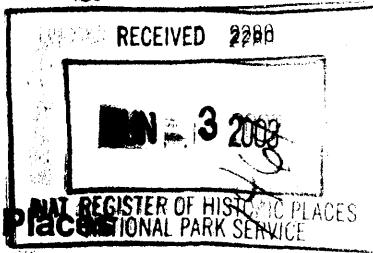


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

25

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 Murray Commercial Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Walnut St. on the North, L.P. Miller St. on the East, Poplar St. on the South, and 6th St. on the West.  not for publication N/A

city or town Murray  vicinity N/A

state Kentucky code KY county Calloway code 035 zip code 42701

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 forth 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.)

David L. Morgan, SHPO and Executive Director, KHC  
Signature of certifying official/Title 10-21-02  
Date  
Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office  
State of 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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

for  
Daniel J. Viva 6/24/03

Murray Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Calloway Co., Kentucky  
County and State

**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 the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
62	20	buildings
1		sites
		structures
1		objects
64	20	Total

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

N/A

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

8

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business  
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse  
COMMERCE/TRADE/professional  
COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution  
COMMERCE/TRADE/department store  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
SOCIAL/meeting hall

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business  
COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store  
COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse  
COMMERCE/TRADE/professional  
COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution  
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
SOCIAL/meeting hall

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN:Gothic, Queen Anne,  
Romanesque  
LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:  
Colonial Revival, Classical Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
walls BRICK  
WOOD - weatherboard  
roof ASPHALT  
other STONE

**Narrative Description**

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

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 a birthplace or grave.
- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1897-1952

Significant Dates

1842

1843

1890

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Kentucky Heritage Council  
300 Washington Street  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Murray Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Calloway Co., Kentucky  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 20.35

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6
---	---

3	8	3	7	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	5	2	4	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

3 

1	6
---	---

3	8	3	3	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	5	2	1	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

2 

1	6
---	---

3	8	3	6	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	5	2	0	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

4 

1	6
---	---

3	8	3	2	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	5	2	3	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Donna G. Logsdon, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization Logsdon & Logsdon Architects date 8-1-02

street & number P.O. Box 10 telephone 270-528-4698

city or town Hardyville state Kentucky zip code 42746

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

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

**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 listings. 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 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 6 & 7 Page 1

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

## 6. Function or Use – continued

### Historic Functions

GOVERNMENT/courthouse  
GOVERNMENT/post office  
COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse  
RECREATION AND CULTURE/  
monument/marker  
LANDSCAPE/parking lot  
TRANSPORTATION/road-related (vehicular)  
FUNERARY/mortuary  
DOMESTIC/hotel  
RELIGION/religious facility  
RELIGION/church-related residence  
RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/  
animal facility  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/  
processing  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/  
storage

### Current Functions

GOVERNMENT/courthouse  
FUNERARY/mortuary  
RELIGION/religious facility  
RECREATION AND CULTURE/  
monument/marker  
LANDSCAPE/parking lot  
TRANSPORTATION/road- related  
(vehicular)  
DOMESTIC/hotel  
EDUCATION/school  
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/  
storage

## 7. Description - continued

### Architectural Classification

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS:  
Commercial Style, Bungalow/Craftsman  
MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco

### Materials

**foundation:** BRICK  
**walls:** CONCRETE  
STUCCO  
SYNTHETICS - Vinyl  
**roof:** SYNTHETICS – Rubber

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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### 7. Narrative Description

The **Murray Commercial Historic District**, located in Calloway County, Kentucky, is composed of 106 properties that contain 62 primary buildings, one site, and one object that contribute to the district's sense of place and time. The overall historic character of the district is strong despite the twenty primary buildings that are non-contributing. Buildings designated as non-contributing were either altered to the extent that the majority of the original materials and character-defining features are no longer visible or the building is less than 50 years old. The total number of buildings in this district is 82. Except for the non-contributing buildings, the district still retains much of the same appearance as it did at the end of the period of significance, in 1952.

The **Murray Commercial Historic District**, in general, encompasses part of a sixteen-block area of commercial, governmental, and religious buildings dating between 1879 and 1952. Architecturally, the district's distinct character is defined by a majority of one- and two-story brick commercial buildings that were constructed on long narrow lots as a direct result of the original 80-acre plot of land that was subdivided into 137 residential and business lots with eight streets, four running east and west and four running north and south in 1843 (Jennings, 1980: 42-43). (See Figure 1, 1854 Original Murray Plat Map.)

The **Murray Commercial Historic District** became a significant commercial center in Calloway County because of a series of events that transpired once the town was established as the county seat in 1842. County commerce slowly developed around the courthouse that is centrally located on the public square in the center of town. A cohesive group of historic commercial buildings that line the square today are evidence of that fact. The post office, established in 1843, remains in operation today. Main Street eventually was transformed into State Route 94, and the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad (now CSX) began stopping here in 1890 (History, 1931) just four blocks east of the town square. These two major transportation corridors, coupled with U.S. 641 just west of town, promoted Murray as a major shipping point. It is the combination of these major factors that perpetuated the continued growth and development Murray.

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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   3  

**Murray Commercial Historic District**

**Calloway County, Kentucky**

## Murray's Commercial Historic District Boundaries

The proposed **Murray Commercial Historic District** straddles one of the major east-west transportation routes in Calloway County, Kentucky, State Route 94, or Main Street (See Figure 2, Calloway County Map). The proposed district covers 20.35 acres and contains 106 lots that extend one block north and south and two blocks east and west of the courthouse square. (See Figure 3, Proposed Murray Commercial Historic District Map, 2002). Specifically, the western boundary of the historic district includes 3 properties that face 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and one facing Main Street between Walnut and Maple Streets. The majority of properties in the nine block area that surrounds the courthouse square are located between Walnut Street to the north and Poplar Street to the south. The eastern boundary roughly extends to L.P. Miller Street and includes portions of five blocks that face Walnut, Main, Maple, Cherry and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets. The proposed **Murray Commercial Historic District** includes a portion of the properties within the originally platted map of 1854 (See Figure 1) and encompasses a cohesive group of buildings representing the period of significance from 1897 to 1952.

## Murray Building Characteristics

The **Murray Commercial Historic District** contains the most cohesive group of early commercial, governmental and religious buildings that formed the major commercial center in Calloway County. Of the 106 properties in the district, there are 62 primary buildings, one object, and one site that contribute to the district. Of the 62 contributing principal buildings, 16, or 26%, date between 1879 and 1899; 26, or 42%, date between 1900 and 1930; and 20, or 32%, date between 1931 and 1952, the end of the period of significance. Most of the contributing buildings are primarily one- and two-story brick commercial buildings with flat or low sloping roofs behind parapet walls on long narrow lots facing State Route 94, or Main Street and the other three sides of the courthouse.

<b>Estimated Date of Construction</b>	<b># of primary buildings</b>	<b>% of primary buildings</b>
1879 to 1899	16	26
1900 to 1930	26	42
1931 to 1952	20	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   4  

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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The majority of these buildings have remained intact for over 50 years and are exemplified by the fact that this cohesive collection of turn-of-the-century commercial buildings reflects elements from a variety of architectural styles. The most common aspect in this historic district is the abundance of character defining features that remain intact as well as original building materials such as brick, concrete block, wood, and stone. Other building elements commonly found throughout the historic district include large storefront windows with recessed entries on the ground floor and stone lintels and sills accentuating tall narrow windows on the upper floors. Awnings or canopies extend over the concrete sidewalks sheltering pedestrians from the elements. A flat or stepped parapet wall is often enhanced by corbeled brick cornices or tile caps.

A few buildings that deviate from the traditional commercial appearance of row buildings include: the Calloway County Courthouse (CWM-11) # 73; five residential buildings that have been converted to commercial use (CWM-94) # 1, (CWM-7) # 2, (CWM-8) # 71, (CWM-99) # 60, and (CWM-65) # 61; one warehouse on N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (CWM-76) # 38; three churches (CWM-15) # 7, (CWM-66) # 59, and (CWM-19) # 48; the Old Murray U.S. Post Office (CWM-17) # 50; an Art Deco service station (CWM-73) # 49 and law office (CWM-93) # 57.

Amidst these blocks of prominent commercial buildings is one historic site (CWM-100) # 39 that is located behind a warehouse, and one object, a Confederate Monument (CWM-30) # 72, situated on the courthouse lawn.

There are twenty primary buildings that are non-contributing. Of these, eleven historic buildings have been altered to the extent that the majority of their original materials and character-defining features are no longer visible, rendering them non-contributing. Nine buildings, constructed after the period of significance, 1952, were not considered to be historically significant and therefore do not contribute to the historic district.

