

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

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

For HCRS use only  
received JUN 11 1980  
date entered JUL 18 1980

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

**1. Name**

historic Broadway Historic District

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number ~~Both sides of~~ Broadway between Second Ave. and Fifth Ave. S., not for publication

city, town Nashville vicinity of congressional district 5th

state Tennessee code 47 county Davidson code 037

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple ownership - see continuation sheet

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registrar's Office

street & number Davidson County Courthouse

city, town Nashville state Tennessee

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

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

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

The Broadway Historic District comprises three blocks of Broadway running from Second Avenue, one block west of the Cumberland River, to Fifth Avenue. The district links the Second Avenue National Register District and the Ryman Auditorium at 116 Fifth Avenue, N., the large gabled building which can be seen in the aerial photographs of the district. The Ryman has been approved for National Historic Landmark status, and the application is as of this writing awaiting the signature of the Secretary of the Interior.

The district includes both sides of Broadway between Second and Fifth Avenues with the exception of all but the two westernmost parcels of the south side of the 200 block. The buildings on the excluded parcels of this block do not meet National Register criteria. Buildings in the district are mostly two- and three-story, late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial structures. Exceptions include several buildings of residential character and several buildings too recent to meet the criteria. The non-contributing buildings fit into the area non-aggressively with one rather spectacular exception.

As a rule the buildings in the district are not in the best physical condition. Most are in need of maintenance and some have lost original detail work. Several first floor facades have been altered, while some have merely been obscured. Four buildings have been all but totally obscured by large metal signs, though permanent damage to the facades as a result seems minimal. In spite of this negative side, the architectural character and scale of a turn-of-the-century commercial street remain and much of the visual damage is reversible. The potential for vastly improving the appearance of the district with relatively simple measures is good.

There are no architectural masterpieces in the district but several buildings do stand out from the rest. Two buildings, #3 and #46, exhibit the scale and configuration of pre-Civil War residences. While no records have been found to prove it, the modest height, pitched roof, and very simple detailing of these two buildings indicate that they were originally residences before the district became a late nineteenth century commercial center.

Among the nineteenth century commercial buildings, the Merchants Hotel (#34) with its rich cornice and truncated turret and the vacant building at 304-308 (#6) with its unusual cornice configuration, elaborate brickwork and carved stone window lintels are standouts. Both of these buildings are largely physically intact on the exterior in spite of some unsympathetic add-on modifications and fire damage on the latter building.

The two bank buildings, Commerce Union Bank (originally Broadway National), (#5), and the American National building (#25) (now vacant) are both twentieth century structures and add a touch of Beaux Arts classicism to the eclectic Victorian character of the district.

There are five buildings in the district determined to be non-contributing. Three of these buildings, #'s 9, 30, and 35, are possibly old enough to meet the criteria but evidence is inconclusive and their facades have been so altered as to be lacking in late nineteenth or early twentieth century architectural character of note. Since the architectural significance of this district rests on its facades, these buildings were determined to be non-contributing. The two others in this category are #22, a one-story brick and glass storefront building of the 1950s, and Sterchi's Furniture, #37. Sterchi's, the visually assertive non-contributing building mentioned above, is a three-story concrete post and lintel building with a facade of glass and turquoise blue and silver-toned metal. This facade, which

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stairsteps outward as it rises, is evocative of the brassy Miami Beach Hotel Modern of the 1950s and is destined to be a Nashville area classic in its own right if preserved.

In addition to the five non-contributing structures in the district, there are four-- #'s 16, 18, 33, and 43, whose original facades appear to be more or less intact but are completely covered with large metal signs. Since these buildings are of the correct period and appear to be, under the signs, original, they have not been classified as non-contributing. They are indicated on the map as buildings of the period with obscured facades.

