

**Site Inventory Form**  
**State Historical Society of Iowa**  
 (November 2005)

State Inventory No. 29-00097  New  Supplemental  
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 29-03685  
 Relationship:  Contributing  Noncontributing  
 Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries  
 National Register Status:(any that apply)  Listed  De-listed  NHL  DOE  
 9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance (R&C) Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Non-Extant (enter year) \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Palace Theater  
 other names/site number Downtown Survey Map # DT-48

**2. Location**

street & number 314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
 city or town Burlington  vicinity, county Des Moines  
 Legal Description:(If Rural) Township Name \_\_\_\_\_ Township No. \_\_\_\_\_ Range No. \_\_\_\_\_ Section \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter of Quarter \_\_\_\_\_  
 (If Urban) Subdivision Original City Block(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Lot(s) 250 & 249 south 6" of W 36'

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]**

**4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]**

**5. Classification**

Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property		
	If Non-Eligible Property Enter number of:	If Eligible Property, enter number of:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> district	— buildings	<u>1</u>	— buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site	— sites	—	— sites
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	— structures	—	— structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object	— objects	—	— objects
	— Total	<u>1</u>	— Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).  
 Title Intensive Level Historical and Architectural Survey of "East" Downtown Burlington, IA Historical Architectural Data Base Number 29-034

**6. Function or Use**

<b>Historic Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Current Functions</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>08A02 movie theater</u>	<u>06A01 church</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

**7. Description**

<b>Architectural Classification</b> (Enter categories from instructions)	<b>Materials</b> (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>08 Modern</u>	foundation <u>10 Concrete</u>
_____	walls (visible material) <u>10 Concrete (pre-cast "stone")</u>
_____	roof <u>15C01 rubber membrane</u>
_____	other _____

**Narrative Description** ( SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	A Property is associated with significant events.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> More Research Recommended	D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Des Moines Address 314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Site Number 29-00097  
City Burlington District Number 29-03685

**Criteria Considerations**

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

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

05: Commerce  
02: Architecture

**Significant Dates**

Construction date 1948  check if circa or estimated date  
Other dates, including renovation 1980s, 1996

**Significant Person**

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Architect Weatherall & Harrison (Des Moines)  
Builder Kucharo Construction Company (Des Moines)

**Narrative Statement of Significance**  SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bibliography  See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

**10. Geographic Data**

**UTM References (OPTIONAL)**

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Hal Morton, commission member Rebecca L. McCarley, consultant, Davenport  
organization Burlington Historic Preservation Commission date December 1, 2012  
street & number City Hall, 400 Washington Street telephone 319-753-8158  
city or town Burlington state Iowa zip code 52601

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION (Submit the following items with the completed form)**

**FOR ALL PROPERTIES**

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____
Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____
Roll/slide sheet #	_____	Frame/slot #	_____	Date Taken	_____

- See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.
- Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

**FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL**

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or noncontributing status)
- Barn:**
  - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
  - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
  - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

**State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line**

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility:  Yes  No  More Research Recommended  
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated by (name/title): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 1

---

<u>Palace Theater</u>	<u>Des Moines</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street</u>	<u>Burlington</u>
Address	City

---

## 7. Narrative Description

The Palace Theater was originally built in 1915, with a façade clad in decorative terra cotta. The exterior of the building was completely overhauled in 1948 during a remodel and expansion for the Palace Theater, resulting in the simpler “modern” façade. The terra cotta detailing was replaced with cast “stone” designed for the theater with trim around the doors and display case of “wine colored glass stone made especially for the job.” The remodeled completely redesigned the interior, added a balcony, and expanded the theater to the full front frontage along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, removing earlier retail spaces within the 1915 theater. The exterior reflects this 1948 remodel. The building is clad in cast stone/concrete panels with vertical ribbing. The entry remains on the north/left third of the building, with glass entry doors. The burgundy structural glass panels around the poster display to the left of the entry, around the triple-poster display in the center bay, and around the south poster display with second entry remain intact. The flat canopy extends across the majority of the building, with a vertical bi-secting sign near the south/right side for the church reusing the theater sign.

