

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: 625 South Washington Street.City or town: Marion State: IN County: GrantNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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

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

In my opinion, the property x meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

____ national ____ statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A ____ B x C ____ D_____
Signature of certifying official/Title:_____
DateIndiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official:_____
Date_____
Title :_____
State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

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Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
District	<input type="checkbox"/>
Site	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Object	<input type="checkbox"/>

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE: specialty store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: GLASS

METAL

roof: ASPHALT

other: BRICK

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The 1936 Firestone Auto Supply and Service Center is located on the south edge of Marion's historic commercial district on Washington Street. The one-story corner building, designed in the Art Moderne Streamline style, features a broad front wall of metal and glass display windows and a broad canopy, curved at their corners.

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Narrative Description

The Marion Firestone Auto Supply and Service Center occupies the south half of the block fronting Washington Street on the northeast corner of Washington and 7th Streets just south of Marion's downtown business district (photo 02). Washington Street was the main north-south street leading through Marion until Highway 9 and 21 bypassed downtown in the 1940s. The building is opposite the city's large public library (1900) and on the diagonally opposite corner of the Marion Chronicle-Tribune Building (1966). The Firestone building is also located among a few of the city's larger churches, including the former Presbyterian Church, Episcopal Church, and Methodist Church, which is on the block's opposite (east) corner from the Firestone site and seen in the background of photos 01-02.

The Firestone building holds a prominent position in the city's downtown when entering from the south. This location was advantageous for Firestone given its nearness to the central part of the city, yet it was easily accessed by travelers heading north into and through Marion. The design of the building, a glass, metal, and masonry box, has a showroom and sales area that wraps the northeast corner of Washington and 7th Streets. The showroom and service bays would have been an impressive sight at night. The service bays were internally lit and the expansive front canopy also would have gleamed with light to catch the eye of motorists. While the storefront glass, entry doors, and garage doors were replaced c. 1970, they were done so to fill the historic openings and provide the same general appearance that the building had when it was constructed. The majority of the building's front (west) and south façade windows and doors had been covered with plywood until late 2023, when the material was removed. Note photos 01-02 are from late 2023, while the remaining photos are from earlier in 2023. The north half of the front façade is lined with auto service bays while the north and east facades face adjacent buildings and alley, respectively. These walls are much more utilitarian in their design. The surface between Washington Street and the building is paved with asphalt for easy maneuvering of automobiles.

The front (west) façade faces Washington Street and is generally divided into two parts. The south half, which wraps the southwest corner of the lot, features a row of four floor-to-ceiling display windows with transoms in brushed aluminum frames (photos 01-02). An entry composed of a pair of storefront doors with side-lite and transom is in the middle of the row. This is best seen in interior photos 08-10. The outside corner bays are rounded and composed of three narrow sheets to accommodate the curvature of the wall. Combined, this provides seven sheets of plate glass and doors divided by aluminum frames in the south half of the front façade.

The north half of the front façade steps back slightly from the display area wall and features six tall glass and steel garage bay doors (photos 03-04). Each door is divided into twenty-four panels (six vertical, four horizontal). The bottom row of panels is solid while the remaining rows are glass. These are best seen in interior photo 15). A band of metal stretches across the top of the bays. The roof of the building extends out over the front wall to the sidewalk for a massive steel canopy that is supported by three round steel columns. A pair of columns is centered with the display area while the third column is at the north edge of the facade. The columns carry a tall

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steel girder north-to-south near the center of the canopy. The canopy is faced with metal and features rounded corners. It is painted with red and blue stripes at the bottom and has ghost lettering spelling out Firestone America's Home for Car Service. A steel frame that once carried a Firestone sign projects from the front of the canopy in the south half of the façade.

The west half of the south façade is a continuation of the front façade's display window design and features a row of four tall display windows with transoms. A pair of storefront entry doors and transom is in the middle of the row. The east half of the façade features three tall glass and steel garage bay doors matching those on the front façade (photos 07, 12). The top of the south façade features a continuation of the metal canopy trimmed at the bottom with blue and red stripes and features ghost lettering spelling Firestone America's Home for Car Service.

The back (east) façade faces a paved alley and additional asphalt pavement behind the building (photo 06). The wall is composed of concrete block divided into bays by steel columns. The bottom five courses of block are exposed and the top is covered with metal. A steel door is near the center of the wall which is topped by a tall steel girder. The northeast corner is brick which is partially covered with metal. This corner has two industrial steel sash windows divided into six panes with concrete sills. One window is located in the first story toilet room and the other is located in a storage loft. A large, square brick chimney rises from the northeast corner and is capped with concrete.

