

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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Dayton Mercantile
other names/site number Baker's Store, Croghan's Hall

2. Location

street & number 408 Main Street

n/a
n/a

 not for publication
city or town Dayton vicinity
state Wyoming code WY county Sheridan code 033 zip code 82839

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x 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 x local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/department store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/department store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Italianate

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Wood

roof: Asphalt Shingle

other:

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Dayton Mercantile is located at 408 Main Street in the business district of the small rural town of Dayton, Wyoming (population 757) at the foot of the Big Horn Mountains. The two-story wood frame building was originally constructed as a commercial general store in 1882 by Henry Baker. Henry Baker then sold the building to Henry Croghan. In 1901 Croghan enlarged the building to the rear and built a ballroom on the second floor and called it Croghan's Hall. The first floor continued to act as the general store and the first Dayton post office, while the second floor was the meeting place for dances, town meetings, and other gatherings. The traditional false front design, typical of the late 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture is unchanged. The large storefront windows, centrally located entry and gable roof hidden by the frame façade are representative of small town commercial buildings in Wyoming from that era. The basic form and character of the building are as they were in 1901.

Narrative Description

The Dayton Mercantile sits on a lot measuring 50 feet x 142 feet with a small lawn and dirt parking area in the rear. The wood frame building sits on the original wood beams although steel beams were painstakingly installed under the south and west sides in 1995 to save the building from demolition and in its current form. Below grade is a 507 square foot dirt wall cellar that services the water heater and a furnace. The building is of frame construction, and is rectangular in shape. It has a hipped roof that is covered with asphalt shingles. The overall dimensions of the building are 50 feet x 53 feet. The two-story building has approximately 2640 square feet on each floor for a total of 5280 square feet.

The building sits on the west side of Main Street in the center of the community of Dayton. The east façade has two entry doors that lead into the main retail space. These entries have single-leaf wood and glass panel doors. A double-door entry topped by a multi-light transom on the south end of the façade opens to a staircase that leads up to the second story dance floor. The single doors are each flanked by large picture windows that stretch from the top of the first floor to half way down the first floor. These window and door openings are not original to the building. However, a photo from circa 1950 shows the store windows with a similar configuration as the present. The entries historically had double doors with multi-pane transoms.

A wood paneled band visually separates the first floor from the second. The second floor contains three nine-over-nine double-hung windows. These windows replaced the original two-over-two double-hung windows at this location. A small pent roof band stretches across the façade above the windows. Above this band is a nameplate with "Croghan's Hall" carved on it. The top of the false front façade features a horizontal band adorned with scrolled brackets. A triangular pediment rises from the center of the false front and contains a rectangular vent opening and decorative dentils.

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

The rear, west elevation has two replacement, sliding-glass windows and a doorway on the second story. A large wood deck spans the entire length of the elevation along the second story. The deck wraps around to the south elevation and is supported by wood piers and partially by a shed roof addition on the first story. The deck was added to the mercantile in 1996.

The south elevation has minimal openings or ornamentation. A single door on the second story leads onto the deck, and a replacement sliding-glass window is below the deck. The enclosed staircase accessing the second floor extends from this elevation and has a roofline that is slightly lower than the main roofline.

The north elevation is mostly a blank wall covered with vertical replacement siding. Historically this was a shared wall with a neighboring one-story commercial building that was torn down sometime in the 1970s. A small paired double-hung window opening is on the west end of the elevation.

The interiors of the first and second floors are largely open spaces. The first floor still functions in its historic use as a retail space. It still retains its historic pressed tin ceiling throughout the space. The oak flooring has been repaired and overlaid over the years. There are three layers of oak flooring in addition to a subfloor.

The second story was used historically as a ballroom and gathering space. A stage set in an opening with three arches is on the west end. The floor is the original 2,000 square foot floor constructed of two and a half inch wide maple boards. It was constructed specifically for dancing and is often considered one of the earlier examples of a 'floating' dance floor in Wyoming. The floor was made with springs and an extra layer of felt padding to give it some extra bounce for dances.

While the building has undergone some material changes over time, most notably the replacement of the second floor windows on the facade, the alteration of the storefront windows and doors, and the addition of a large deck across the rear, it still retains its characteristic false-front form. This form is the main distinguishing characteristic of the building and gives it a good sense of its historic association and feeling.

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

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 N/A

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

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1882-1966

Significant Dates

1901

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance starts in 1882 with the initial construction of the building. It was constructed as Baker's Store to serve the nascent community of Dayton and the surrounding area.

