



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

982

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
Registration Form

**1. NAME OF PROPERTY**

HISTORIC NAME: Triangle Motel  
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: N/A

**2. LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER: 7804, 7808, 7954, and 8024 East Amarillo Boulevard  
CITY OR TOWN: Amarillo  
STATE: Texas CODE: TX COUNTY: Potter CODE: 375 ZIP CODE: 79107

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  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  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer Date 10/18/10  
Signature of certifying official / Title  
Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

**4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.
- other, explain  
 See continuation sheet.

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 12-7-10

**5. CLASSIFICATION**

**OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - state
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

**CATEGORY OF PROPERTY**

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY**

contributing	noncontributing	
4	2	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
4	2	total

**NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER:** 0

**NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING:** *Route 66 in Texas* Multiple Property Submission (2003)

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

**HISTORIC FUNCTIONS:** COMMERCE: motel, restaurant, gas station  
 DOMESTIC: single dwelling, secondary structure

**CURRENT FUNCTIONS:** COMMERCE: bar  
 DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
 VACANT / NOT IN USE

**7. DESCRIPTION**

**ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:** MODERN MOVEMENT: Streamline Moderne;  
 OTHER: Commercial Vernacular, Minimal Traditional

**MATERIALS:** FOUNDATION CONCRETE  
 WALLS BRICK, DRYWALL, PERMASTONE, PLASTER, STEEL, STUCCO, WOOD  
 ROOF ASPHALT  
 OTHER

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION** (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-9)

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Triangle Motel is a complex of six buildings constructed between 1946 and 1952 on a triangular site at the intersection of historic US 66 and US 60 in Amarillo, Texas. Two linear motel buildings, positioned to face each other, were constructed in the Streamline Moderne style with stucco finish in 1946, along with the more utilitarian café and gas station buildings, also finished in stucco. The Minimal Traditional-styled residence and its garage were constructed on the parcel in 1952; the house was built on an assembly line, a precursor to contemporary manufactured homes. The buildings' exteriors were remodeled in 1956—the residence was covered with a PermaStone veneer, while the others were clad in brick. The complex has not been significantly altered since 1956 and retains much of its original form, plan, and design. For its association with the development of Route 66 and its relationship to the tourist economy of Amarillo during the middle of the twentieth century, the Triangle Motel is nominated to the National Register at the local level of significance in the areas of Commerce and Transportation; as an excellent local example of a tourist motor court and related facilities—the great American roadside triumvirate of “gas, food, lodging”—the Triangle Motel is also nominated in the area of Architecture.

### Site

Amarillo is in the north-central section of the Texas Panhandle, approximately 260 miles west of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and 290 miles east of Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Triangle Motel is located on historic US 66 in northeastern Amarillo at the triangle-shaped intersection of historic US 66 and US 60, today known as Triangle Drive and East Amarillo Boulevard (US 60/Business 40), respectively. The nominated property is distinguished by its triangular form and east-west orientation within a mixed residential, commercial, and agricultural area. Buildings on the property include a motel, café, and gas station—all constructed in 1946—and a 1952 house with garage, arranged to conform to the parcel's triangular shape. The gas station occupies the west edge of the property, which is the tip of the triangle. The café is adjacent to and east of the gas station; to the east of the café are the two linear motel wings, constructed to face each other and parallel to the highways. The residence and maintenance garage are located a short distance from the motel wings at the east end of the property. **(Map 6)**

### Individual Buildings and Structures

The motel wings were constructed in a one-story, simplified Streamline Moderne style with stucco finish. Inset parking garages are located between the motel units. **(Figure 9, Photo 7)** The café and gas station were built in one-story, utilitarian, commercial vernacular styles with stucco finish. **(Figure 1)** The house was built on an assembly line in a Minimal Traditional style, and it was an early version of a manufactured home. The garage was built in a utilitarian vernacular style with stucco finish. In 1956 the exteriors of the motel, café, and gas station were remodeled with the addition of brick veneer, and the residence was remodeled with a PermaStone veneer. This complex has not been significantly altered since 1956 and retains much of its original form, plan, and design.

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### Motel, South Wing (1946, contributing)

The south wing of the motel has a linear footprint with five room units, three garages, and an office. **(Figure 9, Photo 5)** The south wing is parallel to US 66 and faces the north wing at a slight angle. **(Map 6)** The building has a concrete foundation and a flat asphalt roof with parapet. Access to room units is through doors in the north elevation; access to the office is through a chamfered door at the northwest corner. Concrete hoods are present above each door, and scallop-edged wood awnings are above each window. Each unit has two original, three-over-four rectangular steel casement windows and three-panel redwood doors with three vertical lights. **(Photo 7)** Spring hinges on the door frames are evidence of missing exterior screen doors. Doors were constructed of redwood and stained maroon; hoods, window frames, and awnings were painted royal blue and, circa 1956, forest green. Metal downspouts are present on the south exterior elevation. A large boiler, built by Midco Boiler and Welding Works in Borger, Texas, served all units in the south wing and is present at the interior south wall of the garage east of Room 7. In 1956, the original white stucco was covered with a veneer of thin, scored yellow brick with a scored red brick skirt. The yellow and red brick are separated by a protruding course of red brick. Brackets at the roofline indicate the past presence of red architectural neon.<sup>1</sup> A small, pole-mounted rectangular neon sign with the word "OFFICE" is adjacent to the manager's office at the west end of the wing.

Each lodging unit consists of a bedroom, 12 feet by 16 feet, with a closet connected to a smaller room, 10 feet by 10 feet, with a bathroom. **(Figure 9)** The room interiors have original plaster walls and ceilings, and are painted in solid pastel colors including yellow, green, pink, and blue. Floors are original concrete with added marbled black and white linoleum asphalt tile. Ceiling light fixtures of various styles are present throughout the units. Curtains of various material and pattern types adorn windows. A horizontal, chrome coat rack hangs on the south wall of the smaller rooms. Sliding, vinyl-curtain doors separate the large and small rooms, while original wood doors lead to each closet and bathroom. Bathrooms retain original white tile shower stalls and white terrazzo flooring. Sinks and toilets are white porcelain. Original, dual-sided gas heaters are located in the shared wall of the large and small rooms. "Catalina" brand air conditioners are present in the east and west walls of rooms 7 and 8, respectively, and vent into the adjacent garages. In some rooms, a typewritten index card is taped above the light switch adjacent to the exterior door, which reads:

We trust you have enjoyed your stay,. [sic]  
Check out time is 11,0, clock am. [sic]  
Other wise another day will be charged for.

Thank you very much,. [sic]  
The Management,  
Triangle Motel.

The manager's office has a wood service-desk or counter extending east-west across the room center. Originally the counter had a varnished wood top; this was replaced in later years with a cream, black-flecked Formica top with aluminum edging. A swing gate at the west end of the counter provides access to the office attendant's work

<sup>1</sup> Ronald Rentfrow. Email correspondence regarding original color of neon. Dallas, Texas, July 19, 2008.

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area, and a bathroom for the attendant is located behind the desk in the southeast corner of the room. Various telephone numbers for "trucker's aid" and restaurants (including the Dream Diner) are written in ink on the rear, vertical wood panels of the service desk. Access to Unit 11 is through a wood door in the interior east wall.

### Motel, North Wing (1946, contributing)

The north wing of the motel—which is parallel to US 60 and faces the south wing at a slight angle—has a linear footprint with six lodging units and three garages. **(Map 6, Figure 9, Photo 6)** The building has a concrete foundation and a flat asphalt roof with parapet. Access to individual lodging units is through doors in the south elevation; entry into Room 1 is through a chamfered door at the southwest corner. Concrete hoods are present above each door, and scallop-edged wood awnings are above each window. Each unit has two original, three-over-four rectangular steel casement windows and three-panel redwood doors with three vertical lights. **(Photo 7)** Doors were constructed of redwood and stained maroon; hoods, window frames and awnings were originally painted royal blue, and later forest green (possibly in 1956). Spring hinges on the door frames are evidence of missing exterior screen doors. Metal downspouts are present on the north exterior elevation. A large boiler, built by Midco Boiler and Welding Works in Borger, Texas, served all units in the north wing and is present at the interior north wall of the garage east of Room 6.

In 1956 the original white stucco exterior was covered with a veneer of thin, scored yellow brick with a scored red brick skirt. The yellow and red brick are separated by a protruding course of red brick. Brackets at the roofline indicate the past presence of red, architectural neon. On the east elevation, the words "TRIANGLE MOTEL" are painted in black directly onto the brick veneer. **(Photo 8)** A large, pole-mounted neon sign is located at the northwest corner of the wing; the sign consists of a vertical box with Art Deco styling, painted with a royal blue background, orange trim and the word "TRIANGLE" painted in white. **(Photo 1)** The box sits perpendicular to a horizontal, rectangular box that is painted with a royal blue background, orange trim and the word "MOTEL" painted in white.

Rooms 3 through 6 are identical to Room 1, consisting of a 12-by-16-foot room with a closet, connected to a smaller room, 10 feet by 10 feet, with a bathroom. **(Figure 9)** Room 1 is larger and has a large, built-in, lockable closet against the north wall of the west room. A handwritten ledger taped to the closet interior indicates it was used for linen storage; this closet was built in later years. Room 2 is the smallest room in the complex, consisting of only one room with a closet and bathroom.

The room interiors have original plaster walls and ceilings, and are painted in solid pastel colors including yellow, green, pink and blue. Floors are original concrete with added marbled black and white linoleum asphalt tile. Ceiling light fixtures of various styles are present throughout the units. Curtains of various material and pattern types adorn windows. A horizontal chrome coat rack hangs on the north wall of the smaller rooms. Sliding, vinyl-curtain doors separate the large and small rooms, while original wood doors lead to each closet and bathroom. Bathrooms retain original white tile shower stalls and white terrazzo flooring; sinks and toilets are white porcelain. Original dual-sided gas heaters are located in the shared wall of the large and small rooms. "Catalina" brand air conditioners are present in the east and west walls of units 5 and 6, respectively, and vent to the adjacent garages. A typewritten index card remains taped above the light switch in some rooms, as described previously for the south wing.

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### Café (1946, noncontributing)

Constructed in 1946, the café is a one-story commercial building with a trapezoidal footprint that tapers to conform to the triangular shape of the land parcel. **(Map 6)** The trapezoidal design includes rounded edges at the northeast and southeast corners, and chamfered corners at the northwest and southwest corners. **(Photos 12 and 13)** The building was constructed with a full basement on a poured concrete foundation, with wood frame and plaster walls, finished on the exterior with stucco; a parapet rose to obscure the flat roof, covered in rolled asphalt. The café has two doorways with vestibules: the south entrance accommodated travelers on early US 66 (now Triangle Drive), while the north entrance accommodated travelers on US 60 (later dually designated US 60/66), and each doorway has an original vestibule. The south elevation has one small window to the east of the entrance vestibule, and two larger windows to the west. A fourth window is located in the southwest corner of the building, which is chamfered.

