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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

NOV 7 1990

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form NATIONAL REGISTER

Ala. Historical Commission

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 Automotive Historic District other names/site number Same

2. Location

street & number Inclusive street numbers: See continuation #1 city, town Birmingham state Alabama code AL county Jefferson code 073 zip code 35205

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes sub-rows for Contributing and Noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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 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. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office) State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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. other, (explain:)

Entered in the National Register

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action 5/30/91

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerical/trade:businessTransportation:road related

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerical/trade: businessTransportation: road related

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

ItalianateLate 19th & Early 20th Century American-MovementModern Movement

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls Brick

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roof Asphaltother Terra CottaStucco

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

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The Automotive District is located just south of downtown Birmingham, across the railroad tracks. It is roughly a twelve block square area bounded on the north by the tracks of the Southern and L&N railroads, on the south by Fifth Avenue, on the east by Twenty-Fifth Street and on the west by Twentieth Street. It is characterized by a large collection of buildings from the years 1900 to 1930, with a few buildings from pre-1900 as well as some from the years 1930 to 1940. The character of the Automotive District is urban: Sidewalks, one and two story brick commercial buildings, vacant spaces used for parking lots, storage and work lots for the commercial, and automotive businesses. The street plan is a basic grid with a Northwest to Southeast orientation of the streets and an East Northeast to West Southwest orientation of the Avenues. Included in the district are the three viaducts (bridges) that cross the railroad reservation from downtown Birmingham, as well as the Seaboard Cost Line railroad tunnel that runs bbetween the lanes of First Avenue, South. There are 119 contributing buildings as well as the four transportation structures.

**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)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce  
Transportation  
Architecture

Period of Significance

1890-1940

Significant Dates

NA

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Criterion A (Commerce)

The Automotive Historic District is significant in the area of commerce because it represents the development of a secondary commercial district just south of downtown Birmingham. The earliest buildings in the district reflect the initial development as a center for an urban neighborhood between the years 1890 to 1910. Dry goods stores, hardware stores, saloons and restaurants, as well as blacksmiths and livery stables occupied the one- and two-story brick buildings that are most prevalent. Between the years 1905 and 1915 a unique development occurred when a "red light" district was created in the district and buildings were erected along First Avenue South to serve as brothels.

However the primary development (and that which is now most evident) came with the invention of the automobile.

Most of the existing buildings were converted to use as automobile sales and service centers, and many were erected for the specific purpose. From 1910 to 1940 the neighborhood turned from its urban residential use to become Birmingham's automotive center. Building facades were altered to accommodate garage doors and service bays, and new buildings erected in this change-over period were large structures specifically designed for automobile service.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Jefferson County, Alabama Tax Records  
City of Birmingham, Alabama City Directories  
Hill Ferguson Papers, Birmingham Public Library Archives  
Downtown Birmingham Architectural and Historical Walking Tour Guide, Birmingham Historical Society  
Prostitution In Birmingham Alabama, 1890-1925, Ellen Sterne  
Southern History Collection, Birmingham Public Library

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA  
 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Specify repository:

Operation New Birmingham

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 42

UTM References

A            
Zone Easting Northing  
C

B            
Zone Easting Northing  
D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This area consists of the greatest concentration of historic buildings relating to the automobile industry.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Dian D. Hairston, Development Coordinator; Melanie Betz/AHC Reviewer  
organization Operation New Birmingham date July 31, 1990  
street & number 2025 Third Ave. North telephone (205) 324-8797  
city or town Birmingham state AL zip code 35203

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2200-2327, and all 2400s odd, 1st Ave. S.; 2009-2200, all 2200s even, and all 2300s even, 2nd Ave. S.; all 2000s even, and 2100-2207, 3rd Ave. S.; all 2100s even, and 2111, 4th Ave. S.; 2022, 2014, and 2110, 5th Ave. S.; 107-109, 121, 207, 209, 230, 425, 427, 429, 431 20th St. S.; 100-213, all 300s odd, 400-420 21st St. S.; 104-319 22nd St. S.; 110 23rd St. S.; 21st Street Viaduct from 1st Ave. N. to 1st Ave. S.; 22nd Street Viaduct from 1st Ave. N. to 1st Ave. S.; and 24th Street Viaduct from 1st Ave. N. to 2nd Ave. S.

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CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES IN THE AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIC DISTRICT, BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