The north façade faces a narrow asphalt alley and building to the north (photo 05). This wall is similar to the back wall but features a raised foundation of poured concrete and two bays composed of concrete block exposed at the bottom and covered with metal above. The wall's east end is brick that wraps the northeast corner of the building and is largely exposed. A two-panel wood door and large metal louver are in the east end of the wall. The door, covered with plywood, is visible from inside the building and is at the top of basement steps. Also visible inside the building is at least one other location where an industrial sash window was likely located in this wall, just west of the louver. It is covered with metal inside and outside, but the concrete sill is still visible inside.

The interior of the building is divided into three primary areas. The large sales showroom and display area is located in the southwest corner of the building and features a bathroom and office along its east wall (photos 08-10). The showroom is separated from the service area by wood and drywall walls (wood facing the service area and drywall facing the showroom area). A storefront door and pass-through window are near the center of the showroom's north wall (right side of photo 10). A small pass-through window is in a former doorway in the north half of the showroom's east wall. A small office with a two-panel wood door and toilet room with metal door facing north and south, respectively, are along the south half of the showroom's east wall. The rooms have a dropped acoustical tile ceiling and wood paneling in the office (photo 11). The showroom area features vinyl tile floors and plaster board ceilings.

Service bays wrap the sales and showroom area on its north and east sides with a cutaway southwest corner (right side of photo 13). See photos 12-16 for service areas. One structural column is located near the back of the service bays in the north half of the building (right side of

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photo 14). A large repair area with storage loft above is in the northeast corner of the building (photos 17-18).

The northeast corner of the repair area features a small room with concrete staircase to the storage loft along its north wall (photo 19). A toilet room and concrete basement stairs (under the loft stairs, accessed through a two-panel wood door) are located through a two-panel wood door in the room's east wall. The staircases have pipe railings and the toilet room has original metal stall walls and door. The service and repair areas have concrete floors, block wainscot, and metal over the walls. The service bays are separated from the storage and repair rooms by wood walls. The loft juts out over the bays in the north half of the building, but steps in from the south half of the repair room (photos 14, 17). The ceilings of these areas are wood with exposed structural steel beams and girders. The loft is a large open space and features a wood floor over wood joists, visible from the repair room below, and short ceilings covered with wood. Oil tank removal from the service area has resulted in large holes in the concrete floor which have been filled in with stone.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1936-1974

Significant Dates

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Bowman Construction

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the completion of the Firestone building in Marion, in 1936, and concludes in 1974. The company, later under the name Bridgestone, continued to operate from this location until at least 2006, but 1974 is selected as the fifty-year cutoff for eligibility.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center is eligible for listing on the National Register using criterion A/commerce for the building's association with the budding automobile era of the first half of the 20th century. The building was one of several duplicate designs created by Firestone using a pattern and prescribed design for automobile driver's convenience and service. The tire industry was dispersed in nature during the first decades of the auto era. Firestone introduced the first mass-produced balloon tire (1923), a dramatic improvement for automobiles. By this time, U.S. tire making was dominated by a few companies. The industry, more so than other auto parts industries, had a degree of vertical integration that was remarkable. Retail outlets, from maker to consumer, were a critical step of business integration. Firestone was an industry leader in this important trend, being the first U.S. tire company to have its own retail outlets. The Marion Firestone shop is a direct outcome of this significant historical economic pattern, serving motorists at a major highway hub in north central Indiana.

The building also qualifies using criterion C/architecture due to its Art Moderne streamlined style featuring glass and steel. Firestone promoted Moderne styling beginning with their pavilion building at the 1933 Chicago's Century of Progress Fair. The Marion building's expanses of glass and curved corners highlights Firestone's progressive store image, which they used to entice customers.

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

COMMERCE

The Firestone corporation was one of several national corporations, largely centered in the Midwest, whose growth paralleled the growth of the automobile industry during the first half of the 20th century. The emerging automobile era was inextricably tied to manufacturing giants like Harvey Firestone in Ohio, Henry Ford in Michigan, and Carl Fisher, James Allison, and the Studebaker brothers in Indiana. Many of the men worked in conjunction with each other promoting the automobile industry and, where not rivals, enjoyed reciprocation. Ford and Firestone reached an agreement where all of Ford's automobiles were outfitted with Firestone Tires in the early years of production. As better roads were built across the country and more people purchased automobiles, most auto-related companies surged in production and profitability.

