

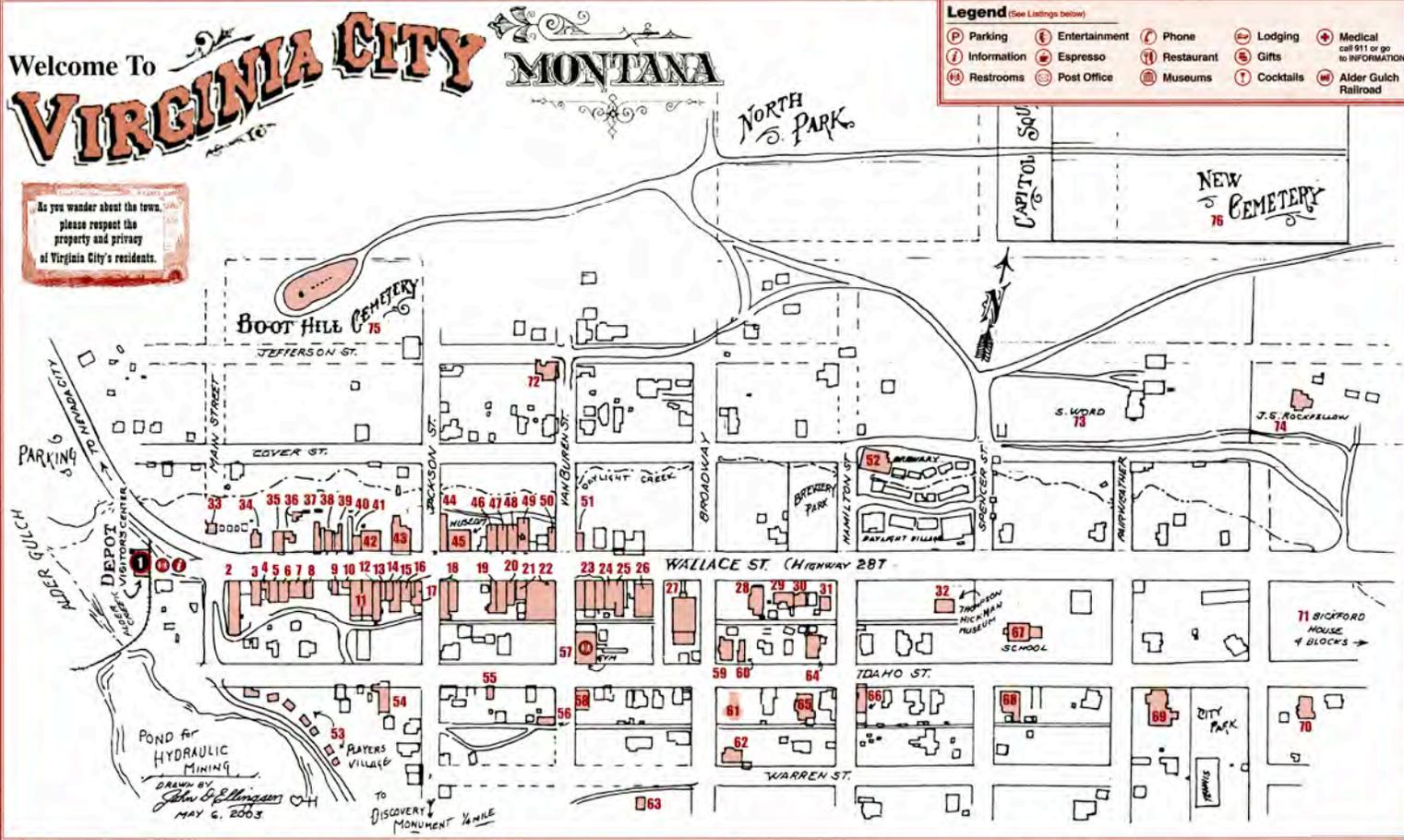
# Welcome To VIRGINIA CITY MONTANA

NORTH PARK

## Legend (See Listings below)

- Parking
- Entertainment
- Phone
- Lodging
- Medical
- Information
- Espresso
- Restaurant
- Gifts
- Call 911 or go to INFORMATION
- Restrooms
- Post Office
- Museums
- Cocktails
- Alder Gulch Railroad

As you wander about the town, please respect the property and privacy of Virginia City's residents.



