

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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name South Avenue Commercial Historic District
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Walnut, and Pershing Streets; South, and Robberson Avenues Not for publication N/A
city or town Springfield vicinity N/A
state Missouri code MO county Greene code 077 zip code 65801

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Claire F. Blackwell 12 May 1999
Signature of certifying official Date

Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register _____
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the _____
National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the _____
National Register
 removed from the National Register _____
 other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

South Avenue Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Greene County, Missouri
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) Category of Property (Check only one box)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure
	<input type="checkbox"/> object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count).

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>10</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>10</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>Professional</u>
<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>Specialty Store</u>
<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>Department Store</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Single-Dwelling</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Hotel</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>Professional</u>
<u>COMMERCE/TRADE</u>	<u>Specialty Store</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Hotel</u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate
LATE 19TH AND TWENTIETH CENTURY
REVIVALS/Colonial Revival
MODERN MOVEMENT/Art Deco

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	<u>STONE/Limestone</u>
roof	<u>ASPHALT</u>
walls	<u>BRICK</u>
other	<u>TERRA COTTA</u>
	<u>METAL/Cast Iron</u>

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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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)

- X 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.
- X 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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions).

ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE

Period of Significance

ca. 1895 - 1949

Significant Dates

ca. 1895
1929

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect/Unknown
Builder/Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- X Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Springfield, Missouri Planning Office

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
A 15 474080 4117670	B 15 474160 4117670
C 15 474160 4117590	D 15 474120 4117590

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Philip Thomason
organization Thomason and Associates date April 5, 1999
street & number P.O. Box 121225 telephone (615) 385-4960
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37212

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name See Continuation Sheet
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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South Avenue Commercial Historic District
name of property
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Historic and Architectural Resources of
Springfield, Missouri

DESCRIPTION

The South Avenue Commercial Historic District is located just south of the Public Square in the downtown area of Springfield, Missouri (1990 pop. 140,494). The district is located along sections of E. Walnut, and Pershing Streets, and South and Robberson Avenues. The district is composed of thirteen (13) buildings, the majority of which were constructed between ca. 1895 and 1920. Most buildings are two- to four-stories in height and were built to house commercial businesses and offices. In addition to these commercial uses the district also contains the Seville Hotel. Although most storefronts have been remodeled with added materials, the buildings retain much of their upper facade detailing and decoration. The buildings illustrate common commercial building designs of the period including Italianate, Brick Front, Colonial Revival, and Art Deco. These buildings continue to be used for commercial purposes and collectively are the largest grouping of historic commercial buildings retaining integrity in the downtown area (Photo No. 1). Of the thirteen buildings within the district, ten or 80%, would be considered contributing to the character of the district.

In addition to their stylistic designs, the buildings within the South Avenue Commercial Historic District can also be described as two-part commercial blocks.¹ Two-part commercial blocks are at least two-stories in height and have separate storefronts and upper facades. Common details in the district include brick piers or cast iron pilasters at the storefronts, brick corbelling at the rooflines, and arched or rectangular one-over-one sash windows on the upper facades.

The buildings within the district are located just to the south of the Public Square and were built during the population boom and commercial expansion of the city from the 1890s into the early 1900s. During these years, commercial activity expanded beyond the Public Square and into what were formerly residential areas. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of the period show the progression of commercial buildings into these blocks of South Avenue and Walnut Street during these decades.² By 1910, almost all dwellings had been razed along these blocks and replaced with new multi-story brick commercial buildings.

The oldest building remaining in the district is a two-story brick dwelling built in 1885 at 413-415 Robberson Avenue. A commercial wing was added to the main facade of this dwelling ca. 1920 and this wing was significantly altered in the late 20th century. Due to the extent of these alterations, this building is included as non-contributing in the district (Photo No. 9). The oldest property in the district which was constructed as a commercial structure is the Italianate design brick building at 404-406 South Avenue (Photo No. 2). This building was designed with separate storefronts divided and supported by brick piers. On the upper facade are segmental arched windows with brick hood molding, and below the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice.

From 1900 to 1910, Springfield's population jumped from 23,000 to 35,000 residents, an increase of 48%. Springfield's prominence as a rail and commercial center for southwest Missouri resulted in a dramatic expansion of the downtown commercial area in this decade. It was in these years that a solid row of brick commercial buildings was completed along the 300 and 400 blocks of South Avenue, and the 200 block of E. Walnut Street. Many of these buildings were designed in vernacular forms known as "Brick Front." Brick Front buildings are those which were constructed from ca. 1900 to ca. 1930, and which were designed with traditional

¹ Richard Longstreth, The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987), p. 24.

² Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, "Springfield, Missouri," Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, New York, 1884, 1886, 1891, 1896, 1902, 1910.

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storefronts and have upper facades displaying rectangular windows, corbelled brick cornices, and decorative brick panels.³ Numerous examples of this type of building form were constructed along these blocks such as at 416 South Avenue. The building at 416 South Avenue retains its original recessed storefront including glass and wood double doors. On the second floor are original one-over-one wood sash windows and a corbelled brick cornice (Photo No. 3). The Springfield Life Building at 214-220 E. Walnut Street was built ca. 1906 and designed to house businesses on the first floor and offices on the upper floors. This four-story brick building was designed with Colonial Revival influences including a cornice with modillion blocks at the eaves, rectangular windows, corner brick quoins, and storefronts divided by brick and stone Doric pilasters (Photo No. 4). The building was remodeled into a hotel in 1928.

Intense building activity continued in the downtown area into the 1910s as the commercial area expanded. Increased vehicular and automobile congestion led to the widening of 20' Traffic Alley into the 40' wide Pershing Street, one block south of Walnut Street. Buildings from this decade continued to be built with Colonial Revival designs such as at 410-412 South Avenue. Although its storefront has been altered, the upper facade retains original rectangular and arched windows outlined by stone quoins, and the arched windows have keystones (Photo No. 5). The last major building to be constructed in the district was the Medical Arts Building constructed in 1929 at the southeast corner of South Avenue and Pershing Street. The eight-story Medical Arts Building was the last high rise building to be erected in the downtown area until after World War II. Designed with Art Deco exterior and interior detailing, this building housed many of the city's physicians and health professionals in the mid-20th century (Photo No. 6).

Non-contributing buildings in the district are pre-1945 buildings which have been extensively altered in recent decades, and no longer retain integrity. Other changes within the district include the remodeling of storefronts with wood or glass panels. Alterations to upper facades have been largely confined to the replacement of original windows or their concealment beneath wood panels. Rehabilitation is presently underway on the Seville Hotel.

³ Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1985), p. 240.

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INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTIONS

(Contributing buildings are designated as (C) while Non-Contributing buildings are designated as (NC).)

1. **217-219 Pershing Street** - One-story brick building constructed in 1926. The storefront has original concrete bulkheads, aluminum and glass display windows and ca. 1970 aluminum and glass doors. Across the width of the storefront is a metal awning. Transoms have been covered with wood panels. The upper facade displays stretcher bond wire brick. The interior has been remodeled with dropped acoustical tile ceilings, linoleum floors and drywall walls. (C)
2. **411 Robberson Avenue** - One-story ca. 1920 brick building constructed as a garage. The storefront has an original multi-light glass and wood door. Adjacent to the door is a multi-light window resting on a frame bulkhead. The window has been covered with wood panels. Next to this entrance is a garage bay with a ca. 1990 metal overhead track door. Above the storefront is a soldier course lintel. At the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice. (C)
3. **413-415 Robberson Avenue** - The property at 413-415 Robberson Avenue consists of a two-story brick dwelling constructed in 1885 with a one-story brick commercial addition added ca. 1920 on the main facade. The dwelling is now used as commercial property and was built as a duplex. The building has a stone foundation, hipped roof of asphalt shingles, interior wall brick chimney and exterior of stretcher bond brick. Windows are both original and replacement, rectangular and arched, one-over-one wood sash. Many of the window openings have been covered with wood siding. Doors are original four-panel wood design with rectangular transoms set within segmental arches. At the rear (west) facade is a two-story ca. 1960 porch with metal posts, staircase and railing. On the main facade facing Robberson Avenue is a one-story ca. 1920 brick building. This building has a bricked in storefront with ca. 1990 glass and metal doors. Above the storefront is a concrete belt course. At the roofline is a stepped parapet with concrete coping. Due to the extent of alterations to this property it is considered non-contributing to the district. (NC)
4. **400 South Avenue** - The two-story brick building at this location was constructed ca. 1895 and housed various businesses. The building was remodeled ca. 1960 with an exterior of brick and porcelain tiles. The entrances have double doors of aluminum and glass design and the upper facade has aluminum windows. Due to the extent of alterations, this building is included as non-contributing to the district. (NC)
5. **404-406 South Avenue** - This two-story brick building was constructed ca. 1895 with Italianate influences and two storefronts. Both storefronts have recessed entrances with original single-light glass and wood doors. Above the doors the transom areas have been covered with ca. 1990 wood shingles. Flanking the entrances are copper and glass display windows which rest on painted concrete or stone bulkheads. Dividing the two storefront bays is a central brick pier with a rock-faced stone capital. Across the width of the storefront are original glass and wood rectangular transoms. On the second story are eight segmental arched window openings with brick label molding and stone sills. The original windows have been removed and replaced with one-over-one aluminum windows and wood panels. Above the windows is a corbelled brick cornice. At the roofline is a parapet wall with terra cotta coping. The interior has paneled wood walls and ceilings. (C)

