



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property:** Private, Public-Local, Public-State

**Category of Property:** District

### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
93	30	buildings
3	1	sites
5	2	structures
2	-	objects
103	33	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions:** (see continuation sheet 9)

**Current Functions:** (see continuation sheet 9)

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification:

- LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20 CENTURY REVIVALS: Neoclassical, Spanish Eclectic, Italian Renaissance
- LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20 CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial style
- MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Deco, Moderne, International Style
- OTHER: 1-part commercial block, 2-part commercial block, NPS Rustic
- MIXED
- NO STYLE

**Principal Exterior Materials:** BRICK, STONE, METAL/cast iron, WOOD, STUCCO

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 10 through 31)

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>C</b>	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.
	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations:** NA

**Areas of Significance:** Community Planning and Development, Commerce, Architecture

**Period of Significance:** 1893-1966

**Significant Dates:** 1893

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): NA

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): NA

**Architect/Builder:** Thaten Bros; Harry and Michie; Hedrick, Wyatt; Carlander, Guy; Voelcker & Dixon; Morgan, Joe; Townes & Funk; Dunne, W. Scott

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 32 through 42)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheets 43 through 46)

**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 (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: *Childress Historical Society*

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

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### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property:** Approximately 109.8 acres

**Coordinates** (see continuation sheet 47)

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

**Verbal Boundary Description:** (see continuation sheet 47 and 48)

**Boundary Justification:** (see continuation sheet 48)

### 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Gregory Smith (THC), Leslie Wolfenden (THC), and Rick Mitchell (Mead & Hunt), based on a  
2013 survey by THC staff and Childress Main Street volunteers

Organization: Texas Historical Commission

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City or Town: Austin State: TX Zip Code: 78711

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Date: March 26, 2015

### Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheets 49 through 52)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets 53 through 57)

**Photographs** (see continuation sheets 5 through 8, and 58 through 93)

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**Photograph Log**

Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District  
Childress, Childress County, Texas

Photo 1

Commerce at Avenue B  
Camera facing northwest  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 2

200 block of Main Street  
Camera facing north  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 3

200 block of Main Street, west side  
Camera facing northeast  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 4

Avenue D at Main  
Camera facing northwest  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 5

Hotel Childress, 220 Ave B (#17)  
Camera facing northeast  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 6

125 Commerce (#27)  
Camera facing southwest  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 7

200 Commerce (#28)  
Camera facing northeast  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 8

Montgomery Ward Building, 205 Commerce (#30)  
Camera facing west  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 9

226 Commerce (#39)  
Camera facing northeast  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

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Photo 10  
240 Commerce (#44)  
Camera facing southeast  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 11  
300 Commerce-(#45)  
Camera facing east  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 12  
Municipal Building, 315 Commerce (#48)  
Camera facing southwest  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 13  
317 Commerce (#50)  
Camera facing west  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 14  
Childress County Courthouse, 100 Avenue E NW (#63)  
Camera facing north  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 15  
100 Avenue F NW (#66)  
Camera facing north  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 16  
100 Main (#86)  
Camera facing northeast  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 17  
109-111 Main (#90)  
Camera facing west  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 18  
Palace Theater, 206 Main (#105)  
Camera facing east  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 19  
217 Main (#108)  
Camera facing west  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

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Photo 20  
Michie Building, 401 Main (#123)  
Camera facing northwest  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 21  
107 Second-Street NE (#1)  
Camera facing northwest  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

Photo 22  
Childress High School (#56)  
Camera facing southeast  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 23  
Childress High School Gymnasium (#56)  
Camera facing east  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 24  
Childress ISD Maintenance Buildings, Avenue G (#83-85)  
Camera facing northwest  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 25  
Fair Park Entrance, Avenue I at Commerce  
Camera facing north  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 26  
Rock Field (baseball field), Fair Park  
Camera facing north  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 27  
Football Stadium (south side, ticket booth), Fair Park  
Camera facing north  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 28  
Football Stadium (south side grandstand), Fair Park  
Camera facing southeast  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 29  
NYA monumnet and "coffin" table, north of park lake  
Camera facing south  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

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Photo 30  
Masonic Amphitheater, Fair Park  
Camera facing southeast  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 31  
Lighthouse Fountain, Fair Park  
Camera facing north  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 32  
Fairy Ring, Fair Park  
Camera facing east  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 33  
Low wall and Table, south side of lake, Fair Park  
Camera facing northwest  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, April 2015

Photo 34  
Barbecue Pits and Rotary Bowl, Fair Park  
Camera facing east  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 35  
Rhoads School Gymnasium and Playground 810 Avenue I NE  
Camera facing east  
Photographed by Gregory Smith, August 2013

Photo 36  
Building at 214 S. Commerce (#34)  
Noncontributing building of historic age with substantial alterations  
Camera facing east  
Photographed by Leslie Wolfenden, August 2013

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications 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.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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**Section 6:**

**Historic Functions:**

Commerce: professional, financial institution, specialty store, department store, restaurant, warehouse  
Culture: theater, auditorium  
Domestic: single dwelling, multiple dwelling, hotel  
Education: school  
Government: fire station, police station, courthouse, post office, city hall, correctional facility  
Health: hospital, office  
Landscape: park  
Recreation and Culture: theater, auditorium, sports facility, outdoor recreation, fair, monument/marker  
Religious: church  
Social: meeting hall  
Transportation: bus depot  
Vacant

**Current Functions:**

Commerce: business, professional, specialty store, department store, restaurant, warehouse  
Culture: museum  
Education: school  
Government: courthouse, city hall  
Landscape: park  
Recreation and Culture: theater, auditorium, sports facility, outdoor recreation, fair, monument/marker  
Religious: church  
Social: meeting hall  
Vacant

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## Description

The Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District encompasses the historic commercial and civic core of the city of Childress, in the southeast Texas Panhandle. The city lies on generally flat terrain about ten miles south of the Prairie Dog Town Fork of the Red River, in south-central Childress County. The 110-acre district includes approximately 17 city blocks, over 60 acres of the city-owned Fair Park, and a discontinuous 1.3-acre parcel containing the former J.J. Rhoads School gymnasium and playground, a landmark in the city's historically African-American neighborhood. The district contains a high concentration of historic commercial, civic, educational, and recreational resources that reflect the historical and architectural development of the community. The primary concentration of commercial and civic buildings is along North Main and North Commerce streets, representing the late nineteenth and early twentieth century economic development of the city. The former Childress High School (now a junior high school) is located north of the commercial downtown. Fair Park, with a wide range of recreational and civic resources, forms the northern portion of the district. Brick-paved streets, installed in the 1920s, are found in much of the commercial portion of the district. A variety of architectural styles are found in the district, representing developmental periods from the 1890s to the 1960s. The majority of the properties are one-part and two-part commercial buildings constructed of brick with commercial storefronts composed of cast iron, brick, wood, stone, and glass. Modern late-twentieth-century development has minimally encroached into the district; as the majority of the properties serve a commercial function, they have undergone storefront alterations over the years to reflect the changing nature of retail business. The district features 136 properties (123 buildings, 7 structures, 2 objects, and 4 sites) of which 103 (75%) are contributing.

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From the arrival of the Fort Worth & Denver City Railroad in 1887, the commercial growth of Childress spread north from the railroad, eventually reaching the courthouse square by 1929. The street grid is laid parallel and perpendicular to the railroad, which runs west-northwest to east-southeast. The street grid is divided into quadrants which meet at intersection of the railroad right-of-way and Main Street. Numbered streets run perpendicular to the railroad, while alphabetical avenues run parallel to the railroad. "Main Street" is used instead of "First," and "Commerce" is used instead of "Second Street West." The streets names are followed by quadrant direction (i.e. Second Street NE or Avenue A SW) to differentiate streets with the same names on either side of the axes. For the purpose of this nomination, the closest cardinal directions will be used in place of half-wind directional points when indicating direction (i.e. north instead of north-northeast). Most city blocks within the district are divided by alleys for utility lines and access the rear of each building. The majority of streets south of Avenue F (U.S. Highway 287) retain well-maintained red brick pavement. Brick pavement is also present on some streets north of Avenue F and along the alleys throughout the district as well. The brick streets are not indicated on the nomination maps, but are counted as one contributing structure.

The Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District is located primarily along North Main Street, Commerce Street, Second Street NE, and Third Street NW, roughly from Avenue A near the former Fort Worth & Denver City Railroad tracks (now BNSF Railroad) to Avenue I into Fair Park with a discontinuous district block to include the African-American J.J. Rhoads School located at the 800 block of Avenue I NE at Ninth Street NE. The nominated district can be divided into three distinct sections: The commercial and civic district between the railroad and Avenue F; the school campus district between Avenue F and Avenue I; and the historic core of Fair Park, north of Avenue I.

### *Commercial and Civic Area*

Childress has a typical Shelbyville courthouse square plan, where the courthouse is sited in the center of a grid with streets intersecting at each corner and lot lines of blocks facing the square oriented to the courthouse. The city of Childress differed from the typical Shelbyville-plan development pattern, however, with historic commercial and civic development in the blocks closest to the railroad in the southern portion of the district and not immediately surrounding the courthouse. Additional commercial development took place after World War II along Avenue F north

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of the courthouse, following its designation as U.S. Highway 287. The commercial and civic center of Childress stretches along Main and Commerce streets between the railroad tracks and the Childress County Courthouse. Commercial development includes one-part and two-part commercial block buildings that uniformly line the sidewalks, forming the densest core of the district. Stand-alone buildings representing civic and religious functions outline the periphery of this central business district, and include the Childress County Courthouse (1939), the former post office (1935), the municipal building (1927), Jeter-Townsend Hospital (c.1925/c.1950), the Hotel Childress (1928), and several churches. A small number of vacant lots are located along the southeastern border of the district. Otherwise, a high density of buildings is maintained along the two main roadways and conveys the appearance, feeling, and setting of typical Main Street thoroughfares in Texas.

Most of the commercial buildings in the district date between 1890 and 1955, with the majority dating to the early twentieth century. Both one-part and two-part commercial blocks are well represented in the district, and brick is the primary building material. Canopies are common on the front facades. Though it is not always evident if the historic materials have been replaced, most canopies appear to represent their original placement. The most common alterations to buildings within the historic district are modernized storefronts in which frame plate glass windows and aluminum frame plate glass doors replaced the original wood-frame entryways and display windows. Even in buildings with altered storefronts, however, the upper sections of most buildings retain a good degree of integrity. Other alterations include the application of non-historic façade treatments such as colored glass panels or ceramic tiles, or the painting of historically exposed brick. In addition, many transom windows have been covered or reversible filled. Most of these alterations probably occurred within the period of significance, and typically do not detract from the overall historic character of the district.

#### *High School Campus Area*

U.S. Highway 287 (Avenue F) separates the dense central business district on the south from the public school and park properties to the north. The campus of Childress High School (now the junior high) is set in a two-and-a-half-block-long "superblock," with a cluster of buildings at the south end with open playing fields to the north. The campus is anchored by the 1926 T-plan Italian Renaissance Styled high school. Other historic campus buildings include the 1939 gymnasium, 1945 shop building, and 1960 cafeteria. Immediately to the east of campus along Avenue G is a half-block collection of three wood-framed school district maintenance buildings, all of which were moved on the site from the decommission army air field after World War II. Four freestanding commercial buildings in this section are oriented to the highway on the north side of US 287 (Avenue F), and unlike the commercial buildings in the densely-developed downtown core, are separated by parking lots. Three of the buildings historically served transportation-related functions: two were gas stations, while the third was a private bus depot that served intercity and interstate travelers (now a noncontributing property due to extensive alterations). Two additional buildings that served commercial purposes in this portion of the district are on the west side of Commerce Street, across from the former high school: a postwar medical clinic at Avenue H (map ID 61) and a commercial laundry at Avenue G (map ID 80).

#### *Fair Park*

The eastern portion of Fair Park (approximately 61.75 acres) includes the highest concentration of the park's historic resources, including eleven which are of sufficient scale and significance to be inventoried, including a football stadium, baseball field, swimming pool, and auditorium, tennis courts, and playground. Landscaping and improvements were completed at Fair Park with support from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and National Youth Administration (NYA). The improvements at Fair Park were spearheaded through the efforts of Richard E. Moore, the park's superintendent from 1938 to 1958. Under Moore's tenure, the WPA and NYA constructed the football stadium and baseball fields, a community building, picnic tables and benches, and drainage structures around the park. Moore was known for his distinctively-designed park features, such as the circular Rotary Bowl picnic table complex, the Masonic Amphitheater, the decorative Lighthouse Fountain, and Fairy Ring picnic table. These features

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were sometimes constructed through the assistance of local civic and community clubs. Moore used his welding skills to construct the playground slide and other equipment. While Moore's flower gardens and fish ponds are now removed or obscured by other vegetation, the park remains noted for its Depression-era stone masonry construction, its fanciful park features, and its sports facilities. The park in a smaller rectangular configuration appears on the 1921 Sanborn map as the Childress County Fair Park with grandstand and 3 exhibition rooms. The 1929 Sanborn map shows that the park had grown in area, with a race track, bleachers, grandstand, platform, stock pens, and city auditorium.

*Discontiguous Parcel: J.J. Rhoads School*

The gymnasium and playground of the J.J. Rhoads School are on a discontiguous parcel at 810 Avenue I NE, eight blocks east of the main portion of the district. The 1953 gymnasium is a steel-framed building with a brick veneer and open plan that houses a basketball court. The playground features original metal equipment, including a swing set and see-saw. This property is included within the nominated district as a culturally-significant property that also reflects the physical segregation of the African-American community from the educational facilities in the heart of the city that served the majority white community during the Jim Crow Era.

**Property Inventory**

The Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District is comprised of 136 resources of which 103 (75%) are contributing. To determine the status of each individual resource, façades were considered as two parts – the lower section consisting of the storefront, and the upper section consisting of either the upper level of a one-part commercial block (containing cornice, parapet, etc.) or full second floor (or more) of two-part commercial blocks. Depending on the nature of the resource, only the primary elevations of the stand-alone buildings were considered.

Contributing resources are at least 50 years of age, retain most of their character-defining features, and add to the district's overall historic character. Contributing buildings retain a majority of their historic architectural materials, but they are not necessarily unaltered. Over time, alterations to commercial buildings were often necessary to accommodate changes in marketing or commercial function. Examples of such changes might be alteration of storefront windows to increase the visibility of merchandise. The remodeling of storefronts was a common occurrence due to ownership changes, new product display needs, and changing architectural styles; such modernization is necessary in order to maintain the commercial viability of the buildings. When these alterations are made within the period of significance and remain sensitive to the historic character of the individual property and the district as a whole, they do not detract from a resource's integrity. Contributing buildings retain sufficient integrity to be recognizable to the district's period of significance.

Non-contributing resources are those that detract from the district's historic character and appearance. They may date from after the period of significance, possess little architectural or historic significance, or have experienced multiple and drastic alterations. A common type of major alteration would be the slip covering of a building with an aluminum storefront. Severe alterations that cause the loss of integrity of the original design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association render a building non-contributing. Resources can no longer be considered contributing if there are numerous such alterations or if alterations obscure the original form, massing, or overall appearance of the resource. A significant resource deemed non-contributing at the time of this nomination could have its status changed to contributing in the future if severe alterations are reversed or integrity is otherwise returned to the property. Resources designated non-contributing due to age may also be re-evaluated for their potential as contributing resources after reaching the fifty-year threshold (and if they retain sufficient integrity).

