

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

JUL 5 1988

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Southern Belting Company Building
other names/site number Toshiba Building; Garnett Station Place

2. Location

street & number 236 Forsyth Street, SW N/A not for publication
city, town Atlanta N/A vicinity
state Georgia code GA county Fulton code GA121 zip code 30303

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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. N/A See continuation sheet.

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Signature of certifying official Elizabeth A. Lyon Date _____
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Amy Schlager 8/10/88

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
COMMERCE/business

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

foundation brick
walls brick
concrete
roof asphalt
other steel
terra cotta

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Southern Belting Company Building is located southwest of Atlanta's central business district. It stands detached on the corner of Forsyth and Brotherton Streets in a commercial area that was once part of the city's commercial center. The five-story, brick industrial building was constructed in 1914-1915 and is representative of the city's early 20th-century industrial architecture. The load-bearing brick walls are punctuated with large, multi-paned, industrial windows, and the interior loads are carried by a timber, steel, and cast-iron frame.

The Southern Belting Company Building is an industrial building that housed the manufacturing of leather belts for textile looms and the sale and service of industrial shuttle looms. The load-bearing brick walls are 20 inches thick on the first floor and 16 inches thick on upper walls. Inside these walls is a framing system consisting of steel and wooden beams and cast-iron and wooden columns.

The front or Forsyth Street facade is symmetrical and suggests the three divisions of the modern commercial building of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It consists of a base of street-level storefront-type entrances, a middle section of three floors of large, multi-paned, steel-sash windows, and a top row of smaller windows capped with a simple cornice. The central main entrance is emphasized by a projecting, bracketed hood with cast concrete and brick details and with three-part double-hung steel-sash windows that light the main stairwell. Wood-framed storefront-type entrances, with double doors, transoms and sidelights, and display windows flank either side of the main entrance. A concrete band provides a cornice for the storefronts and separates them from the three-story middle section. The rows of wide, multi-paned windows represent the large open industrial space inside. The facade edges are terminated by a narrow window on each floor. A concrete belt course separates the top floor from the middle section and visually sets off this floor as the top of the building. Slightly corbeled rows of brick capped with a terra cotta coping form the building's cornice. Brick piers rise between the windows from the ground to the top floor and provide a vertical emphasis that slightly offsets the horizontality of the windows. The facade surface is simply decorated with raised brick patterns around the window openings and along the piers.

The northeast or Brotherton Street facade consists of five floors of segmentally arched window openings with large, multi-paned steel-sash

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windows. Vertical brick piers extend between each bay. At the right side of this facade, the materials and design elements of the front facade continue around the corner for one bay with flat-arched windows, brick slightly darker in color from the rest of the building (labeled on the architects' drawing as "water struck brick"), and the continuation of the concrete belt course at the top floor. At the left side of this facade are two bays of blind flat-arched openings representative of windows and identifying the location of a rear stairwell. Here a brick belt course sets off the top floor. The corbeled cornice with terra cotta coping continues along the top of this facade.

The southeast or rear facade also consists of rows of segmentally arched steel-sash windows divided vertically by brick piers and topped with the corbeled brick and terra cotta building cornice. The windows at the two rear stairwell locations are paired, double-hung rather than multi-paned.

The southwest facade is an almost solid brick wall with only four segmentally arched multi-paned windows on each of the fourth and fifth floors. The lower portion of the building previously adjoined another building. The unadorned wall has no belt courses or piers, and the cornice does not continue along this side. The roof of the building is a slightly pitched, built-up roof. A stair penthouse and an elevator tower and stair tower with skylights rise above the roofline.

The interior was designed with a majority of open industrial space for manufacturing and storage and a small amount of partitioned office space on the first and second floors. Interior loads are carried by a framing system of steel and wooden beams and cast-iron and wooden columns, all visible on the interior. The first through fourth floors are supported by round cast-iron columns and steel beams, while the fifth floor is supported by round wooden columns and steel beams, and the roof by round wooden columns and wooden beams. All five floors have thick wood flooring of one inch of maple over four inches of pine, which also serves as the ceilings for the floors below. Ceiling heights average about 12 feet. The exterior brick walls are exposed on the interior and were painted. Three wooden stairways and three elevators serve the building. The main stairway is located at the main entrance on the front facade, while the other two are reached through rear entrances. The original first and second floor-office partitions were removed, and new partitions were added in both the 1940s and the 1960s. Some of the original drives and pulleys from the Southern Belting Company machinery remain.

