

RECEIVED 2280	
30L ipil. 2002	OMB No. 1024-0018

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 na other name	me Gaine es/site numbe		Commercial N/A	Historic Dist	rict			
2. Locatio	n							
street & nu city, town county state	i mber Gainesville Hall Georgia	code code	GA 139 GA	zip code	;	30501		()vicinity of
() not for	publication							
3. Classifi	cation							
Ownership	of Property:				Cat	egory of Pro	operty:	
(X) private (X) public- (X) public- (X) public-	local state				(X) () ()	building(s) district site structure object		
Number of	Resources w	ithin P	roperty:	Contribu	<u>ting</u>		Noncon	tributing
	buildings sites structures objects total			50 1 1 1 53				18 0 0 0 18

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 4

Name of previous listing: Dixie Hunt Hotel; Federal Building and Courthouse; Jackson Building;

Logan Building

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Historic Places and meets the procedural and profession opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria.	
Received Clove Signature of certifying official	7.3.02 Date
W. Ray Luce Historic Preservation Division Director Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer	
In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register crit	teria. () 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:	Muret J. Viva 3/14/03
(U) entered in the National Register	mies 1. Viva 211710.
() determined eligible for the National Register	
() determined not eligible for the National Register	
() removed from the National Register	
() other, explain:	
() see continuation sheet	Keeper of the National Register Date

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

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING

DOMESTIC/HOTEL

COMMERCE/TRADE/BUSINESS

COMMERCE/TRADE/PROFESSIONAL

COMMERCE/TRADE/FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

COMMERCE/TRADE/SPECIALTY STORE

COMMERCE/TRADE/DEPARTMENT STORE

COMMERCE/TRADE/RESTAURANT

SOCIAL/MEETING HALL

GOVERNMENT/POST OFFICE

GOVERNMENT/COURTHOUSE /FEDERAL COURTHOUSE

RELIGION/RELIGIOUS FACILITY/CHURCH

RECREATION AND CULTURE/MONUMENT

LANDSCAPE/PLAZA/SQUARE

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/HOTEL

COMMERCE/TRADE/BUSINESS

COMMERCE/TRADE/PROFESSIONAL

COMMERCE/TRADE/FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

COMMERCE/TRADE/SPECIALTY STORE

COMMERCE/TRADE/DEPARTMENT STORE

COMMERCE/TRADE/RESTAURANT

GOVERNMENT/COURTHOUSE /FEDERAL COURTHOUSE

RELIGION/RELIGIOUS FACILITY/CHURCH

RECREATION AND CULTURE/MONUMENT

LANDSCAPE/PLAZA/SQUARE

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

LATE VICTORIAN/ROMANESQUE REVIVAL LATE VICTORIAN/RENASSANCE REVIVAL LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/COMMERCIAL STYLE MODERN MOVEMENT/ART DECO

Materials:

foundation Brick; Stone; Concrete

walls

Brick; Stone; Wood; Stucco

Asphalt; Metal roof

N/A other

Section 7--Description

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Gainesville Commercial Historic District encompasses a historic gridiron plan with the development of commercial blocks and community landmark buildings surrounding the historic courthouse square. The plan of Gainesville was laid out in 1820 in a gridiron pattern of streets and allevs with the courthouse square located in the western corner of the grid. In 1885, the county courthouse on the courthouse square burned and a new courthouse was built one block to the southeast. The open courthouse square was landscaped and in 1909 the Confederate Monument (also known as Old Joe) was built in the center of the square (photograph 28). The historic central business district surrounding the courthouse square consists of historic attached one- and two-story brick buildings, freestanding multi-story community landmark buildings, a few nonhistoric stores built during the mid- and late 20th century, and the nonhistoric Georgia Mountains Center, constructed during the mid-1970s. The historic attached one-and two-story stores feature decorative brick corbelling along the cornices, recessed brick panels and bays with windows, brick pilasters, and storefronts with large display windows (photographs 1, 2, 4, and 7). In the mid-20th century some of the historic storefronts were covered with metal facades, but in recent years some of these metal facades have been removed and the historic features underneath have been restored. The community landmark buildings include the Dixie Hunt Hotel (photographs 21 and 24), a c.1937 hotel constructed in the Art Deco style (individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places on May 16, 1985), the c.1910 Federal Building-United States Courthouse (formerly the United States Post Office) (photograph 15) and its 1934 addition, constructed in the Renaissance Revival and Stripped Classical styles respectively (individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places on January 24, 1974), and the c.1906 Westminster Presbyterian Church (historically known as the First United Methodist Church) (photographs 11 and 12) constructed in the Romanesque Revival style.

The city of Gainesville is located in the Central Upland region of Georgia, approximately forty-five miles northeast of Atlanta. Located in the center of Hall County and on the east side of Lake Sidney Lanier (created in the mid-20th century), Gainesville serves as the county seat and has a population of approximately 18,000 people. Situated on a small, high plateau and surrounding a central public square, the historic downtown commercial district encompasses attached and freestanding commercial and government properties. The original town plan of Gainesville, which was laid out in 1820, is relatively intact. The plan features a gridded pattern of streets extending from the original courthouse square. Despite the early date of the town plan, downtown Gainesville's historic architecture is a product of the late 1930s and 1940s due to a powerful tornado that destroyed many of the downtown's landmark buildings and commercial structures in 1936. Much of the area had to be rebuilt after the disaster. Today downtown Gainesville features several Neoclassical Revival and Art Deco-style buildings as well as an array of historic buildings from the 1870s to the 1940s.

