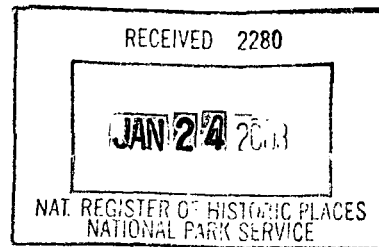


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Morrilton Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by E. Railroad, Broadway, N. Division and N. Moose Streets

☐ not for publication

city or town Morrilton

☐ vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Conway code 029 zip code 72110

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Carrie Matthes
Signature of certifying official/Title

1/16/03
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- ☒ entered in the National Register.
 - ☐ See continuation sheet
 - ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
 - ☐ See continuation sheet
 - ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
 - ☐ removed from the National Register.
 - ☐ other, (explain:) _____

Edson J. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

3/7/03

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

56

35

buildings

sites

structures

objects

56

35

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

4

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCIAL: business

COMMERCIAL: department store

GOVERNMENT: post office

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCIAL: business

COMMERCIAL: department store

VACANT/NOT IN USE

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

RELIGION: religious facility

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: commercial style

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

REVIVALS: Italian Renaissance; Mission

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Brick, cast concrete, stone

walls Brick, Stone, Stucco, Concrete

roof Tile, Composition Shingle, Roll Roofing

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE ATTACHED CONTINUATION SHEETS

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Summary

The Morrilton Commercial Historic District contains ninety-five (95) buildings, sixty (60), or 63% of which contribute to the historic significance of the district. The district is located in portions of nine blocks situated on the city's principal commercial streets- Broadway (US Highway 64), E. Railroad, N. Moose and N. Division Streets. Morrilton, Arkansas is situated in west central Arkansas in the fertile river bottomland of the Arkansas Valley. US Highway 64, Highway 9 and the Union Pacific Railroad (formerly Missouri Pacific Railroad) line run through the center of the town's commercial district. A focal point of the district is the Missouri Pacific Railroad Depot, built in 1915 in the railroad company's standard brick and tile Mediterranean style.

Construction dates of the buildings in the district range from the early 1880s through the 1970s. The majority of the buildings in the district are late nineteenth and early twentieth century brick structures reflecting various vernacular versions of popular American commercial architectural designs. Twelve buildings in the district are less than fifty years old. The district contains four buildings previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places: Morrilton Railroad Station, First National Bank of Morrilton Building, Coca-Cola Building, and the Morrilton Post Office. One property, the only church in the district, St. Paul A.M.E. Church, is listed on the Arkansas Register.

Elaboration

The Morrilton Commercial Historic District consists of portions of a nine-block area north and south of the city's principal thoroughfare, Broadway (US Highway 64), paralleled by the Missouri Pacific Railroad line. Morrilton lies in the Arkansas River Valley, approximately three miles north of the Arkansas River. Petit Jean State Park, Arkansas' first state park and tourist destination since the 1920s, is located twenty miles south of the city. US Interstate 40 runs along the northern edge of the city.

Located within the district are ninety-five (95) buildings. Ninety-four of these buildings are commercial and one is a church. Construction dates of buildings in the district range from the early 1880s to 1970. The majority (87%) of the buildings in the historic district were constructed before 1950. The most prolific era of building construction represented in the district is the period from 1920 to 1940 when 46% of the district's buildings were built.

The historic fabric of the Morrilton Commercial Historic District consists primarily of brick masonry, flat roof, party-wall commercial buildings that are one and two stories in height. One historic building, the Mitchell Building at 124-126 N. Moose is three stories and the First National Bank of Morrilton at 121 E. Broadway is five stories tall and often referred to as "Morrilton's Only Skyscraper". Most of these commercial buildings are vernacular versions reflecting style influences such as Italianate, Classical Revival, and Art Deco.

Of the ninety-five buildings in the district, sixty (60) contribute to the historic significance of the commercial district. In addition, there are four buildings previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

Morrilton Railroad Station - 101 E. Railroad (NR 09-13-77)

Coca-Cola Building - 210 N. Moose (NR Charles L. Thompson & Associates Thematic Listing 12-22-82)

First National Bank of Morrilton - 121 E. Broadway (NR Charles L. Thompson & Associates Thematic listing 12-22-82)

Morrilton Post Office - 115 N. Division (NR 8-14-98)

Late 19th Century: 1880s-1890s

Twelve buildings in the Morrilton Commercial Historic District were constructed before 1900. These earliest extant buildings in the district are concentrated along E. Broadway in the 100 and 200 blocks with one located on N. Moose and another on N. Division Street. Although covered in aluminum panels and non-contributing to the historic district, the Irving Brothers Building at 101 E. Broadway is

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

the oldest extant building in the district, constructed c. 1883. A group of four two-story brick buildings located at 105, 107, 109, and 111 E. Broadway were constructed in 1888 and 1889. These buildings feature similar Italianate arched second story windows and tall paneled brick parapets. The storefront of the Gray Building at 109 E. Broadway is the most original of the four buildings, indicated by the use of cast iron columns. The building located at 100-102 W. Broadway, c. 1888, is a one-story example of a late nineteenth century commercial design with cast iron storefront columns and pronounced brick parapet design. The simple design of the one-story brick building at 114 W. Broadway is characterized by its original wood storefront with shed roof extending over the sidewalk.

