

CENTRAL DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR



Orpheum Theater
Orpheum Electric Building
520-22 Pierce Street
National Register of Historic
Places

Completed in 1927 as a combination Orpheum Theater and commercial block, this building was originally four stories tall with the ceiling of the Theater rising to six stories. In 1949 four additional floors were added to the commercial block when the Sioux City Gas and Electric Company took occupancy as the building's major tenant.

This building was designed by Rapp & Rapp, a prominent New York and Chicago architectural firm known throughout the country for their work with the Orpheum theater circuit. The exterior of the building is of eclectic design with some Art Deco influences. Note the stylized snakes forming the window sills.

This building is best known for its theater. Designed in the French Renaissance Revival style, in its time the theater was one of Sioux City's most opulent spaces. Sweeping arches, long promenades, large foyers opened to a cavernous auditorium with six story tall hand stenciled, gilded ceiling and three immense crystal chandeliers.

From 1927 until 1937 the theater served as a venue for vaudeville and movies, both silent and "talkies". After 1937 talking movies became the theater's staple entertainment with only intermittent touring stage productions.

Remodeling projects in 1968 and 1982 "modernized" the theater, eventually carving it into two movie theaters. A suspended ceiling was added in both the lobby and the main auditorium, two side-balconies were removed, a concrete projection booth was constructed in the balcony, large crystal chandeliers were removed from the auditorium, and the original Wurlitzer pipe organ was dismantled and moved to the Municipal Auditorium.

In 2000-01, the theater underwent a large-scale restoration. All of the false coverings were removed, missing architectural features were carefully recreated, new seats were added, and the hand-painted ceilings were cleaned and meticulously restored.



Frances Building
505 5th Street
Eligible - National Register of
Historic Places

Completed in 1916 at a cost of \$500,000, this eight-story building was financed by James P. Martin and named for his daughter Frances. At the time this structure was considered to be one of northwestern Iowa's most handsome buildings.

An early *Sioux City Journal* article described the brick color as French gray with terra cotta trimmings. No expense was spared, inside or out. The building featured three passenger elevators, marble floors in each corridor, mahogany

woodwork, rounded ceilings, a beautiful lobby, two marble stairways, and luxurious modern offices.

Montgomery Wards Building (Hatch Furniture)
413 - 27 Pierce Street

Constructed in 1934 for Montgomery Wards, this building was designed by Chicago architects Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, designers of Chicago's Merchandise Mart and Union Station.

Montgomery Wards occupied this building until the early 70's. Notable features include the wooden balustrade above the storefront windows.

Taylor Block
Beck Jewelry Store (Sportsmans)
412 - 14 Pierce Street

Most likely constructed prior to the turn of the 19th century, this building was originally known as the Taylor Block. In 1916, the Sioux City architectural firm of Beuttler & Arnold designed a new storefront for jewelry store owner Will Beck. The design called for a sweeping arched entry, tall storefront windows, and the name "Will H. Beck Co." to be prominently displayed above the third floor windows, and "Jewelers" displayed above the second floor windows. A particularly notable feature includes the decorative balustrade running along the roofline.



The Martin Hotel
4th and Pierce Streets
National Register of Historic Places

Built in 1912 for J.P. and L.B. Martin, brothers from one of Sioux City's prominent families, the Martin was one of this city's finest hotels. In its heyday, the Martin boasted 350 rooms, spacious lobbies, a fine restaurant, cafeteria, ballroom, barber shop, and many specialty stores for the convenience and enjoyment of hotel guests as well as Sioux City residents. In fact, from its outset, the Martin was noted for hosting special gatherings for holidays, business meetings and banquets.

In the 1980s the Martin's upper floors were converted into apartments. Notable features include the buff-colored terra cotta accents and the decorative balustrade under the third story windows.

American Express Building
510 4th Street
Schulein Block
506-08 4th Street
Magner and Walsh
504 4th Street

Although the storefronts of each of these buildings have been severely altered from their original appearance, the upper cornices provide us a hint of how these buildings looked at the time of their construction. Note for example the highly decorative, gleaming white terra cotta cornice of the American Express building at 510 4th Street. The Schulein Block, located at 506-08 4th Street, was constructed in the early 1900s by local architect William L. Steele. This was one of Steele's first designs as an architect in Sioux City.



