

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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

---

**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 05000693

Date Listed: July 13, 2005

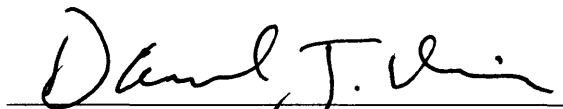
Property Name: Chatsworth Downtown Historic District

County: Baldwin

State: Georgia

none  
Multiple Name

-----  
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*   
Signature of the Keeper

July 13, 2005  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 3. Classification

“Georgia County Courthouses” is hereby removed as a related multiple property listing. No multiple property listing is associated with this property.

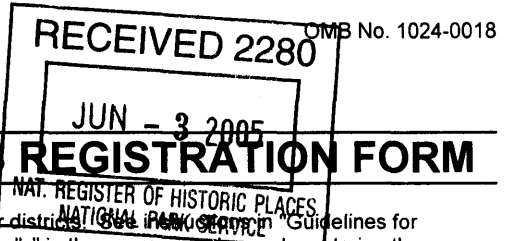
[These changes were made with the approval of the National Register staff of the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office.]

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

**DISTRIBUTION:**

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

642



# 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** Chatsworth Downtown Historic District  
**other names/site number** N/A

## 2. Location

**street & number** Roughly bounded by Peachtree Street to the north; First Avenue and the CSX railroad tracks to the east; Fort Street to the south; and Fourth Street to the west  
**city, town** Chatsworth ( ) vicinity of  
**county** Murray **code** GA 213  
**state** Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 30705

( ) not for publication

## 3. Classification

### Ownership of Property:

- (X) private
- (X) public-local
- ( ) public-state
- (X) public-federal

### Category of Property:

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

Number of Resources within Property:	<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>
<b>buildings</b>	46	28
<b>sites</b>	0	0
<b>structures</b>	3	0
<b>objects</b>	1	1
<b>total</b>	50	29

**Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:** 3

**Name of previous listing:** Murray County Courthouse (nomination includes jail), listed September 18, 1980; Wright Hotel, listed June 17, 1982

**Name of related multiple property listing:** Georgia County Courthouses

**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.

Ricardo Claves  
Signature of certifying official

5-24-05  
Date

*for* W. Ray Luce  
Historic Preservation Division Director  
Deputy 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

( ) determined eligible for the National Register

( ) determined not eligible for the National Register

( ) removed from the National Register

( ) other, explain:

( ) see continuation sheet

Daniel J. Vizza 7/13/05

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*for*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

---

## 6. Function or Use

---

### Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/HOTEL  
COMMERCE/TRADE/PROFESSIONAL  
COMMERCE/TRADE/FINANCIAL INSTITUTION/BANK  
COMMERCE TRADE/SPECIALTY STORE  
COMMERCE/TRADE/DEPARTMENT STORE  
COMMERCE/TRADE/WAREHOUSE  
SOCIAL/MEETING HALL/MASONIC LODGE  
GOVERNMENT/CORRECTIONAL FACILITY/JAIL  
GOVERNMENT/POST OFFICE  
GOVERNMENT/COURTHOUSE/COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
GOVERNMENT/COURTHOUSE/FEDERAL COURTHOUSE  
RELIGION/RELIGIOUS FACILITY/CHURCH  
RECREATION AND CULTURE/THEATER  
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/MANUFACTURING FACILITY/MILL  
TRANSPORTATION/RAIL-RELATED/RAILROAD  
TRANSPORTATION/ROAD-RELATED (VEHICULAR)/BRIDGE

### Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/HOTEL  
COMMERCE/TRADE/PROFESSIONAL  
COMMERCE/TRADE/FINANCIAL INSTITUTION/BANK  
COMMERCE TRADE/SPECIALTY STORE  
COMMERCE/TRADE/DEPARTMENT STORE  
COMMERCE/TRADE/WAREHOUSE  
SOCIAL/MEETING HALL/MASONIC LODGE  
GOVERNMENT/CORRECTIONAL FACILITY/JAIL  
GOVERNMENT/POST OFFICE  
GOVERNMENT/COURTHOUSE/COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
GOVERNMENT/COURTHOUSE/FEDERAL COURTHOUSE  
RELIGION/RELIGIOUS FACILITY/CHURCH  
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/MANUFACTURING FACILITY/MILL  
TRANSPORTATION/RAIL-RELATED/RAILROAD  
TRANSPORTATION/ROAD-RELATED (VEHICULAR)/BRIDGE

---

## 7. Description

---

### Architectural Classification:

LATE VICTORIAN/ROMANESQUE REVIVAL  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/COLONIAL REVIVAL  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/CLASSICAL REVIVAL  
LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/COMMERCIAL STYLE  
MODERN MOVEMENT/INTERNATIONAL STYLE

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

---

**Materials:**

**foundation** Brick  
**walls** Brick  
**roof** Asphalt  
**other** Wood

**Description of present and historic physical appearance:**

Chatsworth is a small county seat town located in Murray County in northwest Georgia. The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District consists of the courthouse square and surrounding commercial and community landmark buildings. Murray County was established on December 3, 1832, out of lands from Cherokee County. The town of Chatsworth began to develop with the construction of the Louisville & Nashville (L & N) Railroad tracks and depot in 1905, and the charter of the Chatsworth Land Company in June of that year. Spring Place (3 ½ miles west of Chatsworth) served as the county seat from 1833 until Chatsworth was designated the county seat in August 1913. The Chatsworth town plan is a late example of the Washington-type county seat plan. The Washington plan features a central courthouse square with streets leading directly to its corners. The Murray County courthouse is on an elevated lot on the west side of Third Avenue (U.S. Highway 411), a primary north-south thoroughfare through town, with commercial buildings to the north, east, and south sides of the square, and a residential area to the west.

The buildings within the commercial area include one- and two-story attached brick buildings and one- and two-story freestanding brick buildings. The buildings represent the Commercial style, the Commercial style with decorative brickwork, and the International style. The buildings were constructed along front lot lines and are flush with the sidewalks. The commercial buildings feature flat- and segmental-arched windows, recessed storefronts, and large display windows, and some feature decorative brick detailing along the cornices and above doors and windows. Good examples of the Commercial style include the buildings at 213, 215, 219, and 221 North Third Avenue (photograph 7) and 109 East Market Street (photograph 13, right). Good examples of the Commercial style with decorative brickwork include the buildings at 108 and 110 North Third Avenue (photograph 4, right); 111 East Market Street (photograph 12); 101, 103, and 105 East Market Street (photograph 13); and 117, 121, 125, and 127 North Second Avenue (photograph 14). One of two International style buildings in the district is the Cohutta Bank Building (photograph 6), located at 101 West Market Street. The one-story building was constructed in 1964. The character-defining features of the building include the flat roof, flat, unadorned wall surfaces, ribbon windows, and the asymmetrical façade. Today the building houses the City of Chatsworth Water Department offices.

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District contains the Crown Chenille plant on the eastern edge of the district. Crown Chenille (photographs 17, 18, and 19) opened its Chatsworth operations in 1941 and constructed these buildings in 1950 and 1952. The industrial campus consists of one-story brick buildings with flat roofs and no ornamentation designed to house processing machinery and to serve as warehouses.

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

### Section 7--Description

---

The Chatsworth Water Treatment Plant (photograph 27) is located north of the Crown Chenille plant. Constructed between 1945 and 1950, the building consists of two sections. The two-story brick building features a flat roof on the west portion and a hipped roof on the east portion and metal casement windows with pivot sections. The water treatment operations were housed on the first floor and city hall offices occupied the second floor. The one-story brick portion of the building housed the Chatsworth Fire Department. Two large truck bay doors dominate the front (south) façade of this portion of the building. Three nonfunctional water containment tanks, constructed in 1948-49, are located behind the building.

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District also contains a historic gas station (photograph 8) on the edge of the downtown commercial core. The station is a good example of the house with canopy type as defined in the Journal of American Culture. Today it houses a used car sales business. Another auto-related building is located at 101 South Second Avenue. The Pinson Building (photographs 15 and 16), constructed in 1947, housed auto dealerships until the 1980s. It is a two-story brick building with a large display window and auto bay door on the first floor, multi-pane metal casement windows on the second floor, and a stepped parapet at the cornice.

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District contains several community landmark buildings. The Murray County courthouse (listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 18, 1980), constructed in 1916, is located on an elevated lot in the western portion of the district (photographs 1, 21, and 31). It is a three-story, square brick building with a tin-covered dome. The front (east) façade features a two-story entry porch with Doric columns supporting a wide entablature with a dentil cornice topped by a balustrade. The main entrance is accentuated by a classical pediment that is supported by fluted pilasters. Windows are single and paired one-over-one double-hung-sash. Window openings are round- or flat-arched and feature limestone lintels and keystones. Some second floor windows feature classical pediments with decorative brackets. Two monuments are located on the front lawn of the courthouse. A monument to veterans of the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War (photograph 21, right) was placed on the courthouse lawn in the 1950s. A Confederate monument (photograph 21, left) was placed on the courthouse lawn in 1999 by the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Located on the same lot as the courthouse is the Murray County Jail (listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 18, 1980), which also served as the sheriff's residence (photographs 22, 23, and 31). Constructed in 1916, at the same time as the courthouse, the jail is a two-story, brick building with a hipped roof with wide overhangs. The first floor features a one-story entry porch that has been enclosed and segmental-arched one-over-one windows. The second floor windows are also one-over-one with segmental arches. A rear porch has also been enclosed. The jail is currently used as county offices.

The Chatsworth Depot (photograph 26) was constructed in 1905 by the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. The one-story, wood-framed building features a cross-gable roof supported by large knee braces. The dept was moved to its current site and raised on concrete piers in the early 1990s. Due to its relocation (a block west of the railroad and separated from it by the Chatsworth Water

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

---

Treatment Plant) and loss of connection to the historic rail line, the depot is a noncontributing resource in the historic district.

The Wright Hotel (listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 17, 1982) (photograph 25), located east of the courthouse square, was constructed in 1909 in response to the growing demand for lodging for rail passengers. The hotel is a two-story, square brick building with a hipped roof that features a single dormer on each façade. Windows are one-over-one double-hung-sash with segmental arches. The building features a two-story wrap-around porch supported by square columns on all sides.

The First Baptist Church of Chatsworth (photographs 28 and 29) is located north of the courthouse square. Built in 1942, the two-story brick building features elements of the Romanesque style including the round-arched window openings, the full-height, stepped round-arched entrance, and the cross-gable roof. An addition was constructed at the rear of the building in 1958, and a nonhistoric sanctuary (photograph 29) was constructed in 1965 to the east of the original sanctuary.