The following table reflects the inventory of properties located within the district's boundaries.

Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

Property Inventory

C = contributing NC = noncontributing NC\* = noncontributing historic building with concealed/slipcovered façade

Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
1	107	2nd St. NE		Store, Western Salvage	c. 1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building. Primary façade still reads as historic storefront with center entry flanked by fixed display windows, but it stands open with no glazing or secure covers. Transom is visible and open, but covered with sheet metal from the inside. The wood canopy is badly deteriorated. South wall features painted sign for "Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery," while north wall has ghosting for a Coca-Cola ad and ice cream. Garage-door opening in rear, but the door is missing, leaving the building open.	Commercial Style	C
2	121	2nd St. NE	Health and Human Services Office		2013	Brand new one-story medical office building of brick and stone construction. Primary entry offset to left (south) and sheltered by gabled roof porch entry. Large parking lot.	No Style	NC
3	210	2nd St. NE		Woodman's Lodge Hall	c.1925	One-story rectangular plan front-gabled building with a rectangular plan shed-roofed side addition. The building is sheathed in wood siding and the windows are all boarded up, including the two small bay windows. The corrugated metal roof has exposed rafter tails.		C
4	217	2nd St. NE		Wholesale grocery, Childress Dr. Pepper Bottling Co., Shirley Fruit Flavors, 7-Up Bottling	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block two-tone brick building with wood-frame transom windows, wood-framed storefront windows, and replacement metal door. There is a Dr. Pepper ghost sign on the north side elevation. Interesting decorative brickwork above the canopy hooks. The metal canopy is not original, but may be of historic age.	Commercial Style	C
5	225	2nd St. NE		Childress Dr. Pepper Bottling Co.	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building divided into two storefronts. The two storefront areas have been remodeled, infilled, and have replacement doors. There is a Dr. Pepper ghost sign on the south side elevation.	Commercial Style	C
6	229	2nd St. NE			c.1960	Two-story rectangular block building made of concrete blocks. It appears that this housed offices on the second floor and warehouse space on the ground floor. It appears to have been converted into a residence. The second floor windows are two-over-two aluminum sash. The garage door has been converted to sliding glass doors.	No Style	NC
7	300	2nd St. NE		St. Luke's Episcopal Church	c.1925	Small L-plan Gothic Revival style church with pointed arched windows and a square bell tower entry. The walls have been covered in asbestos siding and the cross-gabled roof is non-original metal.	Gothic Revival	C
8	401	2nd St. NE			c.1925	One-story Craftsman style bungalow constructed of brick and stucco with second-story pop-up, clipped gable roofs, side porte cochere, deep inset porch, decorative brackets, battered porch columns, wood sash windows.	Craftsman	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
9	409	2nd St. NE		Jeter Townsend Clinic	1924	One-story residence with hipped roof and front gabled inset roof, Neoclassical style porch, wood siding, wood sash windows, and rear garage. This building may have been moved to this site as it does not show up on Sanborn maps up through 1949.	Neoclassical	C
10	411	2nd St. NE		Childress General Hospital, Jeter-Townsend Hospital	c.1925 and c.1950	Two-story L-plan hospital with one-story side wing in light yellow brick with brown brick detailing around windows, doors, and coping. Spanish Eclectic influence seen in the round arched doors and parapet, and barrel-shaped metal roof tiles. Two main doors have been infilled with brick and exterior steps removed. The south wing was added after 1946 (Sanborn maps).	Spanish Eclectic	C
11	210	3rd St. NW	Childress Heritage Museum	Childress Post Office	1935	One-story symmetrical seven-bay rectangular block building with steps to the central entry. Decorative cast stone detailing on coping, arched door surrounds, and end pavilion arched window surrounds. Windows are ten-over-ten wood sash with round-arched transom windows above. The double entry doors are replacements. The post office relocated in 1981 and the building became a museum.	Spanish Colonial, Renaissance Revival	C
12	300	3rd St. NW		filling station	c.1925	One-story rectangular gas station with two service bays and one office area. The office area is boarded up as is one service bay. The canopy, pump island, pump and signage are gone.	Commercial Style	NC
13	109	Ave. B NE	Bird, Bird & Rabe	Day Electric Shop, bank, insurance, lawyers, barber, Amway Products, Andy Rogers Insurance	c.1925	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building with decorative brickwork and wood-bracketed clay-tile canopy above second floor windows. The ground floor windows, doors, and canopies are modern replacements. The second floor windows have been boarded up. Original entrance was probably located on Main Street. The back part of the building houses two additional businesses.	Commercial Style	C
14	117	Ave. B NE	Childress Public Library	Childress Public Library	1974	One-story rectangular block flat-roofed brick building with an attached brick entry porch and planter box.	No Style	NC
15	125	Ave. B NW	Family Eye Care	First Federal Saving and Loan.	c.1965	One story brick commercial building with four large fixed windows, one glass block window, and two single-entry doors. Five boxed columns support a green metal canopy.	Commercial Style	NC
16	127	Ave. B NW	Williams & Griffin Law Offices	Architect: Thaten Bros., Harry and Michie	1958	One story commercial building with drive-through access on the secondary (west) façade. A flat metal canopy extends from the primary façade, sheltering an aluminum and glass entry and display windows and integrated planters. The planters and wall beneath the canopy is stone veneer; above the canopy is brick. The secondary façade incorporates a sliding service window and a V-shaped canopy supported by square metal posts which are set into long, rectangular planters made of stone.	International	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
17	220	Ave. B NW		Hotel Childress Architect: Wyatt Hedrick	1928	Five-story hotel building with one-story rear wing on building's north side. Buff-colored brick with cast stone detailing on the second-story window surrounds, cartouches and panels at cornice, and parapet coping. The upper floor windows are six-over-one wood sash. Ground floor housed several retail businesses, such as a coffee shop, salon, drug, and offices. The ground floor windows and doors are boarded over. The building was used as a hotel, then a retirement home, and then low-income housing. It is currently vacant.	Renaissance Revival	C
18	221	Ave. B NW		Auto Sales & Service	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with simple detailing and stepped parapet. Single-entry wood door is offset to the right (west) and large fixed windows dominate the primary façade. Transom is filled with plywood, but is still readable. Overhead garage doors allow access to the side alley.	Commercial Style	C
19	223	Ave. B NW	Red River Paint and Body	Opera house, cinema, garage	c.1920	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building with multiple alterations. The primary façade can be described as three bays: the easternmost holds a single entry door with sidelights and transom with a rectangular window to the side. Another rectangular window sits above on the second story. This bay is topped with a Mission Revival-influenced curved parapet. Historic photos indicate this uppermost portion was stuccoed. The second bay currently holds an overhead garage doors and a single-entry access door. The original cladding of the second story is no longer discernible. Historic photos show an awning-type, tile parapet that is no longer intact. The third bay holds a large fixed window, smaller than whatever opening used to be here. This portion of the building used to be three stories in height, but the top floor has been removed, except for a small corner in the southwest. Historically this portion of the building featured a mansard roof supported by large wood brackets. The secondary façade holds wood small sash windows and another overhead garage door.	Mission	C
20	200 blk	Ave. C NW		Plymouth dealership	c.1935	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with multiple service bays and large clipped corner display windows that faces toward downtown. Decorative brick cornice and rectangular panels with white corner blocks add architectural detailing.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
21	100	Commerce St.	Childress Fire Department		c.1990	Large, all-metal, barn-like building with shallow pitch gable roof. Sash windows along east façade; large garage doors along west façade. North façade functions as primary entry to office/for visitors with single entry metal door. Surrounded on west and north by ample parking areas. Wide alley access to the north. Form relates function as fire station. Historically, these lots were home to the very first commercial buildings in Childress. The 1902 Sanborn shows a hotel, saloon, and hardware store--all constructed of stone--on these lots. Buildings stood on these lots until at least the 1962 Sanborn.	No Style	NC
22	111	Commerce St.		Preston Insurance; Stanford Studio (Photography); Printing	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with intact storefront, partitioned for two businesses. Single wood doors with glazing provide entry to each half; each half also features a large, single display window. Transom is readable as a series of rectangular panes, but currently covered with plywood. Sign block holds ghost letter for "The Stanford Studio"	Commercial Style	C
23	119	Commerce St.		City Radio and Refrigerators (1969)	c.1925	Roofless, doorless, windowless shell of former building. Partial façade remains and consists of mosaic tile bulkhead, sheet metal transom, and large tile covered façade above. Completely open to the elements, there is a grassy lawn growing inside.	Commercial Style	NC
24	123	Commerce St.	private art studio	Plumber Supply, Commerce Café	c.1925	The building is a one-story one-part commercial block brick building with plywood filled transom and large wood canopy supported by wood posts. Primary façade (painted brick) is divided for two store fronts, with single entries on center and large fixed display windows to the side. Decorative, but simple parapet design; dual sign blocks feature herringbone patterned brick.	Commercial Style	C
25	128	Commerce St.		grocery, drug store, furniture	c.1910	Two-story two-part commercial block building with deep red brick façade, decorative parapet, and inset sign block. First story constructed of concrete block; second story constructed of brick. Storefront modernized, likely in the 1940s, with glass block bulkhead under the large display windows and 2 single entry doors--one leads to first floor store, the other leads to the staircase to second floor. Second story windows on main façade have been replaced with unsympathetic replacements of smaller size than originals. On secondary façade, window sashes appear original, but with little to no intact glazing.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/M/C
26	132	Commerce St.		barber, Gem Theater	c.1920	One and a half story commercial building with recessed entry and no windows. Primary façade compose of brick and concrete block covered with stucco-like material. Sanborn maps indicate this is a brick building on the first floor, and concrete block on upper story (which was added c. 1925 to accommodate use as movie theater). Paired, double-entry doors replaced with plywood. This may have been the theater for African Americans. Unconfirmed.		C
27	133	Commerce St.	residence	confectionary, drug store, Fink Furniture	c.1920	One-story one-part commercial block building with gray brick façade and modern metal canopy. Red brick detailing at cornice line and surrounding sign block. Plywood fills transom, single, modern entry to the left of center. Three fixed tall windows and wood infill in original storefront. The north wall shows evidence (including a cast iron pilaster) of the two-story building what once stood next to this one (now a parking lot). Sanborn maps indicate this is a stone or concrete block building with a brick façade.	Commercial Style	C
28	200	Commerce St.	Dr. Steve Astuto Orthodontist	Masonic hall (2nd flr), Black Insurance, Bowers & Black Insurance, dry goods, offices	c.1910	Two-story two-part commercial block building with cast stone detailing at parapet, sills, and lintels. A name plate indicates that the "Childress Lodge No. 695 A.F. & A.M." had space here. The transom windows above the canopy are boarded up. The primary corner entrance is recessed at an angle and has tiled floor, double wood doors with glass panels, curved sidelights, and an Ionic column. A round window is seen on the short façade facing Commerce in the parapet. Some classical detailing seen in the garland swags, dentil and egg-and-dart molding along the cornice.	Commercial Style	C
29	201	Commerce St.	Edward Jones		c.1950	One-story one-part commercial block building in the International Style. The corner is detailed with stacked brown brick, wrapping the corner, creating a pylon effect. The brown brick is continued on the long side under the ribbon windows topped by a narrow window canopy. The rest of the brick is a light creamy orange in a running bond. The entrance has double metal doors flanked by sidelights and topped by a transom. The entrance is demarcated with an aluminum frame on two sides.	International	C
30	203	Commerce St.	DF Frame & Logo	Cobb's Shoe Store, Hartley Shoe Store, Ray Green Finance Co.	c.1950	One-story, one-part commercial block brick building with slightly recessed storefront in creamy orange stacked brick. The entrance has double metal doors with transom and fixed glass display windows.	International	C
31	204	Commerce St.	501 Winery	grocery, R.E. Hughes Phonograph Records, Murrah's Book & Gift Shop	c.1915	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with altered storefront and modern canopy. Upper façade has recessed sign panel with stepped brick detailing.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
32	207	Commerce St.	Saturday Furniture	Montgomery Ward	1928	Two-story two-part commercial block building in the standard Montgomery Ward design of the late 1920s with glazed terra cotta tile in cream and green. Classical style motifs seen in the garland, medallions, and urns. The second floor windows are wood-frame sash with curved corners on the flanking windows. Transom windows remain above the modern shed-roofed wood canopy.	Neoclassical, Commercial Style	C
33	210	Commerce St.	Childress Specific Chiropractic	Western Union, Service Cleaners, Smith Carpet Co., Swain Insurance Agency A&B Café, City News Stand	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building. The brick has been covered with smooth stucco. The storefront area, including the transoms, has been infilled with stacked Roman bricks probably done in the 1960s. The store has been divided into two businesses (206 and 210).	Commercial Style	C
34	214	Commerce St.			c.1915	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with modern canopy. The façade has been covered with modern brick and fieldstone, and the storefront area has been reconfigured.	Commercial Style	NC
35	216	Commerce St.	Hometown Insurance	Whiteway Barber Shop	c.1950	One-story one-part commercial block building. The façade has been covered with random fieldstone and the storefront has been drastically reconfigured. This building does not show up on the 1946 Sanborn map but does show up on the 1962 Sanborn map, so it post-dates 1946 and pre-dates 1962.	Commercial Style	C
36	217	Commerce St.	Saturday Furniture	Helpy-Selfy Grocery	1928	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building with cast stone detailing (cornice and urn finials). The transom and upper floor windows are boarded up. The storefront features brushed aluminum frame, large plate glass windows and modern canopy.	Commercial Style	C
37	218 - 226	Commerce St.	Gordon's Furniture	Western Auto, Landrum Hardware; John's Furniture, auto sales and service	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block building. The upper façade has been stuccoed and the transom window area has been slipcovered. The canopy has been replaced with a metal one and the storefront area was reconfigured in the 1980s to match neighboring store.	Commercial Style	C
38	225	Commerce St.	McGee Electric	Golden Krust Bakery, Thompson Bakery, Jim Bettis Electric	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with boarded up transom windows and modern shed-roofed wood canopy.	Commercial Style	C
39	229	Commerce St.	Gordon's Furniture	Coats Boot & Shoe Store, Childress Typewriter Exchange, Watkins Hotel, C.V. Jones Hardware	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block building with a modern slipcover hiding the upper façade. The storefront area has been remodeled. The canopy is a replacement.	Commercial Style	C
40	233	Commerce St.		grocery, café, Jones Damron Clothiers	c.1915	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with boarded up transom and storefront windows. Wood planks conceal the lower side piers. Modern brick under storefront windows.	Commercial Style	C
41	237	Commerce St.	Childress Chamber of Commerce	United Gas	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with recessed angled entry, tiled piers, and altered storefront area.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
42	240	Commerce St.		R. H. Norris Warehouse	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with replacement windows and doors. The façade has an angled stepped parapet and wide rectangular nameplate area "R.H. Norris Hardware Warehouse Harold Cheek Owner".	Commercial Style	C
43	241	Commerce St.	Suddenlink	implement warehouse, R.H. Norris Warehouse, Jackson Tire, Cablecom-General	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with a stuccoed finish. The transom windows are boarded up. The storefront area has been altered to a double-angle recess.	Commercial Style	NC
44	245	Commerce St.	Cornerstone Insurance	Parker Floor Covering, Union Bus Station, Modern Café	c.1910	One-story one-part commercial block brick building on a corner lot. Simple brick patterning in parapet to form signboard panel and dentil parapet coping. Aluminum frame storefront with tinted glass. The modern canopy wraps the corner and is supported by brick piers.	Commercial Style	C
45	300	Commerce St.	Childress Building Center	Farm-all Tractor, auto dealership (Chrysler, Pontiac), courthouse	c.1925	Two-story two-part commercial block building on a corner lot with an alley behind. The windows on ground floor and second floor have been replaced and the transom windows have been covered up. The metal wraparound modern canopy is supported by brick piers. Modern metal awnings shelter the second floor windows. The brick walls have been painted. The building has some decorative brick detailing, such as the recessed rectangular panels over each upper floor window, small diamond shapes over each pier, and vertical elements between each upper floor window.	Commercial Style	C
46	309	Commerce St.	Villyards	beauty shop	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block building with metal slipcover on upper façade and part of display windows. The large display windows are replacement aluminum as is the single entry door. The metal canopy is not original. The cornice has modestly corbelled bricks.	Commercial Style	NC
47	312	Commerce St.		cigar store	1903	One-story one-part commercial block building with an infilled store area (brick with modern small sash windows and door), covered up transom windows, and modern metal canopy supported by brick piers. According to the owner, the rear of the building was damaged by the 2006 tornado, but has been rebuilt with a modern garage door. A brick rectangular nameplate area spans the width of the building.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
48	315	Commerce St.	Childress City Hall	Childress City Hall	1927	Two-story rectangular-block symmetrical building with Neoclassical detailing brick and cast stone pilasters and decorative cornice with balustrade, and cast stone arched detailing over ground floor window openings. The upper floor rectangular windows are boarded up as are several on the ground floor, while others are replacement windows. The front façade has a central double door entry with flanking sidelights and transom, topped by 3-over-2 window with metal railing on the second floor and a building name block "MUNICIPAL BUILDING" above. Architect: Wyatt C. Hedrick.	Neoclassical	C
49	316	Commerce St.			c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block building with a double-width garage door opening covered by a modern shed-roofed metal canopy supported by wood brackets. The upper façade has a rectangular brick nameplate area.	Commercial Style	NC
50	317	Commerce St.	First Presbyterian Church	First Presbyterian Church	c.1925	Two-story rectangular block building on a raised podium (for partially recessed basement). The front façade features four double-height classical columns supporting a classical pediment with dentil molding. The two side elevations have slightly recessed walls with three oversized round-arched stained glass windows. Some of the rectangular windows on the sides and rear are boarded up. The building appears to retain much original fabric.	Neoclassical	C
51	320	Commerce St.	Mashburn Realty		c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block building with a central entry way of a single glass door and two wide sidelights flanked by two wide display areas with replacement windows. The red clay tile-covered canopy is a replacement. The upper façade is plain with two diamond elements and canopy tie remnants.	Commercial Style	C
52	324	Commerce St.		Studebaker dealership	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block building with a single-width garage door on the right, a single entry door, and then a wide display window area on the left topped by transom windows. The majority of the windows are covered up. The building is now used for storage.	Commercial Style	C
53	411	Commerce St.	AMD Engineering		c.1920	One-story one-part commercial block with rectangular plan, stair-stepped side parapet, minimal brick detailing on front parapet, and replacement wood shingled canopy.	Commercial Style	C
54	415	Commerce St.	H. S. Black Abstractor Inc.	auto sales	c.1920	One-story one-part commercial block with circa 1950s modern brick veneer façade, inset entry	Commercial Style	C
55	420	Commerce St.	City Parts Co.		c.1930	One-story one-part commercial block L-plan building with store wing and multiple service bays. The windows and doors have been replaced. The canopy is not original.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
56	700	Commerce St.	Childress Jr. High School	Childress HS Main Building Architect: Guy Carlander	1926	Two-story T-plan flat-roofed brick building with gabled-parapet entrance pavilion, two columns supporting lanterns flank recessed double-door entry, colored tile panels, round-arched and flat-lintel windows (replacements), decorative brickwork, and dentiled coping.		C
57	700	Commerce St.	Childress Jr. High School	Childress HS Gymnasium Architect: Voelcker & Dixon and J. S. Clements	1939	Two-story rectangular-plan front-gabled Italian Renaissance style brick gymnasium building with two rectangular-plan flat-roofed wings; round-arched and flat-lintel windows; cast stone columns, brackets, medallions, and coping; decorative brickwork; three double-door entrances; and red clay roof tiles. The building was funded by the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works in 1939.		C
58	700	Commerce St.	Childress Jr. High School	Childress HS Shop	1945	One-story rectangular-plan flat-roofed brick warehouse building used as a shop for the school with stuccoed walls and boarded up windows.		C
59	700	Commerce St.	Childress Jr. High School	Childress HS Cafeteria	c.1960	One-story rectangular-plan gable- and flat-roofed cafeteria building with two entry pavilions with paired entry doors, central triple-arched windows in single-arched opening, flat-topped fixed windows, arched corbel motif along gable ends.		C
60	700	Commerce St.	Childress Jr. High School	Childress HS Science Building	c.1980	One-story rectangular-plan low-pitched front-gable-roofed brick building used for a music hall, metal-framed sash windows, inset entrance with two doors.		NC
61a	700	Commerce St.	Childress Jr. High School	Music Building	c. 1980	One-story front-gabled brick building with three arched bays infilled with three arched stuccoed panels.		NC
61	801	Commerce St.	Department of Human Resources	Fox Building - Fox Clinic Architect: Joe Morgan; Builder: Thaiten Brothers	1952	One-story L-plan International Style brick building with glass block windows, flat canopy over the entrance with thick vertical pylon, and replacement entry door.	Modern	C
61a	114	Ave. D NW	Brown Auto Supply		c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block in brick with double storefront, tiered canopy, boarded up transom windows, metal-framed storefront windows and doors. The upper façade brick has been painted.	Commercial Style	C
61b	120	Ave. D NW		Smith Motor Co.	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with paired storefronts with simple brick façade, transom windows, and storefront areas.	Commercial Style	C
61c	128	Ave. D NW		Smith Motor Co.	1922	One-story one-part commercial block on a corner lot with multi-bay plate glass storefronts, stepped parapet, transom windows, and polychrome brick.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
61d	108	Ave. E NE	Neskorik Insurance	Reid Graham Insurance Adjustors	c.1980	One-story brick building with rectangular plan and gable metal roof. No storefront windows or side windows. Single front door with transoms.	No Style	NC
62	109	Ave. E NW	Integra Care Home Health	Women's Department Club	1928	Two-story brick building with rectangular plan, red barrel-tiled pent roof parapet. The symmetrical façade has paired windows on first and second floors on either side of main entrance. A triple-arched entrance is in the center of first floor topped by three windows. The windows have been replaced.	Spanish Eclectic	C
63	100	Ave. E NW	Childress County Courthouse	Childress County Courthouse	1939	Multi-story stepped block courthouse in the Art Moderne style with stone veneer. It was built with WPA funds. Architect: Townes & Funk	Moderne	C
64	100	Ave. E NW	Childress County Courthouse Adult Probation Department	Childress County Courthouse jail, library	1924	Historic jail also on county courthouse lot in NE corner of block. Two-story rectangular plan, stucco exterior, porch with Doric columns. Jail was the library at one point and a museum. The building retains original wood windows, jail cell components and light switches on the interior.	Neoclassical	C
65	100	Ave. F NE			c.1940	The filling station is covered in stucco. Some of the stucco is falling off to reveal red brick underneath. The filling station portion looks to be much in its original condition and has been added onto over the years. A rectangular brown brick building is located behind (south) of the filling station. It has a primary entrance on Main Street with large display windows either side. The display windows and door have short canopies over them. The overall appearance has an art deco style with horizontal bands at the top carried throughout most of the buildings. Wooden garage doors are located on the northeast portion of the complex.	Commercial Style	C
66	100	Ave. F NW	Jim's Auto and Truck Sales		c.1930	L-plan service station with front canopy, stucco finish, green tile pent roof and decorative green tiles on exterior walls. Historic wood windows are in place.	Spanish Eclectic	C
67	110	Ave. F NW	Bridges Service Center	Gulf Super Service	c.1950	Former Gulf gas station with oblong box with canopy form, 3 service bays with multi-light glazed overhead service doors, large display windows on office area, porcelain enamel wall panels, inward sloping eaves on canopy and garage.	Other: oblong box	C
68	200	Ave. F NW	Golden Dragon Restaurant	restaurant	c.1925	One-story front-gabled two parallel rectangular-plan blocks front-gabled brick commercial building with Chinese style porch entry.	No Style	NC
69	206	Ave. F NW	Prosper Cabinet Shop		c.1930	One-story rectangular-plan gable-roofed metal-framed gymnasium building with concrete foundation, brick walls, sheet metal roof, and skylights.		C
See park map		Fair Park	Fair Park		est. 1920	Eastern portion of Fair Park, including all major buildings and structures, itemized below and described in Section 7 text.		C site