Early 20th Century: 1900 to 1920

Twenty-three buildings constructed in the first two decades of the twentieth century represent patterns of growth in Morrilton. Located in the 100 block of N. Moose Street and the 200 block of E. Broadway are groupings of early twentieth century buildings. These buildings are largely simple brick versions of commercial design with brick parapets. The west side of the 100 block of N. Moose contains a group of five buildings constructed around 1900. These buildings are similar to other one-story brick structures in the block, featuring decorative brick parapets with brick dentiling, constructed in the 1890s. The one-story building at 209 E. Broadway, constructed in 1908, features recessed brick panels in the parapet. Although the storefront of this building was remodeled in 1929 when the J. C. Penney Department Store opened in the building, and has been covered with panels in the last twenty years, the early twentieth century brick parapet remains unaltered.

A projecting cornice and patterns in the brick parapet distinguishes the bank building constructed in 1910 at 201 N. Moose. The focal point of the district, the Morrilton Railroad Station was constructed in 1915 at 101 E. Railroad on the south side of the railroad track. The depot is similar to many Mo-Pac depots constructed in the early years of the twentieth century with its Mediterranean influenced design, dark red brick walls and tile roof.

1920s

The most prolific period of growth in the Morrilton Commercial Historic District is represented by the thirty-one buildings constructed in the 1920s. Groupings of buildings at 113, 115, 119 and 121 E. Broadway and in the 200 and 300 blocks of N. Moose, and six on the 100 and 200 blocks of E. Railroad represent this era of Morrilton's growth. The buildings constructed in the 1920s in downtown Morrilton represent a variety of stylistic interpretations of popular American commercial design, but most are simple brick structures. The First National Bank of Morrilton, constructed c.1925 was designed by prominent Arkansas architect Charles L. Thompson. The First National Bank Building is five stories and a landmark in the city's downtown. The Charles L. Thompson firm also designed the Coca Cola Building at 210 N. Moose Street. This building was constructed in 1929 in a "streamlined" Art Deco style.

The one-story Blue Ribbon Shoe Store Building at 205 N. Moose was built in 1925, and is constructed of buff colored brick with little ornamentation. The Mitchell Building at 124-126 N. Moose is a three-story buff brick structure constructed in 1925 to house the E. E. Mitchell Company, hardware and furniture dealers. The Mitchell Building features original transom windows above each window bay on its first floor. A flat roof awning is suspended by cable over the storefront entries on N. Moose Street. Constructed in 1925, the one-story building at 303-305-307 N. Moose features a small shed roof covered in red tile and supported by decorative wood brackets across the front of the building.

1930s – 1940s

Despite the national economic crises of the 1930s and World War II, seventeen buildings were constructed in downtown Morrilton in the 1930s. The Morrilton Post Office at 115 N. Division is the most significant of this era. Constructed in 1936, the one-story building features Art Deco design influence in the use of cast concrete paneled spaces around door and window openings. Cast concrete bands span the building at the first floor level and above the windows. Cast concrete caps the roof parapet around the freestanding building. The interior of the building features a mural produced by the Section Art Division of the Works Progress Administration.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

The building at 109 N. Division is a two-story simple brick design with limited use of cast concrete detail on the parapet. Other brick buildings constructed in the district in the 1930s are largely devoid of ornamentation. One of the few stone buildings located in the district was constructed at 110 E. Elm c.1938. This small, one-story building is veneered in fieldstone and has a hanging shed board awning suspended by cables over the front of the building.

After 1950

Twelve buildings have been constructed in the district since 1950, only two of which have been built since 1970.

Non-Contributing Buildings

Thirty-five (35) or 37% of the buildings in the district are considered non-contributing. Of these, only twelve are not fifty years old. The twenty-three historic buildings in this category are simply sheathed in metal siding. In most of these cases, the alterations to the facades are reversible. These buildings continue to preserve the continuity of the historic streetscape in overall height, setback, and use.

Integrity

The buildings located in the Morrilton Commercial Historic District retain their integrity and sense of historic place, as they comprise the core of downtown Morrilton. The majority (63%) of the ninety-five buildings in the district retain many of their design characteristics, materials, and historic features, convey the early workmanship associated with each structure. Although some changes have been made to the entrances and storefront displays on the first levels of some of the buildings, the overall feeling of the district is intact as this historic commercial downtown conveys the heritage of a city founded and developed around the railroad.

8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development

Architecture

Exploration/Settlement

Period of Significance

1880-1950

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE ATTACHED CONTINUATION SHEETS

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

SEE ATTACHED CONTINUATION SHEETS

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

SUMMARY

The Morrilton Commercial Historic District is comprised of ninety-five (95) buildings that have served as the regional center of government, civic, business, and cultural life since the town was founded in 1873. Morrilton, Arkansas, the county seat of Conway County, is located about forty-five miles northwest of the center of the state, at the intersection of U.S. Highway 64 and Highway 9, and on the Union Pacific (formerly Missouri-Pacific) Railroad line. This historic thoroughfare was where the City of Morrilton grew and developed; a direct result of the construction of the railroad line. The buildings in the historic district represent the growth and development of the town focused around the railroad station. With construction dates ranging from the early 1880s to the 1970s, the buildings in the historic district reflect the people who established and planned the town.

