



ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY REPORT

Victorian Center Neighborhood Architectural Survey
Waterville, Maine

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CARMA PROJECT ID# M18142

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Prepared for:

Sponsoring agency or entity
City of Waterville
One Common Street
Waterville, ME 04901

Dates:

Provide the dates from when the project was started up through when the report was written and/or revised and submitted.
September 2024-May 2025

Level:

Reconnaissance or Intensive
Reconnaissance

Name of surveyors:

(If different from author, provide contact information for each surveyor.)
Julie Ann Larry

Continuing project?

If so, please summarize previous efforts.
No.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The survey documents historic resources in the Victorian Center neighborhood, an area bounded by Western Avenue and Messalonskee Stream to the south, Messalonskee Stream to the west, downtown Waterville (Elm Street) to the east, and the former Maine Central Railroad line to the north. The Victorian Center neighborhood is approximately 162 acres and encompasses approximately 450 parcels with historic resources. This survey documents approximately 475 primary structures, and 223 outbuildings, including barns, carriage barns, and garages.

Most of the resources in the survey area are in good to fair condition, with some replacement windows, replacement siding, or enclosed porches affecting the architectural integrity of the individual resources. Despite these losses of materials and design, the survey area remains a cohesive residential neighborhood that illustrates its evolution from a rural area in the mid 19th century to a suburban neighborhood to downtown Waterville at the turn of the 20th century. The minor alterations on individual properties do not affect the integrity of the neighborhood or the neighborhood's ability to convey its historic and architectural significance.

Two potential historic districts were identified as well as two potentially individually eligible resources beyond those previously determined eligible by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission as part of this survey.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN AND BACKGROUND RESEARCH

A. Basis:

Describe the purpose of this survey. Identify the Federal or State regulations mandating this survey, or any Programmatic Agreements associated with this project.

The purpose of this investigation was to conduct a reconnaissance survey and make recommendations regarding National Register eligibility for above ground resources within the survey boundary in Waterville, Maine. This work is required by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) as required by Historic Preservation Fund grant requirements as administered by the National Park Service.

B. Survey and Research Goals

Describe the goals of the project, specifically referencing what information is expected to be collected. Address how this information will be interpreted and utilized. Summarize previous survey activities related to this project and discuss and current knowledge about the historic contexts or property types, based on background research or assessments of previous research.

The survey documents historic resources in the Victorian Center neighborhood, an area bounded by Western Avenue and Messalonskee Stream to the south, Messalonskee Stream to the west, downtown Waterville (Elm Street) to the east, and the former Maine Central Railroad line to the north in Waterville. The Victorian Center neighborhood is approximately 162 acres and encompasses approximately 450 parcels with historic resources. With the recent demolition of a small number of neighborhood residences and alterations to historic houses, there has been expressed interest in documenting the neighborhood's historic resources and exploring the potential for a historic district. The results of the survey will assist the City of Waterville to identify additional significant local historic resources to protect to proactively control potential loss of historic resources; update local and state historic resources inventories and identify potential new federal or local historic districts or individual landmarks.

Specific project goals were:

- 1) To develop a historic and architectural context statement for the neighborhood
- 3) To conduct a reconnaissance survey of 450 parcels of land in the neighborhood following MHPC survey standards and methodology.
- 4) To identify contexts for National Register evaluation and to apply the National Register criteria to all resources identified in the survey.

The number of survey forms stated in the project goals (450 survey forms) were exceeded during the field work by the inclusion of secondary dwellings at the rear of primary dwellings, and the inclusion of significant outbuildings.

C. Survey Boundaries:

1. Provide a narrative describing the limits of the surveyed area. Make reference to geographic landmarks, addresses or political boundaries. Utilize reasonable demarcations – tree lines, back lots, etc..

The survey documents historic resources in the Victorian Center neighborhood, an area bounded by Western Avenue and Messalonskee Stream to the south, Messalonskee Stream to the west, downtown Waterville (Elm Street) to the east, and the former Maine Central Railroad line to the north in Waterville.

D. Survey Methodology:

1. Describe background research method, including archival and historical research, institutions consulted, location of data, etc.

Primary sources of information include historic maps and atlases, street directories, street files, and files on Waterville located at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. Additional primary sources of information include property deeds, federal census records, and historic tax photos available online through Colby College. Additional sources are included in the bibliography below.

