

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PHO 676519

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

Columbus Multiple Resource Area

HISTORIC

Historic Resources of Columbus, Georgia (Partial Inventory:  
Historic and Architectural Resources).

AND/OR COMMON

## 2 LOCATION

Original town plan area, bounded by the Chattahoochee River on the  
STREET & NUMBER south and west; Tenth Avenue on the east, and Seventeenth Street and  
City Mills on the north.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd - Jack Brinkley

STATE

Georgia

CODE

13

COUNTY

Muscogee

CODE

215

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT☒ Multiple  
Resources

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☒ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☒ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☒ COMMERCIAL☒ EDUCATIONAL☒ ENTERTAINMENT☒ GOVERNMENT☒ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☒ MUSEUM☒ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☒ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☒ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Multiple Ownership [see continuation sheets attached]

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

VICINITY OF

STATE

Georgia

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Tax Records Department

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Government Center

CITY, TOWN

Columbus

STATE

Georgia

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

See continuation sheets attached.

DATE

☒ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☒ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
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| RECEIVED         | APR 3 1979  |
| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

Representation in

CONTINUATION SHEET Existing Surveys ITEM NUMBER 6

PAGE 2

- (1) Historic American Buildings Survey  
1934 and 1936  
Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- (2) Historic Columbus Buildings Inventory  
1966-1967  
Historic Columbus Foundation, Columbus, Georgia
- (3) Historic Structures Field Survey: Columbus-Muscogee County, Georgia  
1976  
Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources,  
Atlanta, Georgia
- (4) Historic American Engineering Record: Inventory of Historic Engineering  
and Industrial Sites  
1977  
Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
- (5) National Register of Historic Places [see attached list]  
1969-1978  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, D.O.I., Washington, D.C.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                     |             |
|---------------------|-------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY    |             |
| RECEIVED APR 3 1979 | SEP 29 1980 |
| DATE ENTERED        |             |

Representation in  
**CONTINUATION SHEET** Existing Surveys ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 3

Sites within the "Historic Resources of Columbus" multiple-resource nomination study area that are already listed (individually, as districts, or as National Historic Landmarks) on the National Register of Historic Places [indicated by red on the accompanying map].

Individual Registrations

- A. Bank of Columbus (First National) - 1048 Broadway
- B. Bullard-Hart House - 1408 Third Avenue
- C. Goetchius-Wellborn House - 405 Broadway
- D. Gunboats "Chattahoochee" and "Muscogee" - Confederate Naval Museum, Fourth Street
- E. Illges House - 1428 Second Avenue
- F. Joseph House - 828 Broadway
- G. Lion House - 1316 Third Avenue
- H. McGee-Woodall House - 1543 Second Avenue
- I. Peabody-Warner House - 1445 Second Avenue
- J. Pemberton House - 11 Seventh Street
- K. Rankin House - 1440 Second Avenue
- L. Spencer (William H.) House - 745 Fourth Avenue
- M. Swift-Kyle House - 303 Twelfth Street
- N. Walker-Peters-Langdon House - 716 Broadway
- O. Wells-Bagley House - 22 Sixth Street

Historic Districts

- P. Columbus Historic District - Ninth Street on the north, Fourth Street on the south, Fourth Avenue on the east, and the Chattahoochee River on the west.
- Q. Rankin Square - Eleventh Street on the north, Tenth Street on the south, First Avenue on the east, and Broadway on the west.

National Historic Landmarks

- R. Columbus Historic Riverfront Industrial District

[continued]

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |             |
| RECEIVED         | APR 3 1979  |
| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET Representation in  
Existing Surveys ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 4

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- R. Columbus Historic Riverfront Industrial District (continued)
  - R-1 City Mills (and dam) - 9 Eighteenth Street
  - R-2 Columbus Iron Works - 901 Front Avenue
  - R-3 Eagle and Phenix Mills - 1200-1300 blocks of Front Avenue
  - R-4 Muscogee Mills (including Mott House and original Carnegie Library building) - Front Avenue at Fourteenth Street
- S. Octagon House (Folly) - 527 First Avenue
- T. Springer Opera House - 105 Tenth Street

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT

☒ GOOD

☒ FAIR

☒ DETERIORATED

☐ RUINS

☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

### Introductory Note: Survey Size and Methodology

This multiple-resource nomination is limited to history and architecture; archaeology is excluded. The size of the study area was determined by an important historical factor: Columbus, Georgia, as surveyed and planned in 1828, consisted of approximately 1,200 acres. [See the E.L. Thomas map of 1828, copy attached; 1,200 acres included the streets and the commons, the Promenade, etc.] Furthermore, the city limits of Columbus remained essentially this same area until 1924 [see continuation sheets for item #8]. Geographical factors, such as the Chattahoochee River, are included in the verbal boundary description but were involved in the choice of the area to be inventoried only in the historical geographical sense. The topography -- as found at the time of settlement -- helped determine the original town location, extent, and layout; that is to say, the area under study.

