



CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO  
CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

SHF PROJECT # 2010-M1-013

October  
2012

# CITY OF LAMAR, COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

## Architectural & Historical Survey Report

History Colorado - State Historical Fund  
Project Number 2010-M1-013  
Project Deliverable #8



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HAPC Project No. 0909

October 2012

This project was partially funded by a State Historical Fund grant award from History Colorado.

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**I. INTRODUCTION**



*Big Timbers Museum*

**Figure 1.**  
The Prowers County Courthouse, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a prominent landmark in this circa 1930 view of Lamar looking north.

The goal of this Cultural Resource Survey was to document historic architectural resources in the City of Lamar, Colorado. Lamar is a small agricultural community in the Arkansas River Valley of southeastern Colorado. The community serves as the county seat for Prowers County and is the commercial center of a vast farming and ranching region that stretches from the Oklahoma border north to Kit Carson and from western Kansas to Las Animas, Colorado. Lamar is located approximately 30 miles west of the Kansas state line and 108 miles east of Pueblo, Colorado. The city, which lies along the Arkansas River Valley on Highway 50, has a current population of approximately 8,869 residents.

An intensive-level survey of 68 properties was conducted. The project was primarily funded by a State Historical Fund grant award from History Colorado with the remaining funds provided by the City of Lamar. The purpose for collecting the survey information was not only to inform local property owners, business owners, and the general public about the history of Lamar, but also to enhance preservation planning efforts and heritage tourism efforts there. The information gathered during this survey, the first of its kind to

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occur in Lamar, can become the basis from which properties may be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties, or for designation as local landmarks. The survey project also determined the potential for the possible formation of a downtown historic district that may be eligible for listing at the local level or on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, future preservation planning studies that provide for the management and protection of cultural resources may be based on the results of this cultural resource survey.

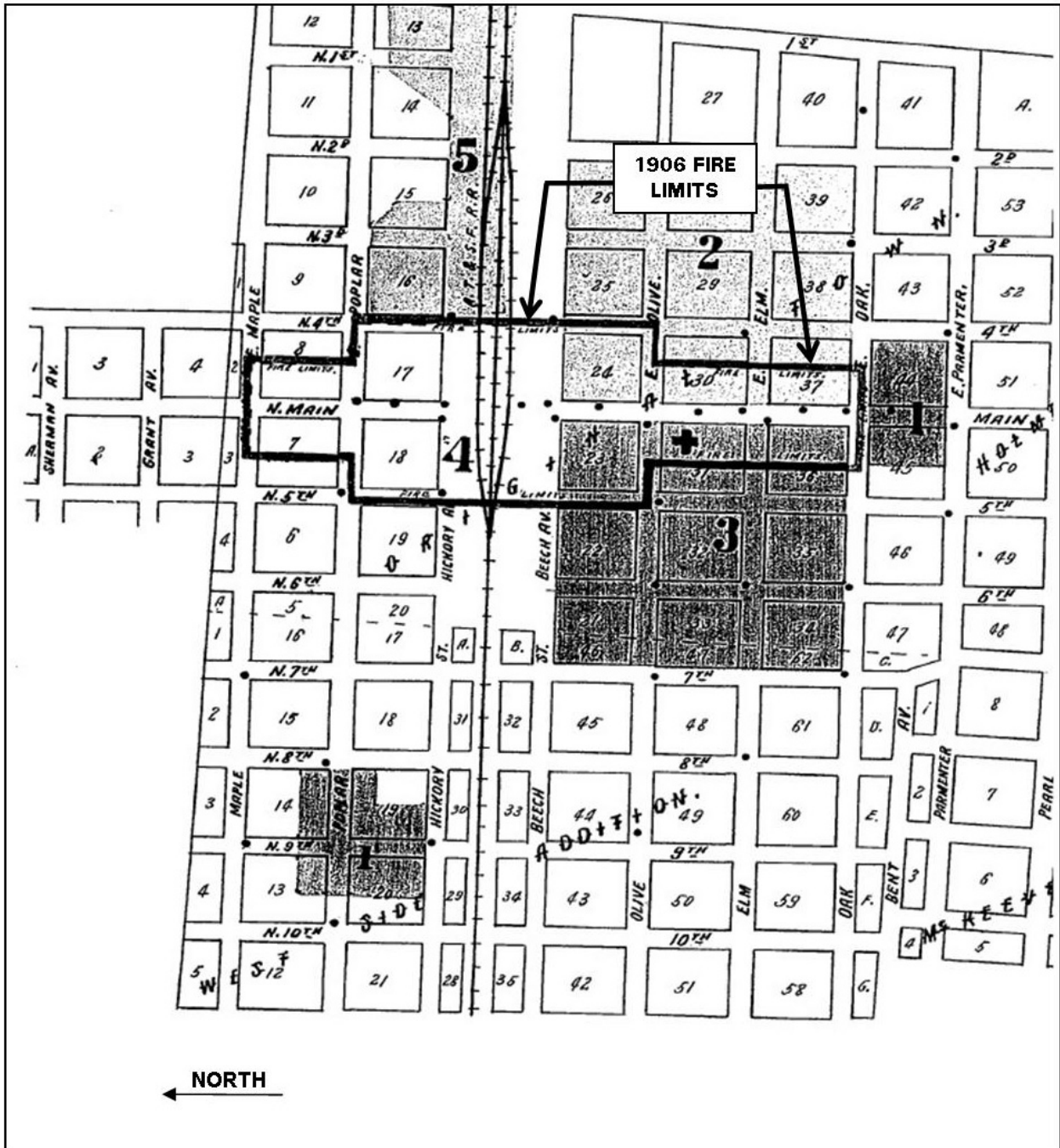
Hoehn Architects, PC was responsible for carrying out this Cultural Resource Survey, with guidance from the technical staff at History Colorado's State Historical Fund. Initial field survey work occurred in November of 2009 and was later completed in November of 2011. Historical research was conducted by Hoehn Architects through the duration of the project, beginning in November of 2009. In order to provide consistent and comprehensive information for all subject resources, the most recent edition of the Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Manual, published by History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, was followed. Adherence to this manual ensured that the information gathered and presented met the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

Since the survey was the first to occur in this southeastern Colorado town, the area within the "fire limit" boundary illustrated in the 1906 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map provided guidance for the survey boundary. This boundary, which includes Main Street, encompassed historic architectural resources that are associated with the early development of Lamar's downtown. (Refer to Figure 2.) The survey team recommended this survey boundary and Lamar's City Administrator requested that the west half of Block 36, the east half of Block 37, and the southeast corner of Block 35 also be included. The survey boundaries include Maple Street to the north and Oak Street to the south; the boundaries extend east to Fourth Street and west to Fifth Street. This boundary was approved by the technical staff at History Colorado's State Historical Fund.

Prior to beginning the project, it was estimated that 70 individual resources would be intensively surveyed within the survey boundary. Follow-up research resulted in an intensive-level survey of 68 resources; some pairs of individual resources, which originally had separate owners and unique storefront designs, were combined on a single inventory form due to later common ownership and consistent façade treatment. The cultural resource survey suggests that 20 historic resources are potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties and as local landmarks in the City of Lamar. The surveyed area is also potentially eligible as a National Register District with Commerce as its area of significance and with a local level of significance. The resources that comprise Lamar's downtown district are united historically by the town's physical development as the commercial focus of the surrounding agricultural area.

The results of the intensive-level survey of 68 properties in Lamar are detailed in this report and in the survey forms, photographs, and supporting documents on file at History Colorado.

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*Denver Public Library Western History Department*

**Figure 2.**  
 The “fire limits” of the City of Lamar are illustrated in the 1906 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. The fire limits boundary provided guidance for the boundary established for this cultural resource survey of Lamar’s central business district.

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**II. PROJECT AREA**

The project area includes architectural resources along Main Street in Lamar, Colorado. The area within the “fire limits” boundary illustrated in the 1906 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map provided guidance for the survey boundary. (Refer to Figure 2.) The boundary also encompasses the west half of Block 36, the east half of Block 37, and the southeast corner of Block 35 in order to include the Prowers County Courthouse at 301 S. Main Street, the First Baptist Church at 108 W. Oak Street, and the Lamar Post Office at 300 S. Fifth Street; the courthouse and the post office are already individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The survey area extends north to Maple Street and south to Oak Street; Fourth Street and Fifth Street serve as the easternmost and westernmost boundaries, respectively. A total of 68 architectural inventory forms were completed during the survey. The project area for the intensive-level survey encompasses 34.81 acres.



**Figure 3.**

The project area included in the City of Lamar Cultural Resource Survey is shown on this map. The project area is located in the Sixth Principal Meridian, Township 22S, Range 46W, Section 31 (USGS East Lamar, Colorado Quadrangle).

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**III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**



*Hoehn Architects PC*

**Figure 4.**

The Masonic Temple and the Lamar Theatre can be seen on the right side of this image, looking north on Main Street at the intersection of Elm Street. The building across the street, at the northwest corner, was once the home of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.).

**Type of Survey and Survey Objectives**

The objective of the Cultural Resource Survey was to document historic architectural resources within the City of Lamar’s Downtown Business District. Since this was the first cultural resource survey to be accomplished in Lamar, the area within the “fire limit” boundary illustrated in the 1906 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map provided guidance for the survey boundary, which encompasses Lamar’s core historic business district. The process resulted in a written and photographic record of the current condition of these resources for use by the City of Lamar and History Colorado’s State Historical Fund (SHF) and Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP). The survey also provided the basis from which eligible properties may be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties, as local landmarks, and as contributing resources within a local or National Register historic district.

Primary research questions about the existing historic resources included the following:

1. Does the survey area provide information about the former residents regarding their heritage, lifestyle, and economic, social, educational, spiritual, and civic activities?



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2. How does the physicality of the survey area reflect the plans of developers, influence of economic conditions, and local, state, and national movements?
3. What varieties of architectural styles and construction materials are represented? What is the range of design quality and craftsmanship represented by extant structures within the survey area?
4. How do the natural landscape and local building materials influence construction patterns and methods?

**Scope of Work and Schedule**

Initial steps in the survey process included determining whether any previous surveys had been conducted in Lamar; this was accomplished by performing a file search in the database of History Colorado's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. The survey team also prepared at the beginning of the project a map that documents the footprint and address of each resource within the survey boundary; this map was used as a reference throughout the duration of the project. (Refer to "Project Map – Locations of Resources" on page 52.)

A pre-survey public meeting occurred on February 1, 2010 at the Cultural Events Center in Lamar. The purpose of the meeting was to inform building owners and merchants located within the survey boundaries as well as local residents that an intensive-level survey would be conducted. The purpose of the survey project, the survey boundaries, the process to be undertaken for the survey, the information to be collected, and the anticipated outcome of the project were described to the audience in a PowerPoint presentation. The survey team requested from the audience historical information about the resources in the survey area and asked that it be sent to Lamar's Main Street Coordinator for distribution. An article about the pre-survey public meeting also appeared in the local newspaper, "The Local Buzz", on February 5, 2010, requesting this information from the community. Following the public meeting, the City of Lamar announced the funding of the project on their website and requested historical information from local citizens.

