

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

State Inventory No. 29-00962 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 Municipal River Terminal
 other names/site number Port of Burlington, Downtown Survey Map # DT-03

2. Location

street & number 400 N. Front
 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) Riverfront, Part NW, Section 4

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: Contributing Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	— buildings	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> district	— sites	— sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site	— structures	— structures
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	— objects	— objects
<input type="checkbox"/> object	— 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

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>14C Transportation – water related</u>	<u>99 Other – visitors' center</u>
<u>14A Transportation - rail-related</u>	<u>02F02 Commerce - market place (farmers' market)</u>
<u>02H Commerce - warehouse</u>	<u>03A Social - meeting hall</u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
<u>09F Commercial – side gable</u>	foundation <u>10B: concrete</u>
_____	walls (visible material) <u>03 Tile block / 10B: concrete</u>
_____	roof <u>08A: asphalt shingle</u>
_____	other <u>steel beam supports</u>

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 type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" 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 400 North Front Site Number 29-00962
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

Significant Dates

Construction date 1928 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates, including renovation 1975, 1987

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder

Architect _____
Builder Struchen-Romer Company (St. Paul, MN)

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 Mary Toal, Volunteer; Angela Adams, Commission Member; Rebecca L. McCarley, consultant, Davenport
organization Burlington Historic Preservation Commission date January 20, 2013
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: _____

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Municipal River Terminal

Des Moines

Name of Property

County

400 N. Front Street

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7. Narrative Description

This one-story concrete and tile block building built in 1928 as the Municipal River Terminal for the Port of Burlington. It was originally built over the river on concrete piers, with riverfront improvements in the 1950s and 1960s extending the edge of the bank further out into the river. The building was rehabilitated into a visitors' center in 1976, and further work to develop the property occurred in 1987. Further development of the riverfront area from this building south to the auditorium filled in a significant portion of the land and created a plaza and riverwalk area along the river. Thus, the concrete piers of this building are now underground, with sidewalk and plaza extending along the east side of the building as well. However, the Mississippi River remains the key feature of the east side of the building, as historically was functional for this side. The building has a low pitch gable roof, which runs parallel to the river and to Front Street.

The west side of the building retains its wide metal canopy supported by cables above the roof over the former railroad loading area. A concrete platform along this side provides access to the interior of the building. Large openings remain on the north and south ends of this side, with the center sections having pedestrian doors and double-hung windows. The north side has two large windows. The south side has two large windows as well, with a concrete stage area built to address the riverfront development to the south. The east side retains a glass enclosed extension from the center of the building, historically the connection to the loading barge floating on the Mississippi River. The fill along this side of the building has resulted in concrete sidewalks, river viewing area, and other landscaping.

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Municipal River Terminal appears to contribute historically to the potential Downtown Commercial Historic District. The recommended boundary for the historic district extends east to the Mississippi River to incorporate this building in the historic district. The building is significantly related to the commercial activities in Burlington from its completion in 1928 through the middle of the 20th century and into the 1970s. The construction of the river terminal provided Burlington with modern docks to serve their local businesses and provide a modern transportation connection between the river and their many railroad lines. The Municipal River Terminal also appears to be individually eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for this significant history in the history of commerce in Burlington. The building may also be individually eligible under Criterion C for its architecture as a river terminal (or port) building, a fairly rare type of building in Iowa. Further assessment of the integrity of the building and current relationship of the building with the river would solidify this determination.

The historic transportation corridor, the Mississippi River, was improved in 1928 with the construction of a modern dock that met federal standards for barge traffic. In 1928, Congress authorized a fleet of 45 barges and five towboats for Federal Barge Line trade, boosting river traffic. In order to participate, Burlington needed a modern dock. A special election approved the dock, and construction started in early 1928. Contract for the municipal river terminal was let to Struchen-Romer Company of St. Paul,

