

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECEIVED

APR 11 1988

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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 N/A

other names/site number Conyers Commercial Historic District

2. Location

street & number Main Street, Carter's Alley, and the Georgia Railroad not for publication N/A

city, town Conyers

N/A vicinity

state Georgia code GA county Rockdale code GA247 zip code 30207

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
39	1 buildings
	sites
1	structures
1	objects
41	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility 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 does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Elizabeth A. Lyon
Signature of certifying official

3/8/88
Date

Elizabeth A. Lyon, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer; Chief, Historic State or Federal agency and bureau Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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 and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Patrick Andrews

5/24/88

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation / rail-related
Government / courthouse
Government / post office
Commerce / department store
Commerce / specialty store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce / specialty store
Government / courthouse
Commerce / business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian
Other: small town commercial
Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick, stone
walls brick
stone
roof unknown
other glass display windows

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Conyers is a county seat located in Rockdale County, approximately 31 miles east of Atlanta. The Conyers Commercial Historic District is the core of the northeast Georgia town. The railroad tracks mark the southwestern boundary of the district, Carter's Alley the northwest, and Main Street the northeast. Main Street intersects the railroad at a forty-five degree angle south of the district and delineates the wedge-shape of the commercial district. Center Street is perpendicular to the railroad tracks and terminates at Main Street, in front of the courthouse.

Conyers Commercial Historic District is situated on level terrain with very little landscaping within the district. The buildings are set flush with the sidewalks along streets that are only one or two lanes in width. On-street parking is provided along most of the streets within the commercial area. The courthouse and the former post office are located on Main Street at the terminus of Center Street. Each sits on a landscaped lot featuring a grass-covered lawn and low shrubs. Red brick is the most common construction material and is often used in conjunction with stone from nearby quarries.

The two buildings in the southwestern edge of the district are associated with the railroad and date from the late 19th and early 20th century. The depot, located at the southern end of Center Street, is a two-story frame building with extended eaves, scroll work, and pendant detailing (photos 1 and 3). The grocery warehouse features a simple horizontal parapet roofline (photo 4). These buildings are freestanding and are located between Railroad Street and the railroad tracks which are still intact.

Commercial development in the Conyers district occurred along Railroad, Center, and Commercial Streets. Most of the one- and two-story buildings are constructed of red brick and share party walls. These commercial structures feature large display windows with rectangular transoms. Some have recessed doorways. Along Railroad Street, common details include round-arched window and door openings. Other stylistic details include corbeled brick cornices, pilasters, Italianate bracketing, and other period influences (photos 2, 8, and 12). These late Victorian structures were constructed from the 1870s through the 1910s.

The former post office and the courthouse, located in the northern edge of the district, date from 1939 and are Colonial Revival rather than Victorian in style. The two buildings are similar in style and scale. The post office has a central entrance with a fanlight and pilasters. A slate roof and white louvered cupola are featured on the courthouse which stands on the site of the original Rockdale County Courthouse.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 2

The new courthouse is attached to the rear of the building. The Confederate Monument (1915) stands on its original site in front of the courthouse.

Changes within the district include the remodeling of storefronts and the addition of aluminum awnings. The ground floor on some of the buildings has been modernized but only one facade has been completely covered over by siding materials. There is no new construction within the district. The district is bordered by nonhistoric commercial development and both historic and nonhistoric residential development.

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) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

architecture
community planning and development
commerce
politics/government
transportation

Period of Significance

1845-1939

Significant Dates

1845
1939

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

multiple

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Conyers Commercial Historic District is significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, community planning, politics/government, and transportation. These areas of significance support National Register eligibility in terms of National Register Criteria A and C.

The Conyers Commercial Historic District is significant in the area of architecture because it contains a good representation of late 19th- and early 20th-century small-town railroad structures, commercial structures, and governmental buildings. The frame two-story depot, located at the intersection of Railroad and Center Streets, was constructed in the late 19th-century and features extended eaves, scrollwork, and pendants (photos 1 and 3). A utilitarian grocery warehouse, constructed of brick and stone with a simple horizontal parapet roofline, is located along the railroad tracks in the southern part of the district (photo 4). The commercial development throughout the district consists of one- and two-story brick structures that feature a variety of architecture details including storefronts with large display windows and recessed entrances, corbeled brickwork, pilasters, and Italianate bracketing (photos 2, 8 and 12). The two government buildings, the post office and the Rockdale County Courthouse, were constructed in 1939 in the Colonial Revival Style (photos 14 and 15). All these buildings represent buildings types, styles, and construction materials and techniques that characterize historic buildings in the downtown areas of many small Georgia railroad towns of this period.