The project was scheduled to begin in November 2009 and to end by November 2011; the project deadline was extended to November 2012. A sample of the most current architectural inventory form was downloaded from History Colorado's website to serve as a template for information to be collected during the intensive-level survey of the 68 historic architectural resources. Timothy Hoehn and Kristine Hoehn of Hoehn Architects PC performed all of the fieldwork, including the collection of survey data, photography, and field verification of building footprints for the architectural inventory forms' sketch maps. They conducted historical research, prepared the intensive-level survey forms, and summarized their findings in a report with maps and graphics that were also prepared by the architects.

Photography of the historic architectural resources for the intensive-level survey was accomplished following the guidelines stated in the most recent edition of the Colorado

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Cultural Resource Survey Manual, published by History Colorado’s Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. In accordance with History Colorado’s requirements, photography of intensive-level resources was accomplished with a digital camera resulting in black and white images. Photographs measured 4” high by 6” wide and were printed on Fujicolor Crystal Archive glossy finish paper. Photographs were taken of as many building elevations as possible. Due to the close spacing of some of the buildings, it was not possible to obtain views of all elevations of some buildings. The back of each black and white photograph was labeled with the site and photograph number, street address, date the photograph was taken, and the SHF project number; the building name was also included, if known or pertinent. The photographs were placed in archival safe, acid free clear plastic pages and attached to the completed survey forms.

Building footprint measurements were obtained during field work for the intensive-level survey. The footprints were then drawn in MicroStation, a computer aided design (CAD) program, and used as a base for the generation of sketch map graphics required in the survey forms. Photograph references were indicated on each sketch map, with a symbol showing image number and direction of view for each image.

**OAHP File Search**

A file search at History Colorado’s Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation was conducted on December 8, 2009. The file search indicated that five properties and two sculptures were previously recorded in the survey area, as follows:

<b>State I.D. #</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
5PW.25	122 N. Main Street	Davies Hotel / Payne Hotel	National Register (Entered 10/19/78)
5PW.27	301 S. Main Street	Prowers County Courthouse	National Register (Entered 9/21/81)
5PW.43	300 S. Fifth Street	Lamar Post Office	National Register (Entered 1/22/86)
5PW.66	211 S. Main Street	(No Name Given)	Not Eligible (Recorded 10/8/92)
5PW.223	322 S. Main Street	Alamo Hotel / Alamo Apts	Not Eligible (Recorded 9/17/85)
5PW.59	109 E. Beech Street	Madonna of the Trail Sculpture	Not Eligible (Recorded 1994)
5PW.101	109 E. Beech Street	Short Fuse on a Slack Rope	No Assessment Given (Recorded 1994)

Because three of the properties were already listed on the National Register of Historic Places, architectural inventory forms were not prepared for them during this survey. However, 211 S. Main Street (5PW.66) and 322 S. Main Street (5PW.223) were intensively surveyed to collect current information about the resources and to determine whether the previous assessment of their eligibility was still valid. The two sculptures are

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located on the property of the Colorado Welcome Center at 109 E. Beech Street (5PW.324), a railroad passenger depot, which was intensively surveyed during this project.

**Background Research**

Governmental agencies provided essential information about the City of Lamar and individual properties. The survey team began their research by collecting parcel data from the Prowers County Assessor's Office in Lamar, Colorado. Legal descriptions and current ownership for all subject properties were collected initially to identify building addresses and building locations on lots and blocks. The chain of title book for the plat of the Original Town of Lamar was also available for research at the Assessor's Office and was used to trace property ownership through time. A fire at the Bent County Courthouse in 1889 resulted in the destruction of the earliest property records. Therefore, research of chain of title records at the Prowers County Assessor's Office did not always indicate the earliest owner of a built resource. The surveyors obtained information about the earliest recorded owner of each property as well as subsequent owners to the present day; this chain of title information was provided for each property on their respective architectural inventory form. (In order to obtain the names of the earliest owners dating to the founding of Lamar in 1887, it would be necessary to research grantor and grantee books, which could be accomplished in the future with another survey grant.)

Both background and site-specific information was also obtained from local and regional institutions. The Big Timbers Museum in Lamar yielded historic photographs of the downtown area and individual resources as well as telephone directories, which were used to identify building occupants and businesses through time. The dates of the telephone directories included 1925, 1933-1934, 1940, 1950, 1959-1960, 1970, 1980, and 1989-1990; this research required searching for individual addresses rather than business names within the directories, which was a time-consuming process.

The Denver Public Library Western History Department served as a source for newspaper clippings and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Lamar, available through their Internet website. The Sanborn Maps served as an important source of information for documenting the growth and development of the city as well as for determining approximate dates of construction of buildings in the survey area and their construction history. Maps of Lamar were available beginning in 1893 and then later in 1900, 1906, 1911, 1919, 1931, and 1938. Relevant information obtained from the maps was included in the intensive-level survey forms.

The history of Lamar and biographical information on property owners and developers was found at regional libraries, including census records available from "HeritageQuest Online", available through the Denver Public Library website. Historical photographs of significant people, buildings, and of the Arkansas River Valley were also found in the archives of the above resources. Published histories of the City of Lamar provided background information about the development of the central business district, as well as facts about significant individuals and events. The book assembled by the Lamar Centennial History Committee, Lamar, Colorado: Its First Hundred Years 1886 – 1986, proved to be the most

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comprehensive published resource for the history of Lamar, offering not only a general history of the area but also biographical information about former and current residents as well as historic photographs of the town not available elsewhere. Other important references included A Prowers County History by Ava Betz and “Three Score and Ten”, a special publication issued on May 24, 1956 to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Lamar.



*Big Timbers Museum; Lamar, Colorado*

**Figure 5.**  
Although this photograph from 1934 shows Miss Lamar on a temporary stage at the city’s 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of its founding, the buildings at the northwest corner of Olive and Main Streets are also visible and provide important information about their former appearance. Photographs like these were available to the survey team at the Big Timbers Museum.

**Acknowledgements**

Ron Stock, former City Administrator for the City of Lamar, initiated the survey project after receiving a recommendation from representatives of the Colorado Community Revitalization Partnership in 2008 that a cultural resource survey was an important step towards revitalizing Lamar’s downtown business district. The surveyors wish to thank

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Shawna Hodge, the Main Street Director for the City of Lamar, for her help in organizing the project, facilitating information-gathering efforts, and managing the SHF grant. Deb Maggart, Personal Property Appraiser for the Prowers County Assessor's Office, provided valuable assistance during the research phase by assisting the surveyors in accessing property appraisal records and chain of title information. Wiley Work, Engineering and Land Survey Department Head for the City of Lamar, provided CAD generated maps of the downtown area that the surveyors used for reference and as a basis for the generation of their own project map. Kathleen Scranton, Curator of the Big Timbers Museum, and her assistant, Caro Hedge, allowed the survey team access to important historical photographs and telephone directories stored at the museum. And much appreciation is extended to the State Historical Fund, which provided the majority of the funding for this cultural resource survey project, with Elizabeth Blackwell and Heather Peterson at History Colorado providing valuable oversight and helpful advice on performing the survey, preparing the report, and determining National and State Register eligibility of the historic architectural resources.

**V. HISTORIC CONTEXT**



*Image from archives.gov*

**Figure 6.**  
Covered wagons were a common sight along the eastern plains of Colorado. Many settlers traveled west to claim land for their future homestead.

**Early Settlement in Colorado (1800-1869)**

The first half of the nineteenth century was a time of discovery, conflict, and expansion for the fledgling United States. In 1803, the eastern portion of Colorado was included in the Louisiana Purchase. Over the next five decades, a series of expeditions revealed Colorado to a growing population in the east. In 1806, Lieutenant Zebulon Montgomery Pike visited the area during his military survey of the southwest. The published report of his findings aroused considerable interest from government officials and the general populace. Visits to the region by prominent figures in the ensuing years included one by Major Steven H. Long, an Army engineer, during the summer of 1820. The published reports of the Pike

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and Long expeditions included descriptions of the relative ease of travel over the plains and the numerous routes available for access to the Spanish settlements of New Mexico.

In August of 1821, the Mexicans overthrew their Spanish rulers; American traders could now be admitted to the New Mexican territory with few restrictions. William Becknell, a trader from Missouri, had already entered the New Mexican settlements and spread word of profitable opportunities there. The New Mexican settlements were in need of textiles and small hardware, while the American traders were interested in gold and silver, and the Mexican horses, mules, and other animals. At the same time, there was interest in the fur resources of the Rocky Mountains by Missouri businessmen; previously-established fur country in the Ohio Valley and areas of the lower Missouri River were now being developed for settlements. The major American traders began building large, fixed trading posts in the heart of Indian country. The American traders exchanged Indian tanned buffalo robes for guns, ammunition, textiles, and tools, which the Plains Indian tribes needed as they became more dependent upon outside sources for their goods.

In 1833, brothers William and Charles Bent with trader Ceran St. Vrain built a massive adobe trading post along the Arkansas River, west of present-day Las Animas, known as Fort Bent. This important complex served as a center for the fur trade and as a protected way station for the increased commerce between Kansas City (then known as Westport) and Santa Fe. Caravans consisting of up to 100 covered wagons, each carrying items for trade with ten to twelve animals in tow, were common sights arriving at the fort. (Refer to Figure 6.) The historically significant way station along the Santa Fe Trail is now known as “Bent’s Old Fort”.

When American settlers took extensive tracts of land in eastern Texas beginning in 1835 to set up their own independent republic out of the control of Mexico, relations between the U.S. and Mexico became tense. The situation grew worse when Texas was annexed to the United States in 1846. A boundary dispute between Mexico and Texas followed. The Mexican-American War broke out after President John Tyler sent Federal troops into the disputed territory.

The ratification of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848 allowed Anglo-American settlers to move into areas of Colorado located south of the Arkansas River. This peace treaty ended the Mexican-American War (1846 – 1848) and called for Mexico’s withdrawal of 525,000 square miles in land to the United States in exchange for fifteen million dollars and the ensured safety of preexisting property rights of Mexican citizens in the transferred territories. The United States also agreed to assume \$3.25 million in debt that Mexico owed to American citizens. Land affected by this peace treaty included parts of Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Wyoming as well as the entire states of California, Nevada, and Utah. But settlement into these areas proceeded slowly, due to a number of factors: There was the possibility of attack from Indians, there were few established settlements to join, and there were concerns about the reliability of land titles transferred from Mexican to American ownership. So settlement into areas along the Arkansas River Valley proceeded slowly.

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Colorado achieved the status of a territory in 1861 and John Evans served as its first governor and chief executive. The influx of settlers into the area, seeking land and sources of food, resulted in conflicts with the Native Americans. The conflicts escalated until they reached a climax in an attack on the unarmed and peaceful tribes, including the Northern Cheyenne, Northern Arapaho, and the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma; the ambush occurred in November of 1864 and is known as the Sand Creek Massacre. Following this event, most of the remaining Native Americans were removed to other states.