The character of the downtown is typical of many small Georgia towns with its public square bordered by one- and two-story, attached, brick commercial structures. Spreading out from the densely developed commercial area of the square, the streets of downtown extend from the east where the government buildings are located to the west where the railroad corridor stretches from north to south, stringing commercial properties along its length. The north side of the square features groups of attached, brick, commercial buildings as well as a historic church, and to the south of the square

Section 7--Description

(outside the district boundaries) lies the Georgia Mountains Center which was constructed in the mid-1970s after two blocks of commercial buildings were cleared. Residential areas extend beyond the historic district boundary to the west, north, and east. There is only one surviving residential building (associated with the church) included in the downtown commercial district. Landscaped areas of trees, grass, and sitting areas are found at the public square. The southern portion of the district includes a group of commercial buildings along the railroad corridor, while the east side of downtown shows dramatic, modern commercial growth due to the widening of Sycamore Street into E.E. Butler Parkway. There are several landmark buildings located within the district that will be discussed in more detail in this section such as the Federal Building-United States Courthouse c.1910 and its addition c.1934 (photographs 15 and 16 respectively), the former First United Methodist Church, c.1914, and the Dixie Hunt Hotel, c.1938.

The town of Gainesville was surveyed in 1820 as the new county government site for Hall County. The site chosen was located near a natural spring and popular Indian trading camp called Mule Camp Springs. The town plan features the courthouse square in the northwest section of the town with four main streets forming the square: Washington, Spring, Main, and Bradford Streets. The immediate blocks facing the square were designed at half the size of a regular city block and featured an alley running through the middle of the block. This pattern has remained intact to the present day with the exception of the southern block where the Georgia Mountains Center is now located.

From its initial settlement period to its antebellum period, downtown Gainesville's commercial development gradually expanded. The earliest town structures were wood-frame buildings interspersed with a few brick structures such as the second county courthouse on the square and several antebellum hotels (one of which was located on the southwest corner of the square at the present site of the Dixie Hunt Hotel). The initial growth of the town was slow, except for a period during the 1830s north Georgia gold rush, and the area around the square gradually developed with residences, commercial structures, government buildings, and churches. The downtown area suffered damages from destructive fires during the years 1851, 1873, and 1876. The 1851 fire destroyed the second county courthouse that stood on the square since 1834 (a third courthouse was built on the foundations of the second). It was not until the 1890s that the blocks facing the square were completely developed with attached commercial structures.

By the 1870s, with the coming of the railroad, Gainesville's downtown blossomed. New commercial businesses, such as cotton warehouses, factories, and small mills, were built along the railroad corridor that ran along the west side of downtown. At the same time the reputation of the Gainesville area as a summer resort grew statewide. Large downtown hotels that served vacationers became a mainstay of Gainesville's downtown streetscape through the mid-20th century. One such hotel was the three-story brick Hudson House Hotel (no longer extant) built in 1887 on the northwest corner of the square. The Art Deco-style Dixie Hunt Hotel is the only such remaining building. Several structures from this period survived into the 20th century and featured Italianate- and Romanesquestyle architecture, such as the Bailey Block and the First National Bank Building (destroyed by the 1936 tornado and a fire in the 1960s, respectively). The stuccoed Imperial Pharmacy Building, also known as the Bank of Banks and Brother Building (photograph 3, foreground), was constructed in 1871 at the corner of Bradford Street and Washington Street and is the oldest documented building

Section 7--Description

in the downtown. This building was rehabilitated as retail and office space using historic preservation tax incentive programs. Beyond the immediate confines of the public square, residential properties extended in all directions. Many of these wood-frame and brick buildings were replaced by spreading commercial development by the mid-20th century.

The streetscapes of downtown Gainesville, in many ways, have not changed much in their appearance around the turn of the century. The one- and two-story attached commercial buildings are set flush with the sidewalk and form a continuous façade along the street. Common decorative elements include storefronts with wood and cast-iron entablatures and columns as well as corbelled brickwork and decorative pilasters. Relatively unaltered storefronts still exist that feature recessed entries, display windows, and plate glass or glass block transoms. Additions to the downtown's streetscape around the early part of the 20th century included the installation of the first electric streetcar tracks in 1903 as well as the bricking of the streets around the public square in 1909 (no visible brick streets survive).

The grassy public square, the original site of the county courthouse from 1822 to 1885, was left barren in 1885 when the courthouse burned and was rebuilt on the southeastern corner of the square. During the late 19th century and into the 20th century the grassy public square was planted with trees arranged in two radiating circles from the center of the square. The Confederate monument (photograph 28) was erected in the public square in 1909. Although pathways were evident at least by the early 20th century, the square did not acquire its more formal landscaped look until the 1930s. The formal appearance of the square today features concrete pathways, planting beds, crepe myrtles, and dogwoods surrounding the monument, the result of a recent Transportation Enhancement grant-funded streetscape improvement project.

