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Smiths Grove Historic District (Boundary Expansion)
Warren County, Kentucky

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6. Function or Use

TRANSPORTATION/railroad
LANDSCAPE/parking lot
GOVERNMENT/government office
GOVERNMENT/post office
EDUCATION/school
RELIGION/religious facility
RELIGION/church-related residence
FUNERARY/cemetery
RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural building

Current Functions

TRANSPORTATION/railroad
LANDSCAPE/parking lot
GOVERNMENT/government office
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EDUCATION/school
RELIGION/religious facility
RELIGION/church-related residence
FUNERARY/cemetery
RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural
building

7. Description

Architectural Classification

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne
MID-19th CENTURY/Gothic Revival
LATE 19th and EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne

7. Narrative Description

The **Smiths Grove Historic District (Boundary Expansion)**, located in Warren County, Kentucky, is composed of a total of 167 properties in the proposed expanded area. These properties consist of 121 primary buildings, 21 secondary buildings and twelve sites that contribute to the district's sense of place and time. The overall historic character of the district is strong despite the 29 primary buildings, 34 secondary buildings, and two sites that are non-contributing. Buildings designated as non-contributing were constructed after the period of significance, that is, after 1956. Except for the non-contributing buildings and sites, the district still retains much of the same appearance as it did at the end of the period of significance. Eleven of these properties have been previously listed in the National Register of Historic Places. All of the 4 properties that were listed in the original district in 1979, and the 7 properties that were listed in 1987 as part of a multiple property nomination, remain intact and are still considered contributing.

The proposed expansion of the Smiths Grove Historic District, encompasses a thirty-block area of primarily commercial and residential buildings dating between 1856 and 1956. The total number of contributing primary and secondary buildings in the original district and the expanded area is 142. Architecturally, the district's distinct character is defined by a majority of one- and two-story, wood-frame and brick commercial and residential buildings interspersed by a series of churches that were constructed on long narrow lots that spread out from the downtown commercial district. Along the outer edge of the district, larger lots can be found that contain a school and cemetery. Rural farmland surrounds the district to the north, east and west. A more recent commercial area is found to the south where S.R. 101 intersects Interstate 65.

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The Smiths Grove Historic District developed along two early transportation routes: the railroad, and Main Street that eventually became S. R. 101. Main Street and the railroad intersect with each other in the northeast corner of Warren County. Smiths Grove developed around the post office that was established in 1844 and eventually along both sides of the railroad tracks in 1859. Shortly after, a cohesive group of historic commercial and residential buildings began to occupy individual lots along this corridor. This neighborhood has continued to grow and develop along these two major transportation routes because it provided access to downtown Smiths Grove, which eventually became a distribution center that supplied stores in southern Kentucky and northern Tennessee.

Smiths Grove Historic District (Boundary Expansion) Boundaries

The proposed enlargement of the Smiths Grove Historic District extends five blocks northward on North Main Street, four blocks west, and two blocks east from the original district that was listed in 1979. Specifically, the expansion area extends northward to Sixth Street and includes the Smiths Grove Cemetery, to Hedge Street on the west, to Kentucky Street on the east and the railroad to the south.

The proposed boundary expansion for the Smith Grove Historic District includes all of the properties that were located within the original historic district boundaries that were listed in 1979 and 1987, along with numerous others, forming a cohesive group of commercial, residential, educational, financial and religious buildings representing the period of significance from 1844 to 1956. The entire original district and newly proposed expansion area covers 134 acres and contains 167 lots that encompasses part of a thirty-block area. See Figure 1, Smiths Grove Historic District (Expanded) Map.

Smiths Grove's Building Characteristics

The Smiths Grove Historic District (Boundary Expansion) contains the most cohesive group of early commercial and residential buildings that were constructed in a thirty-block area north of the railroad in Warren County, Kentucky. Of the 167 properties in the newly expanded area, there are 121 primary buildings, 21 secondary buildings, and 12 sites that contribute to the district. Of the 121 contributing principal buildings, 49 or 41%, date between 1856 and 1899; 44, or 36%, date between 1900 and 1924; and 28, or 23% date between 1925 and 1956, the end of the period of significance. The contributing buildings are primarily one- and two-story wood-frame and brick residential buildings, with hip or gabled roofs, on long narrow lots.

Estimated Date of Construction	# of primary buildings	% of primary buildings
1856 to 1899	49	41.0
1900 to 1924	44	36.0
1925 to 1956	28	23.0
Total	121	100.0

The majority of these buildings has remained intact for over 100 years and is exemplified by the fact that this cohesive collection of mid-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century commercial and residential buildings reflects

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elements from a variety of architectural styles. The most common architectural styles found in this district are the Bungalow/Craftsman style, 20th Century Commercial, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style. Weatherboard and brick are the most common building materials in the district. Roof types are gable, cross gable and hip. Dormers and chimneys project through some of the asphalt or fiberglass shingle roofs. Knee braces visually support projecting eaves on gabled ends. Windows commonly have narrow divided lights over a single pane of glass.

This district is distinguished from other railroad towns in Warren County by the following factors:

- the high density of closely related buildings that were constructed along both sides of the railroad tracks
- the town's many commercial buildings and residences that with late-19th- and early-20th-century styles
- materials such as wood, brick and stone
- workmanship displayed in details such as wood knee braces, brick piers, chimneys, stone sills and lintels
- the feeling they convey as a cohesive unit representing the period of significance from 1844 to 1956.

Integrity

The Smith Grove Historic District (Boundary Expansion) meets National Register Criterion A and is significant in the area of Community Planning and Development because it reveals the patterns of siting, building types and styles, around railroad towns in Warren County.