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

In 1901 it was sold to Henry Croghan who enlarged the structure to its current size. It has continued to serve as a retail space in Dayton to the present day. Additionally the dance floor on the second story served the community as a social gathering space. The Dayton Mercantile has continued to be significant as the central commercial space in the town of Dayton. As a result the period of significance extends to 1966 which is fifty years prior to this nomination.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Dayton Mercantile represents one of the most important early commercial enterprises in the town of Dayton. From its origins as a small country store in the 1880s, it grew to be one of the largest enterprises in the town and region. Dayton grew from a small settlement platted in what was then Johnson County and prospered in what became Sheridan County as the result of the surrounding ranching, mining, and logging industries. The Dayton Mercantile served not only the communities of Dayton and Ranchester, but also northwestern Sheridan County and the surrounding region including southeastern Montana through the network of roads and trails through the area. It served as a gathering place for the people of the area to exchange information, purchase much needed supplies, tend to postal needs, and socialize. Therefore, nearly every family in the region either bought merchandise from or utilized the Dayton Mercantile at some point in the early origins of that portion of Sheridan County. It became one of Dayton's largest and most enduring businesses and has served Dayton and the area from 1882 to the present day in one capacity or another. To this day, the mercantile is the largest building standing on Main Street in Dayton. The Dayton Mercantile is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for the key role it played in the economic development of the town and surrounding region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The mercantile is also significant in the area of entertainment/recreation as the second floor dance hall long served as the social center and community gathering space for the town of Dayton.

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

The town of Dayton is located at the foot of the Big Horn Mountains in northern Sheridan County, fifteen miles northwest of the county seat of Sheridan. Early in its history Dayton served as a trading post along the Bozeman trail, then as a stage stop between Custer, Montana and Rock Creek, Wyoming. John Broadwell acquired forty acres that is the original town of Dayton and an adjacent lot to the south from the United States government by paying \$1.25 per acre for it. Broadwell's uncle, Henry Baker, arrived sometime prior to 1882 from the site of Bed-Tick near Fort Fetterman and purchased the land from his nephew. Baker quickly constructed a sizable store and set up business with groceries and other essential supplies.

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

Soon after finishing the building, the first post office was established in the Baker Store. In the late fall of 1882, a group of the settlers gathered in Henry Baker's store to make the application for a post office. The mail at that time was brought up from Bingham, a stage station midway between the present Ranchester and Dayton. The post office would be officially established in the mercantile in 1883. The selection of the name for the post office was decided by drawing slips of paper from a hat. A young homesteader named Joseph Dayton Thorne had put his middle name in the hat and his name was drawn. Thorne would later become a bank president in nearby Sheridan.

In February 1885, Mr. Baker had the town site surveyed and on March 23, 1885, he filed the town plat. Although Dayton was bypassed by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad which selected Sheridan as a division point in 1892, it did become the center of a railroad tie industry as the railroad continued to build towards Billings, Montana.

The local tie industry was pioneered first in 1892 by the Starbird and Hall Company who reportedly built the first five mile long flume above Dayton. About a year later, the McShane Tie Company of Omaha, Nebraska took over Starbird and greatly expanded the flume system to over forty miles long. Logging the nearby Big Horn Mountains, the tie hacks skidded the ties down the flume where they floated on the Tongue River through Dayton to their destination of Ranchester, five miles down the river, to be loaded onto railroad cars.

Dayton's economy, and the business of the mercantile, prospered by supplying hay, grain, meat, eggs, and potatoes to the McShane tie camps. The town and surrounding area became home to families of farmers, ranchers, loggers, as well as coal miners who worked at the nearby Monarch, Acme, and Dietz coal mines.

Baker sold the Dayton Mercantile building and other property in the area to Henry Croghan in 1901. Croghan had a ranch north of Dayton that he sold "to eastern parties" in order to purchase Baker's property.¹ Baker moved on to Sheridan to pursue other business interests. Later he relocated to Colorado and became involved in mining activities. The building was enlarged and continued as a general mercantile with dances and other entertainment on the second floor. The second floor dance hall would come to be known as Croghan's Hall while the general store was known as the Dayton Mercantile. The floor of the dance hall was constructed at this time with springs and extra layers of padding to give the floor extra bounce for dancing. It is believed to be one of only three dance floors constructed in this manner in Wyoming. Woods Landing Dance Hall (NR listed 12/13/1985) also has a dance floor that was constructed in this manner.

Croghan was described in local newspapers as an extensive landowner and he actively made improvements to his property. In the summer of 1907 it was reported that he added an eight foot wide concrete sidewalk in front of the mercantile. The following year forty acres of his land was annexed to the town of Dayton and is known as the Henry Croghan Addition. Later in the 1910s Croghan would also establish a meat market in the nearby coal mining town of Monarch known as the Monarch Meat Company. Numerous notices in the Sheridan newspapers reported that he would travel to area ranches to purchase cattle to support this operation.