This district is distinguished from other towns in Calloway County by the high density of closely related commercial buildings constructed around a courthouse square; town development in close proximity to three major transportation routes, State Route 94, U.S. 164, and the N., C., and St. L railroad, (now CSX); materials such as brick, concrete block, stone and wood; the workmanship displayed in the details including brick corbelling, stepped parapet walls, as well as stone sills and



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

lintels; their association to each other, and the feeling they convey as a cohesive unit representing the period of significance from 1897 to 1952.

**Integrity**

The **Murray Commercial Historic District** meets National Register Criterion A and is significant in the area of Commerce because it displays trends that were critically important in the Evolution of Commercial Centers in Calloway County. The district has been identified as an area that conveys a strong sense of its historic significance through its historic buildings and sites. The district reveals much information about the development of commercial centers from its earliest days to 1952 when the last historic building in the district was constructed.

The integrity factors that are vital in conveying the Murray's commercial identity and were used in evaluating their eligibility are **location, setting, design, materials, association and feeling**. This district is distinguished from other towns in Calloway County by the high density of closely related buildings and their **location** in close proximity to State Route 94, or Main Street; their **urban setting** adjacent to the railroad; the building **design** in terms of scale, massing, and fenestration; materials such as brick, concrete block, wood, and stone; the **association** of the buildings and sites with their identity as part of a county seat; and the **feeling** they convey as a cohesive unit representing the period of significance from 1897 to 1952.

The integrity of the entire district is extremely high as determined by the criteria outlined below which is supported by the following statistics. Sixty-two contributing buildings are situated on 74, or 70%, of the 106 properties in the district while 20 non-contributing buildings are located on 32 non-contributing properties. Nine of the 20 non-contributing buildings were constructed after the period of significance, 1952, while eleven buildings have been altered to the extent that the original exterior materials are no longer visible and often their original openings have been infilled with new materials or covered completely with new materials, thus changing their original exterior appearance.

All except one of the historic buildings in the district have integrity of **location** since they have remained in the same place where they were originally constructed. Their **setting** provides an accurate picture of the historic character of a commercial center that began as an early settlement village around 1825, became a county seat in 1842, and eventually grew into a thriving commercial

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

---

center centered around a courthouse square that continues to be viable in 2002.

Integrity of **design** in this district is fairly high. The majority of the buildings have maintained their original scale, massing, materials, patterns of fenestration and proportion. In relationship to commercial centers, **design** relates to a series of commercial buildings that were constructed around a public square that have retained their character defining features and continue to provide goods and services to a community.

Integrity of **materials** in the district is extremely high because the majority of building exteriors have retained their original materials and character defining features that reflect the period of significance. The appearance of the **Murray Commercial Historic District** today conveys the **feeling** of a historic town that is rich in character that developed into a commercial center because it was the county seat. **Murray** also retains a high degree of integrity of **association** with the historical events that took place that enticed people to continue to reside here.

All 62 principal historic buildings, one object, and one site in the district have been reviewed using the criteria outlined below for evaluating the impact of alternatives on the integrity of design, feeling and association.

### Alterations

Common alterations to historic buildings generally fall into four categories: alterations to the exterior fabric including original brick facades covered with stucco, permastone, or a metal slipcover, wood weatherboard siding covered with vinyl or aluminum siding; alterations to original window and/or door openings including the installation of new windows, infilling existing openings, making new openings in the exterior walls, and applying shutters; storefront modifications that involve infilling transom windows, modifying the original entry location, replacing storefront windows, or adding canopies or awnings; and additions to the building keeping in scale and using similar materials with the principal building.

In **Murray**, for buildings meeting the terms of Criterion A, it has been determined that changes may have occurred in two or three categories outlined above without compromising the overall integrity of **design** for the building. Many combinations exist based on the four typical alterations listed above.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number   7   Page   7  

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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The following factors were taken into consideration in evaluating the impact of alterations: the nature and extent of the alteration; when the alteration took place, and whether the alteration can be easily removed, reversed, or even should be considered a significant part of the history of the building. Alterations reflecting popular building trends, building code requirements, the number of buildings that have similar alterations, and the impact of the alteration on the overall character of the historic district was evaluated.

As early as the 1940s, permastone was introduced as a new material that provided an updated, new appearance, and once applied, set the building apart from the majority of brick commercial buildings that lined the Main Streets in the United States. Stucco was often used as a covering to stabilize deteriorating and leaking historic brick walls while providing a uniform, clean appearance that could be easily painted. Metal slipcovers were also applied to historic buildings to modernize their appearance in order to compete with emerging shopping malls. Vinyl and aluminum siding were also promoted to cover building exteriors because it was believed to reduce maintenance costs over a long period of time since it did not require painting. Historic wood sash windows were often replaced with energy efficient aluminum windows and stationary louvered shutters were often applied to accent window openings or cover enclosed openings.

A common trend found in commercial districts in the United States involved renovating storefronts. Often, large storefront windows were replaced with new materials and existing storefront entries were relocated to accommodate new uses and attract more business with a new appearance. Transom windows were often infilled or covered over with a new canopy or awning when electricity was introduced because natural light was no longer needed and interior ceilings were lowered to reduce energy costs. Exterior additions, constructed in relationship to the primary building's size, scale, mass, and materials, provided additional building area.

Of the 62 principal historic buildings in the district, 20, or 32 %, have little or no alterations; 19, or 31 %, have one alteration; 13, or 21 %, have two alterations; 7, or 11 %, have three alterations, and 3, or 5% have four or more alterations.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 8

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

Number of changes	# of primary buildings	% of total buildings
Little or no alteration	20	32
One alteration	19	31
Two alterations	13	21
Three alterations	7	11
Four or more alterations	3	5
Total	62	100

Examples of individual buildings displaying changes within the four categories are discussed below.

**Buildings with little or no alterations**

Two buildings retaining the highest degree of integrity in the district are the National Hotel (CWM-18) # 3 and the First Christian Church (CWM-15) # 7. None of the exterior character-defining features of these buildings have been altered. The National Hotel, built in 1928, is a three-story brick, rectangular, Classical Revival style building with a flat roof. The First Christian Church is a two-story brick Gothic Revival church with two corbelled brick towers accented with stained glass and lancet windows. Hood moulds, buttress caps, stone sills and other ornamental details highlight the central portico entry and two towers. Both of these buildings are excellent examples that have retained all of their character-defining features and have been well maintained over the years.

**Buildings with one alteration**

Two buildings with one alteration are the State Farm Insurance Building (CWM-46) # 26 and Bill's Standard Oil Station (CWM-71) # 52. The State Farm Insurance Building is two-story, brick commercial building that was built in 1891. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a metal slipcover was applied to the front façade above the storefront entry. As part of the local Renaissance Kentucky program administered by Murray Main Street, the property owner requested and received partial funding for exterior renovation in 2001 through the façade grant program. Using historical photographs, the metal slipcover was removed and the storefront entry and upper story windows were replaced and accented with appropriate awnings making this the first in a series of façade renovations that are

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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currently taking place in downtown Murray. Bill's Standard Oil Station is a one-story, brick, Art Deco style service station that was constructed prior to 1925. Situated on a corner of the district, the angled entry allowed vehicles easy access to the gas pumps that were available at one time. Currently unoccupied, the one alteration to this building involves window openings. The main storefront window has been infilled with wood paneling as a safety precaution against vandalism and a portable air conditioning unit has been installed in the overhead garage door slightly altering it's original appearance.

### **Buildings with two alterations**

Two buildings that have two alterations are the Stubblefield Building (CWM-33) # 10 and the Gatlin and Swann Building (CWM-41) # 21. The Stubblefield Building is a two-story, 20<sup>th</sup> Century commercial style brick building that has a corbelled brick parapet wall and a flat roof. Built in 1884, it is situated on a long, narrow, rectangular lot opposite the courthouse. Like many buildings in the district, the original second floor window openings and storefront windows with central recessed entry on the front façade have been replaced with new materials. A new awning protects pedestrians from the elements. These alterations do not compromise the overall integrity of this historic building. The Gatlin & Swann Building has been similarly altered. Constructed in the 1890s, this two-story brick commercial building has elliptical arched window heads on the second floor that remain intact. New storefront windows, installed between the original rusticated stone pilasters on the front façade remain visible below the new canopy. This building was renovated in 2001 using façade grant funds administered by the local Renaissance Kentucky Program.

