

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: New Decatur-Albany Historic District (Boundary Decrease, Increase and Additional Documentation)

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by Moulton St East; 4th and 5th Aves; Grant and Jackson Sts SE; and the Louisville & Nashville Railroad corridor.

City or town: Decatur State: Alabama County: Morgan

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

XA B XC D

Lee Anne Hewett

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

9/26/25

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Alabama Historical Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register
criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain:)



Signature of the Keeper

12/19/2025

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☒

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Category of Property (Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

☐

District

☒

Site

☐

Structure

☐

Object

☐

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Number of Resources within Amended New Decatur-Albany Historic District

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>63</u>	<u>22</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u>8</u>	<u>6</u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>71</u>	<u>28</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register :

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling, hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store, specialty store, business, professional, financial institution, restaurant, warehouse

SOCIAL: meeting hall

GOVERNMENT: government office, post office,

RELIGION: religious facility, church-related residence

RECREATION AND CULTURE: theater, music facility

HEALTH CARE: clinic, medical business/office

TRANSPORTATION: bus station

UNKNOWN

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store, business, professional, financial institution, restaurant, warehouse

SOCIAL: meeting hall

RELIGION: religious facility

HEALTH CARE: clinic, medical business/office

TRANSPORTATION: parking garage, bus station

VACANT: not in use

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Section 2: list of inclusive addresses

1st Avenue NE: 115, 119

1st Avenue SE: 101, 201, 334

2nd Avenue NE: 101, 107, 109, 111, 115, 117, 119

2nd Avenue SE: 103 to 324

4th Avenue SE: 209 and 225

Gordon Drive: 201

Grant Street SE: 104, 200 block, 401 and 425

Jackson Street SE: 202

Johnston Street SE: 101, 110, 115, 200 block, and north side of 400 block

Moulton Street, East: 12, 14, 16, 19, 105, 112, 114, 118, 214-254, 402 and 405

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival, Classical
Revival, Late Gothic Revival

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial
Style

MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style, Art Deco, Brutalist

OTHER: Post-World War II Modernist Storefronts

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

FOUNDATION: Stone, Concrete

ROOF: Asphalt

WALLS: Brick, Concrete, Metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The New Decatur-Albany Historic District is located in the City of Decatur, Morgan County, Alabama. The district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) on June 5, 1995. It is largely comprised of commercial resources fronting 2nd Avenue NE and SE, south of

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Lee Street (formerly the main switch of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad corridor) and the early-19th century Tennessee River town of Decatur (Old Decatur/Old Town). The 1995 nomination inventory documented 36 contributing buildings and 11 noncontributing. One of the contributing buildings, the Cotaco Opera House (NRHP Ref. # 86000914), is also individually listed on the NRHP. In 1999, a boundary increase added to the historic district the Decatur Light, Power, and Fuel Company building at 130 1st Avenue NE (not extant). Since its designation, notable changes have occurred to resources within the district, including the demolition of nine (9) buildings and the removal of a c.1970s concrete awning applied to storefronts along 2nd Avenue. The latter was a significant intrusion to the historic aesthetic of the district, and its removal a notable improvement to the streetscape. This amendment extends the period of significance to 1979 to account for mid-20th century growth and development of the downtown, including several surface parking lots attributed to Operation New Decatur, an Urban Renewal initiative in the 1960s and 1970s. The update includes a boundary decrease of approximately 3.3 acres due to large-scale infill construction and demolition of historic resources. The decrease removes 11 resources from the district inventory. A boundary increase of approximately 30 acres is also included as part of the update to draw in all resources traditionally expected to occur in downtown areas, including those documenting the continued development of the New Decatur downtown area through post-World War II growth and Operation New Decatur. The boundary increase adds 65 resources to the district. Finally, the district amendment expands upon the historic context, modifies the inventory of resources, and updates the contributing status of all resources based on the result of a 2021-2022 survey funded by the City and a Certified Local Government preservation grant from the National Park Service. As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District is comprised of approximately 47 acres of land, with a total of 100 resources - 64 contributing buildings, 8 contributing structures, 22 noncontributing buildings and 6 noncontributing structures. Of the 64 contributing resources, 22 are contributing resources to the 1995 designation. The district possesses a diverse collection of one and two-part commercial blocks, freestanding commercial and office buildings, and impressive church edifices, among others. Distinguishing architectural styles occurring throughout the district include late-19th and early-20th century commercial style, Queen Anne, Neoclassical, Gothic and Colonial Revivals, and Art Deco. Post-World War II architecture draws upon principles of the International Style, and Brutalism. The district also includes a number of early commercial buildings exhibiting post-World War II storefront upgrades to appear sleeker and more modern. Surface parking lots from the post-WWII years through the 1970s further document patterns of development. Collectively, the resources within the district retain historic integrity and contribute its overall historic aesthetic and character is intact.

Narrative Description

The New Decatur-Albany Historic District Boundary Decrease, Increase and Additional Documentation (hereafter referred to as “update” or “amendment”) comprises the business and social hub of a planned, progressive New South town that was designed and laid out in 1887. The town of New Decatur was briefly named Albany before being annexed into the earlier city of Decatur. Thus, the present-day city of Decatur encompasses two distinct business districts that are collectively referred to as “downtown” – the Bank Street district of “old Decatur/old town” and

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the commercial and business district of New Decatur/Albany. Despite the absorption of New Decatur into the city limits of the “old” city, both business sectors reflect built environments distinctive of one another, generally separated by Lee Street, the former path of the main switch of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad (L&N RR) corridor. As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District comprises resources reflective of New Decatur’s primary periods of prosperity – the late-19th century commercial blocks of a booming, planned New South business district and cultural and social hub; early-20th century boom when both Decatur’s gained prominence as a railroad hub and New Decatur promoted itself as an ideal location for industry; the early-1940s when the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) constructed a river terminal at Decatur; and the post-World War II years through the 1970s.

The district is located just south of the early-19th century Tennessee River Town of Decatur (“Old” Decatur), which largely comprises the Bank Street-Old Decatur Historic District (listed 3/26/1980). The district is adjacent to the north and west of the Albany Heritage Neighborhood Historic District (listed 2/2/1983), a predominantly middle-class residential enclave that developed concurrently with downtown New Decatur. In 1995, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District was designated to the NRHP, comprising the earliest commercial core of New Decatur that developed along 2nd Avenue between Lee and Jackson Streets.¹ In 1999, the district boundary was expanded to draw in the Decatur Light, Power, and Fuel Company building erected in 1898 at 130 1st Avenue NE (not extant).² All properties designated to the NRHP are concurrently listed on the Alabama State Register of Historic Places.

As listed in the NRHP in 1995, the original New Decatur-Albany Historic District occupies 13 acres of land. The original district is irregular in shape and generally comprised the 100 block of 2nd Avenue NE; the 200 block of 2nd Avenue SE (excluding a few parcels on the west side of the street); the 300 block of 2nd Avenue SE (east side only); properties on the north side of East Moulton Street in the 100 and 200 blocks, and one property at 115 Johnston Street.³ This boundary encompassed approximately 10 blocks within the central business district of New Decatur-Albany. This area, as envisioned by town planners, was to serve as the commercial hub of the new town, with construction of the first buildings in the late 1880s, continuing to World War II. The period of significance of the 1995 New Decatur-Albany Historic District spanned 1887 to 1941.

The district follows the original grid plan layout of the town, oriented north to south and east to west. The majority of the resources within the district are one- and two-part commercial blocks fronting 2nd Avenue, which is lined by concrete sidewalks on either side. Most of the buildings within the district reflect late-19th and early-20th centuries Commercial Style of architecture commonly occurring along America’s Main Streets. When designated to the NRHP in 1995, the district comprised a total of 48 buildings. Eleven (11) of those were documented as

¹ Margaret Slater and Phil Thomason, “New Decatur/Albany Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form,” National Park Service, 1994.

² Alabama Historical Commission, “New Albany-Decatur Historic District (Expansion) National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form,” National Park Service, 1999.

³ Slater and Thomason, 1994; Section 10, Page 25.

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noncontributing to the district and 36 classified as contributing resources and one previously listed resource. The building located at 115 Johnston Street SE (1995 NRHP Resource #32/Amended #50), was erected c.1890 and designated in 1986 (NRHP Ref. # 86000914) as the Cotaco Opera House. However, recent findings confirm that the Cotaco Opera House was never built, and rather, this building housed the New Decatur Opera House, which opened in 1906.⁴

Due to the passage of time, the City of Decatur was awarded a preservation grant from the National Park Service in 2021 to partially fund an intensive-level survey of downtown New Decatur-Albany. The survey included the entirety of the 1995 district (and 1999 boundary increase), as well as a larger expanded area historically associated with the planned town of New Decatur (briefly named Albany), which continued development well after World War II. The survey was conducted by the author of this update and serves as the foundation for the district amendment. The survey identified eight individual resources included in the 1995 NRHP nomination inventory that are no longer extant, plus one that comprised the 1999 boundary increase- Decatur Light, Power, and Fuel Company building.

Demolished Buildings Included on the 1995 NRHP Inventory

- 115 2nd Avenue NE (1995 NRHP Resource #4, Noncontributing), presently a parking lot
- 131 2nd Avenue NE (1995 NRHP Resource #6, Contributing), replaced by campus of Alabama Center for Arts
- 133 2nd Avenue NE (1995 NRHP Resource #7, Contributing), replaced by campus of Alabama Center for Arts
- 101 & 103 2nd Avenue SE (1995 NRHP Resource #11, Contributing), replaced by hotel in 2024
- 200 & 202 Moulton Street, East (1995 NRHP Resource #36, Noncontributing), replaced 2012 by multi-retail
- 204 Moulton Street, East (1995 NRHP Resource #37, Noncontributing), replaced 2012 by multi-retail
- 206 Moulton Street, East (1995 NRHP Resource #38, Noncontributing), replaced 2012 by multi-retail
- 208 Moulton Street, East (1995 NRHP Resource #39, Noncontributing), replaced 2012 by multi-retail
- 130-136 1st Avenue NE (1999 NRHP Resource #49, Contributing), replaced by campus of Alabama Center for Arts

With exception to the demolished properties, most of the extant buildings within the original district have seen little change to their exterior appearance. In some instances, post-World War II and nonhistorical architectural slipcovers applied to the upper façade of commercial buildings have been removed. Some of the storefronts have been remodeled, though most are sensitive to the historic aesthetic of the streetscape. The most notable change to the 1995/1999 district is the development of a large, multi-retail building at 202 E. Moulton Street and sited at the northeast corner of 2nd Avenue NE and Moulton Street East in 2012. Its construction replaced multiple contributing buildings to the original district. The loss of these buildings and construction of the large development detracts from the otherwise historic aesthetic along the streetscape. Thus, it is excluded from the district as part of the Boundary Decrease. Another significant in-fill project occurred in 2024 with the construction of a large hotel located at 103 2nd Avenue SE (#11). Also in 2024, a large multi-level parking garage was erected at 110 Johnston Street (#49). Both are noncontributing resources within the amended district. In the 1970s, as part of downtown revitalization initiatives referred to as Operation New Decatur, a wide concrete canopy was applied to buildings along commercial blocks of 2nd Avenue. The canopies were highly invasive,

⁴ To avoid confusion, unless specified as “1995 NRHP Resource #,” all references to individual resources within the text refer to the inventory presented in this nomination, as amended.

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concealing historic storefronts. The canopies are documented in the 1995 district nomination; however, by the close of the 1990s, they were removed, reversing the insensitive intrusion to the district. This is recognized as a positive initiative to preserve the character of the commercial district and its overall aesthetic. Such changes are successfully returning 2nd Avenue to a thriving commercial corridor in present-day downtown Decatur.

Amended District

Based on the results of the 2022 survey project, it was recommended that the existing district be amended to remove groupings of buildings that detract from the district, update the inventory of resources to correct inconsistencies and discrepancies, and expand the period of significance to account for the continued development of downtown New Decatur following World War II. Not only do several of the buildings within the 1995 district reveal distinguishing post-WWII storefront upgrades, but new development during this period extended east and west from the commercial core along 2nd Avenue. Thus, to more comprehensively document the development and growth of downtown New Decatur following its 1927 annexation and World War II, the survey recommended expanding the district boundary to draw in resources that would fit within the historic context and period of significance.

As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District Boundary Decrease, Increase and Additional Documentation includes a Boundary Decrease to exclude insensitive in-fill construction and demolished historic resources. A large Boundary Increase is included in the amendment to draw in significant properties historically associated with the downtown area of New Decatur/Albany, through its later annexation into the City of Decatur in 1927, and its continued development through the post-World War II years. As amended, the boundary is irregular in shape. Its northern boundary is generally formed by an alleyway between Holly and Moulton Streets. The eastern boundary is abutted by 6th Avenue (US Highway 31). The southern boundary is formed by Grant Street SE and the rear lot lines of 334 1st Avenue SE and 201 Gordon Drive. At its most western edge, the boundary is formed by the L & N Railroad corridor. Portions of the southern and eastern boundary of the amended district abut the Albany Heritage Neighborhood Historic District (83002981; 04000274), the residential sector of New Decatur that developed concurrently with its downtown. As amended, a total of 100 resources comprise the updated district including 64 contributing and 22 noncontributing buildings, and 8 contributing structure and 6 noncontributing structures. All structures are surface parking lots.

Previous Classification (1995 and 1999 increase) of resources within the New Decatur-Albany Historic District boundary:

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
38	10	Buildings
0	0	Sites
0	1	Structures
0	0	Objects
38	11	TOTAL

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Resources demolished within the New Decatur-Albany Historic District boundary DECREASE:

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
3	4	Buildings
0	0	Sites
0	0	Structures
0	0	Objects
3	4	TOTAL

Two additional resources (one contributing and one noncontributing) from the 1995/1999 district are demolished but not included in the Boundary Decrease.

Resources within the New-Decatur-Albany Historic District BOUNDARY INCREASE II:

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
41	13	Buildings
0	0	Sites
8	5	Structures
0	0	Objects
49	18	TOTAL

Current resources within the New Decatur-Albany Historic District after Additional Documentation and Boundary Adjustment:

Contributing	Non-Contributing	
64	22	Buildings
0	0	Sites
8	6	Structures
0	0	Objects
72	28	TOTAL

Boundary Decrease Area

The Boundary Decrease occurs at the northernmost end of the 1995 NRHP district and removes approximately 3.3 acres from the district. A total of 11 resources are removed from the district, seven of which are demolished and replaced by modern infill construction. On the east side of 1st Avenue NE (formerly 130 1st Avenue NE) was the Decatur Light, Power, and Fuel Company Building, which comprised the 1999 district boundary increase (1999 #49). This building was demolished to make way for the new Alabama Center for the Arts Building in 2012. Adjacent to the east were contributing buildings at 131 and 133 2nd Avenue NE (1995 NRHP Resources #6 and #7), also demolished for the development of the Alabama Center for the Arts buildings. Not only were significant contributing buildings razed, but the new construction introduced substantial modern intrusions at the north end of the historic district. The new construction occupies a single parcel of land (0304184035002000), which is included as part of the Boundary Decrease.

To the southeast and on the east side of 2nd Avenue NE, the Boundary Decrease area extends to encompass the following parcels:

0304184034006005 202 Moulton Street East (1995 NRHP Resources #36-39)
0304184034006001 210 Moulton Street East (1995 NRHP Resource #40)
0304184034006002 110 2nd Avenue NE (1995 NRHP Resource #8)

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0304184034007000 112-118 (even) 2nd Avenue NE⁵ (1995 NRHP Resource #9-10)

The parcel occupying 202 Moulton Street East comprises substantial infill construction erected in 2012, which replaced four of the buildings listed on the 1995 NRHP inventory (1995 Resource #s 36-39). Due to the loss of the former contributing buildings and the large-scale modern development, this block detracts from the historical integrity and aesthetic of the streetscape. Therefore, it is included within the Boundary Decrease. Adjacent to the east, the building located at 210 Moulton Street East (1995 Inventory #102) was previously classified as a noncontributing resource to the district as it was built in 1981. The building continues to fall outside of the expanded period of significance and would remain a noncontributing element to the district. As such, it is drawn into the Boundary Decrease. Adjacent to the north of the 2012 infill development, the building located at 110 2nd Avenue NE (1995 NRHP Resource #8, contributing) is included within the Boundary Decrease to avoid holes in the district boundary and further irregularity. Similarly, also excluded from the district as part of the Boundary Decrease are 112 2nd Avenue NE, the Princess Theater (1995 NRHP Resource #9, Contributing) and 116-118 2nd Avenue NE, Albany Post Office (1995 NRHP Resource #10, Contributing).⁶ A portion of the alleyway between Holly Street and Moulton Street East is included within the Boundary Decrease, as is a portion of the right-of-way along 2nd Avenue NE.

Boundary Increase Area

The Boundary Increase expands the district to the east, south and west, drawing in several commercial and religious buildings that are directly associated with the development of the district as a business and social center of New Decatur, and ultimately that of Decatur after annexation. Many of the properties included in the Boundary Increase are attributed to renewed development following World War II that continued well into the 1970s. Several of the buildings added to the district are office buildings, financial institutions, and churches, as well as transportation-related resources including a former Greyhound Bus Station (#38) and roadside automobile dealership (#35). These resources are significant in chronicling the post-World War II expansion of New Decatur's downtown and the subsequent emergence of a central business district boasting mid-rise buildings and surface parking lots to accommodate increased automobile ownership. The Boundary Increase adds approximately 30 acres to the district. A total of 54 additional buildings are added to the inventory including 40 contributing and 14 noncontributing. A small number of these additional buildings added to the inventory occur within the original historic district boundary but were either erroneously excluded from the 1995 inventory or included in the 1995 as part of another building when, in fact, it was a separate edifice.

The Boundary Increase draws in a historic commercial block fronting 2nd Avenue SE, adjacent to the west of the original district boundary. It extends further to the south, crossing Gordon Drive SE to add Culver Cleaners (#6) built in 1946 at 334 1st Avenue SE; and the Albany Executive

⁵ The eastern half of the current parcel 0304184034007000 extends beyond the 1995 historic district boundary and is therefore not included in the acreage of the Boundary Decrease.

⁶ It is the intention of the City of Decatur to individually designate the Princess Theater to the NRHP. The Post Office is no longer a federally owned property.

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Building (#36), erected in 1972 at 201 Gordon Drive. Westward from the 1995 district, the expansion area includes one- and two-part commercial blocks from 1st Avenue, and Moulton, Johnston and Grant Streets. Also included is the sprawling *Decatur Daily* Building, built in 1965 at 201 1st Avenue SE (#5).

The expansive boundary increase area east of the 1995 district includes three bank buildings ranging in date from 1959 to 1963. These include the First Federal Savings and Loan Building (#44), the First American Bank (#49) and the former First National Bank (#83). Each of these buildings draw from Modernist design principles popular during the post-War years. Three prominent church sanctuaries are included within the boundary increase. All exhibit traditional corner tower designs and employ the Gothic Revival style. These include the First Christian Church (#85) built in 1897, the Church of Saint Ann (#57), built in 1906, and the Grant Street Church of Christ (#43), erected in 1925. St. Ann's Catholic School and Convent (#55) was completed in 1955 and conveys a Modernist design. Built c.1920, a former Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Company building (#52) is a Neoclassical, one-part commercial block. The rapid expansion of the City of Decatur during the post-war years required a larger building to accommodate the telephone and telegraph operation. Southern Bell relocated to a modern mid-rise building in 1959 at 425 Grant Street SE (#52), which is an excellent representation of Brutalist design. The eastern section of the boundary increase also includes a former Greyhound Bus Station (#38), built in c.1955, and a former Downtowner Inn/Motel 6 (#63), built in 1964. Both employ the International Style in their design. A small former automobile dealership office, built c.1950 at 225 4th Avenue SE (#35), is an exemplary reflection of post-World War II roadside commercial architecture embracing Modernist design.

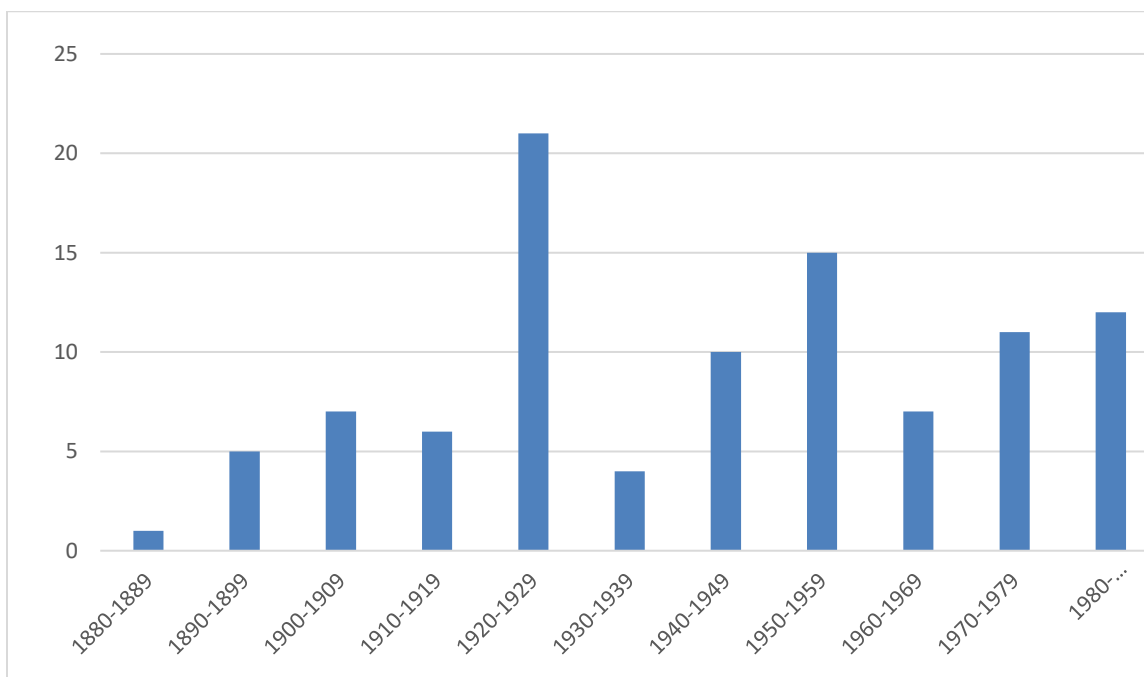


Figure 1. Breakdown of Resources by Date of Construction

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Construction dates of the 100 resources within the survey area range from 1887 to 2019. The dates of construction largely coincide with trends in growth and development of the city since the inception of New Decatur in 1887. As illustrated by Figure 1, only a small number of resources survive from the initial years of development of the new, progressive city. New construction soared during the 1920s before taking a sharp plunge during the Depression years. The post-World War II economic and population boom of Decatur and Northern Alabama is evident in renewed construction activity during the 1940s and 1950s. Though the 1960s and 1970s experienced a slowing in new development, much of the construction during this period was larger scale buildings within the Boundary Increase, including multiple financial institutions. Development in the 1970s includes a small number of commercial and professional office buildings, as well as surface parking lots attributed to Operation New Decatur. Since 1979, only 6 new buildings were built within the amended district. Two of these include the recent construction of a large, multi-story hotel on 2nd Avenue NE (#11) and a large parking deck at 109 Moulton Street (#86).

As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District encompasses a wide spectrum of resources expected to occur within a downtown area of a small city, including commercial, social, governmental, and religious architecture. The amended district includes not only the commercial core of New Decatur/Albany but extends to include resources that comprehensively chronicle the continued growth and development of the city during the post-WWII years and well into the 1970s.

Integrity Statement

As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District retains its historic **location** south of the original river town of Decatur ("Old Decatur") and the former L & N Railroad corridor (present-day Lee Street). Its historic **setting** characterized as a downtown center of a small town remains largely intact, though threatened by in-fill construction, demolition and encroaching development within and along its fringes. Though New Decatur was annexed into the original town of Decatur in 1927, it survives as a distinct downtown hub, separate from the original commercial center to the north. The boundary decrease area at the north end of 2nd Avenue includes the historic Princess Theater, which is adjacent to the amended district, continues to contribute to the historic setting along the streetscape. The remaining buildings that are within the boundary decrease and are adjacent to the updated district are unsympathetic intrusions, detracting from the immediately surrounding setting. Despite the intrusions, they are confined to a small area of the amended district. Thus, the overall setting of the entire district remains largely intact and reflective of its significance as a historic central business district. The historic **feeling** of a traditional Main Street is evident throughout the district, particularly along 2nd Avenue. The Boundary Increase area, which largely developed during the post-WWII years, retains a distinguishing feeling associated with a historic downtown forced to evolve to accommodate increased traffic and automobile ownership. Thus, surface parking lots are common, as are businesses incorporating drive-thrus. While most buildings throughout the amended district reveal some degree of exterior alterations, the majority possess a high percentage of distinguishing **design** features, historic **materials** and quality of **workmanship**. In some instances, commercial buildings reveal post-World War II upgrades to storefronts to appear sleeker and more modern. Such alterations to the historic fabric of the building is significant in conveying its evolving history. Buildings within the amended

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district and their occupants retain the historical **association** as a downtown hub, offering a variety of services, commercial enterprises, and places of worship for area residents.

Of the total 100 resources comprising the amended district, only 28 are classified as noncontributing, or approximately 28 percent. Such properties are those that were built after the period of significance or historic buildings that have undergone significant exterior alterations that compromise the overall historic aesthetic of the streetscape. Such alterations include complete storefront remodeling that altered the historic fenestration, removal of decorative detailing, particularly in the upper façade, or altering of second-floor fenestration.

INVENTORY OF RESOURCES

This updated inventory amends various discrepancies discovered in the 1995 nomination, including assigning multiple inventory numbers to single buildings with multiple storefronts. In some instances, addresses were incorrect or have since changed. The following inventory of resources includes all properties within the 1995 designated historic district, with exception to those that are no longer extant and those included in the Boundary Decrease.

Each resource within the district is identified by its inventory number, which is keyed to the boundary map. Parking lots are identified in the inventory and map as PL-1, PL-2, and so on. The inventory is arranged alphabetically by street name followed by its address number. For each resource, the address is listed, followed by the building name, historic name, or a name by which the building is commonly known. The resource name is followed by date of construction and contributing status. Beneath the address line, the building type (if applicable) and distinguishing architectural style (if applicable) is also listed. Most resources were previously surveyed, and its corresponding Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) identification number is included. This is then followed by the inventory number assigned to a resource in the 1995 NRHP inventory and its prior contributing status. If a resource is located within the Boundary Increase, it will be noted as such. Finally, a detailed architectural description is provided for each, including any noteworthy historical information. When a resource is classified as noncontributing, a brief explanation is provided. In many cases, brief historical notes are provided for the resource.

1st Avenue, NE

1. **115 1st Avenue NE, Kroell Implements Company, c.1945** (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/ 20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1358, Boundary Increase

This one-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a front-gabled roof and tall, flat brick parapet with a simple corbelled brick band that tops the parapet. The upper façade features two simple courses of corbelled brick painted black to contrast with the white-colored brick of the façade. The front façade (east) is symmetrical with a deeply recessed entryway. The interior wall of the entryway is comprised entirely of tinted, metal-framed windows and a metal-and-glass door. The flanking storefront display windows contain similar windows topped with

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rectangular transoms. The entire storefront is a modern remodel; however, the building continues to convey a mid-century commercial style and contributes to the overall historic aesthetic of the district.

The 1948 Sanborn map confirms that a former frame building was replaced with the present brick building by that year. Due to its matching upper façade as the adjacent building to the north, the two buildings were likely erected the same year (c.1945). By 1949, the two buildings were operating as Kroell Implements Company – tractor and farm implements, sales, and services. Shortly thereafter, by 1952, they joined with the auto sales and service center to the north – Semmes Motor Sales.

2. 119 1st Avenue NE, Kroell Implements Company, c.1945 (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/ 20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1360, Boundary Increase

This one-story building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and low, flat brick parapet with a simple corbelled brick band that tops the parapet. The upper façade features two simple courses of corbelled brick painted white to contrast with the cream-colored brick veneer of the façade. The front façade (east) contains a recessed storefront framed by brick corner pilasters. The storefront is a window wall of large, metal-framed fixed windows, each topped by a rectangular transom. The single-leaf entry door is at the north end of the storefront and is metal-and-glass with a transom. A concrete handicap ramp is along the façade and extends from the sidewalk to the entry door. It has a metal railing. Despite the remodeled storefront, the building continues to convey a mid-century commercial style and contributes to the overall historic aesthetic of the district.

