

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

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**1. Name of Property**

Historic name Carey Block

Other names/site number Hurst Block, First State Bank, Greybull Hotel

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**2. Location**

Street & Number 602 Greybull Avenue Not for Publication

City or Town Greybull Vicinity \_\_\_\_\_

State Wyoming Code WY County Big Horn Code 003

Zip Code 82414

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**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  
\_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide  locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

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Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_meets \_\_\_does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

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Signature of commenting official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

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I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. determined eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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**5. Classification**

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Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- Private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Objects
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce	Sub: Business
Commerce	Professional
Commerce	Specialty Store
Domestic	Hotel
Government	Post Office
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Commerce	Sub: Business
Domestic	Hotel
Domestic	Multiple Dwelling
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
roof \_\_\_\_\_  
walls Brick  
Concrete  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

See Continuation Sheets

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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

- X   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.
- X   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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

  Community Planning and

  Development

  Commerce

  Architecture

Period of Significance

  1916-1939

Significant Dates

  1916

  1933

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

  N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

  Gagnon & Co. of Billings,

  MT, builder

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

See Continuation Sheets

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

See Continuation Sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	12	734087	4930443	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

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

See Continuation Sheet.

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

See Continuation Sheet

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name/title	<u>Betsy H. Bradley</u>	Date	_____
Organization	<u>Wyoming SHPO</u>	Telephone	<u>307 777-8594</u>
Street & number	<u>2301 Central Avenue</u>	State	<u>WY</u>
City or town	<u>Cheyenne</u>	Zip code	<u>82002</u>

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

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**Property Owner**

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

Name	Lori Davis		
Organization		Telephone	406-860-2387
Street & number	PO Box 1625		
City or town	Red Lodge	State	Montana
		Zip code	59068

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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. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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Continuation Sheet-Additional Documentation**

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Carey Block  
Big Horn County, Wyoming

## **Description**

The Carey Block occupies the northwest corner of the main intersection in Greybull, Wyoming at Greybull Avenue and North Sixth Street. The original two-story portion of the Carey Block is 75 feet by 80 feet; a parapet wall encloses its nearly flat roof. The reinforced-concrete building has brick-clad piers that articulate the storefront areas, establish window bays on the second story, and carry a cornice band at the window head level. A prominent projecting sheet-metal cornice emphasizes the parapet wall. A one-story wing that extends from the north end of the building maintains the architectural vocabulary of the main block.

The Carey Block, with its large footprint and imposing two-story height is a prominent visual component of the central business district of Greybull. This area extends three blocks, from Fourth to Seventh Streets along Greybull Avenue. The buildings in the business district are one- and two-story commercial buildings, nearly all of which were built by 1925. The two street façades of the Carey Building edge the sidewalk. The west wall of the building is visible above an adjacent one-story wing and the second story of the north wall is also exposed. The one-story wing on the north side covers the remainder of the lot; it extends to an alley on the north and the lot line on the west. Two storefronts face Greybull Avenue adjacent to a corner commercial space. A storefront occupies the north end of the two-story block on North Sixth Street, adjacent to one in the one-story wing.

## **Exterior**

The reinforced-concrete building is faced with red face brick; the concrete is exposed as a watertable, window sills and headers, and storefront lintels. Brick-clad piers establish a pattern of narrow bays on the North Sixth Street façade of the two-story block. A storefront cornice unites the northern three bays of the ground story of this façade. The corner bays on both the North Sixth Street and Greybull Avenue façades originally were open on the ground story as an exterior vestibule that sheltered a recessed corner entrance; these corner bays have been filled in with concrete, glass block, and an aluminum door. The Greybull Avenue façade has a more irregular bay arrangement that consists of three narrow bays on the east end and two storefronts. An historic Greybull Hotel sign, recently re-installed, extends perpendicularly from the wall above the entrance to the second story and hotel. A sign lettered Historic Greybull Hotel extends diagonally from the corner of the building to be read from both streets. Throughout the façades brick piers are treated as minimalistic pilasters with bases the height of the watertable and storefront bulkheads; moldings that refer to capitals are set under the cornice band that extends along both facades just above the second-story windows. Corbel forms terminate the piers at the storefront lintels. A narrow band of brick, punctuated with diamond shapes, separates the cornice band from a projecting sheet-metal cornice at the base of the parapet wall. A contrasting coping caps the brick parapet wall from which piers project as thicker portions of the wall.

The window openings of the corner commercial space are filled with glass block (installed during the 1930s) set below solid modern infill material. A combination of modern and traditional materials encloses the storefronts on Greybull Avenue and the north end of the Sixth Street façade. On the Greybull Avenue façade, the show windows are divided into thirds and doors are positioned on the east side of each unit. A pair of concrete lintels define the storefront transom level, which is now infilled with a series of panels. The storefront at the north end of the North Sixth façade is a combination of brick and other materials that frame two windows. The window openings in the second story retain their original double-hung wood sash, which is set singly, in pairs, and in tri-partite arrangements, depending on the width of the bay.

