing a colony in the west. In the rapidly growing city of Chicago, Illinois, he met with like-minded compatriots. Following a common model of the time, they planned a joint venture financed by membership dues. Working together, they hoped to raise the necessary cash to buy the land, then build enough reserves to carry settlers through the difficult first years on the frontier. Eighteen people attended the meeting and three days later, they formed the Chicago Land Society. In late 1854, a party of company members embarked from Chicago and settled in the vicinity of present-day New Ulm.¹

¹ Beinhorn's account of the events was printed in the *New Ulm Review*, 15 August 1938.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

In 1856, these settlers were joined by a large and influential colonization society, organized by the Turner Society in response to a wave of violence against immigrants in 1854 to 1856. In the antebellum years, the Turners were the most significant secular national organization of German-Americans and one of the few capable of marshalling a response. In March 1855, William Pfaender—a founder of the Cincinnati Turnverein—wrote a letter to *Die Turnzeitung*, the national Turner newspaper, calling for “Practical Turnerism.” In the letter, he stated that it was time for “a separate settlement, which in addition to material well-being also presents the advantage that the mad, unworthy attempts at killing by our Anglo-American disciplinarians cannot limit us.” Pfaender envisioned a small town where the physical and mental aspects of Turnerism could be “practiced.” His plan, imbued with social and political principles, included a detailed proposal for stock ownership, division of land, and management. A month later the Cincinnati Turners formed a committee to organize a shareholding company for the settlement, declaring “that no time should be lost.”

Pfaender, together with his compatriot, Jacob Nix, introduced his plan to the national Turner convention in Buffalo in September 1855, where it met overwhelming approval. Pfaender was chosen as the president of the Turner Colonization Society and he proceeded to draft the charter, which declared the organization’s purpose:

To offer its members, aside from the basis of a secure existence, the benefits of a comprehensive, splendid youth education, and in general to concern itself with the promotion of trade and industry, the arts and sciences, and at the same time foster good German fellowship and the right spirit.

A special national convention approved the organization of the Settlement Association of the Socialist Turner Society. With months, the Association had 1,300 members. Although most came from Cincinnati, members came from many other cities—including Charles Preusser from Cleveland, William Hummel and Eugene Gerstenhauer from Chicago, and, eventually, Jacob Nix from Buffalo.²

With solid financial and moral support, William Pfaender began the search for land, joined by William Seeger, also from Cincinnati, and Charles Preusser. After extensive travel, the party landed in Saint Paul, where they learned of the new town of Germans along the banks of the Minnesota River. On arrival at this new settlement, the two parties immediately understood each other’s value—the Turners found a superb town site and had \$100,000 in its coffers. Recognizing their mutual interest in establishing a German town, the two groups merged as the German Land Association of Minnesota, incorporated a year later on March 4, 1857, with William Pfaender named as president. Each member of the Chicago society, formerly promised twelve lots and nine acres of garden land, received six lots and four acres, while the Turner settlers obtained three lots and four acres.³

A New Town

Building off the cornerstone principles of the Turner Society, the leaders of New Ulm worked to create a town that placed personal liberty as the center of political life, gave extraordinary emphasis on education and physical

² *New Ulm Pioneer*, 1 January 1858. Also see Jorg Nagler, *Frontier Socialism: The Founding of New Ulm, Minnesota*, by German Workers and Freethinkers,” 187-189.

³ Alice Felt Tyler, “William Pfaender and the Founding of New Ulm,” *Minnesota History*, March 1949. Comparatively, the Cincinnati society had around 1,300 members, contrasting with some 200 for the Chicago company.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 3

fitness, and cultivated a social and cultural life that expressed the Germanness, or *Deutschtum*. The German Land Company hired Christian Prignitz, a member of the Turner colonists, to complete a new plat for New Ulm, filed in April 1858. This master plan for New Ulm expressed a grand vision of the city's future based on the ideals of "Practical Turnerism." These included support of education, development of a rich cultural life rooted in German traditions, and a relative equality of opportunity.⁴

Building on the natural terraces, Prignitz laid out primary streets parallel to the river. The lowest terrace became the industrial district and the location of the rail lines after 1873. Minnesota Street, on the second terrace, developed as the primary commercial avenue. The third terrace, location of Turner Hall, the Brown County Courthouse, and the public school, became the primary residential district with street names honoring free-thinking republicans such as Franklin and Jefferson. Just before this terrace rises to a high bluff on the west, the town plan set aside small lots for gardens—along what is now "Garden Street."

Geography, ideology, and regional economic development combined to create a vibrant commercial district. Industry and transportation did not intrude on the residential or commercial space—having much the same effect as zoning laws. To reach their place of employment, workers had to pass through the downtown, possibly stopping at a bakery on the way to work, picking up groceries when heading home, or lingering at one of the many local saloons at the end of a hard day. The commercial district was further enhanced by the establishment of government offices—the post office, the municipal building, and later, the Brown County Historic Society. Public halls—such as Schell's, Gebser's, and Arbeiter's—drew people downtown. These activities generated foot traffic at local stores and restaurants.

The Early Years

Following the principles established by the Settlement Society's charter, city leaders looked to create a strong local economy through "the promotion of trade and industry." Phillipp Gross opened the Minnesota Haus in 1856, rebuilt and renamed the Union House in 1860. In April 1859, Frank Erd and Adolph Seiter opened a nine-room hotel, known as the Dacotah House, with Lena Seiter managing the kitchen. Erd built a substantial brick general store across the street in 1861. Nearby, August von Glahn owned the Pennsylvania House, built in 1857, with a warehouse on the ground floor and simple lodging rooms upstairs. Henry and Carl Vajens—Russian immigrants—ran a fur-trading store. Up on Broadway, Frank Forster's store served as the local post office. Businesses included six stores, one woolen cloths establishment, two blacksmiths, a butcher shop, a bakery, and two mills. By the first of January 1858, the city had ninety-five houses.⁵

In August 1862, the town was devastated, when two pitched battles were fought between the Dakota Indians and settlers. New Ulm and area residents placed barricades around the downtown district while surrounding structures were burned. Four commercial buildings remain from that period. Two, the Kiesling House (220 N. Minnesota) and the Erd Building (108 N. Minnesota), lie within the district while the Forster Store and the Schalk

⁴ "New Ulm and New York Only Cities Platted for Growth," *New Ulm Review*, 18 September 1947; "New Ulm Follows Plan Laid by Far-Seeing German Immigrants," *New Ulm Review*, 14 June 1951.

⁵ "Noted Place in Pioneer Times," *New Ulm Review*, 9 August 1922; "Grand Hotel," *New Ulm Review*, 13 September 1951. *New Ulm Pioneer*, 1 January 1858.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 4

Store are located outside the district boundaries—the latter being moved in 1902 and greatly altered. The Erd Building, in particular, played a key role in the defense of the town, providing shelter to women and children. The effects of the Dakota Conflict lingered for years. Charles Roos reported to General Sibley in 1863 that “nine blocks forming the present Town including the Hill in the rear of the Post office are fortified with twelve log houses and wall and ditch, entire circumference about 6000 feet, two cannons posted on [the] corner of the hill command the whole plateau and the Town.” These fortifications were still in place as late as 1866 when General William Tecumseh Sherman visited the city.⁶

Within weeks, though, new construction began in the town, augmented when the federal Sioux Claims Commission reimbursed residents for their losses in the conflict.⁷

Growth in 1870s

The local economy received a substantial boost on 22 February 1872 with the completion of the Winona & St. Peter Company Railroad to New Ulm. On a cold winter day, hundreds of people gathered at the newly constructed depot to welcome the first train. After the arrival of the locomotive “St. Croix,” the crowds marched to Turner Hall for speeches, food, and dancing. Its economic impact was immediate—within a week, the first freight train pulled out of the city carrying 600 bushels of wheat for distant markets.

