

**THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF  
FALLS CITY, OREGON,  
1845-1965**

**HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT**

The City of Falls City, Oregon  
299 Mill Street, P.O. Box 10  
Falls City, OR 97344

August 1997

# **THE DEVELOPMENT OF FALLS CITY, OREGON, 1845-1965**

## **HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT**

by

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**with Historic Overview by  
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Report to

**The City of Falls City, Oregon  
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Support was provided by staff members of the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. Dave Skilton provided direction and feedback for the document, while Kimberly Dunn coordinated the grant funding for the project.

Equal thanks goes to the residents of Falls City. Several people attended the public meeting at which they shared their thoughts about the city's past and future. A number of residents also allowed the consultants to wander around their properties gathering further information about the community. Without the community's support and involvement, the project's completion would not be possible.

Notwithstanding the support received from these and other individuals, any errors of fact or judgment in this report is solely the responsibility of the authors.

## INTRODUCTION

The following historic context statement has been developed for the City of Falls City, Oregon by Historic Preservation Consultant, Michelle L. Dennis, with a Historic Overview by local area historian, Arlie Holt. The project was completed in 1997 under the terms of a contractual agreement with the City of Falls City and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

A historic context statement is a document used in planning for a community's historic resources. It identifies the broad patterns of historic development of the community and identifies historic property types, such as buildings, sites, structures, objects, or districts, which may represent these patterns of development. In addition, a historic context statement provides direction for evaluating and protecting significant historic resources. As a planning document, it is intended to be a dynamic document, evolving as community needs and desires change.

Context-based planning, as developed by the National Park Service for organizing activities for preserving historic resources, is based on the following principles:

- Significant historic properties are unique and irreplaceable.
- Preservation must often go forward without complete information.
- Planning can be applied at any scale.
- History belongs to everyone.

Information in this document will aid in planning efforts and decision-making with regards to historic resources as the City of Falls City is faced with future development and expansion.

This project was financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, a division of the U. S. Department of the Interior, and administered by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office. All work was completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

## HISTORIC CONTEXT DEFINITION

An important step in understanding a historic context is determining what is to be studied. Three parameters are used to describe the boundaries of a historic context. They are: theme, place, and time. For the purposes of this document, each of these elements was included in defining the project, *The Development of Falls City, Oregon, 1845-1965*.

### THEME

Defining the theme of a context study names "what" is to be studied. The primary theme of this project is the historical development of the City of Falls City, Oregon. It addresses the development of historic resources, such as buildings, structures, sites, and objects, within what are now the incorporated limits of the city.

Falls City is a small, rural community with a population of about 950. Located on the eastern side of the Coast Range along the Little Luckiamute River, the area developed as a mill site. In 1891, areas on both the south and north sides of the river was platted and the town began to grow, reaching its peak of 1200 residents in 1921. Following the closure of the last mill in 1965, the population of the community has grown little. In part due to its rather remote location at the end of a highway into the coast range, and in part due to limited community services, development since 1965 has been slow. With continued expansion of population into the rural areas in western Oregon, however, Falls City and its immediate environs have begun to experience new growth and development, some of which is likely to affect the community's historic resources.

For the purposes of this project, the principle theme of historical development of Falls City has been divided into smaller thematic categories. These categories, as delineated in the Oregon Statewide Inventory Historic/Cultural themes list, were developed by the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The broad thematic categories which apply to Falls City's development are (1) Settlement, (2) Industry and Manufacturing, (3) Agriculture, (4) Transportation and Communication, (5) Commercial Development, (6) Government, and (7) Culture.

### PLACE

Defining the place or spatial boundary of a context study describes its geographic limits. The spatial boundary for this project includes the entire area within the City of Falls City urban growth boundary. The area includes the original plats on the south and north sides of the river, all subsequent additions to these plats, and all annexed portions of the city (see Figure 1). Because the development of the Little Luckiamute valley was integral to the development of Falls City, the project includes references to Falls City's nearby outlying areas as well.

The City of Falls City is located at the head of the Little Luckiamute River valley where the valley floor meets the mountains of the Coast Range. The city is about ten miles east of the Coast Range crest and about thirty miles east of the Pacific Ocean. It is located about six miles southwest of Dallas, twenty miles southwest of Salem and twenty-two miles northwest of Corvallis, in the central portion of Polk County. The

falls for which Falls City was named, and which provided the power for the mills, are located just west of the city center on the Little Luckiamute River, which flows east through the city. The dominant landscape is steep mountainous slopes on the west, north and south sides of the city. East of the city, the landscape is agricultural in appearance. The elevation ranges from 320 feet at the southeast corner to 750 feet at the southwest corner of the city with the bench mark (USGS) at 380 feet.

Because the community developed along both sides of the river simultaneously, there are two main streets, North Main and South Main, along which commercial, industrial and residential areas developed. Today, the commercial district is centered along North Main. Most city services are also located on the north side of the river (only the new post office, which opened during the summer of 1997, is located on the south side of the river). Residential development extends both north and south.

TIME

Defining the time or temporal boundary of a context study established bracketing dates for the period under study. The temporal boundary for this project begins with the first Euro-American settlement in 1845 in the area now included within Falls City's urban growth boundary. The boundary terminates in 1965 with the end of the lumber mill industry in Falls City. The timeframe established for this project correlates with chronological periods established by SHPO, as well as the events significant to the development of Falls City.

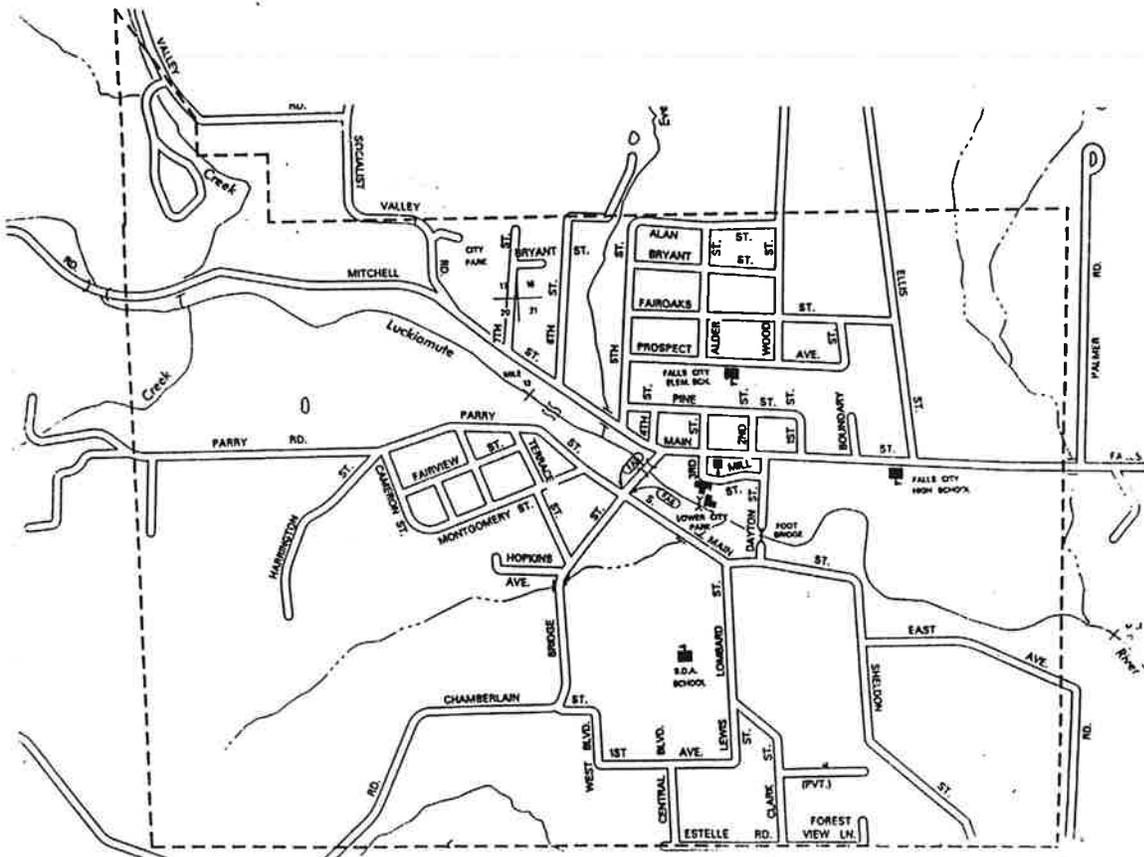


Figure 1. Map of Falls City. Urban Growth Boundary indicated by dotted line (1997).

## HISTORIC CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

The Historic Context Description includes three elements: a historic overview, a discussion about historic properties likely to be found, and criteria for evaluating historic properties. The historic overview, which is divided into seven thematic categories, highlights key events that led to the development of Falls City between 1845 and 1965. From this overview, the type of historic properties likely to exist within the spatial boundaries of the project can be predicted. These properties are categorized and discussed by "resource type" relating to the thematic categories, distributional patterns and quantity. This section also includes a discussion about specific criteria for evaluating historic properties in Falls City. These criteria are based on evaluating the property's significance, integrity and condition.

### HISTORIC OVERVIEW OF THE CITY OF FALLS CITY

The purpose of the following historic overview is to present a summary of Falls City's history, highlighting key events in the community's development. It should be noted that this overview is not intended to be a comprehensive discussion of the history of Falls City. For further detailed information about the community's history, the reader may want to consult the resources listed in the Bibliography. An annotated list of significant people in Falls City's history can be found in Appendix A. The overview is divided into seven thematic categories, based on the Oregon Statewide Inventory Historic/Cultural themes list developed by the Oregon SHPO. Within each category, key events in the development of Falls City are discussed chronologically from 1845 to 1965.

#### *SETTLEMENT*

The area now known as Falls City was at one time the territory of regional Native American Indian tribes. Members of the Chinook and Calapooia tribes are known to have gathered camas roots in the vicinity of the falls as late as 1841.

Exploration by Euro-Americans probably began with fur trapping campaigns between 1812 and the 1840s. One of the first written records of the area was the journal of James Clyman who came to Oregon in 1845 and traveled through the Luckiamute Valley in the spring of 1845.<sup>1</sup> While waiting there to lead a group down the old California Trail to Sutters Fort, he explored the valley and foothills to the west. In his journal, he noted the potential for future industrial and agricultural development.<sup>2</sup>

Osborne Russell was the first man to take a claim at the future site of Falls City. Having first visited Oregon with Nathaniel Wyeth of the Hudson Bay Company in 1834, Russell returned to Oregon in 1842 and served on the Oregon bench of the Provisional Government and earned the title of "Judge Russell." After his political ambitions were cut short when he lost a gubernatorial election, he took a provisional claim of land that included the falls on the Little Luckiamute River in October 1845.<sup>3</sup> While living on this land, he wrote his noted *Journal Of A Trapper* and in 1848, represented Polk County in the Territorial Legislature. He left soon after for the gold fields in California and never returned to Oregon.

The southern portion of Russell's claim was taken as a Donation Land Claim by Theodore Thorp, who with his father John, developed both a flour mill and saw mill on the south side of the river at the falls (see Figure 2). The valley's limited population, however, did not support the scope of their operations and they moved the mills to Rickreall in 1865. It would be nearly three decades before the area would realize its full potential for industrial development as seen by early entrepreneurs.

By the mid-1870s, a number of settlers had claims in the area (see Figure 3), but development was limited primarily to small family farms. In about 1878, the small community known as Syracuse developed approximately two miles east of present-day Falls City and a post office was established there in 1885.

In 1889, a group of entrepreneurs founded the town of Falls City. Promotional brochures which characterized Falls City's resources and advantages were distributed and before long, the town began to grow. In February 1891, Hugh S. and Esther Montgomery platted a part of their acreage on the south side of the river for the townsite and the family developed a mill near the falls. This area became known as the Montgomery Addition. Later that same year, in July, the Falls City Development Company, owned by F.K. Hubbard, A.M. Bryant, Mr. Shurtliff and Mr. Yocum, platted land on the north side of the river for the townsite. Each plat had a Main Street and today, there are still South Main and North Main streets.

The original incorporation of the city was enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon in 1893 and filed in the office of the Secretary of State on February 13th of that year. A new charter was enacted in 1903 and is considered the official incorporation of the city.

Following the arrival of the railroad in 1903, the community flourished for a number of years. By 1905, there were approximately 1000 residents and telephone service to every home. The years from about 1907 to 1920 were boom years for the town. Numerous mills and commercial establishments ensured work for many. Agriculture also grew in importance during this time, with the introduction of the fruit, nut and berry industry and the growth in dairying (see Figure 4).

By 1921, Falls City's population had grown to nearly 1200. But the timber supply was largely depleted and the big Falls City Lumber Company mill moved from Falls City to Valsetz. Other smaller mills closed. The town started on a decline from which it has never fully recovered. By 1930, passenger rail service had ceased and the population of the community had dropped to less than 500. The opening of small mills in the late 1930s and 1940s brought some relief and stability to the community. But when the last mill to operate in town burned in 1965 ending the mill era for Falls City, the town came to a near standstill.

Since then, Falls City has seen only minimal growth and development. During the last 30 years many commercial enterprises left town and only a handful have replaced them. No new viable industry has been developed. Several buildings from the early days have been demolished and only a few new buildings have been built. The population has slowly grown in number but has never reached its earlier peak. And though the vibrancy of Falls City's heyday has never been seen again, many residents would chose no where else to live.

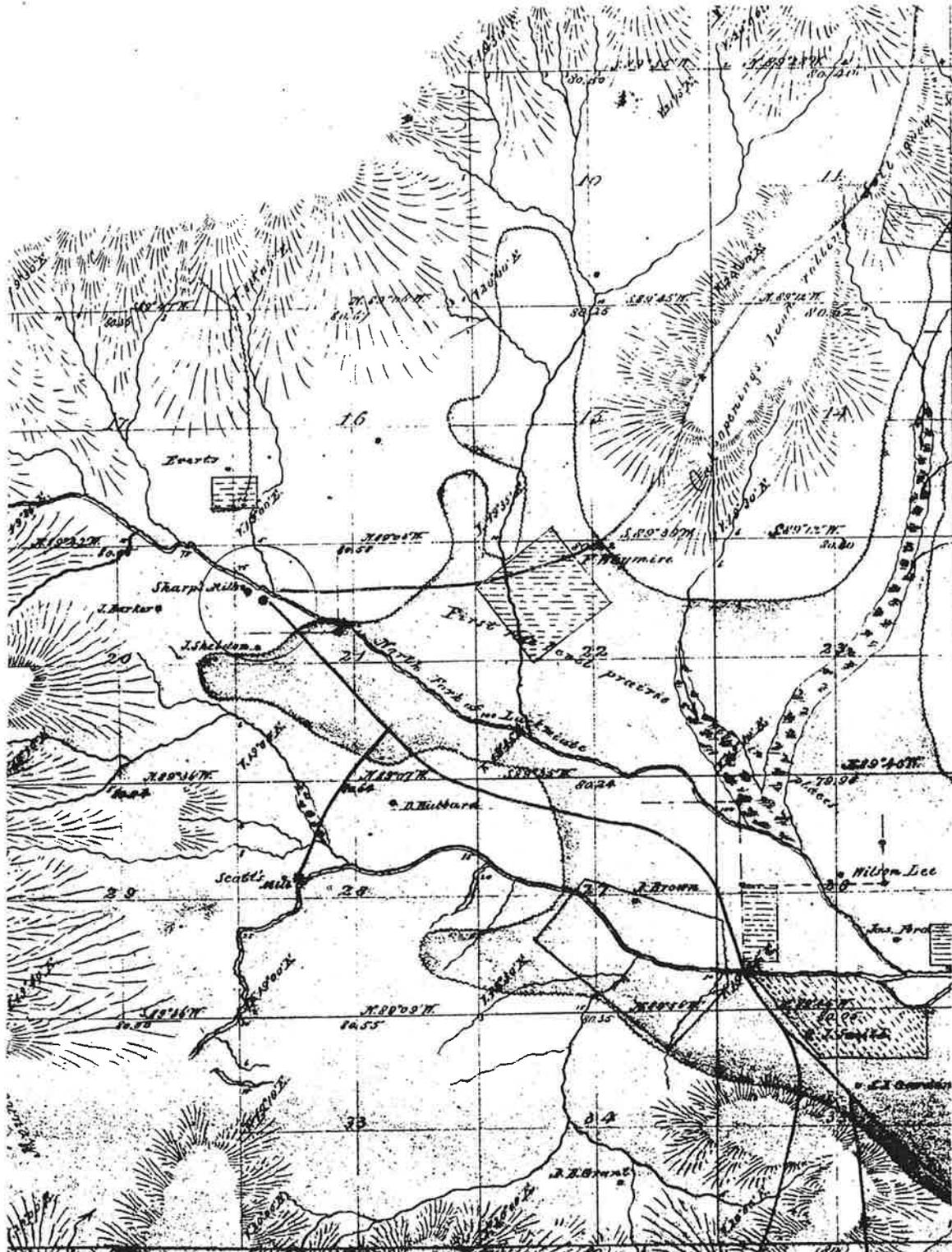


Figure 2. 1885 Survey Map, T8S R6W. Thorp's Mills (circled) incorrectly labelled as Sharp's Mills.