Previous address number of 439. The 1942 City Directory confirms that this building was not yet built. By 1949, it was operating as the Kroell Implements Co. shared with the adjacent building on the south (1949 address of 441). The building is presently joined with the business of the building to the north. Together, the two buildings later housed a furniture store. By 1952, they merged with the auto and repair business at 119 and operated as a body shop and paint.

3. 119 1st Avenue NE, John White Motors, 1946 (NC)
One-Part Commercial Block/ No Style
AHC ID: Mo1361, Boundary Increase

This former auto sales and repair shop is a two-story, one-part commercial block, rectangular in form, with a flat roof. The front of the building (east) is two-story and once housed the auto sales retail space. The rear is single-story and historically housed the auto repair garages. The concrete block building is brick-veneered along the north elevation. Its front façade (east) is stucco and framed by concrete panels creating the appearance of corner quoins. The façade features a low, stepped parapet of white concrete. A white concrete course is above the storefront. The upper façade features fixed metal letters reading: COMMITTEE ON CHURCH COOPERATION. The façade is five bays (3W, D, 3W, D, 4W) with single-leaf, metal-and-glass doors topped by a single-light transom and fabric awning. The display windows are comprised of single-fixed, metal-framed panes. At the east end of the north elevation is a display window matching those on the façade.

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The roof parapet steps down toward the west as the building transitions from 2-story to 1-story. The north elevation of the 1-story section features a garage bay that is enclosed with vinyl siding and metal pedestrian door. To the west is a 6-over-9, double-hung metal sash window.

A 1955 updated Sanborn map is the first to show this resource. The map confirms that the building originally housed an auto sales and repair shop. Previous address was 435-437. 1949 City Directory – John White Motors. By 1959, the building merged with the two to the south (115-119) and operated as Semmes Motor Sales. It is unclear when auto sales ceased, and the building was updated to its present use as office space.

1st Avenue, SE

- 4. 101 1st Avenue SE, City Cafe, c.1970 (C)**
One-Part Commercial Block/ No Style
AHC ID: Mo1362, Boundary Increase

This one-story commercial block features a flat roof surrounded by a wide concrete awning the is hipped and covered in synthetic shingles. The building is narrow and long with a brick veneer. The front façade (east) is 6 bays (D, W, D, W, D, W), from south to east. The first bay (south end) is an entry door that is enclosed with plywood and an AC unit. To its north is a narrow, single-light fixed window recessed within a brick frame. To the north is a secondary entry door with wood frame. This is then followed by a rectangular display window with brick frame and a built-in brick planter. The main entry is a projecting lobby that is enclosed with metal-framed plate glass. Its front (east) is a two-leaf, metal-and-glass door topped by an aluminum awning. North of the lobby is a window matching that on the south side of the lobby. A single window is on the north elevation.

- 5. 201 1st Avenue SE, Decatur Daily, 1965 (C)**
No Style
AHC ID: Mo1363, Boundary Increase
Photograph #4

This large, one-story office building and printing press is rectangular in form with a flat roof. The building is brick-veneered and features a decorative, corbelled brick cornice and parapet that draws upon early-twentieth century commercial design. The front façade (east) features a full-height, central entryway that is recessed beneath a metal, shed roof. The entryway is framed on the sides by brick wing walls. The walls and shed roof extend above the main roof of the building. The recessed entryway features three, round arches of brick stretchers. The arches are supported by cast-iron columns salvaged from an earlier commercial building. Within the entryway is a single-leaf, wood-paneled door flanked on either side by a 21-light fixed window that match the height of the door. The façade to the north of the entryway features two, segmental-arched windows with 15 panes and a brick sill. Metal lettering affixed to the upper façade reads: DECATUR DAILY. The south end of the façade contains 10 tall, 21-light windows with brick sills and segmental brick

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arches. The north elevation contains 8 bays (W, W, W, W, D, W, W, D) with two, deeply recessed entry doors. The windows are 15-light with segmental arches. Extending from the northwest corner of the building to the north is a brick block with a low-pitched gabled roof covered in metal. This block extends to the north to a large metal warehouse. Surrounding the building, the property features some degree of landscaping including a grassed yard and surface parking lot.

Decatur Daily acquired this property in 1964 per property records. The newspaper offices moved to this location in 1972. A historic marker on the property indicates that the *Decatur Daily* boasts one of the nation's first offset newspaper presses, installed in 1964 with a 40-page capacity. Later expanded to 64 pages. The sign further indicates that the cast-iron columns at the entrance were salvaged from a building on Bank Street. With more than 100 years of service to the community, the *Daily* has been a constant and leading source of news for Decatur.

6. 334 1st Avenue SE, Culver Cleaners, 1946 (C)
Modernist, Boundary Increase
Photograph #22

This one-story concrete block former dry cleaners features a stucco exterior and a flat roof. A parapet steps down toward the east elevation (rear) and is painted black to contrast with the white stuccoed exterior. The building is irregular in form, forming a slight triangle with a cornered main entrance at the southwest corner. This cornered elevation features vinyl siding and a brick bulkhead with a centered entry door and flanking display windows. The door and windows are boarded over as the building is vacant. Above the door and windows is an historic flat metal awning suspended by metal chains. The awning is semi-circular. The south elevation has twelve windows, each containing twelve metal-framed panes, arranged in four rows of three. Painted in the upper wall of the elevation reads "CULVER CLEANERS." The east elevation of the building contains a roll-up metal loading bay door and "Cleaners" is affixed to the wall. The north elevation is three bays (G, W, D) features a second roll-up metal door and a window matching those on the south elevation. The entry door is metal-and-glass and flanked by tinted windows. A flat-roofed canopy extends from the elevation and is supported by metal posts.

Culver Cleaners opened in 1946 by T.A. and Lahoma Culver. The building's interior included a cold storage room where Decatur residents would store their fur coats during the summer months. Culver Cleaners grew to become a local landmark among Decatur's southeast residents. In 1987, the Culvers sold the business, which continued to operate as Culver Cleaners. In 2019, the business permanently closed due to declining business.⁷

2nd Avenue, NE

7. 101 2nd Avenue NE, Crow & Crow Hardware Co., c.1910 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1364, 1995 NRHP Inventory # 1 (Contributing)

⁷ Bruce McLellan, "Culver cleaners to Close Doors After 70 Years," *Decatur Daily*, June 27, 2019.

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This two-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and low parapet that is stepped along the façade. A corbeled brick rectangular panel is centered on the front parapet. The front façade (east) features an elaborate, corbelled brick cornice. The upper façade features eight window bays with vertical stretcher headers and a concrete sill. The windows are boarded over. Beneath each is a rectangular brick panel. The storefront features a centered, recessed entry that angles inward toward a double, metal-and-glass door topped by a transom. The flanking display windows are aluminum-framed, plate-glass windows. A wide metal slipcover is above the storefront at the transom level. The decorative corbelled brickwork on the façade also extends along the south elevation. This elevation contains eight window bays on the 2nd floor that match those on the façade. At the east end of the elevation is a set of three display windows topped by metal slipcover. Four small square window bays, boarded over, are west of the display windows. At the west end of the elevation contains a glazed entry door and three, wood-framed display windows. This storefront is topped by a metal awning.

8. 107 2nd Avenue NE, Hunter Furniture Company, 1910 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1365, 1995 NRHP Inventory #2 (Contributing)

This two-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and low parapet that is enhanced by a corbelled brick cornice. Beneath the cornice are four, rectangular metal vents. The second floor of the façade contains four, one-over-one, double-hung windows with nine-over-nine, “pop-in” vinyl grids. The windows are topped by fabric awnings and segmental brick arch lintels. Historically, the building featured two storefronts. The northern storefront is now occupied by three, 36-light display windows, each topped by 24 lights. The same configuration is on the south end of the façade. However, here, the central window is a recessed entrance with double, multi-light doors. A steel lintel spans the storefront.

Previous address was 453 & 105 1st Ave. Per the 1913 Sanborn map a furniture store once occupied the building. The 1922 city directory notes a business name of Schimmel & Hunter, followed in 1938 through 1959 as Hunter Furniture Company.

9. 109 & 111 2nd Avenue NE, New Decatur Advertiser, 1915 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/Late 19th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1366, 1995 NRHP Inventory #3 (Contributing)

This two-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof. The front façade (east) features a flat brick parapet that step up at each end. The parapet is topped by stone coping. The upper façade features an elaborate, corbelled brick cornice. At the corners of the upper façade are engaged brick pilasters. The second floor of the façade contains three window bays. The outer window bays are paired, round-arched, one-over-one wood sash windows that share a segmental brick arch head. The central window bay is paired, one-over-one, flat double-hung windows topped by a shared, round-arched transom. A narrow, corbelled brick string course is along the upper façade. A stone course is along the façade directly beneath the 2nd floor windows. The first

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floor of the façade contains two separate storefronts separated by brick pilasters with stone caps. The south storefront is recessed with a glazed entry door at each end. Between the doors are three display windows with brick bulkheads. A wide, eight-light transom is above the storefront and appears to be historic. The north storefront contains a single-leaf, glazed door that is recessed. North of the door are modern display windows with brick bulkheads. This storefront is topped by a fabric awning that conceals the original transom. The north elevation contains eight windows on the second floor with segmental brick arch heads. All but one of the windows are two-over-two, double-hung wood sash.

Sanborn maps show the following businesses housed in the building: 1894-Furniture Repairing; 1898-Hand Printing; 1908-Repository and Hand Printing; 1913-Printing office and Tailor. Directories show the following: 1913-New Decatur Advertiser, National Woolen Mills; 1923-N.W. George and Hal Mullen; 1938-Boston Candy Kitchen; 1942-City Park Greenhouse, Stout Realty; 1949-City Park Flower Shop, Graves & Jones Real Estate Agency; 1955-City Park Flower Shop and US Referee in Bankruptcy.

PL-1 115 2nd Avenue NE, Asphalt Surface Parking Lot, c.2000 (NC Structure)
1995 NRHP Resource #4 (Noncontributing)

This is a small, asphalt-paved parking lot formerly occupied by a commercial building. Parking spaces are diagonal. A very low concrete curb is along the east and south property lines. The lot is accessed from the east side of 2nd Avenue NE, and its egress an alleyway at the west end of the lot.

10. 117-119 2nd Avenue NE, Wyatt-Malone Building/Puckett Sheet Metal Works (C)
c.1920, One-Part Commercial Block/No Style
AHC ID: Mo1370, 1995 NRHP Inventory #5 (Noncontributing)

This one-story, brick commercial building is comprised of two commercial blocks sharing a façade that was remodeled in 1968. The block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and raised brick parapet that steps down toward the rear. The front façade (east) contains two wide storefronts separated by brick panels. Each is bricked in and contains a centered, entry door flanked on either side by 20-light display windows with brick sills. Each opening on the façade is topped by a metal awning. The interior brick chimneys are on the south elevation, flush with the wall.

2nd Avenue, SE

11. 103 2nd Avenue SE, Fairfield by Marriott, 2024 (NC)
No Style

This is a four-story modern hotel at the southwest corner of 2nd Avenue SE and Moulton Street. The building generally rectangular in form with a flat roof. It has a modest molded cornice. A wide, molded course separates the first floor from those above. The first-floor exterior is a scored concrete. The exterior of the upper floors are a combination of brick veneer and stucco. The upper floors have both flat and segmental-arched window openings. Each window bay is comprised of four, square lights. The first-floor windows are tinted glass. The entrance is at the northeast corner

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fronting 2nd Avenue. It has metal-and-glass doors and tinted plate glass windows. A wide, flat metal canopy extends from the entrance. Due to its age, this is a noncontributing element to the district.

This building replaced 101 & 103 2nd Avenue SE, a commercial block that was destroyed by a storm in 2018 (1995 NRHP Resource #11).

12. 113 2nd Avenue SE, Drugstore, c.1890 (C)

Two-Part Commercial Block/19th-20th Century Commercial Block

AHC ID: Mo1371, 1995 NRHP Inventory #12 (Contributing)

This two-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and brick parapet. The parapet steps slightly down toward the rear. The front façade (east) features a well-preserved upper façade with an elaborate, corbelled brick cornice and string courses. Between the two string courses are four, small segmental-arched metal grills within inset brick panels. The corners of the façade feature slender brick pilasters that extend to the cornice. Three windows are on the 2nd floor of the façade, each being a 1-over-1, double-hung wood sash. The windows are framed by a round, brick arch. Between the window and arch is a multi-light, elliptical transom. Beneath the three windows is a brick panel. The storefront reflects its 1994-remodel. It has a wood-framed bulkhead but retains a single cast iron pilaster from its original design. The storefront features a recessed entry door at its south end and a flush door at the north. The doors are glazed. Between the doors are three, wood-framed display windows. The storefront is topped by a wide, ten-light transom.

Sanborn maps reflect evolving use of the building. From 1894 to 1903, a drugstore was housed in the building. By 1927, a wallpaper and paint store operated from the building. According to city directories, in 1938, it was the John O. Baites Hardware Company; in 1949, the First Federal Savings & Loan; between 1952 and 1955 the building housed the First Federal Savings & Loan as well as a chiropractor. By 1959, White's Jewelry Store and Pierce & Pierce Chiropractors were the occupants.

**13. 115-119 2nd Avenue SE, Brittan Clothing Store and Why Not Eat Here Cafe, (C)
c.1890**

Two-Part Commercial Block/19th-20th Century Commercial Block

AHC ID: Mo1372; 1995 NRHP Inventory #13 (Contributing)

This two-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and brick parapet. The parapet is enhanced by elaborate brick corbelling and dentils. At each end of the upper façade is an engaged, brick pilaster that extends above the parapet. Beneath the parapet is an elaborate corbelled brick cornice topped by a copper belt course with an egg and dart molding. The upper façade contains five windows bays, where the central bay is bricked-in, topped by a brick jack arch. On either side of this central bay is a vertical window of five horizontal lights that appear to be hoppers. These feature stone sills and wide brick jack arches. The outer window bays are inset brick panels topped with corbelled brick dentils. Within the panel is a three-sided, projecting bay window with chamfered side and multi-light hoppers. The projecting bay windows are topped by original copper heads and pediments. The first floor is framed by rusticated stone blocks. It features

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three distinct storefronts of aluminum and glass doors, windows, and transoms. A fabric awning is suspended above the storefronts. Two interior brick chimneys pierce the roof towards the front of the building.

Sanborn maps note the various uses of the building: 1894-Bakery, Insurance Office, Barber; 1898-Baker, Water Works Office, Barber; 1903-Bakery, Barber; 1908-Plumber, Butcher; Barber; 1913-Sewing Machines, Restaurant, Barber; 1927-stores; 1948 and 1955-Store, Restaurant. Directories show in 1938-Robertson Jewelry, Saunders Wave Shop, Why Not Eat Here Café; 1942 & 1949-Brittan Cloth. Co, Moderne Beauty Shoppe, Why Not Eat Here Café; 1955-1959-Brittan's Men's Wear & Why Not Eat Here Café.

14. 123 A & B 2nd Avenue SE, Absaroka; Ottis & Kate, c.1960 (NC)

One-Part Commercial Block/No Style

AHC ID: Mo1373, 1995 NRHP Inventory #14 (Noncontributing)

This one-story commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and low brick parapet. The rear of the building features a two-story block. The front façade (east) has two separate storefronts. The north storefront has a centered, two-leaf glass door that is slightly recessed to form a small outdoor lobby. Two large, metal-framed display windows with tinted panes is to the north, and two to the south. The entryway is topped by a fabric awning. The south storefront has a two-leaf, wood-paneled, glazed door with flanking sidelights. The door is topped by a mansard awning with standing seam metal and decorative wood brackets. The display windows south of the entryway are three, metal-framed plate-glass with brick bulkheads. The south elevation reveals a rusticated stone bulkhead, likely original, topped by three horizontal display windows and a metal awning.

According to the 1995 NRHP district nomination, the storefront was remodeled c.1979 and the projecting bayed windows on the second floor were installed c.1950. Since placed on the NRHP in 1995, the non-historic concrete awning covering the pedestrian sidewalk along the length of the entire block was removed. The c.1960, aluminum-framed display windows and doors were further replaced with the present. The storefronts post-date the 1995 NRHP designation. The extensive exterior alterations detract from the otherwise historic aesthetic of the streetscape.

15. 200-204 2nd Avenue SE, (Former) Walgreens Agency, c.1900, post-WWII (C)

Two-Part Commercial Block/19th-20th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1375, 1995 NRHP Inventory #18 (Contributing)

This two-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and raised brick parapet that steps up toward the center. An inset brick panel is in the parapet. A modest, corbelled brick string course is at the top of the façade (west). The upper façade features seven window bays, each recessed between brick pilasters and topped by a corbelled brick cornice. The windows are one-over-one, double-hung metal sash with metal panel transom. Above each window bay is a recessed brick panel, with alternating panels feature small rectangular vents. The central bay on the upper façade is a set of paired windows, topped by a two-light, round-arched transom. The first floor of the façade has a full-length, bricked-in transom above a modified storefront that is also

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bricked-in. At the south end is a single-leaf door that leads to an interior stair hall. Another matching door is toward the center of the façade and has a set of three, one-over-one windows. On either side of the door and triple windows are single-bay window openings with flat heads that are bricked in. A metal pop-up addition is visible from the north elevation towards the rear of the building. The north elevation contains twelve window bays in the upper floor, each recessed between brick pilasters and topped by rectangular inset brick panels. A bricked-in, segmental-arched door opening is toward the east, followed by three storefronts. Two of the storefronts feature original, multi-light transoms and mid-20th century, recessed entries flanked by metal-framed sidelights.

Sanborn maps show the building was a gas office and telephone exchange in 1913. By 1948, the main block was a single store with three small storefronts on the north fronting Johnston Street.

16. 201-205 (odd) 2nd Avenue SE, Blackburn, Maloney, Scappert & PC Building (C)
1924; Two-Part Commercial Block/19th-20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1374, 1995 NRHP Inventory #15 (Contributing)

This two-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and raised brick parapet. It is comprised of two commercial blocks sharing a façade. The north block contains 201 and 203, and the south block is occupied by 205. The 1st floor of the façade (east) was remodeled in 1988 and features three separate storefronts. Each features a recessed entrance with a single-leaf door, sidelights and transom. The entryways are within a brick, segmental arched opening. On either side of each of the three entryways is a six-light window, also with segmental brick arches. A stone water table is along the façade. A molded brick cornice separates the first and second floors on the façade. The upper façade is largely intact. It has four wide window openings. Each contains a center, single-light window flanked by one-over-one, double-hung wood sash and topped by a multi-light, elliptical transom. The brick arch of each opening is corbelled. At the top of the façade, and extending along the north elevation, is an elaborate, bracketed metal cornice.

It first occurs on the 1908 Sanborn map, replacing the former Casa Grande hotel that burned down c.1900. Sanborn maps show in 1908-Dry goods., B&S., Hardware, Millery; 1913-dry goods, hardware, Moving Picture; c.1955-Bank (#601), Store (#603), Moving Pictures (#605); c.1961-all stores Directories describe the building in 1917: Odom Dry Goods, 1938-Wilder's Men's Clothes, Capital Theater.

17. 206 2nd Avenue SE, (Former) JC Penney Department Store, c.1930, c.1950
(C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1376, 1995 NRHP Inventory #19 (Contributing)

This two-story commercial block is historically comprised of two separate storefronts that later joined to form a single unit w/ post-World War II storefront. The building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and raised brick parapet that steps down to the rear. The upper façade is simple with six small, rectangular metal grates. Six window bays occupy the upper façade, each containing a smooth concrete sill. The windows are metal and three-light, where the middle

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window appears to be an awning or hopper. A concrete course runs along the façade above the windows. The lower façade features a well-preserved post-WWII storefront with aluminum-framed, plate-glass display windows. The storefront is recessed to form an outdoor lobby and angles inward. The main entry features a double-leaf, wooden door with glazing and topped by a wood-framed transom. The recessed, outdoor lobby is enhanced by black, fluted metal columns. The storefront is framed by a stuccoed exterior. A fabric awning is suspended above the storefront. At the south end of the façade is a side entrance that is recessed with two-leaf, metal-and-glass door leading into an interior stair hall. The rear of the building is one-story.

According to city directories, in 1938, the building housed the A & P Tea Company; in 1952 the Belk-Hudson Company; and 1955 and 1959 it was a JC Penny.

**PL-2 208-220 2nd Avenue, SE, Landscaped Parking Lot (Noncontributing Structure)
c.1998, Improved c.2015**

This surface parking lot is accessible from an alleyway that runs parallel to the east of 2nd Avenue SE. The parking lot is asphalt and lined with rows of parking spaces. Traveling east to west through the center of the parking lot is a wide pedestrian walkway built c.2015. It is raised slightly above the parking lot with a concrete surface and curbing. Large brick-paved rectangular panels surround the edge of the walkway. Planted trees, historically appropriate lamp posts and benches line the north and south side of the walkway. At its entrance to 2nd Avenue SE are tall stone pillars topped by wooden arbors. Raised, fieldstone plant beds former the western border of the parking lot on either side of its main pedestrian entrance leading to the walkway. Secondary pedestrian access to the lot break the raised plant beds and are accented by wooden arbors.

**18. 207 & 209 2nd Avenue SE, (Former) Diana Shop; Hills Grover, (NC)
and Laboon's Department Store, 1924
Two-Part Commercial Block/No Style
AHC ID: Mo1377, 1995 NRHP Inventory #16 (Noncontributing)**

This two-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and raised brick parapet. The upper façade is unadorned. The second-floor features two sets of modern replacement windows, each topped by a modern metal awning. The south set of windows are two casements sharing a narrow transom, whereas the north windows are each a single light flanked by vertical sidelights and horizontal transom. The ground level features a centered, metal-and-glass door with sidelight and transom that leads to an interior stair hall. On either side is a modern storefront with recessed entry containing double doors with wide transom and sidelights. Each recessed entrance is flanked by display windows with wood-paneled aprons. The display window occupying the south side of #207 contains a secondary entry door. Fabric awnings are suspended above each storefront.

The building occupies the site of the former Casa Grande Hotel which burned down in 1900. According to the NRHP nomination, the storefront received an upgrade during the mid-20th century, and again in the 1980s. Sanborn maps and city directories reveal the variety of businesses that have occupied the building including a furniture store in 1903, dry goods, clothes, and grocery

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store in 1908; dry goods and a variety store in 1913; the Hills Grocery & Ligon's Dept. Store in 1938; and in 1949 it housed the Diana Shops and Laboon's Department Store.

19. 211 & 213 2nd Avenue SE, Casa Grande Building, 1904 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1378, 1995 NRHP Inventory #17 (Contributing)
Photograph #19

This three-story, rectangular commercial building is brick with a limestone veneer along the front façade (east). Stone pilasters at each corner of the façade extend above a stone parapet. The center of the parapet curves up. At its center is a rectangular stone panel reading CASA GRANDE. A smaller panel is below and reads 1904. A dentiled stone cornice is along the façade. The two-part commercial block features eight window bays on the upper floors, each separated by striated stone pilasters. The windows are one-over-one, double-hung wood sash. The windows on the third floor feature a round-arched upper sash and are topped by a round, stone arch. Between the windows on the 2nd and 3rd floors are panels of alternating rusticated and smooth limestone block panels. While the upper façade retains high integrity, the original storefronts were heavily remodeled in 1987 (according to the NRHP nomination). The storefront is brick-veneered. At the center is a modern window framed by original iron columns. This was the original stair hall entry into the building. On either side is a storefront with recessed entrance and aluminum-framed plate-glass display windows. Above each is a fabric awning.

Sanborn maps show in 1908 and 1913 the building was occupied by a post office (address 613) and bank (address 611). By 1927, the two units merged into a single store.

20. 215 2nd Avenue SE, Goidel's Drug Store, c.1905 (NC)
Two-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1379; Boundary Increase

This three-story commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and stepped parapet along the façade (east). The parapet is enhanced by simple dentiled frieze. The upper floors of the façade contain two bays: a set of paired windows and a single window. All windows are topped by simple dentiled hoods. The façade is stuccoed. The remodeled storefront features a recessed entryway that angles inward toward a two-leaf, glazed door topped by single-light transom. Modern display windows flank either side and have stucco bulkheads. At the north end of the façade is a recessed, glazed door with transom that likely leads into a stair hall. A narrow, dentiled string course is above the storefront. A wide transom above the storefront is infilled and stuccoed. An early-20th century photograph of the building shows a brick façade with a projecting bay window on the second floor. A c.1940s photograph confirms the building was occupied by Berlye's and its upper façade covered by an architectural slipcover. By 1995, the window openings were restored and storefront remodeled.

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Due to the stuccoing of the façade, the loss of a projecting bayed window, and the entire storefront remodeling, this building detracts from the historic aesthetic of the streetscape; therefore, it is noncontributing to the district.

21. 219 2nd Avenue SE, C.T. Grant Co., c.1955 (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/Modern Movement
AHC ID: Mo1380, Boundary Increase

This one-story commercial block is rectangular with flat roof. A tall parapet is along the façade (east) and wraps around the south elevation. The façade is brick-veneered. The south elevation is stucco. The upper façade is enhanced at its ends by six vertical bands of recessed brick. Metal lettering is affixed at the center of the façade and reads “SHOPS on 2nd Avenue.” The façade contains five storefronts, each with a recessed entrance and plate-glass display windows with brick bulkheads. A fabric awning is suspended above the storefronts.

According to Sanborn maps through 1953, this building was three-story at the south half and two-story at the north half. By the 1961 Sanborn map, the building is drawn to show its present, one-story massing. A historic photograph from the 1940s or 1950s show the building as a one-story block similar to the present. The image shows the building as occupied by W.T. Grant Company. This is confirmed by directories from 1955 through 1959.

22. 224 2nd Avenue SE, Emporium Women’s Apparel, c.1900 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/19th-20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1381, 1995 NRHP Inventory Number 20

This is a two-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof. A flat parapet along the façade (west) is enhanced by a stone drip molding, below which is a decorative corbelled brick cornice. A row of 12 small rectangular vents is beneath the cornice. The upper façade has 6 window bays. The windows are 1-over-1, double-hung sash topped with stone drip molding. A corbelled brick belt course runs along the upper façade between the windows. Beneath the windows is a simple stone belt course, followed by a full-width brick panel adorned with four lion heads at the south end. At ground level, the original two storefronts are bricked in. Engaged brick pilasters are at each corner of the façade (one-story), and another at its center. The pilasters separate the former storefronts and have striated brick bases and molded capitals. The south storefront contains three 1-over-1 windows, each separated by an engaged wood-paneled pilasters. The north storefront contains a recessed entryway that leads to a two-leaf, metal-and-glass door topped by a transom. Two wood-paneled pilasters are north of the entry. Above each storefront is a rectangular brick panel delineating the former transoms. The south elevation reveals a brick chimney and 11 windows in the upper façade. These windows are 1-over-1 with small transoms. At the west end of the elevation is evidence of a former entrance or display, shared with the front storefront. Also evidenced on this elevation at ground level are three doors and two windows with stone drip molding. These are primarily covered by wood-louvered shutters.

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Sanborn maps show in 1903 that the building housed a jewelry and stationary store. In 1913, stores included clothes and dry goods, and a jeweler. Later occupants included a drugstore and Emporium Women's Apparel, among others.

**23. 300-302 2nd Avenue SE, E.S. Johnson Building, 1887, post-WWII storefront
(C) Two-Part Commercial Block/19th-20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1383, 1995 NRHP Inventory Number 21**

Photograph #6

This two-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof. The building features a brick parapet that steps down toward the rear and is capped with terra cotta coping. The front façade faces west toward 2nd Avenue. The upper façade features three window bays that are slightly recessed. The windows are replacement 12-over-8 faux muntins topped by flat brick jack arches. Above the jack arch, and within the recessed window bay, are two decorative brick panels. The mid-20th century storefront appears to be clad in synthetic panels and features a cornered, recessed entryway. A square support column is at the northwest corner of the entryway. The door is metal-and-glass and flanked by aluminum-framed display windows. At the south end of the façade is a single-leaf, modern door that is slightly recessed. Above the door is a three-light transom. Above the storefront is the former transom that is stuccoed over. Above this is a stuccoed cornice. The north elevation has original arched openings with brick arches: two are enclosed windows and two are doors. A wide, decorative corbeled brick cornice separates the 1st and 2nd floors on this elevation. At the east end, the cornice changes to a smooth stucco above a storefront and side entry that are also stucco. This section is four bays, each separated by fluted iron pilasters. It features a glazed door flanked on either side by display windows. West of this storefront is a modern door with transom. The second floor of the north elevation contains ten window bays matching those on the façade.

