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NATIONAL
REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Cordele Commercial Historic District
other names/site number none

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Sixth and Fourteenth Avenues and Fifth and Ninth Streets.
city, town Cordele (N/A) vicinity of
county Crisp code GA 081
state Georgia code GA zip code 31015

(N/A) not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:

	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
buildings	67	40
sites	0	0
structures	1	1
objects	0	0
total	68	41

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 1

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Signature of certifying official

5/31/89
Date

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Shelore B... Entered in the National Register 7/6/89

() determined eligible for the National Register

() determined not eligible for the National Register

() removed from the National Register

() other, explain:

() see continuation sheet

Signature, Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

COMMERCE/business; financial institution; specialty store; department store; warehouse
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related; road-related
INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility; waterworks
GOVERNMENT/post office
EDUCATION/library
DOMESTIC/hotel
SOCIAL/meeting hall

Current Functions:

COMMERCE/business; financial institution; specialty store; department store; warehouse
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related; road-related
INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility
EDUCATION/library
GOVERNMENT/post office
SOCIAL/meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Italianate
Commercial Style
Italian Renaissance
Classical Revival
Beaux Arts
Tudor Revival

Materials:

foundation brick
walls brick, concrete
roof asphalt
other stone, metal

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Cordele Commercial Historic District contains the historic commercial, institutional, and transportation-related buildings and structures of the downtown business district of Cordele. The district boundaries have been drawn to encompass the commercial area's intact historic resources and reach from Sixth Avenue to the north to Fourteenth Avenue to the south and from Fifth Street to the east to Ninth Street to the west. This downtown area was laid out on a strict grid plan with north-south and east-west street orientations at the town's founding in 1888 at the intersection of two railroad lines. The grid plan was superimposed over the railroad lines with their junction at the plan's approximate center. The current railroad lines intersect the district between Ninth and Tenth Avenues to the north and between Eighth and Ninth Streets to the west. The majority of buildings in the district are attached commercial buildings and are concentrated in the area south and east of the railroad lines on a rise in the otherwise flat terrain, giving visual emphasis to this area as the city's downtown core. These rows of attached buildings

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are placed in the rectangular blocks within the grid plan, with alleyways providing access to the interiors of the blocks and the buildings' rear facades. Generally to the north and west of the railroad lines are found the transportation-related resources, along with other commercial and industrial buildings in a less concentrated pattern.

The downtown commercial core consists primarily of one- and two-story attached brick commercial buildings constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The majority of these buildings are representative of the one-part and two-part commercial block types typically found in small-town commercial centers. The two-part commercial block is the most common and consists of two distinct zones separated horizontally that reflect a difference in interior use. The lower zone is the public storefront space with entrance and large display windows, while the upper zone suggests more private office or storage space by its wall surface punctuated with rows of windows. The one-part commercial block is one story and consists of a storefront space with surrounding decorated facade. While most of the buildings are constructed of brick, a variety of other facade materials such as marble, rusticated cast concrete blocks, and stucco are also used. Many buildings have both structural and decorative details of cast iron, terra cotta, marble, stone, pressed metal, or wood. Two buildings have elaborately detailed facade turrets, one of terra cotta and the other of pressed metal.

The earliest remaining attached commercial building is the 1889 former First National Bank building at the southwest corner of Eleventh Avenue and Seventh Street. It is a two-story brick building with angled corner entrance. While first-floor storefront alterations have been made, including the change of the corner entrance to a window, the upper facade retains its distinctive parapet walls with corbeled chimneys, rows of arched window openings, and a pressed-metal, pedimented cornice marking the angled former entrance. Other remaining attached commercial buildings also date from the late 19th century and are examples of Italianate and Victorian Commercial architectural styles. The majority of buildings remaining in the district were constructed in the early 20th century up through the 1930s. They represent Neoclassical Revival, Italian Renaissance Revival, and Art Deco stylistic influences on commercial buildings.

An early 20th-century automobile dealership including showroom and garage space remains intact. This Buick dealership was constructed in the 1920s and is a two-story, brick building with cast-concrete details that combine Georgian Revival and Art Deco influences. Its attached, two-part commercial block design with first-floor storefront and second-floor rows of windows is typical of many of the other

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commercial buildings in the city and does not yet reflect its function as later auto dealer building designs would do.

