NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District

other names/site number 067-323-42000

2. Location

street & number Generally bounded by W. Jefferson Street on the north, N. Main Street on the east, W. Jackson Street on the south, and N. Washington Street on the west N/A – not for publication

city or town Kokomo N/A – vicinity

state IN code IN county Howard code 67 zip code 46901

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be consider significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☑ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet
☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-state
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
7	3	buildings
0	0	sites
3	0	structures
0	0	objects
10	3	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store
COMMERCE/TRADE:restaurant
COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse
SOCIAL: meeting hall
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: storage
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store
COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse
TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Neoclassical Revival
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 2O TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style
: Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	BRICK
walls	BRICK
	STONE: Limestone
roof	ASPHALT
other	CONCRETE
	METAL: Steel

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

(See Continuation)

8. Statement of Significance

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

☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significant within the past 50 years.

Areas of significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE
TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1900 – 1958

Significant Dates

1913

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

NONE

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.2 acres

UTM References – USGS 1:24,000 – Kokomo West Quadrangle
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	573460	4482400
2	16	573560	4482400
3	16	573560	4482280
4	16	573460	4482280

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Warner

organization _____ date _____

street & number 5018 Broadway Street telephone 317-283-5450

city or town Indianapolis state IN zip code 46205

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 0r 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Howard County Historical Society

street & number 1200 West Sycamore Street telephone 765-452-4314

city or town Kokomo state IN zip code 46901

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet – Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District, Howard County, Indiana

Section 7 – Description

Narrative

The Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District is located in Kokomo, Indiana. Platted on rolling terrain just north of the courthouse square, the streets in the district display the typical grid pattern found in many Indiana towns and cities. Manufacturing enterprises often sited along the many railroad lines passing through the township and Kokomo proper; there are no manufacturing facilities extant in the depot district. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century reinforce the reality of the importance of railroads in the development of the town. The district's boundaries are roughly defined by Jefferson Street on the north, the railroad tracks to the east, Jackson Street on the south, and Washington Street on the west. Buildings and spaces surrounding the district boundary offer no contextual fabric and, in themselves, form a visual boundary between the core buildings in the district and those outside (Photographs 1 through 3). A streetscape of the core buildings minus the depot is visible in photograph 4. The district has 7 contributing buildings, 3 non-contributing buildings, and 3 contributing structures. The period of significance is 1900–1958.

1) Depot – NW Corner Jackson/Buckeye Streets Contributing Photographs # 5-12
1916 Craftsman

The depot building is comprised of three sections – the passenger on the south end, the freight in the middle, and a concrete extension of the loading dock at the north end. The passenger section of the depot is a two-story, red-brick building with decorative brackets and a jerkin-head roofline. The north portion of the same building, the freight section, is one-story with a gabled roofline. The south elevation contains the once-primary entrance to the passenger section (boarded-up), windows flanking the entry in the first story, and three window openings in the second. Window openings throughout the building have limestone sills and flat, brick lintels; a projecting brick stringcourse visually connects the window sills around the entire perimeter of the second story of the building. The double-hung window units have multiple lights, in a 3x4 pattern, in the upper sash and single-glazing in the lower.

The east elevation includes a secondary entrance to the passenger section, a long loading platform, and a series of four, sliding, wooden doors that provide access to the freight section of the building. The secondary entrance has a small stone stoop, an entry door, and a shed-roofed overhang above the door opening. The entry door surround consists of multi-paned sidelights and transom; the door has a light in the upper half and is wood-paneled in the lower half. The shed-roof over the door is supported at each side with paired, wooden decorative brackets, larger than those on the passenger section eaves. The openings of the shipping doors along the east and west elevations of the freight section have triple header courses, segmental arches, and a transom light at the top. Brick pilasters define bays around each of the eight shipping doors – four in the east and four in the west elevations. The sliding doors have four panels with diagonally-oriented infill of car siding in each panel. The flared eaves of the freight section protect the surface of the loading dock from weather and are supported by large knee braces; the lower point of the knee braces rest on limestone corbel blocks. At the north end of the building is a concrete extension of

the loading dock that has a brick ramp for easy access. The west elevation of the freight section is almost a mirror of the east elevation except there is no loading dock extending out from the exterior wall. The west elevation of the passenger section does not have a secondary passenger entrance but does have windows in both stories and a small cargo door. The windows have the same glazing pattern as previously described. The roof is sheathed in modern composition shingle and has two shed dormers on both the east and west slopes of the roof of the passenger section.

2) 501 North Buckeye Street Contributing Photograph # 13
c. 1910 20th Century Functional

This two-story rectangular building has exterior walls of polychrome glazed bricks that are unusual in this context. The exterior wall surface of the first story is painted. The entry in the southeast angled corner of the building is a modern replacement with new metal framework and glazing. The display windows at street level are modern replacements for what may have been earlier wooden framed units when the building housed a small automobile showroom. A large display window, right of the entry, was closed with brick in the past. The window units in the second story are original, metal framed and fixed-sash throughout. Two tall, rectangular window openings above the entry have been closed permanently with glass block. The stone sills of the some of the second story windows are missing. Despite the obvious changes made in the exterior of the building it retains sufficient integrity to add to the overall context of the district.