The original 1,200-acre township included a Promenade along the river, a South, East and North Commons, two cemeteries, and a gridiron system of rectangular blocks separated by wide streets and avenues. This area, with its historical and architectural developments up to 1930, as the whole ensemble appeared in the summer of 1977, has been studied and reported on here.

Special note should be made of the existence of two nationally-registered historic districts plus a major national historic landmark within this 1,200-acre study area. In 1969, as the result of an inventory and recommendations made by Carl Feiss, A.I.P., more than twenty blocks of the original planned town were registered as the "Columbus Historic District." The area set aside at that time was chosen because historical and architectural elements were concentrated there, creating a "tout ensemble," largely residential in character. In 1977, an intact block of commercial buildings known as "Rankin Square" in downtown Columbus was likewise entered on the National Register. And in 1978, several tracts of industrial development along the Chattahoochee River were designated by the Department of Interior as a National Historic Landmark. [These and other National Register sites and National Historic Landmarks are listed in the inventory included as part of this section.]

The multiple-resource nominations made herein are outside of these established districts and sites but include buildings inventoried during the Feiss survey. The nominations being made on this form result from a compendium of surveys: from the Junior League/Historic Columbus Foundation/Carl Feiss Historic Columbus Building Inventory of 1966/67; from the Eugene B. Culpepper Columbus-Muscogee County Historic Buildings Survey of 1976; from the HAER Summer Recording Team reports of 1977; from the accumulated National Register

[continued]

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED APR 3 1979  
SEP 29 1980  
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Description

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

nominations, 1969 to date; and finally from the work of this consultant, William R. Mitchell, Jr., in the summer and fall of 1977. As a result of all survey work, it was the consultant's decision to choose the original 1,200-acre plan as the multiple-resource nomination area. Buildings and sites to be nominated to the National Register in this multiple-resource study were identified by the various surveys already on hand and by the consultant's additional field work. Thus, this multiple-resource nomination represents a putting together of several previous surveys of architectural and historic resources in Columbus.

*See additional statement dated 8/19/80 concerning limitations of survey.*

Viewed from the air, Columbus, Georgia, in 1979 retains much of its original and subsequent nineteenth-century historical and architectural character; this is especially true in the 1,200-acre area designated for this nomination and even more so in the Historic District nominated in 1969. The original gridiron pattern of rectangular blocks and wide streets laid out in 1828 on the flat plain adjacent to the fall-line rapids of the Chattahoochee River [the river drops 125 feet within two and one-half miles], the Promenade along the river [recently officially named the Chattahoochee Promenade and developed with walks, gazebos and outdoor historical exhibits], the original Commons or greenbelt on the north, south and east [now altered], the original cemeteries, the high ground on the north and east, and the nineteenth-century residential areas scattered throughout may still all be discerned. Old churches on squares originally designated for that purpose and at least one house from the time of founding [located in the Historic District] may be seen. Still-functioning factories and mills, constituting an important historic industrial area along the river and Front Avenue, are also aspects of the physical appearance of 1978 Columbus which may be read as three-dimensional history. These industrial developments on the western border of the original town constitute an almost continuous architectural facade along the river bank when viewed from the Alabama side. City Mills, which is located at the northern end of the multiple-resource area, occupies an industrial site first used in 1828 when the town was founded.

[continued]

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 3 1979

SEP 29 1980

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET Description

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 3

Commercial development along Broadway, as seen now, also provides brick-and-mortar history of the town as it evolved. On the eastern border, which was originally a Commons, is another industrial area which began to be developed in the 1850s when the railroads took up rights-of-way in the greenbelt. This area extends from Linwood Cemetery, the original cemetery in the city plan, almost to the Chattahoochee River on the south. All of these aspects of old Columbus have a mix of architectural styles, periods, and building types which represent a 100-year chronological spectrum, ca. 1828-ca. 1930.

A "Perspective Map" of 1886 [a copy of which is attached] shows essentially the Columbus one sees today. The Sanborn Map of 1889 tells the same story of essentially unaltered physical appearance, at least in basic outline. The scale of Columbus remains mid-nineteenth century; within its downtown streetscapes, the tallest building is the brand new fourteen-story Consolidated Government Building. The already-registered castiron First National Bank (ca. 1869), for example, is only three stories high, as are the tallest of the commerical buildings in the nearby Rankin Square historic district.