Several of Gainesville's landmark buildings date from the early 20th century. The Renaissance Revival-style Hosch Building, constructed c.1901 (photograph 26), located on West Washington Street at the northwest corner of the district, is a two-story, brick commercial building featuring a storefront with cast-iron and wood pilasters and entablature. The segmentally arched windows are topped by a brick corbelled cornice and metal-grated vents created by semi-circular arches. Another impressive structure in downtown on the east side of the district is actually two buildings: the Renaissance Revival-style Federal Building-United States Courthouse built in 1910 and the 1934 addition connected by an ell also built in 1934. Constructed of dressed, white marble on a granite foundation, the 1910 building, which also housed the United States Post Office, is five bays wide with three, two-story arched openings flanked by flat, coupled, Ionic columns. The three-story Stripped Classical-style Federal Building addition, built in 1934 (photograph 16), joined to the rear of the 1910 building by a two-story ell, is also built of marble and has a raised basement. The main entrance is a recessed archway extending the height of the raised basement and two stories. Between each floor is a stringcourse carved first in a wave motif and then with a repeating eagle. Flat, fluted pilasters separate the third-story windows, and the frieze is carved with a classical floral motif. Directly west of the Post Office and constructed in 1915, the Jackson Building (photograph 15, background) was Gainesville's first "skyscraper." Constructed of brick with cast-concrete detailing, the five-story office building has a narrow entryway flanked by large, plate-glass windows. The entrance has recessed double-doors and a classical surround detailed with consoles, a nameplate, and cartouches. The

Section 7--Description

former First United Methodist Church, c.1914, is a large, red brick, front-gabled structure with two corner towers on its front façade. It is located on the corner of Green Street and Brenau Street at the north end of the district. The church features stone detailing, decorative brick corbelling and terra cotta plates, and stained-glass windows. The brick dwelling next to the former First United Methodist Church is a prairie-style house that today serves as church offices (photograph 11).

By the 1930s, the downtown was fully developed with mostly attached, brick, commercial buildings on the north, west, and south; the largest area of residential buildings was located to the east near many of the government buildings and local churches. The destruction of the tornado that hit downtown Gainesville, as well as other sections of the city, on April 6, 1936, was immense. Clearing a swath immediately south of the public square, the tornado leveled the original Dixie Hunt Hotel, half of the square's western block, the county courthouse, the city hall, a row of commercial buildings near the courthouse, and five of six downtown churches. The damage to downtown buildings was great; however, the rebuilding effort began immediately. By the end of the year, a majority of the damaged buildings were repaired or rebuilt, and major construction efforts were underway for the new courthouse, city hall, and Dixie Hunt Hotel. A significant group of buildings that was spared from the tornado is located in the area east of Bradford Street along Washington Street. Included in these buildings that survived the storm are the Logan Building, the Jackson Building, and the Federal Building-United States Courthouse.

A lasting impact of the tornado on the appearance of the downtown was the proliferation of Art Decostyle buildings. The Dixie Hunt Hotel and the Jackson Building are such examples. The architectural details of these marble and stuccoed buildings include exaggerated vertical projections, fluted pilasters, hard-edged vertical designs, and geometrical patterns such as the geometric floral and sunrise patterns. These modern-style buildings provide downtown Gainesville with some of its most memorable qualities.

The 1960s and 1970s brought many changes to downtown Gainesville, such as the demolition of the Princeton Hotel in 1959 that was replaced with the one-story Woolworth Building in 1960. The First Baptist Church burned in 1960, and by 1965 the First National Bank opened a new building on the same block and later added a parking deck. The Wheeler Hotel, located on the north side of the square, was demolished and replaced by the parking lot of the Hall County Library in 1969. The most lasting changes for the downtown included the straightening and increased commercialization of Sycamore Street (now E.E. Butler Parkway), the widening of Church Street (now Jesse Jewell Parkway), and the destruction of three blocks of commercial buildings for the Georgia Mountains Center (outside the district boundaries). These modern developments set the general boundaries of the historic downtown area today. When portions of Broad Street and Bradford Street were closed in the mid-1970s in order to construct the convention center, a new downtown green space was added to downtown.

During the past decade, historic preservation activities have improved the appearance of downtown Gainesville. Local public and private efforts have been made to reinvest in and rehabilitate many of the historic buildings in the downtown for use as offices, restaurants, retail space, and apartments. These efforts include the rehabilitation of buildings, removal of nonhistoric false facades, and

Section 7--Description

streetscape and courthouse square enhancements.

8. Statement of Sign	nificance				
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:					
() nationally () statewide	(X) locall	y ,		
Applicable National	Register Criter	ia:			
(X) A () B	(X) C	() D			
Criteria Consideration	ons (Exception	s): (X) N/A			
()A ()B	() C	() D	() E	() F	() G
Areas of Significance	e (enter catego	ories from in	structions):		
Architecture Commerce Community Planning and Development Politics and Government					
Period of Significant	ce:				
c.1820-1952					
Significant Dates:					
1818-Hall County created c.1820-Town plan of Gainesville laid out 1821-Gainesville incorporated and designated county seat 1871-Charlotte & Atlanta Air Line Railroad comes to Gainesville 1883-Gainesville, Jefferson, & Southern Railroad 1936-Tornado					
Significant Person(s):				
N/A					
Cultural Affiliation:					
N/A					
Architect(s)/Builder(s):				
Brice, Joe R. (Contractor-Logan Building) Chase, William J.J. (Builder-Dixie Hunt Hotel) Prater, Levi (Contractor-Jackson Building) Trowbridge, S.D. (Architect-Jackson Building)					

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Gainesville Commercial Historic District encompasses the historic central business district of Gainesville, a county-seat town in northeast Georgia. It includes the community's central business district and associated public or community landmark buildings that developed around the historic courthouse square.

The Gainesville Commercial Historic District is significant in the area of architecture for its representative collection of intact 19th and early 20th 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 from 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, Renaissance Revival, Commercial, and Art Deco styles. Characteristics of the Romanesque Revival style include rounded arches over windows and porch supports, masonry walls, rough-faced, squared stonework, towers with conical roofs, and asymmetrical facades. Characteristics of the Renaissance Revival style include two- or three-story height, low-pitched roof, tall, narrow windows, commonly arched or curved, and windows with elaborated crowns. 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 Art Deco style include smooth wall surface, flat roof, coping at roofline, horizontal lines in walls, and symmetrical facade. 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. The district also contains architecturally significant community landmark buildings including the Westminster Presbyterian Church (historically known as the First United Methodist Church), the Federal Building-United States Courthouse (also formerly the United States Post Office) and addition, and the Dixie Hunt Hotel. These are excellent local examples of the Romanesque Revival, Renaissance Revival, and Art Deco styles, respectively, 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 and ceramic tile are used in applied ornamentation on the community landmark buildings. These buildings generally possess a high degree of craftsmanship as evidenced by architectural details such as cast-iron posts, brick corbeling, and other ornamentation common to the architectural styles represented in the district.