2. Describe field research method.

A field survey was conducted in November and December of 2024 with additional photos taken in April of 2025. A photo was taken of each building in the survey area and important character defining details were noted. Current photographs were compared to historic images where available to determine if any alterations or additions had been made.

3. Indicate whether a file search was undertaken at MHPC for National Register listed or previously recorded properties.

Yes. In addition, the consultant noted resources already present in the CARMA database. MHPC files included older survey records not in CARMA.

E. Goals:

1. Provide the number of acres in the planned survey area.

162

2. Provide the number of surveys this project is expected to generate.

450

III. SURVEY FINDINGS

A. Acres:

Provide the total number of acres within the survey boundaries. If at the completion of the project the number of acres or the survey boundaries have changed provide an explanation of why this occurred and how the new boundaries were chosen.

The survey boundary encompasses approximately 153 acres. This is less than the anticipated acreage due to the large number of resources, we eliminated a mid-20th century residential development on Sunset Terrace and a portion of Pleasant and North Street that has been significantly altered by demolitions of historic resources and the construction of commercial buildings in the later 20th and early 21st century.

Demolished residences in the vicinity of North and Pleasant Streets include a 2nd Empire dwelling at 24 North Street, a brick Greek Revival at 87 Pleasant Street and six residential buildings at the corner of Pleasant and Main Streets for the expansion of the Kennebec Savings Bank building and parking lots. **Figure 1** below indicates the location of demolished resources with a red star.



Figure 1. Demolished Properties in the northern end of the survey area.

B. Setting:

Provide a general overview of the setting(s) in the project area. Include a summary of the topography, level of development, land use and landscape features.

The Victorian Center neighborhood consists of densely developed residences dating primarily from the mid 19th and early 20th centuries. The area is almost exclusively residential with some business and religious uses primarily along Pleasant and Elm Streets. Lot sizes range from very small lots less than 0.10 acre to large lots around 0.75 acre. The topography of the area is relatively flat with steep slopes near the unnamed stream that divides the neighborhood, at the rear of properties along Mesalonskee Stream. A gentler slope extends from the hill along Morrill Street down to Gilman Street.

Most homes are located at street level, while homes along Burleigh Street and north of Gilman Street are sometimes on elevated sites. Residences with elevated sites may have retaining walls or fences with stairs to access the front stoop or porch, but most simply have grass lawns extending from the house to the street with no intermediary landscape features. While several streets have sidewalks, some of the narrow streets have partial sidewalks or sidewalks on one side of the street only. Sidewalks consist of both bituminous paving throughout the survey area. Granite curbs appear throughout.

C. Number of Resources Recorded:

Count each individually recorded building, structure, object, or site. Do not include continuation sheets in this count. Differentiate between newly recorded resources and previously surveyed resources.

A total of 712 resources were documented within the survey area. These resources include 24 barns and 189 garages. Forty-six previously surveyed or documented resources were included. Four of the forty-six previously surveyed resources were found to have been demolished. Seven of the previously documented resources are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

D. Previously Recorded Properties:

Address whether any of the resources had been previously surveyed. If so, how many, and how were these properties represented and evaluated within the current project?

Forty-five resources in the Victorian Center neighborhood have been previously documented with Maine Historic Preservation Commission Survey Forms. Maine DOT and other government organizations have sponsored surveys in the survey area. Previously surveyed properties included properties on Elm Street, a small group of properties at the intersection of North and West Streets and a survey of properties near the Western Avenue bridge over Messalonskee Stream.

Surveyed resources not yet in CARMA were added to CARMA as part of this project. Recently surveyed resources from a project in 2019 were visually assessed in the field for any recent changes, then if no changes were needed, they were printed and included in the survey products.

E. Types of Properties:

1. Summarize general building and functional trends within the project area: commercial, residential, urban, rural, etc.

Resources are generally residential with some commercial and religious resources on Elm Street and Pleasant Street. School buildings are also present on Gilman Street and Pleasant Street. The former High School on Gilman Street is now a residential property while the former Junior High School on Pleasant Street school is used as a primary school.

2. Summarize the age, style, and condition of the resources within the project area, including surveyed and un-surveyed properties. The matrix is designed to summarize this information, not to replace this narrative description.