Figure 3. Portion of 1873 map showing Little Luckiamute valley.  
 (Note: Sharp's Mills, now identified as Tharp's Mills)

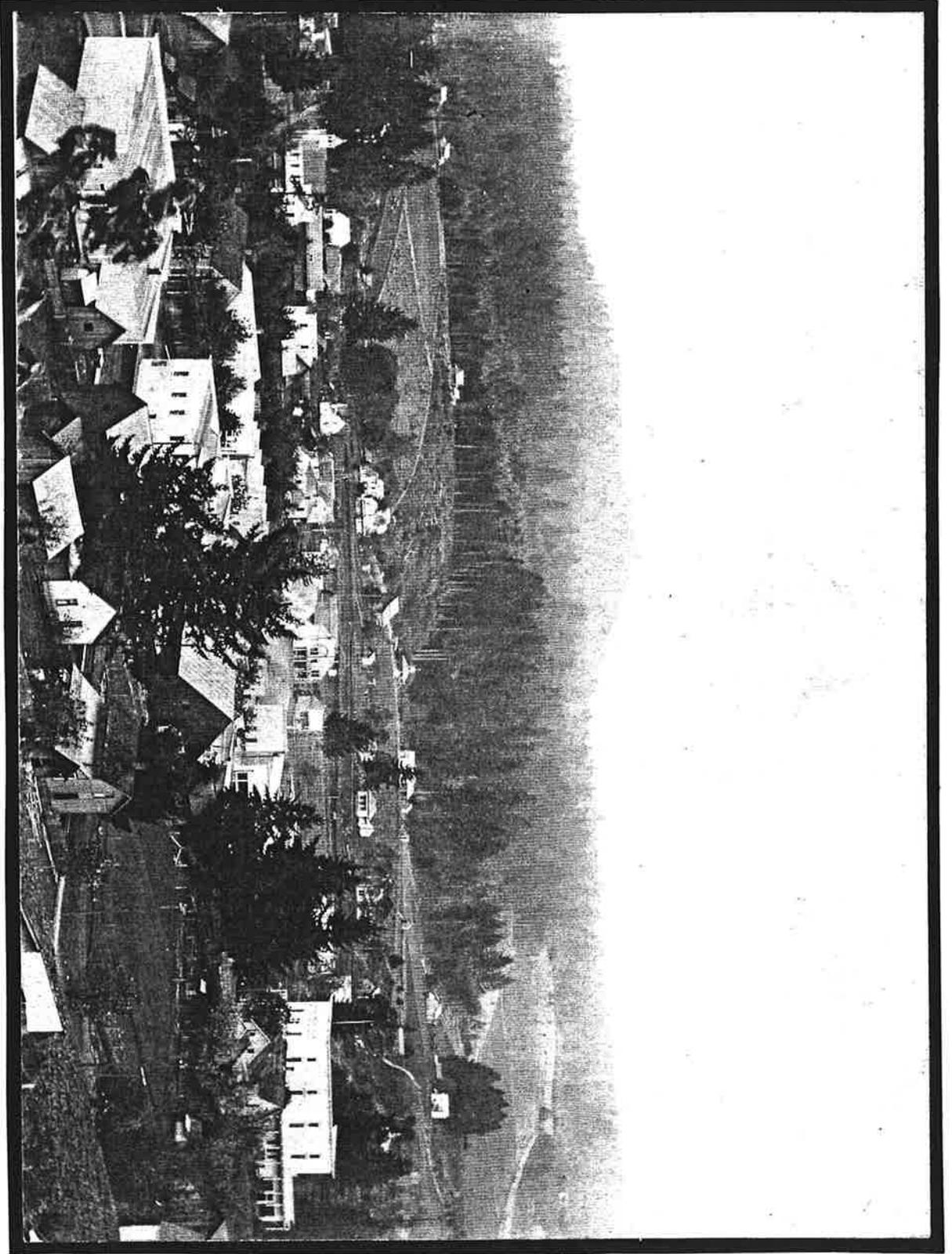


Figure 4. View of Falls City from North Hill, c.1915-1920.

*INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURING*

Many pioneers came to the Oregon country to establish farms in this new land of abundance, but others came as entrepreneurs. The first to note the potential for "hydraulic" development was James Clyman during his travels through the area in 1845. Having crossed the two forks of the Luckiamute River, he noted "both branches of the Lukimute [sic] are bold and noble mill streams."

John Thorp and his son, Theodore, with grandiose visions of the future, were the first to harness the falls at the head of the Little Luckiamute valley for just such development. They built a sawmill in 1852, followed by a grist mill in 1853, on the south side of the river. In 1855, Samuel T. Scott opened a mill a couple miles south of the Thorps' mills, on the north side of Teal Creek (then named Brown Creek).<sup>4</sup> (See Figures 2 and 3.) Because the population did not support the scope of the Thorps' operation, they moved the mills to their land near Rickreall in 1865.

Other small mills in the Little Luckiamute valley near the future site of Falls City followed, including the Shrader-Mowery mill and Tindall's mill, both on Teal Creek, and the Palmehn mill on Dutch Creek, in the 1870s.<sup>5</sup> In 1881, David Rubble bought the relinquishment of the Thorp DLC, which he later sold to his parents, William and Ruth Ruble. Although the exact location and dates of operation are unknown, family diaries indicate that William Ruble ran a sawmill for three years somewhere in this vicinity in the 1880s. Henry McIntosh, who was married to the Ruble's granddaughter, operated a mill with Columbus Bennett west of the falls on the Little Luckiamute during the 1880s.<sup>6</sup> In the spring of 1889, the Rubles sold their land to Hugh S. and Esther Montgomery.<sup>7</sup>

On February 24, 1891, the Montgomerys platted a portion of their land on the south side of the Little Luckiamute as a townsite for Falls City. Their son, John, and his associates built a sawmill near the falls. To create the penstock for water power, rock was blasted away and a dam consisting of one great log laid across the river with small logs leaning against it was built. Once in operation, the Montgomery sawmill and sash and door factory supplied refined lumber for the new construction work in Falls City. The dam was used, with occasional minor repairs, until 1923 or 1924, when it was torn out by the city electric company and a new dam built just below it.

The number of small sawmills in the vicinity continued to increase in the 1890s, but soon after the turn of the century, the coming of the railroad into Falls City would effectively change the smaller operations to more corporate alignments. In 1901, Louis Gerlinger, Sr. incorporated the Salem, Falls City and Western Railway company and began to buy timberland in Polk County. His goal was to construct a freight and passenger railway and to sell cutover lands to homesteaders. Hundreds of square miles of Douglas fir and other commercial timber grew in the Coast Range mountains and could be effectively reached with the development of a railroad. Construction on the rail line began in September 1902 and the first train ran from Dallas to Falls City on May 28, 1903.<sup>8</sup>

The railroad allowed a wide market beyond local consumption and the mills near Falls City flourished (see Figure 5). The Montgomery's mill was sold and prospered as the Falls City Lumber Company under the ownership of Graham Griswold and Will T. Grier. The operation was expanded to include a planing mill located at Falls City and two sawmills, known as Mills 1 and 2, located approximately

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## HISTORIC CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

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four miles southwest of Falls City near Black Rock. Flumes were built from the two outlying sawmills to transport logs to their planing operation in Falls City.

In 1912, Cobbs and Mitchell arrived in Oregon and built a large sawmill at Falls City. Falls City was selected as the logical location for their large mill as it was the closest railhead point to large stands of burned over timber. In addition to constructing a mill many times larger than other local operations, they bought out Griswold and Grier and took over the two smaller mills and planing operation. They also built a logging railroad between Mill 1 and Mill 2 and extended the spur line for several miles into the woods. But because it was cheaper to flume their green lumber from the two mills to the planer at Falls City, they did not extend their railroad to connect with the SFC&W.

The years between about 1907 and 1920 were boom years for the town, with 1915 often sited as the peak year for industrial development. The Falls City Lumber Company, operated by Cobbs and Mitchell, was central to the boom, but there were up to fifteen other smaller mills operating in the area during this time as well. Vast amounts of timber were harvested from the nearby mountain forests. But it was only a matter of time before companies would leave the area in search of new timber sources.

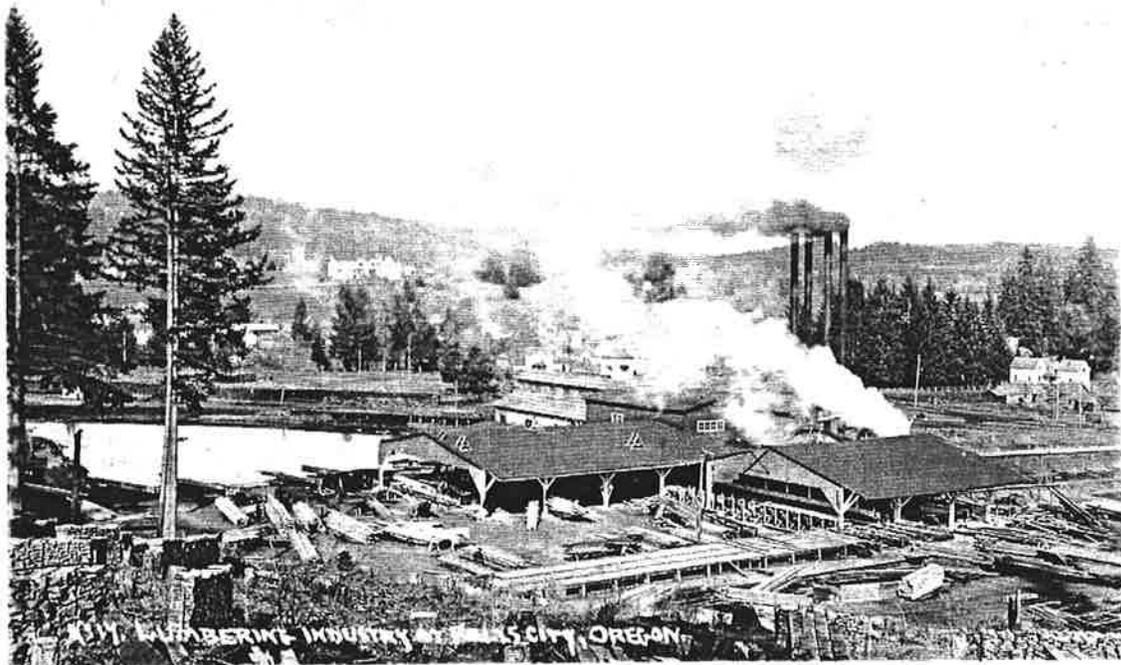


Figure 5. Photo taken from postcard showing Falls City's Lumber Industry.  
(Exact date unknown, but taken sometime between 1893 and 1938.)

By 1921, the population of Falls City had reached its highest point with nearly 1200 people calling the town their home. In 1922, the Falls City Lumber Company moved to Valsetz, taking with it a large number of jobs. Other small mills also began to close. The Depression brought the timber industry to a near standstill for the area when the new mill at Valsetz closed in 1929. By 1930, the population of Falls City had dropped to less than 500. The old Falls City Lumber Company mill in Falls City sat empty until it burned in 1933.

The mill at Valsetz started up again in 1936 and two years later, Loren Cooper moved his milling operation from Airlie to Falls City near the site of the old Montgomery mill of the 1890s. Cooper operated his mill until 1943, then sold it to William and Martha Fern who operated it until 1944 when they sold the timber holdings and the mill machinery to Willamette Industries. The buildings and land became the property of the City of Falls City.

In 1945, Ike Bartell and Walter Schmitke formed a partnership and began the Atlas Lumber Company, renting the buildings and land of the former mill. They enlarged the buildings and added machinery and powered the mill by steam for a year before converting to electric power to increase production. In addition to operating the mill at this site, they installed a planing mill and large loading dock further east on South Main Street to facilitate shipping the lumber by rail.

Although the renewed lumber industry kept Falls City from becoming a ghost town in the 1940s and 1950s, the operations were small and the city never recovered from the decline of the early 1920s. The largest of the mid-century mills was the Atlas Lumber Company, which employed an average of only seventeen men. When the Atlas Lumber Company mill burned in July 1965, the lumber industry in Falls City ended.

## *AGRICULTURE*

Although Falls City has been primarily an industrial lumber mill town, agriculture has played an important role in its history. Before the develop of the mills that brought the town to its heyday, the rural valley was dotted with family farms. As was typical of many early agricultural areas, the settlers grew wheat and other small grains and raised stock.

With time, large farms were subdivided and parcels sold or rented and the land was used more extensively for farming. But old agricultural practices were ruinous. Unwise farming practices, which stemmed from the belief of unlimited return, wore out the soil reducing the crop yields. Open range grazing decreased and range was confined to valley tracts.<sup>9</sup> New methods of farming were necessary and a number of area farmers began experimenting with new crops.

In 1882, Mr. Moyer pioneered the hop growing business as an experiment.<sup>10</sup> For several years, hops was an important and successful crop in the Little Luckiamute valley. Chinese labor was brought in to grub the land of the brush that had returned in order to clear field for new hop yards.<sup>11</sup> In addition to the use of Chinese labor, hop growers used Indians from the Siletz and Grande Ronde reservations to develop the new agricultural industry. The Indians were allowed releases from certain restrictions of the reservation while working for hops growers.<sup>12</sup>

A festive atmosphere was often associated with the hop industry as characterized by appeals such as the following:

WANTED: 1000 pickers for...Hop Field...We pay \$1.10 per 100 pounds...  
Perfect accommodations, food at city prices; free whiskey, dance five nights in the  
week, evangelists on Sunday and a hell of a time.<sup>13</sup>

People attracted to the money or excitement were regular pickers year after year. In addition, many area families worked the hops fields to earn enough money to buy school books and clothes for their children. Hops barns used for drying hops dotted the valley between Dallas and Falls City and were indicators of a flourishing agricultural industry for decades. By the 1950s, however, the hops industry was gone from the valley.

The fruit industry, which got a relatively early start in Oregon in the 1880s, did not get a foothold in the Little Luckiamute valley until after the arrival of the railroad in 1903. In 1909, The Falls City News reported that A.D. James, an experienced fruit grower, had purchased a farm south of Falls City and found the soil to be especially adapted to raising berries and fruits, in which he intended to engage on a large scale.<sup>14</sup> The growth of the fruit industry was illustrated by the list of growers in the 1911-1912 Gazetteer which included F. Byerly, market gardener; W.A. Cobb, berry grower; Falls City Land Co., Dave R. Hall, Mgr., Farms, Fruit and Berry Land; Thos. D. Hollowell, gardener; L.R. Kimes, fruit grower; J.S. Powell, gardener; and Mrs. F.O. Wolfe, florist.<sup>15</sup> Geographically, the fruit industry was found in and around Falls City. Kimes farm was high in the hills to the northwest of town, Hollowell developed a grape and vegetable farm and greenhouses on the hill just north of North Main Street, and Wolfe's farm was southeast of town on Tater Hill.

The development of fruit tracts continued through the 1910s and early 1920s. In addition to the shipping of fresh fruit via rail, a cannery was started at Falls City by A. Rupert and C.J. Pugh in 1919. Pugh was the manufacturer of the first loganberry juice in a commercial manner.<sup>16</sup> The cannery closed during the Depression.

The most successful and longest lived of the Falls City fruit enterprises was run by the W.V. Sample family. In about 1920, their acreage in the hills just north of town was planted to prunes, peaches, loganberries and apples. Their business prospered for over seven decades and included a packing house in which quality fruits came from as far away as Hood River and the Yakima valley in Washington.<sup>17</sup>

Although the increase in dairying in Polk County didn't begin until after about 1910, a related industry appeared in Falls City as early as 1905 when the Vic brothers opened the Falls City Creamery Company where they sold butter. The 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the Falls City Roquefort Cheese located on South Main Street.

Agrarian businesses continued to be listed in the 1931-32 Gazetteer. In addition to hops growers and fruit growers, there were a number of dairy farmers, walnut growers, and poultry breeders listed. After World War II, there was a brief burst of energy in the prune industry due to the demand for prunes in Europe. Soon after, however, many orchards became idle and were eventually removed to open land for the more general farming of today. With the exception of the Sample orchards on the north hill, Falls City's years as a viable agricultural commercial center ended in the 1950s.

### *TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION*

Falls City is located about three-and-a-half miles west of where the old California Trail crossed the Little Luckiamute River. This trail was an early major north-south artery running from Ft. Vancouver on the Columbia River down to California and was used by the Hudson Bay Company during its fur trapping campaigns, as well as by Native American Indian tribes in the valley.

As settlers moved into the Little Luckiamute valley, new routes of travel were established. An 1854 survey charts the California Trail, as well as a road which went north over the ridge to the Rickreall Creek and down into Dallas. This route, known as the Hill Road, was an important route for many years to come as one of only two between Falls City and Dallas. The other route, the valley road which went through Bridgeport, was often impassable in winter.<sup>18</sup> In 1901 a road from Falls City to the Dallas-Lewisville highway north of Bridgeport was built, shortening the trip of either of the other two routes.

A stage, operated by Elmer Gilliam, ran between Falls City and Dallas in the 1890s and early 1900s. A one-way trip to Dallas cost thirty-five cents in 1901 and had risen to fifty cents by 1903.<sup>19</sup> The arrival of passenger service on the railroad, however, brought an end to the stage line.

In 1901, Louis Gerlinger, Sr. incorporated the Salem, Falls City and Western Railway company. Construction on the rail line began in September 1902 and the first train ran from Dallas to Falls City on May 28, 1903. The rail line entered Falls City on the south side of the river connecting with the small depot and several mills. Regular passenger service on the Salem, Falls City & Western Railway lasted from 1903 through 1929.

The first automobile arrived in Falls City in 1905. As a newsworthy event, it was reported in the local paper: "The first automobile ever seen in Falls city was driven into town Tuesday by Charles Dick, of Portland."<sup>20</sup> Undoubtedly, it was not long before more autos followed. Motorized transportation led to the development of the motor stage service, which ran for several years between Falls City and Dallas. Motor stage companies included the Parker Stage Company, later the Oregon Stages company, and the S.P. Busses company.<sup>21</sup>

The condition of roads, however, continued to be a problem as autos and motor stages traveled the dirt and gravel routes. The roads from Falls City to Dallas were not surfaced with macadam until 1936.

Bridges were instrumental to facilitating travel. The earliest reference to a bridge in the Little Luckiamute valley was in the Provisional Land Claim of John Chamberlain in 1848. This bridge was located near the old California Trail where the community of Bridgeport developed. By the 1880s, however, settlers in the area that would become Falls City wanted a bridge closer to the head of the valley. Travel from the south side of the river to the north side meant using an unsafe ford or taking a longer route to cross the bridge at Bridgeport. County Commission records indicate that a bridge across the Little Luckiamute on the road known as the C.G. Rowell Road was constructed in 1888.<sup>22</sup> This bridge was used for about fifty years before being washed out by a flood. It was never rebuilt.

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## HISTORIC CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

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The first documented bridge across the river in the new town of Falls City was a wooden bridge built in 1891 and was known as the Bridge Street Bridge. By 1906, there was a need for additional bridges in Falls City. The Dayton Street Bridge was built during the winter of 1906-1907. A pedestrian bridge from the depot to the north side of town was built in August 1907. And the old wooden bridge was replaced with a steel bridge during the Fall of 1907.<sup>23</sup>

This steel bridge was the primary river crossing for the logging trucks. Heavy use resulted in deterioration and the bridge was repaired in 1941.<sup>24</sup> The bridge, which sat at 90° angles to the streets, posed problems for larger logging trucks and in 1958, a new concrete deck girder bridge, which crossed the river at a wider angle, was built. The installation of the bridge at this angle, however, resulted in the loss of several historic buildings on North Main Street.

