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# 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 Eastman Bus Station  
other names/site number N/A

## 2. Location

street & number 305 College Street  
city, town Eastman ( ) vicinity of  
county Dodge code 091  
state Georgia code GA zip code 31023

( ) not for publication

## 3. Classification

### Ownership of Property:

- ( ) private
- (x) public-local
- ( ) public-state
- ( ) public-federal

### Category of Property:

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

### Number of Resources within Property:

#### Contributing

#### Noncontributing

buildings	2	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	2	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

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.

*Richard Clow*

Signature of certifying official

4.15.02

Date

*for* W. Ray Luce  
Historic Preservation Division Director  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, explain:

see continuation sheet

*Edson H. Beall* 5/30/02

*Jan*

Keeper of the National Register

Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

Transportation: road-related (vehicular).

### Current Functions:

Vacant/Not in use.

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

No style.

### Materials:

<b>foundation</b>	Concrete
<b>walls</b>	Brick
<b>roof</b>	Asphalt
<b>other</b>	Wood

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Eastman Bus Station, constructed in 1945-1946, is located at the south end of Eastman's central business district at the edge of residential neighborhood. The square-shaped building was constructed to function on the first floor as a bus station and telegraph office. The second floor provided space for the owner/manager's residence. The two-story brick building features a hipped roof, overhanging eaves, and chimneys. The two-over-two sash windows are mostly paired with bands of ribbon windows across the rear. Windows on the first floor are supported by concrete lintels with a continuous band of concrete across the main façade. The front façade features three entrances. The paired wooden doors on the western end of the building provide access to the ticket office/waiting area, the center single door opens to stairs to the second floor, and the single door on the eastern end of the building leads to the "colored" waiting area.

The interior still reflects the building's use as a bus station on the first floor and the owner/manager's residence on the second floor. The main waiting room, which occupies most of the west end of the building, includes the original ticket counter. Opposite the ticket counter are men's and women's rest rooms. The smaller waiting room designated for use by African Americans is located in the east end of the building. The "colored" waiting room is served only by one restroom and it is smaller than either of the two restrooms designated for use by whites. The second-floor apartment remains intact and includes three bedrooms and a kitchen. Historic fabric that survives on the interior includes wood floors, brick and plaster walls, and five-paneled wood doors. A nonhistoric flower cooler is located on the first floor in the rear addition.

Alterations to the building include the two fixed-pane windows that replaced sash windows on the main façade and the addition of a full-width canopy across the front. In 1946, a two-story addition

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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was built on the rear of the building that provided additional work and living space.

A garage with a second-floor apartment, built c.1946, is located behind the bus station. The first floor of the garage is constructed of brick masonry. It features six-over-six double-hung sash windows and concrete lintels over the doors and windows. The apartment on the second floor features wood-frame construction with a side-gable roof, overhanging eaves, and exposed rafter ends. An exterior staircase provides access to the second-floor apartment.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**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  
Transportation  
Social History and Ethnic Heritage: Black

**Period of Significance:**

1945 – 1952

**Significant Dates:**

1945 – John Taylor Wilbanks built the Eastman Bus Station.

1946 – Wilbanks built rear addition.

c.1946 – Wilbanks built garage/apartment behind the bus station.

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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**Statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The Eastman Bus Station is a rare surviving example of a historic bus station in rural Georgia. It is unusual because it not only includes the bus station and telegraph office but also the residence of the manager and his family. Its interior arrangement is significant for reflecting segregation of public facilities in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Eastman Bus Station is significant in the area of architecture as a good example of a bus station that also built to include a residence. The Georgia Historic Resources survey, which includes over 50,000 properties, identifies only three bus stations. Most bus passengers in Georgia were served by buildings that were for purposes other than that of a bus terminal. In Eastman, for example, the Goolsby Drugstore served as the bus terminal before the Eastman Bus Station was built and the Eastman Motel functioned as the bus station after the Eastman Bus Station ceased operations. The Eastman Bus Station is also the only known bus station in Georgia that incorporates a residence into its design. The significant architectural character-defining features of the building include its square-plan, hipped roof, masonry construction, historic windows and doors, and concrete lintels. The significant interior character-defining features include the intact plan with the ticket office/waiting area, ticket counter, restrooms, "colored" waiting room and restroom, and intact second-floor apartment.