Included in this nomination is a series of maps to illustrate density, development, and to identify specific structures and areas. It begins with the Thomas Plan of 1828; continues with the 1845 "Plan of the City of Columbus;" then the 1881 Gilbert Map; then the 1886 "Perspective Map;" next, two "Historic Columbus Building Inventory Maps of 1967; and ending with the current tax maps. The 1886 view is particularly important in showing how the railroads developed in the former greenbelt. This same view is surrounded by renderings of structures, six of which are still very much as shown ninety-two years ago, among them the Eagle and Phenix Manufacturing Company, which was studied in the summer of 1977 as part of the work of a HAER Summer Recording Team. This 1886 view also shows the historic location of four structures which span the Chattahoochee River: from north to south, these are the City Mills dam, the Southern Railroad Bridge, the Fourteenth Street Bridge (also no longer of wood), and the Mobile and Girard Railroad Bridge (now Southern Railroad property).

Within this 1,200-acre resource area is a representative mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses and structures. As mentioned before, old Columbus architecturally, with very few exceptions, is mid- to late-nineteenth century. The registered Springer Opera House of 1871 and its near

[continued]

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED APR 3 1979

DATE ENTERED SEP 29 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET    Description    ITEM NUMBER 7    PAGE 4

neighbor, Rankin Square of ca. 1880, are excellent examples of this fact. They are of the same scale, similar materials, and display the esthetic of picturesque eclecticism so characteristic of the period prior to 1930. There are pure examples of Greek Revival residential architecture as, for example, the McGeehee-Woodall House of 1845 listed in 1972 and recorded by HABS in 1936; and there are good examples of well-preserved High Victorian architecture in residential examples such as the Bullock House of about 1898 at 1402 Second Avenue in the area once known as the "High Up-Town" [both the house and the area having been studied in this nomination]. In addition, there is the brick Neo-Classical Woodall (or Sixteenth Street) School of 1893 at 1532 Third Avenue, designed by Atlanta architect G.L. Norrman; it is also included in this nomination as a valuable resource. All of the buildings studied by the 1977 Summer HAER Team are included; each of these is a significant example of Victorian commercial architecture and engineering. On the end of the chronological scale are 1920s commercial buildings along Broadway with Art Deco ornamental motifs such as the F.W. Woolworth building at 1129. The Woolworth store is part of a two-story cornice line which extends along Broadway for several blocks and includes a number of architectural styles and different building materials, including tile, cast-iron, and plate glass.

In 1828, when Broadway was laid out parallel to the river, it was given a right-of-way of 164 feet, which is still extant. Part of this now has a planted median separating traffic going north and south. The rights-of-way of First, Second and Third avenues are still 132 feet wide. The widths of the streets which run at right angles to the river are generally as originally planned, ninety-nine feet. Within this gridiron street plan, block by block, much has survived representing almost every architectural style and building type from 1828 to 1928, with a predominance, as mentioned before, of those from the Victorian era. There is little, if any, however, of Bauhaus or Frank Lloyd Wright influence to be found except perhaps in the commercial buildings of the 1920s, which have a tendency towards severity and, on occasion, a sort of "cubism" in the ornamentation and overall configuration.

In summation, the original 1,200-acre area planned in 1828 as the town of Columbus contains multiple resources worthy of preservation, protection, and rehabilitation. The city of Columbus is now a county-wide municipality extending for miles beyond the original nineteenth-century township, but it is the modern city's policy to include historic preservation principles in its planning processes to retain some of the best aspects of the pre-1930s heritage concentrated in the 1,200 acres around Courthouse Square.



## 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 checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799               | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING                   | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE     | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT        | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY                        | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- c.1930 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY           | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT               | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |  |
|  |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION                     |  |  |  |

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1827/28 - ca. 1930 BUILDER/ARCHITECT See below.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### Narrative Summary of Historic Resources, 1828-1977

John Forsyth, governor of Georgia, camped on the Chattahoochee River at the site of Columbus early in 1828 as the city was about to be surveyed and laid out. Accompanying the governor were five specially appointed commissioners and a surveyor/planner. The five commissioners were Ignatius A. Few, Elias Beall, Philip H. Alston, James Hallam, and Dr. Edwin L. de Graffenried, who was actually already settled there, in the Coweta Reserve, administering to the Creek Indians; the surveyor/planner was Edward Lloyd Thomas. If it were possible for those seven early-nineteenth-century Georgians to return now and look down on Columbus from the twelfth floor of the new Columbus-Muscogee Consolidated Government Building, they would see what would appear to be an essentially nineteenth-century town overlaid with early-twentieth-century developments. Juxtaposed to their observation tower, they would see the latest practices of historic preservation being used in the rehabilitation of multiple resources in the historic 1,200-acre township they had surveyed, planned, and laid out according to a gridiron pattern in 1828. They would be looking down from the town's tallest building, a lone skyscraper located on the original courthouse square.

