HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WINONA

WINONA COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (LH 2008)

On July 5, 1862, Second Street looked dramatically different than it had on July 4th, 1861. The previous Independence Day destroyed nearly all the buildings in Winona's downtown. Yet despite this devastation, Winona rebuilt from the ground up. The city's first railroad was completed in 1870 connecting Winona with Stockton, five miles to the west. By 1870, Winona was the fourth largest primary grain market in the country. And in 1873, over 500 businesses were located on Second Street.

The immense rail line built along Second Street after 1862 made the key role that Winona played in Minnesota’s expanding economy. Today, the Second Street Commercial Historic District boasts some of the state’s oldest surviving river-city commercial buildings. This architecture reflects the popular Italianate style of the period, but the buildings’ construction is distinctly Minnesotan—from the lime stone quarried nearby to the bricks baked at kilns just outside Winona.

The district was added to the National Register of Historic Places (NR) in 1991. Portions of the East Second Street Commercial Historic District were locally designated in January 2008.

EAST SECOND STREET COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Get on the ground floor.

On July 5, 1862, Second Street looked dramatically different than it had on July 4th, 1861. The previous Independence Day destroyed nearly all the buildings in Winona’s downtown. Yet despite this devastation, Winona rebuilt from the ground up. The city’s first railroad was completed in 1870 connecting Winona with Stockton, five miles to the west. By 1870, Winona was the fourth largest primary grain market in the country. And in 1873, over 500 businesses were located on Second Street.

The immense rail line built along Second Street after 1862 made the key role that Winona played in Minnesota’s expanding economy. Today, the Second Street Commercial Historic District boasts some of the state’s oldest surviving river-city commercial buildings. This architecture reflects the popular Italianate style of the period, but the buildings’ construction is distinctly Minnesotan—from the lime stone quarried nearby to the bricks baked at kilns just outside Winona.

The district was added to the National Register of Historic Places (NR) in 1991. Portions of the East Second Street Commercial Historic District were locally designated in January 2008.