



Downtown Historic District

History

The Downtown Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1999; the buildings on Main Street east of State Street were also included in the 1983 Mansion Row National Register Historic District. In addition to the primary area included in the National Register district, the locally-regulated district also includes a secondary area that stretches from East Fifth to West Fifth Streets and south from Culbertson Avenue to the Ohio River. This includes the original area of the town plat.

The downtown district contains a significant collection of commercial buildings that were constructed above the riverfront and date from the first half of the 1800s. Eventually, residential, religious and other types of

buildings were integrated with the commercial buildings and many of these survive today.

The contributing buildings in the district, constructed between 1814 and about 1950, represent a wide range of architectural styles, including Federal, Greek Revival, Renaissance Revival, Italianate, Beaux Arts, Neoclassical and Chicago Commercial.

Generally, the oldest buildings are located on Main Street, which is significant for its high concentration of Federal and Greek Revival style buildings. Among these are the Federal style building at 128-134 East Main Street, built c.1825 and the Greek Revival Indiana State Bank (203 East Main Street), built in 1837. The latter is considered one of the finest examples of the style in the region, if not the state.

As the city grew and prospered many Italianate style buildings were erected on State, Pearl and Market streets. The 1887 Reibel House (115 East Market Street), built with a three story stone façade, is an excellent example of this style of architecture.

The Neoclassical style Elsby Building (117 East Spring Street) built 1916, and the New Albany Carnegie Library (201 East Spring Street) built 1902, represent the continued refinement of the downtown area. Several other 20th century buildings representing the Chicago Commercial, Art Deco and Art Moderne styles can also be observed within the district. The Woolworth Building (218 Pearl Street) built c.1910, the former Sears Automotive building (140 East Main Street), and the Firestone Building (227 State Street) built 1937, are prime examples of these three styles.

Right: The Elsby Building, (northwest corner Pearl and Spring streets), shown c.1920



Below: Woolworth's lunch counter (218 Pearl Street), c.1920



Map