The Dayton Street bridge was closed to traffic and converted to a pedestrian bridge in the 1950s. The original pedestrian bridge was first rebuilt in 1971 by the Seabees. Due to deterioration it was again rebuilt in 1990 by the Salem Naval Reserve Seabee Unit 0818, with help from local volunteers.<sup>25</sup>

Not all contact with the broader world was dependent upon road or rail travel. Falls City had telephone communication by 1898 and telegraph service by 1901. The first telephone system was developed by John Talbott and his sons. The Bell phone system was located in the Thompson Drug Store and extended to individual residences on both sides of the river. In 1907, Cliff Pugh was granted a telephone franchise from the Mutual telephone line and the switch board for this system was located in his jewelry store.

Newspapers were also an important tool for communication. The first news was regularly reported in the Dallas and Polk County newspapers, the Itemizer and the Observer (later combined as the Itemizer-Observer), both of which included their own "Falls City News" column. In 1902, Falls City got its own newspaper when Mr. Leavitt started The Falls City Leader on May 1, 1902.

Other newspapers followed, including the Argus, edited by Mr. Calloway and the Falls City Logger, edited by Virgil Averill and John Chamberlain. In 1906, the local newspaper became the News, edited by C.L. Starr. Under the same name, the paper passed through a succession of editors and owners, including R.M. French, C.W. Lee, and Wood & Son. The last paper published in Falls City was the Enterprise, which was begun in 1925 by George M. Cole. Later owners were T.C. Anderson, and Mrs. Mallery. The paper lasted into the early 1930s.

## COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The group of men that met in 1889 to establish Falls City as a town was known as the Falls City Union. When they distributed a promotional brochure the following year, a number of commercial enterprises had already been attracted to the area. The brochure included a business directory which listed the following "representative firms:"

Montgomery & Sawtell, manufacture all kinds of rough and dressed lumber; Courter Bros., general merchandise; Griggs & MacFarlane, general merchandise; Joseph Wankey, boot and shoe store; J.B. Teal, hydraulic and general contractor; Frank Butler, surveyor, leveller and draughtsman; V.A. Schlappi, land and timber locator;

Star Grain Cruser (Bunce's patent) at Falls City foundry, E. Bunce manager. Send for circulars: J.T. Starr, blacksmith and dealer in agricultural implements.<sup>26</sup>

When the Montgomerys and the Falls City Development Company platted their townsites in 1891, two main streets (North Main and South Main) were created. Commercial interests developed along each. By 1893, there were a number of additional new businesses in town, including a hotel operated by Tom Hollowell.<sup>27</sup> Josie (Moyer) Davenport, who was born in 1885, remembered several early businesses on North Main Street, including a general store and grocery owned by Fred Raymond, a confectionery and barber shop owned by Elmer Gilliam, and a drug store owned by Dr. Measman.<sup>28</sup>

Beginning in 1901, the Oregon Gazetteer regularly charted the commercial growth of the town. In the 1901-1902 directory, additional businesses included general stores owned by John J. Colwell and N. A. Emmitt, a shoe store owned by C. Forshey, and a drug store owned by Merrit Thompson (Thompson's drug store was the longest running business in the history of Falls City). Louis Pfandhoefer was the town's doctor.<sup>29</sup>

Banking was added to the list of businesses in the 1903-1904 directory. General stores were being run by John S. Courter and E.H. Watkins, along with a general store run by the Bryan-Lucas Lumber Company. Other new businesses included a confectionery owned by R.R. Bettis, a livery business run by Dennis & Hughes, and a meat market owned by O.P. Henry. Ralph Hall was listed as a barber, Hinshaw and Leavitt as real estate agents, and Jacob Wagner as a blacksmith. A new hotel, operated by Starr and March, had been built. And Cliff J. Pugh, also long associated with Falls City's commercial history, was listed as a jeweler.<sup>30</sup>

Commercial growth continued into 1905-1906 as existing businesses expanded and new businesses were opened. Bettis had expanded his business to include the sale of cigars, Pugh had added a confectionery to his jewelry store, and Courter had changed to the furniture business. Pear Bryant had opened a millinery and notions business, the Vic brothers were listed as proprietors of the Falls City Creamery, J.M. Stark was listed as the president of the Falls City Mercantile Company, J.A. Wright and O. Sampson had opened a livery stable, and O.E. Leet sold real estate and insurance and served the community as a notary. There were, for the first time, two saloons listed, one run by Thomas Edgar and the other by H. Fugitt. The town had been "dry" until it was re-incorporated in 1903. Mrs. Fugitt, along with Mary Carty, ran the Falls City Hotel. Mrs. Mary Montgomery ran a boarding house. Dr. Pfandhoefer was joined by fellow physician, W.E. Perry.<sup>31</sup>

In 1907, Dr. Pfandhoefer built a hospital. By 1908, Dr. H.E. Kelty was listed as a physician in town as well. New businesses continued to appear, including a tailor shop owned by Charles Ratsch, a boarding house run by Mrs. M.J. Cilocott, general stores operated by F.C. Haueis and G. Sower, a grocery run by W.B. McKown, and a shoemaker' shop owned by N.A. Wagner. McDowell and Kimball were the new proprietors of the livery and the Falls City Hotel was being run by W.D. Chaddock and W.W. Chappell.<sup>32</sup>

Many of the same businesses were listed in the 1909-1910 directory. New listings included a bakery under the ownership of Dominic Tollar; the Bank of Falls City with R.M. Williams as President; a confectionery run by Bert Dennis; a general

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merchandise store operated by Patrick Doyle; meat markets run by Henry Gorke & Joel Shaw, Grant McGuire, and Albert E. West; a furniture store owned by David Grant; drug stores operated by George L. McMurphy and Hirem Fugitt; a tailor shop run by Charles Hartund; a grocery operated by William F. Muscatt; and a large general merchandise store operated by Walter Tooze. The livery was under the ownership of Samuel Newkirk and his sons, Simon and Gared. Saloons were run by George L. McMurphy, C.W. Mathews and W.W. Chappell. Mathews and M.W. Walker were listed as the proprietors of the Hotel Walker. J.C. Talbott was the manager of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co.<sup>33</sup>

By 1911-1912, a number of "old-timers" had expanded their businesses. Pugh and Thompson had started the Gem Theater to show "moving pictures." Pugh was also listed as the manager of the Dallas Telephone Company (in addition to his jewelry business) and Thompson had added a line of stationary to his drug store. Land development was of growing importance and Allen Courter was listed as selling real estate, William and M.G. Ellis ran the Ellis Land Co., and Dave R. Hall managed the Falls City Land Company. New businesses continued to spring up. W. H. Dairyremple opened a hardware store, A.G. Baker opened a hardware and second hand store, Carroll David opened a hardware and plumbing shop, and G.D. Treat and W.E. Gilbert opened a hardware, flour and feed store. F.M. Baker opened a racket store and Mrs. F.M. Baker opened a millinery shop, as did Orline Mead. Restaurants were opened by Oliver Baker and B.G. Frost. G. L. Brentner, E.S. Rich and A.B. Servey operated general merchandise stores. New furniture business were started by F.V. Dennis & C.J. Richey and W.K. Southwell.<sup>34</sup>

The community also got its first lawyer when attorney John H. Flower, also a notary public, opened an office. The French Brothers operated a publishing company. Chas E. McPherran set up a photography business. A billiards parlor was opened by John Nort, William L. Sykes became the town's second barber, and Florence Wolfe, who had been in the area since 1888 and had long brought attention to the community through her work at the Polk County and State fairs and at the Lewis & Clark Exposition in Portland, began her business as a florist. W.E. Newsom was listed as the manager of the electric light company and G.M. Tice was the manager of the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company.<sup>35</sup>

As Falls City entered its peak years, the business community had many familiar names associated with long-established businesses. New businesses, however, continued to appear and included E.P. Brown, a plumber; Samuel Gates, a barber; Justin Hunger who operated a livery; O.M. Mahr, owner of a general merchandise store; E.E. Paddock, who opened a hardware store; A.B. Servey, owner of a men's furnishings store; and S.R. Skeels and F.A. Dutton, who ran a real estate and insurance business. Of great importance was the arrival of Dr. S.M. Hellwarth, a physician who specialized in mill injuries.<sup>36</sup> (See Figures 6 and 7.)

Falls City continued to grow and prosper in 1915-1916. The town's first dentist, A.G. Atwood, arrived and the town had its first garage, run by E.P. Brown. Harvey Strayer was a new lawyer. One hotel was renamed the Madena Hotel after its two proprietors, Mae Nichols and Dena Dennis. The New Falls City Hotel was managed by F. Droege. Cliff Pugh was then in the business of fruit juice manufacturing and William A. Persey was the new jeweler.<sup>37</sup>

The years of the First World War were stable years for the community and brought little change to the business community. Only two new names appeared in the



Figure 6. North Main Street Commercial District, 1912.

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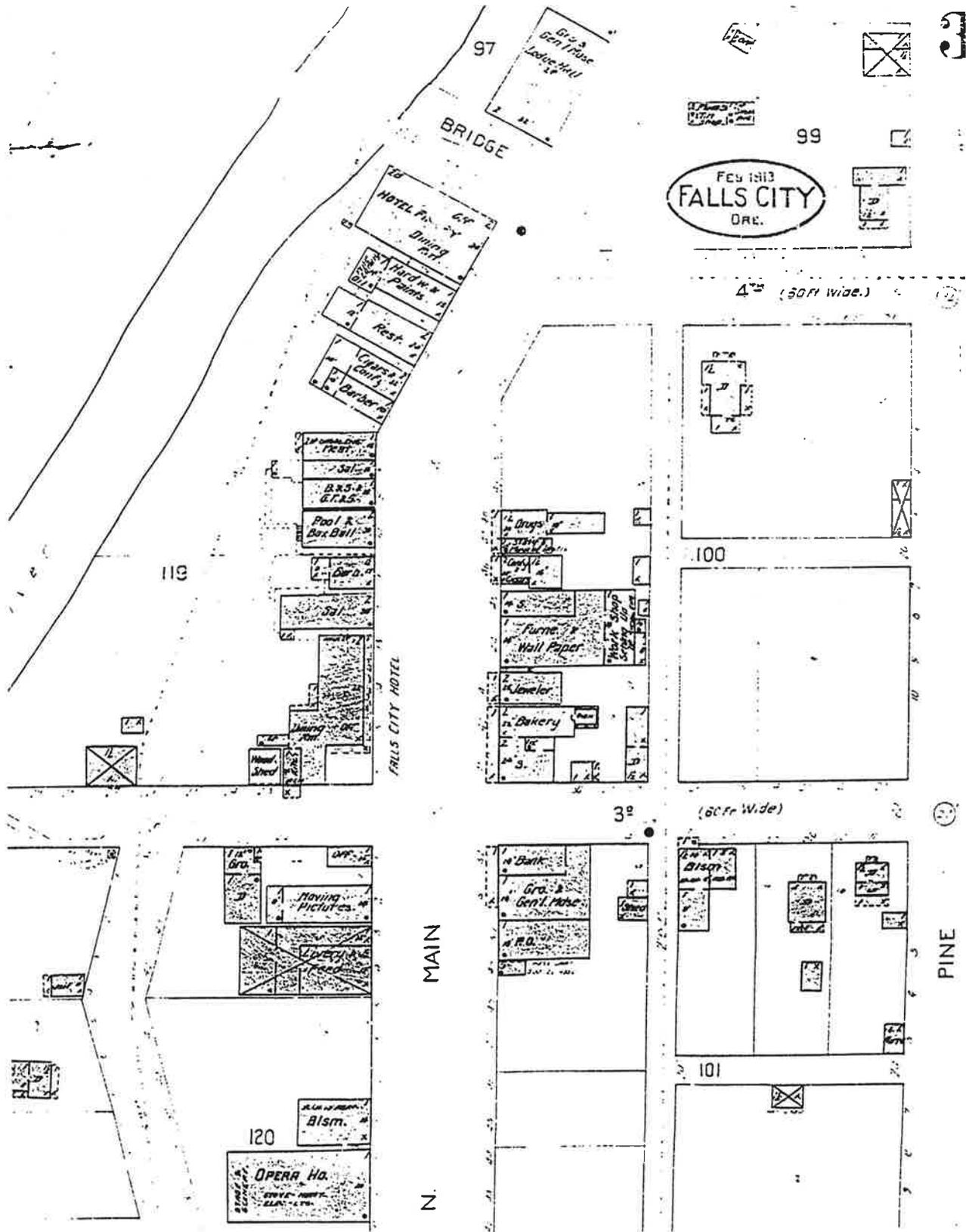


Figure 7. North Main Commercial District, Falls City, Oregon.  
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1913.

business directory: J.O. Michaelson was listed as a realtor and Mr. Woods was listed as the publisher of the newspaper. The stability continued for the two years after the war, as well, with the only business changes of note being that Merrit Thompson had become the president of the Bank of Falls City and C.H. Fisher was listed as a jeweler.<sup>38</sup>

In January 1921, the Oregon Statesman newspaper published an article about Falls City as it entered its fourth decade as a town. The article, written by and paid for by local businesses, promoted the spirit of the town with 1200 people. And although the business directories for 1921-22 and 1922-23 showed a fairly stable business community, the spirit did not last. The large mill closed in 1922 and moved to Valsetz and although the impact was not immediate, the 1920s saw a rapid decline in the community.

By 1931-1932, Falls City's population had plummeted to just under 500 and the nature of business enterprises had changed. Instead of the many commercial ventures of the past, the directory listed hop growers, walnut growers, dairy farmers and poultry breeders, as well as pastors and carpenters. Also listed were a billiard parlor operated by Frank Mack, a confectionery run by Lucille Mack, an auto repair owned by E.P. Brown, and Merrit Thompson's drug store remained.<sup>39</sup> The bank, which fell victim to the local economic crisis as well as the national one, closed in 1931.<sup>40</sup>

The mill in Valsetz shut down in 1929, but re-opened in 1936. This served to stimulate the economy a bit, but businesses in Falls City were still sparse. A local directory listed Brown's garage, Davis' grocery store, Helms' general store, Mack's confectionery, and Thompson's drug store that year.<sup>41</sup> By 1940, the population had again grown to nearly 800 residents, but the number of businesses was still small. Brown's garage, Francis's Red & White Store, Helm's general store, and Mack's confectionery were still listed. And although Merrit Thompson had died, his family continued to operate the drug store.<sup>42</sup>

The re-opening of local mills in the 1940s and 1950s brought a small amount of business back to the community. In 1957 Ben Maxwell, of the Capital Journal, visited Falls City. In an article he wrote for the paper, he said that the business district of Falls City consisted of two grocery stores, four garages, a feed store, two cafes, an appliance store, a sporting goods store, a variety store, a drug store, two taverns and other interests offering the community goods and services.<sup>43</sup> (See Figure 8.)

Falls City remained fairly stable into the mid-1960s. After the Atlas Lumber Company mill burned in 1965, the community again saw a loss of population and business. In the last 30 years, the commercial buildings, many with their false fronts reminiscent of earlier days, have disappeared one by one until there are almost no reminders of the town's heyday. Today, only a handful of businesses are found in Falls City.

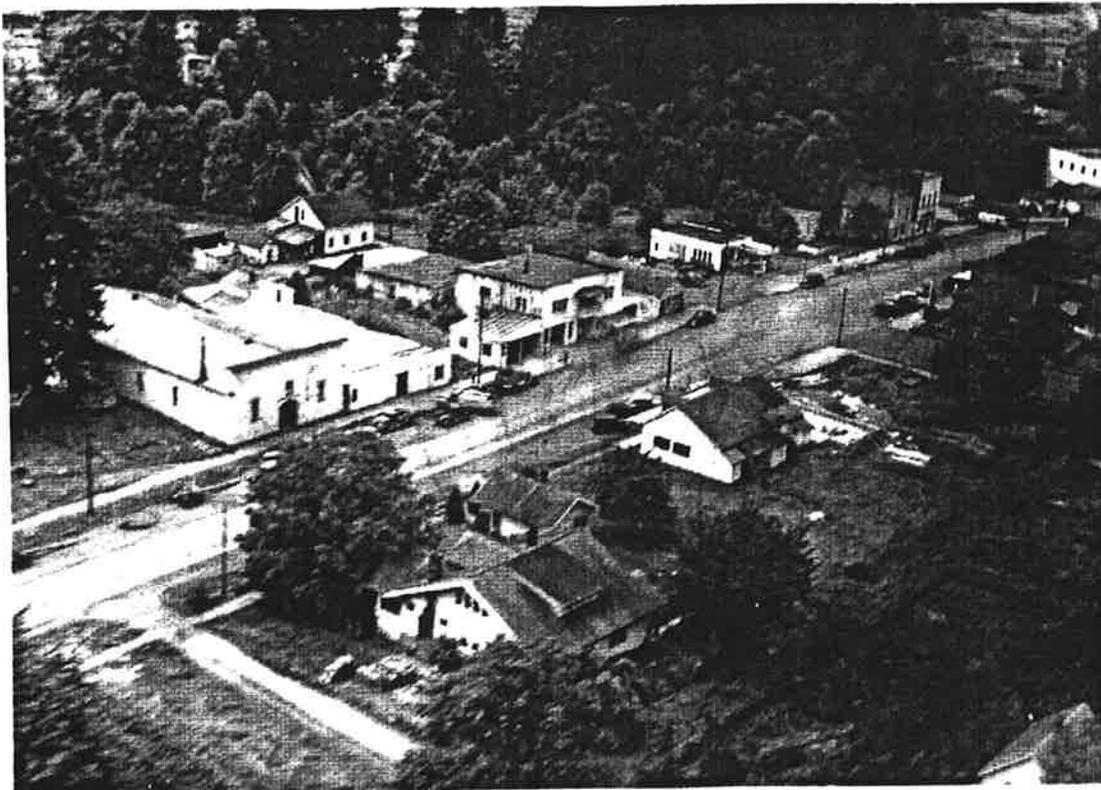


Figure 8. North Main Street Commercial District, Falls City, 1947.

