

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**

historic Strehlow Terrace (Ne HBS No. D009:0136-003; D009:0135-004)

and or common Terrace Garden Apartment Complex

**2. Location**

street &amp; number 2024 &amp; 2107 North 16th Street N/A not for publication

city, town Omaha N/A vicinity of

state Nebraska code 031 county Douglas code 055

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object (s)	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

**4. Owner of Property**

name City of Omaha, c/o Martin Shukert, City Planning Director

street &amp; number Omaha/Douglas Civic Center, 1819 Farnam Street

city, town Omaha N/A vicinity of state Nebraska

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Omaha/Douglas Civic Center

street &amp; number 1819 Farnam Street

city, town Omaha state Nebraska

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**title 1984 Omaha/Douglas County  
Historic Building Survey has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate 1984 - on-going ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☒ local

depository for survey records Omaha City Planning Department &amp; Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Omaha/Lincoln state Nebraska

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### **Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Six buildings constructed between 1905 and 1916 compose the Terrace Garden apartment complex located in northeast Omaha. Situated along the northern and southern perimeter of a narrow three-acre site, three multi-unit apartment buildings, a house and an annex/apartment house face a central courtyard that extends the entire length of the property. A garage/apartment building is located on a separate, smaller parcel of land across 16th Street to the east of the principal site. Built by owner Robert C. Strehlow and designed by architect Frederick Henninger, all six structures contribute to the complex's historical and architectural significance. A fountain, benches and sidewalks also contribute to the complex's significance as surviving elements of the original landscape design.

Originally constructed with an exceptionally high degree of quality workmanship and materials, complex buildings have deteriorated in recent years due to inadequate maintenance; considered as a whole, the general condition of the complex buildings is poor. Nevertheless, the buildings do survive without substantial alteration and, for the most part, the complex has retained a high degree of its historical and architectural integrity for the period of significance. The nine contributing elements of the Terrace Garden complex include the six buildings, the fountain and two original benches (three objects).

Situated on land annexed by the City of Omaha in the late 1850s, the Terrace Garden complex is located in the northeast district of the city — about ten blocks north of the central business district, two blocks west of the Union Pacific Railway yards and one mile northeast of the Missouri River. The neighborhood surrounding the complex was first developed in the 1880s and is composed of older houses, apartment buildings and small commercial structures, a substantial number of which are vacant or in poor condition. The Terrace Garden site lies in two parcels, one on each side of North 16th Street, a major four-lane artery which connects the northeast section of Omaha with the downtown.

On the west side of 16th Street, the Terrace Garden parcel encompasses 3.2 acres. The site lies between 16th Street and 18th Street and has 251 feet of frontage on each street. The site appears nearly level with a slight slope toward the east and two small terraces. Located to the east, across 16th Street, the Strehlow Terrace Garage parcel measures 50 x 132 feet, or about .6 of an acre.

Constructed over a period of about ten years, the complex's six contributing buildings include: three three-story apartment houses — the Majestic (1905), the Strehlow (1907), and the Roland (1909); a one-story annex/apartment (ca. 1916); a two-story residence (ca. 1910); and, on the smaller parcel, a garage/apartment (ca. 1915). Buildings on the larger site are arranged around a central courtyard that extends the entire 540-foot length of the property. The courtyard contributes to the significance of the complex on the basis of surviving elements of landscape design including: two slight terraces; sidewalks that link complex buildings; and a concrete fountain and benches situated toward the courtyard's eastern end. Additional non-historic improvements to the property include the concrete driveways behind the apartment houses; a chain-link security fence, and an asphalt-paved parking area between the Strehlow house and annex.

Individual descriptions of complex buildings are as follows:

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet      Description      Item number      7.      Page      2.

**THE MAJESTIC**

The first building constructed as part of the complex in 1905, the Majestic extends along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. Three stories over a raised basement, the brick apartment building — oriented to the south — measures 160 feet by 55 feet. The elongated rectangular form of the structure is punctuated by a projecting cube-like center pavilion and end pavilions which contain further bayed wall projections. Inset porches occur at the second and third stories above the central entrance; stacked porches on each floor of both end pavilions are supported by brick piers.

Framed by dimensioned lumber, a low-pitched hipped roof shelters the structure. On the north, the roof is covered with red tile; on the south, asphalt shingles replace the original tile. Hipped-roof elaborations extend from the principal roof unit to cover the pavilions; more complex roof shapes — truncated octagons — cover bayed wall dormers. Extended (false) rafter tails enrich the flared eaves of both the dormers and the principal roof.

Structurally, the building utilizes a system of exterior and interior solid masonry bearing-walls. Dimensioned lumber structures floors and an open rafter system supports the roof. Interior foundation walls are composed of irregularly coursed stone rubble and brick. Exterior foundation walls and the entire north wall are brown common brick while tan iron-spot brick in a running bond is used on front and side elevations.

Bilateral in plan and similar in arrangement, each of the Majestic's three main floors contain ten apartment units. The units are grouped around three stairways, each with separate outside doorways opening on the front facade. The principal entrance is located in the central pavilion and is flanked by doors which are entered through the side pavilion porches. Double-hung, sliding-sash windows are symmetrically ranked across the principal and secondary facades. Original multi-paned sashes (9-over-1 and 16-over-1) still remain in several third floor windows.

