

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Bluff Road Historic District

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

German Market Garden Farms of Perry Township (Marion County), Indiana, 1867-1972

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

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly on both sides of Bluff Road from Sprague Street to 4724 Bluff Road

City or town: Indianapolis State: IN County: Marion

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site

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Structure

Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>60</u>	<u>24</u>	buildings
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>73</u>	<u>25</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: single dwelling

Agriculture/subsistence: agricultural outbuilding

Agriculture/subsistence: agricultural field

Agriculture/subsistence: horticultural activity

Transportation: road-related (vehicular)

Commerce/Trade: specialty store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: single dwelling

Agriculture/subsistence: agricultural outbuilding

Agriculture/subsistence: agricultural field

Agriculture/subsistence: horticultural activity

Transportation: road-related (vehicular)

Commerce/Trade: specialty store

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian: Italianate _____

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Tudor Revival _____

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival _____

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival _____

Late 19th and 20th Century American Movements: Bungalow/Craftsman _____

Other: Gable Front _____

Other: No style _____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE _____

walls: SYNTHETICS _____

roof: SYNTHETICS _____

other: GLASS, WOOD, BRICK _____

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Located a short distance south of downtown Indianapolis, the Bluff Road Historic District encompasses roughly 95 acres of farm complexes, dwellings, businesses, and transportation resources. These resources span an approximate 0.90-mile stretch of Bluff Road from the south side of Sprague Street on the north to just north of Thompson Road on the south, bisected by I-465. The resources are associated with a community of German market garden farmers who settled in Perry Township along Bluff Road, an established and heavily traveled thoroughfare into and out of the city of Indianapolis from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. The district includes seventy-four contributing resources and twenty-four noncontributing resources.

Narrative Description

Bluff Road extends south/southwest from Indianapolis across gently rolling land east of the White River. The road traverses Lick Creek within the district. Most residential buildings along

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the slightly diagonal road face due east or west, rather than being aligned perpendicular to the road, giving the houses a somewhat skewed appearance in relation to the road. (See photo 0036.) While numerous east-west roads cross Bluff Road in Perry Township, there are no cross streets within the district. Interstate 465 (I-465), constructed in the 1960s, divides the district into northern and southern halves. (See photo 0023.) Tracks for the former Indiana Central Railroad are located just west of the district, crossing Bluff Road a few miles south of the district near Banta Road. The area along Bluff Road included in the district retains mostly resources related to market garden farming and linear residential development. The linear development here is not due to mid-twentieth-century suburban development, as is often the case on rural roads near urban areas. Rather, the development dates to the late nineteenth century and reflects patterns of German farm family members building houses near other family members, with farm fields and outbuildings generally located behind and sometimes beside the dwellings. Several modern housing developments have been constructed to the south and east, outside the district's boundaries.

Most of the contributing historic resources in the district are associated with small agricultural complexes related historically to the cultivation of vegetables and other produce. (See photo 0004.) These resources, many located on long narrow lots with minimal road frontage, vary somewhat from property to property and can include some combination of the following: one or more houses, a boiler house, boiler chimney, greenhouses or greenhouse frames, barns, sheds, storage buildings, wellhouses, and garages. Some complexes retain the patterns of narrow fields historically used by the growers during cultivation. Aerial photographs show that these fields were often further subdivided as needed, depending on the crops being cultivated in a given year. It is the overall size and shape of a small garden farm's fields that are primarily considered, since the subdivisions of the field could vary from year to year. When multiple fields are present on a property, they count as one resource.

Greenhouses from the historic period, which were vital to the winter cultivation of vegetables along Bluff Road and elsewhere, are an increasingly rare resource. (See photo 0019.) The greenhouse frames are considered the basic resource because exterior cladding was replaced due to breakage or innovations in exterior material types. Glass panes broke easily due to weather events and other incidents. Plastic, both in panes and sheets, became the material of choice in the second half of the twentieth century due to its light weight and lower cost. Older greenhouses are generally topped with gable roofs. A cluster of greenhouses or greenhouse frames may have multiple bays with gable roofs. These clusters are usually interconnected and without walls on the interior; therefore, a grouping such as this is considered a single resource. In the second half of the twentieth century, arched greenhouses covered by plastic with no roof/wall joint became more common. While older greenhouses could be dismantled and moved, and occasionally were, their size and complexity meant this did not happen frequently. Aerial photos show that most of the surviving greenhouses in the district remained in the same location over the decades. Newer greenhouses or older examples that have been retrofitted for nursery production, have walls that are typically covered with plastic or plastic panes, though roofs are sometimes left open, covered with netting or plastic depending upon what plants are being cultivated and the season. (See photos 0019, 0021.) Sometimes new greenhouses are constructed in part with old materials, as was the case on the Gary property. (See photo 0025.)

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The residences within the district represent numerous types and styles of dwellings, most modest in both size and detail, ranging in age from circa 1890 to the early 1970s. Some of the houses have a decidedly European feel, with details associated commonly with the Tudor Revival style, such as multi-level roofs, asymmetrical facades, half-timber details, patterned masonry, clipped gables, oversized dormer windows, and leaded and stained-glass windows. (See photos 0024, 0030.) Others represent popular early twentieth-century types and styles such as American Foursquare and Craftsman bungalows. (See photo 0017.) Many houses in the district are of frame construction, though some are of brick, concrete, or stone, and those dating from the mid-twentieth century have brick or stone veneer exteriors. While there are a handful of two-story houses in the district, dwellings of one and one-and-one-half stories are common, with the one-and-one-half-story, gable-front house form prevalent. This house form adapted easily to changing architectural fashions, including Folk Victorian and Craftsman or in some cases a combination of both. Several of the one-and-one-half-story, gable front houses display distinctive, square, single-sash windows on the front of the house near the junction of the roof and side walls. (See photos 0005, 0042, and 0043.) By the mid-twentieth century, some farm family members chose to build Ranch houses, a style that was increasing in popularity locally and nationally in both rural and suburban areas. (See photo 0013.)

There are several transportation-related resources within the district, including Bluff Road, a bridge, and two former service stations which serviced local vehicles and those passing through. Bluff Road, which has followed the same path for over a century and a half, was designated one of the early state highways in Indiana and was one of the routes of the Dixie Highway. A concrete State of Indiana right-of-way marker stands in a field on the Nierman Farm adjacent to the road north of Lick Creek. The road itself is a contributing resource to the district, as is the bridge carrying the road over Lick Creek (Marion Co. Bridge No. 3802F). (See photos 0022, 0007.) The Schebler-Hartman Garage, a Mission Revival-style building constructed in the 1920s, provided gasoline and serviced cars and trucks of local residents. (See photos 0011, 0012.) Likewise, Bob's Century Services delivered fuel and auto-related services to travelers along Bluff Road in the second half of the twentieth century, probably beginning around 1970. (See photo 0008.) Canopies and the fuel pumps they covered have been removed from both buildings, which continue to house automobile repair businesses.

The landscape along Bluff Road has evolved over time, reflecting changes in the cultivation processes of the German gardeners and their descendants. Market garden farms along Bluff Road once boasted acres of glazed greenhouses that sheltered winter crops of lettuce, tomatoes, and cucumbers. (Not all farms utilized greenhouses; some gardeners cultivated only in fields.) Greenhouses were heated by coal-fueled boilers that were vented by tall brick or tile chimneys. Later, in the second half of the twentieth century, greenhouses consisted of light metal frames covered by plastic. The Schlensker-Schlegel Farm retains greenhouses built at various points in the twentieth century. (See photos 0002-0003.) As growers transitioned away from vegetable growing in greenhouses in the second half of the twentieth century, some farmers utilized their greenhouses for new nursery businesses and have built large numbers of modern greenhouses for the sheltered cultivation of flowers, plants, shrubs, and trees. Other growers have converted their operations to produce only field vegetable crops and have removed their greenhouses altogether.

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Surviving greenhouses or greenhouse frames from the period of significance are rare resources. Boiler houses still stand on some farm properties in the district, sometimes converted to offices, garages, or storage sheds. The boiler chimneys once found on every greenhouse farm can still be found in the district, but like the greenhouses, are a dwindling resource. Two farms, the Schlensker-Schlegel Farm and the Alfred and Alice Bunte Farm, retain boiler chimneys of brick or tile. (See photos 0003, 0029.) Younger members of some families have built new houses close to their family homes, continuing a tradition of close-knit family compounds. (See photo 0035.)

The boundaries for the district have been drawn to omit some noncontributing resources, particularly large groups of modern greenhouses at the rear of farm complexes. The majority of noncontributing resources within the boundaries include houses, greenhouses, and other buildings or structures that were constructed outside the period of significance. A few historic-era buildings have lost integrity due to heavy alterations, which have rendered them noncontributing. Structures, such as garden sheds and swimming pools, are not included in the count of resources.

Inventory List

This inventory list is organized into sections using Bluff Road as the north-south divider and I-465 as the east-west divider. Properties are described from north to south within each section, starting with the west side of Bluff Road followed by properties on the east side. Numbers in parentheses after a property's name indicate that the property was included in the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory (IHSSI) when the survey was conducted in the early 1990s or in the state's historic bridge survey. Adjacent properties that are known to have been historically associated with one another are grouped together under one entry. A note about association is made in the inventory entry for discontinuous properties related to another holding. The total number of resources on each site is listed after the address. Properties with only one or two resources are described with one paragraph; more complex properties with multiple resources include an introductory paragraph and a breakdown of resources. The contributing/noncontributing status of individual resources or features within larger sites is noted in the inventory list.

All properties with contributing/noncontributing status, addresses, and photo numbers are shown on the Bluff Road Historic District Overview Map. Three section maps show the same details, but at a scale of 1 inch equals 165 feet.

Northwest Section (See Northwest Section Map)

Schlensker-Schlegel Farm (IHSSI No.: 097-392-85218)

705 & 735 Sprague Street

8 Total Resources: 4 contributing buildings, 1 contributing structure, 3 noncontributing buildings

Photos 0001, 0002, 0003, 0004

Located on Sprague Street adjacent to Bluff Road and encompassing four parcels, the Schlensker-Schlegel Farm includes a farmhouse, greenhouse, boiler house, boiler chimney, garage, and several modern greenhouses. The farm was established in the 1920s by Henry and

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Sophia Schlensker, Ohio natives who bought this property just off Bluff Road after previously renting a farm on Madison Avenue.¹ The property was acquired by Louis F. Schlegel in 1972 and is currently owned by his son who operates a wholesale nursery with his family on the property.²

House 1925, 1 contributing building

705 Sprague Street

This one-and-one-half-story, frame bungalow is topped by a side-gable roof with a gable-roofed front dormer and a rear shed dormer. The house features an interior brick chimney and scalloped trim in the gable ends and dormers. The house has been updated in recent years with aluminum siding and windows and the enclosure of the front porch.

Boiler House circa 1925, 1 contributing building

705 Sprague Street

One-story tall with a side-gable roof, this building housed the boiler for the greenhouses on the Schlenker-Schlegel Farm. The building is located adjacent to the original greenhouse on the property and has been extended with a garage addition and updated with vinyl siding.

Boiler Chimney circa 1925, 1 contributing structure

705 Sprague Street

Contemporary with the boiler house and greenhouse, this tall, tapered brick chimney is located between the two buildings and vented the coal-fueled heating system for the greenhouses.

Greenhouse circa 1925 with late twentieth century additions, 1 contributing building

705 Sprague Street

The metal frame of this greenhouse structure was constructed by Henry Schlenker for his vegetable growing farm. The building, with multiple gables, has the appearance of a row of greenhouses, but is one building with no interior walls. The glass panes were replaced with insulated plastic panes in the late twentieth century. Several additions have been made to the building including an office on the north end and additional greenhouse space to the rear.

Garage circa 1925, 1 contributing building

705 Sprague Street

One-story, gable-roofed frame garage with wood siding and sliding doors in the front gable.

¹ Ancestry.com, *1920 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010). Images reproduced by FamilySearch; Ancestry.com, *1930 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010). Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

² Indiana Historical Society, "The German Growers of Indianapolis," exhibit script, 2018, 22; Louis F. Schlegel, Obituary, *Indianapolis Star*, July 23, 2013, B4, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/107932630>.