3) 503 North Buckeye Street Contributing Photograph # 14
1906 Romanesque Revival

This tree-story brick building has a limestone façade combining the use of rusticated and smooth faced-blocks to accentuate the margins of the building as quoin-like detail and the upper story window surrounds. The façade or east elevation is characterized by three bays with store fronts at street level and window units in the upper stories. The street-level portion of the elevation appears original in its spatial arrangement; i.e. display windows delineated with cast iron columns that extend from the foundation upward to the metal I-beam that extends across the elevation and separates the first and second stories. Belt courses of smooth-faced block extend across the elevation between the second and third stories and above the third story window openings. Smooth-faced blocks also separate the paired windows in bays one and three and extend upward from the sills of the second-story windows to the lintels of the third-story windows. The exterior wall surface above the I-beam is accentuated with the rusticated and smooth-faced block mentioned earlier. The center bay in the upper stories contains single double hung window units glazed one-over-one. The flanking bays have two single window units in each story; the sashes are double-hung and single-glazed. Above the third-story window openings is a belt course of dentil detail that marks the lower limit of a flat portion of wall surface that extends to a cornice topped with a stepped center section. Below the stepped portion are the raised numbers “1906” designating the year of construction.

4) 507-511 North Buckeye Street Contributing Photograph # 15
c. 1910 Romanesque (Influence)

The façade of this three-story brick building is an example of the use of limited architectural details to provide a much more interesting view to what could be an otherwise plain twentieth-century functional commercial property. The façade is divided into three bays by four full-height brick pilasters that extend upward through the top of the cornice. The left and right bays have large display-type single-glazed window units at street level and modern paired double-hung window units in the second and thirds stories. The center bay contains the recessed entries for the individual shops to the left and right and modern paired double-hung window units (narrower than the units in the left and right bays), in the second and third stories. The exterior wall surface in the east elevation is painted brick at street level and painted stucco in the second and third stories. Belt courses of rough-faced block extend across the width of the elevation as the lintels of the windows in the second and third stories. Immediately above the upper story windows in the left and right bays are bands of recessed rectangular detail with corbelled brick accents directly above. Above the windows in the center bay are three louvered ventilation openings; the lintel for this opening is rough-faced block. The segmental parapet at the top of the building is accentuated by the tops of the pilasters at the left and right limits of the building and the tops of the center pilasters that extend a short distance above the cap of the parapet. The street-level central entry is protected by a canvas canopy on a modern metal frame. The exterior door is modern in material and design.

5) 513 North Buckeye Street "S. Tudor & Company" Contributing Photograph # 16
c. 1905 Neoclassical

This massive three-story, three-bay, red-brick building once housed one of the largest local purveyors of poultry, eggs, and butter in the town. The location of the building was the site of this type business as far back as 1889. The limits of the three bays of the façade are defined by brick pilasters that extend upward the full height of the building. The pilaster effect in the first story is achieved by quoins at the corners and quoined pilaster strips as the interior dividers. The pilasters in the second and third stories have limestone bases and caps. The left and center bays on the street level portion contain two large window openings; the sills are limestone and the brick flat arch lintels are accentuated with large decorative limestone keys. This stylized limestone key is dominant over each window in the façade. The right bay at street level contains the main entry to the interior and a single window opening. The window units at street level are double-hung and glazed eight-over-one; the double-hung units in the second and third stories are glazed eight-over-eight. The entry surround features a single-story brick pilaster at each side, a limestone lintel – with the words "S. TUDOR & CO." embossed – above the door, and a stylized limestone key between the lintel and the top of the recessed doorway. The building is topped by a plain metal cornice that includes round limestone finials that appear visually as the top adornment for each of the pilasters below.

6) 515 North Buckeye Street Contributing Photograph # 17
c. 1905 Twentieth-Century Functional

This one-story, narrow-front brick building has little architectural adornment. The angled portion of the façade that contains the main entry is flanked on the right by a single, arched opening with a stone sill; a double-hung, single-glazed window unit occupies the opening. The other window openings are also arched and glazed in the same manner. The arched main entry is boarded up with plywood and a modern glass and metal door is installed in the lower right portion of the original opening. Brick corbelling along the cornice of the façade adds the single architectural feature to the building; the south elevation facing the alley also has a single secondary entrance at the rear of the building. The door for this entry point has a single-glazed light in the upper half and a wooden panel in the lower portion.

7) 517-519 North Buckeye Street "The Conwell" Contributing Photograph # 18
1913 20th Century Functional

This large single-story brick building is painted a light gray. Simple in design, the building houses two small businesses; a one-time livery stable, the building contained a feed store for many years. The façade includes two large vehicle doors, one in each half of the building; two small personnel doors and a single double-hung, single-glazed window unit appears next to each smaller door. A display window, now closed, graces the center of the building at ground level. At the upper corners of the façade are raised "T" architectural details that add dimension to the flat surface at the outer edges of the building. Above the height of the vehicle doors and centered below the stepped center of the plain cornice, is a Palladian-influenced window unit, now closed, that adds a touch of architectural detail to the façade. Small circular lights appear to the right and left of the central detail. Immediately above the window unit at the center of the cornice is a stone tablet inscribed "19 The Conwell 13."

8) 219 West Jefferson Street Non-contributing Photograph # 19
c. 1920 No Discernible Style

This building has undergone such architectural change over time that it no longer contributes to the context of the district.

9) 506 North Washington Street Non-contributing Photograph # 20

This altered garage, now used as an apartment, possesses no architectural significance nor does it add to the fabric of the district.

