

# RECONNAISSANCE-LEVEL ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY SURVEY OF DOWNTOWN DES MOINES



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Destination Des Moines

Prepared by Artifacts Consulting, Inc. for the Destination Des Moines (Main Street) organization

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Cover image: Scenic overview of downtown Des Moines,  
looking west towards Puget Sound, 2017.

Photograph by Susan Johnson, Artifacts Consulting, Inc.



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## Executive Summary

Since its earliest days, Des Moines has been a small city in the Puget Sound Region. Agricultural land uses, water-based transportation, and the lumber industry initially shaped the community. The introduction and improvement of roads encouraged the commercial development of the downtown and population growth overall. Downtown Des Moines does not have any buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). However, the nearby Covenant Beach Bible Camp (Des Moines Beach Park) historic district is listed on the NRHP and the Washington Heritage Register (WHR), just northwest of downtown. The downtown's built environment is a mixture of many different periods, materials and styles, yet the vast majority of structures are only one to two stories; the low, horizontal development pattern from the last 100 years allows for views out over Puget Sound. This visual connection with and general proximity to the water seems to be a defining part of the downtown's character. Marine View Drive is the main north-south thoroughfare.

The Destination Des Moines organization, which hosts the city's Main Street program, hired Artifacts Consulting, Inc., a historic preservation consulting firm, to conduct a reconnaissance-level historic property survey of three block faces in downtown Des Moines. As a reconnaissance level survey, this survey only assesses properties based upon their visual character that is visible from the public right-of-way; individual property historic research was not conducted. This reconnaissance-level effort includes properties along Marine View Drive South between 222nd and 226th streets, as well as select buildings along 225th Street west of Marine View Drive. Artifacts completed historic property inventory forms on all properties constructed prior to 1978 within the survey area. As part of this survey, those inventory forms were entered digitally to the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's online database, WISAARD (Washington Information System for Architectural & Archaeological Records Data).

This report, which summarizes the efforts surrounding the reconnaissance-level architectural survey in downtown Des Moines, is divided into four sections followed by an appendix.

1. **Introduction.** This first section provides a brief introduction to the project's background, summarizes the project area, and identifies the project team.
2. **Research Design.** This section covers the survey's objectives and methodology.
3. **Historical Overview.** This section provides a brief historical overview of the survey area summarized from existing primary and secondary sources.
4. **Survey Results and Recommendations.** The section starts with recommendations for possible next steps in utilizing the data collected for this project. This section also describes the results from the survey, summarizing the development periods and outlining survey team recommendations of individual and district National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility. This section also provides some potential resources for property owners related to historic preservation and revitalization.
5. **Appendix.** The appendix includes the bibliography for the report and historic aerial images of Des Moines, illustrating the development of the city over time.

## Credits and Acknowledgments

The Reconnaissance-level Architectural History Survey of Downtown Des Moines was funded through a grant from 4Culture. Artifacts is grateful for the help and support from the following individuals and organizations: Tony Hettler, President of Destination Des Moines (DDM); Scott Evans, board member of DDM; Patrice Thorell, City of Des Moines, Department of Parks and Recreation; James Langston, local resident and representative of the Des Moines Historical Society; Brian Kamens of the Northwest Room, Tacoma Public Library; and, all the residents of Des Moines who attended public meetings to share their interest and knowledge.

## Project Background

This reconnaissance-level architectural survey of downtown Des Moines historic properties includes only a few blocks, centered around the (vacant) Des Moines Theater. That building is slated for adaptive reuse later this year or in 2018, which may be a catalyst for the entirety of the downtown area. Des Moines has a number of empty lots and vacant buildings along Marine View Drive. Many pieces of the city's past have already been lost to redevelopment, with new construction projects happening currently. Balancing progress with maintaining a sense of place, fostering a thriving business community while celebrating what makes Des Moines unique -- these are some of the issues Destination Des Moines is attempting to address via the Main Street program, starting with this survey project.

There are no listed historic properties, either individually or as districts, within the survey area on the National Register of Historic Places nor the Washington Heritage Register. Local (King County) landmark listing status is not known. Most of the buildings had not been surveyed before. The survey was initiated by Destination Des Moines to expand their knowledge of downtown properties and development patterns. This project was undertaken by staff from Artifacts Consulting, Inc., specifically Susan Johnson and Mary Thompson.

All the inventory forms and the survey report are available through the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation's (DAHP) online database, the Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data (WISAARD). Copies of the forms have also been provided to the King County Historic Preservation Program.

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## 2. RESEARCH DESIGN

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The survey area, centered around the anchor property of the Des Moines Theater, focused on the commercial core of historic downtown Des Moines. The results from this survey will create a more detailed narrative about historic properties in the 3-block stretch and how they relate to the rest of the city. This study addresses only built environment properties; no evaluation of pre-historic or historic archaeology was conducted as part of this study. All work followed the *Washington State Standards for Cultural Resource Reporting* (2015) and the National Register Bulletin *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning* (rev. 1985).

Within the survey area, reconnaissance level field forms were completed and data entered into WISAARD.

- 6 new reconnaissance level forms and photographs completed and entered into WISAARD, including eligibility recommendations.
- 19 existing WISAARD forms updated with reconnaissance level data and photographs, as well as eligibility recommendations; all but one of the existing forms were merely assessor data points, not full surveys, from 2011.
- 2 properties were built in 1978 or newer. No field forms were completed for these properties, although a photograph was taken for use in the property inventory table.

### Survey Area

The survey area is located in downtown Des Moines, King County, Washington State. The survey area includes the west side of Marine View Drive South between South 222nd and 226th streets, the east side of Marine View Drive South between South 222nd and 225th streets, as well as two buildings (IOOF Hall and the adjacent former city building) on South 225th Street, west of Marine View Drive South. The survey area includes the following Townships, Ranges, and Sections:

- Township 22, Range 04E, Sections 8 and 17
- Quadrangle: Des Moines

The survey area includes no NRHP-listed properties and no known determinations of eligibility from DAHP. Previous documentation within the survey area encompasses a 2011 King County Assessor Data pull. That project generated address, building type, and construction year data for 19 of the properties in this survey. The 2011 forms were missing photographs and much of the information required for a reconnaissance-level survey. The IOOF Hall (728 S. 225th St.) also had a “Legacy” survey form, which predates the digital age; that form is included in WISAARD as a scanned PDF.