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Greenhouses, plastic circa 1985, 2 noncontributing buildings
705 Sprague Street

These plastic covered greenhouses on the east side of the property feature an arched shape and are noncontributing due to age.

Greenhouse circa 1995, 1 noncontributing building
735 Sprague Street

This group of attached gable-roofed greenhouses is noncontributing due to age.

Nierman Farm Complex

4030 Bluff Road

3 Total Resources: 2 contributing buildings, 1 contributing site

Photos 0005, 0006

The Nierman Farm Complex consists of a house, combined boiler house and garage, and historic field patterns. Christian (Christ) N. Nierman (also seen as Niermann) immigrated from his native Germany in 1891. He and his family rented a farm on Madison Avenue before buying this property on Bluff Road prior to 1920. The Niermans cultivated market garden crops in the fields to the south and west of the house and in greenhouses that no longer stand. After Christ N. Nierman retired, his son Christ F. Nierman and his wife, Clara, operated the farm with their family. Clara was a teacher at various schools on the south side of Indianapolis. The property remains in the Nierman family. The family cultivated vegetables in greenhouses and in fields until the early 1970s. The greenhouses have been removed, but the L-shaped field pattern seen on aerial maps as early as the 1950s remains.³

House circa 1920, 1 contributing building

Standing one-and-one-half stories tall, this frame, gable-front house was built circa 1920. The entrance is sheltered by a full-façade shed-roofed porch supported by full-height, rock-faced concrete piers with a balustrade of the same material. Paired windows mark the front gable; these are flanked by small, square single-pane windows near the eaves. The house has been updated with replacement siding and windows and an addition to the rear.

Boiler House/Garage circa 1920, 1 contributing building

This L-shaped building is constructed of concrete blocks on the lower half and frame construction on the upper half and topped by a cross-gambrel roof. The building served multiple purposes as the boiler house, garage, and storage building on the Nierman Farm. The upper gable

³ Ancestry.com, *1910 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010). Images reproduced by FamilySearch; Ancestry.com, *1920 Federal Census*; "Christ Nierman Dies; Ex-Truck Gardener," *Indianapolis Star*, May 30, 1960, 13, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/106050921>; Clara Helen Nierman, Obituary, Tribute Archive, <https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/17867852/Clara-Helen-Nierman>; 1956, 1972, and 2019 Aerial Photography, City of Indianapolis, MapIndy website, accessed November 9, 2020, <http://maps.indy.gov/MapIndy/index.html>.

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ends have replacement siding and windows; garage doors have modern replacement doors as well. The boiler chimney has been removed.

Fields pre-1956, 1 contributing site

The land on the Nierman Farm was divided into smaller fields, depending on the crop under cultivation in a given year. Aerial photos show that the fields were somewhat reduced between 1956 and 1972, when plots adjacent to Lick Creek were allowed to grow up with trees. However, the large core of the fields, located in an L-shaped pattern south and west of the house, remains open as it was since at least the mid-1950s.

Marion County Bridge No.: 3802F (NBI No. 4900375; HB-2633)

Bluff Road over Lick Creek

1 contributing structure

Photos 0007, 0008

Marion County Bridge No. 3802F is a single-span, reinforced concrete arch with bush hammered rails carrying Bluff Road over Lick Creek. The bridge uses a standard Indiana State Highway Commission (ISHC) design and was built by Mead-Balch Construction in the early 1930s. This bridge was determined individually eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for its association with the Dixie Highway as a Select Bridge, per the Indiana Historic Bridge Inventory.

Bob's Century Service Station (Corky's Auto Repair; Midnight Auto Repair at the time of survey)

4200 Bluff Road

2 Total Resources: 1 contributing building (service station), 1 noncontributing building (house)

Photo 0009

This one-story service station building features a pent mansard roof, two service bays on the north end, and an office on the south end. The office displays a corner window and a wood entry door with glazed upper panel. Restrooms were located on the south side, sheltered by an awning. The service bays are enclosed with wood overhead doors with a row of lights. The building is covered with vertical metal siding. A gable-roofed wing extends to the rear.

This building served as the home of Bob's Century Services for more than forty years.⁴ In the early 1970s, the building featured a shallow, V-shaped canopy sheltering the business's gas pumps.⁵ The canopies have been removed, but the building, which now houses an auto repair business, appears little changed. While not much is written in terms of corporate history, it appears that Century Oil Company was an Indianapolis-based company founded as early as the

⁴ Robert W. Drake, Obituary, February 27, 2013, accessed through Legacy.com, <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/indystar/obituary.aspx?n=robert-w-drake&pid=163338393&fhid=14484>.

⁵ Jim Grey, "Old State Road 37 and the Dixie Highway in Indianapolis," *Down the Road* (blog), June 17, 2020, <https://blog.jimgrey.net/2020/06/17/old-state-road-37-and-the-dixie-highway-in-indianapolis/>.

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mid-1950s; the company operated about ten stations in the Indianapolis metropolitan area in the mid-1970s.⁶

Aerial photographs show two buildings on this site by the mid-1950s.⁷ By 1972, the canopy and gas pumps are clearly visible.⁸ Probably built in the 1940s or 1950s, the modest one-story, side-gable-roofed Ranch house associated with the property has the appearance of a new house due to a complete remodeling.

House (IHSSI No.: 097-392-85220)

4240 Bluff Road

1 contributing building

Photo 0010

Built around 1910, this two-story, frame, gable-front house features an unusual four-bay façade with two front doors paired on the left side and two windows to the right. This arrangement may indicate that the building served as a duplex or included an apartment. The first story is sheltered by a full-façade, shed-roofed porch supported by slender Doric columns. Wrought-iron railings of mid-twentieth-century vintage border the concrete stairs on each end of the porch. The front gable is embellished with simple knee brace-type brackets and a rectangular vent. The main block of the house retains its original form and details, although the building has been remodeled with replacement siding, windows, and doors, and expanded with two additions to the rear.

Hartman House

4246 Bluff Road

2 contributing buildings (house and garage)

Photos 0010, 0011

This one-story, frame, gable-front bungalow was probably built around 1920. The house, which sits on a rock-faced concrete block foundation, features two interior brick chimneys and a gable-front porch that has been screened in. The house has been updated over the years with aluminum siding and replacement windows. A frame, gable-front garage with an original entry door and replacement overhead door stands behind the house at the rear of the driveway. Edwin Hartman, who acquired the adjacent Schebler automobile repair shop in 1936, bought this house next door in the late 1940s to serve as his family residence.⁹ The original owner is currently unknown.

Schebler-Hartman Garage (IHSSI No.: 097-392-85221)

4250 Bluff Rd

1 contributing building

Photos 0011, 0012, 0046

⁶ "Century Gas Station Photos," Gassigns.org, accessed December 1, 2020, <http://www.gassigns.org/century.htm>

⁷ 1956 Aerial Photos, MapIndy.

⁸ 1972 Aerial Photos, MapIndy.

⁹ Nancy Mobley, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, October 29, 2020.

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Built in the 1920s, this Spanish Mission Revival-style service station is constructed of concrete blocks. The front of the building is clad in stucco and displays a mission-style parapet roof. The building is arranged in two parts, with an office/storefront on the southern end and a garage with a wood-paneled overhead door with two rows of window lights and a single window opening to the north. A photograph taken in the 1930s or 1940s shows the building with a lighted canopy sheltering gas pumps in front of the southern section of the front of the building. (See photo 0046.) The canopy was removed at some point, but the building is otherwise largely unaltered.

The building and business were owned initially by William G. Schebler. Edwin Hartman bought the business around 1936 and operated it for many years.¹⁰ The business's location along Bluff Road, one of the early state highways in Indiana, an early route of the Dixie Highway, and home of numerous gardeners with motorized work vehicles, made for an ideal location for this automotive service-oriented business.¹¹ Several members of local farm families recalled that some of the gardeners patronized this business and often gathered there to catch up on the local news.¹²

Bill and Betty Hohn House

4262 Bluff Road

2 contributing buildings (house and garage)

Photos 0013, 0015

Clad in a random-coursed rubble veneer and topped by a cross-hipped roof, this Ranch-style house was built by Bill and Betty Hohn in the late 1960s. Betty was the granddaughter of William Schebler, who owned the garage next door during its early years.¹³ The house displays a picture window flanked by operable side windows and paired front entry doors. Concrete steps to the front entrance are flanked by wrought-iron railings. Sashes and doors have been replaced. A stone chimney vents a fireplace near the northwest corner of the dwelling. The house includes an integrated garage on the north end, but a freestanding hipped roof garage, also clad in stone to match the house, is located to the rear; two garage bays are separated by a pedestrian entrance. The front of the house is embellished with two circular stone planters that match the exterior of the house. A decorative concrete block fence, added after 1972, lines the side of the driveway. An in-ground swimming pool was also added after 1972.¹⁴

Brehob Farm Complex (IHSSI No.: 097-392-85225)

4306, 4310, 4316 Bluff Road

¹⁰ Mobley, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, October 29, 2020.

¹¹ Russell S. Rein and Jan Shupert-Arick, *Dixie Highway in Indiana* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 71, https://www.google.com/books/edition/Dixie_Highway_in_Indiana/mfMnmXargacC?hl=en&gbpv=0; Indiana State Highway Commission, "Indiana State Highway System," 1931, accessed September 26, 2020, <http://fedora.dlib.indiana.edu/fedora/get/iudl:1075147/LARGE>.

¹² Nancy Mobley, interview with Kelly Lally Molloy and Bethany Natali, October 7, 2020; Ron Kocher, interview with Kelly Lally Molloy and Bethany Natali, October 7, 2020; Elaine Jordan, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, December 2, 2020.

¹³ Nancy Mobley, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, November 13, 2020.

¹⁴ 1972 and 2019 Aerial Photos, MapIndy.

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9 Total Resources: 6 contributing buildings, 3 noncontributing buildings
Photos 0014, 0015, 0016, 0019, 0020, 0021

The Brehob Farm includes two houses, as well as two barns, a garage, an outbuilding, a greenhouse and equipment shed spread across four parcels. Christian (Chris) W. and Bertha Brehob acquired this farm on Bluff Road prior to 1910 and began growing vegetables for sale at local markets. Chris had immigrated to the United States from Germany in the late 1880s and worked as a delivery driver for a brewery in 1900. His farming operation was eventually taken over by his son, Chris D. Brehob, who built a house in the late 1970s or early 1980s next door to his family's old home. Initially growing vegetables, the Brehobs added flowers to their business in the 1940s, a step toward the eventual conversion of their business to nursery production by the late 1960s. The Brehob operation acquired most of the Wegehof property adjacent to the south in the early 1980s. The wholesale nursery operation was sold to a larger company in recent years. The business retains the name "Brehob Nursery" and continues to employ members of the family who own the adjacent farm complex.¹⁵

Brehob House circa 1910, 1 contributing building
4310 Bluff Road

This one-and-one-half-story, gable-front frame house sits on a brick foundation and is topped by a steep gabled roof. The dwelling, which was built between 1900 and 1910, features both Folk Victorian and Craftsman-style details. The two-bay façade is sheltered by a front porch with a hipped roof supported by three full-height brick piers and bordered by a low brick balustrade wall. The façade features a three-part window with two operable windows flanking a large picture window under a transom with decorative leaded glass. The upper story displays a tripartite group of double-hung windows in the center of the gable, which is flanked by a pair of small fixed or casement windows, a detail that is seen on several other houses in the district. Gable returns and simple wood trim with vertical slats ornament the gables. The house has been updated with many replacement sashes and siding and a gable-roofed addition to the rear.

Garage circa 1910, 1 contributing building
4310 Bluff Road

To the west of the house stands a rock-faced, concrete-block garage with a steep hipped roof. A small frame addition has been added to the rear.

Barn circa 1900, 1 contributing building
4310 Bluff Road

West of the garage is a barn with a gable roof, the first floor of which is built of rock-faced concrete-block; shed additions are located on the north, west, and south walls. Several bays have been enclosed.

¹⁵ Ancestry.com, *1900 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010). Images reproduced by FamilySearch; Ancestry.com, *1910 Federal Census*; IHS exhibit script, 9.

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Equipment Shed circa 1930, 1 contributing building
4316 Bluff Road

The open, shed-roofed equipment shed features a wood frame and metal roof and cladding.