10) 218 West Jackson Street Non-contributing Photograph # 21
c. 1920 No Discernible Style

This building has undergone such extensive change over time that it no longer contributes to the context of the district.

11) Railroad Tracks (3) Contributing Photograph # 22
Variable Dates of Construction

The sets of railroad tracks in the district consist of two sidings and one main through track which reflects the original routing of the Lake Erie & Western Railroad in the district during the period of significance. The main track is on the left in the photograph and the two on the right are the sidings. According to Sanborn maps of the period, at one time in the late-nineteenth century, there was an additional platform between the sidings but there is no extant physical evidence of its existence.

Section 8 – Statement of Significance

The Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; in particular, for its role in the economic development of Kokomo, Indiana, and its significance as a physical reminder of the importance of railroads in the birth and maturation of many early Indiana towns.

The district is also significant under Criterion C as a collection of buildings possessing distinctive architectural characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. There is no truly dominant architectural style in this small district. Some of the extant buildings demonstrate a transitional period when commercial buildings of the very early twentieth century were adorned with architectural details from popular styles of an earlier period such as the Romanesque Revival or Neo-classical styles to relieve the monotony of flat two-dimensional brick surfaces. The corbelled trim around the top of the façade of the small building at 515 North Buckeye Street is a good example of this use of simple detail to create a more visually interesting building. The same can be said of the Conwell building at 517-519 North Buckeye Street. Other buildings in the district such as the S. Tudor building fully demonstrate a wider use of architectural elements of the Neo-classical style to limit the bunker-like image that became more the norm for commercial buildings of this size and type, in later years of the century. Due to the fire that devastated the core of the district in 1913, the extant buildings also reflect a transition from the wooden frame buildings that surrounded the depot for decades to the much more substantial brick buildings visible today.

The depot remains as an outstanding representative of a rapidly disappearing building type in Indiana and the nation. One of only two remaining examples of this type in Howard County – the depot in Russiaville, Indiana, has been moved from its previous location and altered significantly – the depot in Kokomo continues in an active role as the location of a maintenance section employed in caring for existing rail facilities. For years after passenger service ceased on the Lake Erie & Western in the early 1930s, this depot supported a lucrative freight operation well into the 1960s. Collectively, past and present buildings (and the varied businesses they once housed), constitute a core of commercial enterprise that has occupied this same location – prior to the period of significance mostly as smaller, wooden-framed structures – for over 100 years. The period of significance is 1900–1958.

From 1816 until 1851, Indiana was governed by its first state constitution. In 1816, when the first state constitution was written in Corydon, counties had been formed near to, and along, the Ohio and Wabash rivers, but much of Indiana remained unorganized. Consecutive Indian treaties established various reservations that opened areas for limited white settlement and, eventually, land sales to incoming settlers. In the 1830s and 40s, the Pottawatomie and Miami tribes were "removed" from these lands and white settlement began in earnest.

The decade of the 1840s witnessed many changes in Indiana's central region. In 1840, the Miami tribe sold the area known as the "Miami Reserve" for the $550, 000.00; the reserve contained three sections of land in future "Richardville County" that included the future site of Kokomo. The county, organized in 1844 and named in honor of Jean Baptiste Richardville, a

prominent chief of the local Miami tribe, was a land characterized by "a thick forest of immense trees and thicket … through which a bird could scarcely fly." David Foster, who bought a section of land for $2.00 an acre, offered to donate 40 acres for the purpose of making Kokomo the county seat. A committee, formed for the purpose, decided in Foster's favor and a surveyor platted the first 100 lots which went on sale 18 October 1844. Charles Ellison, an early arrival, opened the first saloon/domicile at the eventual location of the O.V. Darby store at the corner of North Main and Sycamore Streets.[1]

The genesis of the new county seat's name remains a mystery. Any numbers of sources consulted attribute the name generally to a local Indiana dialect that when translated could mean anything from "she bear" to "black walnut" after the name of an Indian chief by the same name to "chief of bears" to, finally, a derivation of the Indian name MA KO KO MO. Whichever story seems reasonable, it is obvious that the name came from a local Indian dialect and meant something about trees or bears. [2]

During this same decade and soon after county organization, pioneer residents sought to change the name of their county. In 1846, partly because the county's name did not trip lightly from the lips, a four-man delegation (including David Foster) traveled to Indianapolis to advocate changing the county name. The state legislature chose to honor recently-deceased Tilghman A. Howard, a well-liked and fondly-remembered state politician, to acknowledge a fellow Hoosier's past service to the state and the nation. Howard, a transplanted Tennessean who once worked for Sam Houston, moved to Bloomington, Indiana, in 1830. He served as a district attorney for the state, as a state representative to the U.S. Congress, at one time ran for Indiana governor's office, and finally, as the Charge d'Affaires to the Republic of Texas in the early 1840s. He died in Texas in 1844 and his remains are buried in Rockville, Indiana. [3]

Early leadership recognized the need for a transportation infrastructure to import consumer goods and, eventually, to export local production to distant markets. As early as 1832, an act to incorporate the Madison, Indianapolis & Lafayette Railroad was approved in the legislature as a part of a larger effort that included initiatives for canals, roads, and railroads. A part of the "Act to Provide for a General System of Internal Improvements" called for a single rail line from Madison, on the Ohio River, through Indianapolis, the recently occupied state capitol, and on to Lafayette on the Wabash River. This first successful attempt at creating a transportation