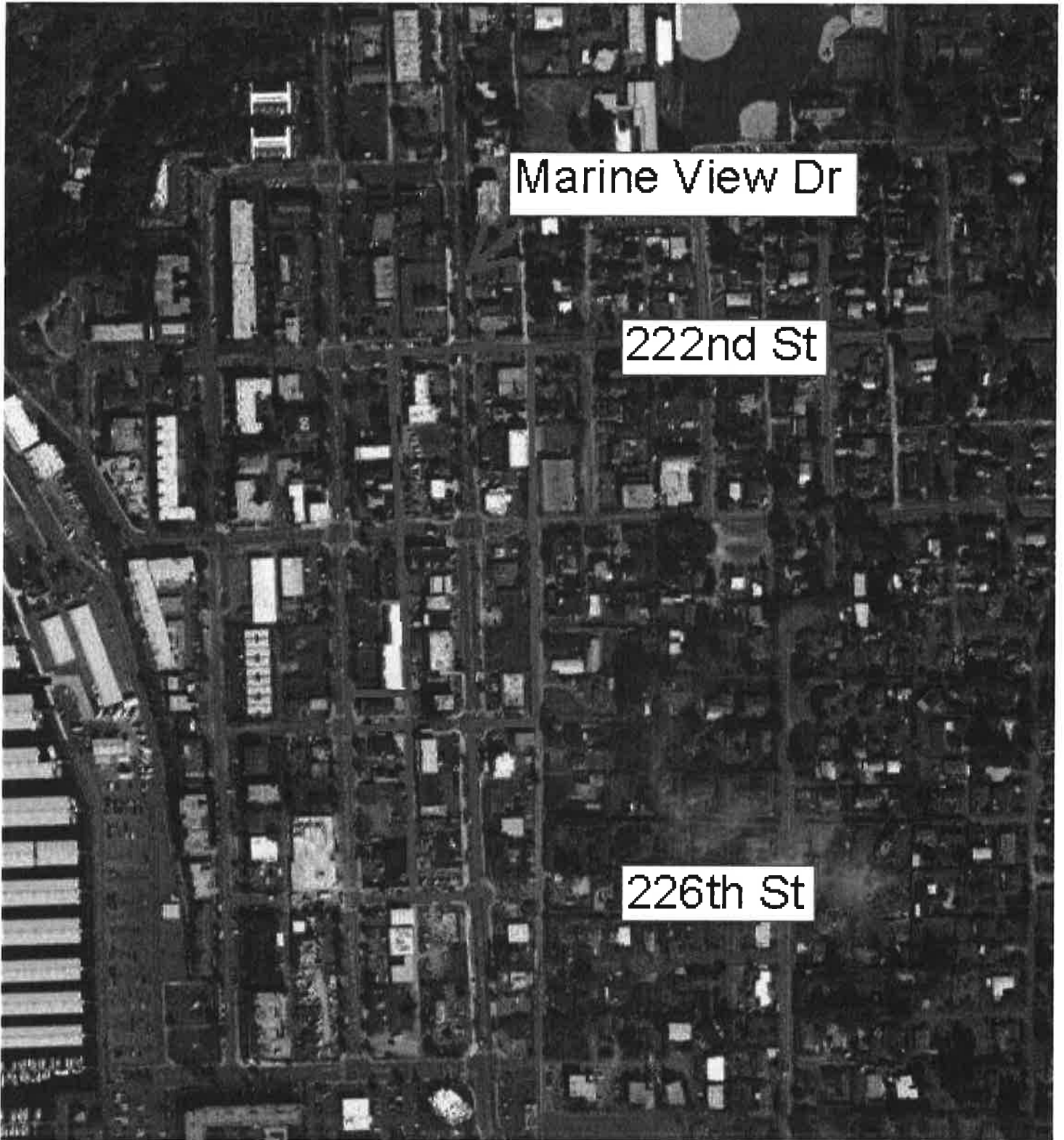
### Survey Methodology

Artifacts’ methodology for survey work relies on research, field work, data entry, and public participation. Before beginning the project, staff from Artifacts Consulting met with representatives from Destination Des Moines and the City of Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department, for general orientation and planning. The public participation aspects and how the survey would be used came forward as prime points of interest for the client.

### RESEARCH

Artifacts staff began their historic context research by first looking for NRHP-listed properties within the survey area, and there are none. NRHP nomination forms for nearby properties, such as the Covenant Beach Bible Camp (Des Moines Beach Park), along with previous survey forms for (eg, Van Gasken House and IOOF Hall survey forms) provided overview history for downtown Des Moines. Other sources consulted include a design study by the University of Washington for downtown Des Moines, local history publications, and previous reports on historic highways and the Des Moines Beach Park. Repositories





### MAP 2.1. SURVEY AREA

The above map depicts the survey area boundaries for the downtown Des Moines survey, outlined with red.

referenced include the Des Moines Historical Society and Museum, Washington State Archives, Washington State Historical Society, King County Assessor, King County Road Services, and the Tacoma Public Library's Northwest Room.

## FIELD WORK

An initial "walk around", preliminary to field work, was completed by two Artifacts staff members, in order to get some general orientation and familiarity with the downtown area. Artifacts personnel digitally photographed the buildings (front and alley view), streetscape, and view corridors. Survey forms were completed in the field for each surveyed building, identifying visible architectural characteristics, address, and current use. Initial eligibility recommendations were noted. The "walk around", augmented by a driving tour of the community, explored blocks from the Des Moines Marina on the west to 8th Avenue on the east, and from South 219th Street on the north to the vicinity of South 227th Street on the south, as well as following State Route 516 (Des Moines-Kent Road).

## DATA ENTRY

Information collected from the research and field work was compiled and input into inventory forms in WISAARD. The inventory forms include all the information required for a reconnaissance-level survey as well as historic photos where possible and available. Historic information on the properties was also included where possible, although this is not required for a reconnaissance-level survey.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Artifacts met with Destination Des Moines and City of Des Moines representatives to plan a community kick-off meeting in June, 2017 for this project. That first community meeting featured a local history presentation by James Langston, long-time resident and a leader of the Des Moines Historical Society. The meeting was held prior to field work, in order to publicize the project and generate public interest.

The final public meeting [tktk].



June 21, 2017, first public meeting about this survey project. Hosted by Destination Des Moines in collaboration with the City of Des Moines. Local historian and Des Moines Historical Society representative, Jim Langston (left) spoke about the city's history and stories of growing up there. Photo by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

TABLE 2.1. PROPERTIES WITHIN SURVEY AREA

DAHP ID #	HISTORIC NAME(S)	COMMON NAME(S)	BUILT YEAR(S)	ADDRESS
40791	Community Club Hall	IOOF Hall, Des Moines Museum	1912	728 S. 225th Street
711682	Fire Station, Police Station	Old City Hall	1947	730 S. 225th Street
340385	Moby Doug's	Wally's Restaurant	1930	22531 Marine View Drive S.
339468	Dr. Menashe's Clinic		1962	22525 Marine View Drive S.
339481		Marks & Marks CPAs	1958	22519-22521 Marine View Drive S.
336424	(laundrymat)	Marina Market & Deli	1962	22509-22513 Marine View Drive S.
340991	Frigid Zone Lockers	B & E Meats and Seafood	1965	22501-22505 Marine View Drive S.
336440	Osterhaut's Service Station	Dana K's Cafe	1937	22341 Marine View Drive S.
340979	(hardware store, lawn-mower repair, shoe store)	New Tokyo Teriyaki, Athens Restaurant, Smoke Vape & Toke	1961	22340 Marine View Drive S.
341042	Des Moines Theater	Des Moines Theater	1945	22325-22333 Marine View Drive S.
336404	Bay View Cleaners	Pretty Nails	1946	22319 Marine View Drive S.
344259	Seattle Trust & Savings	Dragon Gate Restaurant	1952	22315 Marine View Drive S.
343937		Bodle Chiropractic	1959	22312 Marine View Drive S.
711686	Dee's Mart	(vacant)	1945	22311 Marine View Drive S.
339438	Des Moines Electric, Larmer's Electric Repair Shop	EC Computers	1945	22307 Marine View Drive S.
711683	B & E Bakery	Prolific Hair Design, Waterland Arcade	1957	22306 Marine View Drive S.
336464	Tuffley's	All-Star Sports Bar	1945	22303 Marine View Drive S.
336420		Dog House Restaurant	1955	22302 Marine View Drive S.
711684	Washington Mutual Savings	Chase Bank	1975	22240 Marine View Drive S.
340378	Dugout Tavern, Langston Sporting Goods, Zorne's Tavern	Lighthouse Lounge	1931	22239 Marine View Drive S.
711685	Des Moines Fire Station	(vacant)	1952	22231 Marine View Drive S.
393195		(private residence)	1907	22229 Marine View Drive S.
N/A*		New Pacific Building	1981	22220 Marine View Drive S.
336409	(private residence)	Carriage Country Quilts	1937	22214 Marine View Drive S.
711687	Spencer's Variety	Powell Custom Homes	1955	22211 Marine View Drive S.
341028	Des Moines Coast to Coast, 2 Value Hardware	Arturo's Mexican Restaurant, Pauline's Nail Spa	1960	22204 Marine View Drive S.
N/A*		Edward Jones, Serenity Spa	1986	22201 Marine View Drive S.

\*Two properties are less than 40 years old, so no historic property inventory forms were completed for those. Hence, they do not have DAHP identification numbers. These are 22220 and 22201 Marine View Drive South.

# 3. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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The following sections provide an historical overview of the survey area. This is mostly a summary of the existing research and published documents on Des Moines' history, including but not limited to *One Hundred Years of the "Waterland" Community: A History of Des Moines, Washington*; the *Des Moines Beach Park: Conservation Guidance and Advocacy Report* (2004); and, the National Register of Historic Places nominations for the same park. These and additional sources are listed in the **Bibliography**.

## Historical Development

Des Moines, Washington is a community within King County. Although the area was long used for fishing and shellfish harvesting by Native Americans, no permanent settlements are known until Euro-American land claims began in the late 1800s. The townsite officially began in 1889. Des Moines has historically been a semi-rural community along the saltwater shores of Puget Sound, approximately halfway between the urban centers of Tacoma and Seattle. Boats connected Des Moines with the outside world before roads and automobiles were prevalent. Today, the city is known for its connection to the water as well as being along or near several major highways and state roads.

### FROM TOWN TO CITY

The Des Moines Improvement Company, led by J. W. Kleeb and O. W. Barlow, purchased approximately 120 acres from previous land claim settlers of the 1870s and 1880s. In 1889, the Des Moines Improvement Company platted the town and named it after Kleeb's hometown of Des Moines, Iowa. That same year, at least seven additions were platted, expanding the original townsite. Between 1890 and 1929, at least seventeen additional plats were added to the town of Des Moines.<sup>1</sup> The city formally incorporated in 1959.