Barn circa 1926, 1 contributing building
4316 Bluff Road

This one-story, gable-roofed barn is clad in rock-faced concrete blocks. The fenestration of this building has been altered to accommodate its use as an office for the Brehob Nursery business.

Greenhouse with attached Flower Shed, Boiler House remnant, and Tomato Packing Shed circa 1930s, 1 contributing building
4316 Bluff Road

This collection of metal greenhouse frames is clad in plastic panels and currently has plastic sheets covering the roof. The north end of the two, easternmost greenhouse bays is extended with a gable-roofed addition (which served as a flower shed) and with two sheds made of rock-faced concrete blocks (a remnant of the boiler house, which has been removed, and the building used to pack tomatoes and wash lettuce grown in the farm's greenhouses).¹⁶

Chris D. Brehob House and outbuildings circa 1980, 3 noncontributing buildings
4306 Bluff Road

This brick ranch house was constructed in the late 1970s or early 1980s by Chris D. Brehob who owned the nursery to the south in the second half of the twentieth century.¹⁷ It and the two outbuildings behind the house are noncontributing due to age.

Wegehof Farm Complex (IHSSI No.: 097-392-85226)
4320, 4326, 4330 Bluff Road
3 Total Resources: 3 contributing buildings
Photos 0016, 0017, 0018, 0022

The Wegehof Farm encompasses three houses associated with the family. Fred Wegehof came to the United States from Westphalia, Germany around 1893. By 1900, he had married Louisa, and the couple lived with Fred's brother, Herman, on South Meridian Street. Fred, Sr. was already working as a gardener.¹⁸ Prior to 1910, the Wegehofs and their growing family moved to Bluff Road and established a market garden farm with greenhouses. The couple eventually

¹⁶ Information regarding the use of the greenhouse additions provided by Elaine Jordan, granddaughter of Frederic Wegehof, Sr., in an email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, November 19, 2020.

¹⁷ 1981 City Directory record for Chris D. Brehob, Ancestry.com. *U.S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 1* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010, accessed November 13, 2020.

¹⁸ Ancestry.com, *1900 Federal Census*; Fred Wegehof, Obituary, *Indianapolis News*, May 27, 1958, 30, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/311491179>.

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had nine children—four girls and five boys.¹⁹ The family's farm complex was completely destroyed by fire in 1925.²⁰ The family survived and built a new brick house and other buildings on the farm, becoming, according to one press account, the largest of Marion County's greenhouse operations by the mid-1930s.²¹ Eventually, the five sons, all of whom became partners in the gardening business, built houses on or near the family home and business.²² While much of the property is now part of the Brehob Nursery business, several of the houses remain in the Wegehof family.

Frederic and Louisa Wegehof House circa 1926, 1 contributing building
4320 Bluff Road

Topped by a hipped roof, this two-and-one-half story, brick American Foursquare house features a hipped roof dormer with two, three-pane windows and an interior brick chimney. The two-bay façade, sheltered by a full-façade porch, encompasses a front entrance flanked by sidelights and a three-part focal window. The remaining windows are paired with concrete sills and replacement sashes. The hipped roof porch is supported by full height brick piers with concrete caps; stepped brick piers border the concrete entry steps.

Fred Wegehof, Jr. House circa 1930, 1 contributing building
4326 Bluff Road

This one-and-one-half-story, Tudor Revival-style house displays red brick walls with sections of patterned brickwork, a multi-gabled roof, and an arched entry to a small gabled front porch roughly at the center of the front. Beside it to the north is the front gabled section. The house has two chimneys, one exterior end, and one interior. Windows have concrete sills and sashes glazed with leaded and stained glass in abstract designs. The upper part of the front door also features a similar leaded- and stained-glass design.

Walter Wegehof House circa 1939, 1 contributing building
4330 Bluff Road

Featuring red brick walls with sections of patterned brickwork, this period revival cottage displays a gabled dormer, fluted Colonial Revival-style door surround, and a side, screened-in porch. The north half is front-gabled, with the entry offset to the south, while the south half is

¹⁹ George William Baist, *Map of Perry Township, 1909*, in *Baist's Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Marion County, Indiana*; Ancestry.com, *1910 Federal Census*; Ancestry.com, *1920 Federal Census*; Ancestry.com, *1930 Federal Census*.

²⁰ "Home, Greenhouses burn in \$37,000 fire," *Indianapolis News*, June 10, 1925, 1, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/37429739>.

²¹ William Herschell, "Ancients May Have had Their Lotus-Land, But Indiana Now Is Lettuce-Land, Producing Carloads of Lettuce That Reach Winter Markets in Many Cities," *Indianapolis News*, January 18, 1936, 9, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/314407790>.

²² Elaine Jordan, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, October 13, 2020; Herschell, "Ancients May Have had Their Lotus-Land, But Indiana Now Is Lettuce-Land, Producing Carloads of Lettuce That Reach Winter Markets in Many Cities."

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side-gabled with a dormer on the steep roof. Two brick chimneys rise from the multi-gabled roof. Windows feature lintels made of vertical bricks and concrete sills. These windows are found in singles and groups of two and three; many are glazed with leaded glass.

The Auto Spot

4402 Bluff Road

Late 20th century, 1 noncontributing building

This one-story, gable-roofed frame building is noncontributing due to age.

Southwest Section (See South Section Map)

I-465 overpass over Bluff Road

Mid-1960s, 1 noncontributing structure

Photos 0023, 0045

Built in the 1960s, this concrete bridge carrying I-465 over Bluff Road is noncontributing, since it does not contribute to the historic context of the development of market garden farms.

Richard Wegehof House

4450 Bluff Road

circa 1935, 1 contributing building

Photo 0024

Standing one-and-one-half stories tall, this Tudor Revival-style house features a multi-gabled roof with the gables curved upwards at the ends. The exterior of the house is clad in multi-colored bricks. Irregular, rough-faced stones frame the front entry simulating Medieval “long and short” work; patterned brickwork in a checkerboard pattern embellishes the gables. The house displays an original wooden front door with a leaded glass inset piece. Windows, found in the singles and pairs also features leaded glass in the upper, six-over-one sashes; sills are concrete and emphasized with a row of brick heads below each. The house is extended to the rear by a gable-roofed wing; a garage is attached via a breezeway.

The house was moved to this location in the early 1960s (just prior to the construction of the I-465 overpass) from its original site as part of the Wegehof farm complex just to the north.²³ At that time, a stone veneer planter was added to the front of the house.

Modern Commercial Buildings/Warehouses

4600, 4604 Bluff Road

2 noncontributing buildings

Photo 0032

Two metal buildings with garage bays constructed in the late twentieth century.

²³ Elaine Jordan, interview with Kelly Lally Molloy, November 20, 2020.

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House

4614 Bluff Road

3 Total Resources: 3 contributing buildings

Photo 0025

This small complex includes a house, garage, and small outbuilding. It has been owned by the Gary family since the 1990s, but its original ownership is unclear at present.

House circa 1930, 4614 Bluff Road, 1 contributing building

This one-and-one-half-story, gable-front frame house sits on a rough-faced concrete block foundation and was built around 1930. A gable-front porch shelters the entrance. The house has been remodeled with replacement siding and windows. An addition has been added to the rear.

Garage circa 1930, 1 contributing building

Side-gable-roofed garage has vinyl siding and replacement garage door.

Outbuilding circa 1930, 1 contributing building

Small, frame, gable-roofed outbuilding features exposed rafter ends and wood siding.

Gary House and Nursery (IHSSI No.: 097-392-85228)

4706 Bluff Road

9 Total Resources: 4 contributing buildings, 1 contributing object, 4 noncontributing buildings

Photos 0025, 0026, 0027, 0028

This complex encompasses a house, greenhouses, and related buildings associated with Gary Greenhouse, a business founded by Nelson Gary. A native of Michigan, Nelson moved to Indianapolis as a young man shortly after losing his parents. He worked for the Grube family on Bluff Road and learned the greenhouse business. In 1947, Gary started his own greenhouse operation. He acquired the Amt farm on Bluff Road, initially growing vegetables, before shifting to flowers and nursery products. The business remains owned by Nelson Gary's descendants.²⁴

House circa 1922, 4706 Bluff Road, 1 contributing building

One-and-one-half stories tall with a gable-front roof, this frame dwelling sits on a rock-faced, concrete block foundation. The house features a hip-roofed porch supported by Craftsman-style piers with tapered wood posts on rock-faced concrete block piers. The porch is bordered by a wood railing with flat balusters that display a cutout design. The front wall has an off-center, multi-light front door, flanked by a window on each side. The two windows above the porch are symmetrically paired. Windows are a mixture of original wood, one-over-one, double-hung sash

²⁴ IHS exhibit script, 2018, 22; Nelson T. Gary, Obituary, June 16, 2008, accessed through Legacy.com, https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/indystar/obituary.aspx?n=nelson-t-gary&pid=144879025&utm_source=MarketingCloud&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ObitShare_PowerInbox_Neustar&utm_content=ViewObituary&sfmc_id=102324943.

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windows and replacement sashes. The exterior has been covered with vinyl siding and several additions have been made to the rear.

Greenhouse mid-1970s, 1 noncontributing building

This five-bay metal-framed greenhouse was built on the site of an earlier greenhouse utilizing older greenhouse framing and newer plastic panes. It is noncontributing due to age.

Boiler shed mid-1980s, 1 noncontributing building

This gable-roofed metal pole barn was built in the mid-1980s to replace an earlier boiler shed. It is noncontributing due to age.

Greenhouse pre-1956 with 1960s addition, 1 contributing building

This three-bay greenhouse is visible on a 1956 aerial map; additional bays were added to the south in the 1960s.²⁵ The buildings, which house nursery plants, are clad in plastic panes and sheeting.

Garage circa 1940s, 1 contributing building

This two-story, concrete block building with a gambrel roof and garage bays served as a garage and for storage. The building has been extended to the north with a metal gable-roofed addition.

House/Office Building circa 1940s, 1 contributing building

Built in the late 1940s as a home for Nelson and Christine Gary, this one-story, side-gable-roofed concrete block building has been converted to the Gary Greenhouse business office.

Fuel Storage Tank added to site early 1970s, 1 contributing object

This former railroad tanker car was added to the Gary Greenhouse site in the early 1970s to store fuel for the business's boiler.²⁶ It is no longer in use due to the business's conversion to natural gas.

Greenhouses, late twentieth century, 2 noncontributing buildings

These plastic-covered greenhouses are noncontributing due to age.

Alfred and Alice Bunte Farm Complex²⁷

4710 Bluff Road

4 Total Resources: 2 contributing buildings (house and boiler house), 1 contributing structure (boiler chimney), 1 contributing site (field)

Photo 0029

In the 1950s, Alfred and Alice Bunte built a house on the farm next to John's parents, Dietrich R. and Emma Bunte.²⁸ Alfred was a member of the Marion County Greenhouse Growers and "still

²⁵ Scott Gary, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, November 27, 2020; 1956 Aerial Photos, MapIndy.

²⁶ Gary, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, November 27, 2020.

²⁷ There was an IHSSI number associated with a greenhouse on this property (097-392-85229). The greenhouse has been removed.

²⁸ Elaine Jordan, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, November 10, 2020.

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active in the family-owned business” into his seventies.²⁹ This complex includes the circa-1955 house, as well as a boiler house and boiler chimney from circa 1920, and a pre-1956 field.

House circa 1955, 1 contributing building

Topped by a hipped roof with gable extensions, this Ranch-style house is clad in stone veneer on the lower walls and wood siding in the gables. The house features a front three-sided bay extension with a stone chimney to the north, and a picture window in a recessed section with low planter beside it to the south. Roughly at center, an enclosed cross gable has a window pair centered beneath it. A single window is to the south. Other noteworthy details include the integral front planter and an integrated garage. Window sashes have been replaced.

Boiler House circa 1920, 1 contributing building

This hipped roof building is clad in multi-colored bricks and accessed via double doors. According to property records this building was constructed circa 1920.

Boiler Chimney circa 1920, 1 contributing structure

The tall, tapered brick chimney is located near the boiler building.