**The Founding of Lamar and Prowers County (1870 – 1890)**

John Wesley Prowers arrived at Fort Bent in 1858; he settled on the Purgatoire River to farm and raise cattle. Colorado's territorial legislature established Bent County in 1870 with John Prowers as chairman of the Board of Commissioners. The open prairies of Bent County were perfect for raising cattle, a profitable venture; a mature cow could be sold for thirty to fifty dollars. Cattle ranching became a major industry in the area. John Prowers eventually controlled 400,000 acres of range, including 40 miles of frontage along the Arkansas River. In 1880, he formed a partnership with Charlie Goodnight of Texas and built a small slaughter house in Las Animas. Two years later, he was offered \$775,000 for his land and cattle holdings.

By the late 1860s, railroad construction throughout the United States was steadily interconnecting different areas of the country. The advent of the railroads would soon allow visitors from the East access to federal lands available through the Homestead Act, a law signed by President Abraham Lincoln on May 20, 1862. The Act allowed any U.S. citizen who had never borne arms against the United States government to file an application and lay claim to 160 acres of surveyed Government land. During the next five years, the homesteader was required to live on the land and improve it by building a dwelling measuring no smaller than 12' by 14' and growing crops. After the five years had passed, the homesteader could file for his patent or deed of title by submitting proof of residency and the associated required improvements to a local land office. Title could also be acquired following a six-month residency and minor improvements as long as the homesteader paid \$1.25 per acre to the government. The railroads joined in by offering their excess land to homesteaders at inflated prices.

The Santa Fe railroad line reached the Colorado border in 1873; it received a grant of three million acres of land, which could be sold in part to interested buyers. The opportunity to purchase land as well as the discovery of silver and gold attracted settlers to Colorado, which became a state in 1876. The combination of the open range and irrigation water available from the Arkansas River allowed for hay and grain production in Bent County.

Isaac R. Holmes of Garden City, Kansas was a former Santa Fe land agent and a developer of town sites. He had secured the Government Land Office for Garden City and understood that the establishment of a land office was a necessary first step towards establishing a town. Holmes recognized an opportunity to establish a town in the Arkansas River Valley of southeastern Colorado. Most of the land along the Santa Fe



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railroad line was already owned by cattle ranchers. Although the southeast quarter of Section 31, Township 22, Range 46 had been deeded to Edward and Bertha L. Fitzgerald, Holmes chose this land because it was available for establishing a town site and only three miles from the Blackwell railroad station; the railroad company could sanction its relocation to the new town site. Holmes organized the Lamar Town and Land Company with Colonel A. S. Johnson, who was associated with the land department of the Santa Fe railroad, and John E. Godding. Johnson served as President, Godding acted as secretary, and Holmes was the general manager. Others associated with the company included D. E. Cooper, M. D. Parmenter, M. L. Swift, Captain Spivey and I. R. Holmes’ brother, J. H. Holmes.

The next task was to select a name for the town site. President Grover Cleveland’s Secretary of the Interior was Lucius Quintus Lamar, a former U.S. Senator from Mississippi who had been a prominent Confederate cavalry officer. The developers reasoned that the Secretary of the Interior would support the establishment of a federal land office in a town named Lamar.



*DPL Western History Collection OP-2311*

**Figure 7.**

The depot that had been moved to Lamar from the Town of Blackwell burned to the ground in March of 1888. It was temporarily replaced by four box cars, which town promoters thought presented a poor image to potential settlers of the fledgling new town. This depot was constructed on June 23, 1888 and has subsequently been replaced by the one currently located at 109 East Beech Street (5PW.324).

The developers also needed to establish a railroad depot at the town site; it was critical that potential buyers of land have easy access to the new town. The closest depot was located in the Town of Blackwell, named for A. R. Black, a prosperous cattleman who

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operated a large ranch in the area. A small railroad depot had been constructed there, along the Santa Fe Trail, and designated as railroad mile post “499”, its distance from Atchison, Kansas. In 1866, promoters had asked A. R. Black to donate some of his land adjacent to Blackwell for the purpose of creating a town site. In exchange for the donation of his land, Black could subdivide some of his remaining property into town lots to sell for building sites. When Black turned down the offer, I. R. Holmes identified land owners three miles to the west in the future town of Lamar who were willing to sell their land (Edward and Bertha L. Fitzgerald) and told Black the depot would be relocated to the new town site. Black consulted a Denver attorney and was planning to secure an injunction to prevent the depot from being moved. However, on the Sunday before the injunction was to be issued and while A. R. Black was in Pueblo after receiving a false telegram that required his presence for “important business”, a railroad crew moved the Blackwell depot to railroad mile marker “502” at the new town site; the railroad cooperated in the move because it profited from the establishment of towns located along its route. A special excursion train from Garden City, Kansas, carrying prospective buyers, arrived in Lamar at 10 am on May 24, 1886. The opening sale of lots was held, with the town officially founded on that day.



*DPL Western History Collection X-11969*

**Figure 8.**

Wood-framed buildings were initially constructed in Lamar, seen in this circa 1887 view of the 100 block of South Main Street (Block 23) looking north. One substantial two-story brick building was also built on this block. An elevated boardwalk ran along the front of the storefronts. Businesses, starting at the left side of the photograph, included A. D. Rawlings Real Estate, Fred Lee’s Confectioneries, Johnston Dry Goods, a tailor shop, W. D. Lee Groceries, A. E. Bent & Co., U. H. Vanorsdale’s Meat Market, the Lamar Leader’s printing office, C. B. Thoman’s real estate and loan office, an unidentified business, Holmes and Parmenter real estate office, and Spivy & Holmes, a dry goods store. All of these buildings have been replaced.

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The value of the lots sold the first day exceeded \$45,000. Within six weeks, the cost of the lots had risen from \$200 to \$1,500. One real estate agency reported that lots 11 and 12 in Block 18, which is the location of 101-103 North Main Street, sold for \$9,000; another lot across the street in Block 17 sold for \$1,250. Fred W. Burger bought a site for a hotel but had to initially conduct his business from a tent. He later formed a partnership with Abraham Deeter of Winterset, Iowa and together they opened the first hotel in Lamar. Materials were needed for the construction of buildings; the firm of Spivey & Holmes opened a general merchandising store and lumber yard to respond to the demand. Saloons, restaurants and real estate offices opened their doors to the growing populace. Lamar was described in May, 1886:

“Only five short weeks ago there was not a sign of human habitation in sight save a single log building down by the cottonwood belt that fringes the stream. From the river southward a desert-looking plain, partly covered by the short buffalo grass, extended up a gentle incline two or three miles...Today there are five and twenty buildings completed or nearly so; many others are begun and active preparations are making to erect a large number more.”

The town's first newspaper, the Bent County Register, was published on June 12, 1886. The first church services were provided by the Congregational Church on June 27<sup>th</sup>. By the first of July, approximately five hundred people resided at the new town site. An informally organized town council was needed to enforce law and maintain streets in the newly established town; John E. Godding, Secretary of the Lamar Town and Land Company, was chosen as the acting mayor. The citizens of Lamar later voted on November 23, 1886 to officially organize a town government and the election of officers occurred on December 27, 1886. C. M. Morrison was elected mayor.

In July of 1886, both houses of Congress passed a bill that created the Bent Land District and named Lamar as the seat for the land office; I. R. Holmes' request for an official government land office at his new town site had finally been answered. The office formally opened on January 3, 1887 and was swamped with land purchases the following week.

Lamar's central business district received improvements in 1887: Main Street was graded and twelve-foot wide boardwalks were constructed in front of the buildings. The Town Council voted in April of 1888 to purchase 5,000 catalpa trees to shade the streets.

As Lamar grew in population during those early years, so did its citizens' voices in county elections. In the fall of 1888, a leading merchant of Lamar was elected to the state legislature; this represented a significant shift in power since Las Animas was the county seat for Bent County and legislators had typically been elected from that city's populace. In 1889, Colorado's Seventh General Assembly passed bills that created Prowers, Cheyenne, Lincoln, Kiowa, and Otero counties from Bent County. Prowers County was named for John Wesley Prowers, the early settler of the Arkansas River Valley and prominent cattle rancher; the county encompasses an area measuring 39 by 42 miles. Lamar was initially named the temporary county seat but an election in the fall of 1889

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resulted in Lamar becoming the permanent seat of government for Prowers County. The stage was now set for the growth and development of Lamar over the next forty years.

**The Development of Lamar (1890 - 1948)**

Most of the buildings initially constructed in Lamar were of wood frame construction; they could be quickly erected during the town's early boom days. Fire fighting equipment had been purchased in 1887, including a hook and ladder truck with a ladder capable of extending 45 feet. Lamar's first water system was installed circa 1888. However, fires were commonplace in the newly formed town. On July 10, 1890, a fire started in the Athletic Club room on North Main Street. Simultaneously, repairs were underway at the nearby fire engine house and the stream of water was not strong enough to fight the blaze. Augmented by strong winds from the south, the fire spread quickly and consumed numerous buildings. Another fire occurred in August of 1891; the surrounding region was dry due to a significant drop in rainfall. The disastrous event occurred on the east side of North Main Street and was recorded in the local newspaper, the *Lamar Register*:

"At 1:15 o'clock last Wednesday afternoon, fire was discovered on the roof of the Commercial Hotel, and before it was gotten under control the entire block of buildings facing Main Street, from the Commercial Hotel to the John Hess saloon, was devoured by the flames. In just one hour's time a dozen frame buildings were in ashes, and a black and charred mass marked the spot where some of the principal business houses of Lamar stood..."

Other fires occurred in 1893 and 1894 that destroyed more of the town's original wood framed buildings in the central business district. The volunteer fire department in 1893 had a hose cart with 600 feet of "first class hose" as well as a hook and ladder truck; water was supplied from twenty double hydrants. The frequent fires prompted business owners to build their replacement buildings in brick or stone. The E. & H. Craddock Brick Company's business was boosted by the popularity of its more fireproof building material. The construction of masonry buildings along Main Street was underway.

The earliest Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Lamar was recorded in 1893, showing redevelopment of the town beginning along a three block section of Main Street between Poplar Street to the north and Elm Street to the south. Lamar's population in 1893 was recorded in the Sanborn Map as 800 residents. Three years earlier, the Postal Telegraph Cable Company had been allowed to install poles and string wire along the city streets. The Lamar Milling & Elevator Company, located ½ mile east of the railroad depot, was constructed in 1892. Known more commonly as the "Lamar Flour Mill", this flour and grain mill allowed local raw, agricultural products from the Arkansas Valley to be processed locally at a capacity of 500 barrels per day. It was the second largest mill in the state, surpassed only by the Hungarian Flour Mill in Denver, and served as a Lamar landmark until 1968 when it burned down. The Lamar factory for the American Beet Sugar Company was built three years later in 1895; it was located one mile north of the post office and processed 500 tons of beets each day. Both companies employed many workers and contributed to the growth and development of Lamar.

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*Big Timbers Museum*

**Figure 9.**

The John Hess Saloon was an early structure in Lamar. It was consumed by fire in 1891. Other buildings on Block 17, located on the east side of North Main Street, burned during the conflagration.