Rubber tire manufacturing in the United States was initiated by the Goodrich company in 1896 in Akron, Ohio. Multiple companies followed suit with production facilities, several in Akron like Goodyear in 1898 and Firestone in 1900. There were also other small companies in the tire industry in these early years; Ohio alone had over eighty tire companies from 1919-1925, not to mention New Jersey, home to more than twenty-five tire makers during the same period. At first, Firestone processed unfinished tires, taking them through the finishing process before selling them to dealers in the automobile market. New tire manufacturers continued to enter the market through the 1920s. By 1922, nearly 250 tire manufacturers had been established in the United States.¹ However, as some manufacturers grew both in popularity and desirability by automobile manufacturers, the number of new tire manufacturers significantly declined to the extent that virtually no new companies entered the market after 1926 through 1950.² The number of tire manufacturers that left the market after 1922 was substantial, culminating with the largest losses during the Great Depression. As the automobile industry matured and demand for tire sales to automobile factories flattened, tire manufacturers had to find ways to capture more of the after-factory market. Firestone's first mass-produced balloon tire, created in 1923, allowed the company to gain a foothold in the market that carried the company into success through the remainder of the 20th century. During the 1920s-1930s, Firestone was known as one of the "big four" tire companies that included Goodyear, U.S. Rubber, and Goodrich, who controlled over 72% of the country's tire market by 1926.³ In that same year, Firestone acquired a 99-year lease on a million acres of land in Liberia and began cultivating imported South American rubber trees there. This completed the vertical integration process for making the products; the firm had

¹ Kim, pg. 3

² Kim, pg. 4

³ Kim, pg. 5

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already begun direct retail sales of some of its products in its own stores in 1923. It was a step few tire makers took before the Great Depression, even among the big four.⁴

Firestone, like other tire manufacturers, sought to introduce their tires to the public through integration of tire sales with local service garages who became their dealers. Among the big four tire manufacturers, Firestone was considered the most successful in this endeavor. The company provided financial and marketing support to dealers, providing technical support through a service station development department to help select locations, store layout, and construction and equipment purchasing.⁵ This led to strong relationships with dealers that persisted well into the mid-20th century. When appropriate, though, Firestone constructed its own company stores from which to sell its products. Because the Great Depression took a toll on independent service garages, and Firestone desired to achieve more profitability by having a vertical integration strategy, Firestone company stores began to emerge in greater numbers across the country during the 1930s. The Marion shop is the result of a more carefully crafted and unified approach to retail (branding, to use the current marketing term).

When Firestone opened the company store in Marion, it had been in the tire production business for only thirty years yet had by that time built a national reputation for quality and innovation in the industry. Harvey Firestone moved the tire industry from wood and steel to rubber to cushion the beating both tires and passengers experienced on the nation's roads. Firestone founded the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company in Akron, Ohio in 1900, then opened its first factory in 1902 and by 1903 produced its own tires with a workforce of twelve men. Three years later, company sales surpassed one million dollars. What led to Firestone's early success was the introduction of non-skid tires equipped with raised treads, which became the standard for highway tires. The tires had red side walls, a color that followed the Firestone brand in marketing and building design throughout its life.

The company continued to improve tire design through the 1920s, introducing low-pressure balloon tires and gum-dipping in 1923, a process by which tire cords were dipped in rubber and insulated from internal tire heat. Both innovations created longer-lasting tires. By this time, the company gained a national reputation, one that was further enhanced by the tire's use in the Indianapolis 500 automobile race and subsequent successful win in 1925 by a car equipped exclusively with Firestone tires.⁶

Firestone was well on its way to becoming symbolic of a nation on the move when it featured not only a stream-lined building of glass and steel at the 1933 Chicago Century of Progress, but also the efficiency of its assembly line manufacturing tires as well as its other products. A description of what fair attendees witnessed follows:

⁴ Firestone was the first U.S. tire company to have their own stores in 1923, followed by Goodyear (1929), Goodrich, and Dunlop (an Irish firm that established a factory in Buffalo in 1920-23, with branded retail stores coming later).