The north elevation is similar to the south, but with two small windows to the east of the entrance vestibule, two larger windows to the west, and a fourth window located in the northwest corner of the building, which is chamfered. The steel casement windows historically were adorned with scallop-edged wood awnings painted royal blue; the awnings have subsequently been removed, and the windows sealed with yellow brick. In 1956 the original white stucco was covered with a veneer of thin, scored yellow brick with a scored red brick skirt; the yellow and red brick are separated by a protruding course of red brick. A pedestal on the rooftop, which measures approximately 8 by 8 by 7 feet, conceals an evaporative cooler. The pedestal also once supported a revolving neon sign shaped like an upside-down triangle, with a display of vertically-oriented letters spelling "MOTEL." **(Figures 1-3)** Fixed, pole-mounted neon signs were located adjacent to each north and south door vestibule. The sign on US 60 consisted of an arrow pointing toward the café, with the word "DINING" outlined in neon; the sign on US 66 consisted of the same, with the addition of a rectangular box with the word "OPEN" below the arrow. After US 66 traffic was permanently diverted to US 60 in 1956, the north sign was replaced by a smaller arrow with chasing, incandescent lights and a rectangular message box below. Red neon adorned the roofline historically, but is no longer extant. Except for the roof sign, all else remained intact until July 2009, when a hipped roof was installed and covered with rolled asphalt; the café is therefore considered to be a noncontributing resource to the nominated property, but it could be considered as contributing if the new roof were to be removed. **(Photo 14)**

While in service, the café consisted of a small lunch counter on the south (US 66) side of the building, which served fast, casual fare; the west side of the building consisted of a large dining room that offered more relaxed and fine dining.<sup>2</sup> The dining room had a fireplace and an Art Deco decorative theme, including glass block backlit with blue light and an upwardly flared pillar at the center of the room, directing soft blue light toward the ceiling. The lunch counter and dining room were separated by a wall, which no longer is present.<sup>3</sup> Today the building operates as a bar with an open floor plan and a new bar counter. The fireplace and flared pillar are historic features that remain intact.

<sup>2</sup> Ronald Rentfrow, telephone interview. Dallas, Texas, November 25, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

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### Gas Station (1946, noncontributing)

This small, one-story building, constructed in 1946, is located toward the tip of the triangle-shaped parcel at the junction of US 60 and US 66. **(Figure 1)** Utilitarian in style, the building was designed to conform to the shape of the parcel and resembled a polygonal, flat-tipped arrowhead. Built on a poured concrete foundation, the gas station is of wood frame construction with gypsum board and plaster interior walls; exterior walls were finished with white stucco, and a parapet wall rose to obscure a flat roof covered with rolled asphalt. Several character-defining features have been altered to such a degree that the gas station is considered a noncontributing resource to the nominated property.

The gas station had a two-bay, drive-through garage with doors opening to both highways. Attached and extending to the west of the building was a five-sided retail space with large, plate-glass windows. Two canopies extended north and south from the retail area. Gas pump islands—each with three pumps—were located under the canopies, allowing motorists easy access from both highways. The canopies and garage doors were painted in a royal blue color. In 1956 the original white stucco exterior was clad with a veneer of thin, scored yellow brick with a scored red brick skirt; the yellow and red brick are separated by a protruding course of red brick. Red neon adorned the roofline historically, but is no longer extant.

### Residence (1952, contributing)

The residence is a one-story, Minimal Traditional-style dwelling of wood frame construction on a poured concrete foundation; the gable roof was covered with asphalt shingles. **(Photo 17)** The house was an assembly-line product manufactured by the Mobile Home Corporation of Amarillo, and it was constructed on this site by the motel's original owners in 1952. The concrete foundation and basement were poured prior to the house being delivered by truck. The home's exterior was finished with wood siding and painted white; a Permastone veneer was applied over the wood siding in 1956. The entrance to the dwelling is on the west elevation; the interior contained a large, carpeted living/dining room, a kitchen/breakfast room, a large bedroom with three beds, and one tiled bath—all with walls of gypsum board. The basement contained a boiler that was manufactured by Midco Boiler and Welding Works in Borger, Texas.

### Maintenance Garage (1952, contributing)

To the west of the residence is a garage that was used as a maintenance shop. **(Photo 18)** This garage was constructed circa 1952 of wood frame with stucco finish and interior plaster walls; its flat roof, obscured by a parapet wall, is covered with rolled asphalt roof. On the south façade is a large, wood door. A steel pipe tire bumper is located several feet in front of the north wall. A large, pole-mounted neon sign is located adjacent to the highway at the northeast corner of the garage. The sign is identical to the one located at the northwest corner of the north motel wing, and originally was constructed at the southwest corner of the south motel wing; it was moved to its current location in 1956, when US 66 traffic was permanently diverted to US 60.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

**APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA**

Property:

- A** is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** 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** has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS**

Property is:

- 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 of age or has achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:** COMMERCE; TRANSPORTATION; ARCHITECTURE

**PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE:** 1946-1960

**SIGNIFICANT DATES:** 1946-1960

**SIGNIFICANT PERSON:** N/A

**CULTURAL AFFILIATION:** N/A

**ARCHITECT / BUILDER:** Silas M. "Si" Clayton

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE** (see continuation sheets 8-10 through 8-19)

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** (see continuation sheets 9-20 through 9-21)

**PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS):** N/A

- 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 #

**PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:**

- state historic preservation office Texas Historical Commission, Austin
- other state agency
- Federal agency
- local government
- university
- other -- specify repository:

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Triangle Motel in Amarillo, Texas, is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C for its role in commerce and transportation associated with US 66 through Amarillo and the Texas Panhandle, and for its architectural significance as a representative example of a motel-café-gas station complex of the mid-twentieth century. Under Criterion A, the Triangle Motel reflects the commercial response to burgeoning traffic on US 66, a major east-west automobile highway connecting Chicago to Los Angeles. As the importance of US 66 grew, local entrepreneurs responded by developing traveler-related services including motels, restaurants, and gas stations along the route.

Under Criterion C, the Triangle Motel is significant as a representative example of the type of traveler services constructed along US 66 in the mid-twentieth century. The complex contains a motel, café, and gas station built in 1946, and a residence and maintenance garage built in 1952; they retain much of their historic design, materials, and setting. The property is nominated for its local significance, and the period of significance extends from 1946 to 1960, reflecting the National Register's fifty-year standard for historic resources. The complex meets the registration requirements for the property types of "Gas Stations," "Eating Establishments," and "Lodging" as set forth in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, *Route 66 in Texas* Multiple Property Submission.

### Development of US 66

US 66 was part of the nation's first Federal highway system, and emerged as one of the shortest, best-weather routes across the country. Connecting Chicago to Santa Monica and crossing eight states, US 66 served as a major migratory, military, commercial, and tourism route from 1926 until it was decommissioned in 1985. Its path across the flat, expansive Texas Panhandle contributed to its ease of travel. Extending from the border of western Oklahoma, the 178-mile trip across the Panhandle traversed the red clay Permian plains to the sandy high plains of the Llano Estacado, to descend the Mescalero Escarpment to the Pecos River valley.<sup>5</sup> The view from the highway consisted largely of open ranch and farmland as it passed through the railroad towns of Shamrock, Lela, McLean, Alanreed, Groom, Lark, Conway, Amarillo, Bushland, Wildorado, Vega, and Adrian to Glenrio at the New Mexico border.

In 1926 the Texas Panhandle boasted the world's largest natural gas field, 55% of the nation's carbon black production, and nearly 100% of the nation's helium production; it also supplied a major wheat crop and cattle industry. Oil was discovered in 1926, further contributing to the Panhandle's economic prosperity. Amarillo developed as the commercial center for the oil industry, and by 1927 it served as a major distribution center with rail outlets emanating from the city in eight directions.<sup>6</sup> The passage of the Federal Highway Act in 1926 brought

<sup>5</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, "Panhandle," [www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/PP/rvp1](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/PP/rvp1), accessed November 18, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Mike Cox, *Historic Amarillo: An Illustrated History* (San Antonio: Historical Publishing Network, 2000), 36.

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four US highways to the Panhandle: 60, 66, 87 and 287. All four routes merged in Amarillo, making it an important stop for travelers with numerous motels, restaurants, and curio shops.<sup>7</sup> **(Map 1)**

Across the Panhandle, US 66 initially was largely unpaved sand and gravel. As late as 1928, only a few miles of pavement existed within the city limits of Amarillo; by 1929 pavement extended an additional 20 miles west to Wildorado. When the stock market crash plunged the nation into the Great Depression, Amarillo's leaders looked to road building and public works to reenergize the Panhandle region. They succeeded in securing \$7.5 million for highway construction through the Works Progress Administration. Work proceeded as planned, and by 1937 the infamous, muddy "Jericho Gap" east of Amarillo became the last segment of US 66 in the Panhandle to be paved.<sup>8</sup>

From its intersection with US 60 two miles east of town, westbound travelers on US 66 would enter Amarillo on Northeast 8th Avenue (now Amarillo Boulevard). **(Maps 2 and 3)** At North Fillmore Street, travelers turned south to enter downtown; at West 6th Street, travelers turned west through the bustling San Jacinto business district to eventually exit the city.<sup>9</sup> **(Map 4)** By the early 1950s traffic had increased significantly, and in 1953 a bypass was constructed around the city to help reduce congestion in the downtown area.<sup>10</sup> The bypass consisted of a newly constructed section of road extending from Northeast 8th Avenue at North Fillmore to Soncy. The bypass and Northeast 8th Avenue were renamed Amarillo Boulevard and subsequently commissioned as the new alignment of US 66 through Amarillo. Interstate construction in Amarillo began by 1962 and slowly absorbed the US 66 traffic. By 1970, I-40 through Amarillo was complete, reducing US 66 to a business route.<sup>11</sup>

### US 66 and the Roadside Economy

Throughout the historic period of significance, Amarillo entrepreneurs recognized the economic potential of US 66 and opened numerous motels, restaurants, and gas stations along the route. Typically these were small, privately owned "Mom and Pop" businesses built with minimal capital and inexpensive construction materials. Architectural styles sometimes reflected regional or national trends, but also the whims of the individual owners. By the 1930s, motels, restaurants, and gas stations began to be grouped into convenient "one-stop-shop" complexes.<sup>12</sup>

Motels developed in response to automobile travelers who sought affordable, auto-convenient lodging. Evolving from auto camps, cabin camps, and tourist courts, motels typically consisted of room units and sometimes garages integrated under one roofline as a single building or wing. The wings were commonly arranged in a "U" or "L" plan

<sup>7</sup> *Handbook of Texas Online*, "Amarillo, Texas," [www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/AA/hda2](http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/AA/hda2), accessed December 1, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Cox, 55.

<sup>9</sup> Lueise Tyson and Bruce Jensen, "U.S. Route 66 – Sixth Street Historic District National Register Nomination." National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas, 1994.

<sup>10</sup> Monica Penick and Gregory Smith, "Historic Resources Survey, Route 66 through Texas." Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas, December 2002.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *Fast Food, Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 49.

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around a central courtyard. Architectural styles varied, but vernacular, revival, and modern themes were popular. Modest painted wood or neon signs initially advertised the properties; later, large character-defining neon signs were more common, with vertical orientations to add dimension to the low, horizontal motel site. Motels typically were small, locally-owned and managed businesses, run by family members or local individuals who lived onsite. By 1960, eighteen percent of motels had associated coffee shops and twenty-five percent had gas stations.<sup>13</sup>

Restaurants ranged from roadside stands and lunch counters to family restaurants and fine dining. Initially associated with gas stations, over time restaurants and cafés also became associated with motels. These businesses did not follow a standard architectural typology, except that they commonly held a counter and stools, tables and chairs, and later, booths. Architectural styles varied, ranging from vernacular to mimetic to modern. Restaurants often did not rely solely on highway travelers but depended on local business as well.<sup>14</sup>

Like restaurants, gas stations served travelers and local residents alike. Initially consisting of curbside gas pumps in downtown commercial districts, they quickly evolved into off-street stand or shed operations with driveway access. They later adopted more regular and formal plans with added service functions including canopies, service bays, retail space, restrooms, and office space. Architectural styles ranged widely from vernacular to revival. With the streamlining of oil company practices, styles became more standardized over time to reflect individual corporate identities.<sup>15</sup>

Motels and restaurants were attractive to aspiring entrepreneurs, as they could be established with little previous or specialized experience. Architects were not always necessary, as plan books and magazines such as the *Tourist Court Journal* provided do-it-yourself construction guidelines. Plan books often recommended that a focus on style take precedence over quality or durability of construction, with the expectation that the building would be remodeled frequently to meet changing market demands.<sup>16</sup>

Roadside businesses required relatively little capital to establish. Unhampered by small land parcels, high property values, and high taxes often associated with traditional business districts, business ownership moved from the well-heeled downtown investor to the common man and woman on the roadside frontier. In 1951 *Fortune* magazine observed, "There was a time that a sailor home from the sea went to chicken farming. Nowadays he buys a motel by the side of the road."<sup>17</sup> Married couples, or "Mom and Pop" teams, made up the largest percentage of roadside entrepreneurs between the 1930s and 1960s. Men usually tended to the general operation, construction, and repairs, while women cleaned motel rooms, managed front desks, cooked, waited tables, and assisted with gas station duties.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 20, 45.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Cassity, "Route 66 Corridor National Historic Context Study" (Route 66 Preservation Program, National Trails System Office-Intermountain Region, National Park Service, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2004), 304-310.