In the early decades of the town, from approximately 1889 through the 1930s, Des Moines' primary industries were lumber mills, greenhouses, and other agricultural pursuits, such as berry farms. The Van Gasken family operated perhaps the most remembered sawmill, on Des Moines Creek. That mill was active from circa 1889 to 1892. The mill is no longer extant, but the Van Gasken House still overlooks the town and the waterfront.<sup>2</sup>

The population of Des Moines remained small and relatively dispersed through the 1930s. With World War II, wartime production at a nearby Boeing factory drew a large number of workers.<sup>3</sup> Des Moines and other nearby communities surged in population and demand for schools and services. Formerly empty or agricultural lots became the sites for new commercial construction. The present Marine View Drive, once a minor highway dotted with houses and a few businesses, became a busy "Main Street" in the 1940s and 1950s. But, the community was so small it had no bank until the late 1950s or early 1960s.<sup>4</sup> Redevelopment and continued construction in the 1960s and 1970s apparently infilled the remaining empty lots and turned some former single-family residential parcels into multi-business, Modern commercial lots



1912 image of the newly built Des Moines Commercial Club Hall, also known as the Community Club Hall. This became the IOOF Hall (728 S. 225th St.), extant. Image courtesy of the Des Moines Historical Society and Museum.

complete with off-street parking.<sup>5</sup>

During the research for this historical context and the associated 2017 historic property inventory, three key themes emerged as important to the identity and unique character of Des Moines. The first two, Recreation and Transportation, relate to the broader community; the third, Commerce, is particularly associated with the historic business district along Marine View Drive near the Des Moines Theater. These themes will be explored in the subsequent pages. Wherever possible, examples of extant properties related to those themes are given. Some of these are located outside of the 2017 building survey area; they are mentioned here due to their local importance for understanding how Des Moines has evolved. Additional themes and associated properties may be identified in the future with additional research, if intensive level surveys are conducted.

## RECREATION

Des Moines has a long history of offering entertainment and recreation opportunities, for residents and visitors alike. Historically, most of the recreation revolved around the water, with two beach parks and about six miles of waterfront; the two parks are Des Moines Beach Park and Saltwater State Park. Other recreation and entertainment options came with the Des Moines Theater and the amenities related to the public marina, including a fishing pier. These properties are illustrative but not exhaustive examples of the growth and types of recreation/entertainment in the city.

In 1916, Des Moines Beach Park was established. The park use continued until 1931, when the site became a church camp.<sup>6</sup> Since the church camp closed in 1986, the Beach Park has again become a public draw, inviting people to the waterfront.

The second park in Des Moines is located south of the survey area but still along Marine View Drive South. Dedicated in 1926, Saltwater State Park offers camping, hiking, tidepools, a marine sanctuary, and more. The park's 88 acres include 1,445 feet of shoreline on Puget Sound.<sup>7</sup>

In 1945 (according to the King County Assessor), the Des Moines Theater opened as a cinema along Marine View Drive in the heart of the historic business district. According to the Des Moines Historical Society, the theater had a 400-seat auditorium as well as commercial spaces. Two different doctors had offices on the second floor.

In circa 1966, the city began planning for a marina. When the Des Moines Marina opened in 1970, it could accommodate 771 vessels, with additional berths added in 1977. This city-operated marina offered moorage, a boat launch, retail and repair services geared toward boaters, and a public fishing pier. Organized in 1957, the Des Moines Yacht Club is located immediately south of the marina.<sup>8</sup>

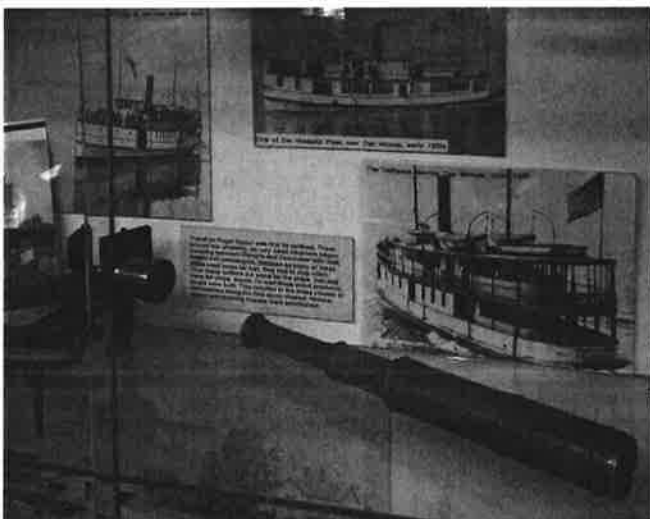


Exhibit at the Des Moines Historical Museum showing some of the Mosquito Fleet vessels which served the community. 2017 photo by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

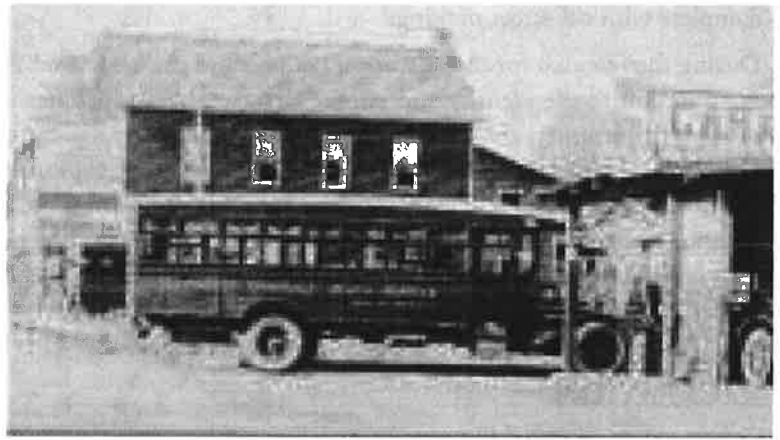
## TRANSPORTATION

Des Moines is one of the many communities along the shores of Puget Sound once served by the Mosquito Fleet. These steam-powered vessels carried passengers, mail, and goods from one town or city to another. The reliance on water-based transportation gave way to automobiles, buses and trucks. State highways developed over time to connect people and places—farms with towns and railroads, small towns with larger cities, country roads with interstate highways, and tourists with natural wonders. Highways such as State Route 509 (Marine View Drive) through Des Moines and State Route 516 (Kent-Des Moines Road) had been established and belonged to the state road system by the 1930s. Both the portion of SR 509 which extends through the core business district of Des Moines and the portion of SR 516 between Des Moines and Interstate 5 were previously labeled, together, as Secondary State Highway 1-K. As these roads have improved over the years, they have significantly shaped the landscape they cross and the communities they connect. The old Pacific Highway (State Route 99, in places)

is another transportation route that has impacted the development of communities in Western Washington, including Des Moines.<sup>9</sup> However, Pacific Highway did not pass through downtown Des Moines. Of the roads and highways in the Des Moines area, State Route 509 is arguably the most significant for transforming the city.<sup>10</sup>

Partially due to these and other road improvements, bus service became a transportation option between Des Moines and Seattle by at least the 1930s. The rise of automobiles and buses meant increased demand for gas stations, automobile repair garages, and related businesses. The building which now houses Dana K's Café (22341 Marine View Drive South) was originally built in 1937 and has served as Osterhaut's Service Station and Garage as well as Del's Texaco and Butler's Auto Repair.<sup>11</sup> Built in 1952, the former city fire station at 22231 Marine View Drive South also subsequently served as an automotive repair garage.<sup>12</sup>

After the end of World War II in 1945, personal automobile ownership rates rose quickly and in turn changed the national landscape. Many new commercial buildings of the time oriented their design to easy automobile access. Demand for more downtown parking led to off-street surface lots, often in front of businesses. Most of the surveyed buildings from the 1950s and 1960s have small parking lots between the building and Marine View Drive. In general, the older buildings (e.g. Wally's Restaurant and Lighthouse Lounge) are closer to the street, since they predate this trend.



1921 image of early Des Moines-Seattle buses, at present corner of Marine View Drive and 227th St. Image courtesy of Des Moines Historical Society.

## COMMERCE

The commercial development of Des Moines has been a major factor in the growth of the town. By 1910, the Des Moines Commercial Club had formed, alternatively known as the Booster Club, Enterprise Club, and Des Moines-Zenith Improvement Club.<sup>13</sup> One of the oldest downtown buildings, the IOOF Hall, was built in 1912 as the Des Moines Commercial Club Hall, also known as the Community Club Hall.<sup>14</sup> By at least 1907, the community had a post office, two general stores, and the aforementioned lumber mills, with a population of only 350.<sup>15</sup>



Historic image of Dahlberg's Store, corner of Marine View Drive and 222nd St., circa 1950. Image courtesy of the Des Moines Historical Society.

