

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Downtown New Britain

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: multiple

City or town: New Britain State: CT County: Hartford

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ 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 considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	

<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____  <b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>Title :</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>107</u>	<u>21</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>9</u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>110</u>	<u>31</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 17

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions.)

TRADE/ Financial institution  
DOMESTIC/ Single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/ Multiple dwelling  
EDUCATIONAL/School  
RELIGION/ Religious facility  
GOVERNMENT/ Post office  
GOVERNMENT/City Hall  
COMMERCE/Professional  
GOVERNMENT/ Courthouse  
COMMERCE/ Organizational  
CULTURE/Theatre  
CULTURE/Monument/Marker

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions.)

TRADE/Restaurant  
TRADE/Financial Institution  
COMMERCE/Domestic  
DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling  
DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling  
GOVERNMENT/City Hall  
RELIGION/Religious Facility  
FUNERARY/Mortuary  
COMMERCE/Professional  
COMMERCE/Organizational  
CULTURE/Monument/Marker  
CULTURE/Theatre

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian: Commercial

Late Victorian: Queen Anne Style, Romanesque Revival

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Italianate Renaissance Revival Style

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Commercial Style

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Beaux Arts Classicism Style

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Venetian Palazzo

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Sullivanesque

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Colonial Revival

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Neoclassical

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Collegiate Gothic

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Gothic Revival

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival: Georgian Revival

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revival

Modern Movement: Moderne Style

Modern Movement: Art Deco Style

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: brick, limestone, concrete, bronze, cast iron, ceramic tile, terra cotta, brownstone, glass, stucco, marble, granite

Foundation: brick, concrete

Walls: brick, cut stone, clapboard, granite, aluminum siding

Roofs: asphalt shingles, rubber

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Downtown New Britain Historic District is the City's urban, civic and commercial core, which developed because of the wealth and population generated by a robust industrial economy from the mid-nineteenth through the early twentieth century. The district is

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characterized by high style, two-four story, mixed-use and community buildings that formed a nexus of social activity. Distinct neighborhoods that have historic associations with specific immigrant populations are largely intact and surround the downtown area, while remnants of former industrial complexes are less prevalent. New Britain is an inland city within Hartford County, near the geographic center of Connecticut. The district is located in the southern section of the City between two state highways. Five streets comprise the main corridors of the district, which include West Main Street, its intersection with Main Street around Central Park, Arch Street, Glen Street and Franklin Square/Elm Street. This approximately 80-acre area, which includes businesses, social and civil services, office buildings, mixed-use and multi-family residences, has 158 resources in total, 127 of which are contributing. There are approximately 4 outbuildings, mostly residential garages in the blocks lying between Arch and Glen Streets. The commercial, civic, and religious, multi-family buildings that supported the various needs of the city's diverse population range in date of construction from 1861 to 1963. Most are made of stone, brick, and concrete construction, reflecting early and mid- twentieth century styles, including Beaux Arts, Romanesque Revival, Gothic Revival, Sullivanesque, Queen Anne, Italianate, and Art Deco. The streets Main Street and South Main Street provide the eastern border, Columbus Boulevard on the north, Arch Street, Main Street and Washington Street on the west, and Franklin Square to Whiting Street on the South. Two properties are small, urban public parks.

Resources in this district still reflect the history and evolution of one of Connecticut's most important industrial cities. It envelops 17 properties that are already listed on the National Register individually or as part of other districts. The Walnut Hill Historic District (listed 1975) abuts the district to the west. The Post Office on West Main, the New Britain Public Library, 31 High Street, the Armory at 10 Grand Street, and two buildings at 295 Arch Street are included in this district as well. This district envelops the City Hall Monument District (listed 1973) and includes City Hall, formerly known as the Russwin Hotel, the adjacent Old Post Office Building, the Old New Britain National Bank Building, a Civil War monument, and Central Park.<sup>1</sup> The individually listed properties within the district are the Burritt Hotel (listed 1983), Trinity-on-Main (listed 2007), First Lutheran Church of the Reformation (listed 2010), the Commercial Trust Building (listed 2009), South Congregational Church (listed 1990), and the New Britain High School Campus (listed 2015). New Britain's Downtown includes commercial, industrial, civic, church and residential buildings in a variety of styles. The district features multiple buildings by distinguished local architect, William Cadwell.

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## **Narrative Description**

Downtown New Britain is a dense urban center of predominantly high-style, low-rise, early twentieth century commercial and civic buildings, adjacent to two major transportation arteries including Routes 9 and 72. The northernmost street of this district is Columbus Boulevard. A major bus station lies just outside this border, beyond which is a large strip mall. The district then proceeds south west up West Main Street and south along Main Street where it

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<sup>1</sup> Robert D. Yaro, National Register of Historic Places, City Hall-Monument District, New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut (February

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branches out down to three arteries: Arch, Glen, and Elm, that move toward Franklin Square Park. Each of these streets runs southwest where they intersect with Whiting Street. Most of buildings are set close to the street, situated along sidewalks -lined streets. However, around Franklin Square and along Glen and West Pearl Streets, buildings are free-standing and set further back from the road than on Main, Arch, South Main, and West Main Streets. (Photos 1-6).

The majority of the streetscapes contain, two to three part, mixed-use, two to five-story commercial blocks with similar massing. Glen Street and its smaller side streets feature several apartment buildings and multi-family units in styles typical of large cities in the early twentieth century, particularly Colonial Revival and Queen Anne stacked duplexes. All of the streets in the district provide examples of commercial, religious, and residential architectural styles typical of the early twentieth century including High Gothic, Italianate, Beaux-Arts, Art Deco, and Romanesque. The district includes some or all of two existing National Register Districts, as well as some individual properties already listed. Non-contributing properties have construction dates that either fall outside the era of significance, having replaced older, demolished structures, or they have been so altered that they no longer reflect their original design and purpose.

Examples of various Classic Revival styles typical of prosperous early twentieth century commercial districts characterize the district. Key buildings and examples of the primary architectural styles represented in the district are described below. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983, 67 West Main Street, known as the Burritt Hotel, was built in 1924 in the Georgian Revival style (Photo 7). This building originally functioned as a hotel and was built as part of New Britain's civic improvement movement of the early twentieth century. Currently, it is a mixed-use, six-story red brick building with ground-level storefronts and upper level apartments. All elevations of the building consist of red bricks, but the West Main Street façade and the elevation facing Washington Street also consist of a number of architectural elements including pilasters, festoon-carved panels, a balustrade above the second story and copper cornices and crests above the storefronts.<sup>2</sup> The Friendship Service Center of New Britain is located 241 Arch Street and was built in 1910. New Britain's Polish residents originally used the Colonial Revival building as a meeting hall. This three-story brick building on 241 Arch Street has an eight-bay façade. At the corners of the building are pilasters with Corinthian capitals that rise to the first floor belt course of blank frieze and flat cornice. The center of the façade contains four sets of Chicago-style windows on each floor, with solidier course lintel and precast concrete sills. A Greek Revival style house is also located at 374 Arch Street. 52 Main Street (Photo 8) one sees an example of the Colonial Revival style with its symmetrical façade, pilasters surrounding the doorway, sidelights and pediments over the windows and doors.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the bold Beaux-Arts style commercial buildings became popular in Downtown New Britain as an opulent expression of the city's prosperity. These buildings include symmetrical facades with large archways, pilasters, and intricate details as well as projecting cornices with decorative dentals.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the New

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Clouette, National Register of Historic Places, Burritt Hotel, New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut (June 1983): 2-4.

<sup>3</sup> Norman Tyler, Ted Ligibel, Ilene Tyler, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice* (W.W. Norton & Company, New York): 2009, 74.

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Britain Institute/ Public Library (Photo 9), the Russwin Hotel was built in 1885 (Photo 10). This is a five-story, stacked vertical block in the Venetian palazzo style. It is made of red brick and brownstone. The old Post Office building, built in 1860-1861, and the Old New Britain Nation Bank building, both Romanesque Revival, were incorporated into City Hall in the 1920s. Both exhibit brownstone detailing with pedimented windows. The arched bays of the Bank Building complement the Russwin Hotel building. Across the street in Central Park stands a Civil War monument, built in 1900. The limestone monument was designed in the Beaux Arts style with ionic columns; pediments are the main elements of the four-sided sculpture. A bronze winged victory statue sits atop the monument (Photo 11).<sup>4</sup>

A four-story, tan brick building, with storefronts on the first story and apartments on the upper three stories, located at 38 Main Street, represents the Beaux-Arts style as interpreted by local architect William Cadwell. Above the storefronts are three stories of paired one-over-one windows, each topped with a gray lintel. Brick pilasters divide the windows and extend to a brick stringcourse that separates the third and fourth story windows. Two sets of oriel windows on the second and third stories. A cornice supported by decorative brackets and dentils (Photo 12). Cadwell also designed a building at the 191 Arch Street address in the Beaux-Arts style with its brick pilasters, supported by decorative terra-cotta bases, which lead up to elaborate terra-cotta arches surrounding the upper level rounded windows. A projecting metal cornice supported by decorative brackets ornaments the façade (Photo 13).

The district contains a range of Cadwell's design preferences. He designed his signature, three-story, symmetrical, seven-bay building at 59 Arch Street in the Sullivanesque style. The exterior is comprised orange brick and terra cotta. Cadwell's use of decorative terra cotta tiling on this building is a design feature common to his downtown New Britain buildings. The prominent, bracketed cornice that crown the building contrasts with the rusticated granite lintels and sills contain a center element. The center window on the third floor has a semi-circular arch, wide carved in a classic design, which repeats around the date: 1897. Six pear-shaped pendants form the base of four pilasters, two framing the central and two at the corners. The pilasters are topped with carved Ionic capitals, each with a cartouche in the center (Photo 14).

Related Neoclassical and Renaissance Revival style buildings with more simple, classical elements include the Post Office at 114 West Main Street and the Rockwell School at 111 Franklin Square, built in 1867 (Photos 15, 16). This two-story Neoclassical style building has a gable roof with its long side facing Franklin Square and a projecting gable pavilion with bracketed returns. Brackets continue under the eaves of the building. There is a balanced fenestration pattern with paired windows. The entrance consists of a flat roofed square porch supported by three Tuscan columns at each of its corners and two attached to the building.<sup>5</sup>

The seven-story New Britain National Bank Building at 55 West Main Street is an impressive example of the Romanesque Revival style with Gothic elements. Originally known as the Commercial Trust Company, the building was constructed in 1927 and listed on the National

<sup>4</sup> City Hall-Monument District Nomination.

<sup>5</sup> Sherrill Foster, "Historic Resources Inventory Building and Structures: 111 Franklin Square". Copy in Local History Room, New Britain Public Library.

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Register in 2009 (Pictured in Photo 7). The lower façade is composed of limestone and the upper façade of red bricks. The lower façade consists of four bays, three of which contain large, double-story round-arched windows, separated by pilasters, with the center bay containing a large bronze door. The façade of the upper four stories consists of six bays, each containing a one/one window. The façade also includes a variety of Gothic details, including Gothic Revival arches and windows. It serves as an example of the ambition and prosperity of the 1920s thanks to its expensive materials and ostentatious details. Frequently hidden in the brickwork of the building are the symbols of the Commercial Trust Company, the blacksmith's anvils. These anvils pay tribute to Elihu Burritt (1810-1879), a famous native of New Britain. Burritt was a blacksmith by trade, but gained the unofficial title "The Learned Blacksmith" thanks to his work as a scholar and advocate for peace at the international level.<sup>6</sup> The upper floors are now apartments, but the interior retains its feeling and association as a bank with its marble floors, high ceiling and teller's counter.

Romanesque Revival characterizes the some of the district's churches and apartment buildings. *Trinity-on-Main* is located at 69 Main Street and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007. Built in 1889, this grand Romanesque Revival church designed by Amos P. Cutting has distinct elements such as a 108-foot turreted square tower and capped with a pyramidal roof. A square tower rises over a large arched entrance. Another interesting feature of this buildings is the checkerboard-like pattern under the eaves. Stained glass windows and a large rounded apse faces Main Street (Photo 17).<sup>7</sup> *Trinity-on-Main* is made of rough-cut grey granite with load bearing masonry and a tile roof.<sup>8</sup> 75 West Main features another Romanesque Revival interpretation with a three-story brick commercial building. Four main arches frame two-story high windows with steel muntins separating quoining on upper floors.

The Italianate style appears quite frequently throughout the district in both its residential and commercial forms. The Italianate Villa at 25 Court Street (Photo 18) is one of the earliest Italianate buildings in the district. It was built in 1861 (31 High Street was built in 1855). This three-story brick building includes a prominent tower, which rises above the roofline. The façade features a bay window on the ground floor as well as a rounded arch entry to the portico. A variety of decorative stringcourses intersect with the windows on the façade. The windows of the second floor are one/one and are surrounded by decorative arches. The roof has projecting eaves in the Italianate style as well. The tower stands above the rest of the building and includes decorative molding and rounded windows. Arch Street also exhibits commercial varieties of Italianate such as that at 73 Arch Street. This two-part, mixed-use commercial block has commercial storefronts on its first floor and apartments on the upper levels. The Italianate features of 73 Arch Street are seen on the upper levels with their red brick façade and include decorative arches around the windows, brick stringcourses, and projecting cornices with decorative brackets (seen in Photo 3). Further down the street is 380 Arch Street, which exhibits the classic Italianate cornice (Photo 19). Several residences on West Pearl Street and Glen Street including a three-story Italianate apartment building dating from 1902 (9 West Pearl Street and, near Franklin Square, three multi-story Italianate style apartment buildings dating from 1915,

<sup>6</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Commercial Trust Company Nomination, New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut (1983): 2-5.

<sup>7</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut (2010).

<sup>8</sup> Sherrill Foster, "Historic Resources Inventory Building and Structures: 69 Main Street".

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1920, and 1912 (23 Glen Street, 27 Glen Street, 103 and 105 Glen Street) (Photos 20 and 21).  
There is evidence of high-style residential Italianate Architecture at 38 Whiting (Photo 22).