Residential resources in the project area range from the early-19th century to the early 21st century and include Greek Revival, Italianate, Stick, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman style residences. Building forms include bungalows, capes, four squares, apartment buildings, and many multifamily residences that from the exterior are difficult to distinguish visually from their single-family neighbors. The identified resources are generally in fair to good condition. Condition is usually impacted by the application of replacement siding, windows, doors and infilled porches or other additions, especially for multi-family residences that have been altered to provide secondary entrances to upstairs units.

3. Describe in greater detail any National Register eligible individual properties or historic districts.

Potentially Individually Eligible Buildings:

- Sacred Heart Church at 72 Pleasant Street (1908-1929) is in good condition and a good example of a Romanesque Church by architects

Timothy G. O'Connell and Richard J. Shaw of Boston. It would be eligible under Criterion C: Architecture and Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties

- Elm Towers at 60 Elm Street (1972) is in good condition and a unique local example of modern mid-rise architecture. It would be eligible under Criterion C: Architecture.

Potentially Eligible Districts:

- There is a potential historic district in the Victorian Center Neighborhood. Most of the resources in the Victorian Center Neighborhood are in good to fair condition, with some replacement windows or siding affecting the architectural integrity of the individual resources. However, the survey area remains a cohesive residential neighborhood that illustrates its evolution from a rural area to a residential downtown neighborhood. The minor alterations on individual properties do not affect the integrity of the neighborhood or the neighborhood's ability to convey its historic and architectural significance. The potential historic district in the Victorian Center neighborhood would be significant under National Register Criteria A: Social History and Community Development, as well as National Register Criteria C: Architecture as a locally good example of a neighborhood that evolved from a rural area to a suburban neighborhood in the second half of the 19th century, into the first decades of the 20th century. Its period of significance would be from circa 1850 to c1937 when streetcar service ended on the adjacent streets network, most of the neighborhood was built out, and would encompass the construction period of many of the neighborhood's early garages. Its boundaries are basically the same as the survey area, Western Avenue and Messalonskee Stream to the south, Messalonskee Stream to the west, downtown Waterville (Elm Street) to the east, and the former Maine Central Railroad line to the north with some minor contractions.
- The complex of seven buildings currently owned by the Kennebec Water District on South and Cool Streets on the banks of Messalonskee Stream are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The complex includes two buildings, Kennebec Water District Pumping Station and a similar styled adjacent building, previously determined eligible for listing in 2013. Also included would be the former Central Maine Power Messalonskee Station No. 4 hydroelectric facility building and dam both built c 1924. It would be eligible under Criterion C: Architecture/Engineering and Criterion A: Community Planning.

F. NR Eligibility:

1. List all new or previously determined eligible or previously listed National Register properties. For each property address the resource's integrity, the applicable National Register criteria(on), the area of significance and the period of significance. Define the property's character defining features.

Previously Listed:

- First Baptist Church at 1 Park Street was listed in 1976 for its architectural significance with a period of significance of 1826.

- Heald House at 19 West Street was listed on the NRHP in 2005 under Criterion C: Architecture with a period of significance of 1916.
- Alvin O. Lombard House and Carriage Barn at 65-67 Elm Street were listed in 1982 significance in inventions and architecture with a period of significance of 1908.
- Foster-Redington House and Garage at 8 Park Place were listed in 2014 under Criterion B: Commerce and Criterion C: Architecture with a period of significance from 1883-1923.
- Waterville High School was listed in 2010 under Criterion A: Education and Criterion C: Architecture with a period of significance from 1909-1940

Previously Determined Eligible:

- Waterville Public Library (**MHPC # 462-0171**) at 73 Elm Street was determined eligible for the NRHP in 2001 and again in 2019.
- Kennebec Water District Pump Station and Buildings (**MHPC #462-0219 & 462-0220**) at 5 South Street were determined eligible for the NRHP in 2013.
- Hannaford Brothers Office Building at 55 Elm Street (**MHPC #462-0290**) was determined eligible for the NRHP in 2019.
- Veterans Memorial Park (**MHPC #462-0293**) and its memorial resources were determined eligible for the NRHP in 2019. The resources are in good condition and would be eligible under Criterion C: Architecture/Art.
- Melcher Block (**MHPC #462-0169**) at 77 Elm Street was determined eligible in 2019.