The district has been identified as an area that conveys a strong sense of historical and architectural significance through its life as a railroad town that developed along both sides of the railroad tracks and along an early transportation route, North Main Street, which eventually became S.R. 101. The district reveals much information about the development of rural farmland area into a commercial district that continues to thrive today. It has also retained the key elements that define of early Warren County railroad towns including: an operational post office, a cohesive unit of commercial, residential, financial, religious, educational, farm buildings, and a cemetery, which cumulatively reflect the appearance of the town at the turn-of-the-century.

The integrity factors that are vital in conveying the Smiths Grove Historic District (Boundary Expansion) and were used in evaluating its eligibility are **location, setting, design, materials, association** and **feeling**. This district is distinguished from other railroad towns in Warren County by the high density of closely related buildings and their **location** in close proximity to the railroad, Main Street or S.R. 101, and Interstate 65; their urban **setting** on long narrow lots enhanced by low landscaping and large shade trees; building **design** in terms of scale, massing, and fenestration; **materials** such as wood, brick and stone; the **association** of the buildings and sites with their identity as part of a commercial district and residential neighborhood that grew up along a railroad; and the **feeling** they convey as a cohesive unit representing the period of significance from 1844 to 1956.

The integrity of the entire district is extremely high as determined by the criteria outlined below which is supported by the following statistics. In the expanded area there are 121 principal, 21 secondary buildings and twelve sites that are situated on 133 contributing properties in the newly expanded area while 29 principal buildings, 34 secondary buildings, and two sites are located on 31 non-contributing properties. All of the non-contributing buildings were built after the period of significance, 1956.

All of the historic buildings in the district have integrity of **location** since they have remained in the same place

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they were originally constructed. Their **setting** provides an accurate picture of the historic character of a cohesive residential neighborhood that expanded northward from the central business district and became a part of a larger residential area that continues to be viable in 2006.

Integrity of **design** in this district is fairly high. The majority of the buildings have maintained their original scale, massing, materials, patterns of fenestration and proportion. In relationship to architectural design, **design** relates to a series of commercial, residential, financial, educational and religious buildings that were constructed to accommodate the needs of a growing railroad community that have retained their character-defining features and continue to provide an accurate picture of what the town was like during the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century in Smiths Grove.

The district retains integrity of **materials** in the district is extremely high because the majority of building exteriors have retained their original materials and character defining features that reflect the period of significance. The appearance of the Smiths Grove Historic District today conveys the **feeling** of a historic commercial and residential area that is rich in character. This district also retains a high degree of integrity of **association** with the historical events that define a Warren County railroad town.

All 121 contributing principal historic buildings in the newly expanded area have been reviewed using the criteria outlined below for evaluating the impact of alternatives on the integrity of location, setting, design, materials, feeling and association.

Alterations

Common alterations to the contributing buildings in the newly expanded area generally fall into four categories:

- 1) alterations to the exterior fabric including vinyl or aluminum siding over the original weatherboard facades;
- 2) alterations to original window and/or door openings including the installation of new windows and/or doors, infilling existing openings, making new openings in the exterior walls, and applying shutters;
- 3) porch modifications, including the replacement of existing columns with wrought iron columns or adding covered walkways or open porches; and
- 4) additions to the buildings such as rear or side additions that are similar in scale, size, and massing, using building materials that are similar to those used in the principal building, and/or carports.

In the Smiths Grove Historic District, for buildings meeting the terms of Criterion A, it has been determined that changes may have occurred in two or three categories outlined above without compromising the overall integrity of **design** for the building. Many combinations exist based on the four typical alterations listed above.

The following factors were taken into consideration in evaluating the impact of alterations: the nature and extent of the alteration; when the alteration took place, and whether the alteration can be easily removed, reversed, or even should be considered a significant part of the history of the building. Alterations reflecting popular building trends, building code requirements, the number of buildings that have similar alterations, and the impact of the alteration on the overall character of the historic district were all factors entered into the evaluation.

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Materials such as vinyl and aluminum siding have been used to cover wood weatherboard walls to reduce periodic painting while retaining an historic appearance. Covered walkways and entries have been added to shield pedestrians from the elements, and/or create an image of prominence. In an effort to reduce energy costs and eliminate the need for repairs, historic wood sash windows have often been replaced with metal sash windows. Inoperable shutters were often applied to accent window openings. When additional building area was required, property owners constructed exterior additions to their primary buildings in relationship to its size, scale, and mass, and used similar or contrasting materials.

Of the 121 principal contributing buildings in the newly expanded district, 76, or 63 %, have little alteration; 44, or 36 %, have moderate alterations; and 1, or 1 %, is currently under rehabilitation. Since there is a high concentration of well maintained buildings within the proposed district, there were a majority of buildings with little alteration. Little alteration consists of one of the following: a modest rear addition, vinyl siding, wrought iron columns, new windows or doors. Moderate alterations include at least two of the following changes: side and/or rear addition, wrought iron columns, a ramp, applied shutters, carport, walkway, or open porch. These alterations do not drastically alter the exterior appearance and are removable in the future.

Number of changes	# of primary buildings	% of total buildings
Little or no alteration	76	63.0
Moderate alterations	44	36.0
Under Restoration	1	1.0
Total	121	100.0

Examples of individual buildings displaying changes within the four categories are discussed below.

Buildings with little or no alterations

Two buildings retaining the highest degree of integrity in the district are the 110 North Main Street (WA-37, #11) and 120 Broadway Street (WA-570, #154). None of the exterior character-defining features of these buildings has been altered. The residence at 110 North Main Street, built in 1875, is a two-and-a-half-story brick Queen Anne that has been converted into a Bed & Breakfast. Detailed spindlework along the front porch eave is supported by wood columns that pierce the stylized front porch railing. Similarly, 120 Broadway Street, built in 1891, is a one-and-a-half-story wood-frame Queen Anne residence that is covered with weatherboards. Paired tapered wood columns on piers accent the main central entry that is raised above grade with a series of steps that flare outward. The Ionic column capitals emphasize the craftsmanship found on some of the buildings in this district. Both of these residences are excellent examples that have retained all of their character-defining features and have been well maintained over the years.