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[1] Charles Blanchard, ed., *Counties of Howard and Tipton, Indiana* (Chicago: F.A. Battey & Company, 1883), 44-48 and 146; Kingman Brothers, *Combination Atlas Map of Howard County, Indiana* (Chicago: Kingman Brothers, 1877), 15; Fred C. Odiet, *Kokomo–Howard County Sesquicentennial Commemorative Book* (Self-published, 1994), 128.
[2] Kingman Brothers, *Combination Atlas Map*, 15; Clipping File, Howard County, at the Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Indiana; Blanchard, *Counties of Howard and Tipton, Indiana*, 146.
[3] Blanchard, *Counties of Howard and Tipton*, 50; Odiet, *Sesquicentennial Commemorative Book*, 7; Ned Booher, *Howard County: A Pictorial History* (Virginia Beach, VA: The Donning Company, 1994), 26.

infrastructure linked two major waterways, three developing commercial centers, and the anticipated future wealth of the agricultural bounty of Indiana's central plain.[4]

The first state roads constructed in the county connected Kokomo with both Michigantown and Peru. By 1846, travel overland to Peru offered limited access to the external world via the Wabash & Erie Canal but the canal was a short-term solution. The Panic of 1837 and the subsequent financial uncertainty throughout the country put a damper on funding of many public projects. As a result, canal building in Indiana foundered for a number of years and did not truly have a positive impact on central Indiana's economy until the early 1850s when completion of the waterway to the Ohio River opened markets down the Mississippi River. [5]

Railroad ventures such as the Madison, Indianapolis & Lafayette line opened the door to further expansions in rail transportation throughout the state. The Peru & Indianapolis Railroad (P&I), predecessor to the Lake Erie & Western line, received its state charter to operate in January 1846. After a period of organization, the enterprise began to clear land for a right-of-way and sought funding for the continued expansion. In 1850, the Howard County Board of Commissioners subscribed for $4,000.00 worth of stock in the railroad. The original purpose of this particular rail line was connection between the Ohio River and the Wabash & Erie Canal at Peru. Eventually, further expansion and consolidation with other routes opened the way for extension to Chicago. Steady progress in construction resulted in tracks reaching Kokomo in 1853. Surely good news for local store owners and consumers, but Kokomo and the surrounding countryside did not have much to offer in the way of marketable products that would come much later. [6]

Agricultural advancements came slowly in the antebellum era. The typical Indiana farmstead of the 1840s was not much different from its 1800 counterpart. Clearing the land and getting crops to flourish were all-consuming tasks to many of Howard County's and Kokomo's citizens through the 1850s. The fields, where the primary crops of corn, oats, wheat, rye, and potatoes grew, required extensive de-stumping and tiling to drain the often boggy soil. The massive amount of timber cut down to clear these fields became the lumber produced by several saw mills in the locale that drew their power from Wildcat Creek. After local needs were met for construction of the growing number of frame buildings in town, area factories eventually produced barrel heads and staves for the soon-to-be-established meat-packing industry.[7]

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[4] James A. Madison, *The Indiana Way* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), 83-86; Indiana Historical Society, Pamphlet "An Act to Incorporate the Madison, Indianapolis & Lafayette Railroad Company", 1832.
[5] John Warner, "The Influence of the Wabash and Erie Canal on the Development of Two Northern Indiana Communities, 1830-1860" (Indianapolis: Master's Thesis, Indiana University, 1996), 12-15; Blanchard, *Counties of Howard and Tipton, Indiana*, 49.
[6] Blanchard, *Counties of Howard and Tipton, Indiana*, 51; Booher, *Howard County: A Pictorial History*, 45.
[7] Jackson Morrow, *History of Howard County, Indiana* (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen, 1910), 197 and 226.

For a few short years subsequent to the railroad tracks reaching Kokomo in 1853, the P&I operated under the control of the state's first railroad, the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad. For financial reasons the line entered receivership and remained in those straits until 1864 when it was reorganized as the Indianapolis, Peru & Chicago (IP&C) Railway. In the early years of the great railroad consolidation melee in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the IP&C was sold in turn to the Lake Erie & Western (LE&W) line in 1887, which was the offspring of two other lines consolidated in 1879. The discovery of natural gas in Indiana along some of its routes saved the line from fiscal disaster in the late 1880s. In the 1920s, the LE&W merged with the New York, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad, which evolved into the Norfolk & Western Railroad in the 1960s.[8]

Kokomo and Howard County continued to make progress through the late 1840s and 1850s. Henry C. Stewart established a brickyard near the corner of High and Buckeye Streets in 1847. As the neighborhood changed to residential, Stewart moved his brickyard operation further west to a location near Webster and Walnut Streets. H. Ashley built the town's first brick building on the corner of Main and Sycamore Streets. [9]

The Civil War, in fact the decade of the 1860s, brought change to central Indiana communities in many ways. One significant negative influence on Howard County and Kokomo's economic growth was the nearly complete cessation of railroad construction in Indiana during the war years, 1861-1865. While Kokomo's second railroad line, the Cincinnati & Chicago Railroad reached the town in 1855, the third line, the Frankfort & Kokomo Railroad did not reach Kokomo until 1874. According to one source, only 54 miles of new track was laid in Indiana during this war period.[10] Transportation played a continuing role in establishing the importance of Kokomo in the economic scheme of the county. The three railroads servicing Kokomo and vicinity carried items for consumers from as far away as Chicago and the Great Lake ports to the east and shipped out meat and other local items such as corn and wheat on their return trips. By 1875, service by these railroads made Kokomo a transportation hub for the entire region. [11]