The Gainesville Commercial Historic District is significant in the area of <u>commerce</u> as the historic commercial center of Gainesville and the surrounding county. Typically the county seat was also the 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

Section 8--Statement of Significance

related services, and communications-related businesses. Extant buildings in the Gainesville Commercial Historic District represent many of these commercial activities including general merchandise, hardware, drug store, banks, law offices, theater, post office, and newspaper office. Of special note locally are the Logan Building, the Jackson Building, and the Hosch Building. 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 19th- and early 20th-centuries. Gainesville's development was due in large part to the placement of the town near a popular trading camp called Mule Camp Springs and the arrival of the Charlotte & Atlanta Air Line Railroad in the 1870s and the Jefferson & Southern Railroad in the 1880s.

The Gainesville Commercial 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 18th-century through the early 20th century. The Washington plan features a central courthouse square with streets leading directly to its corners. Gainesville's courthouse square, rather than being in the center of the town plan, is located in the northwest section of town. This plan also reflects the designation of the community as the Hall 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 including the establishment of the railroad in the late 1870s.

The Gainesville Commercial Historic District is significant in the area of politics and government as the county seat of Hall County and because of the presence of buildings and structures directly related to activities and events associated with local county government and the federal 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 Gainesville Commercial Historic District, county government is represented by the courthouse square with its traditional placement in the central business district and the accompanying Confederate monument. The former historic county courthouse that was located on the square was destroyed by fire in 1885, and the new courthouse (later destroyed by a tornado in 1936) was constructed on the block to the southeast of the square facing Broad Street (outside the district boundaries). The federal government is represented by the 1910 Federal Building-United States Courthouse, which housed the United States Post Office until 1967, and is the

Section 8--Statement of Significance

only evidence of the federal government in many small towns, and the 1934 Federal Building addition. Both buildings are unusually large and architecturally elaborate examples of community landmark buildings, showing the importance of Gainesville in the region.

National Register Criteria

The Gainesville Commercial Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its development since the 1820s as the county seat and the commercial center of Hall County. The Gainesville Commercial Historic District is also eligible for listing under Criterion C for its large and substantially intact collection of historic commercial buildings constructed from the 1870s through the 1950s as well as community landmark buildings.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance for the Gainesville Commercial Historic District begins c.1820 with the layout of the town plan and ends in 1952, the end of the historic period. The original town plan, one of four principal plan forms for county seats in Georgia, is virtually intact today with its central square and gridiron streets, and throughout Gainesville's history it formed the framework for downtown development. Downtown Gainesville served as the principal commercial center in Gainesville and Hall County from the 1820s through the mid-20th century.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

Contributing resources in the historic district are those constructed during the historic period that are significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, community planning and development, and politics and government and that retain historic integrity. These resources include commercial buildings on and around the courthouse square and community landmark buildings such as the Dixie Hunt Hotel, the Federal Building-United States Courthouse and addition, and the First United Methodist Church, now the Westminster Presbyterian Church. The contributing site within the district is the public square. A contributing structure is the town plan. A contributing object within the district is the Confederate monument on the courthouse square.

Noncontributing resources are those constructed after 1952 (photographs 23 and 24) and those that have lost their historic integrity due to significant alterations primarily to front facades that destroyed or obscure historic architectural features (photographs 2, 4, 5, 7, and 19).

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

**NOTE: The following history was compiled by Diana G. Miles, Historic Preservation Consultant, July, 1998. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Establishment and the Gold Rush Boom

The City of Gainesville is located in former Creek and Cherokee Indian territory. The land was ceded to the state of Georgia in 1817. Soon thereafter the Lottery Act of 1818 divided the land into counties, one of which was Hall County.

The original town plan of Gainesville was laid out c.1820 by Timothy Terrell, IV, a surveyor who worked for both state and federal governments. The town plan is a variation of what is known as the Washington-type courthouse plan that was first utilized in Washington, Wilkes County, Georgia. This plan features a central courthouse square at the intersection of two sections of city blocks that are narrower than the other city lots. The result of this arrangement is a smaller town square with smaller commercial blocks aligning its four sides. Gainesville's courthouse square, rather than being in the center of the town plan is located in the northwest section of town. Correspondingly, the initial growth of the town tended to be in the city blocks to the south and east of the original courthouse.

The town plan predates the incorporation of the city itself, as evidenced by an 1821 Hall County deed that documents the original purchase of fifty acres in the Ninth District of Hall County for the development of Gainesville, with a description of one of the purchased lots being "number three in the laid plan of the public lots." Gainesville was incorporated as a town and designated the county seat of Hall County by an act signed November 30, 1821, by Governor John Clark. The new town of Gainesville was located near a site known as Mule Camp Springs that was a trading site in the area as well as a former Indian camping ground.

Deed records compiled by the Hall County Historical Society provide the most information about Gainesville's early development. The first decade was a period of slow growth for the new community. City lots were sold primarily for the construction of businesses, churches, schools, or private residences, and the area around the square was only sparsely developed by the end of the 1820s. Some of the first structures included a wood-framed courthouse that was built on the public square in 1822, at least four log dwellings, a tavern from which the post office operated, and a store. A jail was constructed at an unknown site in 1822.