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Carey Block  
Big Horn County, Wyoming

The west wall of the commercial block is faced with concrete block cast with a rock-faced pattern and is terminated with a stepped parapet. The window openings, punched with no sills or headers, hold single one-over-one double-hung wood sash. The same concrete block clads a wide return bay on the north wall; brick faces the rest of the north wall. The punched windows have the sash used on the west wall. A door gives access to stairs to the roof of the adjacent one-story wing.

The one-story wing on North Sixth Street has a brick façade that displays two bays separated by a brick pier. The lintels of both bays are accentuated by molded caps and a signband that maintains the height of the ground-story window heads of the two-story block. A projecting metal canopy now obscures the signband area. A low brick bulkhead spans the wide northern bay; six panels of infill material frame a series of windows in the area above. The south bay, originally a garage door, is in-filled with brick surrounding a glazed door set under a transom. The north and west walls of this wing are concrete block. A large display window is located near the street and a vehicle door is located at the west end of the north wall. Window openings of two sizes in the west wall, and openings in the north wall, have paired one-over-one double-hung wood sash. A stepped parapet edges the flat roof. A small addition connecting the second story of the commercial block with the garage wing projects from the north wall of the commercial block; this addition, which is set back from the street façades, has walls clad with brick and a shed roof.

**Interior**

The commercial spaces in the main block ground story largely retain the four spatial divisions of the original floor plan. The two storefronts on Greybull Avenue remain separate spaces while the corner unit and the area to the north have been combined. The ceiling heights have been lowered and interior finishes have been covered with modern materials. An area of decorative tin ceiling remains exposed in the western storefront unit and more of this material may be in place above the lowered ceilings. Two vaults in the former bank portion of the property remain in place.

The entrance to the upper floor in the Greybull Avenue façade provides access to a staircase leading to an open hall flanking it on the east. Replacement hollow-core doors are set in openings with a curved plaster edge but no wood trim, indicating a remodeling project in the upper hallway. Modern wood wainscot has been installed along the stairs in the upper hallway; the walls above are plaster.

The entrance to the hotel portion of the property is at the top of the stairs to the west. The entrance retains its historic wood door with an oval glazed panel that is set under a transom. A main hallway parallel to Greybull Avenue bisects the hotel space. A registration desk area opens off the hallway just west of the entrance; a small office faces the street south of the desk area. A transverse hallway bisects the eastern block of rooms. This hall is lined with bathrooms and closets on the east side, an area that had no exterior light except for the historic skylights that are now blocked. The bathrooms have a combination of older tubs and toilets and some new wall surfaces. A second transverse hallway intersects the main one on the east side of the west-facing rooms. The hallways have finished plaster walls and corners protected by wood moldings. Wide baseboard moldings and a small crown molding frame the walls. Acoustical tile covers the hall ceilings. Doors to the rooms are five-panel units set below transoms. The tall openings are edged with wide plain wood moldings; the door head piece is set off by moldings on the bottom and top edges. The original push-button light switches remain in the hallway and period light fixtures hang from the ceilings.

The guest rooms retain their original size and configuration. A previous owner updated them circa 1970 for use in a bed and breakfast operation. The wood windows and door trim were painted to complete a color scheme for each



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Carey Block  
Big Horn County, Wyoming

room. Paneled wood elements form in-room closets. Modern tile covers the wall areas on which the in-room sinks are mounted; the original sinks, as well as older towel bars and light fixtures, remain in place.

The northeast corner of the hotel portion of the upper story is a small apartment with metal kitchen cabinets that suggest mid-twentieth century installation. The offices on the east side of the building were converted to apartments. The center one, occupied by the owner of the building, has fixtures and furnishings installed in the 1950s that reflect this use. The flanking apartments were converted from office suites to residential use during the 1970s. All of the apartments are one-bedroom units.

The basement is divided into several spaces, most of which have a rough finish. However, a two-room portion used as a speakeasy retains its character. Plastered walls retain coral colored paint; ceiling beams are painted a lime green. A low platform remains in the corner of one room near the wide arched opening that links the two spaces.

The interior of the one-story wing reflects a sales and storage commercial arrangement. The rock-faced concrete block of the once exterior wall of the main block is visible as the interior south wall. The hard ceiling at original height has been damaged and reveals the presence of light-weight steel-rod roof trusses. A wood-framed and clad partition with wide openings defines the street-facing side of the space and excludes the south bay. A fairly recent wood-framed interior wall sets off a narrow space along the west side of the wing; this space is connected to the western storefront of the main block.