By at least 1907, the community had a post office, two general stores, and the aforementioned lumber mills, with a population of only 350.<sup>15</sup>

Ten years later, the population had only grown to 500 people but there were doctors, a hotel, an egg crate manufacturer, and a plant nursery. By the early 1930s, the population exceeded 1,000 and the business listings included an auto stage company (to Seattle), numerous fruit growers, poultry breeders, various skilled laborers and contractors, more medical practitioners, and some automotive repair/service stations, among other businesses.<sup>16</sup>

The quantity and variety of commercial properties expanded quickly after circa 1940. Based on the buildings extant along



Ca. 1950s image of parade along Marine View Drive, showing the buildings of the theater block in background. Image courtesy of the Des Moines Historical Society.

Marine View Drive South and surrounding blocks, Des Moines had a boom in the 1940s through the 1960s. Restaurants, small retail stores, multi storefront (business block) buildings, and banks are among the types of commercial enterprises which built up Marine View Drive through the heart of the town. Some of the best examples of mid-century Modern commercial development include B & E Meats and Seafood (22501 Marine View Dr. S.) and the Marina Market and Deli building (22509 Marine View Dr. S.). Population figures for the 1940 and 1950 statewide census are not available for Des Moines, but in 1960, the city had almost 2,000 residents. In 1970, that had nearly doubled.<sup>17</sup>

## Conclusion

Des Moines, Washington was established as a settlement in the late 19th century and grew slowly. The semi-rural character lasted until at least the 1950s, with commercial development concentrated along Marine View Drive as well as between Marine View Drive and the waterfront. Des Moines incorporated as a city in 1959. The survey area encompasses the heart of the commercial zone, around the

1945 Des Moines Theater block. New construction is ongoing but several empty lots are present in downtown. As this was a reconnaissance-level survey, the following National Register of Historic Places eligibility recommendations are based upon a visual inspection of buildings within the survey area.

## Endnotes

- 1 Clarence Bagley, *History of King County, Washington* (Seattle: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1929), 867-870.
- 2 Historic Property Survey form for the Van Gasken House, citing interview with Harriette (Van Gasken) Pedersen Bray, 1978. Courtesy of Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, WISAARD database.
- 3 Des Moines Historical Museum, photo exhibits. Visited July 24, 2017.
- 4 Polk's Business Gazetteers for Oregon and Washington list Kent as the nearest banking point for Des Moines through at least 1932. Longtime resident and local historian Jim Langsdon remembers the first bank opening in Des Moines in the late 1950s or early 1960s. According to his memory, that first bank was Seattle Trust & Savings.
- 5 See historic aerial images, included in the Appendix, of Sections 8 and 17, Township 22, Range 4 East. Years include 1937, 1954, 1965, and 1974. Courtesy of King County Road Services, Map Vault.
- 6 Artifacts Consulting, Inc., *Des Moines Beach Park: Conservation Guidance and Advocacy Report*, prepared for City of Des Moines, 2004. The church camp use ended in 1986.
- 7 Washington State Parks, Saltwater State Park. <http://parks.state.wa.us/578/Saltwater> (accessed July 2017).
- 8 Yacht club establishment date courtesy of the Des Moines History Museum, photo exhibit on marina.
- 9 The Washington State Legislature authorized construction of the Pacific Highway starting in 1913. It was the major north-south route across the western portion of the state. That same year, two other major state highways were approved, including the Sunser Highway (now the approximate path of Interstate 90). Source: Artifacts Consulting, Inc., *Washington State's Historic State Roads*, 2013.
- 10 There are two portions to SR 509. The southern portion stretches between Tacoma and Redondo. The northern portion begins at the junction with SR 516 and continues northward to Seattle. For the purposes of this report, SR 509 generally refers to the northern portion.
- 11 1937 is per the King County Assessor. The year of construction has been reported elsewhere as 1935.
- 12 Garage use per Jim Langston, July 24, 2017 interview.
- 13 Des Moines Historical Society, [www.dmhs.org/timeline/history1900.html](http://www.dmhs.org/timeline/history1900.html) (accessed July 2017).
- 14 Year of construction according to the WA Dept. of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.
- 15 Early business listings and population courtesy of the Polk's Oregon and Washington State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1907-1908, p. 769. This and additional years of this publication available at the



Birds-eye view of Des Moines, taken between approximately 1955 and 1960 (based on the buildings visible and known dates of construction). Marine View Drive stretches from the lower left to the upper right corners. The IOOF Hall, Des Moines Theater, and other familiar buildings are visible. The present Dana K's Cafe, lower center, appears to be a gas station/automotive repair garage in this image. Apart from some commercial buildings along Marine View Drive, the image shows mostly dispersed single-family houses. Image courtesy of the Des Moines Historical Society.

Northwest Room, Tacoma Public Library.

16 Poll's Oregon and Washington State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1917-1918, p. 473; also, 1931-1932, p. 443.

17 Decennial Census Counts of Population for the State, Counties, Cities and Towns, Washington State Office of Financial Management, Forecasting Division.



# 4. RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

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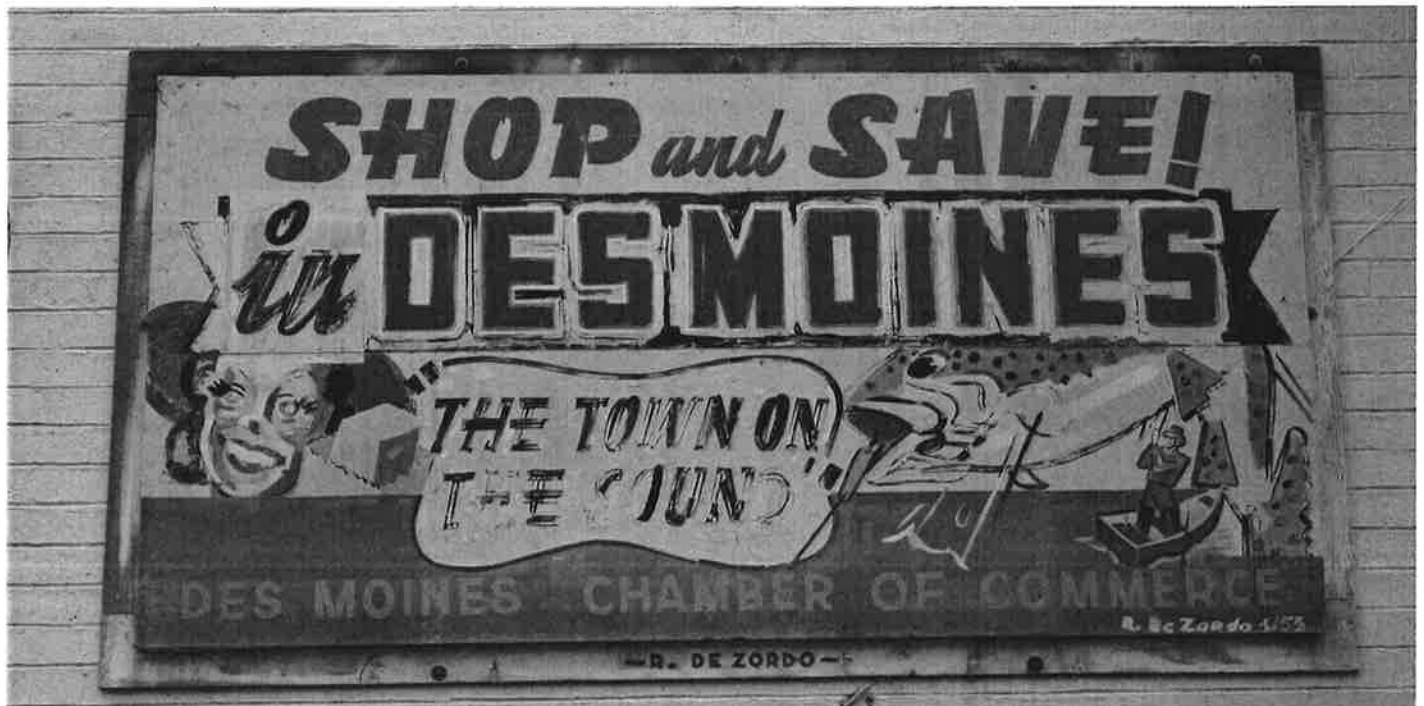
## HOW TO USE SURVEY MATERIAL

Reconnaissance surveys are the backbone of local historic preservation programs. These surveys, while not detailed, identify interesting properties and direct additional inquiries. They spot legacy structures and significant places in communities, thereby focusing the precious volunteer time of groups like Main Street programs and historical societies. In addition, they can be used by local governments to guide permitting and demolition decisions.