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
See park map		Fair Park	Auditorium		c.1925	One-story rectangular-plan gambrel-roofed auditorium with rectangular side wing, and gabled portico, stuccoed walls. The auditorium was expanded and renovated in 1993 with the addition designed by Harper Perkins Architects of Wichita Falls and the construction work done by T. L. Inman Construction Company of Wichita Falls. The original building was a simple rectangular-plan front-gabled building of masonry construction.		NC
See park map		Fair Park	Rock Field		1938	A baseball field with field stone rock walls and bleacher stands built by the National Youth Administration (1937-1938). The field underwent renovation in 2010.		C structure
See park map		Fair Park	Football Stadium		1940	A football stadium with encircling track and field stone wall, home (north side) and visitor (south side) concrete-frame bleachers, square and octagonal ticket booths. The south side bleachers are infilled with field stone and concrete block underneath to provide locker rooms. The stadium was built by the Work Projects Administration (1838-1940) and the National Youth Administration.		C
See park map		Fair Park	Playground		c.1950	Fenced playground area with slides and swing sets.		C site
See park map		Fair Park	Masonic Amphitheater		c.1940	A depressed circular grassed area partially surrounded by concrete and tile step tiers with a flat concrete platform stage and a concrete and brick picnic table and benches.		C structure
See park map		Fair Park	Rotary Bowl		1944-47	A series of concrete picnic tables and benches with stone bases set into three circles with octagonal metal roof supported by heavy metal beams and posts.		C structure
See park map		Fair Park	Swimming Pool		c.1950	Concrete-lined rectangular-plan swimming pool with rectangular-plan gable-roofed concrete block pool house set at an angle to the pool.		C structure
See park map		Fair Park	Fairy Ring		c.1940	A simple concrete bench with concrete pier bases set in a large circle around a circular concrete table with stone base.		C object
See park map		Fair Park	Tennis Courts					NC Structure
See park map		Fair Park	Bridge		c.1990	Nonhistoric wooden pedestrian bridge over the park lake		NC Structure
See park map		Fair Park	Lighthouse Fountain		1939	A lighthouse fountain set in a circular pool. The lighthouse has pebbles pressed into concrete with a wraparound tubing that spouts water. Fountain used to light up.		C object