The Eastman Bus Station is significant in the area of transportation for its important association with the transportation history of Eastman. John Taylor Wilbanks (1903-1964) was given the agency for the Southeastern Greyhound and Service Coach Lines on June 16, 1939. He originally ran the bus service out of a gas station but needed more space to accommodate an increased number of passengers. He built the Eastman Bus Station to accommodate the increase in ridership. Along with the bus station, Wilbanks opened a Western Union office in the building, a function traditionally located in a railroad depot. An average of three to four buses stopped daily at the station, which operated from 1946 to 1983. The Eastman Bus Station represents the advent of bus service over public highways in small towns throughout rural Georgia. Bus service originated early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as an adjunct to the dominant railroads, but by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century bus service competed directly with the railroads for passengers.

The Eastman Bus station is also significant in the area of social history and black ethnic heritage because it retains many of the spaces used only by African Americans during the period of segregation in the South from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the 1960s. The so-called "Jim Crow" laws dictated that in public places blacks and whites used separate facilities. These included separate entrances and seating areas, restrooms and water fountains, and seating on buses. Facilities for African Americans were nearly always inferior to the accommodations made for whites. Segregation affected nearly every aspect of public life in cities, small towns, and rural counties throughout the South. After segregation ended with successes won by blacks during the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, barriers separating whites and blacks were removed or converted to other purposes. Within a few decades, evidence of segregation in public places had mostly disappeared. Movie theaters, train depots, and bus stations often represent the last physical

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8--Statement of Significance**

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vestiges of segregation because of their interior spaces that were dedicated to African-American patronage. The Eastman Bus Station is an excellent example of Georgia's segregated past because of its waiting room and restrooms designated for use by African Americans.

**National Register Criteria**

A—Because the bus station was significant in the history of transportation to the residents of Eastman and because its separate waiting room and restroom that were designated for use by African Americans has important associations with segregation in the South.

C—Because the bus station is a rare and excellent example of a rural bus station in Georgia with its intact ticket counter, waiting rooms, restrooms, and second-floor apartment.

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

N/A

**Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins in 1945, when John Taylor Wilbanks built the Eastman Bus Station, and ends in 1952 (at the fifty-year end date) to include the period in which the bus station continued to mill continued to serve bus passengers in Eastman.

**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The two resources associated with this nomination are the Eastman Bus Station (1945) and the garage/apartment at the rear of the bus station (c.1946). Both are contributing resources. There are no noncontributing resources associated with this nomination.

**Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

Bus service first became available in Eastman, the county seat of Dodge County, in the 1930s. It was initially operated out of Goolsby Drugstore under the business name of "Colonial." John Taylor Wilbanks acquired the franchise in 1934.

John Taylor Wilbanks moved to Eastman on October 22, 1932 with his wife, Annie Virginia Edwards Wilbanks, an Eastman native, and their daughter Carlieze Reta. (The Wilbanks's second daughter, Wauna Jean, was born later). John Taylor Wilbanks was born in Steens, Mississippi on June 10, 1903, the son of John Taylor and Icie Savage Wilbanks, both natives of Habersham County, Georgia. Wilbanks spent his early years in Birmingham, Alabama, Atlanta, and Jesup, Georgia before moving to Lumber City in Telfair County, Georgia in 1920. He attended Lumber City High School and Alexandria No. 3 in Macon. Wilbanks began working as a track laborer for the Southern

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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Railway System at the age of 13, moving to Atlanta as a flagman in March 1920. (His father had worked for Southern Railways.) He remained there for nearly twelve years. He married Annie Virginia Edwards on November 3, 1928.

After moving to Eastman, Wilbanks became a dealer for the Texas Company on College Street, operating a service station until August 15, 1937. At that time he became associated with the American Oil Company. By 1934, he began providing bus terminal service, as well as handling the local Western Union telegraph franchise. The original bus line business grew and was later bought by Greyhound Lines, Inc. Wilbanks was given the agency for the Southeastern Greyhound and Service Coach Lines on June 16, 1939. He operated the bus terminal in conjunction with the Red Star Service Station.