- 1 Northern Pacific RR Depot (c. 1895)** Originally built by the Northern Pacific in Harrison, Montana, it was moved here in 1964. It is a reminder of the lack of rail connections that could have assured Virginia City a different future. The area was once home to a substantial Chinese population. The depot now houses the information center, tickets for the Alder Gulch Shortline Railroad and a gift store.

### SOUTH SIDE OF WALLACE STREET BEGINNING AT WEST END.

- 2 Smith and Boyd Livery Stable (c. 1890s, Opera House)** The stone facade remains intact but the porch, added in 1949, once graced the Morgan Evans Mansion near Anaconda. Conversion to a theater in 1949 provided a home for the Virginia City Players, Montana's oldest professional acting company.
- 3 Bale of Hay Saloon (1883)** A retail liquor store until about 1890, Smith and Boyd operated a saloon here until 1908. Fire gutted the interior in 1983, but square-hewn log walls remain.



- 4 Mechanical Bakery Site (1883)** According to Thomas Dimsdale, Virginia City's first building was constructed on this site. Damaged in the 1983 fire, the log remains are today stored at Nevada City.
- 5 Souerbeer Blacksmith Shop (1883)** There is a cabin of V-notched logs visible within this former dance-hall-turned-blacksmith. Remnants of hurdy-gurdy days include the handcrafted French doors. Much of the original smithing equipment is still in place.
- 6 Frank Prosch Blacksmith Shop (1883)** In 1865 John Trollman, one of 73 local licensed liquor dealers, did business here. The building became a blacksmith shop like its neighbor in the 1870s.
- 7 Virginia City Trading Co. (Reconstructed 1948)** Recently used as a gift shop, "Virginia City Trading Co." was Bovey's "corporate" name from 1945 until 1972, before "Bovey Restorations."
- 8 Barber Shop (1863)** Barber shops were popular with miners in the gold rush days. This long narrow building, long used as a residence, is almost totally original.
- 9 W.P. Armstrong Store/Photo Shop (1883)** A saddler was here in 1878, and Jacob Dick, a painter, occupied the shop from 1883 until the 1920s. The Montana Picture Gallery has been here since the late 1940s. Original plank

- 10 Henry Elling Store (reconstructed 1950)** This shop represents Henry Elling's 1860s men's clothing store. Elling became a banker in the 1870s, and eventually one of the wealthiest men in Montana. His bank (no. 51) is up the street.
- 11 Buford Block (Wells Fargo Coffee House) (1888, 1899)** Following his success as a grocer in the brick building to the east (No. 12) S. R. Buford built the west "fireproof" brick section of this building in 1888 to house his expanding business of mining steel and equipment. In 1899, he tore down the old Wells Fargo office (Wells Fargo moved to No. 14) and built a new grocery department. Boveys made the former Wells Fargo site into the Wells Fargo Coffee House in 1947.
- 12 S.R. Buford Store (1874)** The town's first brick building features the same falsefront as its frame counterparts. The bricks were reputedly tested here before construction of the Madison County Courthouse. Buford's Virginia