### *GOVERNMENT*

Having been founded in 1889, Falls City was platted in February 1891 by Hugh S. and Esther Montgomery (on the south side of the river) and in July 1891 by the Falls City Development Company (on the north side of the river). Both plats were originally known as Falls City and each had a Main Street, but the one of the south side of the river later became known as the Montgomery Addition. On February 28, 1893, the "Plat of the First Addition to Falls City, Oregon" was created which extended the town's potential growth higher up the north hill and considerably west on the north bank of the Little Luckiamute. At this time the Upper Park was laid out just north of Palmehn Road, which is now called Mitchell Street.<sup>44</sup>

Even before the First Addition was platted, a bill to incorporate Falls City had passed both houses of the legislature and was awaiting the governor's signature. The charter spelled out the form of local government to be used, the powers of jurisdiction in criminal and civil matters, the powers to levy and collect taxes, and the powers to address the morality of the community. Included in Section 5 of the Charter:

The Council shall restrain and suppress barrooms, tippling-houses, saloons, bowling alleys, and beer gardens, bawdy houses or houses of ill fame, gambling and gambling houses, and the manufacture, sale, or gift of spirituous, vinous, malt, or intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and shall restrain and prevent any riot, noise, disturbance, or disorderly conduct in any street, house, or other place with the corporation, and prevent the carrying of deadly weapons in a concealed manner.<sup>45</sup>

This charter, which was signed into law in 1893, was rescinded in 1901 and a new charter was created in 1903. It was created by an Act which read:

To incorporate Falls City, in Polk County, Oregon, and to provide a charter therefore, and to repeal all acts or parts of acts heretofore passed to incorporate the town of Falls City and city of Falls City, in said county and state, and all amendments thereto, whether in conflict with this act or otherwise.<sup>46</sup>

The bill passed the House on January 27, the Senate on February 17, 1903, and was filed in the office of the Secretary of State, on February 24, 1903.

In 1907, the city built an electric system, using the old dam built years ago for the Montgomery sawmill. The system included a "five-foot diversion dam that sent water into a holding pond, down a 500-foot wooden trough and ultimately through a generator."<sup>47</sup> Electric street lights were installed throughout the business district. A new dam, just below the original dam, was constructed in 1923-1924 by I.C. Mehrling in order to enlarge the city's system. The entire system was later sold to the Mountain States Power Company.

In 1911, John B. and Annie Teal and their son, Albert Teal and his wife, Eva, granted the City of Falls City deeds for land called "the Rattling Springs" and the "Albert Teal Spring" to establish a municipal water system.<sup>48</sup> By 1913, a gravity operated water system was in place. The State of Oregon issued a Certificate of Water Right to Falls City on September 24, 1917, confirming this as a priority right dating from November 4, 1915. The purpose was called "general municipal, including the irrigation of gardens and lawns."<sup>49</sup> A subsequent Certificate of Water Right, dated May 11, 1920, gave the right to use the waters of "Bougey Creek, a tributary of Teal Creek."<sup>50</sup>

The Falls City Volunteer Fire Department was organized in 1912 and H.H. Zimmerman served as the first Fire Chief. The earliest equipment consisted of hand carts located at different points in town. A four-wheeled cart, which carried hoses, was built in 1922 and towed either behind a car or pulled by hand. Frank C. Brown served as Fire Chief from 1927 until his retirement in 1955. During his tenure, the first fire truck, a 1928 Model A Ford, was purchased. The city purchased a new Ford 500 GPM Pumper Truck to replace the 1928 model in 1947. The department became a member of the Southwest Fire Protection District in 1948 and received a new 1948 Ford F-3 250 GPM Pumper Truck to fight rural fires. The department, which also participated in search and rescue work, had thirty-five regular volunteer members. After Brown's retirement in 1955, Virgil Taylor, Floyd Brown, Bernard (Slim) Freer, John Gilbert, George Kitchin and Paul Bailey served terms as Fire Chief. A new fire hall was constructed in 1965.<sup>51</sup>

The articles of incorporation mandated the construction and maintenance of a city jail. Although the exact date of construction is not known, a small jail appears on the 1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. That concrete block jail, which has not been used since the 1960s, is located at the east end of the City Hall and Library, which was constructed in c.1915 and is in continued use today.<sup>52</sup>

The only federally-related facility ever built in Falls City was the post office. The first postal service in the area where Falls City developed was established in the home of Frank K. Hubbard approximately two miles east of the falls in 1885. The post office carried the postmark of "Syracuse." With the increased momentum to establish

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the town near the falls, the post office was moved to that area and established on June 6, 1889 with James P. Starr as postmaster. Frank Hubbard, who moved to Falls City, was made postmaster again on October 28, 1889 and was followed by John C. McFarlane on June 26, 1890.<sup>53</sup>

On November 25, 1890, George W. Griggs became postmaster, a post which he held for several years. A small post office had been built at the east end of Main Street. Upon his retirement, the post office was moved to Thompson's drug store where Merrit Thompson served as postmaster until 1911.<sup>54</sup>

John Beazley became postmaster in 1911, moving the post office to a building where the fire hall now stands. Ira C. Mehrling was postmaster by 1915, followed by Ronald White and Earl Watt. In 1934, Jack Strauss was made postmaster, a position he held for twenty years.<sup>55</sup> During the later part of his term, the post office was moved to a small building on the southeast corner of North Main and 3rd Streets, where the post office was located until its move to the south side of the river during the summer of 1997. Richard Bowman served as postmaster from 1954 until 1984. Since that time, Virginia "Ginger" Lindekugel, the first woman postmistress in Falls City, has held the position.

### *CULTURE: EDUCATION*

The school and the church, along with the family, were great forces as purveyors of the values of the society. They created, more than any other institution, the common cultural bond in growing frontier communities. The new territorial government of Oregon encouraged the development of schools within its boundaries when it adopted the Territory's first school law on September 5, 1849.<sup>56</sup>

Although the exact location is not known, the earliest known school session in the Little Luckiamute valley was held the summer of 1852 with an enrollment of twenty-six pupils. It was at that time that the County Court mandated that school boundaries be drawn throughout the county. The boundary created for the valley was large enough to include the land surrounding the falls on the Little Luckiamute. The river was then called the North Luckiamute and the first school was known as "District No. 1 on the North Luckiamute." The number was changed to "7" around 1860 and in about 1869, the name "Bridgeport" first appeared on the records for the district.<sup>57</sup>

The first school building in the valley, referred to as the Waymire School, was constructed in 1855 by Frederick Waymire, and was located on the bank of the Little Luckiamute near the southeast corner of the Wilson Lee DLC, two and a half miles below the falls.<sup>58</sup> A school has existed on this site ever since.

As the population of the valley grew and settlement near the falls increased, it was inevitable that the school district would split and a new school would be established.

The first school district in what was to become Falls City, was organized in 1885. The Board of Directors consisted of L.R. Kimes, O.C. Churchill, Robert Ford, and J.N. Hart. The board decided to build a school on the southwest corner of John Lockarts' land. The school was known as the Pleasant Valley School. The first teacher was Mary Palmehn and the enrollment was thirty-five pupils in seven grades.

The building was enlarged and converted to a residence by the Frink family when a newer, larger school was constructed.<sup>59</sup>

As more settlers moved into the area and Falls City grew, the Pleasant Valley School building became too small and it was necessary to rent a hall until a larger school house could be built. The new school was constructed in 1892 on the north hill by contractors Fred and Will Raymond. The school's distinctive belfry, and its position 117 steps from the downtown up the hill, made it a landmark for many years. It opened in 1893 with sixty-two students in eight grades. Although designed as a four-room school, only two rooms were completed when the school opened. J.N. Hart was the first principal.<sup>60</sup> A third room was used as an auditorium until the classrooms were completed in 1907.

In c. 1909, an addition was built and two rooms in the basement were finished for use as domestic science and manual training classrooms. The manual training class was recognized for furniture produced for the Bank of Falls City, as well as furniture sold to businesses for a profit to the school.<sup>61</sup> Eventually two more grades were added and the first graduation of a twelfth grade class was in 1911. (See Figure 9.)

Construction on the high school began in the winter of 1920-1921. The doors opened in the fall of 1921 and the first class graduating in 1922.<sup>62</sup> The concrete school was built on a four acre site on the south side of North Main Street, on the site of the former home of Dr. Pfandhoefer. His 1907 hospital was located just east of the school. The high school is still in use today.

When the grade school burned in 1938, classes were held at the high school and a church until a new school could be built. The new grade school is still used today.

There was one private school in Falls City. The first Seventh-Day Adventist School was opened in 1909 and was held west of town in a rented building which had been a lumber mill office. The first teacher was Violet Brown who taught seventeen to twenty students in eight grades. Mr. Coffin taught twenty-four students the second year. The second location of this school was on Ellis Street where a one-room building was used for several years. Due to an increased need for space, the school moved to a new location on Bryant Street in 1920. In 1946, the school moved to Lombard Street, south of the river, where a 24-foot by 40-foot building served eight grades. In 1948, another small building was added for grades nine and ten.<sup>63</sup>

### *CULTURE: RELIGION*

The earliest church services in the community were held in the Pleasant Valley School. But with the emergence of the town, different denominations wanted their own church buildings. The first Free Methodist Church was erected on Church Street and ready for dedication in April 1892. The building stood facing that street until 1933, when it was placed on skids and re-oriented to face South Main (see Figure 10). The church was extensively remodeled at that time, even though money was limited due to the Depression and the congregation was shrinking in size. The old church became badly deteriorated and needed to be replaced. In 1945, property on North Main was purchased and construction on a new church began. Services were held regularly by 1947 and the old church was sold and torn down. Work continued on the new church and it was finally finished and dedicated in 1953. A new sanctuary was added in 1981.<sup>64</sup>

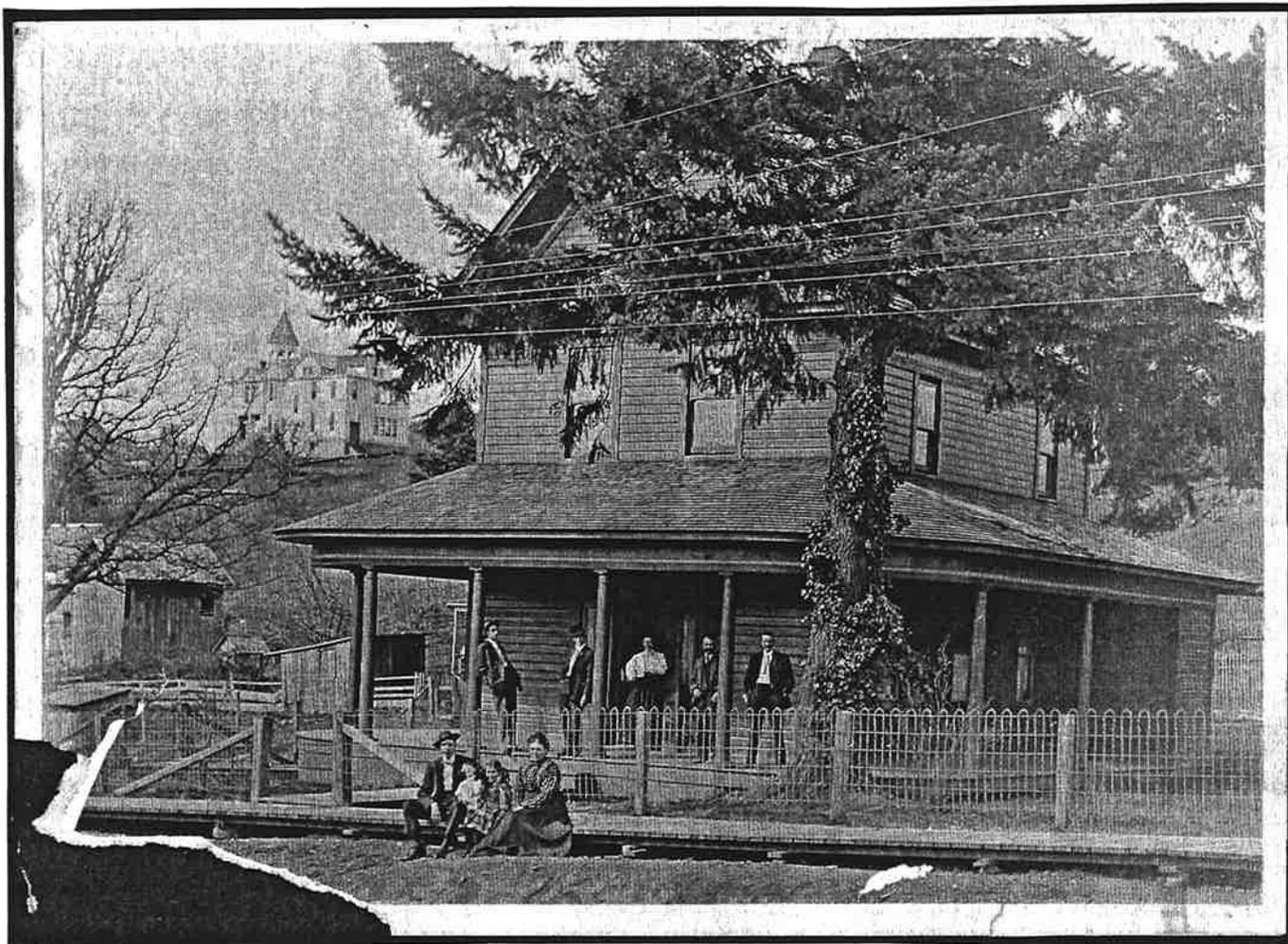


Figure 9. Two Falls City Schools: Pleasant Valley School enlarged and converted to Frink House (foreground) and Falls City Grade School (on hill in background).



Figure 10. Free Methodist Church, c.1930s.

The Falls City Methodist Episcopal Church was incorporated on December 31, 1892. Lots for a church building were donated by M. Shurtliff of the Falls City Real Estate Company. The members asked local sawmill owner, John Teal, Sr., to contribute lumber for the church. He agreed to provide the trees if members would cut them and bring them to the mill where he would cut them. All of the labor was donated. Fred Raymond served as head carpenter. The church, named "Beulah M.E. Church," opened for worship in 1893, even before the windows and doors were installed. A lot for a parsonage was purchased in 1897 and the house was built in 1899. In time, the Methodist Episcopal Church unified with other branches to form "The Methodist Church" in 1939. In 1968, a merger with the Evangelical United Brethren created "The United Methodist Church," which is the official name of the Falls City church, which still stands, today. The parsonage, however, is gone.<sup>65</sup>

The Falls City Christian Church was organized in the early 1890s. The congregation first met in a room over a meat market on North Main Street. Wanting a church of their own, a small building about 12-foot by 16-foot was built and was known as the "Mushroom Church" because of its quick construction. After a new

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church was constructed in 1900, this small building was used as a barn and later burned. The new church had a full basement, a full gable auditorium with rounded windows and a full balcony. There were originally nineteen steps leading from the street to the main entrance (these stairs were replaced with 21 steps in the 1940s after a logging truck ran into them, knocking them loose). This building served the church until the 1950s when it was razed. Until a new church was completed, the congregation met at the old Adventist church. The present church building was constructed in 1952 with plans designed by G. W. Letterman of Salem. The formal dedication took place in September 1953.<sup>66</sup>

In their early years, the Seventh Day Adventists began meeting together in a home on what is now known as Valsetz Road. Their first small church was built by volunteer labor on South Main Street at the foot of Lombard Street across from the present-day Christian Church. The church was completed and dedicated in 1906 and over the years, it was enlarged. A growing congregation made it necessary to build a new church in 1947. It was dedicated in 1948 and enlarged and remodeled in 1965. The old church building was used by various groups until it was dismantled in the early 1970s.<sup>67</sup>

A German Lutheran church was organized, but a church building was never built. The congregation met instead in Tollar Hall once a month with services led by Rev. Groue of Salem during the town's boom years. Tollar Hall was located above the Tollar Bakery and Mrs. Tollar was the daughter of Phillip Wagner who had been a Lutheran minister in Austria for 35 years before coming to Falls City in 1896.<sup>68</sup>

There was for a short time, a Catholic Church, called the Church of St. Mary Magdelene, located on the north hill a short distance from the steps to the school. The date of construction is unknown, but it may have been built as early as the late 1890s or as late as 1909. There was never a resident priest and the church burned in the late 1920s, never to be replaced. A persistent rumor claims that the Ku Klux Klan was responsible for the fire.

An important part of life in Falls City was The Epworth League Institute which was held every summer through the 1920s and 1930s in the Upper Park. The encampment was described as "a city within a city" and a 1928 map shows the location of the wooden bases from which the tent city emerged with sleeping dormitories, showers, dining/kitchen facilities and a tabernacle or auditorium. Steps were constructed from Mitchell Street down to the river where the dam created, according to some, "one of the finest swimming holes in the world."<sup>69</sup>

### *CULTURE: FUNERARY*

Falls City's earliest burials were in the Hubbard Cemetery which had been used since the 1860s. It is located on a ridge one mile southeast of town above the Bridgeport Road.

Because the road to the ridge was impassable much of the year, a Cemetery Association was formed with the goal of locating a more accessible site. The land was purchased from George Tice and was located on the hill north of the highway about one mile east of town. It was recorded in the Polk County Records on December 11, 1893 as the "Falls City Cemetery Grounds, an Unincorporated Association."<sup>70</sup> Some bodies were disinterred from the Hubbard Cemetery and moved to the new city

cemetery. On January 6, 1930, the Falls City Cemetery Association deeded the cemetery to the City of Falls City.

In 1907, the Independent Order of Odds Fellows (I.O.O.F) established a cemetery on the south side of the highway, just south of Falls City Cemetery. It, too, was taken over the City of Falls City when the lodge disbanded.<sup>71</sup>

### *CULTURE: FRATERNAL, SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN MOVEMENTS*

Falls City had several active organizations which contributed to the community's life. Included were the Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F), the Rebekahs, the Masons, the Knights of Pythias, the Pythian Sisters, the Modern Woodmen of American, the Royal Neighbors of American, the Woodmen of the World, and Women of Woodcraft. There was also an active grange organization.