<sup>15</sup> Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 176.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 47, 74.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-69.

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Values associated with motel ownership were those of ingenuity and hard work. One could start small, build in increments, and innovate with changing market demands. It was capitalism at its best, where a common man or woman could be their own boss, depend on their own resources, and earn a living. "Mom and Pop" operations were the epitome of the American Dream, demonstrating that capitalism could thrive even in remote or rural areas. Owners were not necessarily upwardly mobile or wealthy, but rather average citizens who were converting or diversifying their investments in response to changing political, economic, and social climates.<sup>19</sup>

In Amarillo the majority of commercial roadside development occurred along the US 66 corridor, including Northeast 8th Avenue, North Fillmore, and West 6th Street; by 1928 there were 25 tourist courts along US 66 in Amarillo.<sup>20</sup> According to the Amarillo Yellow Pages, this number remained stable through World War II. With the opening of the Amarillo Air Force Base in 1942, the influx of servicemen brought an economic boom to Amarillo. Motels filled an important niche for many servicemen and their families by providing much needed housing. By 1949, Amarillo tourist courts nearly doubled to 46, and climbed again to 68 by 1953. The growth of restaurants and gas stations in the city was proportionate to motels.<sup>21</sup>

### The Clayton Family and the Triangle Motel

While many entrepreneurs focused their business efforts within the city limits of Amarillo, others saw opportunity at the outskirts where traffic could be captured before it entered town. Among these was Silas M. ("Si") Clayton (1888–1984) of Borger, Texas. **(Figure 4)** Born in Nebraska, he initially worked as a boiler inspector for the Union Pacific Railroad in Laramie, Wyoming. With the discovery of gas in the Texas Panhandle, he moved to Borger in 1921 to open his own business, Midco Boiler and Welding Works. Known as a fair and generous businessman, he became Mayor of Borger in the 1930s.<sup>22</sup> During his frequent business trips to Amarillo via US 60, Clayton recognized business potential at the busy intersection of US 60 and US 66. Surrounded primarily by agricultural land, a business at that location would assume a high profile; its location just two miles west of English Field Airport and three miles west of Amarillo Air Force Base added to its appeal. With retirement from the boiler business on his mind, Clayton thought a motel would provide a lucrative post-retirement opportunity for him and his wife Cora (1890–1979).<sup>23</sup>

With encouragement from city officials who forecasted—erroneously—that Amarillo would grow to the east,<sup>24</sup> Clayton purchased fifty acres of land on October 1, 1945, from Charles R. Wilson.<sup>25</sup> Situated just outside the city limits in Potter County, the west boundary of the parcel began at the intersection of US 60 and US 66, and extended one mile eastward. US 60 and US 66 served as the north and south boundaries, respectively; because US 60 approached US 66 from the NE, the land parcel assumed the shape of a triangle. **(Map 6)**

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>20</sup> Tyson and Jensen, 13.

<sup>21</sup> *Amarillo City Directory*. Southwestern States Telephone Company, various dates.

<sup>22</sup> Norman Dysart (resident of Triangle Subdivision since 1947), telephone interview. Amarillo, Texas, October 20, 2007.

<sup>23</sup> Rentfrow interview.

<sup>24</sup> Dysart interview.

<sup>25</sup> Potter County Deed Records (Potter County Court House, Amarillo, Texas), vol. 346, pg. 588.

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Clayton began construction in 1946. Deed records indicate that by April 1946, a tourist court with office, 10 double units, one single unit, dining room and lunch counter, filling station, pump house, water well, and tenant quarters were three-fourths completed at a cost of \$65,000 for labor and materials, paid for in cash. An additional \$30,000 was secured as a loan at that time for blacktop, plastering, stucco work, curb and gutter, sidewalks, painting, and general finishing.<sup>26</sup>

Clayton built the motel complex to provide a complete set of travel-related services for his customers. In April 1946 he established a 5-year, \$40,000 lease with Phillips 66 of Bartlesville, Oklahoma, to operate the gas station.<sup>27</sup> A lease also was established with a private entrepreneur to operate the restaurant. The Claytons would oversee motel operations with assistance from a hired manager.<sup>28</sup> The complex businesses were open by late 1947 or early 1948; capitalizing on the location and shape of the land parcel, they were named the Triangle Motel, Triangle Café, and Triangle Service Station.

In choosing a style for the buildings, the Claytons selected the smooth, curved Streamlined Moderne style for the motel, and more utilitarian, vernacular styles for the café, service station, pump house, and manager's residence. All buildings were constructed with wood frame, plaster, wire lathe, and white stucco; ceilings were insulated with fiberglass material. Royal blue was used for the trim color, including the wood awnings of the motel and restaurant, and the canopy and garage doors of the gas station. The exterior doors of the motel were constructed of redwood and stained maroon.

The motel complex consisted of two linear wings, oriented east to west, separated by a courtyard. Due to the triangular shape of the land parcel, the wings were built parallel to the US highways 60 and 66, and at a slight angle to each other. **(Map 6)** The north wing consisted of six sleeping units and three two-car garages integrated under a single roof. **(Photo 6)** At the west end of the wing, Room 1 consisted of a sleeping room with an adjoining sitting room; Room 2 consisted of a single sleeping room; rooms 3-6 each had two sleeping rooms. Garages were located between rooms 2 and 3, between rooms 4 and 5, and adjacent to Room 6 at the east end of the wing; concrete floors were poured in the garages circa 1956. Doors to rooms 2-6 were oriented south toward the courtyard, rather than toward US 60 traffic. The door to Room 1 was located in the curved, west end of the wing, facing southwest. Concrete walkways led from each door to a concrete curb-and-gutter sidewalk; on a patch of grass separating the sidewalk from the exterior south wall of the wing, each unit was supplied with two outdoor chairs. Facing US 60, the exterior north wall of the wing facing US 60 was blank to minimize traffic noise for guests.

The south wing consisted of an office, five sleeping units and three two-car garages integrated under a single roof. **(Photo 5)** Located at the west end of the wing, the manager's office consisted of a long wood reception desk with a wood (later Formica) countertop, a bathroom, and a short-wave, world band radio for office attendants to enjoy. **(Photo 10)** The office was connected to Room 11 by an interior door in its east wall. Room 11 initially consisted of one sleeping room and an adjacent sitting room with kitchenette; this unit was occupied by the Claytons until they built a permanent residence in 1952, at which time the kitchenette was removed and converted to a sleeping

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., vol. 366, pg. 249.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Rentfrow interview.

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room. Rooms 8–10 each had two sleeping rooms. Garages were located between rooms 10 and 11, between rooms 8 and 9, and adjacent to Room 7 at the east end of the wing. Doors to rooms 7–11 were oriented north toward the courtyard, rather than toward US 66 traffic. The door to the office was located in the curved, west end of the wing, facing northwest. Concrete walkways led from each door to a concrete curb-and-gutter sidewalk; on a patch of grass separating the sidewalk and the exterior north wall of the wing, each unit was supplied with two outdoor chairs. Facing US 66, the exterior south wall of the wing was blank to minimize traffic noise for guests.

As was common practice in the motel industry, plans called for staged construction of the motel.<sup>29</sup> Concrete foundations were laid for an additional six units at the east end of each wing in anticipation of later expansion; however, they never were constructed, as the Claytons determined that the existing units met their business interests.<sup>30</sup> The foundations of the six planned units remain visible to the east of the motel wings today.

The spacious, two-room units of the motel provided a desirable amenity for travelers on US 66. The size of the rooms was influenced by Cora Clayton, who recalled her dissatisfaction with the small motel rooms in which she had stayed during her own travels. The resulting larger rooms became a quality feature of the Triangle Motel.<sup>31</sup>

Each lodging unit was furnished with two chairs, a desk, and a double bed in each sleeping room; the beds were topped with Beauty Rest mattresses. The desk was located adjacent to the exterior door under the window. Each unit also had a wall-mounted, peg-style, chrome coat rack; a closet with a solid wood door; and a pay radio for use at a cost of 25 cents for one hour of listening time. A sliding vinyl door separated the two sleeping rooms in the double units. Floors were finished with marbled black-and-white asphalt tiles, and plastered walls were painted in a variety of colors, including pale yellow, blue, pink and green. Bathrooms were constructed with large, white-tiled showers, and white porcelain sinks and commodes, and floors of white terrazzo tile. Curtain fabric and patterns varied by room.

A large boiler built by Midco—Si Clayton's company in Borger—was located in the eastern-most garage of each wing. Each unit was equipped with a gas heater; in the double units, the heater was located in the shared wall between the two sleeping rooms, with vents opening into each room. Air conditioning was not provided at first, although "Catalina" brand units were installed in rooms 5, 6, 7, and 8 at a later, unknown date.

Room 6 held a standing reservation for the Claytons' visiting family members and was filled with higher-quality furnishings than the other units. Although the garages were intended for the use of paying guests, Si Clayton took the liberty of housing his 1954 Lincoln in the garage space for Room 7.<sup>32</sup>

The courtyard that separated the two wings was oval in shape and defined by the curb, gutter, and asphalt driveway that encircled it. **(Photo 11)** The courtyard provided an outdoor "living room" of grass lawn, picnic benches, chairs, and Chinese Elm trees for shade. A playground with teeter-totter, merry-go-round, and swings was

<sup>29</sup> Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 47, 73-76.

<sup>30</sup> Rentfrow interview.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

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located to the east of the courtyard, across the asphalt driveway. As Si Clayton was a national champion horseshoe pitcher, the playground was also equipped with a horseshoe court.<sup>33</sup>

The check-in procedure at the motel involved potential guests being shown a room by the office attendant; if the guest chose to stay, they would return to the office to fill out a registration card and pay. One night's lodging in Room 1 or 2 cost six dollars, while a night in rooms 3–11 cost seven dollars. Guests would then be given a key and a glass pitcher for ice, which was available in a metal ice box—equipped with an ice pick—located just inside and east of the office door. The ice box was replenished daily with a block of ice brought by a delivery service. After television came to Amarillo in 1954, guests had the option of renting a 17" television from the office for a fee of one dollar. If telephone calls were necessary, guests could use the office telephone, as the rooms did not have telephone jacks.<sup>34</sup> Rooms at the motel almost always were full from the 1940s through the late 1960s, often with repeat customers. During the summer, the majority of guests were tourists, while Air Force base families filled rooms the rest of the year.<sup>35</sup>

For the first five or six years of business, the Claytons hired the Poindexter family to manage the motel, with the Poindexters living in the manager's residence near the pump house. By the mid-1950s, Cora Clayton's brother and sister-in-law, Myron and Bernice Linn, took over the management of the motel, and they constructed a home on land purchased from Si Clayton, east of the motel complex. Housekeeping services were hired out; linens were laundered on the premises at the pump house and dried on a clothesline. In the early 1970s, the Claytons took over both management and housekeeping operations until they sold the property in 1977.<sup>36</sup>

The restaurant, initially known as the Triangle Café, became known as the Dream Diner in 1956. Built with a full basement, the building reflected a utilitarian commercial style, with a trapezoidal shape. **(Figures 1-3)** The café consisted of a small lunch counter on the south (US 66) side of the building, which served fast, casual fare. The north portion of the building consisted of a large dining room that offered fine dining at a leisurely pace. The dining room had a fireplace and an Art Deco decorative theme, including glass block backlit with blue light, and a flared pillar in the center of the room that directed soft blue light toward the ceiling. The lunch counter and dining room were separated by a wall.<sup>37</sup>

While most diners were travelers, the restaurant also attracted a solid local clientele by offering live music and dancing. Prior to 1956, the restaurant experienced one grease fire and one after-hours furnace fire. A small tornado also hit the diner in the 1950s, breaking most or all of the windows. The restaurant was operated by a single lessee for the first twenty years of business, and then a series of lessees until it was sold in 1977.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

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The gas station, initially known as the Triangle Service Station, became the Triangle 66 in 1967.<sup>39</sup> The station was located at the tip of the triangle-shaped land parcel, directly at the junction of US 60 and US 66. Utilitarian in style, the building was designed to conform to the shape of the land parcel, and resembled a polygonal, flat-tipped arrowhead. **(Figure 1)** Gas station services included full-service fueling attendants, oil changes, and automotive repairs. The shop sold oil, grease, water bags, cold drinks, and food. The station operated solely as a Phillips 66 throughout its service life. It was operated by a single manager, Dee Fry, who lived in a home on land purchased from Si Clayton, east of the motel and adjacent to the Linn family.