This building was originally four-story and the tallest building in Decatur. A 1928 photograph of the building shows it at its 4-story height with a hipped roof. The photograph indicates that the 1st floor was occupied by a Piggly Wiggly. The 3rd and 4th floors were removed after a fire as reported in the *Decatur Daily* March 18, 1941. Sanborn Maps show between 1894 and 1903, it was occupied by dry goods with apartments on the upper floors and a grocery fronting Grant Street. Later occupants included a general merchandise and meats, George's Café, Brother's Store and the Rose Jewelry Company.

**24. 301-305 (Odd) 2nd Avenue SE, Mangle's, c.1900, c.1920 (NC)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1382, Boundary Increase**

This two-story commercial block is comprised of a c.1900 block that historically featured two units separated by a central stair hall leading to apartments on the 2nd floor. About 1920, a second commercial building was erected containing a single commercial unit. The two buildings were later combined, storefronts remodeled, and a shared façade applied. Together the brick buildings feature a flat roof with a metal projecting eave. A pressed metal cornice is along the front (east)

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and north elevations. The upper façade contains four windows above #305. These are followed to the north by a wide stuccoed panel with “2nd and Grant” letters. At the north end of the façade is a fifth window. The upper façade windows are single-light modern replacements with fixed shutters and concrete sill. At ground level, the present façade of the 301 & 303 features six bays (W, D, 3W, D, W, W) with a centered, flat metal awning above the central three bays. The bays are separated by engaged, metal fluted pilasters. The main windows are large, single-light fixed displays with brick bulkheads. The three-part bay is a projecting bay with chamfered sides. This was likely the original central entry and stair hall. Adjacent to the south is a two-leaf metal and glass door topped by a transom. North of the projecting bay is a single-leaf, glazed door with transom. A wide transom above the storefront is boarded over by weatherboard cladding. The storefront at #305 features a centered, recessed entry that angles inward toward a single-leaf, glazed door. The door is flanked by sidelights and transom. The flanking display windows are replacement, tinted panes. A wide transom above the storefront is covered in metal sheeting. The north elevation has twelve, 1-over-1, double-hung metal sash windows at the second floor. The first floor features a display window at the east end. A two-leaf, glazed door is centered on the elevation.

The front façade is entirely remodeled, including insensitive storefront alterations and replacement windows on the upper façade. These alterations detract from the historic aesthetic of the historic district. Therefore, it is a noncontributing element to the district.

25. 304 2nd Avenue SE, Blue Ribbon Shoe Shop, c.1925 (NC)
One-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1384, 1995 NRHP Inventory #22 (Noncontributing)

This one-story, brick commercial block is rectangular with a flat roof. The upper façade is clad in a metal architectural slipcover. It has an attached sign at the top with the name of the business. The two storefronts are modified with a later brick veneer and bulkhead. Each storefront has an aluminum-framed glass door topped by a narrow transom featuring a single sidelight. Flanking either side of the doors is a fixed display window.

A c.1940s photograph of the building indicates that the upper façade was brick with wide brick panels. The two storefronts were open fronts with large display windows. The entire façade appears to have been remodeled in the 1980s and detracts from the historic aesthetic of the streetscape. Therefore, it is noncontributing to the district.

26. 306 2nd Avenue SE, Dutch’s Kitchen and Blacks Finance, c.1925, post-WWII (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1385, 1995 NRHP Inventory #s 23 & 24 (Contributing)

This one-story, brick commercial block is rectangular with a flat roof. The façade is stucco with a terra-cotta coping along the low parapet wall. The building features two storefronts. The north storefront appears to date to the mid-20th century. The north storefront features a recessed entryway that angles inward toward an aluminum-framed glass door with transom. Flanking either side of the entry are aluminum-framed plate glass display windows with brick bulkheads. The south

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storefront has a wide opening that once was occupied by a door. This opening is infilled with a large display window and transom. Flanking the window are aluminum-framed display windows. A former transom above each storefront is bricked in and covered by a fabric awning.

City directories show in 1938 that the building housed George's Place Restaurant and the Forbes & Son Piano. In 1954, it was occupied by the T.B. Hudson Restaurant and Sanders Bowling Center. By 1959, the Home Finance Company occupied the building.

The 1995 NRHP district nomination inventoried this property as two separate buildings; however, it is a single property with two storefronts.

27. 307-313 (odd) 2nd Avenue SE, Sterchi Brothers Stores, 1924 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1386, Boundary Increase

This two-story commercial block is comprised of two commercial buildings, erected the same year and sharing similar design features. The brick building is rectangular with a flat roof and brick parapet that steps down toward the rear. The upper façade contains two, horizontal rectangular brick panels. The north block (#307 & 309) contains three factory-style windows in the upper façade. Each are paired, 121-light metal windows where the central six panes appear to make up an awning or hopper. The storefront of this block is completely remodeled with a window wall of tinted, plate glass panes and two glass entry doors. A third glazed door is at the south end of this block and leads into an interior stair hall. Two metal flat awnings are suspended above the remodeled storefront. Above the storefront is a wide transom of replacement glass, followed by stuccoed panels. The south block (#311-13) contains five factory-style windows in the upper façade. Each is comprised of six-by-six, metal panes, including two-leaf casements. An original transom spans the storefront of this block. It features 68, metal-framed panes.

Sanborn maps show two separate buildings in 1927, each with two commercial units. The 1948 map indicates that #307 & 309 housed a furniture store, and a miscellaneous store occupied #311 & 313-store. City directories indicate that the building in 1923 housed the Cook Bros. Furniture Co (#707-09), J.A. Buttrey (711-13). From at least 1938 through 1952, the Sterchi Brothers Stores Inc. (707-09) and Buttrey's Department Store (#711-713) occupied the building, and by 1955, both block housed the Sterchi Bros. Stores.

28. 310 & 312 2nd Avenue SE, Singer Sewing Machine Co., c.1925, post-WWII (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1387, 1995 NRHP Inventory #s 25 & 26 (Contributing)

This one-story, commercial block is concrete construction. Its front façade (west) is stucco. The building is rectangular with a flat roof and parapet topped by terra cotta coping. The north storefront is the historic Singer Sewing Machine Co. The storefront reflects a mid-20th century design. It has a deeply recessed entryway that leads to a modern entry door topped by a transom. The display to the south is an open front with aluminum-framed, plate-glass windows above a

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Carrara glass bulkhead. A fabric awning is above the storefront. The south storefront has a central, recessed entryway that angles inward toward a single-leaf, multi-light door with original transom. The interior walls of the angled entryway were historically glass but later covered in metal sheeting. The flanking display windows are aluminum-framed with metal covered bulkheads. A fabric awning is above the storefront.

Directories indicate that in 1938, the building housed the Singer Sewing Machine Company and Put's Grocery. Between 1942 and 1959, the Singer Sewing Machine Company and Lyons Electric Company occupied the building.

The 1995 NRHP district nomination inventoried this property as two separate buildings; however, it is a single property with two storefronts.

29. 314 A & B 2nd Avenue SE, Triangle Cafe, c.1925 (NC)
One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1388, 1995 NRHP Inventory #27 (Contributing)

This one-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof. A modest corbelled brick cornice is along the front parapet, which is topped by tiled coping. The building features two distinct storefronts. Though each are modern replacements, the fenestration is unchanged. Each storefront features a centered, recessed entryway with a modern replacement door. The doors are each flanked by narrow, six-light sidelights and topped by a narrow transom. The doors feature a classical, fluted surround with corner blocks. Small, fixed display windows are on either side of each of the entries. The display windows are framed by fluted posts on a tall brick bulkhead. Above each storefront is a modern transom of four fixed lights, each containing vinyl grids.

The photograph from the 1995 NRHP district nomination shows two storefronts reflecting post-WWII upgrades with aluminum-framed plate glass windows. Only the south storefront was recessed that year. Since placed on the NRHP, the two modern transoms were installed. The present storefronts were completely remodeled. As such, the building is noncontributing to the district.

The 1927 Sanborn map shows this building as a single commercial unit with a frame awning along its façade. The 1938 directory suggests that the building housed the Triangle Café. By 1948, the block was adapted as a two-unit commercial space. The 1942 and 1952 directories indicate that the building housed Pleeze U Beauty Shop and Alabama Novelty House. By 1955, Roberts Shoe Shop and Alabama Novelty House occupied the building.

PL-3 317 2nd Avenue SE, Surface Parking Lot (Noncontributing Structure)
c.1980; Modified c.2017

This asphalt-paved parking lot is on the west side of 2nd Avenue SE, situated between two commercial blocks. It is accessible via a paved drive extending from the south side of Grant Street. The lot is below grade from 2nd Avenue SE with concrete steps with metal railings extending from the parking lot up to a sidewalk along 2nd Avenue SE. Circa 2017, the steps were improved and a

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low stucco wall installed along the sidewalk here. The wall has piers topped by historically appropriate light posts. It is recessed at the center to access the stairs. Along the 2nd Avenue side of the wall are planted trees.

**30. 316 & 318 2nd Avenue SE, Model Shoe Shop and Edwards Optometry, c.1925 (NC)
One-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style**

AHC ID: Mo1389, 1995 NRHP Inventory #s 28 & 29 (Contributing)

This heavily altered, one-story commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof. Its upper façade is concealed entirely by fiberboard panels. The lower façade is plywood and vinyl siding with two, single-leaf, modern entry doors. This building's front façade received a complete remodeling post-2007. The alterations detract from the historic aesthetic of the streetscape and is therefore a noncontributing resource to the district. The 1995 NRHP district nomination inventoried this property as two separate buildings; however, it is a single property with two storefronts.

The 1938 and 1942 city directory suggest that the building housed the businesses of Model Shoe Shop and M.E. Edwards (optometrist). The 1949 and 1955 directories show Office Equipment Co and Su-Gra Dress Shop.

**31. 320 2nd Avenue SE, Sunshine Cleaners, c.1925 (NC)
One-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style**

AHC ID: Mo1390, 1995 NRHP Inventory #30 (Contributing)

This two-story commercial block is brick-veneered with a flat roof. The upper floor was built post-2007. At ground level, the former storefront is concealed by vinyl siding and a two-leaf vinyl door. At each end of the façade is a slightly projecting brick wall that extends above the roofline. The modern second floor of the façade angles inward to form a recessed balcony with wood posts and balustrade. The second floor has a multi-light door, flanked on either side by multi-light sidelights and windows. A prominent, shed-roof awning with ceramic tiles is above the second floor.

This building received a complete remodeling post-2007. The entire façade is altered and a pop-up addition added to form a 2nd story. Due to the extensive alterations that are not in keeping with the early- to mid-20th century commercial aesthetic of the streetscape, this building is noncontributing to the historic district.

**32. 321 2nd Avenue SE, Rainey's Beauty Academy & Crane's Cafe, 1924 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial**

AHC ID: Mo1391, Boundary Increase

This two-story commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof. A nonhistorical cornice of metal sheeting surrounds the building. The brick veneer of the façade is common bond, whereas the side elevations are six-course American bond. The upper façade of the front elevation (east) contains three window bays, each topped by a fabric awning. The windows are original, 15-light wood frame panes with concrete sills. The first floor of the façade is somewhat remodeled. It

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features two, metal-and-glass doors at the south end. The northern two-thirds of the façade is occupied by the principal storefront framed by stone veneer pilasters. The storefront has a metal-and-glass door with transom and full-height, metal-framed display windows. A nonhistorical, hipped awning with asphalt shingles is above the first floor. There are no windows or doors on the south elevation.

Sanborn maps show that the building was occupied between 1948 and 1961 by a restaurant and store. The City Directories from 1949 to 1959 provide the names of the businesses as Rainey's Beauty Shop and Academy and the Crane Cafeteria.

33. 324 2nd Avenue SE, Speegle Hardware, c.1925 (C)

One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1392, 1995 NRHP Inventory #31 (Contributing)

Photograph #7

This one-story, brick commercial building features a flat roof and parapet that steps down toward the rear. Along the front façade (west), the parapet is enhanced by curved, concrete/stucco edges and central element. The façade contains two storefronts, both reflecting post-World War II upgrades. The north storefront is comprised of a recessed central entry that angles inward toward a single-leaf, metal-and-glass door topped by a transom. On either side are plate-glass display windows with brick bulkhead. A wide, six-light transom is above the storefront. The south storefront has a single-leaf door at its north end, followed to the north by a single-light sidelight. The door is topped by a narrow transom. To the south of the door are two large, plate-glass display windows. A fabric awning is above this storefront, likely concealing a transom.

4th Avenue, SE

34. 209 4th Avenue SE, Decatur Shoe Repair, c.1960 (C)

One-Part Commercial Block/Modern Movement

AHC ID: Mo1397, Boundary Increase

This well-preserved building is one-story and rectangular in form with a flat roof. The building features common bond brick on all elevations save for the front façade. Here, the veneer is a rusticated, narrow brick. The façade (east) contains a single-leaf, metal-and-glass door at its north end that is topped by a single-light transom. To the south are large, plate-glass metal-framed display windows with brick bulkheads. A fabric awning is above the door. A side entry door is on the south elevation and protected by a wide shed awning.

35. 225 4th Avenue SE, Atlas Auto Financing, c.1950 (C)

Roadside Commercial/Modern Movement

AHC ID: Mo1396, Boundary Increase

Photograph #35

This well-preserved building is one-story and rectangular in form with a flat roof and wide overhanging eaves. The eaves are concrete. The building is concrete block construction. Its front façade (east) is enhanced by an exterior clad in seafoam green glazed tiles. The storefront is

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arranged at the south end of the façade. It features a metal-and-glass door with wide transom and an aluminum-framed display window. The north elevation is stuccoed and features two rows of fixed, four-light, metal-framed windows that are set high on the wall. There is a side entry door on this elevation that is concealed by a wood trellis privacy fence. A flat metal awning is cantilevered above this entrance and concrete patio. The wide transom on the front of the building continues along the majority of the south elevation. Beneath the transom is stucco. At the west end of the south elevation, the wall is clad in glazed tiles matching the façade.

Gordon Drive

36. 201 Gordon Drive SE, Albany Executive Building, 1972 (C)
Office Building/Late Modernist, Boundary Increase
Photograph #21

This two-story office building is rectangular in form with a flat roof. Its first floor is clad in a natural, random-coursed stone veneer. Sections of the exterior walls of the first floor are separated by smooth concrete pilasters. The exterior of the upper floor is smooth concrete enhanced by rows of vertically-oriented projecting rails. Narrow, vertical fixed windows are nestled between the rails. The front façade (north) features a wide, recessed entryway containing a two-leaf, metal-and-glass door. The door is surrounded by plate-glass, metal-framed window walls and transom. A smooth concrete panel on the façade has metal lettering affixed to it that reads the name of the building.

Grant Street, SE

PL-4 104 Grant Street SE, Surface Parking Lot, c.1950s Contributing Structure
Boundary Increase

This city-owned surface parking lot is approximately 140 feet by 215 feet in size and occupies a quarter of a block adjacent to the rear of commercial buildings fronting 2nd Avenue SE. The asphalt lot is accessible from the north side of Grant Street. It is bordered along the north by an east-west alleyway, and to the west by 1st Avenue SE. The parking lot has rows of parallel parking spaces. Two raised concrete medians with curbs are arranged north-to-south within the parking lot. At the southwest corner of the lot are two modern wooden screen walls installed to conceal dumpsters. Within the rights-of-way along Grant Street and 1st Avenue, the city has planted shrubbery and mulch.

A 1958 aerial photograph confirms that this site was occupied by a vehicular parking lot during the 1950s. The aerial photograph depicts two commercial blocks at the southeast corner of the present lot. These were razed by the 1980s and the land absorbed into the parking lot to form its present measurements. The parking lot is among the earliest lots established following World War II to accommodate increased automobile ownership and to attract visitors otherwise drawn to the newly developing suburban shopping centers and malls.

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37. 206 Grant Street SE, Slate & Cook, PC Attorneys, c.1920 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1407, Boundary Increase

This 2-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a low-pitched, front-gabled metal roof that is not original. The front façade (south) features a simple, corbeled brick belt course along the upper façade. The west end of the building is a later hyphen erected to connect to the adjacent building. At ground level of the hyphen is a modern entry door with sidelight and topped by a fabric awning. The upper façade of the original block contains four, one-over-one, double-hung wood sash windows, each topped by a rectangular transom and stone drip molding lintel. The two storefronts at ground level are separated by an original cast iron column. The storefronts are infilled and stuccoed, each with two, one-over-one, double-hung wood sash windows topped by fabric awnings. The east elevation reveals remnants of an exterior brick chimney. At the north end of the 2nd floor is a former door opening that is bricked in. The 1st floor of the east elevation has two, one-over-one windows. The 1995 district nomination assigned the building with an inventory number of 20 as an addition to 223 2nd Avenue. However, the building at 206 Grant Street is an entirely separate building.

Sanborn maps show that from 1927 to 1953 a vacant store and a photo studio occupied the building. By 1961, the two separate stores merged to form a single unit. Directories indicate that from 1942 to 1949, Clara's Gift Shop and Sullivan's Studio were housed in the building.

38. 215 Grant Street SE, Greyhound Bus Station, c.1955 (C)
Bus Station/Modern Movement
AHC ID: Mo1408, Boundary Increase
Photograph #9

This unique building is comprised of a small, two-story commercial block with a taller 2-story block where the ground-level is an open drive-thru, tall enough for buses to enter and exit. Both blocks are concrete construction with brick veneer exteriors and flat roofs. The lower block on the west contains office space. The 1st floor of its façade (north) contains two, glazed metal doors with a rectangular display window between. The window has a brick bulkhead. Above each door and display window is a horizontal transom. A flat metal awning is above the 1st floor. The 2nd floor of the façade features a large, horizontal, aluminum-framed window flanked on either side by a metal-framed window containing three horizontal awnings. The east elevation of the block contains three bays separated by brick pilasters. The southernmost bay is a floating glass display box or ticket window. To its north is a set of paired display windows with transom and metal-and-glass door. The third bay is a metal-and-glass door followed by three display windows – all are aluminum-framed. At the north end of the elevation is a painted mural on the brick wall that reads "Moving across town or across the nation, we offer you the finest moving and storage services- Decatur Transfer & Storage Inc." Attached to the west is the tall drive-thru supported by metal

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trusses. The façade (east) above the drive-thru contains two sets of paired windows. The windows are three-light, horizontal awnings.

This building occupies the site of a former 1-story brick furniture store visible on the 1953 Sanborn map. The 1961 map shows the present building as a bus station. The 1959 city directory indicates that multiple transportation-related businesses utilized the building including a bus terminal, Continental American Lines, Southeastern Greyhound Lines, Yellow Cab Co, Hertz Rent-a-Car, and State Farm Insurance Co. office. Property records indicate that Decatur Transit owned the building through 2003.

39. 217 Grant Street SE, Maid Pro, c.1955 (C)

One-Part Commercial Block/Modern Movement

AHC ID: Mo1409, Boundary Increase

This is a modest, 1-story brick commercial block, rectangular in form with a flat roof. Its low flat parapet is capped by a metal coping. The upper façade is unadorned but contains a modern fixed sign reading the name of the present occupant – Maid Pro. The storefront is indicative of mid-century, open front storefront design. It has an aluminum-framed, metal-and-glass door with transom at the west end. East of the door are three large, metal-framed plate glass windows with a low metal-covered bulkhead.

40. 219 Grant Street SE, Standard Loan Service, c.1950 (NC)

One-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style

AHC ID: Mo1410, Boundary Increase

This is a modest, 1-story brick commercial block, rectangular in form with a flat roof. Its low flat parapet is capped by metal coping and steps down toward the rear. The upper façade is unadorned but features a nonhistorical, half-hip awning covered in asphalt shingles. The storefront is remodeled and features three large, 30-light display windows. At the west end is a modern entry door topped by a former transom that is boarded over. The storefront appears to have been entirely remodeled in the 1980s or 1990s (date unknown) thus compromising the integrity of the building and the mid-20th century aesthetic of the streetscape.

41. 225 Grant Street SE, McBride Richardson PC, Law Offices, 1998 (NC)

Office Building, No Academic Style

Boundary Increase

This is a two-story, stuccoed office building with a very low-pitched, front-gabled roof. The façade (north) is symmetrical with a centered entry door. It is 5 bays on the first floor (W, W, D, W, W) with 15-light fixed windows. The windows feature concrete sills and headers with concrete key stone. The entry door is flanked by single-light sidelights and is topped by a fabric awning. A stoop with metal railing is in front of the door. The entryway is flanked by fluted pilasters. The same fenestration occurs on the second floor; however, in place of a door is a concrete panel framed by a round-arched concrete frame painted brown. Due to its age, this building is a noncontributing element to the historic district.

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42. 229 Grant Street SE, Hills Grocery Store, c.1945/1976 (C)

One Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style

AHC ID: Mo1411, Boundary Increase

This is a modest, one-story brick commercial block, rectangular in form with a flat roof. Its low flat parapet is capped by metal coping and steps down toward the rear. The front façade is brick-veneered. The upper façade features a simple, stepped string course of vertical stretcher bricks painted black to contrast with the cream-colored exterior of the façade. The façade features two distinct bays. The western bay contains the entry door, which is metal-and-glass topped by a wide transom. West of the door are three large, metal-framed display windows with brick bulkheads. The eastern bay contains four display windows. A fabric awning is suspended above the storefront. At the rear is a lower concrete block wing with a tall brick chimney piercing its roof. A shed-roofed awning is along rear and has square wood support posts. A small metal hyphen connects the building on the east to a later addition covered in standing seam metal. It has a low-pitched, front-gabled roof. Its façade (north) has a centered, two-leaf glazed door flanked on either side by large, metal-framed plate-glass windows.

**PL-5 200 Block (North) Grant Street SE, Parking Lot (Contributing Structure)
c.1970s, Boundary Increase**

This large surface parking lot is 150 feet by 250 feet. It is accessible from the north side of Grant Street SE and alleyways bordering the lot to the west and north. The parking lot is asphalt with raised grass medians with concrete curbing at the center and corners of the lots. Another median forms the southern boundary of the parking lot, separating it from a sidewalk lining Grant Street. This median features a row of planted trees.

A 1958 aerial photograph reveals that the site of the parking was once fully occupied by commercial blocks. By 1981, the buildings were razed and the parking lot established. It is probable that this occurred the previous decade as an Operation New Decatur effort to attract visitors by offering accessible parking.

43. 240 Grant Street SE, Grant Street Church of Christ, 1925, c.1945 addition (C)

Double Tower/Gothic Revival

AHC ID: Mo1412, Boundary Increase

Photograph #10

This is a grand, Gothic Revival church with a gable-on-hip roof and corner towers at the east and west ends of the front façade (south). The roof is low-pitched and covered in standing seam metal. An original T-wing extends from the center of the rear elevation and connects to a long, 2-story education annex that runs perpendicular to the rear alley. An interior brick chimney is at the northeast corner of the original church building. The roof features overhanging boxed eaves. The front façade (south) is symmetrical and six bays (D, W, W, D, W, W, D) separated by engaged brick pilasters that extend above the roof line. The pilasters are yellow brick to contrast with the

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dark red brick of the exterior. The outer bays occupy the corner towers. These are double, wood-paneled doors topped by pointed arch transoms with stained glass. Above the doors on the tower is a circular stained-glass window. At the top of each tower are paired, pointed arch, wood-louvered vents. The towers feature crenellated parapets. Bays 2 and 5 (from west to east) feature flat-headed, cathedral glass windows with two sashes separated by a smaller, horizontal sash. The two innermost window bays are large, round-arched windows of multi-pane cathedral glass. The transom reflects a fanlight patterning. The central bay of the façade features a lower castellated tower with a limestone panel reading: "Grant Street Church of Christ 1911 A.D. 1925." In front of this tower feature is a lower gabled projecting, followed by another lower gabled projection, together former an enclosed entry vestibule. The gable ends are enhanced by purlins. A two-leaf, six-panel door is centered on the façade. It is topped by a three-light transom and is framed by a stretcher brick surround with corner blocks. The side elevations feature a central, gabled parapet with flanking pilasters to create the appearance of crenellation. Beneath the gable is a prominent, round-arched window of cathedral glass. Two, flat-headed windows are on either side, separated by engaged brick pilasters. Extending from the northwest corner is the c.1945, two-story education annex. The design of the annex mimics that of the sanctuary with contrasting red and yellow brick and gable-on hip roof. A pointed arched entry door is at its east end. The annex has paired, 6-over-6, double-hung wood sash windows. At the ground level of the west end is a full-drive-thru with a segmental-arched opening and limestone keystones.

The church was established in 1910 and relocated to the Grant Street location in 1925. A 1940 aerial photograph shows the original church building with rear T wing. The 1958 aerial photograph confirms the construction of the education annex, which is also depicted in the 1953 Sanborn map.

**PL-6 200 Block (South) Grant Street SE, Parking Lot (Contributing Structure)
c.1970s, Boundary Increase**

This asphalt-paved parking lot measures 125 feet by 140 feet. It is accessible by the south side of Grant Street and features diagonally-oriented parking spaces. The lot lacks any distinguishing design or landscape features.

The site of lot was once occupied by a large automobile dealership and service repair facility depicted on both the 1952 Sanborn map and 1958 aerial photograph. By 1981, the building was razed and the present parking lot established. It is probable that this occurred in the previous decade as an Operation New Decatur effort to attract visitors by offering accessible parking.

**44. 255 Grant Street SE, First Federal Savings and Loan Building, 1957 (NC)
Mid-Rise Commercial/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1413, Boundary Increase**

This large, six-story bank building is reinforced concrete and steel construction with an exterior of stuccoed concrete. The roof is flat. The building is characterized by rows of ribbon windows of single-light, modern tinted panes. The floors are separated by wide concrete panels. The upper floor windows are recessed to form a covered balcony. The main façade (north) features a projecting concrete block bay at its east end that extends above the roof line. This block likely

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houses an interior stair hall or elevator. Adjacent to the west at ground level is a two-leaf, metal-and-glass door with sidelights and metal-framed transom. The wall to the west is a stone veneer, followed by a recessed raised garden bed.

This building is substantially altered and no longer reflects the distinguishing International style design in which it was original built. All windows, exterior siding, and unique design features that once characterized the building are no longer extant. As such, it is a noncontributing element to the historic district.

45. 401 Grant Street SE, Children's Clinic, c.1950 (C)
Small Office Building/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1414, Boundary Increase

This 1-story, brick-veneered building is rectangular in form with a low-pitched roof covered in asphalt shingles. The roof features overhanging eaves with fascia. A slightly wider block with hip roof is at the south end of the building. The front façade (north) is symmetrical and three bays (W, D, W) with a centered, single-leaf, metal-and-glass door flanked by wide sidelights. The windows on the faced are large, multi-light glass block windows. The west elevation is 9 bays (W, W, W, D, W, W, D, W, W) (from north to south). The entry doors are recessed, metal-and-glass. Bays 1, 3, 4, and 9 are large, single-light fixed panes with brick sills. Bay 2 is a two-light fixed window. Bays 6 and 8 are multi-light glass block matching those on the façade. The rear elevation (south) has two horizontal, fixed windows set high on the wall.

Sanborn Maps drawn in 1953 and 1961 depict a wood frame building with brick veneer and identified as a clinic. City directories in 1955 and 1959 indicate the building was a Children's Clinic with the physician practices of C.K. Pitt and W.A. Walker.

46. 425 Grant Street SE, Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Co. (C)
1950/1963
Mid-Rise Commercial/Brutalism
AHC ID: Mo1415, Boundary Increase
Photograph #11

This building is comprised of the original 3-story concrete building and the 1963-1964 concrete and brick expansion to the east. Both feature flat roofs. A 4-story block is sited towards the northwest corner and at the rear of the original building. These likely house elevator shafts or rooftop equipment. The original block is characterized by its unadorned, concrete exterior. Large, aggregate concrete panels surround the original building. The panels are the full height of each floor and are delineated by vertical and horizontal bands along all elevations. The front façade (north) contains only three window bays on the upper floors that are oriented towards the center of the façade. The windows are deeply recessed within a concrete panel that has chamfered sides angling inward toward the window. The windows appear to be single-light, metal-framed casements topped by a single-light transom. Along the façade and front portion of the west elevation a raised basement is enhanced by an exterior clad in stone veneer panels. The main entrance is located at the west end of the façade at basement level. The entrance is recessed with a

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simple dentiled frieze. Two, metal-and-glass doors with sidelights are within the entrance. The large, two-story addition to the east features a brick veneer exterior laid in a 6-course Flemish bond. A smooth concrete course marks the water table along the façade (north). Another concrete string course adorns the top of the façade. The low, flat parapet is topped by a concrete coping. The west half of the addition on the façade is unadorned and contains a single, metal door at the west end. The eastern half of the expansion features five windows on the 2nd floor of the façade. The windows are 1-over-1, double-hung textured glass with applied false muntins creating a 6/6 pattern. The windows have stone jack arches and brick sills. The 1st floor of the façade contains four windows with concrete lintel and keystone and a concrete apron. At the east end is a recessed entrance enhanced by a cast concrete surround and flat pediment with brackets. The door is metal and topped by a transom.