While the city lost people after the U.S. Government–Dakota Conflict, other energetic young men and women found opportunity in New Ulm. Michael Mullen—born in Vermont of Irish parents—moved to town in 1872 and, within a few years, helped to found the Citizens National Bank. Two brothers, A. W. and Maro Bingham, also came from St. Albans, Vermont, and started a lumberyard, but quickly invested in a highly successful company that sold grain and coal. They maintained offices within the downtown district. Judas Newhart—originally from Pennsylvania—opened a law practice on Minnesota Street in 1871 and was elected Brown County Judge of Probate within two years. Joseph Bobleter—born in Dornbirn, Austria—moved from Dubuque, Iowa, to New Ulm in 1869. A man of tremendous energy, he ran a successful drug store on Minnesota Street, began the *New Ulm Review* newspaper, and served as postmaster from 1873 to 1886. In 1871, after only two years in town, he organized the first militia company in the state, called the “New Ulm Military Company.” It laid the basis for the Minnesota National Guard, in which he was given the rank of colonel in 1883.

Samuel Peterson often passed through town as a salesman for farm implements. His wife recalled,

He arrived in New Ulm with his plows the third day of May 1872. He could not find a single place to put his plows for they were all Germans so he walked streets to find a place to see if he could to unload them. Finally, on the corner of Minnesota and Second Street North, he found a Yankee that could speak English.⁸

⁶ See Russell Fridley and Leota Kellett, *Charles Flandreau and the Defense of New Ulm* (New Ulm: Brown County Historical Society, 1962), 59-62.

⁷ Lambert Naegele to William Pfaender, 15 April 1863. Typescript, BCHS.

⁸ Reminiscence, Peterson Family, BCHS. John Lind also recalled that virtually everyone spoke German when he first came to New Ulm.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 5

At ease with strangers, Peterson sold two harrows and thirty-six plows that first day, and within three weeks, had sold out his four hundred plows and fifteen or twenty harrows. Newly married and hoping to settle down, he opened a store on South Minnesota Street in 1873.

Up and down Minnesota Street, new businesses sprang up. John F. Neumann came to the city as a dry goods peddler in 1870, opening a store on Minnesota Street in the following year. For years, beginning in 1857, the Crone Brothers ran the largest mercantile establishment in New Ulm. Both Louis Buenger and Charles Wagner sold furniture on Minnesota Street, supplementing their sales by building coffins.

As local industry and commerce developed, they brought increased numbers of visitors to town who needed places to stay. Following a disastrous fire that destroyed his Union Hotel in 1875, Phillipp Gross immediately built a new two-story brick hotel. The Dacotah Hotel played host to an impressive list of prominent guests, including General William Tecumseh Sherman. The railroad also spurred the development of businesses near the depot.

Banks provided the capital for business expansion in New Ulm and, as highly respected professionals, bank officers played an important role as civic leaders. The earliest bank was the short-lived Central Bank, which opened its doors in 1859 and closed in 1861. The Brown County Bank, established in 1869, moved into a new building on the corner of Center and Minnesota Streets the following year. The Citizens' National Bank on Minnesota Street was incorporated in 1875.

A Golden Age, 1881-1912

New Ulm again suffered a severe blow in 1881 when a cyclone hit the city. Its path swept through the downtown commercial district, leveling many substantial business blocks. The commercial center recovered rapidly, financed by the community's growing industrial sector. In 1886, a group of Cincinnati investors headed by Charles Silversen acquired the Eagle Mill Company, then invested a major expansion of the mill. Combined with the growth of the New Ulm Roller Mill, the city became the second largest milling center in Minnesota (after Minneapolis). With both mills located only a few blocks to the east, the commercial center provided banks, hotels and restaurants for the steady stream of salesmen, and shops and saloons for workers to visit on the way home.

Centered around three downtown factories—Burg, Mueller, and Gebser—the cigar manufacturing industry grew into the third largest supplier in Minnesota, behind only Saint Paul and Minneapolis. Two other industries—beer and bricks—ranked among the leaders in the state. Although not located in the commercial center, they provided a steady flow of cash into the local economy. For example, the first telephone line in the city connected the Hauenstein Brewery, a saloon located adjacent to the Dacotah House on Minnesota Street, and the local dray line.

By the 1890s, the downtown had become the commercial center for a fifty mile radius, between Sleepy Eye on the west and Mankato on the east. New merchants opened stores. O. M. Olsen—born in 1852 in Lillehammer, Norway—came to America with his parents in 1865. After working for several years under Dr. Carl Weschcke at the Pioneer Drug Store, he established the Model Drug Store in the Meridian Block in 1887. F. H. Retzlaff—who got his start in the business under Sam Peterson—opened his own implement store on Minnesota Street in 1891.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 6

Willibald Eibner bought Adolph Seiter's delicatessen in 1883, located in the old Erd building, and began a restaurant.⁹

The downtown commercial district grew impressive as owners erected substantial brick structures. William Boesch, William Hummel, and Edward Maltzahn jointly built a business block on Minnesota Street in 1890, designed by architect Carl Struck. Soon after the completion of this building, lawyers John Lind and E. Hagberg invested in a three-story building across Minnesota Street, enticing the Masons to take over the third floor. Down the street, Schell Hall, designed by Mankato architect Henry Gerhard, opened on the same block as the Grand Hotel. The New Ulm Building and Loan Association, incorporated in 1888, helped to finance the continued improvements in town.¹⁰

Newspaper editor J. H. Strasser described the commercial activity in his 1892 *New Ulm in Words and Pictures*, writing:

A business census of New Ulm by category indicates that we have the following kinds of businesses: 5 general stores, 2 furniture stores, 6 grocery & fabric stores, 4 watch/jewelry stores, 3 grocery stores, 3 lumberyards, 1 fabric store, 6 blacksmiths, 1 clothing store, 2 bakeries, 4 hardware stores, 1 candy & fruit store, 1 farm machinery store, 22 bars, 4 hardware & machine stores, 4 barbershops (2 with bath houses), 2 banks, 3 drugstores, 6 tailor shops, 5 hotels, 3 Newspapers, 3 rental stables, 5 doctors, 6 granaries, 2 dentists, 3 shoe stores, 5 veterinarians, 3 fancy goods stores, 5 lawyers & public notaries, 4 leather goods stores, 3 butcher shops, 2 architects, 4 construction companies, 4 painters, 3 photographers' studios, 2 sculptors, etc.

The railroad, now the Chicago and Northwestern, provided the main artery to the outside world, joined in 1897 by the Minneapolis, New Ulm, and Southwestern railroad, connecting this city with Minneapolis and St. Paul by way of the Minneapolis & St. Louis railroad, and shortening the distance to the cities to 88 miles.¹¹

The growth of local industry, combined with an improvement in rail service, turned New Ulm into a significant commercial center. Retail stores offered a variety of goods to the local market. Banks provided the financial services and loans that made available the capital for business expansion in New Ulm, including the Brown County Bank, the Citizens State Bank, and the new State Bank of New Ulm. Hospitality and entertainment businesses offered a place for the community to gather and a way station for businessmen and other travelers. As the county seat, the city attracted its share of professional workers as lawyers maintained offices near the courthouse.

This new prosperity expressed itself in a host of civic improvements. As the *New Ulm Review* trumpeted:

We are compelled to state there is no city in Southern Minnesota of equal size containing as many handsome and substantial brick blocks, which give the city a truly metropolitan appearance. The retail stores are commodious, light, attractively decorated, and stocked with the latest production of the most reliable manufacturers in their

⁹ *New Ulm Review*, 16 January 1930. The Meridian Block street facade has been greatly altered since Olsen's time.

¹⁰ "Savings and Loan," *New Ulm Review*, 22 July 1939.

¹¹ *New Ulm News*, 2 January 1897.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 7

respective lines. The streets are wide, well rounded and lighted by electricity while the sidewalks are principally of flagstone and gravel and kept in fine condition.¹²

Major retail stores included Louis Buenger's furniture store, now located in a three-story block on the corner at Second North. F. H. Retzlaff, Robert Fesenmaier, and H. W. Engelbert ran hardware stores. C. G. Reim and John Toberer operated jewelry stores. Women managed businesses as well, including the general merchandise store of Mrs. F. W. Peuser—opened in 1903 in the old Kiesling blacksmith shop at 220 North Minnesota—and Martha Eichmann's millinery shop.