In an October 12, 1939 article in the local Eastman newspaper, *The Times-Journal*, John Wilbanks was described as "an outstanding businessman" and "a man of unlimited energy and perseverance, fair and square in his dealings with his fellowmen, and enjoys a wide circle of friends wherever he is known." It was also noted that he was a Mason; active in his local Baptist Church, serving as a deacon; a member of the J. B. Gordon Camp, No. 376, Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen of Macon, and on the Board of Directors for the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

In the mid-1940s, Wilbanks built a two-story brick bus terminal on College Street because the Goolsby Drugstore location did not have sufficient room for the growing bus service. Wilbanks built a rear addition the next year to include space for a Western Union telegraph office and family living quarters on the second floor. He purchased land in the block partially bounded by College Street, Second Avenue, and West Main (Railroad) Street from Lillian L. Brewster on December 28, 1943 and R. T. Ragan on June 13, 1944. This purchase comprises the bulk of the bus station site. Later transactions from Mary A. Parkerson (to Wilbanks) and W. N. Pate (to Wilbanks) dated January 3, 1948 and October 5, 1949, respectively, appear to also involve part of the bus station property. The land is believed to encompass the former sites of the James Bishop Homeplace, old Coleman residence, and/or the Carswell Homeplace. In c.1946, Wilbanks built a garage/apartment at the rear of the bus station, which he rented to local families.

The Wilbanks family ran the bus station business for 49 years. An average of three to four buses stopped daily in the 1940s and 1950s. The World War II era was the most active with two buses going north and two going south each day. Taxis were sometimes hired to accommodate overflow traffic.

John Taylor Wilbanks died October 1, 1964, leaving his real and personal property to his widow, Annie Edwards Wilbanks. She continued to operate the bus terminal and Western Union office until she retired in 1983. She recalled enjoying her years working with the bus line, but admitted she was often frightened and always careful. Mrs. Wilbanks handled hundreds of boxes because the family also managed the Greyhound Express Freight. Mrs. Wilbanks also learned morse code so she could operate the Western Union telegraph business. Later, she used a machine-type transmitter similar to a typewriter to convey messages. In addition, local companies engaged the enterprising



**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8--Statement of Significance**

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Wilbanks' to receive their calls for one dollar a day. Following Mrs. Wilbanks' retirement, the bus stop moved to the Eastman Motel (for about three years) and was discontinued by 1992.

Since 1983, the Eastman Bus Station was rented for various commercial uses. It most recently housed Granny Hazel's Florist Shop. The City of Eastman purchased the building from Mrs. Wilbanks on August 13, 1999 and plans to rehabilitate it for use as a multi-purpose community building. The city also plans to display artifacts related to local history.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Nail, Robin Brown. Historic District Information Form. Eastman Bust Station. On file at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia, 2000.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): (x) N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**  
**date issued:**
- 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**
- Other State Agency**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:**

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

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## **10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property**      Approximately 0.40 acres

### **UTM References**

A)    Zone 17      Easting 294970      Northing 3563930

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The property boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached map, which is drawn to scale.

### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary comprises the city lot historically associated with the Eastman Bus Station.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Steven H. Moffson, Architectural Historian  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**mailing address** 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 101  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** April 15, 2002  
**e-mail** steven\_moffson@mail.dnr.state.ga.us

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Robin Brown Nail  
**organization** Heart of Georgia—Altamaha Regional Development Center  
**mailing address** P.O. Drawer 1260  
**city or town** Baxley **state** GA **zip code** 31513  
**telephone** (912) 367-3648  
**e-mail** N/A

- ( ) **property owner**  
( ) **consultant**  
(x) **regional development center preservation planner**  
( ) **other:**

**Property Owner or Contact Information**

**name (property owner or contact person)** James H. Wright, City Manager  
**organization (if applicable)** City of Eastman  
**mailing address** P.O. Drawer 40  
**city or town** Eastman **state** GA **zip code** 31023  
**e-mail (optional)** N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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**Name of Property:** Eastman Bus Station  
**City or Vicinity:** Eastman  
**County:** Dodge  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** December 1999

**Description of Photograph(s):**

Number of photographs: 19

1. Eastman Bus Station with garage/apartment (right), photographer facing northeast.
2. Main façade, photographer facing northeast.
3. Main façade and north side, photographer facing east.
4. Main façade, detail, photographer facing northeast.
5. Main façade, detail, photographer facing northeast.
6. Main façade, detail, photographer facing northeast.
7. Rear façade with garage/apartment (left), photographer facing west.
8. Rear façade and south side, photographer facing northwest.
9. First floor, interior, main waiting room, photographer facing west.
10. First floor, interior, main waiting room, photographer facing south.
11. First floor, interior, main waiting room, photographer facing northeast.
12. First floor, interior, "colored" waiting room, photographer facing southeast.
13. First floor, interior, kitchen, photographer facing northeast.
14. First floor, interior, rear addition, photographer facing northeast.
15. Second floor, interior, photographer facing southeast.