This telephone company building first occurs on the 1961 Sanborn map as the Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Company. An expansion of the facility opened in 1964. The expanded facilities were needed for additional dial equipment to accommodate an additional 2,200 lines. Barge Thompson, Inc was hired as contractor for the 75 x 40 foot building of re-enforced concrete and brick. Architectural plans were designed by Saggus, Williamson, Vaught, and Spike of Atlanta.

Jackson Street, SE

47. 202 Jackson Street SE, Pettet & Associates, Real Estate Appraisal, 1991 (NC) Colonial Revival

This 1-story office building is brick-veneered with a low-pitched, hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles. The building appears to have two office spaces. The front façade (south) is symmetrical and contains nine bays (W, W, D, W, W, W, D, W, W). At each corner of the façade are modest brick quoins. The entry doors are recessed. Windows are one-over-one, double-hung synthetic sash with painted brick arched headers.

This building is within the boundary of the 1995 NRHP designation; however, it was not included as a resource on the inventory.

Johnston Street, SE

48. 101 Johnston Street SE, Alford, McKenzie & Breeden Accountants, 1979 (C) Small Office Building Boundary Increase

This unadorned, one-story office building is rectangular in form with a low-pitched, hipped roof covered in asphalt shingles. A very wide shed-roofed awning forms a parapet along the front façade (north). It is clad in asphalt shingles. The building features a vertical stretcher brick course along the upper facades of all elevations. Above the course is simple brick corbelling creating a row of square panels. The façade contains a single-leaf, metal-and-glass door at its east end. At the rear of the building are two garage bays with paneled, overhead doors.

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PL-7 100 Block (South) Johnston Street SE, Parking Lot, c.1995 Noncontributing Structure

Boundary Increase

This parking lot is privately owned and accommodates customers of the various businesses housed in the New Decatur Opera House (Resource #50) building adjacent to the east. The lot features an asphalt surface and irregular shape that is slightly curving. Its primary entry point is from the south side of Johnston Street with an egress leading from its south end to an alleyway connecting to 1st Avenue. Surrounding the parking area are concrete drainage features and curbing. The area just outside of the parking lot is grass. Along the east side of the lot, concrete paths and grassy areas with planted vegetation separate the parking area from the building.

49. 110 Johnston Street, Dormitory 2024-2025

(NC)

Boundary Increase

This is a three-story, L-shaped dormitory for students of the Alabama Center for the Arts. Its first floor is brick-veneered, and the upper floors are smooth stucco. The main entrance fronts Johnston Street. Each floor is distinguished by rows of multi-pane windows topped by gray stuccoed lintels.

50. 115 Johnson Street, SE, New Decatur Opera House, 1906

(C)

Two-Part Commercial Block/Late-19th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1420, 1995 NRHP Inventory #32, Listed on the NRHP

Also Known as the Payne Theater and Masonic Theater

Photograph #12

This is a 3-story brick building, rectangular in form with a flat roof. A prominent flat parapet with projecting metal cornice is along the façade (north). This is followed by a narrow string course. The upper two floors of the façade contain five, 1/1, double-hung wood sash windows. A simple cornice is above the first floor of the façade. The façade retains its original storefront configuration with a central, recessed arch entryway containing paired wood glazed doors. At each end of the façade is a recessed, brick panel historically used to display posters. The two storefronts on either side of the central entrance feature a large, wood-framed display window with wood-paneled bulkhead. Above the display windows are wide transoms with decorative leaded glass. Historically, each storefront featured a single-leaf door on either side of the central entryway. The doors are each topped by a leaded glass transom. The door on the east storefront is replacement with a display window with wood-paneled bulkhead. A prominent, exterior brick chimney is on the west elevation. The side elevations reveal multiple windows along the upper floors. The 1st floor of the west elevation contains two side entrances. The rear elevation features a one-story, enclosed porch addition that is used for restaurant dining.

This building was designated to the NRHP under the name of the Cotaco Opera House and with a date of construction of c.1890. However, subsequent research has confirmed that Cotaco Opera House Company never succeeded in establishing a theater in Decatur/new-Decatur. This building located on Johnston Street was completed in 1906 for the New Decatur Opera House Company.⁸

⁸ *The Montgomery Advertiser*, March 25, 1905.

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The following year, it was renamed Payne Theater. In 1909, the building was purchased by the Free Masons and it was once again renamed to the Masonic Theater. A private buyer purchased the building in 1984 and by 1990, renovation for office and retail uses was completed.

**PL-8 200 Block (South) Johnston Street SE, Parking Lot (Contributing Structure)
c.1970s, Boundary Increase**

This parking lot is city-owned. It is a narrow lot that is parallel to an alleyway that runs north-to-south along the rear of commercial blocks fronting the east side of 2nd Avenue. The parking lot is accessible from Johnston Street and has a central drive flanked on either side by a row of diagonal parking spaces. Concrete curbing separates the lot from the alleyway and another parking lot adjacent to the east. Two slightly raised, triangular beds with concrete curbing feature mature planted trees. Two modern street lights are installed along the eastern border of the lot.

Aerial photographs confirm that this lot was in place and utilized for parking between 1958 and 1981. The lot occupies the site of a former commercial building. Its development as a parking lot may be attributed to Operation New Decatur and the need to accommodate increased automobile ownership.

**PL-9 200 Block (South) Johnston Street SE, Parking Lot (Contributing Structure)
c.1970s, Boundary Increase**

This parking lot is privately-owned. The lot is asphalt-surfaced and contains two tall metal streetlights secured at concrete bases. The parking lot has two adjacent entry points from the south side of Johnston Street. Spaces are angled to steer the vehicle egress at a rear alleyway at the south end of the parking lot. At the entrance of the lot is the only notable landscaping with a low-brick wall and planted shrubbery.

Aerial photographs confirm that this lot was in place and utilized for parking between 1958 and 1981. The lot occupies the site of a former commercial building. Its development as a parking lot may be attributed to Operation New Decatur and the need to accommodate increased automobile ownership.

**51. 214 Johnston Street, SE, Law Office, 1940 (NC)
One-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1424, Boundary Increase
Photograph #13**

This 1-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and low parapet that steps down toward the rear. The front façade is unadorned with six equal-sized bays. The three bays to the west are infilled with brick. To the east, two of the bays are also infilled with brick but feature round-arched windows with corbelled brick molding. The windows are comprised of two-leaf, 12-light casement windows topped by single-light, round-arched transom. The easternmost bay is a recessed corner entrance that is also arched. The same arched opening is at the south end of the west elevation, so that the two openings form a small, recessed entry lobby. Seven flat-headed bays are on the west elevation, some topped with corbelled brick hoods.

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This building, including the entire front façade, is significantly remodeled and no longer reflects a mid-20th century design. As such, it is noncontributing to the district.

52. 216 Johnston Street, SE, Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Co., c.1920 (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/Neoclassical
AHC ID: Mo1425, Boundary Increase

This 2-story building is fireproof construction with a brick veneer exterior. The roof is flat. The building is slightly L-shaped with a flat parapet. A molded, smooth limestone panel cornice is along the front façade (south). The façade is symmetrical is five bays (2W, 2W, D, 2W, 2W). The first floor features a recessed entryway with original, two-leaf, wooden glazed door topped by a 5-light transom. The paired windows are original 1-over-1, double-hung wood sash with exterior storm windows. Above each bay is a rectangular, corbelled brick panel that reaches to the base of the 2nd floor bays. The 5 bays on the 2nd floor are paired windows. A prominent, interior brick chimney pierces the roof. A one-story, brick garage is at the rear of the building, spanning the width of the property.

City directories from 1922 to 1959 indicate that the building housed the Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company. A new facility opened that year at 425 Grant Street SE (#46).

53. 237 Johnston Street, SE, (Former) Post Office, 1958 (NC)
One-Part Commercial Block/Colonial Revival
AHC ID: Mo1426, Boundary Increase

This 1-story, brick-veneered commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof. A prominent parapet is along the façade and wraps around the northwest corner. The parapet forms a wide, mansard-type awning covered in slate shingles. Beneath the parapet awning is a dentiled cornice. The front façade (north) is four bays (9W, W, D, W), all of equal size and shape. The entry bay contains a two-leaf, metal-and-glass door flanked on either side by sidelights. A segmental-arched transom is above and topped by a stretcher brick arch. The windows share a matching segmental-arched design. The windows are 24-light with transom. Ghost marks on the west elevation indicate the former presence of windows and doors that were later bricked-in.

According to the c.1960 Sanborn map, this building was originally occupied by a US Post Office. It presently serves as private office space. The prominent awning/parapet appears to date to the 1980s and is an intrusive modification that detracts from the historic streetscape.

54. 239 Johnston Street, SE, McClary-Rankin Building, 1953 (C)
Small Office Building/Modern Movement
AHC ID: Mo1427, Boundary Increase

This 2-story brick commercial building features a flat roof and low brick parapet. The front façade (north) is symmetrical and contains four, paired window bays on the 2nd floor. The windows are horizontal, creating an emphasis on the horizontal. The metal-framed windows are single, fixed lights with two, narrow horizontal lights below. The paired windows share concrete sills. The 1st

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floor of the façade features a centered, two-leaf, metal-and-glass door flanked by sidelights and transom. The entryway is framed by a wide surround of stacked stretcher bricks colored gray to contrast with the brownish brick of the façade. A fabric awning is above the entryway. A triple window is east of the door and a ribbon of four windows is to the west. The windows match those on the second floor but are set within recessed brick panels.

City directories in 1955 and 1959 confirm that the building was occupied by offices of the Southern Bell Company, James L. Rankin, and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

55. 240 Johnston Street, SE, St. Ann's Catholic School and Convent, 1955 (C)
School/Modern Movement
AHC ID: Mo1428, Boundary Increase
Photograph #14

This building is comprised of a 2-story with basement, rectangular block that is oriented parallel to Johnston Street. A 1-story perpendicular wing is along the west elevation and extends to an alley at the north end of the property. This L-shaped form creates a large half-courtyard at the rear. The front façade (north) of the 1-story wing contains a recessed entryway at its east end that leads to a two-leaf, metal door. Two stacked, concrete square panels are to the west. The west elevation of the 1-story wing has 11 window bays. The south elevation of the main, 2-story block is 10 window bays. The windows are flat-headed, single fixed lights with concrete sills and heads. Beneath the 1st floor windows are rectangular concrete panels followed by a horizontal light at basement level. At the east end of the block is a single-leaf, metal-and-glass door with transom. A projecting block is at the east elevation. Inset in the front ell created by the projection on the façade is a glass wall entry lobby with a second entry door. A large, concrete and metal canopy extends from the southeast corner of the façade and wraps around the east elevation.

This building was erected in 1955 to house the St. Ann Catholic School and Convent. The school relocated in 2003 to Spring Avenue in Decatur.⁹

56. 248 Johnston Street, SE, St. Ann's Rectory, c.1945 (C)
English Cottage
AHC ID: Mo1429, Boundary Increase

This 2-story former dwelling is brick with a moderately-pitched, side-gabled roof covered in terra cotta tiles. The gable ends feature circular louvered vents. The front façade (south) is symmetrical and three bays (2W, D, 2W) on the 1st floor and 2 bays (2W, 2W) on the 2nd. The entry door is centered and is wood with four small lights. The door is set within a recessed, corbelled brick surround and round arch. The windows are replacements fixed sash with applied false muntins. The windows have brick sills. Side elevation windows are single, fixed lights that also appear to be replacements.

⁹ "Our History," Saint Ann Catholic School <https://saintanndecatur.org/about-us/>

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This building first occurs on the 1948 Sanborn map at which time it included the 2-story dwelling on the south end and a 1-story apartment on the north. The overall footprint is unchanged but the building is adapted as office space.

57. 250 Johnston Street, SE, Church of St. Ann, 1906 (C)
Corner Tower/Gothic Revival
AHC ID: Mo1430, Boundary Increase
Photograph #15

This imposing edifice is comprised of a 1-story sanctuary with high-pitched, front-gabled roof and 1-story cross wing with hipped roof along the rear. The roof of the sanctuary is asphalt-shingled with gabled parapets at each end. The brick is common bond. A smooth limestone water table course surrounds the building. A modest corbelled brick cornice lines the facade. The front façade (south) of the main block contains a two-leaf, metal-and-glass door topped by an ogee-arched window and brick and limestone arch. Above the entrance is a set of three, lancet-arched windows, each with two lights, and enhanced by a limestone lancet arch. West of the entrance is a lower, limestone pointed header above a lancet-arched window. On either side of this design feature is an engaged brick pilaster with pointed limestone cap. At the west end of the front façade (south) is a lower, bay with a chamfered corner and flat roof. The corners of this projection are enhanced by brick pilasters. The chamfered corner features a 1-over-1, double-hung window topped by triangular light. The brick church is enhanced by a prominent corner tower at the east end of the front façade (south). The tower is two-tiered with an octagonal lantern topped by a conical spire covered in copper. The lantern of the tower features wood-louvered vents on each side. The main body of the tower features a set of paired, single-light windows at the main level sharing a limestone sill. Above the paired windows is a large, lancet window with limestone arch and sill. This window is comprised of two lights within a stone surround and topped by a lancet arch light. The corner tower features engaged brick pilasters at each corner topped by pointed limestone caps. The side elevations of the sanctuary contain six window bays separated by brick buttresses with limestone caps. The windows are paired, two-light panes sharing an ogee arch window and brick arch above. The east elevation of the corner tower features a side entry door that is slightly recessed within a brick and limestone ogee arch surround. The door is wood-paneled.

The Church of St. Ann purchased this lot in 1903 and the church was completed in 1906 for a cost of \$15,000. The congregation remained at this location until relocated in August of 2003 to a larger facility on Spring Avenue.

58. 251 Johnston Street, SE, First American Bank, 1963 (C)
Mid-Rise Commercial/International
AHC ID: Mo1431, Boundary Increase

This building is 4-story, rectangular in form, with a flat roof. The western half includes a fifth floor. The principal massing is cantilevered above the first floor. The exterior walls of the upper floors are a cream-colored stone veneer panels. Vertical, protruding design elements enhance the façade, creating the appearance of slender pilasters and columns. The façade (north) contains 22 single, fixed windows on each floor. The windows are separated by narrow stone veneer panels.

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The first floor of the building is recessed beneath the cantilever of the upper floors. The first floor is accentuated by a black, granite panel veneer. The façade of the first floor is primarily metal-framed, plate-glass, with two, metal-and-glass, double-doors at the west end. Above the first floor “storefront” is a wide, full-width, concrete awning. Above the awning is a full-width, multi-light casement. The fifth-floor block features a flat roof with wide overhanging concrete eaves. A decorative screen wall surrounds the exterior of the block.

According to tax records, the building housed the First American Bank until 2015.

59. 402 Johnston Street, SE, Unknown, c.1890 (C)
Queen Anne
AHC ID: Mo1432, Boundary Increase

This former dwelling is comprised of a 2 ½-story principal massing with a truncated hip roof and a 2-story gabled wing at the rear that created a T-shape. A front-facing gable is on the west end of the front façade (south). A gabled bay projects slightly from each side elevation. The building is brick, and the roof covered in asphalt shingles. The front-facing gable features wood shingles and a decorative, wooden vergeboard. Its gable end features paired, nine-over-1, double-hung wood sash windows. A clipped gable dormer is on the front roof slope and features a vergeboard. The dormer contains a round-arched, multi-light window. A projecting, two-story bay projects from the west end of the façade and has chamfered corners. Each of the three sides of the projecting bay contains a 1-over-1 window with segmental arch head. Adjacent to the east of the projecting bay, on the second floor are two original, double-hung windows with multiple panes, and segmental arch with circular wood element at the center. A one-story, wrap-around porch is inset in the front ell. It has a half-hip roof and large, square brick columns with brackets. The porch is enclosed with a modern double door with flanking sidelights, and a ribbon of multi-light windows topped by a fabric awning. A modern, brick handicap ramp leads to the porch. At the west end of the façade is a one-story, flat-roofed addition with exposed rafter ends and paired windows. The projecting gabled wings on the side elevations feature wood shingles and a 1-over-1 window in the gable end, along with a decorative wooden vergeboards. Inset at the northeast corner of the house is a one-story, brick addition with shed roof.

According to tax records, the building was erected in 1936; however, its architectural design suggests it was erected during the latter years of the 19th century. This area is first covered on the 1908 Sanborn map and the house depicted on the map that year had a similar form to the present. According to census records and directories, W. E. Skeggs owned and occupied the house from at least 1910 to 1920s. William E. Skeggs was a probate judge in 1910. By 1953, the house was functioning as an apartment building. The rear one-story, shed-roofed wing post-dates c.1960 per the 1961 Sanborn map. The porch enclosures also posts-date c.1960.

60. 410 Johnston Street, SE, North Alabama Industrial Development, 2007 (NC)
No Academic Style
Boundary Increase

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This 1-story, sprawling commercial building has multiple retail and office units. It has a brick exterior, flat roof and a very wide cast concrete cornice that forms a parapet wall. The cornice flares outward toward the top. The building is comprised of multiple blocks, each setback from the previous. A parking lot is to the front, rear and sides of the building. Due to its age, it is noncontributing to the district.

**PL-10 420 Johnston, Street, SE, Parking Lot, c.1985
Boundary Increase**

Noncontributing Structure

This parking lot is privately owned and accommodates parking for the Anderson's Furniture Company that is adjacent to the east. The narrow lot has two points of entry from the north side of Johnston Street. Between the two entry drives into the parking lot is a semi-circular median with grass and gravel, as well as a small concrete bench and flag pole. Extending north from the center of the median is a single concrete curb that separates two rows of angled parking spaces. The egress of the parking lot is at its north end that connects to an alleyway.

**61. 430 Johnston Street, SE, Andersons Furniture Company - Annex, 1976 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1433, Boundary Increase**

This 2-story commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof. The 2nd floor is accessed by an exterior metal staircase on the west elevation. The upper facade features a standing seam metal slipcover veneer. A large, metal sign with reading "Anderson's" is centered on the upper facade on the front (south) of the building. The main floor features a brick veneer exterior. The storefront features a centered, two-leaf, metal-and-glass door topped by a single-light transom. On either side of the door is a brick pilaster, followed by three, large, metal-framed plate-glass display windows. A metal awning is suspended above the storefront.

This building was erected as an annex/addition to the expanding Anderson's Office Furniture company.

**62. 432 Johnston Street, SE, Andersons Furniture Company, 1958 (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/Modernist Storefront
AHC ID: Mo1435, Boundary Increase
Photograph #16**

This 1-story commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof. The building is concrete with a brick veneer. The front facade is characterized by an open, visual front with a central, two-leaf, metal-and-glass door. The door is topped by a single-light transom. On either side of the door are two, large, aluminum-framed display windows. The storefront is topped by a flat metal awning suspended above a concrete sidewalk along the facade. Centered on the upper facade is metal lettering reading "Anderson."

This building has been occupied by Anderson's since erected in 1958 (1959 city directory). According to the 1961 Sanborn map, the building originally featured an iron storefront. The

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present storefront appears to date to the 1960s and is consistent with the open, visual fronts with plate-glass windows that frequently occur on commercial buildings from this period.

63. 440 Johnston Street, SE, Motel 6 (originally the Downtowner Inn), 1964 (NC)

International Style

AHC ID: Mo1438, Boundary Increase

Photograph #17

This 5-story hotel draws upon the International style of design frequently applied to mid-rise hotels of the mid-20th century. The building is rectangular with a flat roof and wide overhanging eaves. The roof is topped by a nonhistorical, wide metal awning that creates the appearance of a mansard roof. Gables are centered on the north and south elevations and contain a fixed metal sign with the hotel name. Concrete pilotis along the first floor support the upper floors. At the east end of the building is an open drive-thru, also with concrete columns. The main lobby is at the southeast corner of the building, accessed from the drive-thru. It has two, metal-and-glass doors, and its south elevation has an open visual front with plate-glass windows. The upper floors of the north and south elevations are characterized by long rows of hotel rooms accessed by a concrete balconies with metal railings. Each floor contains 11 rooms (22 total) comprised of a modern replacement door with six panels and a single, square window with AC unit below.

This building has undergone considerable exterior modifications since constructed in the 1960s. Originally, the building featured a flat roof with wide overhanging eaves – a character-defining feature of the international Style. This was modified when the present, wide metal parapet was added, altering the Modernist design of the building. While the historic balconies and exterior stairs are intact, they originally featured alternating, orange-colored panels set within the railing. This historic featured enhanced the Modernist design, but have since been removed, replaced by a modern metal railing. Historically, each hotel room has a single door and a window wall of full-height plate-glass windows. These design features have been replaced with a modern door with six panels and a single square window. The west end of the front façade (south) was a wide bay containing a concrete screen wall, metal-and-glass door, and window wall of aluminum-framed plate-glass. This is now enclosed with stucco, a modern door, and two display windows. The east elevation historically featured a concrete stucco wall with vertical and horizontal protruding bands. This was modified with the present round-arched design element.

PL-11 440 Johnston Street, SE, Parking Lot, c.2010
Boundary Increase

Noncontributing Structure

This parking lot is privately-owned by the hotel adjacent to the west. The asphalt-paved parking lot is accessible from Johnston Street to the south and 6th Avenue to the east. A chain-link fence is along the northern border of the lot, prohibiting access to a rear alleyway. The north end of the western boundary of the parking lot also features chain-link fencing with mature plantings. What appears to be a security light or camera mounted to a metal pole is at the northeast corner of the

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lot. At the southeast corner is a metal sign for the hotel. Save for the fencing, sign, and camera pole, the lot lacks any notable landscaping.

Google Earth imagery confirms that this parcel was occupied by a mid-century gas station surrounded by concrete parking. The building was razed c.2010, at which time the entire parcel was adapted as a parking lot for the adjacent hotel.

Moulton Street, East

- 64. 12 Moulton Street, East, Ashwander Animal Clinic, c.1930 (C)**
One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1442, Boundary Increase

This one-story, brick commercial block features a flat roof and a brick. Brick is common bond. The upper façade retains two, corbelled brick, rectangular panels, each with a small cross-shaped element at its center that is painted white to contrast with the bred brick of the front façade (south). The façade features a mid-20th century storefront comprised of a single-leaf, metal-and-glass door flanked on either side by large, metal-framed plate-glass windows with brick bulkheads. The storefront is topped by a fabric awning followed by a wide transom. The transom is comprised of ten square lights of textured glass. The west elevation reveals two engaged brick chimneys and two engaged brick pilasters.

Sanborn maps indicate that the building housed the Small Animal Hospital from at least 1948 to 1952, and was a poultry research lab by 1961. City Directories confirm the veterinary names through the 1950s including R.F. South Vet (1938-1942); and Ray Ashwander Vet through at least 1959.

- 65. 14 Moulton Street, East, Mayflower Café/Sheat's Hardware, c.1925 (C)**
One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1443, Boundary Increase

This 1-story, brick commercial block features a flat roof and a brick. The brick is common bond. The upper façade retains original, corbelled brick detailing reflecting a sawtooth-type banding and a central brick panel. The storefront is symmetrical with a centered, glazed entry door topped by a narrow, rectangular transom light. The entryway angles inward with angled display windows within the entry. Flanking either side of the entry way are large, fixed display windows set within wood frames. The display windows and entryway feature a rusticate concrete block bulkhead. Above the storefront is a wide transom comprised of twelve, six-light windows.

Sanborn maps document various businesses housed in the building over the years include an unnamed store in 1927; a restaurant in 1948; and a store in 1952. City Directories confirm in 1949 that the Mayflower Café and Carmans Donut Shop operated from the building, and by 1952 the it housed Sheats Hardware.

- 66. 16 Moulton Street, East, Covenant Counseling, c.1920 (C)**

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One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1446, Boundary Increase

This 1-story, brick commercial block features a flat roof and a brick parapet that steps down toward the rear. Brick is common bond. The upper façade retains original, corbelled brick detailing. The storefront is symmetrical with a centered, glazed entry door. Flanking either side of the door are two, large, single-light picture windows with wood frames. A fabric awning is suspended above the storefront. A former, wide transom is boarded over and contains the name of the business painted on it. Light sconces are affixed to the transom panel.

City Directories indicate that, in 1922, the Woco Pep Co, Inc.. operated from the building, followed in 1942 by Steadman's Radio Works Shop, and by 1959 it possibly housed Sheats Hardware.

67. 19 Moulton Street, East, Schulman Poultry Co., 1917 (C)

Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1445, Boundary Increase

This 2-story, commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and flat brick parapet. Brick is laid in 6-course American bond. The upper façade features a corbelled brick cornice within a rectangular, corbelled brick panel. Rectangular vents are in the panel, as is a centered, smooth stucco panel engraved with: "1917 M.L. Schulman." The 2nd floor of the façade features two window bays with segmental, brick arches. The windows are slightly projecting, three-sided bay windows with chamfered sides. The central windows are 18-light, whereas the flanking windows are 12-light. The cast iron storefront fenestration is unaltered, but the display windows and door are replacements. They are of tinted glass. The entry door is two-leaf, metal-and-glass with a rectangular transom. The door is within a recessed entry with side walls that angle inward. A full-width transom is above the storefront. A brick bulkhead is beneath the display windows.

Sanborn Maps confirm a variety of businesses operated here including a produce shop in 1927, furniture store in 1952, and upholstery in 1961. City Directories indicate that in 1917 it was the Schulman Poultry Company, in 1922, the Turner Coal and Grain Company; from 1938 to 1942 it housed Daniel Transportation. Later occupants included LBM Tractor & Implement, H. Ryan Appliances and Furniture and E&W Upholstery.

68. 105 Moulton Street, East, Decatur Super Market, c.1920 (C)

Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1448, Boundary Increase

Photograph #18

This 2-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and low parapet. The top of the front façade (east) is painted with the business name: Cross-Eyed Owl Brewing Company. A modern metal sign is fixed to the façade at the center of the upper wall. The first floor of the façade is remodeled storefronts. It is symmetrical and 6 bays (W, W, D, D, W, W) with single-leaf, metal-and-glass doors sharing a fabric awning. The large display windows are comprised of five, vertically-oriented fixed lights, each topped by a rectangular transom light. The

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windows are tinted glass. The second floor contains four sets of original windows that are painted over. The window sets are comprised of metal-framed, factory-style windows with 3 by 5 lights. The central six lights appear to be makeup an awning or topper. The north elevation contains a garage door that is a metal, overhead door. Two factory-type windows are at the second floor. The windows also occur on the south elevation.

City Directories indicate that Porter's Garage and Pan Am Service Station occupied the building in 1938. By 1942, it was Porters Garage, and between 1949 and 1958, the Decatur Super Market was housed here.

**PL-12 100 Block (north) Moulton Street, East, Parking Lot Contributing Structure
c.1970s, Boundary Increase**

This surface parking lot measures 125 feet by 140 feet and has a concrete surface. It is accessible from the north side of Moulton Street and the south side of an alleyway that forms its northern boundary. The parking lot has a row of parallel parking spaces along its east and west borders and two rows at its center. Between the central rows is a raised concrete median with a tall post street light containing four lights. Modest landscaping along the periphery of the parking lot, particularly along the 1st Avenue side, features beds with concrete curbing, mulch, shrubbery and planted trees.

The 1958 aerial photograph confirms that the site was once occupied by commercial blocks. However, by 1980, the buildings were razed and the site repurposed as a parking lot.