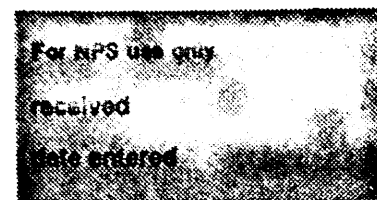
Stone is used extensively to trim walls; a watertable encircles the building; string courses run below windows at each level forming sills; and keystones crown windows on the first floor. Ornamental masonry also occurs at the central entrance where a stone door surround — incised with a band of Sullivan-esque designs — supports a lintel decorated with a greek key design and the inscription, "The Majestic." Further stonework also appears at the windowheads of the dormers — here, extended voussoirs converge over arched panels containing carved wreaths. Carved stone also bands porch piers and copes porch and stoop walls.

Stylistically the Majestic incorporates several architectural design traditions. Classical elements are evident in the symmetry of the building's form — an elaborated hipped-roof cube — and also in aspects of its decorative details, specifically, the flat-arched windowheads with keystones and the dormers' sculptural ornament and voussoirs.

Also apparent in the design of the Majestic are elements related to the Arts and Crafts and Prairie School movements. The carved rafter tails and the flared roof line — a Japanese-inspired feature — derive from the Arts and Crafts tradition. The massive square piers that support the porch, widely overhanging eaves, string courses that create a "high-hipped" effect, and horizontal massing all relate the building to the Prairie School style.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Description

Item number

7.

Page 3.

**THE STREHLOW**

Built in 1907, two years after the Majestic, the Strehlow generally follows the earlier building's precedent in form and plan. Sited directly across the courtyard about 75 feet to the south of the Majestic, the Strehlow occupies the southeast corner of the property and is oriented to the north. Except for minor variations in wall extensions and re-entrants, the buildings are identically matched in form and scale.

Like the Majestic, the Strehlow is an elongated rectangular form punctuated by three projecting hipped-roof cubes. A primary difference between the two buildings occurs in the center pavilion where walls on each of the three main levels have been opened to form a series of stacked porches. Also modified in the Strehlow are the end pavilions' entrances: here, access is gained from the front; in the Majestic, stoops are laterally placed. With only a few variations, window types and placement are the same in both buildings.

In terms of its structure, the Strehlow employs a more modern technical system with the introduction of a heavy, reinforced concrete foundation and poured-in-place reinforced concrete subfloors. Exterior and interior load-bearing masonry walls support a hipped roof framed with dimensional lumber and covered by clay tile. Over the eaves on all four elevations, the roof is clad with turned metal, a feature singularly applied by the architect in the Strehlow. The shape of the roof and wall dormers are similar in both buildings as is the use of tan iron-spot brick on front and side elevations.

Due to interior remodeling, it is difficult to determine the exact number of units that the structure originally contained. However, it appears that in the same amount of overall space, the Strehlow incorporated approximately three more apartments than the Majestic, including several additional two-bedroom units for a total of 34. Like the floor plan of the Majestic, living spaces here also cluster around three interior stairways with outside access through doors in the front and also via enclosed stairway porches at the back.

In the Strehlow, Frederick Henninger enriched his earlier, original design with larger, more three-dimensional masonry ornament. In addition to stone belt courses, wall coping, pier banding and dormer ornamentation, cartouches (inscribed with the letter "s") decorate the central porch piers. Keystone-shaped masonry blocks trim windows on the second story, as well as those on the first. Overall, the effect is that of more decorative interest.

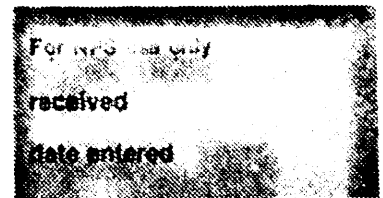
Similar to the Majestic in its stylistic eclecticism, the design of the Strehlow shows the architect's further development of Prairie School characteristics. The central entrance elaborated as a porch with rectangular columns more explicitly recalls the piers that vertically accent Prairie School buildings. The ornamental capitals of the porch piers also show Prairie School, or more specifically, Sullivanesque influences in their foliate designs.

**ROLAND**

The complex's third and largest apartment house, the Roland, lies along the site's northern boundary to the west of the Majestic. Measuring approximately 240 x 60 feet, the raised-basement masonry structure contains 31 living units on four levels, including the basement and a partial attic story.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet	Description	Item number	7.	Page	4.
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Symmetrical, yet complex in plan and elevation, the building's massing consists of three distinct hipped-roof cubes connected by recessive rectangular volumes. The walls of the central cubic mass or pavilion rise one floor higher than the others to contain three full stories plus an attic. A stacked porch entryway projects from the center pavilion; porches also cover entrances on the side elevations.

A low-pitched hipped roof covered by clay tile shelters the structure. Hipped roof units extend over dormers and the three cube-like pavilions. Technically the building utilizes a system of interior and exterior load bearing walls on continuous masonry footings. Poured-in-place reinforced concrete structures floors while dimensional lumber frames the roof. South, east and west facade walls are faced with tan iron-spot brick laid in a running bond. Tan face brick clads exterior basement walls and the entire north facade.