- 13 Assay Office (Reconstructed 1946)** Assayers analyzed ore to determine if it was valuable enough to mine.
- 14 McCurg and Pirney Mercantile-Wells Fargo Display (1883)** A restaurant, the U.S. Post Office, a bowling alley and other businesses occupied this space before 1899 when Wells Fargo Co. moved here. The original Wells Fargo office was torn down to make way for the Buford Block's center section. The last stage departed in the teens and the building was abandoned until restoration in 1945.
- 15 Star Billiard Hall/E.L. Smith Store (1883)** Billiards was popular in gold camps and early Wallace Street had several such halls. E.L. Smith, an early-day miner, returned to Virginia City in 1880 to open the Chicago Cheap Cash Store here. Some speculate that Smith returned to search for the Highland Mary Mine in which he had a claim. Legend has it that the mine made its owners rich, but after winter snows it could never be relocated. Much original merchandise remains in the store.
- 16 Variety Store (Reconstructed, 1948)** Auctions were a popular feature of Mining Camps. Originally the site of an auction house, this building became a "Variety Store" in 1866. It continues much in the same role today.
- 17 Content's Corner (1894)** A significant landmark of early territorial days, oral history holds that the second floor of this once magnificent building held the entire territorial government offices (1865-1875). Stucco scored to look like stone originally covered the rubblestone walls. Most of the Gothic style windows were removed in the 1890s for a "modern" glass storefront.
- 18 Stonewall Hall (1884)** The upstairs of this building was one of several meeting places for the territorial legislature. Since the other legislative meeting places in town no longer stand, this building is Montana's oldest territorial capitol. The once-attractive facade was lost to a "modern" plate glass store front in the 1890s and further "remuddled" in conversion to an auto garage in 1914.
- 19 Miner's Cafe (1915)** A lack of devastating fires is one reason Virginia City is remarkably preserved. Fires that typically wiped out blocks of first generation buildings in most mining camps did not occur here. Most fires here have claimed buildings, but not entire blocks. This building replaced an original that burned.
- 20 F.R. Merk Block/Pioneer Bar (1867)** Originally a hardware store, then a shoe store and in 1888 E. L. Smith moved here from down the street. Since the 1940s, the Pioneer Bar has been a favorite watering hole offering spirited libations. During prohibition such refreshments were also sold on the premises, but under appropriate cover.
- 21 Miland's Shoe Store (c. 1888)** through many changes in owners and uses, the original gothic windows have remained intact.
- 22 Bartlett's Blacksmith Shop (c. 1920) and site of Virginia Hotel (O.K. Livery Stable)** Following the hanging of Slade, his widow mourned over his body in the parlor of the Virginia Hotel which occupied this now-vacant corner in the 1860s. A few years later, it had been converted into a large livery stable. It disappeared in 1944.
- 23 Creighton Stone Block (1884)** This beautifully restored three-part business block was Virginia City's first building of locally quarried stone. Edward Creighton (whose family founded Omaha's Creighton University) planted the first telegraph pole at the corner of this building in July 1866. The line reached Salt Lake City in November. It was a giant step in bringing isolated Montana Territory closer to the "states." For over 100 years, Montana's oldest continuously operated weekly newspaper was published in the east third of the building. It is still going, but now located in Ennis.
- 24 Allen and Millard Bank (1894)** was the first permanent bank in Montana Territory. The institution, later Hall and Bennett, operated until 1930. The building appears exactly as it did in the 1860s except the original French doors and tall Windows were replaced c. 1910. Office was here in the 1870s. Furniture making went along nicely with the lumber business, and an aspect of the furniture business seemed to be undertaking. During prohibition, a speakeasy saloon occupied the rear of the undertaking parlor. When booze again became legal, this building became the Tavern Saloon, and has, since the 1980s, housed restaurants under a variety of names.

(Handicap accessible restroom)

**25 Herndon & Donaldson Furniture Store (c. late 1860s)** A lumberyard office was here in the 1870s. Furniture making went along nicely with the lumber business, and an aspect of the furniture business seemed to be undertaking. During prohibition, a speakeasy saloon occupied the rear of the undertaking parlor. When booze again became legal, this building became the Tavern Saloon, and has, since the 1980s, housed restaurants under a variety of names. (T) (H)

**26 City Hall/Elks Club (1897)** was built for \$12,000. Architect-designed, it featured an impressive tower that soared above Wallace Street. Its new owners, the Elks Club, removed it as a danger in the 1950s. A social center of Virginia City since it was built, it remains in that role today.

**27 Madison County Courthouse (1875-1876)** was in the planning stages as the Diamond R freighters hauled government furnishings to the new capital at Helena. Virginia City's optimism then rested on its status as the Madison County seat. Loren B. Olds, architect of the former Beaverhead County Courthouse (later the Meade Hotel) at Bannack, designed the building replacing the older wooden structure (see #55).

**28 C. L. Dahler House (1875)** was originally a Gothic Revival style residence remodeled into the Queen Anne style. In the 1890s, intricate gingerbread, pointed windows and vertical siding were removed and bay windows, rear gable and decorative bargeboards added.