For clothing and dry goods, the competition was stiff. Crone Brothers maintained its long-standing position as the major retailer. Then, in 1902, J. Anton Ochs returned to his native city after operating a store in Faribault and purchased the Peoples' Store from William Hummel, changing its name to "The Bee Hive." Frank Zschunke's clothing store grew into a small chain called the Columbia Clothing Company.¹³

For food, a shopper might turn to the Red Front Grocery, run by William Bierbaum and William Backer, or F. H. Behnke's store. Meat markets combined a small processing operation—slaughtering, smoking hams and bacon, making sausages—with retail sales. The F. C. Schnobrich Meat Market and City Meats, owned by Rosa Schnobrich, had shops on South Minnesota Street while Andrew Saffert conducted business three blocks north.

With a constant stream of businessmen and traveling salesmen traveling through town, plus visitors to the frequent community parades and special events, public accommodations prospered during these years. The Dakota Hotel underwent a major face lift in 1901, with Carl Heers designing the new front, and the Northwestern Hotel added a third floor in 1912. John Dengler's bakery competed with his cousins, F. W. and Willibald Eibner. The latter expanded his business, adding ice cream and candy factories plus additional baking facilities. The city's thirty-eight saloons competed to slake the thirst of the community.

These business leaders were also among the city's most public-spirited citizens, serving on the boards of civic, charitable, and church organizations. Ochs served as alderman for three years and was a charter member of Saint Mary's Catholic parish. Willibald Eibner's work for the church won him recognition as a Knight of the Order of St. Gregory, one of the highest honors given to Catholic laymen. Fred Johnson ran the Dakota Hotel while managing Turner Hall concerts and plays. F. H. Retzlaff served for almost forty years on the board of Doctor Martin Luther College.

New Ulm invested heavily in its infrastructure, including water, electricity, heat, and telephone. At the turn-of-the-century, the decade old private utility was already antiquated. Driven by the increased needs of the flour mills and the growing commercial district, the city voted overwhelmingly to authorize \$30,000 in bonds for a city-operated electric lighting plant. After a failed attempt to purchase the existing New Ulm Electric Light Company's plant, the council proceeded to build an entirely new light and power system that was completed in 1903. The service proved to be a success. In 1910, New Ulm installed electric street lighting and trumpeted their

¹² "Prosperous New Ulm," *New Ulm Review*, 27 April 1892.

¹³ *New Ulm News*, 19 April 1902; *New Ulm Review*, 7 May 1924.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 8

“White Way” in the Minnesota Street business district. At its peak, the plant employed twenty-two men and generated substantial profits for the city treasury.¹⁴

New Ulm sealed its reputation as a “city of parades” during the years between 1886 and 1913, with the city hosting major state and national conventions. All required a parade down Minnesota Street, featuring well-known local marching bands and the locally based National Guard unit. In 1897, for example, nearly 25,000 people gathered for a week long celebration to dedicate the Sons of Hermann national monument. The following year saw an all-night celebration on the election of the city’s John Lind as governor. The city marked the major anniversaries of battle of New Ulm with parades and downtown events, drawing thousands from across the Midwest.

These events served two major purposes—heralding the city’s German heritage and bringing shoppers to downtown stores and restaurants. Parades, as historian Kathleen Conzen notes, were central to the development of an ethnic identity among German-Americans. This was especially true in New Ulm. In 1912, for example, the German Day parade drew visitors from across the country with the German and Austrian consuls as guests of honor. A few years later, Minnesota Street became the primary route for parades expressing competing views of American participation of World War I. In July 1917, thousands marched as a protest against the existing draft law, leading to the removal from office of the mayor and city attorney. A month later, members of the Commercial Club, precursor to the Chamber of Commerce, helped to organize a pro-war parade, attended by state’s governor, J. A. Burnquist. A Minnesota Street newspaper publisher, Albert Steinhauser, was arrested and charged under federal espionage laws for editorials against the war.¹⁵

Building New Ulm

During these prosperous decades, the commercial center took on an appearance that is still readily apparent in the historic district. Brick manufacturing—a significant local industry—provided the building materials that gave the downtown its look. The red brick relied on extensive local clay deposits. Its mid-grade quality, however, created maintenance problems, often covered over with paint or stucco within a few years.

It was a time when prominent architects competed for local contracts. None shaped the commercial center more than Herman Schapekahn—a local architect and contractor. Schapekahn was born in Hanover, Germany, in 1855, moving to New Ulm at age sixteen. In 1878, he studied architecture in Saint Louis, returning to establish his business two years later. His designs include prominent local landmarks such as Dr. Martin Luther College’s Old Main and the Otto and August Schell houses — all listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Indeed, historian Roger Kennedy called the latter house “the greatest of Minnesota’s German mansions.” As a contractor, Herman Schapekahn built the Saint Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Brown County Courthouse, and the

¹⁴ *Brown County Journal*, 2 June 1945. Investors included Charles Silverson, M. Mullen, E. G. Pahl, William Koch, and George Schmidt; *WPA History of New Ulm*, manuscript, BCHS; “The White Way,” *New Ulm Review*, 23 February 1910; Martin Eyrich, “Nearly Fifty years of Electric Light,” manuscript collection, BCHS.

¹⁵ See Kathleen Neils Conzen, “Ethnicity as Festive Culture: German-America on Parade,” in *The Invention of Ethnicity*, ed. Werner Sollors (Oxford University Press, 1989), 44-76, also Conzen, “The Invention of Ethnicity,” co-authored with David A. Gerber, Ewa Morawska, George E. Pozzetta, and Rudolph J. Vecoli, *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12 (1992), 3-41.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 9

Holy Trinity School. He often worked with Henry Hanschen, a subcontracted mason, building the Otto Schell house and the Brown County courthouse together.¹⁶

Carl Heers was the preeminent architect in New Ulm between 1890 and 1910. Heers came from an old New Ulm family and died in 1937 at age seventy-three. He designed the Frank Behnke House—later expanding the residence for Charles Silversen—as well as the home of Martin Hose. Both are on the National Register of Historic Places. Other important works include the Franklin School (101 S. Front), the Edward Maltzahn house (424 S. State), and the Holy Trinity Rectory (greatly altered). Heers also maintained his own construction crew. Despite his local prominence as an architect, Heers contributed few designs for downtown buildings. These included a major alteration to the fronts of the Dakota Hotel and the Wagner Store, plus interior remodeling to the Lyric Theatre in 1918. None of these examples remains intact.¹⁷

Two Mankato architects made significant contributions to the commercial center. Frank Thayer, born in New York, established his practice in Mankato in 1885. Within a few years, Congressman John Lind commissioned him to design his home in New Ulm, followed shortly by a contract for the prominent Masonic Block on North Minnesota Street. In 1901, he was in partnership with Olof Hanson, an 1886 graduate of the National College for the Deaf (Gallaudet College). On the strength of obtaining the commission for the Court House and Jail in Juneau, Alaska (1901), Thayer and Hanson closed their Mankato office in 1902 and moved to Seattle where he remained until his death. Thayer designed many prominent buildings in Mankato, such as the Swedish Lutheran Immanuel Church (Grace Lutheran), the Lorin Cray residence (1890s), the post office, J. H. Ray's Block, and Brett's Department Store (1895), as well as numerous residences. In southern Minnesota, Thayer's work included the Park Hotel (St. James, MN), Murray County Court House (Slayton, MN), and the Slade Hotel (Adrian, MN).