Windows are ranked symmetrically across the front and side elevations. A variety of window types are employed, ranging from square, single-sash, triple-paned to double-hung, sliding-sash with 6-over-1 lights. In addition to the central entrance and porch-covered doors on the east and west, wings off the central pavilion also contain entrances (both on the south and north). These six doorways open to entry halls and stairways which provide vertical circulation. Four additional interior stairways give apartment units both a front and rear means of egress.

In form and stylistic detail, the design of the Roland is more distinctly tied to the Prairie School than are the other complex buildings. The sprawling, horizontal form of the building anchored by a high central mass; the low pitch of the roof and the widely overhanging eaves associate it closely with the Prairie School tradition. Explicitly Wrightian in detail are the angular geometric column capitals over the secondary entrances and the geometric pattern of the brickwork between the piers. The iron railings enclosing balconies over the front facade entrances show a similar Wrightian motif. The central pavilion's heavy masonry porch piers and the stucco cornice under the eaves also closely relates the buildings to this style.

Arts and Crafts elements, carried over from Henninger's earlier two designs include the oriental roof line and extended rafter tails. Pent roofs, another Craftsman characteristic, also appear in the design of the central entrance and side porches.

**STREHLOW RESIDENCE**

A two-story brick house with a finished attic and full basement, the Strehlow house is a front-gabled, rectangular structure with cross-gabled pavilions on the east and west. Oriented to the north in the southwest corner of the property, the house is situated across the courtyard from the Roland apartments.

Technically the house employs a system of solid masonry walls on continuous brick footings. Dimensional lumber structures the roof and floors. Tan iron-spot brick faces exterior walls; basement walls are red brick. Patterned brickwork in a modified swag design crowns second floor windows, while a basketweave arched panel surmounts the front door and gable end windows at the attic story. Belt courses, wall coping and pier bands are stone. The steeply-pitched roof is covered in red clay tile with flared eaves; also notable is the shed roof over the entry, elaborated with an arch and bracketing.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet      Description      Item number      7.      Page      5.

Functionally, the house has been divided into two six-room apartments, each with a bathroom and kitchen. The attic is one large finished room. Neither the date of the conversion to apartments, nor the structure's original floor plan are known. Floors and interior trim are maple, and windows (which are now covered over) are double-hung.

The house's trelised pergola, carved roof bracketing and flared roof line relate the building to the Arts and Crafts architectural style. The glazing pattern of the structure's windows — 9-over-1 lights with a larger center pane in the upper sash — is also a hallmark of the Arts and Crafts or related Prairie style. Nevertheless, the structure's tall, vertical form, the steep pitch of the roof and the patterned brickwork above the windows show its divergence from the Craftsman style and hence its overall eclecticism.

#### **GARAGE**

Covering an entire 50 x 132-foot lot across 16th Street to the east of the Strehlow complex, the garage is related to other complex buildings by virtue of its materials and design.

This narrow rectangular brick structure faces 16th Street and shares part of a common wall with the Margaret apartments to the south. A brick duplex and garage abut the garage on the north. The front portion of the building, measuring approximately 50 x 40 feet, contains a basement as well as ground and second floor levels; two apartments are located on the second floor level. The rear 50 x 92-foot section is a one-story garage without a basement. Solid exterior masonry walls, steel trusses and dimensional lumber support the structure's built-up roof. Reinforced poured concrete structures floors.

The garage's street facade is clad in the same tan brick as the other Strehlow buildings with geometric-pattern-ing at the cornice. Here too, buff-colored carved stone trims walls and also serves as decorative insets at the cornice and above the second floor end windows. Carved rafter tails (false) embellish the roof's widely over-hanging eaves. Symmetrical in design, the facade's central focus is the garage door with stone jambs and a lintel inscribed with "Strehlow Terrace Garage". The remainder of the facade at ground level is taken up by large window openings (now boarded over) which flank the garage door. At the second-story level above, a bank of six rectangular windows is grouped between two slightly larger rectangular windows. All upper story windows are double-hung, sliding-sash type with 6-over-1 lights.

The Strehlow garage's stylized geometric ornament, tight window grouping and treatment of the area between the central windows as piers associate it with the Prairie School style.

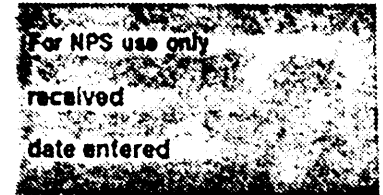
#### **STREHLOW ANNEX:**

Different in material and style from the other Strehlow Terrace buildings, the annex abuts the southern property line, mid-way between the tract's eastern and western boundaries.

A 1916 building permit gives little information about the structure; however, it is believed to have been constructed as a recreation center for the apartment complex. Converted to apartments in the 1920s, the annex now contains four studio and two one-bedroom units.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet	Description	Item number	Page
		7.	6.

Built of brick and clad above the basement level with stucco, the annex is a one-story raised-basement rectangular structure measuring approximately 40 x 60 feet. Exterior and interior solid masonry walls support a low-pitched hipped roof framed with dimensional lumber. Open eaves are supported by paired, carved brackets. Stone is used for parapet coping, wall trim and window sills. On all four elevations, center pavilions extend from the structure's principal mass. The pavilions' walls form shaped parapets which extend above the roof ridge. Red clay tiles cover the roof surface.