**29 McKay/McNulty House (1894)** Flora McKay McNulty, an 1883 Graduate of Grinnell College, was one of the first women doctors in Montana. She was very active in civic affairs and helped others go to college. The two original houses, built by J.M. Lewis, were connected to form one home.

**30 Territorial Governor's Mansion (1894)** served Benjamin F. Potts, appointed territorial governor in 1870. The large and powerfully built man must have seemed a giant in this tiny dwelling.

**31 Lewis/Gohn House (1894)** J.M. Lewis built this house and three others to the West. Hidden inside lathe and plaster, owners discovered a sketch of the Union eagle and Lewis' signature. Volatile Civil War politics apparently prompted Lewis to keep his loyalties to himself. George Gohn later occupied the home until his fine residence next door to the east was finished in 1892.

**32 Thompson-Hickman Museum (1918)** William Boyce Thompson provided the funds for this museum and public library, designed by New York architect Frank A. Colby as a memorial to his father, William Thompson, a contractor who built many early buildings, and his father-in-law, clothing dealer Richard D. Hickman. The home of **William Thompson House (1894)**, one of the earliest frame dwellings, is preserved behind the museum. (M)

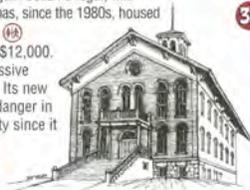
#### NORTH SIDE OF WALLACE STREET BEGINNING AT WEST END.

**33 Adobetown School (1873)** Adobetown, 2 miles north of Virginia City, was one of the many settlements along Alder Gulch. Used as a school until 1923, the Vigilance Club relocated the building in 1950. (S)

**34 Aunt Julia's (1875)** The longest recorded bare knuckle fight in history - 185 rounds - took place on this site in Leviathan Hall (torn down in 1868). The fight between John Condie ("Con") Orem and Hugh O'Neil ended in a draw. The present home, named for beloved "Aunt Julia" Elledge who lived here in the early 1900s, was originally the home of carpenter Julius Kohls. His shop stood next door. (S)

**35 Dance and Stuart Store (reconstruction) Club Foot George Lane,** hanged by the Vigilantes, was arrested in the original Dance and Stuart Store in 1864. The Montana Historical Society was founded there in 1865. Delicate arches and decorative medallions illustrate how popular urban architectural elements were adapted to wood on the frontier.

**36 Pittman Gas Station, (1919), Cabbage Patch (1870s)** Materials salvaged from buildings being torn down were reused by Mr. Pittman to build his gas station to cater to the new "tourists," that ushered in a new era in Virginia City's economy. The "Cabbage Patch" behind, unchanged since the 1880s, represented the "oldest profession."



**37 Kramer Shop/Dress Shop (1863)** The log cabin core of this early building was soon covered with siding. Layered roofing techniques, visible on the west side, chronicle various periods. Poles laid together and covered with animal skin and then a layer of dirt formed the earliest roof. Inside, muslin stretched over log walls is typical of frontier decorating.

**38 Goldberg/McGovern Store and Weston Hotel (1863)** The building's log core was the first Virginia City home of Mary Sheehan (later Mrs. Peter Ronan) whose childhood memories of Alder Gulch include Henry Edgar and road agent Jack Gallagher who boarded at this cabin. The Weston Hotel and its small interconnecting rooms, built by roofing the space between buildings, illustrates why, with space at a premium, accommodations often meant three strangers to a bed. The McGovern sisters ran a dry goods store here from the 1910s until the early 1940s when they pulled down the shades for the last time. The interior and stock remain as they were left on the last day of business, a true time capsule. Outbuildings and the barn behind reflect the town's rural character.

**39 Strasburger's Colorado Store/Jewelry Store (1863)** Likely built within weeks of its neighbor to the west, the use of milled lumber reveals the availability of more refined materials in just a few weeks' time. The "reverse bay" front imitates the cast iron storefront, newly popular back East. The shop was converted to a residence in the 1870s as Virginia City's importance faded.

**40 LaBau's Jewelry Store/Toy Shop (1863)** The Greek Revival style is here adapted to wood in a miniature version of more substantial buildings back East. It was a jewelry store, a doctor's office and a then hotel until the 1930s. Guests sleeping in the front had to walk through all the other rooms to reach the two-story privy out back.