Main Street programs can benefit from reconnaissance surveys by using them to focus attention on the historic assets of downtown. Additional research could identify national or local register properties, or stories important to community history. If a Main Street program wishes to capitalize on its historic assets, then surveys provide the basis for discussions with property owners and local governments about incentives for listing on an historic register and/or incentive for rehabilitation. And this activity tends to be infectious. The targeted rehabilitation of a cluster of buildings in close proximity signals that something positive is happening, that investment is occurring, and that buildings that might have once been declared ugly if not derelict, have real importance and can contribute if not lead community revitalization efforts. Creating financing and incentive packages for property owners of older and historic buildings creates momentum, attracts new leasees, and helps change or bolster the business mix in downtown. This is the economic development focus for all Main Street programs.

Local governments can work to protect surveyed properties by including a GIS layer identifying those properties on local land use maps. Permit or demolition requests might then trigger a response that delays demolition while a new owner or use is explored or directs property owners to local design guidelines, design assistance, tax incentives or façade renovation programs. Working in partnership with Main Street organizations, local governments can help avoid gaps in streetscape or inappropriate remodeling that sets back economic development efforts.

Start with the survey. Build community interest in local history and the places that represent that history. Talk to property owners. Build a toolkit of design, tax and regulatory incentives and work to apply those to the most visible and important buildings in town. This is the fundamental approach of Main Street, which has proven effective in over 2,000 communities across the country.



Historic sign advertising Des Moines, "The Town On The Sound." Exterior, Des Moines Historical Society and Museum. Painted by R. De Zordo, 1953, for the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce. Photo by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

# Findings

The downtown core has few surviving buildings from the city's early days. Most of the building stock dates from the 1940s and later, giving an overall Mid-century Modern impression albeit with many recent alterations. There is a moderate level of integrity with regards to the seven aspects - materials, workmanship, design, setting, location, association, and feeling. Although downtown buildings continue to convey their historical associations, the amount of building alterations and new construction have begun eroding the visual character of this area. The commercial corridor along Marine View Drive continues to have an important visual role as a key arterial through downtown Des Moines.

## DEVELOPMENT PERIODS

The following development periods stem from preparation of the historic context. These periods capture the key growth stages of downtown Des Moines.

- 1889 – 1938: Town Founding through the Great Depression. This period begins with the plat of the original townsite and ends just before the start of World War in Europe, marking the end of the Great Depression in the U.S.
- 1939 – 1965: Mid-Century Expansion. This period begins with the outbreak of World War II in Europe and the associated population and wartime industry growth around Des Moines. The period ends with the slowdown of commercial construction along Marine View Drive. (B & E Meats and Seafood, 22501 Marine View Dr. S., from 1965, is the last known commercial building in that corridor which is currently more than 50 years of age.)
- 1966 – Present: Continued Growth and Revitalization. This period marks the recent past, with continued gradual redevelopment of downtown Des Moines.

The highest concentration of commercial buildings 40 years old or more are located along Marine View Drive between S. 222nd and S. 226th streets. The Des Moines Theater block is the anchor property for this historic business core. The west side of the street has more continuous, intact commercial blocks than the east side. Many of the commercial buildings 40 years old or older along the east side of Marine View Drive, between approximately 222nd and 226th, have generally been more altered with regard to their cladding, windows, and massing than on the west side of the street. There are also more empty lots, where buildings have been demolished, on the east side. (Note: this survey included buildings 40 years old or more, but the minimum age for historic consideration is 50 years.)

Given all of that, both sides of Marine View Drive together still read as a mid-century commercial thoroughfare. Sidewalks make pedestrian access easy all along the strip, as well as along other nearby streets. Surrounding streets such as S. 7th Avenue exhibit a wide range of building ages, styles, and uses, from early 20th century to very recent (including in progress, as of June



Example of Mid-century Modern commercial architecture. 22509 Marine View Dr. South. 2017 image by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

2017). The building stock along Marine View Drive shows a couple of older residences that are now home to businesses, but they are the exceptions to what were mostly purpose-built for commercial functions. Along S. 7th Street, S. 225th, and S. 223rd, that mix of residential with commercial is even more pronounced. In the blocks east of Marine View Drive, the buildings are mostly residential. Thus, the best concentration for showcasing the commercial growth and character of the city is along Marine View Drive.

## PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance for any potential historic district should encompass the years of construction for contributing buildings. In the case of the potential district along Marine View Drive between 222nd and 226th streets, that period would be 1930 to 1965. The start of 1930 is for the construction year of Wally's Restaurant (22531 Marine View Dr. S.), in a former residence. The Quilt Shop (22214 Marine View Dr. S.) is also in a former residence, built in 1937. Both buildings retain sufficient historic character and have current commercial functions. Their inclusion in this survey adds a rich layer to understanding Des Moines' history and development, prior to the World War II and post-war boom years.

The period of significance, with the historic district confined to Marine View Dr., ends in 1965 with the construction of the commercial building at 22501 Marine View Dr. S., now the home of B & E Meats and Seafood. After 1965, the next known commercial building in the core business district is the present Chase Bank, in 1975. Some late 1960s buildings, including the Mar Vue and the former Des Moines Boat building, are located along S. 223rd Street, off the main arterial. There is also a former U. S. Post Office (1966) and a chiropractic clinic (1958) which are fine examples of mid-century architecture; these are both located west of Marine View Drive, on 7th Ave and 225th Street, respectively. These buildings would potentially be contributing buildings if a historic district were created that extended beyond Marine View Drive.

Within the survey area, the oldest known building is the private residence at 22229 Marine View Dr. S., dating to 1907 (per King County Assessor). Due to the level of alterations and the non-commercial use, this house is recommended as a non-contributing property. Other non-contributing properties are those built after 1968 (less than the minimum 50 years old) and those which have been so altered that they no longer convey their historic associations or have lost all character-defining features. See Table [tktk] for a list of the properties inventoried and their potential to contribute to a historic district.

## INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY

Most of the buildings in the survey area have been too altered for individual listing on historic registers. That is, their ability to represent their original design has been too diminished. There is one potentially individually eligible National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) property within the survey area and several more which are potentially eligible for the Washington Heritage Register (WHR) and King County Historic Register (KCHR). Individual listing potential provides an important tool for property owners outside of the potential historic district to utilize financial incentives for work on their properties. (Note: Eligibility based exclusively on architectural characteristics. Properties could be individually eligible under other criteria with further research and in-depth historical significance evaluation.)

Individual eligibility for the NRHP is recommended for 22509 Marine View Drive South, under Criteria C, as a fine example of Mid-century Modern commercial architecture, specifically the Solid End Wall form type.



2017 image of the (vacant) Des Moines Theater, 22325-22333 Marine View Dr. South. Photo by Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

Individual eligibility for the WHR and KCHR is possible for the following, all under Criteria C, for architectural significance:

- 22509 Marine View Drive South
- 22325-22333 Marine View Drive South

The IOOF Hall (728 S. 225th Street) is potentially individually eligible for the WHR and KCHR under Criteria A, for its association with the early commercial and social history of Des Moines. The interior, particularly on the second floor, retains sufficient historic character. The exterior alterations, such as the vinyl siding, are the main detractors for Criteria C consideration.

## CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The project identified an area of downtown Des Moines which has local historic significance but lacks architectural distinction sufficient for a National Register Historic District. Property owners might consider nominating a local (King County) historic district and/or the establishment of a conservation district.

Conservation districts are an overlay zone utilized to protect neighborhood character from inappropriate new construction, additions, and demolition. These in turn support an understanding of neighborhood compatibility and the development of design guidelines to help achieve a long-term vision for the area.

## HISTORIC DISTRICT ELIGIBILITY

Historic districts are concentrations of buildings which tell a story, usually centered around a specific development period and specific themes. Field work identified a potential local (King County Historic Register) historic district; however, the opinion of the author finds the buildings too altered and generally too many missing properties for a National Register historic district. Most of the surveyed properties could potentially be contributing properties to a local historic district, based on commercial development of Des Moines from 1930 through the 1960s. Non-contributing properties are generally too altered (eg, exterior renovations not in keeping with historic character) and/or too recently built (less than 50 years of age). Buildings meeting the minimum age requirement and retaining sufficient integrity which are not presently or historically used for commercial purposes, such as the residence at 22229 Marine View Drive, are also proposed as non-contributing.