The discovery of gold in the north Georgia mountains in the late 1820s created a temporary boom in Gainesville that invited speculators and new businesses to invest in the area. Although the majority of gold mining activity took place outside of Hall County, Gainesville became one of the commercial centers for the gold region. The economic boom also stimulated the construction of new roads extending from Gainesville into gold country. An 1831 article from Athens, Georgia, describes Gainesville as having "nine or ten stores, one of which is established for the special accommodation of that class of our citizens...usually called 'Gold Diggers'...[the town] contains one Tinner's shop,

Section 8--Statement of Significance

several cabinet workshops, three taverns..." (Dorsey 1991, 30). By the end of the 1830s there were three hotels operating on the square, as well as two stores (the post office being relocated to one of them), a tavern, and several dwellings. The first courthouse was sold to the Methodist Church in 1834 and moved to another lot, and a much larger, brick, possibly two-story, courthouse was built to replace it. Located just off the square were several other dwellings, a store, a tavern, and a church. It is believed that a gold minting shop operated by Templeton Reid in 1830 was located to the west of the square on West Washington Street between Maple Street and Grove Street. Reid, a jewelry designer who moved to Gainesville from Milledgeville in 1830, is reputed to have operated the "first private operating mint in this country for the production of gold coins in dollar denominations" (Anderson 1989, 106). The town's first cotton mill was located south of the square, and farther south were two churches built on land specifically set aside for religious use. It is very likely that additional dwellings and businesses were established in town during this period due to the fact that at least ten other land lots were purchased during the 1830s. None of the buildings built during this early period survives.

Post-Gold Rush and Antebellum Period

The boom from the gold rush subsided by the mid-1830s, and the pace of Gainesville's development slowed. By the end of the decade, as the town's population dropped, many businesses found themselves overextended and had to close. Prices fell which limited the extent of land speculation. According to deed records, one of the few land purchases during this period was for six adjacent lots located east of the square that were sold to the same investor in 1841. In 1845, a Baptist congregation constructed a church south of the square on Church Street.

Despite the slowing down of the local economy, the region was developing new transportation routes along the rough roads constructed during the gold rush. These roads provided new commercial opportunities for Gainesville during the antebellum period. A slow revival of town population and commerce during the late 1850s is illustrated by the arrival of E.N. Gower from Greenville, South Carolina, who ran the Gainesville Hotel (no longer extant), a two-story brick building on the southwest corner of the square, and who established a carriage shop in town by 1859. It was also during this period that Gainesville began to develop as a summer tourist destination for those escaping the hot and humid climates of southern and coastal Georgia. Later in the 19th century, Gainesville, with its natural springs and higher elevation, would enjoy a statewide reputation as a summer resort.

In 1851, the town suffered a fire that destroyed the courthouse. Another brick courthouse was built soon thereafter, apparently on the same foundation as the second courthouse. Selected deeds from the 1850s and 1860s indicate a new brick building on the southwest corner of the square (the existing hotel and store may have been destroyed in the 1851 fire), a storehouse and post office on the west side of the square called the O'Connor Corner, several new dwellings east of the square, and a blacksmith shop to the south of the square. An 1861 article in the local newspaper, *The Air-Line Eagle* (established in 1860), also mentions a new millinery shop and confectionery shop in the W.G. Fielding Building located on the block to the southwest of the square. None of the buildings from the antebellum period survives.

Section 8--Statement of Significance

The Coming of the Railroad, 1871

The Civil War and the early years of Reconstruction brought a period of depression to Gainesville that continued until the arrival of the Charlotte & Atlanta Air Line Railroad in the early 1870s. Bringing with it new opportunities for trade and an increase in population, the railroad marked the commercial rebirth of Gainesville and a significant period of growth. In 1873, the town amended and expanded its incorporations so that Gainesville was divided into three wards governed by a mayor and a city council.

Despite two destructive fires in downtown Gainesville in 1873 and 1876, by the late 1870s the town was known as "the most famous summer resort in the State...now the four large hotels, and a dozen boarding houses, cannot furnish accommodations to the visitors from all sections of the South" (*Gwinnett Herald* September 26, 1877). Gainesville's commercial community was thriving during this period, as evidenced by two 1875 and 1876 editions of *The Gainesville Eagle* that listed the following businesses located on the public square: the Bank of Banks & Brother; B.F. Morton Boot and Shoemaker; E.B. Wiley's; Gainesville Hotel; Boone & Randolph; New Cash Store; newspaper office; Clements & Whetstone; Evans & Ferguson; J.R. Davis grocer; and the Samuel C. Dunlap office. The Bank of Banks & Brother was located at the corner of Bradford and Washington, built in 1871; the stuccoed brick commercial building, known as the Imperial Pharmacy building today, is believed to be the oldest building in downtown Gainesville.

By the late 1880s, Gainesville had a population of 3,500 and was bustling with two railroads, the Gainesville, Jefferson & Southern Railroad having been opened in 1883 with a depot built adjacent to downtown on the block west of Maple Street and south of West Spring Street. The unpaved downtown streets were busy with commerce and teeming with wagons, pedestrians, and horse-drawn streetcars that struggled to avoid the piles of trading goods and cotton brought to town by outlying farmers. The square itself had undergone a massive transformation when the courthouse burned in 1885 and a new courthouse was constructed on the block to the southeast of the square facing Broad Street (outside of the proposed district boundaries). This new courthouse was a two-story, brick Romanesque-style building topped with an elaborate clock tower (no longer extant). Street trees were planted along the sidewalks and the newly barren public square had three wells and two fire cisterns.