Buildings contributing to the character of the district:

1. Leslie Warner Building  
200-206 Broadway  
1884. Victorian eclectic commercial building, five stories, brick with terra cotta, pressed metal cornice, and largely intact castiron first story piers. Formerly symmetrical facade altered by widening of Second Avenue and bricking-up of windows.
2. L & L Pawn Brokers  
208 Broadway  
Mid-nineteenth century. Former residence, brick, two stories, pitched roof and third story (much like building at 210) removed in 1950s. First story altered.
3. Vacant building  
210 Broadway  
Mid-nineteenth century. Former residence, brick with metal window hoods, three-story. First story altered.
4. Baxter Building  
212 Broadway  
1891. Victorian eclectic commercial building, four stories, brick with pressed metal cornice. Castiron piers on first story largely intact but obscured by false front.
5. Commerce Union Bank  
(Formerly Broadway Nat'l Bank)  
300-302 Broadway  
ca. 1914. Neo-classical commercial building, four stories, brick and stone with metal cornice. Stone piers on ground level rise two stories to projecting cornice with two stories in buff brick above and pressed metal cornice at roof level. Addition to rear follows similar lines without stone piers.
6. Vacant building  
304-308 Broadway  
ca. 1890. Victorian commercial building, brick with pressed metal and carved stone trim. Cornice damaged by fire. Castiron first story piers partially intact under false front.

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|--|---|
| 7. Manas Furniture Company<br>312 Broadway                       | ca. 1900. Victorian commerical building, brick, three stories. Large window openings partially filled and standard shashes installed. First story largely intact but obscured by sign.                      |
| 8. Mayfair Furniture Company<br>316 Broadway                     | ca. 1880. Brick, two stories, first story and cornice altered. Slender, arched second story windows boarded up.   |
| 10. H. Brown Furniture Company<br>320 Broadway                   | ca. 1900. Victorian commerical building, three stories, brick with pressed metal cornice. First story altered.  |
| 11. H. Brown Furniture Company<br>322 Broadway                   | ca. 1890. Victorian commercial building, three stories, brick with stone trim. First story castiron piers intact but obscured by false front, cornice removed.  |
| 12. H. Brown Furniture Company<br>324 Broadway                   | ca. 1860. Victorian commerical building, three stories, brick. First story castiron piers intact but obscured by false front, cornice missing.  |
| 13. Al's Pawn Shop<br>Swingers World<br>400-402 Broadway         | ca. 1870. Victorian commerical building, four stories, brick. Left side of facade completely replaced with unsympathetic facade, first story configuration partially intact on right side, cornice missing. |
| 14. Friedman Music and Loan Co.<br>408 Broadway                  | ca. 1880. Victorian commerical building, four stories, brick with metal cornice and window hoods. Windows boarded up. first story altered.  |
| 15. Gruhn Guitars, Inc.<br>410 Broadway                          | ca. 1900. Victorian commerical building, two stories, brick. First story altered, cornice missing.  |
| 16. Broadway Show World,<br>Penthouse Cinema<br>412-414 Broadway | ca. 1900. Victorian commerical building, two sotries, brick, originally built along with 410 Broadway as one building. First story altered, second story completely obscured by metal skin.                 |
| 17. T. J.'s Lounge<br>416A Broadway                              | ca. 1915. Commercial building, two stories, glazed brick with stone trim. First story altered.  |
| 18. Sho-Bud Guitar Company<br>416 Broadway                       | ca. 1915. Commercial building, two stories, brick. Companion building to 418 Broadway. First story altered second story corvered with corrugated metal skin.  |

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44. Johnny Russell Lounge  
429 Broadway  
ca. 1900. Commercial building, three stories, brick, nondescript facade.
45. Rebel Trading Post  
431 Broadway  
Nineteenth century, three stories, brick covered with stucco scored to resemble stone. Modest story height and metal hip roof indicate a middle to early nineteenth century date but assesment is difficult to make because facade seems to join with the cornice overlaps the facade of #44 a seemingly newer building. First story altered, second story of Broadway facade obscured by sign. Windows boarded up.
46. Say When Lounge  
104 Fifth Avenue, S.  
Mid-nineteenth century, former residence, two stories, brick with wooden window lintels. First story, all but the doorway on first story obscured by addition, doorway altered.
47. King of the Road  
106 Fifth Avenue, S.  
ca. 1880. Victorian commerial building, two stories, brick. First story altered.
- Buildings Not contributing to the character of the district:
9. Hermitage Kantor Furniture Co.  
318 Broadway  
date?. Two-story, brick. Rear facade of this building indicates a nineteenth century date but the facade has apparantly been altered so much as to be no longer a contributing factor in the district.
22. Partially vacant building  
424-30 Broadway  
ca. 1960. One-story, brick, nondescript store front.
30. Harley-Holt Company  
321 Broadway  
date?. Two stories, brick. Rear view indicates nineteenth century date but facade has apparently been so altered as to be no longer a contributing factor in the district.
35. Linebaugh's Restaraunt  
405-407 Broadway  
date?. One-story, brick. Rear indicates nineteenth century date but nondescript, 1950s facade is out of character with district.
37. Sterchi's Furniture  
411 Broadway  
ca. 1955. Three stories, concrete construction with metal and glass facade. Miami Beach hotel modern facade stair steps out ward with each floor. Metal siding turquoise blue with silver toned strips of trim. Very gaudy sign.