William Cadwell designed the First Lutheran Church of the Reformation at 77 Franklin Square in the Late Gothic Revival style in 1903. It has a symmetrical façade with many Gothic details, both in decoration and in structure, most notably square buttressed towers, rising four full stories to a pinnacled top. A sharply gabled central element contains a rose window; flanking are Gothic style windows that have lancet arches on each face of the towers and on each level with similar paired windows in uppermost element, giving a lighter effect to the whole building (Photo 23).<sup>9</sup>

The Collegiate Gothic style is visible at “The Doris,” 27 Main Street, built in 1930 (Photo 24). This is a three-story, red brick building with five bays. The ground floor is made up of storefronts. The façade on the upper two stories consists of sash windows with soldier course lintels and case concrete sills. The lintels drop down the sides of the windows, which creates labels. Above the third story windows are decorative cement diamonds. In the center is the building’s name. At the top of the building is a simple cement parapet that includes four finials, which creates a castle-like effect. At 35 Glen Street is a uniquely ornate four-story Collegiate Gothic Apartment building dating from 1928, known as the Glen Apartments. The Glen was designed by Connecticut architect Frederic Teich. The layout of the apartment building is in an L-shape and contains a prominent arched entryway at the vertex of its two sides. The entryway also contains white stonework consisting of medieval style decorations, which ascend through all four stories of the buildings. Near the roof of the building, above the entryway, is a flat stone surface with the title “The Glen” carved into it (Photo 25). The c-shaped Collegiate Gothic apartment building at 23 Glen Street, known as the Hungerford Apartments, was designed by prominent Hartford architect George Zunner (Photo 20).<sup>10</sup> Located on Bassett Street at the south end of the district is the former New Britain High School, built in 1896 (Photo 26). Now apartments, this three-story building has masonry work with interesting brick and stone designs are seen throughout the building. It has a crenellated parapet roof with tracery windows, both of which are major characteristics of collegiate gothic architecture. Each window has interesting stonework carved into the lancet arches. Above the front door is a bay window that contributes to this building’s overall beauty.

The Art Deco Style, particularly the one-part commercial block, is common across the district on Main, West Main, and Arch Street. An example of the Art Deco style is seen at 94 West Main Street, built in 1956. This is a two-story building with a three bayed, cement façade. The center bay consists of a glass doorway, above which are two sets of Chicago style windows. Framing the center bay is a rectangular projecting cement molding. On the outer bays are two stories of simple, single-paned windows. The center bay of the façade projects above the outer two bays. The smooth and curvilinear designs of 24 Washington Street, built in 1929 and formerly known as the W. L. Hatch Building, reflects the Art Deco style, which was just

<sup>9</sup> Sherrill Foster, “Historic Resources Inventory Building and Structures: 77 Franklin Square”.

<sup>10</sup> Hartford Architecture Conservancy Survey, *Hartford Architecture Volume Three: North and West Neighborhoods*, 1980 (Hartford, CT: Hartford Architecture Conservancy Inc.), 171-202.

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becoming popular in the late 1920s.<sup>11</sup> Although the building is currently vacant, it formerly operated as W. L. Hatch Insurance and Real Estate Company.<sup>12</sup> This is a two-story building with a three-bayed cement façade. The central bay consists of a recessed, glass paned door, surrounded by a rounded archway. At the top of the arch is a keystone that extends to the sill of a central rectangular window, the top of which is decoratively carved. On either side of the doorway are symmetrical Chicago-style windows with a panel of marble separating the first from the second story. On the far sides of the building are thin pilasters that curl at the top. At the bottom of each pilaster is a carved eagle. Adjacent to the pilasters are recessed square columns, each topped with an urn. At the top center of the building is another carved eagle, set inside a square (Photo 27).<sup>13</sup> Above the building is a vintage neon sign for the W. L. Hatch Co. Insurance and Real Estate Company. Vintage signs are also seen at 111 West Main Street, home to Connecticut Furs, Inc. This building was built in 1950 and although it has a simple concrete façade, its original vintage signs add character (Photo 28).

An exception to the high-style architecture seen throughout the district is at 53 Franklin Square. A single-story brick vernacular-style church that was originally built in 1920 as the “Emmanuel Gospel Church.” It has a symmetrical five bay façade with a gabled roof. There is a smaller additional gable that extends upward along the center of the building. The windows contain stone sills and are of sash design. The top of the entrance is a large eyelid dormer with a stone arch surrounding it. One of the few factory buildings located within the district reflects the nineteenth century commercial factory style. This building, located at 27-33 Columbus Boulevard, was once the home of the National Wire Mattress Company. This typical brick pier factory has arched windows in rows and columns. Many of these window openings are now sealed off with brickwork that matches the rest of the brick factory (Photo 29).<sup>14</sup>

Non-contributing buildings include those so altered with modern materials that it is difficult to identify a particular style. Examples of these include 100 Arch Street. 336 Arch Street, built at the end of the period of significance, does not resemble the rest of the district in architectural style. It is set back significantly from the road with area parking. Properties built after 1963 include 47 Main Street, a one-story red brick building and 102 West Main, both dated from 1970, are also non-contributing (Photo 30). Built in 1975 to replace a demolished early twentieth century block, the 4-story Modern building at 200 Main Street is also non-contributing (Photo 31). 57 Walnut is a Modern-style 1969 three-story stone and crown brick apartment building. The first story has a brick wall leading to the façade. Above the façade is a rectangular overhang. There is a row of sash windows, alternating with stone inset on each side of the façade.

The buildings within the district maintain the integrity of a prosperous, early-mid-twentieth century commercial center. However, several of the buildings of the district have been partially altered with newer materials or facades. Several of the houses along this section of the street have been covered with vinyl siding and vinyl windows, but they still retain characteristic features of their original style. The 1920 Italianate house (380 Arch Street) is a two-story, five-

<sup>11</sup> Richard Francaviglia, *Main Street Revisited* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1996), 48.

<sup>12</sup> “New Britain Historical Society Looks to Save the W.L. Hatch Building,” *New Britain City Journal* (June: 2013) <http://nbcityjournal.com/archives/7019>

<sup>13</sup> Sherrill Foster, “Historic Resources Inventory Building and Structures: 24 Washington Street” (Connecticut historical Commission): 1984.

<sup>14</sup> Sherrill Foster, “Historic Resources Inventory Building and Structures: 27-33 Columbus Boulevard”.

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bay building, constructed of brick, with a shallow hip roof lined with brackets (Photo 19). The most prominent feature of the building is a hexagonal tower, which extends out of the right side of the house's façade. Other than its vinyl windows, this building contains only one major alteration, the addition of an enclosed vinyl sided porch to the building's façade that could be removed, restoring the historic integrity of the building. The fenestration on the first floor of the free-standing 340 Arch Street has been altered, but the rest of the buildings exhibits all its architectural details including rough window sills and lentils, a detailed frieze beneath the cornice, and symmetrical finials at each corner of the façade's roofline (Photo 32). The most serious threats to district integrity are the residential buildings on Glen, Walnut, and West Pearl. In some cases, architectural ornamentation and other details have been removed or are hidden by vinyl or aluminum siding. In most cases, however, the original form is intact and maintains characteristics that identify its architectural style.

Two examples of new facades are seen at 178 and 222 Main Street (seen in Photo 2). These buildings have both been refaced, yet their historical structures are intact. The demolition of the buildings located east of Main Street along Central Park in the 1970s, and the subsequent rebuilding of more modern ones, detracts somewhat from the original setting, however this block falls outside the District boundaries. Still, these and other buildings included within the district maintain the character and setting of the prosperous commercial center of Downtown New Britain.<sup>15</sup> Finally, the City of New Britain is conducting streetscapes improvements to Central Park. All structures and objects are remaining. New landscaping will follow a European Plaza design, which continues the Beaux Arts theme that has historically characterized the space.

All properties in the district are included in the data table below, but they do not necessarily reconcile with the parcel map. Some parcels in the district contain multiple buildings on the lot. Further reconciliation will be completed prior to submission to NPS.

Address	Architectural Style	Date	Architectural Description	Contributing or Non-Contributing
5-39 Arch Street	Gothic Revival	1927	Two-story, building with a flat roof and parapet. First story is storefronts surrounded by cut stone. Second story is both cut stone and red brick with windows that are 1/1. "Packard Building."	Contributing
41 Arch Street	Commercial	1900	One-story brick building.	Contributing
59 Arch Street	Italianate	1897	Three-story building with seven bays and made of orange brick and terra cotta. There are rusticated granite lintels and sills, which contain a center element. The center window on the third floor has a semi-circular arch, wide carved in a classic design. "Vega Hall." Designed by William	Contributing

<sup>15</sup> Todd Jones, *Historic Context and Significance Study of Downtown New Britain: Transportation Infrastructure and Urban Renewal, 1940s-1980s*, HIST 511, CCSU, New Britain, Connecticut, 5.

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			Cadwell.	
67 Arch Street	Sullivan-esque Commercial	c. 1890	Four-story, three bay brick building. Windows on the façade are recessed with stone lintels and brackets in a shell design. The first story was redone in 1931 in Art Deco style with glazed colored tiles in a geometric pattern. "Goodrich's Block." Original designed by Cadwell.	Contributing
73-77 Arch Street	Victorian Commercial with Arts and Crafts Details	1900	Three-story building with three commercial units as well as three apartments. On the ground level the façade consists of three glass storefronts surrounded by bricks. The upper two stories have a brick façade made up of three bays. Each bay is made up of two vertical one/one windows. A cement lintel is above each of the windows on the second story, whereas a decorative brick rounded arch is above each of the windows on the third story. The building has a flat roof with a cornice as well as decorative brackets.	Contributing
85 Arch Street	Commercial Italianate	2009	Three-story red brick, 5-bay Commercial Block. New build, but maintains basic style, material, and massing as previous building.	Non-Contributing
96-98 Arch Street	Commercial	1923	Two-story brick, three-bay building with a flat, built up roof. Flat cornice contains date and name "1923 H. Alex." Soldier brick string course over display windows.	Contributing
100 Arch Street	Modern Commercial	1960	Two-story, seven bay brick building with a flat T&G and rubber roof with long vertical windows.	Non-contributing
139 Arch Street	Commercial	1915	One-story brick and ceramic tile building with load bearing masonry. Flat, built up roof. Three bay façade, each bay separated by brick columns and a soldier brick course over the glass storefronts.	Contributing

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140 Arch Street			Parking lot	Non-Contributing
145 Arch Street	Commercial	1920	Altered one-story building with a flat roof and very simple cornice. The façade is made of concrete blocks and also shows the concrete foundation. There are three bays in the façade, each containing a large sliding window.	Contributing
150 Arch	N/A		Vacant Lot	Non-Contributing
161 Arch Street	Cadwellian Commercial/ Beaux Arts Commercial	1900	One-story building built for either industrial or commercial use. The façade has five bays and is made up of glass storefronts outlined in white bricks on the far left and right sides. Above the glass appears to be discolored white plasterboard as well as a central stringcourse in red. The building has a flat roof and a parapet.	Contributing
168-174 Arch Street	Beaux Arts/ Neoclassical	1906	Four-story brown brick commercial building with a flat, built up roof. 8 bays. Central element is double doors under round arch with brick quoins.	Contributing
176 Arch Street	Commercial	1906	One-story building with large display windows covering the façade. Top of the façade is brown brick.	Contributing
184 Arch Street	Commercial	1955	One-story concrete building with hip roof made of T&G and rubber. Two garage doors on the façade with one bay window.	Contributing
191 Arch Street	Beaux Arts Commercial	1900	Three-story brick and cut stone retail and office building. Flat roof made from T&G and rubber. Elaborate metal cornice. Four brick piers on the façade with terra cotta bases that support a series of four terra cotta arches.	Contributing
191 Arch Street	Commercial	c. 1900	Two-story, brick, commercial block with six bays. A symmetrical, stepped-up roofline parapet reaches it height in the building center. Newer windows	Contributing

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206-218 Arch Street	Italianate	c. 1870	Four-story, six-bay brick and cut stone apartment and commercial building with a flat roof. Decorative corbels line the roof under the cornice and stone lintels under the windows. Possibly first tenement building on Arch Street.	Contributing
222-228 Arch Street			Empty lot	Non-contributing
222-228 Arch Street			Empty lot	Non-contributing
225 Arch Street		1928	Two-story building constructed from a combination of brick and masonry. The façade consists of a brown base as well as brown accents, but is otherwise a cream color. The façade is divided into eight bays. The first story consists of round-arched one/one windows outlined in a brown trim. The second story consists of sliding windows, each crowned with a brown lintel. Between the first and second story windows is a brown stringcourse. The building has a flat roof with a simple cement cornice and central parapet.	Contributing
232-242 Arch Street	Beaux Arts	1916	Four-story, three bay commercial and residential building with a façade of yellow brick with a flat roof of roll asphalt. Second and third stories have Chicago-style windows, while fourth has three narrow windows with semi-circular tops.	Contributing
241 Arch Street	Colonial Revival/ Adamesque	1925	Three-story brick building with load bearing masonry and a flat, built up roof. Eight bay façade. The corners of the building have pilasters with Corinthian capitals that rise to the first floor belt course of blank frieze and flat cornice. The center of the façade contains four sets of Chicago-style windows on each floor, with soldier course lintel and precast concrete sills.	Contributing
250 Arch Street	Commercial	1910	One and a half story brick commercial building. Gable roof with asphalt shingles. Façade has no windows, just a double door on façade and sides.	Non-contributing

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266-270 Arch Street	Beaux Arts	1911	Two-story brick factory and store building with a flat built up roof. At the top in gable-like part is "19Bennett11". First story is store front with large glass pane windows currently boarded up.	Contributing
282 Arch Street	Italianate	1920	Two-story brick building. Off the back is an addition with aluminum siding and hip roof with asphalt shingles. Cupola at top of house.	Contributing
295 Arch Street	Gothic Revival	1890	Elaborate Brick and Stone church.	Contributing (listed on National Register of Historic Places as part of a district in 1975)
295 Arch Street	Gothic Revival	1890	Two-story, rectangular, symmetrical, Medieval Gothic Revival building with crenellated roofline	Contributing (listed on National Register of Historic Places as part of a district in 1975)
296 Arch Street	Moderne Commercial	1940	One-story with a flat roof made from T & G and rubber. Large display windows line the façade of the building. Made from stucco and concrete.	Contributing
310 Arch Street			Parking lot	Non-contributing
336 Arch Street	Modern Commercial	1962	Two-story commercial building with a gabled roof with asphalt shingles. It is constructed from brick and vinyl siding.	Non-contributing
345 Arch Street	Victorian Commercial	1889	3-story commercial building with 4-bay façade Rough cut Brownstone lintels and sills. Decorative cornice.	Contributing
340-348 Arch Street	Commercial	1925	Three-story commercial, brick building with a hip roof. Windows on the second and third stories are 2 over 2.	Contributing
340 Arch Street	Beaux Arts	1911	Four-story, six bay façade brick commercial and residential apartment building with pressed tin cornice. Arched	Contributing