In 1888, the public square was almost completely fronted with commercial structures, except for parts of the north- and south-facing sides of the square. Early photographs, maps, and sketches show the square flanked by two-story, brick commercial structures featuring typical 19th century architectural details, including some high-style Italianate and Romanesque examples. The Opera House, c.1887 (no longer extant), was situated on the northeastern corner of the square, and Gainesville's two in town hotels, the Arlington Hotel, 1882 (later the original Dixie Hunt Hotel), and the Hudson House, 1887 (no longer extant), were impressive three-story structures located on the southwest and northwest corners of the square. These brick, Italianate-style hotels were significant in shaping the 19th and early 20th century appearance of Gainesville's public square as well as illustrating the important role that tourism played in the town's local commerce and economic growth.

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Turn of the Century, 1890s-1900s

The turn-of-the-century development of downtown Gainesville reflected the growing commercial and industrial successes of a regional trade center. With the construction of the railroads and the new opportunities they provided, the town's economic base expanded tremendously while its population increased from 4,500 to 6,500 between 1893 and 1909. By the end of the 19th century, Gainesville had become an active cotton market as well as home to increasing numbers of professional and white-collar workers such as doctors, lawyers, and bankers. The resort business continued to be a major factor in the town's economy, especially during the summer months. However, Gainesville also became a popular shipping point for produce, cotton, livestock, chicken, eggs, and other goods that were produced by framers in the surrounding areas (Dorsey 1991, 228 and 234). By the early 20th century Gainesville also had two large cotton textile mills with associated villages.

Downtown Gainesville continued the development trends that were established during the last twenty years of the 19th century with additional commercial structures being built around and adjacent to the public square. New businesses spread generally south and west of the square. The 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the public square completely fronted with commercial buildings and the blocks extending out from the square increasingly subdivided and developed with residential, commercial, and industrial buildings. The Hunt House Hotel, built by 1893 (no longer extant), and a three-story clothing and carpet store were situated a block or two north of the square, while some of the new businesses south of the square included a steam printing shop, offices, a harness shop, a warehouse, and a livery stable.

The new century in Gainesville was marked by the advent of electric lighting, used in homes by 1902 and, by 1903, electric streetcars. The streetcars transported both people and freight from the Main Street depot to the public square (*Times* January 25, 1976). By 1906 and 1907, the Gainesville Midland Railroad, with a depot west of the public square south of Spring Street, began carrying mail and passengers. In 1909, the public square and the surrounding streets for one block were paved in brick for the first time. During the same year, a Confederate monument was erected in the center of the square by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (Action Strategy 1992, 12-13).

Many new buildings and businesses were constructed in the central business district during the first part of the 20th century. Several of them survive today. A significant addition to the commercial structures on the square was the Hosch Building (c.1901), a dry goods store on the northwest corner of Washington Street and Maple Street that is present today. By 1909, a pair of two-story brick buildings was built on the corner of North Bradford Street and Brenau Avenue that are still present today. Institutional development began encroaching on the residential area to the east of the square when the marble, Neoclassical-style First Baptist Church (1909; burned 1960) and the Federal Building-United States Courthouse (formerly also the United States Post Office) (1910) were constructed at the corners of East Washington Street and Green Street. A brick Presbyterian church (c.1905-1907; destroyed by the 1936 tornado) and the First United Methodist Church, c.1914, were also built at the corners of Green Street and Brenau Street.

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Early 20th Century, 1910 through Early 1930s

During the early 20th century Gainesville experienced the typical technological and social changes of the era, such as the coming of the automobile and the "moving picture" show. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and photographs illustrate these additions to the community as well as the growth of new commercial and industrial establishments that continued to cluster around the central business district. By 1922, three large liveries had been converted into garages. Around the same time several gas stations were constructed in downtown. The Jackson Building, constructed in 1915, was considered Gainesville's first "skyscraper" and was a significant addition to the east of the square next to the Arlington Hotel, and a Georgia Railway and Power Company substation was built by 1915 northwest of the Hosch Building. A row of commercial stores was also built on the corner of Spring Street and Maple Street, some of which survive today.

Other changes to the central business district by the early 1930s included the burning of the Opera House in 1925, an event that took two-thirds of the block's buildings with it. However, by 1930 the entire block (except for the residential eastern portion) was entirely redeveloped and included a movie theater and the Logan Building (1929). The Arlington Hotel had become the Dixie Hunt Hotel and the Royal Theater opened south of the hotel in 1931. By 1934, the Federal Building-United States Courthouse addition was also completed to the rear of the existing post office.

By the early 1930s, Gainesville was a thriving regional trade and textile center with a population of 8,600. Its major commercial and light industrial hub was located in its downtown in the general vicinity of the public square. The public square featured a circular green space planted with trees during this time, and the majority of the streets located immediately off the square were solidly lined with commercial structures, particularly to the south. To the south and west commercial buildings were mixed with light industrial and a few remaining homes. The majority of the residential development in the area was to the east, north, and northwest. The least commercially developed part of downtown was to the north where more scattered commercial businesses stopped abruptly where the residential area began.

The Tornado of 1936: Reconstruction and Revival

A tornado touched down in the heart of Gainesville on April 6, 1936, killing 200 people and destroying a large number of the downtown commercial, residential, and institutional buildings. The current appearance of much of downtown Gainesville is a result of this destruction and the subsequent rebuilding of the town. The predominant Art Deco-inspired architecture of the larger buildings in Gainesville's downtown is a direct result of this massive effort to rebuild the town.