Several of the city's "landmark" commercial and institutional buildings are located in the commercial core and provide architectural emphasis to the area. The largest of these is the Suwanee Hotel. The Suwanee was constructed in 1890-91 as a three-and-one-half-story brick building designed in an English Vernacular Revival style with prominent corbeled chimney faces, false half-timbering in its gables, and gabled dormers. A two-story wooden porch with decorative brackets and friezes once sheltered the first two floors of the main Eleventh Avenue facade and wrapped around to the side facade. The hotel was "remodeled" in the 1920s to compete with a neighboring hotel, which included removing its porch and stuccoing its exterior to give it a more "modern" appearance. The building is no longer used as a hotel but retains some first-floor commercial usage.

The Carnegie Library was built in 1903 and is a one-story brick building with Neoclassical Revival detailing. A dome that originally topped the building's roof was removed at an unknown date. Stone columns and pilasters support a central pedimented portico. Other details include an entablature with modillions, pedimented and bracketed window hoods, and a round-arched entranceway. A rear addition was built in 1917 when additional money was available. A recent side addition complements the original library by repeating some of its features. The Masonic Lodge was constructed in 1907 and is a three-story, corner building with a first floor of stone and upper two floors of brick with stone and terra-cotta details and pressed-metal cornice. Its round-arched openings separated by pilasters, use of columns, and other classical details show the influence of early 20th-century Beaux-Arts Classicism. The U.S. Post Office building (listed in the National Register on June 29, 1984) was constructed in 1912-13 and is a two-story, limestone building in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. It is a freestanding building with surrounding landscaping and parking.

To the north and west of this downtown commercial core are other scattered historic commercial buildings and industrial and transportation-related buildings focused along the railroad lines. The large majority of the commercial buildings in this area are one-part commercial blocks of brick or cast-concrete block with typical storefront entrances and display windows. They were generally constructed in the early 20th century, and their typically simple details include brick corbeling and patterning and stone and clay-tile parapet caps. Two historic gas stations remain in this periphery area around the commercial core, with one to the north and the other to the south. Both were constructed by 1926, as they appear on the 1926

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Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the city. Each is constructed of brick with a front, drive-through bay covered with a hipped roof.

A number of one-story brick warehouses remain along the railroad lines. They are generally constructed with stepped parapets and large openings and are both attached and freestanding. An atypical warehouse located within the district is two-story and constructed of cast-concrete blocks. It was used for cottonseed storage. A large one-story brick warehouse-type building that housed an ice plant is still intact. One building remains from a cottonseed oil mill. The brick building's side walls are reinforced with brick buttresses.

Two freight depots that were constructed by 1908 remain within the district. The larger of these is located in the southwest corner of the district. Its long, rectangular form is typical of depots and is topped by a low-pitched, gable-on-hip roof with wide overhangs. The walls have been covered with artificial siding, but the roof gables retain decorative wooden shingles. The other depot stands to the northeast of the district core. It is wood-framed with weatherboarding, and its roof has a gabled end and a hipped end, denoting a probable addition. Another freight depot and a passenger depot recorded on the 1926 Sanborn map are no longer extant.

The old city waterworks dating from 1914 with water tower and accompanying pump house remains intact across the railroad lines to the northwest. The water tower is a tall, cylindrical shape with a crenellated top and is constructed of cast concrete. The pump house is a one-story brick building with corbeled parapet walls and segmentally arched window and door openings. These facilities are no longer in use.

Noncontributing buildings within the district include nonhistoric buildings constructed after the period of significance and buildings that fall within the period of significance but have extensively altered or covered front facades.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture, Commerce, Community Planning and Development,
Transportation

Period of Significance:

1888-1939

Significant Dates:

1888

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Golucke, J. W., and Company
Lockwood, T. Firth, Sr.

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Significance of property, justification of criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance) and historic context

The Cordele Commercial Historic District is significant as the historic commercial center of the small, south Georgia city of Cordele. The town was established in 1888 at the junction of two railroad lines, and its commercial development took place within the area of the historic district. This downtown commercial, industrial, and transportation center grew rapidly due to its transportation advantages and continued to grow through the 1930s. The district is significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, community planning and development, and transportation. These areas of significance support National Register eligibility under Criteria A and C.

In the area of architecture, the district is significant for its retention of the historic commercial, industrial, institutional, and transportation-related buildings and structures that make up Cordele's central business district. The majority of these buildings are attached commercial buildings that are representative of small-town commercial buildings where the city's day-to-day commercial and service activities took place. The buildings are concentrated in a commercial core to the south and east of the railroad lines on a slight rise in the terrain that gives emphasis to this area as the center of town. These rows of attached buildings sit on the blocks of the town's grid plan laid out at the town's founding in 1888. The 1889 former First National Bank building is the earliest remaining commercial building and is typical of late-19th-century brick commercial buildings with distinctive parapet walls, arched window openings, and pressed-metal cornice marking an angled entrance. The majority of the commercial buildings represent the one-part and two-part commercial block types that were typically found in downtown commercial areas. The late-19th- and early 20th-century stylistic influences found in the district's commercial buildings include Italianate, Victorian Commercial, Neoclassical Revival, Italian Renaissance Revival, and Art Deco.