Agriculture remained primary in the economic mix that supported Kokomo's growth but by the late 1870s, manufacturers of various items recognized the efficiency of placing their factories along one of the railroads that either passed near or through the town. In 1878, Lawrence Snider set up his heading and stave factory that shipped its wares to New York and Philadelphia. Starting in 1874, S.C. Moore operated his planing mill near the IP&C depot and remained active

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[8] Richard S. Simons and Francis H. Parker, *Railroads of Indiana* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 120-121. Simons and Parker, *Railroads of Indiana*, 120-121.
[9] Morrow, *History of Howard County, Indiana*, 229; Blanchard, *Counties of Howard and Tipton, Indiana*, 146; Odiet, *Sesquicentennial Commemorative Book*, 106 and 128.
[10] Simons and Parker, *Railroads of Indiana*, 21; Blanchard, *Counties of Howard and Tipton, Indiana*, 54; Morrow, *History of Howard County, Indiana,* 214, 228, and 230.
[11] Odiet, *Sesquicentennial Commemorative Book*, 128; Blanchard, *Counties of Howard and Tipton, Indiana*, 176.

in the business for 30 years. Other businesses operating near the depot were Eppley & Jones, makers of carriages and wagons; Worley Leas, a flouring mill; E.B. Newton, a dealer in lime and lumber; and Russell & Dolman, a banking firm. [12]

Factories required manpower and manpower required food, a place to sleep, and entertainment in the off-hours and the burgeoning business district in downtown Kokomo was the place. The earliest Sanborn map of downtown Kokomo dates from 1885. The area around the railroad depot, between Jackson and Jefferson Streets, contained a plethora of different businesses such as the planing mill, a harness shop to the west of the IP&C depot, along with a barber shop, drug store, small restaurant, and a saloon – all the services a traveler or a local worker requiring a haircut, aspirin, a meal, and a beverage might desire. North of the passenger and freight depot was a grain elevator, with a 25,000 bushel capacity. Operated by steam, the elevator was owned by the Russell & Dolman Company at the same location it had occupied since 1864. Between the elevator and the depot, was a corn storage warehouse with a capacity of about 40,000 bushels. East of the depot was the Howard Mills, run by J.M. Darnell, one of the earliest such businesses that produced flour from locally grown wheat; next to the mill was a large building that housed a livery stable. [13]

The discovery of natural gas near Kokomo impacted the community almost immediately. In early 1887, local entrepreneur J. M. Leach built a new brick kiln just south of Wildcat Creek in anticipation of future material needs for commercial and residential buildings. The Kokomo Natural Gas & Oil Company formed to furnish the natural gas needs of factories and homes. Initially, the company charged $1.00 per month for each cook stove in a house and $1.50 for the first heater with a reduced price of $.75 for each additional heater. Local boosters rapidly got into the act to entice new business to the town with the "Citizens Free Gas Line for Factories Only" organization whose purpose was to provide free land and gas to businesses agreeing to move to Kokomo or to start-up a new enterprise. In June 1887, Edward Sweeney, the future president of the Globe Stove & Range Company, drilled a new well on the Schrader Farm just outside the city limits. The owners of the Kokomo Strawboard Company and the Kokomo Window Glass Company jumped on the free land/gas bandwagon and built two of the city's earliest manufacturing entities.[14] While many of these first factories dealt principally with glass products, by 1890 a varied range of factories were operating or under construction in and around the community. A roster of companies taking advantage of the free gas and land policy includes the Rockford Bit Company, the Kokomo Canning Works, the Standard Motor Company, Kokomo Furniture Manufacturing, and the Kokomo Wood Enameling Company.[15]

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[12] Morrow, *History of Howard County, Indiana*, 222-229; Wiggins & McKillops, *Directory of Kokomo* (Columbus, OH: Wiggins & McKillops, 1876), 47-54.
[13] Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, *Kokomo*, 1885.
[14] Ibid., 232-241; Booher, *Howard County: A Pictorial History*, 75.
[15] For an overview of the Gas Boom, see James A. Glass and David Kohrman, *The Gas Boom of East Central Indiana* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2005), 7.

The businesses surrounding the depot area did not significantly change for nearly 17 years but by 1902, the United Elevator Company was in charge of the operation north of the depot and a wheat storage facility had been added to the grain-handling inventory of buildings. Both the corn and wheat sections of the operation had the ability to clean the grain, store it, and ship it on daily trains passing through the city. As a result of a fire in 1913, the depot area and its surrounding neighborhood changed dramatically. [16]

On the night of 6 July 1913 a high wind, in conjunction with human error, significantly changed the face of downtown Kokomo. For reasons that remain not fully determined, a fire in the vicinity of the Lake Erie & Western (LE&W) depot and the United Elevator Company elevators on Buckeye Street between Jackson and Jefferson Streets scoured the neighborhood and threatened the downtown commercial district. [17]