Old Martin Department Store

515-21 4th Street and
Martin Department Store Annex (Cameo Theater)
410-11 Nebraska Street
National Register of Historic Places

Occupying nearly a quarter block, the T.S. Martin and Co. department store is a large, three story, "L" shaped building with a main front on 4th street and an annex facing Nebraska Street. The main building 4th street is made up of three building dating back to 1885 but given a new unifying storefront in 1911. Stylistically, the main building represents the Prairie School with its bright white terra cotta and long decorative bands of terra cotta detailing executed in foliage and geometric patterns.

The Annex, which fronts Nebraska St., was constructed in 1901-02. His building was designed in the Beaux Arts Style by local architect Henry Fisher and features a decorative knee wall at the roof line, accentuated cornice with acanthus leaf brackets and decorative swags. Of special note are the purple prism glass windows located on the second and third floors.

In 1916, the Martin Co. moved to a new building across the street from the Annex (now the site of JC Penney). The Annex and the main building on 4th St. were sold and broken into three separate parcels. The west 1/2 of the 4th St. frontage has been drastically altered from it's 1911 appearance. The east 1/2 of the main building was for many years a woman's clothing store and the Annex was converted into a movie theater. In 1998, the Annex and the east 1/2 of the main building were reconnected and rehabilitated into apartments with ground floor retail space.

Terra Plaza (Terra Centre)

600 4th Street

Completed in 1983, this 10-story tall, steel and glass building was designed by Minneapolis-based architects BWBR in partnership with Sioux City-based FEH & Associates. Called the "Queen of the Sioux City Skyline" by the *Sioux City Journal*, the Terra Plaza is home to Terra Chemicals International Inc., and a number of smaller businesses. Terra Chemicals began in Sioux City in 1965 as a small company manufacturing and selling fertilizers. It quickly expanded to a multimillion dollar international agri-business corporation.



Badgerow Building
4th and Jackson Streets
National Register of Historic Places

Constructed in 1929, the Badgerow building is the premier example of the Art Deco Style in Sioux City. Local architect K. E. Westerlind designed the steel, concrete, and terra cotta building while his brother, a Chicago architect, designed the trim in a stylized American motif.

The Art Deco Style retained the love of 19th Century stylistic ornamentation, but streamlined its design for a more modern 20th Century geometric look. Sioux City's American Indian heritage is celebrated in the design of this unique building. The bright colors and unusual ornamental relief along the second story frieze delight the eye during the day, and the back-lighting of the Indian silhouettes along the rooftop are a dramatic sight at night.



Hilton Hotel
707 4th Street

This modern twelve-story building was designed by the Sioux City architectural and engineering firm of DeWild, Grant, and Reckert & Associates in 1974.

Sioux City Convention Center
801 4th Street

Constructed in 1988, this modern building was designed by Sioux City architects, FEH Associates Inc. and houses the Sioux City Convention Center. This building contains 50,000 square feet of exhibition space and the offices of the city's Convention and Tourism Bureau.



Warfield-Pratt-Howell Company
(Pierce Moving and Storage)
3rd and Jones Streets

This six story warehouse was constructed in 1906 for the Warfield-Pratt-Howell Company, a wholesale grocer. At the time of construction, this building was one of several warehouses located along Third Street in an area that became known as "warehouse row" A wholesale grocery operated out of this

building until 1950 when it was purchased by Pierce Moving and Storage.

Cancer Center
3rd and Nebraska Streets

Designed by the Omaha architectural firm of HDR Inc of Omaha, Nebraska, the Cancer Center was constructed in 1993-4 as a joint effort between St. Luke's Regional Medical Center and Marion Health Center. Using an unusual design technique for downtown construction, the architect turned the on a 45 degree angle. This move resulted in unique opportunity to provide beautiful landscaped berms along Nebraska Street.

Sioux City Art Center
3rd and Nebraska Streets

Completed in 1997, this unique building was designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill. The building's central core is a three-story, circular, glass atrium.

Sioux City's Art Center was founded in 1938 as part of the Works Progress Administration's (WPA) Federal Art Project that established community art centers across the United States.