The First United Methodist Church of Chatsworth (photograph 30) was constructed in 1958. The two-story brick building features elements of the Colonial Revival style including an accentuated entrance with a broken pediment and multi-pane, double-hung-sash windows. The building also features a full-height, full-façade entry porch supported by Doric columns and a tiered steeple.

The ADCO Motel (photograph 9), located north of the courthouse square on Third Avenue (Georgia Highway 411), was constructed in 1952. Typical of roadside motor courts of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the ADCO Motel consists of a series of small buildings containing individual guest rooms, constructed in a U-shape around a parking lot to accommodate the growing automobile-traveling population. The buildings are one- and two-story brick buildings with hipped and gable roofs. Entrances to the guest rooms open directly to the parking lot. The office, now a restaurant, is a one-story brick building with a hipped roof that features ribbon windows that wrap around the front corners of the building.

The Chatsworth Masonic Lodge (photograph 7, center), located on Third Avenue, was constructed in 1958. The two-story brick building, typical of Masonic lodges, houses retail space on the first floor while the lodge occupies the second floor. The first floor features a central entrance and display windows for two retail spaces. The second floor contains only two metal casement windows on the front (east) façade. The Chatsworth Masonic Lodge was organized in 1916.

The United States Post Office and Federal Building (photographs 23 and 24) is located on south of the courthouse square and is one of only two International style buildings in the district. The building was constructed in 1964, and ends the period of significant development in downtown Chatsworth during the historic period. The Post Office portion of the building is one-story, while the federal building is two-story. The character-defining features of the building include the flat roof, flat, unadorned wall surfaces, and the asymmetrical façade. United States Post Offices constructed during the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are often the only examples of International style architecture found in small Georgia cities (other examples are often found as additions or auxiliary buildings on

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

---

early 20<sup>th</sup> century school campuses). It is often times the only building associated with the federal government in small towns as well.

The Louisville & Nashville Railroad (now CSX Railroad) runs north-south on the eastern edge of the district (photographs 17 and 20). This historic rail corridor was established in 1905.

An automobile bridge is located in the southeast corner of the historic district. Constructed in 1939, the bridge was part of a New Deal grade-crossing elimination project on a state highway. The 10-span bridge is composed of a steel stringer main span over the railroad tracks and nine T-beam approach spans.

Landscaping in the district is minimal. Commercial buildings are built along front and side lots lines, adjacent to sidewalks and neighboring buildings. The courthouse square contains foundation plantings, and concrete sidewalks and walkways.

The areas outside of the district boundaries include modern commercial development to the north (photograph 7, background) and the south; nonhistoric government offices and a residential area to the west; and nonhistoric industrial development to the east.



---

**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):**  N/A

A       B       C       D       E       F       G

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

Architecture  
Commerce  
Community Planning and Development  
Politics and Government  
Transportation

**Period of Significance:**

1905-1964

**Significant Dates:**

1905-Louisville & Nashville Railroad tracks and depot constructed; Chatsworth Land Company chartered; Chatsworth town plan laid out which forms the developmental framework for the City of Chatsworth

1913-Chatsworth designated county seat

1916-Construction of Murray County Courthouse and Jail

1964-Construction of United States Post Office and Federal Building

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

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

Alexander Blair, architect-Murray County Courthouse

C.W. Bradley

H. Carr, builder-Murray County Courthouse

C.R. Hix, contractor

Dewey Pendley, builder, contractor, architect

William Pendley, builder, contractor, architect

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

**Statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District contains much of the historic commercial development in downtown Chatsworth that developed from 1905 through 1964. It includes the community's central business district and associated public or community landmark buildings centered on the historic courthouse square.

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is significant in the area of architecture for its representative collection of intact early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century commercial buildings that represents prevailing design and construction traditions of small cities and towns in Georgia. They include freestanding and attached one- and two-story buildings. Character-defining features of these types of buildings include: freestanding or attached with party walls; simple rectangular forms; oriented to the street, usually in lines or rows with a common setback usually fronting directly on the sidewalk; storefronts with cast-iron or wood columns, large display windows with transom lights and wood or brick bulkheads; architectural ornament primarily on the front and sometimes side facades; parapet rooflines, some with recessed panels; second-story segmental-arched windows; and ornamented projecting cornices. Architectural styles represented by these buildings include good examples of the Romanesque Revival, Classical Revival, Colonial Revival, Commercial, and International styles. Characteristics of the Classical Revival style include dominant full-height entry porch with roof supported by classical columns, windows aligned horizontally and vertically in symmetrical rows, and a central door. Characteristics of the Colonial Revival style are an accentuated front door with a decorative pediment supported by pilasters, symmetrical facade with a central door and multi-pane windows. Characteristics of the Commercial style include geometric form, storefronts with large display windows, parapet rooflines, second-story segmental-arched windows, and ornamented projecting cornices. Characteristics of the International style include smooth, unornamented wall surfaces, flat roof, asymmetrical façade. The use of brick, both structurally and decoratively, as the principal building material, in conjunction with cast iron, stone, ceramic tile, pressed metal and wood also is characteristic of the way in which these kinds of commercial buildings were built during these periods in small Georgia cities. Other kinds of important commercial buildings are represented in the district. An excellent example of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century gas station, representative of a nationally recognized type (house-with-canopy), is located within the district. The district also contains architecturally significant community landmark buildings including the Murray County Courthouse, the Murray County Jail, the Wright Hotel, the Masonic Building, the First Baptist Church, the First United Methodist Church, and the United States Post Office and Federal Building. These are excellent local examples of the Neoclassical Revival, Colonial Revival, and International styles as evidenced by their detailing and distinctive features. The materials used in the construction of these buildings are the same as those used in the construction of the commercial buildings in the district, however some of the materials such as stone are used in applied ornamentation on the community landmark buildings. These buildings generally possess a high degree of craftsmanship as evidenced by architectural details and other ornamentation common to the architectural styles represented in the district.

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is significant in the area of commerce as the historic commercial center of Chatsworth and the surrounding county. Typically the county seat was also the

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

principal commercial center in the county. Such commercial centers generally featured a range of retail stores, offices and professional services, warehouses, artisans, mechanics, entertainment and related services, and communications-related businesses. Extant buildings in the Chatsworth Downtown Historic District represent many of these commercial activities including general merchandise, hardware, drug store, gas stations, banks, law offices, and auto repair. These historic buildings and the commercial activity they represent are directly related to the economic development and prosperity of the community and its surrounding region during the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Chatsworth's development was due in large part to the placement of the town along a portion of the Louisville & Nashville rail line.

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is significant in the area of community planning and development for its intact historic town plan. This plan is a good example of the Washington-type of county seat plan, one of four major types of county seat plans that prevailed in Georgia from the late 18<sup>th</sup>-century through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Washington plan features a central courthouse square with street leading directly to its corners. This plan also reflects the designation of the community as the Murray County seat. In Georgia, generally, only county seat communities were laid out in this distinctive manner. Reinforcing the importance of the plan is the concentration of historic commercial and community landmark buildings around the square and along the principal streets that creates a clearly defined downtown or central business district. This pattern of development represents the traditional way in which Georgia's county seats grew and developed over time. The architectural development of the central business district also reflects some of the major periods of community growth and development and the major economic factors that contributed to the community's growth and development.

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is significant in the area of politics and government as the county seat of Murray County and because of the presence of buildings and structures directly related to activities and events associated with local county government. Throughout much of Georgia's history, the county has been the most important and powerful form of government. County governments made and enforced laws; provided essential public services including building and maintaining roads, water and sewer systems, and other utility services; administered important aspects of the legal system including courts, birth and death records, taxes, wills and probate, and property deeds; and provided public education throughout the county through county school boards. County commissioners, sheriffs, and judges traditionally are the most important local political figures. These important governmental functions and the politics that directed them are generally represented by the county courthouse, often a courthouse square, the county jail, and sometimes auxiliary offices. In the Chatsworth Downtown Historic District, county government is represented by the courthouse square with its traditional placement at the center of the central business district and by the courthouse itself and nearby jail. The federal government is also represented by the United States Post Office and Federal Building, located just south of the square. In many towns like Chatsworth, the post office is the only visible presence of the federal government.

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is significant in the area of transportation for the railroad-related activities that occurred during the historic period and the enhancement of the city's role as a

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

### Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

commercial, industrial and rail-related center in Murray County and for the important role of the railroad in the development of the downtown Chatsworth business district. The architectural development of the central business district also reflects some of the major periods of community growth and development and the major economic factors that contributed to the community's growth and development including the establishment of the railroad in the mid-1890s. The development of downtown Chatsworth occurred first along the rail line and later around the courthouse square. The railroad arrived in the mid-1890s and was a catalyst for a period of great growth and for the designation of Chatsworth as the new seat of Murray County. The railroad's role is represented by the concentration of commercial and industrial development near the rail lines and the rail lines themselves. The railroad enhanced the city's role as a regional commercial center. The completion of the railroad provided the impetus for the development of the industrial area surrounding the railroad as well as the general growth of the town. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the dependence on the railroad shifted to the automobile. Several major state thoroughfares intersect in Chatsworth reinforcing its role as a transportation hub for Chatsworth and the surrounding area.

### **National Register Criteria**

The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of commerce, community planning and development, politics and government, and transportation for the extant historic resources related to the typical activities that took place in Chatsworth as the seat of government and commerce for Murray County. The Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is also eligible for listing under Criterion C in the area of architecture for its collection of commercial and community landmark buildings constructed from the early to the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

The period of significance for the Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is 1905 to 1964. The district meets Criterion Consideration G due to the fact that it achieved significance in a period less than fifty years before the nomination. The construction of the United States Post Office and Federal Building on the south of the courthouse square represents the last community landmark building constructed in the city. The post office was an important community landmark building because it was the center for community activity in the small town.

The post office, with its reliance on modern building materials, asymmetry, and lack of references to past architectural styles, is significant as one of only two examples of the International Style of architecture in downtown Chatsworth. After World War II, the International Style filtered into Georgia's rural communities through host projects funded by local, state, and federal funds. These projects principally included schools built to accommodate the growing number of baby boomers, health centers that were built to serve migrant and rural populations, and new, modern post offices. In some cases, these buildings inspired the construction of International Style residential and commercial buildings such as the Cohutta Bank Building in Chatsworth.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

**Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance for the Chatsworth Downtown Historic District begins in 1905, the year in which the town plan was laid out. The town developed around its commercial core, typical of county seat towns in Georgia, through 1964, the end of the historic period. The gridiron street plan, laid out in 1905, provided the physical framework for development in the area and retains a strong presence in the district today. The construction of the Post Office and Federal Building in 1964 represents the last major community landmark building constructed in Chatsworth.