⁵ Kim, pg. 14

⁶ "The History of Firestone Tires" <https://www.firestonetire.com/about-firestone/heritage/>

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When you step into the building you will first see an ultra modern tire factory, fully equipped, embodying the latest methods of manufacture, and actually producing Firestone automobile tires. The process, from the masticating of the bales of crude rubber just as they are received from the Firestone Liberian plantations, to the automatic wrapping of the tire for shipment, is displayed. Beyond the end of the production line is an open Firestone tire-making machine and model of a revolutionary testing machine, showing the grueling high speeds to which tires are subjected to bring out facts and characteristics which would otherwise only be revealed by thousands of miles of service over a period of many months. A display auditorium is devoted to dynamically portraying the safety, endurance, and performance of the tires, tubes, batteries, spark plugs, brake-lining and other automotive products manufactured by the Firestone company.⁷

Harvey Firestone died at his Florida home on February 7, 1938. Credits to his success included references to his early association with Henry Ford and Thomas Edison.⁸ He left his heirs to carry on the Firestone company. With global upheaval leading into World War II, Firestone, which had relied on rubber trees in Africa as the raw material to produce rubber for its tires, created rubber synthetics to insure an uninterrupted supply for manufacturing tires in 1940. The synthetic tires were then used to equip military vehicles during World War II. Through the 1950s, the company grew with factories in other countries, employed over 70,000 people, and became the world's largest rubber producer at over one million pounds per day.

Before the construction of the new building in Marion in 1936, Firestone products were already being sold in the city. The 1935 Marion City Directory included an advertisement for a multitude of Firestone products at Seybold & Archers Garage located one block east of the existing site on the northeast corner of 7th and Adams Streets. The Firestone product line included tires, tubes, batteries, and spark plugs. The garage offered brake service, front wheel alignment, lubrication, and car wash. The garage sold Texaco oil and gasoline products.⁹

After completion of construction on Firestone's new building on South Washington Street, a three-day celebration was held that included promotional pricing and gifts for attendees. A half-page advertisement in the May 26, 1936 *Marion Leader Tribune* announced "Tires for \$7.95, 'long life dependable' batteries for \$6.95, electric fans for \$1.29, flowers for the ladies, key chains for the men, and balloons for the kiddies." Marion resident George C. Spradling was named store manager. Firestone Company president, John Thomas, and founder and company chairman, Harvey Firestone, attended the event in Marion.¹⁰

The Marion City Directory for 1938 featured an advertisement for the new Firestone building under tire dealers now located on the northeast corner of Washington and 7th Streets. The product

⁷ Century of Progress International Exposition, Firestone Exhibit, in Chicago, Ill.

<https://digitalarchives.usi.edu/digital/collection/Schlamp-Mey/id/2590/>

⁸ "Harvey Firestone, Tire Magnate, Dies at his Miami Beach Home" *The Indianapolis News*, 7 Feb 1938. Pg. 1, cols. 2-3

⁹ Marion City Directory, 1935. Pg. 30

¹⁰ Harvey Firestone's Dream Store in Marion <http://grantcountyhistory.blogspot.com/2013/04/harvey-firestones-dream-store-in-marion.html>

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line for Firestone products at this location had grown substantially and included tires, batteries, brake lining, home and automobile radios, bicycles, and automobile supplies. Services offered included brake services, lubrication, car washing, battery service, and gas and oil supplies from four Texaco pumps. Robert Morrison had become manager of the store by this time.¹¹

Despite development of the Marion Bypass that rerouted traffic on Highway 9 and 21 from Washington Street to the west side of the city in the 1940s, the Marion Firestone location remained successful, having developed a strong customer base and was still convenient for customers coming into downtown Marion for business or county government services. Downtown Marion remained the unofficial convergence of Highways 9, 15, 21, and 18, though traffic passing through, particularly on Highways 9, 15, and 21 (north/south routes) diminished with the completion of the bypass by 1945. Washington Street remained designated Business Highway 21. While rationing no doubt had an impact on profitability at the Marion store during World War II, the store enjoyed the post-war boom years during which Americans purchased automobiles and leisure driving surpassed necessity driving during the war.

ARCHITECTURE

The Firestone building is replete with features of Modern architecture. The one-story box was constructed in 1936 with its primary walls composed of glass and steel with rounded corners reflecting Art Moderne styling (photos 01-03). The building's flat roof and expansive front canopy further demonstrates its classification as Art Moderne or Streamline Moderne style (photo 04). The Marion Firestone building's design, based off the company's pavilion at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, was a pattern that was reproduced throughout the country, with variations on size and materials, between about 1935 and 1950. As noted earlier, Firestone had established its own retail shops starting in 1923. These appear to have been available, existing commercial locations. The 1930s stores, such as the Marion example, were worlds apart from these early attempts. The design of the 1930s Firestone service centers embraced modernity in setting, materials, design, and lighting.