**Integrity**

Overall, the Carey Block has very good integrity. The integrity of design, materials, and workmanship of the exterior of both the two-story block and the one-story wing are very good. The glass block inserted in the corner commercial space windows during the 1930s is historic fabric. The storefronts have aluminum-framed windows and doors and other replacement infill material that maintains the transparency of the ground floor and traditional storefront components and does not impact the concrete framing of these areas. The integrity of design, materials and workmanship of the interior is very good in the hotel portion of the building. However, these aspects of integrity vary in the other areas of the building that have changed use over time. The property's integrity of location, setting, and association is excellent; downtown Greybull has changed little since its heyday during the early 1920s. The construction that took place during the 1930s in Greybull did not alter the character of the Carey Block's setting. The feeling and association of the exterior of the building as a prominent commercial building in Greybull remain and most of the building is occupied. The historic feeling and association of the interior of the hotel portion of the property are very good. The arrangement of the hotel and its rooms convey what it was like to stay in an early twentieth-century hotel. The speakeasy spaces in the basement have a strong sense of historic use and association. The feeling and association of the rest of the interior spaces is fair to good; changes in materials and use have altered the character of these spaces, though their association with and location within a 1916 commercial block are evident.

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Big Horn County, Wyoming

## Summary Paragraph

The Carey Block in Greybull is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as locally significant under Criteria A and C. The building represents the transformation of downtown Greybull during the 1916 building boom at the beginning of the major oil development period in the Big Horn Basin and is significant under the themes of Community Planning and Development and Commerce. The one-story wing completed in 1933 to house an automobile dealership and repair shop represents Greybull's location on the Yellowstone Highway and the tourist travel component of the town's economy, and consequently the evolving commerce of Greybull. The Carey Block brought the 1910s Commercial Style of architecture to Greybull and is eligible under Criterion C in the area of architecture. The multi-use masonry commercial block represents the more sophisticated versions of this building type erected in Wyoming towns and cities during the 1910s. The period of significance for this property extends from 1916, when the commercial block was erected, through 1939, a time after the heyday of the oil boom and by which time the building projects of the 1930s had diminished the architectural significance of the Carey Block.

## Historic Contexts

### Greybull's Oil Industry Heyday and Business District Development

Greybull, Wyoming, located at the eastern edge of the Big Horn Basin, was transformed from a small railroad town into the center of the regional oil and gas industry during the second decade of the twentieth century. Ranchers had moved into the area during the late 1880s. Those who lived near the lower Greybull and the Big Horn rivers, the future site of Greybull, applied for a post office by 1892. This post office, which was named Coburn after the first postmaster, was some 100 miles from a railroad in what was still a remote and sparsely settled portion of the new state of Wyoming.<sup>1</sup>

Railroad construction through the Big Horn Basin portion of Wyoming during the first years of the twentieth century altered its relative isolation. After the Great Northern and Northern Pacific railroads purchased most of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy (Burlington) railroad's stock in 1900, the Burlington lines were extended and made new connections in the northwest United States. This expansion encompassed several hundred miles of track constructed in the Wyoming vicinity, including a line from Toluca, Montana to Cody on the west side of the Big Horn Basin in 1901. Another line was completed south from Frannie, Wyoming, near the Montana border, on the east side of the Big Horn Basin in 1906 and 1907. The construction of this line, which ended at Kirby, was the reason that Greybull and the small towns to the south, Basin and Worland, were established. A rail line completed south through the Wind River Canyon and east to Casper in 1913 linked the Big Horn Basin lines to the rail system in southeast Wyoming. The Big Horn Basin was then connected by rail to other lines operating through the state and region.<sup>2</sup>

The Burlington promoted settlement in the Big Horn Basin, where it was assumed irrigated agriculture would be the source of prosperity. The Lincoln Land Co., an affiliate of the Burlington line, selected sites for six new towns, including one named Greybull. The plat for a six-block town was filed in 1906 with Greybull Avenue as the main commercial street perpendicular to the rail line. The Burlington designated Greybull as a division point in 1908 and erected a round house, shops, a switching yard, and a stock yard in addition to a depot and coal chute. The railroad employed from 100 to 400 workers at Greybull during the 1910s and 1920s. Property owners erected commercial buildings along Greybull Avenue as the town was established, many of which were wood-framed buildings. Nevertheless, three sandstone buildings were erected by 1909 and later others were built of this material as well. The

<sup>1</sup> J. Tom Davis, *Glimpses of Greybull's Past* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 2004), p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), pp. 339-340; Davis, pp. 59, 131-134.

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Carey Block  
Big Horn County, Wyoming

“Big Store,” a general mercantile operation, occupied a one-story stone building near the southeast corner of the main intersection in town (Greybull Avenue and North Sixth Street) and the two-story Frost Building, also built of local stone, was next door to the east. The First National Bank, known also as the Greybull Bank, occupied a two-story stone building on the southwest corner of the intersection in 1909. The private Wyant & Company Bank was established the following year; it became the First State Bank in 1913. The construction of the one-story Spencer Building of brick at the northeast corner of Greybull Avenue and North Sixth Street and a stone schoolhouse were noted building projects of 1911.<sup>3</sup>

Gas and oil were found in the Big Horn Basin during this period. The Big Horn Oil and Gas Co. supplied natural gas via a pipeline to Greybull and the nearby county seat, Basin, from the first wells in the vicinity. Oil was discovered as well, and by 1914 a group of oil storage tanks and an oil pipeline extending south from Greybull served that industry. The Greybull Refining Company erected the first, small refinery in the area just southwest of Greybull in 1915. That same year, a well south of Fifth Street demonstrated that the town itself sat on an oil field and the oil boom was underway. Also in 1915, James T. Hurst, a Greybull resident, and his partners opened the Elk Basin Oil Field at the northern end of the Big Horn Basin and founded the Elk Basin Refining and Producing Co.<sup>4</sup>