ELABORATION

In 1825, the Arkansas Territorial Legislature divided central Arkansas's Pulaski County into several smaller counties. Conway County resulted from this division. Cadron, a town centrally located in Conway County, was designated to serve as the county seat until a permanent selection could be made. The county seat was moved in 1827 to another small town, Harrisburg. In 1828, a small section of Cherokee territory to the west was added to Conway County. In 1831, the Arkansas Territorial Legislature urged citizens to find a permanent capital for Conway County. Lewisburg, a small settlement along the Arkansas River, the major mode of transportation, was chosen as the county seat. Yet, from 1850 to 1873, the capital moved to Springfield. However, the Arkansas Territorial Legislature renamed Lewisburg as the county seat in 1873. Finally, in 1883, the county seat changed for the last time when it moved to Morrilton.

The fertile soil in Conway County was, and is, the most important and valuable natural resource for agricultural productivity. Goodspeed's 1890 publication, *Historical Reminiscences and Biographical Memoirs of Conway County*, praised the "fine plantations" in the county and stated, "the hidden wealth of Conway County can be brought out by its small farmers." Present-day families, who own and farm their land, continue to be a significant factor in the economy of Conway County. In the last fifty years, the chief crop of Conway County has moved from primarily cotton production to soybeans and hay. In addition, livestock and poultry production has greatly increased in the area.

In 1825, Major William Lewis, his son Stephen, and Dr. Nimrod Meniffee settled on the Arkansas River near the mouth of Point Remove Creek. Major Lewis established the first trading post in Conway County and called it "Lewisburg." A town emerged from the trading post and was incorporated in 1844. Lewisburg derived trade from remote interior settlements, and was the point for all produce received and shipped in the area. Lewisburg thrived and grew to a population of almost 2,000. Its eighty business establishments included saw mills, a grist mill, a flour mill, a cotton gin, a wagon factory, livery stables, a saddlery store, as well as saloons, restaurants and hotels.

Railroad construction in Conway County was the single most significant event in the county's development. In 1853, a charter was granted to the Cairo & Fulton Railroad to construct an east-west connecting line from Little Rock to Fort Smith. After two years of little progress in the Fort Smith branch, a new company, the Little Rock & Fort Smith Railroad, was formed and chartered in 1855. The railroad moved slowly westward from what is now North Little Rock. Construction was interrupted by the Civil War in 1860, and did not resume until 1866. An initial survey for a potential line west to Fort Smith from Little Rock planned to take the railroad through Lewisburg. Residents of the town were asked to donate money to help build the railroad line to ensure it would run through their town. They refused to raise the \$2,000 that Little Rock & Fort Smith Railroad wanted. The citizens felt the town's position was so strategic in Conway County that the railroad would have to come through it anyway. As a result, the Little Rock & Fort Smith Railroad re-surveyed the proposed line, and moved it to pass north of Lewisburg.

The "Lewisburg Station" opened for railroad service in November 1870. Although called "Lewisburg Station," its actual location was three miles north of Lewisburg. This railroad station was the genesis of Morrilton.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

In 1873, Morrilton was established on property donated from the Morril and Moose Farms. One of Lewisburg's most prominent residents was Edward James Morril. Originally from Massachusetts, Morril moved to the thriving town of Lewisburg in 1840. He was a druggist and quickly established a successful business. Morril had a farm north of Lewisburg, which is the present-day area from Division Street to the Cherokee line, west of Morrilton. George Hall Morril, son of Edward James Morril, was the first of the Morril family to settle in the area. The nearest neighbor was the Moose family who farmed the adjacent land, east of what is now Division Street.

The first "Lewisburg Station" was a boxcar fitted beside the railroad track. Moose and Morril proposed to the Little Rock & Fort Smith Railroad to give them a town site in order to construct a permanent station. If the railroad station were maintained, then Morril and Moose, in return, would receive every alternate block within the town site. The railroad station agent, Captain J. W. Boot, is credited with naming the town, choosing between Morril and Moose by a flip of a coin.

The town site was laid out in 1876. Division Street is named for the dividing line between the two farms; the Morril farm to the west, and the Moose farm to the east. East Street was the eastern boundary of the town, West Street was the western boundary, North Street was the northern boundary, and Church Street was the southern boundary. The two streets between the east and west boundaries, were named for the town founders, Morril and Moose Streets.

The railroad quickly replaced the Arkansas River as the favored means of both commercial shipping and passenger travel. As the railroad became more and more popular, the population of Lewisburg moved to be near the railroad station in Morrilton. However, the early growth of Morrilton scarcely qualified the community as a "Boomtown". It took ten years before Morrilton supplanted Lewisburg as the major community in the area. In January 1880, Morrilton was incorporated, and became the Conway County seat in 1883. Lewisburg still had a population of 1,000 in the early 1880s. However, the residents eventually abandoned Lewisburg. Old cisterns and two cemeteries are the only visible remains of the once thriving town and county seat.

In the 1870s, the remaining Morril family members left Lewisburg to settle in their new town, Morrilton. Edward James Morril died in 1885 in the home that he built near the new railroad and his holdings were divided among his children. The Morril family continued to contribute to the growth and stability of the town named after their father as Morril's children donated lands to various churches and town institutions. One son, Henry Morril (builder of the Morril Building at 107 E. Broadway), gave the site for the first school in Morrilton.

