

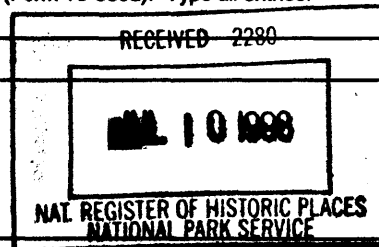
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# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

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 Freeman Ford Building  
other names/site number n/a



## 2. Location

street & number 75 John Wesley Dobbs Avenue  
city, town Atlanta  
county Georgia code GA  
state Georgia code 121 zip code 30303

(n/a) vicinity of

( ) not for publication

## 3. Classification

### Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

### Category of Property:

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

### Number of Resources within Property:

#### Contributing

#### Noncontributing

buildings	1	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	1	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of previous listing: n/a

Name of related multiple property listing: 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 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 the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Mark R. Edwards  
Signature of certifying official

June 26, 1998  
Date

Mark R. Edwards  
State Historic Preservation Officer

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 or bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Edson A. Beall 8-6-98

determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, explain:

see continuation sheet

[Signature]  
Keeper of the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

COMMERCE:specialty store

### Current Functions:

DOMESTIC:multiple dwelling

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

Modern Movement/Art Deco

### Materials:

<b>foundation</b>	concrete
<b>walls</b>	concrete; brick
<b>roof</b>	asphalt
<b>other</b>	terra cotta; marble

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

Located just northeast from the heart of downtown Atlanta, the Freeman Ford Building is a three-story, Art Deco-style building which was originally built to house the C. E. Freeman Ford automobile dealership.

The Freeman Ford Building has a poured-in-place concrete construction, brick veneer exterior, terra-cotta frieze on the front facade, multi-pane steel-framed windows on three sides, and a flat roof. Between the bands of windows on the main facade are brick vertical projections that simulate pilasters and have decorative terra-cotta caps. The decoration on the exterior of the building consists of polychromatic, abstract geometric and floral patterns. The first floor has large display windows with 3-light transoms on two sides and a band of terra-cotta decoration on the top and green marble below the windows on the main facade.

The interior was originally open with three automobile ramps connecting the levels and an entry ramp into the building. There are now large apartment lofts on each level and the ramps remain with wood platforms built over some of them. The ceilings, floors, and columns are all concrete with exposed masonry walls. The ground floor store front area which was originally the auto showroom retains its open space, concrete floors and decorative plaster capitals on the central columns. The original electrical service to the building was encased directly in the concrete as the structure was poured.

The building takes up a majority of the lot which has two side yards: a 10' wide joint-use alley to the west and an auto entrance yard to the east. There is a parking lot on both sides of the building and

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section 7--Description**

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no landscaping. The area surrounding the building is a mix of historic and modern office buildings. The owners recently completed a certified rehabilitation on the property for use as apartment lofts.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**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):**  N/A

A    B    C    D    E    F    G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

Architecture

**Period of Significance:**

1930

**Significant Dates:**

1930-Construction of the Freeman Ford Building

**Significant Person(s):**

n/a

**Cultural Affiliation:**

n/a

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

G. Lloyd Preacher, architect

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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#### **Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)**

Constructed in 1930, the Freeman Ford Building in downtown Atlanta is significant in terms of architecture, transportation, and commerce. The Freeman Ford building is significant in terms of architecture as a excellent and intact example of an Art Deco-style automobile dealership. With its terra-cotta frieze with abstract floral and geometric patterns and vertical projections, the Freeman Ford Building has impressive Art Deco detailing. The bands of windows, the poured-in-place concrete construction, concrete ramps, and intact first floor are also significant.

In *Atlanta Architecture: Art Deco to Modern Classic, 1929-1959*, architectural historian Robert Craig writes:

Its [Freeman Ford Building's] ordinary industrial character reflects the first phase of automobile showroom architecture, simple masonry structures not unlike the automobile assembly plants themselves. In such simple structures as the Freeman Ford Agency, "machines" of the first automobile age were displayed, sold, and repaired.