Greybull was located approximately halfway between the Grass Creek and Elk Basin oil fields, which were brought into production during this boom. Oil from the Grass Creek field first reached the refinery in Greybull through a pipeline from the field to a railhead south of Worland. There it was loaded in tank cars that rode the Burlington line north to Greybull or, alternatively, south to Casper. The Midwest Oil Company acquired the Greybull Refining Co. properties and enlarged the refinery in 1916.<sup>5</sup>

The Standard Oil Company of Indiana opened a refinery in Greybull in 1917. The Midwest Oil Co. and Standard Oil of Indiana contracted with the Illinois Pipeline Co. to construct a pipeline to Greybull as an alternative to the shipment of oil on the rail line. The 80-mile long pipeline, at the time the longest gravity pipeline in the United States, delivered 3,000 barrels of oil to Greybull a day. *The Greybull Standard* added “The Oil City of the West” to its banner in 1917 when the oil heyday was projected as long-lasting.<sup>6</sup>

The oil boom transformed Greybull from a railroad and agricultural service town into the center of the Big Horn Basin oil industry. The town experienced a building boom in 1916 that coincided with the construction and opening of the oil refineries. At the beginning of the oil boom, Greybull had a population of approximately 1,200 residents and a four-room stone school. Wood buildings dominated the commercial portion of the town. The Burlington and Alamo hotels could not house all the newcomers and tents were erected during the spring of 1916 as temporary housing.<sup>7</sup>

Greybull’s downtown commercial district was transformed during the building boom. Ten buildings, many of which were brick, were erected during 1916. James T. Hurst, who had resided in Greybull for a few years and benefited from early oil boom profits, partnered with the First State Bank to erect a multi-use commercial block building on the northwest corner of the intersection of Greybull Avenue and North Sixth Street (later known as the Carey Block). The

<sup>3</sup> Davis, pp. 92, 103, 123-124, and 278-279; *Wyoming State Business Directory* (Denver: Gazetteer Publishing Co., 1920) un-numbered ad page.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 115, 151-152, 155, and 165.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 152 and 158.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154, 161, and 163.

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Carey Block  
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Greybull Hotel and some professional offices occupied the upper floor, above the bank's facility on the corner and three other stores. C. W. Griffin built the Griffin Inn on North Sixth Street, north of Greybull Avenue. The other additions to Greybull's downtown included a one-story stone building erected for use as a restaurant and the Mead Building, which housed the Masonic Hall on its upper floor.<sup>8</sup>

Greybull's oil boom prosperity peaked around 1921. Several fires occurred in the town during 1922, including one that destroyed a group of the wood commercial buildings that stood on the north side of Greybull Avenue. The boom had peaked and the half block on Greybull Avenue west of the Carey Block remained vacant until 1937. Greybull's population reached a high point during the early 1920s at just over 5,000 residents and decreased by 50 percent by 1930. Oil producers in the Big Horn Basin fields were challenged by the isolation of the fields in terms of markets and high shipping costs. A significant drop in the price of oil between 1920 and 1922 decreased profits and production. Standard Oil of Indiana acquired the Midwest Oil Company's refineries in Greybull, Casper, and Laramie in 1921 and began to dominate production in Wyoming. Local oil production decreased significantly by 1926, though the Greybull refineries continued to handle oil from the Grass Creek, Elk Basin, Garland, and Byron fields in the vicinity. Standard Oil of Indiana operated its Greybull refinery until 1948.<sup>9</sup>

The travel and tourism business sector developed in Greybull during the heyday of the oil boom. The Yellowstone Highway, discussed as early as 1912 and celebrated with an official guidebook in 1916, passed through Greybull. The road was absorbed by the "Park to Park Highway, which eventually connected all the major national parks in the west. During the mid-1920s, the Yellowstone Highway east of the national park became US 20. In addition to the town's several hotels, travelers could stay in the Greybull Tourist Park from 1920 through 1930. The Katy Jane Tourist Camp offered cabins for tourists in 1928 and was followed by other operations of this type. The influx of travelers increased the demand for public garages for the storage and service of automobiles, and this business sector became important in Greybull.<sup>10</sup>

Prohibition, which began in Wyoming in January 1919, went hand-in-hand with another means of commercial diversification as bootlegging became a part of the Greybull economy, as in most other communities. J. J. "Joe" Carey and C. W. Schomo were Greybull's prominent rumrunners. Mayor Elizabeth Wiley, who served from 1924 to 1930, led Greybull during this decade of changes. Wiley was highlighted in the national press as one of the first women to be elected as mayor of a municipality in the United States and Greybull was in the national spotlight for this reason.<sup>11</sup>

As the residents of Greybull weathered the difficult 1930s, they benefitted from the stability provided by its two large employers, the Standard Oil of Indiana's refinery and the Burlington railroad, which remained in operation. Road improvements in the vicinity continued and supported the tourist industry. A road was opened over the Big Horn Mountains between Sheridan and Greybull through the Shell Valley in 1931. The improvement of this road was one of several federal relief projects completed in Big Horn County during the 1930s.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 163-164.

