



### #12 City Shop

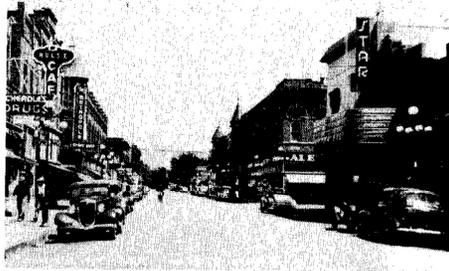
Built in 1930, this brick building trimmed with red ceiling tiles was one of the first designed expressly for the needs of the automobile. The corner driveway provided access to the gas pumps, large glass windows allowed the public to view the latest from Dodge, and a large service area made it possible for the mechanics to tinker with the idiosyncrasies of the new gadgets in unparalleled comfort.\*\*

\*Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.  
\*\*Eligible for listing on National Register.



Additional information is available in *Weiser: A Look at Idaho Architecture* by Don Hibbard and *Weiser: The Way It Was* by Betty Derig, both available either at Stark's Hallmark Store (# 6 Oddfellows), or at the ICC&M Gift Shop. Further Historical Weiser Tours brochures will be available at the Chamber of Commerce office.

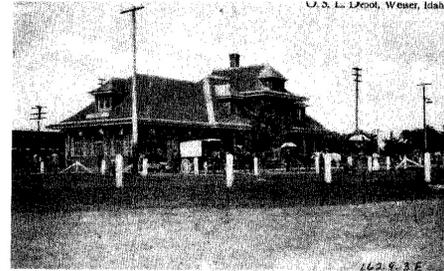
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# HISTORIC WEISER TOUR #1

## COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

Weiser's downtown grew north on State Street from the Oregon Short Line depot after a disastrous 1890 fire wiped out nearly all of the old downtown, located about two miles to the east. The OSL Railroad had built a wood frame depot near the present depot's location in 1886, and speculators had laid out property lines radiating from it. Developers gradually filled in the town map with substantial brick buildings between 1890 and 1920, giving the town its present shape. The six-block stretch along central State Street from the depot marked the heart of a prosperous and elegant new community that dreamed of growth still to come.



### #1 Oregon Short Line Depot

The Downtown Walking Tour begins where most early visitors to town would have begun, at the depot. This Queen Anne-style structure, built in 1906-1907, of brick with rusticated concrete block trim, was similar in design to the now demolished Payette depot. It provided an imposing anchor for the south end of State Street and gave visitors to the town an impressive gateway to the city. Originally a fanlight was above the main doors, and dormers graced the roof. This building was saved from demolition in 1987 and, along with the grounds, has been restored to its original condition. A more complete history of this building is available at the Chamber of Commerce office.\*\*



### #2 Matthews' Grain & Storage

Looking east from State along Commercial, the visitor may see this structure, said to be among the earliest brick buildings on the new west side of Weiser. In the thirties it was known as the "Clinton Rooms" and was reputed to be one of the "red-light" houses in town. A local story says that a postal employee delivering a C.O.D. package to one of the residents was offered a barter of services instead of cash.\*\*



### #3 The Crescent Bar

This building contained an important clothing store in the early years of the century. Known as "C.J. Breir's" and later as "The Hub," it hosted another of Weiser's houses of ill-repute in the 1930's (The Shamrock Rooms), in the apartments on the second floor. Note the windows facing on the alley as you walk around the building\*\*



### #4 The 4-Star Theater

Built in 1910, this theater was remodeled in late 1930's to be usable for both legitimate theater and cinema. Beyond some missing neon and some minor alterations, the building has changed little from that time. Under new ownership, the theater is being refurbished and repainted in a color scheme typical of the time of its construction. It is currently open in season to show the latest films.\*\*



**#5 Bank Building**

At the southeast corner of State and Idaho streets, this brick and stucco building with tile trim served as Weiser's banking center, first as a local Weiser bank, and then as the Weiser branch of the Idaho First National. Local attorneys maintained offices in the rooms above until IFN changed quarters in the late fifties. \*\*