In 1900, the population had doubled to 1,600 and more commercial buildings had been constructed along the three block section of Main Street between Poplar and Elm. The fire department included 30 volunteers with water supplied from wells. In July of 1900, the Town Council instructed the Town Clerk to order 3" and 6" diameter wooden water pipes for the town's water system. Although the streets were not paved, electric lighting was installed along the main thoroughfares. The Denver Times reported on May 24, 1900 that the town celebrated its 14<sup>th</sup> anniversary by visiting a new irrigation system located north of town. Lamar's assets were touted in the newspaper article:

"The soil of Prowers County is acknowledged to be of superior quality, and very productive. The tests of sugar beets grown in the district have been exceptionally favorable and several hundred acres are planted out this season for the new sugar factory. There is a very large acreage of wheat grown every year and it is one of the principal points in the Arkansas valley where the famous cantaloupe is grown with such success. Fruit also does well, and the orchard acreage is being increased largely from year to year.

The completion of this immense irrigation system is bound to add to the population of Lamar, as hundreds of new settlers are coming in from eastern states every

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month. Lamar is sure to be the commercial center of the lower Arkansas valley, and now in its early days, the time for the most satisfactory investments. During the past eighteen months at least one-half of the town has been built new, and the business center of the city is built up entirely of fine brick and stone blocks. The east side of Main street has nearly all been built new during this past year, including a \$15,000 hotel, built of native red stone, by the business men of the town. A new opera house has just been completed during the past three months, and businesses of every character have almost doubled during the year.”

Water facilities became available in Lamar by 1906 and the population had grown to 3,000 residents. The “fire limits” of the town were now defined, with Maple and Oak serving as the north and south boundaries; 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues, located one block to the east and west of Main Street, were the boundaries between Poplar to the north and Olive to the south. North of Poplar and south of Olive, the fire limit boundary was offset to the alleys behind the commercial buildings along Main Street. (Refer to Figure 2 on page 4.) Thus, the core business district was protected with fire hydrants (or plugs) by 1906, an important feature after the devastating fires of the 1880s and 1890s. (Refer to Figures 8 and 9.)

By 1911, the fire limits had expanded to include four additional blocks on the east side of South Main Street between East Beech Street and East Oak Street, the northern and southern boundaries. The fire department now consisted of one full-time paid fire chief and 30 volunteer firefighters; the chief was hired in 1909 and paid \$100 annually to maintain the equipment and run the department for the city. Within the city limits, water mains varying in diameter from 4” to 12” had now been installed; most of the wooden mains had been replaced with cast iron. The Lamar Light, Heat & Power Company, an electric light plant, was located at the southeast corner of East Beech Street and South Fourth Street; it was incorporated in 1908 as the Lamar Gas and Electric Company. This company supplied steam heat to downtown businesses through tunnels located below grade. In 1920, the City of Lamar purchased the privately owned company and named the newly-constructed electric generation facility, which was located on North First Street, the Lamar Light and Power Department. In 1923, “white way” lights were purchased for Main Street. (A portion of New York City’s Broadway district was nicknamed the “Great White Way” for the number of electric lights used on theatre marquees lining the street.)

Other businesses located in Lamar include the Helvetia Milk Condensing Company; it built a plant in 1914 for the canning of milk, known as Pet Milk. (Refer to Figure 10.) The establishment of this business resulted in an increase in dairy farming in the area until 1932 when improved technology allowed fresh milk to become available to consumers and the Lamar plant closed.

Beet sugar, meat packing, and flour milling were valued as the top three commodities produced in Colorado in 1914; the Arkansas River Valley, with its farms and ranches, contributed significantly to the state’s overall production. World War I, which occurred between 1914 and 1918, brought prosperity to the area because of the rise in commodity

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prices. Lamar’s population in 1919 had risen to 3,500 residents and by 1931, 4,400 citizens lived in the city.



*Big Timbers Museum*

**Figure 10.**  
A celebration of the opening of the Lamar Plant of the Helvetia Milk Condensing Company occurred on January 5, 1914. The east side of the 100 block of South Main Street can be seen here. Buildings, beginning from the left side of the photograph, include the Opera House Block (now demolished), 115 S. Main - 5PW.339, 119 S. Main - 5PW.341 (Up-To-Date Drug Company), 121 S. Main - 5PW.343 (Marx & Wheeler Grocery), 123 S. Main - 5PW.345 (A. Everett Meats), and 125 S. Main - 5PW.346 (E. E. Butler Groceries, Dry Goods & Shoes).

The manufacture of American automobiles beginning around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century caused livery stables and feed barns in Lamar to be replaced with filling stations and garages. The Lamar *Register* reported on August 13, 1902: “The first automobile that ever struck Lamar was here this morning and was the center of attraction for a large

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crowd. It was owned by three tourists who were heading east.” Lamar’s first garage opened shortly afterwards in 1906. (Refer to Figure 11.) One of the first federally funded primary highways in Colorado in 1916 was U.S. 287-385, which allowed easy vehicular access to Lamar and brought tourists as well as truckers to the city. The widespread use of trucks and automobiles during the 1920s and 1930s brought with it the need for improved roads. A contract to pave Lamar’s Main Street and side streets was awarded in 1923.



*Big Timbers Museum*

**Figure 11.**

This photograph is labeled “1907 Get Together – Cars in the Prowers Area. 1907 Buick owned by Lampton Buick Co. is in this picture.” The east side of the 200 block of South Main Street can be seen here. Buildings, beginning from the right side of the photograph, include the Masonic Temple at 221-223 South Main – 5PW.361, 213 S. Main – 5PW.356 (two-story building), 211 S. Main – 5PW.66, 207 S. Main – 5PW.353, and the former Ben Mar Hotel at 201-205 S. Main – 5PW.352 (partially visible with multiple chimneys). The buildings at 215-217 S. Main – 5PW.358 and 219 S. Main – 5PW.360 had not yet been constructed.

Although fires had a devastating impact on the development of Lamar, natural disasters took their toll on businesses, too. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of June in 1921, the Arkansas River flooded due to rainfall that had occurred days earlier on the river’s higher tributaries; this flood had a more serious impact on Pueblo and was known as the “Great Flood”. Farmers located west of Lamar lost their wheat and corn crops as well as chickens; damage also occurred



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to area irrigation ditches, roads and bridges. The first floor of downtown businesses flooded. (Refer to Figure 12.) Total damage in Lamar was estimated at \$640,000.

The “Black Tuesday” stock market crash of 1929 marked the beginning of the Great Depression. The gross national product was reduced in half and unemployment reached 25%. Wheat that had been valued at \$1.42 in 1890 now sold for twenty-five cents. Although the Depression affected the thriving economy of Lamar, the city celebrated the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding in 1931 to much fanfare. (Refer to Figure 13.)



*Big Timbers Museum*

**Figure 12.**  
The flood waters from the Arkansas River filled Lamar’s downtown streets, seen in this view looking north toward the 100 block of North Main Street. The ornamental concrete block building at 100 North Main Street – 5PW.318, on the right side of the photograph at the corner location, 102-104 North Main – 5PW.316, and 106 North Main – 5PW.314 remain extant.

Drought and dust storms between 1932 and 1938 also negatively affected the agricultural-based economy of the Arkansas River Valley. The “Dust Bowl” encompassed the panhandles of Texas and Oklahoma as well as areas of Kansas, New Mexico, and Colorado, including Prowers County. The drop in rainfall beginning in 1931 and high winds combined with intensive plowing on farms, which removed grass and topsoil, resulted in the “Dirty Thirties”. The storms caused the sun to be obscured from view; interior lighting was necessary during the day. The dust collected like snow banks in southeastern Colorado; crops, livestock and farming equipment were buried by piles of airborne dirt. The

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Depression and the “Dirty Thirties” caused farming and ranching families to seek alternative employment. Federal relief programs including the Civil Works Administration (CWA), the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided a source of employment in Lamar during this time. Willow Creek Park and Prowers County Welfare Housing were constructed under these programs and remain standing today.



*Big Timbers Museum*

**Figure 13.**

The 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Lamar occurred in 1931 during the Great Depression. This view looking south on Main Street reveals the original appearance of some of the buildings on the 100 and 200 blocks of South Main Street. The building on the right side of the image is 120-122 South Main Street – 5PW.342; a portion of 116 South Main Street – 5PW.340 is also visible. The building at 200 South Main Street – 5PW.351, which was the home of Lamar National Bank in 1931, was demolished circa 1964 for the construction of First National Bank.

**City Development after World War II (1948 - Present)**

Although Lamar always had a strong agricultural-based economy, the city’s “Commercial Club” had been formed in 1897 to attract businesses to the area; the name was changed

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to the Lamar Chamber of Commerce in 1920. Many new businesses opened during the 1940s and following World War II.

The National Municipal League (now known as the National Civic League) and Look Magazine presented Lamar with an “All America City Award”, which is presented annually to cities that are recognized for their civic achievements. The award program, which was founded in 1949, is described on the National Civic League’s website: “All-America Cities have shown the ability to innovate in such areas as job creation, neighborhood revitalization, crime reduction, new housing for low income people, improving education, and engaging youth”. Lamar was recognized in 1959 for its potential as a center of industry; the formation of the Greater Lamar Improvement Company (GLIC) followed shortly afterwards. The newly-formed company included three members appointed by the city council, three members selected by the chamber of commerce, the city attorney, and the secretary of the chamber of commerce. The company’s goal was to work with the Small Business Administration to induce manufacturing companies to locate their manufacturing facilities in Lamar.

An approximate seven acre parcel of the Lamar Industrial Park, located east of downtown, was leased to the GLIC. Companies that, in turn, leased land from the GLIC included Midway Homes, a Dallas-based manufacturer of custom-built luxury mobile homes. A 50,000 square foot manufacturing plant was constructed for the GLIC’s first lessee. After two years, Midway Homes closed its doors and Laredo Homes, another mobile home manufacturer, occupied the building. Laredo Homes met the same fate after a similar period of time. In 1966, the building was leased to the WHO Manufacturing Company, which produced heavy duty grinding equipment for a worldwide customer base. By 1968, the company needed more space and half of the original building it occupied was leased to Aspen Ski Wear, which employed 200 people; Cross Hydraulics, a manufacturer of hydraulic cylinders for the agricultural equipment industry, leased the other half of the building. Cross Hydraulics employed approximately 350 area residents after constructing a number of additions to the original building to enlarge its manufacturing facility. Following a fire in 1976 that destroyed Aspen Ski Wear’s manufacturing facility and a decline in the demand for farm equipment, the ski wear manufacturer relocated to a smaller facility and Cross Hydraulics closed its plant in 1983. Another production facility containing 15,000 square feet was built in 1973 for Ranco Manufacturing Company, which was founded in 1968 to fabricate custom-designed trailers for the agricultural and construction industry. The company initially built three trailers per month for the ranchers and farmers in Prowers County; it now produces three trailers each day with dealers located across the country.

In 1981, the Colorado Division of Commerce and Development learned that the German bus manufacturer, Neoplan, was considering the construction of a plant in an American rural area. A U.S. representative of the company recommended that Lamar be considered for the site of the plant. Following negotiations with local and state officials, Neoplan constructed its manufacturing complex in Lamar. The facility opened in 1982 and employed 650 people from communities within a 60 mile radius of Lamar. An average of four buses was produced each day until 2006 when the company declared bankruptcy and the facility closed.