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
See park map			Fair Park Picnic Tables and Benches (historic objects – not counted separately from overall site)		Late 1930s-early 1940s	Various concrete, stone, and brick picnic tables and benches scattered throughout Fair Park. The concrete table tops come in several shapes: coffin-shaped or elongated hexagon, hexagon, rectangular, and round. Most table and bench bases are constructed of field stone.		Not counted apart from site
80	201	Ave. G NW	Custom Auto Shop	Hargraves Cleaners	c.1930	One-story rectangular-block brick commercial building with metal-framed windows, flat-roofed tie rod-supported canopy, decorative parapet, cast stone lintels and sills, curved metal truss roof system with wood decking and skylights.	Commercial Style	C
81	810	Ave. I NE	Rhoads Community Center	Rhoads School Gymnasium	1953	One-story rectangular-plan gable-roofed metal-framed gymnasium building with concrete foundation, brick walls, sheet metal roof, and skylights.		C
82	810	Ave. I NE	Rhoads Community Center	Rhoads School Playground	1948	Playground features original metal equipment		C site
83		North Main at Ave. G (NW corner)	Childress ISD Maintenance	West Building	c.1945	One-story T-plan gambrel- and gable-roofed warehouse building used for school maintenance with a mixture of siding materials (wood, plywood, asbestos shingles), exposed rafter tails, garage door on rear, sash windows on front.		C
84		North Main at Ave. G (NW corner)	Childress ISD Maintenance	East Building	c.1945	One-story rectangular-plan gambrel-roofed warehouse building used for school maintenance with asbestos siding, exposed rafter tails, garage door on front and side, boarded up windows.		C
85		North Main at Ave. G (NW corner)	Childress ISD Maintenance	North Building	c.1950	One-story rectangular-plan gable-roofed masonry warehouse building with painted-over sash windows, shed-roofed canopy supported by square wood posts.		C
86	100	North Main St.		Knights of Pythias, auto accessories, store	c.1910	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building with corbelled belt course beneath sign blocks. Original entry modified to accommodate a single, residential-type door. Primary and secondary facades display ghost signage advertising storage and mattresses, others are indistinguishable.	Commercial Style	C
87	101	North Main St.	Underwood Building	saloon, grocery, Denver Hotel annex, restaurant, Majestic Hotel	1894	Two-story two-part commercial building with reconfigured storefront composed of glass blocks and cast iron pilasters. First floor composed of stone; second of cement blocks, and second story sits recessed slightly from first. Sanborn maps indicate this was a stone one-story building that gained a cement block second story in c. 1905. Exposed joist ends once supported an upper story porch and roof (see historic photos). No window glazing remains.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
88	104	North Main St.		Norris Implement Company, filling station and garage	c.1925	Front half: one-story, brick building with stucco façade and tiled parapet awning supported by six pairs of wood brackets. Rear half is two-story brick. Remodeled storefront windows, perhaps original transoms. Interior contains large concrete ramp for auto access to the second floor. First appears on the 1929 Sanborn with slightly different front as filling station and auto repair shop with capacity for 25 cars on the second floor.	Commercial Style, Spanish Colonial	C
89	105	North Main St.		dry goods, Hokus Pokus Grocery, Majestic Malt Shop, Hall's Western Store	c.1910	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with simple, intact parapet and recessed sign block. Large, display window cases and single entry under a newer metal canopy. Transom area is filled with wood.	Commercial Style	C
90	109 - 111	North Main St.		Biggerstaff & Morris Building, JC Penney	1908	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building with distinctive brick pylon parapet and sign block that reads "Biggerstaff & Morris 1908." Second story windows openings hold remains of wood sash windows; none have glazing. Multi-colored brick forms decorative design in diamond patterns near roofline. First floor entries are deeply recessed and the overhang is supported by metal posts. The northern third of the buildings features a double entry (possibly original) to the main volume and a single entry that leads directly to the staircase to upstairs. Store windows are filled with wood siding. The southern two-thirds of the building has storefronts covered almost fully with wood siding, except for glass entry doors.	Commercial Style	C
91	121	North Main St.		Piggly Wiggly grocery, Harp Drug Store	c.1910	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building with vertical wood siding and modern residential doors on first floor and wood-filled, arch-topped windows on second. Bi-colored brick details in a diamond pattern.		C
92	123	North Main St.		Monogram Theater	c.1910	Two-story two-part commercial block building with radically altered storefront--now composed of modern, single-entry residential door and vinyl sash windows. Upper story holds 4 square window openings--two are filled with plywood, two are metal casements. The upper façade is coated with a stucco or other cementitious material; crumbling portions reveal red brick underneath.	Moderne	C
93	124	North Main St.	The Scrub Barn	The Daily Index	c.1920	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with stepped parapet and dentiled sign blocks. Storefront composed of aluminum and glass; large display window cases flank the central, recessed entry. Original transom filled or covered with sheet metal. Sheet metal canopy supported by square metal posts set into square, wooden planters.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
94	127	North Main St.		Woolworth's	c.1950	Two-story two-part commercial block building with metal jalousie windows on the second story and metal red and silver sign block. Double entry is recessed and flanked by full storefront display windows. Most of the storefront is clad in wood siding. At the entry is a mosaic floor detail in green and white--a "W" laid inside a diamond. Building probably achieved this configuration in late 1930s or early 40s. Sanborn maps prior to that show two separate buildings here. Lot 4 contained a 2-story building that was stone on the first floor and concrete block on the second; Lot 5 had a two-story brick building. At the time of the 1946 map, this was a single, large store with interior iron posts.	Commercial Style	C
95	128	North Main St.		hardware	c.1915	One story brick commercial building with decorative stepped parapet and dentiled sign blocks. Nearly the entire façade has been filled with green metal sheeting. There is no roof and the entire building appears gutted.	Commercial Style	C
96	132	North Main St.	Pierce Engineering (1st); Pierce Dance Studio (2nd)	grocery; billiards; drug store; restaurant; hall	c.1910	Two-story two-part commercial block with heavily altered façade. Sanborn maps indicate first floor is stone construction with concrete block construction on second. Painted, rough-finished block on second story façade may be original, but windows are vinyl sash replacements of size different than original. First floor façade has newly applied brick and concrete block face covering original transom and storefronts, as well as two, modern, single-entry doors.	Commercial Style	C
97	136	North Main St.	Garibaldi's Restaurant	harness store, hardware store, bowling alley, Saied's Department Store	c. 1900	Two-story two-part commercial block with modernized brick and glass storefront, recessed single entry, and metal canopy. Transom and second floor façade have been covered with painted, stucco-like material. Sanborn indicate this was a one-story stone building in place by the 1902 map; a second floor, constructed of brick, was added by the time of the 1912 map.	Commercial Style	NC
98	139	North Main St.		furniture, clothing, confectionary, Main Drug	c.1910	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with large shingled canopy, decorative brickwork and parapet. Storefront is modern aluminum and glass with large display windows flanking the recessed entry. Bulkheads are polished aggregate tile. Transom filled with some sort of stone-like tile. Sanborn maps indicate that the building is stone with a brick façade.	Commercial Style	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
99	141	North Main St.	Cristler & Davidson Building; Senator Robert Duncan office	Cristler & Davidson, Perkins-Watkins Department Store, telephone exchange (upstairs)	1908	Two-story two-part commercial block building constructed of brick with stone coping and window sills and headers. Modernized storefront composed of aluminum, glass, and marble tile accents. Transoms and second story windows on primary façade are filled with metal shields; those on secondary façade are modern vinyl sash. Cornice plaque reads "Cristler & Davidson 1908." Large painted metal canopy supported by simple wood posts. Exterior stairs lead to basement level on north elevation. Storefront on north elevation (currently used by Senator Duncan) is addressed 119 Avenue B.	Commercial Style	C
100	142	North Main St.	Sun Kissed Tanning Salon	bank; variety store; dry goods & notions; confectionary	c. 1900	One-story one-part commercial block building with brick and glass storefront, angled in from sidewalk. Canopy removed, exposing wall construction beneath. Above canopy is painted, stuccoed covering.	Commercial Style	NC
101	144	North Main St.		grocery, dry goods & notions, Saied's Men's Store, Homerun Sports	c.1910	One-story, one-part commercial block buildings with stone façade treatment below the canopy and metal slipcover above. The side elevation (along Ave. G B) has what appears to be an extra layer of brick to within a few feet of the top. "Homerun Sports" advertisement mural is painted on this side elevation. Above it is a highly decorative, original, corbelled brick parapet in good condition. Side elevation contains two separate, secondary entrances.	Commercial Style	NC*
102	201	North Main St.		First National Bank, Ray Green Finance Co.	c.1925	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building with stepped gabled parapet, cast stone detailing seen in coping, cornice with brackets, keystone, and inset tiles. The windows and doors have been changed (from twelve-over-ones, nine-over-ones, and multi-light transoms).	Commercial Style, Renaissance Revival	C
103	203	North Main St.	Villa Palma Italian Restaurant	dry goods, drugs, Hartley's Shoe Store, McHanney Shoe Store	c.1900	One-story one-part commercial block building with a recessed entrance and the lower façade covered in stucco. The storefront area has been remodeled and covered with corrugated aluminum sheets. The canopy is modern. The upper façade has dogtooth brick and decorative clay tile inserts.	Commercial Style	C
104	205	North Main St.	Fagg Building	bank, Harrison Drug & Jewelry, drugs, Childress County Abstract	c.1900, 1926	Two-story two-part commercial block building with a partial L-shaped wood slipcover and altered storefront. The building block was built circa 1900 but the façade was rebuilt in 1926 (based on historical photos and date on building)	Commercial Style	NC*

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
105	206	North Main St.	Palace Theater	Palace Theater Architect: W. Scott Dunne	1937	One-part commercial block movie theater in the Art Moderne style with zigzag detailing, horizontal striped metal canopy, recessed entry with projecting ticket booth, black and white tiles in horizontal stripe pattern, and vertical "Palace" theater sign. The theater retains a high level of integrity. The Palace Theater was opened in 1937 after a previous theater was destroyed by fire. The theater was opened and operated by Mrs. Mable Phipps, widow of F. M. Phipps, and G. R. Layton, son of the late G. S. Layton.	Moderne	C
106	212	North Main St.		The Hub, Sears Roebuck	c.1925	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with recessed display entry area with marble kickplates, mosaic tiled floor, and large plate glass windows. The upper façade has decorative brick detailing and dogtoothed soldier bricks along parapet. The transom area has been covered and stuccoed. The storefront area was remodeled, probably in the 1950s.	Commercial Style	C
107	213	North Main St.		dry goods, Preston Clothing Co.	c.1900	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building with polychrome brick detailing, segmental arch wood-frame windows on the second floor, brick corbeling at the parapet. The transom windows have been boarded up. The storefront area has been reconfigured, probably in the 1950s.	Commercial Style	C
108	217	North Main St.	Preston Insurance Agency	dry goods, general store, drugs, variety, Ray's Shoppe, Pauline's Style Shop, The Lois Shop	c.1900	Two-story two-part commercial block building with stone detailing and decorative brickwork. The second floor windows have segmental arches with wood window frames. The storefront has been rebuilt but in a historical configuration with traditional large display windows above wood panels, wood door with glass panel, recessed entrance, transom windows over the wood-frame chain-supported canopy.	Commercial Style	C
109	221 - 229	North Main St.	Childress Building Center	grocery, hardware, restaurant, barber, Perry Brothers, Eubank & Park Drugs	c.1900	One-story one-part commercial block building with reconfigured storefront and metal slipcover. Historically 2 separate buildings.	Commercial Style	NC*
110	222	North Main St.	New 4 U Thrift Store	Boles Jewelry, Childress Office Supply, Ox Bow Printing	c.1915	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with angled stepped parapet and wide rectangular nameplate. The transom windows have been covered up. The storefront area has been remodeled.	Commercial Style	C
111	226	North Main St.	The Childress Index	grocery, variety, meat, undertaker	1892	One-story one-part commercial block building that has been stuccoed. The storefront area has been changed with stucco and glass block (around doors and under windows). The canopy is a replacement.	Commercial Style	NC*

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
112	228	North Main St.	Main Events	Hilliard Furniture, White's Auto Store	c.1910	Two-story two-part commercial block brick building covered in enameled metal rectangular panels. The metal panels are loose and some are missing. The storefront area has double glass doors in the center flanked by plate glass windows in metal frames with red panels framing the windows. The second floor windows are tripe two-over-two sash. The canopy is missing.	Commercial Style	C
113	232-240	North Main St.	Downtown Fades and Wild Stylez	furniture, post office, Deluxe Barber, Classic Beauty Shop, Childress County News	c.1910	One-story one-part commercial block building with stucco on the lower part of the façade. The storefront area has been altered with a modern configuration. The upper wall has simple brick corbelling and patterning to form signboard panels and demarcate bay divisions.	Commercial Style	C
114	233	North Main St.	vacant	dry goods, White's Auto Store, Buckley's Men Store	c.1900	One-story one-part commercial block building that has been covered in wood siding and stacked stone veneer. The storefront area has been reconfigured with an angled asymmetrical entry.	Commercial Style	NC
115	237	North Main St.	Sisters Salon & Gifts	drugs, S. L. Levy	c.1900	One-story one-part commercial block building with an altered storefront area with shellstone panels and stacked Permarstone veneer.	Commercial Style	NC
116	241	North Main St.	Two Rivers Art Gallery, Moore Studio	Norris Hardware	c.1900	One-story one-part commercial block brick building with decorative brickwork along the parapet. The transom windows have been covered and the canopy is modern. The entry area has tiled bulkheads and a pair of curved glass bays.	Commercial Style	C
117	300	North Main St.	Main Street Barber		c.1920	One-story one-part commercial block building on a corner lot. The long side elevation has some bricked in garage door-sized areas, indicating automotive dealings (confirmed by current owner). The metal canopies are replacements, as are the windows. The brick has been painted and is very minimal in detailing, just a belt course and cornice.	Commercial Style	C
118	301	North Main St.	First Bank & Trust	First Bank & Trust	1969	One-story rectangular block building with a raised cross axis entrance made of light cream brick wall surface and concrete pilasters and cornice, inset panels of glass, and side drive-through canopy.	International	NC
119	302	North Main St.		Goodyear Service	c.1950	One-story one-part commercial block building with large shed-roofed composition shingled canopy supported by wood posts. The front part of the building has been covered by vertical wood siding. The rear part of the building is made of concrete block and has two roll-up wood panel garage doors.	Commercial Style	NC
120	330	North Main St.	Foster & Lambert LLC		c.1980	One-story residential form building with red clay tile roofing and a pierced block screen in front of the main entrance. The brick walls have few window openings. A modern carport is on the north side.	Spanish Eclectic	NC

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
121	344	North Main St.	Masonic Lodge #695 AF & AM		c.1920	One-story one-part commercial block building that has been extensively modified. The front part of the building has been encased in modern brick. The rear and sides of the building have been covered in metal siding. Based on the footprint and scale of the building, there is probably a historical commercial building under the modifications that dates back to at least 1921 (based on Sanborn maps).	Commercial Style	NC
122	400	North Main St.	Gazebo Park		c.1980	Small urban park set on a corner lot with two borders of evergreen trees along the north and east sides, red brick paver pathways, octagonal wood gazebo, and two small octagonal-shaped plazas surrounded by clipped hedges.	No Style	NC site
123	401	North Main St.		Michie Building, Whippett Dealership, Glor Motor Co., John Deere dealer	1926	One-story one-part commercial block brick building on a corner lot. The corner section has a large pass-through porte cochere for automobile access with curved inner wall for showroom display. The two side blocks have large openings for vehicular access. The building has decorative cast stone detailing and decorative brickwork. The nameplate reads "1926 Michie Building." The transom windows have multi-paned prism glass. The large display windows all appear to be replacements.	Commercial Style	C
124	422	North Main St.			1924	One-story one-part commercial block building with stone veneer, shed-roofed corrugated metal canopy, and attached front-gabled residence with replacement windows and rear addition.	Commercial Style, Minimal Traditional	C
125	423	North Main St.	The People's Federal Credit Union		1974	One-story flat-roofed commercial block with inset corner entry, stone and brick veneer.	Commercial Style	NC
126	436-440	North Main St.	Thetford Insurance & Outreach Family Life Center		c.1955	One-story one-part commercial block rectangular plan building with brick veneer, fixed glass windows, decorative metal ground-to-roof bracket posts, and low-slope roof.	Commercial Style	C
128	500	North Main St.	Main Street Realty	MurrayLane Beauty Salon, Dr. McConnell dentist, filling station	c.1925	One-story commercial building. Pilasters on each side of front façade that connect to columns at an angle by an arch at the top. Flat roof in front 2/3 of building, side gable roof in rear 1/3 of the building; entire roof is metal. Building appears to have been significantly altered and combined over the years. 1929 Sanborn maps show small square floor plan with rectangular canopy in front for a filling station. By 1946, the canopy and filling station were combined and enclosed for residential use. Stucco exterior with numerous areas of visible closed openings. A variety of replacement window shapes and materials. Glass block on the south side, fixed glass on the west side. The primary floor plan is rectangular. A shorter building is connected on the north side to create a L-Plan for the entire business. The shorter building has a single door and horizontally oriented rectangular window.	Spanish Eclectic	C

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Map ID	Address	Street Name	Current Name	Historic Name	Date	Description	Style	C/NC
129	504	North Main St.	Unos Tacos		c.1960	One-story cinderblock double building. The south building only retains a façade. A taco truck is parked behind the façade and seats are located behind the freestanding façade.	No Style	NC
130		Throughout district	Brick Streets					C Structure

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### Statement of Significance

Beginning with its establishment in 1887 along the Fort Worth and Denver City Railroad, the city of Childress, Texas, grew to become a regionally-important commercial and civic center in an area based largely on a ranching and agricultural economy. The Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District includes an impressive assortment of significant commercial, civic, educational, and recreation properties that reflect the thoughtfully-planned physical development of the city through the post-World War II period. The central business district north of the railroad tracks features a variety of commercial architecture found throughout the state, especially in the South Plains and Panhandle regions, reflecting vernacular tastes, and interpretations of popular and high-style design. The district also includes several significant architect-designed civic and educational buildings from the early and mid-twentieth century, as well as several examples of New Deal Era construction, including a massive high school football stadium. The overall feeling of the district, which is laid out in distinct functional zones along eight city blocks, is very much intact. The district is nominated under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Community Planning and Development, and Criterion C in the area of Architecture, at the local level of significance. The period of significance spans from 1892, which is the date of the earliest extant resource in the district, to 1966, which is the fifty-year cutoff for National Register eligibility.

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### Settlement and Establishment of Childress, Texas

The city of Childress is centrally located in Childress County in the southeastern corner of the Texas Panhandle. The city and county are named for George C. Childress, author of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Childress County is drained by the Prairie Dog Fork of the Red River and its four lakes dot the landscape. Fair Park Lake and Scott Lake are both located inside Childress City Limits, while Lake Childress and Baylor Lake are located near the western edge of the county. Its soils are a mix, usually a sandy loam mixed with alluvial sands from the county's many creeks and rivers. These soils support a variety of native grasses as well as cotton, wheat, and sorghum. Shin oak, mesquite, salt cedar, and hackberry grow in the bottoms.