Potentially Individually Eligible Buildings/Sites:

- Sacred Heart Church at 72 Pleasant Street (1908-1929) is in good condition and a good example of a Romanesque Church by architects Timothy G. O'Connell and Richard J. Shaw of Boston. It would be eligible under Criterion C: Architecture and Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties
- Elm Towers at 60 Elm Street (1972) is in good condition and a unique local example of modern mid-rise architecture. It would be eligible under Criterion C: Architecture.

Potentially Eligible Districts:

- A potential historic district in the Victorian Center Neighborhood would be significant under National Register Criteria A: Social History and Community Development as well as National Register Criteria C: Architecture as a locally good example of a neighborhood that evolved from a rural area to downtown residential neighborhood. Its period of significance would be from the construction of the earliest known extant structure circa 1826 to the end of streetcar service on the adjacent transportation corridors in 1937. Its period of significance would encompass the construction period of many of the neighborhood's early garages. The potential boundaries of the district would largely mirror the boundaries of the survey area (Western Avenue and Messalonskee Stream to the south, Messalonskee Stream to the west, downtown Waterville (Elm

Street) to the east, and the former Maine Central Railroad line to the north) with some contractions along Western Avenue, Elm Street and Pleasant Street where demolitions, alterations, or new construction has eroded the historic integrity of the neighborhood.

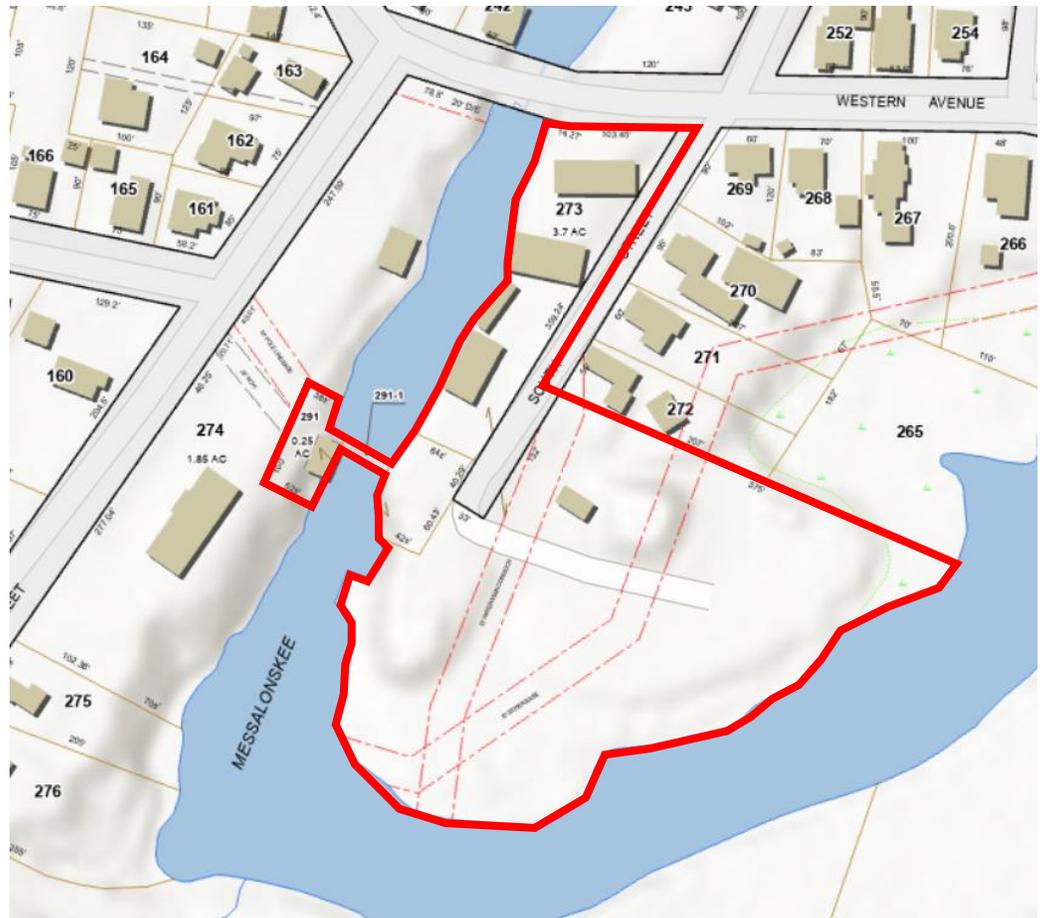
- The complex of seven buildings currently owned by the Kennebec Water District on South and Cool Streets on the banks of Messalonskee Stream are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The complex includes two buildings, Kennebec Water District Pumping Station and a similar styled adjacent building, previously determined eligible for listing in 2013. Also included would be the former Central Maine Power Messalonskee Station No. 4 hydroelectric facility building and dam both built c 1924. It would be eligible under Criterion C: Architecture/Engineering and Criterion A: Community Planning. The boundaries of the potential district follows the political boundaries of the two parcels as shown on City of Waterville tax maps.