<sup>9</sup> Larson, p. 432; Writer's Program of the Work Projects Administration in the State of Wyoming, *Wyoming: A Guide to its History, Highways, and People* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), p. 334; Mike Mackey, *Black Gold: Patterns in the Development of Wyoming's Oil Industry* (Powell, WY: Western History Publications, 1997), pp. iv and 58; Davis, pp. 171, 203, 234-236.

<sup>10</sup> Davis, pp. 296-297.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 249, 269-270

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 298-301,305.

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A group of buildings that received federal funding and some private property improvements changed the architectural character of Greybull during the 1930s. The Community Hall project received Civil Works Administration funding in 1933 and logs were brought from the mountains to town for the building, though construction was delayed until 1936 when Works Project Administration funds became available. The starkly modern Greybull Post Office, completed in 1939, featured the equally modern in style Federal Art project mural, "Chuck Wagon Serenade." The architecturally sophisticated Greybull High School completed in 1938 became the largest building in town. The city park was the recipient of several enhancement projects: a swimming pool, the restored Borner Cabin, and landscaping. Additional federal projects included work on the Greybull airport and infrastructure throughout Big Horn County. By the late 1930s, private sector projects also contributed to the changes in Greybull. An Elks Lodge built west of the Carey Block, a Big Horn Co-op modern service station, and a telephone office building all were completed in 1937. The combined impact of the new buildings in Greybull no doubt made the Carey Block appear to be part of an earlier era, the oil boom heyday, by the end of the 1930s.<sup>13</sup>

**The Small City Multi-Use Commercial Block in The Big Horn Basin**

The multi-use two-story masonry commercial block is a common building type that has been erected throughout the United States in towns and cities of various sizes. This building type was eminently practical in Wyoming because it could house a variety of essential commercial and business functions. The masonry commercial block, whether one of a handful in a small downtown, or standing among others in a commercial center, was also a symbol of permanence and stature in small Wyoming towns. The in-town commercial block, in contrast to the general store as the only commercial building in a hamlet, generally housed more than one tenant. The ground floors provided space for banks, stores, saloons, and restaurants. In towns with limited commercial activity, attorneys, businessmen, and perhaps dentists and doctors, occupied the upper floor space. The use of the second story was more varied in larger towns and residential occupancy was common.

The first two-story commercial blocks in small towns in the Big Horn Basin, as in many other Wyoming towns, were usually masonry buildings. Though they stood out as more substantial buildings in contrast to nearby wood-framed one-story commercial buildings, they were typically rather modest and utilitarian in appearance. Local stone, when available, and brick were used in load-bearing construction. Both materials are fire-resistant in contrast to wood and declare financial resources and permanence in the streetscape. Load-bearing masonry walls can accommodate wide openings for storefronts through the use of cast-iron or steel lintels to support the wall above. Individual window openings on the upper story could be set under arched or flat-arched heads. Corbelling and patterned brick work enrich the upper walls in modest ways and terminate parapets that conceal nearly flat roofs. Strong stylistic references are rare in modest brick or stone commercial blocks and the vernacular appearance of this buildings is dominated by the way one builds in brick or stone. This type of building could be erected by an experienced mason, with or without the involvement of an architect. Ornament may appear on the parapet or cornice and might include plaques with the names of the owner and the building, or a date.

Greybull has several modest masonry commercial blocks. Built of local stone in 1909, a two-story building occupied by the First National Bank on the ground floor had two storefronts facing Greybull Avenue and a corner entrance. Window openings in the upper story were set under flat arches. The building at the corner of Greybull Avenue and South Fifth Street appears to have been built prior to the 1916 building boom. The brick building has a storefront facing the avenue, a canted building corner, and widely-spaced, square-headed individual window openings on the second story. The brick walls are quite plain and only a coping course caps the tall parapet wall. The Big Horn Hotel

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 338, 344, 348, and 365.

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and Big Horn Theater shared a two-story brick commercial block erected in 1917 in Greybull that is a later version of this building type. Brick piers and lintels frame storefront openings; four windows are widely spaced in the wall above. A brick panel at the signband location and another panel with diamond forms set off the wall area where the windows are located; a corbelled brick cornice terminates the façade. The Big Horn movie theater operated in much of the ground story while the Big Horn Hotel occupied the second story.<sup>14</sup>

The types of two-story commercial blocks erected during the 1910s in other towns in the Big Horn Basin included similar modest masonry commercial blocks. The Pioneer Block erected in Basin by 1914 has an angled corner and two street façades with individual window openings set below a prominent corbelled brick cornice. The building was occupied by a bank, grocer, drug store, and barber shop. A two-story brick commercial block erected in Worland circa 1915 has a modest architectural presence. Brick outlines the window openings and forms panels below a corbelled brick cornice. During its early years, the Elks Hotel occupied the second story, above a movie theater, barber shop, and restaurant located in the ground story.<sup>15</sup>

During the 1910s, a more sophisticated type of commercial block appeared that incorporated the Commercial Style of the era. Concrete or steel framing systems supported the structure and allowed larger storefront and window openings. Face brick of red, tan, and blended shades enclosed walls. As window openings became larger and wider, they were often filled with paired or groups of sash. The Commercial Style highlighted structural components of a façade design, such as piers, spandrels, lintels and windows openings. Contrasting materials, such as terra cotta on a brick building, provided this emphasis and a visual richness, though applied ornamentation was limited.