During the Triangle Motel complex's first years of operation, Si Clayton also was winding down his boiler business in Borger, which he had sold to Cecil Rentfrow, the husband of the Claytons' only child, Anna Louise. The Claytons commuted from Borger to attend to business at the Triangle complex, staying overnight in Room 11 when necessary. In 1952 they constructed a personal residence on the property, which they moved into that same year. The house, with a detached garage, was situated east of the motel between the playground and pump house. The house was an assembly-line product, manufactured of wood frame and gypsum board construction by the Mobile Home Corporation of Amarillo. The garage was built with wood frame, lathe, plaster, and stucco; its interior was finished with bare studs and a concrete floor, and the garage door was solid wood. After an incident in which Cora drove a car into the north wall of the garage, Si constructed a steel pipe tire bumper approximately two-feet north of it. The garage was used primarily as a maintenance shop, but it also housed Cora's car—a Mercury. Among other projects, Si built new headboards with bookshelves for the motel beds in this shop.

From its opening in the 1940s, the Triangle Motel Complex boomed with business supported by highway travelers, the Air Force Base, and local residents. Though both highways supported the businesses, US 66 was the more heavily traveled of the two routes.<sup>40</sup> In 1955 the nearby Amarillo Air Force Base was selected for use as a Strategic Air Command (SAC) facility; by 1957, a 13,000-foot long concrete runway was under construction to accommodate the Command.<sup>41</sup> The site selected for the runway crossed the US 66 right-of-way, resulting in the permanent closure of a five-mile segment of US 66 to the east of the Triangle complex. As a result, US 66 was rerouted over US 60 from the US 60/66 junction to a point one-mile east of the Air Force Base. **(Map 2)** The decommissioned stretch of US 66 to the south of the Triangle Motel complex became a local access route known as Triangle Drive. The dually designated US 60/66 corridor was subsequently widened to accommodate the increase in traffic. Despite Si Clayton's requests to widen the highway entirely to the north, the highway was widened to the south and north, moving the highway shoulder to within 10 feet of the Triangle Motel's north wing. In 1960 the county land surrounding and including the Triangle Motel complex was annexed to the city of Amarillo.<sup>42</sup>

In response to the shift of US 66 traffic to the north, Clayton relocated the Triangle Motel neon sign from the south side of the complex to the northeast corner of his garage/maintenance shop, adjacent to the US 60/66 junction. **(Photo 18)** In 1956 Silas made further updates to the exterior of the complex by covering the white stucco finish with a brick veneer, ignoring Cora's argument that it was a "waste of money"; he had seen this treatment on other

<sup>39</sup> *Amarillo City Directory*. Southwestern States Telephone Company, 1966 and 1967.

<sup>40</sup> Dysart interview.

<sup>41</sup> *GlobalSecurity.org*, "Amarillo AFB, TX," accessed December 1, 2007 at: [www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/facility/amarillo](http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/facility/amarillo).

<sup>42</sup> City of Amarillo annexation maps. On file, City of Amarillo.

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commercial buildings around Amarillo and felt it would add a modern appeal to the complex.<sup>43</sup> The new veneer consisted of scored yellow brick with a scored red brick skirt, separated by a projecting course of red brick, and was applied to the motel, café, and gas station buildings. It is likely that the royal blue awnings and trim details were changed to the forest green color present today during this effort to update the motel's appearance. Si Clayton also updated his prefabricated house with a Permastone veneer at this time.

In 1964, the US Department of Defense announced that it would close the Amarillo Air Force Base within four years; the base closure brought economic hardship and a 25% decrease in population for Amarillo.<sup>44</sup> By 1970 Interstate 40 was opened as a thoroughfare and US 66 was reduced to a business route. Although US 60 remained a commissioned US highway, the majority of traveler-related business moved to the I-40 corridor. Business suffered at the Triangle Motel complex, and Silas and Cora Clayton took over management of the motel themselves to cut costs.

In 1977 Si made the decision to retire for good and sell the complex, including the pump house and his personal residence. The properties were sold to Ramona and Vaughn Price for \$34,000.<sup>45</sup> Included in the sale contract was a provision that the Claytons could remain in their Permastone-clad house for the rest of their lives. With the transfer of property to the Prices in 1977, the Triangle Motel Complex closed its doors; the couple owned additional motel properties in Amarillo, and they used the rooms of the Triangle Motel for the storage of excess furniture, carpet, and other items relating to their larger motel enterprises.<sup>46</sup>

After thirty years of deferred maintenance, the Triangle Motel recently has received much-needed attention from a local mother-and-son team who are determined to restore the buildings for use as a motel. The Dream Diner has continued to operate as bar, but under a new name and separate ownership. The Triangle 66 station was converted for use as a tire shop, but remains vacant today; the canopies, gas pumps, and retail area of the station were demolished at an unknown date, leaving only the drive-through garage bays intact. Currently the Claytons' house and garage are occupied as a rental home and garage. The pump house is used for storage; the manager's residence was demolished at an unknown date.

### Summary

The Triangle Motel Complex is a representative example of the commercial development that proliferated along US 66. Cora and Silas Clayton, the "Mom and Pop" owners of the property, exemplify the US 66 entrepreneur. Without prior experience in the motel, café, or gas station business, the Claytons acquired a parcel of land at the junction of US 60 and US 66 in 1945, just months after the end of World War II, where they built a complex of traveler services, capitalizing on traffic from two US highways, the boom of post-war leisure travel, and Cold-War military activities related to Amarillo Air Force Base. The Triangle complex thrived during the local boom on US 66 from the late 1940s through the 1960s. With the closure of the Amarillo Air Force base in 1968 and the opening of Interstate 40

<sup>43</sup> Rentfrow interview.

<sup>44</sup> Cox, *Historic Amarillo: An Illustrated History*, 77.

<sup>45</sup> Potter County Deed Records, vol. 1304, pg. 86.

<sup>46</sup> Rentfrow interview.

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in 1970, numerous traveler-related businesses along US 66, including the Triangle Motel Complex, suffered and were forced to close their doors.

The two motel wings and the Claytons' residence and detached garage retain their original configuration, design, and materials with little or no alterations, and are therefore nominated together as contributing resources. The gas station has lost its canopies, gas pumps, and retail area and is included in the nomination as a noncontributing resource; the café is also considered to be a noncontributing resource due to its new hipped roof added in 2007. Because the manager's residence has been demolished and the pump house surrounded by a significant amount of residential infill, they are not included in the nomination. Collectively, the buildings strongly reflect the private commercial development that occurred on US 66 throughout its history. Few of these roadside complexes remain along historic Route 66 in Texas, and the Triangle Motel complex is one of the best-preserved.<sup>47</sup>

Once common along US 66, such mom-and-pop enterprises lost prominence as the interstate highway system and corporate chains gained favor. Located along historic US 66, the Triangle Motel complex provides important insight to the history of the mid-twentieth century and postwar roadside commercial development. The Triangle Motel is therefore eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A for Commerce and Transportation, and under Criterion C for Architecture; its period of significance begins in 1946 and ends in 1960, the current date of the fifty-year requirement.

For additional information, see the Multiple Property Documentation Form, *Route 66 in Texas* Multiple Property Submission.

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<sup>47</sup> Penick and Smith. "Historic Resources Survey, Route 66 through Texas."

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**ACREAGE OF PROPERTY:** approximately 5 acres

**UTM REFERENCES**

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
14	249902	3901156

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:** (see continuation sheet 10-22)

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:** Nomination includes all property historically associated with the district.

**11. FORM PREPARED BY** (with assistance from Rachel Leibowitz, Historian, Texas Historical Commission)

**NAME / TITLE:** Kaisa Barthuli, Program Manager, Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program

**ORGANIZATION:** National Park Service  
National Trails System-Intermountain Region

**DATE:** March 2, 2010

**STREET & NUMBER:** P.O. Box 728

**TELEPHONE:** (505) 988-6701

**CITY OR TOWN:** Santa Fe

**STATE:** New Mexico

**ZIP CODE:** 87504-0728

**ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION**

**CONTINUATION SHEETS**

**MAPS** (see continuation sheet Map-23 through Map-27)

**PHOTOGRAPHS** (see continuation sheet Photo-35 through Photo-36)

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS** (see continuation sheets Figure-28 through Figure-34)

**PROPERTY OWNER**

7954 and 8024 East Amarillo Boulevard:

**NAME:** Vaughn Dale Price Trust and Ramona W. Price Trust

**STREET & NUMBER:** 2901 Bell Street

**TELEPHONE:** (806) 358-6616

**CITY OR TOWN:** Amarillo

**STATE:** Texas

**ZIP CODE:** 79106-5020

7804 and 7808 East Amarillo Boulevard:

**NAME:** Ruben Cueto

**STREET & NUMBER:** 1001 North Woodland Street

**TELEPHONE:** not available

**CITY OR TOWN:** Amarillo

**STATE:** Texas

**ZIP CODE:** 79107-7058

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## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the Triangle Motel Complex includes Lots 38 and 39 in Block 90 on the accompanying Triangle Subdivision plat map. The property is bounded on the north by US 60, on the west by the unplatted parcel at the intersection of US 60 and Triangle Drive, on the south by Triangle Drive (historic US 66), and on the east by adjacent property lines. **(Map 7)**

## VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

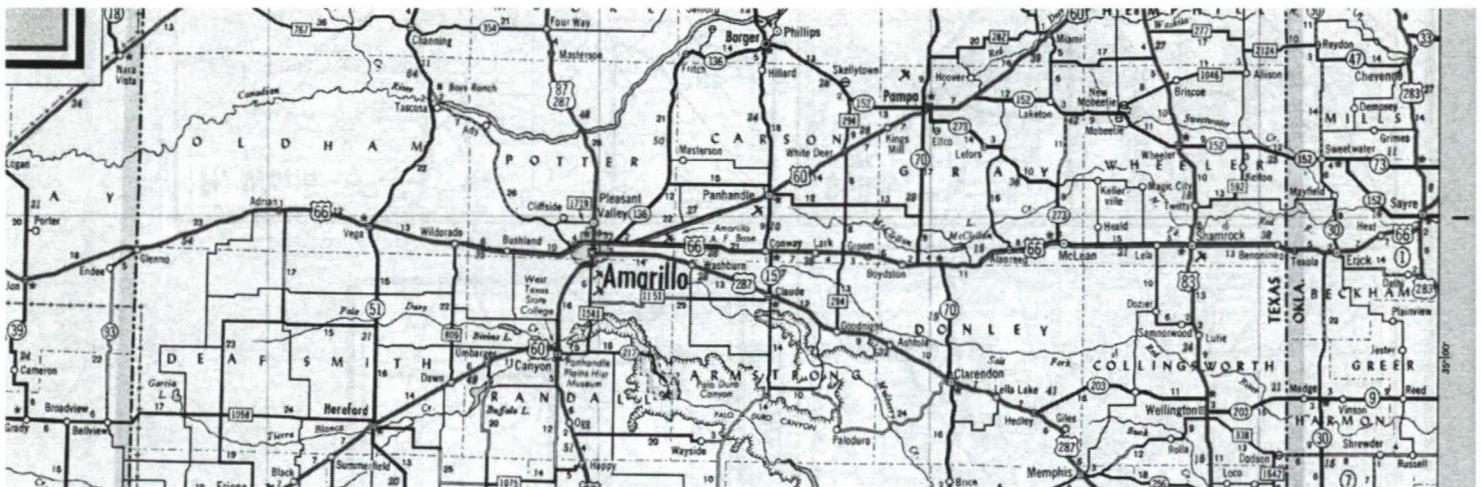
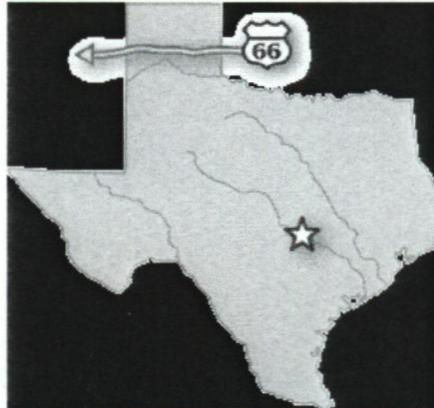
The boundary includes lots historically associated with the nominated property. In 1945 the Claytons purchased lots known at that time as Lots 38 and 39 in Block 90, upon which they constructed the six buildings that comprise the Triangle Motel complex. The lots subsequently have been divided and are now under multiple ownerships. The extant pump house and manager's residence to the east are historically associated with the complex, but are not included in the boundary due to loss of integrity from high-density infill.

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Map 1. 1957 map of Texas, showing US highway alignments through Panhandle region.

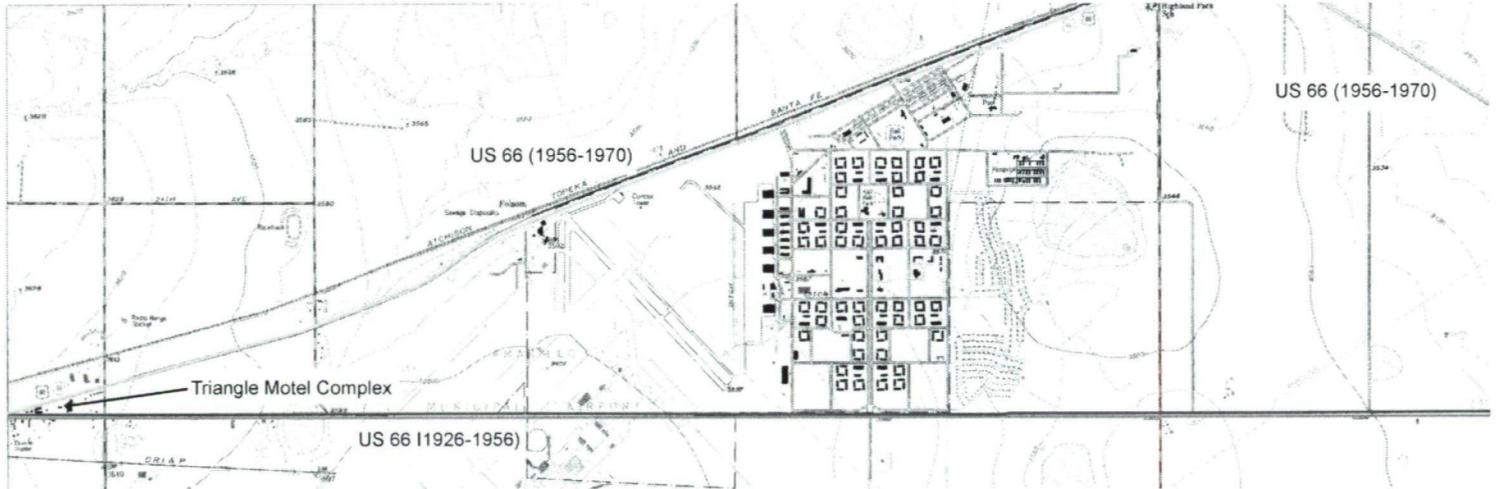
Both images taken from website: <http://www.route66university.com/maps/texas.php>

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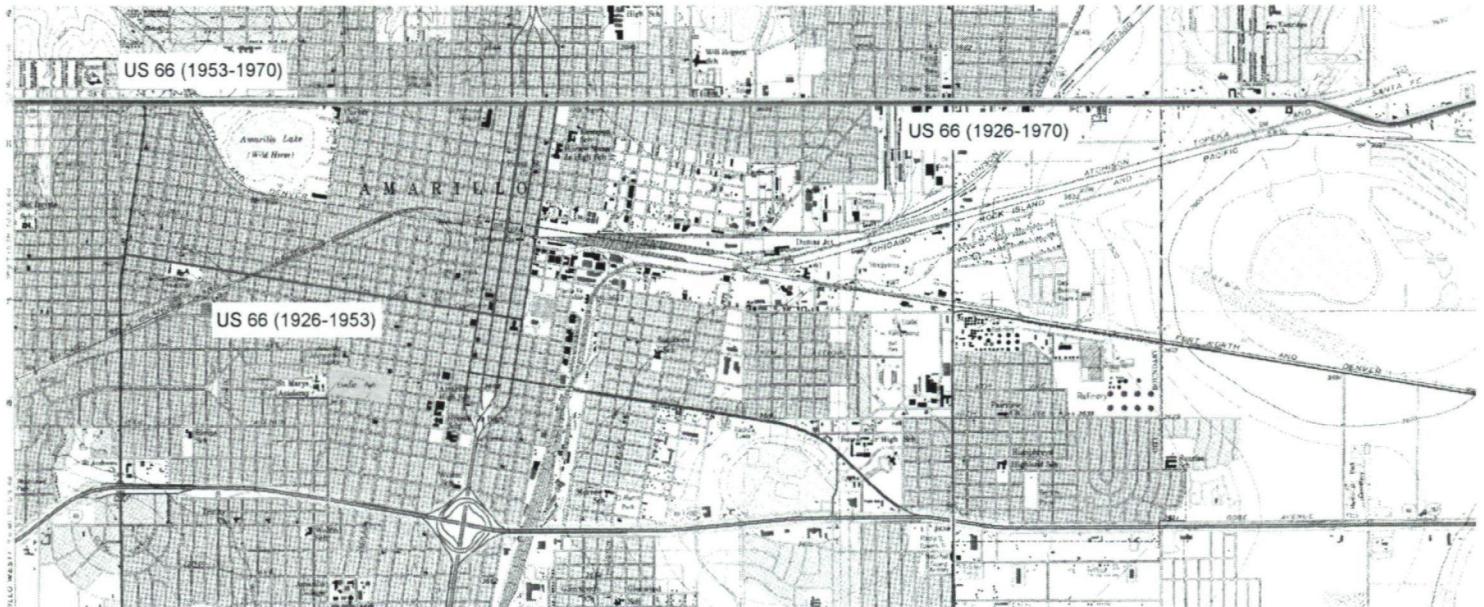
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Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas



**Map 2.** USGS Pullman Quad Map, showing US 66 alignments east of Amarillo. Note relationship of Amarillo Air Force Base (now Texas State Technical Institute) and Amarillo Airport runway to US 66.



**Map 3.** USGS East Amarillo Quad Map, showing US 66 alignments through Amarillo.

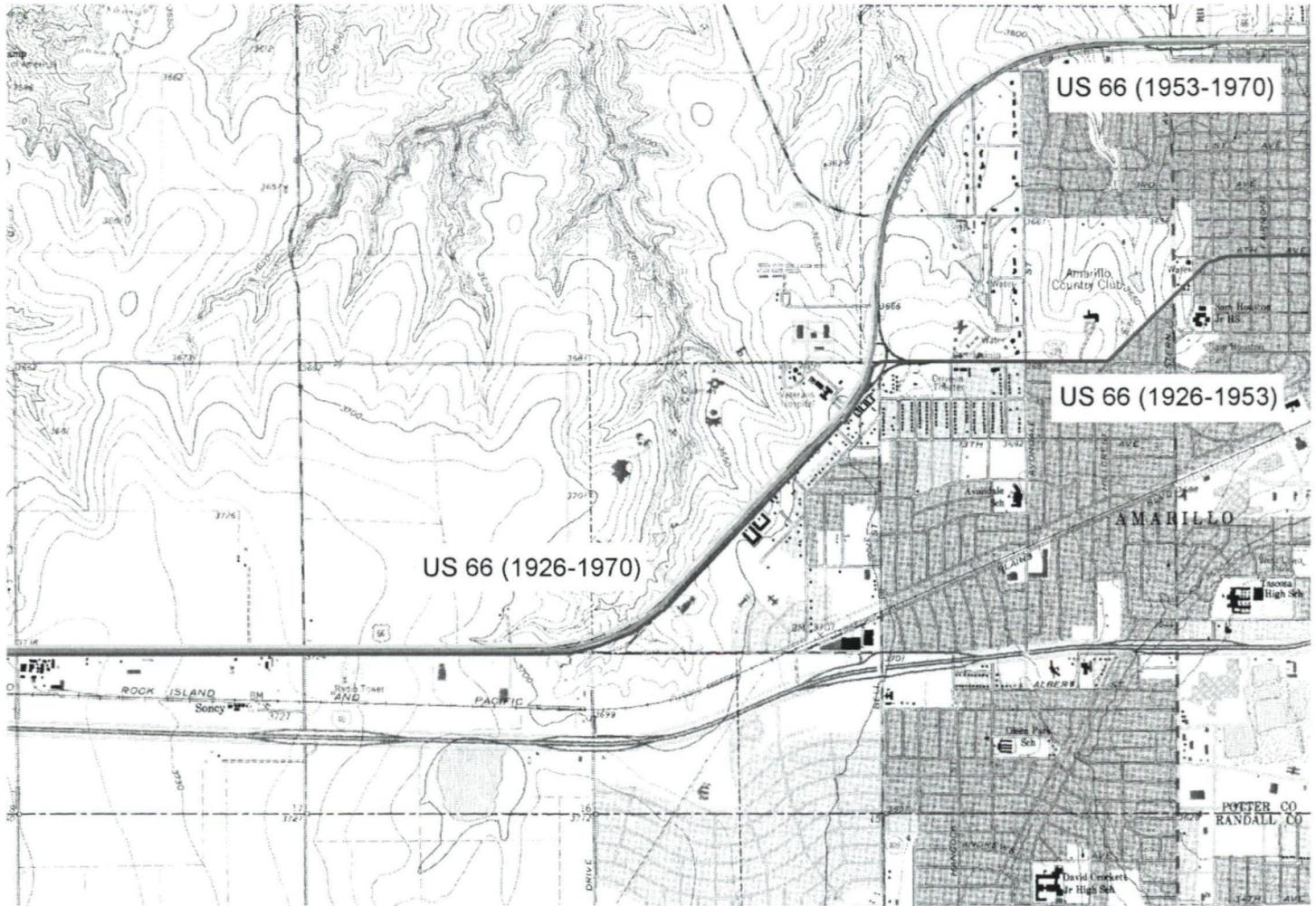
(From *Historic Resources Survey, Route 66 through Texas*, Texas Historical Commission, December 2002.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section MAP Page 25