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Minnesota. The building was situated on the levee across from Drake Hardware in the 400 block of N. Front Street (State # 29-00962). It was constructed on pylons, allowing the river to flow underneath it. Over 300 prominent people were noted to be in town for the October 10, 1928 dedication, which included an elaborate parade down Jefferson and a grand banquet. The municipal river terminal was leased to Inland Waterways Corp of New Orleans, which handled soap, coffee, sugar, household goods, furniture, peat moss, canned goods, farm machinery, and condensed milk in first year ("Thousands are Expected Here for Ceremony," *Hawk-Eye*, October 10, 1928, 1; "Burlington was in need of dock and it got one," *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, July 10, 1962, 80). The 1930 Sanborn map shows the completed "Municipal Docks" operated by the Inland Waterways Corporation. The building was divided into two large spaces on the south half and a large warehouse on the north half. The map notes it has a concrete floor and sits on concrete piers with a steel frame. A platform extends along the west side with three railroad siding immediately in front of the building for loading. A floating walkway connects the main building to a loading barge to the east, which appears permanently attached to this side. The building and attached barge are depicted in historic photographs as well.

In 1930, Burlington promoted itself with slogans such as "Port of Burlington" and "On the Mississippi" – reinforcing its connection with the river and new municipal river terminal. The modern docks and warehouses provided ease of transfer of goods to the excellent railroad system and paved road system serving Burlington, providing distribution of goods throughout the country (*McCoy's Burlington City Directory* 1930: 7). City directories over the next decade continued to tout the benefit of the Port of Burlington, or the Mississippi River Terminal, for businesses in Burlington and commerce throughout the region. The Federal Barge Line connected Burlington and southern ports, and Burlington offered outstanding railroad connections to points to the east and west. With modern river and rail terminals, Burlington offered joint barge-and-rail rates for a savings in transportation costs for any shipper (*McCoy's Burlington City Directory* 1935: 7). The *Hawk-Eye Gazette* noted the key transportation benefits of Burlington in 1938: "Paved highways lead into Burlington from all points of the compass. A modern river terminal handles freight to and from the government-operated Upper Mississippi barge line. An important railroad center, the city has the largest shops of the Burlington railroad; streamlined trains operate though the city over that system, and rail service also is provided by the Rock Island lines. Coast-to-coast buses provide other means of travel, and Burlington municipal airport is on the Chicago-Kansas City federal air route" ("Burlington – on the Mississippi!" *Daily Hawk-Eye Gazette*, September 2, 1938, 19). The "Burlington River Terminal Building" is listed among the public buildings in town in the 1940 city directory.

Another improvement along the old levee was undertaken in 1938-39 with the construction of Memorial Auditorium, two blocks to the south in the 200 block of N. Front Street. The overall development of downtown Burlington and the riverfront area is depicted on a 1941 aerial photograph, which shows the area looking west from the Mississippi River. The railroad tracks enter at the lower left corner, with major lines continuing west-northwest to the top of the image and minor lines continuing north along the river at the bottom. The development of the riverfront area includes the construction of Memorial Auditorium between Valley and Jefferson, with parking to the south. Some fill appears added to the north to the Municipal River Terminal building. This building appears to extend out over the Mississippi River on pylons, with the loading barge visible as well.

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City directories list the Municipal River Terminal Building at the foot of Washington Street through the 1940s and 1950s. The Federal Barge Line also continues to be listed here in the 1940s. Burlington Warehouse Corporation and Burlington-Chicago Cartage also have listings here in 1947 and 1951. Churchill Truck Lines also operated here per the 1950s city directories. By 1960, it is listed as the Mississippi River Terminal, with Sturm Freightways providing the terminal manager (Robert Easton).

The river terminal building and new 1944 railroad station continue to be promoted in city directories through the 1940s, 1950s, and into the 1960s as key in the transportation connections for businesses in the community and surrounding area. The 1960 city directory notes that Burlington is served by the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy (CB&Q) – Burlington Route and the Chicago, Rock Island, & Pacific, with the railroads served by the Indiana limestone railroad station. Burlington also had waterway terminals on Mississippi River, and it had the only municipal terminal between Quad Cities and St. Louis. Additionally, the town boasted an excellent airport and hard surface highways in every direction. The result was “first class transportation and shipping facilities.” Freight rates on river were also very favorable due to breaking point between Official and Western Classifications (*Polk’s Burlington City Directory* 1960: VIII).