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			decorative elements above the second story windows and four arched center windows on the fourth story. Above the top floor windows is the name C. Cianci 1911.	
368 Arch Street	Italianate	1920	Three-story, three family residential home. Vinyl siding with a flat roof with made of T & G rubber. All windows are 2 over 2. Decorative brackets under the cornice.	Contributing
374 Arch Street	Greek Revival	1900	Two-story, three family residential home. Vinyl sided with gable roof with asphalt shingles. Door off-center to the right with small gabled roof overhang over the door. Windows are 2 over 2.	Contributing
380 Arch Street	Italianate	1856	Two-story brick commercial and residential building. Hip roof with asphalt shingles. Bay window on one corner and all windows have sandstone lintels. Decorative brackets beneath the cornice.	Contributing
406-410 Arch Street	Commercial	c. 1910	Four-story, yellow and red tapestry brick commercial building. Brick and cut brownstone with a flat, built up roof. Brownstone sills on the windows and upper story windows have yellow brick window caps in segmental arches.	Contributing
50 Bassett/ 161 Main	Collegiate Gothic	1916	Three-story brick building. The façade features a central tower and two story projecting bay. There is a central entry pavilion ornamented in Gothic motifs and iconography.	Contributing (Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in March 2015)
27-33 Columbus Blvd./ 59 High	Commercial factory style	c. 1890	Five-story typical brick pier factory with arched (segmental) windows in rows and columns. Many of these openings now bricked up. Brick has some rubbed or softened edges at the windows. Several additions contrasted off south elevation.	Contributing
25 Court Street	Second Empire/ Gothic Revival	1886	Two-story brick building with four-story tower in the center, with the entrance under arched and buttressed base of tower on the ground floor. The basic roof is mansard slate, with coved, bracketed cornice.	Contributing

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33 Court Street	Second Empire	1883	Two-story, three-bay façade with a three-story bay window on one side. Gabled hoods over the dormers and brackets under the mansard roof. Windows are 1/1.	Contributing
35 Court Street	Art Deco Commercial	1934	Two-story, three-bay white brick building with 4 pilasters on the façade. Windows have cement sills and there is a pressed tin cornice.	Contributing
40 Court Street	Modern Commercial Style	1941	Three-story building with a metal and brick fence leading to the façade. It has a pilaster façade with entablature above the door and a flower or shell element. This brick stone building has sash windows, and on the second and third row of windows has molding and sills. The roof is a built up flat roof. The style of this building is similar to the building on the right.	Contributing
41 Court Street	N/A		Open carport/ shelter	Non-contributing
Franklin Square Park	Franklin Square Park	c. 1900	Triangular shape, walkway path, benches and trees. Restored in 2000.	Contributing
Elihu Burritt Memorial	Classic Revival	1916	Marble sculpture, 14' by 6' by 3.75', of a female figure representing Peace. Robert Aitkin sculpted and Architect Harold Van Buren Magonigle designed the base and surrounding terrace. Restored in 2000.	Contributing
3 Franklin Square	Victorian Functional/ Commercial	c. 1900	Two-story, three-bay, red brick building. Metal awning and glass storefronts on first floor. 4/4 windows on second story with stone masonry hoods. Decorative cornice, parapet, and flat roof.	Contributing
7 Franklin Square	Beaux Arts/ Sullivanesque	before 1895	Two-story building, red stucco (previously light beige brick). Large picture vinyl windows with grilles between glass and two separate entrances at street level. Cornices near roof and between first and second stories. Seven windows on second story with rough granite sills;	Contributing

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			vinyl windows with grills between glass; window hoods with terra cotta half circle of foliate design, keystone, and impost block.	
19 Franklin Square	Modern/ Federal (sections facing Glen St.); Postmodern (sections facing Franklin Square)	1962	Three-story building in the center, with two-story sections on either side. Red brick, glass, and concrete building, a result of connecting existing buildings and new additions in 1964, 1980, and 2012. The main entrance was created during the most recent renovation; a long, flat portico covers the glass doors and windows and a large postmodern projection of mostly glass hovers over the entrance. Red brick of the older sections is visible to the right and behind the main façade.	Non- Contributing
45 Franklin Square	Italianate	1861	Two-story, three-bay building. Clapboard siding on most of the building except the first floor of the façade, which is light beige brick beneath the front porch roof. Two front entrances, one enclosed under a portico with a Classical Revival-style pediment. Pronounced dentil molding below eaves.	Contributing
45 Franklin Square			Garage with two stories and two bays. c. 2000	Non-Contributing
53 Franklin Square (owned by 77 Franklin property)	19 <sup>th</sup> Century Vernacular	1920	One-story brick church with a symmetrical five bay façade with a low-pitched, gabled roof.	Contributing
77 Franklin Square	Gothic Revival	1903	Stone building with a symmetrical façade and a sharply gabled central element contains a rose window; flanking are square buttressed towers, rising four full stories to a pinnacled top. Gothic style windows that have lancet arches are on each face of the	Contributing (Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places)

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			towers and on each level with similar paired windows in uppermost element. Two additional outbuildings constructed in 1930 and 1955.	
87-99 Franklin Square	Neoclassical	1890/1930	Brick church displays an asymmetrical façade with a rectangular tower and steeple at its center. A stained glass palladian window sits atop 5 stained glass windows, beneath a gabled roofline. Window on façade of tower contains semicircle top. A 1930 addition on the south side is a rectangular, two-story, 5-bay building with a flat roof, flat roof and decorative cornice. Most windows on church are sash, 6/6. Designed by Cadwell.	Contributing
105 Franklin Square		c. 1900	Park	Contributing
110 Franklin Square	Italianate	1880	Two-story, free-standing house with porch, set back from the road. There is a one-story brick addition to the South elevation.	Contributing
111 Franklin Square	Neoclassical	c. 1870	Two-story building with gabled roof, with its long side facing Franklin Square. Gabled projecting pavilion with bracketed returns. Brackets continue under eaves of building. Balanced fenestration pattern with paired windows. Second floor windows contain semicircular tops with fixed glass with large arched sunk panel. First floor windows are sash, 1/1, with six paned tops. Entrance contains a flat roof square porch supported by 3 Tuscan columns at each of its corners and two attached to the building.	Contributing
23 Glen Street	Collegiate Gothic	1909	Three-story brick building. Paired bays divided by center entrance, façade has 1/1 windows.	Contributing
27-31 Glen	C Style	c. 1920	Three-story uniquely shaped brick	Contributing

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Street	Apartment Home		building containing a decorative parapet with half circle elements in center. Contains numerous 1/1 windows. New Britain-born Architect Frederic Teich designed	
35 Glen Street	Beaux Arts	1926	Four-story unique brick, L shaped building with a prominent entrance that contains stone quoins. 1/1 Windows. Ornate decorations are above the central entranceway.	Contributing
61-63 Glen Street	Mid-19 <sup>th</sup> Century Vernacular barn-like meeting hall	1869	One-story, square, brick building with wooden shingles covering the facade. Contains one 1/1 window above entranceway.	Contributing
94 Glen Street	Queen Anne	c. 1885	Three-story house with clapboard siding, gabled roof, and candle snuffer top on octagonal tower to right of porch. First and second floor porches are both open. All windows are sash, 1/1. House is similar in style to the adjacent property, both of which may have been moved to the street after Glen Street's opening in 1884.	Contributing
94 Glen Street			Garage	Non-contributing
95 Glen Street			Empty lot	Non-contributing
97 Glen Street			Empty lot	Non-contributing
98 Glen Street	Queen Anne	c. 1885	Three-story house with clapboard siding, an asymmetrical façade, and a large over sailing gable with paired windows in it. Two story open porch on left side of house contains spindles at its top as well as turned posts. Bell case parapet and roofline divides first and second floor porches with cutouts filled with spindles in center of side and front. Lower porch has modern railings.	Contributing
103 & 105 Glen Street	Italianate	1912	Four-story brick building with arched lintels over all windows.	Contributing

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			Façade is undulating, shallow bay windows and recessed center with entrance. All three porches have been removed, leaving heavy scarring. Façade has brick quoins.	
115 Glen Street	Colonial Revival/Queen Anne	1903	Two-story, three-bay brick house, all windows are segmental arched with brownstone sills. Hip dormers break roof, one on front, two on sides. Dormers have a tile type siding in gunmetal color.	Contributing
116 Glen Street	Mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century vernacular	c. 1895/1900	Two-story house with clapboard siding and gabled roof. Windows on gable ends are symmetrical. All windows on house are 1/1. This home was most likely converted from a barn into a two family house at some point in the early twentieth century. Gabled 2 <sup>nd</sup> building on property.	Contributing
119 Glen Street	Colonial Revival	1906	Two-story, three-bay, brick façade with full row of 1/1 windows across gable line. All have two row header arched brick lintels. Shingles have been removed from gable.	Contributing
123 & 125 Glen Street	Vernacular	1906	Three-story brick building. Wide boxed overhangs with brackets and shallow full height bay window. First floor has a porch, but second and third floor porches have been removed.	Contributing
129 & 131 Glen Street	Queen Anne/Vernacular Stacked Duplex	1906	Two-story brick building, gabled roof to street, with two story porches. First floor porch is full, second floor porch is half of the façade, arched rub brick over all windows.	Contributing
133 & 135 Glen Street	Colonial Revival	1908	Two-story, 4-family vernacular brick building. Arch lintels over 1/1 sash windows. First floor has a full porch and a large brick bay window.	Contributing
139 Glen Street	Triple Decker/Queen Anne	1906	Two-story brick building, with a large wide gable. Shallow arches over all windows, full porch on first	Contributing

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			floor, half width on second floor. Third floor porch has been removed, several types of brick visible on façade, upper façade contains various scars.	
145 Glen Street	Colonial Revival	1926	Three-story Dutch Colonial w/ dormers. Building with an asymmetrical façade, porches have been removed. Brick on lower 2 floors, and building has shingles in gambrel gable. Top of gable has a half window.	Contributing
145 Glen Street	N/A		Concrete block garage.	Non-contributing
149 Glen Street	Colonial Revival Stacked Duplex	1890	Three-story, three-family building, with asphalt shingles and a gambrel roof. The first floor porch spreads across the façade, the second floor porch goes half way, and the third floor porch is open. Aluminum siding.	Contributing
10 Grand Street	Romanesque Revival	1886	Old New Britain Armory designed by Robert Wakeman Hill of Waterbury. Symmetrical, red brick with central rectangular tower.	Contributing (Already listed on the National Register of Historic Places)
8 High Street	Beaux Arts Classicalism	1901	New Britain Public Library. William Brooke, architect	Contributing, (Already listed on the National Register of Historic Places)
31 High Street	Italianate	1855	Classic two-story Italianate single-family home	Contributing Already listed on the National Register of Historic Places)
43-57 High Street	Neo-Tudor and Modern	1920	Original is Neo-Tudor "Perfect Six" Apartment Building known as "Hagearty House." Modern addition, probably post World War II.	Contributing
2-26 Main Street	Collegiate Revival	1909	Two-story, seven-bay, red brick building. Metal awning covering glass storefronts. Pressed metal cornice has wide blank frieze, simple molding, and wide overhang. Four one-over-one windows in each bay on second story.	Contributing

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			Lintels fit under cornice. Granite sills. Parapet above cornice has dog-tooth brick resembling dentils; cement cap.	
23-39 Main Street	Collegiate Revival	c. 1930	Three-story red brick building with stores at street level. Five bays. Decorative brickwork. Metal awning covering storefronts. Sash windows in pairs and singly in organized groups across façade on second and third stories. Windows have soldier course lintels and case concrete sills. Lintels drop down sides of window, creating Tudor “labels”. Ends of lintels have decoration of white concrete squares and flange elements. Square notches on parapet on ends of each bay. Diamond shapes centered in each bay in cornice; middle bay has an oval instead and reads “The Doris”.	Contributing
38-48 Main Street	Commercial	1905	Four-story, tan brick building, with store fronts on the first story and apartments on the upper three stories. Above the storefronts are three stories of paired 1/1 windows, each topped with a gray lintel. Dividing the windows are brick pilasters leading up to a brick stringcourse separating the third and fourth story windows. On either side of the building are two sets of oriel windows on the second and third floors. At the top of the building is a cream colored cornice supported by decorative brackets and dentils	Contributing
47 Main Street	Commercial	1971	One-story red brick building. Metal mansard-style roof/parapet overhangs sidewalk, creating a covered entry. Four bays, each with large windows and/or doors.	Non-contributing
52-54 Main Street	Colonial Revival	1910	Two-story brick building with a symmetrical façade, pilasters surrounding the doorway, sidelights and pediments over the windows and doors.	Contributing
69 Main	Romanesque	1889-	Typical Romanesque style church of	Contributing

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Street	Revival/ Richardsonian Romanesque	1891	the late 19 <sup>th</sup> century. Stained glass, arched windows. Huge round apse end faces Main Street. A square tower rises over a large arched entrance to a pyramidal roof with four small turrets. To the south of the tower is a two story octagonal projection with windows in a two-story arcade motif. To the north of the tower is a much wider semicircular bay with windows paired in vertical bays. Many interesting architectural details, such as the use of contrasting colored stones to make a checkerboard row just under the eaves. Formerly the Trinity Methodist Church and now known as "Trinity-on-Main."	(Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places)
90 Main Street	English Parish Gothic	1865	Nave and side aisled church, with tower to right side of entry. Side doors have own steeply gabled roof. Transept entries have own shorter pointed tower. Towers are buttressed. Gothic style entrance has attached columns, floriated capitals. Gothic detailing used throughout. South Congregational Church	Contributing (Individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places)
116 Main Street	Beaux Arts	1870	Four-story building pink molding. The siding of the building is yellow and red brick on the first floor, and then three stories of white brick. It has a pink, round façade entrance, and to the left and the right of the façade are red pilasters. It has two arches to the left of the main façade. On the second floor above the main façade are the words "Hole in the Wall Theater." The thirds and fourth floors are built of white bricks. Altered	Contributing
132-136 Main Street	Beaux Arts	1903	Five-story building with five rows of pane windows. On the first story on the right hand side of the building is a plaque about the historical significance of the building The top window has segmental arch of blacks and carved keystones of terra cotta. A	Contributing