## 8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Palace Theater appears to contribute historically and architecturally to a potential Downtown Commercial Historic District. The theater originally opened in this location in 1915, with a complete remodel and reconstruction in 1948 to modernize the exterior and the interior. The simple exterior cast stone/concrete façade continues to reflect this architectural design, and the maroon structural glass accents on the first story remain intact. The theater was a key downtown business from 1915 to 1995, outlasting other downtown theaters by nearly 20 years. This history and architecture contributes to the significance of the potential historic district. The interior of the Palace Theater was not assessed within the scope of this project. Further assessment of the interior integrity would be needed to evaluate the individual significance of the building under Criterion A and C.

The Palace Theater opened in their new building on March 13, 1915, without interruption from the previous location on Jefferson Street. The original building was owned and built by Louis S. Jacobs, a Milwaukee movie house tycoon, who spent about \$55,000 on the project, and expressed interest in personally moving to Burlington (*Hawk-Eye*, March 13, 1915). William R. Gibb, the Chicago architect of the building, was also present for the grand opening. The building front was dominated by terra cotta details and a large movie marquis. The theater was considered quite elaborate, “the finest photo-play theatre in the state of Iowa,” and featured ceiling and oscillating fans and a top notch ventilation system capable of completely replacing the interior air every 3 minutes. There were also wide aisles and accessible fire escapes enabling the theater to be evacuated in less than 3 minutes. The 800 seat auditorium also had a stage and a 4 piece orchestra pit. The exterior of the building featured an ornate central entry between two smaller commercial storefronts (312 and 318 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, respectively), all of which were finished in white terra cotta or glazed block “in exact imitation of granite” according to the advance ad in the March 10, 1915 *Hawk-Eye*. The store fronts featured large plate glass windows with retractable awnings, plain cornice area with a narrow ogee crown of terra cotta, and a raised plain pediment that elevated at the ends. The theater entrance was set off from these plain commercial fronts with substantial terra cotta pilasters. The pilasters provided space for feature posters at sidewalk

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 2

---

<u>Palace Theater</u>	<u>Des Moines</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street</u>	<u>Burlington</u>
Address	City

---

height, with a raised horizontal crown of terra cotta over the posters. Higher up on the pilasters were large torch sconce lights highlighting decorative plaques of muse faces – one on each pilaster. The pilasters interrupted the elevated pediments of the next door commercial fronts, and featured a capital that extended about a foot out from the wall and continued across the entry in a low-pitched gable. Above the capital, the pilasters continued up three more courses of terra cotta, and were capped with terra cotta coping. There was an ornamental shield in the flat gable and a mezzanine level window over the entry. The entry was recessed between the pediments, and a flat metal canopy extended across the full width of the sidewalk over the doorway. Above this canopy there was a fancy lighted marquis perpendicular to the sidewalk and an elaborate marquis protruding from the gable spelled out “Palace” in lighted script (with either flames or palm trees at each end of the name). Based on photographic evidence, the marquis signs were replaced several times using several different styles.

The Palace Theater operated in this building from 1915 to 1948. During this time, small retail spaces were maintained at the north and south edges of the building. In 1948, Hollis Head Inc. (corseterie & womens’ furnishings, 1933-1948) was at 318 North 3<sup>rd</sup> St., and Dr. James Quinn 312 North 3<sup>rd</sup> St., which had accommodated various shops in tailoring, millinery, hats, boots, haberdashery and optometry since 1916.

The Palace Theater underwent a major remodel in 1948 by Central States Theaters, Inc., resulting in the current building. Jerome Greenebaum of Central States Theater announced the plans in January 1948 to remodel the theater into a “modern semi-stadium type movie house.” Only three of the walls and part of the roof would remain in the final building, with the roof/façade raised in front for additional interior space to incorporate a balcony with additional seating. The seating capacity would be increased to 900, with new seats installed and space for increased space between rows. Cast “stone” was used for the façade with dark-red Glastone below the marquee level. The district and theater manager offices would also be incorporated in the basement (“Palace Theater Remodeling Project to Start at Once,” *Hawk-Eye Gazette*, January 19, 1948, 1). The grand opening for the new Palace Theater was held on September 2, 1948. Per Greenebaum: “The new Palace is one of the finest theaters in the Midwest and probably in the entire country. It incorporates comfort, fine projection and sound, and the latest in design.” The new Palace marquee sign was a canopy shelf type with panel change on end, designed by Iowa Neon Sign company of Des Moines. Glass doors led into the lobby as well as being used on the interior in the foyer. The lobby was designed to open into the foyer, and then a patron could go into the auditorium or lounge. The lounge was touted as a new feature, not found elsewhere in Burlington. Popcorn and candy could be purchased from a counter in the lobby. New women’s rest and powder rooms and new men’s restrooms were installed with tile floors. The stadium type seating was arranged with two interior aisles, and seats were upholstered over metal framework. The theater was designed by the architectural firm of Weatherall & Harrison of Des Moines (who had designed the Capitol Theater for Central States Theaters in 1936). It was built by Kucharo Construction Company of Des Moines. Interior decorating was completed by Hanns Teichert of Chicago, and walls were hand-painted by Chicago artist Frank Lackner. Lighting was designed by Harry Winograd of Chicago. The innovative custom-made wall lights were not recessed but consisted of boxes over the light, permitting light to leak around the edges. Recessed ceiling lights were used as house lights (“New Palace Theater will have Grand Opening on Thursday,” *Hawk-Eye Gazette*, September 1, 1948, 11).