Limited settlement of Childress County took place earlier than 1887, the official year of the county's organization. Childress County was nothing more than pastureland for area ranches including the Mill Iron Ranch, Diamond Tail Ranch, Shoe Nail Ranch, and the OX Ranch in the late 1870s and 1880s. According to the US Census of 1880, 25 people lived in this area of Texas.<sup>1</sup> In April of 1887, the Fort Worth & Denver City Railroad (FW&DC) began to lay tracks through Childress County, and the organization of Childress County soon followed. The election of a county seat proved to be divisive to the county residents, as it became a battle between two communities that were located about four miles apart on land previously owned by the OX Ranch. The locals favored the election of Childress City to serve as the county seat, while the railroad preferred the community of Henry due to better topography for railroad construction. In the April 1887 election, Childress City won the position as the county seat. However, upset by these results, the FW&DC threatened to bypass Childress County communities. In order to appease the residents of Childress City, the railroad offered lot owners of Childress City equal size lots in Henry, and promised to change the name from Henry to Childress. As a result, the July 1887 election voted for Henry (now Childress) as the official county seat for Childress County.<sup>2</sup>

The FW&DC, stretching from Fort Worth to southern Colorado, was instrumental in the growth and development of Childress County and northwest Texas as a whole. Over the succeeding 40 years, much of the region was converted from sparsely settled, remote ranchland to farms and smaller stock ranches. Unlike many railroads of the period, the

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<sup>1</sup> [U.S.] Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), 409.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Ord, ed., *They Followed the Rails: In Retrospect, A History of Childress County*, (Childress, Texas: The Childress Reporter, 1970), 8-11.

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FW&DC received no land grants or assistance from the State of Texas other than the right-of-way for the line itself. Without income from land sales, the FW&DC actively promoted farming in the region, a strategy surely meant to maximize freight traffic along the line.<sup>3</sup>

The lure of the railroad brought many people to Childress County and ranches began setting aside land or selling off land for crops, such as wheat, corn, oats, and cotton. The central and southern portions of the county were more suitable for farming, while areas closer to the Prairie Dog Town Fork of the Red River and its tributary creeks largely remained as ranchland.<sup>4</sup> According to the US Census, in 1890 the population of Childress County grew to 1,175. Droughts and economic panics slowed growth in the 1890's, but the county's population nonetheless reached 2,138 in 1900. Childress County population boomed again in the early twentieth century, with 9,538 residents in 1910, 10,093 in 1920, and it reached its peak in 1930 with a county population of 16,044.<sup>5</sup> Much of the population growth occurred in rural areas and in the 35 smaller communities that surround the city of Childress. The largest of these communities were Carey, Kirkland, and Tell. Through the late 1800s and early 1900s, the city of Childress quickly grew as well, serving as the commercial, governmental, and transportation hub for the region. Despite the singular importance of the railroad as the reason for the city's establishment and subsequent growth, very few traces of railroad infrastructure (except for the tracks and FW&D Locomotive 501, on display under a canopy) remain in the heart of the city.

### Development of the Childress Business District

Childress' early growth was closely interrelated with its status as a major hub for the FW&DC. The railroad provided the Dwight Hotel, the section house, and the depot in Childress. The town soon had the Childress Lumber Company, a doctor (Dr. J. H. Cristler), a bank, a school system, a newspaper – the *Childress County Index*, and four churches by 1889. The town incorporated in 1890 and had a post office, livery stable, a boarding house, a restaurant, three stores, a local YMCA, and a theater, and the population rose to 621.<sup>6</sup>

In 1890, the first brick courthouse replaced a wood frame false-front rectangular building. A “mysterious” fire burned down this courthouse on October 21, 1891. Reconstruction soon resulted in a new courthouse. When the FW&DC railroad made Childress one of its division points in 1901, the town approved bonds and donated land to build shops, roundhouses, and terminal facilities. With the influx of railroad workers, ranchers, and farmers, the community of Childress began to grow with a resulting population increase from 692 in 1900 to 3,818 by 1910. Businesses began to thrive around the downtown area near the location of the FW&DC railroad depot. The Underwood Building (1898) served as one of the community's first hotels, followed by a downtown construction boom that began in 1908 with the construction of the Cristler Building, Biggerstaff & Morris Building, Bates Building, Albert Building, Bybee Building, and Coyne Building all located in the current 100 block of Main Street in the downtown area of Childress. An 1890 birds-eye map and Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps from 1902 and 1907 illustrate the emerging developmental patterns that would characterize Childress. The 1890 map depicts commercial development concentrated along Meyer Street (now Main Street) for three blocks north of the railroad tracks, with numerous one-story commercial buildings with gable roofs and false-front storefronts. The Hotel Good, a two-story flat-roof stone building, was prominently situated at the northeast corner of Front Street (now Avenue A) and Swearingen Street (now Commerce Street), across

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<sup>3</sup> William C. Billingsley, “Fort Worth and Denver Railway,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/eqf03>. Uploaded on June 12, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>4</sup> Donald R. Abbe, “Childress County,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hcc11>. Uploaded on June 12, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, “Texas Population of Counties by Decennial Census: 1900 to 1990,” [www.census.gov/population/cencounts/tx190090.txt](http://www.census.gov/population/cencounts/tx190090.txt).

<sup>6</sup> H. Allen Anderson, “Childress, TX,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hfc07>. Uploaded on June 12, 2010. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

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the tracks from the FW&DC depot.<sup>7</sup> This hotel, under several names through the decades, was a major landmark and was considered to be “the elite place in Childress” by locals.<sup>8</sup> The 1890 map also shows the newly built brick courthouse, between Meyer Street and Swearingen Street five blocks north of the tracks.<sup>9</sup>

With the relocation of FW&DC division shops to Childress in 1901, the city’s commercial downtown quickly expanded. The 1902 Sanborn map indicates that many of the wood-frame buildings of the previous decade had been replaced by brick or stone masonry buildings. Primary development was centered on Main Street between Wilkinson Street (now Avenue B) and Johnson Street (now Avenue C). Stores along Main Street included dry goods, groceries, hardware stores, and a furniture store. Close to the railroad depot at the Front Street/Swearingen Street intersection were businesses that catered to travelers, such as the Hotel Good and several saloons. The 1902 map also shows a windmill in the middle of the intersection of Main Street and Johnson Street. For several years around the turn of the century, the windmill powered the city’s only water well other than two private wells located on the northern edge of the community near today’s City Park.<sup>10</sup> Through the late 1800s and early 1900s, wagon yards were located on the periphery of the commercial area, accommodating farmers and ranchers who brought crops to market.<sup>11</sup>

By 1907, several previously vacant lots on Main Street downtown had been infilled with commercial buildings, and scattered commercial development extended farther northward to Jones Street (now Avenue D). Notably, several new buildings were constructed on the west side of Swearingen Street between Front Street and Wilkinson Street (now Avenue B), housing two restaurants, a rooming house, lunch counters, groceries, and the two-story Union Hotel. A business at the northwest corner of Front Street and Swearingen Street was noted as offering “cold drinks”, reflecting the citizens’ 1904 vote to prohibit saloons. Other buildings near Front Street, previously noted as saloons, were instead shown as a furniture store, a rooming house, and offices by 1907.<sup>12</sup> By 1908, the city was touted as having 65 businesses, three banks, seven churches, two schools and two cotton gins. It was also noted as the second largest cotton shipping point on the FW&DC line, serving as the railroad’s central division point.<sup>13</sup>

During this time, Childress continued to grow as a transportation center. The FW&DC, having established its major line through Childress and then relocated their shops from Clarendon, added two branch lines with ties to Childress. The Fort Worth & Denver South Railway was constructed in the mid-1920s, running from Estelline to Plainview with its terminal in Childress. The Fort Worth & Denver North Railway, running from Childress to Pampa via Wellington and Shamrock, was laid between 1929 and 1932. Both branches were intended to tap into the growing agricultural production of the Texas Panhandle and South Plains.<sup>14</sup> This increase in rail traffic, along with continuing agricultural growth in the area, led to major population increases. The population in the city of Childress grew to 5,003 residents in 1920 and 7,163 residents by 1930.

### **Automobile Highways and the “Gateway to the Panhandle”**

In addition to the railroad, Childress played host to two major highways. In 1917, the state of Texas proposed the creation of State Highway (SH) 5, one of the original 26 state highways proposed that year. SH 5 connected Henrietta to Amarillo and on to New Mexico, paralleling the FW&DC route. A 1918 George Cram auto trail map notes that the

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<sup>7</sup> Sanborn Map Company, “Childress, Childress Co. Texas,” (New York: Sanborn Map Company, February 1902); Sanborn Map Company, “Childress, Childress Co. Texas,” (New York: Sanborn Map Company, March 1907).

<sup>8</sup> Ord, 12.

<sup>9</sup> Sanborn Map Company, “Childress, Childress Co. Texas,” (New York: Sanborn Map Company, February 1902); Sanborn Map Company, “Childress, Childress Co. Texas,” (New York: Sanborn Map Company, March 1907).

<sup>10</sup> Ord, 202.

<sup>11</sup> Ord, 15.

<sup>12</sup> In 2007, Childress County citizens approved the sale of alcohol by a 7-vote margin.

<sup>13</sup> Ord, 146.

<sup>14</sup> Billingsley.

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SH 5 alignment was included as part of two named auto trails: the “Colorado-to-Gulf Route” and the “North Texas Highway.” A 1922 Texas Highway Department map classified SH 5 as a first-class highway, the only road so designated in northwest Texas. SH 5 was designated as part of US Highway 370 in 1926, later changing to US 287 in 1939. The 504-mile highway begins in Port Arthur and travels through Fort Worth, Wichita Falls, Childress, Amarillo, and into the northern border of the Texas Panhandle.

The initial designation of Texas state highways in 1917 also included the north/south SH 4, also known as the “Del Rio-Canadian” route, passing through central Childress County. The roadway was designated as US 83 in 1926. The term “Crossroads of Hospitality” in regards to Childress comes from the intersection of east/west US 287 with north/south US 83 that occurs in the western portion of the city of Childress.<sup>15</sup> In Texas, US 83 runs an estimated 784 miles, beginning at the Texas/Mexico border in Brownsville extending north through Junction, Abilene, Childress, Shamrock, Perryton, and on through Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota before finally ending in Westhope, North Dakota, at the Canadian border where it continues as Manitoba Highway 83.

Transportation improvements coincided with a boom in the county’s agricultural sector in the early twentieth century. Conversion of large ranches to farms and smaller stock ranches continued, with 262 farms in the county in 1900, rising to 961 in 1910 and 1,348 in 1930. During this period, cotton became Childress County’s dominant crop. In 1910, just over 45,000 acres were devoted to cotton cultivation, making it the county’s most important crop. Substantial acreage was also planted in sorghum and corn. By 1930, Childress County agriculture had evolved into a cotton monoculture. The county had 173,868 acres planted in cotton, representing nearly 95 percent of all cultivated acreage. Stock raising remained an important agricultural activity, with 110,645 acres used for stock raising in 1930. Other counties in northwest Texas and southwest Oklahoma also increasingly grew focused on cotton cultivation, with Childress serving as a convenient processing and shipment point.

### Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Prosperity

The city’s population continued to grow rapidly, with 5,003 residents in 1920 and 7,163 in 1930. Childress’ commercial and civic core grew at a similar pace. By the late 1920s, Main Street, Commerce Street, and adjacent cross-streets were filled with near-solid blocks of brick and stone commercial buildings reflecting the prosperous times. Childress gained a high-rise building with the five-story Hotel Childress, which opened in the late 1920s. Businesses associated with sales and service of automobiles began to appear by the early 1910s; by 1929, downtown Childress was home to numerous auto dealerships, gas stations, and service garages. Imposing civic, educational, and institutional buildings were constructed in this period as testament to the city’s maturation. A new county jail was built in 1924 and the Childress City Hall, designed by Wyatt Hedrick of Fort Worth, was completed in 1927. Several congregations, including First Presbyterian Church, St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, and Holy Angels Catholic Church, erected new church buildings during the 1920s. With the burgeoning population, Childress gained several new schools. In 1926, a new Childress High School building designed by Guy Carlander of Amarillo opened on Commerce Street north of Avenue F. This building served as the high school until 1969, when it was converted to use as Childress Junior High School.

As the downtown area developed, it was clear that there needed to be some entertainment options for the 10,000 residents living in Childress County. The Monogram Theater built on Main Street in 1914 was followed by the construction of the La Grande Theater and Opera House in 1917 and the Gem Movie Theater in 1921. The La Grande Theater hosted hometown productions as well as traveling shows that frequented railroad towns in the period.<sup>16</sup> Shortly after the Gem Theater was completed, city leaders became concerned about the safety of local residents tramping

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<sup>15</sup> Childress Chamber of Commerce and Childress (Tex.), eds., *Childress, Texas, the Crossroads of Hospitality* ([Childress, Tex.: Childress Chamber of Commerce and Board of City Development, 1961).

<sup>16</sup> Ord, 13.

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through dirt-laden streets to attend a local theater or to shop local businesses, so in 1922, the city laid red bricks as a way to pave the streets. The Palace Theater was the last downtown theater and was constructed in 1926. It caught fire twice with the last fire burning it to the ground in 1936. The Palace was rebuilt in 1937, and served the community for many years before finally closing its doors in the early 1980s. The Palace Theater and the old Childress Post Office are recognized as historical buildings through the Texas Historical Commission's Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Marker Program. Local clubs and organizations also met in downtown buildings. These organizations included the Ladies' Department Club as well as the Masonic Lodge and other fraternal clubs.

### Great Depression and New Deal Infrastructure

In contrast to the preceding three decades of rapid development, the 1930s brought hard years of drought and economic depression to Childress and its surrounding region. Cotton prices, which had already dropped through the 1920s, plummeted with the Great Depression. Childress was also on the southeast fringe of the most severe Dust Bowl conditions of the early and mid-1930s, with its droughts and dust storms. The continued presence of the FW&DC shops and facilities helped to mediate the severity of the Depression in Childress, but the railroad itself was hurt by the sharp decreases in agricultural shipments, which were strongly tied to cotton production in northwest Texas.

Federal initiatives were important in propping up the local economy during the Depression, and Childress received an extraordinary amount of federal funding that resulted in permanent infrastructure, including a new county courthouse and jail, a new high school gymnasium, and a massive high school football stadium. From a farming perspective, the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 (AAA) provided payments to farmers to reduce the number of acres in cultivation. While the AAA brought long-needed price stability to cotton and other crops, it also reduced the amount of agricultural products brought to market cities such as Childress. With less production, the number of farmers, tenants, and seasonal laborers also dropped, resulting in population decreases. By 1940, the city of Childress had dropped slightly to 6,434 residents. Reflecting the profound changes to the rural economy, Childress County's population declined substantially, from 16,044 residents in 1930 – its all-time peak – to 12,149 residents in 1940.