Accounts of the 1913 fire and its cause were widespread. Numerous newspaper articles of the immediate period covered the fire but none disclosed what seemed to be a plausible explanation of the cause. Other than a few questionable theories claiming that "a young man carelessly flung a cigarette in some straw near the Lake Erie freight depot," local authorities thought a more likely cause was "a spark from a locomotive" that landed on the roof of the adjacent grain elevator. A later police investigation seems to finally lay the blame for the fire on bootleggers who were selling whiskey out of some vacant rail car on the siding by the elevators; witnesses claimed to "have seen drunken men tumbling from the car while it was on fire." The fire spread to the nearby grain elevators so quickly that local fire leadership, Chief Shauman, sent out a call to Logansport, Marion, and Peru for help containing the fire. All three fire departments responded rapidly and two brought their own equipment to supplement that of Kokomo. A fierce wind from the northwest spread flaming embers to surrounding buildings and kept firemen and local citizens hopping throughout the night. [18]

The monetary loss from the fire was borne by many. Estimates of the total loss in dollars amounted to $100,000.00 and included a number of companies in addition to the LE&W depot and the United Grain Elevators. On a partial list of businesses damaged or destroyed by the fire were the Butler Fence Machine Company, the Howard Mill, a barn owned by Mr. McFann, the Ulrich Harness & Glove Company, and the Holland Furnace Company. Fortunately the Butler Company had insurance but the building housing the Howard Mill and Holland Company did not. Without the quick response from alert firemen who "shot down the street like a bat from the nether regions" and connected a hose to a hydrant at Main and Mulberry Streets to quench the

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[15] James A. Glass, "The Gas Boom in East Central Indiana," *Indiana Magazine of History* 96 (December 2000), 314; Booher, *Howard County: A Pictorial History*, 75.
[16] Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, *Kokomo*, 1902 and 1916.
[17] "Kokomo Station and Grain Elevator Burn," *Indianapolis News*, 7 July 1913, page 8.
[18] Ibid.; Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, *Kokomo*, 1885; "Police Blame Bootleggers for Big Fire," *The Kokomo Daily Tribune*, 11 July 1913, page 1; Morrow, *History of Howard County, Indiana*, 228; "Three Cities Respond To Call For Aid," *Kokomo Dispatch*, 8 July 1913, pages 1 and 8.

burning shingles carried by the wind, the Francis Hotel, near the corner of Buckeye and Mulberry Streets, may have become a victim of the fire. [19]

The fire in July 1913 did more than threaten the downtown business district or destroy a number of frame buildings. In little more than a week after the fire, articles began to appear in the *Kokomo Dispatch* calling for action by local authorities to resolve long-standing problems caused by the presence of railroad facilities in the downtown. Initiated by the Kokomo Merchant's Association, concerns by local citizens addressed safety issues and the movement of trains through the city. Short of rerouting the LE&W around the city on another railroad line, the association sought safety gates, with watchmen, at dangerous grade crossings through the business district (Buckeye Street) and the construction of a "union" station for use by all three railroad lines to eliminate the depot in downtown. A commission of merchants and Kokomo public works folks traveled to Indianapolis to encourage the state-level public utilities commission to prevail upon the LE&W to abandon the tracks through the city and to move its traffic via a belt railroad south of Kokomo. A series of meetings between the merchants and the three railroads servicing Kokomo apparently never resolved all the issues because a new depot for the LE&W was constructed circa 1916 and according to available information, a "union" station, for use by all three railroads and located away from city center, never came to fruition. The grade-crossing safety issue appears to have been somewhat addressed by placing watchmen and safety signals at each crossing site to alert foot and vehicle traffic of the impending arrival of trains through the downtown area. [20]

By 1916, the elevator operation, with its grain storage buildings and the early depot had disappeared from the streetscape. A brick garage building, to the east of the new depot, replaced the Howard Mill, the saloon and a restaurant west of the depot (both frame buildings) became an automobile sales room, and a small lunch room space became a three-story brick building, 503 North Buckeye Street, with a hotel on the second floor and the Knights of Columbus meeting hall on the third. The depot's passenger waiting area remained in the same location (near Jackson Street) but the LE&W freight section now occupied the old elevator space. [21]

The 1920s ushered in another period of consolidation in the railroad industry. The Lake Erie & Western was acquired by the New York, Chicago, & St. Louis Railroad in 1922. Government divestiture action caused the New York Central, the parent of the New York, Chicago & St. Louis, to make some organizational changes and the LE&W became part of the Nickel Plate Railroad in 1923. The Nickel Plate was the third largest in the state of Indiana; the LE&W share of this trackage was 451 miles or 51 percent of the total extended coverage resulting from the mergers that were rife during this period. The LE&W was the largest of the four

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[19] Ibid.
[20] "Elimination of the Track Through City," *Kokomo Dispatch*, 13 July 1913, pages 1 and 2; "All Railroads Entering City in Conference," *Kokomo Dispatch*, 24 July 1913, 1; "The Outlook Encouraging to the City," *Kokomo Dispatch*, 25 July 1913, 1 and 5.
[21] Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, *Kokomo*, 1902 and 1916.

components of the Nickel Plate Road and through its operations gave the Nickel Plate access to a number of lucrative freight links with various transportation hubs in the upper Midwest. [22]