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Tourist-oriented services have become a new economic generator for the area. In June of 1998, the Santa Fe Trail, which passes through Lamar, was officially designated as a National Scenic and Historic Byway, drawing tourists to the area. (Refer to Figure 14.) Nearby attractions include the Camp Amache National Historic Landmark, a Japanese-American Internment camp; the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, and Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site. The annual High Plains Snow Goose Festival also attracts visitors to the city.



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**Figure 14.**  
Many cars and trucks pass through Lamar each day since the city is located along the Santa Fe Trail National Scenic and Historic Byway and serves as a crossroad for U.S. Highways 287, 385, and 50. A study to divert truck traffic through town on a bypass is currently underway. The Wilson Building at 125 South Main Street – 5PW.346 (on the right side of the image) and the former Maxwell House Hotel at 201-203-205 South Main Street – 5PW.352 (on the left side of the image) can be seen in this view looking west along East Olive Street.

Today, the City of Lamar continues to benefit from its natural location in the Arkansas River Valley. A diverse collection of residents live here for the small-town rural atmosphere and quality of life as well as the beautiful natural setting. A song was written for Lamar’s

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centennial celebration in 1986, called “Our Town”. One of the verses summarizes the residents’ sentiment:

We made it when the odds were down  
When the wind blew through and knocked our dreams around.  
We stuck it out. We kept our ground.  
‘Cause hopes survive and they always can be found.  
Still around in Our Town.



*Big Timbers Museum*

**Figure 15.**

This view looking north on Main Street near the intersection of Olive Street was taken circa 1900. The buildings on the 100 block of South Main Street line the wide, unpaved street. The corner building on the right side of the image is 125 South Main Street (5PW.346), which is the former location of E.E. Butler Groceries, Dry Goods & Shoes. The building across the street, located at 120-122 South Main Street (5PW.342), is the former location of First National Bank, which was robbed by the Fleagle Gang on May 23, 1928.

While much of the original historic fabric has been lost or is concealed by newer cladding materials, recent historic preservation efforts are having a positive impact on the historic resources in the city. This Cultural Resource Survey, the first to be conducted in Lamar, will further enhance preservation planning efforts through its documentation of the current state of buildings located in the central business district.

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**VI. RESULTS**



*Big Timbers Museum*

**Figure 16.**

The 200 block of North Main Street can be seen in this view taken circa 1931 at the intersection of Poplar Street. The buildings, starting from the left side of the photograph, include 201 N. Main – 5PW.306 (White Eagle Oil Corporation), 205 N. Main – 5PW.305 (F. J. Sweet Contractors & Supply), 215 N. Main – 5PW.303 (Lamar Motor Sales Co. & Dodge Brothers Motor Cars), 217 N. Main – 5PW.302 (Lamar Motor Sales Co.), and 223 N. Main – 5PW.301 (Eckles Tire Service).

**Types of Resources Surveyed**

The Cultural Resource Survey of the City of Lamar resulted in the completion of sixty-eight (68) Architectural Inventory Forms. Approximately 85% of the surveyed resources (58) were constructed to accommodate commerce and trade, which was expected since the survey was carried out in Lamar’s central business district. The survey also included resources with the following uses:

- 1 railroad depot (Colorado Welcome Center / Lamar Chamber of Commerce at 109 E. Beech – 5PW.324);
- 2 religious facilities (First Baptist Church at 108 W. Oak – 5PW.367 and Living Covenant Fellowship at 121 W. Beech – 5PW.326);
- 4 domestic buildings (Passport Inn at 109-113 N. Main – 5PW.312, Lamar Hotel/Lamar Hotel Apartments at 108-110 W. Olive – 5PW.349, Stockmen’s Motor Inn at 201-203-205 S. Main – 5PW.352 [104 E. Olive], and Alamo Hotel/Apartments at 322 S. Main – 5PW.223);

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- 2 recreational and cultural use facilities (Shore Arts Center at 115 S. Main – 5PW.339 and the Lamar Theatre at 219 S. Main – 5PW.360); and
- 1 social/meeting hall (Masonic Temple at 221-223 S. Main – 5PW.361).

Some of the commercial buildings had earlier accommodated domestic uses on their second floors, based upon telephone directory research. Resources that included a hotel or apartments on the second floor include:

- 123 N. Main - 5PW.307: Rex Hotel (circa 1950) / Keiser Hotel (circa 1960)
- 119-121 N. Main – 5PW.308: Hotel Baca (circa 1925) / Main Hotel (circa 1960)
- 108 N. Main – 5PW.313: Apartments for individual residents
- 102-104 N. Main – 5PW.316: Hotel Lennox or Lennox Hotel (circa 1925 – 1960)
- 100 N. Main – 5PW.318: Apartments for individual residents
- 107-109 S. Main – 5PW.333/5PW.335: LaClede Rooms (circa 1925 – 1940) / LaClede Hotel (circa 1950)

Research revealed that the licenses of five hotels located in the 100 block of North Main Street were revoked in 1962 after a private investigation found that organized prostitution had occurred at the buildings.

The building at 222-224 S. Main Street – 5PW.362 was constructed in 1906 to accommodate the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) Hall on its second floor; this social organization was located across the street from the Masonic Temple. It became the Eagles Lodge in 1950. No social organizations occupy the building today.

Three resources within the survey boundary are already listed on the National Register of Historic Places and were, therefore, not surveyed as part of this project; they are the Davies Hotel/Payne Hotel at 122 N. Main Street – 5PW.25, the Prowers County Building/Prowers County Courthouse at 301 S. Main Street – 5PW.27, and the U.S. Post Office/Lamar Post Office at 300 S. Fifth Street – 5PW.43. Refer to the Survey Log and “Potential Eligible Individual Resources” in this section of the report.

### **Period of Construction**

Precise construction dates and subsequent alterations of historic architectural resources were difficult to determine unless a cornerstone or other similar dating device appeared on the building. Estimated construction dates and dates of subsequent alterations were determined by interpolation from the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, historical photographic evidence, telephone directory and chain of title research, and written historical accounts. Building permit records were unavailable from the City of Lamar because they were destroyed when the City moved into its new office building at 102 East Parmenter Street approximately ten years ago; therefore, dates of building alterations after the last published Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps in 1938 were not available. Where no information was available from the above sources, the Prowers County Assessor’s recorded date of construction was used. In most cases, dates shown on the Assessor’s records were

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contradicted by more reliable information and were not used; most of the dates of construction on the Architectural Inventory Forms are indicated as estimated dates.

The construction dates for buildings in the survey area are associated with the platting date of the Original Town of Lamar in May, 1887 as well as the growth and development of the town. The earliest constructed buildings in the survey area are located in the 100 block of South Main Street in Blocks 23 and 24, on the south side of the railroad right-of-way. The Lamar Hotel at 108-110 West Olive Street – 5PW.349 in Block 23 is the oldest building, constructed circa 1890; its original wood-framed construction suggests that it survived the early fires in Lamar. Other buildings in Blocks 23 and 24 were constructed circa 1893 through 1900 following the devastating fires and are mostly of masonry construction, although many of the buildings façades have been re-clad with modern materials. The 100 block of North Main Street in Blocks 17 and 18 also contain some of the earliest constructed buildings beginning in 1900. (Refer to the Project Maps on pages 52 and 53 for resource numbers and dates of construction.)

As the city grew in population, the central business district expanded to the north and south to the 200 block of North Main Street and the 200 - 300 blocks of South Main Street. The expansion of the downtown also occurred in the east and west directions along the side streets adjacent to Main Street. A small warehouse district developed during the early 1920s on the east half of Block 17 adjacent to the railroad tracks.

When automobile ownership gained popularity, buildings were constructed for car dealerships and repair facilities. Sunday's Garage at 300-308 South Main Street – 5PW.363, constructed circa 1910, was one of the earliest buildings in the survey area to meet the demand. Other automobile-related businesses followed, including a concentration of them in the 200 block of North Main Street: 201 N. Main – 5PW.306 (White Eagle Oil Corporation circa 1930), 205 N. Main – 5PW.305 (The Motor Supply Company circa 1931), 215 N. Main – 5PW.303 (Lamar Motor Sales Co. & Dodge Brothers Motor Cars circa 1930), 217 N. Main – 5PW.302 (Lamar Motor Sales Co. circa 1933), and 223 N. Main – 5PW.301 (Eckles Tire Service circa 1931). Two automobile dealerships were later constructed along Olive Street - U.S. Highway 50, the main east/west thoroughfare through Lamar: 116-120 W. Olive – 5PW.350 (Golladay-Nash Company/Nash Sales & Service circa 1939) and 113 E. Olive – 5PW.347 (Allen & Deloach Tire Shop circa 1947).

Post-World War II construction occurred in the 300 block of South Main Street on Block 36 including 313 S. Fifth Street – 5PW.370 (constructed 1959 as an office building), 311 S. Fifth Street – 5PW.369 (constructed circa 1960 for the First Federal Savings & Loan Association of Lamar), 312 S. Main – 5PW.365 (constructed in 1962 for the Guaranty Abstract Company), 310 S. Main – 5PW.364 (constructed circa 1965 for the Schoenith Office Equipment Company), and 316 S. Main – 5PW.366 (constructed 1969 for the Federal Land Bank Association).

Refer to the “Project Map – Dates of Construction” on page 53.



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**Historic and Current Ownership**

Determination of building ownership and residency over time was challenging. The Town of Lamar was founded in Bent County, which was later subdivided in 1889 to include Prowers County. When a fire caused the Bent County Courthouse to burn down on January 10, 1888, the earliest records of property ownership in Lamar were lost. Therefore, the chain of title information contained in the ledger book for the Original Town of Lamar, available from the Prowers County Assessor’s Office, did not always include the earliest recorded property owner for the older buildings in Lamar’s central business district. The chain of title was recorded for each surveyed resource. This research not only identified historic and current ownership but also provided some guidance for building alteration dates; when a similar alteration occurred to two adjacent unrelated buildings, it was assumed that the alteration occurred after a single owner acquired possession of both buildings. Examples of this assumption include 108-110-112 South Main Street (5PW.334-5PW.336-5PW.337) and 116-120 South Main Street (5PW.340-5PW.342); these groupings of previously architecturally unrelated buildings are now clad with similar materials.



**Figure 17.**  
**THEN:** This building at 112 – 114 South Main Street (5PW.337 – 5PW.338) was built circa 1894. Known as the Pike and Deeter Block, it is one of the oldest buildings in the survey area. Although it was designed as a single building, each half is separately owned. Refer to Figure 19 for this building’s current appearance.

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Various editions of the Lamar telephone directories were consulted. The earliest directories available included 1925 and 1933-1934. Later directories for the years 1940, 1950, 1959-1960, 1970, 1980, and 1989-1990 were also consulted. Since the directories listed businesses and residents in alphabetical order and not by address, it was necessary to scan each directory page for addresses within the survey area. Published newspaper articles and books about prominent citizens in Lamar proved helpful, too.



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**Figure 18.**

**NOW:** The building at 112-114 South Main Street (5PW.337 – 5PW.338), known as the Pike and Deeter Block. The addition of metal siding and stucco to the exterior walls, the replacement of the first floor storefront with an anodized aluminum framing system, and the reduction in size of the second floor window openings at 112 South Main Street (5PW.337) was possible because each half of the building is separately owned.