To the west, they would see the main reason the State of Georgia had caused the town to come into being at that location: the Chattahoochee River with its fall-line rapids. They would see several bridges crossing over to the west bank to meet the State of Alabama at the highwater mark -- Alabama, which at the time of the original settlement of this western Georgia frontier had been inhabited largely by Creek Indians. [See "Historic Data," National Register, 1969, appended.] Along the river, on Front and Bay avenues, they would see a complex of nineteenth-century industrial buildings still functioning as factories, mills, warehouses, and other businesses. They would see a 164-foot-wide commercial avenue, Broadway, with a park-like median and two-story shops forming a long cornice line from south to north.

To the south, they would find block after block of broad, tree-lined residential streets, along with a historic industrial strip along the river.

[continued]

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |             |
| RECEIVED         | APR 3 1979  |
| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 2

They would see the Salisbury Park median on the southern end of Broadway with its distinguished Confederate Monument and nineteenth-century houses facing the streets and avenues, the whole ensemble listed on the National Register as a historic district in 1969 and now being comprehensively rehabilitated. (The old Columbus Iron Works within the district will be "recycled" to become the Trade and Convention Center.) In that same area, just south of the Iron Works, they would see gazebos, gardens, walks, and outdoor "history" displays along the east bank of the river on land set aside for such purposes in the original town plan -- land called the Promenade then, as it is today. [see the 1845 map attached.]

Looking north, these observers would see an entire city block of Victorian commercial buildings being rehabilitated as Rankin Square, and a restored Victorian theater, the Springer Opera House, with a new addition for theatrical activities next to the stage end of the building. They would see tall spires on fine old churches located on lands set aside in the original plan; an excellent Beaux Arts period post office and the only other "skyscraper," a ca. 1915 hotel in the process of being adapted as a home for the elderly; and still further north they would see a number of distinguished nineteenth-century houses, several already listed on the National Register, in an area which used to be called the "High Up-Town," and now, with some notable exceptions (for example, the Rankin and the Ilges houses) losing its original neighborhood character. Then, at the very edge of this northern prospect, these observers would see the original city cemetery, which in 1828 received the surveyor's young son as its first burial. And to the northwest, on the river banks, they would see the still-functioning City Mills at 9 Eighteenth Street, sited where the town's first grist mill (1828) was located.

Finally looking east, they would see Fourth Avenue, now U.S. 27, and bordered by twentieth-century "strip" development, but originally a good residential street. Further east, they would see an extensive railroad complex, the Swift Manufacturing Company, and Golden's Foundry, all located on property set aside as greenbelt or Commons in Edward Lloyd Thomas' original layout.

These observers would be able to see spreading out from their vantage point above Courthouse Square a county-wide twentieth-century municipality which grew from a river, a railroad and textile-oriented nineteenth-century town, a nucleus now much valued for its historical and architectural resources, a city which observed its Sesquicentennial in 1977-78.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |             |
| RECEIVED         | APR 3 1979  |
| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 3

Preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation activities within the multiple-resource study area have been led by Historic Columbus Foundation, Inc., since it was chartered in 1966. It is the sponsor of this nomination. The organization was founded as part of the initiation of formal historic preservation activities in Columbus. One of the Foundation's most important initial actions and still viable contributions was the Historic Columbus Building Inventory (1966-67). Buildings with historical and architectural merit were surveyed under the auspices of the Foundation with the assistance and support of the Junior League of Columbus. The professional consultant was Carl Feiss, AIP. That inventory and the resulting summary report has been the basic foundation for historic preservation work in Columbus -- including this multiple-resources nomination. The Feiss report, dated October 9, 1967, is still a valuable document, as are the inventory records filed at the Historic Columbus office. The report recommended designating two historical districts. One, called "Courthouse South," was locally zoned and nationally registered in 1969.

Feiss also recommended "a special study of historic commercial buildings in the central business district and the historic district along the river." Historic Columbus has focused attention on these sectors over a period of years using individual National Register nominations and other means, culminating in the work of this consultant and that of a HAER Summer Recording Team. A block of historic commercial buildings was entered on the National Register in 1977, and in 1978, much of the industrialized riverfront was declared a National Historic Landmark.

Feiss pointed out the "special problems of historic buildings in the northern part of the Central Business District." Since that time, Historic Columbus has made efforts to help that neighborhood, including the acquisition and/or restoration of the Rankin and Illges houses and their two neighbors at 1414 and 1420 Second Avenue. An important step directed at that problem area is this comprehensive multiple-resources inventory which includes many buildings in the neighborhood as having preservation merit.

A fourth Feiss recommendation in 1967 was to establish a "city-wide historic preservation program on a permanent basis in which there will be the fullest cooperation between public officials and private interests." This nomination is a direct expression of such an effort at city-wide preservation.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |                           |
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| DATE ENTERED     |                           |

CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 4

Only through such cooperation could a comprehensive National Registration of properties be accomplished. In 1976, Carl Feiss returned to Columbus to see what the Historic Columbus Foundation had accomplished in ten years and was highly complimentary of the organization's progress and of what it had achieved throughout the community.