Field pre-1956, 1 contributing site

The property retains a long narrow field located behind this house and the neighboring Dietrich and Emma Bunte House. The field retains the same size and shape as found on aerial maps from 1956 and 1972. The 1956 aerial shows that the field was divided horizontally into smaller plots for the cultivation of various vegetables. By 1972, the field was not sub-divided.³⁰

Dietrich and Emma Bunte House (097-392-85230)

4716 Bluff Road

circa 1928, 1 contributing building

Photo 0030

This one-and-one-half-story brick bungalow features a gable-front orientation with a clipped front gable and two, side shed dormers. The house displays many original Craftsman-style features including a full-façade porch supported by full-height brick piers, three-over-one sash windows, and curved wood bargeboard on the dormers. The dormers have been covered with asphalt siding.

Dietrich Bunte was a Marion County native born of German parents. His obituary noted that he was a truck gardener and salesman who died on the same property on which he was born.³¹ He lived in the house with his wife, Emma and next door to one of their sons, Alfred.

²⁹ “Alfred J. Bunte,” *Daily Journal (Franklin, Indiana)*, January 11, 2012, 5, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/146009263>; “Bunte,” *Indianapolis News*, September 13, 1989, B-14, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/312982433>.

³⁰ 1956 and 1972 Aerial Photos, MapIndy.

³¹ “Dietrich Bunte Dead at Home,” *Indianapolis News*, January 3, 1942, 12, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/314044833>.

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Robert Bollinger Farm Complex (097-392-85231)

4724 Bluff Road

3 Total Resources: 2 contributing buildings (house and outbuilding), 1 contributing site (field)

Photo 0031

The Bollinger Farm Complex includes a house, built circa 1929, an outbuilding, and a farm field.³² The property was owned by Robert Bollinger; his obituary, written in 1960, noted that he had been a gardener since 1924 and had served as president of the Marion County Greenhouse Gardeners' Association.³³ The 1930 Census shows Bollinger as the head of a household on Bluff Road, living with his parents and brother. He married his wife, Lydia, in 1932.³⁴ Robert and two of his brothers formed Bollinger Brothers Incorporated for their market garden business in 1934.³⁵

House circa 1929, 1 contributing building

Two stories tall with a side-gable roof and small central front gable, this picturesque house is clad in irregularly shaped dressed stones and displays long, shed-roofed dormers with stuccoed walls across the front and rear of the house. A full façade shed-roofed porch, supported by replacement columns, shelters the first floor. The house features casement windows glazed with decorated leaded glass; each window has a quoined surround. An addition and attached garage were built around the side and rear (south and west sides) of the house in the mid-twentieth century.

Outbuilding circa 1929, 1 contributing building

A brick gambrel-roofed outbuilding, which likely served as a garage and farm building, is located west of the house. The building fenestration and exterior wall covering of the building has been changed; it is somewhat deteriorated due to roof damage on the rear portion.

Field pre-1956, 1 contributing site

Behind the house is a field associated with the Bollinger farming operation.

Northeast Section (See Northeast Section Map)

Hohlt Farm Complex

4201 Bluff Road

5 Total Resources: 3 contributing buildings, 1 contributing structure, 1 contributing object

³² 4724 Bluff Road Property Card, Marion County Assessor's Office, accessed November 27, 2020.

³³ "Rites Friday for Robert Bollinger," *Indianapolis News*, September 28, 1960, 18, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/312021636>.

³⁴ "Lydia Stine is Bride of Robert Bollinger," *Indianapolis Star*, June 19, 1932, 31, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/105157993>.

³⁵ "Bollinger Brothers, Incorporated," *Indianapolis Star*, July 12, 1934, 11, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/105378007>.

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Photo 0033, 0034

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The Hohlt Farm Complex includes a house, two outbuildings, a well house, and a fountain. The garden market farm was established by Charles H. and Carrie Hohlt in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century along Bluff Road and continued in family hands into the second half of the twentieth century.³⁶ The Hohlts had nine children by 1910.³⁷ Their oldest son Herman eventually built a house just to the south of the family home adjacent to the Peaper farm; the Peaper family acquired that property in the twentieth century.³⁸ Herman Hohlt's house no longer stands, although its garage is now part of the Peaper complex.

House circa 1890, 1 contributing building

This slightly T-shaped two-story, frame house is topped by a steep cross-hipped roof. The house is associated with Charles and Carrie Hohlt, who acquired the farm sometime after 1889.³⁹ The house has been expanded over the years with several additions (most by the mid-twentieth century) and remodeled with replacement siding and windows and the enclosure of porches in more recent years.⁴⁰ The front "stem" of the T has two tall windows on each story. Other windows are less formally placed.

Barn circa 1920, 1 contributing building

This one-story, gable-roofed barn on a rock-faced, concrete block foundation features exposed rafter ends. The building has been covered with metal siding. A large, frame, gable-roofed addition with metal siding has been constructed to the rear.

Garage/boiler house circa 1920, 1 contributing building

This multi-purpose, frame outbuilding sits on a sloped site. The building serves as a garage, with overhead door bays, on the west end. A shed-roofed extension on the rear (east) side is built into a slope. Aerial photos show that the property's greenhouses were once located to the south of this building; these were removed after 1972.⁴¹ The building has been altered over the years with metal siding and replacement windows and overhead doors, but retains its overall form, as well as details such as exposed rafter tails.

Wellhouse circa 1930, 1 contributing structure

³⁶ "Charles H. Hohlt Will Be Buried," *Indianapolis News*, October 15, 1940, 16, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/314559591>. Charles Hohlt's name appears on Bluff Road on Perry Township maps as early as 1909, but may have been a resident for a decade or two before this. See Baist, *Map of Perry Township*, 1909. Herman Hohlt, Obituary, *Indianapolis News*, August 21, 1952, 16, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/105428687>.

³⁷ Ancestry.com, 1910 Federal Census.

³⁸ Ancestry.com, 1920 Federal Census.

³⁹ The Hohlts do not appear as property owners in the 1889 map of Perry Township, but are shown as owners of this property on the 1909 map. See Hervey B. Fatout, *Perry Township, 1889*, in *Atlas of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana* (Philadelphia: Griffing, Gordon & Co., 1889) and Baist, *Map of Perry Township*, 1909.

⁴⁰ 1956, 1972, and 2019 Aerial Photos, MapIndy

⁴¹ 1956 and 1972 Aerial Photos, MapIndy.

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Topped by a gable roof clad in corrugated metal, this low, concrete-block building appears to be a wellhouse.

Fountain circa 1933, 1 contributing object

The front yard of this Bluff Road property is ornamented with a two-tiered metal and concrete fountain surrounded by a low wall of concrete embedded with and topped by irregular stones. A plaque on the fountain reads "C. H. Hohlt November 13 1933."

Peaper Farm Complex

4221, 4231, 4247, 4251, 4253, 4305, 4315 Bluff Road

17 Total Resources: 10 contributing buildings, 2 contributing structures, 1 contributing site, 4 noncontributing buildings

Photos 0035, 0036, 0037, 0038, 0039, 0040

The Peaper Farm Complex encompasses a total of seventeen resources (thirteen contributing and four noncontributing), including a group of six family residences and related buildings, as well as buildings and structures related to a family market gardening operation that spans over a century on Bluff Road, with additional years prior to this on the south side of Indianapolis.

William Pieper immigrated from Wahdem, Germany in 1871 and in Indianapolis met and married Henriette Weghorst, also from Germany. The couple, who eventually changed the spelling of their name to "Peaper" to avoid confusion with another family, initially settled south of Indianapolis, first renting and then buying a farm on South Meridian Street near Pleasant Run.⁴² In 1909, the couple and their growing family moved to twenty-six acres on Bluff Road and built a house on their new farm. There they raised vegetables, including lettuce, cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, turnips and other crops in both fields and greenhouses. The Peapers sold their produce first at local markets and beginning in the 1920s through the Marion County Greenhouse Growers Association under the brand name "Hoosier Boy."⁴³ Their son Chris eventually purchased the house and farm, while son Fred built a house next door with his wife, Ida.⁴⁴ The brothers purchased their father's business in 1923 and called it Peaper Brothers.⁴⁵ Three additional generations have owned and worked the farm and business since then, with seasonal labor hired when needed to harvest the crops and prepare them for market.⁴⁶

A specialized variety of purple-top turnip eventually became the farm's most noteworthy crop.⁴⁷ The farm also developed a specialized cold storage facility to keep vegetables fresh longer and to

⁴² Helen Marie, *Peaper Brothers: A Seed of Hope*, self-published book, 2009, 3, 5; Ancestry.com, 1900 Federal Census.

⁴³ Ancestry.com, 1910 Federal Census; IHS exhibit script, 2018, 23; Peaper Brothers, Inc., "Getting Back to Our Roots," accessed December 1, 2020, <http://peaperbrothers.com/id1.html>. See Marie, *Peaper Brothers: A Seed of Hope*, 12 and 14 for Hoosier Boy photographs.

⁴⁴ Ron Kocher, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, November 30, 2020.

⁴⁵ Marie, *Peaper Brothers: A Seed of Hope*, 9.

⁴⁶ Marie, *Peaper Brothers: A Seed of Hope*, 17.

⁴⁷ Marie, *Peaper Brothers: A Seed of Hope*, 17; Peaper Brothers, "Getting Back to Our Roots."

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extend the amount of time the crops could be sold.⁴⁸ This facility has been expanded over the years and remains in use on the farm.

High fuel costs, the proliferation of vegetables grown in the southern states, and other factors in the late twentieth century led to the end of greenhouse growing on the Peaper Farm and others.⁴⁹ The greenhouses have been removed, except for one plastic house erected in the 1980s.⁵⁰ Currently, the farm grows turnips, peppers, and other vegetables in the farm's fields and in other rented fields.⁵¹ Several generations of Peaper family members still live on and near the farm on Bluff Road.

Widner House 2000s, 1 noncontributing building
4221 Bluff Road

This modern house is owned by a descendent of the Peaper family. It is noncontributing due to age.

Kocher House 2000s, 1 noncontributing building
4231 Bluff Road

This modern house was built in the twenty-first century and is owned by a descendent of the Peaper family. It is noncontributing due to age.

William and Henriette Peaper House circa 1909, 1 contributing building
4251 Bluff Road

The frame William and Henriette Peaper House, built around 1909, stands one-and-one-half stories tall on a rock-faced, concrete block foundation and is topped with a gable-on-hip roof in the front, extended with an additional front gable, and a gable roof to the rear. On the side elevations, the roof is punctuated by gable-roofed dormer windows. A hipped roof porch, also set upon a foundation of rough-faced concrete blocks, spans the front of the house. The porch is supported by replacement square wood posts. Some original windows with tracery muntins survive, although others have been replaced. Other exterior modifications include the addition of vinyl siding and the addition of an attached garage and breezeway.

Garage circa 1930, 1 contributing building
4251 Bluff Road

Built of concrete blocks and topped by a flat roof with stepped parapet on the side elevations, this garage features one opening for vehicles and another pedestrian entrance. The building retains a wood paneled overhead door with a row of glass panes and a simple wooden door that

⁴⁸ Marie, *Peaper Brothers: A Seed of Hope*, 11.

⁴⁹ IHS exhibit script, 2018, 1.

⁵⁰ Kocher, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, November 30, 2020.

⁵¹ Kocher, interview with Kelly Lally Molloy and Bethany Natali, October 7, 2020.

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is glazed at the top. This garage is the only building remaining from the Herman Hohlt Farm that was acquired by the Peaper family in the 1980s.

Fred and Ida Peaper House circa 1912, 1 contributing building (4253 Bluff Road)

Built around 1912, Fred and Ida Peaper are said to have based the design of this house on Fred's brother Harry's house located to the south along Bluff Road (and also in the district).⁵² The one-and-one-half-story, gable-front, house features rough-faced concrete-block lower walls and upper walls now clad in vinyl siding. Historic photographs show that the house originally displayed half-timbering details in the upper walls. The front gable displays a ribbon of three windows, flanked at the eaves by single pane windows, a detail in common with Harry Peaper's House and others along Bluff Road. Gable-roofed dormer windows flank the peak of the roof and triangular knee braces accent all of the gables. The front porch has been enclosed and most windows have been replaced.

Storage Shed circa 1950s, 1 contributing building
4247 Bluff Road

This one-story, shed roofed storage building with wood door stands behind the Fred and Ida Peaper House.