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-
6. **410-412 South Avenue** - The two-story brick building at this location was built ca. 1915 with two storefronts and Colonial Revival influenced upper facade detailing. The 412 storefront retains ca. 1940 paired three-panel wood doors. Adjacent to the entrance is a projecting display window with inset medallions and urn and garland designs. Over the entrance the transom has been enclosed with wood panels. Flanking the entrance is a ca. 1980 aluminum and glass display window which rests on a stuccoed bulkhead. The transom area has been covered with stuccoed panels. Over the entrance is an original pent roof with metal canopy. The 410 storefront also has paired three-panel wood doors. Over the door is a transom with an elliptical fanlight. Flanking the entrance is a projecting display window with medallions and garland and urn designs. The display window has been removed and replaced with wood panels and small single-light windows. The transom area has been enclosed with stuccoed panels. Over the entrance is a pent roof metal canopy. Applied to the storefront are ca. 1940 wood Doric pilasters and decorative wood panels above the transom area. The second story has two sets of original one-over-one wood sash windows. These windows have shared stone sills, stone lintels, and stone quoins. In the north and south bays of the upper facade are one-over-one arched wood sash windows with stone sills and keystones. Above the windows is a corbelled brick and stone cornice. At the roofline is a stone parapet wall. (C)
 7. **414 South Avenue** - This two-story brick building was constructed ca. 1915 with a flat roof and exterior of stretcher bond brick. The storefront has an original recessed entrance bay with a single-light glass and wood door. The north bay of the storefront has an original paneled wood door. Over both doors are rectangular transoms. The storefront has ca. 1970 display windows resting on ca. 1970 brick bulkheads. Above the doors and display windows the transoms have been covered with wood panels. (C)
 8. **416 South Avenue** - This two-story brick building was constructed ca. 1905. The building has a brick foundation, flat roof and exterior of stretcher bond brick. The building retains much of its original storefront including display windows resting on frame bulkheads. The main entrance is recessed with original double doors of single-light glass and wood design. In the south bay of the storefront is a single-light and four-panel glass and wood door which leads to the second story staircase. Above the doors are rectangular transoms. Dividing the two entrance bays is an original wood pilaster. Above the display windows and doors are large transoms which have been painted. Across the width of the display window is a canvas awning. Dividing the storefront and second floor is a brick belt course. On the upper facade are four one-over-one rectangular wood sash windows. The windows have added storm windows and above the windows are original rectangular transoms. The windows have connecting stone sills and lintels. At the roofline is a corbelled brick cornice and stone belt course. The interior of the first floor retains its original pressed metal ceiling. (C)
 9. **420 South Avenue** - Built ca. 1905, this three-story brick building was altered ca. 1970 with an added storefront and upper facade of concrete and stucco and one-over-one metal windows. The building no longer displays its original character and is included as non-contributing to the district. (NC)
 10. **430 South Avenue (Medical Arts Building)** - This seven-story building was constructed in 1929 with Art Deco influences as the Medical Arts Building. It housed dozens of offices of physicians and dentists during the mid-20th century and was later remodeled to house the Great Southern Bank. The building has a flat roof and exterior of tan stretcher bond brick. The main (W) elevation has the first floor and mezzanine level faced with concrete panels. The main entrance has ca. 1980 double doors of anodized aluminum and glass design with rectangular transoms. The door surround has original Art Deco decoration of concrete zigzag and floral panels. Flanking the entrance are display windows of ca. 1980 aluminum and glass design. Over