All of the buildings in the 1966-67 inventory have been included here except for those east of the multiple-resources study area. (Those are scattered throughout the suburbs, such as Wynnton, east of town. Most are residences which have already been registered, and are well-protected by appreciative owners in well-tended surroundings, and currently are not on the highest-priority list of the Foundation.) The Feiss study did not cover as much of downtown Columbus as this multiple-resources nomination and was confined to residential architecture [copies of two maps from the report are attached].

The ten-year accomplishments of Historic Columbus Foundation within the multiple-resources area may be traced to the excellent beginnings in the Feiss consultation and that mid-1960s inventory. A more recent inventory has also made a significant contribution to the multiple-resources area in providing data sheets for this nomination: the State Historic Preservation Section's Columbus-Muscogee County Historic Buildings Survey of 1976 conducted by Eugene B. Culpepper. Those inventory forms and the accompanying slides have made this nomination possible within the short time frame provided. Almost all of the structures identified in that comprehensive, State-sponsored survey have been included as multiple-resources here. [Additional forms, when needed, have been filled in and the Culpepper sheets augmented where necessary.]

As explained under Section 7, a multiple-resources nomination for the area laid out as Columbus in 1828 is justified historically and pragmatically since the area has been comprehensively surveyed and is under the surveillance of an active historic preservation organization with a ten-year record of accomplishments. Historic Columbus has sponsored this nomination as the natural results of its labor and goals, and to provide an additional preservation and rehabilitation planning tool for individuals, agencies, and organizations interested in the area. The comprehensive analysis and nomination of properties in this National Register nomination, though not creating or designating a new "district," do identify and define a recognizable and legitimate historical "area" -- of approximately 1,200 acres -- a location and setting

[continued]

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |             |
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| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 5

with historical and design cohesiveness; cohesiveness in the use of building materials and types of workmanship, and in the more subjective areas of feeling and association; but far too many intrusions for district status and rehabilitation manageability. The area contains buildings and sites not yet old enough or even thought to be "historical resources," which can still be included in such a nomination, as, for example, the post office building of 1933.

Planning agencies in Columbus and Muscogee County have cooperated with the Historic Columbus Foundation in this decade of work, especially the Housing Authority of Columbus, Brown Nicholson, Jr., executive director. The Columbus Historic District and some of the multiple resources nominated here are contained within the Southwest Columbus Urban Renewal project area.

The Consolidated Government of Columbus-Muscogee recognized the significance of its old downtown area in 1975 by retaining Arthur Cotton Moore/Associates, Architects and Planners, to prepare a study of almost precisely the same territory as is dealt with in this National Register nomination. (The Columbus Chamber of Commerce cooperated in the effort.) This city-sponsored attention, and the resulting report, provide more evidence for the area's significance and for the need to carefully identify the resources it contains. This is the way Arthur Cotton Moore/Associates stated the case:

Columbus is fortunate that the original town layout is still reflected in the wide avenues and the many green squares which have helped to preserve some of the thematic charm of the downtown, and reinforce its own unique identity. In addition, the growing preservation activities in the Historic District not only represent an important recognition of the merits of some of the City's older buildings and neighborhoods, but also are an important symbol of the possibilities for renewed residential growth in the downtown area. A number of resources in the project area are related to the basic heritage of Columbus as a

[continued]

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 3 1979

DATE ENTERED SEP 29 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 6

planned city and a mill town. The mills themselves are grand structures... In addition, many of the fine old warehouse buildings along Front Avenue with their large undivided spaces and clerestory windows provide ideal spaces for new uses....

The Moore report is the most current urban plan which the City has at its disposal, but it is not the first to praise the original town layout of 1828. In 1926, a well-known city planner of that period, John Nolen of Cambridge, Massachusetts, made a report to the Planning Board of the City of Columbus, entitled City Plan. Nolen's description of the town's historical background as it relates to the original planned area by the river is excellent and quite accurate. His report was presented at the time the corporate limits were expanded east of the original layout. He wrote:

Fortunate, indeed, is the city which has had the advantage at its founding of a definite and fitting plan, both in purpose and in physical form. The establishment of Columbus, on the Chattahoochee River at the foot of the falls, by an Act of the State of Georgia of 1827, places it in the select list of such fortunate cities. The purpose in founding the town was to open the western section of the state to civilization by creating an agricultural center, by utilizing the water power of the river for industrial purposes, and lastly, by taking advantage of the river for transportation.

The town layout of 1828, the result of legislative enactment, had a rectangular or gridiron system. The area covered by this layout is the district now included within 17th Street, Tenth Avenue, and the Chattahoochee River, wherein streets were laid off parallel to the river at widths ranging from 99 feet to 164 feet, and at right angles with a general width of 99 feet. The arrangement functioned very well for the "trading town" as it was then known, for it was limited in size and occupied a level area.