Further improvements on the riverfront were undertaken in the 1960s. In January 1961, city council announced their plans to fill the area on the river front between Burlington Memorial Auditorium and Municipal Docks Terminal – distance of about 360 feet – and to surface it for parking (*Hawk-Eye*, January 31, 1961, 22). The river terminal was noted in 1962 as leased by Sturm Freightways Co since 1953. River business continued to be brisk, and the company dealt in grain, sugar, wire, coal, petroleum products, and other commodities (*Burlington Hawk-Eye*, July 10, 1962, 80).

Plans to develop the riverfront were revived in 1972 with a new plan to develop more public uses from Memorial Auditorium north to Paul’s Marina, including a new use for the municipal terminal building. The plan was presented to council in January 1974 and further developed in 1975. Sturm Freightways Company had leased the municipal terminal since 1953, and they vacated the facility in May 1974. The building was then rehabilitated into a visitors’ center in 1975 named the “Port of Burlington” as part of the riverfront improvement project (“Planning for riverfront improvement,” *Hawk-Eye*, April 8, 1975, 4). Phase 1 of the work included the interior modifications and improvements for the conversion of the facility. This work included electrical work, heating, plumbing for restrooms, and new front and back doors on the building. The interior walls were left intact to preserve the historic division of the building into three spaces. Plans for the work were announced in November 1975, with work completed by spring 1976. Plans for a plaza area between the Port and Memorial Auditorium were being discussed as a future project (“Inside work is first phase of Port project,” *Hawk-Eye*, November 13, 1975, 2).

Planning and fundraising for additional work to improve the visitors’ center then occurred in 1986, with the work being completed in 1987. The State of Iowa announced plans for a Welcome Center in Burlington, and in 1988 the center opened here. A stage was constructed on the south side also in spring 1987. The Port of Burlington Welcome Center achieved the State of Iowa’s “Primary Welcome Center Status” in 2001. The Port of Burlington is now a hub of activity all year around. The Port of

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Burlington Welcome Center has vast amounts of information on this area as well as the rest of the state. A scenic plaza area on the east side of the Port showcases the Mississippi riverfront. A community room for meetings and parties and a sheltered area for community events and other functions also are found here. An outdoor stage located at the south end of the building is the site of Burlington Steamboat Days American Music Festival, which attracts crowds in excess of 100,000 visitors every third week in June (http://www.growburlington.com/visit_welcome.cfm)

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.

Hass-McFadden. Aerial photograph of Burlington looking west from Mississippi River. In collection of and displayed at Burlington Public Library. Burlington, Iowa: Hass-McFadden, 1941.

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

- 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

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

Smith, Claudia, and Marie Landon. 1976 survey of sites in Burlington. Iowa Site Inventory forms prepared on file at State Historic Preservation Office, Des Moines, IA.