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			cornice on the upper part of the building with minimal brackets and parapet above that carries the name John A. Andrews.	
160 Main Street	Sullivan-esque	1900	Five-story building with three arch windows on the first story leading to the main façade. On the main entrances to the building are two arch windows. Then it has three rows of six pane windows that are underneath a decorated arch with a keystone. A cornice on the upper part of the building with minimal brackets and parapet above that carries the building name Sovereigns Trading Co. John A. Andrews.	Contributing
162 Main Street	Modern	1900	Two-story building made of cement or marble to give the white exterior. This building has two rows of pane windows. The top story has molding and a flat roof.	Contributing
178 Main Street	Beaux Arts Modern	1901	Two-story building, with stone molding on the first story. The main facade has a green gabled roof above it. When it extends up it is made of white marble with a bank sign centered over the façade. Then a green strip inlaid at the top of the building with more stone between leading to a flat roof. Altered.	Contributing
200 Main Street	International	1975	4-story concrete office building	Non-contributing
222 Main Street	Commercial	1885	Seven-story building with Brutalist concrete façade added later and brick exterior. First story contains storefronts, but the upper levels of the façade lack any fenestration. Known as "Porter Block."	Contributing
230 Main Street	Beaux Arts Monument	1900	Monument to New Britain Civil War soldiers rests facing the New Britain City Hall at the tip of Central Park. The statue's material is limestone. The architecture includes Ionic columns and pediments as the main elements of	Contributing (Already listed on National Register)

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			the four sided structure. The monument is capped with a bronze, winged victory-statue. Designed by Ernest Flagg.	
230 Main Street	Park	c. 1850	Triangular green known as "Central Park."	Contributing (Already listed on National Register)
232 Main	NA		Parking Lot	Non-contributing
236-240 Main Street (listed as 242 Main Street on map)	Victorian Commercial	1890	Five-story, three-bay brick building with white polished stone dressings with a flat roof. Two stories of extra wide sash windows, 1/1 above the storefront level. Cornice is divided into three areas by large brackets, each filled with bricks in a basket weave design.	Contributing
242-246 Main Street (listed as 242 Main Street on map)	Victorian Commercial	1890	Four-story, three-bay brick building with white polished stone dressings with a flat roof. The slightly recessed windows are paired, sash 1/1 with cast iron dividers decorated in the Eastlake style. Companion to 236-240 Main Street.	Contributing
250 Main Street	Art Deco	1947	One-story corner commercial building. Significantly altered upper façade.	Contributing
267 Main Street	Modern Commercial Building	1968	Two-story Brick and concrete commercial building with enframed windowed façade.	Non-contributing
272 Main Street	Beaux Arts	1907	Six-story white brick commercial block with quoining and bracketed cornice. "Gates Building"	Contributing
277 Main Street	Modern Commercial	1952	Two-story, two-part brick/ masonry commercial building with concrete second floor façade and enframed windowed first floor.	Non-contributing
283 Main Street	Art Deco Commercial	1925	Two-story, 3-bay marble building with 3 large square windows across second floor. Belt coursing on either side of second floor. "Grant Building."	Contributing
291 Main Street	Commercial Style	1900	Single-story. Significantly altered façade, but original form is in tact.	Contributing
299 Main	Commercial	1914	Three-story building with a two-bay	Contributing

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Street/ 61 Colombus Blvd	Style		façade. Windows are Chicago-Style Sash windows. All windows hang 1/1. Upper floor windows contained within a half circle arch created with light tan brick. Windows supported with heavy plain lintel. Second story windows contain polished light colored stone lintels and sills. Building contains a parapet atop with light colored stone decoration and cartouche. Façade of building holds a sign that reads "Dakille Studio" added as a renovation.	
300 Main Street	Beaux Arts	1928	Five-story, six-bay commercial building. The first and second floor windows are of tripartite design all with fixed glass. The second and third floors are separated by wide marble rectangles complete with cornice. Windows continue to top floor as the same style. Windows create a string course within it are roundels that contain various renaissance designs. The Frieze is swag with letters L and B for "Leonard Building," which housed Raphael's Department Store.	Contributing
302 Main Street/ 53 Columbus Blvd	Modern	1974	Two-story brick building added against the side of the Leonard Building.	Non-Contributing
205 South Main Street	Neoclassical	1930	Free-standing two-story brick building with a flat roof and prominent cornice. Altered first floor with shingled awning between two floors overhangs front entrance. Second story contains five 6/1 windows. Façade is white brick.	Contributing
17 Walnut Street	Italianate	1926	Two-story building with a three-bay façade and a white gable roof with architectural brackets. There are six stairs leading to bricked porch with awnings over casement windows. The second floor windows are unaltered with flat hood over geometric frieze	Contributing

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			incised into wood. The second story siding is clapboard has pane and segmental windows. Third floor has two pointed arch windows right under the gabled roof.	
43 Walnut Street	Perfect 6	1870	Three-story building with bays on each side, characteristic of Perfect 6 style. This building has an iron portico upon entering the facade. This building has a Doric column façade entrance. This building is constructed of stone and brick that surround the windows and sills below. Cut into the granite building is the word Touraine. This building has a flat roof. Although, the style is different from neighboring building it is, as tall as the other buildings.	Contributing
49 Walnut Street	Neo Tudor	1924	Three-story, yellow brick building. The façade has pilasters and entablature above the door. On the entablature is the word Prospect, which above that has a square with two diagonal lines. The triple set of windows forming an outline of a gothic gable with a pinnacle on top. Each of the pane windows has sills. The top story has crenelated parapet with a flat roof.	Contributing
10 Washington St. (1st building)	Art Moderne	c. 1920	One-story. "Miss Washington Diner"	Contributing
10 Washington St. (2 <sup>nd</sup> building)	Modern Commercial	1970	One-story building divided into multiple bays by stainless steel piers, which support and bracket a wide overhand. The building sits on a narrow blond brick foundation base with aluminum siding.	Non-contributing
24 Washington St.	Art Deco	1929	Two-story formal building with a round arched center with a recessed glass pane door. An enlarged keystone above that extends to form a sill of a wide window. Recessed square	Contributing

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			columns ascend to the top cap of the building with large urn recessed into corner. This is accented by a pilaster, which ascends and curls. Windows echo Chicago style. Window design is repeated all around. Known as the "Hatch Building."	
30 Washington St.	Beaux Arts/Neoclassical	1911	Two-story building with a symmetrical façade. First floor windows have semicircular tops. Second floor windows are casement with medium sized panes. Round arch windows continue on all elevations. The cornice extends forward to create a large pedimented portico. The building is brick with cement sills and keystone. Elk Club.	Contributing
3 Webster Street	Colonial Revival Stacked Duplex	c. 1900	Two-story asymmetrical 2-family home with gabled roof. Significantly altered.	Non-Contributing
7 Webster Street	Vernacular	1870	Two-story asymmetrical 2-family home with gabled roof. Significantly altered.	Non-Contributing
11 Webster Street	Vernacular	1900	1.5-story asymmetrical residential home with gabled roof. Significantly altered.	Non-contributing
17 Webster Street	Mixed	1988	Three-story, four family house	Non-Contributing
19 Webster Street	Italianate	1860	Three-story, two family house, with blue vinyl siding and possible additions on the back.	Contributing
27 West Main Street (Building #1)	Venetian Palazzo	1882	Five-story red brick building with a hip roof. Originally Russwin Hotel, currently City Hall of New Britain.	Contributing (Already on the National Register of Historic Places)
27 West Main Street (Building #2)	Renaissance Revival	1871	Old Post Office – three story building with brownstone quoins set against a smooth, light masonry facing. Second floor window frames are pedimented, and third floor frames have segmentally arched projecting heads. The cornice has both dentils and	Contributing (Already on the National Register of Historic Places)

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			modillions.	
27 West Main Street (Building #3)	Romanesque	1860	Two-story red brick with brownstone detailing	Contributing (Already on the National Register of Historic Places)
51-55 West Main Street	Romanesque Revival/ Neo-Italian Palazzo	1927	Seven-story building of limestone on the lower façade and red brick on the upper façade. The lower façade consists of four bays, three of which contain large, double-story round-arched windows, separated by pilasters, with the center bay containing a large bronze door. The façade of the upper four stories consists of six bays, each containing a 1/1 window. Known as Commercial Trust Company Building and now “Anvil Building.”	Contributing (Already on the National Register of Historic Places)
54 West Main Street	Art Deco	1927	One-story building with a façade that appears concrete, with three <i>bas relief</i> elements indented above the black glass permanent false gable. The center design is of a vintage style sailing shape.	Contributing
62-64 West Main Street	Art Deco	1926	Two-story building. The balanced façade’s center entrance has the building’s name, and large windows between string and belt courses, separated by fluted pilaster elements. Kloiber Building	Contributing
66 West Main Street	Victorian Commercial	1871	Five-story, four-bay brick commercial building with a Romanesque feeling. Windows are 1/1 sash and have arched back lintels with brownstone rough-cut keystone and end elements. Under the windows are 3 rows of terra cotta decorated tiles, with sunflowers at the 4 <sup>th</sup> level.	Contributing
67 West Main Street	Georgian Revival	1924	Six-story brick building. The façade features 4 large pilasters and windows are rectangular and 8/2. There are raised brick quoins on the corners of	Contributing (Already on the National Register of Historic Places)

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			the building. The decorative features are all carved concrete. "Burritt Hotel."	
70 West Main Street	Art Moderne	1905	Three-story, two-part commercial block.	Contributing
75 West Main Street	Romanesque	1924	Three-story brick commercial building with 4- main arches framing 2-story high windows with steel muntins separating quoining on upper floors. "Professional Building. "	Contributing
94 West Main Street	Art Deco	1956	Two-story, concrete building with large rectangular windows on each side of the more elaborate entryway.	Contributing
99 West Main Street	Classic Revival	1925	Classical-influenced commercial 3-story building, built in mid-1920s by Louis Raphael for storefronts and office space on second and 3 <sup>rd</sup> floors. Raphael Building.	Contributing
102 West Main Street	Modern	1970	Two Story Brick Commercial Building	Non-contributing
103-105 West Main	Art Deco		Single Story Commercial block. Recently restored Art Deco Storefront	Contributing
111-117 West Main St.	Modern	1950	One-story building with an upper tiled concrete façade with store glass storefronts at the bottom. Original signage.	Contributing
114 West Main Street	Neoclassical	1920	Symmetrical 3-story, 7-bay marble with classic six ionic columns (U.S. Post Office)	Contributing (Already on the National Register of Historic Places)
119 West Main Street	Gothic Revival	1908	Church of brick and masonry with gabled roof and simple tower form.	Contributing
9 West Pearl Street	Italianate	1902	Three-story red brick building with an asymmetrical façade and a three sided bay window, which ascends to the top of the building. Has a shallow hip roof, sash windows 1/1.	Contributing
13 West Pearl	N/A		Parking lot	Non-contributing
14-16 West Pearl Street	Queen Anne	1896	Three-story brick building with a gable roof. The first story has five pane windows and small gabled roof porch entrance. On the second floor is another row of five single- pane	Contributing

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			windows. The third floor has one pane window with vinyl siding.	
18 West Pearl Street	Queen Anne	1880	Two and half story, brick building. The first and second story has three one pane windows. The third floor has two four by four sash windows and a gabled roof.	Contributing
19 West Pearl Street	Queen Anne	1895	Two-story, 3-family asymmetrical façade. Vestiges of mansard roof with patterned slate, but this is possibly an addition. Gable forward extension with first floor bay window.	Contributing
22 West Pearl Street	19 <sup>th</sup> Century Vernacular	1890	Two-story white building with a three bay façade. The first floor has two 9/9 sash windows and an open porch. The second floor has three nine by nine windows.	Contributing
23-25 West Pearl Street	Queen Anne	Before 1895	Two-story, 2- family brick, L shaped Stick-Style inspired building with stickwood trusses in the gabled roof. The façade has three bays and the porch has square chamfered pillars. Designed by Eastlake.	Contributing
26 West Pearl Street	Vernacular	1870	Two-story building with a two-bay façade, a gable roof and wrap-around porch. Vinyl-sided.	Non-contributing
29 West Pearl Street	Italianate	Before 1895	Two-story, three-bay building with flat roof, wide overhang, large paired brackets under eaves with small rectangular windows. Brown/core vinyl siding now covers original siding and decorative brackets. Porch has squared fluted pillars with geometric capitals, brackets, and braces on square roof.	Contributing
32 West Pearl Street	Vernacular	1890	Two-story brick building with brick arches above windows. The first story has an open porch. And on the left side on the first and second story have an enclosed porch.	Contributing
22 Whiting Street	N/A	N/A	Vacant land. Department of Transportation property	Non-Contributing

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56 Whiting Street	Italianate	1924	Three-part commercial, free-standing building	Contributing
57 Whiting Street	Beaux Arts	1924	Four-story, brick, L-shaped building. Each of the windows is single-pane style and had a keystone on the center of each window.	Contributing
70 Whiting Street	Italianate		Two-story asymmetrical residential house with side porch	Contributing
75 Whiting Street	Italianate	1900	Two and a half story building with a brick façade and yellow siding on the sides.	Contributing
75 Whiting Street		2000	Garage	Non-contributing
83 Whiting Street	Italianate	1900	Two-story building with blue vinyl siding. The first floor has an open porch with two rows of single-pane windows and a flat roof.	Contributing

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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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, or 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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Commerce

Community Planning and Development

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**Period of Significance**

1850-1963  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1850  
1963  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Cadwell, William  
Zunner, George  
Cutting, Amos P.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Downtown New Britain Historic District meets National Register Criteria A and C at the local level for its significance as the historic commercial center of one of Connecticut's most prominent industrial cities and for its collection of high style nineteenth through mid-twentieth century architecture that developed in correlation with the city's industrial economy. The period of significance reflects New Britain's era of manufacturing prosperity and related downtown growth. It extends from 1850 when New Britain became a town, to 1963, the date of the first local urban renewal project that resulted in select demolition downtown and the alteration of the city's transportation patterns. Hartford, Waterbury, Bridgeport, and several smaller cities all substantially contributed to Connecticut's industrial prosperity, but New Britain's nationally and internationally renowned hardware industry defined it. The city produced and exported items for private as well as public use, supporting commercial and residential building across the period of significance. In the early twentieth century, it earned the nickname, "Hardware Capitol of the World." As the local industry grew, the factories attracted both native- and foreign-born workers,

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mostly hailing from Northern and Eastern Europe (but Italy as well). These populations supported a bustling economy, a transportation hub, and a vibrant civic and religious life in the downtown district. One of the city's businesses, the American Hardware Corporation was the largest employer in the state with 12,000 workers.\* As evidenced by the numerous churches and services in the downtown, New Britain attracted immigrant workers from southern and northeastern Europe as well as Latin America. New Britain has sustained a diverse population comprised of relatives and people who share the same ethnic heritage as its nineteenth century immigrants. This multi-generational quality is distinct in New Britain compared to other cities in Connecticut, where specific immigrants populations were prevalent at one time, but later dispersed. In 1930, almost a quarter of New Britain was of Polish ancestry, and today the city remains home to the largest Polish population in Connecticut and one of the largest in the country.