Buildings with moderate alterations

Two buildings with moderate alterations are located at 204 North Main Street (WA-541, # 26) and the 317 East Fourth Street (WA-593, # 141). The two-story wood-frame residence at 204 North Main Street was built in 1856.

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Retaining the weatherboard siding and a low sloping hip roof, the front porch is now supported by paired wrought iron columns on piers. A small one-story wood-frame addition projects on one side near the rear of the principal building. It is pierced with tall narrow windows and has a low sloping hipped roof similar in style to the principal structure's roof. Situated on a prominent corner in the neighborhood, the building has been converted to commercial use. In contrast, 317 East Fourth Street is a one-and-a-half story wood-frame residence with an exterior end chimney and side gabled roof. The modifications to this building include its vinyl siding and attached carport that has been added to the side of the principal building. It is compatible with the primary residence because it blends in with the overall building design.

Buildings that are currently being restored

One building that is currently being restored is located at 304 College Street (WA-566, #131). Built in 1891, this two-story, wood-frame residence has a semi-circular front porch supported by columns and a stepped front gabled roof. Covered in weatherboard siding, it retains all of its character-defining features and is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style in this neighborhood.

Non-contributing buildings

Considering the fact that the majority of buildings in the expanded Smiths Grove Historic District have retained their original materials, size, scale, massing and building foot print, with slight modifications, there were no buildings that were altered to the extent that they no longer contribute to the overall character of the proposed district. Thus, only buildings and sites dating after the period of significance, 1956, including 29 principal buildings, 34 secondary buildings and two sites, were defined as non-contributing.

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8. Statement of Significance

The **Smiths Grove Historic District (Boundary Expansion)** meets National Register Criterion A and is locally significant in the Area of Community Planning and Development because it reveals the gradual trends of changes in patterns of siting, building types and styles, around railroad towns in Warren County. Situated along a railroad and a highway, S.R. 101, in south central Kentucky, the proposed district consists of an important group of historic commercial properties that date from the mid-1800s. These buildings, together with the matrix of streets, alleys, and lots on which they are located, provide an excellent picture of the development of the town from 1859, the date of the railroad's arrival, to 1950, when the last historic building in the district was constructed. The district is compared with five other railroad towns that developed in Warren County during the same time.

This document intends to expand the boundary of the Smiths Grove Historic District, listed in 1979 and expanded in 1987. The 1979 effort argued that four buildings in the commercial district were significant for recalling mid- to late-19th-century commercial development. The 1987 listing increased the number of buildings in the district by five, adding those dating from the early-20th century. The 1987 nomination states that the district meets Criterion A at the local level during the period between 1900 and 1930 in the area of Commerce, as opposed to this newly proposed district which meets Criterion A and is significant in the area of Community Planning and Development, based on the historic context "Railroad Towns in Warren County, 1859-1950". This context will examine railroad towns in the County: Oakland, Woodburn, Bowling Green, Smiths Grove, Rich Pond, and Memphis Junction.

The district is significant for the excellent way it reflects all of the key elements of a town that developed around a railroad including its location on two major transportation routes: the L&N railroad (now CSX), and S.R. 101; a central business district that developed within a grid pattern around the railroad; the relationship of commercial buildings to each other and the close proximity of a residential neighborhood that is surrounded by rural farmland; the establishment of a post office that remains operational today; a growth in population; and a cohesive group of commercial, financial, educational and residential resources on their original lots according to an early town map.

Common elements for the establishment and development of railroad towns in Warren County include

- the development of a town plan that makes the railroad the key spatial organizing factor
- the establishment of a post office that marks the town as a viable civic location
- a railroad stop with a building used as a passenger station or freight depot
- a cohesive group of mixed use properties that arose in response to the opportunities brought by the railroad
- the continued viability of the town despite adverse conditions

A number of key events that mark Smiths Grove history include:

- the establishment of a post office in 1844
- the L&N Railroad constructed in 1859
- development of the rural landscape into a commercial district, with the first store opened in 1859
- a residential community arising that surrounds the commercial core
- the town incorporated in 1871
- a college established in 1875
- financial institutions opened in the 1880s, followed by educational institutions in the early-1900s.

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Historic Context: Railroad Towns in Warren County 1859-1950

Railroad Transportation in Kentucky

In 1830, the Kentucky legislature chartered the Lexington & Ohio Railroad, and the line between Lexington and Frankfort was completed in 1835. Kentucky's first railroad was the result of Lexington's need for an efficient transportation system to compete with the Ohio River cities of Louisville and Cincinnati. In 1836, a crude tramline, the Barren River Railroad, was built in Warren County, giving Bowling Green elementary freight service to a wharf about a mile and a half away on the Barren River. The Louisville & Nashville (L&N) acquired a spur in the 1850s.

Then in the 1850s, an opening of the lines connecting Louisville with Frankfort, and Covington with Lexington, emerged, as did the completion of the main stem, Memphis branch, and Lebanon branch of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. By the end of the decade, the Mobile & Ohio, the Mississippi Central, and the New Orleans & Ohio reached the Ohio River in the Jackson Purchase. The L&N completed its main line through Bowling Green to Nashville. Covington, Paris, and Lexington were joined in 1856 by predecessors of the Kentucky Central Railway. The Mobile & Ohio (M&O), running north from the gulf, reached Columbus in the Jackson Purchase in early 1861 (Curry, 1992: 893).

The Civil War interrupted railroad development, but the rails were vital support systems for the military. Between 1865 and 1880, much of Kentucky's trunk and primary network was built and rebuilt. The state's rail mileage swelled from 567 to 1,536 miles during that period (Castner, 1993:753).