Cultural Life

Cultural life in Morrilton was rich for a rural, agriculture area. A two-story brick opera house was constructed in 1891. It was the site of many touring productions as well as a venue for local events. A library was organized in 1894, although it was more like a club for members only. The books donated by the library's members were housed in various homes. In 1914, the library club and other citizens of Morrilton raised enough money to purchase an old church. This church housed the library's collection. In 1916, The Carnegie Foundation awarded the library club a grant to construct a new library building. The Morrilton Public Library (NR listed 4-15-78) is one of only two Carnegie Libraries in Arkansas still used as a library. The library is located one block south of the boundary of the historic commercial district.

Growing Town of Morrilton

As population and commercial business expanded in Morrilton, modern conveniences arrived. Morrilton's first electrical generating plant was constructed in 1893. A telephone system was installed in 1899. The town flourished in the early years of the twentieth century and by 1915 had a population around 3,000. In 1924, Harding College was established in Morrilton. Morrilton was a significant regional center for business and trade. An active Chamber of Commerce, which employed a full-time manager, actively sought new business and industry through extensive advertising. Natural gas service to Morrilton began in April of 1929, replacing the less efficient use of coal for heating. Newspapers editorialized in the late 1920s that the town needed more hotels to

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

accommodate the growing number of travelers to the area. A tri-state brochure published in 1929 highlighted U. S. Highway 64 and its attractions. Morrilton and nearby Petit Jean State Park were featured in this publication.

Morrilton Commercial Historic District

The first business buildings constructed in downtown Morrilton were similar in appearance; one-story frame structures occupied by saloons, general stores, and other miscellaneous establishments. Dirt streets were lined with plank boardwalks. Buildings concentrated on North and South Railroad Avenue (N. Railroad Avenue is modern day Broadway Street) with the railroad tracks and depot separating the two streets.

The 100 block of E. Broadway contains five of the earliest buildings constructed in Morrilton's downtown commercial district. The building at the northeast corner of Broadway and Division Streets (101 E. Broadway) was constructed by brothers Robert and William Irving in 1883 and is said to be the first brick business building in the town. The Irving Brothers General Store occupied this building until the 1930s. A drug store replaced the general store, and remained there for many years. Although the side and front of the building are covered in aluminum panels, the Irving Brothers Building represents the earliest period of growth in Morrilton's downtown. Located just east of the Irving Building are four buildings constructed in 1888 and 1889. These four similar two-story brick commercial buildings, located at 105, 107, 109, and 111 E. Broadway feature Italianate style influence in their second story arched windows and decorative cornices.

By 1889, there were seventeen brick business buildings located around the railroad station. The streets were dirt, and a well was placed in the center of modern-day Broadway Street. The Earl Brothers and Company constructed a brick building for their general store on N. Moose Street in 1889. Their company remained in business for many years, later relocating to modern-day E. Broadway Street. The E. E. Mitchell Company, which sold hardware and furniture, began business in 1893. In 1925, the Mitchell Company constructed a three-story brick building which continued in operation through the 1960s. Fay Hempstead's book, *A Pictorial History of Arkansas from Earliest Times to Year 1890*, stated that Morrilton had six churches, a bank, an opera house, three weekly newspapers, several hotels, a number of stores, and a telegraph. Many of the buildings were brick and found "neat and tasty" in appearance. Further description of Morrilton said "It has in all respects the appearance of a thriving, active place."

Massey Hardware opened a store at 213 E. Broadway in 1918. The company catered to farmers by opening before daylight and closing after dark. Plow points, wagons, wash pans, and wallpaper were among the regular stock. Massey Hardware was the social center for the town. A crowd always surrounded the pot-bellied coal stove in the center of the store. Massey Hardware expanded in the late 1930s, opening three more stores in nearby towns. It remained in business through the 1950s.

More than a third of the buildings in the historic district were constructed during the prosperous years of the 1920s. Two buildings representing the growth of the town in the 1920s in the Morrilton Commercial Historic District are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Designed by Charles L. Thompson and Associates, the First State Bank Building and the Coca-Cola Building were listed on the National Register 12/22/82.

Built in 1925, the First State Bank Building is a dominating narrow five-story bank building located at the corner of Moose and E. Broadway Streets, 121 E. Broadway. The tallest building in Morrilton, it is a rectangular brick structure blended with Classical Revival and Craftsman styles. Although no longer used as a bank, the building retains its significant profile in downtown. The Coca-Cola Building was built in 1929. This building, located at 210 N. Moose Street, is distinguished by fine classical detailing and outstanding Art Deco signage. The building housed the fifth Coca-Cola bottling plant in Arkansas and the Morrilton plant opened in 1929 with a grand citywide celebration. The opening was featured in a special 52-page edition of the local newspaper. People traveled from surrounding communities to dance to an orchestra from Memphis and drink unlimited Coca-Colas. The plant moved to a larger facility in the 1960s and Morrilton's first Wal-Mart store opened in the Coca-Cola building. The building has been purchased by the City of Morrilton and is used as City Hall and the Police Department. The First State Bank Building and the Coca-Cola Building are among the most significant architectural examples in the town.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

The J. C. Penney Department Store opened for business in 1929 at 209-211 E. Broadway in the building formerly occupied by the Earl Brothers' general store. That same year, and same city block, the Rialto Theater opened. In the summer of 1929, talking pictures came to the Rialto Theater. Business boomed and merchants could afford the luxury of running a full page advertisement in the *Morrilton Democrat* in May, 1929 stating "To permit a weekly ½ holiday for our employees during the hot summer months, the business houses of Morrilton will close Thursday afternoons during the months of June, July, and August."