Under Criterion C, the district derives significance for its large collection of intact high-style and large-scale architecture, which physically reflects the city's prosperity from manufacturing products, particularly hardware, shipped across the world. The district encompasses the city's largest collection of historic architecture as expressed on commercial and public buildings. Late nineteenth- through early twentieth-century styles are particularly prominent. Mixed streetscapes of Italianate, Beaux Arts, Romanesque Revival, Colonial Revival, Art Deco, Gothic Revival and Victorian designs characterize the district. Locally prominent architects such as New Britain's William Cadwell and Hartford's George Zunner designed and constructed many of the buildings in the district, further contributing to its historic and architectural significance and character. Despite the effects of urban renewal initiatives in the 1960s, the streets within the district remain highly intact. The district contains a dense cluster of architecturally cohesive commercial buildings, with much of the same design, setting, feeling, and association as it historically had. These buildings represent the evolution of the city and the major urban architectural styles of the early twentieth century.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Criterion A: Commerce, Community Development**

The urban development of New Britain, Connecticut is both distinct and typical for a northeastern industrial city from the mid-nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century.<sup>16</sup> Downtown New Britain a dense hub of commercial, civic and religious activity between the years 1850 and 1963 when the city became one of the most ethnically diverse and prosperous urban centers in Connecticut for several decades. Between these years, businesses, services, retail stores, theaters, local government agencies, office space, and multi-family homes all shared this approximately 80-acre area. During the period of significance, between 50-200 businesses and services occupied just the stretch of Main Street included in these district boundaries. Arch

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<sup>16</sup> Anthony E. Broadman and Michael P. Weber, "Economic Growth and Occupational Mobility in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Urban America: A Reappraisal," *Journal of Social History*, 11 No. 1 (Autumn, 1977): 52-74.

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Street and West Main carried similar activity. Religious centers around Central Park and Franklin Square also brought people and customers into the downtown. Goods manufactured in New Britain shipped all over the world, but workers, owners, and customers came from adjacent and surrounding neighborhoods as well as the region.

In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, the roughly 300- person village of New Britain consisted of several farms and less than 40 houses distributed among three main areas: Hart Quarter, Stanley Quarter, and East Street (the area closest to today's downtown). By the 1750s, maps reveal no discernable center, but settlers began building homes along what is now Main Street. Too rocky and marshy for agriculture, this are of land would eventually become the central business district.<sup>17</sup> James North built the community's first blacksmith shop there and served as a destination to fix tools and discuss communal affairs. Stores from East Street migrated to Main Street, which developed steadily after the establishment of New Britain's major industry in the 1830s. Over the twenty years, the former farming community's population doubled in population. In 1850, the General Assembly made the industrialized village of New Britain, at 3,029 people, its own town, with a population of over 3, 000 people.<sup>18</sup>

Maps between 1800 and 1850 illustrate a more dense and defined downtown. The town green (Central Park) was surrounded by several churches, the homes of local businessmen, and a tavern. In 1857, a fountain was installed in the center of the green, connected by serpentine paths to the nearby streets and to a gazebo at the southern end of the park. At that time, most of the town's commercial buildings were located to the south and east (See Figure 1). Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, livery services were available for hire and stables were located in the Central Park area of the downtown district.<sup>19</sup> A stagecoach traveled the dirt roads to Hartford at least three times a week for twenty-five cents per passenger.<sup>20</sup> Via the railroad (New York-New Haven-Hartford line), which arrived in town in 1869, the factories brought in thousands of workers, mainly immigrants, all who lived in houses around this city center.

In 1871, with a population of 9,840, New Britain was incorporated as a city, with manufacturer Frederick T. Stanley as the first mayor. By the dawn of the twentieth century, 28,000 people called New Britain home and the city's compact business district architecture and activities echoed "Main Streets" of growing industrial cities nationwide. Many of the buildings still standing today characterized a vibrant downtown of civic activity, commerce, entertainment, and culture. Workers hailing from various ethic groups lived and worked outside of this district, but traveled to the downtown for their community, religious, government, social, and business needs. Irish immigrants, fleeing the famine, arrived in New Britain in the 1840s. Scotch, Welsh,

<sup>17</sup> David N. Camp, *History of New Britain with Sketches of Farmington and Berlin, Connecticut: 1640-1889* (New Britain, CT: William B. Thompson & Company, 1889), 52, 55, 69, in Michelle Zajac, *Historic Context and Significance Study of Downtown New Britain: Community Development to 1900*, HIST 511, CCSU, New Britain, Connecticut, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Michelle Zajac, *Historic Context and Significance Study of Downtown New Britain: Community Development to 1900* (New Britain: CCSU, 2010), p. 6 from Works Progress Administration, *Study of Public Facilities (New Britain, WPA)*, 1938.

<sup>19</sup> "Map of the town of New Britain, Hartford County, Conn., from original surveys by E.M. Woodford, surveyor." Connecticut Historical Society, cthistoryonline.org, in Caroline Taylor, *Historic Context and Significance Study of Downtown New Britain: Transportation in New Britain until World War II*, HIST 511, CCSU, New Britain, CT, 2.

<sup>20</sup> "New Britain – Center of Hardware Industry," *The Connecticut Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly*, Vol. 8 (1903-1904), in Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 2.

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Canadian, German, and Scandinavian immigrants followed them shortly after.<sup>21</sup> It attracted large numbers of northern European immigrants, particularly of Polish decent, whose continued presence characterizes the city even today.

Industry was instrumental in the downtown's growth. Factories located outside the downtown district fueled the need and development of the downtown civic and commercial district. The oldest known manufacturer is North and Judd, who located their factory just northwest of the downtown district in the early nineteenth century at the intersection of North Stanley and East Main produced the latches, clasps, and buckles that became New Britain's staples for the next two hundred years.<sup>22</sup> Frederick T. Stanley, Henry E. Russell, and Cornelius Erwin founded what was eventually known as Russell and Erwin Manufacturing in 1835. The factory was in the downtown district along the south side of Myrtle Street; Route 72 now runs through that location.<sup>23</sup> Stanley began the Stanley Works Company in 1852 and soon found himself New Britain's first mayor in 1870. Stanley recognized industry and manufacturing as the main catalyst for developing New Britain from a swamp to a booming economic center. As a result, his government played a very minimal role in the development of the city. Rather, manufacturers often took it upon themselves to make necessary improvements. These early improvements were business-oriented, leaving residents with very limited municipal services.<sup>24</sup>

The growth of downtown's commercial activity was therefore directly linked to the larger industries in town. As a politician and a manufacturer, Stanley was instrumental in bringing the Providence Fishkill Railroad Company into town. The railroad, a key component of the Industrial Revolution, fueled to New Britain's growth and economic success. It drastically improved the town's ability to ship material in and out of the city, providing opportunities for local tradesmen and retailers as well.<sup>25</sup> For example, Luke Bartlett made his living as a blacksmith at 432 Main Street. Josiah Bartlett was a watchmaker on Main Street.<sup>26</sup> Brothers Phillip and Frank Corbin formed the P. and F. Corbin Company in 1849 to make brass products such as springs and bells. The factory complex (no longer extant) was located at 10 Franklin Square, within the area that now comprises the district, and it provided jobs for hundreds of workers who lived in the area.

Industry attracted new immigrants as well as residents due to the seemingly unending supply of jobs. For example, employee Paul Bagdasarian lived on Main Street. His relative, Henry, worked as a clerk for the Corbin Company and he lived just a approximately one mile northwest at 381 West Main Street.<sup>27</sup> Other Corbin families lived and worked in the areas known as Franklin Square.<sup>28</sup> When North and Judd, Russell and Erwin, Stanley Works, and P. and F. Corbin

<sup>21</sup> New Britain Department of Municipal Development and Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, *New Britain Connecticut: Historic Preservation Action Plan* (Nashville, TN: Thomason and Associates, 2010), 9 [hereafter, *Historic Preservation Action Plan*].

<sup>22</sup> New Britain Centennial Committee. *New Britain Centennial: 1871-1971* (New Britain: 1971), in Luke A. Jaljardo, *Historic Context Study for Downtown New Britain: Industry and Commerce during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, HIST 511, CCSU, New Britain, Connecticut, 3.

<sup>23</sup> Sanborn Maps, New Britain, CT, July 1884, Sheet 5.

<sup>24</sup> Patrick Thibodeau, *New Britain, The City of Invention: An Illustrated History* (Chatsworth, CA: Windsor Publications, 1989), 19.

<sup>25</sup> Walter W. Jacob, "The Man Who Turned The Stanley Works Around: The Story of William H. Hart," *The Chronicle of the Early American Industries Association*, 58 No 4 (Dec 2005): 162, in Jaljardo, *Historic Context Study*, 3-4.

<sup>26</sup> New Britain Directory (New Britain, CT: Press of Adkins Printing Co., 1902), 42, in Jaljardo, *Historic Context Study*, 6.

<sup>27</sup> New Britain Directory, 38, in Jaljardo, *Historic Context Study*, 4-5.

<sup>28</sup> Newport Collaborative Architects, *Citywide Historic Properties Survey* (New Britain, CT: 1996, 22, in Jaljardo, *Historic Context Study*, 5.

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expanded and prospered during the Civil War, the demand for the production of machined hardware increased.<sup>29</sup> New immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe came to the city to work. These included Poles, Lithuanians, Czechs, Armenians, and Italians, and New Britain's population increased dramatically. By 1900, New Britain was responsible for one-sixth of the country's hardware production.<sup>30</sup> As the population grew and diversified, New Britain experienced not only marked economic growth, but also great social and civic expansion.<sup>31</sup>

The city flaunted its prosperity through the establishment of new parks, municipal improvements, and the construction of new, brick frame commercial, residential, and industrial buildings in the downtown. Downtown New Britain was a place to work and live for both immigrants and industrialists. The downtown area became denser and more defined, with new developments radiating from the town's center.<sup>32</sup> Workers lived close to their jobs in Franklin Square throughout the downtown, particularly on Arch, West Pearl, Walnut, Glen, and just south of the central downtown district on Division, Bassett, and Edson. They lived in mixed-use buildings with shops or offices on the street level and apartments above or in three-family buildings.<sup>33</sup> Workers attracted numerous retailers and service providers and prompted the construction of houses, streets, sidewalks, and other infrastructure to support them, and much of this remains.<sup>34</sup> Wealthy industrialists also lived close to downtown for the same conveniences as their workers.<sup>35</sup> The proximity of the Stanley mansion, built in 1859 very close to downtown at 1 Hillside Place, reflects the importance that the area served as a hub of commerce and industry. The home of Frederick G. Platt, President of New Britain Machine and New Britain Lumber & Coal, was built at 25 Court Street in 1886. Platt could walk to the retailers, hotels, barbers, and a myriad of other business that served the industrial producers and workers in the Franklin Square area (Photo 18).<sup>36</sup>

New Britain emerged as a prominent industrial center despite its location away from a coast or large river.<sup>37</sup> Instead, trolleys and trains moved people and goods and sustained the community and economy near the city center.<sup>38</sup> Although they appeared in New Britain later than in other cities, horse car railways were a significant development for the city when they were introduced to the streets of downtown in 1886.<sup>39</sup> Residents of New Britain could be transported to the downtown district for shopping; conversely, those who lived downtown could travel to parks and recreations areas on the outskirts of the city. Irish immigrants Patrick and Peter Dolan owned the New Britain Tramway Company.<sup>40</sup> The Tramway line had five branches; all of them departed

<sup>29</sup> New Britain Centennial Committee. *New Britain Centennial: 1871-1971*, in Jaljardo, *Historic Context Study*, 3.

<sup>30</sup> *Historic Preservation Action Plan*, 13.

<sup>31</sup> *Historic Preservation Action Plan*, 12.

<sup>32</sup> Works Progress Administration, *Study of Public Facilities* (New Britain, CT: Works Progress Administration, 1938), 14-15, in Zajac, *Historic Context Study*, 6-7.

<sup>33</sup> New Britain City Directory (New Haven: Price and Lee, 1955).

<sup>34</sup> Alexander von Hoffman, *Local Attachments: The Making of An American Urban Neighborhood, 1850 to 1920* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 90, in Erin Marchitto, *Historic Context and Significance Study of Downtown New Britain: Industry, Commerce, and Services*, HIST 511, CCSU, New Britain, CT, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Jaljardo, *Historic Context Study*, 6-7.

<sup>36</sup> Bogart, *The Economic History of the United States*, 171, in Jaljardo, *Historic Context Study*, 7.

<sup>37</sup> Herbert Fowler, *A History of New Britain* (New Britain, CT: New Britain Historical Society, 1960), 8, in Zajac, *Historic Context and Significance Study*, 2.

<sup>38</sup> Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 2-4.

<sup>39</sup> "Street Car System has 28<sup>th</sup> Birthday," *New Britain Herald*, November 6, 1914. New Britain Public Library, Local History Room, trolley file. In Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 2.

<sup>40</sup> "Personal Mention," *Electric Railway Journal*, Vol. XLIII, No. 25 (January-June 1914), 1421, in Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 3.

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from Central Park in downtown New Britain. In 1892, the New Britain Tramway Company was absorbed by the Central Railway & Lighting Company and converted its lines to electric.<sup>41</sup> Interurban travel became possible as trolley lines connected New Britain to nearby cities. The first trip from Hartford to New Britain took place on June 4, 1897.<sup>42</sup> The New Britain Carriage Company constructed a motor powered automobile patented by John D. Humphrey in 1889.<sup>43</sup> Figures 1-8 illustrate the relationship between these system and the downtown buildings throughout the downtown during this period.