The following table identifies the proposed district eligibility status for each of the 25 surveyed properties. These findings are preliminary suggestions for further discussion. Historic photos were not available for most buildings, so level of alterations is based on the best estimation and field experience of the authors.

For more information on what is required for and what the implications are of listing a local historic district, please contact the King County Historic Preservation Program. <http://www.kingcounty.gov/services/home-property/historic-preservation.aspx>

TABLE 4.1. HISTORIC DISTRICT POTENTIAL

ADDRESS	POTENTIALLY CONTRIBUTING PROPERTY?	YEAR BUILT
728 S. 225th Street	No - but individually eligible; could contribute if district boundary extended beyond Marine View Drive and period of significance starts earlier than 1930.	1912
730 S. 225th Street	No - too altered, not on Marine View Drive	1947
22531 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1930
22525 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1962
22519-22521 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1958
22509-22513 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1962
22501-22505 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1965
22341 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1937
22340 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1961
22325-22333 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1945
22319 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1946
22315 Marine View Drive S.	No - front facade too altered, looks new	1952
22312 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1959
22311 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1945
22307 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1945
22306 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1957
22303 Marine View Drive S.	No - too altered	1945
22302 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1955
22240 Marine View Drive S.	No - not yet 50 years old	1975
22239 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1931
22231 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1952
22229 Marine View Drive S.	No - outside period of significance, not commercial	1907
22220 Marine View Drive S.	No - not yet 50 years old	1981
22214 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1937
22211 Marine View Drive S.	No - too altered	1955
22204 Marine View Drive S.	Yes	1960
22201 Marine View Drive S.	No - not yet 50 years old	1986

## ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

The eligibility recommendations developed as part of this survey, in addition to guiding listing of buildings, also identify which potential financial tools property owners could utilize if they undertake work on their buildings. Incentives are generally available to owners of register-listed properties. Listing status establishes the community value of a property through archival research, building documentation, and a formal public meeting process. It is this community value that the economic incentives are intended to help property owners retain.

Incentives help to encourage private investment in historic properties by extending the investment capacity of private property owners. These incentives acknowledge both the public benefit of historic properties and the capacity for public benefit through coordinated public/private efforts. The following table provides guidance relative to building use and incentive eligibility. Note: the 20% ITC does not apply to single family residences unless they are income producing rentals.

TABLE 4.2. ECONOMIC INCENTIVES USE

Building Use	ITC 20%	ITC 10%	Special Valuation Program
Residence, single family	No	No	Yes, if listed locally
Residence, multi-family	Yes, if NRHP-listed	No	Yes, if listed locally
Commercial (including hotel), Industrial	Yes, if NRHP-listed	Yes, if placed in service at its current location before 1936	Yes, if listed locally

### 20% REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT

Through the federal historic tax credit program, there is an opportunity to receive a federal income tax credit on the qualified amount of private investment spent on a certified rehabilitation of a NRHP-listed building. Washington averages about 15 per year per DAHP, with the smallest project being \$14,000 and largest ever \$40 million.

#### Requirements:

- NRHP-listed, individually or contributing to a district
- Income producing, which can be commercial, agricultural, industrial, and hotel-related, but must remain income-producing for at least five years following rehabilitation.
- Substantial rehabilitation, in which qualified rehabilitation expenditures equal or exceed the adjusted basis value of the building, exclusive of the land.
  - » Adjusted Basis = A – B – C + D
  - » A = purchase price of the property (building and land)
  - » B = cost of land at time of purchase
  - » C = depreciation taken for an income-producing property
  - » D = cost of any capital improvements made since purchase
- Rehabilitation work must be done per the Secretary of the Interior’s (SOI) Standards for Rehabilitation, reviewed by both DAHP and NPS for compliance. Submit for review prior to starting work. Take existing-condition photographs to document work prior to starting. Refer to DAHP website for application forms. <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/tax-credits>

DAHP reports that since 1977, more than 250 properties in Washington have utilized the incentive, generating more than \$900 million in private investments in historic buildings. Since the start of the program in 1976, there has been a total of \$106 billion (adjusted for inflation) in qualified rehabilitation expenditures (QREs) spent nationwide; based on the QREs, the NPS estimates the program has created more than 2.4 million jobs. Based on the QREs, the program has awarded \$20.5 billion in tax credits nationwide, with a net gain of \$25.9 billion in federal tax receipts due to the rehabilitation activities. This has leveraged private investment to support economic growth in communities and benefits the local tax base through the increased property valuation due to the value of investment.<sup>1</sup>

1. Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/tax-credits> (accessed January 18, 2016).

**References for further reading:**

- <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/tax-credits>
- [http://www.dahp.wa.gov/sites/default/files/HPTI\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.dahp.wa.gov/sites/default/files/HPTI_brochure.pdf)
- <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives.htm>
- <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/taxdocs/about-tax-incentives-2012.pdf>

**10% REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT**

The 10-percent federal historic tax credit benefits non-residential buildings that were placed in service prior to 1936, but are not eligible for NRHP listing due to the extent of alterations. The credit amounts to 10 percent of the cost spent rehabilitating the building. There is no state or NPS review associated with this incentive.

**Requirements:**

- Placed in service before 1936.
- Rehabilitated for income-producing, non-residential building use. (i.e. rental does not qualify but hotel use does).
- Substantial rehabilitation, exceeding the greater of either \$5,000 or the adjusted base value of the property (building only, exclusive of the land value).
- Cannot have been moved after 1935.
- Retain at least 50 percent of the building's external walls existing at the time rehabilitation began as external walls.
- Retain at least 75 percent of the building's existing external walls as either external or internal walls.
- Retain at least 75 percent of the building's internal structural framework.

**References for further reading:**

- <http://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/taxdocs/about-tax-incentives-2012.pdf>

**SPECIAL VALUATION PROGRAM**

This program allows property owners to deduct qualified expenditures for rehabilitating a listed historic property, subject to local design review, from their property's taxable value to achieve a special valuation, which the assessor then uses to calculate the annual property tax. (Chapter 84.26 RCW, <http://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=84.26&full=true>)

Created by the state legislature in 1985, this program requires local jurisdictions to adopt an ordinance to allow property owners to take advantage of the tax deduction. The intent of the program is to support, at the community level, the preservation of historic properties throughout the state by removing the disincentive of increased property taxes that was created when a property owner substantially improved a property. The primary benefit of the law is that during the 10-year special valuation period, property taxes will not reflect substantial improvements made to properties that are eligible for special valuation.

**Requirements:**

- Check with the King County Historic Preservation Program for details -- each municipality may vary.

**References:**

- <http://www.dahp.wa.gov/special-tax-valuation>

## Recommendations and Next Steps

- Continue to highlight the city's connection to the waterfront
- Coordinate events between Destination Des Moines and the Des Moines Historical Society whenever possible
- Encourage businesses and events which draw people downtown to shop, eat, etc. This includes drawing boaters to the marina/waterfront.
- Celebrate the mid-century architecture present in Des Moines, including buildings outside of this survey's scope. Possible Modern architecture points of interest include the Mar Vue office building, Mount Rainier High School, and more to be discovered.
- Explore the possibility of a local historic district, listed with King County Landmarks Commission.
- Educate property owners within potential historic district of financial benefits to being listed, such as Special Valuation.
- Consider applying for Certified Local Government grant funds in 2018 for further preservation planning.
- Conduct further historic property surveys, to include a larger area of Des Moines, to help identify notable mid-century modern architecture examples and any additional properties eligible for the local, state and/or national registers.
- Discuss where the Marine View Drive historic district could possibly be extended, such as along S. 225th Street, and where financial incentives such as Special Valuation could benefit the community the most.
- Contact the King County Historic Preservation Program (Jennifer Meisner, Historic Preservation Officer) for more information on how they can support revitalization efforts in Des Moines.