Cotton production was a major industry in Conway County up until the Great Depression of the 1930s. Mule-drawn wagons carrying bales of cotton lined streets of downtown Morrilton. Waiting on North Moose Street were cotton-buyers. The buyers would cut holes in the covers of the bales to pull samples of the cotton in order to determine quality and price. As business flourished in early 1900s, more brick commercial buildings were constructed. An article in the *Morrilton Democrat* newspaper, in 1931, stated that N. Moose Street continued to rank as one of Morrilton's outstanding business streets with forty-seven businesses located on the street. The article boasted that growth on N. Moose had extended past Elm Street, which was the traditional northern edge of the town's business section.

In 1936, the Federal Works Project Administration constructed the Morrilton Post Office on N. Division at a cost of \$52,000. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR 08/14/98). The building's original WPA mural designed and drawn by artist Richard Sergeant of Cambria, Virginia, entitled "Men At Rest," depicts three men who worked in the fields drinking water.

In February 1940, a disastrous fire in the 100 block of N. Division Street severely damaged the major portion of the east side of the block. Henry Drilling, owner of this property rebuilt the buildings at 120 N. Division. In March 1940, an article in the *Arkansas Gazette* stated that \$100,000 would be spent in Morrilton for new buildings later that year. Although a number of buildings were constructed in the district during the 1940s, only four remain extant. Of the ninety-five buildings in the Morrilton Commercial Historic District, only twelve were constructed after 1950.

Statement of Significance

Building names in the Morrilton Commercial Historic District are a compendium of the citizens who were vital links in Morrilton's historical economic and governmental development. The architectural fabric of the district is reflective of commercial building types paralleling national trends from the late Victorian era through the emergence of Post War World II minimalism. Despite the various changes it has experienced in the decades since 1970, the Morrilton Commercial Historic District documents the period from the early era of the town in the 1880s through the post World War II years, when through planning the city grew and developed. The Morrilton Commercial Historic District is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under **Criterion C** for its varied styles of architecture, and under **Criterion A** with local significance for its association with the history of Morrilton.

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Bibliography

Arkansas Democrat, 21 April 1881, 30 April 1884, 28 July 1938, 13 August 1961.

Arkansas Gazette, 17 March 1940.

Brochure entitled "Visit Morrilton", published by the Morrilton Chamber of Commerce, 1938.

Conway County Historical Society, *Conway County- Our Land, Our Home, Our People*, Historical Publications of Arkansas, Little Rock 1989.

Federal Writers' Project, *The W.P.A. Guide to 1930s Arkansas*, with new introduction by Elliott West, (Lawrence, Kansas, 1987). (Originally copyrighted by C. G. Hall, Secretary of State, Arkansas, 1941).

Goodspeed's *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Western Arkansas*, (Chicago and Nashville, 1891).

Hempstead, Fay. *A Pictorial History of Arkansas*. St. Louis and New York: N.D. Thompson Publishing Co., 1890.

Morrilton Democrat, 24 January 1929, 9 August 1929, 23 April 1930, 25 April 1930, 14 May 1931, 10 September 1931.

Sanborn Map Company, Map of Morrilton, Arkansas, 1886, 1889, 1896, 1901, 1913, 1919, 1926

Tax Records, Conway County Courthouse, Morrilton, Arkansas.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

UTM References

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
1.	15	523296	3890147
2.	15	523423	3890152
3.	15	523408	3889888
4.	15	523494	3889878
5.	15	523345	3889670
6.	15	523235	3889720
7.	15	523088	3889832
8.	15	523138	3889893
9.	15	523260	3889919
10.	15	523270	3890117

Verbal Boundary Description

Boundaries of the Morrilton Commercial Historic District are roughly described as follows:

Beginning at the western boundary of the building located at 212 West Broadway, the boundary runs north to the rear property line of this building and turn to run east across the rear property lines of 212, 204, 200 W. Broadway. The boundary continues to run east on the rear property line of buildings located at 106, 108, 114, and 120 W. Broadway. It then turns and runs north to encompass the property at 115 N. Division, formerly occupied by the Federal Post Office. At the intersection of N. Division and E. Commerce, the boundary runs north along N. Division Street, including the properties on the east side of the 100, 200, and 300 blocks of N. Division. The boundary veers west at 311 N. Division to include the St. Paul AME Church, then returns to N. Division and runs north to the intersection of E. Vine and N. Division. At this point the boundary turns and runs east along E. Vine to the rear (east) property lines of the buildings in the 200 and 300 blocks on N. Moose Street. The boundary runs south along these rear (east) property lines to the point where it intersects with E. Commerce Street. At E. Commerce Street the boundary turns and runs east of E. Commerce to its intersection with N. Chestnut Street. At N. Chestnut and E. Commerce the boundary turns and runs directly south across E. Broadway, the railroad tracks to the rear property line of the buildings in the 200 block of E. Railroad. At the point the boundary runs west along the rear (south) property lines of the buildings in the 100 and 200 blocks of E. Railroad to S. Division Street. At S. Division Street the boundary turns to run north across E. Railroad and the railroad tracks to the intersection of N. Division and E. Broadway. At this point the boundary turns west and runs along W. Broadway, including the 100 and 200 blocks to the point of origin at 212 West Broadway.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Morrilton Commercial Historic District were established after a determination of eligibility review by the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program of a comprehensive architectural resources survey of 123 buildings in the core of the town's historic commercial district. The results of the determination of eligibility set the boundaries as the highest and most contiguous concentration of historic buildings representing the town's growth and development.