Just as the "white city" at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago influenced architecture with its classicism for decades, so did the 1933 Chicago Century of Progress Show, but in stark contrast. Forty years had passed since 1893, and the country was in the throws of the Great Depression. The fair was designed "to be a beacon of hope for a better future based on modern developments in science and technology as expressed through the informational exhibits and modern designs of the fair."¹² The mission was "to demonstrate the significance of scientific and technological discoveries to industry and modern society and how those discoveries were being made."¹³ The fair showcased modern advancements in architecture, among other disciplines, and

¹¹ Marion City Directory, 1938. Pg. 25, 141

¹² Stevenson, Anna "The 1933 Chicago Century of Progress World's Fair <https://scalar.usc.edu/works/setting-the-stage-of-modernity/the-1933-chicago-century-of-progress-world-fair>

¹³ Century of Progress International Exposition, Firestone Exhibit, in Chicago, Ill. <https://digitalarchives.usi.edu/digital/collection/Schlamp-Mey/id/2590/>

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exhibits included new automobile designs and houses of the future.¹⁴ Building materials and lighting played a significant role in demonstrating this modernity. New building materials, and tight economic times of the 1930s, caused designers to integrate the use of color and lighting as ornamentation. "Architecture worked as a skin as it encased and represented the modernity, progress, and innovation of interior exhibit spaces and the dramatic lighting and color. The representational nature of the architecture to connote modernity and progress"¹⁵ found its way into promotional literature and postcards.

While the 1933 fair generally influenced a national push toward Modern architecture, the Firestone pavilion constructed at the fair served as a guiding principle in the company's design for new, post-Depression stores across the country. The gleaming glass and porcelain steel building in Chicago was designed by Burnham Brothers.¹⁶ At the opening of a Firestone store in Reno, Nevada, an article stated that the building design and color scheme was adapted from the Chicago World's Fair. Its design is very similar to Marion's building. It is also sited on a corner, it has one entire side devoted to glass garage bay doors, a rounded glass corner for displays, and the other side is composed of floor-to-ceiling glass as a continuation of the display area.¹⁷ Another similar, but much larger Firestone building in Los Angeles, was constructed in 1938 and recently underwent restoration. The building is described as a product of the machine age with an "aerodynamic design gives the illusion of speed, precision, and efficiency, with uninterrupted horizontal lines and rounded corners."¹⁸ The same could be said of the 1936 building in Marion.

The American movement of modern architecture had its strongest push after the 1922 architectural design competition for the *Chicago Tribune* building in which the Finnish architect, Eliel Saarinen's modern design came in second to a Gothic Revival design. Saarinen's design popularized the modern movement in the United States which led to the use of the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles. The former was "decorated" with stylized features in the 1920s-1930s and the latter was stripped of decoration and used more aerodynamic lines for walls and roofs from the 1930s-1940s. The proliferation of the styles' use depended on two significant events in American history, the Great Depression of the early 1930s and World War II during the early 1940s. Significant numbers of buildings were constructed in the styles between about 1928 and 1931, then again between about 1935 and 1940. The styles, more so the Moderne style, had a brief resurgence in popularity in post-war America during the mid-to-late 1940s. By the 1950s, the country had turned its attention to more contemporary architectural styles including the International Style.¹⁹ Art Moderne came to symbolize sophistication and imagination, and certainly lived into the 1950s, often in transportation-related buildings.

¹⁴ Century of Progress International Exposition, Firestone Exhibit, in Chicago, Ill.

<https://digitalarchives.usi.edu/digital/collection/Schlamp-Mey/id/2590/>

¹⁵ Stevenson, Anna "The 1933 Chicago Century of Progress World's Fair <https://scalar.usc.edu/works/setting-the-stage-of-modernity/the-1933-chicago-century-of-progress-world-fair>

¹⁶ Century of Progress International Exposition, Firestone Exhibit, in Chicago, Ill.