Many of the organizations met in a local meeting hall which was, over time, known by several names. The hall, which was built and managed by Jacob Wagner, was originally known as Wagner Hall. He, along with his parents and several family members came from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and during World War I, he was compelled to change the name of the hall to Victory Hall in order to continue bookings. It was also known as Rebekah Hall for a period of time. On the 1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, it is listed as the "Opera House" and on the 1928 Sanborn maps as a "Gymnasium."<sup>72</sup> The building was demolished in 1980.<sup>73</sup>

Although an earlier reading room existed, the public library was established in 1915 by Mrs. Worthington. The library was located in the southwest corner of the City Hall Building. According to Mrs. R.L. Eggert, who became the librarian in 1938 when the library had only about 500 books, the library had about 3000 volumes by 1972. In 1960, the Falls City Garden Club adopted the library as a project and gave the interior "a major face-lift."<sup>74</sup>

### *CULTURE: RECREATION*

Wagner Hall was also the site of many of the town's social and recreational activities. Dances, potluck dinners, community plays, high school graduations, roller skating, political meetings, and other activities were held in this building for several decades. Between 1917 and 1925, the hall was also used several times a year for live performances by the Chautauqua players.

Falls City was an early sports town. A baseball field in the Upper Park was much in use. One of the pitchers was a dentist who had played professional ball elsewhere. Some remember a Japanese team which formed in about 1910 from a group brought here to work in the timber industry. The Mack family built a park two miles west of town in 1939 as a home for a baseball league. The early interest in community baseball ended with the coming of World War II.<sup>75</sup>

Much of Falls City's recreation was related to its natural resources. The river, with its scenic falls, were focal points in the area. The falls were a destination for groups having picnics or holiday celebrations and provided a dramatic backdrop for concerts by the Falls City band (see Figure 11). The dam above the falls created a

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swimming hole, now long gone, dear to many in memory. Fishing along the river has also been a popular pastime, as are outings to the park below the falls.

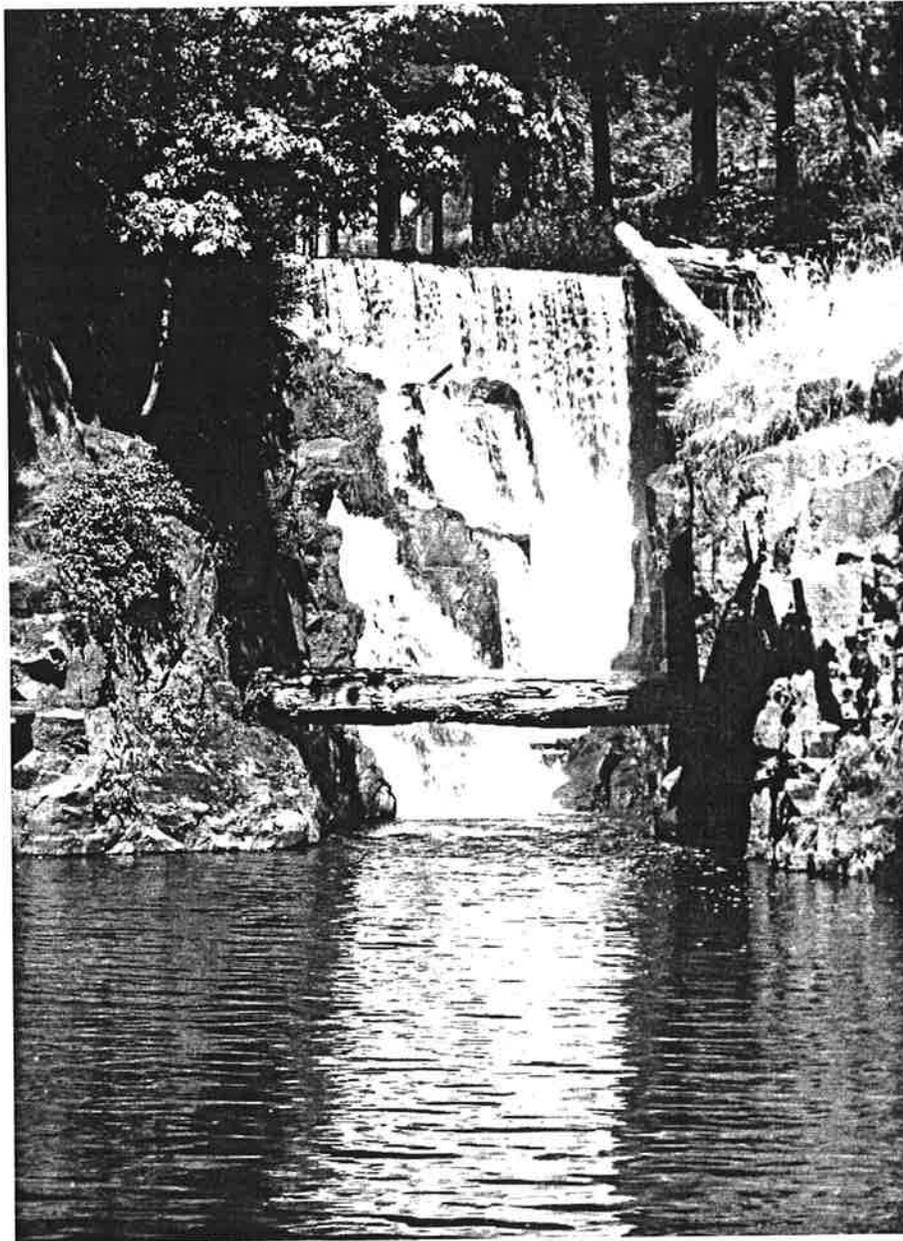


Figure 11. Falls on the Little Luckiamute River, Falls City.

### *CULTURE: MEDICINE*

Prior to Falls City having its own doctor, medical attention for sickness and injuries was provided by Dr. J.E. Kirkpatrick or Dr. Wood, who would come to Falls City from Dallas. In the 1890s, Dr. Brown practiced medicine in Falls City.<sup>76</sup>

By 1901, Louis Pfandhoefer and his wife and children had relocated from New York and he was practicing medicine in Falls City. Dr. W.E. Perry joined Dr. Pfandhoefer in practice in c.1905. In 1907, Dr. Pfandhoefer built a hospital on the south side of North Main Street near his residence. The hospital, which was 32 feet by 42 feet, was heated by steam and included other modern conveniences. Charles Dieling was the contractor and builder.<sup>77</sup> Dr. Pfandhoefer died in 1914.

Other physicians who worked in Falls City were Dr. H.E. Kelty, who practiced from 1907 to 1908, Dr. W.B. Officer, who practiced from 1911-1916, and Dr. S.M. Hellwarth, a specialist in mill injuries, who was retained by the mills and practiced from 1913 to 1922. He was followed by Dr. C.P. Horne in 1923, who practiced until the early 1930s. After Dr. Horne left, Falls City was without a doctor until a new practice was started in the late 1970s.<sup>78</sup>

### *CULTURE: RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE*

The earliest residential dwellings in the area were those of settlers who took claims or bought land in the Little Luckiamute valley. Most of these dwellings were farm houses and were accompanied by various outbuildings. Typically, buildings constructed by early settlers were small and simple, utilizing available materials and traditional techniques of construction.

With the founding of Falls City, however, the number of residential buildings began to grow in proportion to the growing population. Both of the 1891 plats included residential blocks and before long, houses appeared throughout these areas on both sides of the river. The exact number of houses built each year is not known, but records indicate that in 1907 alone, over 50 houses were constructed.

The 1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show a thriving residential community, with a number of houses located on each side of the river. Although there are reports that local builders may have constructed two or three identical houses next to each other, there are only two developments that appear to have been built as "worker housing." Eight small dwellings, built in a row, faced Chamberlain Street south of the Falls City Lumber Company mill and on South Main between Montgomery and Bridge Streets, there were two "sets" of dwellings (one tri-plex, one duplex).<sup>79</sup>

The majority of the community's residential stock was constructed by 1915. The 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show very few new houses, and in fact, indicate that some of the earlier houses were already gone.<sup>80</sup> After the town's initial decline in the 1920s, few houses were constructed until after World War II, and then only a modest amount of new construction occurred. More recently, as Falls City has felt some pressure to develop into a bedroom community for Dallas, Salem and Corvallis, new residential construction has picked up and begun to fill into the historic residential neighborhoods.

### HISTORIC PROPERTIES LIKELY TO BE FOUND

To date, no historic resources survey and inventory has been conducted for the City of Falls City. During the 1976 Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings, no historic resources within the city were identified. A Polk County Historic Sites Survey, conducted in 1991, included two cemeteries (the Falls City Cemetery and the Hubbard-Boydston Cemetery) near Falls City, but both are outside the city limits. There are no buildings, structures, sites, or objects in Falls City currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The city does, however, have an ordinance pertaining to historic buildings and sites which provides for the designation of local historical landmarks, review of alteration and construction, and demolition controls (see Appendix B). Three resources have been designated local landmarks based on this ordinance. They are the United Methodist Church, the Black Rock Site, and the pioneer Falls City Cemetery.

Because no survey and inventory has been conducted, an in-field windshield survey was conducted in conjunction with this project. This windshield survey helped to confirm the presence of certain resource types, while determining which resource types are no longer present in Falls City.

Building trends historically were based largely on the vernacular tradition. There is evidence, however, that some elements of architectural styles were represented in the city's buildings, though mostly in a restrained manner interpreted by the builder. Early commercial buildings were primarily of the western false front ("boom town") version. Some residential dwellings constructed between c.1890 and c.1907 display stylistic elements of Queen Anne, Italianate, and Gothic Revival. Those constructed after about 1907 illustrate styles popular in the early 20th century, including Craftsman bungalow, American Foursquare, and 20th century revival styles. The schools also display elements of architectural styles as the grade school has Craftsman undertones and the high school has stylistic elements related to the Mission style. The only historically intact church in town is of a Gothic Revival tradition. Both industrial and agricultural resources were of a vernacular utilitarian tradition. Wood frame construction was by far the most common method used for all buildings, due to the ready availability of wood products through local mills. There were only three historic concrete buildings in town, one commercial building, the high school, and the jail.

The exact number of builders who worked in Falls City is not known. Those builders, contractors, draughtsman, carpenters, and designers who are known to have contributed to Falls City's upbuilding include John B. Teal, Squire McFarland (who also worked extensively in Benton County), R.M. Gilbert, Frank Butler, Fred and Will Raymond, J. C. Moyer, and Charles Dieling. Undoubtedly there were others, especially during the boom period between about 1907 and 1915.

### *HISTORIC RESOURCE TYPES*

A "resource type" indicates a generic class of related historic properties. For the purposes of this project, they are grouped on the basis of thematic association correlating with the thematic categories identified in the historical development of Falls City and discussed in the historic overview. The seven themes are Settlement, Industry and Manufacturing, Agriculture, Transportation and Communication, Commercial Development, Government, and Culture.

The following resource types, based on the list developed by SHPO, are likely to be found in association with each theme. It should be noted that there may be overlap between categories. For example, settlement-related resources may overlap with agricultural-related resources, and agricultural-related resources may overlap with industrial-related resources.

### *Settlement*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Settlement*, and those resources potentially related to Falls City's history, may include agricultural outbuildings, agricultural fields, cemeteries and grave sites, farm sites, farmhouses, mills and mill-related resources, natural features (such as rivers and waterfalls), residences, trails and early roads.

### *Industry and Manufacturing*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Industry and Manufacturing*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include industrial resources such as mills and factories (grist mills, sawmills, sash and door factories), mill-related resources (such as flumes, millraces, tailraces, log ponds), machine shops, energy-related resources (such as dams and hydropower systems), and agricultural industry facilities (such as canneries, creameries, and cheese factories).

### *Agriculture*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Agriculture*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include farmhouses, agricultural outbuildings (such as barns, corrals, equipment sheds, smokehouses, granaries, root cellars, chicken houses, and storage buildings), hops barns, fruit houses, prune and nut dryers, greenhouses, agricultural fields, orchards, and agricultural industry facilities (such as food processing factories including creameries, cheese factories, and canneries).

### *Transportation and Communication*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Transportation and Communication*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include trails, wagon roads, stage routes, highways, railroads, depots, rail service facilities, bridges, automobile dealers and garages, and gas stations.

### *Commercial Development*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Commercial Development*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include stores (such as general, groceries, clothing, and hardware), lumber yards, warehouses, automobile dealers and garages, gas stations, bakeries, banks, hotels, cafes and restaurants, saloons and taverns, laundries, offices (such as law, newspaper and accounting offices), opera houses and movie theaters.

*Government*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Government*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include city halls, city jails, post offices, schools, city parks, fire stations, libraries, public utilities and public works, and homes of important politicians.

*Culture: Education*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Education*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include schools, school athletic fields and playgrounds, gymnasiums, and auxiliary facilities.

*Culture: Religion*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Religion*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include churches, tabernacles, parsonages, schools, church camp sites, and cemeteries.

*Culture: Funerary*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Funerary*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include grave sites, cemeteries, and related cemetery art and architecture.

*Culture: Fraternal, Social and Humanitarian Movements*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Fraternal, Social and Humanitarian Movements*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include lodge or meetings halls, cemeteries and libraries.

*Culture: Recreation*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Recreation*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include parks and picnic grounds, museums and monuments, auditoriums and gymnasiums, roller and ice skating rinks, baseball parks, swimming holes or pools, club houses, and natural features (such as rivers and waterfalls).

*Culture: Medicine*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Medicine*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include hospitals, doctors' and dentists' offices, and clinics.

### *Culture: Residential Architecture*

The resource types associated with the theme of *Residential Architecture*, and those resource types potentially related to Falls City's history, may include houses, carriage houses, garages, apartment buildings, duplexes, triplexes, rooming and boarding houses, and worker housing.

### *DISTRIBUTION AND QUANTITY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES*

The location of possible historic properties can be predicted using the themes identified in the Historic Overview section of this document. The quantity and type of existing historic resources within each thematic and geographic location can also be identified. Although the windshield survey conducted in conjunction with this project helped to confirm which resource types still existed in the city, further field survey and inventory is needed to record and evaluate the actual quantity, as well as the quality, of the existing resources in Falls City.

### *Settlement*

Settlement resources associated with Falls City's history are primarily agricultural (including houses) and early industrial type resources. Within the present city limits of Falls City, there are portions of 19th century Donation Land Claims, though there are no identified remnants of these early settlements within this project's study area. There are also no identified remnants associated with the earliest mill-related industries from the settlement period. There are, however, a few houses reportedly constructed in the early 1890s, during Falls City's earliest years, which still stand. These houses are located throughout the community.

### *Industry and Manufacturing*

All of Falls City's identified industry and manufacturing resources were located on the south side of the river, from the river bank on the north to the hillsides on the south, and from west of the falls east to the area where the river takes a slight bend at the east end of town.

Within the city's limits, resources related to this theme are no longer visible as they were during the historic period. The mill buildings, flumes and log ponds are gone, with only traces of building foundations buried beneath dirt and brush. The dams on the river have been dismantled and removed. All that remains of the railroad is a road bed that is distinguishable in very few places. The mill sites have not yet been redeveloped and sit as vacant lots. There is a possibility that some artifacts associated with the industry are buried on the lots, and in time with future development, these artifacts may be found. It is also possible that some of the buildings were moved and adapted for new uses, a possibility that future survey work may be able to confirm or deny. Fortunately, historic photographs give a sense of what Falls City's industrial area once looked like.

### *Agriculture*

Falls City is still surrounded by rural agricultural land, much like it was during its historic period. Although many early farms still exist in the Little Luckiamute

valley, few are intact and none are located within the current city limits of Falls City. The principle crops have changed over time, from wheat and other grains, to hops, to hay.

The orchards which were of significance to the town after the arrival of the railroad, are all but gone. An occasional fruit or nut tree is found in the yards of outlying area homes, but it is not clear that these trees are remnants of earlier orchards. The greenhouses and gardens developed by Thomas Hollowell on the hill just north of North Main Street is now only a grassy hillside. The most likely place for agricultural-related resource remnants are in the hills north of town on the Sample family farm, which was in operation throughout most of this century. Agribusinesses related to the fruit and nut industry included the cannery developed by Rupert and Pugh in 1919. There are no traces of its existence remaining, although it is possible that artifacts associated with the business may be buried at the site.

Although there was a shift to dairy farming in the early 20th century, there is little evidence of dairy farms in the Falls City area, although there may be resources associated with the dairy industry remaining in outlying areas. The location of the Vic brothers creamery is unknown, although there is a house on South Main that was reportedly used as a creamery at one point in time. There is no evidence of the building that housed the Roquefort Cheese factory.

### *Transportation & Communication*

The earliest resources associated with this theme include the wagon and stage routes through Bridgeport and over the Hill Rd. Both routes are still intact, but the condition of the roads has improved since the historic period. An improved route to Falls City was constructed in 1901 and today, this route remains the main highway to Falls City. It too, however, has been upgraded and improved over the years.

The railroad entered Falls City on the south side of the river, terminating at the site of the mills. Today there is nothing remaining that is associated with the railroad era of Falls City's history but a road bed visible in some locations. Much of the road bed had been built on, plowed under, or otherwise altered. The rail and ties were taken up long ago and the depot was moved or dismantled after passenger service ended in 1929. All industrial-related railroad resources were demolished when the mill buildings were demolished.

The only garages and gas stations in Falls City were located on North Main Street in the center of town. There are no remnants from the historic period associated with this resource type remaining in town.

Because the Little Luckiamute River essentially divides the town in half, bridges were a necessity historically and records indicate that they were constructed early in the town's history. Unfortunately, none of the historic bridges remain. The pedestrian bridge has been rebuilt twice and the Dayton Street bridge was rebuilt and altered from a vehicular bridge to a pedestrian bridge. The only remaining vehicular bridge, the one located on Bridge Street, is a concrete deck girder bridge constructed in 1958.

Resources related to communication are also gone in Falls City. Buildings which housed early newspaper and the telephone and telegraph companies no longer stand.

### *Commercial Development*

The historic commercial districts in Falls City have largely been demolished. Businesses developed along both South Main and North Main Streets during the historic period, but as they fell vacant and into disrepair, they were removed one by one. Only a few were lost to fire. Historic photographs of North Main Street show a street lined with commercial buildings housing numerous businesses. Although South Main's business district may not have been as densely developed, a number of businesses were also located there.