109 Moulton Street, East – see Resource #86

**69. 112 Moulton Street, East, Humphrey's Cash Store Dept. Store, c.1915 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1449, 1995 NRHP Inventory #33 (Contributing)**

This 2-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof. The roof features a brick parapet that steps down toward the rear. The upper façade features decorative corbelled brick designs, four small square panels with diamond-shaped, limestone insets; and two circular lights with brick surrounds, textured glass, and the letter "H" in red glass. The second floor of the façade (south) contains 6 window bays (W, 2W, W, W, 2W, W) with 1-over-1, double-hung wood sash, each with five glass blocks above a concrete sill. The windows are topped by a vertical stretcher brick jack arch. The ends of each featuring a vertical band of brick headers. The east storefront on the façade features a modern, two-leaf glass door. A single square display window is west of the door, and two are to the east. The windows have a brick bulkhead. The west storefront has four large, metal-framed and tinted windows above a brick bulkhead. A full-width metal awning is suspended above the first floor. It is unknown whether the original transom is intact. The west elevation has a single window at the 2nd floor. Five windows are on the second floor of the rear elevation, as well as a metal door that leads to an exterior metal staircase.

Various businesses, professional offices of fraternal organizations occupied the building over the years including Stevens & Trashear; the Patterson Mercantile Company, the OK Barber Shop,

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Humphrey's Cash Department Store, BPOE Lodge no. 655; Top Value Enterprises, and LOOM
Decatur Lodge No. 243.

70. 114 Moulton Street, East, Murrays Hardware Store, c.1920 (NC)

Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1450, 1995 NRHP Inventory #34 (Contributing)

This 2-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and brick parapet. The upper façade features corbelled brick design details. The brick piers at each end of the front façade (south) features corbelled brick quoins. The 2nd floor of the façade features a wide, recessed opening infilled with brick and two sets of paired windows. The windows are 1-over-1, double-hung wood sash and the paired windows share a round-arched transom. The recently remodeled storefront is enclosed with modern brick veneer, two metal-and-glass doors, and tinted glass windows atop a brick bulkhead. A former transom above the storefront is concealed by a fabric awning. It is unknown whether the transom is intact.

Although the upper façade reveals historic brick corbelling design features, the removal of the factory-style windows on the 2nd floor, infilling with brick and arched windows, coupled with the entire remodeling of the storefront post-1995, this building has lost significant integrity and no longer contributes to the historic aesthetic of the streetscape.

71. 118 Moulton Street, East, Pride Furniture and Appliance Company & Sidney (C)

Johnson Radio Service, c.1915

Two-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1451, 1995 NRHP Inventory #35 (Contributing)

This 2-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and brick parapet. At each end of the parapet on the front façade is a decorative, cast concrete globe. The upper façade features a corbelled brick cornice and multiple bands of corbelled brick creating a sawtooth appearance. The 2nd floor of the façade features four, 1-over-1, double-hung wood sash windows. Each window is topped by a brick, segmental arch. A full-width, limestone course is beneath the windows on the second floor. The two separate storefronts were remodeled in the 1980s. The eastern storefront is now a ribbon of tinted, metal-framed display windows with low brick bulkhead. The western storefront has two, metal-framed glass doors. The main door has sidelights and transom and is flanked by metal-framed display windows. A full-width metal awning is above the storefront.

This building first occurs on the 1927 Sanborn map. City Directories show in 1917-1923 that it was occupied by Hughes and Tidwell; between 1938-1942, Dixie Store Dry Goods and Williams Auto Parts; in 1949, Williams Auto Parts; in 1952, Pride Furniture and Appliance company & Sidney Johnson Radio Service; and in 1959, the building housed the Simth-Pride Furniture and Appliance Company.

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PL-13 213 Moulton Street, East, Parking Lot, c.1950s
Boundary Increase

Contributing Structure

This is a small, city-owned surface parking lot accessible from the south side of Moulton Street. It is a simple central drive flanked on either side by a row of diagonally-oriented parking spaces. The egress leads to an alleyway at the south end of the lot. The east and west border of the parking lot is concrete curbing. Flanking either side of the entrance to the parking lot are two raised plant bed filled with mulch and planted shrubs and a tree. Each feature has a concrete sewer drainage that captures run-off from the parking lot.

A 1958 aerial photograph confirms that the parking lot was operational by that year and was likely one of the early parking lots established in the city in the post-World War II years to accommodate increased automobile ownership.

72. 214-216 Moulton Street, East, Forbes & Son Piano, c.1945 (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1453, 1995 NRHP Inventory #s 41 and 42 (Contributing)

This 1-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and parapet. At each end of the façade (south) is a slight pilaster of a lighter-colored brick. The upper façade features 6-course American bond tan brick and a horizontal band of soldier brick coursing. The building is comprised of two separate stores, where the west unit is narrower than the east. The west storefront (#214) contains a recessed entry that angles inward toward a single-leaf glazed door. Flanking the entrance are large, wood-framed display windows on bulkheads. The east unit (#216) storefront is comprised a recessed entryway with double glazed, wood doors. Flanking the entry are large, single-light display windows with wood frames and rest on brick bulkheads. A wide, 11-light transom is above the storefront. A fabric awning is suspended above the storefront. East of this bay, which is centered on the façade of the building, is another wide bay comprised of a row of 6, vertical display windows, wood-framed, and topped by a transom.

The 1995 NRHP district nomination identifies this building as two separate resources (address 212 and 214/216); however, Sanborn maps confirm that the building is comprised of two storefronts (214 and 216). The address associated with 212 was an adjacent building to the west that was destroyed by fire in 1973. The NRHP district nomination also indicates a construction date of c.1920. Sanborn maps and directories confirm the building was erected between 1942 and 1948. The 1949 directory indicate that Roden's occupied 214 and Ozburn-Abston & Co. was housed at 216. In 1952, it was occupied by Forbes & Sons Piano, and by 1955, the Monarch Super Market.

73. 215 Moulton Street, East, Reynolds Jewelry and Graves & Jones Agency (NC)
c.1945
One-Part Commercial Block/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1454, Boundary Increase

This 1-story, brick commercial block is rectangular in form with a flat roof and parapet that steps down towards the rear. A wide, modern parapet awning with asphalt shingles is attached to the

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original parapet along the façade (north) and west elevations. The original storefront is set between brick pilasters at each end of the façade. The storefront is enclosed with modern, vertical flushboard cladding, and a centered door with display windows on either side. The door is glazed and paneled with a classical surround containing fluted pilasters and a flat, dentiled frieze. The windows are 16-light, wood-frame displays with fixed shutters. The windows rest atop a brick bulkhead.

This building is extensively remodeled and no longer depicts a mid-century commercial block. It would be a noncontributing resource to the New Decatur-Albany Historic District if the boundaries were to be expanded.

74. 217 & 219 Moulton Street, East, M.L. Schullman Building/Dinsmore Brothers (C)
Furniture Co., c.1925
One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1455, Boundary Increase

This 1-story, concrete block commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof. A parapet is flat along the front façade (north) and steps down toward the rear. The rear elevation is clad in a brick veneer. The west elevation is stucco-over-concrete. Three, 1-over-1, double-hung wood sash windows are on the west elevation, placed at ground level. The front façade reveals a Colonial Revival-inspired storefront. Its upper façade is stuccoed with molding that creates a wide rectangular panel. At its center is a decorative cartouche with swags. The façade features four, fluted stucco pilasters that appear to support a wide entablature with stucco molded bands. The façade is four bays (W, D, W, W) with a single-leaf door containing four raised panels, four small lights, and is topped by a three-light transom. The door features a classical surround with fluted pilasters and broken pediment with urn. The large display windows contain 36 panes. The windows are topped by flat, molded wood entablatures.

This building first occurs on Sanborn maps in 1927. The building began as two separate stores with a shared interior wall. By 1952, it was a single space. In 1938, the building was occupied by Almon Blacksmith Shop and Taylor's Barber Shop. In 1942-W.R. Smith Restaurant and H.S. Sanderson gin repair. In 1949, it housed the Lawrence Auto Sales Co. and Sanderson Gin Repair. In 1952, the entire building was occupied by Dinsmore Brothers Furniture Co.

75. 220 & 222 Moulton Street, East, Homelike Café, Malone's Freight Line (C)
Young's Shoe Shop, c.1930
One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1456, 1995 NRHP Inventory #s43 and 44 (Contributing)

This 1-story, brick commercial building is comprised of three historic separate storefronts. The building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and brick parapet. A modest, corbelled brick cornice is along the upper façade. Each storefront is topped by a wide transom that has been infilled with brick laid in a basketweave pattern. The two storefronts on the west contain a single-leaf, metal-and-glass door and two large, metal-framed display windows on brick bulkheads. The east

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storefront features a recessed entry that angles inward toward a glass door with transom. On either side of the entry are display windows on a bulkhead covered in metal sheeting.

This building first occurs on Sanborn maps in 1948, at which time it was comprised of three separate stores (including one restaurant) and a large Motor Freight Station at the rear. The addresses that year were 220, 222, and 224. The same addresses and footprint continued through the c.1961 Sanborn map update. The building was later converted on the interior into two units rather than three. The NR district nomination separates the two “store” units into individual resources in the inventory with addresses of 218 and 222. However, this is inaccurate. The entire building encompasses all storefronts.

City Directories show in 1938-Homelike Café and Malone Fright Line; 1942-1959-Homelike Café, Young’s Shoe Shop, Ira’s Book & Gift Shop.

76. 221 Moulton Street, East, Baker Auto Body Works; Decatur Pts. Co., c.1925 (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/Post-World War II Storefront Upgrade
AHC ID: Mo1457, Boundary Increase

This 1-story, brick commercial building was historically built with two separate storefronts. Sometime in the 1940s, it was converted into a single store. The present storefront reflects common post-World War II upgrades to earlier commercial buildings. The building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and brick parapet that steps down toward the rear. The storefront is symmetrical with a central, deeply recessed entrance. The entrance angles inward toward a two-leaf, aluminum-framed glass door. A wide transom is above the door. On either side of the entryway are large, aluminum-framed plate-glass windows on brick bulkheads. What appears to have once been a transom above the storefront is enclosed and stuccoed. Above this is a fixed metal cornice. Centered on the upper façade is metal lettering reading “GOODY 2 SHOES.”

77. 224 Moulton Street, East, All Wright Pastry Shop, c.1945 (C)
One-Part Commercial Block/Modernist Storefront
AHC ID: Mo1458, 1995 NRHP Inventory #45 (Contributing)

This 1-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and brick parapet. The parapet is topped by terra cotta coping. The upper façade is unadorned but features fixed metal letters reading “Decatur Firefighters Association L-1437.” The storefront on the façade (south) is symmetrical with a recessed entryway that angles inward toward an aluminum-frame glass door. The door is topped by a transom. Flanking either side of the entry are display windows on brick bulkheads. The aluminum frame of the windows is painted black. A fabric awning is suspended above the storefront.

78. 226 Moulton Street, East, Water Works Office, c.1890 (C)
Two-Part Commercial Block/19th-20th Century Commercial
AHC ID: Mo1459, 1995 NRHP Inventory #46 (Contributing)

This 2-story, brick commercial building is rectangular in form with a flat roof and brick parapet. The upper façade features paired, horizontal bands of brick corbelling. Beneath these is a full-

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width, smooth stone belt course. The 2nd floor of the façade (south) contains three, single fixed windows topped by fabric awnings. Beneath the windows is a rough stone belt course. The storefront features a centered, recessed entrance with a glazed entry door. The door has flanking sidelights and is topped by a wide, round-arched transom. On either side of the entrance are wood-framed display windows on wood bulkheads. The storefront features square wood pilasters supporting a plain wood lintel/frieze.

Sanborn maps and city directories confirm the variety of businesses and offices operating here including a water works office, a tin shop, the Thomas Cash Store Grocery; Home Sup Company and Clements hardware Company.

79. 230 Moulton Street, East, United Way, c.1980 (NC)

Small Office Building/Colonial Revival

AHC ID: Mo1460, 1995 NRHP Inventory #47 (Noncontributing)

This 1-story, brick office building features a flat roof. Parapet walls are along the side elevations and extend forward beyond the front façade (south). This creates the appearance that the façade is recessed. A shed-roofed overhang is along the top of the facade and covered in slate shingles. The façade is 4 bays (W, W, W, D) with 30-light, wood-frame windows with paneled aprons. The easternmost bay is recessed and contains the Colonial Revival door with raised panels, 6-light sidelights and 21-light transom.

80. 232 Moulton Street, East, Harlem Cafe, c.1930 (C)

One-Part Commercial Block/20th Century Commercial

AHC ID: Mo1461, 1995 NRHP Inventory #48 (Contributing)

This 1-story, brick office building features a flat roof and parapet with concrete coping. The upper façade features three, diamond-shaped tinted brick panels. The storefront contains a modern replacement, glazed and paneled door with transom at the west end. The former wide display opening is infilled with wood, paired and triple windows. The windows are replacement, single fixed lights. The windows rest atop a brick bulkhead. A fabric awning is suspended above the storefront.

The 1938 and 1942 city directories indicate the building housed the Harlem Café, a black-owned restaurant. By 1949, the building housed the office of optometrist T. C. Bingham, and realtors H.L. and C.E. Malone.

**PL-14 200 Block (south) Moulton Street, East, Parking Lot
c.1970s, Boundary Increase**

Contributing Structure

This is a large, city-owned surface parking lot measuring 140-feet by 200 feet. It is accessible from the south side of Moulton Street at three separate points. The parking lot, therefore, has three drives that lead north to south, each flanked on either side by a parallel row of parking spaces. The east and west drive exit at an alleyway at the south end of the lot. The western drive, however, forms a curve at its south end created by concrete curbing to divert traffic toward the central drive and exit. Two raised concrete medians run north to south through the parking lot. Tall metal streetlights are

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installed in the medians. At each end of the median, they have perpendicular curbed medians to create an overall I shape. These are filled with mulch and planted trees.

A 1958 aerial photograph confirms that the site of the parking lot was occupied by commercial blocks. These buildings were razed and the parking lot established prior to 1980 according to aerial imagery.

81. 247 Moulton Street, East, Powell & Roberts Law Firm and Shelton & Shelton Law Firm, 1969 (C)
Small Office Building/Modernist
AHC ID: Mo1462, Boundary Increase

This 1-story office building is U-shaped with a flat roof and parapet. The building is clad in brick veneer and rests on a concrete foundation. The building features two wings projecting from each end of the front façade (north). The parapet at the front corners of each wing extends taller above the roof. A wide overhang is along the front façade and features rows of recessed concrete panels. The front façade of each projecting wing is enhanced by a stone veneer panel at the center, and flanked on either side by full-height, vertical, tinted glass windows. Between the projecting wings, concrete steps lead to a small courtyard. At the south end of the courtyard is the primary entrance into the main block of the building. Here, the wall is glass with metal-framed, tinted plate-glass. A two-leaf, metal-and-glass door with wide transom is centered on the wall.

82. 253 Moulton Street, East, A&M Mini Storage, 1968 (C)
Storage Facility/No Academic Style
AHC ID: Mo1463, Boundary Increase

This 1-story, storage facility is concrete block construction and L-shaped. It is comprised of a rectangular block along the south end of the lot with a long wing projecting from the west end of the north elevation. The building is clad in a brick veneer; however, the south elevation is exposed concrete block. This north projecting wing is occupied by 9 storage units facing east toward 4th Avenue. Each unit has a metal, overhead garage door. The northernmost garage door is taller than the others. The north elevation of the south wing contains an overhead, metal garage door. To its east is a metal pedestrian door, and to its west is a two-leaf, metal glazed door. The east elevation of this wing features a metal, paneled door at the south end, followed to the north by three storage units, each with small, overhead metal doors. The south elevation contains seven window opens that are boarded over.

83. 254 Moulton Street, East, (former) First National Bank, 1959 (C)
Mid-Rise Commercial/International
AHC ID: Mo1464, Boundary Increase
Photograph #19

This 3-story concrete bank building features a combination brick and concrete veneer exterior. The building is rectangular in form with a flat roof. The upper floors appear to cantilever slightly above the first floor. The south elevation is the main façade. Here, the upper floors feature a concrete exterior wall enhanced by rows of raised, concrete square panels. The name of the business is

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affixed to the wall at the upper east corner. The southwest corner of the façade is recessed to form a covered entryway. This section features 2 round, black pilotis. The wall within the recessed entry is a all metal-framed, tinted glass. A two-leaf, metal-and-glass door is at the east end of the recessed section. At the east end of the front façade is a set of paired, full-height display windows with wide transoms. The west elevation contains five, fixed windows with brick sills. To the north of the windows is a projecting bay with brick and concrete exterior. The upper floors of the elevation share inset, vertically oriented bays of brick panels that extend to the roofline. The east elevation of the building reveals classic International style design. The upper floors are each characterized by a row of fixed, single-light windows with black spandrels above and below. A one-story, brick veneer addition is along the east elevation. It features a corbelled brick cornice with inset square panels. The addition contains 11, single-light windows with brick sills. The surface parking lot adjacent to the west of the bank is historically associated with the property as it was intended to offer customers a convenient and easily accessible place to park their vehicles.

84. 402 Moulton Street, East, Eyster Key Attorneys at Law, 1974 (C)

Office/Post-Modernist

AHC ID: Mo1465, Boundary Increase

This 2-story building is concrete construction with a dark, brown brick veneer exterior. The rectangular building features a flat roof with parapet topped by metal coping. A wide cornice surrounds the building. It features six rows of vertical stretcher bricks where alternating columns protrude slightly. The bottom of the cornice features three bands of brick headers, with each row recessed from the other. The building is characterized by narrow vertical window bays that extend from ground-level to the base of the cornice. Each is recessed and separated by a brick wall. Each contains a single, tinted fixed light at each floor separated by a spandrel panel. The façade is symmetrical and 5 bays (W, W, D, W, W) with a central, full-height recessed entrance. The door is a two-leaf, wood panel door with fabric awning. Above the door is a large spandrel panel followed by a large, square tinted window. A fixed sconce is on either side of the door. The side elevations have 7 window bays. The 4th bay of the east elevation is broken to accommodate a side entry door.

85. 405 Moulton Street, East, First Christian Church, 1897, Remodeled 1942 (C)

Corner Tower/Gothic Revival

AHC ID: Mo1466, Boundary Increase

Photograph #20

This 1-story, Gothic Revival church is wood frame construction with a random-coursed, stone veneer exterior. The church features a steeply-pitched, front gabled roof covered in asphalt shingles. Its front gable end features a diamond-shaped, fixed window. A castellated corner tower projects from the east end of the front façade (north). It has paired, pointed arch, wood-louvered vents at the top of the tower. Beneath the vents on each side is a rectangular stone panel framed by white-colored stone. A pointed-arched, wood-framed window is on the main level of the tower's front. Adjacent to the west of the tower on the façade is a lower entry vestibule with castellated parapet. Beneath the parapet is a stone panel with "First Christian Church engraved on it. Centered on the vestibule's façade is a modern replacement, metal-and-glass door with narrow vertical

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transom followed by large pointed arch transom. Stone steps lead to the entry vestibule. West of the vestibule, a pointed arch window is on the façade of the main sanctuary. The east elevation of the church features 7, single-light, flat-headed windows. A lower gabled wing (c.1940) projects from the south end of the east elevation. It is stone-veneered with paired, 2-over-2, double-hung wood sash windows. A large, gabled wing extends from the south end of the church's west elevation. This wing (1960) features a gabled roof and brick veneer exterior. The exaggerated gable end on its front façade (west) covers a recessed entryway with metal-and-glass doors and a flat awning. Its north elevation contains ten 2(horizontal)-over-2(horizontal), double-hung metal sash windows.

This church first occurs on the 1913 Sanborn maps as the Church of Christ. By the 1927 Sanborn, it was renamed the First Christian Church. Both maps confirm that the church was frame with a wood exterior, but an entry vestibule were present. In 1942, the present tower and stone veneer were added and the building extended to the south, and a gabled wing added to the east. The same footprint continued through 1953. The 1961 Sanborn map update confirms that the large west wing was constructed in 1960.

86. 109 Moulton Street, East, Parking Garage, 2025
Boundary Increase

(NC)

This modern garage has four levels of parking including its rooftop. It is concrete construction with brick-veneer applied to its support columns along its first floor. The brick-veneered entrance fronts 1st Avenue NE. An exterior metal staircase is at the northwest corner and protected by a modern arched canopy. The north elevation of the building contains five storefronts, each comprised of two-leaf metal and glass doors with flanking display windows, transoms and a metal awning. The first floor of the elevation is brick veneer.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Commerce

Entertainment and Recreation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1887-1979

Significant Dates

1887, 1927

1906

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The New Decatur-Albany Historic District was designated to the National Register in 1995 for its local significance under Criterion A in the areas of **Community Planning and Development (Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase)**, **Commerce** (Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase) and **Entertainment and Recreation (Additional Documentation)**, and Criterion C in the area of **Architecture (Additional Documentation and Boundary Increase)**. The 1995 designation has a period of significance from 1887 to 1941. The amended district maintains these four areas of significance but extends the period of significance to account for

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post-World War II growth and development. As amended, the period of significance begins in 1887 when developers designed and laid out the progressive, New South town of New Decatur. The Johnson Building (Resource #23) was also erected that year and is the oldest extant building in the district. The period of significance extends to 1979 to account for the continued growth and development of the business district through the post-World War II years and city planning initiatives through the 1970s. The updated period of significance allows for the inclusion of commercial and religious architecture comprising the Boundary Increase Areas, which comprehensively document the renewed development of the central business district following World War II. New construction continued through the 1970s including a number of surface parking lots tied to Operation New Decatur, a municipal effort inspired by Urban Renewal to revitalize downtown Decatur. Following the 1970s, Operation New Decatur was winding down, and new construction virtually ceased with only one building erected in the following decade, making 1979 a more natural break in development.

As amended, the historical context is expanded upon to more comprehensively chronicle the significance of the four areas of significance, accounting for both the Boundary Decrease and Increase areas. In the areas of Community Planning and Development and Commerce, resources within the amended district are dominated by commercial and business-related buildings spanning the late-19th century through the 1979 with the construction of an office building at 101 Johnston Street (Resource #48). The year 1979 also marks the end of Operation New Decatur, a planning initiative fostering revitalization of the district, and at which time the program was coming to a close. Resources in the amended chronicle the early establishment of New Decatur, a “Twin City” to adjacent Decatur, and its growth and development that coincide with periods of prosperity, and the later efforts of Operation New Decatur. In 1887, New Decatur was planned and laid out as a progressive New South city. The town was designed to be the “Chicago of the South” to attract northern industrialists. Its design included broad streets and a central park, and also set aside distinct zones for residential enclaves, industrial development and a business district. The amended historic district encompasses much of what was initially laid out to serve as the new city’s business district, its gridded layout intact. 2nd Avenue quickly emerged as the central commercial corridor within the business district, with commercial blocks radiating outward from the cross streets. During the late-19th and early-20th century, New Decatur church congregations erected sanctuaries within the planned business district, concentrated between the central commercial corridor along 2nd Avenue and the planned residential sectors to the east and south-southwest. Such a pattern of development allowed for a more centralized location accessible to a wider residential area. In 1927, New Decatur (then named Albany) was annexed into the earlier river city of Decatur. In the years leading up to and through the post-World War II years, business development expanded outward from the central commercial corridor, most of which comprises the Boundary Increase. This development is distinct from the traditional commercial blocks along 2nd Avenue in that buildings are less concentrated, many larger in scale with expansive parking lots to accommodate increased automobile ownership. A number of surface parking lots within the Boundary Increase were established in the 1970s likely as a result of Operation New Decatur, many of which replaced commercial blocks that were demolished.

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In the area of Entertainment and Recreation, the amended statement of significance accounts for the Boundary Decrease and the removal of the Princess Theater, as well as newly discovered information related to the early history of the New Decatur Opera House (#50) formerly referred to as the Cotaco Opera House). Built in 1906, the New Decatur Opera House was the first such venue established in New Decatur, and the second in the greater Decatur area. It served as a theater until 1925 when the theater portion of the building was razed.

The amended historic context expands upon the Architecture context to more comprehensively document significant building types and styles occurring within the 1995 district boundary and the Boundary Increase. The period of significance under the Architecture context begins in 1897 with the construction of the earliest extant resource in the amended district. It extends to 1974 with the construction of a Post-Modernist office building (Resource #84), the last of the architecturally distinguishing buildings reflecting Modernist designs. Among the 85 resources within the amended district, commercial architecture predominates. Nearly half of the commercial buildings are classified as one- and two-part commercial blocks, most incorporating a combination of design elements that, together, convey the Commercial Style. Commercial buildings within the Boundary Increase are typically larger in scale, free-standing buildings, including notable mid-rise financial buildings, office buildings, and transportation-related businesses. The highest percentage of extant buildings was erected during the post-war years through the 1970s. New construction in the Boundary Increase slowed significantly after the 1970s. In addition to the Commercial Style, a high percentage of the commercial buildings reflect Modernist design attributed to the continued prosperity the city experienced in the post-war years. Distinct Modernist styles represented in the district include the International Style and Brutalism. In addition to the new construction of the post-War years, storefronts and facades of the earlier commercial blocks, particularly those within the central commercial corridor, reveal upgrades to appear sleeker and more modern. Also represented within the Boundary Increase of the amended district are exemplary representations of church sanctuaries, all with corner towers and reflecting the Late Gothic Revival Style.

Significant dates include 1887 when the town was laid, and 1928 when New Decatur/Albany was annexed into the City of Decatur. The year 1906 is significant as the year the New Decatur Opera House (#50) was erected, providing a social and cultural center for New Decatur residents and those of Northern Alabama.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The following context is a compilation of the statement of significance narrative presented in the 1995 National Register nomination and further study conducted by the author of the amended nomination.

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CRITERION A: COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT, COMMERCE (1887-1979)

Early Settlement of Morgan County and the City of Decatur

Morgan County, Alabama was formed by an act of the Alabama Territorial General Assembly on February 6, 1818, nearly two years prior to the establishment of the State of Alabama. The county, which was originally named Cotaco, is situated in the northern part of Alabama with the Tennessee River forming its northern boundary. The river, along with the numerous creeks and tributaries that traverse the county, played a significant role in its early settlement and growth as an agrarian-based economy and center of trade. The earliest towns in present-day Morgan County emerged along the banks of the Cotaco and Flint creeks. Among those included Flint, Danville, Bluff City, Decatur, and Hartselle. The first county seat was established at Somerville in 1818. The name of the county was changed in 1821 in honor of General Daniel Morgan, and in 1891, the county seat relocated to the City of Decatur.¹⁰

An understanding of the establishment and growth of the town of New Decatur/Albany would not be possible without a general background of its predecessor and Twin City, Decatur. Decatur has its beginnings prior to the formation of Cotaco County when, in 1817, Dr. Henry Rhodes established a ferry crossing the Tennessee River. The ferry landing was sited on the southern bank of the river and was the only ferry crossing the Tennessee River. A small village referred to as Rhodes Ferry quickly emerged around the landing as settlers recognized the valuable advantages the river offered. It was not before long that Rhodes Ferry was a flourishing shipping center for the transport of cotton down the Tennessee River to New Orleans.¹¹

By 1819, shortly following the formation of the county, a town was surveyed and laid out in Sections 7, 17, and 18 in Township 5, Range 4 west at Rhodes Ferry. The plat adopted a gridded plan; however, rather than a traditional east to west and north to south arrangement, the streets were oriented to parallel to the Tennessee River. In 1821, patents for the tracts were issued to the Decatur Land Company, which was organized a year earlier with the following trustees: George Peck, Henry Rhodes, Jesse Garth, McKinney Holderness and Isaac Lane.¹² Shortly thereafter, the name of the settlement officially changed to Decatur in honor of the U.S. Naval officer, Stephen Decatur.

Decatur was officially incorporated in 1826; however, despite it being a regional trading center and river terminal, residential growth was relatively slow. The construction of the Tuscumbia-Decatur Railroad in the 1830s fueled a slight growth in population of Decatur as the rail line provided an inland route that bypassed the nearby town of Muscle Shoals. In 1837, Decatur was a

¹⁰ Donna J. Siebenthaler, "Morgan County," the *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, Alabama Humanities Alliance, May 5, 2021; <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1351#:~:text=The%20county%20was%20created%20from,%2C%20Virginia%2C%20and%20the%20Carolinas.<accessed June 1, 2022>>

¹¹ William Jenkins and John Knox, *The Story of Decatur, Alabama*, Decatur Printing Company, Inc, 1970; p.17 and 42.

¹² Jenkins and Knox, 1970; p.43-44.