¹ *Sheridan Post*. September 9, 1901.

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

Dayton officially incorporated as a town in 1906 with C.H. Ketcham as its first mayor. That year, the Wyoming State Business Directory listed Dayton as having a population of 225 people. The list of businesses in the town included two hotels, a bank, the mercantile, a livery stable, a Congregational Church, a millinery, and a few saloons. Dayton's population would remain fairly steady over the following decades as it reached 348 by 1935.

The Dayton Mercantile widely advertised its goods in the Sheridan newspapers. During the 1910s its advertisements in the Sheridan Daily Enterprise boasted that it was the only general merchandise store in all of Sheridan County and that it carried a complete line of goods including dry goods, groceries, hardware, boots and shoes, crockery, glassware, tents, tarpaulins, farm implements, wagons, buggies, barb wire, rubber roofing, stock salt, and more.

In addition to its function as a general store the Dayton Mercantile served an important role in the social affairs of Dayton. The dance floor was put into regular use by members of the community. Interviews with longtime residents of Dayton reveal that the hall was a popular place for a variety of people to come together and socialize. One resident recalled that dances were held every Saturday. They would often start in the mornings, take a break for lunch, then continue on to the late hours of the evening. Often the girls would bring box lunches and the boys would bid to have lunch with the girls.² Another resident recalls that during the prohibition era bootleggers would bring drinks in to the dances. Drinks would be lined up in the cloak room or available out back of the building.³ In addition to the regular dances, the building was also used for meetings of local fraternal organizations and plays presented by local school groups as well as traveling productions.

The Dayton Mercantile continued to serve as the primary retail and social gathering space until 1936. At this point it continued to serve as the primary retail space for the community, but much of the social uses were taken by the newly constructed Dayton Community Hall. In making an application for Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds to build the community hall it was noted that the Dayton Mercantile was no longer suitable for the full range of community gatherings that was needed in the community. It is not entirely clear why the mercantile was no longer considered suitable, but the WPA application states that a clubhouse was needed to serve approximately 1000 people in Dayton and the surrounding area.⁴ This probably surpassed the capacity of the mercantile.

Immediately following the construction of the Dayton Mercantile in 1882 it immediately became a central building in the town. During the early settling of the community it served as the only place for townspeople and the surrounding ranchers and miners to purchase groceries and necessary supplies. The Mercantile was an essential part of the founding and settlement of the town of Dayton. Furthermore the development of the upper story for use as a dance hall and general gathering space provided a much needed social outlet that was not available elsewhere in the community.

² Stuart Kleiber, interview with Harriet Ratchye, August 22, 1975. Transcript available at Wyoming State Archives.

³ Jesse Cobb Adams, interview with Harriet Ratchye, March 2, 1976. Transcript available at Wyoming State Archives.

⁴ Carol Swift, Lucille Alley, Pete Hager, Nancy Weidel. Dayton Community Hall National Register Nomination, November 25, 2005.

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Adams, Jessie Cobb. Interview with Harriet Ratchye, March 2, 1976.

Kleiber, Stuart. Interview with Harriet Ratchye, August 22, 1975.

McPherrren, Ida. "Dayton, The Historical", Wyoming State Archives file WPA146.1

Rawlings, Charles. *Our Neck O' the Woods*. Rangeland Photo and News Service, Sheridan, Wyoming. 1972.

Sheridan Post, September 9, 1901.

Swift, Carol, Lucille Alley, Pete Hager, and Nancy Weidel. "Dayton Community Hall National Register Nomination." November 25, 2005

Wyoming Newspapers Database. Available at <http://newspapers.wyo.gov/>. Accessed January 6, 2016.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

☐ 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): 48SH1872

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.16 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 13 321244 4971624
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
Zone Easting Northing

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

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

The boundary is defined as lot 4, block 15 in the Town of Dayton.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundary represents the area that is historically and currently associated with the Dayton Mercantile.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elaine Stevens

organization

date

street & number 408 Main Street

telephone

city or town Dayton

state WY

zip code 82836

e-mail

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: **Dayton Mercantile**

City or Vicinity: **Dayton**

County: **Sheridan**

State: **Wyoming**

Photographer: Beth King (exterior photos), Richard Collier (interior photos)

Date Photographed: Summer, 2015 (exterior), 2005 (interior)

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Dayton Mercantile

Sheridan County, WY

Name of Property

County and State

East façade, photographer facing southwest.
1 of 7.

Northeast corner of building, photographer facing southwest.
2 of 7.

