United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



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

Type all ellilles C	ompiete applicable se			
1. Name				
historic Betwe	en the Rivers His	toric District		
and/or common				
2. Locati	on Roughly	bounded by	ith Etowah	and oostanau
street & number	See Continuation	Sheet	rs, and 7th A	A not for publication
city, town	Rome	N <u>/A</u> vicinity of		-
state Georgia	code	013 county	Floyd	code 115
3. Classi	fication			
* district building(s) structurex	nership public public private both lic Acquisition in process being considered	Status  X occupied  unoccupied  work in progress  Accessible  X yes: restricted  yes: unrestricted  no	Present Use agriculture X commercial X educational entertainment X government x industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
street & number				
city, town		vicinity of	state	
<u>5. Locati</u>	on of Lega	I Description	on	
courthouse, registry (	of deeds, etc. Super:	ior Court		
street & number	Floyd	County Courthouse		
city, town	Rome		state	Georgia
6. Repres	sentation i	n Existing	Surveys See c	ontinuation sheet
Historic S	Structures Field S nty, Georgia	Survey:	perty been determined ele	
1977			federal stat	e county local
depository for survey	records Historia	Preservation Sec	tion, Georgia Dept.	of Natural Resource
city, town	Atlanta		state	Georgia

# Condition Check one Check one

#### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

7. Description

Between the Rivers Historic District encompasses the contiguous historic commercial, residential, institutional and industrial areas in the oldest section of the city of Rome. The district is a very hilly area, three-quarters encircled by the Etowah and Oostanaula Rivers. In 1834, at the time of the initial settlement of Rome, the streets in this area were laid out in a grid pattern with only slight modifications in regularity made for the topography. Lots and buildings in both the commercial and residential areas are, almost without exception, perpendicular to the streets.

The commercial area of the district is centered in the low-lying area along Broad Street between First Avenue and Sixth Avenue. Here, predominately two to four story brick buildings with party walls and no landscaping are set back uniformly along the sidewalk. Buildings date from the 1870s to the 1930s and display typical Victorian, Neo-Classical and early-twentieth century commercial design features. Pre-1900 structures feature typical Victorian decorative elements such as brick corbelling, sign plates, window hoods, rounded windows, wooden brackets, and large storefronts. The Second Empire Style Masonic Temple is the finest remaining building from this period. The buildings from the early years of the twentieth century display classically inspired detailing such as balustrades, pedimented window hoods, and corner quoins. Those from the 1920s typically have less detailing and flatter facades. Some commercial buildings have been altered in recent years by the addition of metal and plate glass store fronts to the first floors and by interior remodeling. At the north end of Broad Street in the Fifth and Sixth Avenue area are a cluster of Rome's historic public buildings including the old Floyd County Courthouse, the Municipal Building, and Carnegie Library. Two historic bridges, one a reinforced concrete bridge that carries Broad Street across the Etowah River and the other a steel truss bridge that carries Second Avenue across the Oostanaula River, are included in the district.

Residential areas are located to the north (a small fragment of a once much larger area) and the southeast of the central business district. While a few Greek Revival and Gothic Revival structures from the mid-nineteenth century remain, most houses are from the Victorian, turn-of-the-century, and early twentieth century periods. Houses from the Victorian era exhibit typical Queen Anne, Eastlake, Gothic, and Romanesque design features including on the exterior, scrollwork, decorative shingles, and dormers and, on the interior, asymmetrical plans, stained glass windows, and decorative wood trim. Many large Neoclassical style houses with prominent columned porches, and smaller more modest houses with little ornamentation, were built in the district in the early years of the twentieth century. During the 1920s a few bungalows and apartment buildings completed the housing stock. Buildings are constructed primarily of wood or brick with a frequent use of stone trim. Very large and imposing houses and apartments are located in the southern part of the district, with the housing becoming more modest in character towards the north. Lots in the very hilly residential area are relatively small in size but feature extensive landscaping including the frequent use of stone for street curbs, retaining walls and walks, and many informally planted trees, hedges, flowers and shrubs. In the midst of the residential area is Tower Hill, site of Rome's prominent and historic 1871 Clock Tower, originally part of the first public water works in north Georgia.