Craig goes on to point out that this otherwise utilitarian building has unusual and distinctive architectural features:

The Freeman Ford Agency is saved from being a mundane, easily ignored, industrial building by the delicate Art Deco frieze of polychromatic terra cotta that enriches its upper facade. A lineup of blossoming flower on upright stems regularly interspersed with abstract Deco patterns creates a remarkable stencil-like border. Variegated colors on brick surfaces produce a tapestry effect, where uniform bricks might have created a dull factory aesthetic.

The Freeman Ford Building is also significant in architecture as a design of the nationally recognized architect G. Lloyd Preacher (1882-1972). Born in Fairfax, South Carolina, G. Lloyd Preacher graduated from Clemson College in 1904 with a Bachelors of Science degree in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering followed by a Masters in Architecture. He began to practice architecture in 1910 in Augusta, Georgia, where he built the Marion Building in 1912 which was Augusta's first skyscraper. He moved to Atlanta in 1922 and eventually operated offices in Indianapolis, Memphis, Raleigh, Spartanburg, St. Petersburg, Miami, New York, and San Francisco. According to architectural historian Robert Craig, Preacher became the southeast's "most significant institutional and commercial architects with hotels, apartment buildings, schools, and office buildings throughout the southeast." He is best known in Atlanta for his design of the Atlanta City Hall which opened in 1930 and incorporated Art Deco and Gothic architectural elements. Some of Preacher's other

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8--Statement of Significance**

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Atlanta designs include Mary Lin Elementary School (1928-1929), Grant Park Elementary (1930), Whitefoord Elementary (1928-1929), The Briarcliff Apartments (1925), and The One-Ninety Apartments (1921). The Freeman Ford Building is more industrial than the buildings that Preacher is known for; however, the Art Deco detailing, polychromatic decoration, and the integration of form and function are representative of Preacher's work.

**National Register Criteria**

The Freeman Ford Building is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under National Register Criterion C for its significance in the as an intact and excellent example of an Art Deco-style automobile dealership designed by a nationally recognized architect.

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

n/a

**Period of significance (justification)**

n/a

**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

n/a

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

#### Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

Charles E. Freeman started one of the first automobile dealerships in Atlanta in 1922. By 1927, the Charles E. Freeman Company, Inc. was a licensed Ford Dealership. By 1929 Atlanta was booming and Mr. Freeman was ready to build a new and modern automobile dealership.

The Freeman Ford building was designed by architect G. Lloyd Preacher for Charles E. Freeman's Ford agency, and built in 1930. This was a year in which an estimated \$35,000,000 worth of construction was done in Atlanta, with a significant amount of that investment made by national corporations. The Freeman Ford building was constructed for about \$400,000. In the previous year, the Art Deco Southern Bell building, designed by Mayre, Alger and Vinour, was built on the same block, and still stands today.

1929-30 was perhaps the climax of a booming period for Atlanta business, architecture and building. The Great Depression, beginning in October 1929, inevitably brought this to an end. The Freeman Ford Agency only occupied the building at 75 Houston Street until 1932, and then relocated to 254-258 Ivy Street, NE. From that time until the present the building has seen a variety of occupants. It has been used as a parking garage since 1961. Despite changes in tenancy over the years, the building remains today as it was originally built, with only minor modifications. Recently the building underwent a certified rehabilitation which converted the building to loft apartments.

G. Lloyd Preacher moved to Atlanta from his native Augusta in 1922, and eventually became a nationally known architect with offices in New York and San Francisco in addition to locations across the Southeast. He designed Atlanta's City Hall building, which opened in February 1930, and he was best known for institutional and commercial projects, which gives the Freeman Ford building a unique place in his oeuvre. It is doubtful whether the detail and craftsmanship in this building has been put into any automobile storage facility in Atlanta since.