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A 1986 certified rehabilitation has utilized the building as office space. New interior partitions have been added to provide tenant space, corridors and needed facilities, for the most part in the areas that originally had partitions. Existing stairways and elevator shafts have been incorporated into the plans. The large, open tenant spaces retain the majority of the open character of the historic interior. A new atrium with skylight was opened through all floors near the building's center to provide more interior light. The tenant spaces are partitioned off from the atrium with glazed partitions to allow this light in and to retain the historic open character. The interior structural frame is intact and still exposed. Wood floors were retained and refinished in public spaces and carpeted in tenant spaces. Interior brick walls are still exposed and were cleaned. On the exterior, the brick walls were cleaned and the steel-sash windows were repaired or replaced in kind where necessary. One of the street-level entrances and adjacent display windows were rebuilt to match the existing entrances. The building continues to look much as it did when constructed and is once again a viable part of the old commercial area it represents.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Industry

Period of Significance

1914-1915

Significant Dates

1914-1915

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Lockwood, Greene, and Company

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

In the area of architecture, the Southern Belting Company Building is significant as an example of Atlanta's early 20th-century industrial architecture. Its features include multi-paned, industrial windows set in load-bearing brick walls and a timber and metal interior structure. The building was designed by an architectural and engineering firm that was a leader in industrial design. In the area of industry, the building is significant for housing the Southern Belting Company, a leading manufacturer of leather belts for textile looms, and the Draper Company, a manufacturer and distributor of shuttle looms. These areas of significance support the property's eligibility under National Register Criteria A and C.

Statement of Significance and Historical Context

The Southern Belting Company Building is a good example of the utilitarian industrial architecture built in Atlanta in the early 20th century utilizing a construction system of load-bearing masonry and a timber and metal interior frame, and with brick walls punctuated with rows of large, multi-paned, steel-sash windows that identify the building's industrial function. The building's design is a product of the office of Lockwood, Greene, and Company, Architects and Engineers, who were based in Boston, Massachusetts, and who were the leaders in industrial design for the textile industry. Housed in the building were leading manufacturers of the leather belts and shuttle looms required for the textile industry's operation.

The Southern Belting Company grew out of a partnership called Bay State Belting that was founded in Boston in 1887. The company moved to Atlanta in 1890 and was incorporated that year as the Southern Belting Company. The company was the only major manufacturer of leather belts in the southeast for the region's important and flourishing textile industry. Always located in the downtown area of Atlanta, in 1914-1915 the company constructed a new facility at 236 Forsyth Street to provide additional space for its expanding business. The company continued to be strong in industrial belt manufacturing until the 1950s when the introduction of small electric motors sharply decreased the demand for belts to drive industrial machines. To offset this decline, the

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Lincoln, Samuel B. Lockwood Greene: The History of an Engineering Business, 1832-1958. Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Greene Press, 1960.
- Lyon, Elizabeth A. "Images and Origins of a New South City: The Central Business District of Atlanta." Unpublished paper, 1975. Copy on file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Roth, Darlene and Associates, Inc. The Heart of Atlanta: Historic Structures Survey. Prepared for the Atlanta Urban Design Commission, April 1984. Copy on file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Roth, Darlene and Associates, Inc. "Southern Belting Company/Toshiba Building," Historic Property Information Form, September 1984. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

N/A See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

Zone Easting Northing

C

B

Zone Easting Northing

D

N/A See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property corresponds to the current legal boundary.

N/A See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is identical to the historic property associated with the building.

N/A See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debbie Curtis, Architectural Historian

organization Historic Preservation Section date June 20, 1988

street & number Department of Natural Resources telephone 404/656-2840

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city or town Atlanta

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company began producing industrial power transmission equipment. Becoming the Southern Belting and Transmission Company in 1957, the company is still in operation in Atlanta today. It moved out of the Forsyth Street building in 1967.

Sharing the building with the Southern Belting Company was the Draper Company, manufacturers of shuttle looms used in the textile industry. The Draper Company was headquartered in Hopedale, Massachusetts and leased space in this building for their southeastern sales office and parts warehouse to service their southeastern clients. There was a mutual interest for both companies in the south's textile industry, for one company made the belts that drove the other company's looms. The Draper Company moved out of the building in the 1950s.