By the end of the 1920s increasing truck and automobile traffic and the availability of better roads affected massive change in the railroad industry. In March 1932, the LE&W suspended passenger travel but retained its strong hold on area freight operations. This was the end of passenger travel on a line that had carried folks from one place to another for a period of over 80 years. It was noted that a small funeral wreath was attached to the last car on the last passenger service train between Indianapolis and Michigan City, Indiana. The LE&W continued to provide its portion of the Nickel Plate freight business and particularly in moving raw material and finished products out of Kokomo to distant market centers. In 1964, the Norfolk & Western organization bought the line and absorbed its various operations into the larger entity. The Lake Erie & Western, the successor to the first railroad into Kokomo and the proud operator of a successful railroad enterprise, lost its identity and became merely parts of a larger corporation. [23]

In summary, despite decades of change and a decreased importance of railroads in the region's economy, the Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District – the depot and it's neighboring commercial buildings – calls to mind an image of the past when so much of the city's wealth and prosperity depended on the railroads and their part in the development of community. An observer from the period could easily recall the daily hustle and bustle around the depot as trains arrived and departed, carrying people and goods among the many population centers in the region.

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[22] Simons and Parker, *Railroads of Indiana*, 119-124; "Nickel Plate Road Historical and Technical Society" at nkpts.org/history on 2 November 2007.
[23] "155 Years: Highlighting the region's attachment to the rails," Kokomo Tribune, 1 April 2001

Section 9 - Bibliography

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Section 10 – Geographical Data

Boundary Description:

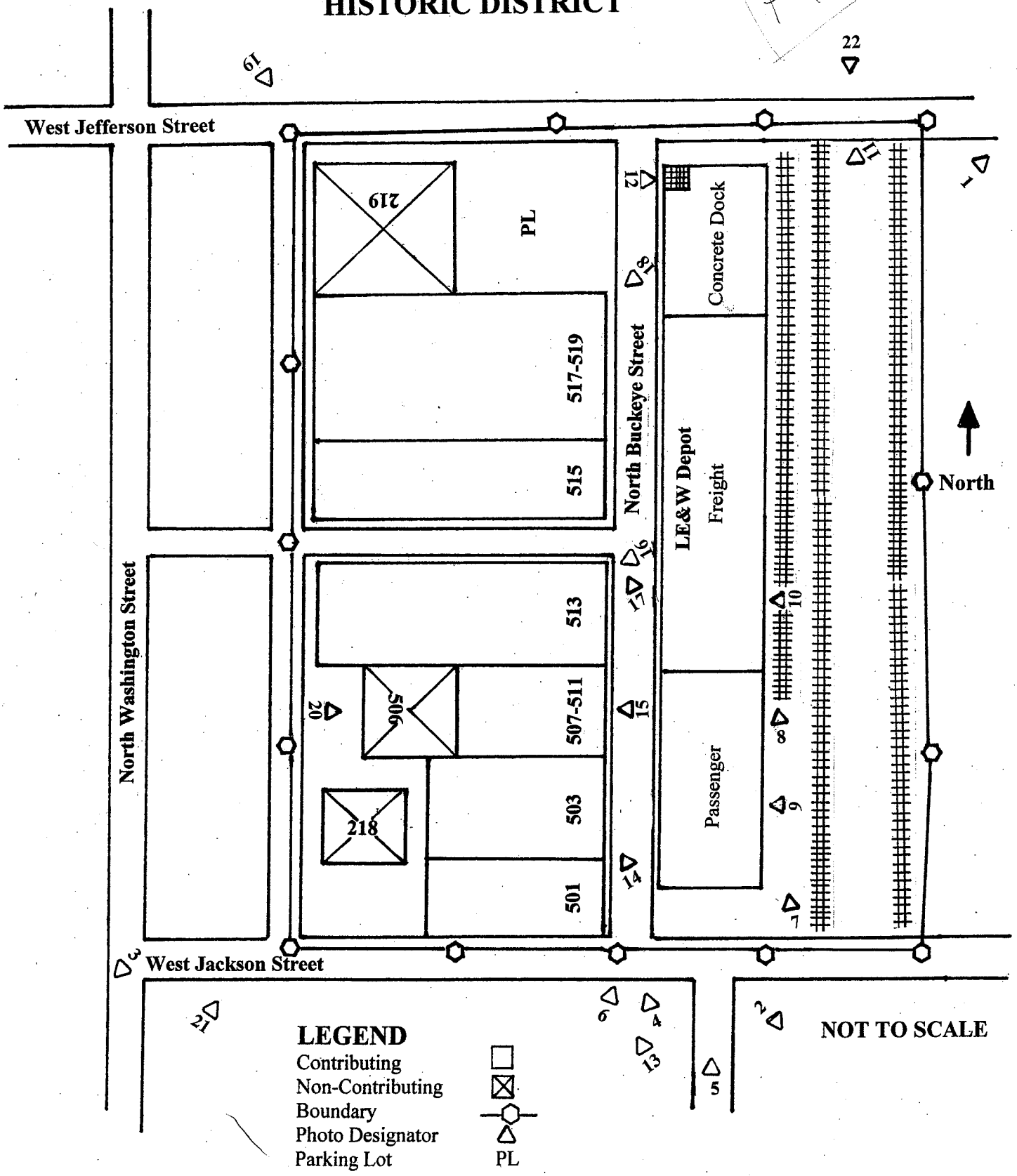
From the start point at the northwest corner of the intersection of North Buckeye and West Jackson Streets proceed west along the north curb of West Jackson Street to its intersection with the alley between North Washington and North Buckeye Streets; turn north and proceed along the east edge of the alley to its intersection with the south curb of West Jefferson Street; turn east and proceed along the south curb of West Jefferson Street, past its intersection with North Buckeye Street, and continue east to a point 10 feet east of the centerline of the eastern-most set of railroad tracks running north and south between North Buckeye and North Main Streets; turn south and proceed along a line 10 feet east of the centerline of the eastern-most railroad tracks to its intersection with the north curb of West Jackson Street; turn west and proceed along the north curb of West Jackson Street, past its intersection with North Buckeye Street; cross North Buckeye Street and close on the start point at the northwest corner of the intersection of West Jackson and North Buckeye Streets.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary for the Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District incorporates the limits of the primary location of the first, and subsequent, depots for the Lake Erie & Western Railroad in Kokomo throughout its history and the core of commercial buildings that depended on the railroad for its existence.

