

1513 Ludington Street

Before



After



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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1419. Northern Motors Building (1925-29; 1999)

This is a single story enframed window wall commercial building that occupies the north half of an entire city block near the west end of the downtown business district. It is constructed of brick veneer over concrete block but is now clad entirely in synthetic stucco. The façade is eight bays that are defined primarily of multiple display windows. The five eastern bays, comprising those that a circa 1937 vintage photograph reveals composed the original building, are composed of a recessed aluminum-framed double entry door with transom and sidelights that is flanked on each side by two bays pierced by five aluminum-framed display windows on stucco-clad bulkheads. Pentagonal pilasters with plain masonry plinths and capitals occur on each side of the recessed entrance and between the banks of display windows. These support a wide, stepped, parapeted upper façade containing signage. The eastern façade has been extended by a three bay addition consisting of an overhead entry door flanked on each side by bays composed of runs of four aluminum-framed display windows. These occur beneath an extension of the upper façade parapet. The first bays of the building's side elevation consist of display windows that wrap around from the façade and followed by a functional piercing pattern of overhead doors and fixed-pane windows rearward. The circa 1937 photograph reveals that the parapet above the entry originally was capped by a shallow pediment and that the façade's piers extended slightly above the parapet.

Sanborn maps reveal this building first appears on the 1929 Sanborn map, addressed as 1413 Ludington and occupying the entire west half of its city block north of the alley. It is illustrated as a Garage, Capacity 80 Cars, Concrete Floor, Steel Truss, Tile and Brick-Faced in both the 1929 and 1929 Updates editions. The three eastern bays of the current building were added after 1950 and prior to 1999. City directories reveal no business/ entry at this address in 1924-25, but by 1929 Northern Motor Co. is illustrated at 1423-33 Ludington. The business continues at this location through the 1963 edition and is still in business here today nearly 90 years later.

In early December 1927 over 5,000 people visited the Northern Motors showroom when the Ford Model A was displayed for the first time (Lindquist 2010a). In 1999, an advertisement for Northern Motors illustrating the building as it currently appears invited the public to "Check Out Our New facelift" and to help celebrate the Northern Motors' 76th anniversary (revealing that the business was established in 1923 (UP Magazine 1999: 10).

This building is the largest enframed window wall type building in the commercial district. It has been the key structure and the location of a Ford automobile dealership for 90 years. It has been altered over the years to serve an evolving automobile sales and service market, with its last major renovations occurring in 1999.

1513. A. Clement Building (1915)

This is a brick, two-story two-part commercial block. Its street level façade is two bays wide, consisting of an angled storefront entry and display window separated from two display windows by a broad central pier. An integrated aluminum frame signboard is centered on the central pier. All fenestration is aluminum-framed and is enframed in porcelain enamel panels beneath a horizontal metal canopy that extends from a masonry block stringcourse. A wood signboard mounted on the canopy identifies the business with block letters and programmatic signage in the form of a musical note. The second story red brick wall plane is punctuated at regular intervals by horizontal string courses of light yellow face or shiner brick. These alternating bands continue upward to the building's cornice. Second story fenestration is composed of a central triple sash window flanked on each side by double-hung sash windows. The façade culminates in an elaborate, classically-inspired pressed metal cornice featuring dentils and consoles. Centered beneath the cornice is a limestone plaque

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imprinted, "1915 / A. CLEMENT."

The visible side elevations are constructed of poured concrete (identical to that of the building built one year earlier next door at 1515-1517 Ludington). The west side lacks fenestration, and the east side's first story also is windowless, but is pierced by three double-hung sash windows in the second story. The rear elevation's second story is sheathed in asphalt siding pierced by vinyl replacement windows, and drops to a single story concrete block extension that is pierced by a double steel entry door.

Sanborn maps reveal that although there is a date stone in the cornice stating "1915", the building's location is illustrated as a vacant lot in the 1929 edition. The 1929-50 Updates edition indicates the building has been constructed, although it is addressed as "1513/1514" (sic). The single story rear bay is indicated, although the narrow extension from it to the alley is not, and therefore appears to post-date 1950. City directories reveal there is no entry for this address prior to the 1937 edition, when Martin Anderson shoe repair is located here. By 1941, Groop shoe repair occupies the building, but the storefront is Vacant by 1948. 1511-1513 Ludington is occupied by Delta Music Center by 1953, which continues in business at this location through the 1963 edition. The building still houses a music store today (Ron's Music). The A. Clement apparent in the building plaque appears to be Ambrose Clement. Ambrose Clement is listed in the 1889 city directory as having a barber shop at 800 Ludington, while in the 1893-1895 directory he had a barber shop at 807 Ludington and a residence at 1011 Wells Avenue (1st Avenue South), that by 1924-24 he resided above the Kammeier Jewelry Store at 1516 Ludington, and that he died in 1926. This building has been the location of a music store for at least six decades.

1515-1517. The Electric Building/J.H. Knutsen Home Electric Building (1914)

This is a two-story, two-part double commercial block that is constructed of poured concrete and is clad in stucco. The street level façade is composed of two storefronts clad in thin coursed ashlar stone and brick veneer, which are separated by a central door leading to the second story. The bulkhead beneath the east storefront is extended through corbelling to provide a bench seat. The fenestration of each storefront is identical and aluminum-framed, and is composed of a large display window that extends from the building corner to an entry door. These doors abut projecting walls occurring on either side of the wood entry door leading to the second story. A vertically seamed, metal pent roof canopy extends across the full-width of the façade at the level of the storefront cornice.

The second story facing is divided horizontally and vertically by linear bands of rough-faced stucco that enframe smooth-faced wall planes. The building corners are emphasized by this treatment vertically, and connect to a horizontal band that occurs at the façade's parapet. Other full-width rough-faced horizontal stucco bands occur above the second story windows, essentially forming common lintels, and beneath them to link the plain masonry sills. Fenestration consists of two pairs of symmetrically positioned double-hung sash windows occurring within smooth stucco panels divided centrally by a vertical band of rough-face stucco. Narrow bands of vertical rough-face stucco serve as the window stiles, running between the rough-face horizontal bands linking the lintels and sills. A smooth stucco panel occurs between the rough faced stucco above the windows and beneath the parapet, upon which large rough-face stucco block capital letters proclaim, "HOME ELECTRIC CO.". Centered beneath this is a small rectangular masonry plaque that is inscribed, "J.H. Knutsen / 1914." The visible side elevations are constructed of poured concrete (identical to that of the building built one year later next door at 1513 Ludington). The west side elevation lacks first floor fenestration, while the second story is pierced by three double-hung sash windows. The poured concrete second story of the rear elevation is pierced by four sash windows and a central entry door, while the first story is occupied by a shed-roof car-port extension.