Market shed/boiler house, circa 1950s, 1 contributing building
4247 Bluff Road

This rambling frame and concrete-block building was built in several sections. The building sheltered the farm's basement level boiler, provided space for coal fuel delivery, and included an upper-level space to prepare vegetables grown on the farm for market. The boiler chimney is no longer extant, although its location is visible in the concrete on the north side of the building.

Equipment Shed circa 1950s, 1 contributing building
4247 Bluff Road

This concrete-block equipment shed with metal shed roof is accessed via sliding metal doors.

Greenhouse circa 1980s, 1 noncontributing building
4247 Bluff Road

This plastic-covered greenhouse is noncontributing due to age.

Restroom facility circa 1950, 1 contributing building
4247 Bluff Road

Topped by a gable roof, this concrete-block restroom facility was built for workers on the farm.

⁵² Ron Kochoer, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, November 5, 2020.

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Turnip shed and warehouse, circa 1930s with additions in 1950s and 1960s, 1 contributing building
4247 Bluff Road

This series of attached, above and below ground cold storage and warehouse buildings was built in several stages beginning with a below-ground structure at the southwest corner in the 1930s. Additions to the north and east were made in the following decades. The buildings are topped with gable and shed roofs and are constructed of concrete blocks. The concrete block building has been covered with a metal exterior.

Pole Barn circa 1960s, 1 contributing building
4251 Bluff Road

This gable-roofed, metal pole barn is present on the 1972 aerial map.

Wellhouses circa 1930s, circa 1960s, 2 contributing structures
4247 Bluff Road

Two wellhouses sit side by side. The gable-roofed building to the north housed a hand dug well for the Peaper property. The shed-roofed, concrete block well to the south was added in the 1960s and continues to serve the property.

Fields 1 contributing site
Aerial photos show that the field patterns of the Peaper Farm are basically unchanged from the 1950s to the present.⁵³

Paul Peaper II House circa 1980s, 1 noncontributing building
4305 Bluff Road

This brick Ranch house is noncontributing due to age.

Paul and Ruth Peaper House circa 1952, 1 contributing building
4315 Bluff Road

This gable-roofed Ranch house is clad in a veneer of irregular stones and features a two-car integrated garage, a front-facing gable containing the front entrance, and a picture window. The house was built in 1952 by Paul Peaper, grandson of the original farm owner, and his wife, Ruth.

Southeast Section (See South Section Map)

Arthur Wegehoft House
4425 Bluff Road

⁵³ 1956, 1972, and 2019 Aerial Photos, MapIndy.

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Circa 1930s, 2 contributing buildings (house and garage)
Photo 0041

Built in the 1930s, this stucco and brick veneer-clad, Tudor Revival-style house features a prominent front brick chimney with stone accents and an arched recessed entrance found within a front-facing gable with a catslide. The taller main section of the house is side-gabled. The entry arch is marked with a stone keystone and the remaining walls are stuccoed. This was originally the home of Arthur Wegehof, one of the sons of Fred Wegehof, Sr. The house resembles Sears' Dover kit house.⁵⁴

Behind the house stands a concrete-block two-car garage. The house and garage have been modernized with replacement windows and doors. This property is now part of the Schlegel Nursery business headquartered on Sprague Road.

House

4507 Bluff Road

circa 1920, 1 contributing building, 2 noncontributing buildings (altered garage and recent pole barn)

Photo 0041

This one-and-one-half-story, frame bungalow was built around 1920. The house is topped by a side-gable roof with a gable-front dormer. An engaged front porch is supported by tapered wood posts on brick piers and bordered by a brick railing. The south elevation has a projecting bay with tripartite window. The house has been updated with replacement siding and windows.

Outbuildings associated with the house include a frame garage that has been encased in new siding (obscuring the door openings) and a modern pole barn. This property is now part of the Schlegel Nursery business headquartered on Sprague Road.

House

4525 Bluff Road

circa 1900, 1 contributing outbuilding, 1 non-contributing house

Photos 0043, 0045

Situated on a brick foundation, this two-story, T-shaped house underwent a remodeling in the mid-twentieth century and a second remodeling around 2022, after the architectural survey for this district.

Behind the house stands a frame outbuilding with a gable-front roof that extends over the entrance—perhaps used as a wellhouse or storage building.

⁵⁴ "HonorBilt Modern Homes," Catalog, Sears, Roebuck and Co., 1930, https://archive.org/details/SearsModernHomes1930Pg00_201607/Sears%20Modern%20Homes%201930%20pg01.jpg.

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House

4549 Bluff Road

circa 1928, 2 contributing buildings (house and garage)

Photos 0043, 0045

This one-story, frame, gable-front dwelling sits on a rock-faced concrete block foundation and displays many original Craftsman-style details, including a partial-width front porch supported by full-height brick piers and bordered by a brick balustrade laid in an open basket-weave design. Windows are glazed with original three-over-one, double-hung sash windows. A tall brick chimney rises from the north side of the house. Wood weatherboards have been covered with vinyl siding.

Behind the house is a frame, gable-front garage with a replacement overhead door.

House

4555 Bluff Road

circa 1930, 2 contributing buildings (house and garage)

Photos 0043, 0045

Built circa 1930, this one-story house is topped by a side-gable roof with a front gable sheltering the entrance on the north end. The house has been remodeled with new siding and windows and has been extended to the rear.

A one-story, frame garage to the rear is contemporary with the house.

House

4601 Bluff Road

circa 1910, 2 contributing buildings (house and garage)

Photos 0043, 0045

Built around 1910, this frame, gable-front house stands one-and-one-half stories tall. The house features gable-roofed dormers on each side of the gable roof and an interior brick chimney. The house has undergone changes in recent years, including the enclosure of the front porch and the addition of vinyl siding and replacement windows. The brick porch supports and balustrade remain visible.

Behind the house is a hipped roof frame garage. An arched pedestrian entry door separates the garage bays and a car port extends to the south of the structure.

House

4609 Bluff Road

circa 2010s, 2 noncontributing buildings (house and barn)

Photo 0044

This new house and barn are noncontributing due to age.

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Harry Peaper House (IHSSI No.: 097-392-85227)

4617 Bluff Road

3 Total Resources: 2 contributing buildings, 1 noncontributing building

Photo 0042

House circa 1913, 1 contributing building

Standing one-and-one-half stories tall with a gable-front orientation, this frame house rests on a concrete foundation and resembles several other houses in the Bluff Road Historic District, including that of Fred Peaper, the owner's brother (located just to the north on Bluff Road). Gable-roofed dormer windows enlarge the upper story. The house features a triple group of double-hung sash windows in the upper gable, flanked by single pane windows in the eaves. A full-façade porch, gable-front porch, now enclosed, retains its full-height, rock-faced concrete block supports and balustrade. The house has been re-sided in vinyl siding, and most windows have been replaced.

Barn/Boiler House pre-1956, 1 contributing building

This L-shaped, frame building is seen on aerial photographs as early as 1956, but was likely constructed earlier.⁵⁵ The building was probably used as a barn or a boiler house for greenhouses; aerial photos show greenhouses were located to the east. Several additions have been made to the sides and metal now covers much of the exterior.

Shed modern, 1 noncontributing building

This one-story, gable-front frame building is noncontributing due to age.

Bluff Road (1 contributing site)

Photos 0006, 0022, 0043

This two-lane asphalt road has followed the same south/southwesterly path through Perry Township within the district and for several miles in each direction north and south since appearing on local maps as early as the 1850s. Once a country road, Bluff Road became part of the Dixie Highway in the early twentieth century and an early state route in the 1920s, eventually designated as part of State Road (SR) 37. The roadway's travel lanes remain within an early right-of-way, which was likely established firmly during the early auto age. A right-of-way marker near 4030 Bluff Road, and the width of the lanes on the early 1930s Lick Creek Bridge (Photos 0007 and 0008) confirm this. Therefore, the Bluff Road route within the district has sufficient integrity to contribute to the district.

⁵⁵ 1956 Aerial Photos, MapIndy.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE
ETHNIC HERITAGE

Period of Significance

circa 1890-1972

Significant Dates

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance ranges from circa 1890, the approximate date of the earliest building standing in the district, and ends with 1972, a year by which many of the market garden farms within its boundaries were transitioning from greenhouse vegetable production to nursery businesses or field crops, or away from market gardening altogether.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Bluff Road Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A, for its association with the German market garden farmers and their descendants who cultivated vegetables and other produce for residents of Indianapolis and other midwestern cities. The success of these gardens, which included both field and greenhouse crops by the early twentieth century, eventually propelled Marion County to the top of the list of producers of vegetables in Indiana, and among the top producers in the nation for greenhouse crops like tomatoes and lettuce. The district is significant in the areas of Ethnic History and Agriculture. The district is nominated under the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "German Market Garden Farms of Perry Township (Marion County), Indiana, 1867-1972" and documented under the context by the same name. Located along a slice of Bluff Road, a road that became synonymous with the German growers in the first half of the twentieth century, the district encompasses houses, farm complexes, field patterns, and automobile-related resources that represent the history and development of the market garden industry in Perry Township of Marion County.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Multiple Property Form

The Bluff Road Historic District is the most readily identified district within the geographic bounds of the Multiple Property Document Form. It meets the registration requirements for Type 3: Districts. The Bluff Road area has a significant concentration of the resource types described for the property type. Bluff Road was the focal point of the significant business of market gardening. Furthermore, the leading German-American farm families of the various growing associations controlled the clear majority of acreage, farms, and houses in the district.

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Produce Farming on Bluff Road

Market gardeners, sometimes referred to as “truck farmers,” began settling along Bluff Road in Perry Township, south of the city of Indianapolis, by the 1880s.⁵⁶ A plat map dated 1889 shows the distinctive long, ribbon-like lots with narrow road frontage established by some farmers of German descent by that time, including John Bunte, whose descendants still own property on the west side of Bluff Road.⁵⁷ Clusters of German gardeners had in previous decades rented or owned market garden farms on the south side of Indianapolis, within or closer to the city limits, along South Meridian Street, South Madison Street, and other thoroughfares.⁵⁸ In the decades around the turn of the twentieth century, maps and census records show that German families with names including Hohlt, Peaper, Brehob, Wegehof, and Nierman moved away from those areas closer to the city, which were starting to develop residentially and commercially, to Bluff Road and adjacent roads where they established market garden farms. For example, William and Henrietta Peaper owned a farm on South Meridian Street in 1900, but by 1910, the family had acquired twenty-six acres on Bluff Road and moved operations there.⁵⁹ Similarly, Christian and Louise Nierman rented a farm on South Madison Street in the 1910s; the couple bought a farm on Bluff Road prior to 1920.⁶⁰

Bluff Road was a logical location choice for market garden farms for a variety of reasons. Some writers indicate that the area’s proximity to the White River and associated fertile soils, made this a superior area for market gardening.⁶¹ One reporter suggested that the soil drained well around Bluff Road due to an underlying layer of gravel: “Most of the farms are centered in the area south of Indianapolis, about the Bluff [R]oad, because an underlaying gravel belt holds moisture and makes the district peculiarly adaptable to gardening.”⁶² The road itself may have been a draw for some farmers. Bluff Road had been a significant route into and out of the city

⁵⁶ German gardener Herman Amt moved to his Bluff Road farm in the 1880s. “Dies at the Age of 73 Years: Herman Amt Came to America 41 Years Ago,” *Indianapolis Star*, March 20, 1906, 10, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/118639322>.

⁵⁷ Fatout, Hervey B., *Atlas of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana* (Philadelphia: Griffing, Gordon, & Co., 1889), 16.

⁵⁸ “Truck Farmers Work Hard Early and Late, But are Generally Content and Happy,” *Indianapolis News*, May 10, 1902, 12, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/37786868>; “Land of the Windmill, Where Three Good Crops Each Year Are Possible,” *Indianapolis News*, October 7, 1905, 17, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/40023036>.

⁵⁹ G.W. Baist, *Baist’s Property Atlas of Marion County, Indiana* (Philadelphia: G.W. Baist, 1909); Ancestry.com, *1900 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010). Images reproduced by FamilySearch; Ancestry.com, *1910 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010). Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

⁶⁰ Ancestry.com, *1910 Federal Census*; Ancestry.com, *1920 United States Federal Census* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010). Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

⁶¹ Indiana Historical Society, “Gardeners Benefit Society of Indianapolis: Historical Sketch” for the IHS collection file, 2007, 2; Cathy Born, “The Indianapolis Gardeners Benefit Society,” in *The Hoosier Genealogist: Connections* 49, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2009), 59, <https://images.indianahistory.org/digital/collection/p16797coll68/id/5025/rec/23>.