### **Buildings with three alterations**

One building that has three alterations is the Ryan Building (CWM-38) # 15 which is located in the middle of the block on the north side of Main Street directly opposite the Calloway County Courthouse. This two-story brick building was constructed in 1880 and has a flat roof. The storefront entry has been replaced with new materials, the transom is now covered with an awning and the second floor windows have been enclosed with shutters. Although an awning hides the transom and shutters cover the windows, it is feasible that the windows can be reopened and the transom be uncovered in order to restore the original facade in the future.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   10  

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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### Non-contributing buildings

Examples of two buildings that have been altered to the extent they no longer contribute to the district are Porter Chevrolet Garage (CWM-64) # 62 and the Corn-Austin Building (CWM-39) # 16. The Porter Chevrolet Garage was built in 1912 as a service station for vehicles on Maple Street. Two of the three original openings on the front façade have been reduced in size, a mansard roof or canopy now extends the length of the building, and board and batten siding now covers the original brick façade and parapet wall, altering its original design. Thus, these alterations have rendered the building as non-contributing. The Corn-Austin Building is located on the north side of Main Street, opposite the Calloway County Courthouse. This two-story brick building that was built in the 1890s has been covered with stucco, the upper floor windows have been enclosed and are no longer visible, and a mansard roof has been added over the modified storefront entry. Considering that none of the original building materials or character-defining features remains intact, this building no longer contributes to the district.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 11

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

List of Resources

Murray Commercial Historic District																	
Code	Res. # CWM-	Address	Stories				Materials					Alter.		Date	Eval.		
			1	1.5	2	2.5+	WD	BR	BV	CB	Other	Y	N		C	NC	
1	94	105 N. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	X				X		X				X		1930s	X	
2	7	103 N. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.				X	X						X		1899	X	
3	18	100 N. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.				X				X				X	1928	X	
4	31	516 E. Main St.	X					X					X		1930s		X
5	32	514 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1930s	X	
6	101	500 E. Main St.			X				X	X			X		1995		X
7	15	111 N. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.			X			X					X	X	1904	X	
					X				X				X		1960s		X
8	95	102 N. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	X					X					X		1920s	X	
9	96	100 N. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	X					X					X		1920s	X	
10	33	418 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1884	X	
11	34	414-416 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1900	X	
12	35	410-412 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1900s	X	
13	36	408 E. Main St.				X		X					X		1938	X	
14	37	406 E. Main St.				X		X					X		1879	X	
15	38	404 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1880	X	
16	39	402 E. Main St.	X							X	X		X		1890s		X
17	40	400 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1890s		X
18	92	108 N. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	X				X		X				X		1920s	X	
19	102	104 N. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.	X									Drivit	X		1920s		X
20	103	100 N. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.	X									Metal	X		1920	X	
21	41	314 E. Main St.			X				X				X		1890s	X	
22	42	310 E. Main St.			X				X				X		1890s	X	
23	43	308 E. Main St.			X				X	X			X		1890s	X	
24	44	306 E. Main St.			X					X			X		1890s	X	
25	45	304 E. Main St.			X				X	X			X		1800s	X	
26	46	302 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1891	X	
27	47	300 E. Main St.			X		X				X		X		1890s	X	
28	83	101 N. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.	X					X					X		1890s	X	
29	82	103 N. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.	X				X		X				X		1937	X	
30	81	105 N. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.	X				X		X				X		1937	X	

WD - WOOD FRAME, BR - BRICK, BV - BRICK VENEER, CB - CONCRETE BLOCK, CT - CLAY TILE, ST - STUCCO Y - YES, N - NO  
C - CONTRIBUTING, NC - NON-CONTRIBUTING

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 12

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

**List of Resources**

Murray Commercial Historic District																	
Code	Res. # CWM-	Address	Stories				Materials					Alter.		Date	Eval.		
			1	1.5	2	2.5+	WD	BR	BV	CB	ST	Y	N		C	NC	
31	80	107 N. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.	X					X					X		1945	X	
32	79	109 N. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.	X				X		X				X		1945	X	
33	76	110 N. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.			X			X					X		1902	X	
34	78	100 N. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.	X					X					X		1968		X
35	48	212-214 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1907	X	
36	49	210-210 1/2 Main St.	X		X					X	X		X		1936		X
37	50	208 E. Main St.	X					X					X		1939	X	
38	51	206 E. Main St.	X					X					X		1927	X	
39	100	101-105 N. Cherry		S	I	T	E						X		1925	X	
40	74	210 Walnut St.			X						X		X		1948	X	
41	75	212 Walnut St.			X			X					X		1917	X	
42	52	206-208 E. Main St.	X				X		X				X		1943	X	
43	53	200-204 E. Main St.	X				X		X				X		1948	X	
44	77	103 S. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.	X					X					X		1952	X	
45	98	209 Maple St.				X		X					X		1946	X	
46	97	201 S. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.				X		X					X		1960s		X
47	104	202 S. 3 <sup>rd</sup> St.			X					X	X		X		1993		X
48	19	203 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.				X		X					X		1931	X	
49	73	301 Maple St.			X			X					X		1925	X	
50	17	201 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.	X					X					X		1931	X	
51	72	204-206 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.	X					X					X		1924	X	
52	71	200 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.	X					X					X		1925	X	
53	70	403 Maple St.			X			X					X		1929	X	
54	69	405 Maple St.			X			X					X		1994		X
55	68	407 Maple St.			X						X		X		1940	X	
56	67	411 Maple St.	X				X		X				X		1973		X
57	93	201 S. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	X				X		X				X		1930s	X	
58	105	503 Maple St.			X				X	X			X		1990s		X
59	66	503 Maple St.			X			X					X		1903	X	
									X						1961		X
60	99	102 S. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.		X			X						X		1920s	X	

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 13

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

List of Resources

Murray Commercial Historic District																	
Code	Res. # CWM-	Address	Stories				Materials					Alter.		Date	Eval.		
			1	1.5	2	2.5	WD	BR	BV	CB	ST	Y	N		C	NC	
61	65	508 Maple St.	X									X		X	1948	X	
62	64	504 Maple St.	X				X		X				X		1912		X
63	63	502-502 1/2 Maple St.			X			X					X		1948	X	
64	62	500 Male St.			X		X		X				X		1925	X	
65	61	118 S. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.			X			X					X		1925		X
66	60	114-116 S. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.			X		X		X				X		1925	X	
67	59	110 S. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.			X		X		X				X		1916	X	
68	58	104-106 S. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.			X			X					X		1916	X	
69	57	100 S. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.			X			X					X		1925	X	
70	90	107 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.			X			X			X	X			1880s		X
71	8	603 E. Main St.			X			X					X		1899	X	
72	30	E. Main St.		O	B	J	E	C	T				X		1917	X	
73	11	E. Main St.				X		X					X		1913	X	
74	54	101 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.			X			X					X		1975		X
75	84	300 Maple St.			X					X			X		1960s		X
76	91	302-304 Maple St.			X			X					X		1925	X	
77	85	117-119 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.			X			X					X		1890	X	
78	86	115 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.			X		X	X					X		1916		X
79	87	113 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.			X				X	X			X		1880s		X
80	88	111 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.			X			X					X		1880s	X	
81	89	109 S. 4 <sup>th</sup> St.				X	X						X		1880s	X	

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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## 8. Statement of Significance

The **Murray Commercial Historic District** meets National Register Criterion A and is significant in the area of Commerce because it displays trends that were critically important in the physical development of commercial centers in Calloway County. The district is significant for the excellent way it reflects all of the key elements that define commercial center growth including: its central location in the county and at the crossroads of three major transportation routes, U.S. 641, State Route 94, and the CSX Railroad; the establishment of a post office that remains open today; a growth in population due to its status as the county seat and industrial development; and a cohesive group of commercial, residential, financial, educational and industrial resources on their original lots according to an early town map.

In order to evaluate the significance of the proposed **Murray Commercial Historic District** it is necessary to identify the elements that are instrumental in commercial center development. Once the elements are identified and analyzed, they will be used to compare eight other commercial centers in Calloway County with Murray in order to establish its significance. The following elements have been identified as factors that influenced the growth and development of Calloway County commercial centers: geographical location, transportation systems, population, governmental and educational facilities, financial institutions, and industries.

Considering the fact that each town had a combination of these elements, then one can ask which have the greatest affect on a town's continued growth or decline? The growth and development of eight commercial centers in Calloway County will be discussed, analyzed and evaluated based on this list of common elements in the following framework, "Evolution of Commercial Centers in Calloway County, 1843-1952" in order to answer that question and establish Murray's significance.