The greatest railroad development occurred after the Civil War, however, when the Louisville & Nashville Railroad expanded its holdings, and the Chesapeake & Ohio, the Illinois Central, and the Southern, all purchased existing lines and constructed new ones (Curry, 1992: 893).

Railroad construction accelerated in the 1880s and early 1890s (Castner, 1993: 753). By the 1920s, rail covered over almost 4,000 miles in Kentucky. The railroads which had dominated transportation in the last half of the nineteenth century were already being challenged by the emerging road system that opened greater areas of the state to automobiles, buses and trucks. By the late 1920s, the number of miles of roads under state maintenance roughly equaled the railroad mileage, and thereafter surpassed it (Curry, 1992: 893). Kentucky rail mileage reached its maximum in by 1930 with over 5,005 miles of line, with hundreds of trains carrying passengers (Castner, 1993: 753).

Raw materials, agricultural products, minerals and livestock flowed from rural counties to urban markets and manufacturing centers. The urban centers shipped back tools, furniture, house wares, and other staples needed by the rural populace (Castner, 1993: 753). No new mainlines were built after 1930, although some new tracks were laid during and after World War II, even as late as 1989, to serve coal and industrial developments (Castner, 1993: 754).

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Shortly after World War II, passenger traffic on railroads significantly declined as automobile production increased and became affordable. This made it more difficult for the railroads to compete as freight carriers in areas of low traffic density (Curry, 1992: 893). The railroads first reduced, then totally eliminated passenger service within the state and then suspended freight service on many branch lines, leaving the trunk lines to carry enormous amounts of freight throughout the 1980s (Curry, 1992: 893). Between 1930 and 1989, almost 2,000 miles of secondary, branch and shortlines in the state were abandoned, or sold to other shortline operators, industries, or communities. Rail and passenger service suffered sharp declines as a result of the highways. In 1971, the remaining passenger trains services in the state were integrated into the Amtrak system, and after 1980, only two Amtrak trains served Kentucky (Castner, 1992: 754.). Thus, railroad transportation ceased to have much impact on the growth of the towns that historically developed along the railroad.

L&N Railroad

The existing L & N Railroad meanders in a northeast direction through Warren County. It enters the county at Woodburn in the south and travels in a northeasterly direction on the east side of U.S. 31-W, slicing through Rich Pond and Memphis Junction. It veers eastward through downtown Bowling Green adjacent to U.S. 68/80, and finally traverses east through Oakland and Smiths Grove just north of Interstate 65, before it exits the county.

The completed L&N Railroad made six stops within Warren County: Woodburn, Rich Pond, Memphis Junction, Bowling Green, Oakland, and Smiths Grove. Of these six, Bowling Green was already thriving as the county seat. Although the railroad made a tremendous impact on Bowling Green, the town did not develop solely as a railroad town. Rich Pond and Memphis Junction have less historic resources and are centered around industrial buildings along the railroad. The settlements of Oakland, Smiths Grove, and Woodburn are similar in the fact that they have a cohesive group of historic resources and grew from a few small farms to full-fledged communities because of the railroad.

The elements that influenced railroad towns were business, agriculture and commerce. Upon completion in 1859, the Louisville & Nashville Railroad (L&N Railroad) was a catalyst in Warren County for economic prosperity. According to Kentucky Historian Thomas D. Clark, "the building of the L&N was the most significant internal improvement undertaken in Kentucky... it connected the Commonwealth with the expanding South and immediately became economically profitable" (Castner, 1992: 579).

The L&N Railroad not only provided an opportunity for market expansion, but also encouraged the development of towns served by this rail-transportation network. The population along the rail corridor increased dramatically through the efforts of developers exploiting this transportation system. The 1850 U.S. Census indicates the total population of Warren County, Kentucky as 15,123. By 1880, the population had nearly doubled, to 30,158 (U.S. Bureau of the Census). The influx of population created a new market for goods and services within the immediate area. The L&N provided essential passenger, freight, and mail transportation services to more than half the counties in the state and moved products from Kentucky's farms and industries to regional, national and export markets (Castner, 1992: 578).

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Warren County Railroad Towns 1859-1950

Community Planning and Development is a useful framework for discussing the historical significance of Smiths Grove's diverse group of commercial, residential, financial, religious and educational resources in relationship to the railroad, streets, alleys, and lots on which they are located. The juxtaposition of these buildings, structures and sites in this setting, and their close proximity to the railroad, are extremely significant in the history and development of Smiths Grove and Warren County.

Before these towns developed along the railroad in the 1850s, there was a large expanse of land just waiting to be developed. Some territories were divided into land grants to pay former soldiers following the Revolutionary War (Tolbert, 1999: 7). As pioneers migrated westward, they brought their knowledge of settlement practices, cleared and settled the rolling, fertile land. Usually near water, they established a home, a trading post and became farmers, drawing subsistence from the land. Buildings were constructed in these locations using available materials, usually beginning with hand-hewn log structures (Tolbert, 1999: 10).

It was the advent of the railroad that generated a building boom during the 1850s that effectively refined the townscape (Tolbert, 1999: 14). Once the railroad arrived, these towns did not develop in the absence of a drawn plan. The patterns were usually either linear, grid, or radial. Blocks were usually divided into large square or rectangular lots and then subdivided into long narrow lots to provide the maximum number of owners along street frontage. The combination of gridding off the town for future growth, coupled with the great possibilities promised by the railroad, enabled growth to occur quickly. But even with a town plat, these towns were often fluid at their edges, making it difficult to discern the rural versus urban areas. Certainly what distinguished these towns from the surrounding rural landscape is their function as a place for doing business (Tolbert, 1999: 13).

Storehouses, warehouses, depots, and freight stations were built along the railroad to collect and distribute unrefined agricultural products from the countryside and items needed by the community. Nearby, commercial buildings were constructed to sell the goods, residential buildings to house the growing population, hotels for visitor accommodations, financial institutions to support investment opportunities, and educational and religious facilities to encourage learning and social interaction. This combination of rural and urban elements made small towns a distinct type of place – more than a farm neighborhood, but not quite a city (Tolbert, 1999: 46).

