Historical Society
of Pottawattamie County

September 20, 2020

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter is in support of the designation of the 530 West Broadway complex as a local historic landmark. We believe this designation will significantly contribute to the long term preservation of what is an important element of Council Bluffs' cultural heritage.

As suburban sprawl and roadside development make more and more places look the same, the unique buildings we have remaining take on an increased importance in helping to maintain our identity. This is more acute in Council Bluffs than most cities. The aggressive urban renewal project of the early 1970s markedly changed the community's personality by removing all buildings of the downtown's central district. It places us in a unique situation. Few if any other cities have likely come even close to eliminating so much of their central district, which is typically the area the community identifies with and that gives a town its character and individuality.

It's not just about bricks and mortar. Historic buildings are more than examples of architecture or aesthetics; they represent the intentions, assumptions and lives of those who built them and used them, and serve as crucial touchpoints linking our legacy with the present. What makes this building complex particularly significant is that it stands as one of the few remaining examples of a specific and important time period in Council Bluffs. The city had passed through its frontier period and the transition from village-hood into being a city. This complex exemplifies the next phase, our great era of development. This time was marked by unparalleled optimism and a building boom that categorized the late 19th and early 20th Century, when the prevailing notion was, "Council Bluffs will reach far beyond the bounds of any speculation or prophesy."

The Council Bluffs Board of Trade wrote in 1889, "Five years ago and the stranger looked upon a village. None of the characteristics of city-hood were here. Can this now be Council Bluffs? Yes, this is Council Bluffs— energized, modernized, and progressive." This is the time period the 530 West Broadway complex grew out of. We hope to see those buildings remain as a monument to that era and to that attitude which brought together the energy and forces which propelled Council Bluffs into a dynamic city and shaped our future for the next several decades.

Regards,
Board of Directors,
Historical Society of Pottawattamie County

ATTACHMENT C