<https://digitalarchives.usi.edu/digital/collection/Schlamp-Mey/id/2590/>

¹⁷ "Reno Firestone Auto Supply and Service Store Opens" *Nevada State Journal*. 23 Aug. 1935. Pg. 8, Cols. 1-8

¹⁸ "L.A.'s Historic Streamline Moderne Firestone Building to be Restored" <https://www.archdaily.com/930588/s-historic-streamline-moderne-firestone-building-to-be-restored>

¹⁹ McAlester, pg. 581

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Firestone understood what its architecture could represent and wanted to catch the attention of motorists on one of Marion's busiest streets. The gleaming glass box and well-lighted front canopy would have been an impressive contrast to its darker surroundings and classical-inspired tall buildings such as the library and Methodist Church to the west and east, respectively. The clean, bright, lines represented the height of modernity in the 1930s and curvature to the box, in its glass walls and canopy, idealized speed and movement. This was something especially important to portray to customers. Not only did it relate to their driving experience, but it also related to the speed and efficiency the business offered in serving the motorist.

A few other notable historic Firestone buildings in Indiana include the 1938 Art Deco styled building at the corner of State and Market Streets in New Albany. It also features a rounded front display wall, service bays, but is composed of tan colored metal panels with blue trim. Tell City has one located on Mozart Street with a similar color scheme but is smaller and composed of glazed block and was likely constructed c. 1935. An unusual sleek limestone and glass Firestone building is located on Main Street north of downtown Crown Point. It has a rounded front bay with red, neon-lit Firestone letters on top of the parapet. It appears to date to c. 1950. Based off of an older design pattern by Firestone that featured a tower on its corner, a c. 1930 brick example is located on a downtown corner in Fort Wayne. Both the building and tower feature cutaway corners versus rounded corners that came to epitomize the standard for Firestone design after the 1933 Chicago fair.

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center

Grant County, IN

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<https://scalar.usc.edu/works/setting-the-stage-of-modernity/the-1933-chicago-century-of-progress-world-fair>. Accessed April 14, 2023.

“The History of Firestone Tires” <https://www.firestonetire.com/about-firestone/heritage/>
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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center
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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16	Easting: 613493	Northing: 4490268
2. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
3. Zone:	Easting:	Northing:
4. Zone:	Easting :	Northing:

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

Beginning on the east side of South Washington Street, at the intersection of 7th Street, face north and follow a line 130 feet to the south side of the alley which forms the north property line of 625 S. Washington Street. Turn east and follow the south side of the alley 130 feet to the west side of the north/south alley that forms the east property line of 625 S. Washington. Turn south and follow the west side of the alley 130 feet to the north side of 7th Street, then turn west and follow the north side of 7th Street 130 feet to the east side of Washington Street, or the place of beginning. The property being nominated is composed of Lots 8 and 9 of Turners Addition to the City of Marion.

Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center
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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property boundaries include the Firestone building constructed in 1936 and its front canopy and pavements that were associated with the operation of the Firestone store from the time it was constructed until the end of the period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kurt West Garner
organization: Save Our Stories, Inc.
street & number: 12954 6th Road
city or town: Plymouth state: IN zip code: 46563
e-mail: kwgarner@kwgarner.com
telephone: 574-780-1423
date: April 17, 2023

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
-

Photographs

Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center

Grant County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center

City or Vicinity: Marion

County: Grant State: Indiana

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: October 4, 2023 (photos 01-02)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northeast at the corner of Washington and 7th Streets

1 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking north at the south facade of the Firestone building

2 of 19.

Date Photographed: March 8, 2023 (photos 03-19)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast at the front of the Firestone building

3 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southeast and up at the front canopy

4 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east along the north façade of the building along the alley

5 of 19.

Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center

Grant County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at the back of the Firestone building from back alley

6 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest across 7th Street at south façade of Firestone building

7 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking north in showroom/sales area with office on left

8 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest in showroom/sales area

9 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking northwest in showroom/sales area with office on right

10 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking south into office at back of showroom/sales area

11 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest at garage bays in southeast corner of building

12 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking south at garage bays in southeast corner of building

13 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking north in garage bays in northwest corner of building

14 of 19.

Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center

Grant County, IN

Name of Property

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Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest in garage bays in northwest corner of building

15 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking south in garage bays in northwest corner of building

16 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking north in repair area at back of building

17 of 19.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking southwest in repair area at back of building

18 of 19.