Transportation continued to fuel traffic and development, not just for locals but surrounding regions as well. The Corbin Motor Vehicle Company, produced the Corbin Motor Car. Bus systems, including the New Britain Hartford Coach Express, began operating in the 1920s.<sup>44</sup> Peter A. and Rose F. Agostini founded the New Britain Transportation Company. Its central office was located at 681 Arch Street, with a garage at 333 Arch Street. The busses competed with trolleys, advertising a “nickel a ride.”<sup>45</sup> Central Park remained the epicenter of New Britain’s transportation systems. As the number of cars and busses in New Britain increased, the city began paving the roads.<sup>46</sup> New Britain was even featured in a tour guide published by the Works Progress Administration in 1938. It encouraged sightseers to drive down Main Street and visit Franklin Square Park.<sup>47</sup> Even though the trolleys were discontinued in 1937, traffic congestion in downtown remained a problem. Traffic lights were installed to try to alleviate the congestion, and lampposts were added to the Main, Arch, Walnut, and Chestnut Street intersection, as well as at Park and Elm Streets and Franklin Square. They even included “walk” signs for pedestrians’ safety.<sup>48</sup>

The Chamber of Commerce advocated downtown hotels, such as The Russwin and The Doris on Main Street and The Burritt on West Main Street, accommodated business travelers passing through the area. The Burritt Hotel at 67 West Main Street is a significant landmark of the downtown district. It was built in 1924 as part of the civic improvement movement that took place in the city in the early twentieth century. It came after a community-wide effort to provide New Britain with a first class hotel, a necessity in a progressive city. In the early 1920s, New Britain’s business leaders became concerned that the city was losing commercial opportunities to other Connecticut cities with better hotel facilities. The leaders of New Britain’s leading industrial and mercantile enterprises, together with civic organizations such as the Lions and Rotary clubs, banded together to form a corporation to build a large, modern hotel. The hotel was intended not only to accommodate visitors, but to also project New Britain as a community of progress.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>41</sup> “43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report of the Railroad Commissioners of the State of Connecticut,” (Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company, 1895), in Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 3.

<sup>42</sup> “Trolley to New Britain: Experimental Trip Yesterday – Opening Probably Next Week,” *The Hartford Courant*, June 5, 1897: 6.

<sup>43</sup> “New Britain News,” *The Hartford Courant*, May 24, 1889, in Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 4.

<sup>44</sup> Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 4.

<sup>45</sup> Richard P. Spencer, “The History of the New Britain Transportation Company” (February 14, 2013), [www.nbt.bz](http://www.nbt.bz).

<sup>46</sup> “New Britain Roads in Fine Condition,” *The Hartford Courant*, June 1, 1919, in Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Federal Writers’ Project of the Works Progress Administration, *Connecticut: A Guide to its Roads, Lore, and People* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1938), 221, in Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 5.

<sup>48</sup> “Traffic Changes in City Proposed,” *New Britain Herald*, December 17, 1937; “Traffic Control Equipment Here,” *New Britain Herald*, October 29, 1938; “Committee Named to Study Traffic,” *New Britain Herald*, April 28, 1937; “New Light Posts to be Installed,” *New Britain Herald*, October 3, 1938, New Britain Public Library, Local History Room, Traffic file, in Taylor, *Historic Context Study*, 5.

<sup>49</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Burritt Hotel, New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut, National Register # 83001257, 4.

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As New Britain's population grew, the city government began to play a greater role.<sup>50</sup> The local government faced major overcrowding issues. Councils met frequently to make plans for the installation of sewers, the water supply, fire protection, and road and sidewalk work.<sup>51</sup> In 1907, the city purchased the Russwin Hotel and turned it into the town's new city hall.<sup>52</sup> Located in the downtown district, the building was originally built in 1885. It was modified for its use as city hall. The Renaissance Revival-style building features terra cotta decoration on its exterior and creates a dominating presence in the downtown area.<sup>53</sup> The massive population growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also brought concerns about education. In 1853, city leaders established the *New Britain Institute* to promote a series of lectures and establish a library and reading room. In 1850, in an era when families had to pay tuition for schooling, New Britain became the first municipality in Connecticut to make its schools free.<sup>54</sup> In addition, until 1850, no high school preparation standards existed in the state. New Britain High School was the first to establish such standards.<sup>55</sup> The culmination of these educational improvements came with the construction of a new high school in 1896 in the downtown district at 50 Bassett Street (Photo 28). It served as the high school for nearly seventy years until it closed down in the 1960s in lieu of larger facilities. The building still stands today as apartments for the elderly and handicapped.<sup>56</sup>

The dense development of the scale and scope of the urban services, commerce, and industry in the downtown area from 1900 to 1950 is evident in the New Britain city directory and city maps (see Figures 9 and 10). These included: doctors, dentists, beauty salons, barber and beauty shops, restaurants, offices, clubhouses, churches, banks, and movie theaters; and grocery stores, drug stores, clothing and shoe stores, pharmacies, real estate agencies, and jewelry, dry goods, hardware, and appliance stores. These services tied residents to the downtown.<sup>57</sup> Raphael's Department Store (300 Main Street, aka The Leonard Building) became a primary destination for shoppers in the region. Other upscale retail businesses in the Andrews Building (132 Main Street, Figure 15) offered five levels of display windows in his furniture store. Louis Raphael also owned a then state-of-the art office building on West Main Street (Photo 34).

Immigrants and their cultural ties also helped shape the downtown into a thriving cultural center. Although considered a largely foreign city, by the 1930s, the majority of New Britain residents were first-generation American, with 72.4 percent of the population being born within the United States. Of those, 88 percent were less than 37 years of age. The City Social Survey suggests this is because of the immigration restrictions imposed during and after World War I. However, New Britain remained the top foreign-born city in Connecticut at the time, with a foreign-born population of 27.6 percent. Virtually all of New Britain's citizens were English-speaking, but many of them were bilingual, speaking Polish (38.7 percent), Italian (22.5 percent),

<sup>50</sup> Thibodeau, *New Britain, The City of Invention*, 19.

<sup>51</sup> Thibodeau, *New Britain, The City of Invention*, 51.

<sup>52</sup> Thibodeau, *New Britain, The City of Invention*, 24.

<sup>53</sup> National Register of Historic Places, City Hall – Monument District, New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut, National Register # 73001957.

<sup>54</sup> *The High School New Britain Connecticut*, 21.

<sup>55</sup> Kenneth A. Larsen, *A Walk Around Walnut Hill: New Britain, CT* (New Britain, CT: The Art Press), 16.

<sup>56</sup> "Ceremony Held at Old High School for Conversion to 126 Apartments," *The New Britain Herald*, June 4, 1977.

<sup>57</sup> New Britain Directory (New Britain: Price & Lee Co, 1950), 985, in Marchitto, *Historic Context Study*, 4.

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German/Austrian (ten percent), or another language.<sup>58</sup> Even today, New Britain is known for the overwhelming presence of a close-knit Polish community. For nearly a century, the Polish enclave, located just outside the district, was known as Polonia. According to Stanislaus A. Blejwas, New Britain's Polish population numbered 1,168 in 1900. By 1910 it grew to a population of 43,916, consisting of both native and foreign-born.<sup>59</sup>

Another group who immigrated to New Britain for work and brought its religion is the Swedes. Swedish immigrants began coming to the city during the 1870s. They were attracted to New Britain because they already had experience working in iron manufacturing in Sweden.<sup>60</sup> The Swedish community was also centered on its faith. The Swedish church located downtown was one of three Swedish churches centered in New Britain, and it was the most significant of the three. The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Maria Church was formed in 1881 by a group of Swedish immigrants. The current structure located in Franklin Square was constructed in 1906 due to the demands created by increasing membership.<sup>61</sup> The structure itself is a magnificent Gothic Revival, adding a stunning piece of architecture to the Downtown district (Photo 24).

The Germans in New Britain provide another example of the interconnected roles of industry, immigration, and religion in the community development of downtown. It was a group of about thirty young German men who pushed for the creation of a church. They had come to New Britain for work and felt that they needed a place where they could worship and practice their religious customs.<sup>62</sup> As more and more Germans came to the city, it was apparent that these people needed a place to worship and hold community events.<sup>63</sup> They formed a congregation, selected a pastor, and built their church.<sup>64</sup> Building the church was a challenging undertaking and it was a community effort. Each worker in the congregation contributed one day's wages every month to the fundraising effort.<sup>65</sup> Their hard work resulted in the construction of St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church at 99 Franklin Square in 1887 (Photo 34).<sup>66</sup> The construction of St. Matthew's brought the community together much more permanently, and the new church offered a variety of programs to build this sense of unity. Community involvement became a vital part of the church's mission. In the 1950s, the church built a private Lutheran school for the children in the community. The church has been a vital center to the German community within New Britain.

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<sup>58</sup> City of New Britain with Cooperation of the Auxiliary Committee to the Emergency Relief Administration Committee Operated as ERA Project No 88-Fa-102 Under the Supervision of Emergency Relief Commission, *Report of City Social Survey—New Britain, Connecticut*, (Hartford, CT: State Office Building, November 1935), 7 as found in Zackary Keegan, "Demographics and Housing in New Britain During the Great Depression," for Local History and Community Development, Central Connecticut State University (December 2007).

<sup>59</sup> Stanislaus A. Blejwas, *A Polish Community in Transition: The Origins and Evolution of Holy Cross Parish, New Britain, Connecticut*. (Chicago: Polish American Historical Association, 1978), 5, in Kendra Mapp, *Historical Context and Significance Study of Downtown New Britain: Immigration and Religion*, HIST 511, CCSU, New Britain, Connecticut, 3.

<sup>60</sup> Helge Nelson, *The Swedes and the Swedish Settlements in North America*, Vol 1. (Lund: Sweden: Gleerup, 1943), 112, in Mapp, *Historical Context Study*, 4.

<sup>61</sup> *Hartford Times*, October 20, 1951, in Mapp, *Historical Context Study*, 4.

<sup>62</sup> Carol Burns, "Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church to Celebrate 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary," *The New Britain Herald*, December 20, 1986, in Danielle Johnson, *Historical Context and Significance Standards of Downtown New Britain: Immigration in Regards to Religion in the Community*, HIST 511, CCSU, New Britain, Connecticut, 2.

<sup>63</sup> *Saint Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church History*, 1-2.

<sup>64</sup> *Saint Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church History*, 1-2.

<sup>65</sup> "Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church Observing 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary." *The New Britain Herald*, November 24, 1984, in Johnson, *Historical Context and Significance*, 3.

<sup>66</sup> *St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church History*. The History Committee, Centennial Committee 1950. Local History Room: New Britain Public Library, New Britain, Connecticut, 1, in Johnson, *Historical Context and Significance*, 2.

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Churches like St. Matthew's greatly impacted the development of the downtown district and provided buildings that still make up a significant piece of the district's architecture. They are therefore a prime example of the diverse community histories found in the downtown district. Immigrants were able to use these churches to build a strong sense of ethnic heritage. This diversity is what helped to make the downtown the rich, cultural and economic center it became. This diverse history displays the historical significance that the downtown holds in the history of immigration of New Britain and in the United States as a whole. The South Congregational Church and the First Baptist Church formed a partnership in the 1880s to provide support and worship services for New Britain's numerous residents. The church at 90 Main Street hosted numerous ethnic groups until they could establish their own churches (Figure 2).

Located on South Main Street, Saint Joseph's Catholic Church was constructed in 1896 when the city's Catholic community felt that the influx of Catholic immigrants, especially the Irish, drove the need for another Catholic parish in addition to the one that already existed with St. Mary's.<sup>67</sup> The Archdiocese of Hartford appointed Father Richard Moore the first priest of the church. The building was constructed and ready for parishioners a year later in 1897.<sup>68</sup> As the Catholic community continued to grow, the Archdiocese decided that a school was needed for the sake of education in the community. When the church was constructed, four classrooms were built adjacent to the church for educational purposes. In 1931, those four classrooms were expanded into a full size school.<sup>69</sup> The school continues to serve New Britain's Catholic community today. There have been extensive efforts to restore Saint Joseph's and preserve the community's history. There was a major effort of restoration in the 1990s to replace missing stained glass, doors, flooring, windows, and the gas burner in the rectory. It was estimated that the parish needed around \$300,000 to make the necessary repairs.<sup>70</sup> As a result the community feverishly worked to raise money to restore their church. Father Thomas Gaffney was quoted in 1996, saying, "If someone came in to give us five million dollars to tear this down and build a new church, there'd be an uproar."<sup>71</sup> The community did not want a new church; they wanted to preserve their history by restoring theirs, indicating how powerful the church is as a symbol in that community. The French-German Saint Peter's Catholic Church is located at 98 Franklin Square. Other houses of worship are located in the area surrounding the district.<sup>72</sup>

The booming hardware manufacturing industry during the 1920s is reflected in another centerpiece of the New Britain Downtown district: The Commercial Trust building, located at 55 West Main Street (seen in Photo 6 to the left of City Hall). The Trust was organized in 1915 as an alternative to the New Britain National Bank, demonstrating increasing demand for banking services due to the city's growing prosperity. The new bank was constructed between 1925 and 1927 at the cost of \$750,000.<sup>73</sup> It followed the tradition of banks and financial institutions

<sup>67</sup> "Parish History- St. Joseph's Church." Archdiocese of Hartford Official Website, in Johnson, *Historical Context and Significance*, 4.

<sup>68</sup> "Parish History-St. Joseph's Church."

<sup>69</sup> Toni Silano, "Saint Joseph's Church Celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary." *The New Britain Herald*, October 4, 1996, in Johnson, *Historical Context and Significance*, 4.

<sup>70</sup> Reverend Thomas R. Gaffney, "Restoration Projects: St. Joseph's Parish-Pamphlet." Local History Room: New Britain Public Library, New Britain, Connecticut, in Johnson, *Historical Context and Significance*, 5.

<sup>71</sup> "Restoration Projects: St. Joseph's Parish-Pamphlet."

<sup>72</sup> *Historic Preservation Action Plan*, 12.

<sup>73</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Commercial Trust Company Building, New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut, #09000141, 8.