### 8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 X 1800–1899 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric agriculture architecture art x commerce communications		law literature military music	re religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation X other (specify)
Specific dates	1834-1930s	Builder/Architect	Multiple	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### Summary Statement of Significance

Between the Rivers Historic District is architecturallly and historically significant for the comprehensive way in which it represents the historic development of the City of Rome from its founding in 1834 through the 1930s. In terms of community planning and development the district is significant for the way it represents a planned nineteenthcentury city and county seat. In terms of architecture, the district is significant for its many intact commercial, residential, institutional, and industrial buildings ranging in date from the 1850s to the 1930s which provide a fine picture of Rome's historical development into a prosperous regional center. In terms of landscape architecture, the district is significant for its late nineteenth-early twentieth century residential landscaping. In terms of commerce, the district is significant for its many commercial buildings which reflect Rome's historic importance as a regional commercial center. In terms of industry, Between the Rivers is significant as the historic location of Rome's industrial development which played such an important part in the city's growth and prosperity. In terms of engineering, the district is historically significant for the location in its midst of the Rome Clock Tower and two historic bridges. In terms of medicine, the district is significant for a building associated with Dr. Robert Battey, a Rome physician of national prominence who pioneered in medical care for women and in design for health care facilities. In terms of politics/government, the district is significant as the seat of local government for the City of Rome and for Floyd County. In terms of historic archaeology, the district is significant for the assumed archaeological potential in the Broad Street commercial area where an eight-foot rise in the street level dating from the 1880s may have preserved evidence of earlier commercial building layout, materials, and techniques. The above areas of significance support the district's eligibility under National Register criteria A, B, C, and D.

#### Community Planning and Development

Rome is an important example in Georgia of a planned nineteenth-century city and county seat. It was established and laid out in 1834 as a speculative venture meant for commerce and trade as well as for government functions. Its location at the junction of two navigable rivers was a deliberate choice to facilate transportation. Its gridiron plan was typical of nineteenth-century town planning but somewhat unusual for Georgia in its more linear and less centralized orientation. Rome is one of the few county seats in Georgia in which the courthouse was not centrally located as the community's focal point.

Between the Rivers Historic District encompasses this initial area laid out in 1834. It retains the original street alignment and reflects the incremental growth of the city

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geo	graphical Da	ata		
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	d counties for properties		or county boundaries	
state N/A	code	county	code	
state	code	county	code	
11. Forn	n Prepared E	Зу		
name/title	Carolyn Brooks, Na Historic Preserva	_	Researcher	
organization	Georgia Dept. of I		date April 5, 1983	
street & number	270 Washington St	reet, S. W.	telephone 404-656-2840	
city or town	Atlanta,		Georgia 30334	<u></u>
12. Stat	e Historic Pi	reservation	n Officer Certificat	ion
· -	ficance of this property with	•		
As the designated S 665), I hereby nomir according to the cri	nate this property for inclusi teria and procedures set for	ion in the National Regis	Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Lister and certify that it has been evaluated servation and Recreation Service.	
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titie	Elizabeth A. Lyon State Historic Pre	() servation Officer	date 4/20/83	
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Reeper of the Nati	onal Register		<b>F</b>	
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Chief of Registrati	on a mark			

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Location and Representation

Continuation sheet in Existing Surveys Item

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#### Location

Between the Rivers Historic District encompasses the historic core of Rome, Floyd County, Georgia, which is located at the confluence of the Etowah and Oostanaula Rivers as they become the Coosa River. The district is three-quarters surrounded by the Oostanaula and Etowah Rivers, and lies south of Turner McCall Boulevard on the north and northeast. The major street through the district is Broad Street, the city's main historic commercial thoroughfare. Running southeast-northwest through the district at right angles to Broad Street are all or parts of First through Fifth Avenues and running northeast-southwest, parallel to Broad Street, are West First and Second Streets and East First through East Fourth Streets.