Henry Gerlach was born in Milwaukee and moved to Mankato in 1885, where he opened an architectural office that drew patrons throughout the Minnesota River Valley. Work included the Oscar Schmidt House, Mankato, the Emily and Stephen Schumacher house, St. Peter, and the Citizens' Bank in Worthington, all on the National Register of Historic Places. In New Ulm, he designed Schell Hall (202 N. Minnesota), the Mueller and Seifert Block (204-06 N. Minnesota), and the Stuebe/Neumann Block (north section of Herbergers).¹⁸

Carl Struck, from Minneapolis, designed the Boesch Hummel Maltzahn Block, leading to a contract for the Brown County Courthouse. His work included the Vernon County Courthouse in Viroqua, Wisconsin, plus the Englebrecht Hobe House in White Bear Lake. All are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Prominent contractors included:

Otto Tappe was born in Hanover, Germany, in 1860, coming to the United States in 1882. In 1890 he opened a contracting firm in partnership with Henry Schriefer, followed by three years in business with John Gronau. He established his own company in the late 1890s, typically employing twelve men. Work includes Turner Hall

¹⁶ *New Ulm News*, 20 April 1895; 27 April 1895. C. T. Struck designed the Brown County courthouse. Note that one of Schapekahm's daughters married brickmaker Fred Aufderheide; Roger Kennedy, *Minnesota Houses: An Architectural and Historical View* (Minneapolis: Dillon Press, 1967), 75; "Herman G. Schapekahm," *New Ulm Review*, 8 May 1912. The Hintz home is still standing at 305 S. Broadway.

¹⁷ "Word received of death," *New Ulm Review*, 7 June 1937.

¹⁸ *New Ulm News*, 19 March 1898.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 10

(1900), the Chapel and Boys' Dormitory at Dr. Martin Luther College, the Fritsche Block, and the Buenger Furniture Building on Minnesota Street. He died in 1926 during completion of the New Ulm Oil Company station on North Broadway.¹⁹

John Gronau was born near Danzig, Germany, in 1869, coming to New Ulm in 1892. After a short stint with Otto Tappe, he formed his construction company in 1898. In 1905, Gronau built Saint Peter's Episcopal Church, near the Commercial Historic District. Other work included the Way of the Cross chapel, plus the Schoch and Olsen Blocks on Minnesota Street. He remained in business until 1925. Active in civic affairs, he served two terms as city councilor and served on the Zoning Board of Appeals.²⁰

August Puhlmann began contracting work in the city around 1881, partnering with John Gronau at the time of the construction of the August Gieseke tenent house on Second South. In 1915, he retired and his sons formed Puhlmann Brothers. Work includes the Schoch-Reinhart Block (2 S. Minnesota) and City Meat Market (1-5 S. Minnesota).

Other important contractors of the period included:

- C. F. Kaiser, located at 9 North German Street, contractor for the Washington and Lincoln Schools plus the New Ulm Telephone Exchange.
- Frank Keute, although primarily a brick mason, but later headed Keute Brothers contractors and built the Emerson School (demolished). With Kaiser, he built the Zischka Saloon (6 S. Minnesota) and the Farmers and Merchants Bank (200 N. Minnesota).²¹
- C. O. Wielandt and H. R. Stegemann, located at 1115 Center Street, contractors for the Armory, the County Poor Farm, and numerous homes such as the T. F. Hammermeister house. Downtown work includes the Retzlaff Automobile Dealership.

1914-1945

The local economy remained strong as the Eagle Roller Mill and the New Ulm Roller Mill continued to grow after World War I. In 1911, the Eagle added a rye flour and corn meal mill — said to be the largest “country” mill in the world. The Eagle Roller Mill employed 350 people and maintained fifty-one elevators. Its brand names—Gold Coin and Daniel Webster — were known throughout the Midwest. While the keystone industries of flour, beer, and bricks remained important, New Ulm also became a regional center for the processing and distribution of agricultural and livestock from surrounding farmlands. Their plants and warehouse were generally within blocks of the downtown district. The Milford and Cottonwood Creamery Company extended moved into new building on Third North, just off Minnesota Street in 1919. A. H. Dannheim ran the most successful local dairy,

¹⁹ “Otto Tappe, Sr. is called by death,” *Brown County Journal*, 15 October 1926; *New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1925.

²⁰ *Brown County Journal*, 7 October 1948; *New Ulm Review*, 7 October 1948.

²¹ *New Ulm News*, 29 May 1897; *New Ulm Review*, 16 December 1925.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 11

opened in 1927. His son, Don, later opened a store front on South Minnesota Street, called Dannheim's Kuhstall, closing in 1989—one of the last independent milk bottlers in the state.²²

In 1926, Cudahy Packing Company of Chicago opened a subsidiary, Sunlight Produce Company—in New Ulm, only blocks from the commercial district. Howard Roeder opened a hatchery in the Ruemke Mercantile building on North Minnesota Street in the late 1930s, selling his own breed of leghorns known as “Silver Cup Chicks.” This building, on the National Register of Historic Places before being demolished in the 1981, anchored the north end of the downtown. Three Stork brothers opened their firm in 1902 on the corner of German and First South. It grew into one of the largest produce plants in the region with as many as 7,000 chickens were processed daily. Other nearby service centers included the Minnesota Seed Company and New Ulm Grocery Company.²³

Public and private services grew. As the electric plant neared capacity, the city council approved a major expansion, completed in 1913, that included the construction of a 125-foot brick smokestack. The New Ulm Heating Company began providing steam heat to downtown businesses, with the first connection made to the Dakota House in October 1916. The new telephone exchange building on North German Street opened its doors in 1916. The city paved Minnesota Street in 1914.²⁴

New Ulm dedicated a new municipal building in 1919. The bond issue authorizing construction passed in the midst of World War I, with the campaign led by the fire department. Designed by Tyrie and Chapman, the architects who completed the high school, the brick building housed the fire and police departments. At its opening ceremonies, a reporter said, “Many remarked on the beauty of the foyer and the balustrade leading to the second floor when entering the building from Broadway.”²⁵

New downtown buildings took on a significantly different look after 1913. The Auferdheide brickyards shifted from traditional molds to a machine-pressed brick, often called Hy-Tex or Hydraulic Press Brick. It was more uniform in shape with a harder surface, most often produced in dark brown shades. It became the primary building material for the next three decades. Examples include the Municipal Building, the Fritsche Block (506 First North), the Buenger Furniture Store (205 N. Minnesota), and the Saffert Meat Market (217 N. Minnesota). Then, in 1916, the Saffert-Gugisberg Cement Company moved to town from nearby Fairfax, building a major plant a few blocks northeast of the commercial district. This company, later reorganized as American Artstone, produced the cement blocks used in several commercial buildings, notably the Arbes Store, now part of the Lamplighter Restaurant. American Artstone specialized in cement forms resembling stone, often used on sills, lintels, and decorative trim on New Ulm's commercial buildings.

²² “Firm Employs 16 People,” *New Ulm Review*, 19 August 1929. Cigar manufacturing died by the 1920s, however, following mechanization advances in the industry and the advent of mass-produced, cheap cigarettes.

²³ *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 2 September 1954; *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 24 September 1952; *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 18 June 1958; *New Ulm Review*, 1 July 1914; 19 December 1914.

²⁴ “A Big New Manufacturing Plant,” *New Ulm Review*, 19 December 1914; “Municipal Plant Heat Turned On,” *New Ulm Review*, 18 October 1916, also 29 November 1916.