**41 City Bakery (reconstructed, 1948)** Bakeries and Chinese laundries found many customers among the single miners. This early building housed both these businesses at different times. (T) (S)

**42 Kiskadden Stone Block (1893)** The town's first stone building and the bakery next door were built of rough rock covered with stucco scored to look like quarried stone. Originally there were three ground floor shops and the Vigilantes reputedly met upstairs. George Thexton converted the building to a livery and blacksmith shop in 1872.

**43 Fairweather Inn (1880s-1948)** Many changes make this hotel a prime example of layered periods and varied uses typical of Virginia City's buildings. Additions to the original log core include east and back wings, a second story, front porch (copied from the Goodrich House at Bannack), and a fire escape salvaged from a dredge boat. (S)

**44 Montana Post (reconstruction, 1948) and Print Shop (1864)** housed Montana Territory's first newspaper (the Montana Post). The first book (Thomas Dimsdale's Vigilantes of Montana) was printed in the rear print shop. The wood detail and pointed arches are characteristic of the Gothic style, especially favored in Virginia City.

**45 J. Spencer Watkins Museum (1901),** is a contemporary example of Virginia City's varied and blended periods. (M)

**46 Metropolitan Meat Market (1888)** Cast iron storefronts symbolized prosperity and Virginia City merchants, isolated without rail connections, were anxious to keep pace. George Gohn installed this storefront when he rebuilt his business after a fire. (M) (S) (T)

**47 Albright Clothing Store/Candy Store (1911)** Built in 1911 by the Masons to reinforce their original hall next door, a men's clothing store was the first tenant. A grocery store was here until it became the famous candy store in the 1970s. (M)

**48 Rank's Drug (1865)** Joseph Slade was arrested on this site in Paris Plout's store on March 10, 1864, and hanged on a corral post behind the building. Vigilante president and Virginia City's first mayor, Plout's built this stone building a year later and gave the second floor to the Virginia City Masons.

**49 Masonic Temple (1887)** This \$30,000 stone building was the most expensive in the territory. Its lodge room furniture, still in use, was shipped by steamboat and ox team. The cut stone facade, designed by L.B. Olds, remains unchanged. (S)

**50 Elling Bank (1863-64)** Nowlan and Weary established a bank here in 1864. Under Henry Elling from 1873 it became the first financial capital of Montana. Beautiful Gothic style windows fell victim to 1910 remodeling.

**51 Hangman's Building (1863-64)** On January 14, 1864, Vigilantes hanged five "road agents" in this unfinished building. After completion, the building houses the ancestor of Rank's Drugs and later the Virginia City Water Co. run by Sarah Bickford (see #72).

**52 Gilbert Brewery Complex (1863-1880s)** includes the Gilbert home, brewery, bottling plant, cellar (across Cover Street) and grounds of the "beer garden park." Established in 1863, Gilbert Beer was produced until Prohibition. The Gilberts raised 15 children in the rambling house. Charles Bovey constructed Daylight Village, including a vintage style gas station, to the east of the Brewery in the late 1940s - early 50s. (T) (S)



#### IDAHO STREET BEGINNING AT WEST END

**53 Player's Village (1950, 1977)** The rehearsal hall was built c. 1950 from logs from the 1904 Millard "mansion" at Summit, eight miles south of town. The cabins came from various places, including the Upper Ruby, and one from Iron Rod, complete with a ghost.

**54 Bonanza Inn (mid-1880s)** was the first Madison County Courthouse, used during the entire territorial capital period. The Sisters of Charity remodeled it as a hospital that they ran from 1876 until 1879.

**55 Governor Meagher House (c. 1894)** Controversial Acting Governor Thomas Francis Meagher lived here. Queen Victoria had sentenced the Irish rebel Meagher to be drawn and quartered; yet he became a hero in the Civil War and ended up "Governor" of Montana.

**56 Mrs. Slade's House (1894)** The beautiful Maria Virginia Slade, whose husband was hanged for disorderly conduct by the Vigilantes in March 1864, rented this house while she was courted by Slade's friend Jim Kiskadden. Their brief marriage ended in divorce.