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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16. Second floor, interior, north-side room, photographer facing northeast.
17. Second floor, interior, photographer facing northwest.
18. Second floor, interior, bedroom, photographer facing east.
19. Garage/apartment with bust station (right), photographer facing east.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)



Eastman Bus Station  
Eastman, Dodge County, Georgia

Sketch Map

National Register Boundary **—**

Scale: 1" = 100'

North 

**Eastman Bus Station**  
Eastman, Dodge County, Georgia

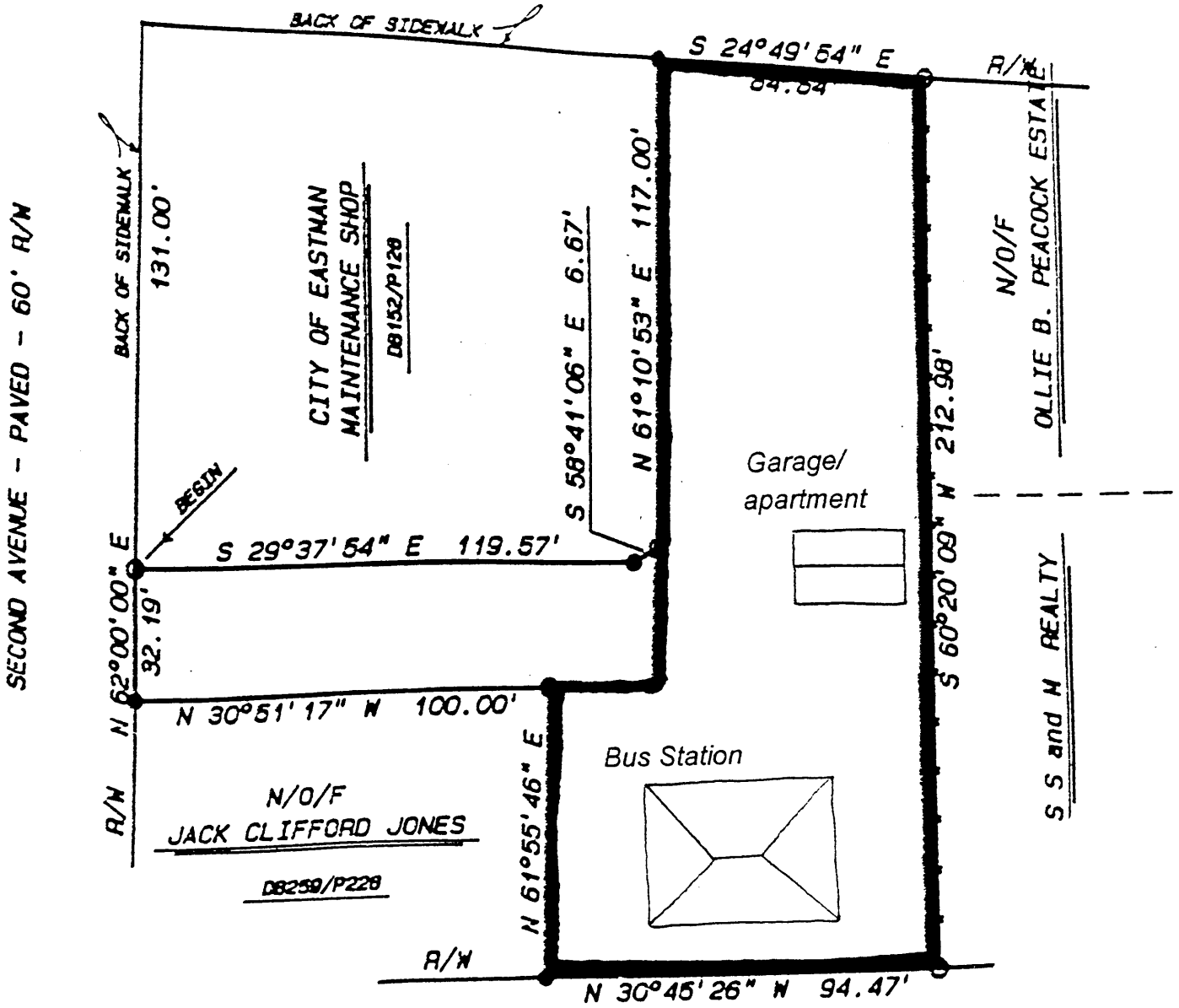
Sketch Map

National Register Boundary 

Scale: 1" = 40'