First floor window openings are round-arched and regularly-spaced; larger, arched window openings are cut into pavilion walls. Basement windows are rectangular; aluminum storm windows cover wood double-hung windows. The structure's main, north entrance which leads to the first floor, is cut through the center pavilion's side wall and is reached by stairs sided by a brick and stucco wall.

While the annex's simple box-like form does not clearly link it specifically to one stylistic tradition, its use of stucco, round arched windows openings, and especially its shaped parapets link it to the Mission style. The parapets' quatrafoil designs and contrasting stone coping further identify the building with this style.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–1916	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

<b>Specific dates</b>	1905, 1907, 1909, ca. 1910, ca. 1916	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Robert C. Strehlow, owner-builder Frederick A. Henninger, architect
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### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

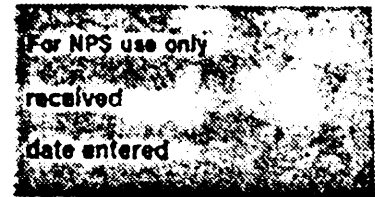
The Terrace Garden apartment complex is architecturally significant, on both a local and state level, as an example of innovative stylistic trends that developed in Midwestern architecture after the turn of the century; most notably, the complex survives as an early and fine adaptation of the Prairie School style. A collaborative effort between client-builder Robert C. Strehlow and Omaha architect Frederick A. Henninger, Terrace Garden holds further importance as the state's earliest known example of an integrated grouping of related apartment buildings. The complex also derives significance in the area of commerce through its association with Robert Strehlow, an Omaha-based builder who gained national recognition for his work in constructing world's fairs from 1898 to 1915 in Omaha, Buffalo, St. Louis, Seattle and San Francisco. The property's period of significance extends from Strehlow's initial involvement in the project with the erection of the first building in 1905 to 1916, the year that Strehlow completed the final building in the complex.

### HISTORY:

By 1905, when Robert Strehlow purchased land on North 16th Street for his apartment complex, multi-unit housing had existed in the area for at least 20 years. First developed in the late 1850's, North 16th Street — then named Sherman Avenue — was sited along a bluff overlooking the Missouri River providing a drive to country estates north of the city. Two decades later when industry moved into the river plain below the bluff, the wealthy left the area, opening the district to new commercial and industrial uses. In addition to cottage-type housing for workers in nearby industry, middle-class residential development in the area was assured when Sherman Avenue was selected as a major north-south streetcar route, linking the downtown with the northeast sector of the city. Beginning in the 1880s, real estate developers responding to downtown workers' demands for housing outside the center city, yet close to major transportation routes, introduced flats, duplexes, row houses and later multi-unit apartments to the area. (Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission, 1984, pp. 26-28).

An early form of multi-family housing related to increasing commercial development along Sherman Avenue in the late 1880s was the St. Louis flat. This building type combined store space on the ground floor with residential units above. Three examples of St. Louis flats appeared during this period, one at Grace Street (1887) and two at Corby (1889, 1892). In the immediate vicinity of the Strehlow site, the duplex became the predominant multi-family type around 1890: a cluster of three duplexes were constructed near the corner of Burdette and Sherman between 1889 and 1891, and three blocks north on Sherwood Avenue, two more substantial brick duplexes went up in 1892. Little evidence survives to document the incidence in the district of a third important 19th century multi-unit type, the row house. With few examples of this type surviving in the northeast 16th Street area, it follows that this housing form was less prevalent here than in other early centers of multi-unit residential development where the row house was a popular type (Timberg, p. 1-2).



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet      Significance      Item number      8.      Page      2.

The depressed economic conditions of the 1890s slowed building activity throughout the city, but the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in 1898 spurred a building boom, especially in Omaha's northern district where the fair was located. Preceding the opening of the Exposition by one year, Omaha real estate speculator George H. Payne built the first large apartment building in the area at 16th and Lake Streets on a major route to the fair. Payne, a member of the Exposition's Board of Directors, was early to capitalize on the area's enhanced development potential resulting from the fair's north Omaha location (Worth, p.3).

The construction of Payne's fifteen-unit, neo-classical building, the Sherman, marked the beginning of a further shift in land use along North 16th Street to higher-density housing types — specifically, to the apartment house. Omaha's first apartment building, the Mengedoh, built in 1892, contained 34 units in a four-story, brick structure at 816 South 22nd Street. The depressed real estate market of the 1890s probably slowed the spread of this new building type: by 1905 less than a dozen apartment houses had been constructed in the city. From this group, only the Sherman and another building constructed by George Payne — the Normandie at 1102 Park Avenue — survive (Building Owners' and Managers' Association, p. 7).

After the turn of the century when economic conditions improved and building activity resumed, new apartment projects were clustered west of downtown in the area between California and Leavenworth, from 17th Street to 33rd. In selecting Sherman Avenue for his new apartment complex, Robert Strehlow confirmed the street's multi-family character despite its location outside the mainstream of such construction. In turn, Strehlow's project accelerated an apartment-building trend that fixed North 16th Street's identity as the primary apartment house row in North Omaha (Timberg, p. 4).