In commerce, the district is significant because it served the local community and the county as the principal historic retail and service center. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Conyers served as the center for the ginning, baling, and shipping of cotton and other locally produced goods for Rockdale County. Businesses within the historic district during the 1880s and 1890 include general merchandise stores, grocers, a bank, a print shop, and a hotel. During the period from 1901 to 1921, cotton warehouses, a barber, and several garages also conducted their business within the district. The district continues to serve as a retail center for the local residents.

Dr. William D. Conyers (1794-1858) was a pioneer in Newton County and owned a plantation that extended into what was to become Rockdale County. Dr. Conyers deeded

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jaeger, Dale. "Conyers Commercial Historic District." National Register Information Form (with attachments), October 1, 1986. On file at the Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Williford, William Bailey. The Glory of Covington. Atlanta: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1973.

See continuation sheet

- Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 - 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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property approximately 6 acres

UTM References

A

1	7
---	---

7	7	16	5	2	10
---	---	----	---	---	----

3	17	2	19	0	13	10
---	----	---	----	---	----	----

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The district boundary is described by a heavy black line on the attached district map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The district boundary encompasses the area of intact commercial, transportation, and government buildings in Conyer's central business district. It is bordered by altered historic commercial buildings, nonhistoric commercial buildings, and both historic and nonhistoric residential development.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janice E. Adams, National Register Researcher

organization Historic Preservation Section, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

street & number 205 Butler Street, S.E., Suite 1462 telephone (404) 656-2840

city or town Atlanta state Georgia zip code 30334

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

the necessary right-of-way through his property to Georgia Railroad in 1845 which resulted in the town being named in his honor. Since Conyers evolved in response to the railroad and was not a county seat until 1870, the town developed in response to the depot rather than the courthouse square. The earliest development in the community was clustered around the railroad tracks and along Center Street. After county seat status was established in 1870 and the courthouse was constructed at the terminus of Center Street, the downtown area developed in the wedge-shaped area between the railroad and the courthouse. The result is typical for county seats in Georgia which were usually planned in a gridiron pattern around a central square. For these reasons Conyers is significant in the area of community planning.

In terms of politics/government the district is significant because it contains both a historic county courthouse and a historic post office, two major governmental institutions, where most political activity took place within the county. The present courthouse, constructed in 1939, stands on the same site as the original Rockdale County Courthouse. Both these buildings represent the presence of the federal government in local affairs during the Depression era. Both buildings are typical of the kinds of landmark structures built in many Georgia towns under the auspices of the various 1930s public building programs.

The Georgia Railroad reached Conyers by 1845. The depot symbolizes the origins of the town and the continued importance of the railroad for transportation of both passenger and freight into the early 20th century. For this reason the district is significant in the area of transportation.

National Register Criteria

The Conyers Commercial Historic District served as a commercial and retail center for Conyers and Rockdale County and was planned in response to the arrival of the railroad in the 1840s. Both the county courthouse and the post office are located within the historic district. These factors support the proposed nomination under National Register Criteria A. The district meets National Register Criteria C because of its intact examples of late 19th and early 20th century commercial and governmental architecture.

