

OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR  
EXPLORATION

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received DEC 14 1982  
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Forsyth Commercial Historic District

and/or common

2. Location

main, Lee, Johnston, Adams, Jackson, Kimball, and  
Harris Sts.

street & number See continuation sheet N/A not for publication

city, town Forsyth N/A vicinity of congressional district

state Georgia code 013 county Monroe code 207

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership (less than fifty property owners)

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Monroe County Courthouse

city, town Forsyth state Georgia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title See continuation sheet has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local \_\_\_\_\_

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

# 7. Description

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

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

The Forsyth Commercial Historic District encompasses the contiguous historic commercial downtown of Forsyth. The district is located on a rise of ground at the center of Forsyth's circular city limits. Principal city streets intersect at right angles in this area, creating a tight gridiron pattern of several blocks arranged around the central courthouse square. The blocks are generally subdivided into long, narrow lots fronting onto the main streets and backing up to alleys or service areas. Buildings on these lots are for the most part one or two story masonry commercial structures dating from the mid 19th century through the early 20th century. They are densely grouped within the district and share both party walls and a common setback from the sidewalks. Styles of architecture represented in the district include the Italianate, Romanesque, Renaissance Revival, Neoclassical, Commercial, and Colonial Revival; numerous examples of Victorian Eclectic design appear as well. Brick, the principal building material, is used structurally and decoratively in foundations, piers, load-bearing walls, pilasters, spandrel panels, parapets, segmental arches, string courses, and corbelled cornices. It is complemented by cast-iron columns in storefronts, stone foundations, and stone, terra-cotta, pressed metal, and wood detailing. Many building interiors still retain their historic wood, plaster, and pressed metal finishes. In the center of the district, on its open square, stands the late 19th century High Victorian-style Monroe County Courthouse (listed on the National Register in 1980). Non-historic properties that do not contribute to the character and appearance of the district are limited to several buildings with altered storefronts or facades and a few contemporary commercial buildings. Landscaping in the district is largely confined to the courthouse square.

### Boundary

The boundary of the Forsyth Commercial Historic District is described by a heavy black line on the attached maps. It circumscribes the contiguous historic commercial downtown of Forsyth. To the north, south, and west are residential neighborhoods; to the east is a mixed-use area of newer commercial buildings.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 182 -early 20th **Builder/Architect** Multiple

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Forsyth Commercial Historic District is historically significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, community planning and development, and politics and government. It meets National Register criteria A and C.

## Architecture

In terms of architecture, the district is significant for its fine collection of 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings that represents the prevailing design principles and construction practices of commercial architecture during this period of time, especially as found in small piedmont Georgia cities. Significant local interpretations of prevailing national styles such as the Italianate, Romanesque, Renaissance Revival, Victorian Eclectic, Neoclassical, Commercial and Colonial Revival are well represented. Period details including piers, pilasters, columns, spandrel and parapet panels, segmental arches, string courses, and corbelled cornices are widely apparent. The use of brick, both structurally and decoratively, in conjunction with cast iron, stone, terra cotta, pressed metal, and wood, is characteristic of 19th and early 20th century commercial architecture in Georgia. This architectural repertoire is a fine example of what could be accomplished by designers and contractors working with a range of building materials, designs, and techniques during this period, and it represents the way in which high-style architecture was locally interpreted in small Georgia cities.

In addition to these architectural qualities, the district is also significant architecturally because of its concentration of historic commercial buildings arranged according to a rectilinear pattern which creates a distinct historic downtown environment in this part of Forsyth. This effect is enhanced by the relatively uniform scale and massing of the buildings, the consistent use of materials, compatible ornamentation, and the regular siting of buildings along the gridiron street pattern around the courthouse square. Few intrusions or vacant lots mar the historic character and appearance of the district.

## Community Planning and Development

In terms of community planning and development, the district is significant because it represents the downtown commercial center of a historic county seat that was planned and developed in ways that are characteristic of such cities in piedmont Georgia. Forsyth was founded in 1823; its downtown gridiron street plan was located on high ground at the center of circular city limits. This early 19th century framework then accommodated intensive mid to late 19th century and early 20th century commercial development fostered by the arrival of the railroad in 1838, 19th century cotton agriculture, the development of Tift College in the second half of the 19th century, and the establishment of two cotton mills at the turn of the century.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately 15 acres

Quadrangle name Forsyth, Georgia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	1 7	2 2 5 3 6 0	3 6 5 8 8 7 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 7	2 2 5 5 4 0	3 6 5 8 6 2 0
E	1 7	2 2 5 5 2 0	3 6 5 8 9 3 0
G			

B	1 7	2 2 5 3 5 5	3 6 5 8 6 2 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D	1 7	2 2 5 7 7 0	3 6 5 8 8 5 0
F			
H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary is described by a heavy black line on the enclosed property/sketch maps and is justified in Section 7.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Cloues, National Register Coordinator  
 organization Historic Preservation Section Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources date November 30, 1982  
 street & number 270 Washington Street, S. W. telephone 404-656-2840  
 city or town Atlanta state Georgia 30334

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Elizabeth A. Lyon  
 title Elizabeth A. Lyon date November 30, 1982  
State Historic Preservation Officer

For NPS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Delores Byers</u> Keeper of the National Register	date <u>1/13/83</u>
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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(2) Location

The Forsyth Commercial Historic District, located in Forsyth, Monroe County, Georgia is an area surrounding the courthouse square. It contains all or parts of nine city blocks and include parts of the following streets: East and West Main Street, East and West Johnston Street, East Adams Street, North and South Jackson Street, North and South Lee Street, North Kimball Street, and North Harris Street.