1. American Chemical; 2202 1st Avenue South, 1925. Almost identical to 2204 1st Ave. (next door) in design. This building appears to be a later annex of red brick with two story two bay facade. Cornice line capped with concrete trim.
2. V and W Supply; 2204 1st Avenue South, 1921. This is a dark red brick building with two window bays at each floor. The brickwork is fine. The roof line is ornamented with a flattened pediment.
4. Birmingham Water Works; 2214 1st Ave. South, 1915. A two story brown brick building with three opening bays at each floor on the 1st floor a central garage door is flanked by two large windows. There are three large windows at the 2nd floor. Above the 2nd floor windows the cornice line is ornamented.
6. Southern Dairies; 2216 1st Ave South, 1927. A red brick one story building. The facade opened by two asymmetrically placed sets of windows. The cornice line is ornamented with a elongated lozenge design with two concrete tile bearing the letters "S".
8. Hardwick & Co.: 2300 1st Ave. South, 1902. This is a two story brick Victorian commercial building. There are three large opening at the 1st floor. At the 2nd floor five arch headed windows are symmetrically placed. A cornice supported on 4 brackets runs the width of the facade. Above the cornice, at the center of the facade is a rectangular pediment.
9. Hardwick Steel: 2310 1st Avenue South, 1902. A two story brick building with an asymmetrically set stepped pediment at the roofline. The left side of the facade has a window and large door at the first floor and three windows above. The right side has considerable alteration. The building is joined with 2308 and 2312 behind the facade.
12. Wall & Floor System: 2431 1st Avenue South, 1924. a one story six bay red brick building. Each bay is separated by a protruding brick pier. A decorative Concrete medallion is set in each pier. Two inverted triangles are above each window opening. The bay at the corner of the intersection is beveled.
13. Auto Lag Body Shop: 2421 1st Ave. South 1925. A simple one story brick building with three bays.
14. Alabama Overhead Door: 2417 1st Ave. South 1926. A one story building with four bay facade and a crenelated roofline.
16. Nelson Glass: 2409 1st Ave South, 1923. A two story brown brick warehouse with stone trim. Classical detailing around central opening and around door on right of 1st floor. Stone sills above and below 2nd floor windows. Bars on all windows part of original design.

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18. KRO Laundry: 2327 First Ave South, 1905. A two story stucco over brick bldg. Build originally as a brothel in the "Red Light" District was incorporated with two other bldgs into Perfection Laundry.

19. KRO Laundry: 2323 1ST Ave. South, 1925. A one story stucco over brick building built to link the two existing structure on either side, making all three a single laundry plant.

20. KRO Laundry: 2321 1st Ave. South, 1909. A two story stucco over brick building with regular fenestration on facade large windows on first floor (five), smaller windows (6) at 2nd floor. A simple pressed metal cornice runs at the roofline. Built as one of the brothels in the "red light" District. This building was incorporated with two other blgs. to become Perfection Laundry.

23. Moore Co.: 2229 1st Ave. South, 1891. This is the oldest building in the District, and one of the oldest in Birmingham. A red brick two story corner bldg. The first floor has a beveled entrance corner with a cast iron support column. The second floor has arch headed windows. The roofline corbeled brickwork supports a pressed metal cornice.

24. Madam Blanch Barnard: 2227 1st Ave. South. 1907. One of the few "Red Light District" houses left. This is a two story brown, glazed brick in a simplified classic design. The First floor has a central entrance flanked by two pairs of rectangular windows. The First floor brickwork is rusticated, above runs a simple cornice. The second floor has three sets of paired windows.

26. V & W Wholesale: 2215 1st Ave. South, 1921. This is a two story yellow brick with a 1926 refacing of a 1921 store. The first floor has two large windows flanking a central door. The door has a surround of concrete in a deco style.

28. Seaboard Saloon: 2131 1st Ave. South, 1897. A two story brick Victorian commercial bldg. The first floor has a rebuilt facade prob. c. 1917, with an iron beam above the two plate glass windows and central garage door. The second floor has arch headed windows. The cornice is pressed metal and is one of the finest remaining example of its type in Birmingham.

29. 2129 1st Ave. South, 1916. This is a one story, one bay garage building , red brick with interesting stone and brick work at cornice.

30. Ramwood Furniture: 2127 1st Ave. South, 1925. A red brick one story, one bay garage building with handsome ornament of concrete tiles and parapeted roofline.

31. Portedreo Garage: 2125 1st Ave. South, 1925. A red brick one story , one bay facade with concrete roofline.

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32. Auto Radiator Co.: 2115-2119 1st Ave. South, 1927. A red brick one story twin facade building with original windows and transoms, simple parapeted roofline with stone cornice caps.
33. Instant Cash: 2111 1st Ave. So., 1937. This small one story brick building has one bay facade with three window under a red tile shed roof. The door opening is beveled back from the street.
34. Kentucky Livery and Feed: 2109 1st Ave. South, 1893. this building has been substantially altered because of a fire. Originally a two story building of Victorian design. There is a large central arched opening to the right are two elongated windows. The second oldest building remaining in the district.
36. Max Rigsby Body Shop: 2012 2nd Ave South, 1916. A two story tan brick bldg. The first floor is garage doors, plate glass, transoms. The second floor has three arch headed windows with concrete keystones and a dot-dash concrete tile cornice.
37. Max Rigsby Body Shop: 2016 2nd Ave. South, 1905. A two story yellow brick bldg with larger paired windows on the second floor and corbeled brick cornice line.
38. Max Rigsby Body Shop: 2018 2nd Ave South, 1908. A two story red brick bldg. with parapeted roofline.
40. Davis Electric & Carburetor: 2009 2nd Ave. South, 1922-23. A one story, two bay painted brick bldg. with parapeted roofline.
41. Birmingham Spring Service Inc.: 2011 2nd Ave South, 1915. A one story , two bay facade painted brick bldg with corbeled brickwork frieze above windows and another at the cornice line.
42. Birmingham Spring Service Inc. (Garlock Pkg. Co.): 2017 2nd Avenue 1915. A one story, two bay facade painted brick building with corbeled brickwork frieze above windows.
43. Birmingham Spring Service: 2017 2nd Ave. So., 1940. A one story two bay painted brick, typical commercial style building.
44. Davis Transmission: 2100 2nd Ave South, 1929. This one story red/brown brick building has facades on both 2nd Ave South and 21st Street. The open bays are separated by brick piers capped with ornamental concrete. These support the roofline with ornamental stone cornice frieze and roof cap.
46. Deacon Jones & Son: 2114 Second Avenue South, 1920-21. A three bay brick one story bldg. The right two bays are garages, the left bay is an office storefront. The facade three bays are divided by protruding brick piers that rise to create a parapeted roofline. The brick is painted red and white.
47. Bates Auto Service: 2118 2nd Ave. South, 1916. this is a two story yellow brick double building. The 1st floors was a garage door and has narrow narrow door on the side. The second floor has six windows symmetrically arranged. The roofline has a double pediment with capped piers. The first floor facade is painted white.