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

Contributing buildings in the Chatsworth Downtown Historic District include commercial and community landmark buildings that were constructed during the period of significance that retain their historic integrity. The three contributing structures in the district are the intact town plan, the portion of the Louisville & Nashville (now CSX) Railroad tracks included in the district, and the historic automobile bridge located in the southeast corner of the district. The 1950s war monument on the courthouse lawn is the one contributing object in the district.

The majority of noncontributing resources in the Chatsworth Downtown Historic District are historic buildings that have lost their historic integrity due to significant alterations such as the application of false façades, nonhistoric mansard roofs, and reworked storefronts. There are very few post-1964 buildings in the district. Noncontributing resources include those resources constructed after 1964 (photographs 5, center; 10; 11, center; 26, background; and 29, right), and those that have lost historic integrity through alteration (photographs 2; 3, foreground; 8, background; 14, left; and 26, foreground). Vacant lots are also included as noncontributing resources. A 1999 Confederate monument on the courthouse lawn is the noncontributing object in the district.

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

**\*\*NOTE: The following history was compiled by William Blankenship, Historic Preservation Consultant, December, 2003. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.**

The history of the Chatsworth Downtown Historic District is the story of two downtowns, both developing over decades in close proximity. The history of the district may be divided into three distinct eras: the first is the era of initial development, 1904 and 1920; the second era, 1920 and 1945; and the third era slightly overlaps the second, c.1939 to 1964.

**Initial Development of Chatsworth**

The history of Chatsworth began fifty-five years before the first building was constructed in what is now Chatsworth; moreover, the seeds that begat the city were germinated nearly five hundred miles north of the present day city, with the birth of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. Within ten years,

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

the Louisville & Nashville (L & N) Railroad had lain nearly 270 miles of track, connected the cities of Louisville, Kentucky and Nashville, Tennessee, and was seeking a way to connect these cities to Atlanta.

The Civil War affected the growth and existing rail assets, however, immediately after the war, the L&N sought to carry out plans that had withered because of the war. The L&N Railroad had stiff competition. The Marietta & North Georgia Railroad had already connected rails between Atlanta and Canton, Georgia, while the Knoxville Southern Company had constructed rails between Etowah, Georgia, and Copper Hill, Tennessee. What was necessary, from the point of view of L&N officials, was to offer customers (passengers as well as freight) an easier route to points north of Atlanta and Marietta. The Marietta & North Georgia Railroad soon connected with the Knoxville Southern, but the route laid traversed some of the most rugged land features in the southeastern United States. In fact, moving freight by waterway was sometimes quicker than by rail, given the irregular path taken by the railways.

The L&N decided to connect their terminal in Knoxville, Tennessee with a terminal in Cartersville, Georgia. The land on which to accomplish this was much more accommodating to track layers than that of the land immediately west and east of the proposed route. Most importantly, some of the land, especially in the Georgia portion of the route was already half prepared, in a manner of speaking. This half-prepared land was the site of the Old Federal Road, built nearly eighty years earlier, a portion of which ran through Murray County. Track began to be laid in the mid-1890's.

During this period, the south, and especially Georgia was undergoing a revolutionary change. Termed the "New South" movement by Henry Grady, Publisher of the Atlanta Constitution, this movement sought to bring the Old South, still feeling the ravages of the Civil War, back to an appearance of eminence within the United States. Grady and other proponents of this New South concept felt that encouraging industrial development in the south would foster a feeling of rebirth and civic pride in the South.

Proponents of the New South movement were fabulously successful in their efforts. Cheap land availability coupled with an unlimited supply of cheap labor drew northern textile companies and other manufacturers to the South in droves. No longer, went the reasoning of these business owners, would they have to worry about increasing demands for Union recognition. Localities in the South got into the act by offering deals to manufacturers and businesses that moved south.

The effect on the economy of the South was enormous. As money poured into Southern states, and as people began to leave farms in favor of factories, the social and cultural fabric of the south began to alter itself. Moreover, new towns began to develop, fueled by the movement to bring new railway tracks into areas to more easily link cities and to provide transportation for increased amounts of freight (mostly in the form of cotton) from rural areas. In short, cotton need no longer be shipped to faraway northern textile centers; now, cotton and other materials (including foodstuffs and iron) might benefit even more people in the south.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

One of the effects of the expansion of rail service through rural areas was the establishment of new towns along the tracks. Chatsworth was one such town. Woodstock, in Cherokee County was another. What Chatsworth and Woodstock, separated by seventy miles of rugged terrain, had in common were farmers with agricultural products seeking a way to reach markets in Atlanta and points north. In the case of Chatsworth, the product was cotton. In addition to cotton, Chatsworth already had the beginnings of an industrial base; talc (or soapstone) was plentiful in the area—miners of the stone needed a way to get the material from Murray County to manufacturing facilities in North Carolina. Thus, the L&N tracks coming south from Knoxville necessitated the building of a freight depot near cotton farmers as well as talc miners. This depot was located alongside the L&N tracks by an L&N engineer. It was named "Chattsworth" by the engineer.

For the north Georgia talc industry and the soon to be town of Chatsworth, the presence of railroad tracks and a depot from which to ship freight was a real boon. Prior to the railroad's construction, talc production was a minor affair. First, the talc had to be extracted from the Cohutta Mountains east of the present town. Then, the talc had to be loaded and hauled sixteen miles to the nearest railhead, Dalton, in Whitfield County, 12 miles to the west. Transportation costs were high, and in some cases prohibitive. It cost on average 50 cents up to \$3.50 to haul a ton of unfinished talc to Dalton on horse or mule drawn freight wagons. At the time, roads were unimproved, a condition lasting well into the 1920's in Murray County, and there was no guarantee that a wagon would arrive in Dalton in a timely manner.

The L&N tracks ended the worry. At first, the raw talc was hauled to the depot in wagons and loaded aboard freight cars. Then, in 1907, J. Frazier Glenn constructed the first talc grinding plant (or, mill) south and east of Chatsworth. Freight cars could now be loaded at tipples and sent on their way to North Carolina for finishing and other manufacturing processes.

But prior to this development, persons from throughout the County, especially Spring Place, which the railroad had bypassed, began to have an idea that the introduction of the L&N tracks might spell financial fortune for those with the wherewithal to take advantage of land running adjacent to the newly laid tracks. A company was founded with the express motivation to survey, auction, and develop a new town next to the railroad tracks.

The Chatsworth Land Company was chartered on June 2, 1905. Its principal officers included Charles N. King of Spring Place, Henry Farrar of Dalton, J.M. Sanders of Spring Place, W.C. Martin of Eton, and a man identified only as "Mr. Strickland." Land owned by Jasper Moreland, a Murray farmer who lived on the east side of the Cohutta Mountains, in Gilmer County, was purchased by the group, as was a portion of land from James Springfield, another local farmer. At the time of the purchase, the land, amounting to some ninety-five acres, was heavily wooded and covered with a thick underbrush, though there were some semblances of wagon paths leading through the brush and forest. Alvin Jones was hired, along with a work crew, to clear lots in preparation of selling the land to individual property holders.

A land auction was scheduled for December 1906. The land was surveyed and divided into blocks,



National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

each identified alphabetically. Each block (within the proposed district) consisted of thirty-two lots, each of them twenty-five feet by one hundred feet. Two of the blocks were larger than the others; these two blocks were four hundred feet squared. One of these was reserved for hotel space; the other for a county courthouse. Considering the fact that the Land Company had yet to sell a single lot of land, the designation of a square specifically set aside for a new county courthouse was considered either progressive thinking or arrogant thinking, depending on the person who was asked. Later, the issue of moving the county seat to Chatsworth from Spring Place would indeed induce a political upheaval within the confines of Murray County.

The original plat drawn for the Chatsworth Land Company is located at the Murray County Courthouse Deed Room (see attachment 1). The survey, conducted by H.C. Hamilton, of Dalton, shows the original layout of the City of "Chattsworth." Chatsworth was originally laid out in a pattern of blocks, with alphabet designations. The blocks within the proposed district are KK, LL, SS, TT, & a portion of WW. Additionally, there are three named blocks: Hotel Square, Courthouse Square, and Desoto Park. Each block within the district, with the exception of the Hotel Square, the Courthouse Square, and Desoto Park were split into thirty-two individual lots, numbered one through thirty-two. These lots were twenty-five feet (east or west frontage) by one hundred feet (north or south frontage). The proposed district boundaries lay within this plat. The principals of the Chatsworth Land Company then had the plat superimposed on a sales circular prepared by T.A. Frierson, a Real Estate Auctioneer based in Atlanta. The fact that most of the building sites are not cleared of trees or brush is not mentioned in the circular; rather, the advertisement plays up the profit and speculation potential of the properties.

Not all of the advertising was ill founded, however. The advertisement mentions that businesses had already settled in the area. The Desoto Hotel, for example, was nearly completed by this stage, and the Pendley Brick Company was producing building materials. People were also streaming into the area, however, few residences were constructed. Most of the people in the area were living in large tents; some entire families resided in these tents, staked on property they hoped to purchase at the upcoming land sale. The advertisement also mentions the fact that the Cohutta Talc Mill (not within the proposed district) was up and running, providing employment to people living in the area.

The land auction took place under a large tent erected on the corner of present-day Fort Street and Second Avenue. This location proved important later on, as the development of the core downtown area progressed through the 1900s and 1910s. The first land lot sold to Thomas Monroe Wright, for the sum of twenty-five dollars. Another important development occurred with the sale; this was the beginning of the development of Block "WW" (a portion of this block is included in the district boundary) as a residential area. This lot eventually became the site of the W.S. Bradley residence. It was later that this block became dedicated to commercial concerns.

The land auction proved a great success. Most of the lots within the proposed district were sold on a cash or credit basis. The auction ran for two days; according to deed research, the second day was the busier. Another interesting and important development was the wording of some of the deeds. These deeds, mostly concerning properties in Blocks "SS," "TT," and "LL." The deeds were

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

essentially identical to other deeds written for other properties, but with one crucial difference. Some of the deeds from the above blocks specified exactly which sort of building could be constructed on the property. For example, the deed for Lot 2 in Block "SS" states that only a brick building could be constructed on the site. This leads the researcher to two conclusions: First, the founders of Chatsworth were practicing an early form of neighborhood covenant practice, and second, these lots specified to be occupied by brick structures were intended to be the commercial center of town. In short, the founders of Chatsworth were engaging in community planning activities, much like current property developers and neighborhood associations. This is not to say that there is not a third and more cynical conclusion to be drawn from the research: As most of the founders held a stake in the fledgling Pendley Brick Company, it would have been in their interest to promote the use of building materials originating from their plant. There is no written evidence to confirm this conclusion, however.