# 5. APPENDIX

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## Bibliography

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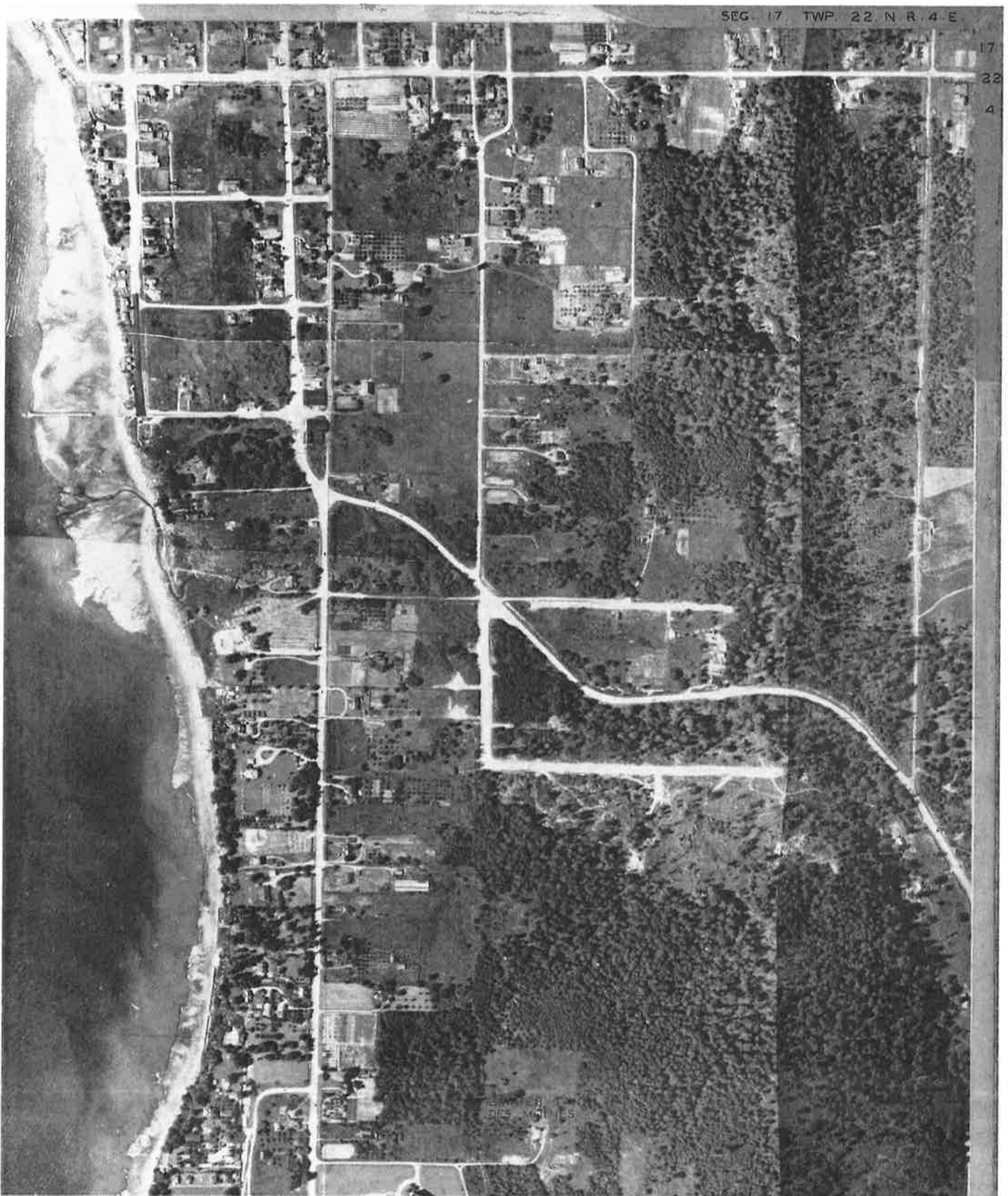
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# Maps

The following historic aerial photographs show the changes in Des Moines from 1937 through 1974. Images courtesy of the King County Road Services Department, Map Vault. For each year, there are two images -- from Section 8 and Section 17, north and south ends of Des Moines. There is a small amount of overlap between the two images in each year set.



MAP 5.1. 1937 AERIAL IMAGE, SECTION 8. The above image shows the north end of downtown Des Moines, at bottom. Township 22, Range 4 East, Section 8. Image is zoomed in, to better show the survey area.



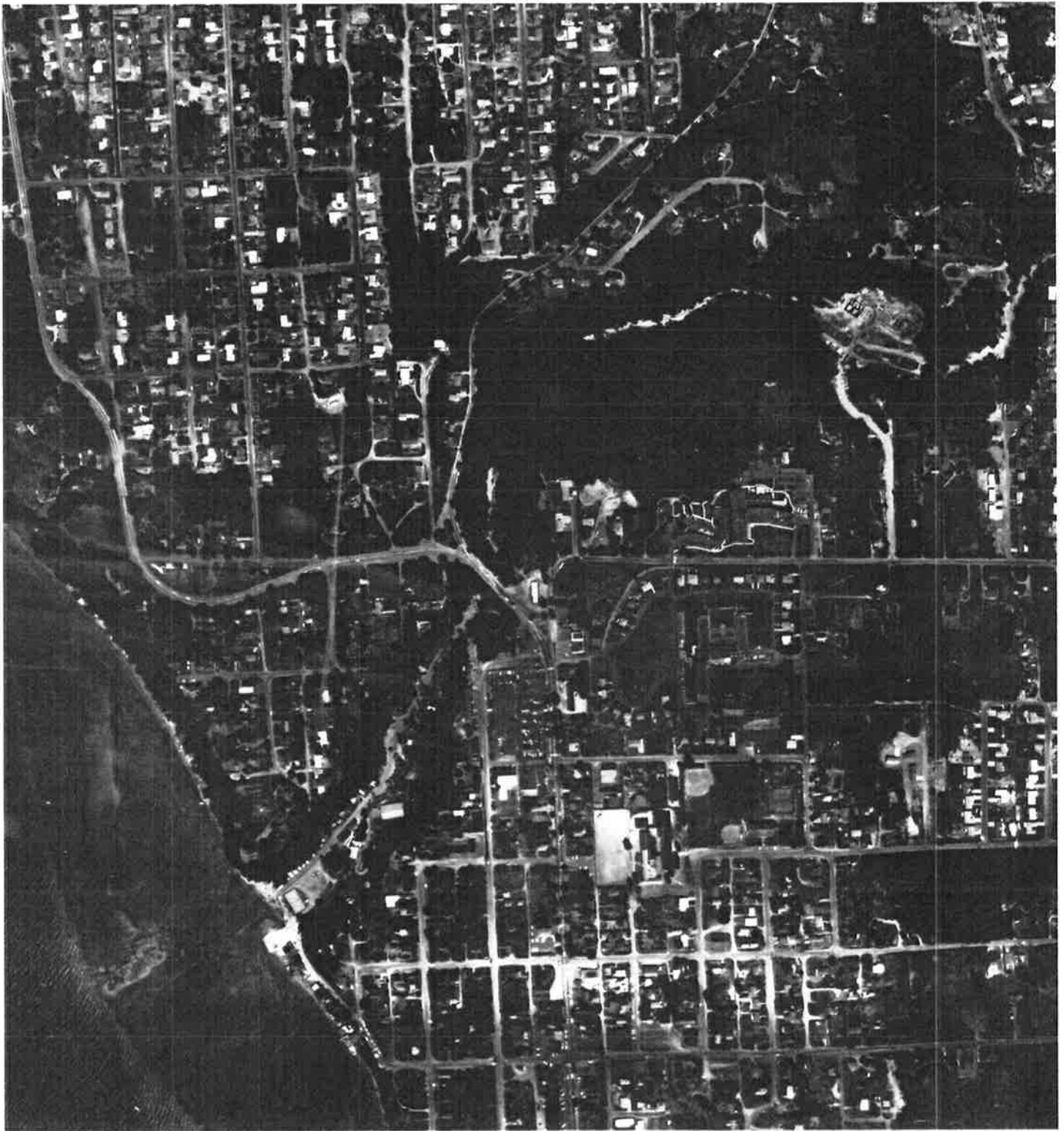
MAP 5.2. 1937 AERIAL IMAGE, SECTION 17. The above image shows the core of downtown Des Moines, at top. Township 22, Range 4 East, Section 17. Image is zoomed in, to better show the survey area.



MAP 5.3. 1954 AERIAL IMAGE, SECTION 8. The above image shows the north end of downtown Des Moines, at bottom left quadrant. Image is zoomed in, to better show the survey area. Full extent of Township 22, Range 4 East, Section 8 not shown.

The 1954 aerial for Section 17 is  
not available.

MAP 5.4. 1954 AERIAL IMAGE, SECTION 17.