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50. Adult Screening Room: 2130 Second Ave South, 1900. A simple one story stucco over brick, commercial building. It has a bevelled corner entrance that has been blocked by recent alterations.

51. Slick Finish Auto Parts: 2107 2nd Ave. South, 1925. A one story, two bay red brick bldg with concrete cornice.

53. City Transmission: 2121 2nd Ave South, 1929. A one story, three bay brick blds. with substantially unaltered facade. Brick piers separate the bays and support the terra cotta tile shed roof and a busy parapeted roofline.

54. White Auto Parts: 2125-27 2nd Ave. South, 1928. A one story, three bay and yellow bldg. The banded brick piers support a brick frieze with stone ornaments.

55. Birmingham Wholesale Furniture: 2200 2nd Ave. South, 1930. This is a 1 1/2 story red brick bldg. the first floor is a series of window bays. The corner bays have windows at a 1/2 story office. Above the windows, concrete frieze supports a parapet with brickwork and inset concrete tiles.

56. Birmingham Wholesale Furniture: 2212-18 2nd Ave. South, 1910. This is a two story painted brick, late Victorian/early 20th century style bldg. The lower floor has been altered by filling in the original opening. There are new aluminium windows at the second floor.

57. BEBCO: 2230 2nd Ave. South, 1930. This is a one story red brick building was designed to have a Spanish/ Moorish style. The roofline has two gabled bays between which red tile shed roofs cover three bays. Terra Cotta tiles and twisted 1/2 pilasters caps support columns between the windows.

62. Central Restaurant: 2320 2nd Avenue South, 1928. a one story three bay facade, red brick, auto garage, show room building. It has a stepped roofline with a central bay being slightly higher.

63. Apex Woodwork and W. W. Automotive: 2324 2nd Ave. South, 1919-20. This is a simple one story, two bay brick storefront with garage.

64. Central Rest.: 2330 2nd Ave. South, 1907. This is a two story brick building with beveled corner entrance with a simple cornice made from corbeled brickwork.

65. German Auto: 2200 3rd Ave. South, 1930. One of the largest and most impressive bldgs in the district. A three story red brick corner bldg. The first floor has plate glass windows that opens into the showroom. The two upper floors have triple windows in each bays. The bays are defined by large piers which rise to the roofline and are capped with concrete tiles.

66. German Auto: 2207 3rd Ave. South, 1929. A brown and brick three bay one story garage building.

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69. Bavarian Car : 2114 3rd Ave South, 1915. A one story , two bay painted brick garage building. The panel above the storefront enlivened with decorative brickwork.

70. Bavarian Car Care: 2112 3rd Ave. South, 1919. A simple one story, one bay brick garage building.

72. Lexus Dealership: 2109 3rd Ave South, 1905. This is a painted brick one story warehouse bldg, with alteration to the corner, where part of the original structure was demolished and the new modern annex was built. The original bldg has a tall arch headed windows and arch headed garage doors. A brickwork cornice runs above.

74. McCormack Bro. Motor Car : 2109 3rd Ave. South, 1926. A one story painted brick building. Three bays on facade central bay is garage door flanked by windows on either side.

75. Crowley Classics: 2105-07 3rd Ave South, 1914. This is a very handsome two story red brick building with an attached one story annex. The main bldg has two bays on the front and seven bays on its side. The first floor has brick piers that separate the plate glass show windows. The piers are ornamented with concrete tiles

77. Birmingham Spring Service: 202 03rd Ave South, 1931. A one story, five bay terra cotta faced bldg. The bays alternate with three windows and two garage doors. Over the doors a scroll like frieze.

78. Birmingham Spring Service: 2010 3rd Ave. South, 1922. This is a handsome and unusual one story three bay yellow brick bldg. Its three bays are broken up and divided by raised brick piers and panels with an irregularly stepped roofline.

84. Lee Rogers: 2111 4th Ave South, 1930. A two story red brick, two bay facade building. First floor plate glass, transoms, garage doors. Second floor four windows and parapeted roofline.

86. Tom Williams: 2022 5th Ave South, 1923. A two story, two bay brown brick building with plate glass, transoms, garage door at first floor, two sets of triple windows at Second floor. Parapeted roofline with ornamental concrete tiles.

87. Tom Williams Body Shop: 2014 5th Ave South, 1926. A two story, 6 bay brown brick automotive garage building. The first floor has a mixture of window and garage bays. The brickwork above the windows is corbeled. The roofline is parapeted. The facade is ornamented with concrete tiles.