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CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 7

Nolen's fifty-one-year-old summary still aptly describes the original historical background and significance of the multiple-resources study area. The Nolen report, along with the Arthur Cotton Moore report of 1975, are evidence for why this multiple-resources nomination is being made.

Another excellent summation of the significance of the historic downtown area was prepared by Mrs. James J.W. Biggers, Jr., executive vice-president of Historic Columbus Foundation, Inc., when, in 1969, a large number of mainly residential blocks were nominated for the Register as a historic district (Ninth Street on the north; Fourth Street on the south; the Chattahoochee River on the west; Fourth Avenue on the east). That inventory-nomination accurately outlined the early historical background of Columbus from its founding and layout by the State of Georgia in 1828 until the Carl Feiss buildings inventory of 1966-67. Because that nomination concentrated only on the registered district, maps and other data are necessary here for the entire area, especially north of the blocks north of Ninth Street and for developments since 1969, such as Rankin Square, registered in October, 1977. Until 1924, as mentioned above, the city limits of Columbus included essentially what the State of Georgia laid out for development in 1828 [see attached 1924 map from Nolen's City Plan]. Within that old Columbus acreage, the most growth and change took place, and still takes place, north of Ninth Street. The essentially residential section now known as "The District" had remained and still remains nineteenth century in scale and character, and thus in 1969 could be registered. Since registration, preservation activities there have accelerated to include museum houses, many private renovations, and adaptive usage of various kinds, including the conversion of the registered Iron Works into a Trade and Convention Center. But north of Ninth Street, change has been a fact of life, except in terms of certain basics such as the town plan, since the earliest days. An area in which change was especially concentrated was along the river at Fifteenth Street, just north of the Muscogee Manufacturing Company, which had been residential. The Mott House (HABS), for example, has become part of the Muscogee Manufacturing (now Fieldcrest) complex. The Fontaine House (HABS) was torn down in the late 1930s, as were other less auspicious houses in that river-front neighborhood. From the river at Fifteenth Street east beyond Broad was the "High-Uptown" residential area; surviving from that neighborhood are the Rankin, Peabody-Warner, and Illges houses -- all registered -- and a number of other surviving houses inventoried here. The basic gridiron layout of approximately four-acre squares covered the entire 1,200

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CONTINUATION SHEET    Significance    ITEM NUMBER 8    PAGE 8

acres by the 1880s, with the exception of the Commons blocks, which had been given over to the railroads or to manufacturing operations such as Goldens and Swift [note that the area where Swift Manufacturing Company stands is still designated Commons Block 13 on the tax map].

The site of City Mills at 9 Eighteenth Street was the northernmost and first of the river-oriented industrial complexes which, by the 1880s, dominated Front Avenue and the river banks. Church Square, where the Baptist and the Methodist churches are still located, was set aside in the original plan and, as it still functions for that purpose, the Square is listed here. Other churches are inventoried here, some of which, including those on Church Square, are on original locations [see individual inventory forms]. Rankin Square, listed on the Register in October, 1977, is typical of the commercial blocks in the downtown area which have been commercial and non-residential from the earliest days. Courthouse Square survives as an entity from the original plan but, of course, is now dominated by the twelve-story tower mentioned in the narrative introduction. Earlier courthouses had been demolished with the growth of the city and the county (now a consolidated government).

The two best preserved and most significant historical anchors for the historic central business district north of Ninth Street have been the Springer Opera House, registered in 1970 and the Swift-Kyle House listed in 1973. They have been a catalyst for historic preservation activity discussed in this nomination.

In conclusion, this multiple-resources nomination expands the National Register in Columbus to include the pre-1930s aspects of downtown Columbus outside of the previously established historic district and sites, but confined to the original 1,200 acres laid out and surveyed in 1828. The basic motivation for its preparation is to provide useful information and insight as historic preservation becomes a more practical part of community planning and development. This nomination is a culmination of a number of years of inventory and preservation work and brings together in one document the multiple historical and architectural building resources of approximately 100 years of growth in Columbus, Muscogee County, Georgia.



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES****UTM NOT VERIFIED**

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**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

(This is the overall figure for the entire area inventoried.)

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1,200 acres approx.

QUADRANGLE NAME Columbus, Ga.-Ala.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES UTM References are on the inventory forms.

A                                                  

B                                                  

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                                                  

D                                                  

E                                                  

F                                                  

G                                                  

H                                                  

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The multiple resource area is marked by a heavy black line on the attached U.S.G.S. map.

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

William R. Mitchell, Jr., consultant (see continuation sheet)

ORGANIZATION

Historic Columbus Foundation, Inc.