A number of key events that affected Murray's history include: the formation of Calloway County in 1822; the town selected as the county seat in 1842; its central geographical location in the county; 80 acres of land subdivided into 137 lots in 1843 (Fig. 1), a post office established in 1843 that continues to operate, the town's incorporation in 1844, the first government building, the Courthouse, built on the square in 1844; educational and financial institutions consisting of churches, schools and banks; industries such as clothing and tobacco factories; three major

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

---

transportation systems bisecting the town; a growing population requiring an increase in housing stock and hotels to accommodate visitors; and a series of fires that shaped the town's physical appearance between the years of 1843 and 1952. The proposed **Murray Commercial Historic District** will be illuminated in a powerful way by comparing common elements that are instrumental in the growth and development of eight other Calloway County towns.

### Evolution of Commercial Centers in Calloway County, 1843-1952

In order to establish the significance of the **Murray Commercial Historic District** with respect to the "Evolution of Commercial Centers in Calloway County," it is vitally important to compare Murray with other commercial centers in Calloway County. Since the formation of the county in 1822, 46 communities have been documented on maps between 1854 and 2000. After conducting in-depth research and investigation into the history of each town and traveling the county, this researcher selected the eight commercial centers that exist today in Calloway County to analyze and compare with Murray.

The following factors were used to compare the growth and development of Murray with other commercial centers in Calloway County that developed during the same time period: geographical location, transportation systems, population, governmental and educational facilities, financial institutions, and industries.

The geographic location of early settlements may have determined a town's continued existence, depending on the needs of the community and surrounding area. Settlements situated on flat fertile land adjacent to bodies of water often prospered because water was used for sustenance, growing crops, raising livestock and tobacco, and operating gristmills which provided sources of income.

Another key factor that determined the town's continued growth or decline is its proximity to major transportation routes, such as highways, rivers and railroads that served as a shipping point for the surrounding area. Once land was cleared, a town survey or plan may have been drawn to establish boundaries and organize future growth and development. Population growth was based on the local amenities, the town's proximity to other urban centers, and the services it could provide for its citizens and the surrounding area.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

---

Governmental facilities, constructed to provide for the needs of the community, usually include a trading post, post office, city hall or county courthouse. Educational facilities offered a place to worship and learn basic skills. Financial institutions provided a source of income to promote economic development. Industry, such as flour or saw mills, dairy production, and tobacco rehandling warehouses were instrumental in boosting the local economy. All of these elements were used to compare the **Murray Commercial Historic District** with respect to the Evolution of Commercial Centers in Calloway County. Murray is compared to eight other commercial centers that developed during the same time period in Calloway County: Wadesboro; Hazel; Crossland; New Providence; New Concord; Almo; Kirksey; and Dexter.

### Calloway County

Calloway County, the seventy-second county in the order of formation, is situated in the southwestern part of Kentucky in the Jackson Purchase Region on the Tennessee state line (History, 1931). It was formed on November 3, 1822, from a section of Hickman County. It is bordered by Graves on the west, Marshall County on the north (Bryant, 1992: 152), the Tennessee River on the east and the State of Tennessee on the south. The principal streams are the east and west forks of Clark's River and Blood River (History, 1931). Covering 386 square miles, it was named in honor of Colonel Richard Callaway (Bryant, 1992: 152), an elected member of the Virginia House of Burgesses and General Assembly from the territory of Kentucky before the Commonwealth was admitted to the Union in an election in Boonesborough in 1775, when he was chosen as representative. In 1777, he was re-elected to the post to serve until 1779. Colonel Callaway was murdered in 1780 by marauding Indians while engaged in building a flatboat service for the Kentucky River crossing business. While serving as a member of the House of Burgesses, he was part of a delegation to lay out the town of Boonesborough (Jennings: 1980, 15).

The earliest settlers came to Calloway County from Virginia and the Carolinas. They settled in the northern part of the county because water and timber were abundant. The Chickasaw Indians have left considerable signs of their habitation along Clayton's Creek in Calloway County on the flat top of round mounds. Arrowheads of stone have also been found all over the county. (History, 1931).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

---

The first permanent Euro-American settlement in Calloway County was founded between 1817 and 1818 by Banister Wade and called Wadesboro, which served as the county seat from 1822 to 1842. When Marshall County was created out of Calloway County in 1842 (Bryant, 1992: 152) by an act of the state legislature (Jennings: 1980, 17-18), the county seat was moved to Murray, the geographical center of the county. The town was named after John L. Murray, a member of Congress for eleven years (History, 1931).

**Wadesboro**

Wadesboro is located on the West Fork of Clarks River, seven miles north of Murray and 300 yards from the Marshall County line. Situated on the Wadesboro Road, just west of Dexter and U.S. 641, this site may have been settled by and named for merchant, Banister Wade from Halifax, Virginia, between 1817 and 1818. The town was established between 1821 and 1822 and became the first county seat in 1822 when Calloway County was established earlier that year. The post office was established on March 12, 1824 and closed in 1904 (Rennick, 1984: 307).

Wadesboro was often referred to as the Capital of the Purchase because it was a convenient location for the first settlers crossing the Tennessee River (Jennings: 1980, 18). A hotel, tavern, and a land grant office served the town's 300 inhabitants including a physician and several merchants. At the height of the town's growth there were 14 large stores in business, a tannery, flour and lumber mills, a hotel, three or more blacksmith shops, two churches, public buildings and a schoolhouse. Wadesboro's growth plummeted after all the public lands had been sold and the county seat was moved to Murray in 1842. Thirty years later, only three stores remained open (Jennings, 1980: 21-28). By 1978, a church, cemetery, and several red brick houses on 86 residential lots covering 160 acres of land existed (Jennings, 1980: 26). As of 2002, only a few houses dating from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century are visible in this vast farmland area where Wadesboro's historic buildings once stood.

Although Wadesboro's had all of the elements of a successful commercial center, once the county seat was moved to Murray, it slowly returned to an agrarian community located near a major transportation route, U.S. 641. This effect suggest that among the many variable analyzed here, the most important factor contributing to a Calloway County's town success is naming it the county seat.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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Hazel

Hazel, located on the southern border of Calloway County at the intersection of U.S. Route 641 at S.R. 893, was established in 1890 by the Nashville Chattanooga & St. Louis, (formerly the L&N, now CSX) Railroad. The town may have been named for the daughter of Samuel H. Dees who established the Hazel post office on December 31, 1890 (Rennick, 1984: 135). Between 1900 and 1910, a buggy and wagon shop with a full line of hardware and farming implements opened for business (History, 1931) and three new two-story brick buildings were being constructed along the east side of Main Street (Jennings, 1980: 107). In 1909, Hazel was the site of the new two-story brick county high school building (Jennings, 1980: 146) where 25 students completed classes in the spring of 1910 (Jennings, 1980: 152). In 1911, the construction of the N.C. & St. L. Railroad depot, located north of the brick hotel, aided to the growth of Hazel and served as an important transportation link for the 248 pupils, including 50 borders, from the north section of the county (Jennings, 1980: 164-165).

Although the Hazel Hotel burned down in 1914 (Jennings, 1980: 196), the Dees Bank of Hazel was organized the following year (Jennings, 1980: 203). By the early-1930s, Hazel was considered the "Hub of Calloway County" (Jennings: 1980, 259-260) because this thriving trading center had a population of 900 with two banks, a tobacco rehandling house (Jennings: 1980, 253), a blacktopped highway (Jennings: 1980, 255), and a new livestock center (Jennings, 1980: 435).

As of 2002, a Baptist Church, a Church of Christ, a Faith Independent Missionary Baptist Church, a Discount Tobacco Store, an Antiques store, a post office, a funeral home, two banks, a tire service store, the volunteer fire department, and a series of renovated stores remain intact along the railroad tracks. Just beyond the commercial center tobacco barns dot the open farmland landscape intermixed with older wood-frame, brick, and stone residences with a few 1960s ranch style houses.

Hazel had several of the necessary elements that promoted growth and prosperity at one time, however, it is speculated that the decrease in railroad transportation for shipment of goods may have been instrumental in the decline of this rural community. Thus in Calloway County, a town without the county seat, plus with a decrease in railroad transportation, that town is likely to decline severely.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

---

**Crossland**

Just west of Hazel is Crossland, which is located at the intersection of S.R. 893 and S.R. 783 on the Tennessee state line, ten miles southwest of Murray. Crossland, dating from 1865, was named for Hon. Ed Crossland (Jennings, 1980: 57). The post office, established by Boswell Harding on March 24, 1868, was named for Judge Edward Crossland (1827-1881) of the Common Pleas Court, who later served this district in the U.S. Congress (1871-1875). The post office was discontinued in 1925 (Rennick, 1984: 135). In 1885, there were three business stores, a cotton gin, one tobacco house, two blacksmith shops, two physicians and a Methodist church (Jennings, 1980: 57) in town. In 1908, a fire destroyed the O.H. Wilson Dry Goods store and warehouse, J.D. McLeod's store, the post office, icehouse and the vacant residence of Dr. Parvin Crawford (Jennings, 1980: 137).