Period of Significance

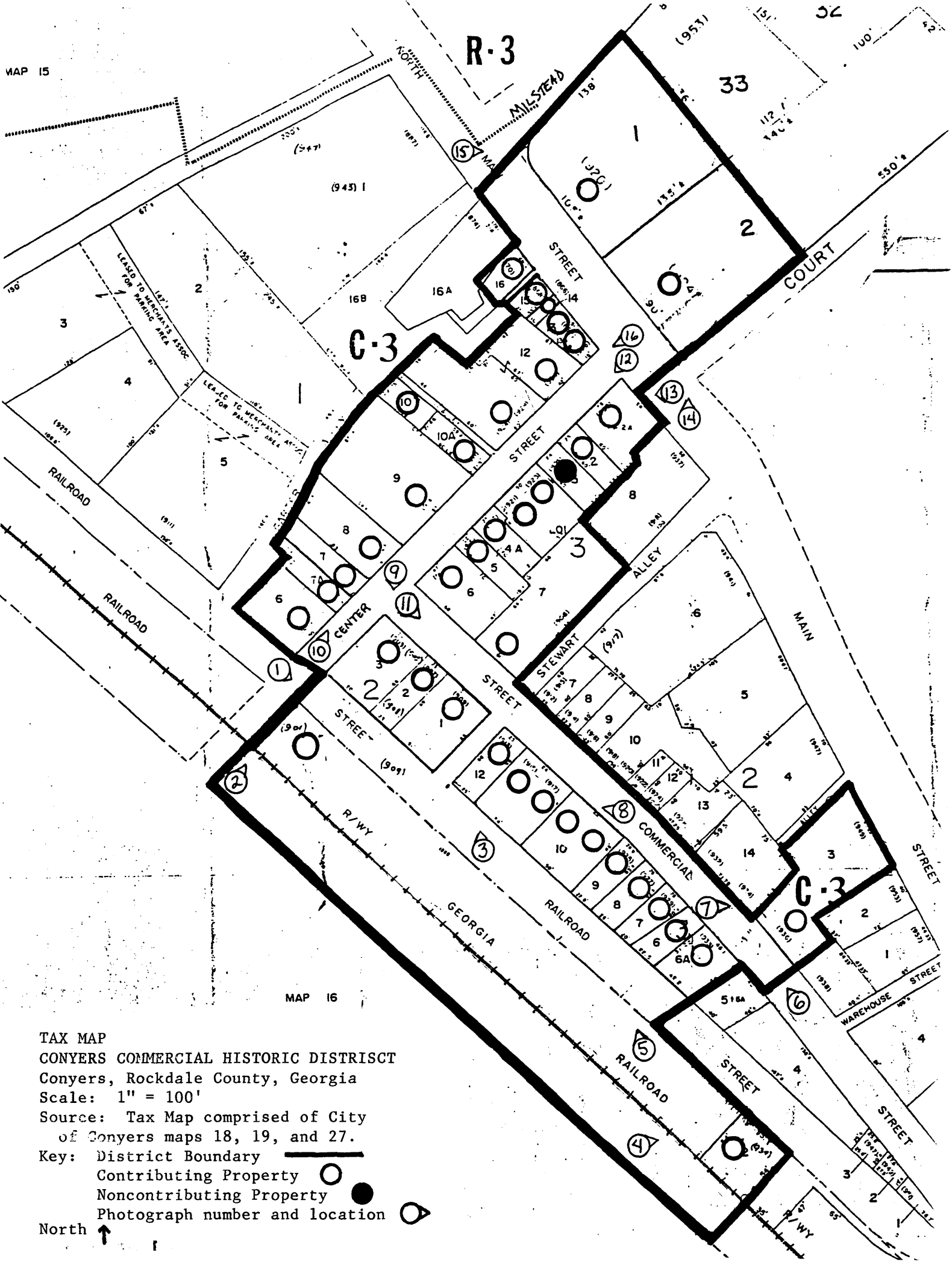
Conyers was founded in 1845 with the arrival of the Georgia Railroad. The railroad right-of-way, with its adjacent, later depot, documents this earliest phase of development. Commercial development prospered during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with most of the extant historic buildings in the district dating from this period. Although commercial development slowed during the Great Depression years, two major landmark buildings were built toward the end of this decade: the Rockdale County Courthouse and the (former) U.S. Post Office (1939). These were the last major historic buildings built in the downtown area. Since World War II, until recently, the only

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

building activity in downtown Conyers has consisted of storefront remodeling. Thus, the period from 1845 and the founding of Conyers through 1939 with the construction of the last two major downtown historic buildings establishes a coherent period of significance for the Conyers Commercial Historic District.



TAX MAP

CONYERS COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

Conyers, Rockdale County, Georgia

Scale: 1" = 100'

Source: Tax Map comprised of City of Conyers maps 18, 19, and 27.

- Key: District Boundary
- Contributing Property
- Noncontributing Property
- Photograph number and location 1

North