For Childress residents, federal work-relief programs provided a welcome opportunity for employment. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the National Youth Administration (NYA) operated numerous projects in the city and county. The Public Works Administration (PWA) funded construction of the Childress County Courthouse and High School Gymnasium.<sup>17</sup> Childress County sponsored wide-ranging road improvement projects that employed hundreds of local workers, and the City of Childress also sponsored local construction and maintenance projects, as well as service projects such as sewing rooms in the city auditorium building, and indexing of county records.<sup>18</sup> Notable city-sponsored work-relief projects included improvements and repairs at Childress High School (now Junior High Building), landscaping and improvement projects for Fair Park, and construction of a football stadium and baseball fields in Fair Park. The WPA provided \$42,650 for the construction of concrete stands, the rock wall, and cinder track for the football stadium.<sup>19</sup> A July 1940 report from the WPA district office in Amarillo noted that \$869,456, including over \$700,000 in Federal funding, had been expended on Childress County WPA projects to that date. Those figures do not include WPA projects after July 1940, NYA projects, or other federal work-relief efforts.<sup>20</sup>

The improvements at Fair Park were spearheaded through the efforts of Richard E. Moore, the park's superintendent from 1938 to 1958. Moore (1915-1958) was trained as a rock mason, and worked for the county on several bridge

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<sup>17</sup> "Courthouse and Gym Building at Childress." *Dallas Morning News*, January 8, 1939, 4.

<sup>18</sup> "Sewing Room Provided," *Dallas Morning News*, March 29, 1939, 9.

<sup>19</sup> "Childress Stadium Project Approved," *Dallas Morning News*, June 23, 1939, 2; "\$42,650 WPA Plans for Stadium Approved," *Dallas Morning News*, June 30, 1939, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Meredith, A.A., Work Projects Administration Regional Director. Letter to Childress County Judge Stansell Clement, 17 July 1940. Copy available at Childress County Heritage Museum.

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projects before becoming the superintendent of Fair Park. From the 1930s until his death in 1958, Moore and his family lived in the park, residing in a house located just south of the swimming pool. Under Moore's tenure, WPA and NYA laborers constructed the football stadium and baseball fields, a community building, picnic tables and benches, and drainage structures around the park. Moore was known for his uniquely designed park features, such as the circular Rotary Bowl picnic table complex, the Masonic Amphitheater, Lighthouse Fountain, and Fairy Ring picnic area. These features were sometimes constructed through the assistance of local civic and community clubs. Moore used his welding skills to construct the playground slide and other equipment. While Moore's flower gardens and fish ponds are now removed or obscured by other vegetation, the park remains noted for its Depression-era stone-masonry construction, its fanciful park features, and its sports facilities.<sup>21</sup>

In c.1936 and 1948, itinerant film maker Melton Barker shot two versions of a short comedy called "The Kidnappers Foil" in Childress, with a cast comprised of local children. Barker produced over 200 versions of this film (67 in Texas) from the 1930s through the 1970s, with only minor variations to the script. In the style of the "Our Gang" comedies, the story follows two groups of children as they work to rescue a kidnapped girl named "Betty Davis." Barker would typically find local movie theaters and newspapers to sponsor each film and promote casting calls for area children, who, for a small fee, could audition for parts in the film. After brief rehearsals, a small crew would shoot on location, often in a local park. Fair Park and its distinctive stone landscape elements are prominently featured in both Childress films. Each film ends with footage from a local talent show. In 2012, the 1937 version was entered into the National Film Registry.<sup>22</sup>

In 1950, Childress began hosting the annual "Greenbelt Bowl" showcasing small-town high school football players, a tradition has continued through the 2010s. Fair Park is a focal point of local recreation and attracts visitors from across the region.

## World War II

In 1941, the majority of the great American population centers were located in the eastern United States. While the modern infrastructure of the nation had steadily grown from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, Texas remained primarily a rural state as late as 1941. However, World War II changed the Lone Star State considerably as federal spending geared up to established facilities to train, house, and deploy the U.S. military to confront a global two-front war. West Texas, with its favorable climate, open vistas, and dispersed population centers, proved ideal for the development of military installations during the war, especially airfields. After much petitioning, Childress became home to the Childress Army Airfield (CAAF) in 1943. The base created a large boost to the local economy and population. The base, which was located about three miles west of Childress, occupied 2,658 acres of land with four 6,000-foot runways. Established as a bombardier training school, cadets practiced bombing ground targets at more than a dozen bombing ranges in Childress and surrounding counties. Skip Bombing, where the bomb is "skipped" to a floating target, occurred at Lake Childress, but was strictly for demonstration or experimental purposes. CAAF also served as a prisoner of war (POW) camp. This POW camp was a branch of the Hereford POW camps and only housed German prisoners. The Childress Army Airfield closed in 1945 and the City of Childress assumed control of the runways and received an estimated \$7.5 million dollar asset to Childress County in 1947.<sup>23</sup> These old military airstrips continue to serve local communities as the Childress County Municipal Airport. As part of the Childress Army Airfield

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<sup>21</sup> Jean Wilhite interview; Ord, 30-31.

<sup>22</sup> "Kidnappers Foil 1937 & 1948," [http://www.childresspalacetheater.com/Kidnappers\\_foil\\_1937.html](http://www.childresspalacetheater.com/Kidnappers_foil_1937.html), "The Kidnappers Foil' Joins Elite Company in National Film Registry," *Lubbock Online | Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, accessed April 7, 2015, <http://lubbockonline.com/entertainment/2012-12-19/kidnappers-foil-joins-elite-company-national-film-registry>; "Melton Barker and the Kidnappers Foil," <http://www.meltonbarker.org/the-film/>. Several of the films, including both Childress versions, can be viewed via the Texas Archive of the Moving Image website [www.texasarchive.org](http://www.texasarchive.org).

<sup>23</sup> Michael G. Ehrle, *Childress County Story* (Childress, Texas: Oxbow Printing, Inc, 1971), 38.

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decommissioning, the Federal government donated to the Childress Independent School District several wood-frame “temporary” buildings. Two of the buildings were moved to the Childress High School campus, where they remain today as part of Childress Junior High School. A similar wood-frame building was moved from the former Army Airfield and converted to use as the city’s school for African-American students.

### The African-American Community in Childress

A small African-American community on Childress’ northeast side developed in the early twentieth century. The 1910 Census reported no African-Americans in Childress County, but the number rose to 70 in 1920 and 700 in 1930, as jobs related to cotton production and the railroad increased. This exponential growth in the Black population was met with some resistance in 1927, when a series of fights – described by the *Dallas Morning News* as “sporadic battles” culminating in a “street brawl” – broke out between Anglo youths and African-American residents. Defying police orders, the *News* reported, “...a number of local boys attempted to drive the negroes from the city.” African-American farm workers east of the city fled into Hardeman County, but returned to their homes within a few days. Two Texas Rangers were sent to the city at the request of Mayor Will Jones to assist local police.<sup>24</sup>

To serve the growing community, Mrs. Dora Wilson of Wichita Falls established a school for African-American students in 1929. The school, initially named after early local resident Mary Etta Price, functioned as the county’s only school open to African-Americans during the 1930s. Wilson also served as the school’s first teacher. By the 1932-1933 school year, the school had 73 students in Grades 1 through 7.<sup>25</sup> In 1948, the former Army Airfield building was moved to 810 Avenue I NE, to replace the earlier two-room wood-frame school building located in the 700 block of Avenue H NE. In 1953, a brick-exterior gymnasium was constructed adjacent to the school building.<sup>26</sup> Along with the move in location, the school was renamed in honor of Bishop College president J.J. Rhoads of Marshall, Texas. The gymnasium hosted numerous sporting events, serving as the home court for the “Tiger” and “Tigerette” basketball games, which were regularly covered in the *Childress Index*. The Rhoads School served African-American students of Childress and from the distant cities of Estelline (16 miles), Turkey (46 miles), and Quitique (55 miles) until 1966, when local schools were integrated.<sup>27</sup> The main school building was destroyed by fire in 1973 but the detached gym remains in use as a community center today. The local African-American population dropped sharply in postwar years primarily due to changes in agricultural harvesting and the elimination of most railroad jobs. Many residential and commercial buildings associated with the local African-American population have been demolished or removed, with the former Rhoads School now serving as an extant touchstone of the community’s past.<sup>28</sup>

### Postwar Changes

Following World War II, Childress underwent steep population declines and profound changes in local economic and community development patterns. The closing of the Childress Army Air Field in 1945 ended the prospect for defense-related jobs in the area. Farm mechanization gained pace, further reducing the need for hand laborers in cotton and grain production. Mechanization also diminished the need for the FW&DC shops and yards in Childress. Diesel-electric locomotives required less maintenance than earlier coal-burning steam locomotives. Even as the Texas Zephyr express passenger route between Denver and Houston was established in 1940, highways were quickly replacing the rails as the backbone of the region’s transportation network. The Zephyr ceased service in 1966, ending 89 years of passenger rail service to Childress. The FW&DC had fewer than 100 local employees by 1970, a steep drop from the

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<sup>24</sup> “Send Rangers to Childress,” *Dallas Morning News*, August 16, 1927; “Peacefulness At Childress,” *Dallas Morning News*, August 17, 1927.

<sup>25</sup> 1937 School Adequacy Report.

<sup>26</sup> *The Childress Index*, January 3, 1954.

<sup>27</sup> “Rhoads School Will Be Eliminated Next Year,” *The Childress Index*, April 5, 1966.

<sup>28</sup> Billye Hughes and Robert Cannon interview; Rhodes Community Center Board of Directors report.

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peak of over 600 employees in the early twentieth century. The FW&DC's imposing car barn burned in 1955, while the depot, roundhouse, and shops were demolished in the 1970s.<sup>29</sup>

As highways became the primary mode for both passenger and freight traffic, US 287 took on even greater importance in Childress' development. Auto-oriented businesses such as motels, restaurants, and service stations increasingly moved to US 287 – locally known as Avenue F – to cater to passing travelers. Retail businesses also moved to the highway in postwar decades, forming a linear strip of development serving local residents as well as travelers. Development along US 83, located along the western outskirts of the city, was far less pronounced.

U.S. Census population figures illustrate these postwar developments. While the county's population stabilized in the 1940s, it dropped precipitously in following decades, with 8,421 residents in 1960 and only 6,605 in 1970. The city of Childress also lost population during this period, but benefited from the general rural-to-urban migration and consolidation of rural schools into the Childress Independent School District. The city's population jumped to 7,619 residents in 1950, but began to fall in subsequent years with 5,408 residents by 1970. The city's economy, once focused on farming and the railroad, broadened to include light manufacturing enterprises and continued importance as a regional hub for governmental and health care services.<sup>30</sup>

### Architectural Significance (Criterion C)

The Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District includes a high percentage of contributing buildings, some of which are landmarks in their own right. The contributing buildings within the district reflect a wide variety of architectural styles, expressed in a variety of materials, with a level of integrity not commonly found in comparably-sized cities of the Texas Panhandle and South Plains. In addition to a large number of brick 1-part and 2-part commercial blocks found within the densely-developed commercial core, the district includes a glazed tile Montgomery Ward store, the Zigzag Moderne Palace Theater with its colorful projecting neon sign, the Renaissance Revival high school and gymnasium, a Modern Classical courthouse and jail, and an extraordinary collection of Depression Era rustic buildings, structures, and objects within Fair Park. The district also features an extensive network of brick streets, and a variety of manufactured and painted historic signage.

The majority of buildings in the central business district represent common commercial forms from the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, with a high concentration dating to the height of the community's economic boom at the beginning of the 1900s. Most of these buildings are brick, and are found along North Main and Commerce streets. Taken together, the historic buildings, structures, and objects within the district are significant as a largely intact assemblage reflecting the architectural forms and styles built in Childress in the late 1800s through mid-1900s.

Most commercial buildings in the district can be characterized as one-part and two-part commercial blocks, terminology devised by Richard Longstreth in *The Buildings of Main Street*.<sup>31</sup> As commercial buildings often do not exhibit the characteristics of high styles, Longstreth's typology is based on façade organization. Architectural detailing may be either prominent or entirely lacking. Many commercial blocks in Childress are simple, brick, single-story buildings in various states of repair. The remodeling of storefronts was a common occurrence due to ownership changes, new product display needs, and changing architectural styles. It is rare to find a commercial building in Childress that has not been altered in some manner, often as the result of stylistic trends.

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<sup>29</sup> Ord, 49-50.

<sup>30</sup> Ord, 14-16.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street*. Richard W. Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street: A Guide to American Commercial Architecture*, Building Watchers Series (Washington, D.C: Preservation Press, 1987).

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**One-part commercial blocks** can be free-standing or part of a row. The one-part commercial block is one story in height and usually consists of one or two storefront windows and a central doorway. False parapet fronts, brick coping, or signboard panels often enhance the upper wall. In Childress, most one-part commercial block buildings are of brick masonry construction, with some stone masonry and wood-frame buildings also present. While generally lacking an overt architectural style, some one-part commercial blocks exhibit limited stylistic influences through decorative elements and fenestration. This building type is by far the most common in the district, accounting for 44% of all buildings. Dense concentrations of this building type are located in the 100-300 blocks of Commerce Street, and the 100 and 200 blocks of North Main Street. The buildings at 133 Commerce Street and 222 North Main Street are good representatives of the basic early-twentieth-century Commercial Style. With its asymmetrical entry and ribboned windows on its side facade, the former bank building at 201 Commerce Street provides an interesting post-World War II interpretation of the one-part commercial block with International influences.

**Two-part commercial blocks** can also be free-standing or part of a row. This type is distinguished by its division of the facade into two distinct sections. The ground floor is similar to the one-part commercial block while the upper portion, usually consisting of one to three stories, is commonly punctuated with smaller window openings at regular intervals. The first stories of these buildings were usually devoted to retail or other public uses, while upper stories were commonly used for offices, meeting halls, hotel rooms, and apartments. The local examples are mostly of brick construction, with isolated examples of terra-cotta and stucco wall surfacing. Like the one-part commercial block, examples of this type may be plain and relatively unornamented, or may exhibit characteristics of architectural styles. The 1908 Cristler & Davidson Building at 141 North Main Street and the c. 1910 building at 128 Commerce Street are representative of the unadorned two-part commercial block. In contrast, the former First National Bank Building at 201 North Main Street and the former Hotel Childress at 220 B Avenue NW, both display restrained Renaissance Revival influences. Wyatt C. Hedrick's Montgomery Ward Building at 207 Commerce Street features Neoclassical detailing in addition to its terra-cotta exterior, typical of Ward's corporate design of the period. The building at 217 North Main Street is another fine example of this type, with its polychrome brick, brick corbelling and patterning, shaped parapet, and pilasters demarcating second-story bay divisions. Reflecting a later period of development, the 1937 Palace Theater at 206 North Main Street, designed by noted theater architect W. Scott Dunne of Dallas, demonstrates the Moderne style as well as features common to movie theaters of the period, such as prominent marquee and signage elements and a recessed entry with ticket windows.

In Childress, two-part commercial blocks are interspersed among one-story buildings in the city's downtown core, in the 100 and 200 blocks of North Main Street and Commerce Street, and adjacent east-west cross streets. This building type accounts for 17% of all buildings in the district.