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas



**Map 4.** USGS West Amarillo Quad Map, showing US 66 alignments through Amarillo.

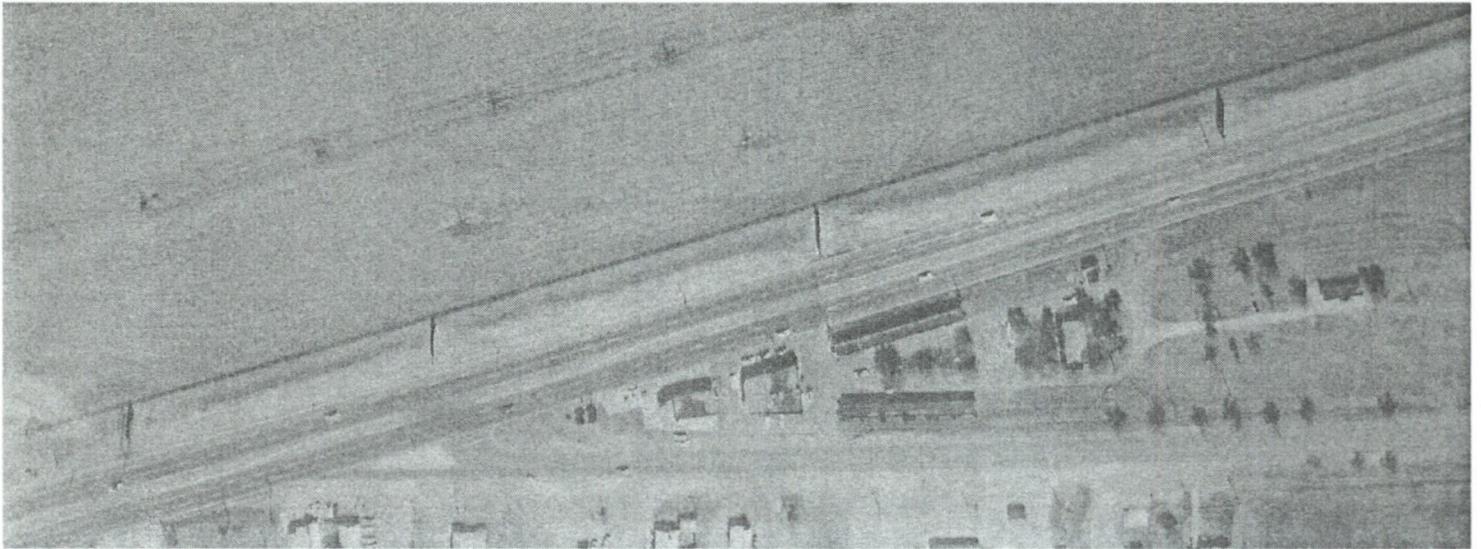
(From *Historic Resources Survey, Route 66 through Texas*, Texas Historical Commission, December 2002.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

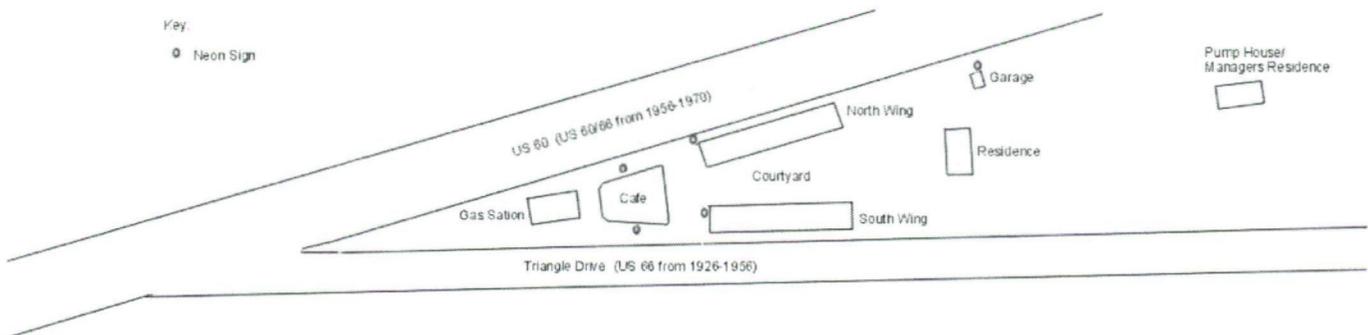
Section MAP Page 26

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas



**Map 5.** 1966 aerial photo of Triangle Motel complex.

Photo courtesy of City of Amarillo Engineering Department.



**Map 6.** Triangle Motel complex site plan sketch (not to scale).

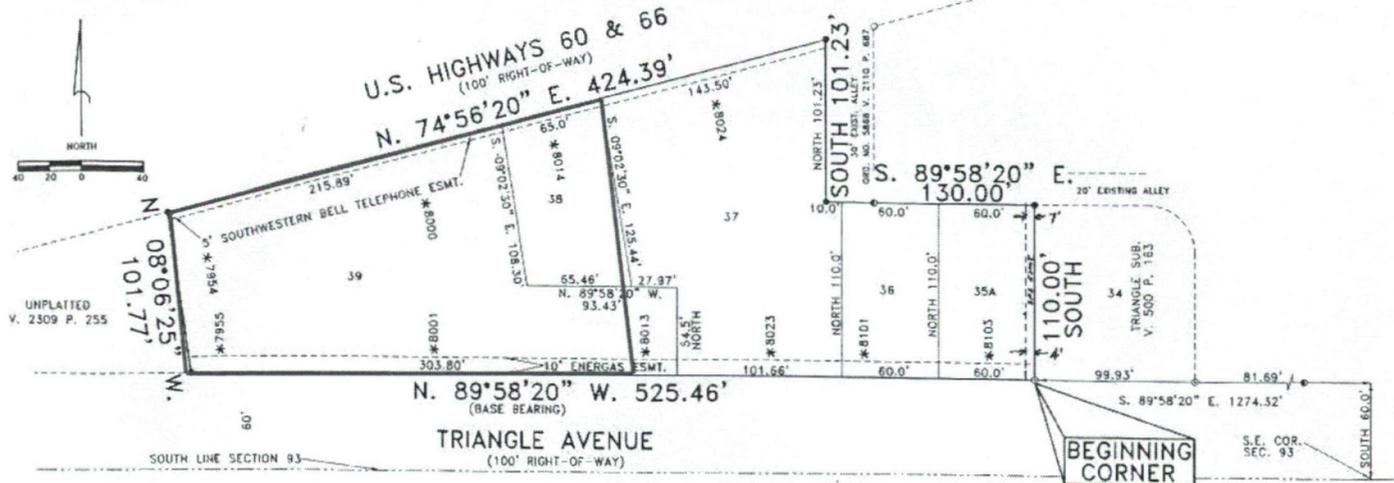
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section MAP Page 27

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

CENSUS TRACT 123



Map 7. Parcel map for Triangle Motel.

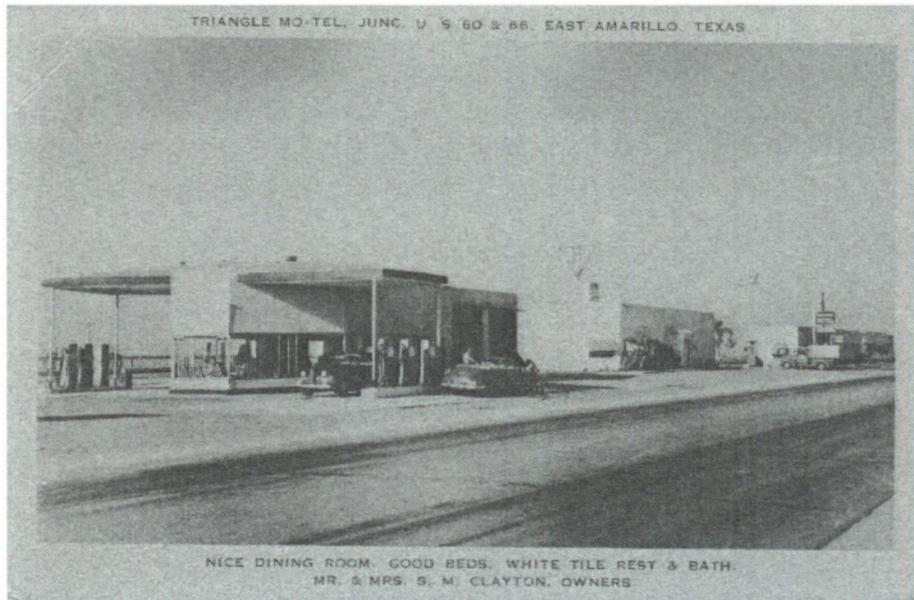
Nomination boundary in red.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

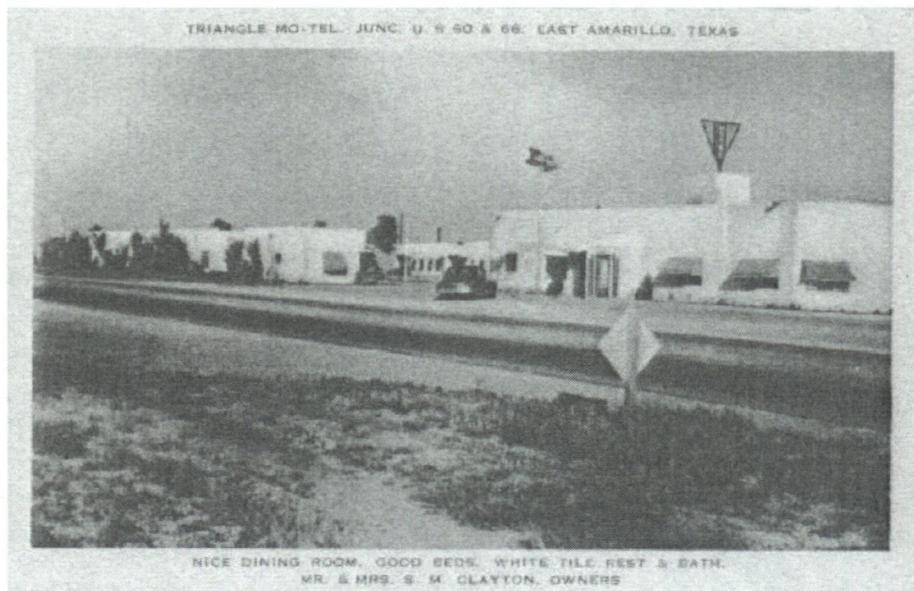
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 28

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas



**Figure 1.** Triangle Motel, ca. 1950. View northeast from US 66 (1926-1956).



**Figure 2.** Triangle Motel, ca. 1950. View southeast from US 60.

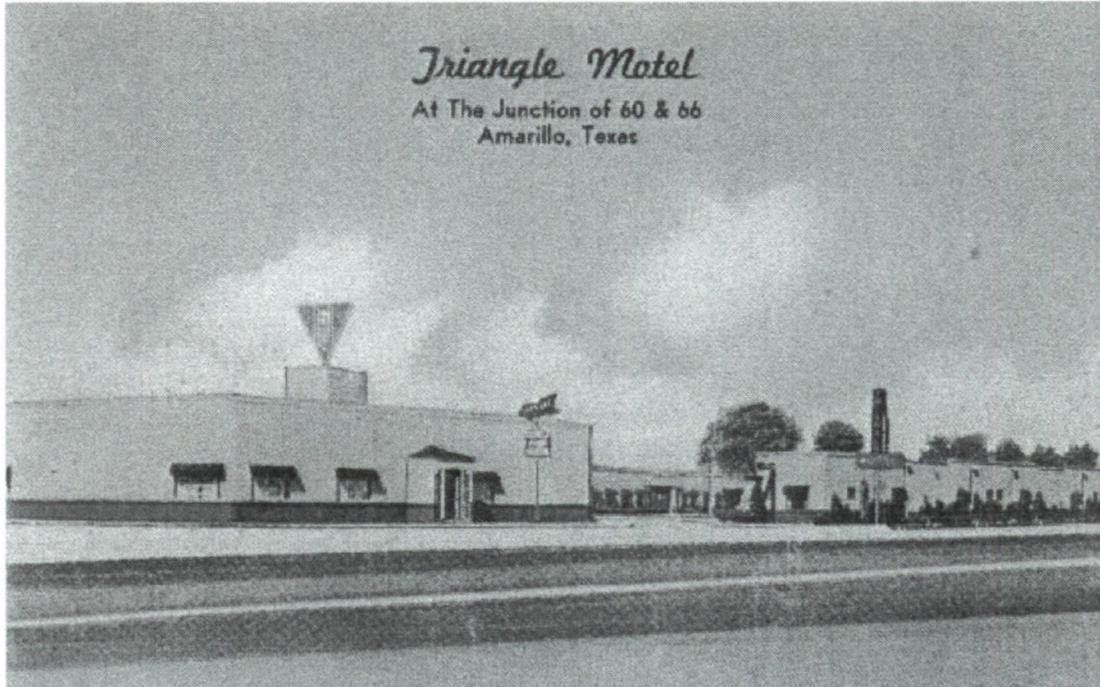
(Postcards courtesy Joe Sonderman Collection.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 29

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas



**Figure 3.** Triangle Motel after remodeling in 1956. View northeast from US 66 (1926-1956).

(Courtesy Joe Sonderman Collection)

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 30

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

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**Figure 4.** Silas M. Clayton, 1938.