It is at this point that the first development stage of Chatsworth shifted into an active and vigorous mode. By 1910, four years after the auction, Chatsworth boasted over 500 residents. Moreover, there were several businesses occupying buildings in most parts of the proposed district. Block "Y" (outside district boundary) had at least three L&N section houses constructed upon it. In Block "JJ," (outside district boundary) the Hull Kerr Store occupied one of the lots. This building was destroyed several years later by a fire. Immediately south of the Hull Kerr Store was the Flanagan General Merchandise, and further south, Cox's Store. On the southeast corner was a building that originally housed a confectionary and a post office, operated by Alvin Jones, and later by Samuel Barnett. This building was later used as the Murray County Library and now houses the Murray County Senior Citizens Center. Due west of the senior center was the Wright Hotel, built in 1909.

At place in the space now occupied by the Old Chatsworth Water Works was a steel water tower. The water tower was removed in the 1960s, but the concrete pad it rested on is still present in the southwest corner of the property. In Block "TT," First Avenue still ran the length of the block from north to south. This avenue no longer exists; it was demolished to make room for the Crown Chenille Building in 1941. However, in 1910, at least three businesses, all occupying wood frame buildings sat on the west side of then First Avenue. These stores were all general merchandise stores and were later destroyed by fires. From north and running south, the stores occupying this area were the John Parker Store, an unnamed meat market, and the L.W. (Lewis) Thompson Store. At one point, just over ten years later, *The Chatsworth Times* would briefly occupy this building.

Block "WW" was first developed as a residential area; by 1912, the Fincher and Wright Homes (outside district boundary) had been constructed on the southeast corner of the block, as had the Bradley, Ratcliff, and Holbrook homes. These houses were demolished at various times, and have now been replaced with modern buildings. Original and subsequent development of Block "WW" is an indicator of the changes that were yet to come in Chatsworth; as an early residential center of the proposed district, this block is the original residential development part of the "first" downtown of Chatsworth.

Block "SS," as it is today, was the commercial heart of the district. The difference between the

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

current configuration of Block "SS" as it appears today and how it appeared in the period between 1906 and 1920 lies in the built environment and the original intentions of the founders of Chatsworth. In essence, the east portion of Block "SS" was intended to be the downtown commercial area of Chatsworth. The reasoning of the principals of the Chatsworth Land Company were sound enough; the east portion of the block lies closest to the railroad tracks.

One must realize that Chatsworth was designed and intended by its planners to be a financial success. As a result, the plan of the town was thought out carefully. The first step in planning the community was to provide motivation for builders to construct substantial buildings on the lots. The railroad provided good motivation; people stuck on a train for long distances do like to get off and stretch their legs, and those legs might lead the rest of the body into a shop, where they might buy something. The first building incoming passengers saw on arrival in Chatsworth was the depot, but by looking directly west, milling passengers would see a substantial town beginning to form. By 1912, the core of the first downtown was constructed. The J.B. Gregory Building (photograph 13) on Market Street was present by this time, as was the Kelly Building (photograph 14, center) and the Wright Hotel.

Also present by this time was the Barksdale Building, unrecognizable from its original state today, the Newton Gordon Store, and the Gudger Farm Supply Store. These early stores made up the core of the downtown area, along with the Bank of Chatsworth Building. These early stores were also highly competitive with one another; so cutthroat in fact that in the late 1910s, competition had to be reined in with taxes on each kind of stock the stores carried. Each store sold a complete line of stock, ranging from dry to canned goods. They each sold farm supplies and clothes, and a myriad of other goods. Chatsworth's population at this time ranged from 350 to 500 residents, with several stores ready to serve the needs of local residents, county residents, and train passengers. Therefore, the stores had incentive in undercutting the others' pricing on goods. Storeowners spied on one another constantly, even going as far to send strangers into competitor's stores to report on prices of the other stores. After being reported back to a storeowner, the storeowner would slash the prices on a particular item to below his cost, thus attracting customers to his store.

As a result of these practices, stores in Chatsworth were constantly failing; one store in the district changed hands four times in eight months. The solution arrived at by the city council was effective. A business license scheme was instituted whereby for every line of stock a store offered, a flat tax would be charged to the store. At first, this tax was very unpopular and some storeowners refused to pay it and were fined for non-compliance; but the scheme worked as designed. As a result, stores in Chatsworth began to specialize in particular areas. For example, Gudger's General Store began to operate as strictly a farm supply store. Bob Shelton's store began to offer fine foods, while some stores began to branch out into other areas, like restaurants and soda fountains. Kelly's Store even installed a barbershop in a successful attempt to bring business into his store. Eventually, the entire commercial concern of Chatsworth accepted the council's decision; *The Chatsworth Times* later stated that the only thing wrong with the council's decision on the issue was that the license fees were not high enough.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

The western portion of Block "SS" was a little slower in developing for two reasons. Between the year of the land sale and the construction of the county courthouse, there was little incentive for development along this part of Third Avenue. There were a few establishments, however; Major Terry's Livery Stable (nonextant) was located on the corner of Market Street and Third Avenue and W.C. Bradley had a wood frame store on the corner of Fort Street and Third Avenue (nonextant). These two buildings may be considered speculative enterprises in the sense that their owners might have foreseen the future value of owning businesses on this portion of the block. Both of the buildings were destroyed by fires in the 1920s. It would soon turn out that Bradley and Terry had forecasted correctly, if this was their assessment. Soon after their buildings were constructed, a movement arose to fill the space allocated by the city's founders with a courthouse.

**Development of the "Second" Downtown Chatsworth**

Spring Place had served as the Murray County seat of government since 1833, shortly after Murray County was created from land of Cherokee County. The fact was that Spring Place, until the time Chatsworth was established, had a good claim on being the county seat. First, it was the largest town in the county, and the oldest. Second, it was also centrally located in a very narrow and lengthy county with roads that stretched outward in all directions, including to Dalton, Whitfield County. Dalton had in recent years become very important to Murray County. The nearest railhead was situated there, and any goods to be shipped to or from the Spring Place area had to be shipped at Dalton. Spring Place had a good road leading to Dalton.

The construction of the L&N Railroad through the area changed all that. Once the railroad was completed, and Chatsworth well established, Spring Place's days as the center of government in Murray County were numbered. Of course, most of the founders of Chatsworth had some connection with Spring Place. Charles N. King, president of the Cohutta Banking Company (also founded in Spring Place) and the Chatsworth Land Company was from Spring Place, as was William Pendley, owner of the Pendley Brick Company. From the beginning, with eyes on the development potential inherent in the railroad tracks, King and other founders planned to move the county seat to Chatsworth. All that had to be done was to wait for Chatsworth to mature and become a full-fledged town. In 1912, the city founders finally felt that, with over five hundred residents in the town, and signs of more to come, it was time to move the county seat to Chatsworth. The Land Company then reorganized itself and with the assistance of the Chatsworth City government, began to circulate petitions among the Murray County citizenry to have the county seat moved to Chatsworth.

After all the signatures necessary to plan an election were collected, the issue was set for a vote. It was the news of the upcoming election that caused ripples of discord throughout the entire county. First, the City of Eton, just north of Chatsworth, decided that if there was an election to be held to move the county seat from Spring Place, then Eton should be eligible for the placement of the county seat. In order to carry the votes of county citizens, Eton offered to construct a new courthouse at no expense to the county. After much campaigning and mudslinging between the two towns, the election was held in late September 1912.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

In the meantime, however, Spring Place citizens had quietly been mounting a fight to keep the county seat located where it had been since 1833, mostly by mobilizing voters to get out and vote the measure down. Ultimately, this gesture was soundly defeated. In the ensuing election, Spring Place only polled 150 voters in support of keeping the county seat and courthouse in Spring Place. However, the amount of votes prevented Chatsworth from declaring an outright victory—by taking votes away from Chatsworth, the City of Eton was able to draw enough votes to prevent an outright majority in the polling.

The results of the election were then contested by Chatsworth on the grounds that Eton had entered the election too late. Chatsworth's contention was that Eton had entered into the fray after the election was called, thus negating Eton's claim for the county seat. Court battles raged for nearly nine months, until the State Legislature and the Governor were finally prevailed upon to declare Chatsworth the new county seat in August 1913. Hard feelings persist to the present day, and it is not uncommon to meet people from Murray County who still have opinions on whether the county seat rightfully belongs to Chatsworth, Eton, or Spring Place.

Now that Chatsworth was the County Seat, it was time to discuss and construct a new courthouse. As did the decision concerning the move of the courthouse, the courthouse plans caused much controversy. The trouble was not with the construction of the courthouse, but with the details of the construction that caused problems. So much so that Judge A.W. Fite jailed members of the Murray County Commission for contempt of court after they attempted to appeal a ruling against them by going to politicians in Atlanta, rather than through the judiciary system. Eventually, Fite was overruled by the Georgia Supreme Court on all of his rulings, and the courthouse was constructed at a cost of \$60,000.

The construction of the courthouse took just over two years. During this time, court was held in Chatsworth on the upper floor of the aforementioned L.W. Thompson Building. Not all court functions were held in this building, however. The Grand Jury, convened in February and August of the year, deliberated at the Bank of Chatsworth Building, and deliberating juries were escorted to the Baptist Church (nonextant), located on the northeast corner of Cherokee Street and Third Avenue. The effect of the courthouse construction was much greater than that of just about any other development in Chatsworth. The architecture of the courthouse, for example, was in the Neoclassical Revival style, lending a sense of civic pride and power among the people of Chatsworth and Murray County. Second, and the greater of the two effects, the new courthouse caused a shift in the geographical development of the town.

There is no way to exaggerate the importance of the courthouse to the City of Chatsworth. First, it gave the city a sense of civic pride to have such a majestic building in their town. Chatsworth had only been incorporated for ten years when the courthouse was completed. Second, the courthouse became a great indirect provider of economic development in the town. As the county seat, Chatsworth could rightly expect a terrific boost in commerce, industry, and even social and cultural enhancement. This proved to be true. Judges and attorneys had to come from outside the area on the train to hold court. People from throughout the county had to come to Chatsworth to conduct

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

legal business or to serve on juries. A political base began to develop in Chatsworth that extended throughout the county as those in Chatsworth sought to hold on to power recently gained. Commercial and industrial concerns soon began to benefit from the increase of visitors and even those who decided to relocate to Chatsworth. Socially and culturally, Chatsworth began to thrive. Due in part to the railroad, Chatsworth could boast several carnivals and fairs throughout the year. Elephants appeared with the circuses that set up tents at the corner of Second Avenue and Fort Street.