**Auto-related commercial buildings** are a common commercial subtype in the Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District. According to Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, Childress had numerous auto-related commercial buildings, most of which were north of D Avenue NW. Childress' location along State Highway 5/US 287, which follows F Avenue through the city, necessitated ample auto-related commercial businesses. These auto-related commercial buildings include gas stations, auto-repair shops, and auto dealerships. Auto-related businesses rely on passing traffic to attract customers, so their associated buildings are often visually engaging in terms of style and signage and in many cases are set back from the street to allow room for vehicle parking and access. The 1922 Smith Motor Company Building at 128 D Avenue NW and the 1926 Michie Building at 401 North Main Street, both serving as auto dealerships, feature open drive-through areas at the intersection corner (the canopy area at 128 D Avenue NW has since been infilled), with service bays and office areas along both street elevations. Extant gas stations in the district date from the 1920s to the early 1960s. Of particular note are three former gas stations constructed in the Spanish Eclectic style: 100 F Avenue NW, 500 North Main Street (outside the district boundary, but individually eligible), and 403 Third Street NW, all dating from the 1920s to early 1930s. Post-World War II gas stations, such as the former Gulf Super Service at 110 F Avenue NW, tend to follow the oblong box form common to the period. While several of the gas stations exhibit alterations, modifications to gas stations were actually quite common, as the property type evolved over time from a

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simple filling station to a more complex travel- and service-oriented business backed by large, branded corporations. Owing to these industry changes, few gas station buildings serve their original function and are often converted to other auto-related uses such as auto repair shops.

Several subtypes of **institutional buildings** are scattered throughout the district. These buildings were designed for use as government or civic buildings, schools, health care facilities, churches, or fraternal houses. It is in some of these institutional properties where higher style architectural influences are most apparent. For example, the Childress County Courthouse typifies the Art Moderne style with its stripped-down classicism, symmetrical facades, decorative frieze work on an otherwise stark limestone exterior, and inset porch supported by classical columns. The courthouse, built in 1939, was designed by the Amarillo firm of Townes and Funk. Other major civic buildings in the district are: the 1924 Neoclassical Childress City Hall designed by Wyatt Hedrick, the 1924 former County Jail, and the former U.S. Post Office (now Childress County Heritage Museum), built in 1935 with Spanish Eclectic and Renaissance Revival influences.

The district includes two educational complexes. The c.1947 gymnasium for the J.J. Rhoads School, at 810 I Avenue NE, remains in use today as a community center, while the Guy Carlander-designed 1926 Childress High School at 700 Commerce Street is now Childress Junior High School. Childress has been home to numerous fraternal societies, clubs, and community organizations. Many of these organizations met in the upper-story space of downtown buildings. In some cases, however, the organization constructed a separate building, including the 1928 Spanish Eclectic-influenced Women's Department Club, as well as the Masonic Lodge at 344 North Main Street, now altered and non-contributing to the historic district. The building at 210 Second Street NE, which has a residential appearance, was once the lodge hall for the local chapter of the American Woodmen, an African-American fraternal organization.

Many of the city's oldest churches have their congregational buildings within the district. The oldest extant church building in the district is the 1923 Trinity Lutheran Church, originally the home of Holy Angels Catholic Church. The c.1925 First Presbyterian Church has Neoclassical detailing, while the c. 1925 St. Luke's Episcopal Church and the 1946 Central Christian Church, adjacent to one another in the 300 block of Second Street NE, provide two interpretations of Gothic Revival church architecture. The 1966 First United Methodist Church was built after the district's period of significance and therefore is considered a noncontributing resource. With the passage of time, this church, with its modernist take on the Gothic Revival style, may be reconsidered for inclusion as a contributing resource. Two health care-related institutional buildings demonstrate evolving design approaches to this subtype during Childress' development. The c.1925 Jeter-Townsend Hospital at 411 Second Street NE, exhibits limited Spanish Eclectic influences in its appearance, with its curved parapet and barrel tile parapet coping. The medical clinic at 800 Commerce Street expresses a typical post-World War II design ethic through its rectangular geometric forms, flat roof, and asymmetrical entry.

The city's Fair Park contains a variety of **recreation-related resources**. Important historic features within the park include the football stadium, the Lighthouse, the Masonic Amphitheater, and the circular Rotary Bowl picnic complex and other picnic areas. Many resources within the park are noted for their use of stone masonry and hand-crafted techniques, hallmarks of Depression-era work-relief construction.

The historic district contains a small number of **industrial type commercial buildings**. In general, the industrial building form is dictated by its function and is characterized by utilitarian design and simplicity of construction. These buildings can be both small and large scale, and can be free-standing or part of a larger complex. In Childress, the historic industrial buildings are located adjacent to the railroad and were historically used to support the local manufacturing economy. A typical example is the former woodworking facility at 100 Third Street NW. Of note is the R.H. Norris Warehouse at 240 Commerce Street, constructed c. 1925 and located in the commercial portion of downtown.

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While the historic district is focused on commercial and civic resources, there are some **domestic buildings** present, particularly on the eastern and western periphery of the district's boundaries. These buildings are single-family residences constructed from the 1890s to the early 1960s, with most dating from the 1910s and 1920s during Childress' period of rapid population growth. The Czewski House at 117 C Avenue NE is notable as an 1893 residence with some evidence of Queen Anne and Folk Victorian stylistic influences. Several 1920s houses have front-gable roofs with limited Craftsman detailing.

**Infrastructure-related resources** in the district include the 1920s-era brick streets present through much of the downtown and adjacent residential areas, as well as extant historic concrete street markers found at several intersections. All brick streets in the nominated district are considered to be one contributing structure.

### Summary of Criteria

The Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District includes historic commercial properties and buildings that retain architectural integrity reflecting the historic character of Childress and its commercial, civic, and institutional development from the 1890s through the 1960s. The district is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Commerce because it was established as and continued to serve as the primary commercial center in Childress County and the surrounding region. The district also meets Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development because it retains the city's well-organized layout on a regular street grid with distinct functional zones for commerce, government, education, and recreation, and serves as an excellent example of small-city planning in Texas. The district also meets Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an excellent collection of late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century commercial architecture in Childress County.

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**Section 10 – Geographical Data**

**Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

	Latitude	Longitude	
1.	34.421347°	-100.205972°	
2.	34.422833°	-100.204647°	
3.	34.423262°	-100.204438°	
4.	34.427527°	-100.202779°	
5.	34.432130°	-100.200660°	
6.	34.433977°	-100.200513°	
7.	34.435404°	-100.204029°	
8.	34.432024°	-100.206907°	
9.	34.430974°	-100.207243°	
10.	34.423093°	-100.208772°	
11.	34.422291°	-100.208536°	
12.	34.425985°	-100.194875°	Rhodes School

**Boundary Description**

The district includes approximately 109.8 acres, and is roughly bounded by Avenue A to the south, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE to the East, the north side of Fair Park to the north, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street NW to the west. The boundary is delineated on attached maps.

South Portion (all but Fair Park; approximately 46.75 acres).

Beginning at the northwest corner of the intersection of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE and Avenue A NE, proceed north to the southwest property line of 210 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE; proceed east to the southeast corner of the same property; proceed north to the northeast property line of 300 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE; proceed west to the northwest corner of the same property; proceed south to the southwest corner of the same property; proceed west along the north side of Avenue C northwest one half-block to the alley; proceed north one block along the center of the alley and across Avenue D NE; proceed east to the southeast corner of the block; proceed north to the northeast corner of the block; proceed west one-half block; proceed north along the center of the alley to Avenue F NE; proceed west to the northwest corner of North Main at Ave F; proceed north one block to the southwest corner of North main at Avenue G NE; proceed east one block to the southeast corner of Avenue G at 2nd Street; proceed north one half block; proceed west to the west side of North Main Street; proceed north along the west side of North Main Street to Fair Park; proceed west to the intersection of Ave. I at Commerce Street; proceed south to a point in line with the north boundary of 801 Commerce Street, proceed west to center of the block; proceed south to Avenue H; proceed east to the east side of Commerce Street; proceed south to the southwest corner of Avenue G at Commerce Street, proceed west one half-block, proceed south to the approximate center of the block; proceed west approximately 150 feet along the south side of the alley; proceed south to the southwest corner of the lot of 206 Avenue F NW, proceed east to the northwest corner of Avenue F at Commerce Street; proceed south one and one-half blocks to the northeast corner of the lot of 415 Commerce Street; proceed west to the northwest corner of the same property; proceed south along the center of the alley past Avenue D NW to the center of the block; proceed west to the west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street NW; proceed south along the west side of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street NW to a point approximately 85 feet past Avenue B NW; proceed east to the alley; proceed south along the west side of the alley to Avenue A NW; proceed east to the point of beginning.

Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Fair Park (approximately 61.75 acres).

The nominated portion of Fair Park begins at the intersection of North Main with Avenue I NE. Proceed north to the southeast side of a park road; proceed along the park road north, past the lake and the intersection with an unnamed road that leads to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street NE, and continue to the north edge of the park property; proceed west to Park Lane and continue south past the intersection with Avenue L NW; continue along the road separating the baseball/softball field to the west and the football stadium to the east, continuing to the north side of Avenue I NW. Proceed along the north side of Avenue I to the point of beginning.

Discontiguous Property: Rhoads School (approximately 1.3 acres)

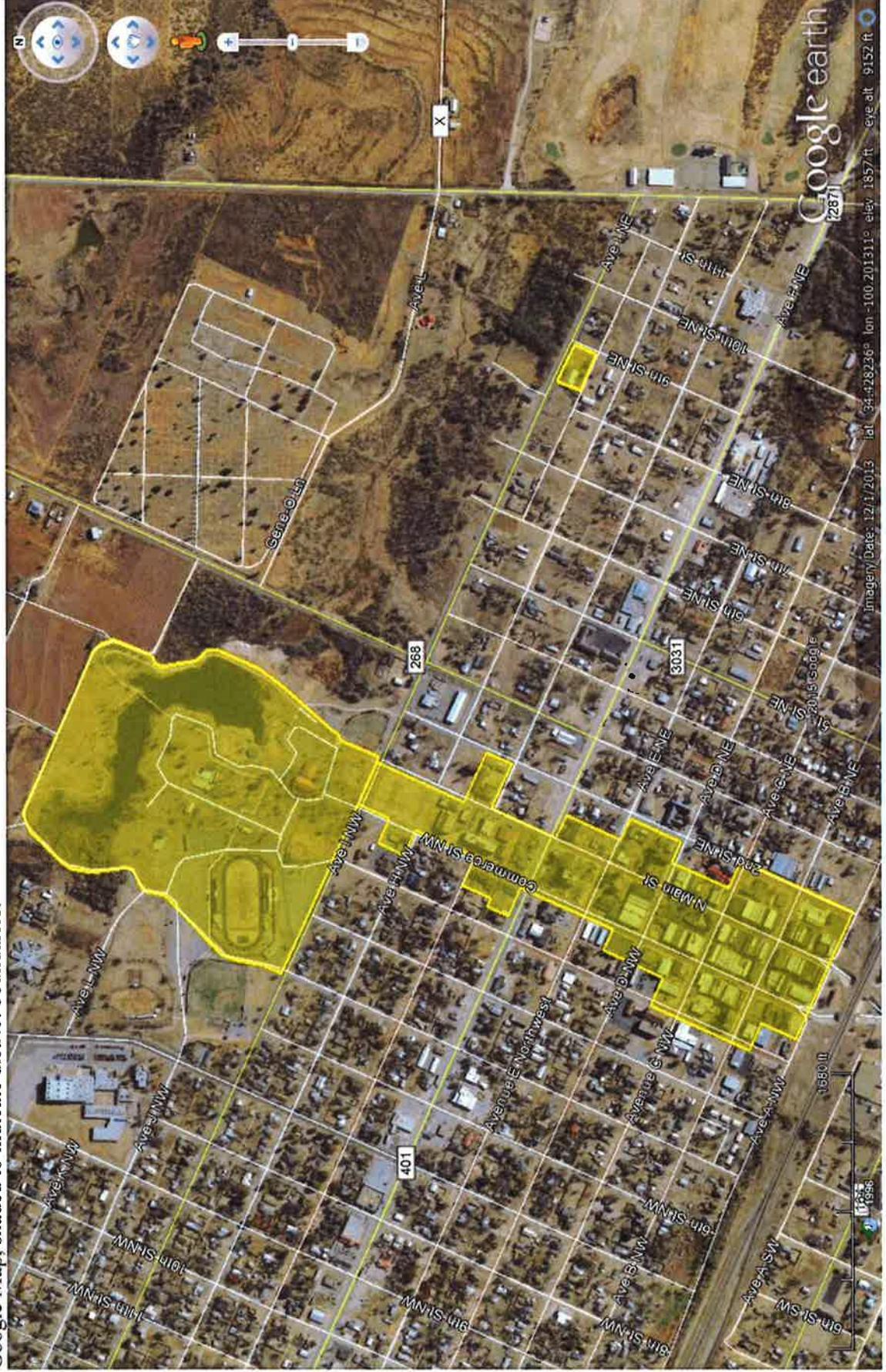
The district includes one property several blocks east of the main body of the district: the former gymnasium and playground of the Rhoads School, located at 810 Avenue I NE, bounded on the east by 9<sup>th</sup> Street NE, bounded on the south by an alley, and bounded on the west by a line drawn through the center of the block. This property is included in the district because it is associated with the education of African-American students in Childress, who, due to segregation, could not attend the larger public schools in the city. This property – and the neighborhood surrounding it – was physically separated from the institutional core of the city due to racial restrictions, but is today recognized as a key institutional component of the district despite its distance from the public spaces historically utilized and enjoyed by only white members of the community.