WEST MAIN STREET - PAVED



COLLEGE STREET - PAVED - 60' R/W

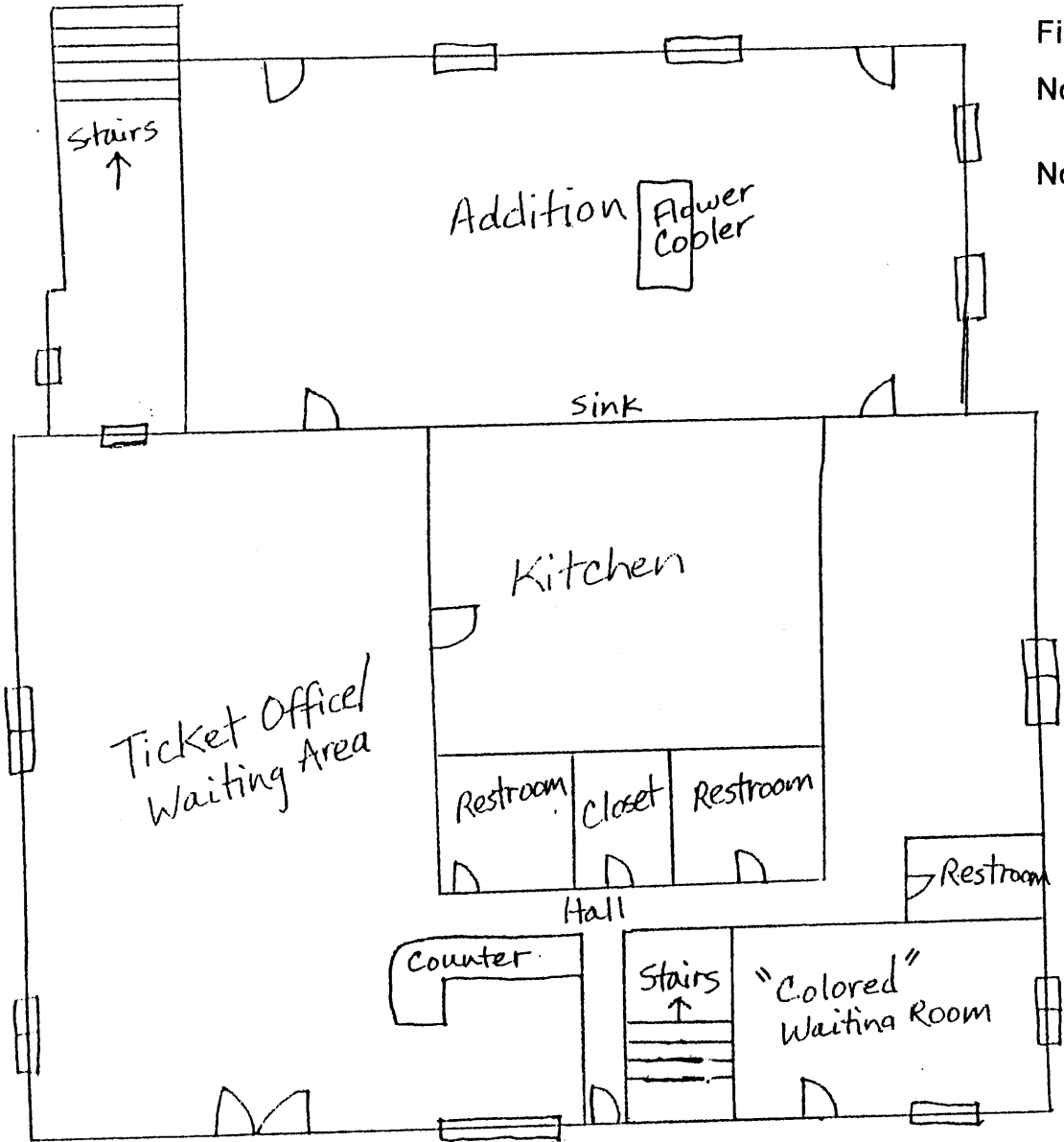


**Eastman Bus Station**  
Eastman, Dodge County, Georgia

First Floor Plan