2. For an eligible historic district provide a topographic map showing the limits of the proposed district. Supply additional photographs illustrating street or landscape views, as well as all non-historic or non-contributing resources. Key the map to the survey forms.

Figure 2. Potential Boundaries of a Victorian Center Neighborhood:



Figure 3. Potential Boundaries of a historic district along Messalonskee Stream:



G. Threats:

Discuss any known or anticipated threats to the survey area. These might include, for example, development (sprawl, teardowns, 'urban renewal' projects), neglect, or environmental threats.

Commercial expansion, parking needs, fires, and lack of maintenance are all threats apparent in the Victorian Center neighborhood.

On the north end of the neighborhood Ware-Butler and other commercial expansion has resulted in the demolition of historic properties on Pleasant and North Streets.

Recent fires led to the demolition of 13 Morrill Avenue (**MHPC #462-0230**) and 22 School Street which was replaced by a new dwelling (**Map #517**) in 2025. Also in 2025, two dwellings (**Map #583 & #584**) were demolished to accommodate additional parking for the First Baptist Church at 1 Park Street.

Throughout the neighborhood, siding and window replacement, porch repairs and garage teardowns were noted as altering historic materials or demolishing historic outbuildings. Several structures, both primary structures and outbuildings, appear to be vacant and at risk of demolition, especially the dwelling and former barn at 1 Nudd Street and the former Sacred Heart Church and rectory at 72-74 Pleasant Street.

H. Recommendations for Further Work:

1. Provide recommendations for future survey work, for example, expanding the survey boundaries, developing a local or National Register nomination, or publishing the results of the survey to a website.

The City of Waterville's website page for the Historic Preservation Commission should have a link to the CARMA database for easy access to the new and existing survey forms. The website should also link to the Colby College arcgis webpage that contains links to some of the available 1930s' historic photos. These photos could be helpful to homeowners as they make improvements to their properties.

<https://colbycollege.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=e996e4e692c340b0adf6d0766ecd244a&extent=-69.6492,44.5459,-69.6231,44.5600>

The City of Waterville should consider a local designation of the survey area as a local historic district to manage alterations to resources in the neighborhood and to prevent demolition of contributing resources.

I. Data Repository:

Describe where copies of the survey products (maps, matrix, photographs, disks, forms, report, etc) will be stored and how they will be made available to the public, if applicable.

Copies of newly recorded resources have been added to the CARMA database. Hard copies of the records will be on file at Maine Historic Preservation Commission and a digital copy of the survey will be available at Waterville City Hall.

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Maps

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Plan of Waterville Concourse, Waterville, Maine, 1967. Shows parking and retail buildings.

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[LOC] Library of Congress

V. HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

Waterville lies on the western bank of the Kennebec River with its downtown area immediately adjacent to the riverfront. This historic commercial and industrial center is located north of the confluence of the Kennebec River and Messalonskee Stream. Across the Kennebec River in Winslow, the Sebasticook Stream flows into the river. The falls on the Kennebec between Waterville and Winslow were utilized by native tribes and known as Teconnet [Tacconnet], which was anglicized to Ticonic. The Kennebec River was a major travel way for native tribes and evidence of a major seasonal camp and settlement along the Kennebec at the falls and near the junction of the three waterways between the river's mouth at Popham Beach on the Atlantic Ocean and the river's headwaters at Moosehead Lake has been documented over the years.

The project survey area is located to the west of the downtown area. The Victorian Center Neighborhood is a primarily residential neighborhood of late 19th and early 20th century dwellings with a few churches, commercial and institutional buildings on its eastern edge, adjacent to the downtown. Its boundaries are Western Avenue and Messalonskee Stream to the south, Messalonskee Stream to the west, downtown Waterville (Elm Street) to the east, and the former Maine Central Railroad line to the north. The neighborhood is divided by a small unnamed brook that flows from north of the railroad line, east of Pleasant Street, before joining Messalonskee Stream south of Western Avenue.