However, the third, and most important effect of the courthouse was the geographical shift that the business district underwent as a result of the courthouse being located across from the west portion of Block "SS." Business people in Chatsworth could not help but notice that from the front steps of the courthouse, one would have to look directly east. At the time the courthouse was constructed, the view afforded to one departing the courthouse was one of empty lots overgrown with weeds and the rears of buildings cluttered with storage sheds and unused materials. Where visitors saw these sights, however, local business people saw potential profit and opportunity. It would not take very long for these business people to take advantage of the opportunities being offered. No longer would the buildings on Second Avenue and Market Street be the dominant and most sought after buildings in the proposed district. With attention turning to the eastward view from the courthouse, the value of the westward view from the depot would begin to be eclipsed, and the course of development of Chatsworth forever changed.

The first brick building constructed on the west portion of Block "SS" was the Bates Building, presently called the Terry Building. The first of two identical buildings, this building was constructed in 1916, and is located almost directly across from the courthouse door. It was constructed by William Pendley, who by this time was out of the business of manufacturing brick in favor of constructing brick buildings. Ben Bates was the owner and the first to occupy the building. His department store sold a wide range of goods, including clothing, books, and a limited supply of canned foods. By 1920, Bates had profited sufficiently enough from the store that he was able to construct an addition to the store.

By this time, Bates had taken on a partner. Major D. Terry was a presence in Chatsworth since at least 1910. He owned one of the two livery stables on Third Avenue, which was a large wood frame structure on the corner of Market Street and Third Avenue, now occupied by the Chatsworth-Murray Chamber of Commerce Building. Bates and Terry continued to operate the department store, but rented several of the upstairs spaces in the building for office or business space. Fred Brown, an undertaker from Eton, operated his embalming services from the second floor for several years before purchasing the Hix Building next door and remodeling it for his use.

The Hix Building was constructed for use as a theater originally. Charles Hix was another fixture in Chatsworth, with his hands in many business ventures. He owned a garage, had part interests in a couple of the local stores, and was the first to offer service for electrical appliances in Chatsworth, mostly radio repair. The Hix Building, constructed in 1920, was built by William Pendley. In fact, Pendley and Hix were nearly killed when scaffolding collapsed while they stood on it inspecting

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

Pendley's brickwork. The subsequent theater business occupying the building did not last very long, despite the addition of matinees. The importance of the building in its early years was in the contribution to the city. With few venues outside the courthouse to hold meetings and other civic occasions, the theater doubled as a meeting place for organizations such as the local Parent-Teacher Association. After the theater ceased operations, the building was converted to a garage space by Hix, and has served several other businesses during the ensuing years.

Businesses continued to steadily increase in the western portion of Block "SS" throughout the 1920's and 1930's. By 1927, the Barnett Building was constructed. Some of the first tenants to occupy the building were the Chatsworth Post Office and a small soda shop. Also in 1927 the M.D. Jefferson and W.C. Bradley Buildings were reconstructed. A fire in December 1926 destroyed the last of the oldest wood frame commercial buildings in the district. The fire started in Jefferson's store building and rapidly spread. At the time, there was no building to the north of the Jefferson Store, but W.S. Bradley's Store Building was directly south of the Jefferson Building. The fire spread quickly and burned the buildings to the ground before fire crews could find the fire truck, which was parked in a garage undergoing repairs. After the fire, plans were immediately launched to replace the buildings. The new buildings were constructed concurrently, and had a more modern commercial look. Both buildings were one-story and used plate glass liberally, closely resembling buildings that are found in they typical strip malls of today.

The next building to go up was the Blue Goose Café Building in 1931. The northernmost building on the western portion of Block "SS" until 1935, this building is still extant, although due to irreversible alterations in the building since the 1970's, the building is a noncontributing resource. The Blue Goose Café Building was the first building in Chatsworth to be constructed and dedicated for the express purpose of being a restaurant. Chatsworth had a number of eateries, but most of the facilities were either afterthoughts, or small affairs set into the corner of a general store area. Soda Fountains abounded in Chatsworth, but these places were not full service restaurants. When the Blue Goose Café opened in 1931, people flocked from throughout the county to eat there. Additionally, short order lunches were served daily to locals and travelers, especially to those visiting the courthouse on court days.

By 1935, the western portion of Block "SS" was nearly filled with brick structures. Major Terry's Livery Stable, a victim of fire, was no longer present, and the lots remained vacant until the Chamber of Commerce Building was constructed in 1997. Additionally there were three vacant lots yet to be filled. In 1935, two of those lots became the home of the R.H. Bradley Building. Bradley was a presence in Chatsworth and all of Murray County since at least 1910. He was a physician trained in Atlanta. He occupied offices in at least two buildings for nearly twenty-five years before undertaking the construction of the two-story brick building on Third Avenue that is named for him today (photograph 5, right). This building proved to be one of the more interesting buildings on the block due to the wide array of uses the building has been put to over the ensuing years.

In the meantime, other areas of the district were developing. The 1910s and 1920s were golden years for building construction in Chatsworth. Outside the district, residences were being built at a

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

dizzying rate, while inside the district, where there was not construction; there were at least plans for construction. In Block "LL" for example, the Chatsworth Garage, which had been constructed before the courthouse came to Chatsworth, underwent an immense expansion and alteration. The expansion was actually the addition of two buildings on the lot. These buildings were constructed to serve T.L. Gregory's Ford Agency. Gregory had constructed the garage as strictly that; it was a place for people to have their automobiles repaired. When Gregory was awarded the Ford Motor Company Agency, he decided to convert the garage building into a showroom and offices. Then, needing a garage, he constructed a building twice the size and quadruple the floor space of the original garage, this according to a January 1921 issue of *The Chatsworth Times*. He then constructed a gas and oil station on the lot in 1926; this station was the first gas station and building in Chatsworth to have a paved driveway and parking area.

Elsewhere in Block "LL" there were other changes. *The Chatsworth Times*, having been unceremoniously evicted from their previous location in 1921, contracted William Pendley and Sons to construct a new building on the corner of Cherokee Street and Third Avenue. Another interesting development in this Block was an addition planned for the Chatsworth Pharmacy building; E.H. Dickie, who purchased the building in 1928 decided to add a second story to the building. Today, the addition cannot be distinguished from the original building (photograph 5, background).

In Block "WW," the last of the residential homes was constructed. From this point on, however, Block "WW" began its long redefinition into a commercial area. The trend began in 1931 with the construction of the Joseph Luke Cox filling station (outside the district boundary). This trend in Block "WW" was due to a burgeoning influence from automobiles and the roads needed to carry them. The railroad was fast becoming a victim of its own influence and success, a trend that was occurring nationally.

The railroad in Chatsworth and the United States as a whole had been one the great strengths contributing to the development of America, but its time as the dominating force in American transportation was rapidly being undercut by the automobile. The irony in this lies in the fact that without the railroad, the automobile would have never come close to being a rising influence. The railroad, of course, carried all the raw resources to construct automobiles; coal, iron ore, rubber, wood, and a manner of all materials were carried by the railroad to American manufacturing facilities. In the case of Chatsworth, new automobiles for sale in Chatsworth arrived in pieces on freight trains; usually in two pieces, the cars would be picked up at the depot and pushed or pulled to the T.L. Gregory Dealership, where they would be assembled and sold to waiting members of the public

People in Chatsworth flocked to buy automobiles, and stocks were usually low. Local sources state that Gregory usually received two to three shipments of cars per year, and that he would usually sell out of stock in a matter of weeks. Gregory also did high volume in the sale of motorized farm equipment as well, as did Bob Gudger at his store on Second Avenue. And as more and more people purchased the Tin Lizzies and Studebakers, the more and more people began to demand good roads in the county. The more roads that were built in the area, the less passengers felt the need to take the train.



National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

Murray County and Chatsworth road building was a catch-as-catch-can operation for the first twenty-five years of Chatsworth development. In the proposed district, it did not matter how much the roads were graded by mule-driven graders, or how much gravel was packed into the road surfaces once grading had occurred; the first hard rainfall made the roads impassable. Without good drainage systems flooding was common during heavy rainstorms. County roads were infinitely worse. Sensible people simply parked their cars during the winter and reverted to horse and buggy during the winters. Combined with rains and the accompanying ditches that developed in the road surfaces, county roads were near impassable, at least by automobile. In fact, livery stables and blacksmiths did good business in Chatsworth well into the 1930s, even though U.S. Highway 411, which passes through the heart of the district, was completed (but not paved). Oddly, *The Chatsworth Times* makes no mention of the Highway 411 paving project. There is mention, however of the paving project that directly affected the district in a rival newspaper that operated in Murray County from 1935 to c.1940. *The Murray County Herald* reported that paving was completed in the period between March and August 1935.

Chatsworth finally had a paved main thoroughfare (U.S. Highway 411, or Third Avenue), but city streets, including streets within the district were still unpaved and subject to such disrepair that drivers risked having their vehicles disappear in mud holes if they dared the streets during rainy periods. In 1942, the city took steps to correct the matter. That April, the city council forwarded a proposal that "two city blocks be paved..." The streets to be paved were Second Avenue from Fort Street to Market Street and between Second Avenue and Third Avenue on Market Street. There was only one problem with the proposal: Chatsworth had long had a policy of inducing property owners along the route of such improvements to pay for such improvements, probably going a long way in explaining why infrastructure improvements in Chatsworth took so long to develop. At one point, the city sued and lost a case in 1919, when they tried to force Tom Wright, owner of the Wright Hotel, to pay for concrete sidewalks that the city installed.

In the next issue of *The Chatsworth Times* (April 30, 1942) the City Council announced that a compromise had been reached in whom would pay for the paving project, of which the announced cost would be \$4,800.00. One-third of the project would be paid with county funds, one-third by city funds, and one-third by property owners along the paving route. This solution was acceptable to the property owners, and the paving project was completed two months later, in June. By 1944, all the roads in the district were paved, with the exception of First Avenue between Market and Fort Streets.