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erecting dominating structures to symbolize strength and prosperity. The Trust company adopted the blacksmith's anvil as its symbol and logo to honor of Elihu Burritt, New Britain's most famous native son, who was a smith by trade. A scholar and pacifist, Burritt was most well known for advocating peace at an international level. He had founded the League of International Brotherhood in Great Britain in 1846. The League's goal was to advocate against war throughout the world.<sup>74</sup> The symbol of the anvil is present all throughout the architecture of the building, leading it to also become known as the Anvil Building among New Britain's residents.

While the Commercial Trust Building is a significant example of the economic prosperity of the 1920s, it is also physically reflects the financial crash of 1929. The crisis of confidence that followed the crash caused depositors to withdraw large amounts of money from their bank accounts. The situation with Commercial Trust was no different, and the company closed its doors on December 13, 1930 leaving an elaborate lobby made up of high-end marble and interior embellishments essentially unused. Since then, the property has changed hands from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to the New Britain National Bank. The New Britain National Bank weathered the Great Depression and moved into the building, but it became a victim to urban renewal, which took residents, shopping, and banking to the suburbs to increase automobile accessibility..<sup>75</sup>

Through the efforts of the local government leaders, the City received significant federal aid from New Deal programs like the Works Progress Administration, offering employment opportunities and infrastructure projects. The downtown survived the Great Depression in fairly strong condition with many streets and sidewalks repaved, curbs realigned, and streetlights installed. Meanwhile, the city continued a tradition of supporting the indigent and homeless by providing the basic necessities of food, water and clothing to residents through numerous institutions including the YWCA and Salvation Army on Arch Street.<sup>76</sup> The City contributed to the war effort by producing munitions and weapons revived the economy for a time. The American Hardware Corporation still had assets of more than \$23,000,000, employed 4,200 people, and maintained over 2 million square feet of space in its factories in Franklin Square through 1950 (Figures 11-14).<sup>77</sup>

After World War II, the decline of the domestic manufacturing economy and the automobile slowed decades of steady growth in New Britain and its commercial core. Urban renewal and marked the movement of commerce away from the city center. At the same time, many New Britain residents were moving out of town as the city's manufacturing declined. By the 1960s, New Britain was the only city in Connecticut without a central expressway. Despite having saved its downtown district, some city leaders and residents were beginning to think they were

<sup>74</sup> Commercial Trust Building Nomination, 8.

<sup>75</sup> Commercial Trust Building Nomination, 9. In 1990, Fleet Bank took over the company and the last banking activities took place in the building in 1996.

<sup>76</sup> Julia Baldini, "Land Use and Infrastructure," and Katherine Parlato, "Government in 1930s New Britain," in "Full Steam Ahead," Local History and Community Development, Central Connecticut State University, December 2007. Copy in New Britain Public Library; Rich Edwards, et. al. "The History of Homelessness in New Britain, Connecticut," Local History and Community Development, Central Connecticut State University, Spring 2012.

<sup>77</sup> *Historic Preservation Action Plan*, 13-15.

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missing out on modern progress.<sup>78</sup> When Congress passed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, federal funds became available to support highway construction.<sup>79</sup> Developers and new ideas about urban planning persuaded city leaders that a highway was necessary to allow New Britain to grow and prosper in the modern world. The state approved the plan for Route 72 through the heart of downtown in the early 1960s.<sup>80</sup> The city's political and industrial leaders supported it, thinking that it would help downtown business, improve access into the city, and connect New Britain to the state's larger interstate system.<sup>81</sup> However, many objected, noting that "not one rich person is being affected" and that people might travel through New Britain or out of New Britain to Hartford for commerce.<sup>82</sup> Routes 72, 9, and 84 allowed people to live outside New Britain and shop at malls adjacent to the highways. Unfortunately, efforts to economically renew the city ironically marked the downtown's decline. Downtown lost much of its original retail purpose as the highway ramps necessitated building demolition, the widening of streets and intersections and traffic patterns downtown changed to handle increased automobile volume.<sup>83</sup> Highways now connected the cities to the suburbs; three highways were constructed through New Britain, with one slicing through the heart of downtown.

Like highway construction, urban renewal was the city's attempt to solve the economic problems caused by the weakening industrial base.<sup>84</sup> At the end of 1963, the City approved demolition of several "city landmarks" as part of the South Central Renewal project just east of the downtown business district.<sup>85</sup> From the mid-1960s through the 1980s, the city saw numerous urban renewal schemes, which were directed by the city's Redevelopment Commission. Among the largest and most visible was New Brite Plaza, located on a twelve-acre lot at the corner of Main and East Main Streets at the northern edge of downtown. Another was a modern office tower at the corner of Bank and Main Streets, later known as the ACMAT building. Some residents mounted a fruitless effort to save the Strand Theater in 1972.<sup>86</sup> It was not until a city report done in the late 1970s found that urban renewal had resulted in a loss of 1,165 housing units and 3,345 residents in downtown that city leaders finally began to realize the consequences. They changed zoning codes to promote more residential development and protect what remained of the central downtown, but it was too late to bring many residents back.<sup>87</sup> However, despite the demolition of large parts of historic downtown building stock, much of the downtown commercial district, including Franklin Square, remains intact.

<sup>78</sup> Thibodeau, *New Britain, The City of Invention*, 73-76, in Todd Jones, *Historic Context and Significance Study of Downtown New Britain: Transportation Infrastructure and Urban Renewal, 1940s-1980s*, HIST 511, CCSU, New Britain, Connecticut, 3.

<sup>79</sup> Mark H. Rose, *Interstate: Express Highway Politics, 1941-1956* (Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1979), 93-94, in Jones, *Historic Context Study*, 4.

<sup>80</sup> Thibodeau, *New Britain, The City of Invention*, 76-79, in Jones, 4.

<sup>81</sup> Albert J. Marino, "Majority at Hearing in Favor of Highway Through City Center," *New Britain Herald*, August 24, 1962, 1-2, in Jones, *Historic Context Study*, 4.

<sup>82</sup> Connecticut State Highway Department, *Public Hearing Transcript, Relocation of Route 72 in New Britain and Berlin, From the 1961 Route 72 Construction East of New Britain Road in Berlin to Interstate Route 84 in the Vicinity of the New Britain-Plainville Town Line Including a Connector to Interstate 291 in Newington; Held in the New Britain Senior High School in the City of New Britain, August 32, 1962* (Wethersfield: Connecticut State Highway Department, 1962), 66-72, in Jones, *Historic Context Study*, 4-5.

<sup>83</sup> "New Britain 1957," "New Britain 1980," Map Drawer 1, City Maps, Local History Room, New Britain Public Library, in Jones, *Historic Context Study*, 6.

<sup>84</sup> Thibodeau, *New Britain, The City of Invention*, 89, in Jones, *Historic Context Study*, 7.

<sup>85</sup> "New Britain: Renewal to Demolish Many City Landmarks," *The Hartford Courant* (December 22, 1963), 7B1.

<sup>86</sup> Thibodeau, *New Britain, The City of Invention*, 90-91, in Jones, *Historic Context Study*, 8.

<sup>87</sup> "New Life Sought in City," *Hartford Courant*, February 28, 1977, 15A, in Jones, *Historic Context Study*, 9.

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### Criterion C: Architecture

The New Britain Downtown District also meets Criterion C at the local level for its representation of classic and distinctive examples of high-style commercial architecture during the period of significance, many of which prominent architects designed, including at least one from New Britain. The most prominent styles exhibited in Downtown New Britain are the Colonial and Gothic Revival, Neoclassical (particularly Beaux Arts), Romanesque Revival, and Art Deco styles. The use of the popular Italianate style demonstrates how the district embodies the characteristics of that time period and style. The Beaux Arts style represented the prosperity the City of New Britain enjoyed at the time with its baroque detailing. Colonial Revival style in New Britain is embodied in the red, brick Burritt Hotel with its symmetrical façade, evenly spaced windows, pilasters, festoon-carved panels, a balustrade above the second story and copper cornices and crests above the storefronts. The Romanesque Revival buildings bear the classic rounded arches, semi-circular arches on windows, and belt courses. Finally, the machine-inspired Art Deco style appropriately appears frequently on one and two-part commercial blocks throughout the manufacturing city.

New Britain was a prosperous place, where preeminent local architects experimented with a variety of contemporary architectural styles. New Britain-born Frederic Teich (whose office was located in the Raphael Building at 99 West Main Street) designed an apartment house at 35 Glen Street (Photo 26). American architect George Zunner is famous for his architecture in Hartford, Connecticut, but his work is also present in New Britain. Zunner came to the United States from Germany in 1878 at the age of 21 and began his work as an architect as a supervisor of the construction of German buildings at the Chicago World's Fair from 1891 to 1893. He then went to Boston, and three years later came to Hartford in 1896. Zunner became a prominent citizen of Hartford, designing over 600 buildings there, and served as the President of the Hartford Rifle Club as well as a member of the city's building commission.<sup>88</sup> The C-shaped Collegiate Gothic apartment building at 23 Glen Street, known as the Hungerford Apartments, is a distinctive example of Zunner's work in New Britain (Photo 27).

The Beaux Arts style, particularly as interpreted by the prominent and local engineer and architect William Cadwell, characterizes much of Downtown New Britain. Cadwell was born nearby in Farmington, Connecticut in 1862, and became one of the best-known civil engineers and architects in Central Connecticut. He is remembered for numerous architectural and engineering achievements in the City of New Britain, such as the design of the city's sewage system. He planned several of the largest buildings at the city's center, as well as the first steel mill at Stanley Works. He served on many boards and committees within the city, for example as a trustee of the New Britain Trust Company.<sup>89</sup> Cadwell lived very close to the downtown, in what is now the Walnut Hill National Register Historic District. Cadwell's architectural design of 191 Arch Street exhibits the Beaux-Arts style with its brick pilasters, supported by decorative terra-cotta bases, which lead up to elaborate terra-cotta arches, which surround the upper level rounded windows (Photo 12). Caldwell's Beaux Arts style architecture is seen scattered elsewhere throughout the district, including 38 Main Street with its similarly elaborate projecting

<sup>88</sup> "Geo Zunner, 75, Architect, Dies Suddenly," *The Hartford Courant*, July 14, 1936.

<sup>89</sup> "W.H. Cadwell Engineer is Dead at 78," *The Hartford Courant*, May 22, 1941.

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cornice (Photo 13). 59 and 67 Arch Street best displays his eclectic Italianate/ Sullivanesque style (Photo 13).

New Britain also attracted prominent architects from the region. The hotels, designed by renowned architects, were also meant to be striking buildings. The nationally recognized architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White out of New York designed the Russwin Hotel. Henry E. Russell and Cornelius Erwin financed it. When it was converted to City Hall, McKim, Mead, and White also completed the renovations. The hotel was the only one designed by exclusively by Stanford White's assistant, Joseph Morrill Wells.<sup>90</sup> The H.L. Stevens Company out of New York City was contracted to prepare the plans and construct the Burritt Hotel. The firm specialized in hotel construction. The building was considered very modern for 1924 because it was constructed with all fireproof materials. It also included a strong, almost indestructible reinforced concrete structural system. This was a key component of the building in a time when hotel fires were a justifiable fear.<sup>91</sup> In addition to safety, the hotel also contained all the modern amenities of the time. This included separate freight and passenger elevators, complete plumbing in every room, and separately piped in iced drinking water. The architecture of the building was intended to illustrate its role as the leading hotel in the city. The large and imposing Georgian Revival style building quickly became a landmark of the downtown district. The monumental pavilions on each of the main elevations, the balustrades, the round-arched and Palladian windows, the panels with festoon carving, and the redbrick are all carried out on a large scale. This gave the building its dominating presence. As the largest and most stylish hotel in the city, it became the center of all of New Britain's social affairs. This included dinners, dances, and other formal events. Its restaurant and coffee shop were frequented by generations of residents, and the New Britain Club had its headquarters in the building as well (Figure 14).<sup>92</sup>

Famous architects also designed many of the churches. Amos P. Cutting, one of New England's most prestigious architects in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, designed the Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church at 69 Main Street (Photo 16). He also designed seventy-five churches and several libraries in New England. Trinity Church is a Romanesque Revival building. When the congregation could no longer afford its maintenance, a grass-roots movement of local citizens saved the building from demolition. It now serves as Trinity-on-Main, a cultural center for arts, community, and education.<sup>93</sup>

Like in the city as a whole, the majority of the buildings in the downtown were constructed prior to World War II. The downtown remains attractive to immigrants and workers seeking inexpensive housing opportunities, convenient services and shopping, community activity, and a convenient, walkable downtown.<sup>94</sup> In recent years, developers have begun to restore, repurpose, and reuse many of the most architecturally iconic buildings, helping to maintain the downtown's historic character

<sup>90</sup> Fowler, *A History of New Britain*, 140; "City Hall-Monument District," National Register Nomination Form, National Park Service, 1973.

<sup>91</sup> Burritt Hotel Nomination, 4.

<sup>92</sup> Burritt Hotel Nomination, 6.

<sup>93</sup> Trinity-on-Main: A Space for Arts, Community, and Culture. [trinityonmain.org](http://trinityonmain.org).

<sup>94</sup> *Historic Preservation Action Plan*, 16.

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- von Hoffman, Alexander. *Local Attachments: The Making of An American Urban Neighborhood, 1850 to 1920*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.
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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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- preliminary determination of 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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 80

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: -72.778002 | Longitude: 41.662398 |
| 2. Latitude: -72.778175 | Longitude: 41.659314 |
| 3. Latitude: -72.778794 | Longitude: 41.659131 |
| 4. Latitude: -72.778327 | Longitude: 41.660054 |
| 5. Latitude: -72.778337 | Longitude: 41.662728 |
| 6. Latitude: -72.778274 | Longitude: 41.664138 |

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- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 7. Latitude: -72.773993  | Longitude: 41.665389 |
| 8. Latitude: -72.774387  | Longitude: 41.66628  |
| 9. Latitude: -72.775777  | Longitude: 41.667035 |
| 10. Latitude: -72.776608 | Longitude: 41.667708 |
| 11. Latitude: -72.775427 | Longitude: 41.669113 |
| 12. Latitude: -72.770948 | Longitude: 41.668404 |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the Downtown New Britain Historic District are shown on the attached map entitled "Downtown New Britain National Register Historic District Boundaries". The boundaries begin with South Main Street, Franklin Square, and Main Street, which comprise the eastern boundary. These streets serve as a natural boundary as they mark the end of the downtown neighborhood. Columbus Boulevard serves as a northern boundary in the same manner. Arch Street, Main Street, and Washington Street form the western boundary, which abuts and slightly overlaps the Walnut Hill Historic District. The south boundary follows a line along Whiting Street.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The district boundary was drawn to encompass the intact portion of the historic civic and commercial center of New Britain. It contains the area historically identified with as the downtown, but excludes peripheral areas of recent development. Since the focus of this nomination is the visually identifiable dense commercial core, the expansive residential

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neighborhoods to the west and south were intentionally drawn out. The boundary includes some peripheral institutional and community buildings that are already included in other National Register listings, but also meet the themes of significance identified in this nomination. Some residential buildings within the boundary are included because they are interspersed throughout the district or a part of a notable downtown streetscape. The district boundaries surround the visually cohesive downtown characterized by dense development and high-style, mixed use buildings.