North elevation, photographer facing south.
3 of 7.

Northwest corner, photographer facing southeast.
4 of 7.

Southwest corner, photographer facing northeast.
5 of 7.

Interior of first floor retail space.
6 of 7.

Interior of second floor, photographer facing northwest.
7 of 7.

Property Owner:

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

name Elaine Stevens

street & number 408 Main Street

telephone _____

city or town Dayton

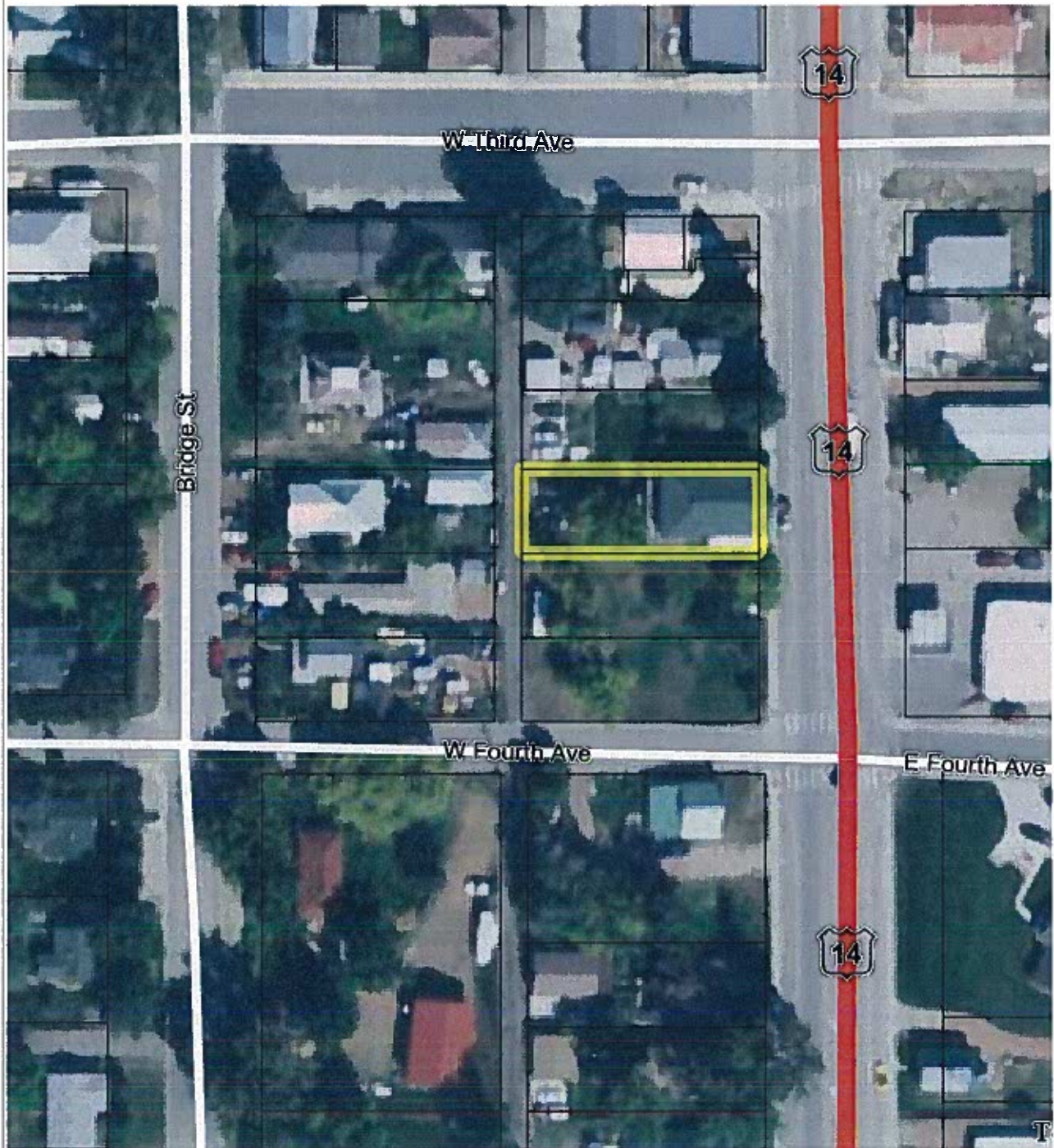
state WY

zip code 82836

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 18 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.

Sheridan County Wyoming MapServer



Sheridan County provides this map for illustrative purposes only and assumes no liability for actions taken by users based on information shown.

0 66 132 198 ft

1/27/2016

Map of the Dayton Mercantile.
Sheridan County, Wyoming