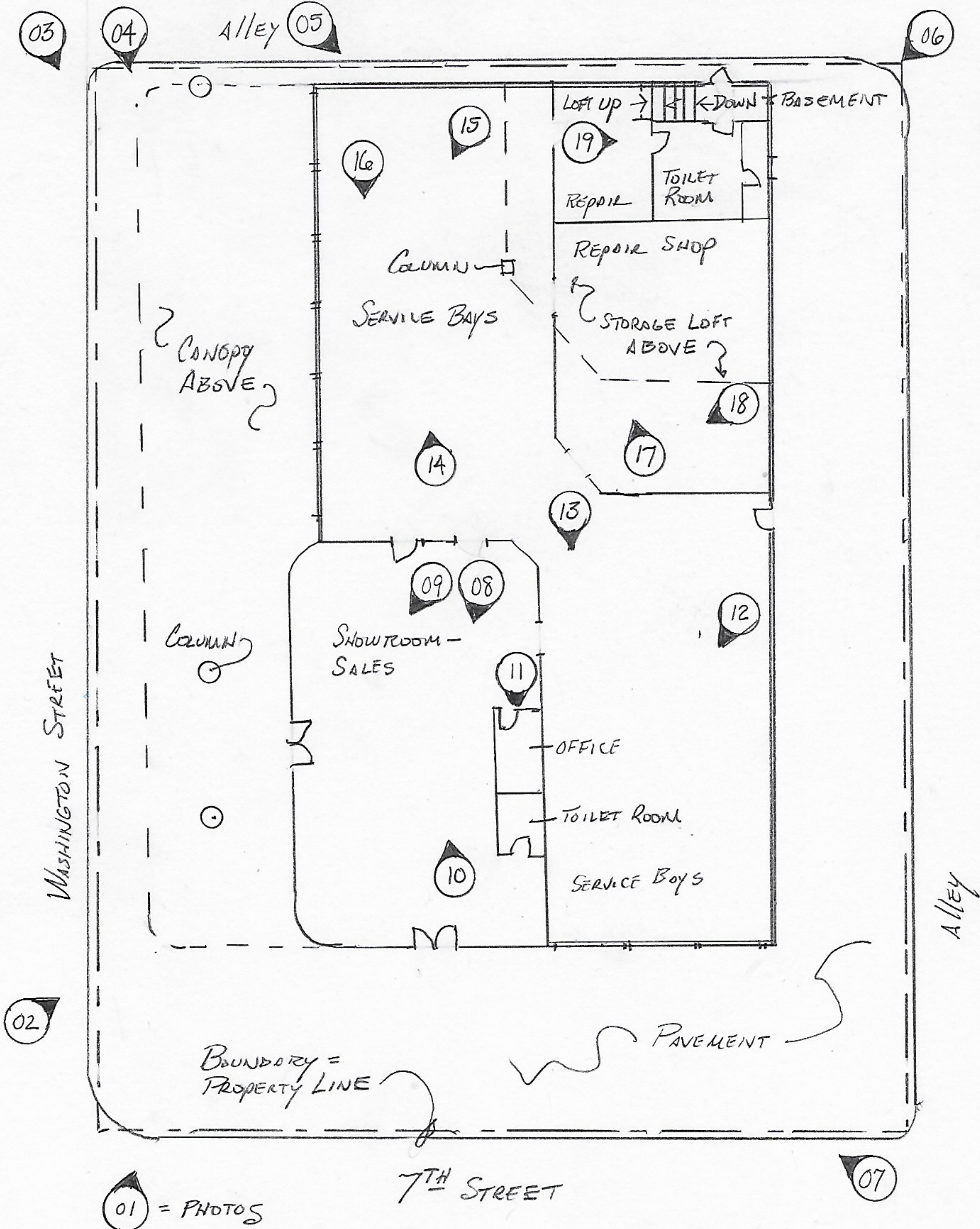
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Looking east in storage room toward toilet room and stairs in northeast corner of building