Oakland

This 6th class city is located one-half mile northwest of I-65 and 8-1/2 miles northeast of Bowling Green. William Radford, the first storekeeper, is said to have named the L&N Railroad Station in 1859 for the many large oak trees in the vicinity. One year later he established the local post office as Oakland Station and became its first post master. The name was shortened to Oakland in 1867 (Rennick, 1984:217).

Oakland's growth corresponded with the construction of the L&N, which served as the focus for Oakland's agrarian commerce. The town is an excellent example of how the railroad radically changed what began as a small settlement in a rural village to an economically successful town. The design of the town's commercial and residential areas and their relationship to each other and the railroad relays a typical story of the railroad's impact on Warren County's early settlements well into the 20th century (Zeigler, 2004).

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Oakland's physical development was designed around the L&N Railroad, which in essence became the main street. Other streets radiated perpendicular to the railroad, which is similar to other Warren County towns along the L&N. The town's commercial district developed as early as 1875, along both sides of the railroad, rather than on one side. At that time there was a telegraph office, drug store, post office, two-room office, a general store, a passenger platform, and a grocery. In addition, there were several agricultural-based structures, including two storage barns, a mill, and a stockyard (Tucker, 1952:1-4).

The L&N Railroad facilitated Oakland's development not only as a community, but also as an agricultural center. This region was conducive to highly productive yields because of the thin fertile topsoil. Before 1859, subsistence agriculture dominated the area, but after adequate transportation was established, commercial agriculture prevailed. According to *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, "it [the railroad] moved products of Kentucky's farms to regional, national, and export markets" (Castner, 1982: 578).

From 1870 through the 1890s, Oakland developed as one of the prosperous railroad towns in Warren County and became a major shipping point for strawberries, tobacco, grain, and livestock until between 1860 and 1930. By 1876, a flourmill, school, hotel, two general stores, and a drug store were established (Logsdon, 2000: 55). Oakland's commercial buildings were lined up along one side of Main Street facing the railroad. According to the 1877 D.G. Beers & Co. map, a depot, railroad company building, mill, tobacco house, and several other buildings were lined up along the railroad tracks with one road parallel to the railroad and another road perpendicular to the railroad, delineating the town's anticipated outward growth and expansion. Racial integration was visible at this time by the establishment of a black church, and education was important as seen by the Oakland Academy that is situated on the northern edge of town. Several houses appear in a grid-like street pattern south of the railroad.

The community's agricultural prosperity led to a building boom in Oakland. As frame commercial buildings were burned or razed, they were replaced with brick structures south of the railroad tracks. During its peak, Oakland boasted four groceries, a bank, barbershop, post office, drug store, mercantile store, repair shop for agricultural equipment, mill, black smith shop, and mortuary. In comparison, nearby Smith's Grove had two drugstores, a harness shop, a brickyard, two general stores, and a saloon (Baird, 1999: 18). The Oakland post office that opened in 1887 remains operational as of 2006.

The Rolling Mill that had been located to the west of the central business district and south of the railroad tracks is a prime example of how the L&N railroad contributed to the development of the town. The Model Roller Mill Company, also known as the Seed Cleaning Mill, was built in 1902 using the labor of workers who commuted from Cincinnati and lived on the train during construction. The Mill, originally a flourmill, changed to a seed mill in 1927. When the Mill shut down in the late-1980s, the machinery was moved to a similar plant in Auburn, Kentucky, and the building was demolished in 2003 (Zeigler, 2004). The fact that this mill remained open until the last quarter of the 20th century demonstrates the commitment of the townsfolk to its continued growth, development, and viability.

The fact that the town had several doctors also indicates its vitality in the late-1800s and early-1900s. Several of their homes remain extant (Baird, 1999:18). In this residential area south of the tracks are a church, school, and cemetery. In 1870 the Pleasant Hill Christian Church moved to this area, as did other churches. The cemetery is a

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small plot enclosed with a wrought-iron fence. The dates of the tombstones range from 1854 to 1888 and include the names of Shobe and Mansfield, early town builders (Zeigler, 2004).

In the center of town, two brick buildings with parapet walls, the Oakland State Bank, currently a Masonic lodge, and the old Oakland Post Office (Logsdon, 2000:55), face the railroad tracks and are significant reminders of the town's development during the early years and reflects the area's financial boom.

The decline of the railroad resulted in a decline in Oakland's economic growth, which in turn caused a down turn in the built environment, thus distancing the association between the town and railroad transportation (Zeigler, 2004).

In 2004, the estimated population of Oakland was 256. As of 2006, the majority of historic resources remain intact and reflect the original design of the town along the railroad.

Woodburn

This 6th class city is located on the L&N line in the southwestern part of Warren County on S.R. 240 just east of U.S. 31-W and eight miles southwest of Bowling Green. The post office was established in 1843 at a stage stop called Mason's Inn on U.S. 31-W. The town was allegedly named for an early fire that had destroyed much of the nearby forest. When the L&N Railroad completed its main line in 1859, the depot was built on land that was donated by Ewing Robertson. The post office was transferred there as New Woodburn and renamed Woodburn in 1864. The town was laid off at the depot site in December 1865 and incorporated in February 1866 (Rennick, 1984: 323-324).

Woodburn became one of two shipping points in southern Warren County for such products as tobacco, wheat, corn and hogs. During the Civil War, Woodburn was the site of several minor skirmishes including the burning of a train by General John Hunt Morgan in 1863 and the burning of the railroad depot in 1864 by Confederate guerrillas. Three general stores, two groceries, two hotels and saloons, a drug store and schools were established (Architecture, 1984: 145). The town developed around the railroad track with commercial buildings, the railroad depot, and eventually the community's stockyards (Zeigler, 2004). The 1877 D.G. Beers & Co. map shows a high concentration of buildings along both sides of the railroad tracks, with the depot in the middle on the west side of the tracks. The town developed in a grid pattern and expanded outward to the east and west of the railroad tracks. Long and narrow lots as well as large blocks were situated between the streets that ran perpendicular to each other and the railroad tracks.