²⁵ *Brown County Journal*, 22 November 1919.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 12

Citizens' Bank built a sumptuous new building next to the Dakota House, while the Farmers and Merchants Bank opened its doors in 1914 on the corner of Second North and Minnesota Streets—both designed by Arthur Moorman, a Minneapolis architect known for his many small town bank designs. T. H. Schlönaus joined with four other men to organize the State Bond and Mortgage Company that same year, starting operations on the day that World War I broke out. Along Minnesota Street, Emil Buenger's new furniture store on the two hundred block sparked a flurry of construction. Within a few years, Ulrich Electric put up one-story store, inspiring neighbors F. W. Eibner and John Henle to harmonize the three storefronts. Just up the street, Andrew Saffert remodeled his butcher shop. The *Brown County Journal* opined, "This block will have the best appearance of any in the city."²⁶

Louis Fritsche, now joined by his sons in the medical profession, erected a new building on First North for his clinic. The Fritsche Clinic gained a national reputation during these years, drawing some of the finest specialists to the city and enhancing the town's reputation as a medical center.²⁷

New businesses grew up around the automobile and in the twenties, the Armory hosted an annual car show in the spring. Frank Retzlaff expanded his hardware and farm implement business, selling Imperial and Flanders automobiles until acquiring one of the first Dodge dealerships in the country in 1913. In the twenties, he split the family enterprises and formed the Retzlaff Motor Company, with offices and a showroom on Center Street. Across the street, the Zischkas built a two-story brick building used at first as a Chrysler salesroom and garage. On First South, Dr. J. P. Graff erected a garage. Other dealers included Kretsch Auto, located in the old Union Hall near the new Municipal Building, and South Side Auto. Gas stations sprang up on street corners.²⁸

Local architect Albert Plagens contributed the design for the Grand Theatre, opened in 1920. The downtown received a spectacular new addition in 1935 with the opening of the New Ulm Theatre. J. J. Liebenberg, one of the Midwest's finest theater architects and best-known for the Uptown and Varsity theatres in Minneapolis, designed this movie palace. It was demolished to make way for a municipal parking lot.

There were several popular eating spots nearby. Eibner's remained a popular destination with the Willimarie and Pioneer dining rooms on the second floor. Elfrieda Toberer, longtime president of the Turner Ladies Society, opened the Silver Latch Café in 1932 and secured a steady flow of patrons when it was designated as the local bus depot. Al Veigel decided to take advantage of the large crowds who jammed the picture shows. In the paper, he announced, "I have purchased the Kaiserhoff Tavern from Sam Fuchs and am now operating under my personal management. Ribs, a Specialty. Next door to New Ulm Theatre." After working for several years at the Dakota House, George Neuwirth opened a bar and bowling alley in 1933, first on Minnesota Street, then moving into the old Burg Cigar factory on Center Street.²⁹

A major downtown fire swept through Muesing Drug and Eibner's Restaurant and surrounding buildings on January 24, 1936, leaving \$250,000 in damage. Moving quickly to reopen, the building owners embraced the

²⁶ *Brown County Journal*, 3 April 1920; 15, 29 September 1922.

²⁷ *Brown County Journal*, 10 April 1925; *New Ulm Review*, 23 January 1924.

²⁸ *Brown County Journal*, 23 July 1926; *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 18 May 1953.

²⁹ *Brown County Journal*, 1 July 1932 *New Ulm Review*, 13 January 1938.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 13

“modern” look for their new store fronts. A local newspaper reported, “Much favorable comment has been heard regarding the excellent appearing front. . . . The Artstone used in the buildings is of a buff color and is pleasing to the eye. The design is rather modernistic but not sufficiently ultra to prove unattractive.” These buildings have been incorporated behind a new facade as part of the State Bank and Trust Company.³⁰

After World War II

Following World War II, New Ulm residents looked forward to the future with optimism, hopeful that the trials of the previous decades were over. Indeed, as a *Journal* headline proclaimed, “Local Employment Situation Bright.” Thirty-five local manufacturing plants employed 1,002 people—more than half related to food processing. Even after the war, more than one thousand women held jobs in town, working in hospitals, schools, stores, offices, and factories like Wear Well Garments. Jobs were not the only good sign. Housing starts multiplied.

The veterans came back, ready to serve their city. In a column in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Gareth Hiebert wrote that these young men showed a strong commitment to their hometown. Dick Eichten told Hiebert, a New Ulm boy as well, “My father started this store in 1917 . . . I came back here after the war and decided to keep on in the store.”³¹

As with any city, there were always transitions. National or regional retailers opened stores on Minnesota Street. Herbergers—based in Saint Cloud—came to New Ulm in 1946, moving into the old Crone Brothers’ clothing store. Woolworths, Montgomery Ward, Ben Franklin, and J. C. Penney all had Minnesota Street stores. Other stores “modernized” their brick storefronts, including Alwin Electric and Pink’s Department Store, drastically changing the old Meridian Block, and Forster’s Furniture Store on North Minnesota Street.

However, one of the key city’s key industries — flour milling — was in the midst of a significant change as companies consolidated and others cut back production as the war ended. In the first five postwar years, nearly two hundred flour mills closed throughout the United States. In 1943, the Eagle Mill bought out the New Ulm Roller Mill, ending seventy years of competition. The business plan called for the newly acquired mill to be used primarily for rye products.³²

Further changes came in October 1951. Following the death of her husband, Oliver Foreman, a longtime company employee, Charles Silversen’s daughter and the trustees of his estate called a stockholder’s meeting to accept a takeover bid from the International Milling Company of Minneapolis. The Silversen interests owned around forty percent of the company stock and swayed the remaining stockholders to accept the offer. One year later, the new corporate owner lowered the hammer. Just days after Christmas, 1952, International closed down the wheat flour milling operation, claiming that “production was too inefficient in the old Eagle plant units.” For

³⁰ *Brown County Journal*, 31 July 1936: The architect was Raymond L. Amos.

³¹ Gareth Hiebert, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, 26 March 1961.

³² *New Ulm Review*, 8 April 1943.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 8 Page 14

the first time in nearly a century, New Ulm had no wheat flour mill, although other operations remained open, including the rye flour unit of the old New Ulm Roller Mill.³³

The city's economy took another hit when the Cudahy Packing Company closed its New Ulm operations following a corporate reorganization. At its peak, during World War II, the business employed more than three hundred people. Wear Well Clothing shut down its local plant as well. Then, the Brown County REC switched suppliers for its rural customers, signing a contract with the Western Area Power Administration, and dropping New Ulm Utilities.

The city recovered well, thanks to an energetic local committee led by Otto Oswald. They enticed several new industries—Kraft Foods and 3M among others—to the city with offers of locally financed buildings. However, these were located in new industrial parks on the north and south edges of the city. As a result, workers were drawn away from routine downtown visits, encouraging new retail businesses to open closer to these plants. During a period of regional consolidation—particularly the growth of nearby Mankato—the city turned to economic planners for advice during the 1970s and 80s, drawing on local history with the acquisition of the Kiesling House and construction of the Glockenspiel in 1980. In 1989, the Marktplatz Mall opened just east of Minnesota Street. An enclosed shopping plaza, it offered retail stores and services.

Summary

The district, as represented in its well-preserved buildings, shows a downtown that remained vibrant over the years. Its architecture is not encased in a single period or style—despite past attempts to impose a German theme—but reflects a changing local economy. Indeed, the continuing strength of the downtown encouraged change, with new buildings and “improvements” reflecting businesspeople's response to altered commercial realities. Today, the city's commercial center, retains an important economic role in the region. History has come to play a key part, with heritage tourism drawing thousands of visitors to New Ulm each year.

Architects/ Builders

Architects: Herman Schapekahm, Carl Heers, Frank Thayer, Henry Gerlach, Carl Struck, Tyrie & Chapman, Edward Wirtz

Builders: Otto Tappe, John Gronau, August Puhmann, C. F. Kaiser, Frank Keute, C. O. Wielandt, H. R. Stegemann

³³ *New Ulm Daily Journal*, 29 December 1952.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 9 Page 1

9. Bibliography

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New Ulm Plaindealer
New Ulm Post
New Ulm Review
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 9 Page 2

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 36 acres

New Ulm, Minn. 1992

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

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☒ 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	<u>Daniel J. Hoisington</u>		
organization	<u></u>	date	<u>1 May 2005</u>
street and number	<u>P. O. Box 13790</u>	telephone	<u>651-415-1034</u>
city or town	<u>Roseville</u>	state	<u>MN</u>
		zip code	<u>55113</u>

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	<u></u>		
street & number	<u></u>	telephone	<u></u>
city or town	<u></u>	state	<u></u>
		zip code	<u></u>

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

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section 10 Page 1

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM References

1.	15	383412E	4907843N
2.	15	383520E	4907819N
3.	15	383649E	4907736N
4.	15	383802E	4907500N
5.	15	383779E	4907429N
6.	15	383674E	4907334N
7.	15	383540E	4907417N
8.	15	383435E	4907577N
9.	15	383384E	4907789N

[See USGS map.]