The following is a list of the building's occupants:

1930-32	Charles E. Freeman, Inc., Authorized Ford Dealer
1933	Vacant
1934	Pickett Brothers auto garage/repair
1936-49	Lamar-Rankin Wholesale druggists
1950	Vacant
1951-53	U. S. Dept. Of Commerce Warehouse
1955-56	Willys Motors, Inc.
1957	Vacant
1958-60	American Tire Co.



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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8--Statement of Significance**

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List of occupants, continued:

1961-68	AAA Parking, Inc.
1970-73	Friendly Parking Service, Inc. Trade Camera
1974-83	Sunshine Parking, Inc. Trade Camera
1984-91	Parking Company of America, Inc. Trade Camera through '89
1991-96	System Parking, Inc.
1996-97	Conversion into Loft Apartments

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Atlanta City Directories.

Blackman, Rachel. "Freeman Ford Building," Historic Property Information Form, February 1996.  
On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources,  
Atlanta, Georgia.

Craig, Robert M., Atlanta Architecture. Art Deco to Modern Classic. 1920 - 1959. Pelican  
Publishing Co., Gretna 1995.

Georgia and Georgians. L. L. Knight, Lewis Publishing Co., New York, 1917.

Periodicals - The City Builder, June 1930.

Preston, Howard L. Automobile Age Atlanta: The Making of a Southern Metropolis. 1900-1935.  
Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1979.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): ( ) N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**  
**date issued:** October 30, 1996
- 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:**

**Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): n/a**

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** 0.5136 acre.

**UTM References**

A) Zone 16 Easting 742250 Northing 3738270

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary is indicated on the attached map with a heavy black line, drawn to scale.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary represents the historic and current legal boundaries of the property.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Leslie N. Sharp, National Register Coordinator  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**street & number** 500 The Healey Building, 57 Forsyth Street  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** 5/31/98

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Ron Stang and Rachel Blackman, architects  
**organization** Stang & Newdow, Inc., Architects  
**street and number** 84 Peachtree Street, NW; Suite 500  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** 404-584-0500

( ) **consultant**  
( ) **regional development center preservation planner**  
(X) **other: Project Architects**

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Photographs**

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**Name of Property:** Freeman Ford Building  
**City or Vicinity:** Atlanta  
**County:** Fulton  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** March 1998

**Description of Photograph(s):**

- 1 of 17: Looking west toward Five Points down John Wesley Dobbs Avenue (formerly Houston Street) Freeman Ford Building on the left, front and east facade; photographer facing west.
- 2 of 17: Northeast corner of the Freeman Ford Building; photographer facing southwest.
- 3 of 17: Front or north facade and northwest corner of Freeman Ford Building; photographer facing southeast.
- 4 of 17: West facade of Freeman Ford Building; photographer facing east.
- 5 of 17: Southwest corner of Freeman Ford Building; photographer facing northeast.
- 6 of 17: Detail of front or north facade of building; photographer facing east.
- 7 of 17: Detail of east facade entrance; photographer facing west.
- 8 of 17: First floor entrance lobby; photographer facing east.
- 9 of 17: Second floor loft apartment on the east side of the building; photographer facing south.
- 10 of 17: Second floor loft apartment on the east side of the building; photographer facing east-southeast.
- 11 of 17: Third floor hallway; photographer facing south.
- 12 of 17: Third floor hallway; photographer facing southwest.