88. L.B. Shelton Grocery: 107 1/2 -109 20th Street, 1890.  
A two story stucco over stone bldg. Facade of the 1920's. Second floor has five windows and two attic vents with decorative grill work. Rusticated stone pier at each corner.

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89. S. E. Harberger Tire Repair: 121 20th Street So., 1915. A one story , two bay painted brick building at its left 1/2 still has transoms and right, 1/2 garage door.

90. Industrial Diesel & Hydraulics: 207 20th Street South, 1934. A one story garage building made of stucco with a parapeted roof with ornamental red clay and tiles. A rectangularly shaped building with a carport covered service area on the left front side of the building.

91. Industrial Diesel & Hydraulics: 209 20th Street South, 1918. This is a two story red brick building with a simple two bay facade relieved at the roofline with a cornice of raised brick work and concrete molding.

92. Firestone Tire and Rubber; 230 20th St. S., 1937. One of the best examples of late Art Deco/ Art Moderne in Birmingham. Two story building faced with terra cotta panels (painted). Recessed 1st floor supports, cantilevered second floor. Ramp curves up to take autos to second floor service area, Rounded corners and long band of windows across second floor facade (now covered with aluminum panels). Fine stucco work under cantilever.

93. 20th Street South Commercial Block; 425-431 20th St. S., 1906. 2 story brick, half-block long commercial building. 1st floor storefronts have been considerably altered. 2nd floor is a series of single windows surrounded by an inset brick pattern which supports a simple cornice above which is a stepped parapet roofline. 2nd floor windows have been screened by a metal grill and signage. Originally built to house businesses, by 1914 automotive stores began to appear and were operated here into the 1930s.

94. Western Elec. Co. Warehouse; 101 21st St. S., 1919. A one story brick building with a two bay facade. There are ornamental drain spouts, panels and parapet caps at the cornice/roofline. The brick has been painted and window openings have been filled with concrete blocks.

95. Poster-Alexander Co.; 105 21st St. S., 1924. This two story red brick building is a twin to 107 21st St. S. The first floor has a symmetrical storefront with transoms overhead. The 2nd floor is opened by a single large window. Above the window is an elaborately detailed concrete cornice which supports a flattened pediment roofline.

96. Crandall Pkg. Co.; 107 21st St. S., 1918. This two story red brick building is a twin to 105 21st St.S. The first floor has a symmetrical storefront with transom overhead. The second floor is opened by a single large window. Above the window is an elaborately detailed concrete cornice a flattened pediment roofline.

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97. Wheelock Plumbing and Heat; 109-111 21st St. S., 1901. Originally a two story, turn of the century Victorian commercial building. It was substantially rebuilt c. 1929. The building is three stories high. The 1st floor is faced with terra cotta blocks surrounding the two store fronts, the left with original transoms. Above the first floor is an elaborate pressed metal cornice with Running Dog frieze and metopes and triglyphs. The upper two floors have paired sets of metal frame windows. The upper facade is of yellow brick laid in a linear pattern. A simple pressed metal cornice is at the roofline.

98. Armstrong and Renfro; 118-120 21st St. S., 1907. This is a red brick, two story, two bay building with an adjacent one story wing. At the first floor, the two bays at left are unaltered. They have inset doors with windows and transoms. At the right, the beveled bay has been filled in, but the iron corner support column remains. The second floor has two bay windows between which there is a single window. The fronts of the bay windows are stucco. Above the windows the brickwork is corbeled to create a cornice. In 1917 this building became home to an auto repair shop, in 1919 it became a garage, and in 1925 a tire and battery shop.

100. Morris and Westall Auto and Tire; 213 21st St. S., 1915. This is a 2 story stucco over brick building. Originally built in 1915, the facade appears c. 1930 with its glass block transom at the first floor, stucco facing and trio of metal frame windows at the second floor under a stepped roofline.

101. Goodrich Silvertown; 200 21st. St. S., 1930. Built as a filling station/garage, this building had two open bays on each side between which were pointed arch headed bays under which gas pumps sat. Brick one story stucco infill in open bay areas. Frank Lloyd Wright/Johnson Wax Building mushroom column corner support (unique).

102. 208 21st S.; 1917. A simple one story, one bay brick building with a parapeted roofline capped with stone trim.

103. Chase Rubber Co.; 311 21st St. S., 1937. One of the few remaining open service bay buildings. The corner of this two story brick building is supported by columns with terra cotta brackets. The front one-half of the first floor is open garage/service area. The second floor has handsome brickwork at the corner and cornice line with large regularly spaced windows.

104. Nolan Tire and Rubber; 401 21st St. S., 1916. A two story, red brick building with a two bay facade on 21st. St. The first floor has two storefronts (one open at the corner of 4th Ave.) and has transoms over plate glass. The 2nd floor is a series of double hung windows, eight along the primary facade and eleven along the side (second floor windows are new). Above the windows there is a raised geometric ornament in the brickwork. An elaborate parapeted roofline with stone ornament caps the building.

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105. E. R. Parker Motor Company; 405-9 21st St. S., 1921. One story, red brick building. Four bays with large, plate glass display windows surmounted by transoms. Access through center two bays; garage door in second bay from right. Simple brick cornice.