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the New Ulm Commercial Historic District are shown by the dotted black line on the accompanying map entitled "New Ulm Commercial Historic District, New Ulm, Minnesota."

Boundary Justification:

The district includes the contiguous, intact, historic resources along Minnesota Street and five perpendicular streets that document the district's commercial significance. The boundaries of the district encompass a cluster of adjacent commercial buildings in the central business district of New Ulm that date from 1861 through 1953 and that retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The properties were inventoried during historic sites surveys of New Ulm in 1999-2001 for the New Ulm Heritage Preservation Commission. Buildings outside of the boundaries of the district were excluded because they either do not date from the period of significance or do not retain sufficient integrity to contribute to the district.

With two exceptions, the boundary follows existing streets, alleys, and property lines. The Kuhlmann House (513 Center) has a small attached corridor connecting it with 519 Center Street as the combined offices of the law firm of Berens, Rodenberg & O'Connor, Chtd. MarktPlatz Mall is attached to 110 North Minnesota, now Herberger's Store, and shares corridors and display space.

Photo # 7 (014887-23)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section Photo Page 2
 Key _____

Streetscape: Looking east on Center: Second from right: Kuhlmann House (513)

Looking east

Photo # 8 (014887-24)

Center: South Side Auto Garage (21)

Looking northeast

Photo #9 (014802-15) (Page 7:3)

Far Left: Chicago House (20); Center: H. Siebenbrunner Grocery (18) (NC); Right: Engelbert Hardware Store (16)

Looking southwest

Photo # 10 (014801-11) (Pages 7:3, 7:4, & 7:5)

Left: City Meat Market (1); Center: American Theatre (9); Right: Schoch Block (13-15)

Looking north, northeast

Photo # 11 (014802-14) (Pages 7:6 & 7:9)

Center: American Theatre (9)

Looking east, northeast

Photo # 12 (014802-17) (Page 7:6)

Left: F.C. Schnobrich Meat Market (8); Center: John Zischka Saloon (6)

Looking southwest

Photo # 13 (014801-13) (Pages 7:7 & 7:8)

Schoch-Reinhart Block (2)

Looking southwest

Photo # 14 (014801-16) (Page 7:8)

City Meat Market (1-5)

Looking east

Photo # 15 (014802-18) (Page 7:9)

George's Ballroom (405)

Looking south, southwest

Photo # 16 (014887-7) (Page 7:10)

Jacob Pfenninger Store (506)

Looking north, northwest

Photo # 17 (014802-7) (Page 7:11)

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section Photo Page 3
 Key

Zischka Building (509)
Looking east, southeast
Photo #18 (014802-4) (Page 7:12)

Center: George Kuhlmann House (513)
Looking east, southeast
Photo # 19 (014802-5) (Page 7:12)

F.H. Retzlaff & Sons (518)
Looking west, northwest
Photo #20 (014802-8) (Page 7:13)

United States Post Office (2 North Broadway)
Looking west, northwest
Photo #21 (14802-6) (Page 7:14)

Retzlaff Motor Company (12 North Broadway)
Looking north, northeast
Photo #22 (014802-1) (Page 7:15)

Fesenmaier Service Station (18 North Broadway)
Looking north, northeast
Photo #23 (014800-22) (Page 7:15)

Left: Jacob Pfenninger Store (506); Center: G.A. Ottomeyer Block (1)
Looking west
Photo # 24 (014801-17) (Pages 7:11 & 7:16)

Left: Henry Behnke Building (4); Right: Brown County Bank (2)
Looking north
Photo #25 (014802-19) (Pages 7:19 & 7:17)

Right: Center: Schoch-Ottomeyer Block (3-5); Masonic Block (9-11-13)
Looking southwest
Photo # 26 (014801-20) (Pages 7:18 & 7:20)

Far Left: Meridian Block (16-18); Left: Roos-Sommers Block (14); Center: Boesch Block (10-12); Right: Hummel/Maltzahn Block (6-8); Far Right: Henry Behnke Building (4)
Looking north

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section Photo Page 4
 Key _____

Photo #27 (014802-20) (Pages 7:22, 7:21 & 7:19)

Masonic Block (9-11-13)

Looking southwest

Photo # 28 (014801-21) (Page 7:20)

Center: Roos-Sommers Block (14); Right: Boesch Block (10-12)

Looking northeast

Photo # 29 (014802-22) (Page 7:21 & 7:19)

Amann's Saloon (15)

Looking west, southwest

Photo #30 (014801-22) (Page 7:22)

Meridian Block (16-18)

Looking north northeast

Photo # 31 (014802-23) (Page 7:22)

Center: Gebser Hall (22); Right: Gebser's Store (20)

Looking east, northeast

Photo # 32 (014799-4) (Page 7:24)

Retzlaff Hardware (21)

Looking southwest

Photo # 33 (014803) (Page 7:25)

Center: Wicherski Shoe Store (24)

Looking east, northeast

Photo # 34 (014799-5) (Page 7:26)

J.C. Penny (27) (NC)

Looking southwest

Photo # 35 (014803-2) (Page 7:26)

Somsen Block (28) (NC)

Looking east

Photo # 36 (014799-6) (Page 7:27)

Arbeiter Hall (26 North Broadway)

Looking east, northeast

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section Photo Key Page 5

Photo #37 (014800-19) (Page 7:27)

New Ulm Municipal Building (100 North Broadway)

Looking north, northeast

Photo #38 (014800-20) (Page 7:29)

Fritsche Block (504-510 1st North)

Looking north, northwest

Photo #39 (014800-12) (Page 7:30)

State Bank & Trust (100) (NC)

Looking east

Photo #40 (014799-11) (Page 7:31)

Olsen Block (101) (NC)

Looking west

Photo # 41 (014803-6) (Page 7:32)

Left: Olsen Block (101) (NC); Center: Citizens Bank of New Ulm (105) (NC); Right: Baltrush Block (115) (NC)

Looking southwest

Photo # 42 (014803-8) (Pages 7:32, 7:33 & 7:36)

Center: Frank Erd Building (108) (NC); Right: State Bank & Trust (100) (NC)

Looking east, northeast

Photo # 43 (014799-10) (Pages 7:33 & 7:31)

Center: Crone Brothers (110)

Looking northeast

Photo # 44 (014799-7) (Page 7:34)

Left: Wagner Furniture; Citizens Bank (120); Center: Stuebe Meat Market and John Neumann Store (116-118); Right: Theodore Crone Dry Goods (112-114)

Looking north, northeast

Photo #45 (014799-8) (Pages: 7:39, 7:36 & 735)

Center: Baltrusch Block (115) (NC); Right: Reim Jewelers (117)

Looking southwest

Photo # 46 (014803-7) (Pages 7:36 & 7:37)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section Photo Page 6
 Key

Center: Reim Jewelers (117)

Looking southwest

Photo #47 (014803-9) (Page 7:37)

Clock in front of Reim Jewelers (117)

Looking north

Photo #48 (014887-17) (Page 7:37)

Wagner Furniture/Citizens' Bank (120)

Looking east

Photo # 49 (014799-12) (Page 7:39)

Ben Franklin (126) (NC)

Looking east

Photo # 50 014799-14) (Page 7:41)

Weiser Block (127)

Looking south

Photo # 51 (014803-15) (Page 7:42)

Right: Farmers & Merchants Bank (200) (NC)

Looking north

Photo # 52 (014799-13) (Page 7:44)

Doehne Block (201)

Looking west

Photo # 53 (014803-16) (Page 7:45)

Buenger Furniture Company (203)

Looking southwest

Photo # 54 (014803-17) (Page 7:46)

Left: H. Seifert Saloon (206); Center: Mueller Cigar Factory (204); Right: Schell Hall (202)

Looking east, northeast

55 (014799-17) (Pages 7:48, 7:47 & 7:46)

Weneeda Bakery (209-213)

Looking southwest

Photo # 56 (014803-18) (Page 7:49)