Today, a few older one-story wood-frame houses remain as well as the Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church, a concrete block country store and diner, two concrete block warehouses, and several trailers. Flat farmland, stippled with tobacco barns, surrounds this once thriving commercial center.

Although this town developed at the intersection of two major transportation routes and was able to support a variety of businesses for over forty years, it was the devastating fire of 1908 that may have caused the decline in growth of Crossland as a major commercial center.

**New Providence**

New Providence, situated southeast of Murray on S.R. 893, was named by early county citizens who migrated from Old Providence in Eastern Kentucky (History, 1931). Boasting 100 inhabitants in 1885, there were two stores, a tobacco house, a blacksmith shop, three physicians and two churches, Methodist and Presbyterian, here at one time. The town thrived because it served as the junction point of inland shipping originating on the Tennessee River in the transportation of freight into northeastern Tennessee as well as the immediate area (Jennings, 1980: 56). Although a post office was registered here in 1883 (Jennings, 1980: 51), it does not exist today.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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Presently, New Providence has a grocery store, a concrete block Missionary Baptist Church, a cemetery adjacent to the brick Church of Christ that was established in 1947 and built in 1949, as well as several wood-frame T-plan and brick ranch style homes.

As river transportation declined in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is speculated that New Providence was no longer considered a major shipping point, since Murray had the capacity to provide warehouses and serve a larger area. Also, it's loss of post office indicates a decline in population which is probably related to the reduction of transporting goods.

### New Concord

New Concord, located on S.R.121 and S.R. 444, 8.5 miles southeast of Murray, was originally was established in 1828 as Humility (Jennings, 1980: 45). Five years later, a post office was established (History, 1931). By 1835, settlers from Concord, North Carolina, sought a more appropriate name for a growing town had it incorporated as Concord (Rennick, 1984: 212). Since another town was named Concord, the town and post office were renamed New Concord in 1841(Rennick, 1984: 212). The post office remains open for business as of 2002.

The first store in Humility was established by the Stubblefield family in 1819. In 1848, P.M. Rowlett established a tobacco manufacturing plant and produced two brand names, "48" and "Old Dominion". This organization became one of the county's most important industries after its operation site was moved to Murray in 1903 (Jennings, 1980: 45). It became a flourishing enterprise in the first part of this century (Jennings: 1980, 7). At one time the town had a wagon shop, two drug stores, two dry good stores, one saloon, one hotel, one church, a Masonic Lodge, two tobacco factories, two doctors and 150 inhabitants. About 1845, there was a Masonic building that was used by the old Union Church. A two-story wood-frame schoolhouse that was constructed in 1850 was destroyed by fire in 1866 (Jennings, 1980: 45-46).

New Concord became a trading center because freight, originating from the Tennessee River, was being transported through town. After the railroad was established in 1890, the town sharply declined (Jennings, 1980: 45). In 1919, the New Concord Milling Company, established by A.G. Smith, operated here for six years then moved to Murray in 1925. By 1931, the population of New Concord



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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was 100. There was a high school, two stores, one blacksmith shop, one garage, one church, one doctor and a post office (History, 1931). By 1931, the Masonic building was used by the New Concord High School (History, 1931). Ten years later, the school was consolidated with other county schools (Jennings: 1980, 307).

Today, bungalows, wood-frame houses dating from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a few brick ranch style houses, "Your Store", the U.S. Post Office, a warehouse and two additional stores can be found in New Concord.

Although New Concord had all of the elements that promoted the growth and development of a commercial center in mid- 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was the relocation of tobacco manufacturing plants and the milling company to Murray and the reduction of river transportation that caused the town to decline as a trading center.

## Almo

Almo is located five miles north of Murray, just east of S.R. 1824, on S.R. 464. After the vicinity was first settled in the early-1890s along the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis (formerly the L&N, now the CSX) Railroad, the post office was established on February 11, 1891 as Buena (Vista) for the beautiful view that can be seen from the top of a nearby bluff. On November 18, 1892, the post office that remains open today was renamed Almo (Rennick, 1984: 4) by the train crew that worked on the first track running through Calloway County (History, 1931).

In 1894, Nat Ryan Sr. engaged in the mercantile business in Almo in a 32 x 92 foot, two-story building with a storage room of the same size. These buildings were packed with a general line of high-class merchandise (History, 1931).

Almo was a thriving young railroad town in 1908 with two first class stores, one hotel, a church, tobacco prizery, a large blacksmith shop, post office, express office, and W.O.W. Hall. Almo Park, a shaded outdoor arena at the bend of the river, attracted congregations of musical bands, singers, and fiddlers paying tribute to the dinner that was served on the grounds that was operated by the N.C. & St. L. Railroad (Jennings, 1980: 105). By 1915, Almo never recovered from a fire

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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that virtually destroyed the entire business section on the north end of town (Jennings, 1980: 202).

Today, this small town has two stores that have been well maintained and is surrounded by a cluster of bungalows and wood-frame T-plan houses dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century amidst a series of trailers along Main and Second Streets. Even though Almo had a series of elements that promoted its continued growth and development, located along a railroad and a major transportation route, a commercial and residential area that accommodated the needs of a growing community, it began to decline for several reasons: the fire of 1915 destroying businesses, Nat Ryan, Sr. providing other business ventures in Murray, and trains no longer serving Almo due the reduction of stops.

### Kirksey

West of Almo, at the intersection of S.R. 299 and S.R. 464, is the village Kirksey. Originally the town was named Radford for Joseph N. Radford who established the post office on May 14, 1857. Although the Radford post office closed in 1860, Stephen Franklin Kirksey re-established it as Kirksey on July 14, 1871 (Rennick, 1984: 161) and it remains open today.

Mr. W. P. Dulaney established a mercantile business in Kirksey in 1896 and operated it for over twenty years. He also served as the postmaster for fifteen years and president of the Bank of Kirksey for six years (History, 1931). In 1910, a bank at Kirksey was organized in a new brick building that became an asset for a town of 300 residents (Jennings, 1980: 152). One year later, the corn club was organized to distribute improved corn seed to young growers, through Woodmen of the World (Jennings, 1980: 165). By 1912, a road was graveled between Kirksey and Murray, the county seat (Jennings, 1980: 182). James Terry Cochran owned and operated a well-stocked general mercantile store and a well equipped garage where automobile work was done in 1919 (History, 1931). In 1907, Kirksey was the location of Calloway County's Normal School (Jennings, 1980: 99). In 1970, the Kirksey Post Office was moved into a mobile home (Jennings, 1980: 569).

Presently, a new post office and café, feed mill, gas station, Church of Christ building and an old vacant commercial building remain as evidence of this once thriving town.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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It is speculated that Kirksey's decline in growth as a commercial center is due to its rural location that is served by county roads rather than by major transportation corridors, and that it was not considered a major shipping point.

**Dexter**

Dexter is situated 7.5 miles north of Murray in north central Calloway County, just east of U.S. 641 on S.R. 1824. This former 6<sup>th</sup> class city and rail shipping point on the Nashville Chattanooga and St. Louis (formerly the L&N, now CSX) Railroad is now but a hamlet with a post office. Although this area was settled earlier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was not until 1890 when the then Paducah Tennessee & Alabama Railroad was constructed, that plans for a village materialized at the site of this railroad construction camp. Sam M. Jones, landowner, donated the right-of-way and site for the station on condition that he be allowed to name it. He chose the name of a thriving town in Missouri, which at that time was giving employment to several of Jones's former Calloway County neighbors. The post office was established near the depot on December 19, 1890 with General Buford Williams, postmaster (Rennick, 1984: 82).

Today, all that remains is a brick post office, a metal sided community center, a park, the Dexter Missionary Baptist Church, and the Dexter Pentecostal Church among several trailers, wood-frame hall and parlor, shot gun, and side passage houses, bungalows, and brick ranch style houses.

Situated on a major transportation corridor should have promoted Dexter's continued growth and development, however, it is speculated that when Murray became the major shipping point in the county, other commercial centers diminished.

**Murray: 1843 – 1952**

The vicinity of Murray may have been settled in or before 1825 by James Willis, a dealer in tobacco and hides. He established a post office named Williston on the corner 4<sup>th</sup> and Sycamore Streets in 1830. Shortly thereafter he sold his holdings to Robert Pool and the area became known as Pooltown, later Pleasant Hill (Rennick, 1987: 208). After June 7, 1842, when Marshall County was divided from Calloway County, several sites were considered for the county seat. The site selected was the geographical center of the county and adjoined Pleasant Hill in

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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Section 26, Township 2 north, range 4 east. The town was named for Honorable John L. Murray, one of the leading lawyers in the western part of the state, the third member from the county to serve in the Kentucky House of Representatives, and for 11 years a member of the U.S. Congress (Jennings, 1980: 27-28).