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

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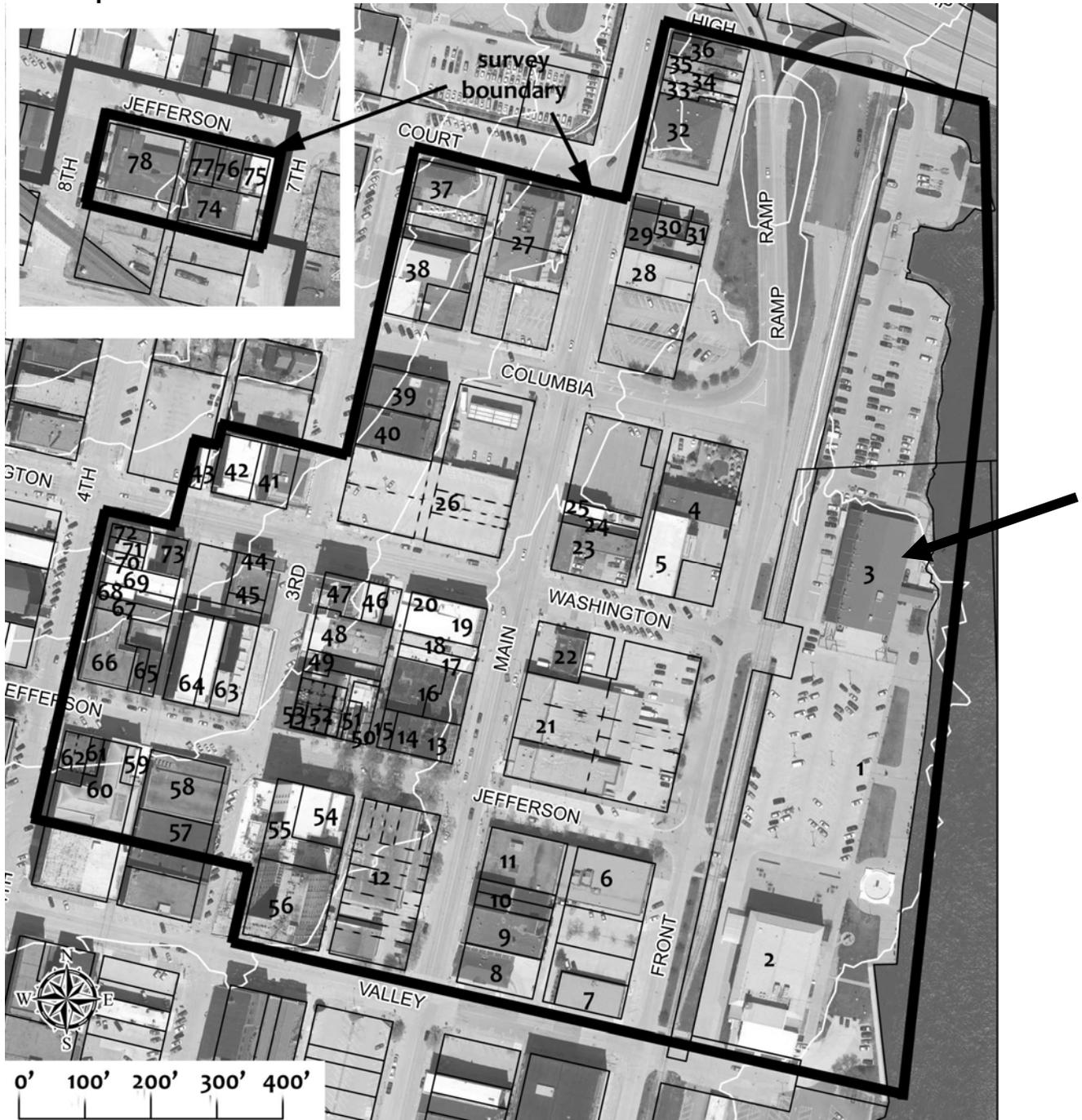
Municipal River Terminal
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Location map



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

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Building plan (from assessor's website)