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Name of property

Brown County, Minnesota

County and State

Section Photo Page 7
 Key

Left: Grand Theater (212); Center: Grand Hotel (210); Right: H. Seifert Saloon (206)

Looking east

57 (014799-20) (Pages 7:51, 7:50 & 7:48)

Center: Grand Theater (212)

Looking east, northeast

Photo # 58 (014799-19) (Page 7:51)

Left: Dengler Store (216); Center: Arbes Furniture (214)

Looking east, northeast

Photo # 59 (014799-21) (Page 7:52)

Epple Meat Market (217)

Looking west, southwest

Photo # 60 (014803-19) (Page 7:53)

Kiesling House (220)

Looking east, northeast

Photo #61 (014804-1) (Page 7:54)

Center: Veigel-Moll Building (221)

Looking southwest

Photo #62 (014803-20) (Page 7:55)

Louis Buenger Building A & B (227 & 225)

Looking south

Photo # 63 (014803-22) (Page 7:55)

Lohman Building (301)

Looking west

Photo # 64 (014803-23) (Page 7:57)

MarketPlatz

Looking south

Photo # 65 (014887-11) (Page 7:35)



North Minnesota Street, ca. 1920
2-28 block, east side
View north from Center Street
Brown County Historical Society



South Minnesota Street, 1912
2-26 block, west side
View south from Center Street
Brown County Historical Society



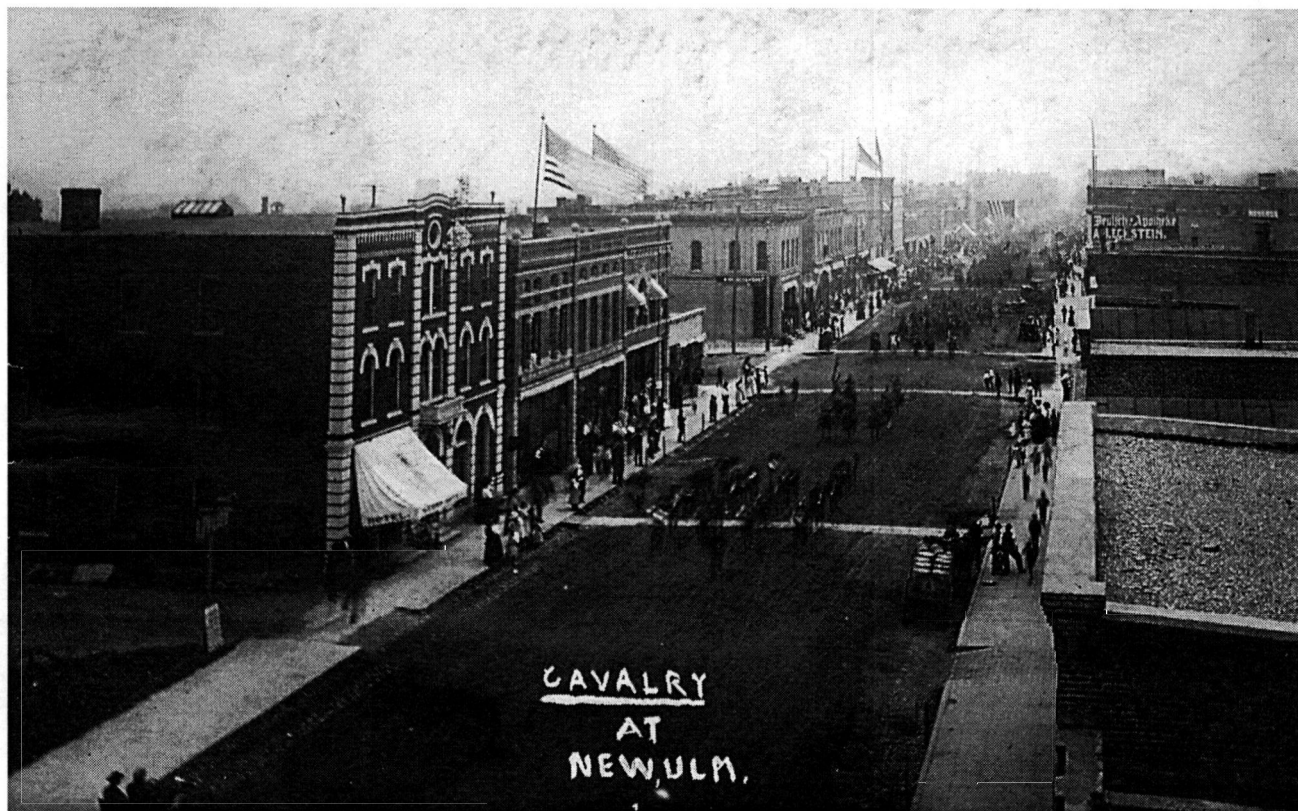
1-15 South Minnesota Street, 1928
City Meat Market, Lyric Theatre
View southeast from Center Street
Brown County Historical Society



North Minnesota Street, ca. 1910
1-27 block, west side
View northwest from Center Street
Brown County Historical Society



North Minnesota Street, 1902
100 block, west side
View south from 2nd North Street
Brown County Historical Society



North Minnesota Street, 1902
200 block, east side
Grand Hotel (202) on left
View south from 3rd North Street
Brown County Historical Society



North Minnesota Street, 1929
100 block, east side
View north from 2nd North Street
Brown County Historical Society