No Scale

North 

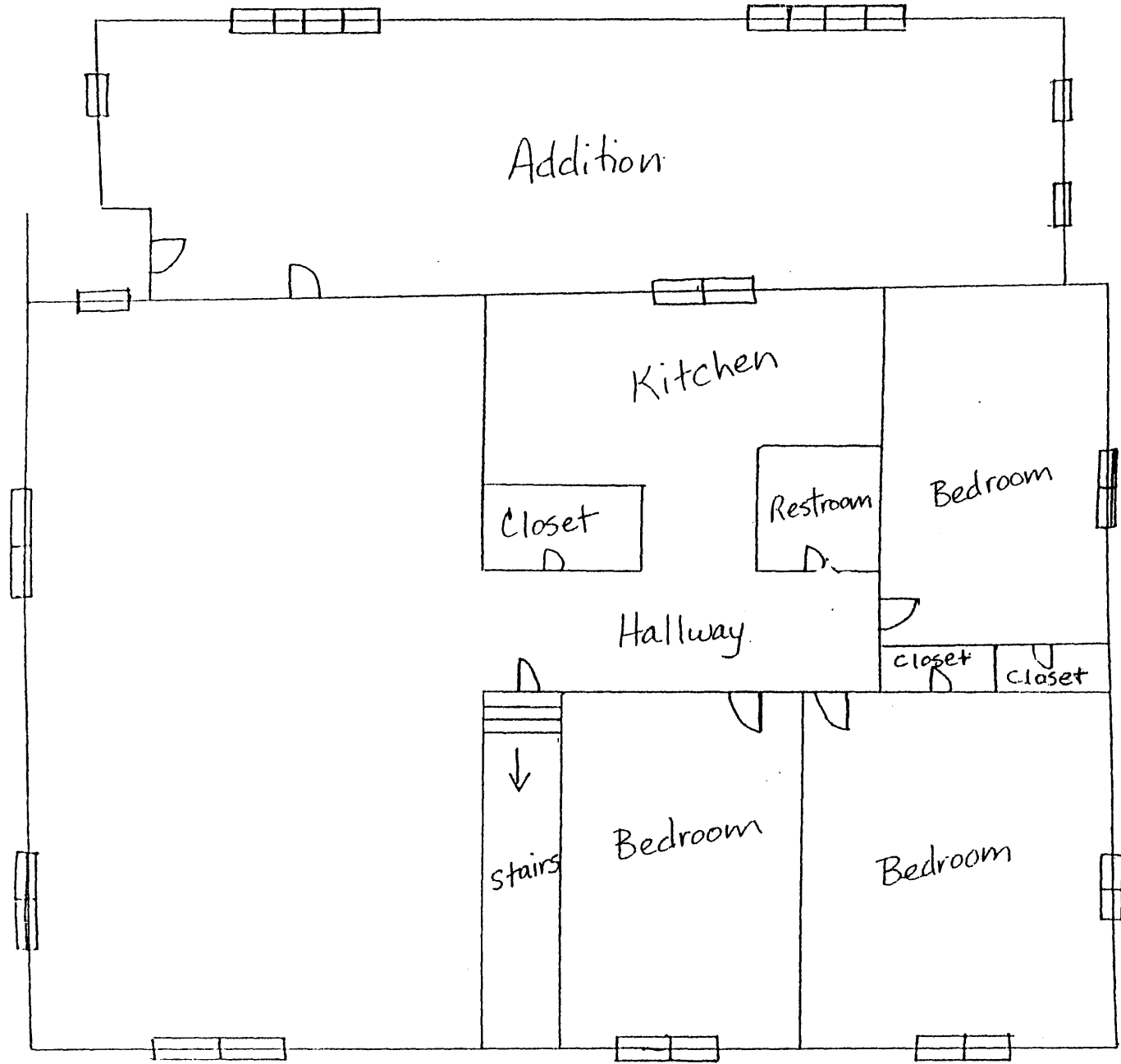


College Street

**Eastman Bus Station**  
Eastman, Dodge County, Georgia

Second Floor Plan

No Scale



College Street