Buildings of this type and style appeared in small towns in the Big Horn Basin, as well as the larger cities in Wyoming, and became an architectural representation of both more modern ways of building and up-to-date stylishness. The Deming Building, built in Cheyenne in 1911, represents this type of building in what was Wyoming's largest city at the time. Designed by prominent Cheyenne architect William DuBois, the three-story building has exterior walls of tan iron-spot brick detailed with cream terra cotta sill courses and stepped lintel courses, as well as a terra-cotta cornice. The corner building has several storefronts with large show windows. The Commerce Block was erected in downtown Glenrock in 1917 during an oil boom in the vicinity. Brick pilasters with cream-colored terra-cotta capitals define storefront openings on two street facades. A number of commercial blocks were built in Thermopolis during the 1910s, including a large two-story building at one of the important intersections in the downtown circa 1915. Contrasting face brick defines areas of the two street façades, outlines window openings, and highlights an unusual row of ocular vents set just below the projecting terra-cotta cornice. A distinctive corner entrance highlighted the bank's corner office; a combination jewelry and music store surrounded the bank and had two storefronts. The post office and a billiards hall completed the ground story occupants.<sup>16</sup>

The Carey Block, erected in 1916, is the first of the buildings of this type in Greybull, as well as the largest. Its reinforced concrete structure and brick enclosing walls dominated by prominent piers influenced its architectural detailing in the Commercial Style. The uses of this building included a bank and several storefronts on the ground floor and a hotel and professional offices on the upper floor. Further east on Greybull Avenue, a brick commercial

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 229-30; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (Sanborn Map), Greybull (1918 and 1939). The First National Bank building still stands, encased with modern materials. The other two buildings in Greybull are extant and have few alterations.

<sup>15</sup> Sanborn Maps, Worland (1912 and 1918) and Basin (1914).

<sup>16</sup> Sanborn Maps, Thermopolis (1912 and 1918); Robert G. Rosenberg, *Downtown Cheyenne Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, 1996, pp. 7-26 and *Commerce Block National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form*, 2004.

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block erected circa 1920 is another example of this building type and style. This small two-story commercial block housed the post office on the ground floor and the IOOF (International Order of Odd Fellows) Lodge on the upper floor. The upper story has two larger window openings filled with a tripartite sash arrangement. A small scale traditional brick corbelled cornice marks the actual roofline at the base of a tall parapet wall that bears the lodge name and flanking smaller plaques. The Grand Theater completed in 1921 immediately to the north of the Carey Block has a comparable architectural presence that includes references to classical architecture. Piers that frame storefronts on the ground story are continued by contrasting stone pilasters that support urns that rise above the tall parapet, silhouetted against the sky. A sheet-metal canopy bearing a shield over the main entrance was an urban theater element new to Greybull.<sup>17</sup>

**The Carey Block History**

The most prominent building erected during the 1916 building boom was the one known briefly as the Hurst Block, and later as the Carey Block, a multi-use commercial block. James T. Hurst, in partnership with A. S. Wyant of the First State Bank, built on the most important intersection in Greybull's downtown commercial district and used architectural presence, scale, and building materials to make a statement about the town's new commercial status during the oil boom period in Greybull.

A. S. Wyant had the long-term vision for the project, while James Hurst provided the financial wherewithal. Wyant purchased three lots on the northwest corner of the main intersection in 1906 and planned for a bank building to eventually dominate that corner. Meanwhile, Wyant erected a small building on the back of the lot for use as a grocery store. He erected another frame building near the street in 1910 and opened the Wyant & Company Bank in it. Wyant incorporated the firm as the First State Bank of Greybull in 1913. James T. Hurst purchased a large amount of stock in the bank in 1915 and became its president. Hurst, who arrived in Greybull in 1905, first entered the wholesale liquor business with a partner. After acquiring the Grey Bull Saloon, Hurst expanded his business interests. Hurst and a group of associates who had invested early in some contested Elk Basin oil leases in 1915 were soon some of the wealthiest residents of the Big Horn Basin.<sup>18</sup>

James T. Hurst announced the commercial block building project in March 1916. Gagnon & Co. of Billings, Montana erected the building.<sup>19</sup> The multi-use commercial block was a two-story reinforced concrete structure with brick exterior walls. First State Bank, which occupied the corner storefront, was provided with concrete vaults. A drugstore occupied the middle storefront on Greybull Avenue and a hardware and furniture store operated in the adjacent one. The Greybull post office was the first occupant of the commercial space facing North Sixth Street, north of the bank. Dr. Gorder occupied one of the professional offices on the second story facing North Sixth Street for many years. The Greybull Hotel occupied much of the second floor. Several proprietors and managers operated the Greybull Hotel during its early years and some of the time it served as the Griffin Hotel Annex. The building was known as the Hurst Building and the First State Bank Building during its first decade of use. A prominent cornice framing the street facades added to the building's height and presence, as did a series of cloth awnings that sheltered each window on both floors of the building. Perpendicular signs for the Greybull Hotel and Drugs extended from the Greybull Avenue façade. Steps led to an exterior vestibule at the corner entrance to the bank.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Davis, pp. 165, 212, 230, and 232.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 165-167, 241, and 278-279.