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Page 3

---

<u>Palace Theater</u>	<u>Des Moines</u>
Name of Property	County
<u>314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street</u>	<u>Burlington</u>
Address	City

---

In 1951, there were five theaters in Burlington: Palace Theater, Arion Theatre (210 N. Main, extant), Capitol Theater (211 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St, extant), Zephyr Theatre (in former Masonic Temple at 420 Jefferson, extant), and Burlington Drive-In Theatre (Agency Rd). Central States Theater Corporation continued to run Palace Theater here until 1995. Over this period, the other downtown theaters closed. In 1970, the Capitol Theatre (211 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St) continued to be listed, with the Burlington Drive-In Theatre (Agency Rd) and Players Workshop Theatre (1431 Grove) operating elsewhere in town. Central States Theaters closed the Capitol Theater in downtown in 1977, opening two large theaters (West I and II) in West Burlington. The Palace Theater was then the last downtown theater in operation. In the late 1980s, the large auditorium space was divided into two theaters, Palace I and II. The total number of seats remained at 600-700. In 1991, the Palace Theater was the only downtown theater listed, with the two theaters in West Burlington and the Burlington Drive-In Theatre (Agency Rd) also showing movies in town. Central States Theaters then opened a six-plex at Westland Mall, with the Palace Theater showing second-run movies for \$2 in 1995. However, that plan did not prove viable, and the Palace Theater closed downtown in December 1995 ("Palace Theater," *Hawk-Eye*, December 10, 1995, 3A).

With the theater closing, Heritage Baptist Church contacted the theater company about purchasing the building, and they bought it for \$30,000. This was the first building for the church, which had 40-50 members each Sunday in attendance. One auditorium was retained for the church services while the other was remodeled for a sanctuary ("Offering plate, not popcorn, passes at Palace," *Hawk-Eye*, January 20, 1996, 1B). Heritage Baptist Church continues to operate here in 2012.

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Site Number 29-00097

Related District Number 29-03685

Page 4

---

Palace Theater  
Name of Property

Des Moines  
County

314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Address

Burlington  
City

---

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

City Directories, Burlington, Iowa, various dates. On microfiche at the Burlington Public Library

Deed records, per transfer books at Des Moines County Auditor's Office.

Downtown Partners, Inc., a Division of the Greater Burlington Partnership, Burlington, Iowa. Collection of collected historic photographs of downtown Burlington.

"The new and beautiful Palace Theatre makes its first announcement to the public," advertisement, *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, March 10, 1915, p.9.

"New Palace Theater will have grand opening on Thursday," *Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*, September 1, 1948, 11.

Newspapers, various titles and editions. Particular special editions utilized:

*Burlington Evening Gazette*, March 24, 1906  
*Daily Hawk-Eye Gazette*, September 2, 1938  
*Burlington Hawk-Eye Gazette*, August 4, 1942  
*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, July 10, 1962  
*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, July 4, 1976

"Opening of Palace Theater," *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, March 14, 1915, 23.

"Palace to have sound movies," *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, December 2, 1928.

Sanborn Map Company. "Burlington, Iowa," Fire Insurance Maps. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1886, 1892, 1900, 1931, 1952.