**Architectural Styles**

There are 35 historic resources or approximately 51% of the total surveyed resources that have modified front façades. In their original unaltered state, most of these buildings would have been classified as “Commercial - 19<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial” or “Commercial -

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Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Commercial”, but are now classified as simply “Commercial” or “Modern Movement - Commercial” because the alterations include construction materials typically used between 1940 and 1970. In many cases, stucco, metal panels, or wood siding has been applied to the buildings’ original masonry exterior walls. Most of the storefronts have been replaced with anodized aluminum framing systems and the storefront transoms have been abandoned, probably to accommodate a suspended ceiling inside, or covered by a canopy. Many of these buildings’ second floor windows have been replaced and/or resized, covered with new siding materials, or the window openings have been infilled with wood. (Refer to Figures 17 through 20.) These “improvements” may have occurred in response to urban renewal trends of the 1960s or as a result of the City of Lamar’s receipt in 1959 of an “All America City Award” and the consequent availability of employment and renewed prosperity to the area.



*Lamar, Colorado: Its First Hundred Years 1886-1986*

**Figure 19.**

**THEN:** Eckles Tire Service was located at 223 North Main Street (5PW.301), built circa 1931. Appliances were later sold here. The building remained in the Eckles family through circa 1977. Refer to Figure 20 for this building’s current appearance.

Another 20 historic resources or approximately 29% of the total surveyed resources exhibit sufficient architectural integrity to be categorized as “Commercial – Early 20<sup>th</sup>

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Century Commercial” since they retain character defining features of this special use type. Buildings that have been altered but still retain a portion of their original decorative masonry detailing, storefront windows, entry doors, or second floor windows were given this classification.

Another 29 recorded historic resources (or approximately 43%) embody some identifying features of specific architectural styles.

The Late Victorian style (1880 – 1910) is represented in the First Baptist Church at 108 West Oak Street – 5PW.367 with its multiple gabled roofs, corner bell tower, pointed (Gothic) arched window openings containing stained glass, and decorative wood shingles on the gable ends of the former parsonage, which now functions as an educational wing.

Elements of the Tudor Revival style (1890 – 1940) are incorporated in the cottage gas station located at 201 North Main Street – 5PW.306, including the steeply pitched cross-gabled roof, decorative half-timbering on the gable ends, and tall, narrow multi-lite steel casement windows.

The Alamo Hotel at 322 South Main Street – 5PW.223 exhibits features of the Mediterranean Revival style (1890 – 1935) with its clay tile-clad hipped roof and decorative brick detailing, including the former stepped brick entry door opening facing Main Street, stepped brick cornice above the north and south sides of the second floor, recessed brick panels at the third floor level, and the brick rowlock sills laid above brick dentils.

Character defining features of the Prairie Style (1900 – 1920) are embodied in the railroad passenger depot at 109 East Beech Street – 5PW.324, including the low-pitched hipped roof with wide, overhanging eaves; the stone coursing that emphasizes the building’s horizontal lines; and the single-hung windows, with diamond-shaped muntins in their upper sash.

The Art Deco style (1925 – 1940) is reflected in two buildings on South Main Street. The former Maxwell House Hotel at 201-203-205 South Main Street – 5PW.352 retains its original aluminum-framed storefronts with recessed entry doors on the north elevation, metal multi-lite casement windows, and glazed terra cotta parapet caps incorporating volutes and sunrise ornamentation. The Lamar Theatre at 219 South Main Street – 5PW.360 represents the conversion of an early 20<sup>th</sup> Century commercial building to an Art Deco building for recreation and culture. Its distinguishing features include the glazed terra cotta wall treatment that extends above the roof line to emphasize the building’s height, the stepped terra cotta frontispiece that incorporates volutes, the second floor multi-lite metal casement windows, the glazed block window on the first floor, the marquee with volutes at the apex of its wedge-shaped canopy and neon lighting, and the curved ticket sales counter.

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Character defining features of the Modern Movement style – commercial building type can be found in a number of buildings, which incorporate aluminum storefront framing systems, metal siding or porcelain metal panels, projecting horizontal canopies, as well as contrasting or textured masonry wall surfaces with stacked bond brick coursing. Historic resources located at 102 (5PW.330), 103 (5PW.331), 104-106 (5PW.315), 108 (5PW.334), 110 (5PW.336), 115 (5PW.339), 116 (5PW.340), 200 (5PW.351), 208-210 (5PW.354), and 312 (5PW.365) South Main Street as well as 313 (5PW.370) South Fifth Street embody many of these features. The building at 311 South Fifth Street (5PW.369) has a low-sloped front gabled roof with exposed beams and deep overhanging eaves, supported by pairs of slender columns while 316 South Main Street (5PW.366) incorporates decorative precast concrete and ornamental concrete block wall construction; both are good examples of the Modern Movement style as adapted to a local commercial building.



*Hoehn Architects PC*

**Figure 20.**

**NOW:** The original stepped parapet remains at 223 North Main Street (5PW.301) but the building’s other original architectural features from its circa 1931 construction have been modified as seen in Figure 19.

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**Topographic Influence on Building Form**

Lamar and the Arkansas River Valley are situated in a former prehistoric bay that once formed part of the edge of a vast, shallow inland sea that covered the Great Plains. The area is known as “Big Timbers” for the stand of mature cottonwood trees that extends approximately 45 miles along the Arkansas River and formerly served as a protected location for pioneers to rest while crossing the Great Plains. The Spanish referred to the area as “La Casa de Palo” or the “House of Wood”. Lamar is located at the approximate mid-point of the Big Timbers.

The downtown buildings were constructed on land that was relatively level and treeless. As a result, the buildings were constructed in a conventional way, with grade remaining typically level around all sides of the buildings. The interior floor elevation was set no more than one step above exterior grade to allow easy access to the first floor commercial spaces. The availability of brick, following the early fires that destroyed many wood-framed buildings, resulted in the construction of many masonry buildings. Locally quarried sandstone remains visible on 114 South Main Street (5PW.338). Stone was also used for accent trim on some of the buildings, including the Masonic Temple located at 221-223 South Main Street (5PW.361). Ornamental concrete block is another building material that was used in the survey area. Since it appears similar to stone, it was probably used as a less expensive alternative. The concrete block at 100 North Main Street (5PW.318) was probably made on site utilizing local sand, with molds duplicating the texture of stone.

**National Register Evaluation Criteria**

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Local Landmark Criteria**

In order to qualify for designation as a historic site in the City of Lamar, the site must be determined to have historic significance due to one or more of the following factors:

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- A. Its character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Lamar, County of Prowers, State of Colorado or the United States of America.
- B. Its location as a site of a significant historic event.
- C. Its identification with a person(s) who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the City of Lamar, County of Prowers, State of Colorado or the United States of America.
- D. Its exemplification of the cultural, economic, social or historic heritage of the City of Lamar, County of Prowers, State of Colorado or the United States of America.
- E. Its portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.
- F. Its embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.
- G. Its identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the City of Lamar, County of Prowers, State of Colorado or the United States of America.
- H. Its embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, materials or craftsmanship that represent a significant architectural innovation.
- I. Its relation to other distinctive areas that are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural or architectural motif.
- J. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the City.

**Eligibility Assessments**

The assessment of the 68 properties intensively surveyed for this project resulted in the following 20 resources found to be potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the State Register of Historic Properties and as local landmarks in the City of Lamar. These resources retain most of their essential physical features to convey their significance.

1.	5PW.302	217 N. Main Street	Lamar Motor Sales Company
2.	5PW.305	205 N. Main Street	Motor Supply Company
3.	5PW.315	104-106 S. Main Street	Eisenhauer's Department Store
4.	5PW.321	105 N. Fourth Street	J. F. Sherman Mercantile Co.
5.	5PW.324	109 E. Beech Street	A.T. & S.F. RR Passenger Depot
6.	5PW.330	102 S. Main Street	J & N Shoes
7.	5PW.331	103 S. Main Street	Green's Jewelry

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8.	5PW.334	108 S. Main Street	Avco Financial Services
9.	5PW.336	110 S. Main Street	
10.	5PW.339	115 S. Main Street	Eudora’s Style Shop/Shore Arts Center
11.	5PW.340	116 S. Main Street	J. C. Penney Company
12.	5PW.350	116-120 W. Olive St.	Golladay-Nash Company
13.	5PW.351	200 S. Main Street	First National Bank in Lamar
14.	5PW.352	201-203-205 S. Main St.	Maxwell House Hotel
15.	5PW.354	208-210 S. Main Street	A. L. Duckwall Store
16.	5PW.360	219 S. Main Street	Lamar Theatre
17.	5PW.365	312 S. Main Street	Guaranty Abstract
18.	5PW.366	316 S. Main Street	Federal Land Bank Association
19.	5PW.367	108 W. Oak Street	First Baptist Church
20.	5PW.369	311 S. Fifth Street	First Federal Savings & Loan

**Draft Statement of Significance for Potential Historic District**

The survey results also suggest that there is potential for the formation of a historic district, both at the local level and for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. National Register Bulletin 15 provides the definition of a district, which “...possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district derives its importance from being a unified entity, even though it is often composed of a wide variety of resources. The identity of a district results from the interrelationship of its resources, which can convey a visual sense of the overall historic environment or be an arrangement of historically or functionally related properties.” Downtown Lamar potentially meets Criterion A for being associated with an event that has made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history with Commerce as the district’s area of significance and with a local level of significance.

The name of the potentially eligible National Register District is “Downtown Lamar”. The resources that comprise Lamar’s central business district are united historically by the town’s physical development as the commercial focus of the surrounding agricultural area. Despite the fact that many of the original storefronts have been altered, their modified and “updated” designs represent the evolution of commerce in Lamar and the need to continually attract consumers to a downtown business district with a period of significance of 1890 through 1962.

The proposed boundaries of this potential historic district are the same as those chosen for the project area, which are shown on page 5.

**Survey Log**

The following survey log documents each resource and its potential eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties, or as a local landmark. It also indicates whether the resource contributes to the potential “Downtown Lamar” historic district.