The 1876 Gardner & Gaines Directory indicates that Woodburn had a population of about 1,000, with two hotels, two blacksmiths, a shoemaker, five mercantile stores, a saddle maker, an undertaker, two carriage and plow makers, three doctors, and two saloons. A bank set up operation here in 1894. In addition, Cedar Bluff Female College and Star Female College were located at Woodburn (Zeigler, 2004).

The chief agricultural products from this area included: corn, wheat, tobacco, pork, raw milk, mules, and cattle. For a brief period strawberries were an important local product. Strawberries allowed farmers to produce an additional cash crop, as the season for the small fruit preceded the planting of tobacco. Woodburn boasted one of

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Warren County's independent strawberry associations, established in the early-1900s. Woodburn also boasted two African-American churches: First Baptist Church established in 1866 and St. Paul's AME which is located just outside Woodburn on Highway 240 (Zeigler, 2004).

Historically, the town's commercial district lined both sides of the railroad with its main streets intersecting the tracks at right angles. The town's first commercial structures are no longer standing due to a major fire in 1902. Dense residential areas lie on both sides of the commercial areas and eventually become more rural as they radiate away from the railroad (Zeigler, 2004).

In 2004, the estimated population was 333. As of 2006, the post office remains open and the town consists of a series of churches, a playground, trailer park and a few historic homes interspersed among more recent ranch houses perpendicular to the railroad.

Bowling Green.

This second class city is the seat of Warren County and is located on U.S. 31-W, U.S. 68 and U.S. 231 just west of Interstate 65 and 88 miles southwest of downtown Louisville. The town was established and incorporated in 1798 as Bolin Green on two acres of land donated the year before by Robert Moore for the seat of the newly created county (Rennick, 1987: 32). The town was most likely named for Bowling Green, the seat of Carolina County, Virginia (Bryant, 1992: 106) which in turn had been named for the nearby estate of Colonel John Hoomes as a condition of his donation of the site for the public buildings. The estate boasted a large lawn where the game of bowling was played by country gentlemen. This derivation seems plausible because many pioneer Warren County families had come from this section of Virginia. Some local historians, however, think the name referred to Robert Moore's ball alley near his home which is mentioned in old records as a source of local recreation. For years this industrial commercial and cultural capital of south central Kentucky has been called, "The Park City" for its downtown Fountain Square Park in which a fountain was erected in 1881 (Rennick, 1984: 32).

Following its incorporation, a surveyor mapped a town around the tiny courthouse and jail. In May, 1799 the first town lot (east half of Park Row) sold for \$18, but other sales were slow (Baird, 1999: 2). The Bowling Green post office was established on April 1, 1802, with Robert's brother George as post master (Rennick, 1987: 32). By 1809, the lots immediately adjacent to the public structures had been purchased and a few of them divided and subdivided. Because money was scarce, deeds apparently served as a medium of exchange, and some lots changed hands many times before anyone built on them. By 1810, however, a few stores, a brick tavern, and several modest homes faced the square, and the federal census taker listed 23 households with a total of 98 white and 56 slave residents in Bowling Green (Baird, 1999: 2).

Although there were only 154 residents in 1810, steam boat commerce enabled Bowling Green to grow (Bryant, 1992: 106). In 1816 the county commenced construction of a fine brick courthouse on the square of land around which the town developed (Baird, 1999, 2). The town grew principally around the public square, westward along Main Street and along two north-south streets running beside the public square, College and State Streets (Architecture, 1984: 155). By 1821, the Bank of the Commonwealth established a branch office on the square and by 1827 the town boasted a locally-owned newspaper, a resident physician, a private school for boys (a school for girls opened in the Presbyterian Church in the mid-1820s), a Masonic lodge, at least one church, two tiny hotels, a

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number of mercantile shops and an array of other business establishments. Most structures housing a commercial venture also served as a residence for the owner. The courthouse provided meeting space for congregations without buildings and numerous rural log structures provided space for both school and church meetings. A stagecoach line connecting Bowling Green to Louisville, Nashville and Hopkinsville rumbled into town three times a week to discharge and pick up the mail and passengers. The round trip between Bowling Green and Louisville (180 miles) took three days and cost \$12 (Baird, 1999, 2).

From its inception Warren County's residents depended on the Barren River as an avenue for commerce. Construction of locks and dams on the Barren and Green Rivers improved river travel, and a portage railroad was built in 1832 from the Barren River to the site of the old Warren County Courthouse. Mules pulled the cars along the tracks, transporting goods from the river into the town. In the 1850s, the Louisville & Nashville Railroad (now CSX Transportation) completed a rail line through Bowling Green (Bryant, 1992: 106) and built depots in Bowling Green, Smiths Grove and Woodburn, linking these towns to northern and southern markets (Bryant, 1992: 106).

During the Civil War, Bowling Green was occupied by both Confederate and Union armies. In 1862, the Confederates set fire to the rail depot and warehouses near the courthouse square while the Union army bombarded the center of the city to hasten the withdrawal of the Confederates (Architecture, 1984: 155). After the Civil War, the business district grew rapidly and many of the city's historic business structures were erected. The second Warren County Courthouse was replaced in 1868, the same years as the first waterworks system was constructed. The first mule-drawn streetcars that began operating in 1889 were replaced by the first electric-powered care in 1895 (Bryant, 1993: 106).

Education began with a Southern Normal School in 1884, and Potter College, a Christian non-sectarian college for women, opened in 1889. It was eventually purchased by Western Kentucky State Normal School, now known as Western Kentucky University (Bryant, 1992: 106).