<sup>19</sup> Gagnon & Co. was a construction firm headquartered in Billings, MT and worked on building projects throughout much of Montana and Wyoming during the first decades of the twentieth century. The firm constructed the circa 1909 addition to the Montana Capitol Building and the Billings Chamber of Commerce Building in 1911. The architect of the building has not been identified.

<sup>20</sup> Davis, pp. 165-167; Sanborn Map, Greybull, 1918.

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Hurst did not stay associated with the First State Bank in Greybull for long although he remained engaged in the oil business, mainly in the Big Muddy field near Casper. The First State Bank merged with the Commercial Bank of Greybull in 1922 and remained in the First State Bank's premises. The early arrival of the Great Depression in Wyoming during the 1920s, when its agricultural and oil sectors struggled, affected the state's banks. The First State Bank failed in April 1927.<sup>21</sup>

Joe Carey acquired the First State Bank Building later in 1927 and it was then known as the Carey Block. Trained as an ambulance driver in the Army, Carey's first job after he arrived in Greybull in 1919 was to drive a delivery truck for the Greybull Market. During Prohibition, Carey used his driving skills as a "rumrunner" and spent his days working in P. C. Kittleson's Vulcanizing and Battery Co. This business occupied the former Wyant & Co. Bank building, which had been moved to the north side of the property when the Hurst Block was built in 1916. Carey's silent financial partner in the liquor operation was George Hinman, the cashier of the First National Bank in Greybull. Carey's experience suggests that illicit liquor operations in Greybull comprised a definite component of the city's commerce. Carey's rumrunning proceeds financed his share of the purchase when partner Jim Beale and Carey acquired the tire shop and Nash Sales and Service agency from Kittleson in 1923. Carey located his business ventures in the Carey Block in 1927, including a speakeasy in a portion of the building's basement. Carey demolished the old Wyant bank building and erected a one-story addition on the north side of the Carey Block to house the Beale & Carey Nash dealership and automobile repair shop in 1933. By that time, Beale & Carey sold Dodge, Plymouth, and Packard automobiles. Carey retired from the automobile business in 1945. Joe Carey and his wife lived in an apartment in the Carey Block for many years, overlooking the only stoplight in Greybull.<sup>22</sup>

The one-story wing of the Carey Block built in 1933, which was designed in the idiom of the larger block, extended its commercial presence on North Sixth Street. Steel rod trusses spanned the walls of the space, leaving the interior column free for the easy maneuvering of automobiles. Awnings shaded the large window and door openings of the façade. Historic photos indicate that gas pumps stood on the sidewalk at the edge of the street. Signs on the building promoted Vulcanizing tires, the business's AAA affiliation, and other services. A tall sign was positioned above the parapet wall during the time Beale & Carey sold Firestone tires and Conoco gasoline.

The Greybull Hotel was one of the other long-term business operations in the Carey Block. Ursula Jones operated the hotel in the Carey Block from 1927 through 1962. The Greybull Hotel offered rooms with and without private baths though steam heat and hot and cold water were available in each room. The business promoted itself as modern and convenient. During the early 1930s, it was one of seven hostelrys in Greybull. Mott's clothing store occupied the corner space vacated by the bank for several years. However, Bob Avery's "Bob's Bar" was the long-term occupant of that corner. After selling "near beer" during the first year, Bob's Bar operated under one of the two beer licenses in Greybull from 1933 until 1950. Bob's long-used slogans "On the Corner" and "Easy to Find, Hard to Leave" highlighted the bar's location in Greybull.<sup>23</sup>

## Historical Significance

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<sup>21</sup> Davis, pp. 167, 194, 281-282.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 257-262.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 268, 328, 334, and 339; *Wyoming State Business Directory* (Denver: Gazetteer Publishing Co., 1920), un-numbered ad page.



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**Summary**

The Carey Block in Greybull is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. The property is locally significant in the areas of Community Planning and Development and Commerce as it represents the increasing importance in commerce and the transformation of Greybull into the center of the Big Horn Basin oil boom during 1916. The construction of the addition in 1933 to accommodate an automobile-related business reflects Greybull's location on the Yellowstone Highway and the importance of the travel sector of the town's economy. The long-term tenants, the Carey automobile business, the Greybull Hotel, and Bob's Bar reflect the nature of commerce in Greybull during the 1920s and 1930s. The building is also locally significant in the area of Architecture. The building in Greybull represents the more high-style and sophisticated commercial blocks erected in Wyoming towns and cities during the 1910s in the Commercial Style.