⁶² “Truck Gardeners, Who Always Hit Peak Output, Unconcerned at Food Drive,” *Indianapolis Star*, November 9, 1941, 32, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/104844890>.

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since at least the mid-1850s.⁶³ Like South Meridian Street and South Madison Street, other north-south roads in Marion County located to the east, Bluff Road offered a direct route from southern Marion County to Indianapolis and its markets; however, the section of Bluff Road in Perry Township was, at least in the first decades of the twentieth century, more distant from the burgeoning commercial and residential areas on the south side of Indianapolis.

As automobiles became more common in the early twentieth century, Bluff Road was increasingly used by travelers heading into and out of the city. As early as 1913, increased traffic on Bluff Road and the use of the thoroughfare for those “test driving” vehicles at high speeds occasionally clashed with the area’s agricultural land use, as speeding automobiles disrupted or failed to make way for slower farming vehicles, many of them still pulled by horses. One long time Bluff Road gardener, Charles Hohlt, told a reporter, “Numerous accidents along the highway are caused by ‘speeders,’ and many of the auto drivers display a total disregard for the rights of the farmer and horsemen.” The article noted that Hohlt and about fifty other Bluff Road residents formed an organization to call attention to the problem of speeding on the road and to try to limit speeds, through both education and law enforcement, to twenty-five miles-per-hour or less.⁶⁴

Bluff Road was, by 1917, designated as one of the routes through Indiana making up the Dixie Highway, linking northern states to Florida and other points south, which must have increased use of the road.⁶⁵ In 1920, gardeners along Bluff Road were among the taxpayers who petitioned the Marion County Commissioners for the improvement of this road’s surface, a request that was apparently denied. A newspaper notice reported that “[t]he Marion county commissioners have been asked to reconsider a petition filed by taxpayers for construction of a hard surface road on Bluff Road by C. F. Peeper [sic], of the Marion County Gardeners’ Association, who declared hauling of produce to Indianapolis requires improvement of the road next year.”⁶⁶ Three years later, Bluff Road was declared a state highway, first numbered SR 22, but eventually numbered SR 37.⁶⁷ This designation led to planned improvements of the road’s surface and infrastructure, which, as a newspaper headline noted, would make Bluff Road the “Finest in the State.”⁶⁸ This designation also led to the establishment of businesses related to automobile travel, which could service the vehicles of travelers and farmers alike, including the Schebler-Hartman Service Station at 4250 Bluff Road in the 1920s.

⁶³ Condit, Wright, & Hayden, *Map of Marion County, Indiana*, Cincinnati, OH: Middleton, Wallace & Co., 1855.

⁶⁴ “Bluff Road Citizens Roiled by ‘Speeders,’” *Indianapolis Star*, July 26, 1913, 20, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/8900592>.

⁶⁵ Ellis Searles, “Hoosier State Automobile Association and the Hoosier Motor Club are Carrying On a Campaign to Make the Roads Safe for the People,” *Indianapolis News*, November 17, 1917, 15, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/37341611>.

⁶⁶ “Asks Reconsideration of Bluff Road Improvement,” *Indianapolis Star*, December 2, 1920, 15, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/119384151>.

⁶⁷ “Improved Road Construction Method Used on New Bluff Highway Expected to Make it Finest in the State,” *Indianapolis News*, July 26, 1924, 16, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/35452818>. By 1931, the road was designated SR 37. See Indiana State Highway Commission, “Indiana State Highway System,” 1931, accessed September 26, 2020, <http://fedora.dlib.indiana.edu/fedora/get/iudl:1075147/LARGE>.

⁶⁸ “Improved Road Construction Method Used on New Bluff Highway Expected to Make it Finest in the State,” *Indianapolis News*.

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The early twentieth-century influx of gardeners along Bluff Road corresponded with a transformation in market gardening: the use of greenhouses to cultivate vegetable crops typically grown in the summer months. By 1918, the Peaper Farm had five greenhouses, four of which were connected and one of which was a free-standing, extra-large structure.⁶⁹ The Wegeholt family operation across the road reportedly boasted the largest greenhouse operation in Marion County in 1936, with more than two acres of greenhouses.⁷⁰ Within a few decades, Bluff Road became nearly synonymous with greenhouse gardens, with a distinctive landscape that included dozens of acres of vegetable crops grown under glass.⁷¹ Most of the market garden farms along Bluff Road within the historic district were three to fifteen acres, with crops cultivated in both fields and greenhouses, although some, such as the twenty-six-acre Peaper Farm on the east side of Bluff Road, were larger.⁷²

The products of these market gardens in Perry Township and in some adjacent areas helped rank Marion County as the top vegetable producing county in the state in the 1930s.⁷³ The high production numbers continued into the 1940s. In the wartime years when other types of farms were being encouraged to increase production, the vegetable farmers of Marion County were already operating at peak capacity.⁷⁴ In 1943, Marion County's Agricultural Extension Agent H. E. Abbott estimated that "this industry nestling near the capital, is larger and more intensified than that of any other comparable area in the United States."⁷⁵

High production continued after the war. Bluff Road was still noted to have the "greatest concentration of vegetable greenhouses in central Indiana."⁷⁶ While the gardeners were continually generating high yields, problems for the industry were looming as farm labor became increasingly difficult to come by during and after World War II.⁷⁷ The high price of land in a developing urban and suburban county also discouraged some would-be farmers.⁷⁸ Continually pursuing improvements and solutions to these issues and other problems (such as pest management and soil fertility), the growers worked with the Marion County's agricultural agent

⁶⁹ Helen Marie, *Peaper Brothers: A Seed of Hope* (n.p.: self-published, 2009), 7.

⁷⁰ William Herschell, "Ancients May Have Had their Lotus-Land, But Indiana Now is Lettuce-Land, Producing Carloads of Lettuce That Reach Winter Markets in Many Cities," *Indianapolis News*, January 18, 1936, 1, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/314407790>.

⁷¹ Herschell, "Ancients May Have Had their Lotus-Land, But Indiana Now is Lettuce-Land, Producing Carloads of Lettuce That Reach Winter Markets in Many Cities."

⁷² Maurice Early, "The Day in Indiana," *Indianapolis Star*, April 23, 1943, 8, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/105024125>; Marie, *Peaper Brothers: A Seed of Hope*, 5.

⁷³ "Electric Heating Employed to Force Early Production," *Indianapolis Star*, February 13, 1938, 13, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/105024125>.

⁷⁴ "Truck Gardeners, Who Always Hit Peak Output, Unconcerned at Food Drive.," *Indianapolis Star*.

⁷⁵ Early, "The Day in Indiana."

⁷⁶ Robert Kellum, "Greenhouses in Marion County Experience Their Busy Season," *Indianapolis Star*, March 23, 1958, 32, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/105618183>.

⁷⁷ "Truck Gardeners, Who Always Hit Peak Output, Unconcerned at Food Drive," *Indianapolis Star*; Kellum, "Greenhouses in Marion County Experience Their Busy Season;" "Farm Labor Shortage in State Seen," *Indianapolis News*, February 23, 1966, 6, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/311776128>.

⁷⁸ Kellum, "Greenhouses in Marion County Experience Their Busy Season."

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and Purdue University's horticulturalists, and consulted growers from outside of Indiana.⁷⁹ In 1958, the farms of Chris Brehob, William Hohlt, and Robert Bollinger, all located within the district, were stops on a tour of the area greenhouse industry made by a delegation of greenhouse growers from Cleveland, Ohio. The Marion County Greenhouse Growers' Association sponsored the visit to provide a means to "trade practical pointers on any new methods."⁸⁰

By the early 1970s, the greenhouse industry was decreasing, but still vital to Marion County's economy. In 1971, around fifty market gardeners on the south side of Indianapolis produced lettuce and tomatoes in what was described as a "million dollar industry... that is second only to Cleveland in production."⁸¹ At that time, the reluctance of the younger generation to make a career of working on the farms was identified as one major challenge for the industry; another was increased competition from warm weather growers in California and Florida.⁸² As the decade progressed, these and additional challenges, such as high fuel costs, led many Bluff Road greenhouse growers to abandon the cultivation of vegetables.⁸³

Despite dwindling numbers of market gardeners, the market garden farms along Bluff Road and throughout Perry Township did not just disappear; they transformed yet again. Some long-time gardening families within the district, such as the Brehob family, converted their operations to plant nurseries.⁸⁴ The Gary and Schlegel families, who moved into the district in the mid-to-late twentieth century, founded flower nursery businesses.⁸⁵ Others, such as the Peaper family, abandoned greenhouse growing by the 1980s and focused only on the cultivation of field crops, including their specialty variety of purple-top turnips.⁸⁶ Some of the greenhouses along Bluff Road continued to be used in the nursery operations, but many greenhouses, unused and expensive to maintain, were taken down in the late twentieth century.⁸⁷ Bluff Road's unique landscape and the history it represents, however, remain discernable into the twenty-first century.⁸⁸ Surviving greenhouses, along with related resources including groupings of family dwellings, boiler houses and chimneys, and discernable small field patterns along Bluff Road, depict the unique history of the German market gardeners in southern Marion County.

⁷⁹ Robert Kellum, "Greenhouse Mystery Soil Disease Beaten," *Indianapolis Star*, June 21, 1959, 35, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/105689967>; "Growers Plan One-Day Trip to Michigan," *Indianapolis News*, May 7, 1956, 4, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/311494231>; Kellum, "Greenhouses in Marion County Experience Their Busy Season."

⁸⁰ Kellum, "Greenhouses in Marion County Experience Their Busy Season."

⁸¹ "Salad Under Glass," *Indianapolis Star*, January 10, 1971, 7-9, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/105677246>.

⁸² "Salad Under Glass."

⁸³ Robert Rees, "Fuel Costs, Competition Forcing Greenhouse Growers to Give Up," *Indianapolis Star*, October 6, 1975, 1, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/106901751>.

⁸⁴ Indiana Historical Society, "The German Growers of Indianapolis," exhibit script, 2018, 9.

⁸⁵ IHS exhibit script, 2018, 22; Paul Schlegel, interview with Kelly Lally Molloy and Bethany Natali, October 7, 2020.

⁸⁶ IHS exhibit script, 2018, 23; Ron Kocher, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, December 29, 2020.

⁸⁷ Rees, "Fuel Costs, Competition Forcing Greenhouse Growers to Give Up;" Kocher, email message to Kelly Lally Molloy, December 29, 2020.

⁸⁸ See Dan McFeeley, "Greenhouse goods galore: Bluff Road gets 2 green thumbs up for adding flavor, flowers to commuting," *Indianapolis Star*, June 9, 2003, 11, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/127304295>.

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Developmental History/Additional historic context information

Additional historic contextual information may be found in the Multiple Property Documentation Form: "German Market Garden Farms of Perry Township (Marion County), Indiana, 1867-1972."

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Bluff Road Historic District

Marion County, Indiana

Name of Property

County and State

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Bluff Road Historic District
Name of Property

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

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Bluff Road Historic District
Name of Property

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property approximately 95 acres

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

Bluff Road Historic District

Marion County, Indiana

Name of Property

County and State

1. Zone: 16	Easting: 570967	Northing: 4395558
2. Zone: 16	Easting: 571364	Northing: 4395562
3. Zone: 16	Easting: 571401	Northing: 4394756
4. Zone: 16	Easting : 570907	Northing: 4394047
5. Zone: 16	Easting: 570498	Northing: 4394039

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

The boundary of the Bluff Road Historic District is shown as the solid black line on the accompanying three maps titled Bluff Road Historic District Northwest Section, Northeast Section, and Southwest and Southeast Sections, all of which have a scale of 1" = 165'. These section maps are zoomed-in portions of the Bluff Road Historic District Overview Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary was drawn to include farm complexes, houses, greenhouses, and other resources associated with a concentration of market garden farms along Bluff Road from the south side of Sprague Street to just north of Thompson Road. The boundary excludes properties without surviving agricultural resources, as well as modern subdivisions to the south.