City records show that Robert Strehlow purchased the major parcel of land for his apartment project just prior to beginning construction in 1905. The 3.2 acre tract — platted as part of E. V. Smith's addition in 1869 — lay directly north of the original Smith estate, then owned by the widow of former territorial Governor Alvin Saunders. The two parcels, together with another tract north of Strehlow's, formed a kind of elongated north-south "superblock," since neither 17th nor Yates Street had ever been opened through the block.

Located in the northeast corner of Strehlow's property, the Majestic was the first of the complex's structures to be built. A construction permit dated June, 1905 lists the Majestic's cost at \$50,000. Built two years later for \$75,000, the Strehlow was sited on the lot's southeast corner facing the Majestic and matching the earlier building in form, scale and appearance. Along the northern boundary of the property adjacent to the Majestic, the builder's third and final apartment house, the Roland, went up in 1909 for \$50,000. Permits no longer exist for the complex's fourth building, Strehlow's own house, which occupies the tract's southwest corner across the courtyard from the Roland. Insurance maps and city directories lend evidence to date the house's construction concurrently with that of the Roland, ca. 1910. The final addition to the major parcel of Strehlow's property was his community house — known as the Strehlow Annex — built according to permits in 1916. Wakeley's biographical sketch of Strehlow in Omaha: The Gate City and Douglas County Nebraska, refers to "... a community house which is always open, containing (a) reading room, billiard room, dance hall and other facilities for community amusement". (Wakeley, p. 729.) It is assumed that this reference describes the stucco structure situated on the southern property line between the house and the Strehlow apartments. City directories indicate that in the early 1920s the building was divided into apartments.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Continuation sheet      Significance      Item number      8.      Page      3.

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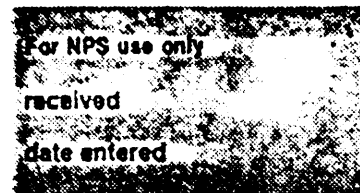
On a separate parcel of land, across 16th Street to the east of the primary complex, Strehlow constructed two additional buildings: the Strehlow Terrace Garage and the Margaret. According to city permits, the Margaret — a 21-unit, Tudor style apartment house which shares a party wall with the garage — was built in 1915. Inspection of the juncture of the two structures suggests that the garage preceded the apartment. This premise is furthered by the fact that the garage closely relates to earlier complex buildings (particularly the Roland) in materials and style.

Another integral element of the complex is the central courtyard. Because of Strehlow's placement of the Majestic, his first building, in the corner of the expansive tract, it is evident that the builder's intent from the start of the project was to construct a group of structures arranged around a central yard. A set of photographs dating from 1916 are the earliest views of the complex's landscaping plan. Bilaterally symmetrical, and measuring approximately 80 by 550 feet, the courtyard in its design displays the formalistic landscaping style that was popular around the turn of the century. Long, straight vistas bordered by plants, slight terraces, geometrically-shaped flower beds and a central fountain reflect the courtyard's highly ordered character. Pollarded catalpas lining sidewalks in front of the Majestic and Roland, gravel paths bordering edged flower beds, potted trees and a large arbor with benches indicate the high degree of attention invested in the complex grounds. Early photographs and insurance maps also indicate that there were other small, frame structures built on the property and used possibly for recreational purposes. Wakeley also mentions the complex's tennis court; it was probably located between the annex and the house in the area which is now a parking lot.

Robert Strehlow took up residence in the Majestic soon after the building was completed in 1905 or 1906. Although city directories provide rather sketchy information due to inconsistent addressing of complex buildings, it appears that Strehlow moved into his newly completed house around 1910 and remained there until the early 1920s when he moved to California. Strehlow returned to Omaha about ten years later and resided in his apartment complex until his death in 1952 at the age of 90.

A native of Germany, Robert Strehlow came to the United States as an 18-year-old carpenter in 1880. He did building and contracting work in Ohio, Iowa and South Dakota before arriving in Omaha in 1891. Strehlow's work for the city's 1898 Trans-Mississippi Exposition launched his career in exposition building. Over the next two decades he completed contracts amounting to more than \$25 million for construction at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, the 1908 Alaska-Yukon and the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. Strehlow received awards for his 1904 and 1915 exposition work, which included courts, cascades and sunken gardens as well as buildings.

In addition to his apartment complex, Strehlow built houses and industrial plants in Omaha. He was also active locally in political and community affairs. In 1917 he was elected to the first of two terms in the Nebraska legislature where he served as chairman of the committee on public institutions. In addition, Strehlow headed a number of German societies and civic clubs and maintained a prominent position in developing and promoting music activities in the city. (Omaha World-Herald, 4 July 1943; 8 July 1951.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet      Significance      Item number      8.      Page      4.

To design the building project which served as a focus of his attention for almost fifty years, Strehlow turned to Omaha architect Frederick Henninger. Although records do not exist to confirm that Frederick Henninger prepared plans for the house and garage, it is plausible to assume that he designed all six complex buildings. Reasons for Strehlow's selection of Henninger as the architect for his ten-year building project are not known; however, it does appear that early in his career Henninger was one of the city's first architects to specialize in apartment house design.