### **Third Period of Development of the Chatsworth Downtown Historic District—1935-1954**

In the 1940s street paving was a major improvement, and usually predicted great things to come. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule, but Chatsworth was not one those exceptions. Already, the railroad was being supplanted by paved roads. First, they connected Chatsworth with Dalton in a whole new way. Sixteen miles from Chatsworth, Dalton was a thriving city, a veritable metropolis compared to Chatsworth. Bedspread and textile plants abounded in Dalton, and steady work was available there in greater quantities than was offered in Chatsworth. The problem was getting there from Chatsworth. The train tracks in Chatsworth did not go anywhere near Dalton. Roads were, as

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

stated earlier, in horrible shape. To get to Dalton and back in an automobile, no matter what kind of automobile, was an adventure, and usually regarded as an occasion. Present day Highway 52 and Highway 76 were very dangerous, and one can barely get through a whole month of issues from *The Chatsworth Times* without reading a story about some poor soul being severely injured or killed on roads leading to Dalton before 1932, when Highway 76 was paved.

With the advent of good roads, new things were possible. It was possible, for example to ship work to Chatsworth from Dalton. This occurred for the first time in 1932, when Highway 76 was paved. Kenner and Rauschenberg, a textile giant in Dalton, decided to open a store in the Terry Building on Third Avenue. This store sold chenille tufted bedspreads, probably to passers through on the road to Knoxville or Atlanta. K&R, as they were more commonly known, was listed in Chatsworth Business License ledgers as a general store, which may be true. However, they were mostly engaged in creating a demand for chenille products along the Atlanta-Knoxville Highway. By 1936, most of Chatsworth's stores had gotten in on the act. Quarles & Westfield, Gordon's Store, S.E. Brown's Merchandising, A.C. Banks & Company, and Tennie Cantrell's Store were buying and selling chenille products. Individual sellers sold the bedspreads from the trunks of cars and backs of pick-up trucks on the streets of the district.

It was not long before someone thought that manufacturing the bedspreads in Chatsworth might be a good idea, as much to create jobs as to sell. The first new industrial plant dedicated to manufacturing bedspreads opened in 1938. Named Redwine & Strain, it was located outside the proposed district boundaries, so will not be covered. The first bedspread manufacturer within the district was probably the Chatsworth Spread Company, which was located on the eastern portion of Block "SS." Later that year, McCarty Chenille Company formed and also operated in Block "SS." This company later moved to Dalton. Two businesses opened in the district in 1941. The first was the Southern Mattress Company. It operated in three successive buildings in Block "JJ." The company operated out of three successive buildings because the first two buildings constructed by Gene Ball, president of the company, burned to the ground in the space of two years. The third building was demolished by the current owner of the property in 1990.

By far the most successful manufacturer to settle in the district, however, was the Crown Chenille Corporation, which transferred some of its manufacturing operations to its new building located in Block "TT," in 1941. The significance of this building in the present day district is that this building finally finished the transformation of Chatsworth from a strictly commercial service economy to a more balanced industrial/commercial district. Just as Crown Chenille was becoming fully operational, the United States entered World War II, and the plant shifted to war production, providing work for hundreds of women brought into the work force as a result of a manpower shortage. Unlike other manufacturers, the women stayed once the war was over.

Depending on whom one talks to, the Crown Company is either regarded the savior or destroyer of Chatsworth's social and cultural life. Some local sources regard Crown Chenille Company with regard approaching reverence; the company appeared in Chatsworth and provided literally thousands of jobs in the forty years it operated, and its successors still provide employment today.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

To others however, Crown Chenille Company was heavy-handed in its dealings with the city. A good example of this is found in Crown's expansion in 1950. Crown Chenille had outgrown its space by 1950, though it occupied nearly the entire "TT" Block. Its solution was to expand its building to the east, nearly doubling its square footage. The problem with this plan involved the destruction of Desoto Park, the town's leading place to gather for recreation. The Chatsworth Land Company had taken great care to include a city park in the original plan of Chatsworth. It appears on the land plat of 1905, and by 1950, Desoto Park was considered one of the most beautiful parks in North Georgia, at least by citizens of Chatsworth, despite the fact that the Crown Chenille building was adjacent to the park on the west and the railroad tracks on the east. It was covered with large growth trees, and was reportedly covered with a lush lawn, planted by the city fathers themselves, shortly after Chatsworth's founding.

According to one oral source, Crown Chenille, with its status as the largest employer and company in Chatsworth, if not the entire county, wanted to expand their building across the park. People within and without the district did not think much of this plan, and made it plain to the city council that this was a terrible idea. In the end, Crown reportedly threatened to leave Chatsworth altogether if they were not allowed to carry out their expansion plan. In late 1949, the city council sided with Crown Chenille. The park was scraped clean and the plant was expanded.

Elsewhere in the district, Chatsworth was undergoing yet another building boom. One of the earlier buildings to result from this boom was the First Baptist Church of Chatsworth, a beautiful and unique church building located in the Desoto Hotel Block. The Desoto Hotel Block had gone through virtually no changes since the construction of the DeSoto Hotel in 1905-1906. By 1945, however, the Desoto had fallen on hard times. Despite a recent renovation, house style hotels were falling out of favor in the United States by the end of World War II. V.C. Pickering, for example built an early modern style "strip hotel" two blocks north of the Desoto Hotel in the 1940's that was constantly filled by travelers, while the Desoto was forced to become a rooming house. Not long after this, Alvin Jones decided to sell the hotel and its land, excluding the land he had already sold to the trustees of the First Baptist Church, located on the southwest corner of the lot. Jones sold the land to the Kenemer Brothers (Mack, Luke, and J.T), a family who had been a presence in Chatsworth for almost two decades. Kenemer Brothers operated a chain of funeral homes, and were headquartered in Dalton.

The Kenemers had a funeral home in Chatsworth located on the south frontage of Fort Street, and it does not appear that the Kenemer Brothers planned to open another funeral home on the Desoto Hotel Block. Instead, they immediately subdivided the block and started to sell the property one piece at a time. The first to buy a lot was C.T. Earnest, a local fuel jockey at the Sinclair Service Station south of Fort Street. He and his brother purchased the northwest quadrant of the Hotel property and constructed a combination gas station/bus station on the lot. They in turn, subdivided their lot and sold lots to the highest bidders. One lot was sold to the Masons, who constructed their lodge building in 1955. In fact, by 1955, the entire Third Avenue frontage of the Hotel Desoto block was filled with buildings. Honey and Wilbanks sold furniture and electrical appliances from the building they constructed on the site, while Lay's Department Store sold merchandise from their building, located next to Honey and Wilbanks. The First Baptist Church purchased the Desoto Hotel

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

and used it as Sunday School classrooms until 1957, when it was demolished to make room for a church addition.

The rest of the district seemed frozen in time, aside from Block "WW." This block steadily became commercialized in the intervening years. By 1954, the only residences on the block were on the eastern frontage, the west frontage houses demolished to make room for three service stations. The remaining residences were converted to rental houses long before. Pinson Auto Sales opened on the corner of Fort Street and Second Avenue in 1947.

One block that underwent a few substantial changes during the period after World War II was Block "LL." In 1946, Greeson's Supermarket was constructed. In 1947, an addition was constructed on the east face of the J.B. Gregory Building and the Seward Hix Building was also constructed in 1947. This block appears to have undergone a new development phase within the district for several reasons. First, as in the case of the Gregory Building addition, the land was already owned by the building's owners, O.L. Leonard and C.H. Greeson. In the case of the Seward Hix building, the land was deeded to him by his father, shortly after he returned from World War II. A new generation was coming to power in Chatsworth.

While parts of the district were developing, others were declining. The eastern portion of Block "SS" was undergoing this process. Some of the oldest buildings in Chatsworth occupy this block, but a movement to view the block from a historical perspective had not yet developed. As the 1940s gave way to the 1950s, and an increasing number of Chatsworth's founding citizens were passing away, this part of the block began a steady decline. The Kelly Store Building serves as a good example. When the Kelly Store closed in the late 1930s, the building became a rental commercial building. On a night in 1942, Melvin Young opened fire on police officers and bystanders outside the bar, wounding five before he gave up. Young was a talc miller. The Hong Kong Bar (formerly Kelly's Store) was the site of periodic violence until it closed some years later.

By 1953 and 1954, the transformation was complete. Chatsworth had started as a small clearing next to the railroad tracks. The citizens of the town had found the wherewithal, in less than fifty years, to become the largest and most successful town in the county, and to become the county's seat of government. It had run the gamut of developmental woes, going from a primarily agricultural town to a commercial center to a successful industrial area, and all without losing its basic essence; an essence that remains today—a young, spirited, and aggressive town, aware of its history, and taking steps into the future to protect its history.

By 1955, most of the city founders, dating from 1905-06, were deceased. The most notable death was that of Charles N. King, past attorney, judge, bank president, and former partner in the Chatsworth Land Company, which sold the original lots in Chatsworth to its first inhabitants.

Chatsworth had gone through several transitions by this point in its history, most concerning the development of transportation, commerce, and government. The passing of C.N. King marked yet another transition.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

King's influence in the affairs of Chatsworth had extended into many areas of the city's development. As a partner in the Chatsworth Land Company, King was foremost in promoting the area as a new, planned township. As an attorney and later as a judge of the Inferior Court, King played a role in bringing the county seat to Chatsworth from Spring Place. Additionally, in this capacity, he played a role in locating state roads in the area, and as a long-time president of the Cohutta Banking Company, King played roles in bringing industry and commerce to Chatsworth, including lumber, textile, and talc concerns.

At King's death in 1954, Chatsworth was a bustling and expanding city. While the downtown district was for the most part completely built, with the exception of the DeSoto Hotel block, outlying areas underwent a development boom. It was during the 1950s that the Chatsworth Estates were developed, which marked the first time in over thirty years that a significant housing development was constructed in the area. This area, while not part of the historic district, was in response to the developments in the downtown area, most notably, the expansion of Crown Chenille complex in Block "TT" of the original Chatsworth Land Company plat. This area of Chatsworth was the first area to be developed in the early 1900s, due to its proximity to the L & N railroad depot. Commercial businesses such as Cochran & Tatum, S.E. Rogers General Mercantile, Quarles & Westfield, and the first offices of *The Chatsworth Times* were located in this block. However, several of the buildings were constructed of wood, and over time, fire claimed most of these buildings. What space was not utilized for commercial development in the first fifty years of Chatsworth's history in Block "TT" was used for DeSoto Park, an area set aside by the Chatsworth Land Company as a community gathering place. This area was landscaped as a park over time, and by the early 1950s became an area designed for recreational use by all citizens of Chatsworth.