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**Individual Eligibility**

	<b>State ID No.</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>N.R. Criteria (1)</b>	<b>State Register Criteria (1)</b>	<b>Local Landmark Criteria (2)</b>	<b>Historic District Contributing Status</b>
1	5PW.301	223 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
2	5PW.302	217 N. Main St.		C	F	Contributing
3	5PW.303	215 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
4	5PW.304	211 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing (3)
5	5PW.305	205 N. Main St.		C	F	Contributing
6	5PW.306	201 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
7	5PW.307	123 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
8	5PW.25	122 N. Main St. Davies / Payne Hotel	(4)			Contributing
9	5PW.308	119-121 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
10	5PW.309	115 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing (3)
11	5PW.311	110-114 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
12	5PW.312	109–113 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
13	5PW.313	108 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
14	5PW.314	106 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
15	5PW.315	104 -106 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
16	5PW.316	102-104 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
17	5PW.317	101 - 103 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
18	5PW.318	100 N. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
19	5PW.319	109 E. Hickory	---	---	---	Contributing
20	5PW.320	101 N. Fourth St.	---	---	---	Contributing
21	5PW.321	105 N. Fourth St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
22	5PW.322	102-104 E. Beech St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
23	5PW.324	109 E. Beech St.	A,C		D,F	Contributing
24	5PW.325	111-115–117 W. Beech St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
25	5PW.326	119-121 W. Beech St.	---	---	---	Contributing
26	5PW.328	100 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
27	5PW.329	101 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
28	5PW.330	102 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
29	5PW.331	103 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
30	5PW.333	107 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
31	5PW.334	108 S. Main St.		C	F	Contributing
32	5PW.335	109 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing

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33	5PW.336	110 S. Main St.		C	F	Contributing
34	5PW.337	112 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
35	5PW.338	114 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
36	5PW.339	115 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
37	5PW.340	116 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
38	5PW.341	119 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
39	5PW.342	120-122 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
40	5PW.343	121 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
41	5PW.344	105 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
42	5PW.345	123 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
43	5PW.346	125 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
44	5PW.347	113 E. Olive St.	---	---	---	Contributing
45	5PW.348	106 W. Olive St.	---	---	---	Contributing
46	5PW.349	108 - 110 W. Olive St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
47	5PW.350	116 – 120 W. Olive St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
48	5PW.351	200 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Non-Contributing (3)
49	5PW.352	201 – 203 - 205 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
50	5PW.353	207 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
51	5PW.354	208 – 210 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
52	5PW.66	209-211 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
53	5PW.355	212 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
54	5PW.356	213 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
55	5PW.357	214 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
56	5PW.358	215 - 217 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
57	5PW.359	216 - 220 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
58	5PW.360	219 S. Main St.	A,C		D,F	Contributing
59	5PW.361	221 - 223 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
60	5PW.362	222 - 224 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
61	5PW.363	300 - 308 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
62	5PW.27	301 S. Main St. Prowers County Building Prowers County Courthouse	(4)			Contributing
63	5PW.364	310 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing

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						(3)
64	5PW.365	312 S. Main St.		C	F	Contributing
65	5PW.366	316 S. Main St.		A,C	D,F	Non-Contributing (3)
66	5PW.223	322 S. Main St.	---	---	---	Contributing
67	5PW.367	108 W. Oak St.		C	F	Contributing
68	5PW.43	300 S. Fifth St. U. S. Post Office Lamar Post Office	(4)			Contributing
69	5PW.368	301 – 307 S. Fifth St.	---	---	---	Non-Contributing
70	5PW.369	311 S. Fifth St.		A,C	D,F	Contributing
71	5PW.370	313 S. Fifth St.	---	---	---	Contributing

(1) National & State Register Criteria

A: Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history

C: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction

(2) Local Landmark Criteria

D: Exemplifies the cultural, economic, social or historic heritage of the City of Lamar, County of Prowers, State of Colorado or the United States of America.

F: Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

(3) The resource is non-contributing to the potential historic district due to its date of construction (Post-1962).

(4) The resource was previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Potential Eligible Individual Resource Descriptions**

The following 20 resources within the survey area are potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places or the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties and as local landmarks:

1. 5PW.302: Located at 217 North Main Street, the Lamar Motor Sales Company is significant under Criterion C for its representation of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century commercial architecture as adapted to a local business with a period of significance of 1919 – 1926, which is its approximate date of construction. The building’s character defining features include its brick piers that anchor each end of a storefront incorporating a wood entry door, large display windows, and a transom that extends between the piers as well as a decorative brick parapet incorporating a raised center pediment and decorative diamond-shaped brick detail.

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2. 5PW.305: The Motor Supply Company, located at 205 North Main Street, is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its association with the city's commercial development from 1926 through circa 1970. It is also significant under Criterion C for its representation of Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century commercial architecture as adapted to a store with a period of significance of 1926. The building's character defining features include its brick piers that anchor each end of a storefront incorporating a recessed entry door, large display windows, and a horizontal sign panel with brick frame above the former transom windows.
3. 5PW.315: The former Eisenhauer's Department Store, located at 104-106 S. Main Street, is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its function as both a local hardware and department store with a period of significance of 1925 to 1980. This resource is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a commercial building in Lamar with a period of significance of 1972, which is the approximate year of the building's alteration when the buildings on lots 4 and 5 were acquired by a single owner and a unified storefront could be achieved. The building's character defining features include its vertical steel siding incorporating decorative perforated panels, a storefront with clear anodized aluminum framed windows and doors as well as spandrel panels below the storefront windows, and a continuous suspended horizontal canopy separating the steel siding above from the storefront below.
4. 5PW.321: J.F. Sherman Mercantile Company, located at 105 N. Fourth Street, is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its association with the city's commercial development with a period of significance of 1921 to 1984, which is the time that the building functioned as a food/poultry warehouse and specialty store. It is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century commercial architecture as adapted to a local warehouse with a period of significance of 1920. The building's character defining features include its cast-in-place concrete walls, multiple window openings with transoms, barrel vault roof with roof monitor, and stepped parapet walls.
5. 5PW.324: The A.T. & S.F. Railroad Passenger Depot at 109 E. Beech Street is significant under Criterion A for Transportation for its association with the city's transportation history with a period of significance of 1907 to 1962. It is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for incorporating features of the Prairie style of architecture as adapted to an A.T. & S.F. railroad passenger depot with a period of significance of 1907, which is the year of the building's construction. The building's character defining features include its low-pitched hipped roof with wide, overhanging eaves; the stone coursing that emphasizes the building's horizontal lines; and the single-hung windows, which incorporate diamond-shaped muntins in their upper sash.

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**1. 217 North Main                      5PW.302**  
**Lamar Motor Sales Company       ca. 1919**



**4. 105 North Fourth Street        5PW.321**  
**J. F. Sherman Mercantile Co.     ca. 1921**



**2. 205 North Main                      5PW.305**  
**Motor Supply Company            ca. 1926**



**5. 109 East Beech Street            5PW.324**  
**A.T. & S.F. RR Passenger Depot   1907**



**3. 104-106 South Main                5PW.315**  
**Eisenhauer's Department Store**  
**Altered ca.1972**



**6. 102 South Main Street            5PW.330**  
**J & N Shoes                             Altered ca. 1964**

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**7. 103 S. Main Street                      5PW.331**  
**Green’s Jewelry                      Altered ca. 1966**



**9. 110 S. Main Street                      5PW.336**  
**Altered circa 1960**



**10. 115 S. Main Street                      5PW.339**  
**Eudora’s Style Shop / Shore Arts Center**  
**Altered ca. 1962**



**8. 108 S. Main Street                      5PW.334**  
**Avco Financial Services                      Altered ca. 1960**



**11. 116 S. Main Street                      5PW.340**  
**J. C. Penney Company                      Altered ca. 1976**

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6. 5PW.330: Located at 102 S. Main Street, J & N Shoes is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its representation of a local store with a period of significance of 1900 to 1982. The resource is also significant under Criterion C for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a commercial building in Lamar with a period of significance of 1964, which is the approximate year of the building's alteration when J&N Shoes was established at this location. The building's character defining features include its vertical steel siding, a storefront with clear anodized aluminum framed windows and entry door with porcelain panels below the storefront windows, and a continuous suspended horizontal canopy separating the steel siding above from the storefront below.
7. 5PW.331: Located at 103 S. Main Street, Green's Jewelry is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its representation of a local store with a period of significance of 1900 to 1982. The resource is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a commercial building in Lamar with a period of significance of 1966, which is the year of the building's alteration when the property ownership changed. The building's character defining features include its vertical steel siding, a storefront with clear anodized aluminum framed windows and entry door with vertical steel siding below the storefront windows, and a continuous suspended canopy with steel-sided fascia.
8. 5PW.334: This resource located at 108 S. Main Street is significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a commercial building in Lamar with a period of significance of 1960, which is the approximate year of the building's alteration when this property along with 110 and 112 S. Main were acquired by the same owner. The building's character defining features include its vertical metal panels above the storefront and over the first floor masonry bearing walls, the anodized aluminum framed entry doors and storefront windows, and a suspended horizontal metal canopy with ribbed fascia that extends continuous across the top of the storefront.
9. 5PW.336: This resource at 110 S. Main Street is significant for the same criterion as 5PW.334 (# 8 above).
10. 5PW.339: The former Eudora's Style Shop, now known as the Shore Arts Center, is located at 115 S. Main Street and is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its local function as a mercantile/clothing store with a period of significance of 1933 to 1990. The resource is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of commercial architecture in Lamar with a period of significance of 1962 to 1971, which are the approximate years of the building's alterations. The building's character defining features include the scored stucco façade, the storefront with clear anodized aluminum framed doors and windows with stacked bond brick below, and a continuous suspended horizontal canopy separating the stucco above from the storefront below.

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**12. 116-120 W. Olive                    5PW.350**  
**Golladay-Nash Company                ca. 1939**



**15. 208-210 S. Main Street        5PW.354**  
**A. L. Duckwall Store                    altered ca. 1950**



**13. 200 S. Main Street                5PW.351**  
**First National Bank in Lamar        ca. 1964**



**16. 219 S. Main Street                5PW.360**  
**Lamar Theatre                            1946**



**14. 201-203-205 S. Main St.        5PW.352**  
**Maxwell House Hotel                    1938**



**17. 312 S. Main Street                5PW.365**  
**Guaranty Abstract                        1962**



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**18. 316 S. Main Street            5PW.366**  
**Federal Land Bank Association    1969**



**19. 108 West Oak Street        5PW.367**  
**First Baptist Church            1908 - 1948**



**20. 311 South Fifth Street      5PW.369**  
**First Federal Savings & Loan    1960**

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11. 5PW.340: The former J. C. Penney store at 116 S. Main Street is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its local function as a department store with a period of significance of 1895 to 1990. This resource is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a commercial building in Lamar with a period of significance of 1976, which is the approximate year of the building's alteration when the buildings at 116 S. Main and 120-122 S. Main (5PW.342) were acquired by a single owner and a unified storefront was applied over the subject building and the north half of 120-122 S. Main (5PW.342). The building's character defining features include its porcelain enameled metal panels, a storefront with clear anodized aluminum framed doors and windows with porcelain enameled metal panels below the storefront windows covering masonry bearing and party walls, and a shallow horizontal canopy located immediately above the storefront.
12. 5PW.350: Located at 116-120 W. Olive Street, the former home of the Golladay-Nash Company is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its association with the city's commercial development with a period of significance of 1939 to 1972, which represents the years that the building functioned as a local automobile showroom and service business. It is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of commercial design as adapted to a local automobile-oriented business with a period of significance of 1939. The building's character defining features include its flush ornamental brick façade incorporating large display windows and a diagonal wall that allows for vehicular parking, generously-sized multi-lite double-hung wood windows, large door openings for vehicular access to the building interior, and barrel vaulted roof.
13. 5PW.351: The First National Bank in Lamar, located at 200 S. Main Street, is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its function as an important financial institution in Lamar with a period of significance of 1964 to 1982. The resource is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a local bank with a period of significance of 1964 to 1978, which includes the building's original date of construction and its subsequent addition. The building's character defining features includes its stone exterior walls, laid in a random rubble coursing pattern; the aluminum storefront framing system; the paired narrow masonry window openings on the north elevation; and the steeply sloped standing seam metal canopies that wrap the northeast and northwest corners of the building.
14. 5PW.352: The former Maxwell House Hotel, located at 201-203-205 S. Main Street, is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its association with Lamar's public lodging history and its long use as a hotel with a period of significance of 1938 to 1964, which represents the years that the building continuously functioned as a hotel. It is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture as a good example of a combined Art Deco and Modern Movements style. The building's character defining features include its Art Deco aluminum-framed storefronts with recessed entry doors on the north elevation, metal multi-lite casement windows, and glazed terra cotta

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parapet caps incorporating volutes and sunrise ornamentation. The character defining features attributable to its Modern Movement style include the recessed storefronts with clear anodized aluminum framing and stucco-clad building base.