In the late 1890s, Henninger in association with Omaha real estate developer George H. Payne designed two of the city's earliest apartment houses, the Normandie and the Wynona. The National Register Inventory - Nomination for the Sherman Apartments — another of Payne's early projects — suggests that this building also may be one of Henninger's designs. Several other of the city's extant turn-of-the-century apartments display features similar to those of the Strehlow complex buildings; however, information which could positively identify these designs with Henninger is not readily available. Further research on this topic could clarify the importance of Henninger's role in the early development of the apartment house type in Omaha.

Born in 1865 in Iowa to German immigrant parents, Frederick A. Henninger studied at the Chicago Art Institute where he was called "a natural born artist." After working for an architect in Lincoln, he took over the practice of Omaha architect F.C. Ledebink in 1896. Throughout the next forty years, Henninger's office produced numerous projects, widely varied in style and building type. At one point, his firm's output in residential design earned it the reputation for designing "a house a day" (Omaha Architects File). Henninger's major Omaha building projects include: the Securities Building; the U.S. National Bank Building; the West Farnam Apartments (LHPC, H1-79-10); the Havens Page Residence (NRHP, 1982); the O.H. Barmettler Residence (LHPC, H2-80-18) and Calvin Memorial Presbyterian Church (NRHP, 1986).

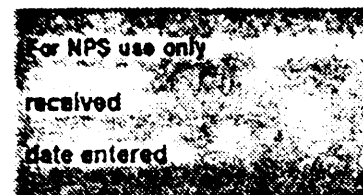
Tenants of the Strehlow Terrace in its early years included the treasurer of a construction materials company, a physician, the owner of a womens' clothing store and a department manager for an investment company — for the most part, middle-and upper-middle class professionals and office or retail workers. When the Strehlow family sold the property in 1967, it was purchased by the Community Housing Foundation as a neighborhood revitalization project. In the intervening years, the North 16th Street area had experienced economic decline, population loss and the deterioration of its building stock. After an unsuccessful attempt at redevelopment, the buildings were sold. Over the past decade, the physical condition of the complex continued to decline while the property gained public notariety from numerous condemnation proceedings. The City of Omaha completed purchase of the complex in 1986. Plans for a certified rehabilitation of complex buildings for use as multi-family housing are currently underway.

**SIGNIFICANCE:**

Constructed between 1905 and 1916, Terrace Garden complex buildings chronicle a succession of stylistic trends that occurred in Midwestern architecture in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The complex's earliest buildings, the Majestic and Strehlow, reflect several aspects of the Neo-classical Revival style that became popular in Omaha after the 1898 Trans-Mississippi Exposition. The buildings' bilateral symmetry, flat-arched window trim and decorative masonry voussoirs typify classical influences. Arts and Crafts stylistic details are most evident at the roof lines of the three apartment buildings and in the Strehlow house. Exposed rafter tails, carved brackets

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet      Significance      Item number      8.      Page      5.

and flared eaves (and, especially, in the house, the trellised pergola) represent the design tradition popularized by Gustave Stickley's Craftsman Magazine. Frederick Henninger's final design for the complex, the Strehlow annex, incorporates Mission style characteristics which generally began to appear in Omaha's residential designs after 1915. The annex's round-arched door and window openings, the tile roof and the wall dormers' shaped pediments are hallmarks of this style.

The particular significance of the Terrace Garden complex to Omaha and Nebraska lies in the fact that its designer, Frederick Henninger, was early in adapting new, 20th century architectural trends — such as the Arts and Crafts and Mission styles — in his designs for Terrace Garden. Henninger's role as an innovator is most apparent in his use of the Prairie School style in his plans for Strehlow's three large-scale apartment buildings.

According to Marcus Whiffen, Frank Lloyd Wright's concepts of Prairie style residential design were established by 1900 (Whiffen, p. 301). Five years later, Frederick Henninger employed aspects of the style in his plans for the Majestic and the Strehlow. Low, hipped roofs, broadly overhanging eaves and a stringcourse between stories emphasize Henninger's intent in giving his buildings a horizontal effect consistent with a major tenet of the style. In the Majestic, direct stylistic references are few, but side porch columns do show a relation to Prairie School piers and mullions. The design of the Strehlow moves closer to the Prairie School idiom: specifically, the open entrance porch more closely approaches Wright's use of a series of rectangular columns as major vertical accents.

Additionally, the Prairie School's ties to Japanese architecture are seen in Henninger's use of flared eaves on all three buildings. In the Roland, Henninger directly quotes Wright in the ornamental details of the front elevation's secondary entrances. Though not a pure example of the style, the Roland — more than any other building in the complex — most clearly exhibits Prairie School features.

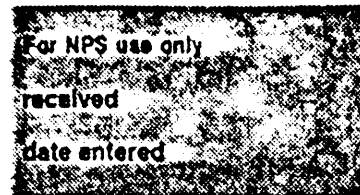
The comparatively early date of Henninger's Prairie School designs for the Terrace Garden complex suggest that the architect was likely of prime importance in transporting the Chicago-based style to Omaha and Nebraska. Placing Henninger's work within a statewide context, the only known building in Nebraska designed by Frank Lloyd Wright was built in McCook in 1907 (NRHP, 1978). Based on the Omaha architect's work for Robert Strehlow beginning in 1905, Henninger warrants further consideration as one of the state's earliest interpreters of the Prairie School style.