106. Edward Brewes Auto; 421 21st St. S., 1920. This is a one story red brick building with a five bay facade. The bays are separated by concrete piers (now covered with aluminum panels). Each bay has a flattened pediment at the roofline. This building was first used for car sales, then as a tire store (1927).

107. Peerless Motor Co.; 414 21st St. S., 1915. This is a one story, three bay brick building. The brickwork at the top of each bay is corbeled. Built to house the Perkins Motor Co., it successively was used as a tire store, and used car showroom.

108. Weldon Martin Rubber; 420 21st St. S., 1920. This is a one story red brick building with three storefront bays on 21st St. and two on 5th Ave. A broad frieze of concrete with simple buttresses runs above the windows and supports the roofline that is ornamented with brick and concrete geometric shapes. Flattened pediments of concrete cap the roofline.

109. Birmingham Auto Radiator Repair; 104 22nd St. S., 1913. Brick, one story garage. Roof has caved in.

110. Joseph B. Hayden Plumbing; 106 22nd St. S., 1913. A painted brick one story garage/warehouse. Housed Birmingham Auto Radiator Repair and A. H. Nelson Auto Repair (1923).

111. Salvation Army Home and Hotel; 114 22nd St. S., 1907. A two story stucco over brick building, the central doorway frame and cornices over windows at either side are a vague classic/Palladian design. Three evenly spaced square windows openings (blind) are at the second floor. A small geometric detailed cornice is at the top center of facade. The primary facade is probably a later c. 1925-1930 refacing of the original facade.

112. Alabama Mattress Company; 118 22nd. St. S., 1910. A one story, small yellow brick building. A 1970s/80s remodeling added aluminum siding and awning above window.

113. Cruise-Crawford Auto Building; 201 22nd St. S., 1915. A two story, stucco over brick building. The 22nd St. facade has eight bays; the 2nd Ave. facade has two bays. Originally all bays were like the last three on 22nd St. side with large multipane windows at both floors. Post 1940, the windows on 2nd Ave were closed off and a large billboard type sign was placed on corner wrapping around to cover two bays.

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114. Eyer-Raiden Building; 200-206 22nd St. S., 1895. This three story building is one of the oldest in the district. The principle facade (22nd St.) is broken into five bays, the central bay being one door/window wide. This was the entrance to stairwell to the upper floors. The first floor commercial spaces retain the plate glass fronts with transoms over (although original transoms appear to have been replaced c. 1925-30). The two upper floors are red brick which have been painted a dull gold. The numerous window openings are arch-headed. The windows on the top two floors have been replace or covered. A handsome pressed metal cornice is at the roofline.

115. Bremmer and Schimmel; 208-210 22nd St. S., 1915. A simple one story, two bay garage building. Housed several auto repair shops from 1918-1940s.

116. Fulenwinder Auto Supply; 216 (18,20) 22nd St. S., 1920. This is a one story, three bay yellow/tan brick building. The first floor bays have been filled with brick, glass block and plaster. Above each bay is a panel with decorative motif in terra cotta tile. The roofline is parapeted.

117. J. E. Brown and Son; 230 22nd St. S., 1912. A simple one story, four bay, brick commercial building. Originally a grocery, it was converted to an auto repair shop in 1925.

118. Merchants Cigar and Candy; 319 22nd St. S., 1938. A one story, red brick commercial building with raised banding in the brickwork of the upper portion of the principle facade.

119. 110 23rd St. S.; 1907. One of a group of buildings along 1st Ave. S. (Ave. A) which constituted the "red light" district of Birmingham at the turn of the century. The building is a two story red brick building with stone or concrete trim at the window sills and at the roofline. The brickwork is fine, with raised bands of brick surrounding the arch headed windows in each bay. The central bay steps back to indicate the entrance to the building. The brickwork becomes decorative at the roofline to simulate a decorative cornice.

120. Seaboard Coast Line Right of Way; middle of 1st Ave. S., c. 1895. This is a four block long "tunnel" which carried two tracks of the Seaboard Coast Line. It runs through the middle of 1st Ave. S. from 24th St. on the east to 20th St. on the west. Made of reinforced concrete, it was built when the first viaducts crossed the railroad reservation, and was incorporated into the 1920-30 rebuilding of these viaducts. Massive concrete structure with fine lines and details in pediment caps and corner pillars.

121. 24th Street Viaduct; 24th street between 2nd Ave. S. and 1st Ave. N., c.1930. A reinforced concrete structure built to get vehicles from 1st Ave. N. to 2nd Ave. S. It has handsome baluster railings and wrought iron electric street lights placed along each side. A flight of stairs leads from viaduct sidewalk down to 1st Ave. S.

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122. Rainbow Viaduct; 21st Street between 1st Ave. S. and 1st Ave. N., 1919. A reinforced concrete structure built for automobile traffic. Four lanes wide with balusters on either side with planters and memorial plaque dedicated to WW I casualties from the Rainbow Division. Handsome cast iron lamp posts.

123. 22nd Street Viaduct; 22nd Street between 1st Ave S. and 1st Ave. N., 1923. One of the three concrete bridges built in the 1920's to get cars across the railroad reservation. This bridge also carried streetcars. A wooden structure was built here in 1896 and was replaced by the current structure. Fine baluster railings on either side support delicate and impressive iron lamp posts.