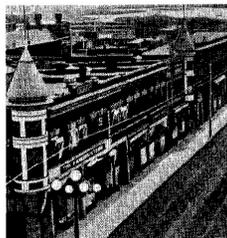
**#6 Oddfellows Hall #17**

Built in 1886, this lodge was one of the original buildings on State Street. It features stained-glass windows and a pressed-tin ceiling in the hall upstairs. The lower floor housed the popular Metropole restaurant, where people met to enjoy a soda or to eat lunch at the fancy counter. Since the late fifties, the Weiser Newsstand (now Stark's Hallmark Store) has been here. Bob's Billiards was located around the corner. (Women were not banned from this establishment, but they were not encouraged either.) \*\*



**#7 Pythian Castle**

Located one-half block east of State Street on Idaho, this building is one of the best examples of fantasy architecture in the state, and Weiser's most distinctive landmark. Designed by Boise architects Tourtellotte & Hummell, who designed many Weiser landmark buildings (including the Post Office), it cost \$9,000 in 1904. The sandstone for the facade was quarried on the Weiser River ten miles above town. The twenty-foot-high arched ceiling in the upstairs lodge hall, installed in 1911, is one of the best preserved pressed-tin ceilings in the state.\*



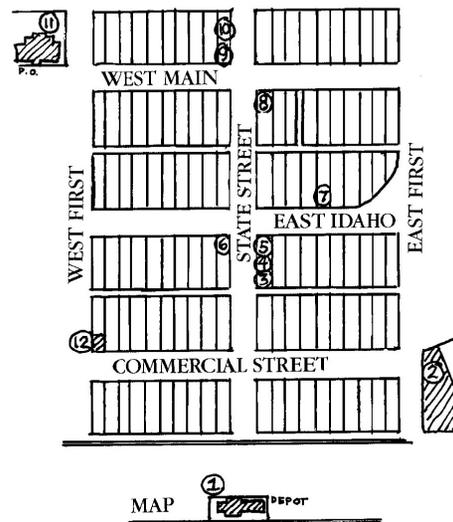
**#8 Washington Square**

Morrie Reinhaus, member of a long-time Weiser business family, initiated efforts to restore and redevelop the north half of this central business block in the late 1970's. Included in this effort was the site of the Washington Hotel, which took up the northeast quarter of the block until it was destroyed by fire in 1973. The Fuller Block filled the corner of State & Main and was built in 1904. It featured elegant corner towners, a Tourtellotte trademark, at either end on State Street. The top half of the building was removed after a fire in the mid 1980's. The little brick building in the middle of the block on Main Street housed Weiser's first telephone office, keeping up to half a dozen switchboard operators busy at any one time, until dial phones came to town in 1958.\*\*



**#9 Haas Hardware**

The Haas family was one of the first businesses opened in Weiser to cater to the miners of the 1880's. The Seven Devils mineral belt, which stretched for 100 miles along the east side of the Snake River, brought many of the first permanent settlers to Washington County. By 1909 Herman Haas was ready to settle into more permanent quarters than a freight wagon, and to build a hardware store on the northwest corner of State & Main. When it was built, it was one of the largest hardware and implement stores in the state. The second floor contained spacious apartments, abandoned when the substantial brick building's facade was covered over in the 1940's by the new occupant, a department store called the Merc. Fortunately, this building's original beauty remains essentially intact, awaiting rediscovery in the future. \*\*



**#10 Montgomery Ward Store**

Business was booming in Weiser prior to the stock market crash when work on this building began. Completed for and occupied by Montgomery Ward in 1930, this brick building included a full basement, mezzanine and second floor, all used for display merchandise. In 1954, Western Auto Supply moved in, reducing the sale floor space to its current configuration. Clausen's Ace Hardware is the third owner/occupant and has been an important anchor in the business district since 1976. While small alterations have occurred to the building over the years, it still retains the original distinctive terra cotta cameo in the cornice. \*\*



**#11 Weiser Post Office**

Built in 1933, this large post office at one time housed all federal offices in Weiser, including headquarters of the Weiser National Forest, an area that extended past McCall and is now mostly included in the Payette National Forest. This structure retains almost all of its original features, from the round writing stands on the main floor to the marble restrooms in the basement. Like many federal buildings of the period, it was built with WPA assistance.\*