Murray was situated on an 80-acre plot of land owned by Edmund and Charles Curd. It was subdivided into 137 residential and business lots with eight streets, four running east and west and four running north and south (Jennings, 1980: 42-43). On May 23, 1843 the Williston Postmaster renamed the post office Murray and the town was incorporated under this name in 1844 (Rennick, 1987: 208.)

The First Courthouse in Murray was built of brick between 1843 and 1844 on the town square (Jennings, 1980: 28). Historically, the fourth Monday of the month was the day when people came to the courthouse to attend the monthly court session, buy, trade, swap rings for mules, horses, dogs, ponies, rifles, shotguns and Barlow knives, barter, steal or drink, see medicine and magic shows, hear religious debates and political arguments (Jennings, 1980: 63). By 1860, the population of Murray was 218 (Jennings, 1980: 44). During the Civil War a company of soldiers out of Fort Anderson in Paducah burned the downtown business section surrounding the courthouse on the east side on Friday night and the north side on Monday night (Jennings, 1980: 35-36). Soon after the war, the buildings were rebuilt (History, 1931).

By 1870, Murray was inhabited by only 179 people but a scant three years later, its population climbed to over 600 people. At that time, Murray boasted two wholesale houses, six retail stores, one flour mill, a saw mill, wood carding mill, wagon and carriage factory, tanning yard, 12 mechanical shops, two tobacco factories and a number of tobacco houses, two tanneries, at least five saloons two hotels, and two churches. There were five lawyers in town, four physicians, one newspaper and one school – Murray Institute (History, 1931).

While the fire of 1875 leveled the west side of court square (Jennings, 1980: 59), it wasn't until 1884 did another fire destroy the east side of the square (Jennings, 1980: 58). Buildings on the north side of the square were spared from fire damage including Wear Drug Store, founded by Mr. H.P. Wear in 1882. This store remains the longest continuously owned and operated businesses on the square, by family members for over one hundred years (History, 1931).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

---

In 1886, J.H. Churchill opened his funeral business at the corner that was occupied by the First National Bank in 1931. After two years he moved his business to the south side of the square where he remained until the present funeral home was constructed in 1918 on the corner of Maple and Third Streets. He lived above the Churchill Funeral Home until 1931 when his son, R.W. Churchill, succeeded him in the funeral home business. Resident Nathan B. Stubblefield became well known after he created the wireless telephone in 1888 and the wireless voice transmission in 1892 that was the forerunner of the radio (History, 1931).

By 1897, the population hovered at 950. Stores situated on all four sides of the courthouse square consisted of offices, grocery, photo gallery, cobbler, livery, undertaker, agricultural implements, drugs, printing, a masonic lodge, clothing hardware, dry goods, harness, jewelry, theatre and wagon shop. Within two blocks of the square were hotels and a jail. One-half mile away were tobacco rehandling warehouses and an ice house along the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad tracks. A planning and sawmill, flouring mill, and lumber company were nearby (Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Limited, 1897).

The advent of the railroad system through Calloway County changed the growth and development of towns throughout the county when it emerged in 1890 through Murray (History, 1931). Around 1900, Murray began to lose its rural identity. Formerly, a lot included the home, outbuildings, outdoor toilet, garden, horse lot, cow shed, stable, and smokehouse, stretching for 300 to 600 foot depths on city lots between Olive Street on the north to Poplar Street and from the railroad tracks on the east to 12<sup>th</sup> Street on the west (Jennings, 1980: 78). The urbanization process can be seen within Murray's central business district, but also its residential lot areas.

By 1902, the population had increased to 1,000, with financial institutions, building supplies, an opera house, and West Kentucky Pants Company near the town square. A freight depot, passenger depot, baggage house, a standard oil station and lumber company were all constructed along the railroad tracks (Sanborn Map Co. 1902). One year later, the Courthouse burned (Jennings, 1980: 177). By 1907, several tobacco factories were lined along the railroad tracks and Murray College opened 2 blocks west of the courthouse (Sanborn Map Co., 1907).

In 1908, a block of stores on the east side of the court square were consumed by fire (Jennings, 1980: 137). One year later, a major fire swept away the businesses

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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and structures on the north side of Main Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets. That same year, the city's energetic leaders suggested rebuilding the west side of the square that had been leveled by fire (Jennings, 1980: 140-144). By 1910, population hovered around 3,000 (Jennings, 1980: 211) and dipped down to 2,000 two years later (Jennings, 1980: 168) when two large fires occurred in Murray (Jennings, 1980: 173).

In 1912, a new courthouse was approved (Jennings, 1980: 179) and construction was completed in 1913 (Jennings, 1980: 190). At that time the town boasted seven churches, three with black congregations (Jennings, 1980: 177) and several main roads in the county were graveled (Jennings, 1980: 181-183). Two years later, the streets were renamed (Jennings, 1980: 205). When Murray's population soared to 2,500 in 1916, the housing stock increased and the New Murray Hotel was constructed (Sanborn Map Co., 1916).

In 1925, the streets were paved (History, 1931). Ten years later, city streets were undergoing extensive curb and graveling under the Citizens Works Administration (Jennings: 1980, 260). Then, in 1937, the Works Progress Administration expended \$ 70,000 in Calloway County for county road and city street construction (Jennings: 1980, 266). The first blacktop road began at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Main Street and extended west on Main circa 1942 (Jennings: 1980, 277).

The historic National Hotel opened in 1928 on Main Street (History, 1931). In 1928, the Keys & Houston Clinic was constructed on the corner of North 5<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Street (Jennings: 1980, 243). It opened to the public in 1930 (History, 1931) and was dissolved as an organization in 1946 when the Houston-McDevitt Clinic was officially organized (Jennings: 1980, 307). By 1931, Murray boasted paved streets, a complete sewerage system, two banks, two hotels, a water and light system, three loose-leaf tobacco floors, a Building and Loan Association, ice factory and two wholesale groceries (History, 1931). In 1932, the Post Office at the southwest corner of the square opened for business (Jennings: 1980, 251) with a population of 2,660 in Murray according to the 1930 census (History, 1931).

In 1942, a fire destroyed the old Peoples Bank at the corner of North 5<sup>th</sup> and Main that was once used as a hotel, library, printing shop, professional offices, photo gallery and three banking institutions since its construction in 1890 (Jennings: 1980, 278). Currently, a new bank building is located on this corner. By 1950, there were 6,007 inhabitants in Murray (Jennings, 1980: 329). During the early

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 14

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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church facilities on the site west of the old church building on Maple Street (Jennings: 1980, 347).

As of 2002, the majority of the buildings in town appear the same as when they were constructed through the 1940s. Although some of the buildings were renovated between 1950 and 1992, since 2000, several buildings in the proposed Murray Commercial Historic District have received partial funding for exterior renovation. This work has been reviewed and approved by the local Renaissance Design Review Committee and the Kentucky Heritage Council. Building renovation has restored the historic appearance of these buildings making the proposed Murray Commercial Historic District physically appear similar to what it looked like from the late-1800s through the mid-1900s.

**Analysis**

In analyzing all nine commercial centers in Calloway County it became apparent that while every community began as a small social center, its specific geographic location and associated transportation systems became two major factors that determined population growth as well as the establishment and continued existence of governmental and educational facilities, financial institutions, and industries. It was a combination of these factors that affected a town's continued growth or decline.

Comparatively, of the nine commercial centers in Calloway County, Murray is similar to all eight towns in that they were all were settled and established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a post office and that each town was situated on a major transportation route. The continued viability of each town, however, was dependent on how the early transportation systems developed and changed over time. Of the nine towns, four were situated along railroads: Hazel, Almo, Dexter and Murray; one was located on a river: Wadesboro; and four other towns were established along roads: Crossland, New Providence, New Concord, and Kirksey.

Of the nine commercial centers, six were actually involved with the transportation of goods. Although New Providence and New Concord were considered trading centers and inland shipping points for the Tennessee River, their decline was due in part to the decrease in river transportation and the increase in railroad and highway transportation. Wadesboro slowly faded away after the county seat was relocated

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

---

to Murray in 1842. Even though Crossland and Kirksey were located at a crossroads, they began to lose their identity because they were situated away from major transportation corridors. Although Almo, Dexter, Hazel, and Murray were considered shipping points for the railroad, Almo's growth was crippled by a fire that devastated the downtown area from which it never recovered.