Heading from the west and sweeping through downtown between Washington Street and Broad Street, the tornado had a devastating impact. The county courthouse and City Hall (both outside of the proposed district boundaries), the original Dixie Hunt Hotel, and the majority of buildings on the square's western block were destroyed. The blocks surrounding the courthouse and city hall were destroyed, as well as a row of commercial buildings on South Bradford Street facing the courthouse. Five of the town's six churches were destroyed or seriously damaged. Most downtown buildings

Section 8--Statement of Significance

suffered damage from the force of the wind or from the resulting fire that burned through many buildings. The months and years after the tornado were spent rebuilding the town. Much of this effort was made possible by the Federal government's Depression-era work programs such as the Works Progress Administration.

Most of the new buildings constructed immediately after the 1936 tornado were built to replace those that were lost, therefore, the land use in downtown did not change drastically. The new Art Decostyle courthouse was completed and then dedicated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1938, and the new City Hall was constructed south of the courthouse (both outside the proposed district boundaries). The Dixie Hunt Hotel reopened as an Art Deco-style hotel in 1938, and St. Paul Methodist Church was rebuilt in a new location at the corner of Grove Street and Washington Street (outside the district boundaries; the historic county courthouse, individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 8, 1995, and city hall are cut off from the historic district by the nonhistoric courthouse addition and the massive modern Georgia Mountains Center and associated parking directly south of the square). The western block off the square was rebuilt with the addition of two new buildings on the south end and the repair of the northernmost building. Many of the rebuilt or repaired commercial buildings had very simple brick facades, such as those currently along the west side of South Main Street and along West Spring Street.

One of the most significant additions to the downtown was the construction of the Art Deco-style Walter Jackson Building on the corner of Washington Street and Green Street. This corner building took the place of a residence that was destroyed by the tornado. A brick building with two stories and a basement was also built around 1936 that stretched between North Bradford Street and North Main Street (known today as the Pilgrim-Estes Building). Throughout downtown, so many commercial buildings were repaired or rebuilt in response to the great destruction caused by the tornado that many consider Gainesville's downtown largely a product of 1936.

Aerial perspectives of downtown Gainesville in the early 1940s show a fully recovered commercial district. The square is flanked on four sides by brick commercial structures, many having facades that reflect new construction or reconstruction. The Dixie Hunt Hotel and the Princeton Hotel anchor the northwest and southwest corners of the square. The block to the north of the square is fully developed with commercial structures, having filled out since the 1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, and the Wheeler Hotel is to the north of the Hosch Building. Other notable buildings include Whatley's and the Imperial Pharmacy buildings on the square.

Gainesville's Modern Period

The fifty years of growth in Gainesville from the late 1940s to the present have produced some major changes in the appearance and function of the downtown. Although some parts of the downtown remain largely intact from the period of the 1930s, other areas have undergone radical changes, often through the agencies of urban planning.

The 1960s saw the destruction of many downtown landmarks. The Princeton Hotel was demolished in 1959 and replaced with the one-story Woolworth building in 1960. The First Baptist Church burned

Section 8--Statement of Significance

in 1960, and by 1965 the First National Bank opened a new building on the same block (and later added a parking deck). The Wheeler Hotel, located on the north side of the square, was demolished and replaced by the parking lot of the Hall County Library in 1969.

It was the redevelopment of two downtown streets that ultimately influenced the growth and appearance of downtown. The redevelopment of Sycamore Street (now E.E. Butler Parkway) during the 1960s altered the main route through town from Green Street to Sycamore Street, while the widening of Church Street (now Jesse Jewell Parkway) during the 1970s created a commercial corridor that pushed out the existing residential growth and isolated commercial structures from their original contexts as a part of downtown. The main effect of these widened roadways was to increase the construction of new commercial structures (parking decks, strip malls, City Public Safety building, post office, *The Gainesville Times* building) along the roads, resulting in the demolition of increasing numbers of historic structures. This newer development is outside of the proposed district boundaries.

The 1970s brought more changes to downtown with the burning of the historic Citizens Bank Building on the corner of Washington Street and Bradford Street on the square. The building was replaced with a one-story structure. The greatest change for the public square however came with the construction of the Georgia Mountains Center in the mid-1970s (outside of the district boundaries). To make way for the large convention center, the two downtown blocks immediately south of the square were cleared. Sections of Broad Street and Bradford Street were permanently closed as part of the project.

Over the last several years, new local public and private efforts have been made to reinvest in and rehabilitate many of the historic buildings in the downtown for use as offices, restaurants, retail space, and apartments. These include the Imperial Pharmacy (1871), the Hosch Building (c.1901), the Logan Building (1929), and the Dixie Hunt Hotel (1938). The formal appearance of the square today features concrete pathways, planting beds, crepe myrtles, and dogwoods surrounding the monument, the result of a recent Transportation Enhancement grant-funded streetscape improvement project. Gainesville's downtown commercial district still reflects its heritage as the heart of a small community centered on its public square and as a commercial center nourished by its historic connection to the railroad and the surrounding county and region.

9. Major Bibliographic References

"Action Strategy: Central Business District, Gainesville, Georgia." Prepared by Jaeger/Pyburn, Gainesville, Georgia: February, 1992.

Anderson, Jimmy. "Fateful Day in Gainesville: April 6, 1936." <u>A North Georgia Journal of History.</u> Olin Johnson, ed. Woodstock, Georgia: Legacy Communications, Inc., 1989.

A City Laid Waste: Tornado Devastation at Gainesville, Georgia, April 6, 1936. Compiled by W.M. Brice. Gainesville, Georgia: W.M. Brice, 1936.