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one of the many stops along the 1,000-mile Trail of Tears, witnessing 2,300 Cherokee pass through. They arrived by boat along the river and were then transferred to the railroad to head westward.¹³

By 1850, development in Decatur remained low with a mere population of 606 residents.¹⁴ This would soon change when the first train to cross the Tennessee River was built at Decatur in 1855. The future growth of the town was inevitable, and a brief economic upsurge ensued. Unfortunately, the Civil War proved a major setback to Decatur. The town held a uniquely strategic spot in northern Alabama. First, the Memphis and Charleston Railroad was one of a few east-west lines in the confederacy that connected the Mississippi River to the east coast. The bridge crossing the Tennessee River at Decatur was of vital importance. Additionally, Decatur had rail connections north to Nashville, and the Tennessee River remained a significant transportation route.¹⁵ Decatur hosted the headquarters of both the United States and Confederate forces during the war. In 1862, federal troops destroyed the railroad bridge crossing the Tennessee River, and in 1864, the city was the site of the Battle of Decatur. During the federal occupation of Decatur, all but four buildings were torn down to be reused in the construction of barracks and other military structures.¹⁶ Three survive today.

Rebuilding of Decatur following the Civil War was slow through the Reconstruction years (1865-1874), yet businesses gradually returned. It was not until the ravaged railroads were reconstructed when noticeable growth ensued. In 1870, Decatur obtained a new charter, increasing its corporate limits. This short-lived building campaign in Decatur was stifled once more, when in 1877, a fire erupted along Bank Street and destroyed the majority of its buildings. The following year, an outbreak of yellow fever struck Decatur, further stalling growth.¹⁷ Despite these setbacks, the following decade saw the city's first significant boom period, which was largely attributed to the organization of the Decatur Land Improvement and Furnace Company in 1887. The company acquired 5,600 acres of land and promoted a new, progressive city to the southeast of Decatur to be named New Decatur.¹⁸

New Decatur: The New South Progressive City

The promise of the new city attracted an influx of northern capital as pamphlets and newspapers spread the merits and possibilities of the "Gateway City."¹⁹ A development firm, led by Major E.C. Gordon, worked with renowned New York landscape architect, Nathan Franklin Barrett, to lay out the city. The team envisioned New Decatur as the "Chicago of the South" with broad streets and

¹³ Rhodes Ferry Park: Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. <https://www.nps.gov/places/rhodes-ferry-park.htm>

¹⁴ Margaret Slater and Phil Thomason, "New Decatur/Albany Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, National Park Service, 1995; Section 8, Page 18-19.

¹⁵ Jenkins and Knox, 1970; p.107.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Shirley D. Qualls, "Bank Street/Old Decatur Historic District-Extension of Bank Street Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form," National Park Service, 1980; Section 8 Page 3-4.

¹⁸ Sarah Lawless, "Decatur," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, Alabama Humanities Alliance, 2009, updated 2021; <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/Article/h-2143> <accessed June 1, 2022>.

¹⁹ Qualls 1980, Section 8 Page 4.

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a large park through the town.²⁰ Gordon “envisioned a city which would be unsurpassed in the lower Tennessee Valley and hurried to develop the unexploited river town.”²¹ New Decatur was to be a progressive city with a focus on manufacturing and industry. Such ideals, often referred to as the New South Movement, were growing in popularity in the southern states following Reconstruction. The term “New South” was first coined by newspaper editor Henry W. Grady, who, in 1874, urged the South to abandon its reliance on an agrarian-based economy for one that embraced modern, industrial development.²² In fact, the naming of streets throughout New Decatur of Confederate and Union Civil War generals was a deliberate attempt to appeal to both northern and southern investors.²³

²⁰ “Park History,” Delano Park, <https://delanopark.org/park-history> <accessed June 2022>

²¹ Margaret Slater and Phil Thomason, “New Decatur/Albany Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, National Park Service, 1995; Section 8, Page 19.

²² Rob Dixon, “New South Era,” *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, Alabama Humanities Alliance, 2009
<http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2128> <accessed June 1, 2022.

²³ Slater and Thomason, 1995; Section 8, Page 19.

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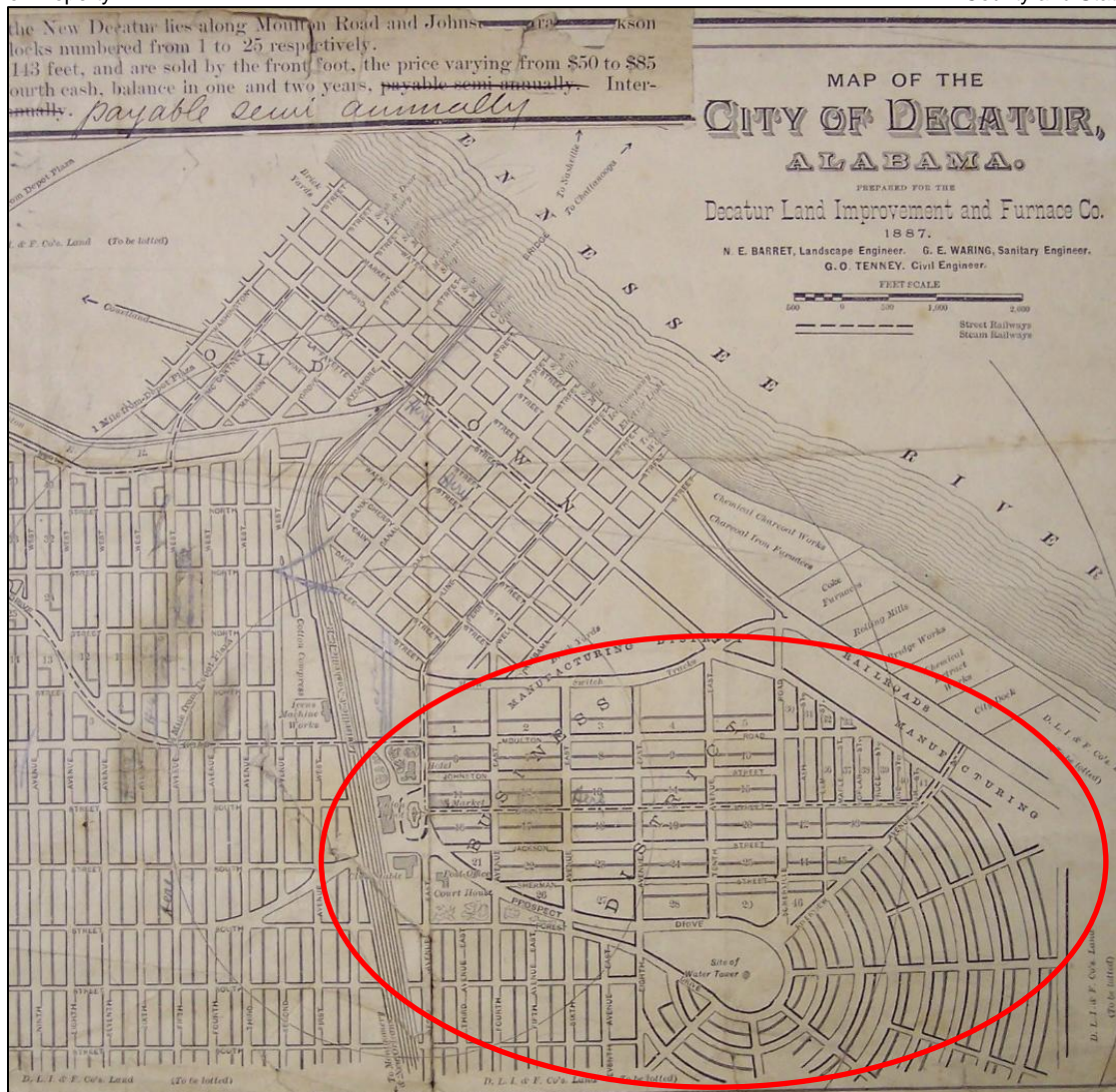


Figure 2. Map of the City of Decatur, 1887; New Decatur circled in red

The 1887 *Map of the City of Decatur* prepared for the Decatur Land Company depicts the original planned layout of New Decatur, which continued the gridded street plan as “Old Town” but adjusted its alignment to conform to a traditional, east-to-west grid (Figure 2). As illustrated, planners included a distinguishing design feature of semi-circular residential streets surrounding the southeast side of a large park named Delano Park. The park was executed as planned, however, the semi-circular streets did not come to fruition, instead continuing a grid layout. Also included in the plan of New Decatur were distinct sectors reserved for a manufacturing district along the Louisville & Nashville corridor and river at the north, and another set aside as a business district. According to the plat, the business sector of New Decatur generally lies along Moulton Road and Johnston and Sherman Streets in blocks numbered from 1 to 25. Second Avenue was at the heart of the business district and would quickly develop as the primary commercial corridor for the new city. The business lots measured 25 x 143 feet and were sold by the front foot. As amended, most

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of the New Decatur-Albany Historic District falls within the business district as set aside by city planners. Some of this area is excluded from the district due to loss of integrity, particularly lots laid out at the north end of the business district.

Within a few months following the formation of the Decatur Land Improvement and Furnace Company, several large manufacturers were secured for the new city. Among those included were the Charcoal Chemical Works, American Oak Extract Works, which was the largest enterprise of its kind in the world, the Ivens & Sons Machine Shop and numerous others. By December of 1887, forty-one establishments were planned for New Decatur, including the immense car and construction shops of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. More than 500 houses and buildings were erected by the close of that year. Landscape engineers laid out sewage and drainage systems, and the City established its electric, telephone, and streetcar services. The development in 1887 was so extensive that the population increased from 1,200 to 5,000 residents by the end of the year, exceeding that of Old Town to the northwest. In addition to the numerous industries to develop in New Decatur, many businesses were established to serve the growing number of residents, businessmen, and tourists.²⁴

An article published in the *New York Times* in 1887 entitled “New Life in Old Towns: A Type of the New South’s Progressiveness” chose New Decatur as its case study. According to the article, New Decatur was a “representative town of those new-born in Alabama.”²⁵ The article goes on to attest to the promising future of Decatur:

This is a boom that is legitimate. There may be a measure of speculation in it, but this is to be said: “Even were the land company syndicate to desert the town when these new industries are under way, the town would be safe and in the way to a lasting prosperity, for Decatur is no mere paper town as some land company progeny are not so many miles away; she has a foundation; the land company, its maps, and its prospectus, are not all that there is to her. She has rare natural advantages; she gets the opportunity to develop and make the most of them; she has good commercial communication with the outside world now, with a river on one side and two railroads on the other, while other important railroads are building toward her.”²⁶

On January 11, 1888, New Decatur received its first U.S. post office with Luther B. Wyatt as postmaster.²⁷ The following year, only two years after its establishment, New Decatur was officially chartered. The “old town” and New Decatur functioned as separate entities, yet the two were closely intertwined due to their proximity and shared railroad and river resources. In 1890, a new canal at Muscle Shoals was completed, fueling Decatur and New Decatur’s economies. The Tennessee River depot in Old Town was a major shipping point between Chattanooga and the Shoals. Together, the two towns’ economies and populations thrived, ultimately leading to the

²⁴ Jenkins and Knox, 1970; p.145-146.

²⁵ “New Life in Old Towns: A Type of the New South’s Progressiveness,” *New York Times*, March 1, 1887.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Jenkins and Knox, 1970; p.173.

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relocation of the county seat from Somerville to Decatur in 1891.²⁸ The courthouse was established in Old Decatur (“Old Town”).²⁹

An 1888 Bird’s-Eye View illustration of Decatur depicts “old town” and the rapidly developing New Decatur (Figure 3). As illustrated, the original town and New Decatur were separated by corridors of the two railroads that merged near present-day 1st Avenue, then traveled along a straight path through the heart of Old Town before crossing the Tennessee River bridge. Old Decatur is shown along the bank of the river, while New Decatur is depicted inland, opposite the railroad tracks.

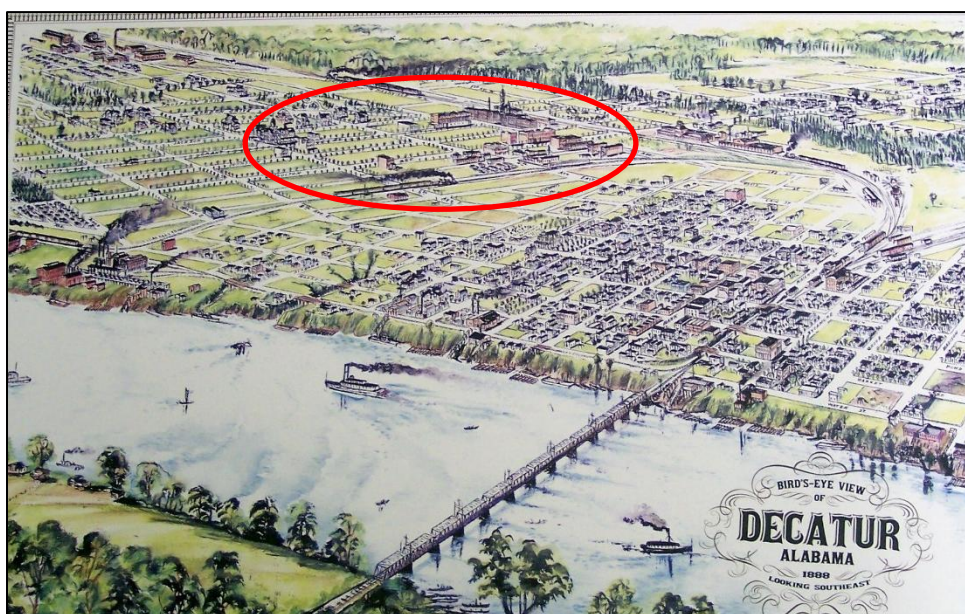


Figure 3. Bird’s Eye View of Decatur, 1888, looking southeast
Courtesy of Morgan County Archives

The area circled in red is the approximate area of New Decatur designated as the Business District and which largely comprises the amended district boundary

²⁸ Margaret Slater and Phil Thomason, “New Decatur/Albany Historic District National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, National Park Service, 1995; Section 8, Page 20.

²⁹ Note: As presented in this report, Old Town and Old Decatur are interchangeable and encompass the entirety of the original town, including its central business district and residential sectors to the east and west.

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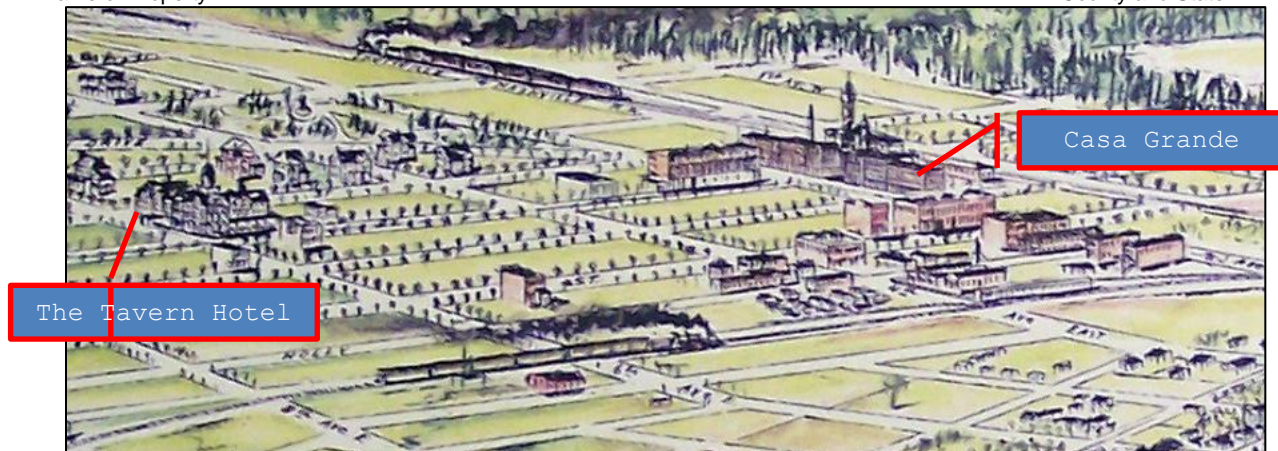


Figure 4. Detail View of the New Decatur Business District as Depicted on the 1888 Bird's Eye View Reproduction

Late-19th Century Building Boom of New Decatur



Figure 5. Casa Grande hotel, c. 1910s

Source: Decatur: Postcard History Series

Development of New Decatur following its inception and layout was almost instantaneous. Two early hotels were planned by developers to attract visitors and investors. Both are depicted on the 1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (Sanborn) and Bird's-Eye View (reproduction). Opposite the railroad depot on 1st Avenue was the large site of the former Casa Grande Hotel fronting 2nd Avenue. The Casa Grande Hotel (not extant) was initially planned as a monumental edifice in New Decatur. However, the illustration depicted on the bird's eye view is a conceptual drawing and the hotel, as shown, never came to fruition. Instead, a smaller and less grand hotel was erected here. Its associated, impressive stable was located further north on 2nd Avenue. Also shown on maps of the late-19th century is the former Tavern Hotel, located at the southwest corner of the intersection of 6th Avenue and Grant Street. The Tavern was built by the Decatur Land Company and was among the finest and most luxurious hotels in Alabama during its heyday. Unfortunately, neither hotel survived the early-twentieth century. The Casa Grande Hotel was rebuilt in 1904 at a much more modest scale and design (#19, Figure 5, Photograph #5). By 1913, the Tavern was deteriorating and sold to local business leader C.E. Malone. It was later used as an apartment building until 1923 when it was destroyed by fire.³⁰ The large stable and livery of the Casa Grande hotel survives on 2nd Avenue. In 1919, the stable closed and the

³⁰ David Breland, "the Tavern Hotel: The "Showplace of Decatur," *Armchair Moco*, April 7, 2020; <https://www.armchairmoco.com/fun-facts/the-tavern-hotel-the-showplace-of-decatur#:~:text=Built%20in%201888%2C%20The%20Tavern,luxury%20novelty%20of%20the%20day>. <accessed June 1 2022>

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building remodeled to serve as a silent film and vaudeville playhouse. Of these early inns, the 1904 Casa Grande Hotel survives within the amended New Decatur-Albany Historic District. The Tavern is no longer extant, and the stable of the Casa Grande Hotel, now the Princess Theater, is excluded from the district as part of the Boundary Decrease and is planned for individual designation to the National Register.

A small number of extant buildings survive within the amended district are attributed to the early boom period of New Decatur shortly following its inception. The oldest is the E.S. Johnson Building, erected in 1887 at 330-302 2nd Avenue SE (#23, Figure #6; Photograph #6). The four-story Johnson Building is recognized as the first tall office building built in Decatur. The upper floor was destroyed by fire a few decades after construction, though the building survives as an important edifice on 2nd Avenue and is reminiscent of the city's first significant boom period. Other surviving buildings from this period within the historic district include, but are not limited to, commercial blocks once housing a drugstore and retail space at 113-119 2nd Avenue SE (#s 12 and 13), erected c.1890. A contemporaneous commercial block is located at 226 Moulton Street East (#78), which, according to Sanborn maps and City Directories, housed a water works office, tin shop and other commercial businesses through the years.

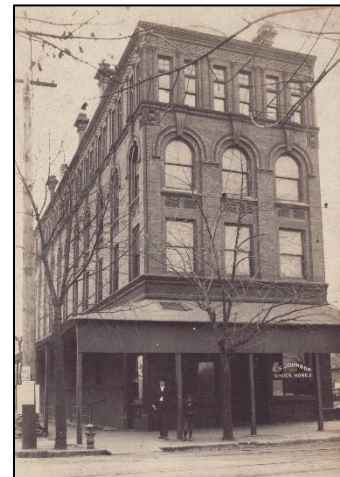


Figure 6. Johnson Building
(#23), c.1900

By 1898, Sanborn maps confirm dense commercial development along 2nd Avenue, the majority of which was brick construction. Commercial blocks also extended from 2nd Avenue along the cross street. The former New Decatur Hotel is shown near the northeast corner of the intersection at 2nd Avenue and Moulton Street (not extant). Among the businesses/offices identified on the Sanborn map that year include banks, hardware stores, the mayor's office, a plumber, furniture store, grocers, a coal office, feed store, dry goods, and a jeweler, among others. Though the Sanborn maps in 1898 do not cover the entirety of the New Decatur-Albany Historic District, as amended, a scattering of commercial development occurred east of the central commercial district along 2nd Avenue between 4th and 6th Avenues.³¹

In addition to hotels established in New Decatur's business district during its early formative years, religion was a vital institution to the community. While some congregations of contemporaneous towns and small cities in the United States established church sanctuaries within the residential enclaves, other communities chose to site religious facilities near, or within, the town's business district. In doing so, the churches were accessible to more residents and neighborhoods. Thus, in New Decatur's business district, churches were generally grouped between 4th and 6th Avenues, east of the central commercial district and accessible to the large residential enclaves to the east and south-southwest. The first known church in the New Decatur business district area was the Central Baptist Church, completed in 1896 at the corner of Grant Street and 6th Avenue SE (not

³¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. Decatur and New Decatur, Alabama, 1898 (Sheets 6 and 7).

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extant). The following year, the First Christian Church, was completed in 1897 at 405 Moulton Street (#85; Photograph #20).

Decatur at the Turn-of-the-20th Century & Annexation

By the turn-of-the-20th century, the new city was heavily populated by northerners, sparking rivalry between the two Decaturs. Both continued to function as separate municipalities, though rapid expansion was quickly merging the two entities. Together, they were frequently referred to in newspapers of the day as the “Twin Cities.” Unlike old Decatur, which was more densely developed, New Decatur covered a larger area, and by the turn-of-the-century encompassed areas referred to as East Decatur, South Decatur and West Decatur.³² An article in the *New Decatur Advertiser* on July 27, 1907 boasts that New Decatur “is undoubtedly one of the best laid out and improved cities in the South.”³³ Another article that year documents the numerous benefits in New Decatur while luring investors and new industries:

New Decatur offers excellent locations for manufacturing sites, cheap fuel, raw materials, splendid transportation, salubrious climate, etc. It is not vain boasting, rather a clear statement of fact, that we have here in New Decatur advantages for manufacturers that it would be difficult to parallel in any other part of the country. What New Decatur is and what she shall be is as much the product of her energy and enterprise as of her natural resources, which are manifold. It may be said that no place of similar size has shown a more rapid advancement than New Decatur, and there is not a branch of her industries which has not shared in this advancement. The city has fine waterworks and a plentiful supply of the finest water in the State. It has excellent electric and gas plants for lighting and heating purposes, two local and long-distance telephones, sewerage, telegraph, schools, churches of various denominations, hotels, two banks which are financial institutions of large resources. We also have a fine electric railway system....The L&N and Southern Railroads center in New Decatur, while the Tennessee River is close by. Real Estate in New Decatur is steadily advancing. The growth of the city is steady and safe, owing principally to splendid railroad advantages, fine agricultural back country, increased manufacturing industries, and opportunities for safe and profitable investments and pleasant homes.³⁴



Figure 7. New Decatur Opera House/Payne Theater, Date Unknown

Courtesy of the Morgan County Archives

New Decatur continued to thrive and prosper through the early-20th century. Nearly 40 extant buildings within the amended historic district were built between c.1900 and c.1930. All occurred within the central commercial district along 2nd Avenue and the 100 blocks of its cross streets. Among the notable businesses built in the district include the Casa Grande Hotel (#19), erected in 1904. The New Decatur Opera House (#50) was built in 1906 at 115 Johnston Street, SE (Figure 7; Photograph 12).

³² Slater and Thomason, 1995; Section 8, Page 20; AND Jenkins and Knox, 1970; p.180.

³³ “Midsummer Edition” of the *New Decatur Advertiser*, July 27, 1907; Jenkins and Knox, 1970; p.180.

³⁴ Marcus E. Strouss, “New Decatur,” *New Decatur Advertiser*, April 18, 1907, Page 3.

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Built in c.1930 is the former JC Penny Department Store at 206 2nd Avenue SE (#17). The businesses housed in these buildings are those expected to occur within a thriving small southern city, where the commercial center provided residents with essential goods and services, as well as luxury items. Businesses noted in city directories included restaurants, cleaners, hardware, attorney offices, shoe stores, veterinary services, jewelers, butchers, markets and groceries, among a variety of other concerns.

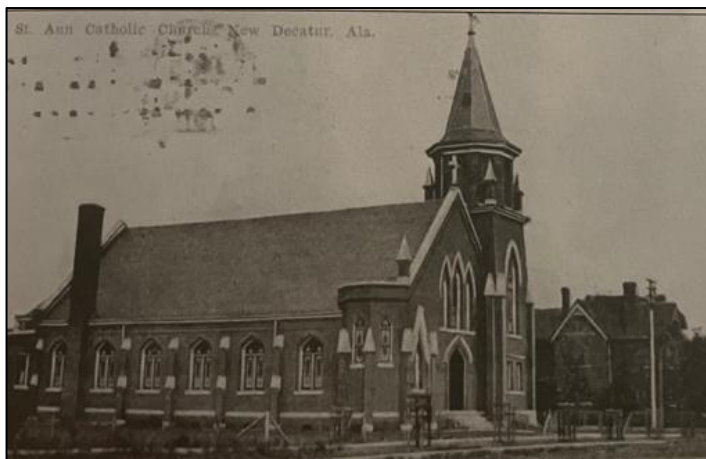


Figure 8. St. Ann's Catholic Church (Mo1430), c.1910

Source: Morgan County Museum and Archives

Other notable edifices erected during the first quarter of the 20th century include the Church of St. Ann (#57; Figure 8), built in 1906 at 250 Johnston Street SE (Photograph #15), and the first Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Company Building (#52; Photograph #13) at 216 Johnston Street SE built c.1920. In 1925, the Grant Street Church of Christ (#43) erected a sanctuary at 240 Grant Street SE (Photograph #10). All are within the Boundary Increase of the historic district.

While the town planners envisioned a large business district extending from the depot on 1st Avenue, east toward 6th Avenue, the 1913 Sanborn map illustrates the different development pattern that occurred. Generally, commercial development was concentrated from 1st Avenue east to 4th Avenue. East of 4th Avenue, however, blocks were predominantly occupied by residential development with a scattering of commercial concerns and churches.³⁵ This generally remained the case through the Depression years and World War II. It was not until after the War when the blocks east of 4th Avenue began redevelopment toward a business-centric district envisioned by town planners in the late-19th century.

Throughout the first quarter of the 20th century, New Decatur was a thriving and prosperous town, though it remained intricately tied to adjacent Old Town. The *Decatur Daily* newspaper was established in New Decatur during the early years of the 20th century. The paper began in 1912 to serve the "Twin Cities." The operation first opened in the basement of a building on the northeast corner of Moulton Street and 2nd Avenue. Following the renaming of New Decatur to Albany in 1916, the newspaper was renamed the *Albany-Decatur Daily*. In 1928, the newspaper erected a two-story building at 101 Johnston Street to house its printing presses (not extant).

To avoid confusion with the city names, in September of 1916, New Decatur was renamed to Albany, despite the urging of many civic leaders that the two towns unite. The new name was

³⁵ Sanborn Maps, 1913.

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favored by the many northerners that established businesses in the city.³⁶ Albany was short-lived, however, when it quickly became clear that the Twin Cities would benefit the most by combining their resources. In 1927, Albany and Decatur joined to form a combined municipality. The *Albany-Decatur Daily* newspaper was officially renamed the *Decatur Daily*. In 1928, the City of Decatur assisted the state in the completion of the first highway bridge across the Tennessee River.³⁷ The Keller Memorial Bridge was completed in 1928, extending Highway 31 from Nashville, Tennessee through downtown Decatur where it follows along 6th Avenue through the New Decatur/Albany area. Forming the eastern boundary of a portion of the amended historic district, 6th Avenue/Highway 31 became a high-trafficked thoroughfare that ultimately established an informal demarcation line between the business district and the residential neighborhood to the east.

The Depression hit Decatur hard. Numerous New Decatur/Albany businesses closed, as well as industrial enterprises such as the L&N Railroad. The economy quickly rebounded when the Tennessee Valley Authority erected a public use river terminal at Decatur. By 1940, the city of Decatur, and its annexed sister city, boasted 41 manufacturing plants, six wholesale houses and many retail shops. Among the numerous industries represented were the manufacturing of cotton textiles, fertilizer, steel barges, boats, bricks and tiles, among others.³⁸

New Decatur-Albany Historic District: Post-World War II through the 1970s

Following World War II, renewed prosperity took hold in and around Decatur, which consequently resulted in an outflow of residents to the growing suburbs. Gradually, the prosperity of the downtown business districts along Bank Street in Old Town and 2nd Avenue in the former Albany declined as businesses relocated to the suburban shopping centers catering to the rapid growth of automobile ownership. This trend was not limited to Decatur. Nationwide, suburbanization had emerged as a largely American phenomenon, and commercial businesses once characterizing America's Main Streets closed permanently and historic buildings razed. In many instances, cities and local businesses attempted to compete with the shopping centers by attracting customers. Among the most common trend was the upgrade of storefronts and facades to appear sleeker and more modern. Offering accessible parking within close proximity to the commercial hub also became commonplace as a means to attract customers.