Non-contributing Structures

3. 2200 Block 1st Ave. S. - Storage Lot
5. 2200 Block 1st Ave. S. - Parking Lot
7. 2220 1st Ave. S. - 1 story brick office building c. 1960
10. 2312 1st Ave. S. - Functional steel frame factory building post 1940
11. 2316 1st Ave. S. - Modern style, one story brick, stone and glass block building post 1940
15. 2413 1st Ave. S. - one story cement block garage post 1940
17. 2403 1st Ave. S. - one story red brick, and cement block building post 1940
21. 2300 Block 1st Ave. S. - vacant lot
22. 2301 1st Ave. S. - steel frame and corrugated metal factory post 1940
25. 2221 1st Ave. S. - vacant lot
27. 2200 Block 1st Ave. S. - storage lot
35. 2008 2nd Ave. S. - one story, non-contributing building c. 1970
39. 2000 Block 2nd Ave. S. - parking lot
45. 2100 Block 2nd Ave. S. - parking lot
48. 2100 Block 2nd Ave. S. - parking lot
49. 2100 Block 2nd Ave. S. - parking lot
52. 2100 Block 2nd Ave. S. - storage lot

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58. 2300 Block 2nd Ave. S. - vacant lot
59. 2308 2nd Ave. S. - one story brick, steel frame, and glass office building  
post 1940
60. 2310 2nd Ave. S. - vacant lot
61. 2318 2nd Ave. S. - one story, red brick garage/office building c. 1945
  
67. 2205 3rd Ave. S. - parking lot
68. 2100 Block 3rd Ave S. - parking lot
71. 2100 3rd Ave. S. - one story steel and glass auto repair building c. 1970
73. 2100 Block 3rd Ave. S. - parking and auto sales
76. 2030 3rd Ave. S. - one story, cement block and corrugated tin building c.  
1970
79. 2008 3rd Ave. S. - two story office building c. 1960
80. 2000 Block, 3rd Ave. S. - parking lot
81. 2100 Block 4th Ave. S. - one-story, modern office building post 1940
82. 2124 4th Ave. S. - modern, two story cement and steel frame office building  
c. 1970
83. 2100 Block 4th Ave S. - parking lot
85. 2110 5th Ave S. - extensively remodeled, two story brick building. Original  
building c. 1920, remodeled 1960s
99. 201 21st St. S. - two story, stucco and stone commercial building. Original  
building c. 1930, remodeled c. 1970



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Section number 8 Page 1 Automotive Historic District

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Criterion A (Transportation)

The Automotive Historic District is significant in the area of transportation because within its boundaries are buildings and structures which were specifically designed for automotive and rail transportation. Most buildings in the district became or were built for the sales and service of automobiles. Viaducts were erected to move streetcars and later automobiles across the railroad tracks north of the district. One railroad tunnel was created to allow trains to cross the district unimpeded.

Criterion C (Architecture)

The Automotive Historic District is significant in the area of architecture because it contains buildings that represent architectural styles dating from 1890 to 1940. Within the district are late Victorian commercial buildings that display Italianate and Romanesque Revival elements as well as later buildings that reflect early 20th century architecture. Most of the buildings are intact and still visually convey the district as an automotive center.

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HISTORICAL SUMMARY

The Automotive District began as a residential area south of Downtown Birmingham. It was the proverbial "wrong side of the tracks," being home to laborers, railroad workers, immigrants and blacks. The First Commercial Buildings (107 20th Street South, 1890; 200-204 22nd Street South, 1895; 2131 First Avenue South, 1897;) were saloons or groceries with boarding houses upstairs or, specifically, home to the American Newspaper Union and the Labor Advocate (2131 First Avenue South, 1891. Along First Avenue South were warehouses, livery stables and feed stores.

The other avenues were lined with houses, with a mixture of black and white residents.

When the first 22nd street viaduct was built in 1896 (a wooden structure replaced by current one in 1923) it opened the district to more consumer traffic which led to an increase in commercial construction. Buildings such as 2016 2nd Avenue South, 1905; 2018 2nd Avenue South, 1908; and 118-120 21st Street South, 1907 were built to house dry goods stores, confectionaries, photographers, studios and an auto shop. The second floor in these buildings were given over to residential use.

Being the "wrong-side-of-the-tracks" these residences housed more often than not "ladies of the evening". Whether legitimate or not most of the upstairs addresses in the district area were occupied by women. In fact, between 1905 and 1913 Birmingham's City Government created a "red-light" district along First Avenue South between 22nd and 24th Streets. In 1909, the city directory lists nine addresses, between 23rd and 24th Streets. Each address is occupied by a woman with a colorful name - Mayme Brown, Marie Martin, Blanch Wilson, to name a few.

Two buildings in the 2300 block of First Avenue South, 2327 First Avenue South, 1905; 2321 First Avenue South, 1908; were occupied and probably owned and operated by Blanch Wilson. But it was the 2200 block of First Avenue that housed the finest architectural examples of these brothels. The Blanch Bernard House, 2227 First Avenue South, is the finest remaining building of this type in the district, and it is indicative of the wealth and glamor the "palace of gilded sin" seemed to offer.