The downtown's "landmark" buildings represent a large-commercial, governmental, and institutional presence in the city and are an imposing collection of early 20th-century building designs. The Suwanee Hotel built in 1890-91 was a project of the Cordele Hotel Company, a subsidiary of the Americus Investment Company which had established the town. At one time the city had four hotels, but the Suwanee is the only one that remains. The Suwanee's English

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Vernacular Revival style makes an imposing presence in the district. The 1903 Carnegie Library is a significant Neoclassical Revival building, designed by J. W. Golucke and Company of Atlanta, with both a 1917 rear addition, by Atlanta architect Eugene Wachendorff, and a recent side addition. The 1907 Masonic Lodge was designed by T. Firth Lockwood, Sr., of Columbus, Georgia, in a version of Beaux-Arts Classicism. The Italian Renaissance Revival style U. S. Post Office (listed in the National Register on June 29, 1984) was designed under the supervision of James Knox Taylor, Supervising Architect of the U. S. Treasury, and was constructed in 1912-13. Cordele became the county seat of newly formed Crisp County, named for U.S. Congressman Charles F. Crisp, in 1905, and a courthouse was built on Seventh Street at Thirteenth Avenue. This courthouse was torn down in 1950 and replaced with a "modern" building.

Building types present in the district that represent the industrial and transportation roles in the area are a number of warehouses, two depots, an old ice plant, and the remains of a cottonseed oil mill. Cordele was an active and successful manufacturing, distribution, and transportation center in the early 20th century, and this is clearly represented by the large number of related buildings that remain intact along the railroad lines. Cotton was an important crop to the city's economy, and it was stored in and distributed from the warehouses and depots, and cottonseed oil was manufactured in the mill. The majority of these warehouses are one-story, brick or cast-concrete-block structures with low roofs and stepped parapet walls that are typical of warehouse construction. The depots are typically narrow, rectangular structures with large roofs and are located immediately adjacent to the railroad lines as required by their functions. Two 1920s gas stations and an early auto dealership represent the kinds of buildings that served the increasingly important automobile. The 1914 waterworks, by engineer Arthur Pew and builder R. T. Aderhold, are relatively rare examples of such structures.

In the area of commerce, the district is significant as the historic central business district of Cordele. Cordele is the largest city in the county and became the county seat when the county was formed in 1905. The commercial area within the district has historically served the city and surrounding county. The early 20th century was a time of great growth for the city, and this growth is reflected in its downtown commercial core that contains rows of attached commercial buildings, a large hotel, and governmental and institutional buildings that together composed the business life of the city.

In the areas of community planning and development and transportation, the district is significant for its placement and development as a

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railroad-oriented commercial, distribution, and manufacturing center. The town's grid plan with the commercial area as its focus was laid out in 1888 by the Americus Investment Company at the junction of two railroad lines and remains intact. The presence of the railroad was the reason for the city's establishment and determined where the city would be located. The city was named for Cordelia Hawkins, daughter of Sam Hawkins, president of the Americus Investment Company and the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad. Cordele's outstanding growth and success was due to its role as a transportation center and it earned the title and slogan "The Hub City - The Wheels of Progress Ever Turn". The city promoted the formation of Crisp County in 1905 and actively pursued the designation of Cordele as the county seat, further spurring commercial growth. The first two decades of the 20th century were a period of tremendous growth in the city, evidenced by a great variety of businesses, much building construction, large amounts of freight handled by the railroads, and many public improvements. In 1916, there were four railroad lines traversing Cordele's downtown area - the Georgia Southern and Florida from Macon to Jacksonville; the Seaboard Air Line from Savannah to Montgomery (now CSX); the Atlanta, Birmingham, and Atlantic from Brunswick to Atlanta and Birmingham (now CSX); and the Georgia Southwestern and Gulf from Cordele to Albany (now Georgia Northern). Four hotels once stood downtown as well. The city's outstanding transportation facilities served to distribute the agricultural products of the surrounding rural county, especially cotton. The important role of transportation and related manufacturing and commerce in the city's economy is represented by the numerous warehouses, two depots, a hotel, the former ice plant, and the remains of a cottonseed oil mill. It is most clearly represented by the fact that the city's plan is superimposed over the railroad lines that provided the means for the city's growth and development. The 20th-century impact of auto transportation on the city is also represented by the presence of an auto dealership and two gas stations from the 1920s.