Where houses are documented as part of a family complex, single houses are included. The Multiple Property Form explains this phenomenon as a development pattern within the area. Where the narrow lots and fields that are distinctive of this type of truck farming remain intact, they are included.

Despite the barrier of I-465, the district still has a visual connection (due to the overpass) and firm historical tie on either side. This leg of I-465 was completed between 1963 and 1966. The Bluff Road gardeners remained active well after its completion, as documented by sources included in the bibliography.

Bluff Road Historic District
Name of Property

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kelly Lally Molloy/Historian, Bethany Natali/Historian, Charity
Munro/Technician
organization: Weintraut & Associates, Inc.
street & number: 4649 Northwestern Dr
city or town: Zionsville state: IN zip code: 46077
e-mail bethany@weintrautinc.com
telephone: 317-773-9770
date: January 18, 2023

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Bluff Road Historic District
Name of Property

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

City or Vicinity: Indianapolis

County: Marion County

State: Indiana

Location of Original Digital Files: Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

Photo 0001 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0001**)

- Schlensker-Schlegel Farm; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southeast to house and boiler shed
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0002 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0002**)

- Schlensker-Schlegel Farm; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southeast to garage, historic greenhouses, office, boiler chimney, and new greenhouse
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0003 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0003**)

- Schlensker-Schlegel Farm; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southwest to house, boiler house and chimney, and modern greenhouses
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0004 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0004**)

- Schlensker-Schlegel Farm; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking west to house, greenhouses, and boiler chimney from adjacent Nierman Farm field
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0005 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0005**)

Bluff Road Historic District

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

Name of Property

- Nierman Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southwest to house with Schlensker-Schlegel house in the background
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0006 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0006**)

- Nierman Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northwest to house and boiler house/garage
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0007 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0007**)

- County Bridge No. 3802F and Bluff Road; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southeast to bridge on Bluff Road
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0008 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0008**)

- County Bridge No. 3802F; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking west to bridge from south bank of Lick Creek
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0009 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0009**)

- Bob's Century Service Station; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northwest to service station and house
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0010 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0010**)

- Landscape View of Contributing House, Hartman House, and Schebler-Hartman Garage; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southwest from east side of Bluff Road
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0011 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0011**)

- Schebler-Hartman Garage and Hartman House; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking west from Bluff Road
- Bethany Natali

Bluff Road Historic District

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

Name of Property

- October 7, 2020

Photo 0012 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0012**)

- Schebler-Hartman Garage and Hartman House; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northwest from Bluff Road
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0013 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0013**)

- Bill and Betty Hohn House; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northwest
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0014 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0014**)

- Brehob Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southwest to house, garage, and barn
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0015 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0015**)

- Billy and Betty Hohn House and Brehob Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Landscape view looking west from the Peaper Farm
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0016 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0016**)

- Brehob Farm Complex and Wegehof Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Landscape view looking southwest from the Peaper Farm
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0017 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0017**)

- Wegehof Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southwest to three Wegehof houses
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0018 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0018**)

- Wegehof Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District

Bluff Road Historic District

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

Name of Property

- Looking west to barn and new greenhouses (outside district boundary)
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0019 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0019**)

- Wegehof Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northwest to south end of historic-era greenhouses
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0020 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0020**)

- Wegehof Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southwest to greenhouses and flower shed addition
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0021 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0021**)

- Wegehof Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southeast to the north end of the historic-era greenhouses and flower shed, boiler house remnant, and tomato packing shed additions
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0022 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0022**)

- Wegehof Farm Complex, Peaper Farm Complex and Bluff Road; Bluff Road Historic District
- Landscape view looking north
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0023 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0023**)

- I-465 Overpass, Richard Wegehof House, and Bluff Road; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking north
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0024 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0024**)

- Richard Wegehof House; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northwest to house
- Doug Fivecoat

Bluff Road Historic District

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

Name of Property

- November 20, 2020

Photo 0025 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0025**)

- Contributing House, and Gary House and Nursery; Bluff Road Historic District
- Landscape view looking southeast
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0026 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0026**)

- Gary House and Nursery; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northwest to house
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0027 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0027**)

- Gary House and Nursery; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking west to fuel storage tank and former house/current office building
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0028 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0028**)

- Gary House and Nursery; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northwest to garage and historic-era greenhouses
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0029 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0029**)

- Alfred and Alice Bunte Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking west to house, boiler house, and boiler chimney
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0030 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0030**)

- Dietrich and Emma Bunte House; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southwest to house, with Robert Bollinger House in the background
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0031 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0031**)

- Robert Bollinger Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District

Bluff Road Historic District

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

Name of Property

- Looking southwest to house and outbuilding
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0032 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0032**)

- Non-Contributing Modern Commercial Buildings/Warehouses; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southwest
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0033 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0033**)

- Hohlt Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northeast to the complex
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0034 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0034**)

- Hohlt Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking east to the fountain
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0035 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0035**)

- Peaper Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northeast to new houses on the Peaper Farm
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0036 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0036**)

- Peaper Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southeast to four Peaper family houses
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0037 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0037**)

- Peaper Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking west to the Peaper houses and outbuildings from the turnip shed and warehouse
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Bluff Road Historic District
Name of Property

Marion County, Indiana
County and State

Photo 0038 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0038**)

- Peaper Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking southeast to the wellhouses and turnip shed and warehouse
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0039 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0039**)

- Peaper Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking east to one of the Peaper Farm's fields
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0040 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0040**)

- Peaper Farm Complex; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northeast to the Peaper Farm from the Wegehof Farm
- Bethany Natali
- October 7, 2020

Photo 0041 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0041**)

- Contributing House and Arthur Wegehof House; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northeast to the houses
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0042 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0042**)

- Harry Peaper House; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking east to the house
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0043 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0043**)

- Contributing Houses and Bluff Road; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northeast
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0044 of 0046 (**IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0044**)

- Non-Contributing House and Barn; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking east

Bluff Road Historic District

Marion County, Indiana

Name of Property

County and State

- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

Photo 0045 of 0046 (IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0045)

- Contributing Houses, I-465 Overpass, and Bluff Road; Bluff Road Historic District
- Looking northeast
- Doug Fivecoat
- November 20, 2020

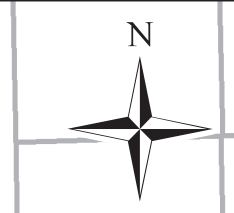
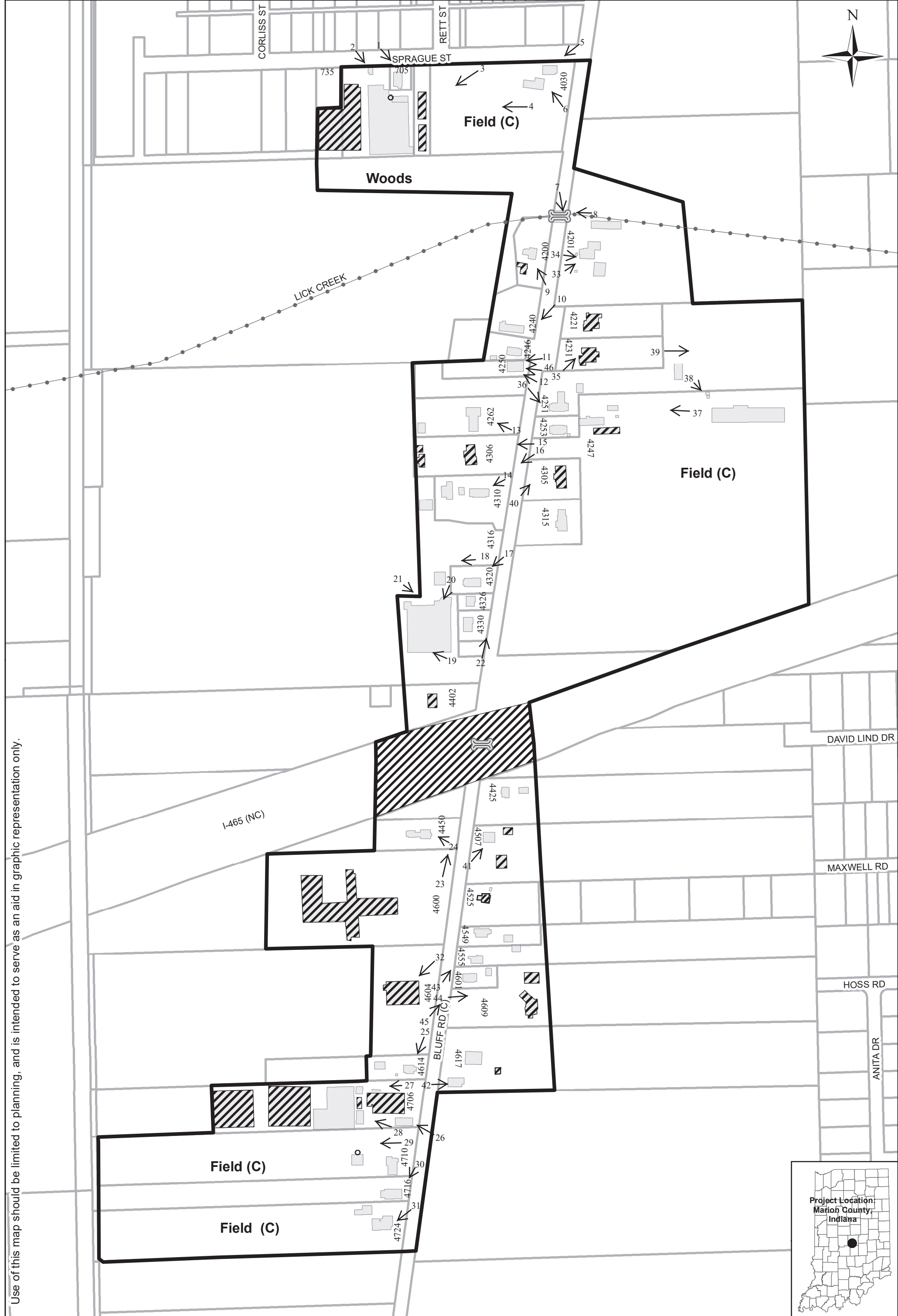
Photo 0046 of 0046 (IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDistrict0046)

- Hartman Garage; Bluff Road Historic District
- Historic Photograph

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

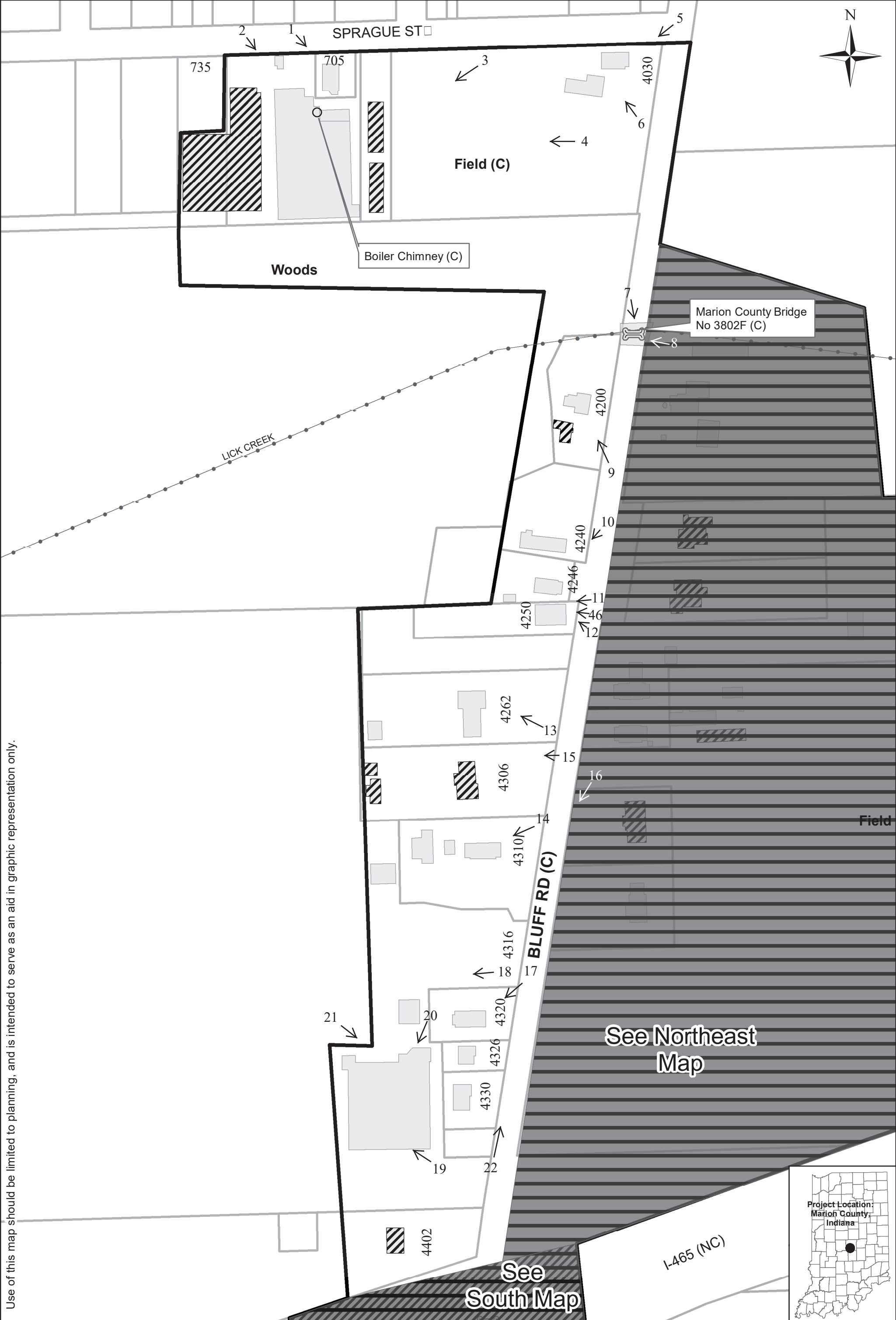
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Use of this map should be limited to planning, and is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only.