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19. Ellwest Theater  
418 Broadway  
ca. 1915. Commercial building, two stories, brick. Nondescript facade, first story altered.
20. Friedman Loan Company  
420 Broadway  
1923. Commercial building, two story, brick with stone trim.
21. Tootsie's Orchid Lounge  
422 Broadway  
ca. 1880. Victorian commercial building, two stories, brick with pressed metal cornices, painted lavender. First story partially altered.
23. Beesley's Furniture Company  
217-219 & 221-223 Broadway  
(only the two buildings at left are included in district) ca. 1900. Commercial building, three stories, brick with stone trim. First story altered, rather nondescript upper facade intact but obscured by metal signs.
24. Service Merchandise Company  
111 Third Ave., S.  
ca. 1880. Victorian commercial building, three stories, brick with pressed metal window hood. First story configuration with wooden piers and cornice intact, upper cornice removed. Companion building to #26
25. American Nat'l Bank Building  
(now vacant)  
301-303 Broadway  
ca. 1915. Beaux Arts bank branch office, one-and-one-half-story, stone. Ionic pilasters rise one-and-one-half-story to cornice above which is a parapet with carved classical ornament. Doorway located at corner recessed behind curving facade.
26. Service Merchandise Company  
305-307 Broadway  
ca. 1880. Victorian commercial building, three stories, brick with pressed metal cornice and window hoods. First floor altered. Companion building to #24.
27. Service Merchandise Company  
309-311 Broadway  
ca. 1900. Victorian commercial building, three stories brick. Cornice removed.
28. Harley-Holt Company  
317 Broadway  
ca. 1890. Victorian commercial building, three story, brick. First story altered.
29. Harley-Holt Company  
319 Broadway  
ca. 1890. Victorian commercial building, three story, brick. First story altered. Both #28 and #29 were somewhat remodeled after a 1939 fire on the third floor.
31. The Alamo (annex)  
323 Broadway  
ca. 1890. Victorian commercial building, two stories, brick. Minimal decorative treatment. First story altered.

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32. The Alamo  
325 Broadway  
1902. Victorian commercial building, three stories, brick. First story altered.
33. Morris Furniture Company  
327-29 Broadway  
ca. 1860. Victorian commerical building, three stories brick. First story altered. Second and third stories obscured by corrugated metal skin.
34. Merchants Hotel  
401-403 Broadway  
1892. Victorian commercial building, three stories, brick with metal cornice and window hoods. Slate roof on turret intact, iron work on first story partially intact in spite of alterations. Connected to the main building by an unsympathetic one story connector is a two story brick building with a metal cornice and arched windows. Alterations to the facade make it difficult to determine original appearance. Location on the same lot and similar design details suggest it always functioned as a part of the hotel, though the connecting link was constructed within the last 30 years.
36. Lawrence Brothers  
406 Broadway  
ca. 1910. Commerical building, three stories, glazed brick with stone trim. First story altered.
38. Ernest Tubb's Record Shop  
417 Broadway  
see #41
39. Rose Loan Comapny  
419 Broadway  
see #41
40. The Wheel  
421 Broadway  
see #41
41. Playhouse Cinema  
423 Broadway  
ca. 1880. Victorian commerical buildings, three stories brick with wood window lintels. Four companion buildings identcial in original very simple configuration. First story of all four buildings altered. Rose Loan Company obscured to third story by large metal sign. Cornice removed from all four buildings.
42. Country Saloon  
425 Broadway  
ca. 1900. Victorian commerical building, two stories, brick with metal cornice. First story altered.
43. Vacant building  
427 Broadway  
Nineteenth century, three-story, brick. Rear facade and pitched roof indicate nineteenth century date. First story altered, upper facade completely obscured by metal sign.