Photograph courtesy of Ronald Rentfrow.

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

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section FIGURE Page 31

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas



**Figure 5.** Silas M. Clayton with grandson Ronald Rentfrow, circa 1947.



**Figure 6.** Cora Clayton with grandson Ronald Rentfrow, circa 1947.

Photographs courtesy of Ronald Rentfrow.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 32

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

<b>TRIANGLE MOTEL</b>		
Amarillo, Texas, _____, 19____		
Name _____		
Address _____		
_____		
No. in Party _____	Cabin Number _____	Rate _____
License _____	Year _____	State _____
Make of Car _____		
When You Sign This Card You Release The Owners of All Liability and Damages		

**Figure 7.** Triangle Motel guest registration card.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 33

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

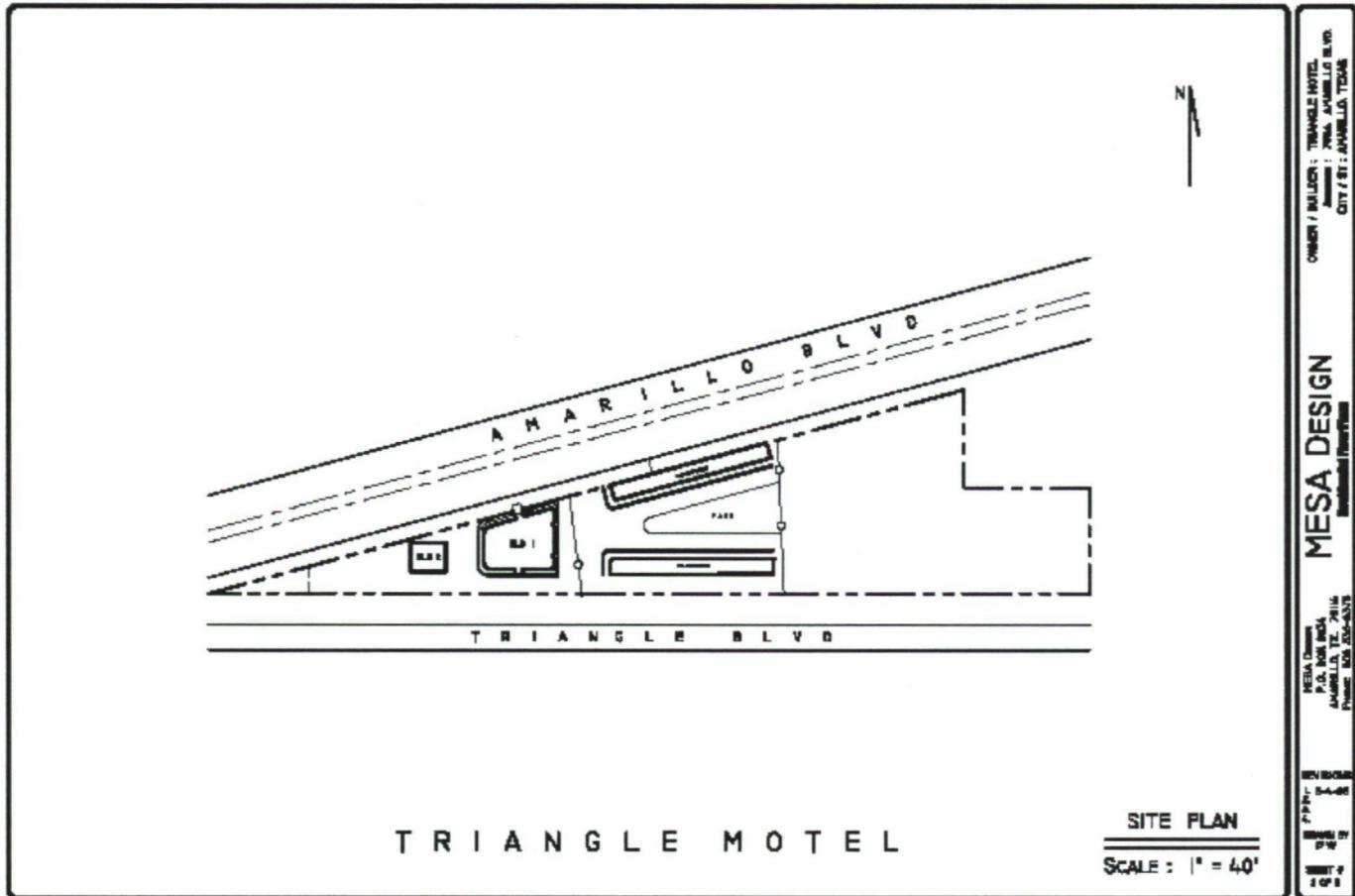


Figure 8. Triangle Motel site plan sketch.

Gas station, café, motel units only.

Courtesy of Dan Wadley.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 34

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

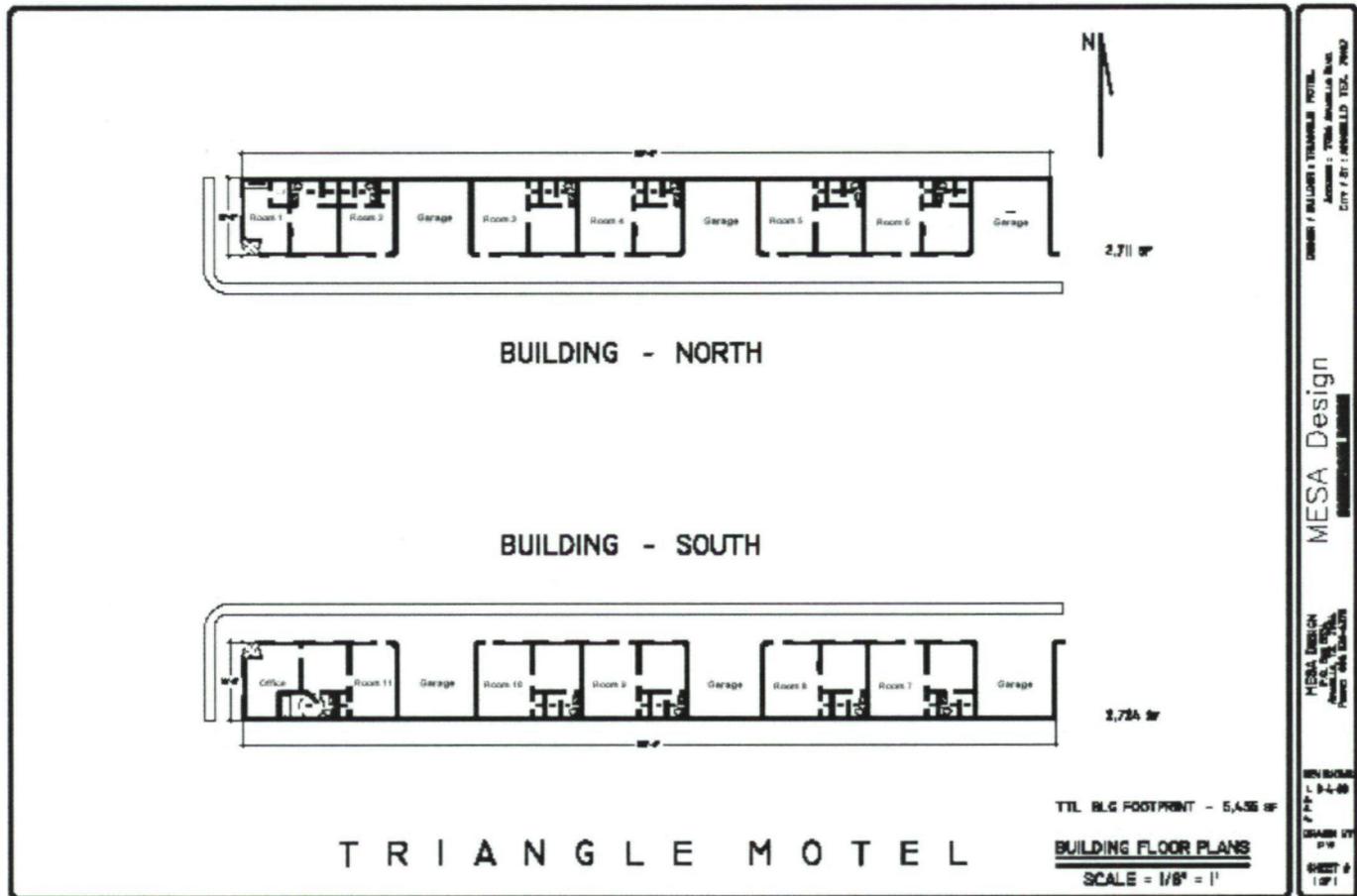


Figure 9. Floor plan and Room units of the Triangle Motel.

Courtesy of Dan Wadley.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section PHOTO Page 35

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

### PHOTOGRAPH LOG

All photographs are credited as follows:

Name of Property:	Triangle Motel
City:	Amarillo
County:	Potter County
State:	Texas
Photographer:	Kaisa Barthuli
Date:	October 19-20, 2007 (except Photo 14 taken August 2009)
Location of digital files:	Texas Historical Commission, Austin

Printed on Epson Ultra Premium Presentation Paper with Epson Ultrachrome ink

- Photo 1 of 18: Triangle Motel neon sign and entrance from historic US 60/66 (US 66 from 1956-1970).  
View to the southeast.
- Photo 2 of 18: Gas station, café and motel complex.  
View to the southeast from historic US 60/66 (US 66 from 1956-1970).
- Photo 3 of 18: Gas station, café and motel complex.  
View to northeast from historic US 66 (1926-1956).
- Photo 4 of 18: Gas station. Historic US 66 (1926-1956) to right; Historic US 60/66 (1956-1970) to left.  
View to east from tip of "triangle" land parcel.
- Photo 5 of 18: Motel, south wing. Wing includes office and Rooms 7-11. Note pole-mounted neon sign, "Office."  
View to the southeast.
- Photo 6 of 18: Motel, north wing. Wing includes Rooms 1-6.  
View to the northeast.
- Photo 7 of 18: Original doors of Rooms 4 and 5; garage.  
View north.
- Photo 8 of 18: Motel, north wing, exterior east elevation. "Triangle Motel" painted in black block letters.  
View northwest.