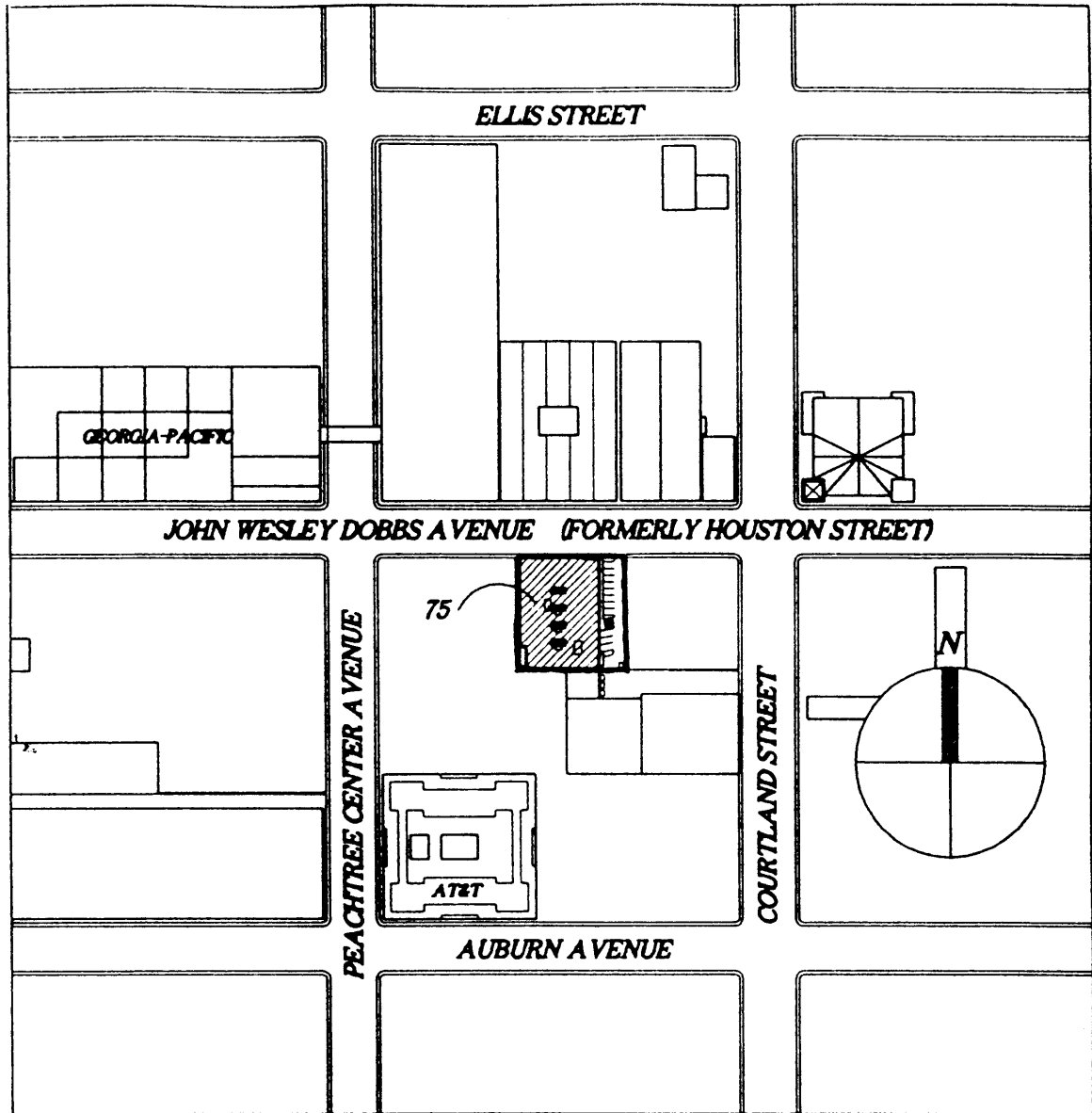
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Photographs**

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- 13 of 17: Third floor loft apartment on the north side of the building; photographer facing east.
- 14 of 17: Third floor loft apartment on the north side of the building; photographer facing west.
- 15 of 17: Third floor loft apartment; photographer facing east.
- 16 of 17: Third floor loft apartment in the southwest corner of the building; photographer facing southwest.
- 17 of 17: Roof of the Freeman Ford Building; photographer facing southwest.



FREEMAN FORD BUILDING  
 ATLANTA, FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA  
 LOCATION MAP  
 APPROXIMATE SCALE: 1" = 238'

## FREEMAN FORD BUILDING