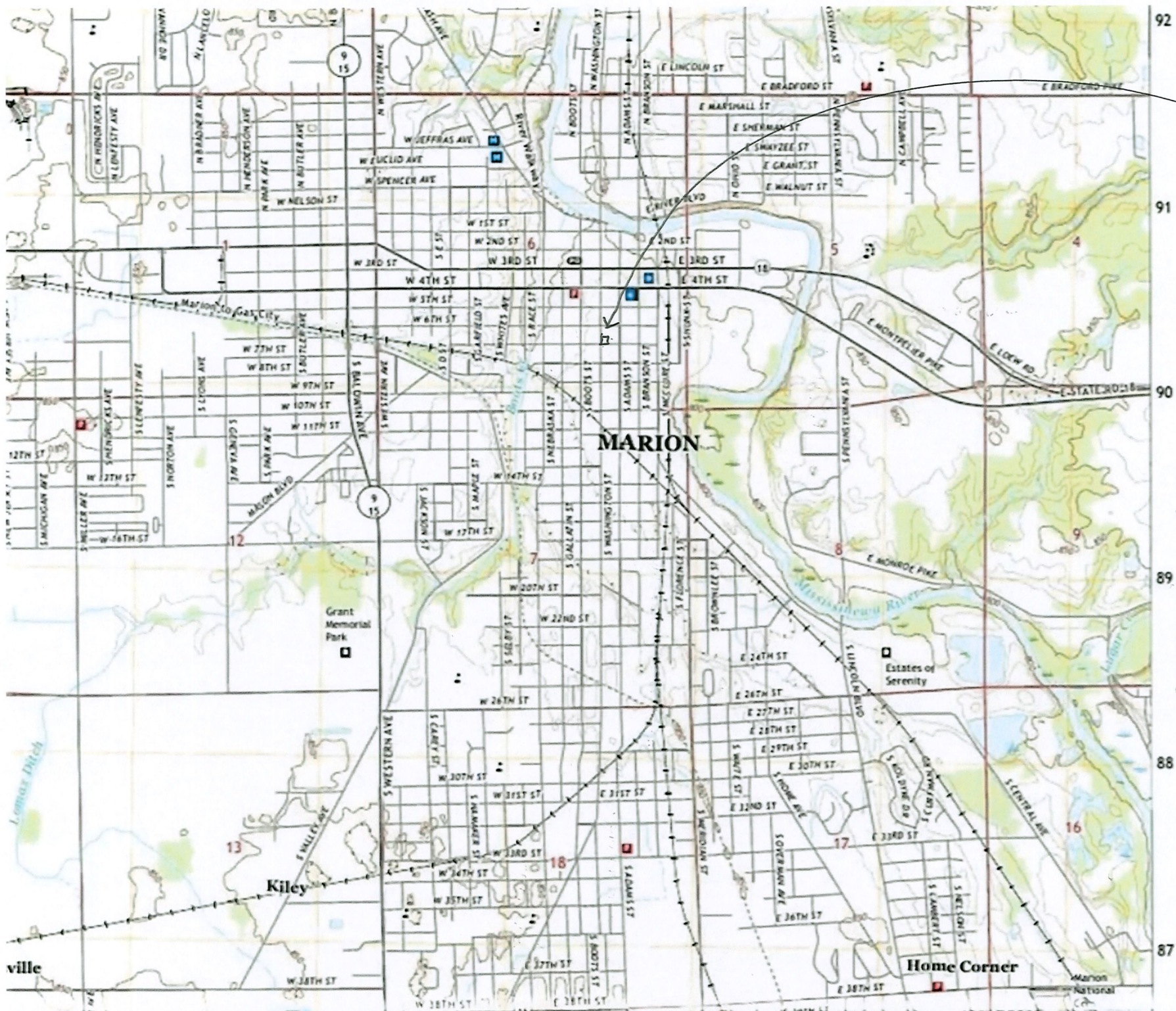
19 of 19.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

MARION FIRESTONE AUTO SUPPLY & SERVICE CENTER
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
625 S. WASHINGTON ST. MARION
GRANT CO. IN





Marion Firestone Auto Supply & Service Center,
National Register of Historic Places. - MARION, GRANT Co., IN
NAD 83 UTM 16 613493 4490268



IN_GrantCounty_MarionFirestoneAutoSupply&ServiceCenter_0001



IN_GrantCounty_MarionFirestoneAutoSupply&ServiceCenter_0002



IN_GrantCounty_MarionFirestoneAutoSupply&ServiceCenter_0004



IN_GrantCounty_MarionFirestoneAutoSupply&ServiceCenter_0006



IN_GrantCounty_MarionFirestoneAutoSupply&ServiceCenter_0008



IN_GrantCounty_MarionFirestoneAutoSupply&ServiceCenter_0009



IN_GrantCounty_MarionFirestoneAutoSupply&ServiceCenter_0013



IN_GrantCounty_MarionFirestoneAutoSupply&ServiceCenter_0017