DATE

December, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 5312

TELEPHONE

(404) 322-0756

CITY OR TOWN

Columbus

STATE

Georgia

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE X

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

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

3/28/79  
6/30/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(See list of properties included)

DATE

9/29/80

ATTEST: W. Ray Luce

DATE

9/24/80

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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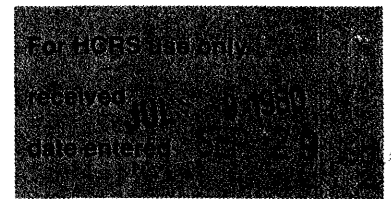
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**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



Continuation sheet FORM PREPARED BY

Item number 11

Page 2

The Multiple Resource Survey-Inventory Forms were prepared by:

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Lower Chattahoochee Area Planning and Development Commission  
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June 30, 1980

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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| RECEIVED         | APR 3 1979  |
| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET    ATTACHMENT 1    ITEM NUMBER    PAGE 1

SUMMARY REPORT, HISTORIC COLUMBUS BUILDING INVENTORY

Carl Feiss, 1967

INTRODUCTION

The city of Columbus, like many other cities in Georgia, has inherited a great architectural tradition. The city of Columbus, compared with coastal cities in the Southeastern United States, is a relatively new comer having been settled in 1828. Quickly it established city planning and within a short period of time began to assimilate and develop the architectural style frequently known as "antebellum." It also began to develop an architecture of its own.

The two parallel strains of domestic architecture were to flower in the city up to the Civil War. One was that of the great mansions set in isolation on substantial properties and located both near the center of town and scattered in the vicinity. The other strain of equal interest, although less dramatic and romantic, was the building of a great number of small frame homes with a design based on classical architecture. Many of these smaller homes survived in excellent condition south of the center of the city and extending from the river to Fourth Street. From an early date, there developed an architectural style in these smaller homes which appears to be indigenous to Columbus; a building type with a rectangular floor plan and pyramidal roof which rests in part or in whole on a front veranda.

The great houses of Columbus are well known and easily identified. Some of these are in excellent condition and their future appears to be safeguarded. Others are in serious jeopardy because of inadequate funding, maintenance and an incompatible environment. The problem of safeguarding the future of many of these great houses is a serious one and must be faced squarely by the Historic Columbus Foundation. In a sense, the future of every one of these structures is in some kind of jeopardy and the means for permanent historic preservation of those larger homes rated in the top part of the inventory is the responsibility which must be assumed by the city of Columbus and the Historic Columbus Foundation regardless of present status of the structure. Too much

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
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| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET ATTACHMENT 1 ITEM NUMBER PAGE 2

has already been lost in the city and there is too much that remains which could be lost in exactly the same way. There is no easy answer to the method or system for preserving these structures, particularly those which are impacted by adverse environmental conditions as neighborhoods deteriorate and change from residential to non-residential land uses.

There are two areas in the city in which are found groups of one-and-two story residential structures, mostly small or moderate size. One of these is in the Rose Hill area and the other, south of Ninth Street and west of Fourth Avenue. In these two areas are found many, but not all, the best examples of these fine small homes of the "antebellum" period. To the best of our knowledge, no similar collection of buildings of this type will be found elsewhere. It is hoped that these districts of small homes of this character can be reserved simultaneous with the efforts to preserve the larger homes.

There is no question that the inventory conducted by the Junior League confirms earlier opinions as to the values to the City of Columbus of its architectural heritage. There is also no question that the inventory has identified in some detail the condition and jeopardy which relate to historic buildings of all types.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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| DATE ENTERED        | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET    ATTACHMENT 2    ITEM NUMBER    PAGE 1

COLUMBUS HISTORIC DISTRICT NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION FORM, 1969  
(HISTORICAL DATA)  
"Statement of Significance," Section 8

The Columbus, Georgia area had been the scene of settlement by the Indians for hundreds of years prior to the colonization of Columbus. This was the heart of the Creek Nation, the local Indian tribe being the Yucchis. During the early-eighteenth century, Georgia was settled, being one of the original thirteen colonies, the coastal area developing first. After the Revolution, the whole country began to move West and so did the state of Georgia. The state at this time was comprised of its present area and part of Alabama and Mississippi. In order to provide more lands for settlement, Georgia agreed to give up all land west of the Chattahoochee to the United States if the government would make a treaty with the Indians that would clear the lands within the present boundaries. The Indians agreed to the treaty and the Indians in this area were moved to a strip of land sixty miles wide across the river where they stayed until the tribe was gradually moved to a reservation in Oklahoma. This is the setting in which Columbus was brought into being.

As soon as the Indians had been removed, Governor John Forsyth and the legislature set out to establish a trading town at the site of Coweta Falls in 1828. A surveyor, Edward Lloyd Thomas, mapped out the city, lots were sold and Columbus came into being. This planned beginning is unique because most towns were not planned, but sprang up around existing plantations, cross roads, or the terminus of railroads. Columbus was one of four Georgia cities that were planned communities: Savannah on the east was the first in 1733, Columbus on the west the last in 1828. The surveyor laid out a rectangular town, thirteen blocks long and eight blocks wide, surrounded by a green belt of commons land. There were also four squares, designated for civic, religious and academic use.