The Southern Belting Company Building was designed by Lockwood, Greene, and Company (now Lockwood Greene Engineers, Inc.), a leader in the design of large industrial plants. Established in 1882 and based in Boston, Massachusetts, the firm became the largest and best-known firm of textile engineers with the great growth of the textile industry from the 1880s into the 20th century. They established a firm lead in the south that continued into the 1920s. Their southern branch office was located in Greenville, South Carolina, and a field office was established in Atlanta. The firm designed a number of cotton mills and manufacturing companies in Georgia, including two mills for the Fulton Bag and Cotton Mills (in Cabbagetown National Register Historic District, listed January 1, 1976) in Atlanta. The design of the Southern Belting Company Building is characteristic of the textile mills and manufacturing companies designed by this important engineering firm in the period from the 1880s to the 1920s.

The location of the Southern Belting Company Building is within an area that was once part of the thriving central business district of Atlanta. Atlanta developed as the commercial, industrial, and distribution center of the southeast during the period following the Civil War and into the mid-1920s. Its tremendous growth was largely due to the transportation advantages the city possessed as a railroad terminus. Atlanta's early commercial center developed adjacent to and south of the intersection of the Western and Atlantic and the Macon and Western Railroads, and was centered on Alabama and Whitehall Streets. This area was laid out in the 1840s in a street grid pattern that was oriented to the irregular radial pattern of the railroad tracks as opposed to strict north-south orientation. The depot and the railroad tracks were the focal points of the city's activities. The business district housed a mixture of wholesale, retail, manufacturing, office, financial, and governmental activities.

In 1881, the International Cotton Exposition took place in Atlanta and focused national attention on the city as a transportation, distribution, and manufacturing center. It also brought together planters and manufacturers

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to discuss improvements in cotton processing, and thus provided a great boost to the south's textile industry. The fair's main building became the Exposition Cotton Mills, an important enterprise in the region's cotton milling industry. The Cotton States and International Exposition of 1895 was also held in Atlanta and further promoted the city as a key transportation center for doing business in the south. The city's commercial growth attracted dozens of national and regional companies' southeastern branch offices. It was into this commercial growth and thriving textile industry that the Southern Belting Company was incorporated in 1890.

During the first decade of the 20th century, the city's commercial center began to shift north of the railroad tracks with the construction of modern office skyscrapers and the relocation of important downtown retail institutions, hotels, and theaters to that area. This signaled a change in the scales of the city's economy and technology to those of a more modern metropolis. The construction of the Southern Belting Company Building in 1914-1915 took place as this change in commercial focus was beginning. The shift was completed by 1930. In the area south of the tracks, governmental and business activities continued but at a reduced level.

The Southern Belting Company Building was constructed on the southwestern fringe of the early commercial center. The section that included the building site was residential from Trinity Avenue south throughout the 19th century and changed to its commercial character during early 20th-century commercial growth that came south from the business district. This evolution can be seen in a progression of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. The 1899 Sanborn Map shows a residential duplex on the building site and dwellings on all blocks immediately surrounding the site. The nearest business establishment was an unused planing mill one block away. Two blocks north, commercial enterprises such as a carriage shop, candy factory, straw hat factory, hotels, and warehouses were mixed with dwellings. Three blocks north, the buildings were almost all commercial. In 1911, shortly before the construction of the Southern Belting Company Building began in 1914, the Sanborn Map shows the site's residential block still intact. Commercial establishments had been constructed one block north, including an ice cream factory, a paint company, and a laundry. Two blocks north were hotels, warehouses, manufacturing, and a large agricultural implements and vehicles business. Retail stores had begun lining the streets, and few dwellings remained. The 1931 Sanborn Map shows the Southern Belting Company Building in place with a machine shop and a dairy next door and housing remaining in the rest of the block. In the blocks to the north, few houses were left, and retail stores, manufacturing, a post office station, and hotels were clearly dominant.

The buildings constructed in the early commercial center of the city from 1865 to 1930 reflected their commercial usage. There was a homogeneity in