With the arrival of Crown Chenille in the early 1940s, changes in Block "TT" began to encroach upon DeSoto Park. By the conclusion of World War II, Crown Chenille had outgrown its original quarters and was looking to greatly expand their operations. As a result, the company sought to purchase from the City of Chatsworth all land that encompassed DeSoto Park, threatening the city with the caveat that if they were not able to purchase the land, the company would be forced to leave Chatsworth for another location. Bowing under this pressure, the city sold the land. Subsequently, Crown Chenille constructed additions to its original building that stretched the length of the block, eradicating DeSoto Park from the landscape.

This expansion led to an influx of new employees in the area. A new problem arose from the expansion, however, that of housing new residents. Prior to the Crown Chenille expansion, and throughout the World War II era, housing for workers in Chatsworth, especially for transient workers, was provided by existing downtown buildings, mostly in the second stories of the buildings. Housing became an immediate concern. Chatsworth is situated with its eastern boundary along Holly Creek. Though a bridge was constructed over the creek in 1939, it was more convenient, as well as less harmful to agricultural interests east of the creek, for housing to develop to the west and northwest of downtown Chatsworth. Two large developments were constructed in the late 1940s through the 1950s to serve the needs of the population influx. These two areas are not included in the historic district, but they illustrate the beginning of an exodus of people, and later businesses, from the

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

downtown area.

With the increased population, employment opportunities, and availability of housing, Chatsworth began a noticeable change toward suburbanization and businesses began to move out of the downtown area. The first to move was Huffstetler's Market in the early part of 1956. Huffstetler's, which had occupied the Kelly Building in Block "SS" since just prior to World War II, constructed a larger, full-service grocery store on the outskirts of Chatsworth, one mile north of the historic district. While a few other businesses in town attempted to modernize and even build new facilities in the downtown area, Huffstetler's signaled an irreversible trend. Another business that moved from its former location to a newer building just north of town was the Ford dealership. Founded by T.L. Gregory, the building in Block "LL" served as the Ford headquarters until 1965, when it moved to a more modern location. The T.L. Gregory complex has served multiple uses since that time. At present it is occupied by an auto detailing company and used car lot. At about the same time, Pinson Auto Company moved from its building on the corner of Fort Street and Second Avenue to a location between Chatsworth and Dalton on U.S. Highway 76. The Pinson building has hosted a chain of auto service companies since the move, as well as a furniture store.

The DeSoto Hotel block, so named by the owners of the Chatsworth Land Company for the hotel that already existed on the lot, was the next area to be developed. Alvin Jones, who owned the hotel, at various times during the first fifty years of its existence, and who was a pioneer settler of Chatsworth, died in 1948. Just prior to this time, he sold the Hotel DeSoto to the Kenemer family. The Kenemer family was from Dalton, where they provided funeral services for area residents. At the end of World War II, two of the Kenemer brothers purchased the DeSoto Hotel block for commercial purposes. The Kenemer's subdivided the block and sold the lots for various commercial purposes. The Hotel DeSoto remained after the First Baptist Church of Chatsworth purchased the property. It was dismantled in 1957 to make room for a church expansion on the south side of the block. In other parts of the block, residences were constructed on the north and west sides and commercial buildings on the east side facing U.S. Highway 411. These buildings included a fueling station, which included a café and bus station, a Masonic Lodge, an appliance store, and the new Cohutta Bank building. The Cohutta Bank building was the last building constructed on the block during the historic period in 1962. It served as the bank's headquarters until 1979. Today the building is owned by the City of Chatsworth and houses the Chatsworth Water Commission.

Although many businesses were moving out of downtown Chatsworth during the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some important community landmark buildings were constructed during this time. As mentioned above, the Baptist Church expanded in the late 1950s, a Masonic Lodge was constructed along Third Avenue in 1958, and a modern building was constructed for the Cohutta Bank in 1962. Other important buildings constructed in the late 1950s and early 1960s were the Methodist Church, constructed in 1958, and the United States Post Office and Federal Building, constructed in 1964. The construction of the modern-style post office marked the end of major development in downtown Chatsworth in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. The trend of businesses moving from the city core to outlying areas of the city limits continued throughout the 1960s and reached its height in the early 1970s. At one time during the late 1970s fully one-half of the commercial buildings in downtown Chatsworth

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

were empty at any given time. Low rent prices were incapable of bringing businesses back to the city core, and the district began to take on the look of a small, deserted downtown area, typical of those in north Georgia during this era.

During the 1970s fire gutted or otherwise destroyed at least three buildings in downtown Chatsworth, including the Rogers, Cochran, Quarles, and Wilbanks buildings. All but one, the Quarles Building, had to be razed after the fires. The Quarles Building interior was remodeled after the fire and subdivided into two businesses.

Other buildings in the area during the 1970s were altered to such a point that they do not retain their historic integrity. These buildings are on the edges of the historic district and include the last building associated with the Pendley Brick Company complex and the Bradley Hardware Building. Other buildings and structures once located on the edges of the district were demolished, included Moreland's Blacksmith Shop and M.D. Jefferson Cotton Gin and Warehouse. Additionally, most of the buildings and objects on the old Pendley Brick Company property were destroyed.

There were those businesses that decided to stay and weather the decline of the downtown and the recessions of the 1970s, while others began to buy and refurbish previously empty buildings. The Fincher family continued to do business downtown in various locations, as did the Greeson family. Benny Huggins purchased the Kelly Building and opened his accounting service there, while also stabilizing and then restoring the façade of the building. Mr. Charles Whitner purchased the Bradley Building, which was in danger of collapsing. Two other buildings that played a role in keeping downtown Chatsworth a viable commercial area are the Wright Hotel and the J.B. Gregory Building, both among the oldest buildings in the district. The Wright hotel operated as such until the late 1960s when Mrs. Katherine Wright Raines returned from New Mexico as the sole heir of the Wright family. She moved into the hotel and began its slow restoration. During this time, she became involved with the Whitfield-Murray Historical Society, and after the restoration of the hotel, offered it as a meeting place for the historical society.

The J.B. Gregory Building housed a hardware business for several decades until illness forced the owner of the building to retire. Shortly after his death, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Ausmus purchased the building from the heirs and opened an antiques store. This followed a decision by the Chatsworth Downtown Development Authority and the Chatsworth Chamber of Commerce to try to attract new businesses and tourism to the area. The reasoning was simple, in that D.D.A. and Chamber of Commerce officials believed that even though the recently constructed sections of Interstate 75 routed much of the north-south traffic away from Chatsworth, there would always be those who preferred to traverse the less-traveled U.S. Highway 411, and that at least some of these travelers might be willing to stop and shop in downtown Chatsworth if given the opportunity to do so. By increasing business traffic in the area, it was reasoned that other businesses might feel compelled to move back to the downtown area.

Chatsworth's role as county seat also played a part in people coming to downtown. One of the mainstays of Chatsworth's downtown had always been the market for office space for attorneys and

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

other businesses connected with the county and city governments. The Agricultural Adjustment Office, for example, dealing the rural farm issues, kept an office on Second Avenue well into the 1990s.

By the 1990s, Chatsworth had returned to some semblance of the town it had developed into by the 1950s. Most commercial buildings were occupied during the decade, catering to the needs of tourists as well as the people of Chatsworth. It was during this period that tourism began to take a back seat to the needs of the local citizens. Again, Chatsworth's status as the county seat played a role in the transformation. By 2000, all commercial buildings within the historic district, except one, were established to meet the needs of local and county citizens.

Following is a list of significant persons to the development of Chatsworth during the historic period:

1905-1954—Charles N. King (1867-1954) King at various times held offices in nearly every appointed and elected position in Murray County. An attorney from nearby Spring Place, King was the President of the Chatsworth Land Company and the Cohutta Banking Company. He was instrumental in helping to move the county seat of Murray County from Spring Place to Chatsworth. He sat on numerous boards, including the school board, draft board, and finance boards. King was also a Chairman of the Board for the Cohutta Banking Company.

1905-1912—Gordon B. Gann (1877-1949) One of the least known of Chatsworth's residents in the past, Gann was elected as the first mayor of Chatsworth. He was an attorney as well. Gann's contribution to history extends well past Chatsworth, however. Gann moved to Marietta, Cobb County and became the mayor there, but not before taking part in the infamous murder of Leo Frank, a pencil factory manager and convicted murderer of Mary Phagan. Gann has been identified as a chief lieutenant in the Frank lynching in recent publications. After serving as mayor of Marietta, Gann served in the Georgia House of Representatives.

1905-1946—Rufus Noel Steed (1879-1946) From Eton, north of Chatsworth, Steed was an attorney, assistant Solicitor General of the Cherokee Judicial Circuit, and a Probate Court Judge. Additionally, Steed served as a Master in the I.O.O.F. organization, on the County Board of Education, as a trustee in the Fort Mountain Association (this organization was dedicated to developing Fort Mountain, which overlooks Chatsworth, as a major tourist draw), and as a Georgia State Senator.

1910-1947—Victor Conroy Pickering (1883-1947). From Spring Place, Pickering figured heavily in the early development of Chatsworth and Murray County. He contracted several roads in the area, including Georgia Highway 52 and U.S. Highway 411. Additionally, he was responsible for the construction of at least ten bridges over the Coosawattee and Conasauga Rivers, as well as the arch bridge over Holly Creek. Pickering also took part in local politics; he was a Georgia State Representative and Senator, and sat on the Murray County Board of Education. Moreover, he was a generous benefactor to the school system, providing land and funds to build the Murray County High School. He also gave time and money to social organizations; most notably, the original and subsequent additions of the First Baptist Church of Chatsworth were largely funded by him.



National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

1905-1945—Alvin Jones (1858-1945). Jones was originally from Tennessee, and relocated to Georgia in the 1890's. He was a founding citizen (some say "the" founding citizen) of Chatsworth. He could be said to be the first employee of the town; in charge of a work crew, he was responsible for clearing trees and brush from the future town site. He claimed other firsts in the history of Chatsworth; Jones was the town's first postmaster—he stamped the first letter to be mailed from the town and later was the first person in town to utilize airmail service. Jones and his wife, Lou, owned and operated the Desoto Hotel for nearly forty years.

1909-1925—Thomas Monroe Wright (1864-1925). Wright and his family operated the Wright (or, Chatsworth) Hotel. Wright purchased the property the hotel sits on from the Chatsworth Land Company and built the hotel, using local materials and labor. Wright, from the area just south of Chatsworth, owned hundreds of acres of arable land and was a cotton farmer, as well as being a hotel operator. After his death in 1925, his widow, Laura Holbrook Wright operated the hotel until her death in 1948.