Historically, Bowling Green developed in a grid pattern around the courthouse that expanded in a northeasterly and southwesterly direction south of the railroad. A grid pattern also developed along the railroad spur that extended northward to the Barren River from the main railroad that bisected town.

Business and industries flourished with a dress-making establishment that employed more than two hundred women in 1906, producing Taylor-Made dresses. By 1940, one of the largest industries, known as the Union Underwear factory, came to town. After Interstate 65 was completed in the late-1960s, Bowling Green began to attract more industries, including General Motors Corporation that completed a plant in 1980 for assembling its Corvette line. Since that time, Bowling Green has become the largest city in southern Kentucky (Bryant, 1992: 106) with a population of 50,663 in 2003.

In 2004, the estimated population of Bowling Green was 51, 294. As of 2006, the post office that opened in 1802 remains operational; commercial, residential, financial, religious, and educational historic resources abound throughout the city; and the size and magnitude of the city has greatly increased in comparison with Smiths Grove, Oakland and Woodburn. The L&N Railroad Depot, constructed between 1923 and 1925 and a striking example of Classical Revival style, closed in the late-1960s. In recent years the depot has undergone extensive

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renovation. It is currently occupied as a media and conference center and continues to contribute to the cultural life of the community once more.

Smiths Grove

This 5th class city is located in south-central Kentucky at the intersection of Kentucky Highway 101 and Interstate 65, 10-1/2 miles northeast of Bowling Green. The town is characterized as a small commercial center that developed along a railroad and is surrounded by a residential neighborhood within Warren County's richest agricultural farmland. This rural farming center with an estimated 2004 population of 762, it is the second largest municipality in Warren County.

The first post office was established on September 24, 1829, with Benjamin Ford, post master. This post office was discontinued in 1834. The town was named for a grove at the foot of the small knob west of the present town and for the original landowner. A post office established there as Cool Spring in 1836 was renamed Smith's Grove in 1844. As with Oakland, the L&N Railroad is the reason the scattered farming community grew into a town, as evidenced by the dramatic growth in businesses and schools. In 1871, the town was incorporated (Rennick, 1984: 274-275). The town's development revolved around the L&N Railroad and rightfully so, because buildings and structures were specifically designed and built at this location to accommodate the needs of the railroad. Therefore, the history of the railroad at Smiths Grove is a vital part of the town's development.

It appears that the longevity of Smiths Grove as a railroad stop can be attributed to its development on the L&N's main line that ran between Cincinnati, Ohio via Louisville to New Orleans. Smiths Grove slowly transformed from a low lying rural farmland area into a small town that developed along the railroad. This transformation took place after the construction of the railroad in 1859 with commercial buildings, warehouses, and a depot being constructed facing the railroad. Large lots that were subdivided into smaller lots in the area surrounding the railroad became occupied with residential housing, banks, governmental buildings, churches, schools and a cemetery.

According to the 1887 D.G. Beers map, Smiths Grove had a saloon, railroad depot a stock yard and tobacco warehouse running parallel along the south side of the railroad tracks with a line of stores along the north side. By that time, a grid street pattern with numerous long and narrow lots was fully developed on the north side of the railroad tracks to Sixth Street, the northern boundary and Hedge Street, the western boundary. College Boarding Hall and Smiths Grove College were also situated in the northeast quadrant. The L & N depot at Smiths Grove was opened in 1903, and served the community for more than 50 years (Zeigler, 2004).

Education was a high priority to the residents of Smiths Grove and the center of the community's activities. One of the earliest educational facilities in Smiths Grove was the Poplar Level Academy that was founded in 1848. Later, in 1875, The Smiths Grove College was established by W.W. Beck and was built where the present North Warren Elementary School is located. In 1901, the Smiths Grove College was sold to the Methodists and was renamed the Smiths Grove Training School for Vanderbilt University. By 1913, the community had three schools: Warren Baptist Academy, the Smiths Grove Institute and the old Public School (Zeigler, 2004).

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The town's financial and commercial district developed along both sides of the railroad with its main streets intersecting the tracks at right angles. The first store that opened in Smiths Grove was U. Rasdall and Sons in 1859 (Zeigler, 2004). Mr. Urias Rasdall, came to Smiths Grove in 1866 and engaged in merchandizing until his death in 1892. His son, Mr. L.D. Rasdall of Smiths Grove, was a principal breeder of fine horses in Warren County and owned three hundred seventy acres of fertile land adjacent to the town. This is where he had yearly sales of his pedigreed colts and thoroughbred trotting horses that were attended by horsemen from all parts of the country. He also bred fine jack stock and jersey cattle and was a chicken fancier and breeder with half-a dozen of the best varieties (Smiths Grove, n.d.: 53-55).

Financial resources contributed to the town's stability. In May 1880, the Deposit Bank of Smiths Grove commenced business and the Farmers Bank of Smiths Grove opened its doors in 1889. When President F.D. Roosevelt called a bank closure on March 6, 1933, the Farmers bank never re-opened. For a period of time it was used as the post office. The community's business directory in 1915 consisted of an undertaker, two barbers, a jeweler, three general merchants, one restaurant, two banks, a blacksmith, a hardware store, a grocery and furniture store, a hotel, a tinner, a hospital, and a local newspaper (Zeigler, 2004).

The Smiths Grove Historic District, as proposed for expansion, offers an excellent instance of a Warren County railroad town because it reveals the fast-paced development of rural farmland area into a small town. It retains the key elements that are significant about the development of early Warren County railroad towns including: an operational post office, a cohesive unit of commercial, residential, financial, religious, educational, farm buildings, and cemetery, which together reflect the appearance of the town at the turn-of-the-century with some modifications. It is a resource that really hasn't grown beyond its late-19th century zenith.