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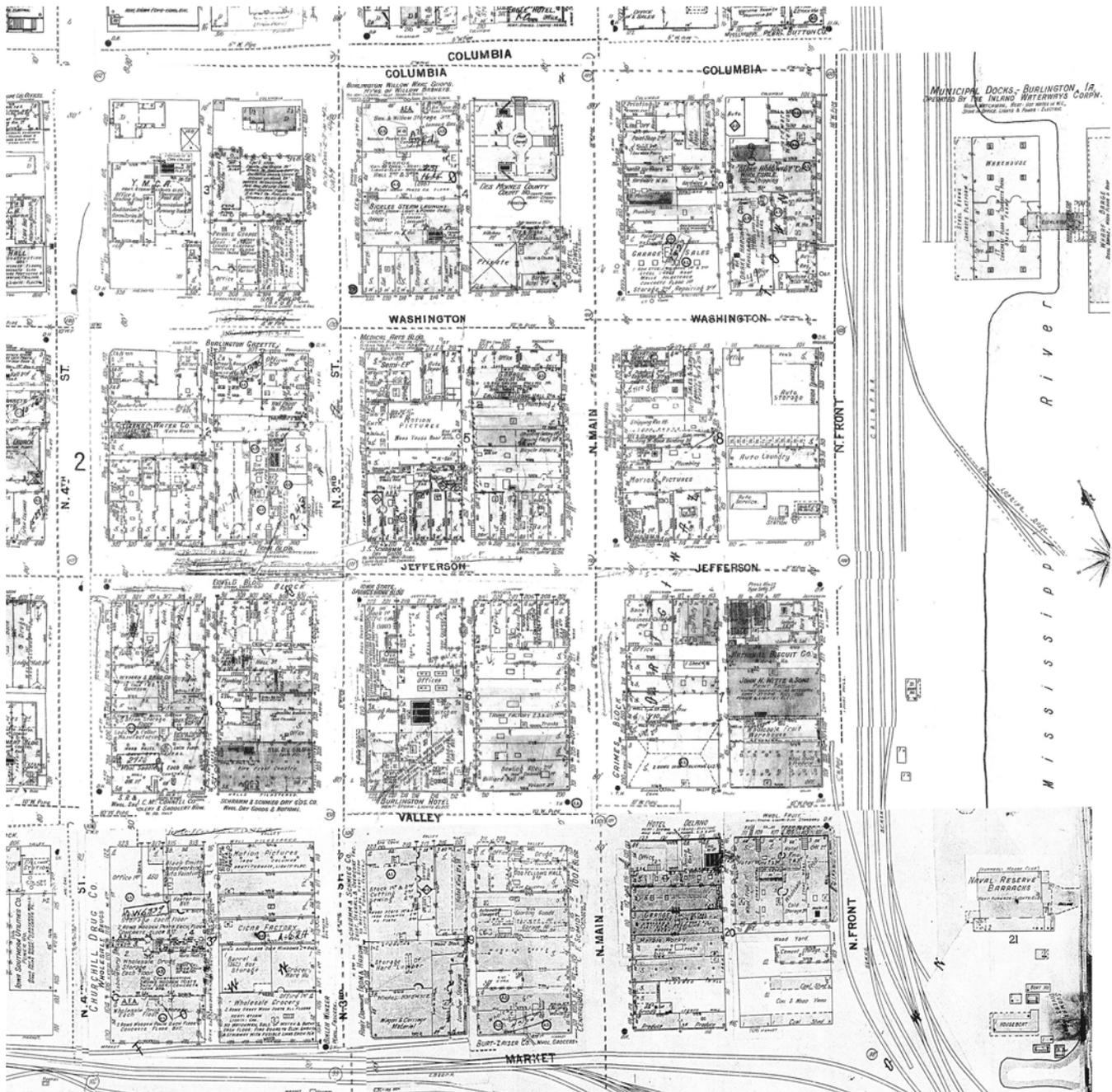
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Historic images



1930 Sanborn map of riverfront area and downtown (Sanborn Map Company 1931).

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1941 aerial photograph of riverfront area and Municipal River Terminal building (Hass-McFadden 1941)

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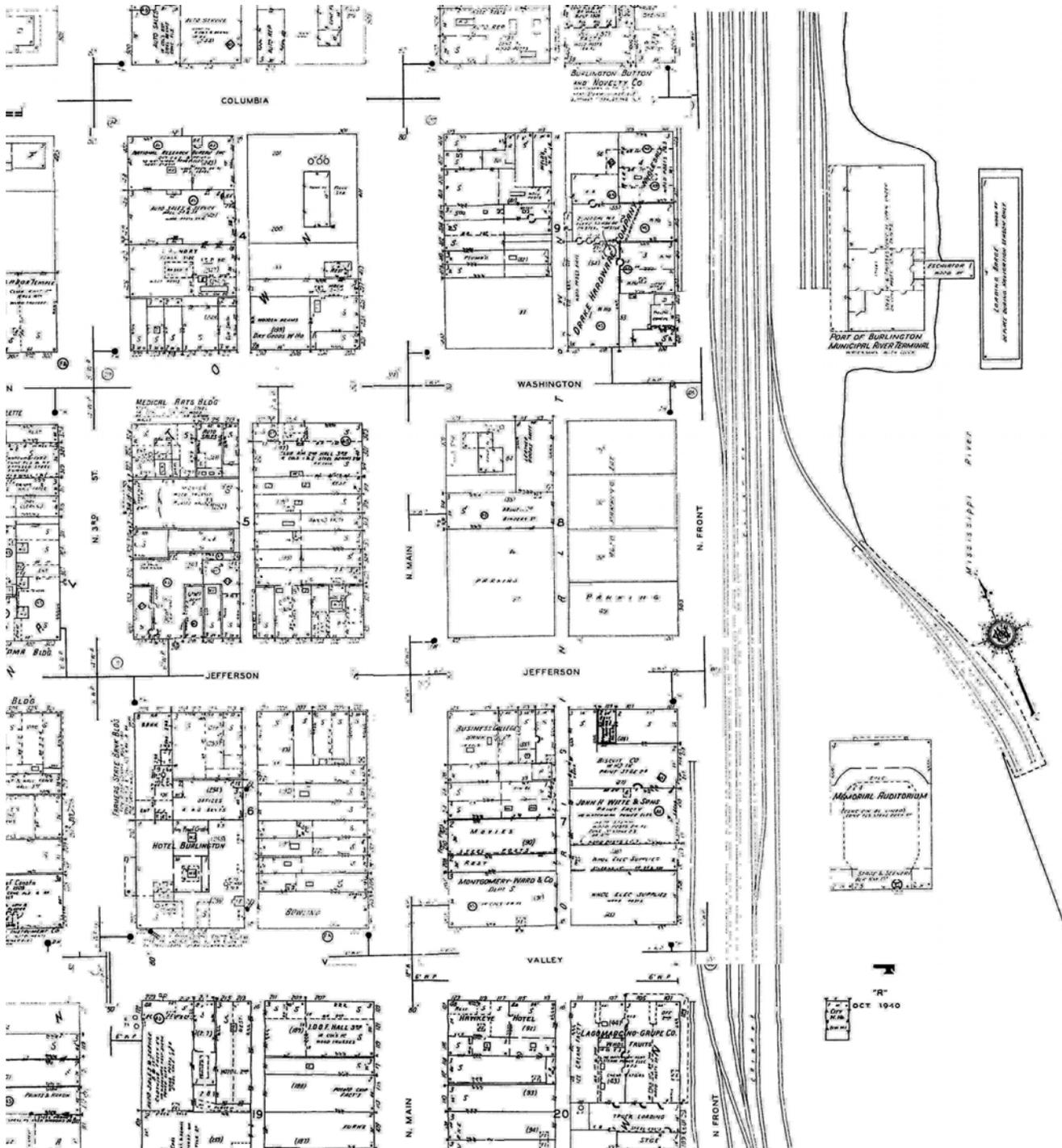
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1952 Sanborn map of riverfront area and downtown (Sanborn Map Company 1931).