# 8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1880-1923

Builder/Architect

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Broadway District derives its significance from historical associations and from its architectural merit. Nashville, a river town, grew outward from the banks of the Cumberland. The Broadway District begins just one block from the river and encompasses some of the oldest blocks of the city.

Primarily a commercial area since the mid-nineteenth century, the business conducted in the district is significant to Nashville's history. Furniture stores were in business on lower Broadway as early as 1870, and by the turn of the century it had become a center of the trade. By 1916, when the Broadway Business Men's Association published a public relations pamphlet on the area, it was "famous as a furniture market" with both retailers and manufacturers in business on lower Broadway. While it has suffered a decline in both the number and quality of furniture stores in recent years, the district is still a center of the trade locally; and two companies, H. Brown and Harley-Holt, have been in business in the same location since 1902 and 1906, respectively.

The Broadway District was, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a center of the hardware and feed and grain trades as well. The Merchants Hotel, built in 1892, was there to accommodate the many business travelers in the area. The Merchants Hotel is still in business, though now catering to a less substantial clientele.

In the 1920s Nashville became the center of the newly emerging Country and Western music business. The Ryman Auditorium, located on Fifth Avenue North adjacent to the district boundary, became the home of the Grand Ole Opry in 1941. The Grand Ole Opry radio program which had originally been broadcast from studios was broadcast live from the stage of the Ryman every week until 1974 when the Opry moved to a suburban location. Soon after the Opry came to the Ryman, the Broadway district became the home of a number of Opry-related businesses and remains so today. Two of these businesses, Ernest Tubb's Record Shop and Tootsie's Orchid Lounge have attained national acclaim.

Ernest Tubb's Record Shop, owned by the Opry star of the same name, has since 1951 been the home of the Midnight Jamboree, a radio show originating live from the store after the last Saturday night show at the Opry house. The show, which has often featured as yet unknown singers, gave Elvis Presley and Opry super-star Loretta Lynn, among others, their first radio exposure. The back door of Tootsie's Orchid Lounge is across the alley from the stage door of the Ryman Auditorium, and it has been, since its opening, a popular spot with Opry performers and their admirers. For nearly twenty years the proprietor, Tootsie Bess, served music, beer and sympathy to stars, would-be stars, and thousands of tourists and fans; and she maintained liberal credit terms for those down on their luck. Despite the death of Mrs. Bess in 1978 and the absence of the Opry around the corner, Tootsie's and the other Opry-oriented businesses continue to draw thousands of fans from across the nation and around the world. This aspect of Broadway's history is relatively recent, but is of extraordinary importance to Nashville as country music continues its

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Broadway Business Men's Association. "Broadway." Nashville, 1916.  
 King, Larry L. "The Grand Ole Opry." Harper's Magazine, July 1968, pp. 43-50.  
 Metropolitan Historical Commission. Nashville: A Short History and Selected Buildings.  
 Nashville, 1974.

## 10. Geographical Data **ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

Acreeage of nominated property 13  
 Quadrangle name Nashville West, Tennessee **UTM NOT VERIFIED** Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>7</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	B	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>4</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>5</u> <u>1</u> <u>9</u> <u>8</u> <u>9</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>6</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Description attached. See attached maps.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

Assistance with historical research:  
 name/title David Paine Debbie Lindecker and volunteers from Historic Nashville, Inc.  
 organization Metropolitan Historical Commission date December, 1979  
 street & number Second Ave. N. at Broadway telephone 615-259-5027  
 city or town Nashville state Tennessee 37201

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*Herbert L. Hays*

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 6/2/80

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

*W. Ray Luce*  
 Keeper of the National Register

date 7/16/80

Attest:

*Kristin O'Connell*  
 Chief of Registration

date 7/9/80

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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phenomenal expansion in world popularity. If the country music phenomenon can be said to have a focus, that focus is on the Broadway district.

In spite of physical decay, unsightly signs, and unsympathetic modifications, the Broadway district retains the scale and feeling and a good bit of the original detail of a late nineteenth century commercial main street, which in its heyday it was. No where else in Nashville, including the adjacent Second Avenue National Register district, can the same combination of building styles and scale be found for more that a single block on both sides of the street. The visual authenticity of the district over all is good, has great potential for improvement, and is unique in town.