(6) Representation in Existing Surveys

The Monroe County Courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 18, 1980 as part of the "County Courthouses in Georgia" thematic group nomination.

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Significance

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Commerce

In terms of commerce, the district is significant because of its layout and its role as the principal commercial center for Forsyth and Monroe County. The district has a gridded street plan that has been identified as characteristic of small Georgia cities founded and developed for commercial as well as civic purposes. The district served as the center for day-to-day commercial activities in the city and its surrounding agricultural countryside; these commercial activities included wholesaling and retailing, professional services, banking, hotel accommodations, and entertainment. The district also contained the offices and warehouses of Forsyth's 19th and early 20th century cotton factors.

Politics/Government

In terms of politics/government, the district is significant as the seat of city government in Forsyth and county government in Monroe County. The presence of these important local institutions is represented by the late 19th century Monroe County Courthouse and the early 20th century City Hall. The district also features a gridiron street plan that is associated with communities founded as county seats.

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Continuation sheet Major Bibliographical Reference  
Item number 9

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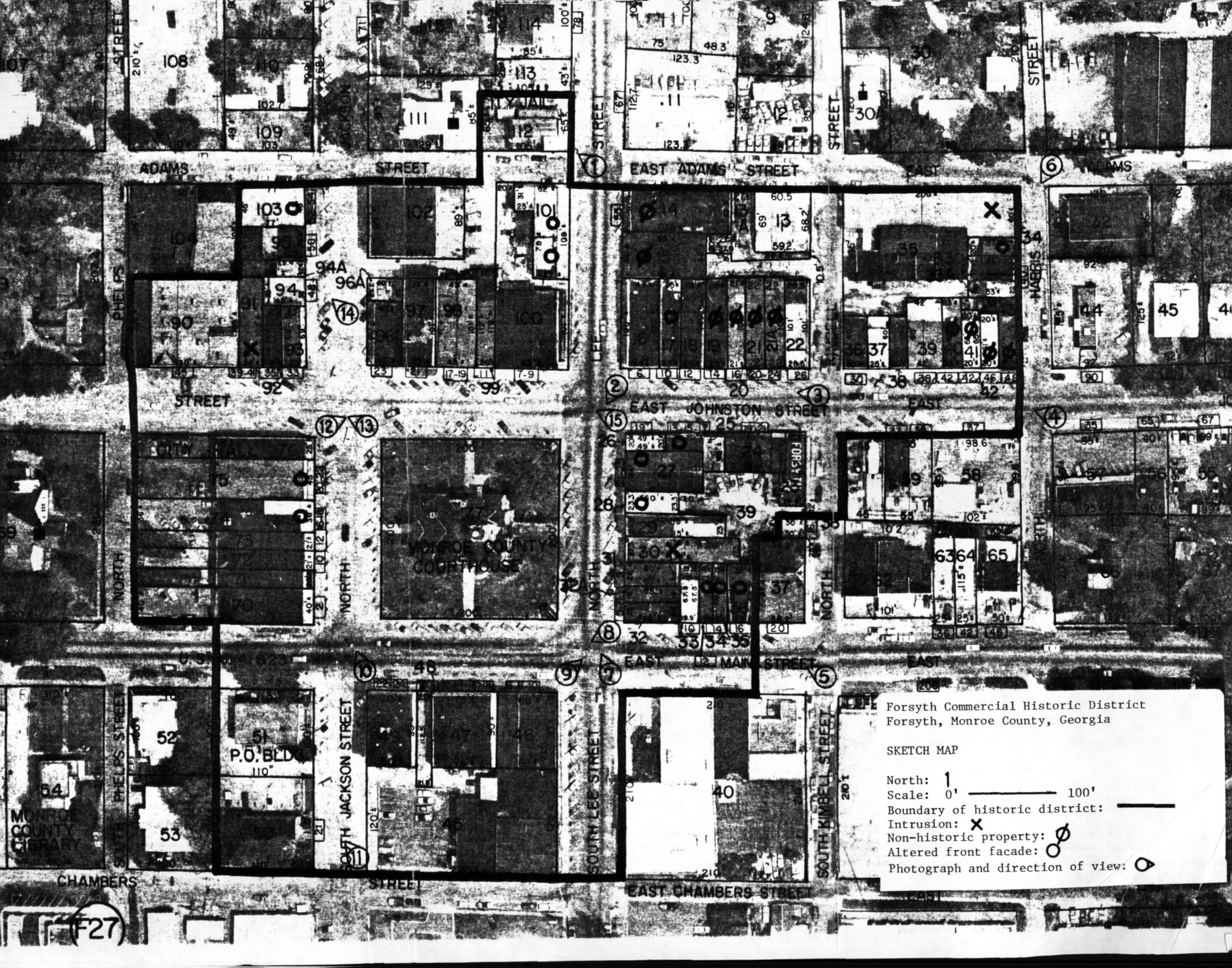
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



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Forsyth Commercial Historic District  
 Forsyth, Monroe County, Georgia

SKETCH MAP

North:  1  
 Scale: 0'  100'  
 Boundary of historic district:   
 Intrusion:   
 Non-historic property:   
 Altered front facade:   
 Photograph and direction of view: 

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