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the windows are lintels with inset concrete banding. Windows above the storefront in the mezzanine level have replacement ca. 1980 two-over-two horizontal metal sash windows. The upper floors of the building have window bays divided by brick piers. The windows have brick sills and spandrel panels have alternating soldier and sailor brick coursing. The window openings have ca. 1980 two-over-two horizontal aluminum sash windows. Above the seven-story windows are concrete panels with Art Deco floral designs and incised panels. On the north elevation is an entrance and display windows similar in design to the west elevation. Above the mezzanine level is a belt course with floral and rectangular concrete panels. Windows and upper facade decoration matches that of the west elevation. On the east and south elevations are windows set within the stretcher bond brick facades. These elevations lack the concrete facing, brick piers, and Art Deco decoration found on the main elevations. The interior retains original plaster walls, marble floors, and cove molding at the ceiling. Office areas have original single-light glass and wood doors, but most areas have been remodeled with dropped ceilings and added carpeting and wall panels. The elevator lobby on the first floor has original plaster moldings with Art Deco floral designs. (C)

11. **210 E. Walnut Street** – Built ca. 1905, this five-story brick building replaced an earlier two-story building at this site. The storefront was remodeled ca. 1970 and has aluminum and glass display windows, stuccoed bulkheads and transoms, and a central entrance with an aluminum and glass door. Across the width of the storefront is a metal awning. Window openings on the second, third, and fourth floors are rectangular in design and separated by brick pilasters with egg and dart capitals. The window openings have been covered with wood panels. Dividing each floor are stone water tables. The central and corner brick piers have quoins. The fifth floor windows have segmental arches. At the roofline is a terra cotta cornice with acanthus leaf brackets. The first floor interior has carpeted floors, wood Doric support columns, pressed metal ceiling, and plaster walls. The upper floors retain their original open floor configuration. (C)
12. **210 E. Walnut Street (Garage)** – At the rear of 210 E. Walnut Street facing an unnamed alley is a one-story brick and concrete block garage built ca. 1925. The building has no garage doors and the interior is supported by wood posts. On the main facade, stucco has been added over the original wood siding above the garage bays. The building has a poured concrete foundation and seven-course common bond side and rear walls. (C)
13. **214-220 E. Walnut Street (Springfield Life Building/Savoy Hotel/Hotel Seville)** – The Springfield Life Building was constructed ca. 1906 and housed various shops and offices over the next two decades. In 1928, the building was remodeled into the Savoy Hotel which was one of Springfield's most ornate hotels of the period. After operating as the Savoy Hotel for several years, the building came under new ownership and was renamed the Hotel Seville in 1933. The hotel remained in operation until 1998 and it is presently undergoing rehabilitation. The four-story building has four storefronts on the Walnut Street facade. The 214 storefront has ca. 1960 tile bulkheads, aluminum and glass display windows, and an entrance with an aluminum and glass door. The 216 storefront also has ca. 1960 tile bulkheads, solid wood entry doors, and the display window is covered with wood panels. Above the doors is an original rectangular transom. The 218 storefront contains the main entrance to the hotel, which has ca. 1970 double doors of aluminum and glass design. The storefront has original stuccoed bulkheads, and copper and glass display windows. Over the entrance is an original two-light transom. Above the 214-218 storefronts is an original steel and glass transom. The 220 storefront was remodeled ca. 1940 with aluminum and glass display windows and Carrara glass panels. Dividing the storefront bays are brick pilasters with quoins and stone Doric capitals. On the upper facade are paired original one-over-one wood sash windows. The transoms over the windows have been covered with wood panels. The windows have original rock faced sills and smooth lintels. Dividing the upper floor window bays are brick pilasters with quoins. The fourth floor windows are set within segmental arches. At the roofline are

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rows of corbelled brick with egg and dart molding, and a sheet metal cornice with brackets. The 220 storefront has a ca. 1940 diner with original counter and stools. This section has a linoleum floor, plaster walls and ceilings. The 220 storefront has a recessed entrance with a single-light glass and wood door. The interior of the first floor has some sections of the original lobby including plaster arcades, plaster walls and ceilings. The interior retains many original doors which are single-panel, two-panel, and five-panel wood design. Over the doors are rectangular transoms. The building's original wood staircase remains intact as does the elevator and elevator doors. The upper floors are divided into individual hotel rooms which have been remodeled with dropped ceilings and added carpeting. (C)