15. 5PW.354: Located at 208-210 S. Main Street, the former A. L. Duckwall Variety Store is significant under Criterion A for Commerce for its representation of a local department store with a period of significance of 1950 to 1980. The resource is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a commercial building in Lamar with a period of significance of 1950, which is the approximate year of the building's alteration when the A. L. Duckwall Variety Store began conducting business from this location. The building's character defining features include its flush brick façade, the pair of clear anodized aluminum-framed storefronts with recessed entries, and sign band that extends across the full width of the two storefronts.
16. 5PW.360: The Lamar Theatre, located at 219 S. Main Street, is significant under Criterion A for its association with the city's entertainment and recreational heritage with a period of significance of 1946 to 1962. It is also significant under Criterion C for incorporating the Art Deco style of architecture as adapted to a local theater. The building's character defining features include its glazed terra cotta wall treatment that extends above the roof line to emphasize the building's height, the stepped terra cotta frontispiece that incorporates volutes, the second floor divided-lite metal casement windows, the glazed block window on the first floor, the marquee with volutes at the apex of its wedge-shaped canopy with neon lighting, and curved ticket sales counter.
17. 5PW.365: Located at 312 S. Main Street, Guaranty Abstract is significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a local commercial building with a period of significance of 1961, which is the year of the building's construction. The building's character defining features include its brick façade laid in a stacked bond pattern, asymmetrical masonry opening at the front façade incorporating a recessed stone wall that supports large storefront windows, and flat roof.
18. 5PW.366: The building at 316 S. Main Street was originally home to the Federal Land Bank Association. This resource is significant under Criterion A for Commerce with a period of significance of 1969 to 1993, which represents the time that a bank continuously conducted business from this location. It is also significant under Criterion C for Architecture for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a local commercial building with a period of significance of 1969, which is the year of the building's construction. The building's character defining features include its decorative precast concrete double tee and ornamental concrete block wall construction, narrow vertical windows, flat roof, and double-tee site wall.
19. 5PW.367: The First Baptist Church is responsible for the construction of the building at 108 W. Oak Street. This resource is significant under Criterion C for Architecture for

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incorporating features of the Late Victorian style of architecture as adapted to a local church with a period of significance of 1908 to 1948, which includes the time when the building was altered. The building's character defining features include its multiple gabled roofs; the corner bell tower; the pointed (Gothic) arched window openings containing stained glass, which were added to the church circa 1924; and the decorative wood shingles on the gable ends of the former parsonage, now an educational wing.

20. 5PW.369: Originally constructed for First Federal Savings & Loan, this resource located at 311 S. Fifth Street is significant under Criterion A for Commerce with a period of significance of 1960 to 1983, which represents the time that a bank has continuously conducted business from this location. It is also significant under Criterion C for its representation of the Modern Movement style of architecture as adapted to a local commercial building with a period of significance of 1960 to 1973, which includes the year of the original building's construction and the addition. The building's character defining features include its brick and stone wall construction, clear anodized aluminum storefront system and awning windows set into a saw-tooth wall arrangement, as well as its low-sloped front gabled roof with exposed beams and deep overhanging eaves, supported by pairs of slender columns.

### **Conclusions**

It was anticipated that 70 historic resources would be recorded, based upon a preliminary count of buildings in the survey area. A total of 68 historic resources were documented with this intensive-level survey. Reasons for the change include pairs of individual resources, which originally had separate owners and unique storefront designs that were combined on a single inventory form due to later common ownership and consistent façade treatment, such as 104-106 South Main Street (5PW.315). There were other buildings that incorporated two storefronts and were designed as a unified composition, which were found through historical research to be separately owned. An example is the Pike and Deeter Block at 112 – 114 South Main Street (5PW.337 – 5PW.338). Buildings within the survey area boundary that were not intensively-surveyed because they were recently constructed include 224 N. Main Street, which is a Building Material Supply store, and 10 North Main Street, which appears to be a former fast-food restaurant. Other non-surveyed buildings include metal warehouses in Block 18 and a realtor's office and three other small buildings in the railroad right-of-way west of Main Street and opposite the Colorado Welcome Center. Refer to the "Project Map – Locations of Resources" on page 52.

The majority of buildings included in the survey area were constructed between 1890 and 1940, which corresponds to the town's rise in population. The oldest buildings are located in the blocks adjacent to the railroad right-of-way. (Refer to the "Project Map – Dates of Construction" on page 53.) Most of the significant resources in the survey area are those that are associated with a specific architectural style, retain some of their original character defining features, and are associated with the commercial, social, or economic history of the city.

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Due to urban renewal trends during the 1960s, changes in taste, and other factors, most of the buildings in the central business district do not retain all of their original character-defining features. The majority of the modifications to the buildings include the addition of stucco, metal panels, or wood siding to the main façades, the replacement of the original storefront windows with anodized aluminum framing systems, the addition of canopies that often cover former transom windows, and the abandonment or infilling of second floor window openings. One of the goals of this cultural resource survey was to assess the eligibility of the central business district as a local historic district or for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The survey found that although most of the buildings have been altered, many of the updated façades have achieved historic significance of their own. This survey revealed that there is a sufficient concentration of buildings with historic physical integrity for the creation of a historic district.

This cultural resource survey confirmed that Lamar’s commercial history is reflected in the development of the plat of the Original Town of Lamar.

# LAMAR, COLORADO

## Cultural Resource Survey

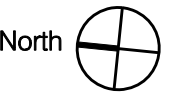
### PROJECT MAP

#### LOCATIONS OF RESOURCES

SCALE  
1"=175'-0"

HOEHN  
ARCHITECTS  
PC  
PROJECT  
NO. 0909

HISTORY  
COLORADO-  
THE STATE  
HISTORICAL  
FUND  
PROJECT  
NUMBER  
2010-M1-013



# LAMAR, COLORADO

## Cultural Resource Survey

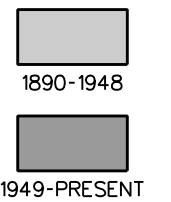
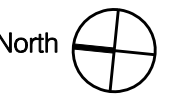
### PROJECT MAP

#### DATES OF CONSTRUCTION

SCALE  
1"=175'-0"

HOHN  
ARCHITECTS  
PC  
PROJECT  
NO. 0909

HISTORY  
COLORADO-  
THE STATE  
HISTORICAL  
FUND  
PROJECT  
NUMBER  
2010-M1-013



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## **VII. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The information collected in this intensive level survey of Lamar's central business district provides the necessary information to move forward with a National Register historic district nomination. Downtown Lamar potentially meets Criterion A: Event for its association with a historic trend that has made a significant contribution to the development of the community with Commerce as the district's area of significance and with a local level of significance. This criterion will be substantiated with the preparation of a historic district nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and consultation with the National Register staff at the OAHP. Twenty (20) resources were also found to be potentially eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties and as local landmarks.

In order to enhance preservation planning efforts and heritage tourism within Lamar, the City of Lamar, its Historic Preservation Board, and the building owners should give serious consideration to moving forward with the following activities in response to this survey project:

- *Seek local landmark designations of the twenty resources found to be potentially eligible for individual listing.*  
This type of designation typically affords the greatest protection of the individual historic resource since exterior alterations usually require review by the local Historic Preservation Board.
- *Prepare National and State Register nominations.*  
Funding for the preparation of National and State Register nominations for individual resources and/or the historic district may be available from Colorado's State Historical Fund. Benefits to listing in the National or State Register include eligibility for investment tax credits and the availability of grants from Colorado's State Historical Fund for approved rehabilitation projects. However, listing in the National or State Registers does not offer automatic protection of the resource. Private owners of these properties using private funds may alter or demolish these properties within existing local building regulations.
- *Provide interpretive plaques or signage at significant buildings and downtown entry points.*  
Interpretive plaques could be installed immediately and would represent a minimal cost to the City of Lamar and/or individual property owners. A downtown walking tour could be developed that highlights the district's historic significance. The development of a walking tour along with the design and fabrication of associated plaques may be eligible for funding through Colorado's State Historical Fund.
- *Educate and inform the residents of the historic significance of Downtown Lamar through public presentations.*  
A public meeting to present the results of this survey project will occur in early November 2012 and could serve to kick-off a lecture series, held at the City of Lamar's



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Cultural Events Center. The cost to carry out this recommendation will depend upon the speaker's expenses.

- *Provide a link to the survey project results on the City of Lamar's website.*  
This action could occur immediately. It would reach the greatest number of residents and convey the most information about the historic significance of Downtown Lamar. Communication with the local community should include the benefits of historic designation in order to boost private investment in the preservation of historic buildings within Lamar's central business district.
- *Use the survey results for local planning activities.*  
The survey can be used to facilitate decision-making about the potential impact of future private and government-funded projects in Lamar's central business district.
- *Conduct future intensive-level surveys of additional buildings located within the plat of the Original Town of Lamar, which extends to First Street to the east and Sixth Street to the west; the north and south boundaries are similar to those of this survey, which are Maple Street and Oak Street, respectively.*  
This follow-up survey would follow the earliest historical pattern of development in Lamar and inform the City of Lamar of additional properties potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties, or for designation as local landmarks. This future survey project could be funded in part through a grant from History Colorado's State Historical Fund.

As a follow-up to this project, a Main Street program that provides financial assistance to building owners who properly rehabilitate their storefronts may create an impetus for attracting new businesses to Lamar and enhance the potential historic district. A number of historic photographs have been assembled for this survey project, which could be used to provide guidance for future storefront rehabilitation. In many cases, the original façade may still remain under existing wall cladding. Funding for the rehabilitation of historically designated buildings may be available from the State Historical Fund and tax credits may be available to individual property owners.

The City of Lamar should follow through with their plan to use the survey results as the basis for the creation of an historic preservation ordinance, to educate the public about the benefits of historic preservation, and to provide guidance for developing a downtown marketing and public relations plan. By accomplishing this survey, the City of Lamar is taking an important step toward the revitalization of its downtown, the heart and soul of the community.

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**Figure 21.**

The 200 block of South Main Street was featured on the cover of the 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Colorado State Council in April of 1960. The storefronts remain intact on both sides of the street, indicating that many of the building alterations seen today occurred sometime after 1960.

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**VIII. USGS MAP**

Lamar East Quadrangle / Sixth Principal Meridian, T22S, R46W, Section 31  
Shaded area represents survey area boundaries