National Register Criteria

The Cordele Commercial Historic District is eligible under National Register Criterion A because of its associations with the establishment of Cordele's central business district and its historic development as a railroad-oriented commercial and transportation center for the city and surrounding area. The district is eligible under Criterion C for its intact collection of historic commercial, industrial, institutional, and transportation-related buildings and structures that represent the city's business activity.

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Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification, if applicable)

The period of significance for the district is 1888 to 1939. Development in Cordele began when the city was laid out in 1888 to take advantage of the intersection of two railroad lines. The city's central business district developed at this junction and continued to grow through the 1930s and beyond. The end of the period of significance will therefore be the 50-year cut-off date of 1939.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Sledge, John, and Susan Barge. Historic District Information Form. August 19, 1983 and April 9, 1988. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia, with supplemental information.

Daughters American Revolution, Fort Early Chapter. History of Crisp County. Cordele, Georgia: Daughters American Revolution, 1916.

Cordele-Crisp County Historical Society, Inc. Crisp County's History in Pictures and Stories. Atlanta, Georgia: W. H. Wolfe Associates, 1978.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) 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:

- (X) State historic preservation office
- () Other State Agency
- () Federal agency
- () Local government
- () University
- () Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 55 acres.

UTM References

- A) Zone 17 Easting 236620 Northing 3540365
- B) Zone 17 Easting 236875 Northing 3539775
- C) Zone 17 Easting 237280 Northing 3540820
- D) Zone 17 Easting 237470 Northing 3540390

Verbal Boundary Description

The district boundary encompasses approximately 17 blocks in downtown Cordele and is generally drawn along Ninth Street to the west, up to Ninth, Eighth, and Sixth Avenues to the north, along Fifth Street to the east, then in an irregular, diagonal direction across Sixth and Seventh Streets to Fourteenth Avenue to the south. The district boundary is drawn to scale on the attached sketch maps of the district.

Boundary Justification

The district boundary encompasses the intact historic development in Cordele's central business district. To the north, west, and south of the district is nonhistoric commercial and industrial development. To the east is a large residential area.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debra A. Curtis, Architectural Historian
organization Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
street & number 205 Butler Street, S.E., Suite 1462
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30334
telephone 404-656-2840 **date** May 24, 1989

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CORDELE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Cordele, Crisp County, Georgia

Photographer: James R. Lockhart

Negative: Filed with The Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Date: August 1988

Description:

1 of 29: Twelfth Avenue between Seventh and Eighth Streets; photographer facing southwest.

2 of 29: Eighth Street between Eleventh and Thirteenth Avenues; photographer facing northeast.

3 of 29: Railroad depot between Eighth and Ninth Streets; photographer facing north.

4 of 29: 1920s gas station at corner of Eighth Street and Fourteenth Avenue; photographer facing north.

5 of 29: Warehouse on Thirteenth Avenue between Seventh and Eighth Streets; photographer facing northwest.

6 of 29: U. S. Post Office on Sixth Street between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues; photographer facing southwest.

7 of 29: Carnegie Library on Eleventh Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Streets; photographer facing northwest.

8 of 29: Sixth Street from Eleventh Avenue; photographer facing north.

9 of 29: Railroad depot at Sixth Street and Tenth Avenue; photographer facing west.

10 of 29: Railroad lines between Ninth and Tenth Avenues; photographer facing west.

11 of 29: Sixth Street from Ninth Avenue; photographer facing north.

12 of 29: Cast concrete block warehouse on Eighth Avenue between Fifth and Sixth Streets; photographer facing northwest.

13 of 29: Former ice house and cottonseed oil mill on Sixth Street between Sixth and Eighth Avenues.