#### Representation in Existing Surveys:

Three properties in Between the Rivers Historic District are individually listed in the National Register. These are:

United States Post Office and Federal Courthouse, May 6, 1975.

Rome Clock Tower, February 8, 1980.

Floyd County Courthouse (included in County Courthouses in Georgia Thematic Nomination), September 18, 1980.

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Continuation sheet

Description

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Several historic churches are located between East First Street and East Second Street, easing the transition from the commercial to the residential area. Running along the southern and northwestern edges of the district are turn-of-the-century industrial areas with several brick warehouses and factories. These few industrial structures are the sole survivors of Rome's historically extensive industrial development.

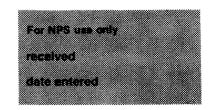
#### Non-contributing Buildings

Intrusions in Between the Rivers are largely limited to a few modern commercial buildings and a high school addition which detract from the character and appearance of the district. In the commercial area of the district along Broad Street a group of buildings are described as having "potential significance." These are historic structures, most of which have been altered by the addition of a false metal facade. Removal of the false facade or other recent additions to such buildings could reveal a relatively intact structure. A number of non-historic structures, built within the past fifty years but not detracting from the character of the area, are scattered throughout the district. Individual buildings in all three categories are identified on the enclosed district map.

#### Boundary

The nominated property, outlined with a heavy black line on the enclosed maps, consists of the contiguous architecturally and historically significant properties in the area of initial development in Rome. The boundaries are set by the two surrounding rivers and by new commercial and industrial development dating from the 1950s and 1960s. Only two public buildings and a small residential area are included north of Sixth Avenue, due to new commercial building in that area. The Oostanaula River and Etowah Rivers are a natural boundary on the west and southwest. New commercial and industrial development along Second Avenue and a new major road, Glen Milner Drive, form the boundaries to the south and east.

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Significance

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as it developed from 1834 to about 1930 when development was virtually halted by the Great Depression. In the residential area, located primarily on the high hills south and east of Broad Street, houses remain to document all periods of the city's development. Large numbers of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century residences attest to these periods being ones of particular prosperity and growth for Rome. In the commercial area centered along Broad Street a similar pattern emerges. Buildings here date from the late 1870s on. They reflect the city's strong recovery from its partial Civil War destruction in November 1864 by Sherman's troops and also its steady growth thereafter generated by its increasing industrial base, its role as an important cotton marketing center, and its function as a regional trade center. By 1920, Between the Rivers had essentially reached its present level of density, and further development generally occurred on sites of earlier buildings. The Depression ended development and when it began again in the 1940s most of it occurred outside the district. 1960s and 1970s industrial and commercial development has made some inroads into the southeast portion of the district, but a major portion of the historic city of Rome remains intact in Between the Rivers.

#### Architecture

The wide variety of buildings in Between the Rivers Historic District is representative of the type of historic architecture found in Georgia's larger cities. These structures reflect prevailing national principles and practices of architecture as they were locally interpreted. The majority of the buildings in the district were designed by local carpenter/builders, but some of the more important commercial and public buildings were the work of architects such as Bruce and Morgan (Old Floyd County Courthouse) and A. Ten Eyck Brown (Municipal Building) with statewide reputations. Most of the structures feature typical building materials and techniques, with load-bearing brick predominating in the commercial area and woodframed construction with exterior weatherboarding being most common in the residential areas. Buildings date from the 1850s to the 1930s and include a wide variety of building types such as private residences, apartment houses, churches, banks, hotels, office buildings, stores, municipal buildings, a school, a library, and industrial buildings. Among the architectural styles well-represented are vernacular and high style examples of the Greek Revival, Goth Revival, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Victorian Commercial, Neoclassical, and Bungalow/Craftsman.