Dorsey, James E. <u>The History of Hall County: Volume I, 1818-1900</u>. Gainesville, Georgia: Magnolia Press, 1991.

Gainesville City Directories, 1911-12, 1918, 1937, and 1948.

"Gainesville Saw Good Railroads Live and Die." The Times. March 23, 1969.

Gwinnett Herald September 26, 1877. In <u>The History of Hall County: Volume I, 1818-1900</u>. Gainesville, Georgia: Magnolia Press, 1991.

Hall County Deed Research, Hall County Courthouse, Gainesville, Georgia.

National Register Nomination Forms. Hall County. On file at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia.

"The Jesse Jewell Story." Published by J.D. Jewell, Inc. Gainesville, Georgia.

McRay, Sybil, compiler and ed. <u>Pictorial History of Hall County to 1950</u>. Gainesville, Georgia: Hall County Library Committee, 1985.

McRae, Sybil. "Street Cars Rounded Square in Gainesville 75 Years Ago." *The Times*. January 25, 1976.

McRae, Sybil, and James E. Dorsey. <u>Windows of Memory, The Hall County That Was: A Photographic History</u>. Gainesville, Georgia: Hall County Historical Research Foundation, 1989.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Gainesville, Georgia: 1886, 1888, 1893, 1903, 1909, 1915, 1922, and 1930.

Sears, Joan Niles. <u>The First One Hundred Years of Town Planning in Georgia</u>. Atlanta, Georgia: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1979.

Section 9—Major Bibliographic References

Prev	ious documentation on file (NPS): (X) 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 #
Prim	ary location of additional data:
(X) () () ()	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 18 acres

UTM References

A)	Zone 17	Easting 239830	Northing 3799029
B)	Zone 17	Easting 240032	Northing 3798684
C)	Zone 17	Easting 239728	Northing 3798523
D)	Zone 17	Easting 239645	Northing 3798723

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the proposed nomination is indicated on the attached maps by a heavy black line.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the proposed district includes the historic, intact, and contiguous properties in the downtown commercial core of Gainesville. The northeast (east) edge of the district was set by modern commercial and institutional development along the widened former Sycamore Street, now E.E. Butler Parkway, which parallels Green Street. The southeast (south) side of the district is bounded by nonhistoric government buildings along Spring Street (which separate the historic county courthouse, individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and city hall from the historic district, by the massive modern Georgia Mountains Center and associated parking directly south of the square, and by the widened former Church Street, now Jesse Jewell Parkway, with its modern development, remodeled former historic buildings, and isolated individual historic buildings. The southwest (west) edge of the district is defined by the former dead-end railroad corridor which today is an open, re-graded, grassed area separating the downtown square from the remodeled and expanded former railroad station. Beyond the northwest corner of the district is a largely vacant block, formerly occupied by the Gainesville High School, the municipal electrical power plant, and several houses, all gone except for the former school gymnasium/auditorium which has been converted into a hotel. The northwest (north) edge of the district marks the extent of concentrated historic commercial development associated with downtown Gainesville; beyond is largely nonhistoric commercial development, a large residential neighborhood, and a city park along a creek.

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 July 3, 2002 e-mail holly anderson@mail.dnr.state.ga.us

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

name/title Diana G. Miles, Preservation Planner organization The Jaeger Company mailing address 119 Washington Street city or town Gainesville state Georgia zip code 30501 telephone (706)534-0706 e-mail

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

Property Owner or Contact Information

name (property owner or contact person) Joseph Burnett, Executive Director organization (if applicable) Historic Downtown Gainesville mailing address P.O. Box 2574 city or town Gainesville state Georgia zip code 30503 e-mail (optional)

Photographs

Name of Property:

Gainesville Downtown Historic District

City or Vicinity:

Gainesville

County:

Hall

State:

Georgia

Photographer:

James R. Lockhart

Negative Filed:

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Date Photographed:

December, 1999

Description of Photograph(s):

Number of photographs: 28

- 1. Washington Street; photographer facing west.
- 2. Washington Street; photographer facing northeast.
- 3. Corner of Washington Street and Bradford Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 4. Bradford Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 5. Bradford Street; photographer facing west.
- 6. Alley between Bradford Street and Main Street; photographer facing southwest.
- 7. Washington Street, west side of square; photographer facing southwest.
- 8. Main Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 9. Corner of Main Street and Brenau Avenue; photographer facing southeast.
- 10. Corner of Brenau Avenue and Bradford Street; photographer facing southwest.
- 11. Westminster Presbyterian Church (former First United Methodist Church), Green Street; photographer facing west.
- 12. Green Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 13. Corner of Green Street and Washington Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 14. Corner of Green Street and Washington Street; photographer facing west.
- 15. Federal Building-United States Courthouse (former United States Post Office) and Jackson Building (background), corner of Washington Street and Green Street; photographer facing

Photographs

southwest.

- 16. Federal Building-United States Courthouse 1934 addition, corner of Green Street and Spring Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 17. Bradford Street, north side of square; photographer facing northwest.
- 18. Public square; photographer facing northwest.
- 19. Main Street, south side of square; photographer facing southwest.
- 20. Corner of Main Street and Spring Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 21. Dixie Hunt Hotel; photographer facing southwest.
- 22. Corner of Main Street and Broad Street; photographer facing west.
- 23. Corner of Broad Street and Maple Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 24. Maple Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 25. Maple Street; photographer facing northwest.
- 26. Hosch Building; photographer facing north.
- 27. Corner of Maple Street and Washington Street; photographer facing south.
- 28. Public Square and Confederate monument; photographer facing west.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)