To compete with the rapid suburbanization characterizing the era, several commercial businesses along 2nd Avenue upgraded their storefronts and facades (see Architectural context). The city began efforts to improve its parking capacity by creating parking lots near the 2nd Avenue commercial corridor. Two parking lots (PL-4 and 13) within the Boundary Increase were established in the 1950s. Despite these efforts, numerous businesses permanently closed and the commercial hub along 2nd Avenue was in decline by the 1950s. While the commercial heart of New Decatur struggled, the increased automobile ownership fueled national tourism, and subsequently, traffic along Highway 31 through Decatur. Thus, multiple auto-related businesses

³⁶ Jenkins and Knox, 1970; p.239.

³⁷ Slater and Thomason, 1995; Section 8, Page 21.

³⁸ *Ibid*, Page 21.

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emerged along 6th Avenue and within its vicinity, including multiple service and filling stations, as well as hotels and motor courts, by the late-1940s.

New construction immediately following World War II in New Decatur's business district tended to occur along the cross streets, east of 2nd Avenue. Among the handful of businesses that constructed new buildings during this period include the former Kroell Implements Company (#s 1 and 2, Boundary Increase) at 115-119 1st Avenue NE; the former Atlas Auto Financing Building (#35, Boundary Increase; Photograph #8) on 4th Avenue SE; and the Forbes & Son Piano and Monarch Supermarket on Moulton Street (#72). South of Gordon Drive, Culver's Cleaners opened in 1946 at 334 1st Avenue SE (#6; Photograph #22). The cleaners, located within the Boundary Increase, served the residents of Decatur for nearly 70 years.

At the end of the 1950s, two financial institutions erected prominent, mid-rise edifices within the business district. The First Federal Savings and Loan Building (#44; Figure 9), completed in 1957 at 255 Grant Street, SE, and in 1959, the former First National Bank (#83; Figure 10; Photograph #19) erected an impressive building at 254 Moulton Street, East. The two bank buildings are among the largest erected in Decatur and speak to the strong economy of the post-War years. Both are within the Boundary Increase of the amended historic district.



Figure 9. First Federal Savings & Loan Building

Source: 1959 City Directory

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Figure 10. First National Bank, 1959

Source: 1959 City Directory

Financial institutions were not the only organizations erecting substantial buildings within the business district of New Decatur by the late-1950s. In 1959, the Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Company moved its headquarters from its c.1920 building at 216 Johnston Street, SE. The new building, erected at 425 Grant Street, SE (#46) was substantially larger in scale and designed to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population. The building was significantly enlarged in 1963 and survives as one of the largest edifices within New Decatur's business district (Photograph #11).

Nationwide following World War II, the populace was "eager to replenish its spiritual wells" and "streamed back to church in unprecedented numbers."³⁹ A multitude of factors contributed to this religious revival in America including the post-War baby boom and a much-improved economy. As the Cold War loomed, American began to view itself as a Christian nation in contrast with atheistic communism. Throughout the country, newly formed congregations erected churches, particularly in the rapidly expanding suburbs. Earlier church congregations experienced membership growth, consequently resulting in the construction of large-scale additions, annexes, and educational facilities. New Decatur/Albany was no exception to this national phenomenon. Amid wartime, the First Christian Church (#85), constructed in 1897 at 405 Moulton Street, received an extensive remodeling in 1942 when its present tower was completed, and a stone veneer applied. A large wing was added by 1960. St. Ann's Catholic Church (#57) grew considerably during the post-War years. In c.1945, a rectory was erected adjacent to the west of the church and in 1955, the church added a school and convent annex (#55; Photograph #13). Similarly, the Grant Street Church of Christ (#43; Photograph #10) added a large education annex in 1953 at its rear. All fall within the Boundary Increase of the amended New Decatur-Albany Historic District.

³⁹ Joanne Beckman, "Religion in Post-World War II America, National Humanities Center, Duke University, 2020; <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/twenty/tkeyinfo/trelww2.htm> <accessed June 1, 2022>

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Figure 11. Motel 6, c.1960s

Courtesy of Morgan County Archives

As the church facilities grew and larger commercial and office buildings were erected during the post-War years, the blocks between 4th and 6th Avenues that were dominated by residential development began to transition to a more business-centric landscape. Also noteworthy is the emergence of large-scale parking lots to accommodate increased automobile ownership and encourage suburbanites to patronize downtown Decatur businesses. During the 1960s, a small number of commercial buildings were erected and are generally evenly distributed throughout the business district. Taking advantage of increased tourist traffic along Highway 31/6th

Avenue, the Downtowner Motor Inn (later Motel 6) erected a large, multi-story hotel at the corner of Johnston Street and 6th Avenue (#63; Figure 11; Photograph #17). In 1964, the *Decatur Daily* installed the nation's first offset newspaper press across from its office on 1st Avenue.⁴⁰ In 1972, the paper moved its offices into a new sprawling facility (#5; Photograph #4) on 1st Avenue SE. The *Decatur Daily* has continued to serve the city for more than one century. Another notable business to erect a substantial building within the district is the First American Bank who completed its multi-story bank building in 1963 at 251 Johnston Street SE (#58). All of these properties occur within the Boundary Increase of the historic district.

Historic aerial imagery in 1958 and 1982 attests to a major shift in new commercial growth away from downtown to the rapidly expanding suburbs. During the 1960s and through the 1970s, suburbanization dramatically expanded south from downtown Decatur to State Route 67. The thoroughfare runs east to west south of the city, crossing Highway 31. While residential subdivisions transformed the built environment here, considerable commercial and industrial growth emerged along Highway 31, south of Gordon Street to Route 67. This development, which took advantage of the high-trafficked transportation route, is surrounded by paved parking lots. It included auto-related businesses, small commercial concerns, as well as large, big box retailers, office parks, car dealerships, supermarkets and drive-thru fast food restaurants. Between the highway and the railroad, increased industrial development also occurred during this period. This dramatic shift of business away from downtown posed significant challenges.

The built environment just north of the amended historic district significantly transformed from the early-1960s through the 1970s. During this period, much of the railroad corridor, which separated the two Decatur's, was removed to make way for large-scale construction. The few remaining industrial facilities along the former switch were also removed, and Lee Street took its

⁴⁰ "The Decatur Daily," State of Alabama Historic Marker.

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present path separating New Decatur and Old Town. A major stimulus to this trend was "Operation New Decatur," a revitalization effort inspired by Urban Renewal.

As early as 1960, city planners were developing "an action program to develop a new community."⁴¹ In 1967, the City of Decatur introduced their plan "Operation New Decatur" to the public. *The Decatur Daily* published a 24-page special insert showcasing the vision for a revitalized downtown designed to adapt to modern needs, particularly increased automobile use.⁴² Though the plan did not directly reference the national Urban Renewal movement, it was certainly inspired by the program. Operation New Decatur was a planning program "designed to help Decatur assume its responsibilities in the future growth of the North Alabama area."⁴³ A major initiative of Operation New Decatur was aimed toward downtown revitalization, including the establishment of a "2nd Avenue Mall." The program recognized the importance of the central business district, and the city's commitment to rebuild the central core of Decatur, which was then declining as a result of suburbanization. Operation New Decatur outlined specific objectives to achieve this goal, which were largely in line with Urban Renewal programs occurring throughout the United States:

The entire central business of Decatur will be updated to meet the current needs of its people. The program calls for the removal of decayed areas and condemnation and the rehabilitation of remaining buildings, and the redesigning of the entire area to allow for property traffic flow and adequate off-street parking. The Bank Street and Second Avenue areas will have as their center a shopping mall which allows people to enjoy shopping once again in their downtown area without the interference of automobile traffic.⁴⁴

Operation New Decatur had a significant impact on the built environment of the historic district. Many early commercial buildings that were in deteriorating conditions were acquired by the city and subsequently razed. The vacant lots were often adapted as surface parking. The lots were intended to encourage customers to return to the commercial district by providing easy and accessible parking within close proximity to businesses. As the plan for a 2nd Avenue Mall intended for a pedestrian map without traffic interference, the establishment of nearby parking lots was vital to attract customers. Of the 14 surface parking lots within the historic district, six (6) were established in the 1970s. Historic aerial imagery reveals that most of these parking lots developed on the sites of former commercial blocks that were demolished. While there is no confirmed direct ties to Operation New Decatur, the city's acquisition of abandoned and deteriorating buildings specifically for their removal is a strong indication of an intentional plan to beautify the downtown district by ridding the area of blighted buildings.

⁴¹ "Operation New Decatur: An Action Program to Build a New Community," A pamphlet prepared for the City of Decatur, c.1960.

⁴² N.c. "Building a New City: Operation New Decatur," *The Decatur Daily*, March 28, 1967, pg.4.

⁴³ "Operation New Decatur: An Action Program to Build a New Community," A pamphlet prepared for the City of Decatur, c.1960.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

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As Operation New Decatur was underway, so too were the planned revitalization efforts south of Lee Street encompassing the 2nd Avenue commercial core. Though the program initially intended for a central shopping mall that was pedestrian-friendly while prohibiting automobile traffic, the city planners carried out an alternative strategy to draw customers back to the downtown commercial hub. The city erected a wide concrete canopy along some of the commercial blocks fronting 2nd Avenue with the idea to offer a pedestrian-friendly corridor comparable to the covered walkways of the commercial shopping strips and malls in the suburban areas. The canopies provided shade and protection from weather, yet they were highly insensitive to the historic aesthetic of the district. Not only did the canopies directly impact buildings' façades, but they also concealed the historic storefronts. The installation of the canopies was largely ineffective in revitalizing the 2nd Avenue commercial district.



Figure 12. 300 Block of 2nd Avenue with Concrete Canopy, c.1995

Source: 1995 New Decatur-Albany Historic District National Register Nomination

In addition to the concrete canopies along 2nd Avenue, new construction within the amended historic district continued through the 1970s, including commercial and office buildings and surface parking lots. The latter were undoubtedly attributed to Operation New Decatur initiatives. Four office buildings were erected during the 1970s, all of which are within the Boundary Increase of the amended historic district. These include the Albany Executive Building (#36), built in 1972 at 201 Gordon Drive (Photograph #21); the Key Attorneys office building completed in 1974 at 402 Moulton Street (#84); and the Certified Accountants building, erected in 1979 at 101 Johnston Street (#48). The City Café (#4) at 101 101 1st Avenue SE was built in 1970, and in 1976, the Anderson's Furniture Company at 430 Johnston Street erected an annex to its thriving business. Following the construction of the office building on Johnston Street in 1979, Operation New Decatur was winding down and commercial growth virtually ceased. Subsequent alteration to the

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built environment of the district was primarily a result of demolition and modern infill construction.

New Decatur Preservation Initiatives and New Development (1980 through 2025)

In 1984, the Downtown Area Revitalization Effort (D.A.R.E) was established to encourage economic revitalization of downtown Decatur, including the New Decatur-Albany Historic District. The organization became Main Street of Decatur in 1990 and was headquartered within the historic district. Among the initiatives of Main Street of Decatur was to spearhead various renovation projects throughout the city, as well as to encourage a shift in building use from retail to professional services. The latter was spearheaded as an effort to make the preservation of the buildings economically feasible.⁴⁵ In 1990, the City of Decatur also formed a Historic Preservation Commission to create locally designated historic districts subject to historic overlay zoning that includes a review of all building and demolition permits for appropriateness.

It wasn't until 1995, however, when the central commercial district along 2nd Avenue of New Decatur was recognized for its historic and architectural significance and placed on the National Register. Shortly following the designation of the New Decatur-Albany Historic District to the National Register in 1995, the Main Street of Decatur and Historic Preservation Commission were successful in efforts to remove the concrete canopies along 2nd Avenue and restore, as much as possible, the historic aesthetic of the streetscape. This reversal was a positive initiative to preserve the character of the commercial district and its many surviving historic edifices. Their removal has encouraged property owners to properly restore their building facades, and ultimately, the overall historic aesthetic of the district. Such changes are successfully returning 2nd Avenue to a thriving commercial corridor in downtown Decatur. In 2004, the Downtown Redevelopment Authority was formed to "provide consistent support and promotion of the city's redevelopment projects and create easier avenues for private developers to build and remodel in the downtown and riverfront areas."⁴⁶

Since the Albany-New Decatur Historic District was placed on the National Register in 1995, nine (9) buildings within the original historic district boundary have been razed. Unfortunately, all were among the oldest surviving resources in the district, ranging in date from c.1890 to c.1925. Among those were the former Royal Furniture Store at 133 2nd Avenue, NE and the Decatur Light, Power, and Fuel Company Building at 130 1st Avenue NE. The latter was added to the district in 1999 as a boundary increase. Both were demolished by c.2010 to make way for a large campus of the Alabama Center of the Arts.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Slater and Thomason, 1995; Section 8, Page 19.

⁴⁶ Mainstreetalabama.org/Decatur/

⁴⁷ Appendix C includes a detailed inventory of the resources identified on the original 1995 NRHP nomination and the current status of each.

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CRITERION A: ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION (ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION)

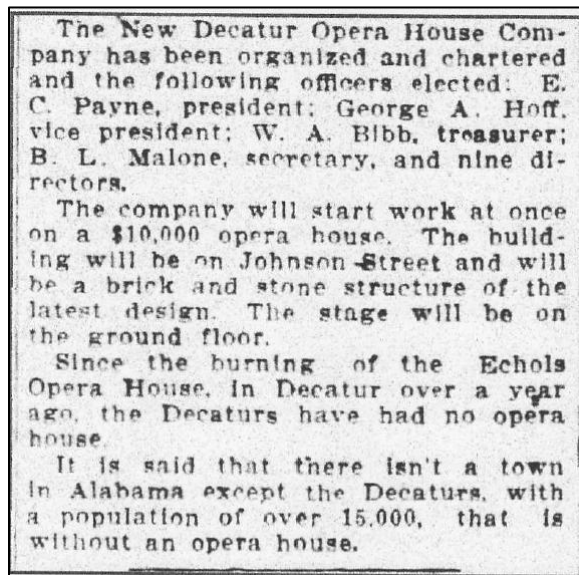


Figure 13. Announcement in the *Montgomery Advertiser* for the New Decatur Opera House, March 25, 1905.

According to the 1995 National Register nomination, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District is significant at the local level in the area of Entertainment and Recreation for possessing two historic theaters that were cultural centers for Decatur residents and visitors – the Cotaco Opera House (NRHP Listed 1986; 86000914) and the Princess Theater. The building located at 115 Johnston Street SE (#50) was designated to the NRHP under the name of the Cotaco Opera House with a date of construction of c.1890. However, subsequent research has confirmed that Cotaco Opera House Company never succeeded in establishing a theater in Decatur or New-Decatur. The building located on Johnston Street is confirmed to have been built in 1906 for the New Decatur Opera House Company.⁴⁸ The following year, it was renamed the Payne Theater. In 1909, the building was purchased by the Masonic order

of New Decatur. The second floor was converted from office space to a Masonic Hall, while the remainder of the building continued to operate as a theater, renamed as the Masonic Theater.⁴⁹ The theater was the social center of Decatur where musicals, vaudeville, and early in the 20th century, moving pictures could be seen. It operated as the Masonic Theater until the theater portion of the building was demolished in 1925. In 1976, the deteriorated building was bought by the City through reported Urban Renewal initiatives. A private buyer purchased the building in 1984 and by 1990, renovation for office and retail uses was completed.⁵⁰

Under the area of Entertainment and Recreation, the 1995 historic district nomination documents the significance of the Princess Theater located at 112 2nd Avenue NE (1995 inventory #9) as another cultural center in New Decatur. As amended, the Princess Theater is removed from the New Decatur-Albany Historic District as part of the Boundary Decrease.

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE (ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION AND BOUNDARY INCREASE, PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE 1887-1974)

As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District possesses distinguishing building forms and architectural styles reflective of trends in architectural design that characterize American small cities from the late-nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. Not only are the pre-

⁴⁸ *The Montgomery Advertiser*, March 25, 1905.

⁴⁹ Announcement. *Birmingham News*, April 30, 1909; p.5.

⁵⁰ Slater and Thomason, 1995; Section 7, Page 14.

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World War II buildings significant contributions to Decatur's rich architectural heritage, but those erected after the War represent a distinct collection of mid-century modern commercial architecture otherwise well-represented in other parts of the city. These include many mid-rise Modernist bank buildings, an International Style hotel, and a monumental Brutalist design, among others. Further, post-War architectural upgrades to earlier commercial buildings speak towards the national trend seen across America's Main Streets to appear sleeker and more modern as a means to compete with suburbanization. By far, the majority of the buildings within the amended historic district are commercial, including those housing general retail space, restaurants, banks, and professional and medical services, as well as those related to automobile transportation including repair shops, dealership offices, and a bus station. In addition to the breadth of commercial architecture within the district, the New Decatur-Albany Historic boasts three, architecturally impressive church sanctuaries. Architectural styles most prevalent in the district are the Commercial Style, Gothic Revival, and those embracing Modernist principles and materials.

Commercial Architecture

Commercial architecture within the district is dominated by one- and two-story brick and concrete construction with flat roofs. Most are concentrated along 2nd Avenue and are among the oldest extant resources within the district. Brick parapets are common, many of which feature corbelled brick or attached metal cornices. Storefronts reflect traditional design elements such as a recessed entry and flanking display windows. Many of the storefronts also exhibit post-World War II upgrades to create a sleeker and more modern aesthetic. Commercial buildings are often distinguished by their overall form, or type, as well as architectural style.

In his guidebook, *Buildings of Main Street*, Architectural Historian, Richard Longstreth defines the **two-part commercial block** as the most common form for small and moderate-sized commercial buildings in the United States. This type of building is generally limited to two to four stories and is characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones. The two-part division of the exterior zones typically reflects differences in its interior use. The street level indicates public spaces for commercial enterprises, while the upper section suggests more private spaces reserved for offices, meeting halls or apartments.⁵¹ The two-part commercial block accounts for 25 representations of commercial buildings within the amended district. The majority are located along 2nd Avenue. The north side of the 100 block of E. Moulton Street is a fine illustration of a small commercial row lined with two-part commercial blocks (Photograph #3). Constructed in 1904, the Casa Grande Hotel (#19; Photograph #5) is an exemplary illustration of a two-part commercial block that is three-story with commercial space occupying the first floor and hotel suites on the upper floors. The former Crow & Crow Hardware store building at 101 2nd Avenue NE (#7) is a traditional two-story example of this commercial form. Though the 2nd floor windows are boarded over, the building retains a distinct separation of public space on the first floor and private space on the second.

⁵¹ Richard Longstreth, *Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*, New York: Alta Mira Press, 2000; p. 30-31.

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The **one-part block** is usually a one-story, sometimes two-story, commercial building that was a popular design in small cities and towns during the late-19th and early-20th centuries. It was adapted from the lower part of the more numerous two-part commercial blocks. The amended district includes 32 examples of a one-part commercial block, occurring throughout the business district, though most are concentrated within the central commercial hub. A row of three, one-part commercial blocks is located at 12-16 (even) E. Moulton Street (Photograph #2). The three buildings feature traditional storefronts, each topped by a wide transom, and an upper façade enhanced by modest brick corbelling.

With exception to the one- and two-part blocks, the 14 remaining commercial buildings within the historic district, however, do not conform to traditional commercial forms. These are primarily distributed throughout the Boundary Increase, and are free-standing, rather than traditional blocks sharing adjacent walls. Most are attributed to post-World War II construction through the 1970s. Such representations include the former office of Atlas Auto Financing and dealership (#35; Photograph #8), the Decatur Shoe Repair (#34), and Culver Cleaners (#6; Photograph #22), among others. An architectural distinguishing commercial building also located within the Boundary Increase is the former Greyhound Bus Station (#38), built c. 1955 at 215 Grant Street SE (Photograph #9). The building is comprised of a small, two-story commercial block with a taller 2-story block where the ground-level is an open drive-thru, tall enough for buses to enter and exit.

Beginning in the post-War years, it was not uncommon for small cities to see the emergence of mid-rise, moderate- to large-sized office buildings. New building materials and construction techniques allowed for larger, more affordable buildings constructed of steel and structural concrete. Decatur's thriving post-War economy required many businesses to erect larger buildings to accommodate expanding services. Though only one-story, the *Decatur Daily's* new office, built in 1965 on 1st Avenue SE (#5; Boundary Increase), is an exemplary illustration of a large, sprawling office building erected during this period (Photograph #4). The former First National Bank (#83, Photograph #19), built in 1959, and the First American Bank (#58), built in 1963 are exemplary illustrations of mid-rise financial institutions indicative of the post-World War II years in both urban and suburban settings. Such bank buildings are generally three to six-stories in height and featuring drive-thru banking to accommodate increased automobile ownership. The drive-thru is either attached to the building or detached within a large parking lot. The 1959 City Directory features an announcement promoting the new First National Bank Building – a testament toward the new modern amenities growing in popularity following World War II:

This modern structure, costing over \$550,000, will have banking and executive offices on the first floor; accounting and bookkeeping department on second; and the third floor will be rented for offices....Decatur will be provided with the most modern banking facilities in this vicinity. Additional facilities include a large parking lot, complete drive-in banking services, small loan and Title One loan departments. The building will be 100% air conditioned.⁵²

Nearly half of New Decatur's commercial buildings lack stylistic influences. The majority of the commercial buildings within the district reveal stylistic elements of the **Commercial Style**.

⁵² Decatur City Directory, 1959.

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Occurrences range from restrained representations to more elaborate iterations. Commercial buildings employing this style are characterized by decorative, corbelled brickwork along the cornice or parapet. Shaped parapets were frequently employed, as are rectangular brick panels common along the upper façade, sometimes featuring inset accents of tile, concrete, limestone, or terra cotta. Storefronts typically have recessed or flush entrances and translucent window transoms. Numerous classic representations of the Commercial Style occur on the one- and two-part commercial blocks within the commercial hub of the New Decatur-Albany Historic District. The Casa Grande Hotel (#19) is a good depiction of the Commercial Style. Another variant of the Commercial Style is a former drugstore at 113 2nd Avenue SE (#12), erected c.1890. This more elaborate interpretation draws upon the Renaissance Revival style with round-arched windows, and its corbelled brick cornice creates the appearance of a balustrade. A much more restrained reflection of the Commercial Style is the one-part commercial block at 14 Moulton Street, East (#65), constructed c.1910. This building is characterized by its wide transom and decorative brick corbelling in the upper façade.

Neoclassical (popular nationwide c.1895 to 1955), or Classical Revival, became a dominant architectural style for residential buildings nationwide by the turn-of-the-twentieth century; however, it spread prolifically nationwide, becoming a popular style for a wide range of buildings including commercial buildings, bank branches, and public architecture. The style usually features a classical symmetry, full-height porch with columns and temple front, and various classical ornaments such as dentil cornices. This style is more scaled down and flexible than the Renaissance Revival. Only one commercial building within the district reflects elements of the Neoclassical style, albeit very restrained. Constructed c.1920, the former Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Company Building (#52; Photograph #13) features a sense of formality with a symmetrical façade and a modest cornice of smooth stone panels.

Modernist architecture embraced technological advances in materials and construction methods while rejecting applied ornamentation and references to the past. Modernist designs focused on “simplicity, spatial clarity, and maximizing interior exposure to daylight.”⁵³ Post-World War II-era American architecture embraced European Modernism that first emerged in the 1920s.⁵⁴ Following World War II, the **International Style** evolved into a broader modern movement emphasizing technology and expression of construction methods, materials, exposed structural elements, and simplicity of form. The style was highly popular through the late-1950s. Identifying features of the International Style in Modernist design include the use of modern materials such as concrete, glass, and steel; rejection of non-essential decoration; ribbon windows and glass curtain walls; and flat roofs. As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District contains three commercial buildings embracing elements of the International Style. The First National Bank Building (#83; Photograph #19) is characterized by rows of curtain walls with spandrels, and a recessed ground-level entrance with support columns that resemble pilotis, a common feature of

⁵³ Peter Meijer Architect, “Thematic Survey of Modern Movement Non-Residential Architecture, 1945-1975, in St. Louis City,” City of Saint Louis Cultural Resources Office, 2013; p.90.

⁵⁴ Jonathan and Donna Fricker, “Louisiana Architecture: 1945-1965, Modernist Triumphant – Commercial and Institutional Buildings, September 2009, revised February 2010.

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Modernist office buildings. Another intact representation of the International Style is the First American Bank Building (#58), which features rows of windows with stone veneer panels, or spandrels. Its ground-level is recessed with a flat awning and full-height pilasters. The third expression of the International Style is the former Downtowner Inn/Motel 6 at 440 Johnston Street, SE (#63; Photograph #17). Though altered, elements of the style endure, particularly the long rows of windows and doors along the upper facades and a recessed, ground-level lobby and drive-thru loading area. The ground level contains structural columns that resemble pilotis and a sense that the upper floors are floating above the ground level. Historically, the upper floor balcony railings were enhanced by alternating colored spandrels. It is not surprising that all these notable Modernist examples in the historic district occur within the Boundary Increase.

Brutalist architecture is another Modernist style that emerged by the 1960s. It rejected the modern conservatism dominating mid-century design by placing emphasis on mass, weightiness, roughness, and solidity. The most common design element of Brutalist architecture is the use of exposed concrete. The word Brutalism was derived from the French words *Beton Brut*, meaning Raw Concrete. Concrete is a simple, pliable material, “which responds to the genuine architectural expression, but still very clear and remarkable once dry.”⁵⁵ The style has been most used in the design of institutional buildings such as libraries, courthouses, and public housing. Identifying features of Brutalist design include heavy cantilevered blocks and massive appearance; monumental and boxy form; exposed cast concrete; deeply recessed windows or slit windows, void between mass; broad, expansive walls and slab columns; concrete screening, or shade walls; and an overall brawny, unornamented muscular presence.⁵⁶ One edifice in the New Decatur-Albany Historic District embraces Brutalist design. Constructed in 1959 and expanded in 1963, the new Southern Bell Building (#46; Photograph #11) is characterized by its colossal boxy form, concrete-paneled exterior, and narrow recessed windows. Its ground level is enhanced by a stone panel veneer.

Although New Decatur’s central business district was largely developed prior to World War II, a small number of commercial buildings were erected during the mid-20th century that convey trends in Modernist design. These are distinguished using modern materials such as aluminum-framed plate glass, and design techniques such as cantilevered roofs and angled entrances. Among the notable representations of Modernist commercial architecture include the C.T. Grant Building (#21), constructed c.1955 in the heart of the 2nd Avenue commercial hub. Here, the multiple storefronts are characterized by open, visual fronts with wide, aluminum-framed, plate-glass windows and recessed entries. Its plain, unadorned upper façade provides a wide space that can be used as a billboard. Another notable commercial building with a Modernist façade is the Anderson Furniture Company (#62, Boundary Increase, Photograph #16). It features a wide storefront of large, aluminum-framed plate glass windows; a full-width flat metal awning; and a plain upper façade with the name of the business attached. An exemplary free-standing Modernist commercial building is the former Atlas Auto Financing (#35; Photograph #8), presently a barber shop, built

⁵⁵ Patina Lee. “Brutalist Architecture-What Does it Really Stand For?” *Widewalls*, June 26, 2016

<https://www.widewalls.ch/brutalist-architecture/>

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

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in c.1950 on 4th Avenue SE. This relatively simple building is characterized by its wide, cantilevered flat roof, aluminum-framed windows and doors, and a wall enhanced by sea green, glazed tiles.

