



Merchant Street

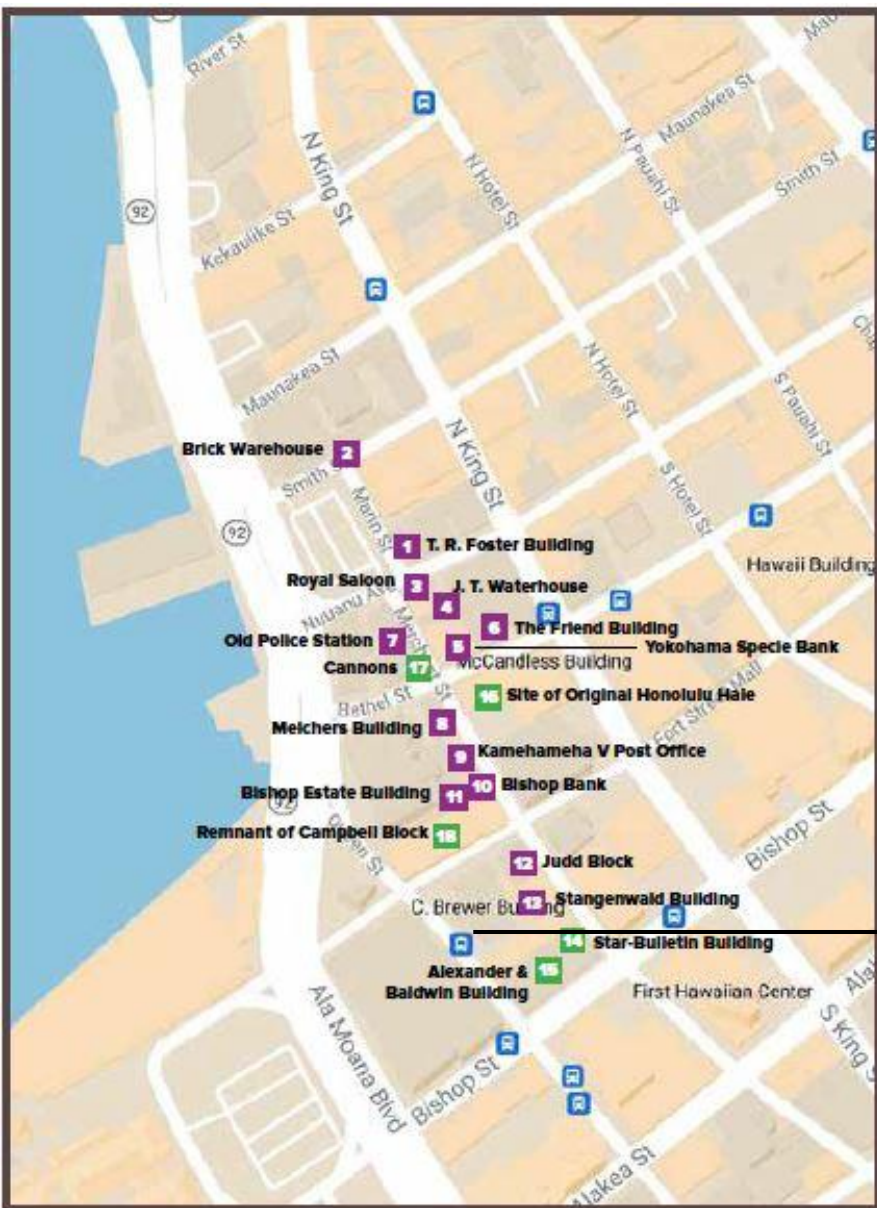
COMMERCIAL & CIVIC HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Merchant Street Commercial & Civic Historic District is an excellent example of an early commercial center in post-contact, pre-territorial, and Territorial Hawai'i. As one of the first official streets in Hawai'i and one of the city's first economic hubs, it is significant for its role as 'Honolulu's Wall Street', the location of the Honolulu Stock Exchange, banks, insurance companies, sugar factors, and commission agents. Four out of the five members of the 'Big Five' maintained their offices in buildings included within the District. The District retains a notable concentration of intact, historic, commercial, and municipal buildings from the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries.

In November 2021 the Hawai'i Historic Places Review Board approved an update and amendment to the Merchant Street Commercial and Civic Historic District listing on the Hawai'i State Register of Historic Places. The original nomination was approved in 1973. This amended form provides much needed clarification, along with expanded description and significance sections, details the district's history as well as its architectural character, and has added two buildings to the district (The Honolulu Star-Bulletin Building and the Alexander & Baldwin Building). Other new resources added to this district nomination are the site of the original Honolulu Hale and four objects: granite curbs and sidewalks, lava rock curbs, cannons, and a remnant of a cast-iron storefront.



Top: Ca. 1885 photo taken from intersection of Merchant and Bethel Streets facing south-southeast. Right foreground shows the Kamehameha V Post Office building in its original state. The old Honolulu Hale is visible behind it. The Melchers Building is in the left midground; many original design elements are still visible, including quoins and a hipped roof. Image courtesy of the Hawai'i State Archives, PPWD-8-7-025. Above left to right: The Friend Building · Royal Saloon Building · T. R. Foster Building (fronting Nu'uauu Avenue) with small brick warehouse (fronting Marin Street) at rear.



■ Newly added Historic District Sites
 ■ Current Historic District Sites

- 1 T. R. Foster Building (1891)**
902 Nu'uuanu Avenue, brick
Architect/builder unknown
- 2 Brick Warehouse (Ca. 1892)**
Marin Street, brick
Architect/builder unknown
- 3 Royal Saloon (1890)**
2 Merchant Street, brick
Architect reported to be W.C. Peacock
- 4 J. T. Waterhouse Building (1870, 1911)**
14/16 Merchant Street, brick and stucco
Architect unknown
- 5 Yokohama Specie Bank (1908)**
908 Bethel Street, brick and terra cotta
Architect Harry Livingston Kerr
- 6 The Friend Building (1887)**
924 Bethel Street, brick and stucco
Builder George Lucas
- 7 Old Police Station (1921)**
842 Bethel Street, reinforced concrete
Architect Louis Davis
- 8 Melchers Building (1854)**
821 Bethel Street, coral block and stucco
Architect unknown
- 9 Kamehameha V Post Office (1871)**
901 Bethel Street, reinforced concrete
Architect J.G. Osborne
- 10 Bishop Bank (1878)**
63 Merchant Street, brick and stucco
Architect T. J. Baker
- 11 Bishop Estate Building (1896)**
77 Merchant Street, lava rock
Architects C. W. Dickey and Clinton Briggs Ripley
- 12 Judd Block (1898)**
851 Fort Street Mall, bluestone and brick
Architect Oliver G. Traphagen
- 13 Stangenwald Building (1901)**
119 Merchant Street, concrete, brick and stone
Architects C. W. Dickey & Clinton Briggs Ripley
- 14 Star-Bulletin Building (1910/1911)**
121 Merchant Street, reinforced concrete
Architect possibly Walter G. Smith
- 15 Alexander & Baldwin Building (1929)**
822 Bishop Street, terra cotta, travertine and tile
Architects C. W. Dickey and Hart Wood
- 16 Site of original Honolulu Hale (1836)**
901 Bethel Street
- 17 Cannons**
Corner of Merchant & Bethel Streets
- 18 Remnant of Campbell Block (1882)**
brick, plaster and cast iron
Architect unknown

Granite curbs and sidewalks and cannons can be found throughout the Merchant Street Commercial and Civic Historic District.



Source: Merchant Street Commercial and Civic Historic District updated National Register of Historic Places nomination prepared by MASON in March 2021.