At its incorporation as a town in 1802 Waterville, previously part of the town of Winslow, had a population of approximately 800. The First Baptist Church at the corner of Park and Elm Street (**MHPC #462-0001**) was constructed in 1826. In 1829 Waterville Classical Institute opened a new two-story brick building on Elm Street south of Park Street and Monument Park (now Veterans Memorial Park **MHPC #462-0293**). The Waterville Classical Institute was moved for a new brick building in 1882, later demolished and is now the site of Elm Towers (**Map #26**).

Most of the Victorian Center neighborhood's Greek Revival and Gothic Revival dwellings are located in the easternmost section of the neighborhood, predominately along Pleasant Street and side streets between Elm and Pleasant Streets. Winter Street between Elm and Pleasant has a distinct group of Greek Revival residences. The dwellings are mainly small in scale with minimal extant Greek Revival details, except for their Greek Revival door surrounds with several of the entrances inset from the front facade

In 1848 the Androscoggin and Kennebec Railroad came to the city, and seven years later the Penobscot and Kennebec Railroad would be built, offering further rail service to Bangor. Telegraph lines laid along the tracks reached the city in 1854.

Mid-19th century maps depict development in the Victorian Center Neighborhood as mainly limited to areas east of the dividing unnamed brook. Pleasant Street was mainly lined with residences, while Elm Street was a mix of residential, institutional, and religious buildings. To the north of the neighborhood at the intersection of Main and Pleasant Streets and at the junction of the Androscoggin and Kennebec Railroad with the Penobscot and Kennebec Railroad was a depot. A freight house and railroad repair shop

were located to the east of the Depot across Main Street. (The two rail lines would merge to form the Maine Central Railroad in 1862).

Both the Messalonskee and Kennebec were used to power factories like a shovel-handle factory, cotton mills, sawmills and shoe-factories. French Catholic immigrants from Quebec arrived in the city around 1830 to work in those various factories. A shirt factory was established east of Main Street in the early 1850s by C.F. Hathaway. Responding to advertisements by Hathaway and others, Syrian Lebanese immigrants began arriving in the city to work in the factories, on the railroad, and in other local businesses in the second half of the 19th century.

The Ticonic Water Power and Manufacturing Company was formed in 1866, and two years later a dam was built across the Kennebec River. In 1873 a large cotton mill was built. Amos D. Lockwood became involved in the cotton mill project, and soon the Lockwood Company was formed. By 1882 the company expanded with a second larger mill, and by the turn of the century the mill complex was employing 1,300 persons, mainly women. The manufacturing opportunities attracted more French-Canadian immigrants to Waterville and in 1874 St. Francis de Sales Roman Catholic Church was built on Elm Street to serve Waterville's Catholic residents (**MHPC #462-0009**).

A Methodist church (**Map #350**) was built at 61 Pleasant Street in 1870 and St. Mark's Episcopal Church was constructed at 1 Center Street in 1878 were also built in the same period as was the town's first public high school, the Waterville Free High School, established in 1876. A second St. Mark's Episcopal Church was built 1901-1911 (**Map #301**) on the site of the earlier St. Mark's Church and Rectory buildings on Center Street.

In 1884, Waterville out-bid Portland and other cities to become the home of the Maine Central Railroad car and locomotive repair shops, bringing hundreds of new jobs to the area and thoroughly establishing the town as a railroad center. The railroad maintains a major railyard in Waterville to the present day. The city's population grew in response to the increased railroad access and the opportunities factories and their ancillary support operations offered. In 1880 the population of Waterville was 4,672 and by the end of the century was 9,477.

Between 1880 and 1890 the population increased by nearly 3000 people and this rapid rise in population led to the town becoming a city in 1888. While many factory workers were often lodged in company housing, to the west of the city center middle class neighborhoods began to develop in the 1890s. An 1878 map of the town indicates that the Victorian Center neighborhood was still largely centered on Elm and Pleasant Streets, with very little residential development west of the unnamed brook that divides the neighborhood, except for Winter and North Streets. By 1895 residential development had spread west along Morrill Avenue, Dalton, Winter, Crommett, Boothby, and Lawrence Streets.