New Ulm Commercial Historic District

Not to scale

nc = noncontributing resource

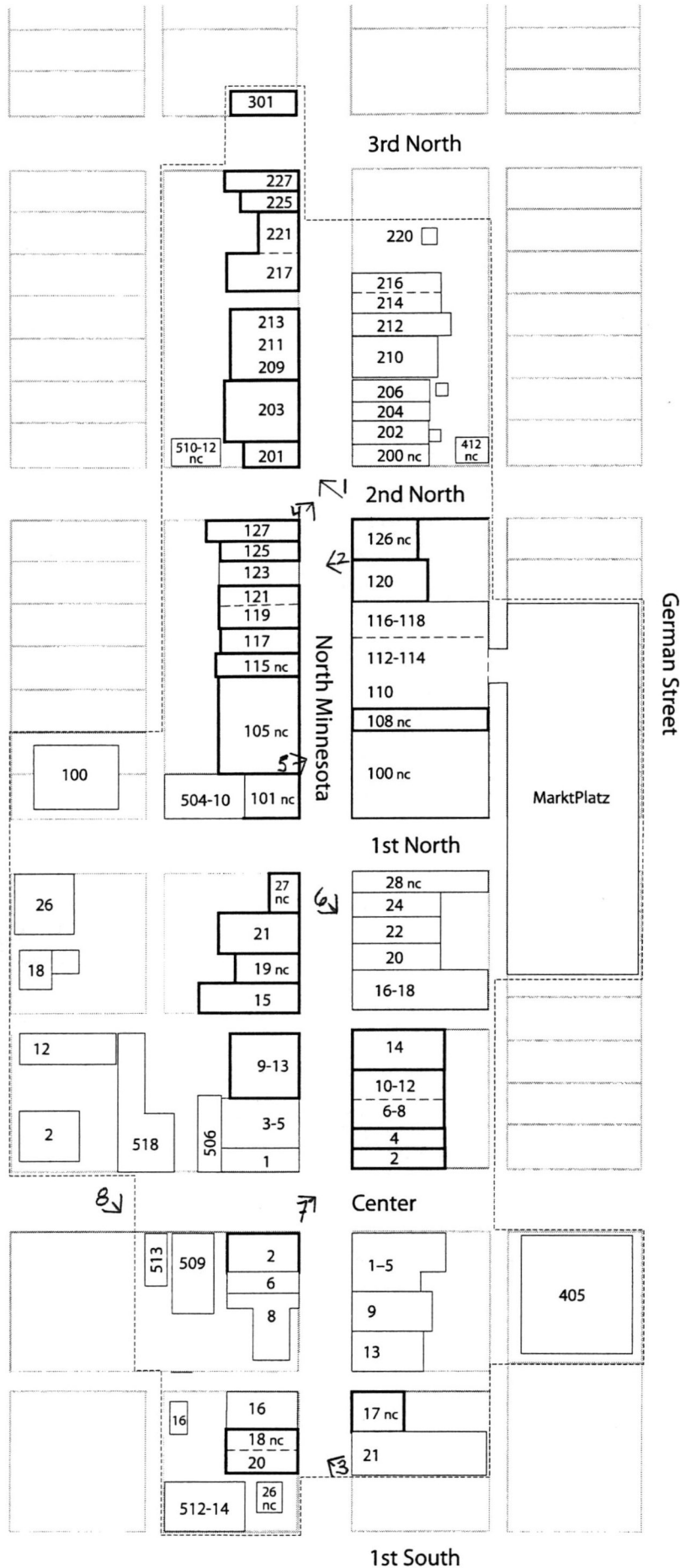
----- district boundary



Photo Key for
photos 1 - 8

North Broadway

South Broadway





New Ulm Commercial Historic District
Brown Co., Mn
#1

014887-14

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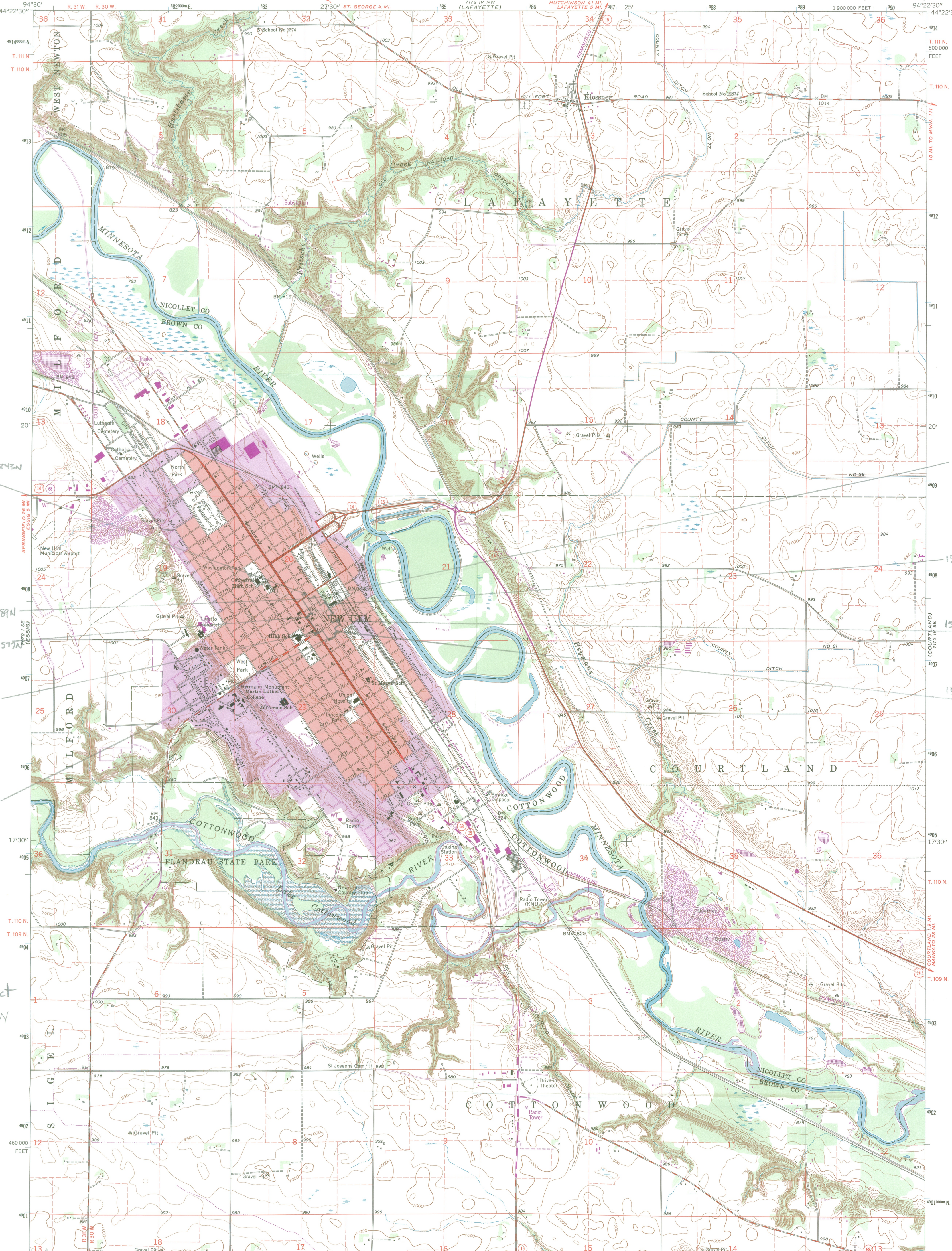
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15 383412E 4907843N

15 383384E 4907781N

15 383435E 4907577N

15 383540E 4907417N

15 383674E 4907334N

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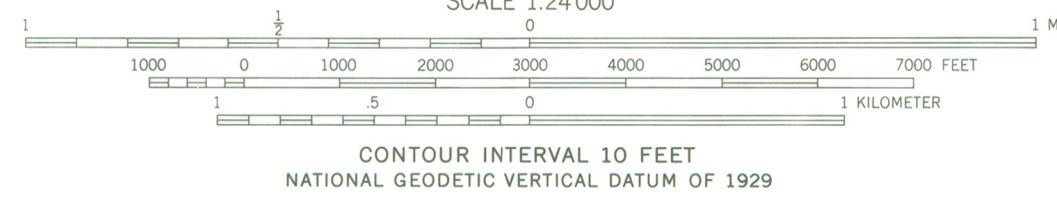
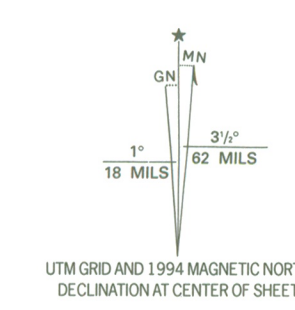
15 383520E 4907817N

15 383649E 4907736N

15 383800E 4907500N

15 38779E 4907429N

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from imagery
dated 1963. Field checked 1964
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and
10 000-foot ticks: Minnesota coordinate system, south zone
(Lambert conformal conic)
Blue 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator ticks, zone 15
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed
corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83
for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic
Survey NADCON software
Area covered by dashed light-blue pattern is subject to controlled
inundation



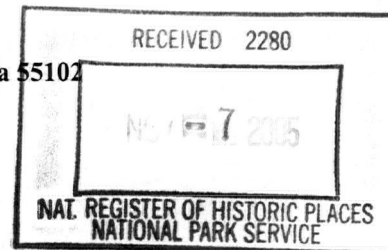
ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with
State of Minnesota agencies from imagery
dated 1991-92 and other sources. Map edited 1994
Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content
standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours

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Minnesota Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office
345 Kellogg Blvd West, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
651/215-0118



TO: Janet Matthews, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Susan Roth, National Register Historian

DATE: November 1, 2005

NAME OF PROPERTY: New Ulm Commercial Historic District

COUNTY AND STATE: Brown County, MN

SUBJECT: National Register:

- ☒ Nomination
- ☐ Multiple Property Documentation Form
- ☐ Request for determination of eligibility
- ☐ Request for removal (Reference No.)
- ☐ Nomination resubmission
- ☐ Boundary increase/decrease (Reference No.)
- ☐ Additional documentation (Reference No.)

DOCUMENTATION:

- ☒ Original National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
- ☐ Multiple Property Documentation Form
- ☒ Continuation Sheets
- ☐ Removal Documentation
- ☒ Photographs
- ☒ Original USGS Map
- ☒ Sketch map(s)
- ☐ Correspondence
- ☐ Owner Objection
 - The enclosed owner objections
 - Do ☐ Do not ☐ constitute a majority of property owners

STAFF COMMENTS: