

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 Property

historic name Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building

other names/site number Montrose Potato Growers Association Building (5MN.5270)

2. Location

street & number 39 W Main St

n/a	not for publication
	vicinity

city or town Montrose

state Colorado county Montrose zip code 81401

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

Shelley K. Norton
Signature of certifying official/Title

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer 2 June 2020
Date

History Colorado
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 _____

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

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/Warehouse

COMMERCE/Warehouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

foundation: STONE/Sandstone
walls: BRICK

roof: SYNTHETICS/Thermoplastic polyolefin
other: _____

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph¹

The 1908 Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building is located in Montrose, Colorado, approximately 175 miles directly southwest of Denver and 60 miles southeast of Grand Junction. The historic downtown area of Montrose runs east to west along Main Street. Townsend Avenue/US Highway 50/550 intersects Main Street running north and south and is now considered the center of the downtown area. East of this intersection is what was, and is still, the retail and commercial center of the downtown area with many of the historic façades intact. West of the intersection the building density diminishes as one approaches the railroad and the former Denver & Rio Grande Depot (5MN.1661). Further west along Main Street is one of the historic rail spurs and then Main Street is intersected by Grand Avenue. Between the railroad and Grand Avenue is the location of the historic Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building. Immediately east of the building, on the site of the former Montrose Fuel Co. coal yard, is a large concrete building that now houses a church. To the south is a lumber yard and to the north a newly built metal building housing a food bank. To the northwest is a cinderblock building housing a tree trimming business and to the west a ca. 1968 metal warehouse and shop building that was used by the Montrose Potato Growers Association as a machine and repair shop and later as storage for farm implements by the Producers Co-op; this building was renovated in 2017 and now houses a distillery. The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building is a one-story, 120' x 80' rectangular warehouse building with a full basement and flat metal roof with a corbelled parapet at the front (south side) and stepped parapets on the east and west sides. Loading docks run along the east and west walls. The walls are composed of light orange and tan brick on a raised, rock-faced sandstone foundation. The interior of the building reflects its historic use as a warehouse, featuring an open floorplan, wood post-and-beam structural system, exposed wood roof structure, exposed brick, and a temporary modern wood plywood floor. The basement extends the full length of the building with the exposed brick, sandstone foundation and post-and-beam structural system all visible. The basement also contains a cold storage area at the north end and a vault room in the south west corner. The design of the building facilitated its use as a warehouse and staging area for produce as well as a supply store for local farmers. Goods such as potatoes, apples, peaches, sugar beets, and wool would be delivered on the west loading dock, stored, sorted, graded and packaged inside the building and then loaded onto railcars from the east loading dock.

Narrative Description

The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building is a large, rectangular, brick warehouse building located in the historic railroad yards in Montrose, Colorado. The building was constructed in 1908 and many of the original, significant features remain intact, included the building's historic wood windows.

The flat roof was originally covered with tinplate over wood planking. The tinplate and wood planking had deteriorated over time and was replaced in 2019 by new roof framing, insulation, and white thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) membrane roofing material. The roof's primary historic structural elements (large timber beams) and secondary historic structural elements (wood frame pony walls and roof joists) remain in place. Skylights, which are not visible from the main vantage points at ground level, were also installed in 2019 to provide natural light to the interior of the warehouse. Thirteen large wood columns rising from the wood floor support the exposed roof structure overhead.

The main-level floor joists are heavy wood timbers supported by a similar set of timber beams and columns. The historic brick walls are triple wythe 12" brick masonry with historic lime mortar and no air gap. Courses are stacked with a header course every seven courses.

Front (South) Wall

The front (south) façade displays corbelled brick at the cornice line and a bonderized steel parapet cap. The cap was added in January 2020, as a requirement for the warranty on the roof replacement as part of the historic rehabilitation project. Below the corbelled brick is painted signage that reads:

“THE MONTROSE POTATO GROWERS ASS'N.”

APPLES, POTATOES,
BEANS__ONIONS.___SEED

¹ The building is oriented along a northwest-southeast axis, facing southeast. For ease of description, the building is described as facing south.

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The painted signage differs from the signage documented in a 1912 photograph of the south façade. The signage was likely changed when the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association (MFPA) transferred the building to the Montrose Potato Growers Cooperative Association ca. 1945, according to records (Photo 1).

The façade has a central segmental arched opening with a historic sliding wood door, painted white. The door also contains a hinged pedestrian door. Flanking the entrance are two large segmental arched openings. The western opening contains a wood frame holding a set of three one-over-one-light double-hung wood-sash windows with wood mullions and a rock-faced stone sill. The eastern opening contains a wood frame holding a set of three four-over-four-light, double-hung wood-sash windows with wood mullions and a rock-faced stone sill. At ground level are two segmental arched openings, each containing a wood frame and six-by-six sliding wood-sash windows. The wood frames, sashes and mullions of the south facing windows have been degraded due to exposure. Much of the glazing in the lower windows has been damaged or is missing and roughly half of the glazing and a few sashes are missing in the main windows. The 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance map (Figure 2), a 1912 photo (Figure 4), the current discoloration of the lower 6-7 brick courses, and the presence of joist pockets in the stone foundation suggest that a wood deck once extended out from the south wall and wrapped around the building to the east loading dock. The south loading dock does not currently exist, and records indicating when it was removed or why have not been found to date. Prior to 2019, the ground surface along the south wall sloped toward the building, causing foundation problems and water intrusion issues for more than 30 years. In 2019, the surface was regraded between the building and the sidewalk along Main Street to drain away from the building. To protect the basement windows on the south wall, corrugated steel window wells were installed, which project approximately 6" above grade. Against the foundation, damp-proofing and a drainage mat were installed to prevent further water intrusion. At the base of the foundation wall, a perforated pipe drain was installed to carry any water along the south wall away from the building.

East Side (Photos 3 and 4)

On the east side, the stepped parapet wall is capped with bonderized steel installed as part of a 2020 roof replacement. The parapet wall declines from south to north. Below the roof line are four square openings that vent the main interior space. Below the openings, and running the length of the east wall, is a sign painted in white letters on a black background that reads: "THE MONTROSE POTATO GROWERS ASSOCIATION." Below the sign are two segmental arched openings, each containing hinged, wood double doors, which open to sliding wood doors behind them. Along the wall are two areas where graffiti was removed, inappropriately, resulting in large lighter patches of brick. At the north end of the east wall graffiti was left on the building ca. November 2019. A historic wood deck/loading dock, documented in the 1912 Sanborn Map (Figure 2), extends out from the east wall and runs the length of the building. The dock, originally used to load train cars on the adjacent rail spur, has been damaged by long-term exposure to the elements. On the wall below the dock are two segmental arched openings, each containing a wood frame and a six-by-six sliding wood-sash window. The wood frames, sashes and mullions of the basement windows have been degraded due to exposure, but remain mostly intact. Much of the glazing in the lower windows has been damaged or is missing.

North Side (Photo 2)

At the top of the north wall is a bonderized steel gutter running the width of the building. Below the roofline, the brick work of four segmental arched openings is visible. These openings contain six-over-six-light double-hung wood-sash windows with rock-faced stone sills. The majority of the north wall is covered by a one-story wood-frame structure with galvanized metal on the three outer walls and roof. The addition runs the full width of the building. The covered platform appears to have been in place as early as 1912, based on the 1908 and 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps (Figures 2 and 3); there was not a platform on the north side of the building according to the plans shown on the 1908 Sanborn map, but by the 1912 survey a wood structure with a metal roof wrapped around the north side of the building. According to the 1912 Sanborn map, however the addition was not metal clad as it is today. An aerial photo taken ca. 1930 shows the addition in place at that time, with the construction as it appears today (Figure 5). The addition has five three-over-three wood hopper windows and three wood loading doors set within wood frames. The interior of the addition replicates the wood plank construction of the east and west decks. Near the middle of the floor is a concrete slab that was poured over built up dirt below (Photo 14). From the interior of the addition, the former exterior of windows mentioned above can barely be seen as they have been boarded up (Photo 15).

West Side (Photo 5 and 6)

The west wall mimics the east with a stepped parapet wall, now capped with bonderized steel. The southwest segment of roofline has a brick chimney for a stove that was historically located in the interior office space (no longer extant). Below the roof line are four square openings used for venting/climate control of the main interior space. Dominating the west wall is a historic shed-roofed wood loading dock with a "lattice" of boards forming its walls (Photos 5 and 8, Figure 4). The platform is documented in the 1912 Sanborn Map (Figure 2) and a 1912 photo (Figure 4). The north end of the dock is

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enclosed by the ca. 1912-30 metal rear addition. The wood lattice work has two openings with double sliding, wood doors mounted on an exterior track. The west wall of the brick building has two large segmental arched openings, each containing a sliding, wood door. At the south end of the west wall are two segmental arched openings. The opening to the north contains a wood frame and a two-light, wood-sash, hopper window (Photo 13). The sash has been removed from the opening to the south. Below the west deck are two segmental arched openings, each containing a wood frame and a six-by-six sliding wood-sash window. The wood frames, sashes and mullions of the basement windows have been degraded due to exposure, and much of the glazing in the windows has been damaged or is missing.

Interior

The main-level interior of the building consists of an approximately 8,000-square-foot open space with 13 columns, supporting the roof structure and a temporary $\frac{3}{4}$ " tongue-and-groove plywood floor (Photos 9 and 10). One of the columns was replaced in 2019, due to damage caused by a fire on March 3, 2012. To the west of the main entrance, in the southwest corner, is the former location of an office. The office space was defined by two lath-and-plaster walls, with a single-light wood panel door in the east wall. The brick exterior walls in this area are finished with painted plaster. In the southeast corner, a set of stairs leads to the basement. A low wood wall historically surrounded the stairwell and three sides. Both the office's lath-and-plaster walls and wood wall around the stairwell were removed in 2019 due to deterioration. In the center of the main floor is a mechanical lift/pallet elevator. It is unclear if there was a manpowered or other electric lift in operation prior to the system that is in place, but inspection tags on the electric hoist indicate that the current system was in place by 1959.

The original floor was made up of 2" x 6" tongue-and-groove hardwood resting on 2" x 10" floor joists. The floor was replaced due to rot in 2019. A 10' x 28' section of the original 2" x 6" tongue-and-groove floor remains stretching east from the south door to the east wall. Approximately 30 percent of the floor joists were also replaced in 2019 due to rot and the 2012 fire.

The basement runs the full length and width of the building. The stairs leading from the main floor run along the south wall to the basement's southeast corner. The basement contains 23 columns and 3 rows of beams supporting the floor above. One column and one beam were replaced in 2019 due to rot (Photos 11 and 12). At the north end of the basement is a cold storage unit that was added ca. 1948 based on the installation date on the door. The floor in the cold storage area is raised up approximately 6" from the remainder of the basement floor. A wood-frame wall separates this area from the rest of the basement and the entire room was insulated with cork. Just south of the cold storage area and to the west of the elevator is a room that appears to have been a utility closet with plumbing and electrical connections and a generator. At the southwest corner of the basement is a vault room with a historic Diebold vault door that is currently inoperable. The door was supplied by Garretson-Woods Safe Co. from Denver, CO.

Alterations

The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building was constructed in 1908. Changes in the economy and advances in refrigeration and transportation led to many of the building's improvements throughout its history. In 1912, the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association concreted the entire basement, added the enclosed lattice shed with a tin roof to the west deck, enlarged and remodeled the office to be a more fitting sales and administrative headquarters and added a new wagon scale in front of the building.² The 1912 Sanborn map (Figure 3) documents the addition of the metal roof and wood siding covering the west platform and north wall. In 1921, the association installed large motor truck scales (location is unknown), as a sign of the changes in transportation, which were the only ones on Colorado's Western Slope.³ By the 1930s the north wall addition had been updated to reflect its current construction with metal siding. In ca. 1948 the cold storage area of the basement was constructed. The transfer of the property to the Montrose Potato Growers in 1945 likely led to the change in signage around that period. Documents from a 1968 Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Right of Way project along West Main Street/Colorado Highway 90 show the building as the "Potato Growers Assoc." and clearly highlight docks running on the west, south and east sides; the south deck was removed sometime after that period, possibly with the construction associated with the CDOT project, but no documentation has been found to give an exact date of its removal.

All other known alterations have been part of 2019 rehabilitation project to save the building from further degradation (Figures 8 and 9). This work was reviewed and approved by the Montrose Historic Preservation Commission and followed the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The remaining parts of the roof were removed, and a new synthetic roof was installed with skylights that cannot be seen from the main vantage points along the south, west and

² "New Wagon Scale," *Montrose Daily Press*, 11 July 1912, 5; "Improvements Being Made on Building," *Montrose Daily Press*, 19 August 1912, 1.

³ "Association Re-elects Its Directorate," *Montrose Press*, 25 February 1921 1.

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east side (Photos 7 and 8). The brick and mortar along the parapet was repaired and a metal parapet cap was installed. On the south side foundation repairs were made to repoint stone, apply waterproofing and window wells, and regrade to provide drainage away from the building. On the interior of the building the planks and joists supporting the new roof were also replaced with new wood matching the original for dimension and style. New wood glulam beams were installed on top of the existing beams to meet code, which reduced the need for a segment of the original wood pony wall supporting the roof. Approximately half the original pony wall is still in place. One wood column was replaced on the main level with an additional wood column and wood beam in the basement requiring replacement. The wood floor was removed as were 30 percent of the joists. The joists were replaced with new wood matching original style and dimensions. The floor was replaced with a temporary plywood floor. The south and east walls of the basement also saw repairs made to the brick and mortar.

Integrity

The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building retains a high level of integrity. The building remains in its historic **location** and **setting** near the railyard on West Main Street in Montrose. At the time of its construction, the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building was one of only a handful of commercial properties that existed in the low-density area surrounding the railyard (Figure 2). By 1919, some infill had occurred but the area remained fairly underdeveloped compared to the central downtown area east of the Main Street and Townsend Avenue intersection (Figure 6). A similar setting remains today as the surrounding area is still sparsely populated, with many of the surrounding historic properties still in existence, including the nearby Denver and Rio Grande Depot (5MN.1661) and associated railroad tracks (Map 5). The railroad spur that historically ran along the building's east loading dock has been converted to a recreational path, but its pathway remains clearly visible.

The building displays good integrity of **materials**. Its brick walls and stone foundation remain intact and the interior retains the majority of the wood columns and beams that make up the roof and floor support structure. The original wood floor and wood roof sheathing were replaced during the 2019 rehabilitation due to rot and water damage resulting from the loss of the tinsplate roof. The replacement wood floor and sheathing replicate the historical materials in size and type, and do not diminish the building's overall integrity. The roof material has changed, out of necessity, from the original tinsplate to a synthetic material; however, the roof is not visible from the street level and the impact on the building's overall integrity of materials is small.

The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building retains a high level of integrity of **design** for a building of its type. The building retains its historic footprint and simple rectangular form, with no non-historic additions present, and its historic loading docks remain intact and largely unchanged. The interior warehouse spaces remain intact, with the removal of the small corner office space the only significant interior change. The utilitarian nature of the building remains evident in the minimal ornamentation and its corbelled brick cornice, arched brickwork over each window and door, brick walls and sandstone foundation continue to convey the typical design characteristics of the period. The integrity of **workmanship** is also high. The historic building practices and techniques of the period remain evident in the building's masonry and other features such as its historic wood windows.

The property's high integrity of location, setting, materials, and workmanship create a strong **feeling** of early twentieth century agricultural commerce in western Colorado, a time when local produce was transported to warehouses near the railroad and stored prior to shipping to regional and national markets. Integrity of **association** is high, the building continues to read as an early twentieth century brick warehouse building and its historic signage clearly connects the building with Montrose's agricultural commercial history.

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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.)

Property is:

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1908 - ca. 1965

Significant Dates

1908

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Antrobus, John Hudson (architect)

White, William L. (White & Okey, engineer/builder)

Okey, Homer O. (White & Okey, engineer/builder)

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

The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building is significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with the commercial history of Montrose and Colorado's Western Slope, serving as a warehouse for the Montrose Fruit and Produce Association (MFPA), and, later, the Montrose Potato Growers Association. The period of significance for Commerce extends from 1908 when the building opened, until ca. 1965 when it ceased to provide storage and transportation services for local produce growers. The MFPA Building is further significant under Criterion C for Architecture as an excellent example of an early-twentieth-century agricultural warehouse building within Montrose, Colorado. The period of significance for Architecture is 1908-12, the period encompassing the construction of the building and its loading docks. The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building retains an exceptionally high level of integrity for a building of its type.

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

The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce for its association with the commercial history of Montrose and the Western Slope, having been erected in late 1908 as a warehouse and office for the Montrose Fruit and Produce Association (MFPA), and, later, serving as a warehouse for the Montrose Potato Growers Association, the function it continued to fulfill until the mid-1960s. With its location near the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, the MFPA Building was a regional hub for agricultural commerce. In addition to facilitating the storage and transportation of regional produce to markets throughout the country, the building was the headquarters for the local produce associations that played a pivotal role in the political and economic landscape of the area by negotiating better pricing for farmers and representing local growers at regional, state, and national meetings. The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building is a surviving example of the agricultural importance of the Western Slope and the significance of the railroad and produce cooperatives in connecting rural farms to urban markets.

The MFPA Building is further locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture as an excellent example of an early-twentieth-century agricultural warehouse building. With this type of building, form followed function and utilitarian features such as the open floor plan, exposed timber structural components, multiple large sliding doors, minimal ornamentation, and loading docks speak to the building's historic use as a warehouse facility. Other features such as its brick walls, stone foundation, flat roof with stepped parapets and corbelled-brick cornice, segmental arched windows and door openings, and historic painted signage convey the character defining features of early 1900s commercial buildings constructed across Colorado in small towns like Montrose. Designed by locally prominent architect John Hudson Antrobus and built by the construction firm of White & Okey, the building's longevity is a testament to their skill.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The city of Montrose was incorporated in May 1882. A year later, in 1883, the first fruit growers began planting orchards on Spring Creek Mesa, west of the city, and the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad completed construction that put Montrose on a main east-west railroad.⁴ The continued development of irrigation canals through the late 1880s allowed for the growth in fruit orchards, and the prices being fetched in the mining camps of the San Juan Mountains attracted more and more people to develop arable land.⁵ Through the late 1880s and into the early 1900s the quality of the area's agriculture gained notoriety across the United States, winning awards and holding records for the best sugar beets, apples, potatoes, onions, peaches, wheat, oats, and cabbage, and leading to the claim that the county had the "best soil and climate in the world".⁶ Much of the produce was still being shipped locally to the mining towns at the turn of the century, but supply was outpacing this local demand. According to a 1908 article on the local agricultural industry:

⁴ "Montrose Fruit Growers Association," *Montrose Press*, 5 June 1908, 25; Karl Gilbert, "Railroading," in *Montrose, Colorado Centennial 1882-1982*, edited by Montrose Centennial Commemorative Booklet Committee (Grand Junction, CO: Greater Montrose Centennial, Inc., 1982), 56.

⁵ Vern Jetley, "Water Development," in *Montrose, Colorado Centennial 1882-1982*, edited by Montrose Centennial Commemorative Booklet Committee (Grand Junction, CO: Greater Montrose Centennial, Inc., 1982), 61-62.

⁶ "Montrose, and Montrose County," *Montrose Press*, 5 June 1908, 1.

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The planting of orchard after orchard followed until there is more than 2500 acres of fruit in bearing within five miles of the city of Montrose, the question of finding a market for the fruit that will grow on this great acreage of land did not have serious consideration until it dawned upon the fruit grower that in order to get the best price for the fruit grown, it would be necessary to ship it to nearly every state and territory in the Union. That that might be done to the best advantage, it was necessary to have an organization to handle the fruit; so, in March 1907, most of the large orchard men was called together and organized the Montrose Fruit and Produce Association. The object of the association is to furnish its growers with supplies at a reasonable price and to find a market for their products. The association employs the best fruit salesmen it can secure to market its fruit, and the most expert packers to superintend the packing and shipping of its products. It also handles hay, grain and potatoes, and will make a specialty of the Uncompahgre Valley potato, that already commands the highest price of any potato shipped into the large markets. The association is organized with \$25,000 capital.⁷

Upon the completion of the building, the reinvigorated Montrose Fruit & Produce Association continued to push Montrose fruit to the limit, by getting it into "at least 60 of the best markets in the country", while bringing, "better prices for this fruit than for that of any other locality in the state", according to M.B. Heston, the manager of the association in 1909.⁸ The accessibility to the railroad and the expert grading, packing, and marketing done by the association meant Montrose area produce was becoming big in markets in California, New York, Chicago, and even south to Mississippi and New Orleans.⁹ The success of the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association generated generous revenues for its farming members and stockholders. Through the early 1920s, the association routinely had annual earnings of between \$100,000 and \$200,000, with a report from 1911 suggesting the association would move over 1,200 railcars of produce worth \$500,000. In 1914, the association generated a 12 percent dividend for stockholders, making it one of the largest economic drivers in the community.¹⁰

In addition to the packing, grading, and marketing efforts of the association, the managers and board consistently lobbied for more railcars, specifically refrigerated cars, which at the time, were in short supply across the nation. As early as 1909 the manager of the association was commenting on the car shortage and its impact; regardless, the new warehouse was "capable of caring for a great quantity of fruit temporarily".¹¹ In July 1920, Earl Rule, the manager of the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association was in Denver to negotiate more refrigerator cars, approximately 10,000, with state and railroad officials. According to Rule, "the car situation is regarded as critical over the country...an adequate supply of cars will mean millions of dollars to the growers over the western slope while a car shortage would result in not only irreparable loss to these growers, but also to the nation at large where the slope's food supply is badly needed to relieve shortages."¹²

Despite the quality of the produce and its abundance, the Western Slope, and Montrose, specifically, became less and less of a priority for the railroad with the drawdown of mining, the advent of automobiles, buses, and better roads, and the depression of the 1930s.¹³ Narrow gauge service to the area began to slow down in 1936, when passenger service ended, followed by freight service in 1949.¹⁴ References to the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association tail off through this period as well. Writing regarding railroad strikes throughout the 1940s were found on wood planks inside the MFPA Building, indicating that the association was still greatly impacted by the railroad despite the advent of trucking. County documents show the warranty deed for the property being transferred for \$0 from the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association to the Montrose Potato Growers Cooperative Association on March 7, 1945. By 1951 the building was listed

⁷ "Montrose Fruit Growers Association," 25.

⁸ "New Manager for Fruit Growers' Association," *Montrose Press*, 25 June 1909, 3.

⁹ "Our Apples Making Market in the South," *Montrose Daily Press*, 29 March 1909, 1; Elaine R. Hale, "Agricultural/Ranching," in *Montrose, Colorado Centennial 1882-1982*, edited by Montrose Centennial Commemorative Booklet Committee (Grand Junction, CO: Greater Montrose Centennial, Inc., 1982), 72.

¹⁰ "1,200 Cars of Potatoes Going From One Firm," *Montrose Daily Press*, 20 September 1911, 1; "Association Re-elects Its Directorate," *Montrose Press*, 25 February 1921, 1; "Montrose Fruit & Produce Ass'n Has Annual Meet," *Montrose Daily Press*, 24 February 1915, 1; "Satisfactory Year's Business is Recorded by Fruit Association," *Montrose Daily Press*, 1 March 1916, 1; "Business is Very Successful," *Montrose Daily Press*, 14 February 1912, 1; "\$90,000 in Business Done by Montrose F. & P. Association," *Montrose Daily Press*, 26 February 1914, 1; "Montrose Fruit & Produce Does Big Business in 1917," *Montrose Daily Press*, 9 March 1918, 4; "Annual Meeting of Montrose Fruit & Produce Assn. Held," *Montrose Daily Press*, 6 March 1919, 1.

¹¹ "Car Shortage is Serious for Western Slope Fruit Growers," *Montrose Press*, 15 October 1909, 5.

¹² "Shippers Going After Cars for Western Slope," *Montrose Daily Press*, 26 July 1920, 1.

¹³ Karl Gilbert, 56.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 57-8.

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as the Montrose Potato Growers Association warehouse in city directories, sometimes referred to as the “annex”.¹⁵ Ledgers found on the property indicate usage of the cold-storage facility in the basement of the building by locals, such as Mary’s Café, Alpine Café, and Black Canyon Café as well as the Grand Imperial Hotel in Silverton, Colorado, through the early 1960s.

The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building

Sometime after the association’s creation in 1907, the first building to serve as the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association’s warehouse and offices was built (Figure 1). The gable-roof wood-frame building stood on the site until it was destroyed by fire on June 22, 1908.¹⁶ Losses were put at \$10,000 with \$5,000 covered by insurance.¹⁷ The Montrose Fruit & Produce Association members decided to rebuild on the same site a “building of brick and stone” that would cost approximately \$6,000 and be “modern in every respect”.¹⁸ The new building was designed by architect John H. Antrobus and was to be a one-story brick building measuring 45’ wide at the front, 116’ long, and 67’ wide at the back with a stone basement, with excavation beginning in July 1908.¹⁹ The Montrose construction firm of White & Okey (William L. White and Homer O. Okey) were chosen to construct the building.²⁰ By September 1908 the brick walls had begun to be built and it was not long before the project was completed.²¹ The new building was completed by October 23, 1908, when it was reported that the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association had moved into the new building; they reportedly had only been without a building for three months, suggesting that the new building may have been completed earlier.²²

The fact that the building and all of its significant characteristics remain intact is a testament to the skills of Antrobus and White & Okey. The team of Antrobus and White & Okey would go on to partner on two other prominent buildings in Montrose that have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. These are the Montrose City Hall and Library (NRIS.82002309, listed June 13, 1982), designed and built in 1926, and the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Building (NRIS.0400260, listed April 6, 2004), designed in 1926 and built in 1926-27.

It appears that outside of the downtown commercial center, a few residential homes, the churches, and the schools, most of the buildings constructed as of 1919 in the outskirts of the city were wood frame. The Sanborn maps show that there were at least four warehouses constructed near the railyard by 1919, three of which were brick and shared similar architectural elements with the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building. The three warehouses included the ca. 1912-19 Max Fisher Building, purchased by J.F. Warren in 1920, which later housed the W.D. Garlington Company and was then used for storage and distribution (147 N. First St., Figure 5, and Map 5: Building 1; 5MN.5038); the 1908 Coors Building, which had accommodations on the second floor and a junk and hide business on the first floor (134 N. First St., Figure 5, and Map 5: Building 2; 5MN.1660); and the ca. 1904-13 Montrose Warehouse, owned by Robert Halley at the northwest end of the Western Colorado Power Company Building (44 S. Grand Ave., Figure 7, and Map 5: Building 5; 5MN.5271).²³

When compared with these surviving local examples of early twentieth-century brick warehouses, the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building is distinctive for its high level of integrity, which is bolstered by the retention of the majority of its historic wood loading docks on its east and west sides, features that are often lost as building uses evolved. While the ca. 1912-19 two-story J.F. Warren warehouse has retained much of its historic feel and its characteristic brick walls, painted signage, corbelled brick cornice and stepped parapet, a modern painted sign has been added over the original artwork on the main facade and alterations appear to have been made to the building’s historic windows and doors. The Coors Building has had historic painted signage on its west side (Figure 5) removed and a number of recent alterations, including the addition of a large shed roof on the front and construction of a large two-story metal addition at the rear, as well as the installation of non-historic storefronts on the front and east side. The ca. 1904-13 Montrose Warehouse Building is very similar to the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building in the style and color of its brick walls,

¹⁵ Montrose City Directories, 1910-70.

¹⁶ “Montrose Visited by \$75,000 Fire,” *Daily Sentinel* (Grand Junction), 22 June 1908, 8.

¹⁷ *Montrose Press*, 26 June 1908, 1.

¹⁸ “Montrose Growers Expect to Rebuild,” *Daily Sentinel* (Grand Junction), 6 July 1908, 6.

¹⁹ “Personal Paragraphs,” *Montrose Press*, 17 July 1908, 5; “Association Will Build,” *Montrose Press*, 17 July 1908, 9.

²⁰ “Contract Let for the Produce Warehouse,” *Montrose Press*, 14 August 1908, 3.

²¹ “Personal Paragraphs,” *Montrose Press*, 25 September 1908, 5.

²² “Little Dashes,” *Montrose Press*, 23 October 1908, 5; “Montrose Fruit Men Have a Good Year,” *Daily Sentinel* (Grand Junction), 11 March 1909, 8.

²³ “J.F. Warren Buys Fisher Building For A Warehouse”, *Montrose Daily Press*, 8 September 1920, 1; “M. Fisher Moves To New Location in Coors Bldg.,” *Montrose Daily Press*, 3 April 1917, 3.

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sandstone foundation, segmental arched windows with stone sills, and corbelled brick cornice; however, the building has been significantly altered in recent years and no longer retains integrity.

In October 1, 2019, the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building was designated a local landmark by City of Montrose, and shortly after work began to repair and stabilize the building, which was vacant and had been damaged by a 2012 fire. Plans are currently underway to further rehabilitate the building and adapt it for use as a tasting room for the adjacent Storm King Distilling Co.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Books

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Hale, Elaine, "Agricultural/Ranching." In *Montrose, Colorado Centennial 1882-1982*, edited by Montrose Centennial Commemorative Booklet Committee, 69-76. Grand Junction, CO: Greater Montrose Centennial, Inc., 1982.

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Newspaper Articles

"\$90,000 in Business Done by Montrose F. & P. Association." *Montrose Daily Press*, 26 February 1914.

"1,200 Cars of Potatoes Going From One Firm." *Montrose Daily Press*, 20 September 1911.

"Annual Meeting of Montrose Fruit & Produce Assn. Held." *Montrose Daily Press*, 6 March 1919.

"Association Re-elects Its Directorate." *Montrose Press*, 25 February 1921.

"Association Will Build." *Montrose Press*, 17 July 1908.

"Biggest Shipping Day in History." *Montrose Daily Press*, 7 October 1920.

"Boosters of the Uncompahgre Valley." *Montrose Daily Press*, 29 March 1910.

"Business is Very Successful." *Montrose Daily Press*, 14 February 1912.

"Car Shortage is Serious for Western Slope Fruit Growers." *Montrose Press*, 15 October 1909.

"Car Shortage Serious Here." *Montrose Daily Press*, 15 October 1909.

"Contract Let for the Produce Warehouse." *Montrose Press*, 14 August 1908.

"Fire Threatens Whole Town Monday." *Montrose Press*, 26 June 1908.

"Improvements Being Made on Building." *Montrose Daily Press*, 19 August 1912.

"J.F. Warren Buys Fisher Building For a Warehouse", *Montrose Daily Press*, 8 September 1920.

"John F. Moore Named as Sales Agent." *Montrose Daily Press*, 19 June 1912.

"Little Dashes." *Montrose Press*, 23 October 1908.

"Local News Items." *Montrose Press*, 21 May 1909.

"M. Fisher Moves To New Location in Coors Bldg.", *Montrose Daily Press*, 3 April 1917.

"Montrose Fruit & Produce Ass'n Has Annual Meet." *Montrose Daily Press*, 24 February 1915.

"Montrose Fruit & Produce Does Big Business in 1917." *Montrose Daily Press*, 9 March 1918.

"Montrose Fruit Growers Association." *Montrose Press*, 5 June 1908.

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- "Montrose Fruit Men Have a Good Year." *Daily Sentinel*, 11 March 1909.
- "Montrose Growers Expect to Rebuild." *Daily Sentinel* (Grand Junction), 6 July 1908.
- "Montrose Visited by \$75,000 Fire." *Daily Sentinel* (Grand Junction), 22 June 1908.
- "Montrose Visited by Destructive Fire Yesterday." *Daily Journal* (Telluride), 23 June 1908.
- "Montrose, and Montrose County." *Montrose Press*, 5 June 1908.
- "New Manager for Fruit Growers' Association." *Montrose Press*, 25 June 1909.
- "New Wagon Scale." *Montrose Daily Press*, 11 July 1912.
- "Our Apples Making Market in the South." *Montrose Daily Press*, 29 March 1909.
- "Personal Paragraphs." *Montrose Press*, 17 July 1908.
- "Personal Paragraphs." *Montrose Press*, 25 September 1908.
- "Rebuild Very Soon." *Daily Sentinel* (Grand Junction), 23 June 1908.
- "Satisfactory Year's Business is Recorded by Fruit Association." *Montrose Daily Press*, 1 March 1916.
- "Shippers Going After Cars for Western Slope." *Montrose Daily Press*, 26 July 1920.
- "Whole Train Load of Potatoes Leaves City on the Narrow Gage." *Montrose Daily Press*, 22 February 1918.

Other Documents

Montrose City Directories, 1910-70.

Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, 1908-19.

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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: Montrose Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 5MN.5270

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

Datum:

NAD 1927 _____ or **NAD 1983** _____

(Insert additional UTM references as needed.)

1	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>248713</u> Easting	<u>4262695</u> Northing	3	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____

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

The nomination boundary encompasses Lots 17-19, and portions of Lots 20-21, within Block 92 of Selig's Addition east of the former Denver & Rio Grande Railroad spur. The boundary measures approximately 75' northeast to southeast on the southeast side fronting on West Main Street, 125' northwest to southeast on the southwest side, 110' northeast to southwest on the northwest side, and 130' north-northwest to south-southeast on the northeast side paralleling the former Denver & Rio Grande Railroad spur.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The larger property parcel includes Lots 13-16, which contains a ca. 1968 steel-frame warehouse that was extensively renovated in 2017 and dirt parking area to the west of the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building. The ca. 1968 warehouse was built outside the period of significance and does not retain integrity and is therefore excluded from the nomination boundary. The boundary described above contains the entirety of the Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building and includes a sufficient buffer between the historic building and the adjacent ca. 1968 warehouse.

11. Form Prepared By

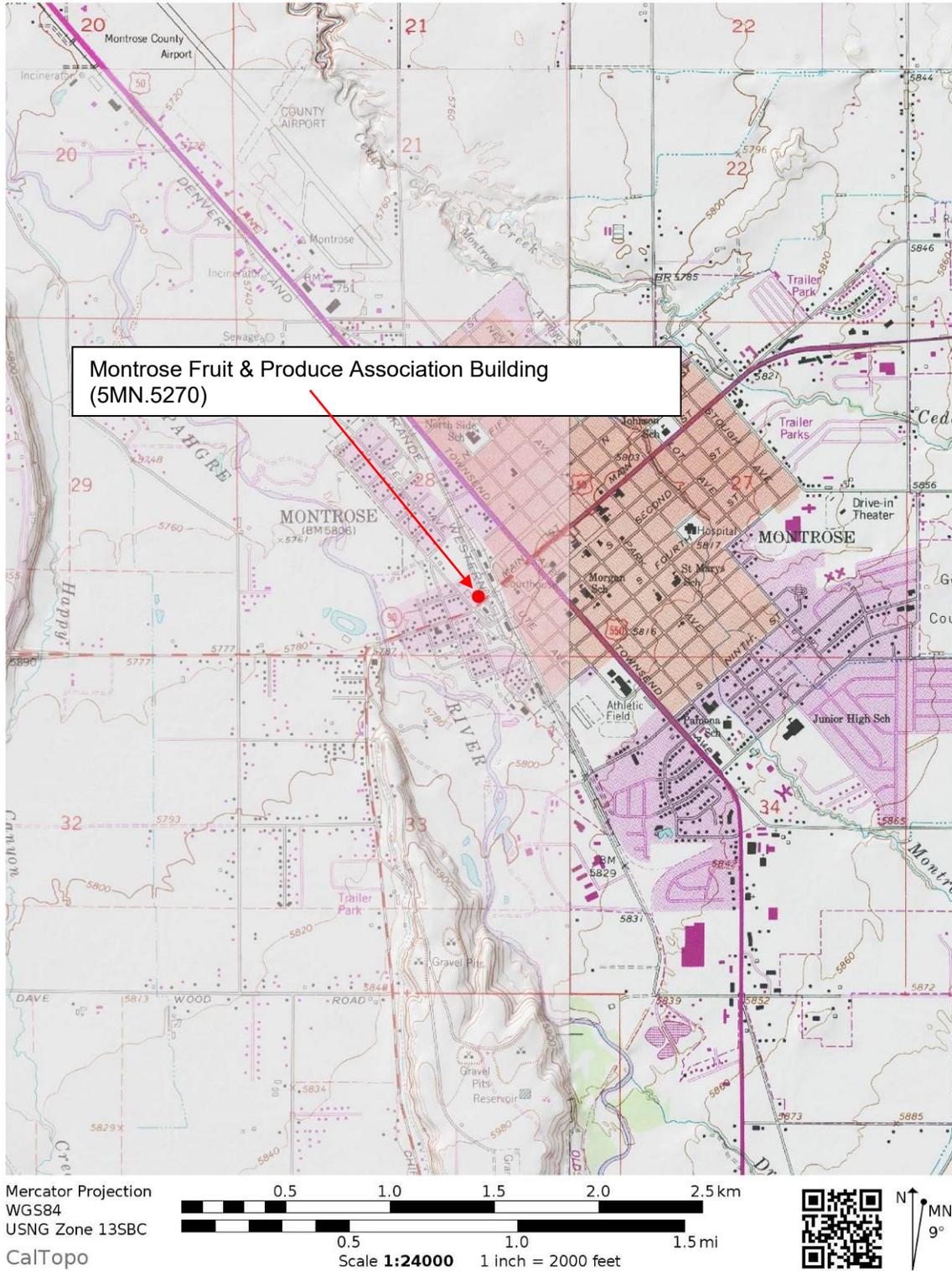
name/title David Fishering, Owner
organization High Oasis, LLC date 1/29/2020
street & number 1414 Hawk Parkway Unit F telephone 9702098663
city or town Montrose state CO zip code 81401
e-mail david@stormkingdistilling.com

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Additional Documentation

Maps



Map 1: Montrose West, Colorado, USGS Topographic Map.

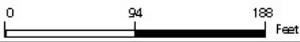
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Montrose Fruit & Produce Association Building
Web Print: 02/07/2020

This map is a user generated static output from an Internet mapping site and is for reference only. Data layers that appear on this map may or may not be accurate, current, or otherwise reliable.



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Map 2: Nomination boundary. Map source: Montrose County Parcel Map,
<https://portico.mygisonline.com/html5/?viewer=montrosecoparcel>

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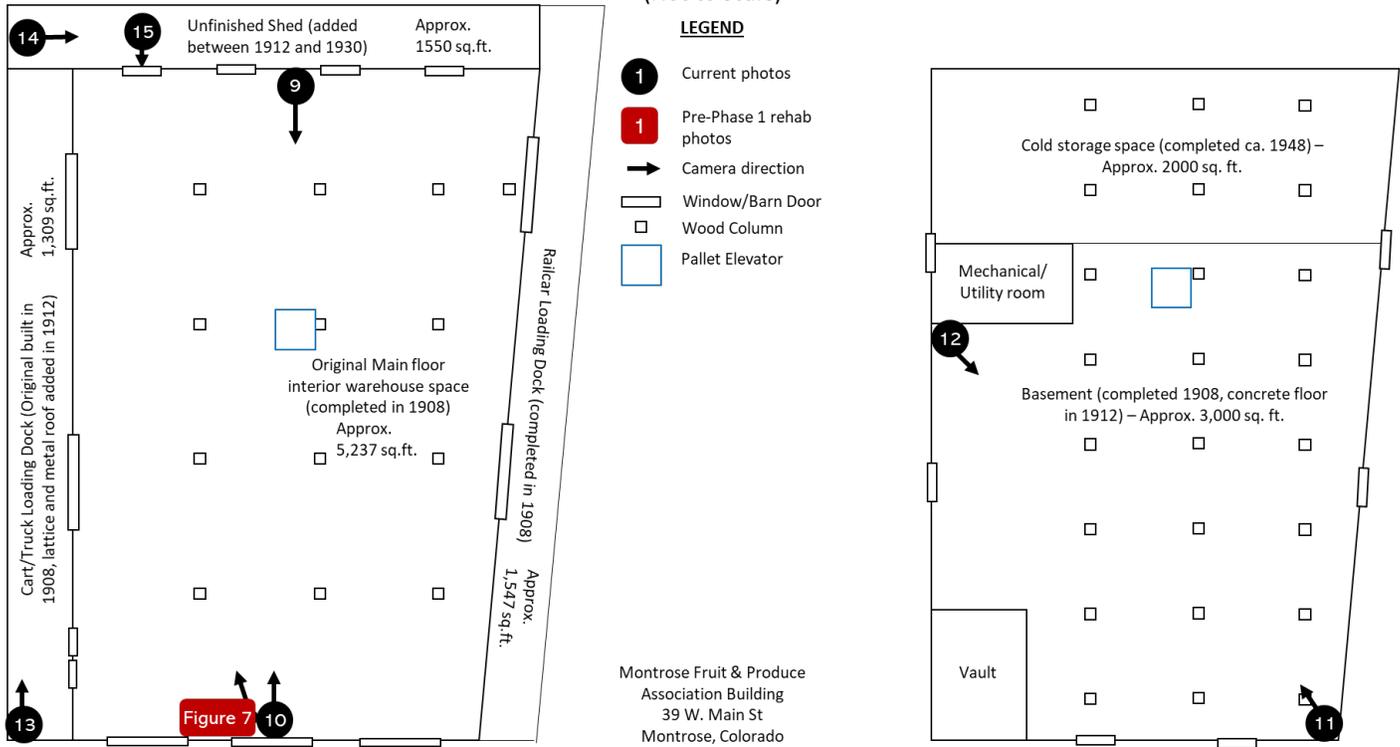


Map 3: Google map image, showing exterior photo locations.

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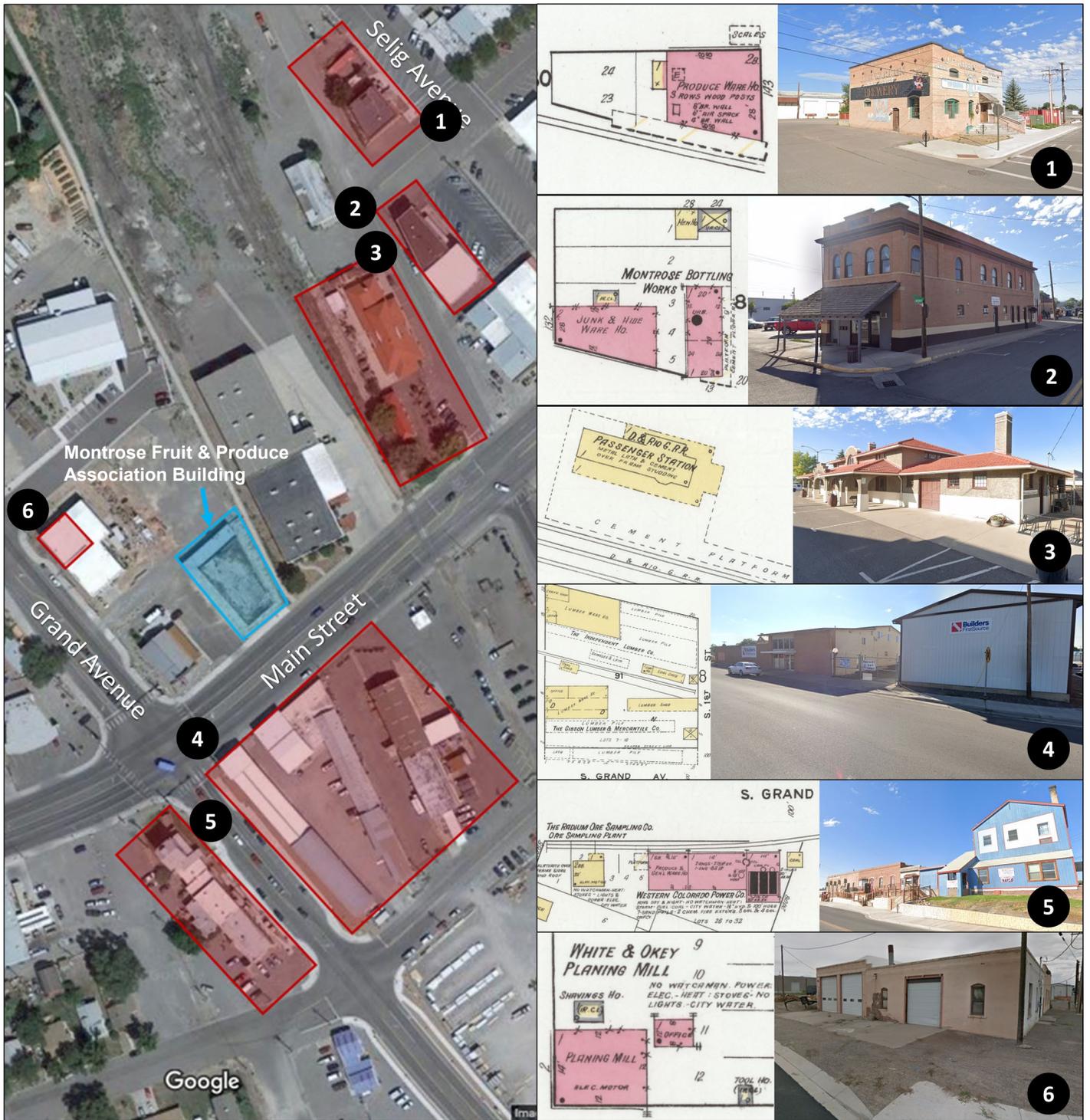
Sketch Map and Interior Photo Key
(Not to scale)



Map 4: Sketch map showing interior photo locations.

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Map 5: Google map images (2020) of surrounding area identifying the major properties with their historic function and present appearance illustrated with Sanborn map images (1919) and Google Streetview images (2019), respectively.

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Historic Figures:

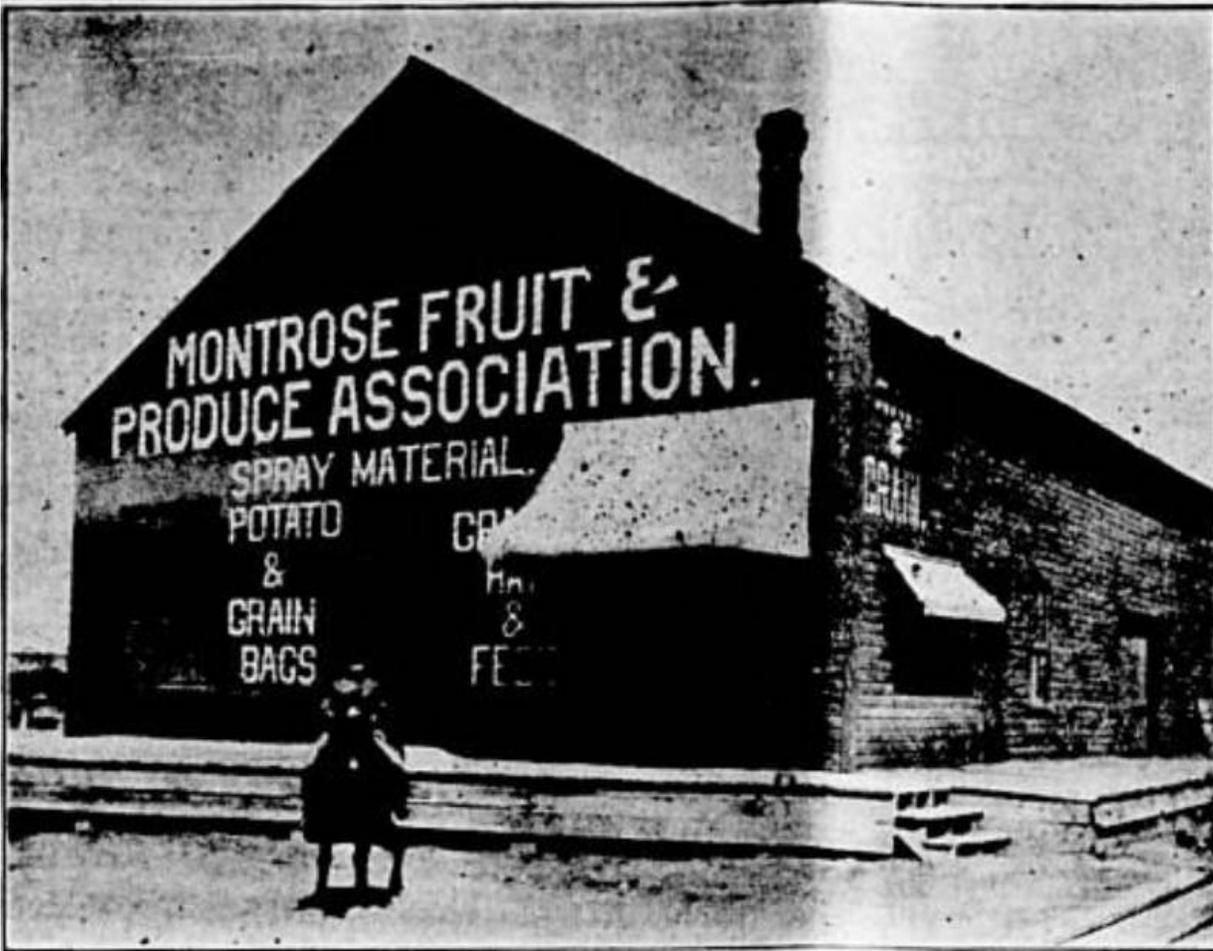


Figure 1: Historic photo of the first Montrose Fruit & Produce Association warehouse building, prior to 1908 fire, south façade, camera looking northwest, ca. 1908. (Source: "Montrose Fruit Growers Association." *Montrose Press*, 5 June 1908.)

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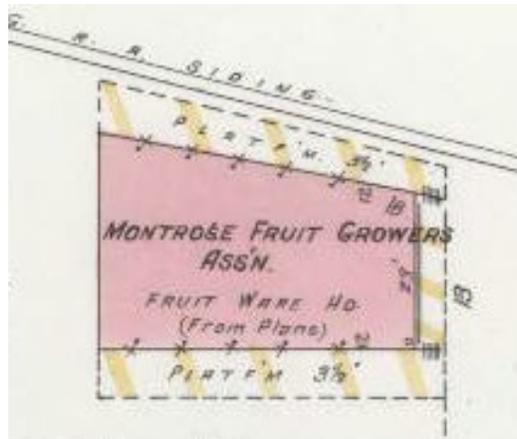
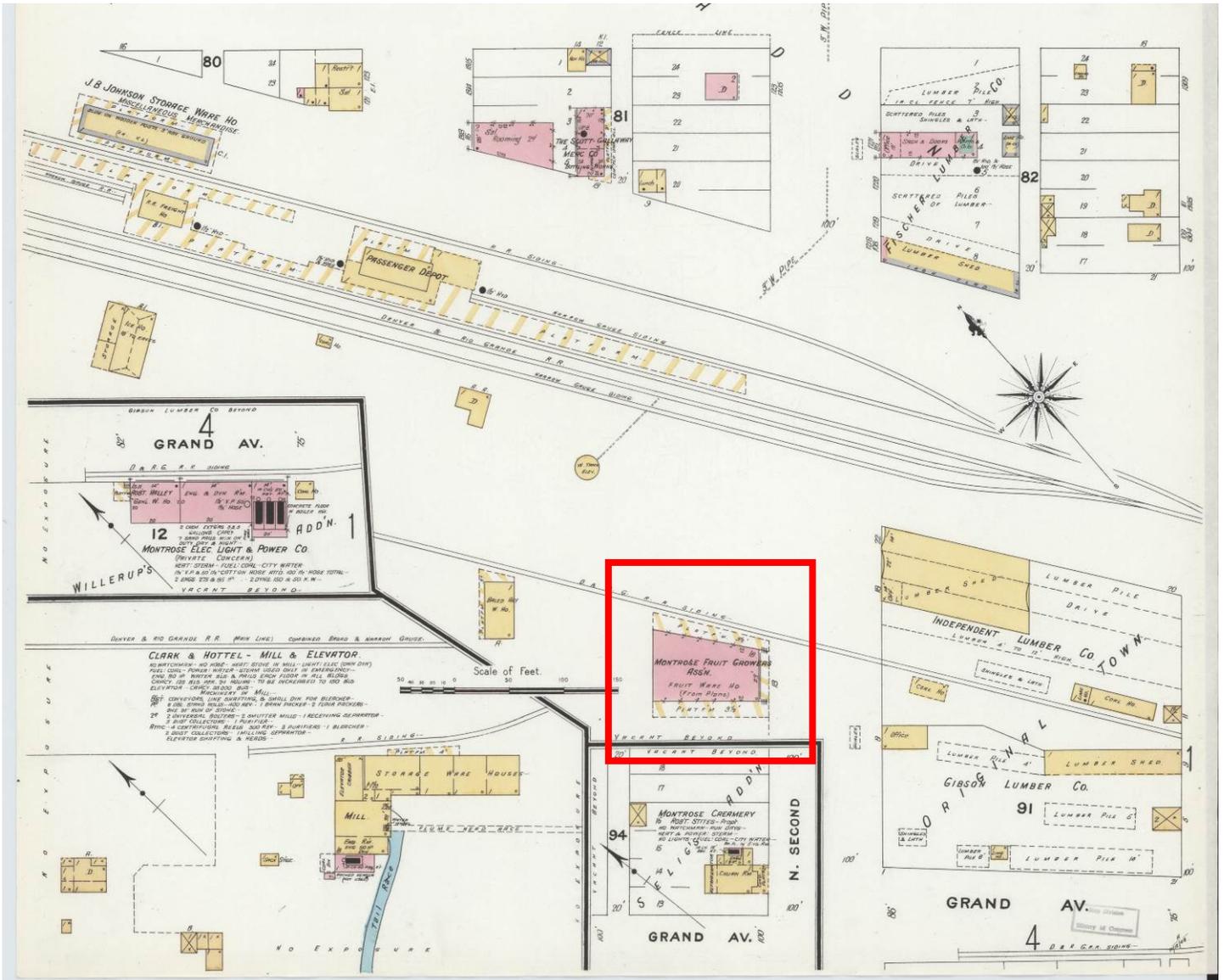


Figure 1: Details from 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map documenting the Montrose Fruit Growers Assn. Building from plans. Note Denver and Rio Grande Railroad siding along the northeast side of the building. (Source: Library of Congress)

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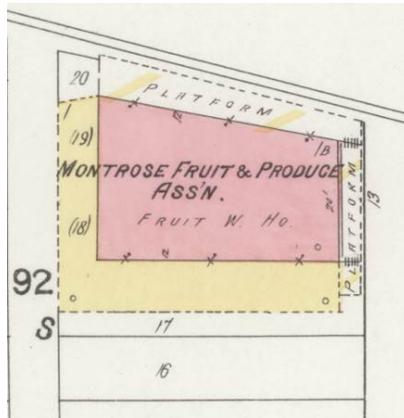
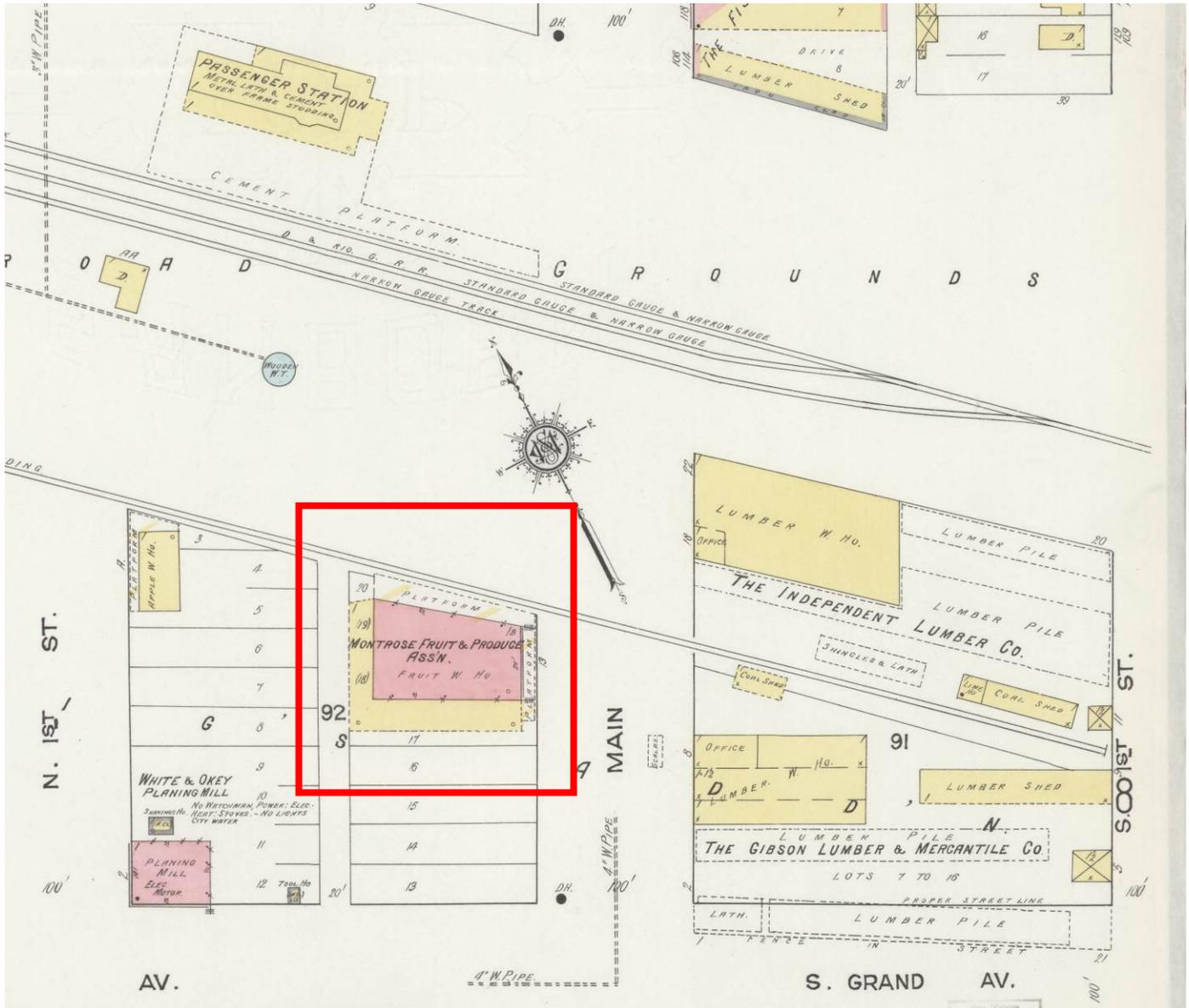


Figure 2: Details from 1912 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Note the changes to the platform on the west and north sides, indicating a wood frame with metal roof. (Source: Library of Congress)

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Figure 4: Historical photo, south façade and dock, camera looking west, ca. 1912. (Source: Montrose Historical Society)