Morrilton Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Conway County, Arkansas
County and State

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Morrilton Commercial Historic District

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Conway

DATE RECEIVED: 1/24/03 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/19/03
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/07/03 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/10/03
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 03000085

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3/7/03 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Entered in the
National Register*

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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



1. 100 & 200 BLOCK W. BROADWAY
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. photo By SANDRA Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPP
6. View Looking north west
7. photo # 1



1. (left) 100-102 E. BROADWAY (right) 103-05, 107, 109, 115 N. Division
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 1110-02
5. negative at AHP
6. view Looking Northwest
7. photo #2



MERLE NORMAN
&
MORE

Ridgely

1. 100 BLOCK E. BROADWAY
Morilton Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. negative AT AHPP
6. view Looking northeast
7. photo #3



ADWELLS

MURRAY

WARD

THE LITTLE FORTY-NINE
&
MORE

Bobby's

MANPOWER

113 195

Exclusively
Appliances
TV
BEST CHOICE
Rental Purchase Inc.
Stereo
DVD
Computers

1. 101, 103, 105, 107, 109 E. Broadway
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. negative At AHPP
6. View Looking Northwest
7. photo #4



1. 111, 113, 115, 119, 121 E. BROADWAY
MORRILTON Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-16-82
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPP
6. view Looking NORTH EAST
7. photo #5



1. 100 Block E. BROADWAY
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-18-02
5. negative AT AHP
6. View Looking Northwest
7. Photo # 6



1. 119, 121 E. BROADWAY
Morrison Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. negative At AHP
6. view looking north
7. photo #17



1. Westside 100 Block N. MOOSE ST.
Morrilton Commercial Historic District

2. Conway County, AR

3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith

4. 11-18-02

5. negative at AHPP

6. view Looking Northwest

7. photo # 8



Morrilton
Music Company
New & Used Instruments and A...

WEAR THE CHIEF
OUTDOOR
SUNSHINE SHIRTS
AVAILABLE NOW
\$10.00
\$15.00

1. Westside 100 Block N. MOOSE
Marriton Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. negative At AHP
6. View Looking Northwest
7. photo # 9



1. MITCHELL Building -124-126 N. MOOSE ST,
MORRILTON Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. Photo By SANDRA Taylor Smith
4. 11-18-02
5. negative AT AHPP
6. View Looking EAST
7. photo # 10



1. 210-212 E. Commerce
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. negative # AHPP
6. View Looking southeast
7. photo # 11



1. 201, 203, 205, 207-89, 211, 213, 215, 217, 219 N. MOOSE STREET
Morriston Commercial Historic District

2. Conway County, AR

3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith

4. 11-10-02

5. negative at AHPP

6. view looking southwest

7. photo # 12



1. 381, 303-05-07, 313-15, 317, 321, 327 N. MOOSE
Morilton Commercial Historic District

2. CONWAY City., AR

3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith

4. 11-10-02

5. negative at AHPP

6. View Looking Northwest

7. photo # 13



1. 200-202, 204 N. MOOSE
Morrilton Commercial Historic District
2. Conway Cty., AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. NEGATIVE AT AHP
6. View Looking Northeast
7. Photo # 14



1. COCA COLA Building - 210 N. MOOSE
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. negative at AHPP
6. view looking east
7. photo # 15



1. WEST SIDE 200 BLOCK N. MOOSE
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. negative AT AHP
6. view Looking Northwest
7. photo # 16



1. (right) 101 E. BROADWAY, (Left) 106, 108, 114-16, 120 N. DIVISION ST.
Morrilton Commercial Historic District

2. CONWAY COUNTY, AR

3. photo By SANDIA Taylor Smith

4. 11-10-02

5. NEGATIVE AT AHPD

6. View Looking NorthEast

7. photo # 17



1. EAST AND WEST SIDES 100 BLOCK N. DIVISION
MORRILTON COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
2. CONWAY COUNTY, AR
3. PHOTO BY SANDRA TAYLOR SMITH
4. 11-10-02
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPP
6. VIEW LOOKING SOUTH
7. PHOTO # 18



FOR SALE
Petit Jean
Properties Inc.
800 394-4300

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

1. 106, 108, 114-16, 120 N. Division St.
Marriott Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPD
6. View Looking Southeast
7. photo # 19



1. 112 E. Commerce
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. negative at AHPD
6. view looking Southeast
7. Photo # 20



1. 106, 108, 110 E. ELM STREET
Morriston Commercial Historic District

2. Conway County, AR

3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith

4. 11-10-02

5. NEGATIVE AT AHP

6. View Looking southwest

7. photo # 21



1. 300, 302, 304, 306, 310 N. Division St,
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. photo by Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-82
5. negative at AHP
6. View Looking Northeast
7. photo # 22



1. St. Paul A.M.E. Church - 311 N. Division St.
Norriton Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. Negative at AHPD
6. View Looking North West
7. Photo # 23



1. Morrilton Missouri Pacific RR Depot - 101 E. RAILROAD
Morrilton Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. NEGATIVE AT AHP
6. View Looking Northwest
7. photo # 24