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - SUMMARY

The South Avenue Commercial Historic District is significant under National Register Criteria A and C for its historical and architectural significance. The buildings which comprise the district are representative of the property type of Downtown Commercial Buildings and meet the registration requirements set forth within the historic context of 19th and Early 20th Century Commercial Buildings in Springfield, ca. 1850-1948. The district is one of the largest groupings of contiguous pre-1948 commercial buildings remaining in downtown Springfield, and is significant under Criterion A as representing traditional commerce when the downtown area was the center for the city's commercial activity. The district is significant for containing several of the city's most prominent early 20th century commercial buildings such as the Masonic Temple, the Seville Hotel and the Medical Arts Building.

The district is also significant under Criterion C as one of the few contiguous groupings of turn of the century commercial buildings in Springfield which retain much of their original design and detailing. The district contains a variety of architectural styles of the period such as Italianate, Colonial Revival, and Art Deco. The loss and alteration of pre-1948 commercial buildings has been extensive in the downtown area, and only a few concentrations of buildings retain a sense of early 20th century time and place. The South Avenue Commercial Historic District is one of the largest of these, and 80% of the buildings in the district are considered contributing to its character.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

From 1880 to 1890, the population of Springfield increased from 6,522 to 21,850. Part of this dramatic increase can be attributed to the merging of Springfield and North Springfield in 1887, but the majority of this increase was due to intense settlement in the community. Residential areas expanded to the east, west, and south of the downtown commercial area aided by the city's electric trolley lines.⁴ With residential construction moving away from the downtown area, new commercial buildings replaced many of the city's older dwellings in the immediate environs of the Public Square. Earlier dwellings south and east of the Public Square along South Avenue and Walnut Street were razed in the 1890s and 1900s to make way for new brick commercial buildings. Those built in the 400 block of South Avenue were primarily two-story buildings containing a variety of businesses such as a print shop, clothes cleaners, and plumbing supply store. The 200 block of E. Walnut Street developed into an important business section of downtown Springfield by 1910. A series of two- to four-story brick buildings were erected along these two blocks during this decade including the Springfield Life Building which housed retail shops on the first floor and offices on the upper floors.

Commercial expansion continued into the 1920s with the construction of the Medical Arts Building at 430 South Avenue. The building was completed in 1929, and this eight-story structures was designed with Art Deco detailing of the period. This building housed many of Springfield's physicians and dentists in the 1930s and 1940s. This section of downtown also emerged as the center for the city's most ornate hotels of the period. Within three blocks were the city's major hotels of the 1910s and 1920s. These included the Colonial Hotel at 205 S. Jefferson Avenue; the Hotel Sansone at 310-312 E. St. Louis Street (now Park Central East); the Bell Hotel at 307 S. Jefferson Avenue; the Seville Hotel at 214-220 E. Walnut Street, and; the Marquette Hotel at 400 E. Walnut Street. These hotels were all in operation by the late 1920s and provided a variety of accommodations for travelers. Of these, the Colonial Hotel has been razed, and the Hotel Sansone, the Bell Hotel, and the Marquette Hotel are located outside of the district boundaries. The Springfield Life Building was remodeled in 1928 as the Hotel Seville, and its lobby was designed with elements of the Spanish Colonial style.

⁴ Crossroads at the Spring, p. 38.

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When it opened, the Hotel Seville was lauded as a rival to the sumptuous Colonial Hotel. The Seville Hotel was one of the most prestigious hotels in the city during the mid-20th century.

The buildings within the South Avenue Commercial Historic District continued as an important business center well into the mid-20th century. In attempts to "modernize" and attract customers, some storefronts were rebuilt with modern materials but the majority of buildings retain their upper facade decoration. Most buildings continue to be occupied for business or office use. In recent years the Medical Arts Building has been remodeled into a bank, and plans are presently underway for the rehabilitation of the Hotel Seville.