The period of significance for this property is from 1916, when the commercial block was erected, through 1939. By that time, the heyday of the oil production era had passed and the bustle of the downtown commercial district related to that energy boom period had diminished, though the Yellowstone Highway continued to bring travelers through Greybull. The architectural significance of the Carey Block extended well beyond its year of construction. In a boom and bust townscape, the most up-to-date building in the last boom period remains a touchstone for architectural modernity until it is eclipsed by new construction. In the case of Greybull, the new architecture introduced by the federal relief projects during the mid-1930s clearly signaled the beginning of the next era of building. The updated functions the new buildings housed – the post office and school – and the modernized civic infrastructure also represent the next phase of community planning and development. Consequently, these federal relief projects, from both historical and architectural perspectives, close the period of significance.

**Criterion A.** The Carey Block represents the transformation of Greybull during the 1916 building boom at the beginning of the oil production heyday in the Big Horn Basin. It is significant under the themes of Community Planning and Development and Commerce. The Carey Block was the most prominent of the ten buildings erected in the business district in 1916, a critical period in the development of Greybull. Its corner location with two long street façades and two-story height contribute to its visual prominence and association with that period. The multi-purpose building initially housed several of the commercial needs in the booming town: a bank, hotel rooms, professional offices, and retail space. The building expresses the development of Greybull during the heady first period of the oil boom, its role as the industrial center of the oil industry in the Big Horn Basin, and local hopes for a long-lasting commercial prosperity.

During the post oil boom era, Joe Carey profited from two other aspects of the town's commerce, the illicit liquor business during Prohibition and the automobile sales and service industry. The speakeasy in the basement, the only finished space on that level of the building, was an extension of his rumrunning operation. The local demand for autos and their servicing was supplemented by travelers on the Yellowstone Highway. Carey and his partner, James Beale, built a modern automobile dealership and service facility as a wing on the building in 1933 near the town's main commercial intersection and on the Yellowstone Highway. The Carey Block property conveys the changing nature of the downtown business district in Greybull and commerce during the oil boom period of the late 1910s, as well as the subsequent period when the economy was more diversified.

**Criterion C.** The Carey Block brought the Commercial Style of architecture popular during the early twentieth century to Greybull and is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The multi-use corner building contrasts significantly with most of the other commercial buildings in scale and architectural presence. Most of the more substantial, yet still small, masonry commercial buildings erected in Greybull prior to 1916 were constructed of

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local sandstone. The Carey Block represents the use of more modern building construction – a reinforced-concrete frame and brick enclosing walls. By the time that a fire destroyed all of the wood-framed commercial buildings west of the Carey Block in 1922, the oil boom had peaked and most of the buildings were not replaced. This event resulted in the Carey Block standing nearly alone on its side of the street for a number of years, a condition that further emphasized its scale and architectural presence.

The Carey Block expresses a modernity in architectural expression based on the emphasis of form and very limited use of ornament, an idiom that was as appropriate for an oil boom town in a somewhat remote area of Wyoming as it was elsewhere. The reinforced concrete structure of the building, largely hidden from view, was an additional component of the modernity of the building. The Commercial Style represented a more sophisticated version of the masonry commercial block, and was more likely to be designed by an architect, though the designer of the Carey Block is unidentified. Red face brick clads the exterior walls of the building; a recessed entrance at the corner was anchored by the corner brick pier. Strong rhythms created by brick piers and window bays combined with references to classical forms in the cornice produced a handsome and modern presence for the building. Fabric awnings at the windows unified the entire property during the first half of the twentieth century. The brick automobile dealership wing maintained the architectural vocabulary of the commercial block.<sup>24</sup>

**Summary.**

The Carey Block combines architectural expression with multiple commercial uses as a representation of Greybull's oil boom period and commerce throughout a twenty-three year period. As the largest building with a prominent corner location, the architectural presence of the Carey Block conveys the commercial needs and hopes for prosperity of the 1916 building boom. Architectural style, scale, materials, and a mixed-use program allow the physical presence of this property to convey a sense of modernization and high-style in a small town coming into its own during a boom period of the type that has been common throughout Wyoming's history. The automobile-related wing conveys another sector of Greybull's economy – the rise of the automobile and tourist travel. The period of significance, 1916 to 1939, encompasses the heyday of Greybull's central business district related to the oil boom and the period when the Carey Block was the most high-style building in Greybull.

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<sup>24</sup> Davis, pp. 206 and 234.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary is the property the building occupies, Lots 12, 13, and 14, Block 3, Original Town of Greybull, Bighorn County, Wyoming.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary encompasses all of the property historically associated with the Carey Block.

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Kennedy Neg. 129, Wyoming State Archives

Carey Block, Greybull, Wyoming.  
1922



Kennedy Neg. 176, Wyoming State Archives

The Carey Block in its Greybull Avenue setting, Greybull, Wyoming  
Circa 1925