WILTON
MUSEUM

COX

NOW
OPEN

Club 2001
ARCADE
POOL
TOURNAMENT

ARCADE

1. 100 Block E. Railroad
Morriston Commercial Historic District
2. Conway County, AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 1H10-02
5. Negative At AHPO
6. View Looking Southeast
7. Photo # 25



1. 100 BLOCK E. RAILROAD
MORRILTON Commercial Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. PHOTO BY SANDRA TAYLOR SMITH
4. 11-18-82
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPP
6. VIEW LOOKING SOUTHEAST
7. PHOTO # 26



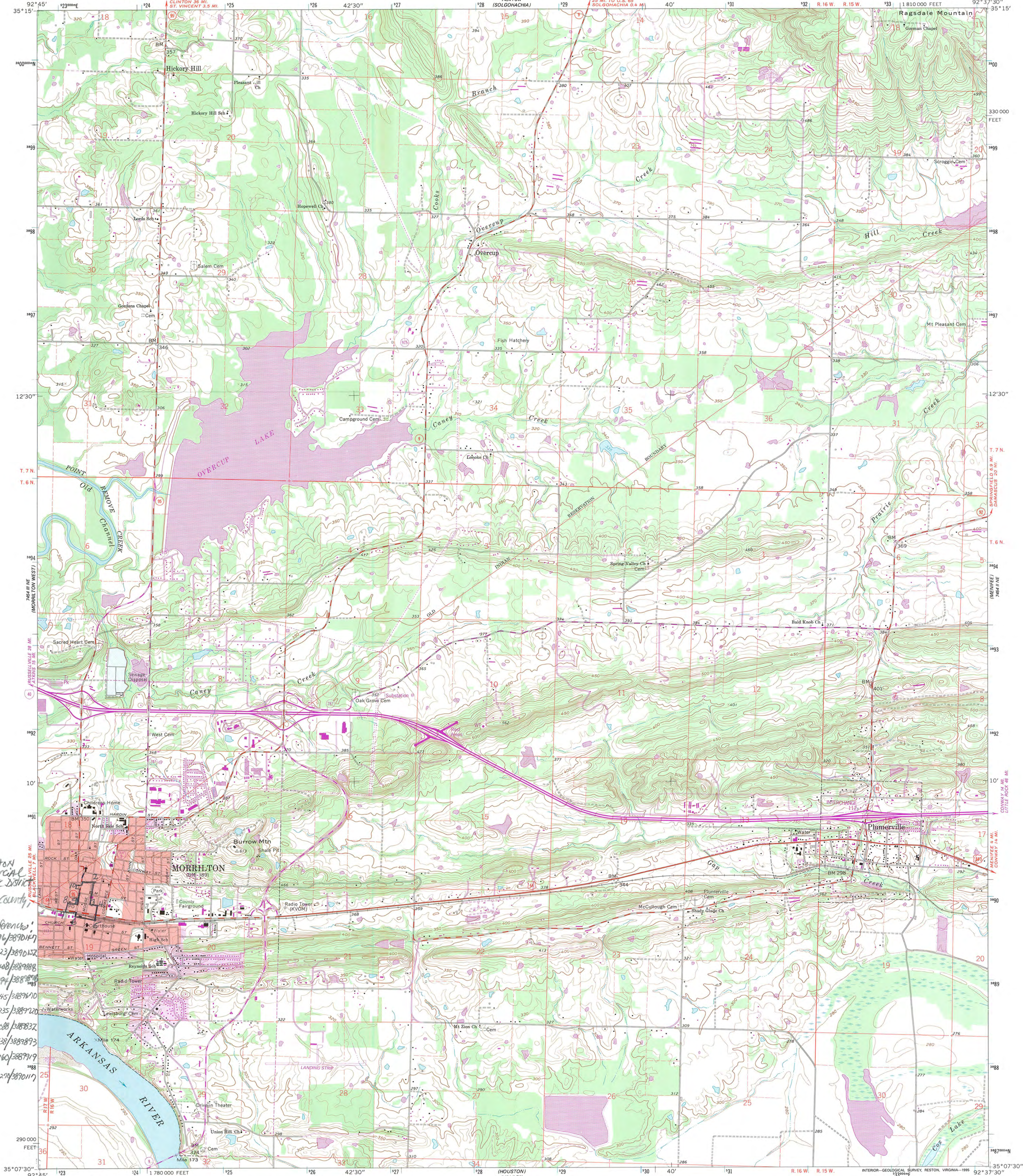
KAY'S PRODUCE

GARDEN
PLANTS
BULBS
SEEDS

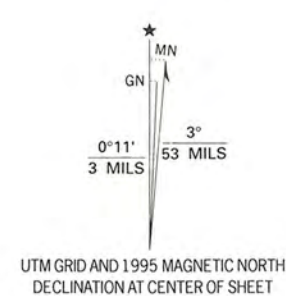
Kay's
Produce
254-1214

COX
COMMUNICATIONS

1. 212, 222, 224 E. RAILROAD
Morrilton Historic District
2. CONWAY County, AR
3. Photo By Sandra Taylor Smith
4. 11-10-02
5. NEGATIVE AT AHPP
6. View Looking Southwest
7. photo #27



Produced by the United States Geological Survey
Compiled by photogrammetric methods from imagery dated 1958
Field checked 1961
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and
10 000-foot ticks: Arkansas coordinate system, north zone
(Lambert conformal conic)
Blue 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator ticks, zone 15
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed
corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83
for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic
Survey NADCON software