After the "Red Light" District was abolished in 1913, the character of the area began to change. By 1915 to 1920 the replacement of houses, saloons and stores with businesses devoted to the sale and service of the automobile was in full force. The Seaboard Saloon 2141 First Avenue South, 1897 became T.W. Guest Auto Repair in 1917. One story garage buildings were constructed throughout the district. (104 22nd Street South, 1913; 2114 Third Avenue South, 1915; 2112 First Avenue South, 1919; 216-218-220 22nd Street South, 1920) and larger buildings specifically designed for auto sales were built (2105-07 Third Avenue South, 1914; 201 Second Street South, 1915). During this period three bridges were built to carry auto traffic across the Railroad Reservation (21st Street viaduct, 1919; 22nd Street viaduct, 1923; 24th Street viaduct, 1930).

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By the mid 1920's most blocks were lined with auto service businesses. In 1923 the 2000 block of Second Avenue, South, was listed as having Estes Tire & Motor Company, Cline Motor Company, Sears & Cooper Auto Top, Auto Truck and Service, Birmingham Ignition Supply, Dusenberry Top and Birmingham Electric Battery Company.

Construction of buildings related to automobile sales and service continued apace into the early 30's (2200 Second Avenue South, 1930; 2200 Third Avenue South, 1930; 2020 Third Avenue South, 1931). Although the District, like the rest of the city, saw little building activity during the Depression years; afterwards it did continue as a center for auto-related business with buildings being added and converted to that use up to the present time. (230 20th Street South, 1937).

Although originating as a "down-at-heel" residential neighborhood, the Automotive District gained notoriety in the early years of the century as a center of vice and prostitution. After these activities were illegitimized, and the area was opened to auto traffic by erection of the auto bridges on 21st and 22nd Streets, the District established itself as the center for automobile sales and service. Although the city has grown and expanded and the sales and service auto industry has followed the population and its cars to the suburbs, the Automobile District still remains a viable center of activity.

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**UTM References:**

	<b>ZONE:</b>	<b>EASTING:</b>	<b>NORTHING:</b>
<b>A</b>	16/	518190/	3708220
<b>B</b>	16/	518380/	3708280
<b>C</b>	16/	518570/	3708450
<b>D</b>	16/	518850/	3708210
<b>E</b>	16/	518600/	3707930
<b>F</b>	16/	518710/	3707730
<b>G</b>	16/	518610/	3707540
<b>H</b>	16/	518420/	3707510
<b>I</b>	16/	518320/	3707620
<b>J</b>	16/	518260/	3707790

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Starting at a point at the East side of 24th St. where it intersects 1st Ave., N./ proceed South to the Southeast corner of the intersection of 24th St. and 1st Ave., So./go East along 1st Ave., So. to the Southwest corner of the intersection of 25th St. and 1st Ave., So./ go South to the intersection of 25th St. and 1st Alley So./ go west along 1st Alley, So. to the East side of 24th St./ go to the Northeast corner of 24th St. and 2nd Ave, So./ go West along Southside of 2nd Ave., So. to a point 50' East of the intersection of 22nd St. and 2nd Ave., So./ go South along Eastside parcel 9, block 138 to 2nd Alley, So./ go East 25' go South along Eastside of parcel 11&13, block 138 to 3rd Ave., So./ cross 3rd Ave., So./ go West 25' go South along Eastside of West 1/2 of parcel 4&10, block 145 to 3rd Alley, So./ go East 25' go South along Eastside parcel 11&13, block 145 to 4th Ave., So./ go West along 4th Ave., So. to a point 150' East of the intersection of 21st St. and 4th Ave., So./ go South across 4th Ave., So. and long Eastside of parcel 7&14, block 163 to 5th Ave., So./ go West along 5th Ave., So. to the Northeast corner of the intersection of 20th St. and 5th Ave., So./ go North to 4th Alley, So./ go East along 4th Alley, So. to 21st St./ cross 21st St./ go North along Eastside of 21st St. to the Northeast corner of the intersection of 21st St. and 3rd Ave., So./ go East across 21st St. and proceed along the Northside of 3rd Ave., So. to a point 150' West of the Northwest corner of the intersection of 20th St. and 3rd Ave., So./ go North 140' along the Westside of parcel 17, block 135 to 2nd Alley, So./ cross 20th St./ go North on the Eastside of 20th St. to a point 40' North of 1st Alley, So./ go East 100' along the Northside of parcel 10, block 120./ go South 40' along the Eastside of parcel 10, block 120 to 1st Alley, So./ go East on 1st Alley, So. to the Eastside of 21st St./ go North on 21st St. to the Southeast corner of the intersection of 21st St. and Seaboard Coast Line R.O.W./ cross 21st St. and go West along Southside of Seaboard Coast Line R.O.W. to its intersection with 20th St./ Go North along Eastside of 20th St. crossing Seaboard Coast Line R.O.W./ go East along Seaboard Coast Line R.O.W. to its intersection with 21st St./ go North along 21st St. to its Southwest intersection with 1st Ave., No./ go East crossing 21st St./ go South along 21st St. to the Northeast intersection of 21st St. and Seaboard Coast Line R.O.W./ go East along North side of Seaboard Coast Line R.O.W. to its Northwest intersection with 22nd St./go North along 22nd St. to its Southwest intersection with 1st Ave., No./ cross 22nd St./ go South along 22nd St. ti its Northeast intersection with Powell Ave./ go East along the Southside of Powell Ave. to its Southwest intersection with 24th St./ go North along 24th St. to its Southwest intersection with 1st Ave., No./ cross 24th St. to the starting point.