The streets in the Historic District were of course laid out when land was not at the high premium of today. Broadway is one hundred and sixty four feet wide with a planted divider separating traffic going in opposite directions. In the Historic District the bricks used in the original paving of Broadway are still in place. It is one of the very few brick streets remaining in the city. The rights-of-way of First, Second, and Third Avenues are one

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| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET    ATTACHMENT 2    ITEM NUMBER    PAGE 2

hundred and thirty two feet wide with magnificent rows of trees on many blocks double rows outlining the streets. The existence of this tremendous number of trees in such close proximity to the downtown area is one of the most outstanding features of the district.

The area encompassing the Historic District contains approximately six hundred and twelve structures: two hundred and forty nine of these are considered standard; two hundred and sixty one are rated sub-standard, but worthy of rehabilitation; one hundred and two are dilapidated, according to "A Neighborhood Analysis of Columbus, Georgia" prepared in September, 1968. Of the six hundred and twelve houses in the area, one hundred and seven are considered of historical significance and were so rated by Mr. Carl Feiss of Washington, D.C. in a Historic Columbus Building Inventory conducted by his nationally known group in 1967. According to Mr. Feiss, the structures in the proposed Historic District "are considered the main body of the city's history and should be preserved. They are both individually important and important as a group."

The houses in the District include a few dating back to Columbus' founding year. Architecture in the area ranges from simple Georgian cottages to Greek Revival, to homes of the Gothic Revival style. Many great houses of different styles including notable examples of Greek Revival and Italian villa, were built in Columbus, a number of them set in splendid isolation on substantial properties. Of paramount interest in the Historic District, however, is the parallel strain of domestic architecture less dramatic perhaps, but no less significant, that consists of a vast collection of small frame houses with a design based on classical architecture, a building type with a rectangular floor plan and pyramidal roof which rests in part or in whole on a front veranda. This style, and a related two-story row house, is considered indigenous to Columbus. A one-story octagonal house is also a distinctive landmark in the area. Wood, being plentiful, was the most commonly used building material, but there are also examples of stucco on brick, and some stucco-fronted frame houses.

Initially a neighborhood of well-off shopowners, successful professional people and prosperous craftsmen, the Historic District as a living area in the latter half of the twentieth century has unusual potential, for it combines modest dwelling units of architectural variety and value, plus proximity to

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

|                  |             |
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| DATE ENTERED     | SEP 29 1980 |

CONTINUATION SHEET    ATTACHMENT 2    ITEM NUMBER    PAGE 3

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the city shopping, employment and recreational facilities, all in a setting of wide, tree-lined avenues and streets.

This area is currently being considered for redevelopment under a proposed urban renewal plan. Much emphasis will be placed on the river with scenic drives and walks utilizing the original commons land. A proposed zoning ordinance is also under consideration which would give a Historic and Architectural Review Board control over building materials and styles used in this area.

If this area is included in the National Register, it is the aim of the Historic Columbus Foundation to work jointly with the Housing Authority and city officials to reclaim this area as part of Columbus' heritage utilizing its tremendous possibilities for twentieth- and twenty-first-century use.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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CONTINUATION SHEET    ATTACHMENT 3    ITEM NUMBER    PAGE 1

"CITY OF COLUMBUS"\*

The City of Columbus was created as a trading town by an Act of the General Assembly of Georgia, December 24, 1827. The location designated was on the Chattahoochee River, near the Coweta Falls. This spot was selected because it was at the head of river navigation and at the foot of a long series of falls which afforded great potential water-power.

A reservation of 1,200 acres was allotted for the town and commons. Surveying of streets began February 1, 1828 and was completed within three months. Within 13 days after the sale of city lots began, July 10, 1828, 488 of the total 632 lots had been sold. The remaining lots were sold in February, 1829.

Ignatius Few, Edwin L. de Graffenried, James Hallam, Philip H. Alston, and Elias Beall were designated commissioners to conduct the sale, Edward Lloyd Thomas was the surveyor in charge. Governor John Forsyth and his staff attended the initial sale. While here they camped in tents pitched on the town commons which bordered the river between the present Fourth and Seventh Streets.

By the end of 1829 the city had 1,000 inhabitants.

Georgia Historical Commission, 1953

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\*The state historical marker from which this text is taken stands in the Broadway median between Eleventh and Twelfth streets. Since 1953, it has provided a centrally located succinct factual account of the town's origins. One of the first historical events that the Georgia Historical Commission (1952-1973) chose to commemorate, the City of Columbus' founding was the first state marker erected in Muscogee County. It is a dramatic and visible footnote to why those original "1,200 acres" -- in which the marker stands -- were chosen for a National Register of Historic Places Inventory completed exactly 150 years after the events commemorated.