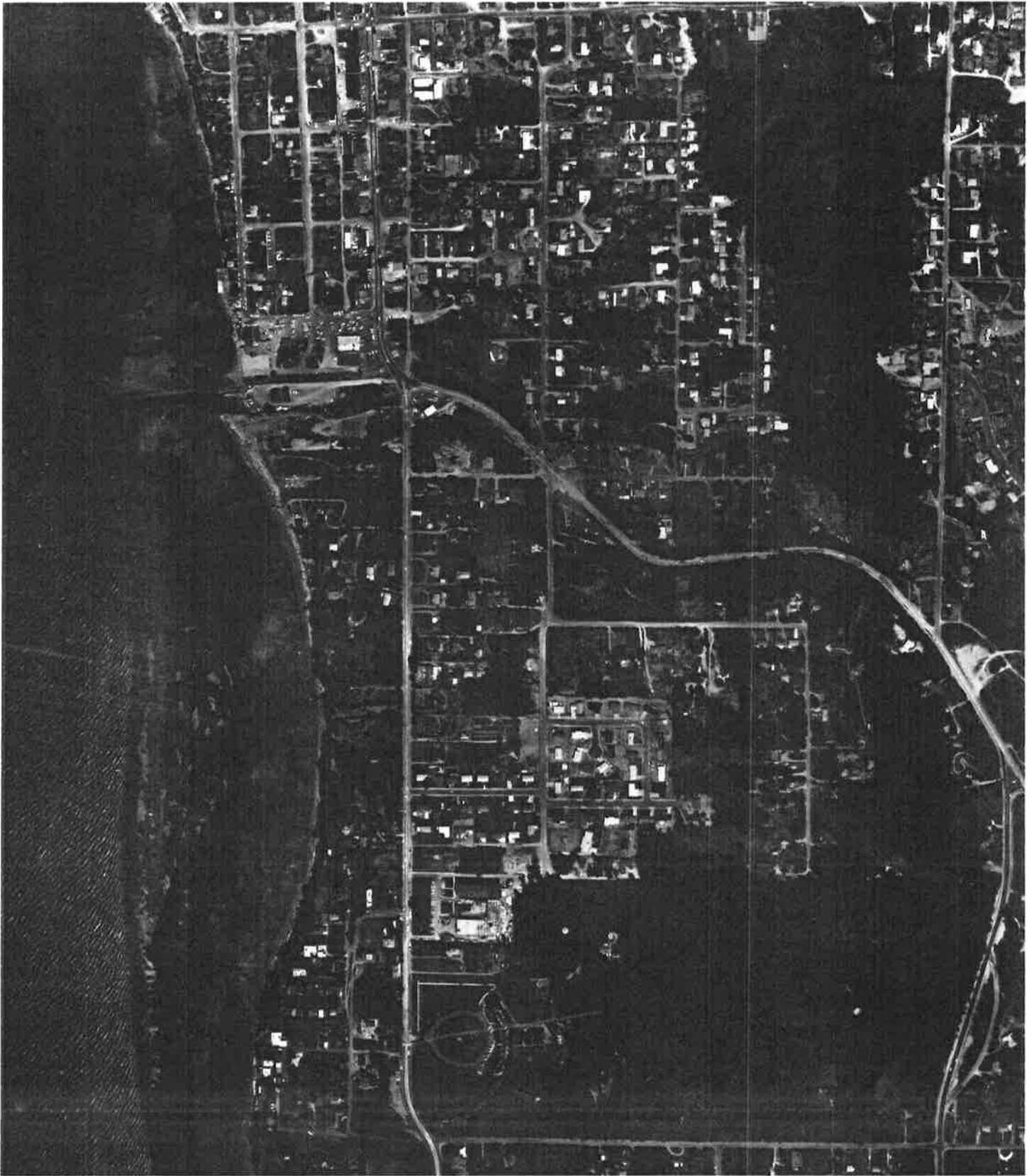


REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
IN THE CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA  
COPYRIGHT PHOTOGRAMMETERISTS, DES MOINES, IOWA

K-SN-65 FL 10B-5 ; FLOWN 6-30-65, SCALE 1"=400' SEC 8, T2

MAP 5.5. 1965 AERIAL IMAGE, SECTION 8. The above image shows the north end of downtown Des Moines, at bottom left quadrant. Image is zoomed in, to better show the survey area. Full extent of Township 22, Range 4 East, Section 8 not shown.

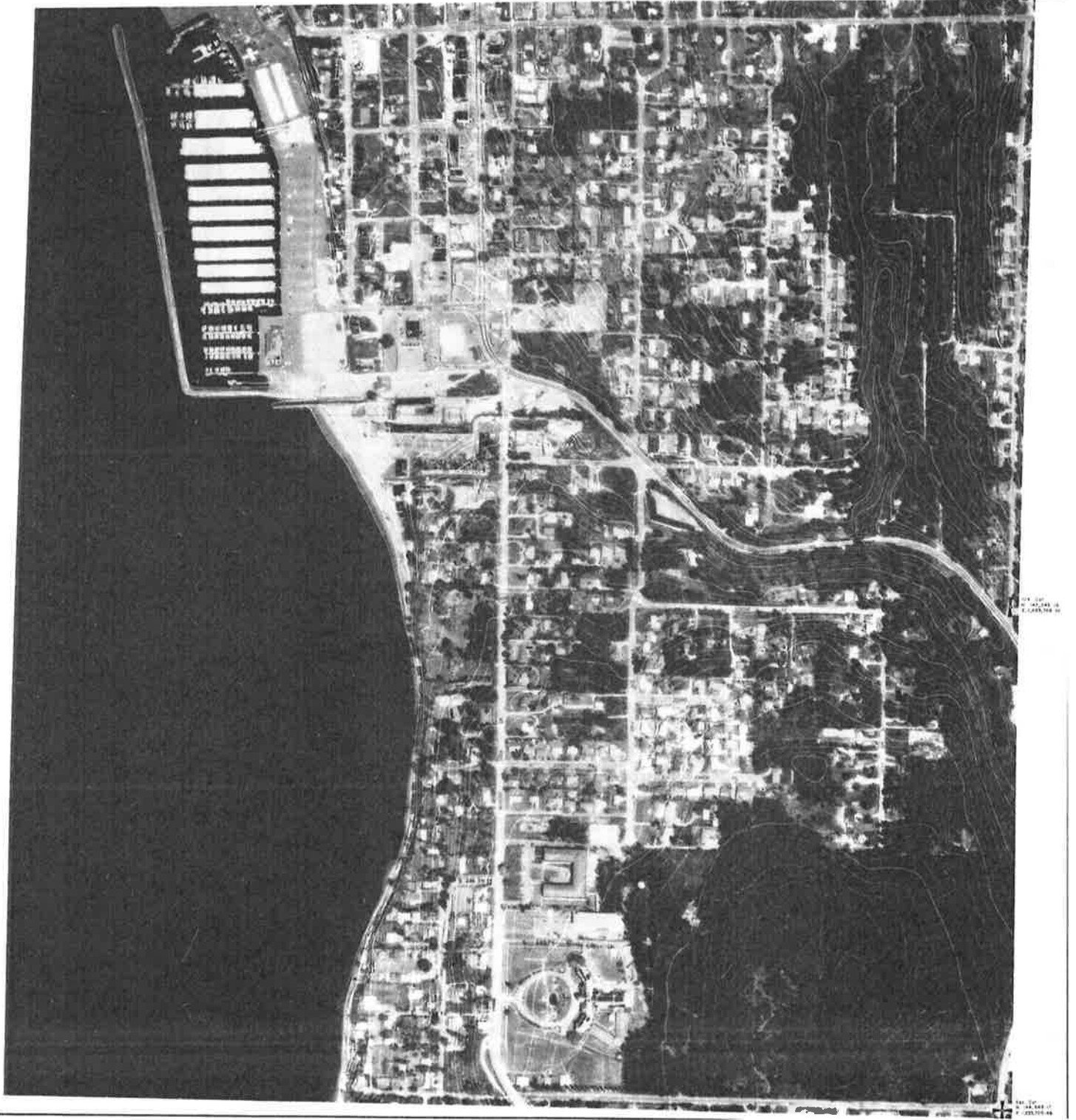




MAP 5.6. 1965 AERIAL IMAGE, SECTION 17. The above image shows the core of downtown Des Moines, at top. Image is zoomed in, to better show the survey area. Full extent of Township 22, Range 4 East, Section 17 not shown.



MAP 5.7. 1974 AERIAL IMAGE, SECTION 8. The above image shows the north end of downtown Des Moines, at bottom left quadrant. Image is zoomed in, to better show the survey area. Full extent of Township 22, Range 4 East, Section 8 not shown.



MAP 5.8. 1974 AERIAL IMAGE, SECTION 17. The above image shows the core of downtown Des Moines, at top. Image is zoomed in, to better show the survey area. Full extent of Township 22, Range 4 East, Section 17 not shown.