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AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIC DISTRICT PHOTOS

- 1) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
2100 block 1st Ave., So. looking west southwest
- 2) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
Intersection 22nd St. & 2nd Ave., So. looking West Southwest
- 3) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
No. side 2000 block 2nd Ave., So. Looking West
- 4) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
So. side 2000 block 2nd Ave., So. looking west southwest
- 5) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
No. side 2000 block 5th Ave., So. looking west
- 6) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
E. side 100 block 21st St., So., looking North
- 7) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
2229 1st Ave., So. looking South
- 8) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
2131 1st Ave., So. looking South
- 9) Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
2227 1st Ave., So. looking Southeast

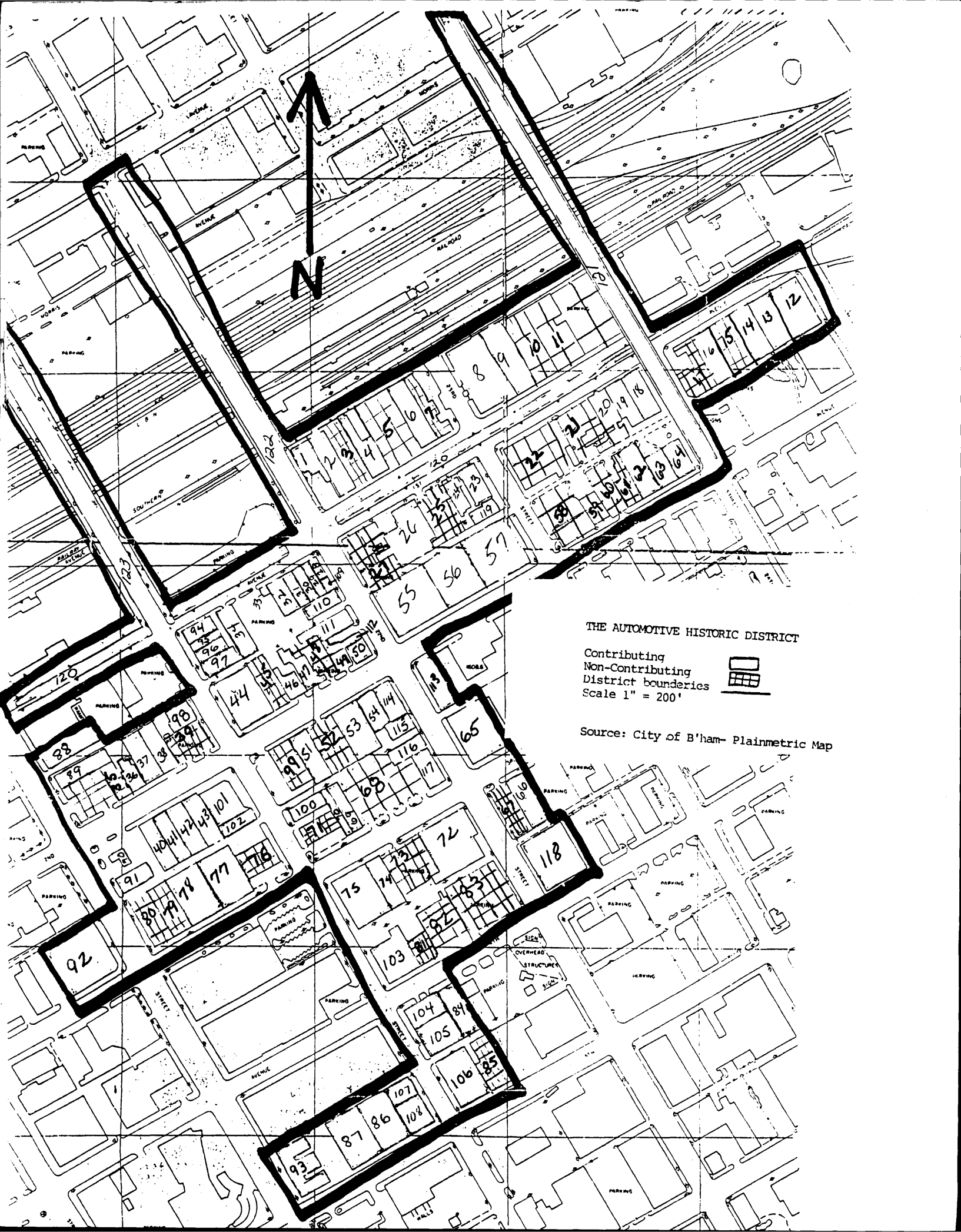
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- 10)Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
208/210 22nd St., So. looking West
- 11)Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
230 22nd St., So. looking northwest
- 12)Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
401 21st. St., So. looking East
- 13)Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
2010 3rd Ave., So. looking northwest
- 14)Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
2115-19 1st Ave., So. looking southeast
- 15)Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
2121 2nd Ave., So. looking South
- 16)Automotive District  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
2020 3rd Ave., So. looking West
- 17)Automotive District, Birmingham, Al  
Steve Stella, June 1990  
Operation New Birmingham  
230 20th St., So. looking West



THE AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Contributing  
Non-Contributing  
District boundaries  
Scale 1" = 200'



Source: City of B'ham- Plainmetric Map