Hazel and Dexter were similar to Murray in that they developed along the county's major north-south transportation route, U.S. 641, and were bisected by the railroad. After the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis railroad came through downtown Murray in the 1890s, a freight depot, passenger depot, and baggage house were constructed amidst a group of tobacco warehouses.

In terms of industrial development, Hazel rivaled Murray in the early years because it was known as the "Hub of Calloway County" with a tobacco rehandling house and livestock center. From the late-1800s, numerous industries grew in Murray including tobacco factories and warehouses, planing and saw mills, lumber companies, agricultural implement warehouses, flouring mills, the West Kentucky Pants Company Factory that were located near the railroad freight depot. Although New Concord began manufacturing tobacco in 1848, that operation was relocated to Murray in 1903.

It is speculated that the decline of Hazel, Dexter and New Concord as a trading and shipping centers was directly attributed to Murray's increase in industrial development. Murray eventually became a major shipping point in Calloway County due to its location on the railroad, the fact that it was centrally located in the county, and it was the county seat. The **Murray Commercial Historic District** is an obvious resource to reflect this economic dominance.

Population growth is a barometer of the availability of jobs, the existence of governmental and educational facilities, financial institutions, and industries. When the county seat moved to Murray in 1842, potential jobs related to county government were eliminated in Wadesboro. While this caused a decline in growth for Wadesboro it produced more opportunities for employment in Murray, which in turn spurred population growth.

In terms of governmental facilities, all nine commercial centers had a post office. Only three have closed: Wadesboro, Crossland, and New Providence. The others remain open and operating today. While the continued presence of a post office is



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 16

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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often an indicator of a town's growth, it does not seem to be the primary factor in keeping a town viable. Other factors must be present. Although Wadesboro was the county seat between 1822 and 1842, Murray is the only town today that has a post office, County Courthouse and City Hall.

Religious and educational facilities were considered important assets to a community. Each community is noted as having a church while seven out of nine reported having a school. Although Hazel had a county high school that was accessed by the railroad and Kirksey was the location of Calloway County's Normal School, Murray was the western location of the state's Normal School which is now Murray State University, the largest institution of higher learning in the Jackson Purchase region. As county school consolidation began in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, small towns lost the schools that were apart of their identity and gave them a sense of viability. When a transportation infrastructure permitted moving busloads of children to larger consolidated schools, it signaled another rise in importance in Murray and a diminishing of the smaller towns.

In conclusion, while all nine towns display similarities in growth and development, Murray emerged as the largest commercial center in Calloway County as of 2002 that continued to grow and develop based on this exceptional combination of contributing factors: its geographic location in the center of the county; its three major transportation systems, a U.S. Highway, a State Road, and a railroad; its status as the county seat and a major shipping point; its growth in population due to an increase in industries such as tobacco and clothing; its exceptional education system with Murray State University; financial center with banks, and a cohesive group of historic resources still remain around the court square despite a series of fires. All of these elements are directly to the growth and development of Murray making it the most significant commercial center in Calloway County. This is why the proposed **Murray Commercial Historic District** is a fitting resource to reflect these factors.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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## 9. Bibliography

### Previous Research at the Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky

Kentucky Historic Resource Inventory Forms for Calloway County

### Historical Maps

Calloway County Property Identification Maps

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

U.S.G.S. Topographic Maps: Calloway County Courthouse

Deeds, Tax Cards, County and City maps

### Secondary Resources

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

Murray Commercial Historic District

Calloway County, Kentucky

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#### Interviews:

Janet Schell  
Sharon Buford  
Don Henry  
Robin Taffler

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number   10   Page   1  

**Murray Commercial Historic District**

**Calloway County, Kentucky**

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## **10. Verbal Boundary Description**

The **Murray Commercial Historic District** boundaries are as follows: roughly bound on the north by Walnut Street, on the east by L.P. Miller and Cherry Streets, on the south by Maple and Poplar Streets, and on the west by 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The district includes the following lots on Murray's Property Identification Map # 7, block 16, lots 9 & 10; block 15, lots 3 & 5; Murray's Property Identification Map # 9, block 4, lots 8 & 9; block 8, lots 4-10, 10A, 11, 12; block 12, lots 6-10, 11, 11A, 11B, 12A, 12-15, 15A; block 17, lots 3-17; block 18, lots 1-11; block 20, lots 6-9; and Murray's Property Identification Map # 10, block 1, lots 3, 4, 4A, 5-12; block 2, lots 1-3; block 6, lot 1; block 7, lots 1, 1A, 2-5, 13; block 10, lots 1-17; block 11, lots 1-4; block 13, lot 4; block 14, lots 1 & 2. See attached map.

## **Boundary Justification:**

The boundaries for the **Murray Commercial Historic District** were chosen to designate the most contiguous group of commercial buildings located within the corporate city limits that display the highest degree of integrity representing the period of significance from 1897 to 1952. Lots situated along the edge of the district were not included because they were either built after the period of significance or were primarily residential buildings that would be part of another district.

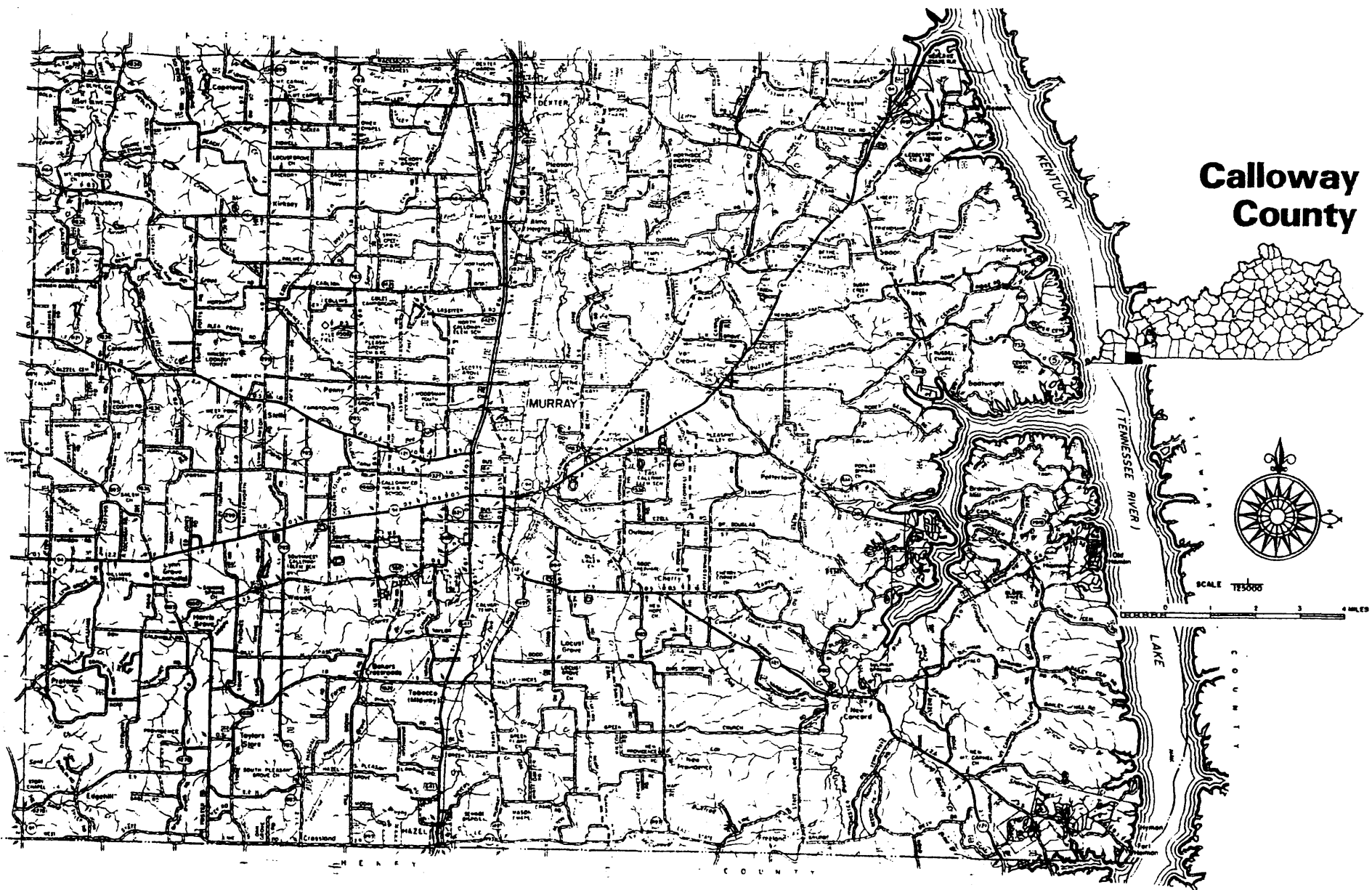
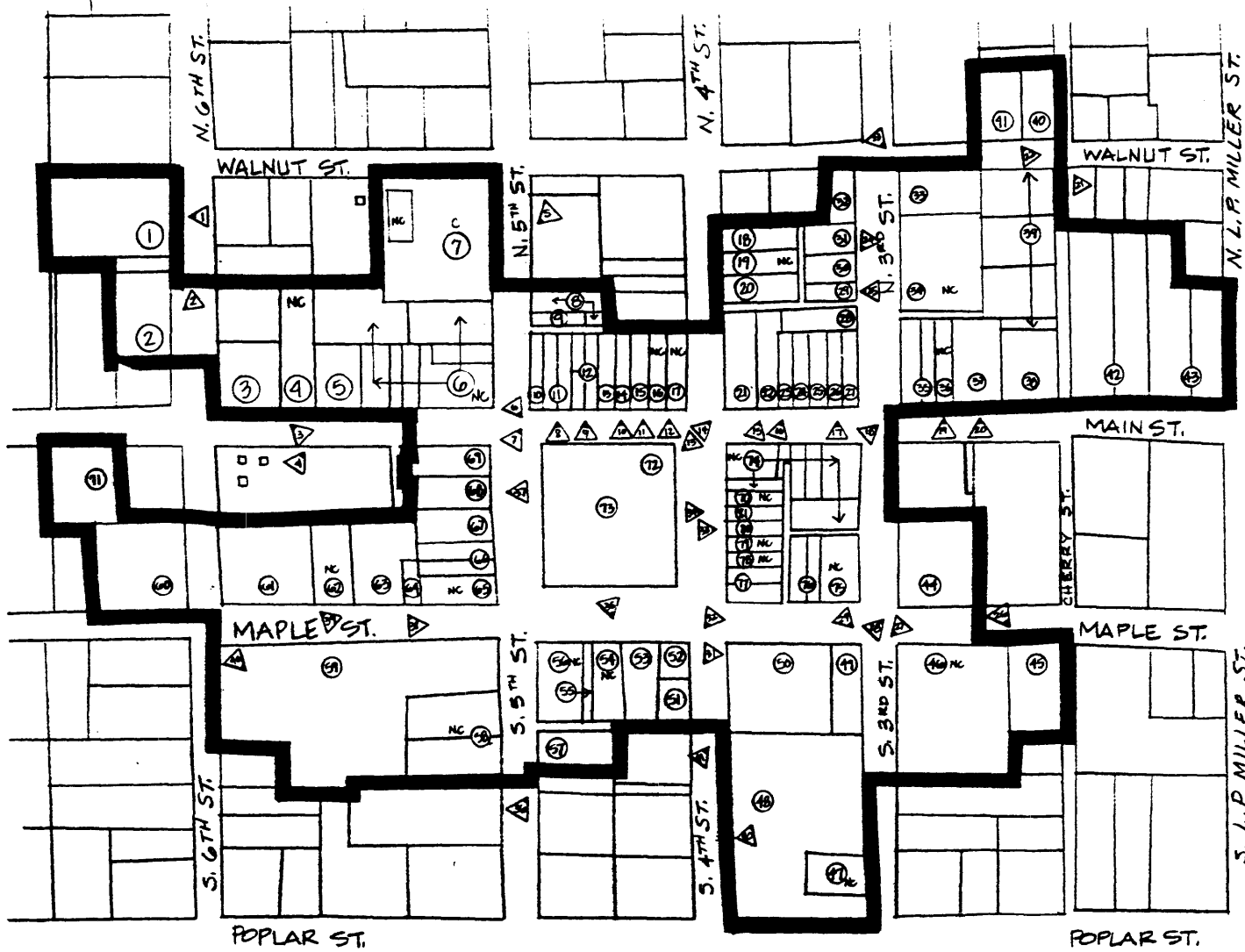