#### Landscape Architecture

In terms of landscape architecture, the district is significant for its late nineteenth-early twentieth century residential landscaping which features the informal use of retaining walls, walks, trees, shrubs, and flowers in individual lots to create a naturalistic and park-like setting which flows from one lot to the next. This type of landscaping is characteristic of that found in the residential areas of small towns and cities throughout the country and represents accepted landscaping practices of the period. The frequent use of finely-crafted stone retaining walls in the extremely hilly residential areas is an important local landscaping feature.

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#### Commerce

Between the Rivers Historic District contains the historic commercial center of Rome and provides an extensive intact example of the historic commercial fabric of a mid-sized Georgia city as it evolved over nearly a half century. The extent of the commercial area and the wide variety in type and style of the commercial buildings reflects Rome's importance as a regional commercial center. From the city's establishment in 1834, Broad Street served as the focus of the town's commercial activity. By 1900, the area with its offices, stores, banks, warehouses, hotels, and theatres had established itself as the center of wholesale and retail trade for thirteen counties in northwest Georgia and northeast Alabama.

#### Industry

In terms of industry, Between the Rivers District is significant as the historic location of Rome's industrial development which played such a large part in the city's growth and prosperity. Rome's riverside location was selected to promote industry, and beginning in 1855 with the establishment of an iron foundry the area along the Etowah at the south of the district began to develop as an industrial area. By the early twentieth century a variety of industrial concerns in the city, including some in the district, were shipping products across the southeast. A few of these historic industrial structures remain along the Etowah to document Between the Rivers' impact and role in the industrial development of the city. A number of the fine houses located in Between the Rivers' residential section were built and lived in by plant owners and managers.

#### Engineering

Engineering significance in Between the Rivers is explained by the presence in the district of the Rome Clock Tower (listed in the National Register in 1980) and two historic bridges. The 1871 Rome Clock Tower is the only remnant of Rome's original public waterworks, the first such facility to be built in North Georgia. The so-called "Clock Tower" is actually a water tower topped with a clock containing a 250,000 gallon tank which stored water pumped up from a well close to the Etowah River. The 1916-1917 solid-arch concrete bridge that carries Broad Street over the Etowah River and the 1930 iron truss bridge spanning the Ooostanaula at Second Avenue document bridge construction of their type and period.

#### Medicine

Dr. Robert Battey, a Rome physician of national prominence, pioneered in both medical care for women and design for health care facilities. The development of his Woman's Hospital in 1880 was an undertaking of special significance for the city for it attracted patients from a number of states. One unit of his innovative hospital complex composed of frame cottages linked by covered walkways remains at the corner of First Avenue and Fourth Street.

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#### Politics/Government

The district is significant as the seat of local government for the city of Rome and of county governmnt for Floyd County. The presence of these important institutions is represented by the late-nineteenth century Floyd County Courthouse (listed in the National Register in 1980 and presently being rehabilitated for county offices), the turn-of-the-century United States Post Office and Federal Courthouse (listed in the National Register in 1975 and presently used as the Floyd County Courthouse), and the early-twentieth century Municipal Building.

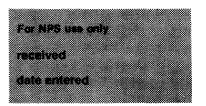
#### Historic Archaeology

Before levees were constructed along the surrounding rivers, the low-lying portions of Between the Rivers were frequently subjected to spring flooding. In 1886, a particularly disasterous flood destroyed three bridges and sent steamboats up Broad Street as far north as Fifth Avenue. Subsequently, to alleniate the flooding problem, the level of Broad Street and its flanking storefronts from between Fourth and Fifth Avenues to the Etowah River was raised eight feet. As a result of that action, archaeological potential which might lead to information about an earlier period of commercial building on Broad Street (the earliest extant buildings on the street date from the late 1870s) is assumed.

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Between the Rivers

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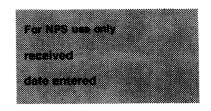
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Continuation sheet Biographical References

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