Vertical files. Files on business/industry as well as individual businesses. Burlington Public Library, Burlington, Iowa.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
 State Historical Society of Iowa  
**Iowa Site Inventory Form**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Site Number 29-00097  
 Related District Number 29-03685

Page 5

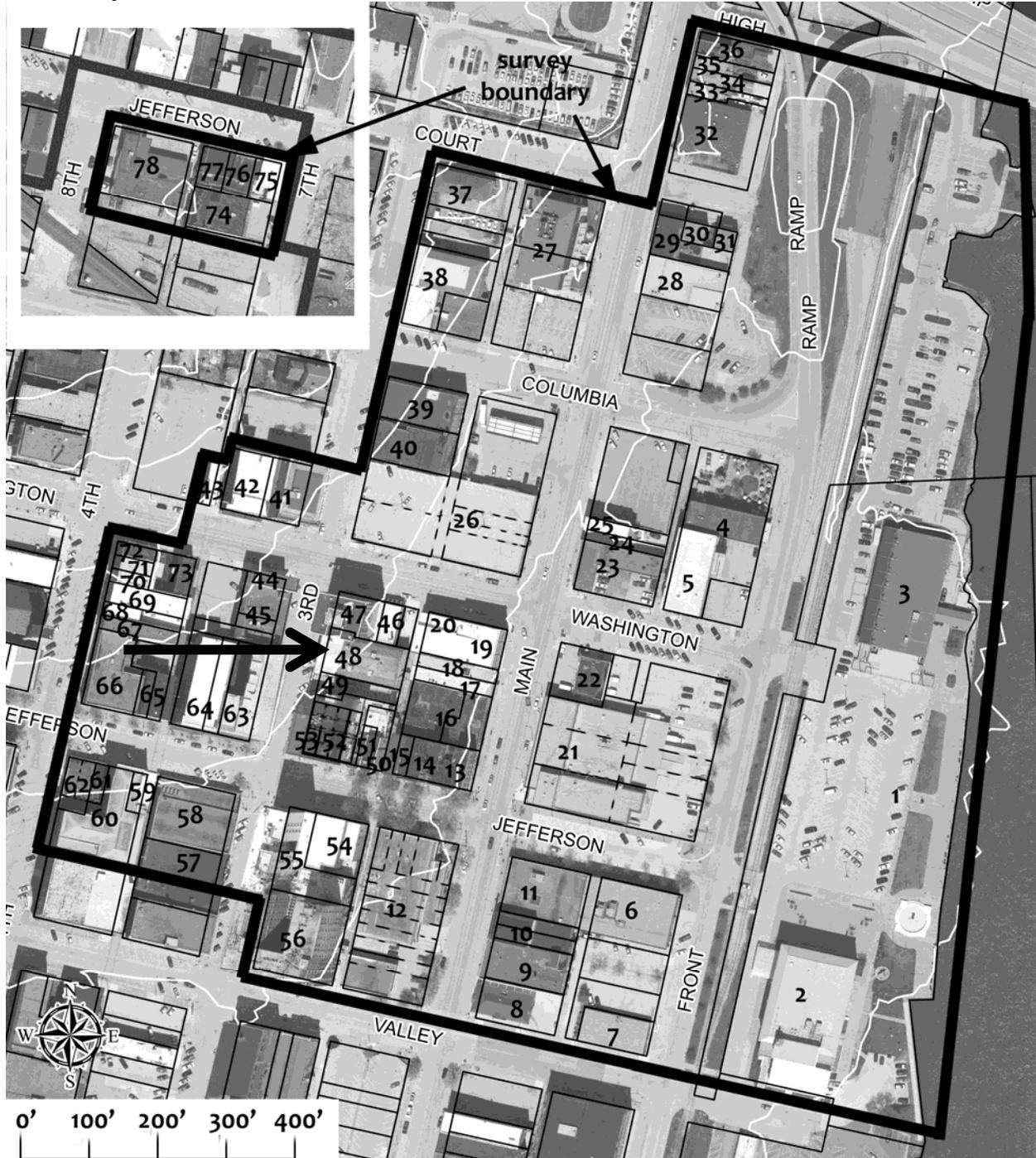
Palace Theater  
 Name of Property

Des Moines  
 County

314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
 Address

Burlington  
 City

**Location map**



Base aerial photography by Aerial Services Inc for Des Moines County GIS Commission, March 2010.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
**Iowa Site Inventory Form  
Continuation Sheet**