Springfield's downtown area has been impacted over the past several decades through the loss of many pre-1948 buildings, and the addition of extensive surface and multi-story parking lots. As a result, only a few small historic districts have been identified as meeting National Register eligibility in the downtown area. The boundary for the South Avenue Commercial Historic District contains one of the larger concentrations of historic commercial buildings remaining in downtown Springfield. Overall, the South Avenue Commercial Historic District retains sufficient buildings and streetscapes to meet National Register criteria. This district is significant under Criterion A as representative of the type of commercial landscape which once existed throughout the downtown area. The district contains some of the most prominent early 20th century buildings built in downtown Springfield such as the Springfield Life Building and the Medical Arts Building. Within the district are examples of the Italianate, Colonial Revival, and Art Deco styles as well as vernacular Brick Front designs. The buildings collectively convey a sense of time and place of the early 20th century and are eligible under National Register Criterion C.

Further information relating to the South Avenue Commercial Historic District is contained within the accompanying Multiple Property Documentation Form, the "Historic and Architectural Resources of Springfield, Missouri."

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South Avenue Commercial Historic District
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UTM References

E. 15/474120/4117530
F. 15/474080/4117530

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the South Avenue Commercial Historic District includes the following parcels on Greene County Tax Map 88-13-07-24-2: Block 226, parcels, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 19, 20, 21, and 22, and; Block 227, parcel 3. These parcels include all property included within the boundary of this historic district.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the South Avenue Commercial Historic District includes all contiguous buildings retaining integrity along the 400 block of South Avenue, the 200 block of E. Walnut Street, and the adjacent blocks along Pershing Street and Robberson Avenue. The boundary is drawn to include a large concentration of pre-1948 buildings in the downtown area which retain integrity. Properties to the north along the 300 block of South Avenue, McDaniel Street, and Jefferson Avenue were omitted from the district due to the large number of non-contributing buildings, surface parking lots, and parking garages. The eastern boundary is drawn to omit post-1948 buildings and surface parking lots. To the south of the southern boundary are surface parking lots and post-1948 buildings. The west boundary is drawn to omit altered buildings and surface parking lots on the west side of the 400 block of South Avenue. Across the street from this district is the Walnut Street Commercial Historic District which has been determined eligible to meet National Register criteria. The South Avenue and Walnut Street Commercial Historic Districts are separated by post-1948 buildings and parking lots, and are therefore listed as two districts rather than one.

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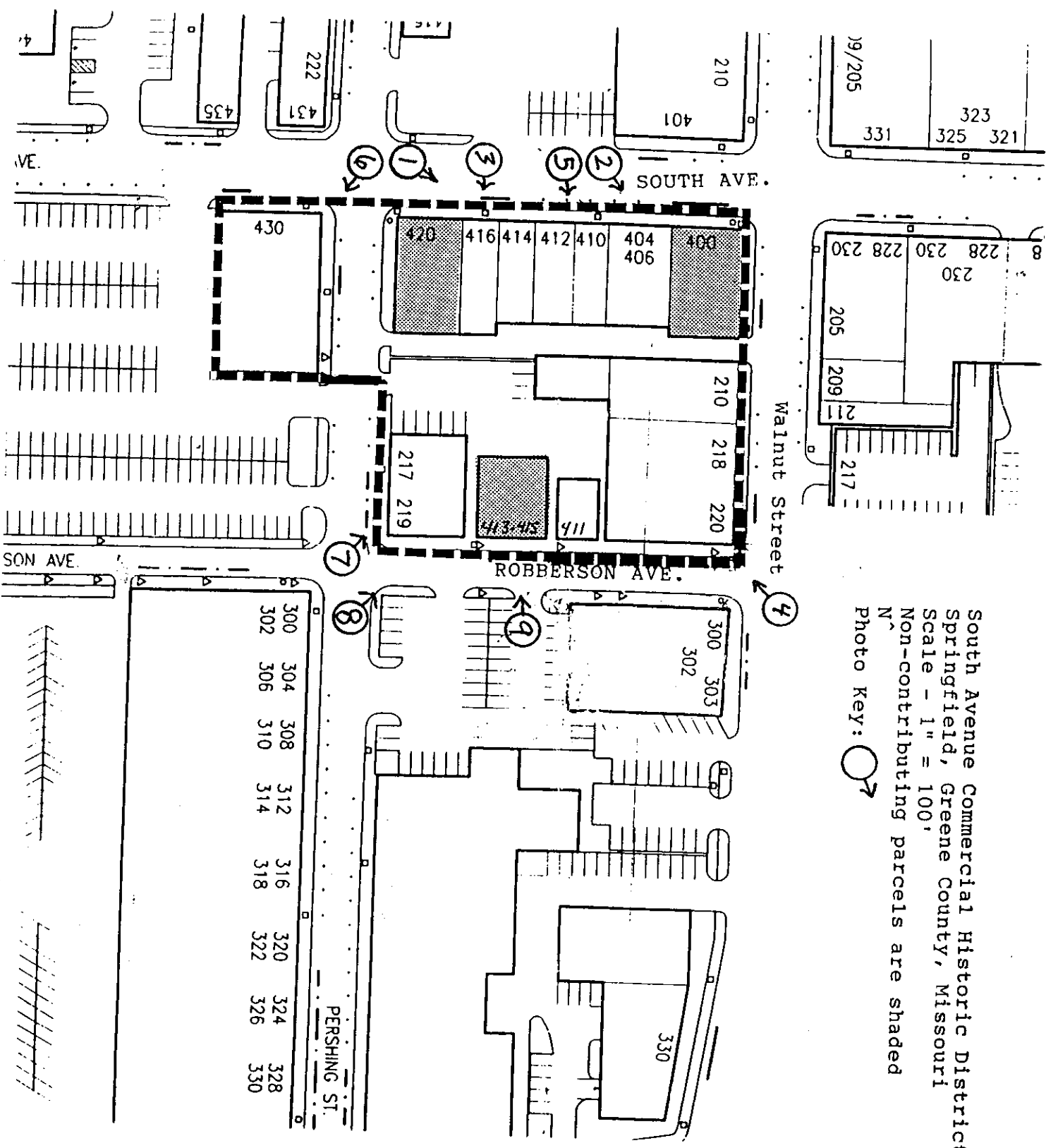
South Avenue Commercial Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri

Photo by: Thomason and Associates

Date: July, 1998

Location of Negative: Historic Preservation Program, Missouri Department of Natural Resources
(The above information applies to all photographs)

- Photo No. 1: Streetscape of the 400 block of South Avenue, view towards the northeast.
- Photo No. 2: 404-406 South Avenue, view towards the northeast.
- Photo No. 3: 416 South Avenue, view towards the east.
- Photo No. 4: 214-220 E. Walnut Street, Hotel Seville, view towards the southwest.
- Photo No. 5: 410-412 South Avenue, view towards the northeast.
- Photo No. 6: 430 South Avenue, Medical Arts Building, view towards the southeast.
- Photo No. 7: 217-219 Pershing Street, view towards the northwest.
- Photo No. 8: Streetscape of the 400 block of Robberson Avenue, view towards the northwest.
- Photo No. 9: 413-415 Robberson Avenue, view towards the west.



South Avenue Commercial Historic District
 Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
 Scale - 1" = 100'
 Non-contributing parcels are shaded
 N
 Photo Key: ○ →

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 300 | 304 | 308 | 312 | 316 | 320 | 324 | 328 |
| 302 | 306 | 310 | 314 | 318 | 322 | 326 | 330 |

PERSHING ST.

SON AVE.

ROBBERSON AVE.

SOUTH AVE.

Walnut Street

19/205

323
325 321
331

230
228 230
205

209

217

210

401

222

431

435

430

420

416

414

412

410

404

406

400

210

218

220

217

219

300

302

303

330

Commercial Street Historic District
Springfield, Greene County



DOCTOR
TICKLE

DOCTOR
TICKLE

GENUINE OLIVER PLOWS

216

SCHAEFFER & MASCHINO
FARM IMPL'S

SCHAEFFER & MASCHINO
HARDWARE

COMPANY.

Street scene, 400 Block of South Avenue
South Avenue Commercial Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Photo No. 1



404-406 South Avenue
South Avenue Commercial Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Photo No. 2



416 South Avenue
South Avenue Commercial Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Photo No. 3



214-220 E. Walnut Street
South Avenue Commercial Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Photo No. 4



410-412 South Avenue
South Avenue Commercial Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Photo No. 5



430 South Avenue
SOUTH AVENUE Commercial Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Photo No. 6



217-219 Pershing St.
South Avenue Commercial Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Photo No. 7



400 Block Roberson Ave.
South Avenue Commercial / Historic District
Springfield, Greene County, Missouri
Photo No. 8



413-415 ROBBERSON AVE.
SOUTH AVENUE COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
SPRINGFIELD, GREENE COUNTY, MISSOURI
Photo No. 9