Scholarship documenting the historical development of the apartment house type in Nebraska — or for that matter, in the United States as a whole — is not extensive. Demographic factors would suggest, however, that among turn-of-the-century Nebraska cities, only Omaha possessed conditions favorable to the support of multiple-building housing developments on the scale of Terrace Garden. In Omaha, the existence of apartment complexes that pre-date Strehlow's have not been documented. Terrace Garden, therefore, derives architectural significance as the state's earliest known example of an integrated grouping of related apartment buildings.

Terrace Garden complex also derives significance in the area of commerce for its association with Robert C. Strehlow. The Omaha-based builder gained a national reputation for constructing world's fairs beginning with Omaha's 1898 Trans-Mississippi Exposition through the Panama-Pacific Exhibition in San Francisco in 1915. Within this period, Strehlow developed his apartment complex incorporating aspects of turn-of-the-century exposition design, including an axial court arrangement, a sculptured fountain and landscaped grounds — all of which imparted an attitude of magnificence and opulence.

United States Department of the Interior  
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number

8.

Page 6.

In addition, the general uniformity of complex buildings in style and materials further ordered by a comprehensive site plan shows the influence of the City Beautiful Movement, an urban planning movement that had its beginnings in exposition design, particularly in Daniel Burnham's plan for Chicago's 1893 World's Columbian Exposition (Whiffen, p. 273-274). While the Terrace Garden buildings in terms of style are not consistent with the City Beautiful Movement's Beaux-Arts classicism, the complex does represent one of the city's few extant adaptations of the movement's site planning concepts.

By virtue of its design, setting, feeling and workmanship, Terrace Garden reflects Robert Strehlow's considerable achievements as a master builder of major early 20th century expositions. Through his work, Strehlow was directly involved with a number of the country's leading architects and planners and he adapted aspects of their work in the planning and design of his Omaha apartment complex. Over a span of nearly fifty years, until the time of his death in 1952, Strehlow played an active role in the development of his apartment complex as builder, owner, manager and tenant. No other buildings or structures associated with Strehlow convey a clearer or more complete sense of his life's work.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

(See continuation sheet)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3.8 (approx.)

Quadrangle name Omaha North, Nebr.-Iowa

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

(See continuation sheet)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynn Bjorkman, City Planner

organization Omaha City Planning Dept., Suite 1110

date August 1986

street & number 1819 Farnam Street

telephone (402) 444-4927

city or town Omaha

state Nebraska 68183

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☒ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*James A. Hanson*

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date 10/31/86

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

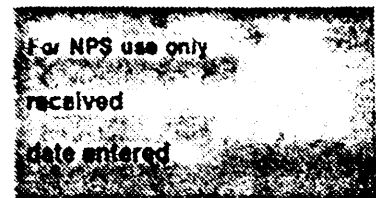
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Major Bibliographical References Item number 9. Page 1.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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date entered

Verbal boundary description  
Continuation sheet and justification

Item number 10.

Page 1.

The property is described as all that part of Tax Lots 22, 23 and 24 in the Southeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 10, Township 15 North, Range 13 East of the 6th P.M., lying between the west line of Sherman Avenue and the east line of 18th Street in the City of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, and the north 70.84 feet of Block 1, E.V. Smith's Addition to the City of Omaha, Douglas County, Nebraska, including all historically associated property, more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the point on the west line of Sherman Avenue in the City of Omaha, 33 feet west of the SE corner of the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 10, Township 15 North, Range 13 East of the 6th P.M., (being also the NE corner of said Block 1, E.V. Smith's Addition) and running thence north along said west line of Sherman Avenue 180.56 feet, thence west 554 feet, more or less, to the east line of 18th Street, thence south along the east line of 18th Street 251.40 feet, thence east 554 feet, more or less, to the west line of Sherman Avenue, thence north along said west line of Sherman Avenue 70.84 feet to the place of beginning.