Site Number 29-00097  
Related District Number 29-03685

Page 6

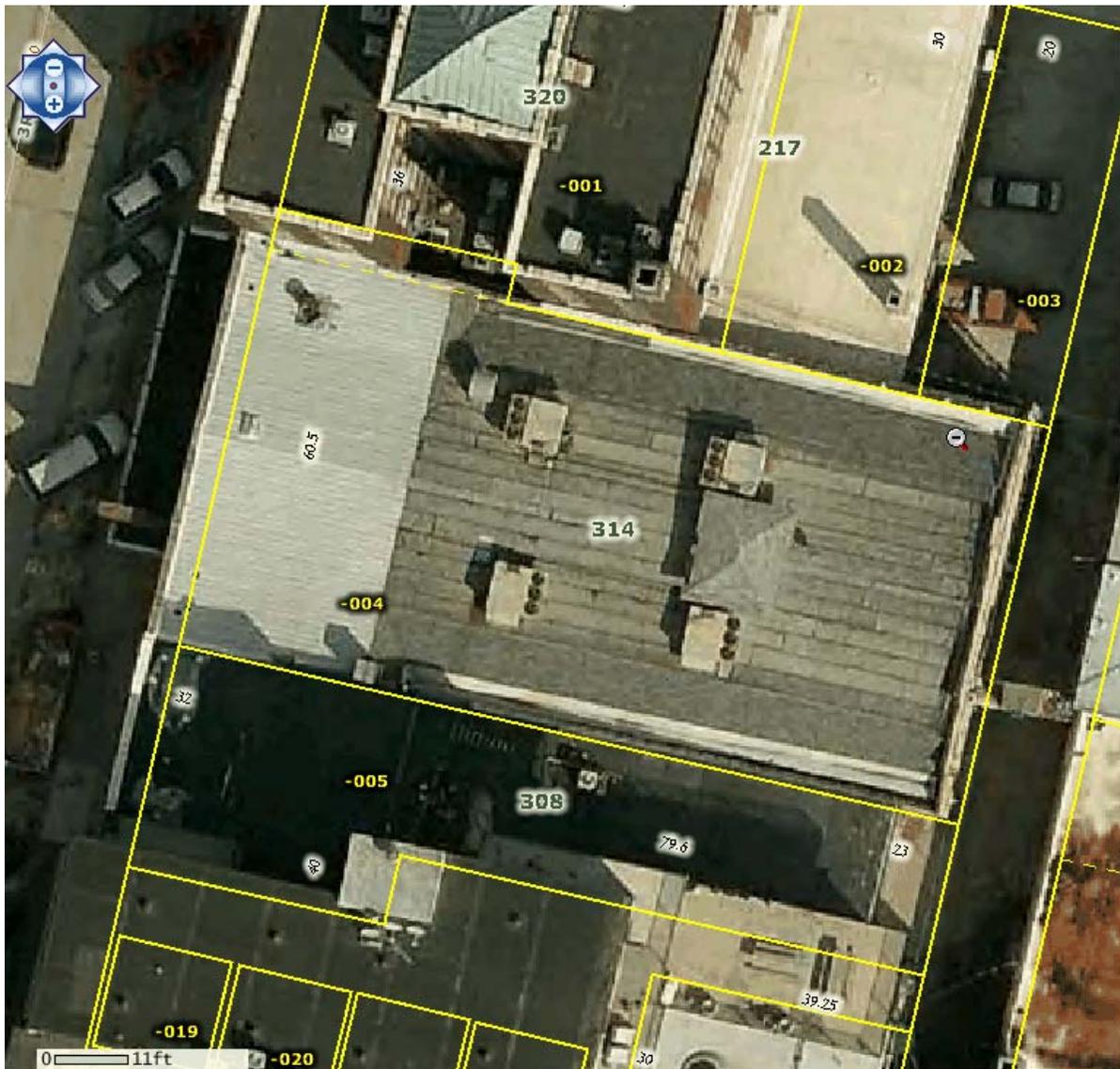
Palace Theater  
Name of Property

Des Moines  
County

314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Address

Burlington  
City

**Building plan (from assessor's website)**



# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Site Number 29-00097

Related District Number 29-03685

Page 7

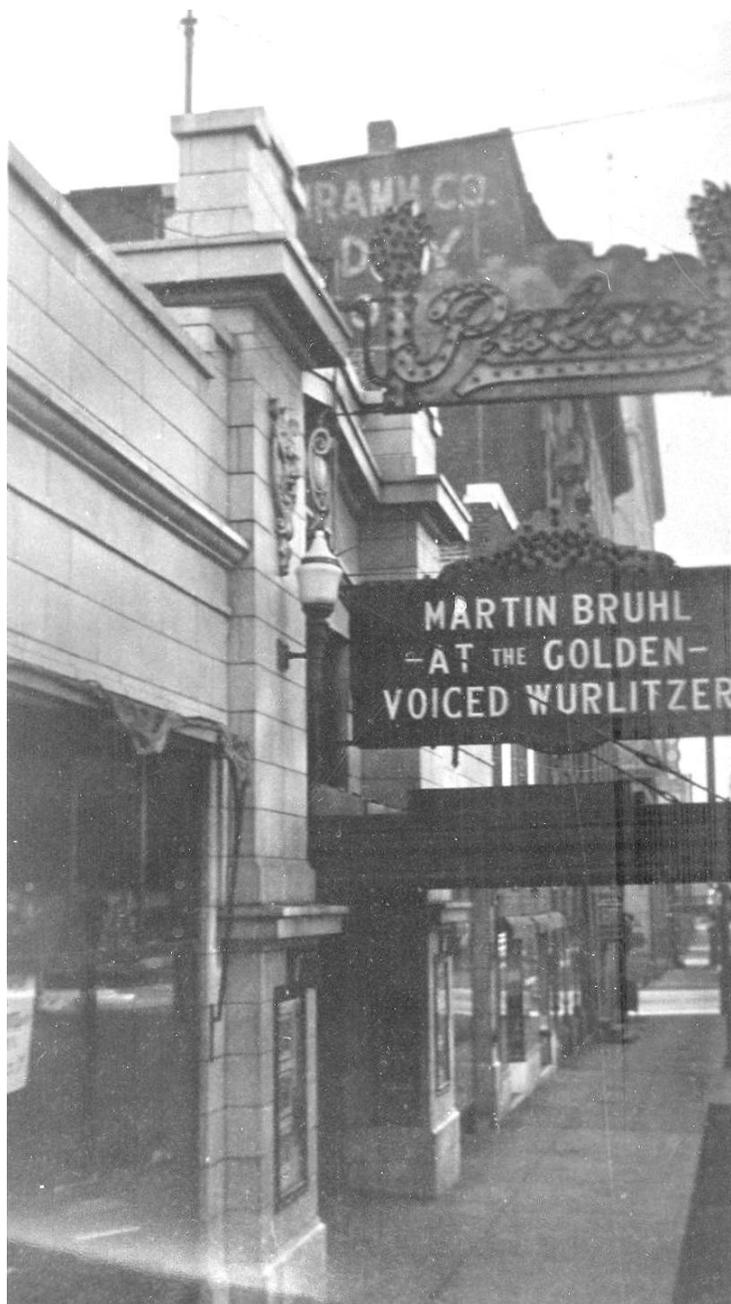
Palace Theater  
Name of Property

Des Moines  
County

314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Address

Burlington  
City

## Historic images



Original façade of Palace Theater (Downtown Partners collection)

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
**Iowa Site Inventory Form  
Continuation Sheet**

Site Number 29-00097  
Related District Number 29-03685

Page 8

Palace Theater  
Name of Property

Des Moines  
County

314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Address

Burlington  
City



Palace Theater at left in 1970, looking northeast from Jefferson at 3<sup>rd</sup> (Downtown Partners collection)

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs  
State Historical Society of Iowa  
**Iowa Site Inventory Form  
Continuation Sheet**

Site Number 29-00097  
Related District Number 29-03685

Page 9

Palace Theater  
Name of Property

Des Moines  
County

314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Address

Burlington  
City



View of building in February 1982 (American Classic Images)

Online at [http://americanclassicimages.com/  
Default.aspx?tabid=141&txtSearch=CATAdvancedSearch1%2c15%2c3%2c438&ProductID=27205](http://americanclassicimages.com/Default.aspx?tabid=141&txtSearch=CATAdvancedSearch1%2c15%2c3%2c438&ProductID=27205)

# Iowa Site Inventory Form Continuation Sheet

Site Number 29-00097

Related District Number 29-03685

Page 10

Palace Theater  
Name of Property

Des Moines  
County

314 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Address

Burlington  
City

## Digital photographs



Photograph 29-00097-001 – West elevation, looking northeast (McCarley, June 20, 2012)