Today there are no visible remnants of historic commercial resources located on South Main Street and only two or three buildings remaining on North Main Street. Those remaining on North Main include the large, two-story concrete building which housed a hardware store and smaller, one-story store building on its west side (both appear on the 1928 Sanborn maps, but not the 1913 maps). The third building is located a couple lots east of the concrete building and, although much altered, may have been the building which was at one time a jewelry shop or a confectionery.

### *Government*

Historic resources associated with the theme of Government were located on the north side of the river, near what became the business center of town. The City Hall and Jail, both still standing, were built on Mill Street along the north bank of the river. The library, which was founded in 1915, was located in the southwest corner of the City Hall and is still in use today. An earlier public reading room was located on the south bank of the river almost directly across from the library's current location, but there are no remaining remnants of that building. The city's parks are still located where they were originally, but landscapes have been modified to some degree.

Other government-related resources from Falls City's historic period, including the fire station and the post office are no longer standing. The current fire hall was built in 1965 and the current post office opened during the summer of 1997. The post office which was vacated with the most recent move, was a building that was constructed in the 1950s.

The only other government-related resources associated with Falls City's historic period are the public schools, which are described in the following section.

### *Culture: Education*

Falls City's public schools historically were located on the north side of the river. The first school building, known as the Pleasant Valley School, was located on what is now North Main Street. It was enlarged and converted to a residence when the new school was built on the hill, neither of which still stand.

The school constructed in 1892-1893, was located on the north hill above the downtown area on Prospect Avenue at Wood St. This school burned in 1938 and was replaced with the school that currently occupies the same site. The present structure, a single story building with Craftsman style undertones has been somewhat altered. The playground across the street is fairly modern.

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## HISTORIC CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

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The Falls City High School was constructed in 1920-1921. The concrete building with stylistic elements associated with the Mission style of architecture, is still in use today. The windows have been replaced, but otherwise the building is relatively intact. An auxiliary building, which sits to the east of the high school, is of recent vintage.

The only private school in town, the Seventh-Day Adventist school, has been located on both the north and south sides of the river at different times in its history. It is not known if any resources associated with the school's first three locations remain today. The fourth location, however, is the site of the present school, constructed in 1946 and 1948.

### *Culture: Religion*

Churches were an important part of Falls City's history. They were, historically, located at various sites on both the north and south sides of the town. Although there have been a number of churches located in Falls City throughout its history, only one historic church remains today at its original location. This church, the United Methodist Church, is located on North Main Street east of the commercial district.

The site of the Epworth League Institute summer encampment was located in the Upper Park, northwest of the downtown commercial district. Although the park remains, there is little evidence of the annual encampment and their activities.

The only church-related school in Falls City, the Seventh-Day Adventist school, is described above. There are no church-related cemeteries in Falls City.

### *Culture: Funerary*

Three Falls City area cemeteries were started during the town's historic period. The earliest burials were in the Hubbard cemetery southeast of town. This cemetery was surveyed in 1991 (referred to in the Polk County survey as the Hubbard-Boydston Cemetery). The Falls City Cemetery, located one mile west of downtown north of the main highway, was started in 1893 and deeded to the city in 1930 (it too was surveyed during the 1991 survey). The third cemetery in which Falls City's residents are buried is the I.O.O.F. (Odd Fellows) cemetery (also now owned by the city) which was started in 1907 and is located south of the Falls City Cemetery on the south side of the highway.

All three cemeteries are intact, but the Hubbard Cemetery has become overgrown and is untended. The Falls City Cemetery and the Odd Fellows Cemeteries are tended by the city.

### *Culture: Fraternal, Social and Humanitarian Movements*

Although a number of fraternal and social organizations existed historically in Falls City, most apparently met at Wagner Hall or over store fronts on North Main Street rather than having their own lodge halls constructed. Only one building was identified on the 1913 and 1928 Sanborn maps as a "Lodge Hall" and that was located

on the upper floor of the Tooze Department Store on North Main Street, just west of the bridge. None of the buildings used for meetings remain today.

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows was responsible for starting a cemetery just east of Falls City. That cemetery still exists (described above).

The only other resource type in Falls City associated with this theme was the library, and then only peripherally. The Falls City Garden Club was responsible for modifications undertaken in 1960 (the library is discussed under the "Government" section above).

#### *Culture: Recreation*

Wagner Hall, located on North Main Street, was the site of a large portion of Falls City's social and recreational activities. It was torn down in 1980. Sports facilities in town included a baseball field in Upper park and another, built by the Mack family, two miles west of town. After community interest in baseball waned with the coming of World War II, the baseball parks were eventually unused.

Because much of Falls City's recreation was related historically to its natural resources, many of those resources are intact today. The falls still exist on the river and continue to provide a scenic site for those interested in viewing them. The park area along the banks of the river, although somewhat altered over time, continues to provide open space for picnics, recreational games, quiet walks, or river-side fishing. The dam, however, is gone and so is the swimming hole that provided fun outdoor recreation for generations of Falls City residents.

#### *Culture: Medicine*

Historic Falls City resources associated with this theme were primarily located on the north side of town, along North Main Street. Although the exact location of the doctors' offices and clinics is not known, it is likely that they were located in the historic buildings in or near downtown, all of which have long since been removed. Dr. Pfandhoefer, a long-time physician and builder of the local hospital in 1907, lived in a house near the site of the high school. The hospital was next door to the house. Both have been demolished.

#### *Culture: Residential Architecture*

Residential dwellings are by far the most wide spread and most abundant of Falls City's historic resources. Most of Falls City's residential stock was built during the town's historic period as neighborhoods developed on both sides of the river. These residential neighborhoods stretch up onto the hillsides to both the north and south. As previously mentioned, most of the houses are best described as vernacular buildings based on the builder's interpretation of various stylistic notions of the time. Many of the houses have been altered in some way, enlarged or modified or updated stylistically. There are a number, however, that retain a fair amount of historic integrity and represent the history of the community's development well.

Early dwellings often had small outbuildings, few of which exist today. There are no identified carriage houses from the historic period, although there are a few garages which may date to the early automobile era.

Other types of resources associated with this theme include hotels, rooming and boarding houses, and worker housing. The historic hotels, located on the north side of the river, have been demolished. Locations of early rooming houses and boarding houses has not been determined. It is possible that existing residential dwellings served the needs of boarders. More research is needed to determine the location and extent of worker housing. Those dwellings thought to potentially be working housing were located on the south side of the river, near the mills. Some of these houses remain today, while others have either been moved or demolished.

### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Evaluation is the process by which the significance of identified properties is determined. After a survey of historic resources in Falls City is completed, each surveyed property's historical significance and architectural integrity will need to be evaluated. Because no previous surveys have been conducted, the City of Falls City has not developed evaluation criteria to be used when evaluating historic properties. The ordinance for designating local landmarks provides some direction, but is quite vague and requires only that a proposed landmark be found to have "architectural, historical, or cultural significance to the City of Falls City...age alone is insufficient grounds for local landmark designation."

Generally speaking, a resource must be at least 50 years of age to be considered historic. The National Register makes exceptions for "younger" resources, but the exceptions are stringent and based on truly exceptional quality or importance of the resource. Falls City's resources are, for the large part, older than 50 years. If, however, a historic resource is identified that is less than 50 years of age, the National Register criteria for exception may provide direction for the City's consideration.

The basis for Falls City's evaluation criteria should follow closely the criteria used for the National Register of Historic Places, an accepted model endorsed by SHPO. The criteria developed by Falls City may be modified to address the historic and architectural contexts of the community. The National Register criteria address the significance and integrity of historic resources, including districts, buildings, sites, structures, and objects. Significance and integrity are discussed below.

There are numerous examples of evaluation criteria used successfully by other cities and counties in the state. Examples of these can be obtained from SHPO. One example, which might be appropriately adapted for use in Falls City, has been included in the appendices (see Appendix C). The National Register Bulletin #15, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," may also provide direction for the city in developing evaluation criteria.

### *SIGNIFICANCE*

The National Register criteria recognizes that historic resources may have associative value, design or construction value, or information value. When evaluated within its historic context, a resource must be shown to be significant in at least one of

the following areas to be considered potentially eligible for listing on the National Register:

Events/Patterns of History: The resource is associated with an event (or events) and/or with a pattern of events or historic trend that has made a significant contribution to the history of Falls City, the region, the state, or the nation; or

Person(s): The person(s) associated with the resource is (are) individually significant and made demonstrated contributions to the history of Falls City, the region, the state, or the nation; and the resource is associated with the person(s)'s productive life, reflecting the time period in which he or she achieved significance; or

Design/Construction: The resource embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; and/or the resource represents the work of a master; and/or the resource possesses high artistic value; or the resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

Information Potential: The resource has yielded information important to history or prehistory; or the resource may be likely to yield information important to history or prehistory.

### *INTEGRITY AND CONDITION*

Integrity is the authenticity of a resource's historic identity, or its intactness of historic form and original construction materials. Integrity is integral to the resource's ability to convey its significance. Alterations, either historic or contemporary, should be examined for compatibility. There must be identifiable evidence in all or some of the following aspects of integrity for a historic resource to be considered eligible for the National Register. Which aspects must have integrity should be determined on a case by case basis, as some aspects are more important in conveying significance.

Condition of a historic resource should not be confused with integrity. Condition is generally defined as "state of repair." A resource can be in poor condition, but retain a high degree of historic integrity. The reverse also may be true when a resource is in very good condition, but may have lost a great deal of its historic integrity. Ideally, a historic resource will have a high degree of integrity and be in good condition, but it is not necessary for a resource to be in good condition in order to be considered eligible for the National Register or as a local landmark. The use of condition as a criteria for evaluation, however, may be useful when deciding which resources to preserve. Those that are determined to be significant and have a high degree of integrity, but are in poor condition, may be a low priority for preservation simply for practical reasons.

The seven aspects of integrity are:

Location: Is the resource in its original location or has it been moved?

Design: Is the original design intact?

Setting: Has the character of the setting stayed the same or has it changed?

Materials: What portion of the original materials are retained?

Workmanship: Does the resource show craftsmanship of the period?

Feeling: Does the resource evoke an aesthetic or historic sense of the past?

Association: Is this the site of a historic event or activity or is the site associated with an important person(s) historically?

## **RANKING**

After significance and integrity are assessed, historic resources should be ranked in relation to their significance, integrity and condition. Resources can be ranked individually or, if in a district, ranked for contributing status to the district. Just as different evaluation criteria have been developed by different municipalities, so have ranking criteria. Falls City will need to determine a ranking system that works for their community and would be adaptable to both local landmark listings and potential National Register eligible properties or district. (An example of a ranking system is included in Appendix C.)

Several factors may enter into ranking individual properties. Significance and integrity must be considered first. If a resource has a high level of significance, but has been altered to the point of lost integrity, its ranking may be lower than a resource that possesses strong historical associations or high architectural merit and a high degree of integrity. The ranking system used by Falls City will need to address various combinations of significance, integrity and condition.

SHPO has developed a ranking system for historic districts based on period of development. This system includes the following six categories:

Primary/Contributing: a property which dates from the primary, or oldest period of development represented in the City of Falls City. This primary period in Falls City's history spans from its initial settlement by Euro-Americans through the period of railroad construction and early industrial growth (1845-1902).

Secondary/Contributing: a property which dates from a subsequent phase of development in the City of Falls City's historic period of significance. The secondary period of significance for Falls City is identified as the period spanning from the arrival of the railroad through the closing of the Falls City Lumber Company mill (1903-1922).

Tertiary/Contributing: a property which dates from Falls City's third phase of development, from the closing of the large mill roughly through the end of World War II and into the Post-War Era (1923-1950).

Historic/Non-Contributing (in current condition): a property which dates from the City's historic period of significance but has been altered or remodeled in such a way that it currently does not convey the historic period. Properties in

this category have the potential to be reclassified to "Contributing" status if the incongruous alterations are reversed through rehabilitation or restoration.

Compatible/Non-Historic/Non-Contributing: a property which is compatible with the building traditions of the City of Falls City (consistent in scale, materials of construction, etc.) but which post-dates the historic period of significance.

Non-Compatible/Non-Contributing: a property which is so substantially altered that its historic character is irretrievable, or a property which is non-historic that does not conform to the traditional scale, materials, or placement of buildings within the City of Falls City.

The process of survey and inventory is an ongoing process that requires revision on a regular basis. Historic resources may shift from one ranking category to another as time passes. A primary-ranked resource may be lost to fire or may be altered to the point of compromising its integrity, resulting in a re-ranking of that resource. Or further research may reveal that a resource ranked tertiary is actually from the secondary period of significance, necessitating a re-ranking of that resource. It is also important to note that as additional resources reach 50 years of age, they too may contribute to the community's history. They should be surveyed, ranked and added to the Falls City inventory as appropriate.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The Luckiamute River is named for the Native American Indian tribe which once inhabited the valley. A branch of Calapooians, they were hunters and gatherers but had succumbed to the white man's diseases which ran rampant prior to settlement of the valley. Luckiamute has various spellings in early pioneer writings, including Lakimute, Lickemute, Luckimute, Lackemute, and Lakmiut. In the record of the provisional land claim of Osborne Russell, it was written Lukamyute as seen in the Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims, Abstracted 1845-1849 (Portland, OR, *The Genealogical Forum*, 1982: 5). In the same compilation of records, one can find Luckymute, Luckmyute, Lukamute, Luckymyute, Luckemute, Luckamute, and Lackamute.

<sup>2</sup>James Clyman, Journal of a Mountain Man (Missoula, MT: Mountain Press, 1984), 174.

<sup>3</sup>Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims, Abstracted 1845-1849 (Portland, OR: The Genealogical Forum, 1982), 5.

<sup>4</sup>Cadastral survey map, 1 May 1855.

<sup>5</sup>Itemizer Observer, 23 August 1934.

<sup>6</sup>Map of Polk County, Oregon (H.W. & T.H. Ogilbe, Portland, OR, 1882).

<sup>7</sup>Brown-Sibley Abstract Co., Book 20 Deeds, 138.

<sup>8</sup>Catherine A. Baldwin, Making the Most of the Best (Portland, OR: Willamette Industries, Inc., 1982) 2.

<sup>9</sup>H. Elmer Barnhart, "Survey of the North Luckiamute Valley, Polk County, Oregon, Historical, Social and Economic" (MA thesis, University of Oregon, 1915), 3.

<sup>10</sup>Josie (Moyer) Davenport, "Early Days Around Falls City and Its People" (undated manuscript).

<sup>11</sup>Glenn Gage, interviews with author, 1991-1992.

<sup>12</sup>Clement Brooker, Oregon, Its Wealth and Resources (Battle Creek, Michigan: William C. Gage and Sons, Printers, 1890) 21; and Frank J. Smith, "Nine Acres in the Richest Hop State in the Union," Lewis and Clark Journal, 1 (January 1904), 27.

<sup>13</sup>Annie Marion MacLean, "With Oregon Hop Pickers," The American Journal of Sociology XV (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1910), 87.

<sup>14</sup>The Falls City News, 11 August 1909.

<sup>15</sup>Oregon Gazetteer, (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1911-1912).

- <sup>16</sup>The Oregon Statesman, Anniversary Edition, January 1921.
- <sup>17</sup>Milton Sample, interview with author, 27 July 1997.
- <sup>18</sup>Davenport manuscript.
- <sup>19</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R.L. Polk & Co., Inc., Publishers, 1901-1902 and 1903-1904), n.p.
- <sup>20</sup>Observer, May 1905.
- <sup>21</sup>Itemizer Observer, 1929 (no month).
- <sup>22</sup>Observer, 17 November 1888.
- <sup>23</sup>Observer, 26 April 1907; 10 May 1907; 23 August 1907; 6 September 1907; 29 November 1907; 10 January 1908.
- <sup>24</sup>State Bridge Inspection report, 2 February 1941.
- <sup>25</sup>Itemizer Observer, 23 May 1990, 3a.
- <sup>26</sup>"Falls City, Polk County, Oregon. Its Situation, Resources and Advantages," brochure issued by the Falls City Union, 1890.
- <sup>27</sup>Itemizer, 6 January 1893.
- <sup>28</sup>Davenport manuscript, n.p.
- <sup>29</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1901-1902), 170.
- <sup>30</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1903-1904), 183.
- <sup>31</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1905-1906), 210-211.
- <sup>32</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1908-1908), 210.
- <sup>33</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1909-1910), 153.
- <sup>34</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1911-1912), 145.
- <sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 145.
- <sup>36</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1913-1914), 234-235.
- <sup>37</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1915-1916), 184.

<sup>38</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1917-1918), 164; and Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1919-1920), 152.

<sup>39</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R. L. Polk & Co., Inc., 1931-32), 127.

<sup>40</sup>Itemizer Observer, December 1931.

<sup>41</sup>Falls City Telephone Directory, 1936.

<sup>42</sup>Falls City Telephone Directory, 1940.

<sup>43</sup>Ben Maxwell, Capital Journal, 8 May 1957.

<sup>44</sup>Plat of Falls City, Oregon, 28 February 1893.

<sup>45</sup>Bill to Incorporate the Town of Falls City, Legislative Act, 13 February 1893.

<sup>46</sup>Bill to Incorporate the Town of Falls City, Legislative Act, 27 January 1903.

<sup>47</sup>Itemizer Observer, 6 April 1980.

<sup>48</sup>Polk County Deeds, Vol. 55: 53.

<sup>49</sup>Certificate of Water Right, State Record of Water Right Certificates, Vol. 3: 1832.

<sup>50</sup>Certificate of Water Right, State Record of Water Right Certificates, Vol. 5: 5072.

<sup>51</sup>"History of Falls City Volunteer Fire Department," pamphlet, c. 1965.

<sup>52</sup>Oregon Statesman, 1 June 1972.

<sup>53</sup>U.S. Post Offices, Oregon Segment, microfilm, State Library, Salem.

<sup>54</sup>Davenport manuscript, n.p.

<sup>55</sup>Ila Estelle, Postal Service Notes, 20 September 1984.

<sup>56</sup>Charles H. Carey, General History of Oregon (Portland, OR: Binfords & Mort, 1971) 701.

<sup>57</sup>Barnhart, 15.

<sup>58</sup>Margaret B. Smith, Letter to brothers and sisters, Bridgeport, O.T., 19 August 1855.

<sup>59</sup>Clara Montgomery, "Lewis & Clark Exposition, Falls City Public School," Paper on exhibit at Lewis & Clark Exposition, 1905.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Falls City News, 4 April 1914; and "Industrial Arts in Oregon," Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. LIV, December 1953: 308.