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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section PHOTO Page 36

Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

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- Photo 9 of 18: Interior view of Room 11 in south wing of motel.  
View southeast.
- Photo 10 of 18: Interior view of office with registration desk.  
View southeast.
- Photo 11 of 18: Courtyard.  
View east.
- Photo 12 of 18: Café. Neon sign.  
View northeast from historic US 66 (1926-1956).
- Photo 13 of 18: Café.  
View southeast from historic US 60/ 66 (US 66 from 1956-1970).
- Photo 14 of 18: Café with new roof installed July 2009. (Photo by Gregory Smith, June 2010.)  
View south from historic US 60/ 66 (US 66 from 1956-1970).
- Photo 15 of 18: Gas Station.  
View northeast from historic US 66 (1926-1956).
- Photo 16 of 18: Gas Station.  
View southeast from historic US 60/ 66 (US 66 from 1956-1970).
- Photo 17 of 18: Residence.  
View southeast.
- Photo 18 of 18: Garage/maintenance shop with pole-mounted neon sign.  
View east.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Triangle Motel  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Route 66 in Texas MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Potter

DATE RECEIVED: 10/22/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/22/10  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/07/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/07/10  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000982

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 12.7.10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places**

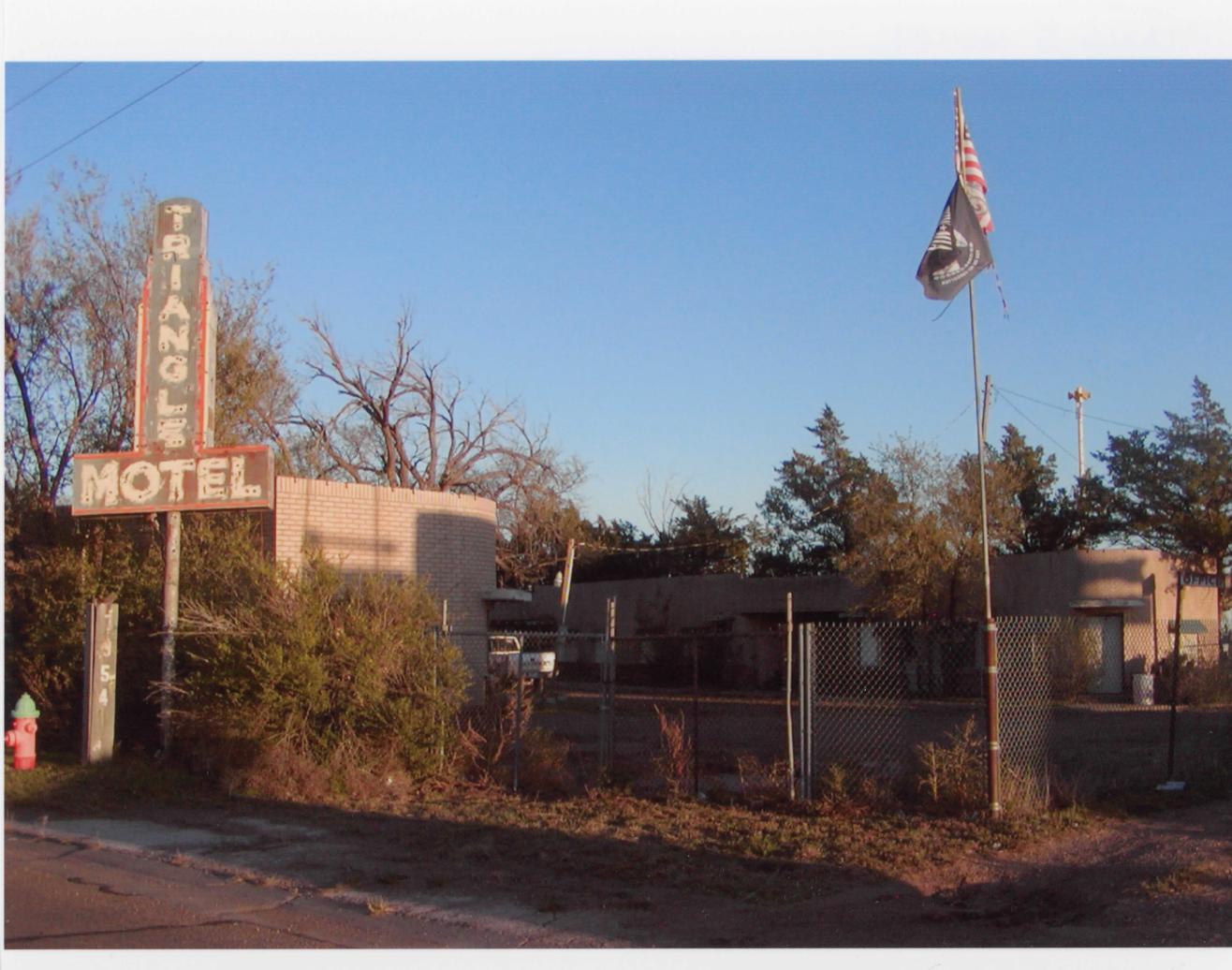
RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



TRIANGLES

MOTEL

TRIANGLES

TRIANGLE MOTEL

AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX

PHOTO 1 of 18



HOTEL

THE FAST Tire Service

306-372-2561

FLATS  
FIXED

10 WHEELERS  
WELCOME

TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 2 OF 18



THE FAST Tire Service

FLATS  
FIXED

REPAIRS

WHEELS  
REBUILT

OPEN

TRIANGLE MOTEL

AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX

PHOTO 3 OF 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER CO, TX  
PHOTO 4 OF 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 5 of 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 6 OF 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 7 OF 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 8 of 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 9 OF 19



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 10 OF 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 11 OF 18



BEER  
OPEN

RESTAURANT

TRIANGLE MOTEL

AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX

PHOTO 12 of 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 13 OF 18



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 14 OF 18

**The FAST Tire Service**

800-372-3561

FLATS  
FIXED

10 WHEELERS  
WELCOME



TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
PHOTO 15 OF 18

**THE FAST Tire Service**

7  
8  
0  
8

FLATS  
FIXED

**THE FAST Tire Service**

800-372-2561

7  
8  
0  
8

18 WHEELERS  
WELCOME

TRIANGLE MOTEL

AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX

PHOTO 16 OF 18



Plus  
TRIANGLE MOTEL

AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX

PHOTO 17 OF 18



HP Premium Plus

HP Premium Plus

HP Premium Plus

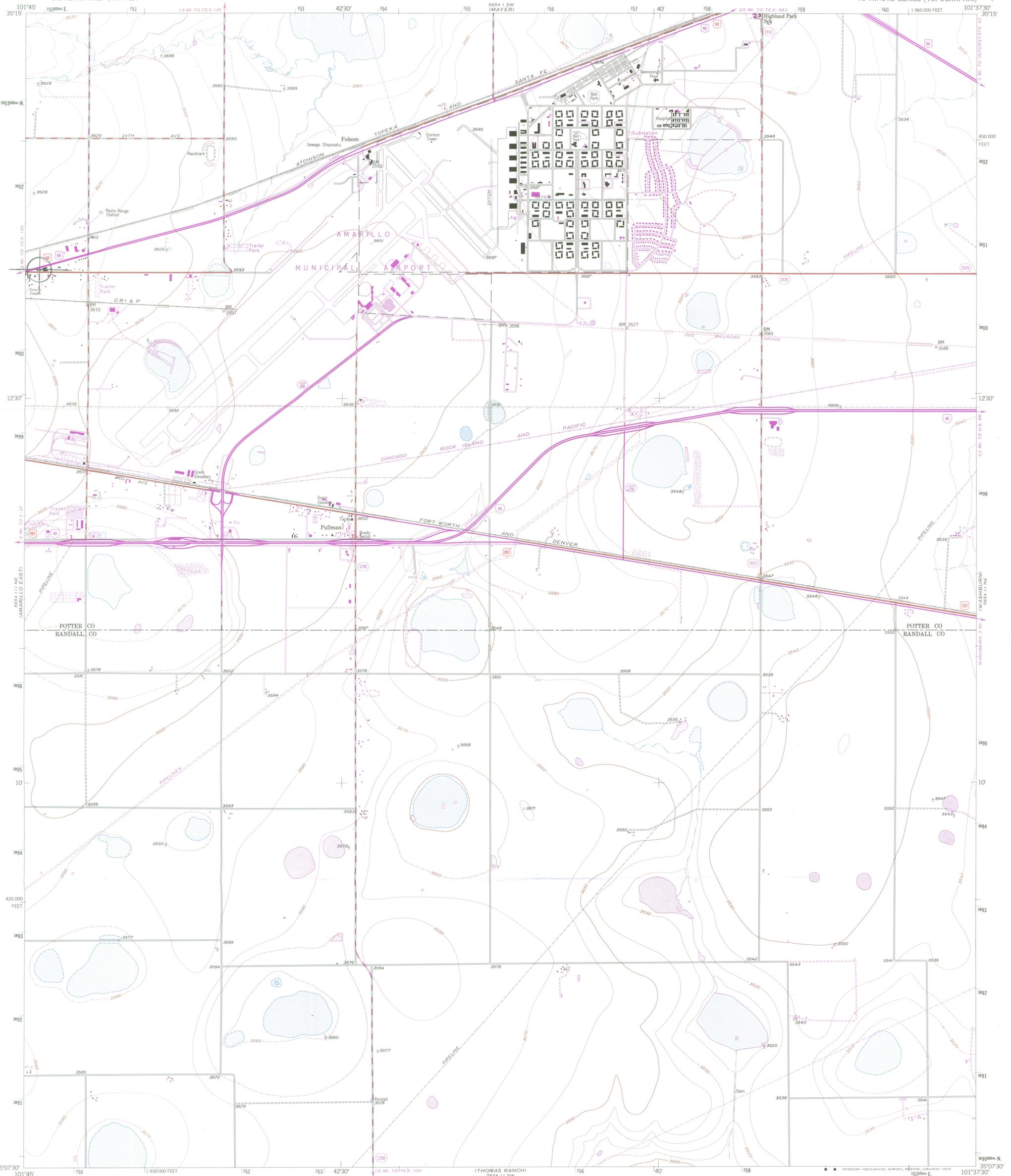
HP Premium Plus



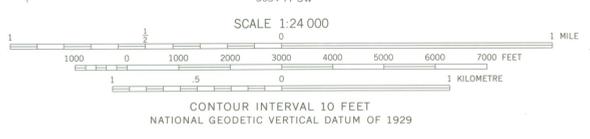
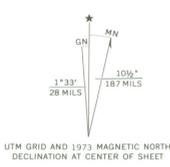
TRIANGLE MOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX

PHOTO 18 OF 18

TRIANGLE HOTEL  
AMARILLO, POTTER COUNTY, TX  
ZONE 14 249902 E 3901156 N



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Culture and drainage in part compiled from aerial photographs taken 1953. Topography by planetable surveys 1956  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, north zone  
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue  
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1967 and 1973. This information not field checked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

3501-213

PULLMAN, TEX.  
N3507.5-W10137.5/7.5  
1956  
PHOTOREVISED 1967 AND 1973  
AMS 5654 11 NW - SERIES V882

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
*real places telling real stories*



MEMORANDUM

TO: Linda McClelland  
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Rachel Leibowitz, Historian  
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Triangle Motel  
Amarillo, Potter County, Texas

DATE: October 19, 2010

The following materials are submitted regarding [address]:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Original National Register of Historic Places form
	Resubmitted nomination
	Multiple Property nomination form
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Photographs
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	USGS maps
	Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other: Archival gold CD with digital image files (TIFs) and .doc file of form

COMMENTS:

- SHPO requests substantive review
- The enclosed owner objections (do ) (do not ) constitute a majority of property owners
- Other:

