

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

ALABAMA

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

1. Name

historic Morris Avenue/First Avenue North Historic District

APR 19 1985

and/or common

RECEIVED

2. Location

street & number 2000-2400 blocks of Morris Avenue and
2100-2500 blocks of First Avenue North

NA not for publication

city, town Birmingham

NA vicinity of

congressional district 6

state Alabama

code 01

county Jefferson

code 073

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple

street & number

city, town

_____ vicinity of

state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number 716 21st Street North

city, town Birmingham

state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Alabama Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1970-present federal state county local

depository for survey records Alabama Historical Commission - 725 Monroe Street

city, town Montgomery

state Alabama 36130

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Description

The Morris Avenue/First Avenue North Historic District includes the 2000-2400 blocks of Morris Avenue and the 2100-2500 blocks of First Avenue North. Morris Avenue is located immediately north of the city's railroad lines and runs parallel to them. First Avenue North is immediately north of Morris Avenue; the south side of the 2300 and 2400 blocks have their backs on Morris Avenue. Together these streets document the first two phases of warehouse, jobbing and, to a more limited extent, office development in Birmingham. These buildings constitute one of the largest and most complete groupings of late 19th/early 20th century buildings in the city.

Morris Avenue consists of 33 mostly warehouse structures which were built primarily between 1886 and 1920. Only one (2114-16 Morris Avenue) was built later. These buildings constitute the first phase of warehouse development in the City of Birmingham which grew up contiguous to the railroad tracks and then moved immediately north to First Avenue.

The district has a distinct sense of continuity due to a number of factors. Scale, usage and design elements are compatible throughout the district; brick is the most common building material; two to three stories is the average height (with a few being one or four stories), and many were originally used as warehouses or jobbing concerns (with a few being office buildings). Architectural features are commonly stone or stone-like sills and lintels, parapet rooflines, modified pediment parapet rooflines, stone inlays, multi-paned windows, segmental relieving arches and arched windows, and corbeling.

As an earlier development, the Morris Avenue buildings are somewhat smaller and less imposing than those on First Avenue and are mostly of red brick. Those built before 1900 are typically more stylistic and ornate: 2014 Morris Avenue (c. 1888), a Victorian Italianate style warehouse with elaborately detailed brickwork; 2018 Morris Avenue (c. 1891) with dentils above the first and third floors and cast iron around the two entrances; and 2100-2102 Morris Avenue (c. 1899) with brackets and cornice, and cast iron columns. Others built before 1900 feature recessed entrances. The warehouse at 2121 Morris Avenue (c. 1890) has a recessed entrance flanked by high arched windows; 2209-11 (c. 1890) is of similar style; 2125-27 (was 2123) (c. 1885) has a recessed arched entrance flanked by identical windows of smaller proportions, and 2201 has a similar arched entrance.

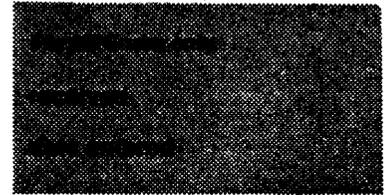
Morris Avenue warehouses built after 1900 begin to feature multi-paned windows and often have stone lintels and sills. 2301 Morris Avenue (c. 1910-15) is a 3-story brick warehouse with massively proportioned stone lintels, brick pilasters and corbeling at the roofline. Built at about the same time, 2305 is the most elaborately detailed of those built since 1900 with multiple arches above each third floor window, corbeling and ornamental caps on projecting piers. Varying rooflines also appear and stone caps. 2325-27 (c. 1900) is 3 stories with 2 sets of multi-paned windows, and a creneled roofline with caps.

Historic First Avenue North is a four-block area of jobbing, warehouse and office buildings which date from 1893-1930. Some of these, along the south side of First Avenue from 22nd to 25th Streets, faced First Avenue and had their rear facades on Morris. These buildings, as well as the north side of First Avenue, represent the second stage of warehouse development in Birmingham.

The most substantial and impressive grouping of buildings is a series of warehouses on the south side of the 2300 block, developed between 1896 and 1918. These

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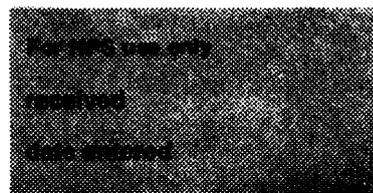
warehouses relate well because of their use of a common building material, brick, in having facades opened by large numbers of windows, and in having a scale which continues the length of the block. The Liberty Trouser Building (1896) and the A. C. Legg Building (1896) are identical in design, using light brown brick on the facade, which is divided into bays of three windows on the two upper floors with segmental-arch-headed windows on the third floor, carrying a brick molded cornice supported by buttresses which pierce the roofline. These two buildings flank the Moskowitz Warehouse (1910), a red brick building featuring a huge bas relief panel flanked by smaller panels on a blind wall at the third floor, and a heavy classical cornice to create a design which is unique in the city. The two other warehouses on the block, the Calder Furniture Warehouse (1918), a light brown brick building, and the Lorch-Bennett Furniture Warehouse (1897), using a dark brown brick, carry parapet rooflines over large multi-paned windows. The Donovan Coffee Company Building (1890), across 24th Street, is related to the 2300 block by scale, material, usage and design, being much like the furniture warehouses with ornamentation like the Liberty and Legg buildings. The canopies on several of the buildings which overhang the sidewalk are links to an earlier period in the city when most of the retail district of Birmingham had covered sidewalks. This handsome block of buildings on 1st Avenue runs through the block to Morris Avenue.

In addition to the district's warehouses, a small group of significant office buildings is sited in the 2100 block of First Avenue. This group includes the Beaux Arts style Birmingham Realty Building (1905) designed by the acclaimed local architect William C. Weston; the A. A. Adams Realty Building (1910), a handsome brick building with cast iron and pressed metal details which has housed Adams Realty for over 65 years; and the Burchwell Building (c. 1910), a one-story brick building with a typical design using horizontal emphasis in contrasting stone. The relation in scale and materials, and the individuality of the designs make this one of the most handsome groupings in the city. Other important buildings along First Avenue include the Goodall-Brown Building (c. 1905), a stately large-scale brick building by the local architectural firm of Miller and Martin, which is on the site of the famous Caldwell Hotel; the Merchants Credit Building (c. 1920), perhaps the most handsome small-scale Art Deco facade in the city; and the two late Victorian or early 20th century two-story buildings, one at 2125, the other at 2420, which retain their original storefronts.

The Morris Avenue/First Avenue Historic District, with buildings covering at least 40 years of building construction in Birmingham, and having housed a multitude of retail and wholesale concerns dealing in dry goods, candy, furniture, groceries and meats, buggies, and realty concerns, documents the warehouse development in Birmingham, which began on Morris Avenue and expanded up to First Avenue. Of the 69 buildings, 63 (91%) contribute to the significance of the district.

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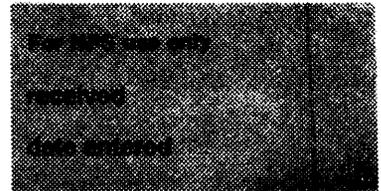
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CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES

1. Warehouse, 2021 Morris Avenue: 1887; 3-story brick with corbeling, arched windows, arched transoms on 1st floor, brick sills & multiple storefronts (4 originals).
2. Warehouse, 2023 Morris Avenue: c. 1887; 2-story brick with moderate detail.
5. Warehouse, 2121 (now 2123) Morris Avenue: c. 1890; 2-story brick with massive recessed arched entrance flanked by high windows; 2nd floor arched windows brick corbeling.
6. Warehouse, 2123 (now 2125-27) Morris Avenue: c. 1885; 2-story brick with massive recessed arched entrance flanked by identical smaller entrances; decorative brickwork.
8. Warehouse, 2201 Morris Avenue: c. 1889; 2-story brick with recessed arched entrance; 1st and 2nd floor arched windows, stone sills.
10. Warehouse, 2209-11 Morris Avenue: c. 1890; 3-story brick with decorative brickwork, corbeling; two massive recessed entrances flanked by large arched windows; segmented arches.
11. Warehouse, 2213 Morris Avenue: c. 1890; 3-story brick with decorative brickwork; projecting pilasters with decorative brickwork; segmented arches: Originally Wilson & Sons Wholesale Groceries.
13. Warehouse, 2223 Morris Avenue: c. 1895; 2-story brick. Most recently the Showboat Nightclub.

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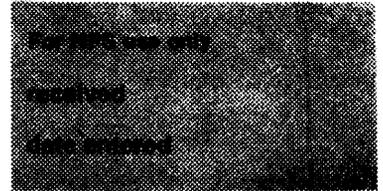
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14. Warehouse, 2301 Morris Avenue: c. 1910-15; 3-story brick; massively proportioned stone lintels and sills; corbeling at roofline, brick pilasters, original 1st floor doors. Originally home to BAMA Foods, a prominent regional concern.
15. Warehouse, 2305 Morris Avenue: c. 1910-15; 3-story brick; the most elaborate detailing on the street of buildings built after 1900; blind arcade above each 3rd floor window, corbeling, ornamental caps on projecting piers; brick sills.
16. Warehouse, 2309 Morris Avenue: c. 1915; 4-story brick with decorative brickwork, arched windows, possibly wood and brick sills.
19. Warehouse, 2325-27 Morris Avenue: c. 1900; 3-story brick with 2 sets of multi-paned windows, stone sills, crenelated roofline with caps; metal scuppers, downspouts; decorative diamonds inset in facade.
22. Warehouse, 2411 Morris Avenue: c. 1920; 1-story brick with stone roofline.
23. Warehouse, 2014 Morris Avenue: c. 1888; Neo-Classical style; 3 stories, brick with corbeling, round-headed arches and pilasters. One of the two with the most elaborately detailed brickwork on Morris Avenue.
24. Commercial Building/Warehouse, 2016 Morris Avenue: c. 1886; 2-story commercial style brick and frame with cast-iron columns and cornice at entrance ways; 3 bays; segmented arches. Originally 3 stories, damaged by fire.
25. Warehouse, 2018 Morris Avenue: c. 1891; 3-story with cast iron around entranceways; dentils above 1st and 3rd floors; arched 3rd floor windows.

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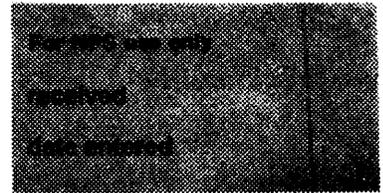
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27. Commercial Building (Reprint Corporation), 2025 1st Avenue North (Rear is 2024-26 Morris Avenue). Building runs through from 1st Avenue North to Morris Avenue and was originally built as two separate buildings. 2025 1st Avenue North: c.1925; 4-story brick with moderate detail. 2024-26 Morris Avenue: c.1891; 2-story brick with brick pilasters, segmented arches, brick corbeling, cornice line at 1st floor, facade is symmetrically divided.
28. Protective Life/Chamber of Commerce Building, 2027 1st Avenue North (rear is 2030 Morris Avenue). Building runs through 1st Avenue North to Morris Avenue and was originally built as two separate buildings. 2027 1st Avenue North: 1928; 14-story Neo-Gothic Style building clad in light-colored terra cotta. It has an exceptionally distinctive lobby area featuring a mural of an angelic woman and child. 2030 Morris Avenue: c.1900; 2-story brick with 1st floor modernized.
29. Warehouse, 2100-2101 Morris Avenue: c. 1899; 2-story brick with 1st floor cast-iron columns; arched windows; 1st floor wood entablature; brackets and restored cornice above 2nd floor.
31. Commercial building, 2118 Morris Avenue: c. 1915; 2-story brick with corbeling. First floor bricked in to match 2114-16 Morris Avenue.
34. Warehouse, 2124-26 Morris Avenue: c. 1900; 2-story brick with reconstructed wood storefront; transoms, stone sills, arched windows.
36. Warehouse/Commercial (Slater Sales Co.) 2209-11 1st Avenue North: c. 1900-1915. Two-story (3 stories in rear on Morris Avenue) with 3 projecting piers and stone caps; brick pilasters, decorative brickwork with diamond insets with original double, wood doors; multiple transoms above entrances; one original bay, one bay with aluminum and glass.
37. Warehouse/Commercial (Slater Sales Co.) 2213 1st Avenue North: c. 1905-17. One story (2 stories in rear on Morris Avenue) brick with stone roofline; appears to have had a sill or cornice removed from above storefront; storefront modern with aluminum, glass and block glass.

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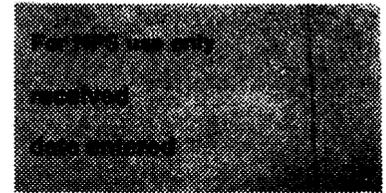
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38. Warehouse/Commercial. 2215-17 1st Avenue North :
c. 1910-17. One-story (2 stories in rear on Morris
Avenue) honey-colored brick; 2 bays; storefronts
modern with aluminum and glass; brick pilasters
with limestone caps; pedimented roofline above each
bay with stone roofline; corbeling on east side
facade; limestone insets.
39. Warehouse/Commercial (Lindsey Office and Office
Furniture Outlet), 2219-2221 1st Avenue North :
c. 1935. One-story brick with 4 projecting piers
and limestone caps; moderately decorative brickwork;
3 bays, all with original wood and glass double doors;
stone insets (diamonds and squares); storefronts
(except doors) modern with aluminum glass and metal
panels.
41. Liberty Trouser, 2301 1st Avenue: c. 1896; 3-
story honey colored brick; elaborate corbeling
above 3rd floor windows; limestone sills (2nd
and 3rd floors, and across west facade), lime-
stone above corbeling & across top of building
and on caps at top of projecting (piers); 3rd
floor arched windows; 1st floor modernized
with aluminum and glass and brick painted black;
original wood window across front; side windows
replaced with aluminum; virtually identical to
2319 1st Avenue North.
42. Moskowitz Warehouse (now Omni Foods), 2311 1st
Avenue North: c. 1909-10; 4 1/2 story red brick
which uses bas relief panels on a blind wall at
the third floor, and uses contrasting colors to
highlight the architecture. Massive concrete
bracketed entrance with recessed stairway leading
to front doors; original double iron gate; stone
sills. Original wood windows.
43. A. C Legg, 2319 1st Avenue North: c. 1896; 3-story
honey colored brick with elaborate corbeling above
third floor arched windows; stone caps above
elaborately designed projecting twin piers; piers
on either end and two sets in middle; 1st floor
modernized with brick facade of different color;
and glass and aluminum entrances (2); stone sills
at 1st floor; windows have been modernized.

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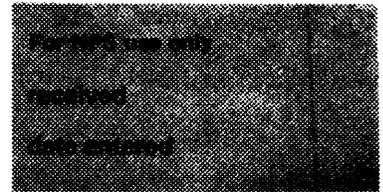
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44. Calder Furniture Co. Warehouse, 2321 1st Avenue North: c. 1918; 3-story brick building with 3 bays each, pilasters on each end and 2 in middle to separate middle multi-paned windows - parapet roof with stone caps; above each stone insets, bay above 3rd floor; 1st floor metal awning and series of transom windows above storefront; 3 bays; original wood doors; no significant alteration.
46. Lorch-Bennett's Furniture Warehouse, 2329 1st Avenue North: c. 1897; 4-story red brick; 2 bays separated with stone pilaster, with multi-paned metal windows and activated roofline with stone caps above each bay; stone lintels, decorative brickwork, stone inset above storefront; metal awning above doorway; windows and pilasters along west side facade. No significant alteration.
47. Warehouse, 2401 1st Avenue North; c. 1910; 3-story in deep red brick; decorative brickwork; stone insets above and below 2nd and 3rd floor; metal multi-paned windows; elaborately decorated twin pilasters on either side to separate large middle windows from small side windows; twin pilasters with stone cap and windows along west side facade; parapet roofline with projecting stone lintels; metal awning above entrance; No significant alteration.
49. Queen Concession Supply Co., 2407-09: c. 1910; 1-story brick; pedimented roofline with stone caps and roofline; 2 bays; 1 bay altered with aluminum and glass; the other is original; metal gutters, downspouts, scuppers.
51. Commercial (World's Product, Dixie), 2417-19 1st Avenue North: c. 1915; 1-story; possibly limestone with pilasters, and simple cornice above; classically-inspired stonework; double transom windows above storefront; parapet roofline; storefront modernized with aluminum and glass.

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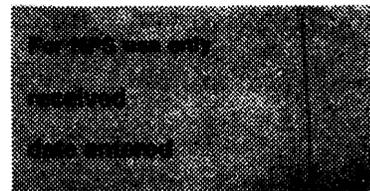
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52. Dixie Store Fixtures, 2421 1st Avenue North: c. 1910; 2-story honey-colored brick with intricate parapet roofline with stone caps and insets; stone sill and insets beneath 1st floor windows; 1st floor modernized with rock, aluminum and glass.
53. Dixie Store Fixtures, 2423-25 1st Avenue: c. 1910; 3-story brick; elaborately pedimented roofline identical to 2421 1st Avenue; also diamond insets above 2nd and 3rd floor windows; transom windows above 3rd floor windows; 1st floor modernized, identical to 2421.
54. Blackwell Furniture (also BB's Imports-Pottery-Glassware), 2427-29 1st Avenue North: c. 1900-1910; 2-story honey colored brick with stone; border and caps at roofline; stone sills beneath 2nd story; 1st floor modernized with aluminum panels and glass; multi-paned 2nd story windows.
55. Commercial Building (now Rogers Army-Navy), 2500 1st Avenue: c. 1910; 2-story brick with multi-paned windows; multiple parapet roofline and a series of narrow projecting piers on two facades.
57. Commercial Building (Mr. Burch Formal Wear), 2420-22 1st Avenue: c. 1900-05; Originally a boarding house, physician office, etc.; 2-story brick; brick pilasters that project at roofline and caps; elaborately decorative cornice above 1st and 2nd floor windows with hoods, modillions, beads; scrolled brackets; transom windows; very little alteration except to the windows in a recent renovation.
58. Standard Distributors, 2414-18 1st Avenue: c. 1910; 3-story honey colored brick; activated roofline with stone caps; corbeling above windows; stone sills; 2 of 3 arched windows with keystones and fanlights remain at 3rd floor; most windows original; 1st floor heavily altered with moss rock, gravel, aluminum, glass; brick pilasters.

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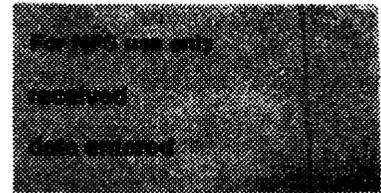
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60. Commercial Building/United Trophy, etc., 2400-04 1st Avenue: c. 1902; 2-story brick, corbeling; brick sills, arched windows at 2nd floor; very little alteration. Originally a saloon and reportedly also a brothel.
62. Norman Tobacco & Candy Co. (now Mike's Music Center), 2324 1st Avenue: c. 1910; 1-story brick painted white; simple with few details; storefront partially altered.
63. Raymond Hosiery Co., Inc., 2320 1st Avenue: c. 1920; 1-story brick; stone cap at roof; 2 large stone insets above storefront with letter "R" engraved; grilled vents with stone sills across front; 1st floor partially altered.
64. Greenwald Wholesale Shoe Co., 2316-18 1st Avenue: c. 1935; 4-story red brick, stone sills, corbeling; stone cap at roof, windows modernized; 1st floor partially altered; brick pilasters at 1st floor; transoms above storefront.
65. Stagg Co., Inc. and Warren Reid Millinery, Handbags, Accessories, 2314 1st Avenue North: c. 1915; 2-story brick; elaborately activated roofline; bracketed stone sills; stone caps at roofline; stone diamond insets; multi-paned 2nd floor windows; multi-paned transoms; storefront modernized with aluminum and glass.
67. Fix Play, 2300 1st Avenue North: c. 1900-1910; 3-story brick, series of stone insets above 2nd floor windows and unbroken stone sill at 3rd floor; massive projective metal cornice with Greek keys around front and west side; decorative metal work and diamond above 1st floor windows on side; decorative brickwork above 2nd and 3rd floor windows; some upper floor windows modernized; storefront on front and side modernized.

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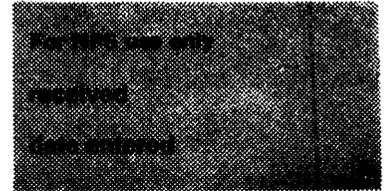
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70. Jefferson Wholesale Shoe Co., 2224-26 1st Avenue: c. 1890-91; 2 1/2 story brick; elaborately decorated brickwork, brick pilasters which project above roofline; stone caps; massive transom windows above 1st floor storefront; 2nd floor windows altered; 1st floor modernized; 2nd floor stone sills.
72. S & L Garment Co., 2218 1st Avenue North: c. 1910; 2-story honey-colored brick with arched, crenelated roofline and stone caps; decorative brickwork and stone insets; 2nd floor windows modernized with aluminum; 1st floor storefront modernized with aluminum paneling, glass.
74. American Legion Post #1, 2212 1st Avenue North: c. 1906; 2-story limestone with parapet roof; long, vertical recessed windows; decorative louvered vents; wide stone pilasters on either side with sills and classical details above secondary side entrances with 1 of the original metal gate/door remaining; 1st floor storefront modern in brick, wood and windows up through 2nd floor; no 1st floor windows remain.
75. Goodall-Brown Building, 2200 1st Avenue North: c. 1905; 5-story brick; metal cornice with lion's heads and brackets with classical details; corbeling between 4th floor westside windows, also west side facade; stone sills, lintels, keystones; segmented stone arches with keystones above 2nd and 4th floor; stone frieze in Greek keys around front and west facades; 1st floor modern with aluminum, glass and wood paneling; upper floor window renovated; metal gutters and down spouts; site of old Caldwell Hotel.

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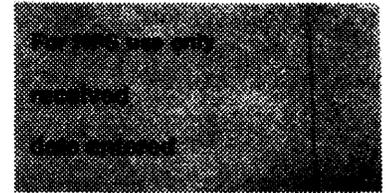
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76. Warehouse, 2128 1st Avenue North, (now Storkland): c. 1912; 2-story brick; stone and brick cornice; stone cap at roofline; decorative brickwork in contrasting colors around windows and as inset adjoining the 2 friezes; transom windows above storefront and east side windows.
78. Burchwell Co., (and Credit Service Corporation), 2122-24 1st Avenue North: c. 1910; 1-story brick; 2 bays; activated roofline with projecting piers stone caps; arched stone lintels; diamond insets; segmented bracketed stone cornice above each bay separated by brick pilasters; storefront modernized with aluminum and glass.
79. A. A. Adams & Co., 2120 1st Avenue North: c. 1905-10; 2-story brick; stone insets above 1st floor parapet roofline; elaborate massive bracketed cornice; decorative brickwork; 2nd floor windows modernized with aluminum and glass; originally Hill Ferguson Realty.
80. Birmingham Realty Co., 2118 1st Avenue North: c. 1905; Architect: William C. Weston. Contractors: Evans Construction Company. 2-story Beaux-Arts style with deep brown terra cotta ornament and yellow and brown brick. Godhead cartouche over the keystone of massive arched piers. Interior contains exceptional skylight and mezzanine.
81. Commercial (Merchants Credit Association), 2119 1st Avenue North: c. 1927; Art Deco; 2-story, block glass in transom above entrance; partially modern. Storefront; modernized upper windows; 3 windows across each floor.

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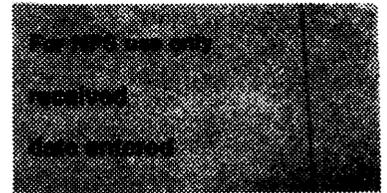
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82. Commercial Building 2121-23, 1st Avenue North: c. 1900; 2-story brick; 2 main entrances flanked on either side by bay with entrance; moderate limestone details; set of 6 multi-paned windows; 1st floor modern with glass, aluminum.
83. Commercial/Warehouse, (now Pyburn's), 2125-27 1st Avenue North: c. 1890; 2-story brick; corbeling; very little alteration except brick has been painted a brick color; storefront with 8 transoms; double entrance doors.
85. Southern Railways Transportation Building, 2201 1st Avenue North: c. 1924; 10 stories brick and limestone; 4 windows across front; 10 across sides; belt course; 2-story limestone; limestone sill above 10th floor; circular stone inlays; corniced single-door entrance; original steel windows; (name inscribed above). Only the main entrance is altered.
86. Black Diamond Coal Mining Co., 2229 1st Avenue North: c. 1903; 2-story glazed brick; 2 bays; handsome cornice above second floor with brackets and dentils around bottom; simple cornice above 1st floor with dentils; 1-story pilasters on each end and to separate bays; 2-floor windows modernized; first floor storefront recently modernized with glass and wood; original limestone sills remain beneath windows.

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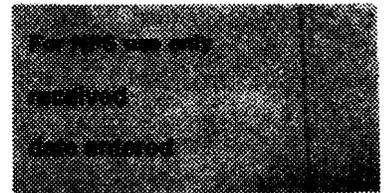
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Conditionally Contributing

18. Warehouse/Commercial, 2317 Morris Avenue
c. 1915-20; 1-story brick with stone roofline;
substantially altered but contributes in size
and scale.
20. Warehouse/Commercial, 2317 Morris Avenue:
c. 1915-20; 1-story brick with slightly
activated roofline and cap. Alterations
made in the 1970s could be reversed.
30. Commercial building, 2114-16 Morris Avenue:
c. 1940; commercial style 3-story brick with
stone sills, roofline, metal windows.
32. Commercial building, 2120 Morris Avenue:
c. 1915; 2-story variegated brick with
brick pilasters and decorative brickwork,
stone roofline, transom windows with
wrought iron.
84. Warehouse/Commercial (Business Liquidators),
2129 1st Avenue North; building was totally
refaced in 1984 but it remains in keeping
with the historic nature of the street.

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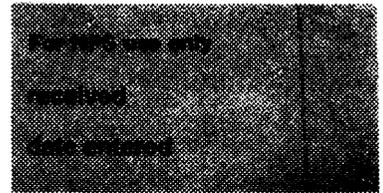
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NON-CONTRIBUTING

3. Warehouse, 2023 Morris Avenue: c. 1885;
2-story brick and frame; recently (1970;s)
altered and added onto to look like a train
and used as a Victoria Station restaurant.
4. Parking Lot, 2000-2100 block of Morris Avenue.
Extends under 21st Street Overpass.
7. Parking Lot, 2100 block of Morris Avenue.
9. Warehouse, 2205 Morris Avenue: c. 1889;
2-story brick, stone roofline. 1st and
2nd floors substantially altered.
12. Parking Lot, 2200 block Morris Avenue.
17. Parking Lot, 2300 block Morris Avenue.
21. Parking Lot, 2400 Morris Avenue.
26. Parking Lot, 2000 block Morris Avenue.
33. Parking Lot, 2100 block Morris Avenue.
35. Parking Lot, 2200 block Morris Avenue
through to 1st Avenue North.
40. Parking Lot, 2200 block Morris Avenue
through to 1st Avenue North.

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- 45. Vacant Lot, 2327 1st Avenue North.
- 48. Vacant Lot, 2405 1st Avenue North.
- 50. Warehouse (Mid-South Interiors), 2413-15 1st Avenue North: c. 1904; 1-story; facade refaced with plaster; modern garage door entrance.
- 56. Used Car Lot, 2438 1st Avenue North.
- 59. Vacant Lot, 2406-12 1st Avenue North.
- 61. Parking Lot, corner 1st Avenue and 24th Street North.
- 66. Warehouse/Commercial, 2304 1st Avenue North: c. 1914; 2-story brick. All windows have been heavily altered; facade heavily altered.
- 68. Parking Lot, corner 1st Avenue North and 23rd Street.
- 69. Commercial Building (Cumberland Capital), 3338 1st Avenue North: c. 1965; 1 story.
- 71. Silverstein Brothers (now B & S Foods), 2220-22 1st Avenue North: c. 1896; 2-story brick with stone cap at roofline; stone inlays above 2nd floor windows. First floor totally altered in style, materials; 2nd floor windows heavily altered.
- 73. Parking Lot, 2212 1st Avenue North.
- 77. Parking Lot, 2126 1st Avenue North.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below					
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention				

Specific dates c. 1885-c. 1930 **Builder/Architect** unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Commerce - Criterion A

The Morris Avenue/First Avenue North Historic District is significant as Birmingham's oldest and most important warehouse and jobbing district. Developing in two stages, the initial phase began immediately parallel northward of the city's lifeline, its rail system. Development here began c. 1885 and continued until c. 1920, with the heaviest construction occurring between 1885 and 1910. Such business concerns as wholesale grain and feed, whole-sale groceries and produce, wagons, buggies, and junk were the norm. There were also two telegraph offices used to transmit food orders around the world. By 1893, this warehouse development began its second stage by moving immediately eastward on Morris Avenue and northward to First Avenue North. Construction of these generally larger warehouses continued until c. 1930 and included similar business interests. Included were dry goods, candy, furniture, meats and groceries in addition to realty and railroad offices. With relatively few intrusions, the district has retained its integrity as Birmingham's most significant warehouse and jobbing district.

Architecture - Criterion C

The Morris Avenue/First Avenue North Historic District is significant architecturally as a warehouse and wholesale district of large utilitarian structures that clearly express their function with large open spaces, orientation to transportation, and restrained architectural ornamentation reflecting the evolution of taste from the 19th into early 20th century. The district clearly and thoroughly documents the architectural and historical development of warehouses in Birmingham. The late 19th-century structures along Morris Avenue near 20th Street (the city's main artery) are smaller brick load-bearing buildings with individual windows punched through facades modeled with ornamental brickwork. As development spread east from 20th and north from the railroad tracks in the early 20th century, the brick structures assumed a larger scale, with many three and four stories tall, up to 75 feet wide, and running through the entire block from First Avenue to Morris. Facades are much flatter, with a stylized decorative treatment using geometric figures and modified-gable and flat parapet rooflines that contrast with the more classical cornice motifs of the earlier buildings. Huge steel sash windows express the frame construction of some of the latter buildings and their functional purpose of admitting as much light as possible into the building interior.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See attached Bibliography sheets

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property approx. 9 acres

Quadrangle name Birmingham North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1 6	5 1 8 7 6 0	3 7 0 8 6 0 0
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

1 6	5 1 8 7 8 0	3 7 0 8 5 4 0
Zone	Easting	Northing

C

1 6	5 1 8 7 4 0	3 7 0 8 3 6 0
-----	-------------	---------------

D

1 6	5 1 8 6 8 0	3 7 0 8 3 2 0
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E

1 6	5 1 8 6 4 0	3 7 0 8 3 3 0
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F

1 6	5 1 8 1 7 0	3 7 0 8 0 8 0
-----	-------------	---------------

G

1 6	5 1 8 1 0 0	3 7 0 8 2 8 0
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H

1 6	5 1 8 2 0 0	3 7 0 8 2 8 0
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Verbal boundary description and justification

See red line on attached plat map

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Pamela Sterne King/Operation New Birmingham; Ellen Mertins/AHC

organization Alabama Historical Commission date August 31, 1981

street & number 725 Monroe Street telephone 205-261-3184

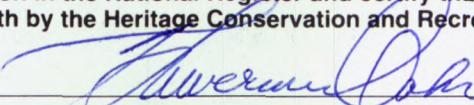
city or town Montgomery state Alabama

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

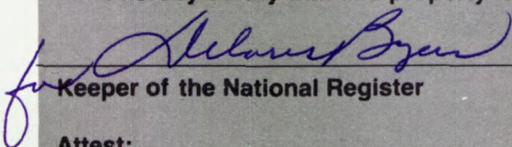
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 12-2-85

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

 Keeper of the National Register

date 1-9-86

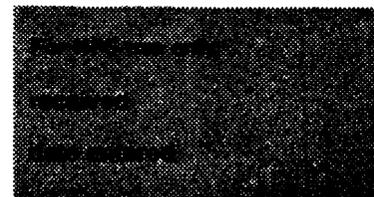
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

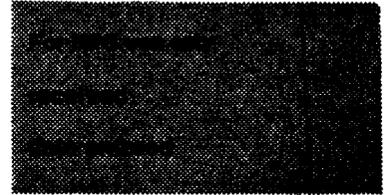
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The Morris Avenue/First Avenue North Historic District developed in two stages, beginning on Morris Avenue and extending northward to First Avenue North. The district contains one of the largest concentrations of late 19th/early 20th century architecture in the City. It was also Birmingham's oldest and most important wholesale/jobbing district.

Morris Avenue itself is virtually as old as the city of Birmingham (1871). It was included on the 1871 survey of Major William Barker in an area occupied at that time by a lake and marshy swamp. Legends have it that it was the best fishing and hunting site in the state. In 1872 the area had developed into a two-block muddy street between 18th and 20th Streets - just east of the City's present-day major artery; it had also acquired the name of Josiah Morris, Montgomery banker, and one of the organizers of the Elyton Land Company which developed Birmingham. At that time, this Morris Avenue business area consisted of a lumber yard, an iron works, a printing company and a carriage maker. Nothing remains today of those early buildings.

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National Park Service**

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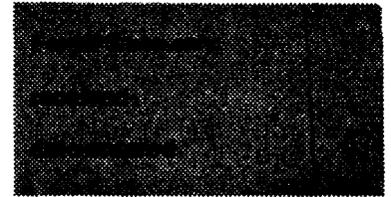
Page 2

What does remain relatively intact is the 4-1/2 block stretch of Morris Avenue which quickly became known as the City's warehouse and wholesale district. Undoubtedly helped by the newly constructed 22nd Street viaduct (1885) and infused with the wealth and ambition that was spun off from the land boom of 1886-87, Morris Avenue acquired something akin to gold rush fever. According to one historian/writer, Raymond J. Rowell, Sr., "When the big boom started, Morris Avenue took on the aspects of a gold discovery site. Lots that had gone begging at a few dollars suddenly commanded thousands each. Almost in a flash, Morris Avenue became the 'breadbasket' street of the young city." Suddenly the street was saturated by the aroma of spices, coffees, teas, melons, fruits, peanuts and other goods that gave the Avenue its distinction. Even the intrusion of a stockyard did little to dampen its overall gastronomic effect.

There remain intact, on Morris Avenue, eight warehouses constructed before 1890, and another seven built before 1900. The remaining were built by 1920. By then the narrow cobblestone and brick street had become further defined by the presence of Greek vendors on every corner, and a panoply of fish, poultry and vegetable markets and wagons.

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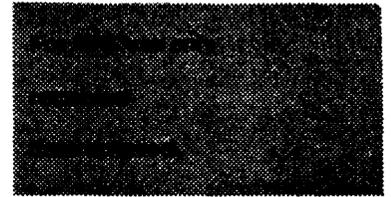
There was something of a development interlude in the early 1900's; however, that seemed to threaten Morris Avenue's survival. Newspaper accounts of 1901, wrote Howell, portended that "Morris Avenue (was) dead". According to one of these sources, some of the larger concerns had "moved out of the alley and over to the 2300-2500 blocks of First Avenue North". But, this development did not spell the end for Morris Avenue; in fact, a number of additional warehouses were constructed there between 1901 and 1920. Growth of the Morris Avenue wholesale area would continue simultaneously with that on First Avenue.

As an extension of Morris Avenue, First Avenue North likewise derived its definition, economic viability and endurance from its being as a wholesale and jobbing district. As early as 1893 dry goods, groceries, fruits and confections, wagons and lumber were found there in abundance. Collectively, they defined the entire area as a wholesale community.

There have been, in addition, other defining characteristics which serve to supplement the dominant wholesale presence. First, there was always the presence of residences and boarding houses there. 2420 (inv. #60) was built c. 1891 as a two-story brick boarding house with first and second floor cornices and brackets. 2300 (inv. #69 c. 1900-1910) was a three-story boarding house with stone sills and a massive projecting metal cornice

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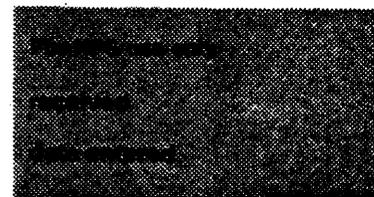
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highlighted with Greek keys. Second, the location of two major realty offices c. 1905-10 helped to define the street. Birmingham Realty Company, (2118 1st Avenue North), successor to the Elyton Land Company was designed by William C. Weston as one of the finest examples of Beaux Arts architecture in the city. Right next door at 2120 the more modest Hill Ferguson Realty Company (now A. A. Adams & Co.) was located. It has a parapet roofline and a bracketed cornice. Both businesses remain there today. Third, First Avenue early on developed an apparent penchant for the saloon. As early as 1890 saloons dotted the area. Many, including 2404 (inv. #63) reputedly doubled as a brothel. The combination of these elements consequently broadened the warehouse motif present on Morris Avenue to include large and small commercial buildings, and warehouses of 1, 2, 3, and 4 stories and a wide range of sizes.