<sup>62</sup>*Promoter*, 1922 Annual of the Falls City High School.

<sup>63</sup>Ila Estelle, interview with the author, July 1997.

<sup>64</sup>George Stockhoff, "A Short Historical Account from the Minutes of the Society," 1990; and Mildred Murphy, "Early History of Falls City Free Methodist Church," 1970.

<sup>65</sup>Darlene Frink and Paul V. LaRue, "History of Falls City United Methodist Church," n.d.

<sup>66</sup>Ila Estelle, "The Beginnings and My Memories, Falls City, Oregon." Manuscript, n.d., 24-25.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 28.

<sup>68</sup>Falls City News, 18 April 1914.

<sup>69</sup>Bill Ames, "Looking Back at the Falls City Falls," Itemizer Observer, n.d., n.p.

<sup>70</sup>Polk County Cemeteries, Volume Two: The Southwest Fourth (Polk County Genealogical Society, 1988), 21.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>72</sup>Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Falls City, Oregon, 1913 and 1928.

<sup>73</sup>Statesman Journal, 10 September 1980: 1A.

<sup>74</sup>Oregon Statesman, 1 June 1972.

<sup>75</sup>Arthur Mack, interview with the author, July 1997.

<sup>76</sup>Davenport manuscript, n.p.

<sup>77</sup>Observer, 12 April 1907.

<sup>78</sup>Oregon Gazetteer (Seattle, WA: R.L. Polk & Co., Inc., Publishers, 1907-1923).

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HISTORIC CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

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<sup>79</sup>Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1913.

<sup>80</sup>Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1928.

## GOALS AND PRIORITIES

This historic context statement sets the stage for identifying, evaluating, and protecting significant historic resources within Falls City's urban growth boundaries and provides a broad plan for historic preservation activities to be undertaken in the future. Although decisions about which historic resources to survey, inventory, register and preserve are based on their significance, context-based planning attempts to balance the importance of historic properties against other factors affecting them by establishing goals, priorities and strategies.

The information found in this section is largely based on information gathered during a public meeting held in May 1997. Approximately 15 residents attended the meeting to discuss their concerns and hopes for preserving Falls City's historic resources. The overwhelming sentiment, regardless of future action taken, was to preserve the overall quality of life and character that is present in the community - which includes preserving significant historic resources for future generations. A second meeting held in June, for the purposes of setting priorities and discussing strategies, was unattended except for the consultants and the project's volunteer coordinator. Therefore, the priorities outlined in this section are recommendations made by the consultant. The strategies outlined in this section are based on suggestions by the SHPO.

Because this document is intended to evolve in response to community needs over time, it is possible that the priorities set forth here may be re-prioritized to reflect changing needs and goals.

## IDENTIFYING OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Studying a historic context helps to develop a logical and reasonable approach to preserving associated significant properties. At any given point in time, there may be a number of constraints that can make preserving historic resources a challenge. Public interest or apathy, the availability of fund and/or staff time, political support or opposition, and threats to resources affect the priorities for reaching preservation goals.

The first step in identifying considerations is to *identify stakeholders*, those people who are in a position to influence the outcomes or whose interests will be affected, both favorably or unfavorably, by historic preservation activities. This list includes, but is not limited to, residents and property owners, City of Falls City staff and elected officials, the Falls City Planning Commission, the Falls City school district administration, the local senior citizens organization, ACTION (a local group interested in civic betterment), the Falls City Mushroom Festival, Polk County Planning and Development, the Polk County Historical Society, the Oregon Historical Society, and the State Historic Preservation Office. A current list of local contact persons and telephone numbers is available at City Hall. Telephone numbers for additional contacts are listed in Table 1 on the following page. As additional stakeholders are identified, they will be added to this list.

Identifying *threats to preservation* is the second step in identifying considerations. Threats to preservation may be both direct and indirect. The list

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GOALS & PRIORITIES

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generated at the public meeting included lack of funding, public apathy or indifference, political opposition, redevelopment of property, new development and community growth, and fear and resistance based on lack of information and understanding. As new threats become known, they should be added to this list, just as those on the list that no longer pose a threat should be removed.

The final step in identifying considerations is to identify *opportunities for preservation*. Although there are a limited number of resources remaining in the community, the opportunities for their preservation are numerous and range from recordation prior to demolition to adaptive reuse to full preservation. Some resources may warrant designation as local landmarks or National Register of Historic Places properties. Some may lend themselves to interpretation (through signage) as historic sites. Funding for historic preservation projects may be accomplished through both public and private funding efforts, including SHPO matching grants and private contributions.

Citizen involvement is key to all phases of city planning, including historic preservation planning. Community members can make valuable contributions by sharing historical materials, photographs and memories. Seeking public input can help build historic preservation alliances. Preservation efforts in Falls City need to be community-based and community-oriented, but should not necessarily be limited to the urban growth boundary or city limits. When appropriate, the outlying rural area and its residents should be included in Falls City's historic preservation efforts.

Table 1. Contact Numbers for Preservation-Related Assistance

David Skilton, Preservation Planner Oregon State Historic Preservation Office	503-378-5001 x260
Kimberly Dunn, Grants Coordinator Oregon State Historic Preservation Office	503-378-5001 x230
Gene Clemons, Planner Polk County Development	503-623-9237
Bill Ewing, City Administrator Falls City	503-787-3631
Georgia Wildfang, President Polk County Historical Society	503-838-1807
Historic Preservation League of Oregon	503-243-1923

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Falls City's mission is to preserve the community's significant historic resources. To this end, the following goals and objectives have been developed for working toward this mission.

GOAL: Educate the community about historic preservation.

- Objectives:
- establish a heritage education curriculum for use in schools
  - offer public workshops and educational programs, such as "Rehab Oregon Right" or information about tax incentive programs
  - develop interpretive signage about historic sites in or near the City

GOAL: Establish a Historic Resources Inventory for Falls City.

- Objectives:
- conduct a survey of the City's historic resources and sites
  - evaluate the significance of inventoried properties

GOAL: Provide protection for significant historic resources.

- Objectives:
- integrate this historic context statement into the City's overall planning process and Comprehensive Plan
  - encourage local landmarks applications (using the City's established process for designation) for appropriate resources
  - begin the National Register nomination process for priority of historic resources

GOAL: Locate and secure funding for local preservation efforts.

- Objectives:
- budget for public historic preservation projects (such as survey and inventory or interpretive signage) using City funds
  - approach foundations and others with grant funds available for historic preservation projects
  - approach the list of stakeholders for donations when appropriate
  - discuss additional fund-raising options to determine which, if any, might be pursued

GOAL: Strengthen and maintain the City's historic preservation program as part of long-term planning efforts.

- Objectives:
- integrate this historic context statement with the City's Comprehensive Plan (that plan is scheduled for updates in the near future)
  - update this context statement on a regular basis (reassess goals, priorities, and strategies)
  - continue the dialog between the City and the community about on-going preservation concerns and efforts

### STRATEGIES

A strategic approach can be useful to historic preservation planning. Identifying strategies which can help accomplish objectives will greatly facilitate the achievement of each goal. To assist those working on preservation efforts, the SHPO has identified several strategies which may be helpful.

*Networking:* Interested persons could attend a conference or workshop (such as the annual HPLD's Governor's Conference) to get or share new ideas and connect with others involved in similar preservation efforts.

*Partnerships:* Develop a working relationship between property owners, business organizations, City officials, and/or others to work together on specific preservation activities, such as nominating historic districts.

*Piggybacking:* Work with existing organizations to disseminate information about historic preservation through the organizations' newsletters.

*Volunteers/Interns:* Solicit volunteers or interns from local organizations, local schools, area colleges and universities to work on specific preservation-related projects.

*Grants:* Use planning and clerical staff time, as well as documented volunteer time, to match grants from SHPO and other foundations and organizations.

*Repackaging:* Use the Historic Overview section of this document, along with several historic photographs, to create a publication that could be used as an educational tool for the school curriculum or as a fund-raising effort in the community.

*Coalitions:* Combine efforts with those working on natural resources to preserve historic rural landscapes threatened by development.

*Leveraging:* Use some money or resources to help insure a favorable result from preservation efforts of others.

*Mentoring:* Connect new historic home owners with those that have already restored or rehabilitated their own historic properties.

*Modeling:* Register key historic resources on the National Register or local landmarks register and rehabilitate or restore to demonstrate the value of the process to others in the community.

Although the City of Falls City is encouraged to evaluate which of these strategies might work best for a chosen situation, the use of partnerships, volunteers/interns, grants, repackaging, and modeling may work well to achieve some of the objectives stated above.

### PRIORITIES

To minimize the potential damage or destruction of the community's historic resources, the City's historic preservation efforts should be prioritized. Because there was little input from the community about the priorities, the following priorities are suggested. As part of the on-going preservation efforts by the City of Falls City, these

priorities should be discussed and re-prioritized as necessary. A variety of factors (such as new major development) can change the priority of work from year to year and therefore, regular evaluation of the priorities is recommended.

Because it is possible to pursue several preservation activities simultaneously, the following priorities need not be a single track followed in a linear fashion. In other words, all of the priorities listed under Group A need not be accomplished before working toward Group B or Group C. It is recommended, however, that the activities in Group A be approached sequentially.

#### ***GROUP A: SURVEY, INVENTORY, AND REGISTRATION***

1. *Begin the survey and inventory work for the City of Falls City.* Secure funding (possibly apply to SHPO for a match grant) to hire historic preservation consultant to conduct a full survey the city's historic resources and sites.
2. *Evaluate the inventoried properties for Local Landmark and National Register significance.* The evaluation should be based on the criteria established as part of this historic context statement.
3. *Identify key significant properties to be placed on the Local Landmarks register and the National Register of Historic Places and begin the registration process.* Based on the windshield survey conducted in conjunction with this project, only one individual resource (the Falls City United Methodist Church) was identified as National Register eligible, although further survey and research may reveal additional individual properties which meet the criteria for the National Register. It is also possible that the residential area on the north side of town may have enough historic integrity to warrant a historic residential district. Further evaluation is needed to make final determinations. Properties suggested for the Local Landmarks register include: the Falls City High School, the City Hall, and various residential dwellings.

#### ***GROUP B: PRESERVATION PLANNING***

1. *Integrate historic preservation planning into the City's overall planning goals and efforts.* Consider establishing a volunteer Local Landmarks Commission to work directly with City staff, the Planning Commission and the City Council to oversee the local landmarks registry and assist with planning and carrying out preservation-related activities, including fund-raising and educational efforts. Members of the commission can represent property owners, the local business community, and others interested in the City's history and its role in the City's future. Members can also be solicited who a background in historic preservation, architecture, archeology, engineering, real estate, and marketing. Historic preservation should be a regular (though not necessary frequent) item on the Planning Commission agenda.

*GROUP C: HERITAGE EDUCATION*

1. *Establish a heritage education program.* This program may include a curriculum for grade school and/or high school levels designed by the school district's administration and faculty, with assistance from SHPO, HPLO, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The program may also include other educational events to heighten awareness of historic preservation in the community or to assist property owners with their rehabilitation or restoration efforts. Examples of activities may include a series of newspaper articles during May in recognition of National Historic Preservation Week, a table staffed by Local Landmarks Commission members at local and area events such as arts festivals and fairs, workshops such as "Rehab Oregon Right," and the construction of heritage markers or interpretive signage for historic buildings or sites and the development of a walking tour to these sites.

The placement of heritage education at the end of this list in no way negates its importance. Education is part of the on-going process throughout all of the City's historic preservation efforts. They are listed in this order because they are seen as more of a long-range, on-going effort that can begin immediately, but can go on long after the activities listed at the top of the priority list have been completed. However, should funding specifically designated for heritage education become available before completion of the other priorities, the City is encouraged to engage in pursuing either activity as a worthwhile endeavor toward achieving the overall mission of preserving the community's historic resources.

## INTEGRATION

Because many agencies and organizations prepare plans which may have an impact on historic resources, it is important to understand what these groups envision for a property. Coordinating efforts may help the City of Falls City to alleviate redundancy and avoid duplicating planning measures already in effect. To maximize the value invested in documenting a historic context, it is important to understand how this document and future preservation planning efforts can connect with other plans and other contexts. This section of this document looks at other plans and contexts that may have a bearing on local preservation planning. In addition, recommendations for future related studies helps to lay groundwork for future work.

### CONNECTION WITH OTHER PLANS

The City of Falls City has a local Comprehensive Plan developed in accordance to Statewide Land-Use Planning Goal 5. It was last updated in 1979 and is due for an update in the near future. Recent revisions to the Administrative Rule governing Goal 5 (OAR 660-023) encourage communities to plan for historic and cultural resources using the context-based model developed by the National Park Service. This historic context was developed with integration into the City's Comprehensive Plan in mind and follows NPS's context-based model.

Polk County also has a comprehensive plan that includes a section addressing the identification and protection of the county's significant historic resources. Because there is potential for overlap between the City of Falls City's preservation efforts and those activities outlined in the Polk County plan, the City should review the Polk County plan and coordinate efforts where possible.

Although no federal government property exists within the Urban Growth Boundary of Falls City, Polk County is responsible for the highway bridge within the city limits. The concrete deck girder bridge was constructed in 1958; there are no known plans to upgrade or replace the bridge. When a maintenance project involves a potentially historic bridge, however, the county coordinates with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and SHPO. Although the highway bridge is not yet 50 years old and, therefore, would not be considered potentially significant historically, it will be eligible for review as a potential historic resource in the year 2008.

Because state law (ORS 358.652) mandates that state agencies and political subdivisions, (such as school districts, park districts, fire districts, service districts, etc.) develop programs to preserve significant historic properties which they own or for which they are responsible, there may be overlap between the City's preservation efforts and those of these agencies. Although no plans from these agencies were identified pertaining to Falls City at this time, the City should be reminded to keep abreast of any plans that develop in the future which might result in overlap or opportunities for coordinated efforts.

## CONNECTION WITH OTHER CONTEXTS

There are two historic context statements which overlap geographically and thematically with the City of Falls City Historic Context Statement. A statewide agricultural development context was drafted in 1989 (Speulda) which identifies survey and research needs, preservation activities, and goals and priorities for the preservation of historic agricultural resources. In 1991, the Polk County Historic Context Statement was prepared (Koler and Morrison) which also recommends several activities toward identifying and preserving the county's historic resources. There is some overlap of the recommendations outlined in these context statements with the goals and objectives set forth in the Falls City Historic Context Statement.

In addition, historic context work has been completed for neighboring Marion and Benton counties. Although the focus of each is specific to the historic resources found within each county, the City of Falls City may find the information useful to further understanding their own historic context and may find ideas for preservation planning and activities which may lend themselves to adaptation by Falls City.

## FUTURE RELATED STUDIES

The process of preserving historic resources is a dynamic one. The goals, priorities and strategies set forth in this project will change with time. Consequently, updating this context on a regular basis should be built in to the City's overall preservation planning effort.

Although this project has identified key events and historic resources that contributed to the historical development of Falls City, the project, by limits of its own definition, is meant to be a general overview. Certain historic themes deserve more intensive study. Of interest might be the development of the residential neighborhoods, most of which were developed by 1920. A study of Falls City's residential properties would include the early up-building by hopeful developers, architects and builders and the use of standardized plans, and the variation of architecture styles which appear in modest detailing on many early homes.

A thematic study of Falls City's extensive milling history could be undertaken, even though there are no standing resources associated with the historic mills. Some of the mill sites, however, are still vacant and not yet redeveloped. The sites could be part of the heritage tourism program, using interpretive signage with photographs and textual information.

A thematic study of religious development in Falls City could examine the development of churches and church-related properties more thoroughly. A study of this sort would include not only the churches and their evolution, but the Epworth League Institute's summer camp and meeting grounds on the north side of the river.

Although there are no currently identified prehistoric sites in the Falls City urban growth boundary, they may exist. Archeological research in the area may provide further understanding about the area's history prior to Euro-American settlement.

The countryside surrounding Falls City, as well as the neighboring communities in the Little Luckiamute Valley, have contributed to the historical development of Falls City. In light of increasing development pressures and population expansion, a study which examines more fully the historical development of the entire valley could benefit both Falls City and Polk County.

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## APPENDIX A

## SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE in FALLS CITY HISTORY

**Bowman, Ross.** Born in Falls City on May 9, 1907. A farmer and logger, Bowman served on the school board for 22 years. He served two terms as mayor in the 1970s and was sworn in as a City Councilor in January 1997, a few months before his 90th birthday. He married Helen Douglas in 1926 and together they parented seven children, whose professions include a doctor, a dentist, a postman, a writer, a state corrections employee and two teachers. Bowman considers working for his town as part of being a good citizen.

**Bryant, Abner M.** [1838-1896]. Bryant was a teacher, minister, and President of the MacPherson Normal College in Nebraska before coming to Oregon. He was one of the founders of the Falls City Development Company, the incorporators of north Falls City which became the educational and commercial center of the community. He was also active in the development of the Falls City cemetery, the first in the city, where he and other prominent members of the community are buried. His wife, Sarah, continued to sell town lots long after his death. He was one of several early residents of Falls City who served in the Union Army during the Civil War.

**Butler, Frank** [1842-1908]. Butler was born in England and learned surveying before coming to the United States with his family in 1882 to survey for a railroad promoter who wanted to build a railway from the Willamette Valley to Yaquina Bay. He purchased two Donation Land Claims south of Falls City and established his "Oakhurst" home. One of the original town promoters, Butler is often called "the founder of Falls City" because of his survey work for various land developers in the area. He, too, became a land developer and platted the northern portion of his land holdings where he built his "Hillcrest" home. He donated the land for the Gerlinger railway which later became the Salem, Falls City and Western and deeded the ground for the Christian Church. His business stationery described him as "consulting civil engineer, surveyor and landscape gardener" as well as "notary public, conveyancer and public typewriter; city surveyor of Falls City, Oregon; Justice of the Peace 4th District, Polk County."