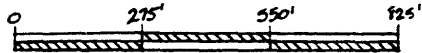
Figure 2



MURRAY COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

MURRAY,

KENTUCKY



LEGEND

- PROPOSED DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- ⊙ BUILDING/SITE CODE NUMBER
- NC NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE
- △ PHOTOGRAPH ANGLE

Figure 3



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Murray Commercial Historic District  
Calloway County, KY

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Photos \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

**Same information for all photos:**

**Name:** Downtown Murray Commercial Historic District **Location:** Calloway County, KY

**Photographer:** Donna Logsdon **Date:** October 2001

**Location of Negatives:** Kentucky Heritage Council, 300 Washington Street, Frankfort, KY 40601

\* = RC Black-and-white paper photo. Non-asterisked are digital photos submitted as supplemental information

**Photograph-specific information:**

<b>Photo #</b>	<b>Photo Direction and Content:</b>
Photo 1:	CW-M-94 (#1), east façade of Hurt-Jones Building
*Photo 2:	CW-M-7 (#2), east façade of Will Linn House
*Photo 3:	CW-M-18 (#3), south façade, National Hotel
Photo 4:	CW-M-32 (#5), south façade, Twin Lakes Furniture
*Photo 5:	CW-M-15 (#7), north (front) façade, First Christian Church
*Photo 6:	CW-M-11 (#73), north and east facades, Calloway County Courthouse
Photo 7:	CW-M-33 (#10), south (front) façade, Stubblefield Building
Photo 8:	CW-M-34 (# 11), south (front), Wild Raspberry/Hillyard Lyons, Inc.
Photo 9:	CW-M-35 (# 12), south façade, A.H. Wear Drugs; Wallis Drugs
Photo 10:	CW-M-37 (# 14), south façade, Diuguid Building
Photo 11:	CW-M-38 (# 15), south façade, Ryan Building
Photo 12:	CW-M-39 (#16) Corn-Austin Company, CW-M-40 (#17) Scott Drugs
*Photo 13:	CW-M-30 (#72) northeast side, Confederate monument
Photo 14:	CW-M-41 (#21) south side, Gatlin and Swann Building
Photo 15:	CW-M-42 (#22) south side, Graham Building
Photo 16:	CW-M-43 (#23) south façade, Bold Liquidators
*Photo 17:	CW-M-46 (#26) south façade, State Farm Insurance
Photo 18:	CW-M-48 (#35) south façade, A.B. Beale & Son
Photo 19:	CW-M-49 (#36) south façade, Baxter Brillbrey Building
*Photo 20:	CW-M-50 (#37) south façade, Tremon Beale Building
Photo 21:	CW-M-74 (#40) south façade, Ruling Star Lodge #51, OES #55
*Photo 22:	CW-M-75 (#41) south façade, Mt. Horeb Free Will Baptist Church
Photo 23:	CW-M-76 (#33) North façade, Ross Feed Store
*Photo 24:	CW-M-81 (#30) East (front) façade, J.B. Farris Building
Photo 25:	CW-M-82 (#29) East façade, M.T. Morris Building
Photo 26:	CW-M-98 (#45) North façade, Ronald W. Churchill Building
*Photo 27:	CW-M-73 (#49) North and east facades, Howe and Melton Building
Photo 28:	CW-M-77 (#44) West and south facades, Crass Furniture
Photo 29:	CW-M-97 (#46) North (side) façade, J.H. Churchill Funeral Home
Photo 30:	CW-M-19 (#48) West (front) façade, First Baptist Church
Photo 31:	CW-M-72 (#51) East (front) Farmall Tractor Dealership
*Photo 32:	CW-M-71 (#52) Northeast (corner) façade, Bill's Standard Oil Station
Photo 33:	CW-M-88 (#80) West façade, Scott Building
Photo 34:	CW-M-89 (#81) West façade, Holland Building
Photo 35:	CW-M-70 (#53) North façade, J.D. Sexton Building
*Photo 36:	CW-M-93 (#57), West façade, R.O. Miller, Attorney At Law
Photo 37:	CW-M-58 (#68) East (front) Façade, Frame Village/Rudy's Restaurant
Photo 38:	CW-M-63 (#63) South façade, Tucker Building
Photo 39:	CW-M-65 (#61) South façade, Church of Christ, American Legion Post #73
*Photo 40:	CW-M-66 (#59) North (front) façade, First United Methodist Church/Hale Chapel
*Photo 41:	CW-M-17 (#50) West (front) façade, Murray Post Office



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

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**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 02001464

Date of Listing: June 24, 2003

Property Name: Murray Commercial Historic District

County: Calloway

State: Kentucky

none  
Multiple Name

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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.

*for* Daniel J. Vivian  
Signature of the Keeper

June 24, 2003  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8. Statement of Significance

1842, 1843, and 1890 are hereby removed as significant dates.

-----  
The Kentucky State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

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**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**