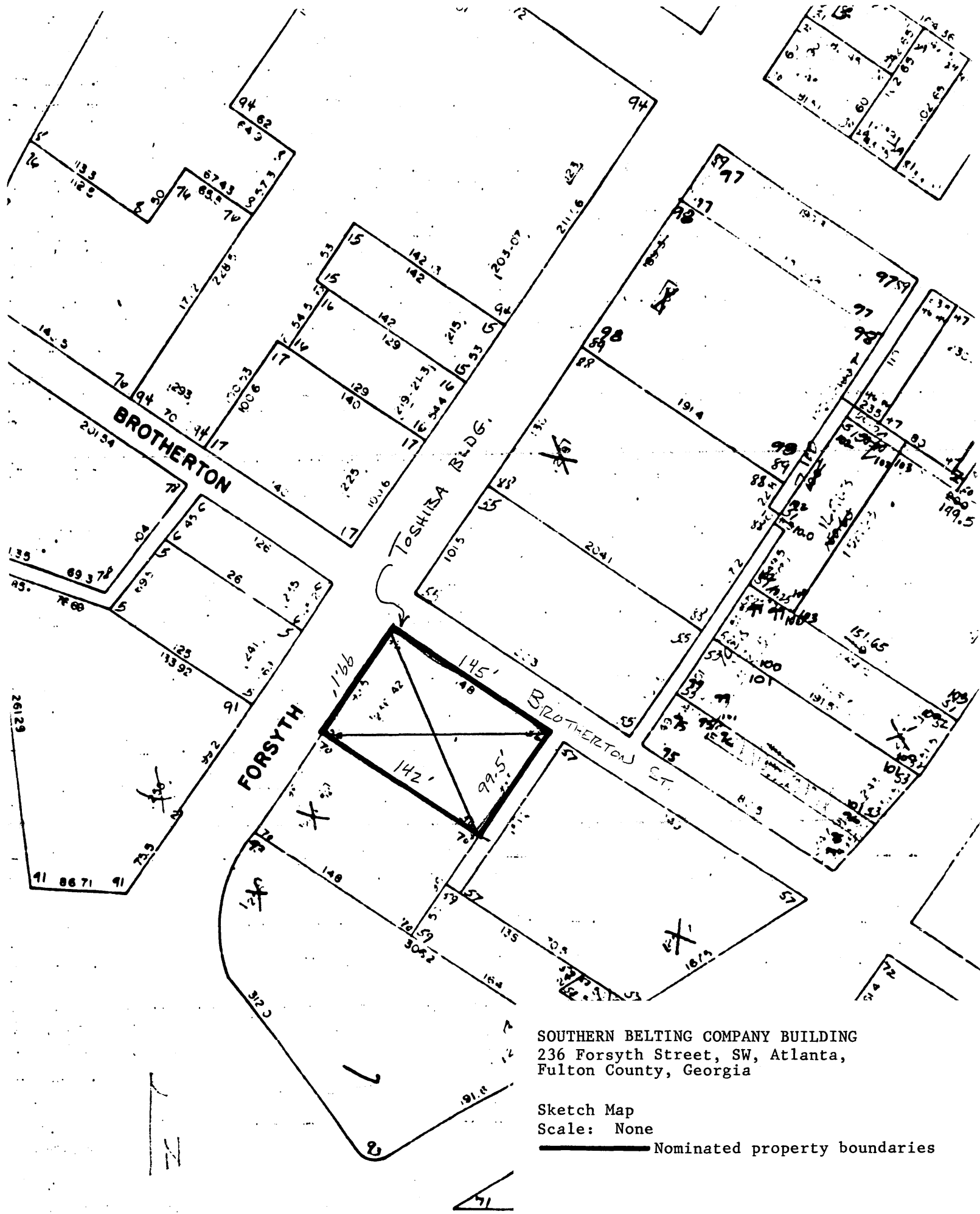
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their pre-skyscraper sizes and shapes. The majority were rectangular boxes from one to five stories tall, constructed of the prevalent building material of brick, and representing several architectural styles but consistently having elaborated facades, articulated roof lines, and surface textures definitive of late 19th- and early 20th-century commercial buildings. The scale of the buildings in this area remained the same into the 20th century while skyscrapers were rising to the north. Today, the dwellings and many of the 19th-century commercial buildings are gone. The buildings that remain date mostly from 1890 to 1930, representing the latter part of the area's commercial heyday. The original street grid pattern also remains basically intact. Various modern commercial structures have filled some of the gaps, but many sites remain vacant or are used for parking lots. The MARTA Rapid Rail System has come through the area and located its Garnett Street Station adjacent to the Southern Belting Company Building, which now serves as office space known as Garnett Station Place.

The significance of the Southern Belting Company Building lies in its representation of the commercial center that once thrived in this area of the city and of the commercial structures that were constructed there as a result of Atlanta's tremendous growth as a regional business hub in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The building's design by a leading textile engineering firm provides a significant example of an early 20th-century industrial structure remaining in the downtown area. And its use by the Southern Belting Company and the Draper Company, leading manufacturers of textile looms and the belts to drive them, attests to the importance of the textile industry to the southeastern region.



SOUTHERN BELTING COMPANY BUILDING
 236 Forsyth Street, SW, Atlanta,
 Fulton County, Georgia

Sketch Map
 Scale: None

———— Nominated property boundaries