**Estelle, William** [1871-1950]. Estelle learned the lumber business as a youth in his native Michigan and was especially skilled in log rafting and riding the rafts the high water of spring floods. He and his young family came to Oregon in 1896. In Falls City, his knowledge of the timber industry gave him the skills to build the ponds and flumes used to transport lumber several miles from small mills in the Coast Range. In 1910, he began working for the Falls City Lumber Company owned by Cobbs and Mitchell. He held the position of Construction Forman for the mill plant and the woods camps eight miles south of Falls City. He was also responsible for decking several million feet of logs brought in by private rail from camps for winter operations. When the Cobbs and Mitchell operations moved to Valsetz, Estelle built the first school there. In later life, he operated and managed several mills including his own Estelle Lumber Company. In 1906, he was a charter member of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Falls City and was a supporter of the Adventist School.

**Hollowell, Tom** [1850-1926]. Hollowell was an early resident who, when he arrived at the Little Luckiamute River in 1891, for boarding houses or hotel type residences. He was a carpenter who built a number of early buildings, most of which have long since passed into oblivion. He operated a hotel for the growing community. At the peak of Falls City's growth and prosperity, he was the local green grocer and nurseryman who developed the potential of the hill north from North Main St. with a series of terraces and green houses.

**Hubbard, Frank** [1845-1922]. Hubbard came overland in 1853 and his father took a Donation Land Claim immediately southeast of today's Falls City where the Hubbard family cemetery still exists. Hubbard was a community leader all of his life. He served as chair of the Bridgeport school board. In 1885, he purchased a part of the Frederick Waymire DLC just east of Falls City and established a post office in his home which carried the postmark of "Syracuse." In 1889, he was one of the founders of Falls City and was its first treasurer, later serving as mayor. As one of the town's chief boosters, he purchased 191 acres of land and assisted in its development.

**Montgomery, Hugh** [1827-1909]. Montgomery and members of his family came to the area of the falls from Pennsylvania in 1889. In 1891, he and his wife, Esther, platted the first town of Falls City on the south side of the Little Luckiamute River. This became known as the Montgomery Addition. Because of its generally milder slope, and hence easier access of rail service, this part of town became the industrial center of Falls City. The Montgomerys developed a mill at the site of the falls, as well as developed other logging operations. An ardent prohibitionist, Montgomery was a leader in the ban on liquor and saloons in the first city charter. He and his wife were charter members of the Methodist church.

**Moyer, Jessie** [1880-1959]. Moyer, the daughter of Abner and Sarah Bryant, symbolizes, more than any other person in Falls City, the best in education. Beginning her career in one-room schools in the community, Moyer served as an educator for several decades. Her unique facial expression and commanding voice charmed and positively influences several generations of local children. She loved to walk the four mile stretch to school each morning and home again each evening. She was also active in all civic and lodge work in town. For several years, until the time of her last illness, she was the correspondent for the *Itemizer Observer* at Falls City.

**Pfandhoefer, Louis H.** [1853-1913]. A much respected early Falls City physician, Dr. Pfandhoefer built the town's only hospital in 1907 near where the high school stands today. Born in Germany, he studied in New York state before coming to Falls City to practice medicine in 1898. While in Falls City, he was also a land developer. He invested in timber claims and in five acres of residential property along the banks of the Little Luckiamute River.

**Pugh, Cliff J.** [1872-19--]. Pugh was sometimes considered to be Falls City's leading booster during the time of the town's greatest growth. In residence before 1900, he is generally thought of as the town's long-time jeweler, although he was also an engineer, an optician, an operator of a confectionery store, the creator of the local telephone company, and co-owner of the Gem Theater. He championed the growth of agricultural development to offset the decline of the lumber industry and was the

manager of a loganberry juice factory and an incorporator of the local cannery. Pugh prospered when Falls City prospered and left the area in the late twenties when the town began its first serious decline.

**Russell, Osborne** [1814-1892]. Russell, who was born in Maine, was the first man to have claim which included the falls where Falls City is today. He first came to Oregon with Nathaniel Wyeth in 1834. He returned to Oregon in 1842 and was a member of the American party in Champoeg in 1843. He served as judge of the Supreme Court and on the Executive Committee of the Provisional Government. He came to Polk County in 1845 after having lost a gubernatorial election, where he wrote his famous Journal of a Trapper in 1846 and 1847. He went to the gold field in 1849 and never returned to Polk County.

**Teal, John** [1849-1917]. Known as Judge Teal, John Baldwin Teal was one of the prominent men who was connected with the upbuilding of Polk County for over a half century. Starting in the carriage business, he soon developed mill and timber interests on Brown Creek which, in his honor, was renamed Teal Creek. His operations supplied lumber and timber products for a wide range of construction throughout the area. He was also known as a bridge builder. He served the community in various capacities and his son, Albert, was mayor of Falls City for many years. Teal's wife, Eva, deeded the property which became Camp Kilowan.

**Thompson, Merrit** [1862-1938]. Thompson came from Michigan to Falls City in 1893. He was one of the prime movers of the Falls City Commercial Club, where he served as treasurer. He also served as the City Treasurer. In 1895, he opened his drug store on North Main St. and which continued as a family business until the mid-1940s. He was involved in numerous other businesses as well and served as the President of the local bank and was the owner of the Gem Theater. He also served as postmaster for a number of years.

**Thorp, John** [1797-1880]. Thorp was the first entrepreneur to recognize the importance of and to take advantage of the falls as a location for development. A pioneer of 1844, he led one of three major wagon trains to Oregon that year. He took a claim near the Willamette River in Polk County and had his son, Theodore, take the claim which encompasses the modern site of Falls City. He erected a sawmill there in 1850 (which is mistakenly identified as Sharps Mill on some early maps). In 1854, he erected, at a cost of \$16,000, a two runs of buhrstone flour mill. It was the only mill in the county after the closure of the Nesmith's Mill on the Rickreall until John Waymire built another near Dallas. In 1865, the claim at the falls was sold and the flour mill moved to the more central location of Rickreall, which was then called Dixie.

**Wagner, Jacob "Jack"** [1865-1944]. Born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Wagner came with his parents and other family members to the United States in the 1890s and to the Falls City area by 1896. Though listed as a blacksmith, Wagner's greatest contribution to Falls City was Wagner Hall, which he built around 1906 on North Main St. In World War I, the name was changed to Victory Hall and even later, it was sometimes referred to as Rebecca Hall. It was the center of civic activity for many decades, housing grange meetings, family potluck dinners, community and

traveling plays, vaudeville shows, basketball games, lectures, community fairs, high school graduations, and Saturday night dances. Wagner Hall stood until 1980.

**Ward, Phoebe** [1874-1956]. Ward is best remembered for her care of the sick. During the Depression, when there was no doctor in Falls City, her home was a veritable hospital where many received care. She operated a maternity home in her residence under the direction of Dr. Bartell in Dallas. She arrived with her family from Michigan at the age of sixteen. In addition to serving the community's ailing, she helped to organize the Free Methodist Church and for 25 years was Sunday School Superintendent and a member of the Women's Missionary Society. She taught music, played and sang, and she wrote articles for and took part in Sunday School conventions.

**Waymire, Frederick** [1807-1873]. Waymire came to Polk County with his wife and family from Ohio in 1845. A millwright and farmer, his Donation Land Claim bordered today's Falls City to the east. He was active in politics and was one of the first to project a railroad in Oregon. He served as Territorial legislator in 1855-1856, a member of the Oregon Constitutional Convention in 1857, and as State legislator in 1868. In politics, he was considered the "voice of the common man." He was the builder of the first Bridgeport school in 1855 and was an incorporator of LaCreole Academy in Dallas in 1856.

**Wilson, Faye** [1909-1989]. Wilson was born in St. Johns and educated in Newberg and Portland. She came to Falls City in the 1930s and worked tirelessly for the City as its Recorder, Police Judge, and School District Secretary. She was also a member of the City Council. In her role as municipal judge, it was said that she "treats them fair and hits them hard." She worked for the Polk County Health Association and for juvenile betterment programs. She was the organist for the United Methodist Church and was active as pianist for her husband's dance orchestra which played often at Wagner Hall from 1938 to 1943.

**Wolfe, Florence** [1850-1939]. Wolfe came to Oregon in 1853, crossing the plains with her parents William and Ruth Ruble. They settled in the Eola Hills where her father founded mills and worked as a horticulturist. Wolfe came to the Falls City area in 1888 and established a flourishing farm on Tater Hill southeast of town and developed property within the town. During her long residence, she worked for the good of the community and was among those who unsuccessfully promoted a highway from Falls City to the coast. She handled exhibits at both the county and state fairs with great success. She was in charge of the Polk County exhibit at the Lewis & Clark Exposition in Portland in 1905 and won a number of blue ribbons for the county.

**APPENDIX B****FALLS CITY ORDINANCE  
ARTICLE 8. HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SITES****SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS****1.010 Purpose:**

This Article is established for the purposes of promoting the historic, educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation, restoration, and protection of buildings, structures, sites, places and elements of historic interest within the City.

**1.020 Applicability:**

The provisions of this Article shall apply to designated Historic Landmarks inventoried on the City's Significant Resources Map.

**SECTION 2: DESIGNATION OF HISTORICAL LANDMARKS****2.010 Institution of Proceedings:**

The Planning Commission, City Council, property owner or any interested person may initiate proceedings for the designation of an Historical Landmark as follows:

- A. The City Council or Planning Commission may initiate designation proceedings by sending written notice to the City Recorder or planning consultant.
- B. A property owner or interested person may begin designation proceedings by making written application on forms available from the City Recorder. The application shall contain the following minimum information:
  1. The applicant's name and address;
  2. The owner's name and address, if different from the applicant;
  3. Assessors map number and tax lot number of property proposed for designation;
  4. A statement explaining the following:
    - a. The reasons why the proposed landmark is of historic, cultural or architectural value;
    - b. The positive and negative effects, if any, which designation of the proposed landmark would have on the residents or other property owners of the area.

**2.020 Hearing Process:**

The Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing pursuant to the procedures and notification requirements of Article 3, Section 5 to consider the proposed Landmark designation. The decision of the Planning Commission shall serve as a

recommendation to the City Council. The City Council shall hold a public hearing pursuant to the provisions of Article 3, Section 6 and shall make the final decision on designation of the proposed Landmark.

2.030 Criteria for Designation of Historical Landmarks:

A building, structure or site may be designated as an Historical Landmark upon findings that the proposed Historical Landmark is of architectural, historical, or cultural significance to the City of Falls City. The age of the proposed Landmark, alone, shall not be sufficient grounds for designation.

2.040 Revision of Significant Resources Map:

Upon designation, Historical Landmarks shall be added to the Significant Resources Map and shall become subject to the provisions of this Article.

SECTION 3: REVIEW OF ALTERATIONS AND CONSTRUCTION

3.010 General Requirements:

- A. Except as provided in 3.010 (B) below, no Historical Landmark shall be altered in such a manner as to affect its exterior appearance, nor may any new structure be constructed upon a site designated as an Historical Landmark or upon a site containing an Historical Landmark, unless such alteration or construction has first been approved by the Planning Commission pursuant to this subsection.
- B. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature which does not involve a change in design, material or the outward appearance of such feature, or which the Building Inspector shall certify is required for the public safety because of its unsafe or dangerous condition.

3.020 Application Requirements:

- A. The applicant shall make application, in accordance with the provisions of Article 3, upon forms obtainable from the City Recorder.
- B. The application shall include floor plans, building elevations, material samples and such other information as is necessary to explain the nature of the proposed alteration or construction.

3.030 Hearing Process:

The Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing, pursuant to the procedures and requirements of Section 5 of Article 3, to consider approval or denial of the proposed alteration or construction. The decision of the Planning Commission shall be final unless an appeal to the City Council is filed pursuant to Section 7 of Article 3.

3.040 Criteria for Approval or Denial:

The Planning Commission shall determine the appropriateness of the proposed alteration or construction and may approve the request upon findings that the alteration or construction:

- A. Does not significantly reduce the historical or architectural character of the Landmark; and
- B. Is in keeping with the style, scale and general design of the Landmark.

#### SECTION 4: DEMOLITION CONTROLS

##### 4.010 Review Procedures:

- A. If an application is made for a permit to demolish all or part of a structure which has been designated as an Historic Landmark, or a structure which is located upon a site designated as an Historic Landmark, the Building Inspector shall within seven (7) days transmit to the Planning Commission a copy of said application.
- B. The Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing within 45 days of application, pursuant to the procedures outlined in Article 3, to consider action on the proposed demolition permit.

##### 4.020 Review Criteria:

In determining the appropriateness of the demolition as proposed in an application for a demolition permit, the Planning Commission shall consider the following:

- A. All plans, drawings, and photographs as may be submitted by the applicant;
- B. Information presented at the public hearing held concerning the proposed demolition;
- C. The Falls City Comprehensive Plan;
- D. The criteria used in the original designation of the Historical Landmark;
- E. The historical and architectural style, the general design, arrangement, materials and general condition of the structure in question or its appurtenant fixtures; and
- F. Whether denial of the permit will involve substantial hardship to the applicant, and whether issuance of the permit would act to the substantial detriment of the public welfare and would be contrary to the intent and purposes of this section of this Ordinance.

##### 4.030 Planning Commission Action:

- A. The Planning Commission may approve the demolition request and authorize the Building Inspector to issue the permit after considering the criteria contained in Section 4.020 above. Action by the Planning Commission shall be final unless an appeal to the City Council is filed pursuant to the provisions of Section 7 of Article 3.
- B. The Planning Commission may reject the application for the demolition permit if it determines that, in the interest of preserving historical or architectural values, the structure should not be demolished. In that event, issuance of the permit shall be suspended for a period fixed by the Planning Commission as follows:

1. The Planning Commission may invoke a stay of demolition for a period not exceeding thirty (30) days from the date of the decision on the requested demolition.
2. The Planning Commission may extend the suspension period if it determines that there is a program or project under way which could result in public or private acquisition of such structure or site, and that there are reasonable grounds to believe that such program or project may be successful. The suspension period may be extended in thirty (30) day increments for an additional period not exceeding ninety (90) days, to a total of not more than one hundred and twenty (120) days from the date of the initial decision on the requested demolition;
3. An action by the Planning Commission suspending the issuance of a permit for any demolition may be appealed to the City Council by the applicant for the permit by filing an appeal with the City Recorder, pursuant to the provisions of Section 7 of Article 3.

4.040 Demolition of Hazardous Structures:

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the issuance of a permit for the demolition of a structure which the Building Inspector shall certify constitutes a hazard to public safety because of its unsafe or dangerous condition.

## APPENDIX C

## HISTORIC RESOURCE EVALUATION FORM

Inventory Resource No. \_\_\_\_\_ Rating \_\_\_\_\_  
 Historic Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

## CRITERIA AND FINDINGS

To determine if a historic resource is eligible as a Local Landmark, it must be 50 years old and meet a qualifying level of both "Significance" and "Integrity." The following criteria, based on the National Register criteria, will be used to evaluate proposed historic properties.

**AGE**

A resource must be 50 years old or older (for properties less than 50 years of age, consult National Register Bulletins #15 [Criteria Consideration G] and #22 to determine potential eligibility). NOTE: If the answer to both these questions is "No," there is no need to complete the rest of this form.

	Yes	No
1. Resource is 50 years old or older.	_____	_____
Period of significance:		
1889 and older	= 4 points	
1890-1903	= 3 points	
1904-1921	= 2 points	
1922-1950	= 1 point	
2. Resource meets criteria for exceptions to age.	_____	_____
Total Points for Age =	_____	

**SIGNIFICANCE**

When evaluated within its historic context, a resource must be shown to be significant in **at least one** of the following areas. Each area can be worth **no more than a total of five (5) points** to insure that the areas are weighted equally (one area is no more significant than another area). This section is worth a total of 20 points.

	Yes	Somewhat	No
1. <b>Events/Patterns of History</b>			
a. The resource is associated with an event or events that have made a significant contribution to the history of the city, the region, the state, or the nation; <i>and/or</i>	_____	_____	_____
b. the resource is associate with patterns of events or a historic trend that made a significant contribution to the history of the city, the region, the state, or the nation.	_____	_____	_____

Total Points for Events/Patterns of History = \_\_\_\_\_

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APPENDICES

Yes    Somewhat    No

**2. Person(s)**

- a. The person(s) associated with the resource is(are) individually significant and made demonstrated contributions to the history of the city, the region, the state, or the nation; *and*
- b. the resource is associated with the person(s)'s *productive* life, reflecting the time period in which he or she achieved significance.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Total Points for Person(s) = \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Design/Construction**

- a. The resource embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; *and/or*
- b. the resource represents the work of a master; *and/or*
- c. the resource possesses high artistic value; *or*
- d. the resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (applies only to districts).

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Total Points for Design/Construction = \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Information Potential**

- a. The resource has yielded information important to history or prehistory; *or*
- b. The resource may be likely to yield information important to history or prehistory.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Total Points for Information Potential = \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL POINTS FOR SIGNIFICANCE (can be no more than 25 points) = \_\_\_\_\_

**INTEGRITY**

Integrity is the authenticity of a resource's historic identity and it is integral to the resource's ability to convey its significance. There must be identifiable evidence in all or some of the following aspects of integrity. Which aspects must have integrity should be determined on a case by case basis. Some aspects may be more important than others in conveying significance, depending on what makes the resource significant (see sections above). Each area of integrity is worth three (3) points; this section is worth a total of 21 points.

Yes    Partially    No

1. Location (is the resource in its original location?)

_____	_____	_____
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2. Design (is the original design intact?)

_____	_____	_____
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(Integrity continued)

	Yes	Partially	No
3. Setting (has the character of the setting stayed the same?)	_____	_____	_____
4. Materials (are the original materials retained?)	_____	_____	_____
5. Workmanship (does it show craftsmanship of the period?)	_____	_____	_____
6. Feeling (does it evoke an aesthetic or historic sense of the past?)	_____	_____	_____
7. Association (is this the site of a historic event or activity or is the site associated with an important person historically?)	_____	_____	_____

TOTAL POINTS FOR INTEGRITY = \_\_\_\_\_

**FINAL RATING AND RANKING**

On the basis of the evaluation of significance and integrity, the findings for this resource are:

Total Points for Age                    \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total Points for Significance        \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total Points for Integrity            \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL OVERALL POINTS        =        \_\_\_\_\_

RANKING:     40-45 points    Primary Significance  
                   33-39 points    Secondary Significance  
                   26-32 points    Contributing Significance  
                   25 & below     Non-Contributing

Based on the Total Overall Points, this resource is ranked as \_\_\_\_\_