In the first part of the 20th century, institutional buildings like the Public Library (**MHPC #462-0171**) were constructed. The 1905 library was designed by architect William Robinson Miller, who also designed the public library in Auburn. The library is constructed in the Richardsonian style that was popular for library buildings in the 1870's and 1880's. Subsequently, the building was renovated and expanded. In 1912 Waterville's Central Fire Station was constructed near the intersection of Main Street and College Avenue. A year later the new Post Office (**MHPC #462-0170**) at Elm and Main Streets opened.

During this same period land on the western edge of the Victorian Center neighborhood was laid out for development. Prior to his death in 1901, George F. Gilman of Bridgeport, Connecticut owned a large amount of land to the west of the downtown. Gilman, who was born in Maine, was a prosperous New York entrepreneur. He co-founded the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company in 1869, the first grocery chain store, which was later known as the A&P.

In 1903, a portion of the George Gilman Estate on Gilman Street between Middle and West Street was purchased by Edward C. Marcia, a local carpenter. He sold his house lots and may have been involved with the construction of the houses as well but he never settled in the neighborhood. Marcia boarded elsewhere in town with a carpentry shop on Charles Street (Between Temple and Silver Streets, east of Elm Street, now a parking lot). This section of the Victorian Center neighborhood includes properties on West, Carroll, Morrill and Middle Streets. One residence, the Heald House at 19 West Street was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.

After George F. Gilman's death, the vast majority of his remaining Waterville land holdings were sold to the Waterville Land Company in 1905. Within a month, the company produced a plan to divide their holdings into 75 house lots that averaged 70' x 100' or 70' by 140' on West, Bartlett, Burleigh, and Heath Streets. As quickly as the lots were platted and sold, single and duplex family houses were built and occupied. The houses were almost exclusively constructed of wood, generally vernacular Colonial Revival or Queen Anne in style, and many of them may have been based on pattern book designs. Walking access to downtown or the mills, proximity to neighborhood schools on Western Avenue (now a playground), Gilman Street (former Waterville High School **MHPC #461-0211**), and Pleasant Street (now Albert S. Hall School **Map #384**) all attracted middle-class families to the neighborhood.

The Lebanese immigrated to Waterville in waves. The first immigrants arrived in the 1860s following a revolution between Christians and Muslims in what was then part of Syria, while the second wave came in 1910, driven by efforts to avoid conscription into the Turkish Army. The second migration was also encouraged by earlier immigrants who urged their relatives to join them in Waterville to take advantage of increased religious and social freedom and economic opportunity. Initially, Lebanese immigrants worked as peddlers. Later they came to work in the area's railroads and cotton mills. Eventually, many found work in the woolen mills which offered higher pay and better working conditions. Many Lebanese settled at the Head of Falls and on Front Street with the church and social organizations playing an important role in their lives.

Immigration played a significant role in Waterville's religious history. The early French-Canadian immigrants who came to Waterville to work in the mills led to the establishment of St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church at 52 Elm Street in 1874 (**MHPC #462-009**). Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church was established in 1908 to serve the non-French, English speaking, Catholic population, mostly comprise of Irish immigrants in 1908 at 72 Pleasant Street (**Map #343**). Initially masses were first conducted in the building's basement. Construction on the church was completed in 1930, and the church was officially dedicated. Sacred Heart School opened in 1944. Lebanese immigrant families that were Maronite Catholics attended services at Sacred Heart Church until 1924. The community later established St. Joseph Maronite Church on Appleton Street near the Kennebec River waterfront.

In the 1920s several developments helped to shape the neighborhood. In 1922 the old high school on Pleasant Street was demolished to accommodate construction of the new Junior High School, now known as the Albert S. Hall School at 27 Pleasant Street (**Map #384**). At the north end of the neighborhood Ware-Butler opened south of the train tracks in 1925.

Streetcar access in the Victorian Center neighborhood along Western Avenue and Elm Street was lost in the 1930s. With the relief of traffic congestion as the primary stated reason for the decision by its owners Central Maine Power Co., the Waterville, Fairfield and Oakland Street Railway was abandoned in 1937, and the last electric streetcar ran on October 11 of that year. In 1959 the last passenger train serviced Waterville, although cargo trains have continued to the present day. Soon after passenger train service ended, Waterville was connected to the new interstate highway system with two exits, one at Oakland Road/Kennedy Memorial Drive and the other at Upper Main Street.