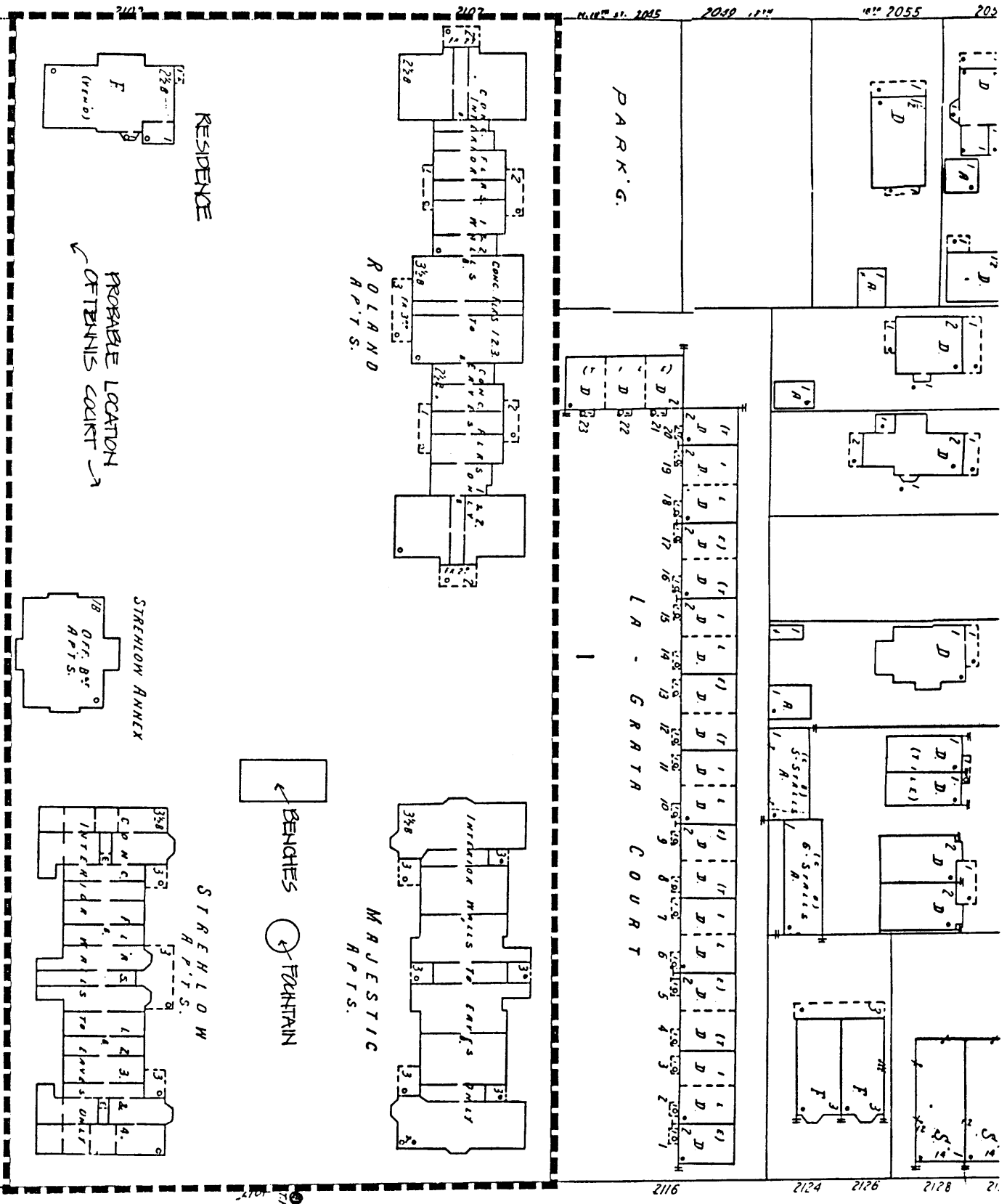
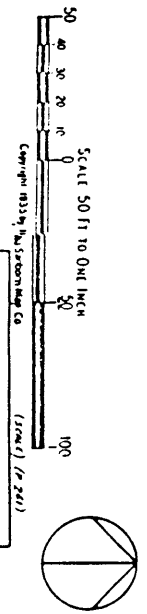
Also all of Lot 5, Block 2, Paddock Place, an addition to the City of Omaha, as surveyed, platted and recorded in Douglas County, Nebraska, including all historically associated property.



36" W.P.  
65'  
6" W.P.

2028 2032 2036 2040 2044 2046 2050 2054 2060

233



12" W.P.  
66'  
6" W.P.

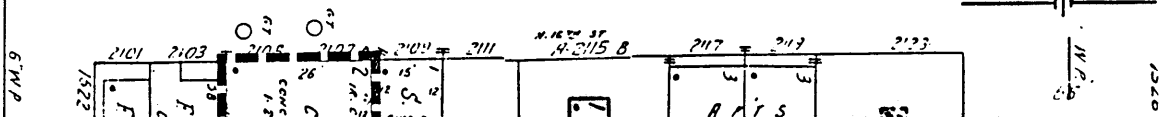




Photo 1 of 8 — Strehlow Terrace, view looking northwest from courtyard showing fountain.  
Photo by Lynn Meyer, Omaha City Planning Department, 1985



Photo 2 of 8 — Strehlow Terrace, The Majestic, view looking northeast from courtyard property.  
Photo by Lynn Meyer, Omaha City Planning Department, 1985



Photo 3 of 8 — Strehlow Terrace, The Strehlow, view looking southwest from courtyard.  
 Photo by Lynn Meyer, Omaha City Planning Department, 1985



Photo 4 of 8 — Strehlow Terrace, The Roland, view looking northwest from courtyard  
 Photo by Lynn Meyer, Omaha City Planning Department, 1985



Photo 5 of 8 — Strehlow Terrace, Strehlow House, view looking southwest from courtyard  
 Photo by Lynn Meyer, Omaha City Planning Department, 1985



Photo 6 of 8 — Strehlow Terrace, Strehlow Terrace Garage, view looking east from 16th Street  
 Photo by Lynn Meyer, Omaha City Planning Department, 1985





Photo 7 of 8 — Strehlow Terrace, Strehlow Annex, view looking southwest from courtyard  
 Photo by Lynn Meyer, Omaha City Planning Department, 1985



Photo 8 of 8 — Strehlow Terrace, historic view looking west across courtyard.  
 Nathaniel Dewell Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society, June 1929, NSHS SHn 1647(a) (H673.5-4649)