Modernist storefronts. The design of commercial facades and storefronts changed considerably following World War II as a result of advertisements, advances in materials and manufacturing, and product marketing. Such advancements allowed the lower level of commercial buildings in the mid-twentieth century to appear more modern and up to date.⁵⁷ Among the most significant innovation was the open front, also referred to as a visual front. Rather than opaquely backed display windows, the interior space became the display, allowing pedestrians an interior view of the entire store. In doing so, businesses attracted more customers. Perfectly clear plate glass was easily produced and transported in large sheets and frequently used on storefronts. Large windows were crucial in creating the visual front.⁵⁸ Glass might be lightly framed, typically with aluminum. During the mid-twentieth century, asymmetry and angled storefronts were common. Display windows and recessed entries provided room for additional display and a small exterior lobby protected from weather. For deeply recessed entries, the use of freestanding columns further enhanced the storefront. Retail display cases were often built within an exterior lobby, including small, cantilevered display cases. It was not uncommon to see a canopy along the façade, extending the exterior lobby. These jutting canopies replaced the traditional fabric or wood awning. Some were supported by rods, and columns, while other steel and concrete canopies were cantilevered without visible support.⁵⁹

Following World War II, aluminum and steel were primary materials, particularly used on storefronts. A variety of glass products were used to not only create the open front, but to enhance the building's appearance. Opaque structural glass such as Vitrolite and Carrara, was thin and could be attached to a variety of substrates. Further, it was available in a variety of colors and is highly durable.⁶⁰ Structural glass contrasted well with the aluminum storefronts. Spandrel glass started to appear on office buildings as curtain walls and was frequently used for slip covers along the upper façade of commercial buildings. Glass blocks and colored ceramic tiles and panels were also used, though less frequently, to make a dramatic statement. Textured masonry surfaces were common, as well as colorful tiles along the bulkheads and wall surfaces.⁶¹

To compete with the rapid development of commercial strips outside of downtown, business owners of earlier commercial buildings were pressured to modernize. This generally meant remodeling the storefront to create an open, visual front that would attract pedestrians and motorists alike. Upper floors were often covered with glass, porcelain enameled panels, or aluminum slip covers. Advertising and signage were highly important to modern commercial

⁵⁷ Carol J. Dyson, "Mid-Century Commercial Modernism: Design and Materials," a transcription of a presentation at Mid-Century Modern Structures Symposium, April 14-16, 2015.

⁵⁸ Dyson 2015.

⁵⁹ Carol Dyson, "How to Work with Storefronts of the Mid-Twentieth Century: A Mid-Twentieth Century Storefront Components Guide," National Main Streets Conference, 2008.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

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buildings during the post-war years. The upper façade frequently served as a large billboard with large lettering applied. This national trend is evident in New Decatur's commercial hub where a small number of the earlier commercial facades, particularly the storefronts, were updated to appear sleek and more modern.

One of the most notable upgrades to an earlier commercial block is the former J.C. Penney Department Store (#17). This modern storefront features a visual front with aluminum-framed display windows and a recessed entryway that angles inward. A similar upgrade is evident on the commercial block at 221 E. Moulton Street (#76). Most impressive is a 1940s storefront remodeling to the Johnson Building (#23), built in 1887. The recessed, cornered storefront features aluminum-framed display windows on a bulkhead with synthetic panels. The tiled flooring at the entrance reads "ROSE" (Photograph #6).

Religious Architecture

The amended New Decatur-Albany Historic District contains three impressive church sanctuaries, all reflecting Gothic Revival influences. The **Gothic Revival Style** (popular c.1840-1880) emerged during the mid-19th century as a departure from classical precedents. It was greatly influenced by the publication in 1842 of the first popular pattern book of house styles – Andrew Jackson Downing's *Cottage Residences*. Picturesque, Medieval precedents were recommended in the models, ultimately resulting in Gothic Revival. The style is characterized by steeply-pitched roofs, often with cross gables; decorated vergeboards in gable ends; pointed arch windows and doors; castellated edges; and wall surfaces and windows continuing uninterrupted into gable ends.⁶² It was frequently used for church design. A renewal of Gothic Revival occurred during the early- to mid-20th century.

The First Christian Church (#85; Boundary Increase; Photograph #), constructed in 1897, and the Church of St. Ann (#57, Boundary Increase; Photograph #20), erected in 1906, both feature corner towers and lancet windows. The tower of the First Christian Church is further enhanced by a crenelated parapet. The most recent church erected in the survey area is the Grant Street Church of Christ (#43, Boundary Increase; Photograph #10), erected in 1925 with a double tower design. It is characterized by its crenelated parapets and lancet-arched vents in its towers.

The St. Ann's Catholic Church erected a large school annex and convent (#55) in 1955 on the church campus. The large, two-story brick building embraces the International Style in its design. It has a flat roof, boxy form, rows of windows, and an entry lobby with aluminum-framed display windows (Photograph #14). It is presently used as a hospice.

SUMMARY

The 85 extant buildings within the amended district chronicle the various periods of growth and development of the New South city of New Decatur, laid out in 1887 and intentionally designed to appeal to industrialists and entrepreneurs. The district falls within the planned section of the new city set aside specifically as a business district. Patterns of development reflect two significant

⁶² McAlester 2017; p244-245, 267.

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boom periods. The first occurred immediately following the inception of the new city, with commercial blocks concentrated along 2nd Avenue and its surrounding intersections. This period of growth continued through the first quarter of the 20th century in a similar pattern, concentrated around this central commercial corridor. During the post-World War II years and following the 1928 annexation into the city of Decatur, a new phase of commercial growth ensued, expanding outward into what was initially planned by developers as the larger business district. This development is distinctive from the earlier commercial growth in that the buildings were typically larger in scale, including mid-rise financial institutions, a hotel and office buildings, the colossal Bell South building, and smaller free-standing businesses. Also noteworthy are the few transportation-related buildings attributed to increased traffic along Highway 31/6th Avenue. These include a former roadside automobile dealership and a Greyhound Bus Station.

Since its inception in 1887, most of the buildings within the New Decatur-Albany Historic District played a vital role in providing goods, services and cultural enrichment to residents of Decatur (both old and new towns) through the 1970s. Architecturally, the amended district comprises an impressive collection of traditional one- and two-part commercial blocks evoking elements of the Commercial Style. Also noteworthy are the many representations of buildings drawing from Modernist design and materials. Historic storefronts, particularly those along 2nd Avenue, frequently underwent post-war upgrades that convey an evolving built environment. The few religious facilities within the amended district introduce more high-stylized edifices to the landscape with prominent corner towers and Late Gothic Revival influences. As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District comprises extant historic resources within the planned business district of New Albany chronicling nearly one century. The majority of the resources contribute to the district, and the streetscapes throughout continue to convey the distinct development patterns and periods of economic prosperity and growth. The removal of the insensitive concrete canopy along 2nd Avenue storefronts has further enhanced the historic aesthetic of the central commercial corridor within the district.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ 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 # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☒ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): varies

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ~47
Acreage previously listed in the National Register 14
Acreage of boundary increase 37.56
Acreage of boundary decrease 4.56

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

A. Latitude: 34.604972	Longitude: -86.987105
B. Latitude: 34.604963	Longitude: -86.986618
C. Latitude: 34.604386	Longitude: -86.982084
D. Latitude: 34.603296	Longitude: -86.980169

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E. Latitude: 34.601265 Longitude: -86.980225

F. Latitude: 34.599865 Longitude: -86.984538

G. Latitude: 34.600545 Longitude: -86.986459

H. Latitude: 34.601972 Longitude: -86.987242

I. Latitude: 34.603411 Longitude: -86.987441

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

As amended, the New Decatur-Albany Historic District (Boundary Decrease, Increase and Additional Documentation) is an irregularly shaped district with the boundary largely formed by existing parcels. Beginning at the northwest corner of the amended district, the boundary follows the north lot line of 119 1st Avenue NE, extending east to 1st Avenue. The boundary then travels in a southerly direction, crossing an alleyway, to the northeast corner of the lot at 105 1st Avenue NE. From here, the boundary travels east to the boundary of the original district, then northward following the rear property line of buildings at 117-119 2nd Avenue NE. The boundary then turns east, extending to west side of 2nd Avenue NE. It travels southward along the west side of the street until reaching the southwest corner of the intersection of 2nd Avenue and Johnston Street. The boundary then travels eastward to the northeast corner of the lot at 200-204 2nd Avenue. The boundary turns north, extending to the south side of a north-east alley between Holly and Moulton Streets. It follows eastward along the rear property lines of buildings fronting the north side of Moulton Street, crossing 4th Avenue NE, before reaching the northeast corner of the lot at 402 Moulton Street. The boundary then turns southward, extending to the south side of an east-west alleyway between Moulton and Johnston Streets. It continues eastward to 5th Avenue, then travelling south to Johnston Street. From here, the boundary follows along the north side of Johnston Street, traveling west to 4th Avenue. It then follows southward along the east side of 4th Avenue, crossing Grant Street to the northwest corner of 401 Grant Street. The boundary continues eastward to 5th Avenue, then south to a rear alley. The boundary moves westward, following along the north side of the alley before reaching the northeast corner of the building at 316-318 2nd Avenue. From here, the boundary follows along the rear property line of buildings fronting 2nd Avenue, crossing both Jackson Street and Gordon Drive. At the southeast corner of the property at 201 Gordon Drive, the boundary turns west to the southwest corner of the lot, then north to its northwest corner. It then travels northwesterly then westerly, crossing both 2nd Avenue SE and 2nd Street SE, until reaching the southeast corner of the parcel occupied the building at 334 2nd Street SE. The boundary follows the boundary of the lot, forming a slight triangle, before extending northeast across Gordon Drive to the rear property lines of buildings fronting the west side of 2nd Avenue SE. The boundary then travels north, following these property lines, extending to the north side of Grant Street. The boundary travels west from this point, crossing 1st Avenue SE to the

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southwest corner of the parcel occupied by the building at 201 1st Avenue. The boundary continues to generally follow around this lot, before heading easterly to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Several physical determinants contributed to the amended boundary of the New Decatur-Albany Historic District. The amended district boundary was drawn to exclude large-scale modern development that significantly detracts from the historic aesthetic and overall integrity of the district. Though the Princess Theater (1995 NRHP Resource #9) is a significant historic property that is included within the boundary decrease, its exclusion is necessary as it is surrounded by insensitive modern construction.⁶³ The amended district boundary was further drawn to include all resources historically associated with New Decatur's downtown through the mid-20th century. While 2nd Avenue serves as the epicenter of the business district, the boundary increase areas to the east, west and south draw in all resources expected to occur within a historic downtown, including not only commercial buildings but entertainment venues, religious facilities, fraternal meeting halls, hotels, a bus station, communications centers, and a large newspaper press, among others. Together, the amended district more comprehensively chronicles the development and growth of downtown New Decatur-Albany through the annexation into the City of Decatur and an expanded Period of Significance. The boundary was drawn to encompass as many contributing, nonresidential resources as possible while avoiding large non-historic buildings or those with low integrity. The boundary was extended south of Gordon Drive to draw in two historic properties - Culver Cleaners (#6) built in 1946 at 334 1st Avenue SE; and the Albany Executive Building (#36), erected in 1972 at 201 Gordon Drive. The former business long served the New Decatur community. Adjacent to the east of the Albany Executive Building is the Albany Heritage Neighborhood Historic District (83002981; 04000274 increase), the sprawling residential area of New Decatur. This district largely abuts the eastern border of the New Decatur-Albany Historic District, as amended. Thus, a portion of the amended district boundary was drawn to avoid overlap of the two districts and to avoid substantial gaps between the districts, where possible. Finally, the boundary was drawn to follow current property lines to ensure that the entirety of the parcel is included within the boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

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⁶³ It is the City's intention to individually designate the Princess Theater to the NRHP pending its removal from the historic district.

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: New Decatur-Albany Historic District (Boundary Decrease, Increase and Additional Documentation)

City or Vicinity: Decatur

County: Morgan

State: Alabama

Photographer: Jaime Destefano

Date Photographed: February 9, 2022⁶⁴ and February 3, 2025

⁶⁴ Photographs from the 2022 survey included with this nomination were field-verified in February of 2025.

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Photographs Captured in 2022 (field verified in 2025)

- 1 of 32 100 Block of 1st Avenue NE (Boundary Increase). Photographer facing southwest
- 2 of 32 12-16 Moulton Street E. (Boundary Increase). Photographer facing northeast
- 3 of 32 100 Block Moulton Street E (1995 District). Photographer facing northeast
- 4 of 32 Decatur Daily (#5), 201 1st Avenue SE (Boundary Increase). Photographer facing southwest
- 5 of 32 Casa Grande Building (#19), 211-213 2nd Avenue SE (1995 District).
Photographer facing west
- 6 of 32 Johnson Building (#23), 300-302 2nd Avenue SE (1995 District). Detail of Post-
WWII Storefront Upgrade. Photographer facing southeast
- 7 of 32 324 2nd Avenue SE (#33), (1995 District). Photographer facing east
- 8 of 32 Atlas Auto Financing (Former Dealership, #35), 225 4th Avenue SE (Boundary
Increase). Photographer facing west.
- 9 of 32 Former Greyhound Station (#38), 215 Grant Street SE (Boundary Increase).
Photographer facing south.
- 10 of 32 Grant Street Church of Christ (#43), 240 Grant Street SE (Boundary Increase).
Photographer facing north
- 11 of 32 Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Co. (#46), 425 Grant Street SE (Boundary
Increase). Photographer facing southeast
- 12 of 32 New Decatur Opera House (#50), 115 Johnston Street SE (1995 District).
Photographer facing southeast
- 13 of 32 (old) Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Co. (#51), 216 Johnston Street SE
(Boundary Increase). Photographer facing north.
- 14 of 32 St. Ann's Catholic School and Convent (#55), 240 Johnston Street SE (Boundary
Increase). Photographer facing northwest.
- 15 of 32 Church of St. Ann (#57), 250 Johnston Street SE (Boundary Increase).
Photographer facing north.

New Decatur-Albany Historic District (Boundary
Decrease, Increase and Additional Documentation)

Morgan County,
Alabama

Name of Property

County and State

16 of 32 Anderson Furniture company (#62), 432 Johnston Street SE (Boundary Increase).
Photographer facing north.

17 of 32 (old) Downtowner Inn/Motel 6 (#63), 440 Johnston Street SE (Boundary
Increase). Photographer facing northwest.

18 of 32 (old) Decatur Super Market (#68), 105 Moulton Street E (Boundary Increase).
Photographer facing southwest.

19 of 32 (former) First National Bank (#83), 254 Moulton Street E (Boundary Increase).
Photographer facing northeast.

20 of 32 first Christian Church (#85), 405 Moulton Street E (Boundary Increase).
Photographer facing northeast.

Photographs Captured in 2025

21 of 32 Albany Executive Building (#36), 201 Gordon Drive SE (Boundary Increase).
Photographer facing southeast.

22 of 32 Culver's Cleaners (#6), 334 1st Avenue SE (Boundary Increase). Photographer
facing northeast.

23 of 32 200 Block of Moulton Street SE (1995 District). Photographer facing northwest.

24 of 32 200 Block of Grant Street SE (Boundary Increase). Photographer facing
southwest.

25 of 32 100 Block of 2nd Avenue NE (1995 District). Photographer facing southwest.

26 of 32 300 Block of 2nd Avenue SE (Boundary Increase). Photographer facing
southwest.

27 of 32 300 Block of 2nd Avenue SE (1995 District). Photographer facing southeast.

28 of 32 300 Block of 2nd Avenue SE (1995 District). Photographer facing northeast.

29 of 32 Streetscape View along 2nd Avenue SE from 300 Block (1995 District).
Photographer facing northwesterly.

30 of 32 200 Block Johnston Street SE (Boundary Increase). Photographer facing
northeast.

New Decatur-Albany Historic District (Boundary
Decrease, Increase and Additional Documentation)

Morgan County,
Alabama

Name of Property

County and State

31 of 32 100 Block 2nd Avenue SE (1995 District). Photographer facing south.

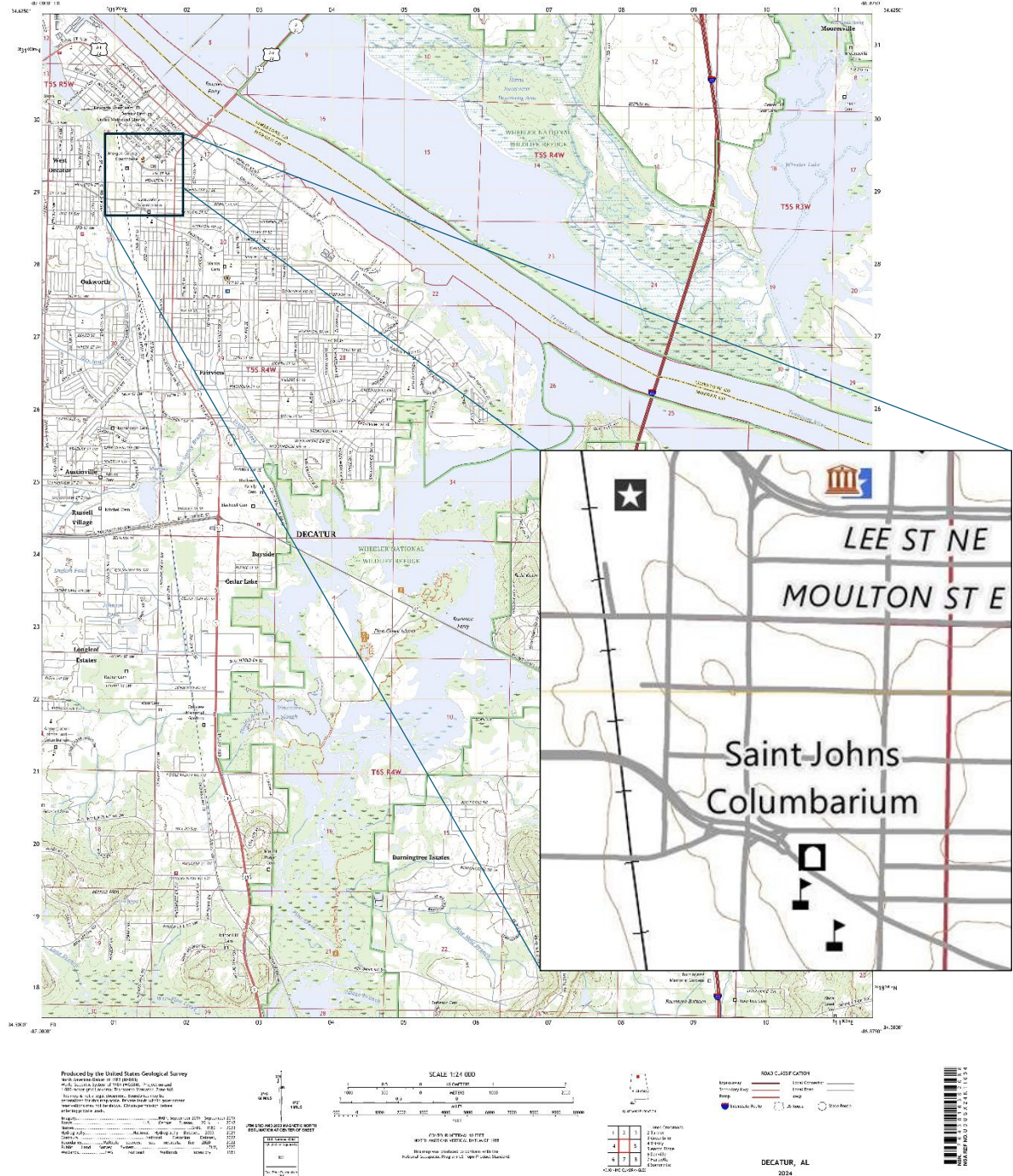
32 of 32 200 Block Moulton Street SE (1995 District). Photographer facing northeast.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



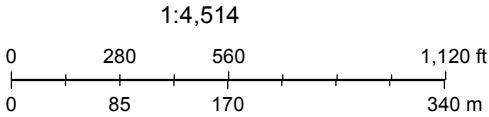
Decatur Quadrangle

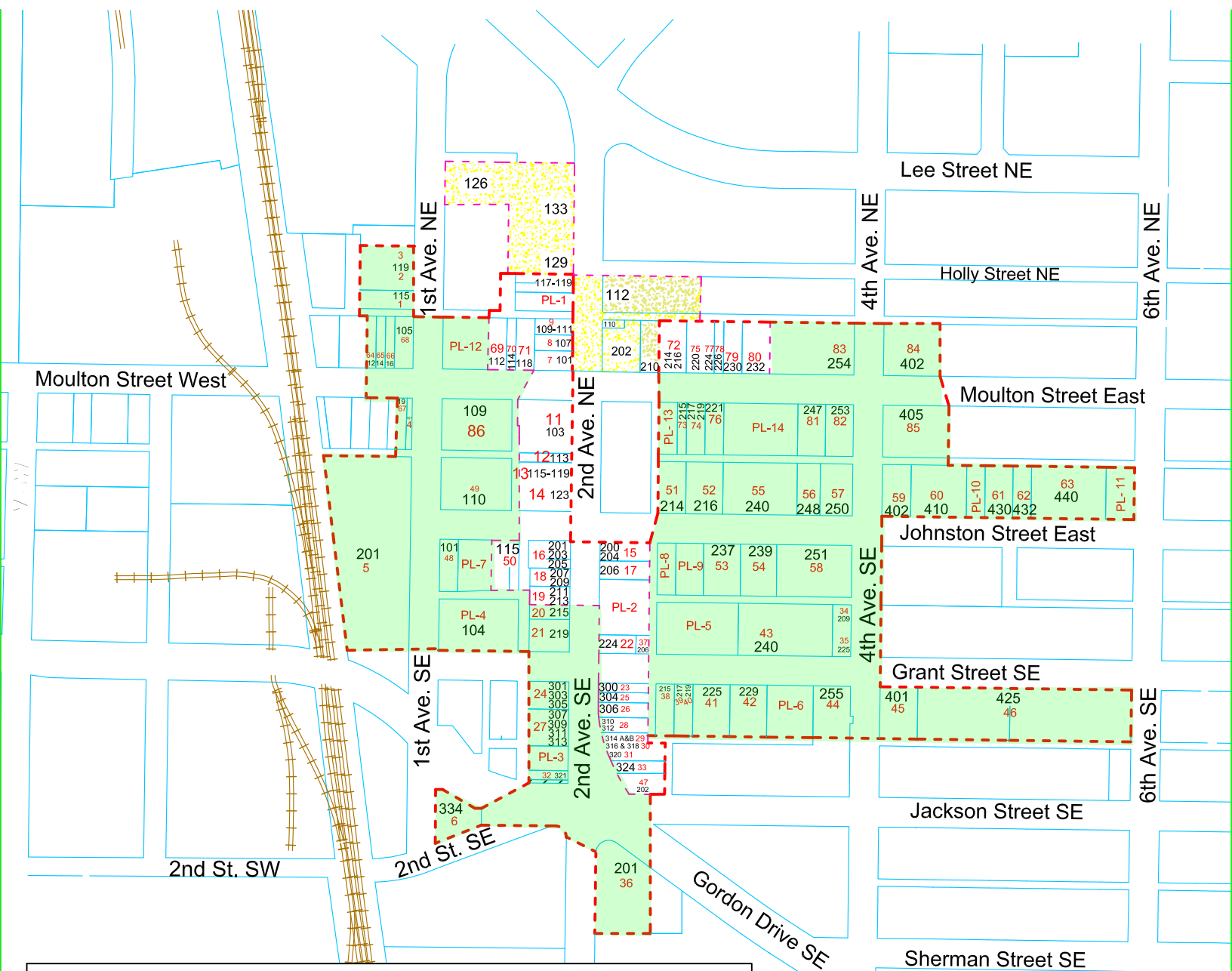


NEW DECATUR-ALBANY HISTORIC DISTRICT, AS AMENDED
DECATUR, M ORGAN COUNTY, ALABAMA
2025



- PARCEL BOUNDARY
- BUILDING FOOTPRINT
- - - - - AMENDED NRHP DISTRICT BOUNDARY

A COORDINATE REFERENCE POINT



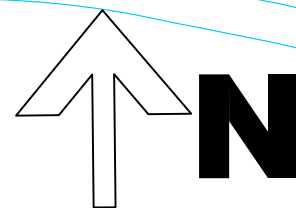


NEW DECATUR-ALBANY HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY INCREASE/DECREASE BOUNDARY MAP, AS AMENDED

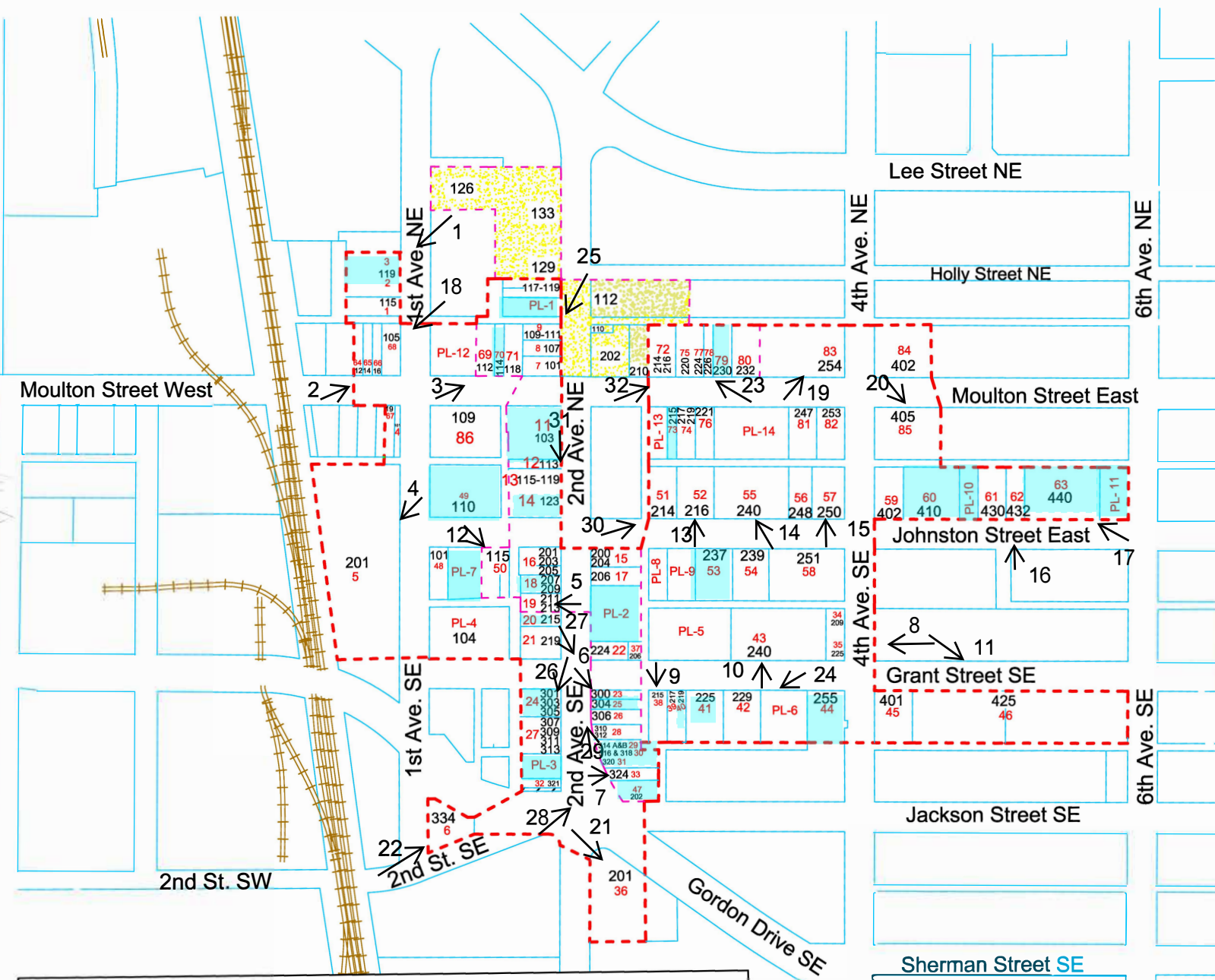
- 1995 NRHP District Boundary
-  Boundary Decrease
-  Boundary Increase
- Amended Boundary

01 NRHP Inventory #
1234 Address

Prospect Dr. SE



0 Feet ————— 300 Feet



NEW DECATUR-ALBANY HISTORIC DISTRICT BOUNDARY INCREASE/DECREASE BOUNDARY MAP, AS AMENDED

----- 1995 NRHP District Boundary

----- Amended District Boundary



Boundary Decrease



Noncontributing
Resource

01

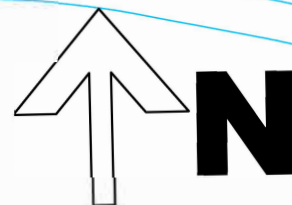
NRHP Inventory #

1234

Address



Photograph



0 Feet ————— 300 Feet