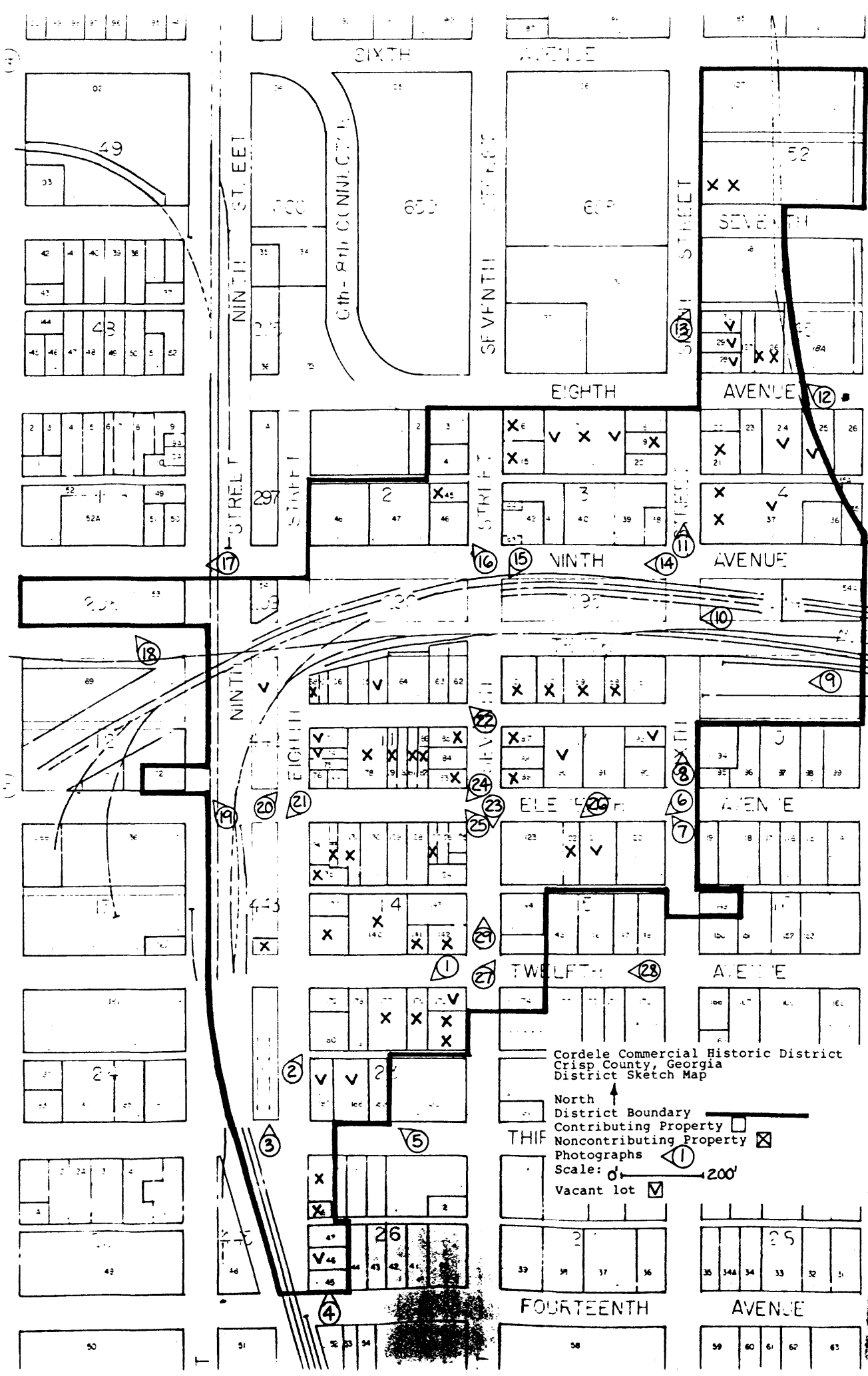
14 of 29: Ninth Avenue from Sixth Street; photographer facing west.

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- 15 of 29: Seventh Street from Ninth Avenue; photographer facing southwest.
- 16 of 29: Intersection of Seventh Street and Ninth Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 17 of 29: Former city waterworks from railroad trestle over Ninth Avenue; photographer facing west.
- 18 of 29: Former city waterworks from railroad line at Tenth Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 19 of 29: Warehouse at Ninth Street and Eleventh Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
- 20 of 29: Intersection of Eleventh Avenue and Eighth Street; photographer facing northeast.
- 21 of 29: Former warehouse on Eighth Street between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues.
- 22 of 29: Intersection of Wall Street and Seventh Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 23 of 29: Intersection of Seventh Street and Eleventh Avenue; photographer facing south.
- 24 of 29: Intersection of Eleventh Avenue and Seventh Street; photographer facing southwest.
- 25 of 29: Intersection of Eleventh Avenue and Seventh Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 26 of 29: Former Suwanee Hotel at Eleventh Avenue and Seventh Street; photographer facing southwest.
- 27 of 29: Masonic Lodge at Seventh Street and Twelfth Avenue; photographer facing northeast.
- 28 of 29: Twelfth Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Streets; photographer facing west.
- 29 of 29: Seventh Street from Twelfth Avenue; photographer facing north.



Cordele Commercial Historic District
 Crisp County, Georgia
 District Sketch Map

North ↑
 District Boundary ———
 Contributing Property □
 Noncontributing Property ⊠
 Photographs (1)
 Scale: 0' ——— 200'
 Vacant lot (V)

(11)

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