1905-1952—Joseph Luke Cox (1886-1952). Cox, from Tennessee, along with T.L. Gregory may be credited as one of the earliest leading businessmen of Chatsworth. Cox and Gregory founded the Chatsworth Garage and later were granted an agency from the Ford Motor Company to sell and repair Ford models. Cox eventually left the partnership and started his own business. He was the first person to sell Chevrolets in the area and he operated gas and oil stations.

1915-1945—Marcus D. Jefferson (1877-1945). Jefferson was from Acworth, Cobb County. While in Acworth, Jefferson became proficient in the operation of cotton gins and decided to establish a market for cotton in Chatsworth. In short order, Jefferson constructed a gin next to the railroad and proceeded to organize the buying and selling of cotton and cotton by-products to and from local farmers and out-of-town textile concerns. While Murray County enjoyed a high production of cotton, it was Jefferson who organized the business, using the railroad to quickly ship raw cotton to other areas. Further, Jefferson operated a mercantile operation and several warehouses. He also served several terms as Chatsworth's mayor.

1905-1938—William D. Pendley (1854-1938) Pendley was from Spring Place and relocated to Chatsworth soon after its founding. Pendley was a sort of jack-of-all-trades. He may be counted as an inventor, investor, and builder. Soon after the founding of Chatsworth, Pendley, with majority control of a small brick manufacturing operation, founded the Pendley Brick Company. Eventually, this company and its successors would provide the building materials for most of the brick buildings still standing in Chatsworth today. Pendley was also a skilled mason. After the brick company failed, Pendley worked as a brick mason. His craftsmanship is imprinted on several buildings in Chatsworth. Also at this time he worked in one of Chatsworth's talc mills and invented a type of scissors that could cut talc in such a way as to make the stone practical as a type of pencil. This process allowed steel workers to mark steel with talc, which is the only material applied to steel that will not burn when the steel is heated as a result of welding or cutting.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

---

1910-1985—Robert E. Chambers (1890-1985) Chambers, originally from Ramhurst, by way of Tennessee was one of those rare individuals who start at the bottom and through sheer hard work, make their way to the top. Chambers grew up on his families' farm, in southern Murray County. In 1910, he moved to Chatsworth and performed all sorts of labor to support himself. He worked as a lumberman until he was hired as an auto mechanic at Gregory & Cox's Garage. Before long, he was doing the bookkeeping duties of the company. It was at this time that J.M. Campbell, the longtime County Clerk, died unexpectedly. Chambers decided to run for the office and won handily. By the 1930's, Chambers was trustee of the board governing the Cohutta Banking Company, and with C.N. King's retirement, became the President of the Bank, a position he held for decades. Chambers was also interested in historic preservation. He led the battle to restore and gain recognition for the historic Vann House, past home of Chief Joseph Vann, located in Spring Place. A small museum located in Spring Place is dedicated and named in his honor.

---

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

---

Baldwin's Dalton, Georgia City Directory, Master Edition, 1940. Charleston, S.C.: Baldwin Directory Company, Inc., 1940

Brooks, Thomas William. Insurance Ledger. Book housed at Wright Hotel, Chatsworth, Georgia.

Browne, Ray B. and Russell B. Nye, editors. Journal of American Culture, Volume 1, Number 3. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University, 1978.

Caldwell, Wilber W., The Courthouse and the Depot: The Architecture of Hope in an Age of Despair: A Narrative Guide to Railroad Expansion and its Impact on Public Architecture in Georgia, 1833-1910. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2001.

Cash, Wilbur. The Mind of the South. New York: Vintage Books, 1941, reprinted 1898.

Castner, Charles B. "A Brief History of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad." Located at [www.rrhistorical-2.com](http://www.rrhistorical-2.com).

City of Chatsworth. Business License Ledgers, 1927-1968, Volumes 1 & 2. Located at Chatsworth City Hall.

Edmondson, E.E., editor. The Murray News, issues inclusive 1905-1913.

Frierson, T.A. "Chatsworth Land Sale Advertisement," 1905.

Georgia Department of Archives and History. Murray County Files, Control Nos. 1-137.

Georgia Department of Archives and History. "Inventories and Appraisements; Sales Bills: 1896-1914." Source Number RHS4059-60, Drawer 176, Box 39.

Georgia Department of Archives and History. "Lists of Physicians, Embalmers and Druggists; Dentists Register: 1877-1955." Source Number RHS4082, Drawer 93, Box 69.

Georgia Department of Archives and History. Murray County Ordinary Records, 1896-1933. Source Number RHS4061, Drawer 178, Box 6.

Georgia Department of State. "Sixth or 1832 Land Lottery." Located at [www.sos.state.ga.us/archives](http://www.sos.state.ga.us/archives).

Georgia Department of Transportation. Georgia Historic Bridge Survey. Serial Number 213-0005-0; Bridge location 213-00002D-020.62 E.

Hall, Lyman, editor. The Murray Herald, issues inclusive 1935-1937.

Heartsill, Clarence, editor. The Spring Place Jimplecute, issues inclusive 1915-2003.

Hubbell, A.H. "Untitled Article," Engineering and Mining Journal, Vol. 143, No. 11 (November 1942).

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 9—Major Bibliographic References

---

Subject Files: Murray County, Georgia, Folder #7.

Kendricks, Veda. Daughter of the late James Butler, Sheriff of Murray County, Murray County. Interview by William Blankenship, October, 2003.

Leonard, William. Chatsworth resident, Chatsworth, Georgia. Interview by William Blankenship, July-August, 2003.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.

McGinty, J. Roy, Jr. Assorted papers of J. Roy McGinty, Jr. Papers housed at Wright Hotel, Chatsworth, Georgia.

McGinty, J. Roy, et al, editors. The Chatsworth Times, issues inclusive 1915-2003.

Murray County, Georgia. Probate Court, probate and estate records, books 1-118.

Murray County, Georgia. Superior Court, business licenses.

Murray County, Georgia. Superior Court, various deed books.

Murray County History Committee. Murray County Heritage. Florida: Wolfe Publishing, 1987.

Parker, Peggy. The Talc Industry in Murray County, Georgia. Georgia Department of Archives and History, Subject Files, Folder 8, 1978.

Polk's Dalton City Directory, 1953. Richmond: R.L. Polk & Co., 1953.

Polk's Dalton and Chatsworth (Whitfield County, Georgia) City Directory, 1965-66. Richmond: R.L. Polk & Co., 1966.

Raine, Katherine Wright. Papers of Katherine Wright Raine. Papers housed at Wright Hotel, Chatsworth, Georgia.

Temple, Sara Blackwell Gober. The First One Hundred Years: A Short History of Cobb County, in Georgia. Marietta, Georgia: Cobb Landmarks and Historical Society, 1997.

United States Government. "Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900-Population," Located at Murray County Library, Chatsworth, Georgia, Reference File.

United States Government. "Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910-Population," Located at Murray County Library, Chatsworth, Georgia, Reference File.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 9—Major Bibliographic References

---

United States Government. "Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920-Population," Located at Murray County Library, Chatsworth, Georgia, Reference File.

United States Government. "Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930-Population," Located at Murray County Library, Chatsworth, Georgia, Reference File.

United States Government. "Selected Excerpts: 1937 and 1946 Manufacturing Schedule," Located at Murray County Library, Chatsworth, Georgia, Reference File.

**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:**
- 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**

---

## 10. Geographical Data

---

**Acreage of Property**      44 acres

### UTM References

A)	Zone 16	Easting 704478	Northing 3849615
B)	Zone 16	Easting 704484	Northing 3849098
C)	Zone 16	Easting 703980	Northing 3849115
D)	Zone 16	Easting 703961	Northing 3849604

### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated historic district is indicated on the attached map by a heavy black line.

### Boundary Justification

The proposed district is centered on the historic courthouse square and includes the intact portion of downtown Chatsworth that developed during the historic period as the commercial center of Murray County. The areas outside of the district boundaries include modern commercial development to the north and the south; nonhistoric government offices and a residential area to the west; and nonhistoric industrial development to the east.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

---

**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Holly L. Anderson, National Register Historian  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**mailing address** 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 101  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** May 20, 2005  
**e-mail** holly\_anderson@dnr.state.ga.us

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

**name/title** William Blankenship  
**organization** Fort Mountain Preservation Services  
**mailing address** 307 Cardinal Drive  
**city or town** Woodstock **state** Georgia **zip code** 30188  
**telephone** (770)591-4621  
**e-mail** bblank488@mindspring.com

- ( ) **property owner**  
(X) **consultant**  
( ) **regional development center preservation planner**  
( ) **other:**

**Property Owner or Contact Information**

**name (property owner or contact person)** Tim Howard  
**organization (if applicable)** Whitfield-Murray County Historical Society  
**mailing address** 329 Highway 225 South  
**city or town** Chatsworth **state** Georgia **zip code** 30705  
**e-mail (optional)**

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

---

**Name of Property:** Chatsworth Downtown Historic District  
**City or Vicinity:** Chatsworth  
**County:** Murray  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** November, 2004

**Description of Photograph(s):**

Number of photographs: 31

1. Murray County Courthouse; photographer facing northwest.
2. East side of Third Avenue; photographer facing east.
3. Intersection of Third Avenue and Fort Street; photographer facing northeast.
4. East side of Third Avenue; photographer facing northeast.
5. East side of Third Avenue; photographer facing northeast.
6. Cohutta Bank Building; photographer facing north.
7. West side of Third Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
8. East side of Third Avenue; photographer facing northeast.
9. West side of Third Avenue; photographer facing southwest.
10. Intersection of Second Avenue and Cherokee Street; photographer facing southwest.
11. West side of Second Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
12. Intersection of Market Street and Second Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
13. North side of Market Street; photographer facing northwest.
14. West side of Second Avenue; photographer facing northwest.
15. Intersection of Second Avenue and Fort Street; photographer facing northwest.



National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

---

16. Second Avenue; photographer facing west.
17. Fort Street; photographer facing northwest.
18. Crown Chenille; photographer facing northwest.
19. East side of First Avenue; photographer facing northeast.
20. Louisville & Nashville (L & N) (now CSX) Railroad tracks; photographer facing northwest.
21. Murray County Courthouse; photographer facing west.
22. Murray County Jail; photographer facing northwest.
23. Murray County Jail and United States Post Office and Federal Building; photographer facing southwest.
24. United States Post Office and Federal Building; photographer facing southwest.
25. Wright Hotel; photographer facing northeast.
26. Railroad depot; photographer facing northwest.
27. Chatsworth water treatment facility; photographer facing northeast.
28. First Baptist Church; photographer facing northwest.
29. First Baptist Church; photographer facing northwest.
30. First United Methodist Church; photographer facing northwest.
31. Murray County Courthouse and Jail; photographer facing northwest.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)