Conclusion

In relationship to transportation in Warren County, six towns were served by railroad systems. Of the six railroad towns in Warren County, Bowling Green originally developed around a court square, it depended on the Barren River as an avenue for commerce, and eventually became a university town. It also covered more acreage than the other five towns, thus rendering it more difficult to compare with Smiths Grove. Rich Pond is comprised of industrial buildings, churches, an elementary school and recent residential housing that is situated perpendicular to the railroad that defines the boundary between town and rural farmland. Memphis Junction consists of a few small wood-frame houses, feed and grain storage buildings and a church in an industrial area. This community also developed perpendicular to the railroad that slices through this rural farming community, making it more complex to judge against Smiths Grove. Both Rich Pond and Memphis Junction are not incorporated towns, and both of their post offices closed in 1943 and 1909 respectively. In terms of population, Bowling Green is the most populated area with a 2004 estimated population of 51,294, followed by Smiths Grove at 762, then Woodburn at 333 and Oakland at 256.

Of the six railroad towns in Warren County, Smiths Grove is most similar to two other towns—Oakland and Woodburn—in that they are all three situated on or adjacent to a major transportation corridor; developed both commercial, educational, financial, religious and residential buildings along both sides of the railroad track; had a passenger or freight depot; were incorporated; have a post office that remains operational today; a population under 800, and continue to thrive despite adversities such as fires, floods, and the decline of the railroad.

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Although the depots are gone in Smiths Grove, Oakland, and Woodburn, the railroad tracks are still visible and the train continues to travel through these towns. They are compact complex resources that retain many aspects of their railroad town forms.

Established in 1859, the rural characteristics of Oakland press against the central urban fabric. Laid out in the classic railroad town plan with a modest square adjacent to the tracks, the town boasts an array of commercial and domestic buildings that developed as early as 1875 along both sides of the railroad. Oakland was one of the prosperous railroad towns in Warren County and became a center for strawberry production and railroad shipping. Oakland has retained its tiny downtown consisting of an interesting variety of Victorian-era residences and a turn-of-the-century seed mill alongside the railroad tracks. In comparison with Smiths Grove, Oakland's growth and development is directly attributed to the railroad. In retrospect, while Oakland retains several historic residential and commercial buildings, the community did not continue to physically grow outward in relationship to Smiths Grove where the boundaries continued to expand and encompass more land.

Woodburn, situated in one of the most scenic areas of Warren County, was initially settled in 1843. Like Oakland and Smiths Grove, Woodburn began as rural farmland prior to the formation of Warren County in 1797, but did not truly boom until the completion of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad in 1859. The town was laid off at the depot site in 1865 with the commercial district lining both sides of the railroad tracks. Surrounded by agricultural fields, this village served as an important shipping point for agricultural products and has continued to grow and develop in spite of a fire in 1902 that destroyed some of the earliest commercial structures. As with Smiths Grove, churches and schools were established to accommodate the religious and educational needs of this growing community. Financial institutions, commercial businesses, and residential areas continued to grow around the central core. Although Woodburn developed around the railroad which was a major shipping point and still retains an operational post office, it has a minimal number of historic homes, several more-recent churches, a trailer park, and is less populated than Smiths Grove.

In comparison with Woodburn and Oakland, only Smiths Grove has continued to grow significantly from a tiny early-19th-century settlement surrounded by rural farmland into a small 20th-century railroad town that continues to maintain its viability. In contrast with the other two towns, Smiths Grove was established much earlier and began to slowly consume the large agricultural farmland area, turning it into a series of blocks and lots for development, along the railroad. Commercial development lined both sides of the railroad track. The train continued to stop here well into the 1950s. Although railroad passenger and freight transportation finally ended in Smiths Grove in the 1950s, the town had a sufficient amount of governmental buildings, service stations, commercial businesses, churches, schools, banks and residential housing to sustain itself.

Along the western edge of the proposed district on Hedge Street are a few larger lots from the division of early farmland into residential lots. A few barns are situated on these lots, behind houses, and are physical reminders of the agricultural nature of this community.

On the northern edge is the largest lot in the district, Smiths Grove Cemetery, dating from the early-1800s. A chapel is located in the center of this well manicured densely populated cemetery that is carved by a few narrow winding roads. The size of this cemetery reflects the cohesiveness of this community over a long period of time and its location on the edge of the town forms a visual buffer to the rural farmland beyond. The eastern edge is

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densely populated with residences. North Warren Elementary School also comprises the second largest lot in the district. The school has been well maintained and has been added to over the years, showing that it continues to adapt to serve the surrounding community. The southern edge has early historic commercial buildings that continue to be the core of the central business district. Main Street is where the earliest governmental, financial, religious, commercial and residential buildings are clustered. Residential housing is lined up along the side streets on long narrow lots. A funeral home, several churches, and a few parking lots break up the housing repetition by encompassing several contiguous lots.

In conclusion, Smiths Grove is an excellent example of railroad towns in Warren County because it reveals the patterns of development from rural farmland into a small 19th-century village that has grown into a stable community. Smiths Grove consists of a cohesive group of historic resources that have a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, association and feeling. In comparison with Oakland and Woodburn, Smiths Grove has the most intact historic resources and has continued to thrive as a railroad town until the middle of the 21st century.

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10. Verbal Boundary Description

The **Smiths Grove Historic District (Expanded Boundary)** is roughly bound by agricultural land on the north, Hedge Street on the west, Kentucky Street on the east and Railroad Avenue on the south. This area contains the most contiguous historic properties that are a part of the Smiths Grove. See attached map.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries for the **Smiths Grove Historic District (Expanded Boundary)** were chosen to designate a contiguous area of land that encompasses the most significant densely populated area known as Smiths Grove. The agricultural farmland located on the north, east, and west of the proposed district are not a part of this nomination due to the fact that they are rural in nature. The area directly to the south is not included because of the high proliferation of properties that are not historic and are therefore non-contributing.