**57 Elling-Knight Warehouse/Gym (1870s; 1934)** Originally storage for wagons and heavy hardware, it was converted to a gym in 1934. (M)

(Handicap accessible restroom)

**58 Methodist Church (1875)** Stucco scored to look like stone dressed up this Gothic Revival style church. The first service was the funeral of Alder Gulch discoverer William Fairweather.

**59 Episcopal Parsonage (1908),** in use until c. 1970 by the last resident minister, is a charming transition between Victorian-era Queen Anne and the newer bungalow styles.

**60 Judge Henry Blake House (pre-1868)** displays original gingerbread. Judge Blake was elected the first chief justice of Montana. (Note: the "weathered siding" fell victim to remodeling in 1998.)

**61 St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1902-04)** was constructed with funds from Mrs. Henry Elling in memory of her husband. Butte architects Fennel and Grove designed the English Gothic style church. The large stained glass windows are reputedly by Tiffany.

**62 Callaway House (1876)** was home to territorial secretary James Callaway. He was also a 3-time mayor and chief justice of the Montana supreme court. Callaway built his home on the site of the first Virginia City public school.

**63 Territorial Arsenal (1867),** an early landmark once two stories high, was constructed with part of the 1.1 million U.S. dollars Acting Governor Thomas Francis Meagher spent mustering his army.

**64 Bennett House (1876),** remodeled to its present appearance in 1901, was the home of banker A.J. Bennett (see #24) and his son, L. H., a district judge. (S)

**65 Sanders House (1864-1867)** was constructed three-fourths of a mile out of town in 1864 according to reminiscences of Mrs. Harriet Sanders. Wilbur Sanders, famed attorney and Vigilante prosecutor, moved the house here in 1867 after the gold camp calmed down. The Gothic Revival style home was one of the first built of planed boards.

**66 Cole/Batten House (1868)** Also known as Hill House, legend has it that the

town's first Chinese wedding took place here. Beautifully restored, the several additions reflect various periods pre-1900.

**67 Virginia City School (1876),** now City Hall, was designed by L. B. Olds (see #27). It was the territory's first high school, used from 1876 to 1972.

**68 Thexton House (1894)** illustrates the lingering preference for the Gothic Revival style in Virginia City. Blacksmith George Thexton fashioned the first pivot in southern Montana and made the augers used to bore wooden pipes for the early water system. (see #43). (S)

**69 Elling House (1876),** built by millionaire banker Henry Elling. The beautiful stone home with its upstairs Gothic window was an accurate reflection of Elling's wealth and prestige.

**70 Governor Sam Stewart House (1905)** Samuel V. Stewart practiced law in Virginia City and built this home for his bride. Elected 6th governor of Montana in 1912, he moved his family to Helena where they were the first to live in the Original Governor's Mansion.

**71 Bickford House (1894) (outside area of map)** Truck farmer Lucien Romey cultivated gardens on these grounds and built the log core of this dwelling. From 1894-1931 it was home to Sarah Bickford, born into slavery in North Carolina, longtime owner of the city water system.

#### COVER STREET BEGINNING AT WEST END

**72 S.R. Buford House (1878),** built by grocer S.R. Buford (see #12), today reflects the complete make over it received c. 1900.

**73 Samuel Ward/Ford Bovey House (1864, remodeled 1973)** Pioneer attorney Samuel Ward was an early occupant. The central stone section is the oldest portion and the front was added in 1865. Rebuilt in 1973-74, it was the home of the Boveys' son, Ford.

**74 Rockefeller House (1898)** The "mansion on the hill," built by grocer John Rockefeller for his bride, was Virginia City's most up-to-date home with a bathroom and the first spring-fed running water in the Territory. Charles and Sue Bovey made their home here.

#### CEMETERIES

**75 Boot Hill, Virginia City's first cemetery,** was located upon this ridge top, but folks were reluctant to place their loved ones next to the five road agents (see #52). Many graves were soon moved to the "New" Cemetery. The Society of Montana Pioneers marked the five road agents' graves in 1899.

**76 New Cemetery (1888)** Many beautiful examples of funeral art are found on the final resting places of the pioneers buried here. The area west of the cemetery was designated as "Capitol Square," the location picked in 1868 for the Territorial Capitol Building.



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