The northern boundary extends to Columbus Boulevard to include the district's only factory building, and the highway marks a distinct endpoint of the intact portion of the historic downtown. The west and south boundaries are drawn in accordance with a change in development pattern from commercial or mixed use to primarily residential with gradually decreasing density, but include related historic buildings at the edges. The south boundary encompasses three residences included because they form an integral part of the streetscape facing Franklin Square and are located between a school and mixed-use building that fit with the themes of the nomination. The eastern boundary is delineated along the line of recent development and is drawn to exclude properties that are not historic.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Leah S. Glaser, Associate Professor of History with Amy Gagnon, Historical Consultant, Tim Adams, Heather Gullberg, Kira Holmes, Kristen Hopewood, Dan Lobner, Richard Maziarz, Emily McAdam, John Mooney, Sebastian Holquist, Lauren Remetta, Joseph Sylvester, Frank Perrin, and Candace Hall (HIST 511, Fall 2013)

organization: Central Connecticut State University Public History Program for the New Britain Historic District Commission

street & number: 1615 Stanley Street

city or town: New Britain state: CT zip code: 06050

e-mail glaserles@ccsu.edu

telephone: 860-832-2825

date: 9/29/2015

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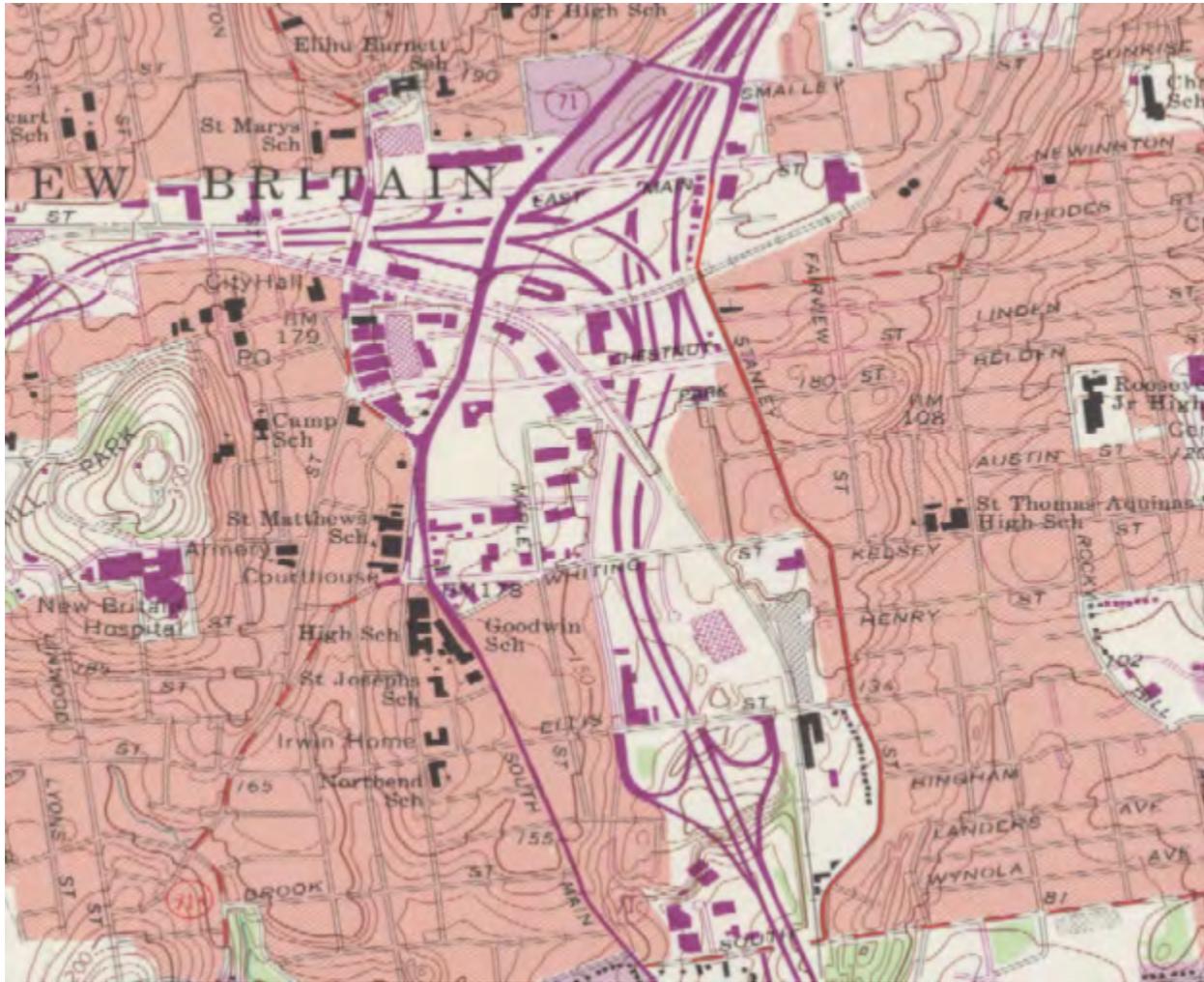
### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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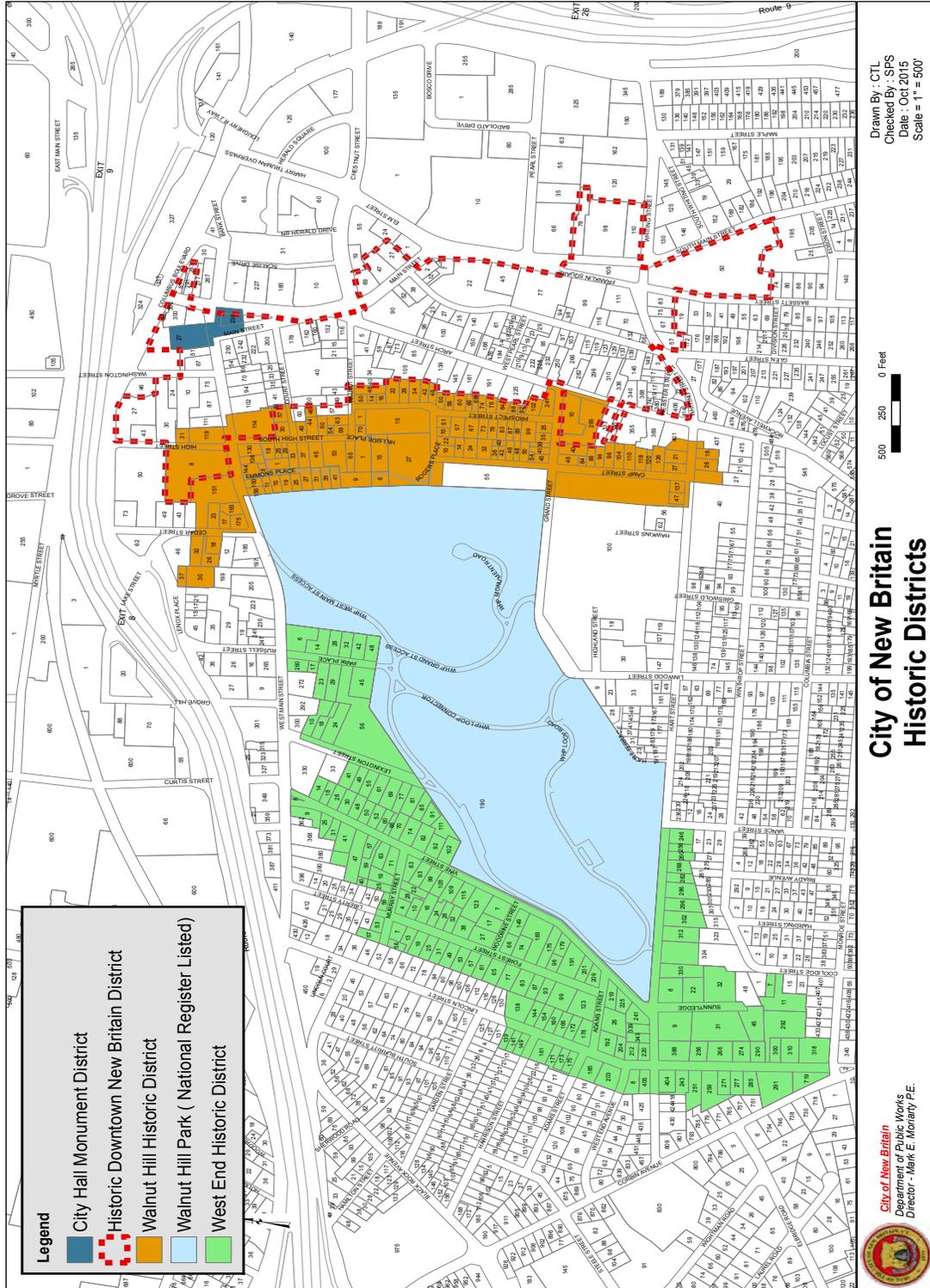
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Downtown New Britain Historic District Topographical Map

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**Figures**



1. Central Park w/ then Russwin Hotel in background, 1892. *In and About New Britain*. Lewis & Atwell: New Britain, 1892.



2. Looking Up Main Street, 1907, E.P. Kensington, CT: Charton and Co. South Congregational Church in background.

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3. Franklin Square from High School, c. 1910. Postcard. Published by the August Schmelzer Co., Meriden, Conn. No. 99, made in Germany.



4. Arch Street, Postcard, c. 1910. Published by the August Schmelzer Co., Meriden, Conn. No. 6, made in Germany.

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5. Trolley cars on tracks on unpaved street. Pedestrians on sidewalks in front of businesses. Automobiles and wagons on street, 1911. Leroy Roberts Railroad Collection, Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries.



6. Central Park and Main Street (City Hall in background), c. 1909  
Connecticut Historical Society, Connecticut Images Collection

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7. West Main Street toward Main Street, 1910, Connecticut Historical Society Connecticut Images Collection



8. Arch St looking North, 1910  
Connecticut Historical Society, Connecticut Images Collection

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9. E.M. Woodward, Map of New Britain from Original Surveys, 1851.

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10. Nirenstein Map of Downtown, 1944. New Britain Industrial Museum.

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11. Downtown New Britain, 1949. Southern New England Telephone Company Records, Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut Libraries.



12. Arch Street. New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut.  
Southeast view, Photo taken in the 1950s. Photo courtesy of the New Britain Local History Room.

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13. Burritt Hotel. New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut.  
Southeast view, Photo taken in the 1950s, Photo courtesy of New Britain Local History Room.



14. 236-246 Main Street. New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut.  
Southwest view, Photo taken in the 1950s, Photo courtesy of New Britain Local History Room.

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15. Main Street. New Britain, Hartford County, Connecticut.  
Southwest view, Photo taken in the 1960s, Photo courtesy of the New Britain Local History Room.

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: New Britain Downtown

City or Vicinity: New Britain

County: Hartford

State: CT

Photographer: Tod Bryant

Date Photographed: October 26, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

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Aerial View of Central Park, West Main, and Main Streets. Google Earth, 2015.

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West side of Main Street. Camera facing South.

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Looking east down West Main Street. Camera facing east.

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Looking southwest down Arch Street from Main Street. Camera facing west.

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Glen Street, looking north. Camera facing north.

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Franklin Square looking north from Whiting Street. Camera facing north.

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South (front) elevations of 27 (nearest), 51-55 (*aka* Anvil/Commercial Trust Building), 67 West Main Street (Burritt Hotel). Camera facing northwest.

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North (front) elevations of 52-54 Main Street. Camera facing south.

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East (front) elevation of 8 High Street, New Britain Public Library. Camera facing west.

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South (front) elevation of 27 West Main. City Hall. Camera facing North.

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North (front) elevation of Soldiers Monument, Central Park. Camera facing south.

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West (front) elevation of 38 Main Street. Camera facing north.

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East (front) elevation of 191 Arch Street. Camera facing southwest.

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East (front) and north elevations of 59 and 67 Arch Street. 59 Arch is known as the “Vega Building.” Camera facing west.

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North (front) and west elevation of 114 West Main Street. Former U.S. Post Office. Camera facing south.

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East (front) and south elevation of 111 Franklin Square. Camera facing west.

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West (front) and north elevation of 69 Main Street. Camera facing southeast.

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East (front) and south (side) elevations of 33 and 25 Court Street. Camera facing northwest.

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West (front) and north elevation of 380 Arch Street. Camera facing southeast.

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East (front) and south elevation of 23 Glen Street. Camera facing northwest.

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East (front) and south elevation of 27 Glen Street. Camera facing northwest.

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North (front) and east elevation of 38 Whiting Street. Camera facing southwest.

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East (front) and south elevation of 77 Franklin Square. Lutheran Church. Camera facing northwest.

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South (front) and east elevation of 27 Main Street. Camera facing north.

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East (front) and north elevation of 35 Glen Street. Camera facing west.

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North (front) and east elevation of 59 Bassett Street. Camera facing southwest.

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East (front) and south elevation of 24 Washington Street. Camera facing northwest.

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South (front) elevation of 111-117 West Main Street. Camera facing north.

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South and west elevation of 27-33 Columbus Blvd/ 89 High Street. Camera facing southeast.

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North (front) and east elevation of 102 West Main Street. Camera facing southwest.

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East (front) and south elevation of 200 Main Street. Camera facing northwest.

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West (front) and north elevation of 340 Arch Street. Camera facing southeast.

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East (front) elevation 87-99 Franklin Square. Camera facing northwest.

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South (front) elevation of 99 West Main Street. Camera facing north.

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East (front) and south elevation of 30 Washington Street. Camera facing northwest.

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South and east elevations of 75 West Main. Camera facing northwest.

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**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 existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.