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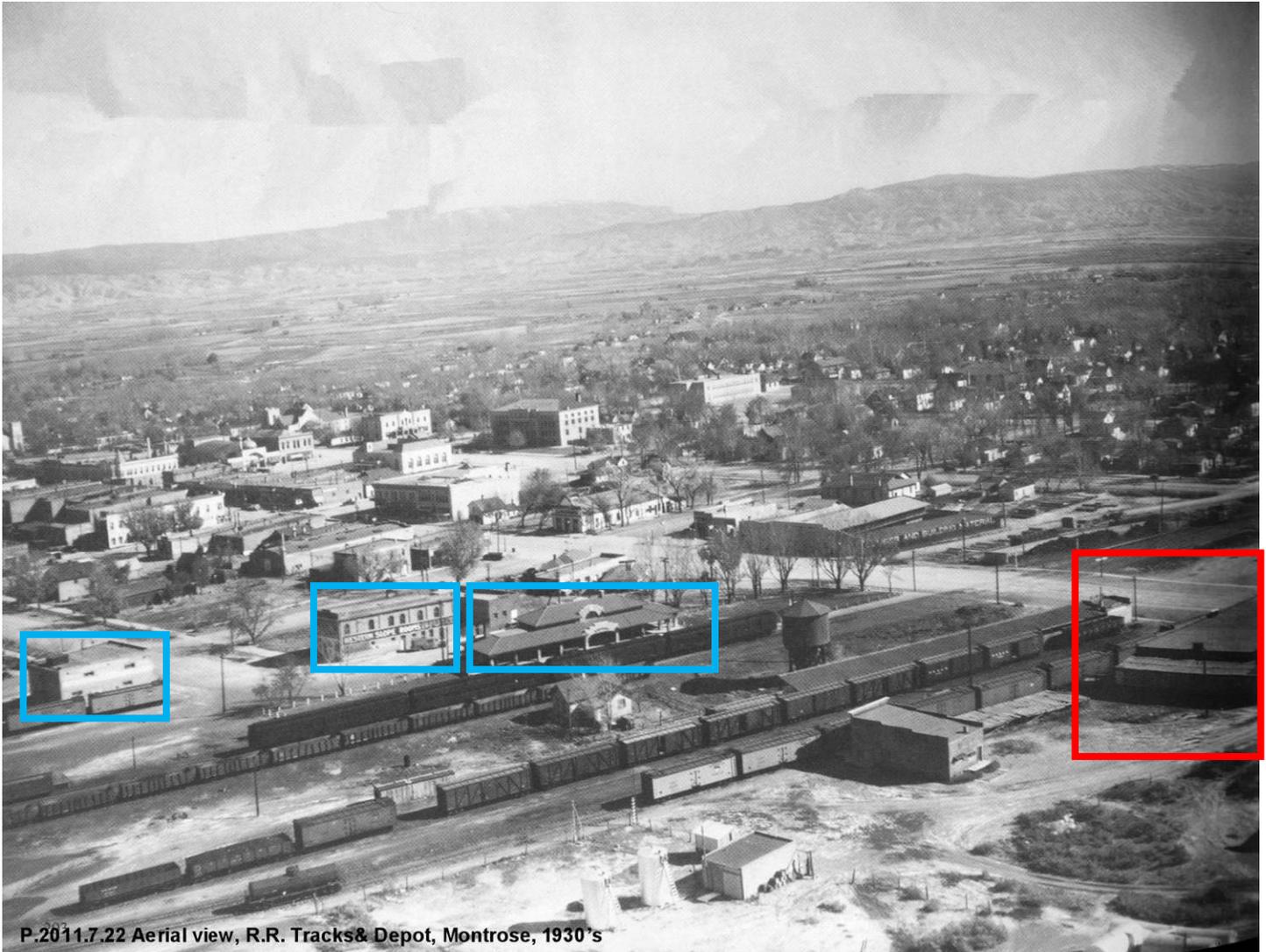


Figure 5: Historic aerial photo, camera looking east, rear (north side) of building is in lower right corner, ca. 1930. Other buildings including, from left to right, the J.F. Warren Building (5MN.5038), the Coors Building (5MN.1660) and the Denver and Rio Grande Depot (5MN.1661) can be seen as well. (Source: Montrose Historical Society)

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Figure 6: Details from 1919 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. (Source: Library of Congress)

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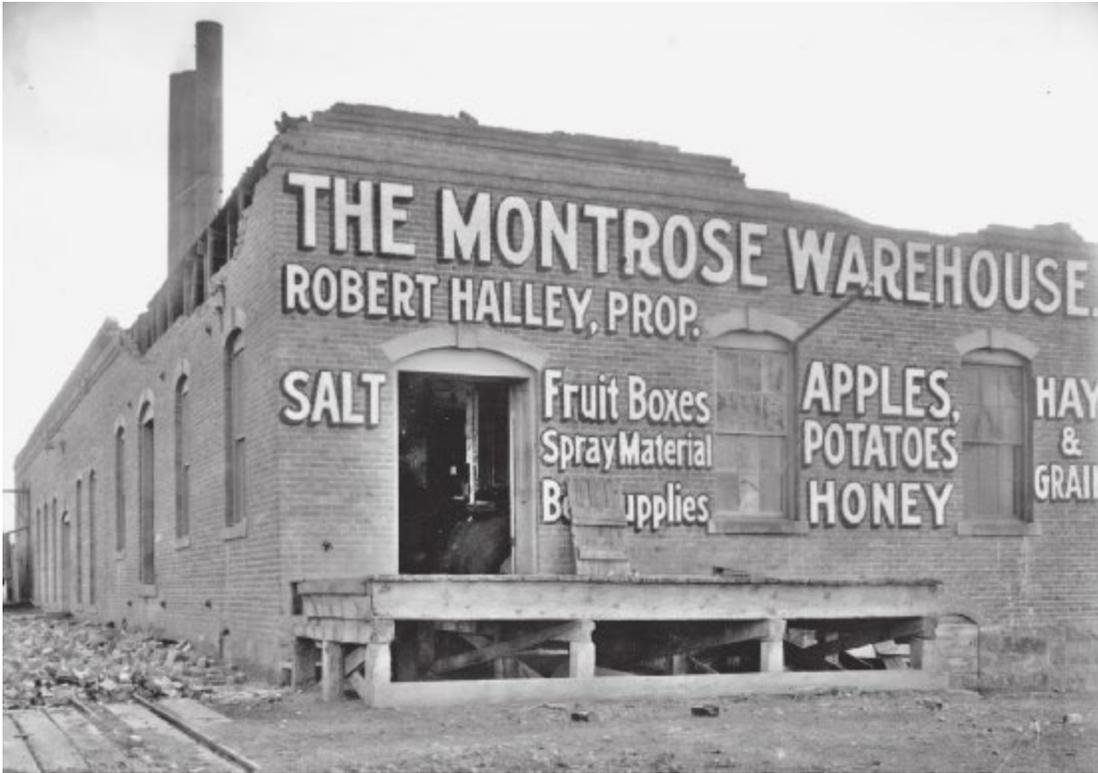


Figure 7: The Montrose Warehouse. (Source: Montrose Historical Society).

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Figure 8: Aerial photo taken (25 September 2019) prior to 2019 rehabilitation, camera facing northwest. (Source: William Woody)



Figure 9: Photo of interior taken (10 October 2019) prior to 2019 rehabilitation. Office to the left (no longer extant). (Source: David Fishing)

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

For Photos 1-6, 9-15

Name of Property: Montrose Potato Growers Building

City or Vicinity: Montrose

County: Montrose State: Colorado

Photographer: David Fishing

Date Photographed: 28 January 2020

For Photos 7,8

Name of Property: Montrose Potato Growers Building

City or Vicinity: Montrose

County: Montrose State: Colorado

Photographer: William Woody

Date Photographed: 24 January 2020

Photograph numbers and captions:

1. South wall, main façade, camera facing north.
2. North wall with shed addition, note how shed covers and cuts off four segmental arched windows, camera facing south.
3. Southeast corner, camera facing northwest. Note bike path/former railroad spur.
4. East wall, camera facing west.
5. Southwest corner, camera facing northeast.
6. West wall and loading dock, camera facing east.
7. Aerial, camera looking northwest.
8. Aerial, camera looking southeast.
9. Interior, main floor, camera looking north.
10. Interior, main floor, camera looking south.
11. Basement, main room, camera looking northwest.
12. Basement, main room, camera looking southeast.
13. West loading dock, interior, camera looking north.
14. North shed, interior, camera looking east.
15. North shed, example of window covering, camera looking south.

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 18 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.