SCALE 1:24 000
1 000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 0.5 0 1 KILOMETER
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72204
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



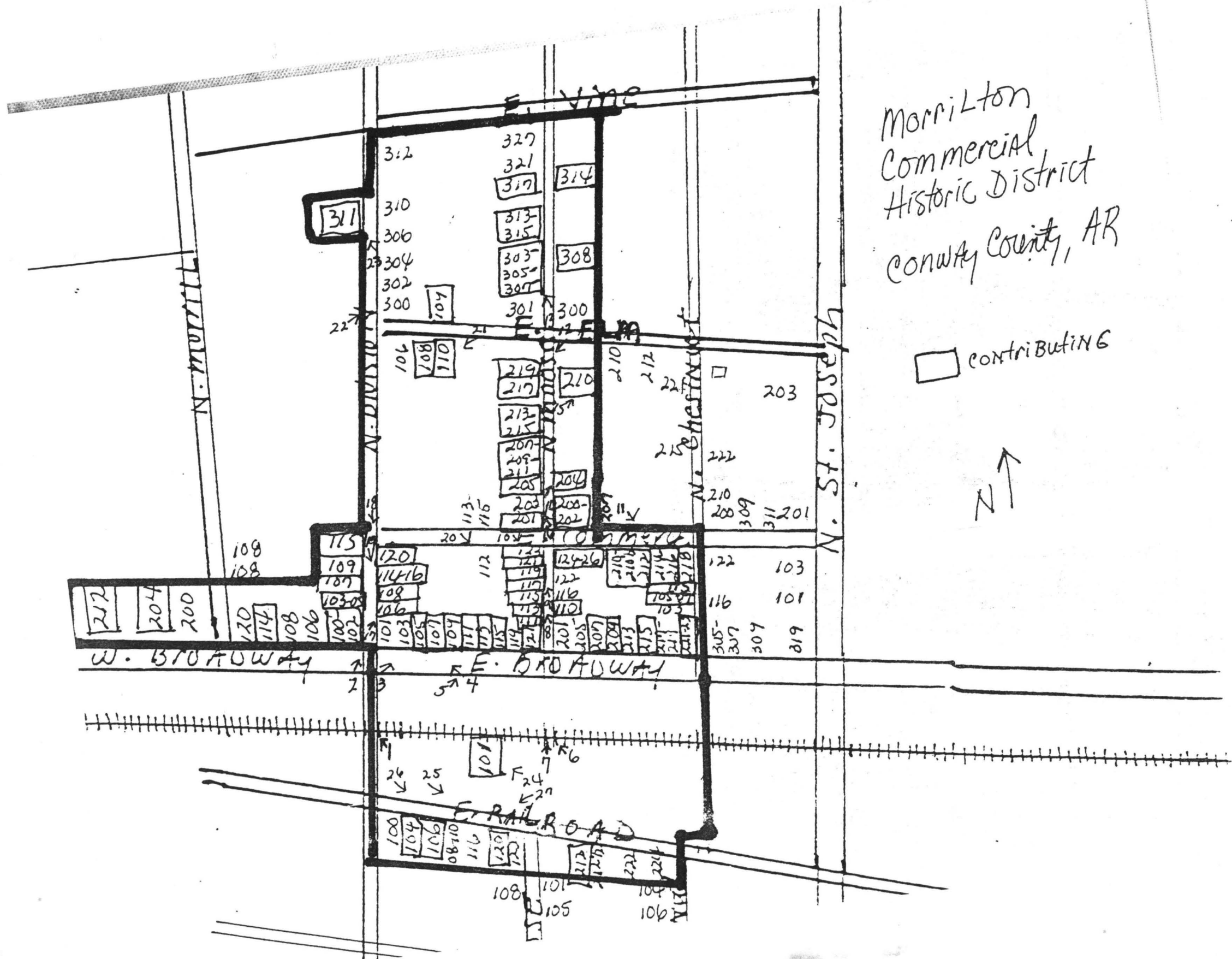
ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

MORRILTON EAST, AR
35092-B6-TF-024
1990
DMA 7454 II NW-SERIES V884

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with
State of Arkansas agencies from imagery dated 1989-90
and other sources. Map edited 1995
Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content
standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours

Morrilton
Commercial
Historic District
Conway County, AR

☐ CONTRIBUTING





The Department of Arkansas Heritage

Mike Huckabee, Governor
Cathie Matthews, Director

Arkansas Arts Council

▪

Arkansas Natural Heritage
Commission

▪

Historic Arkansas Museum

▪

Delta Cultural Center

▪

Old State House Museum



Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

1500 Tower Building

323 Center Street

Little Rock, AR 72201

(501)324-9880

fax: (501)324-9184

tdd: (501)324-9811

e-mail:

info@arkansaspreservation.org

website:

www.arkansaspreservation.org

16 January 2003

Carol D. Shull
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Morrilton Commercial Historic District – Morrilton, Conway County

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the nomination of the above-referenced property. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

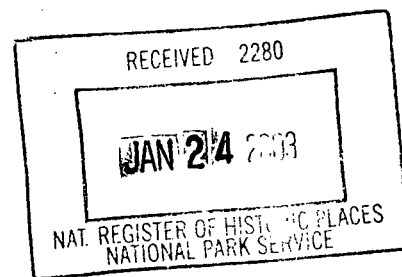
Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews,
State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:zc

Enclosures



An Equal Opportunity Employer