LAKE ERIE & WESTERN DEPOT HISTORIC DISTRICT

4/08 FINAL



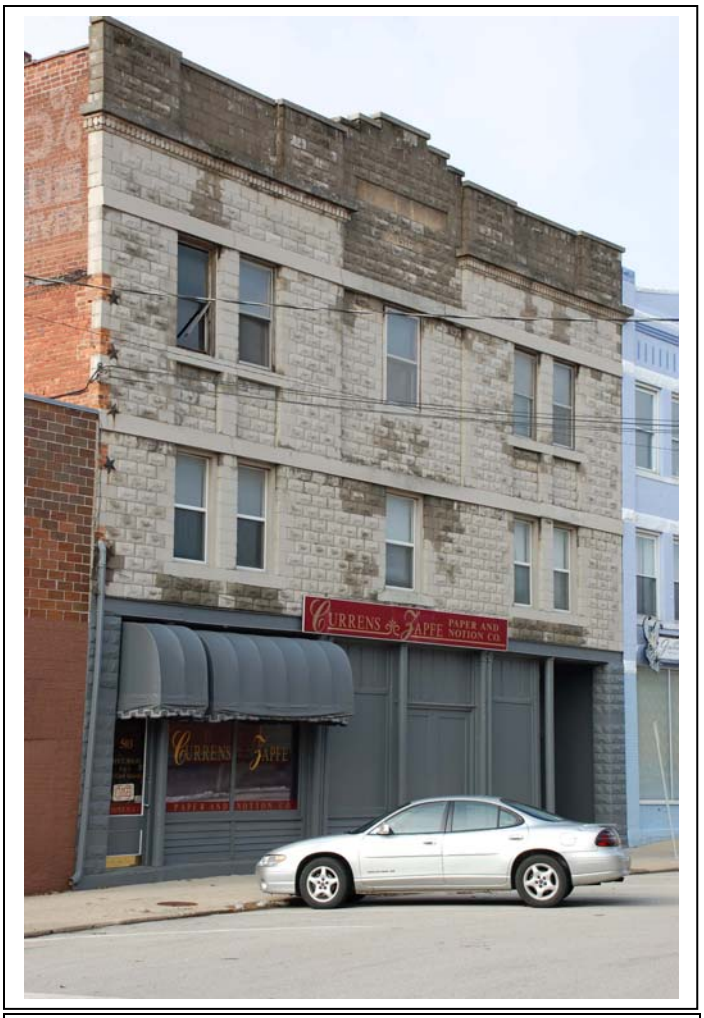
Common Information: Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District
Kokomo, Indiana
John Warner
Date: 12 December 2007 and 19 February 2008
CD: 402 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46202

Photograph orientation –
1. Looking outside the district to the northeast.
2. Looking outside the district to the southeast showing empty parking lots where buildings once stood.
3. Looking outside the district to the southwest at modern buildings in this case a church on North Washington Street.
4. A view of the core buildings looking northwest up North Buckeye Street.
5. A view of the south elevation that at one time was the primary passenger entrance into the depot.
6. A view of the west elevation from West Jackson Street looking north.
7. A view of the east elevation of the passenger section of the depot; looking northwest.
8. A view of the east elevation of the freight section of the depot showing the loading dock: looking northwest.
9. The present primary entrance to the passenger section used by current crew members; there is no passenger service; looking west.
10. Typical door on the loading dock accessing the interior of the freight section and a view of the large knee brackets supporting the deep overhang of the eaves on this section of the depot; looking west.
11. Concrete extension of the loading dock to the north of the building proper; looking southwest.
12. Brick ramp for the concrete loading dock extension; looking east from North Buckeye Street.
13. View of small brick commercial building on the northwest corner of the intersection of West Jackson and North Buckeye Street; looking northwest from West Jackson Street.
14. View of 503 North Buckeye Street; looking northwest.
15. View of 507-511 North Buckeye Street; looking west.
16. View of the east elevation of the S. Tudor Building at 513 North Buckeye Street; looking southwest.
17. The small angle-front brick building at 515 North Buckeye Street; looking northwest.
18. The Conwell at 517-519 North Buckeye Street; looking southwest.
19. This is 219 West Jefferson Street; looking southeast from North Washington Street.
20. This is the altered garage at 506 North Washington Street; looking east.
21. View of 218 West Jackson Street from North Washington Street; looking north.
22. The three sets of tracks on the east side of the depot; looking south.

Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District # 4

Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District #5

Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District #10



Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District #13

Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District #14

Lake Erie & Western Depot Historic District #17