The influence of the automobile and changes in modes of transportation is readily apparent in the Victorian Center neighborhood. While a number of mid to late 19th century carriage barns were converted to garages in the 20th century, detached one-car and two-car garages are numerous in the neighborhood, with early examples from the 1910s and 1920s. More common are garages from the 1930s and 1940s, that are slightly larger in scale than earlier examples. Homes from this period and post World War II in the neighborhood often incorporate an attached garage into the design of the dwelling.

Waterville reshaped its downtown area substantially in the 1960s. In 1960, the establishment of the Urban Renewal Authority set Waterville's urban renewal initiative in motion. Among the many old and historic buildings lost during the process were the Elmwood Hotel, Colby's Memorial Hall, and the First Congregational Church. The process of destruction lasted roughly a decade, eliminating old buildings and substandard residences in an effort to improve the city and traffic flow. Charles Street and the buildings along it were cleared to create the Concourse, a large parking lot and shopping complex, next to Main Street. New buildings on Elm Street like Hannaford Brothers at 55 Elm Street (**MHPC #462-0290**) and 61 Elm Street (**MHPC #462-0292**) were constructed as part of this renewal.

Although one goal of Urban Renewal was to improve the accessibility of downtown Waterville, downtown Waterville was simultaneously losing some of its vitality. Like in many communities, the City's new interstate exits became popular areas for business development, most of it in the form of suburban chain stores that outcompeted many downtown businesses. Waterville's population began to drop, due to a lull in the national economy and a nationwide shift to more suburban and rural living. In 1960, Waterville had a population of 18,695, but by 2000 its population declined to 15,605.

New textile plants opening in the southern United States offered cheaper goods and Waterville's mills suffered, resulting in layoffs and mill closings in the middle decades of the 20th century. The latter half of the twentieth century was accompanied by the closing of many of Waterville's factories and mills. The Wyandotte Worsted Company shut its doors in the 1980s. Scott Paper cut back on its operations in 1993. Two years later, Kimberly-Clark bought Scott Paper and continued cutbacks until the plant closed in 1997. In 1996, the former Hathaway Company, manufacturers of shirts, was on the verge of closure and taken over by a group of local business and government leaders as one of the last major American shirt companies to

produce shirts in the United States. The factory was kept open, but the competition was too much, and in 2002 the factory closed for good.

Also, at the end of the 20th century, further consolidation of the city's Catholic churches came in 1996, when Sacred Heart at 72 Pleasant Street (**Map #343**), Notre Dame, and St. Francis de Sales merged into a single Parish of the Holy Spirit. In 2013 St. Francis de Sales closed and the building was subsequently demolished. The land at 52 Elm Street was used for new apartments for low-income seniors. Sacred Heart Catholic Church ceased celebrating masses in 2006 and closed its soup kitchen in 2020.

Waterville Main Street, funded by a statewide downtown restoration initiative, was organized to help downtown businesses and promote cultural events to attract people to downtown Waterville. The city also worked on beautification projects, including a redesign of the controversial Concourse parking lot. As the 21st century took hold, plans continued for new developments to fill in the empty spaces left from urban renewal and closed factories. The plans marked a return to the Kennebec River as a center of the community, no longer for industrial purposes but for aesthetic value. Using state and federal historic tax credits a private developer remodeled the old Lockwood and Hathaway mill facilities into the Hathaway Creative Center, a multi-use complex for stores, apartments, and studios aimed at local artists in 2009.

In the first quarter of the new century the City of Waterville is experiencing a dramatic new resurgence. Since 2000 the population has slowly increased. The City and Colby College have worked together on a community revitalization plan that builds on the city's historic architecture, local businesses, and anchor institutions. Projects funded by Colby College and the Harold Alford Foundation include a new mixed-use building with student housing and retail, a hotel, a new cultural arts center, and the renovation of a historic office building in the downtown area. The revival of downtown has likely led to recent renovations and other improvements in a few residential structures in the Victorian Center neighborhood since its historic proximity to downtown makes it a desirable location to live once again. As reinvestment in the neighborhood continues, there is the potential for restoring lost or deteriorating architectural features as well as the potential loss of architectural features like windows, original doors, and siding. Also at risk are the neighborhood's many small single and double garages from the first half of the 20th century.