The Morris Avenue/First Avenue North Historic District, in part, has retained its wholesale definition, primarily along First Avenue. There, a variety of dry goods, spices, display fixtures and foods may be bought wholesale. Morris Avenue, on the other hand, underwent an unsuccessful attempt in the 1970's to remake the street into Birmingham's entertainment district. Beginning in the early 1980's, it began another and current redevelopment of these warehouses into first class professional office use.

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The Birmingham News, December 19, 1971.

The Birmingham News-Age Herald, September 27, 1936.

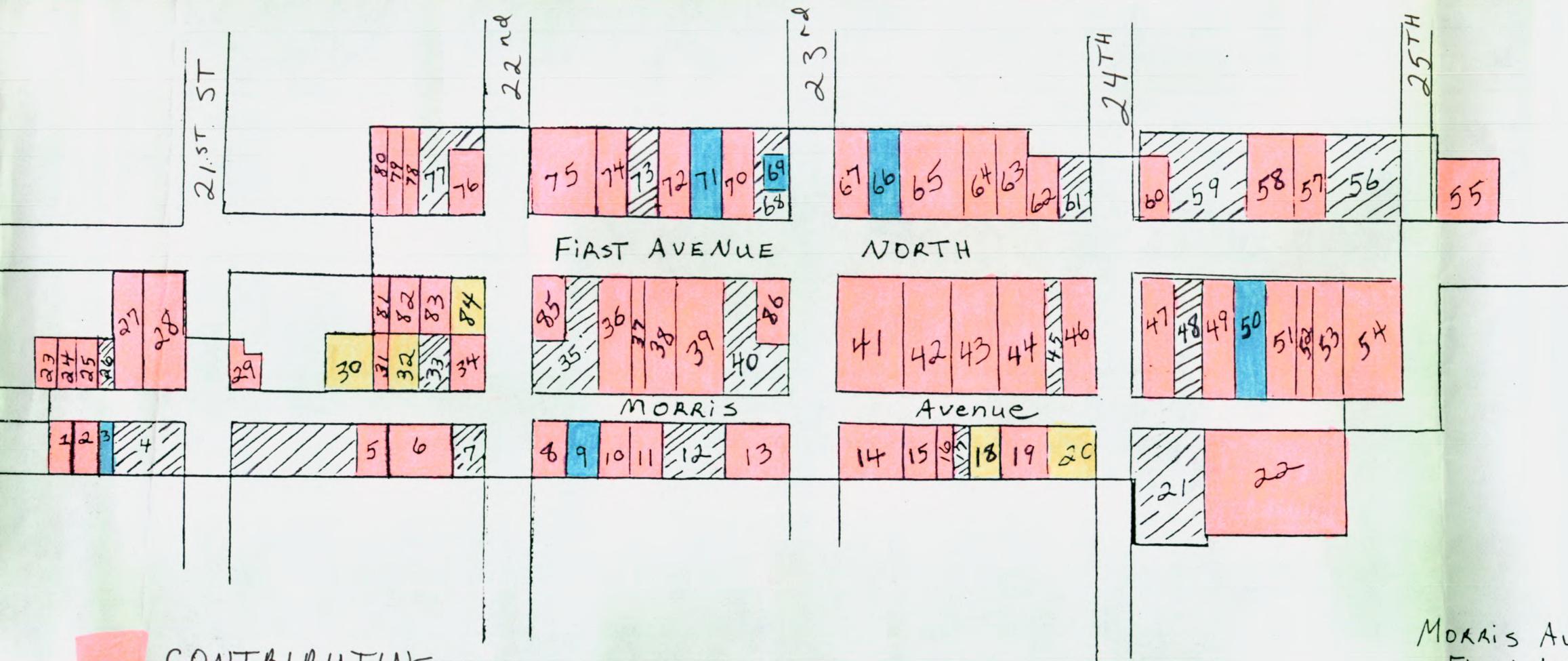
The Birmingham News, June 29, 1958.

The Birmingham News, March 6, 1974.

The Birmingham News, August 29, 1974.

The Birmingham News, June 17, 1978.

Raymond J. Rowell, Sr., Birmingham-As-It-Was, 1972.



- CONTRIBUTING
- CONDITIONALLY CONTRIBUTING
- NON-CONTRIBUTING
- Parking / Vacant Lot

MORRIS Avenue /
First Avenue North
Historic District

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 86000009

Date Listed: 1/9/1986

Property Name: Morris Avenue/First Avenue North Historic District

County: Jefferson

State: AL

-
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

3/5/09
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

The district consists of commercial buildings with a period of significance from c.1885-c.1930. The building at 222-2222 1st Avenue was built in c.1896 but designated as non-contributing due to alterations to storefront and second floor windows. A more accurate construction date is circa 1910 and all of the brickwork on the façade is intact, including the first floor brick piers. This façade is also very similar to the buildings on either side. Therefore, the building should be designated as a contributing structure.

The Alabama State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)