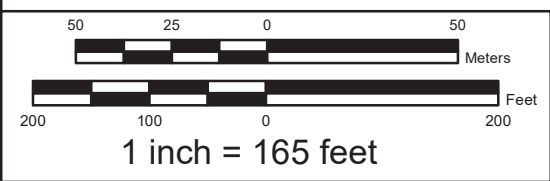


Bluff Road Historic District Overview

- Non_Contributing
- Contributing
- Bridges
- Bluff Road Historic District
- Parcels



Use of this map should be limited to planning, and is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only.



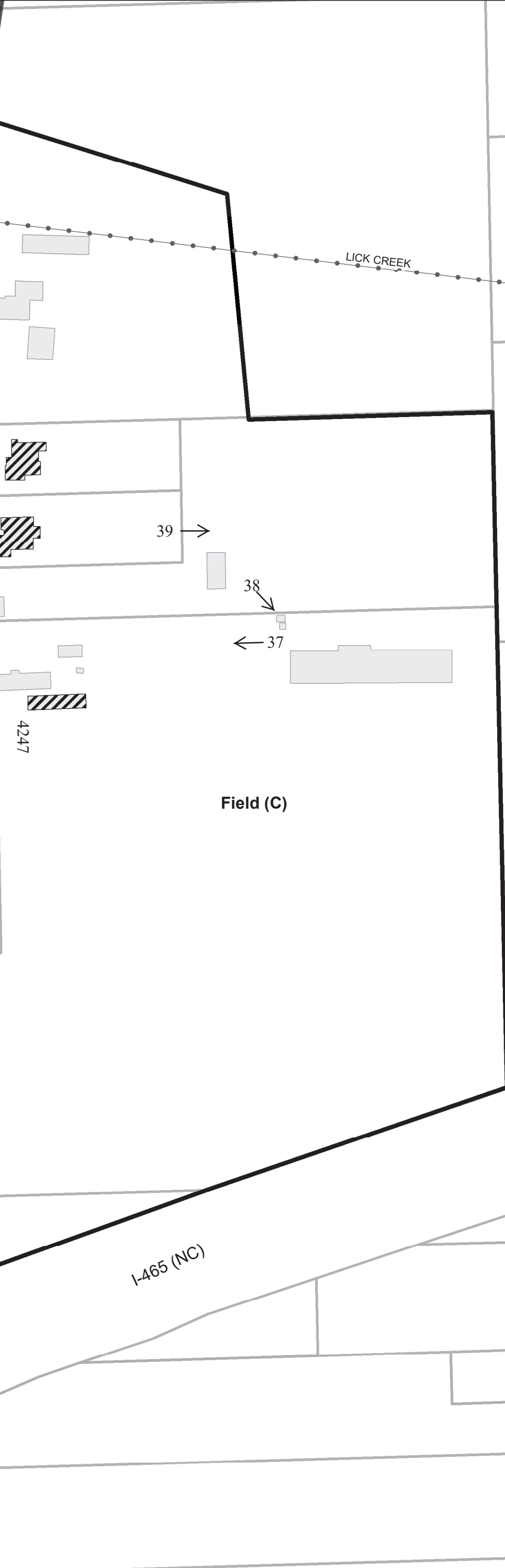
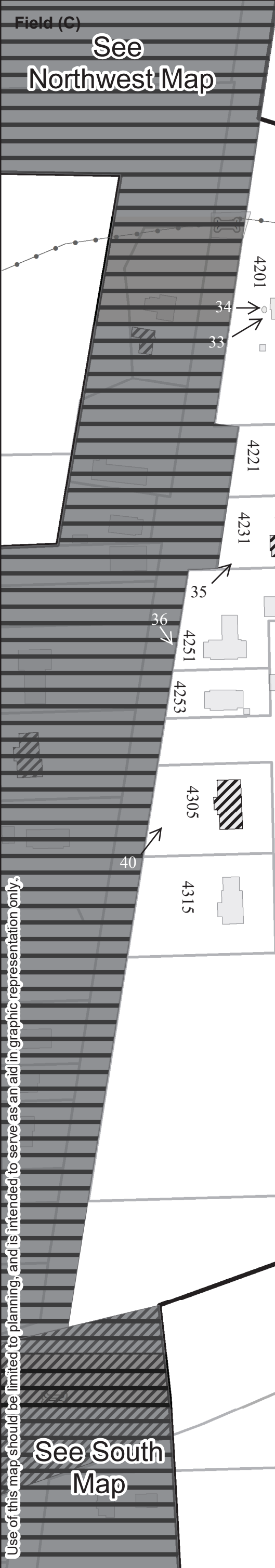
Bluff Road Historic District Northwest Section

- Non_Contributing
- Contributing
- Bridges
- Bluff Road Historic District
- Parcels



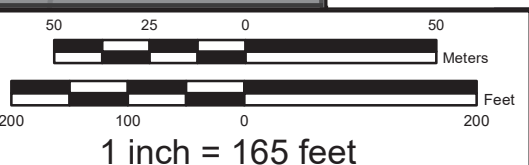


See Northwest Map



Use of this map should be limited to planning, and is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only.

See South Map



Bluff Road Historic District Northeast Section

- Non_Contributing
- Contributing
- Bridges
- Bluff Road Historic District
- Parcels

See Northwest and Northeast Maps



I-465 Overpass (NC)

I-465 (NC)

BLUFF RD (C)

Field (C)

Field (C)

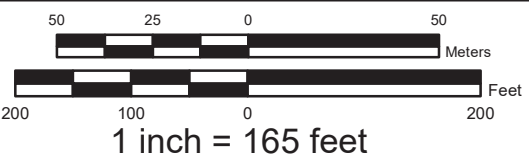
Use of this map should be limited to planning, and is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only.

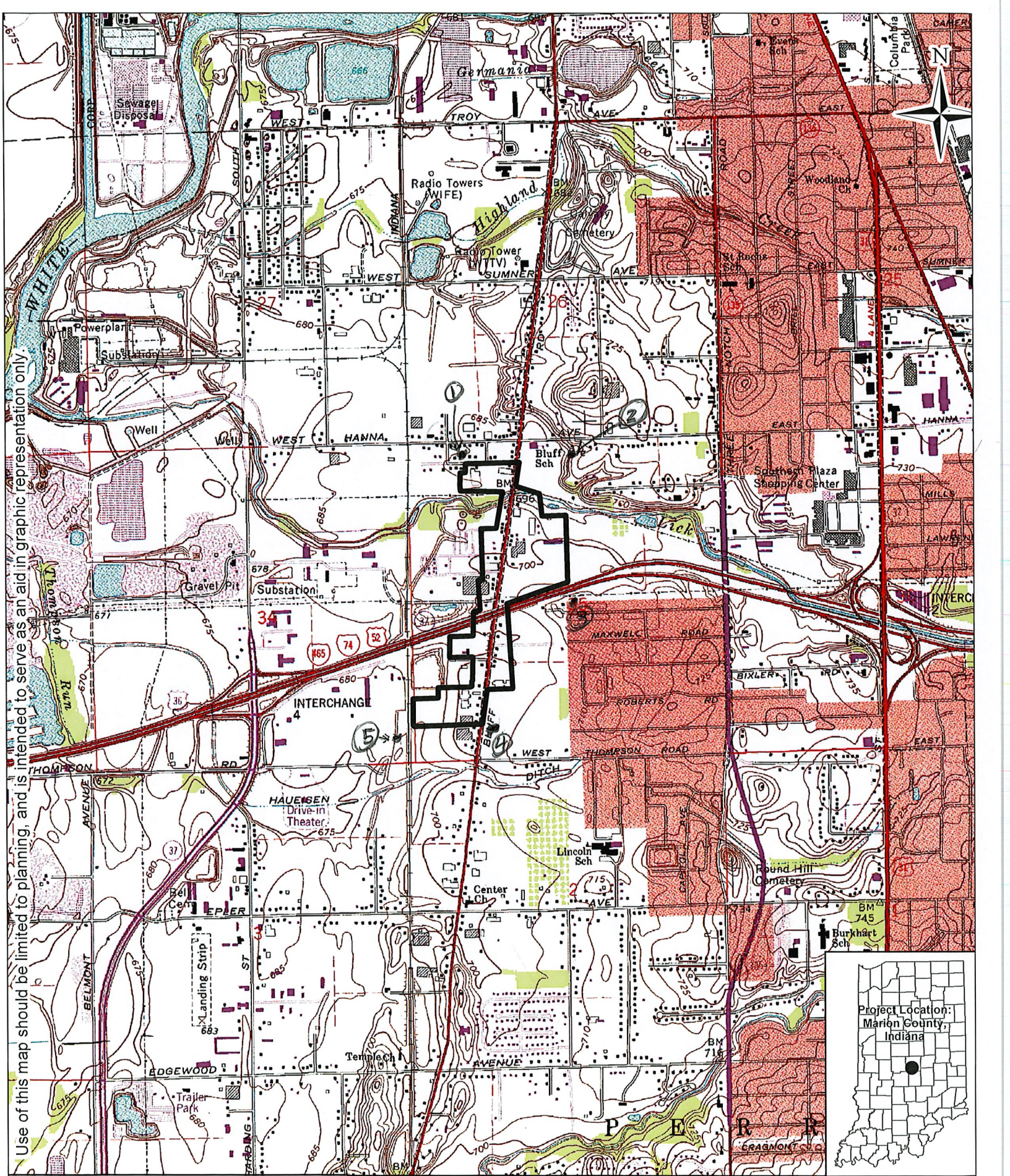


Project Location:
Marion County,
Indiana

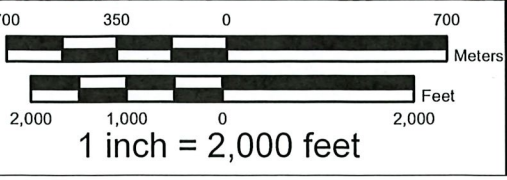
Bluff Road Historic District South Section

- Non_Contributing
- Contributing
- Bridges
- Bluff Road Historic District
- Parcels





Use of this map should be limited to planning, and is intended to serve as an aid in graphic representation only.



Bluff Road Historic District

Bluff Road Historic District

⑤ 16 570496 4394039

MARION Co., IN
NAD 83 UTM
① 16 570967 4395558
② 16 571364 4395562
③ 16 571401 4394756
④ 16 570907 4394047



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0003



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0008



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0009



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0012



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0014



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0016



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0017



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0023



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0024



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0029



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0034



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0036



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0037



IN_MarionCounty_BluffRoadHistoricDist5rict_0044