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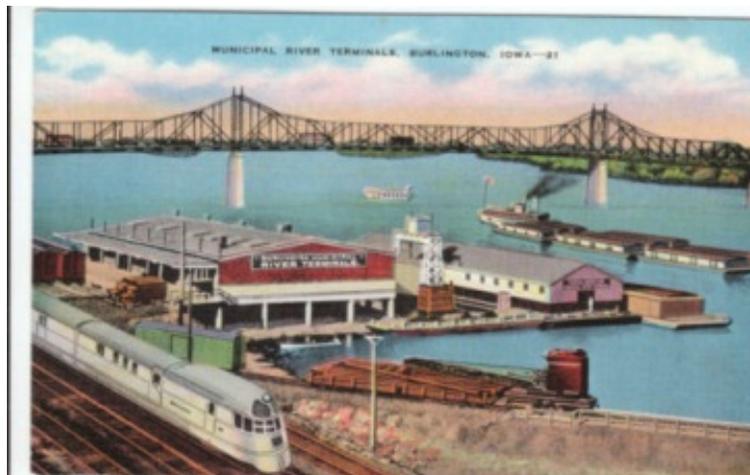
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Municipal River Terminal around 1940 (Downtown Partners collection).



Municipal River Terminal in 1940s (Downtown Partners collection).

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Municipal River Terminal around 1956 (Downtown Partners collection).

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Stage work

Tom Wolf, an employee of Universal Contracting Co., works a backhoe Tuesday at the south end of the Port of Burlington, where a permanent stage will be built. "We're not touching anything else until we get the stage done," Bob Logan, site superintendent, said today. Rain slowed workers on Monday and Tuesday but did not stop the work, he said. Five Universal employees began work at the site Monday and will be building footings for the stage later this week, he said.

Hawk Eye photo/Mark Fageol

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Digital photographs



Photograph 29-00962-001 – West and south elevations, looking northeast (McCarley, November 15, 2012)

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Photograph 29-00962-002 – North and west elevations, looking southeast (McCarley, November 15, 2012)

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Photograph 29-00962-003 – Detail of west elevation, looking northeast (McCarley, November 15, 2012)

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Photograph 29-00962-004 – South and east elevations, looking northwest (McCarley, June 20, 2012)