**Boundary Justification**

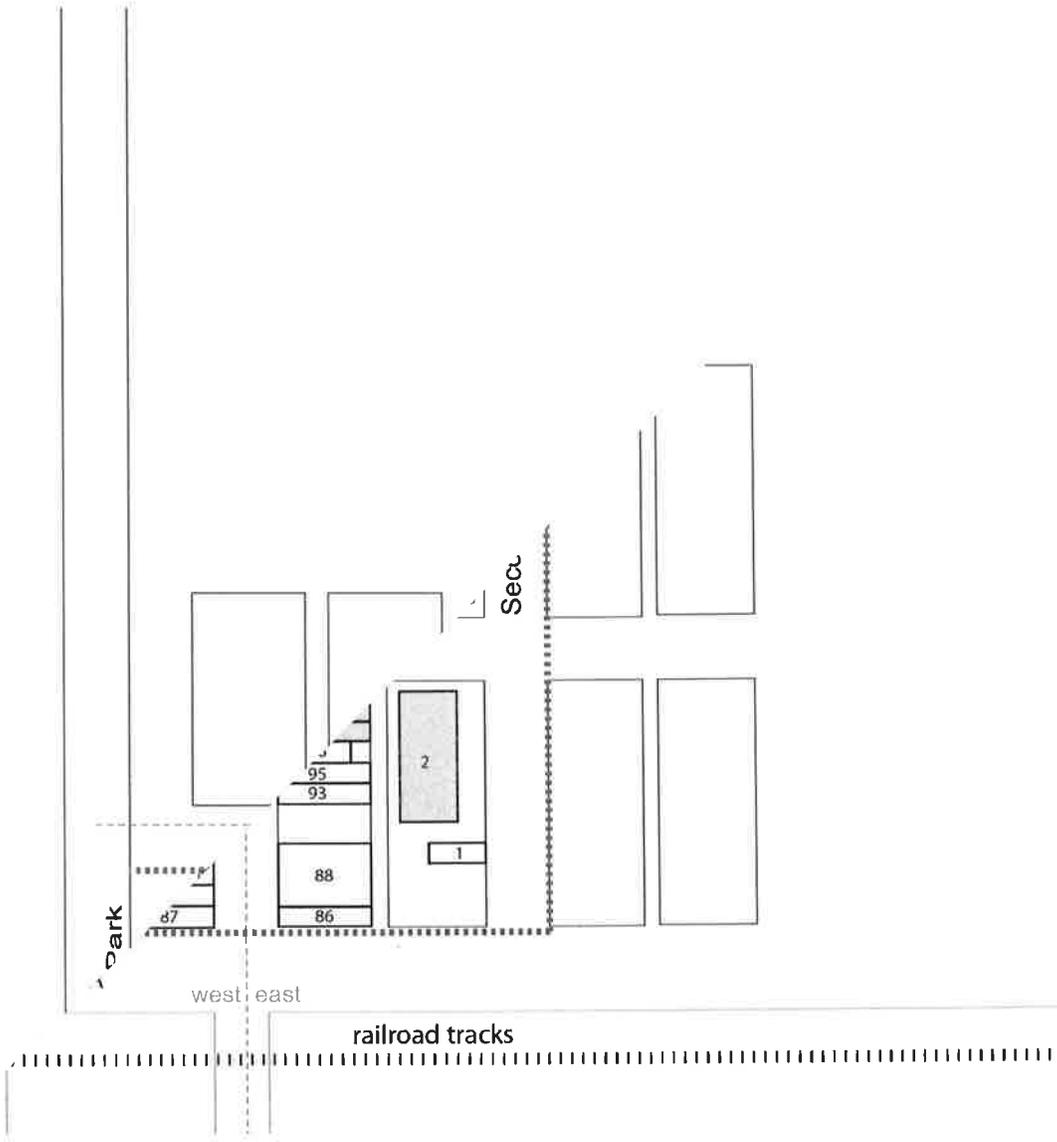
The boundaries of the Childress Historic District contain the largest collection of historic resources that represent the founding, growth, and development of Childress. Significant resources include landmark commercial, civic, and institutional buildings dating throughout the city's history, as well as a large amount of park land. The southernmost portion of the district is chiefly commercial; the central portion includes the municipal and county buildings and public school properties; and the northernmost portion includes the majority of the city's public park. The district contains few historically-residential properties.

Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

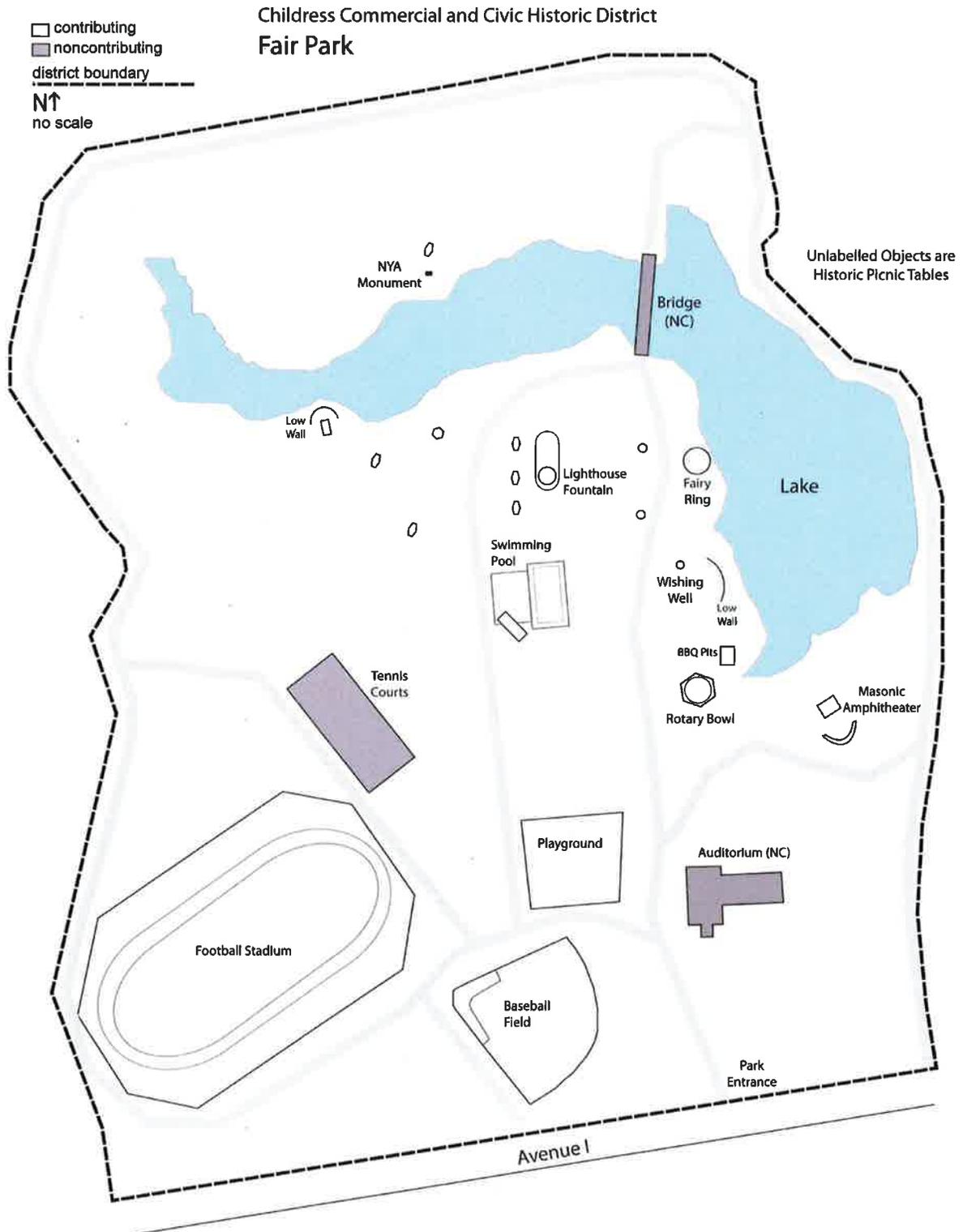
Google Map, shaded to indicate district boundaries.



Childress, Childress County, Texas



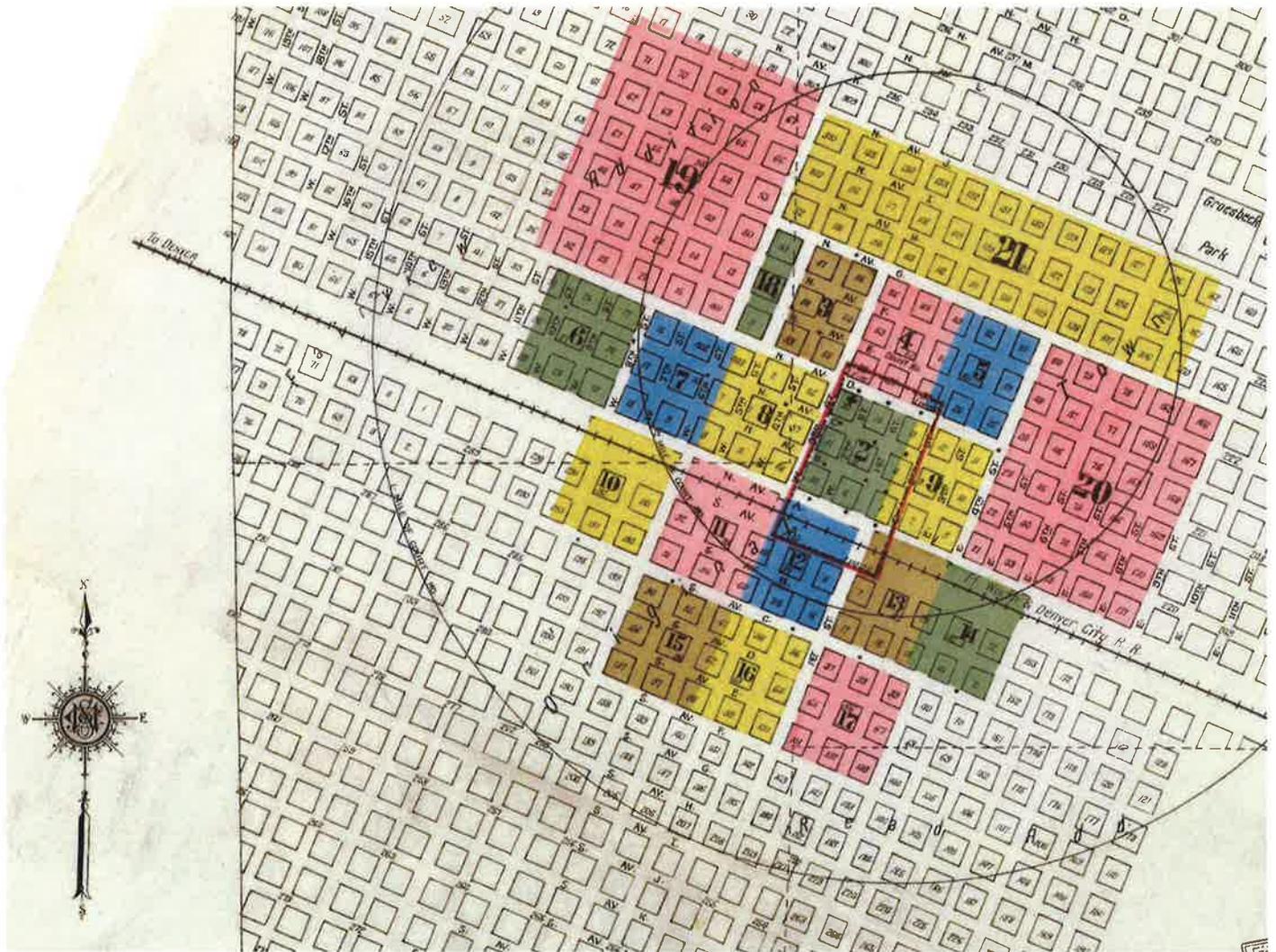
Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

**Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1921** (fragment), showing layout of the Childress in relation to the railroad. The majority of commercial growth occurred north of the tracks.

Source: Perry-Castaneda Library, University of Texas at Austin. <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/sanborn/c.html>



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Gordon's Furniture, 218-226 Commerce (#37), 2013.



John's Furniture Store in Childress, Texas, n.d.; Childress County Heritage Museum  
(<http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph34488/> : accessed April 13, 2015)



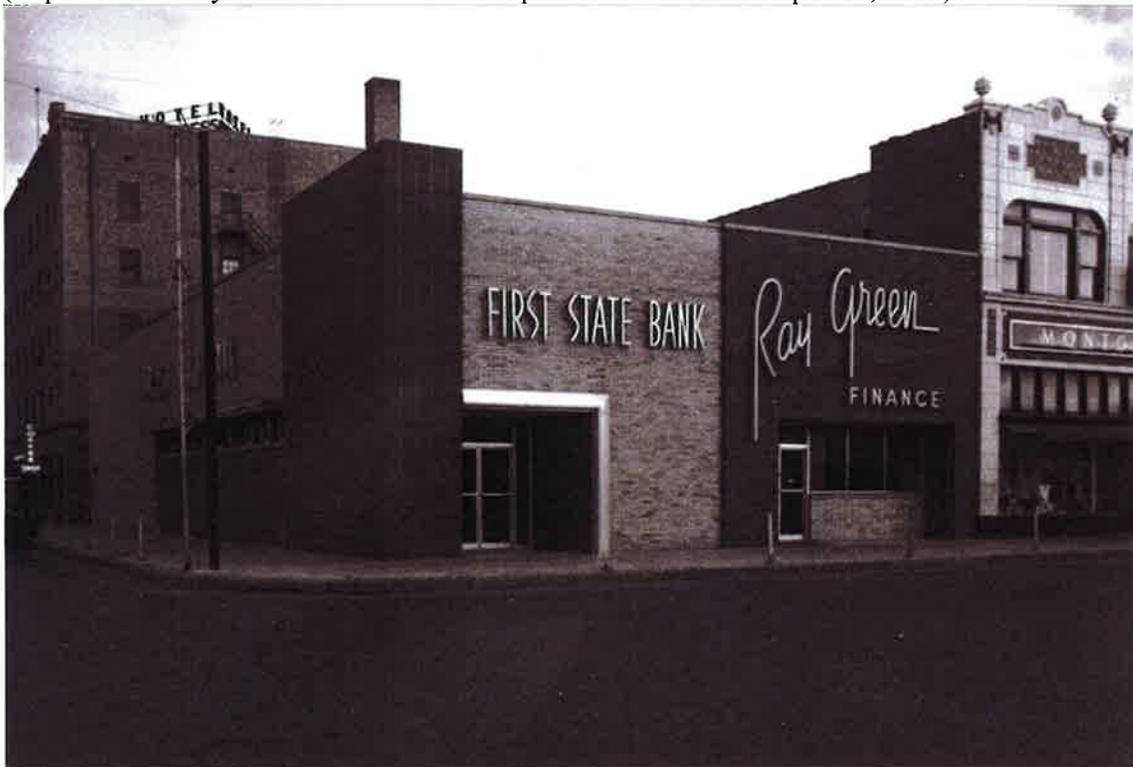
Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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201 & 203 Commerce (#29 & #30), 2015



First State Bank, Ray Green Finance, and Montgomery Ward, n.d.; Childress County Heritage Museum (<http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph34489/> : accessed April 13, 2015).



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221-229 Main Street (#109) (noncontributing)



Eubank & Park Drug, 229 Main Street (right bay of above building), n.d.; Childress County Heritage Museum (<http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph34493/> ; accessed April 13, 2015).



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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North bay of 109-111 Main Street (#90), 2013.



Harp Drugs Store on Main Street, n.d.; Childress County Heritage Museum  
(<http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph34487/> : accessed April 13, 2015).



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Fairy Ring, Fair Park, 2013.



Scene from "The Kidnappers Foil" filmed on location in 1936 at the Fairy Ring in Fair Park, with cast of local children. <http://www.meltonbarker.org/the-film/>.



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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## Current Photographs

Photo 1

Commerce at Avenue B, facing northwest



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 2  
200 block of Main Street, facing north



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 3

200 block of Main Street, west side.

Third building from left (Fagg Building, 205 N. Main, Map #104) is a representative noncontributing building, with a historic façade partially concealed by a slipcover.



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 4  
Avenue D at Main, facing northwest



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 5  
Hotel Childress, 220 Ave B (#17)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 6  
125 Commerce (#27)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 7  
200 Commerce (#28)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 8  
Montgomery Ward Building, 205 Commerce (#30)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 9  
226 Commerce (#39)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 10  
240 Commerce (#44)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 11  
300 Commerce-(#45)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 12  
Municipal Building, 315 Commerce (#48)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 13  
317 Commerce (#50)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 14  
Childress County Courthouse, 100 Avenue E NW (#63)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 15  
100 Avenue F NW (#66)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 16  
100 Main (#86)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 17  
109-111 Main (#90)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 18  
Palace Theater, 206 Main (#105)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 19  
217 Main (#108)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 20  
Michie Building, 401 Main (#123)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 21  
107 Second-Street NE (#1)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 22  
Childress High School (#56)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 23  
Childress High School Gymnasium (#56)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 24  
Childress ISD Maintenance Buildings, Avenug G (#83-85)



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 25

Fair Park Entrance, Avenue I at Commerce



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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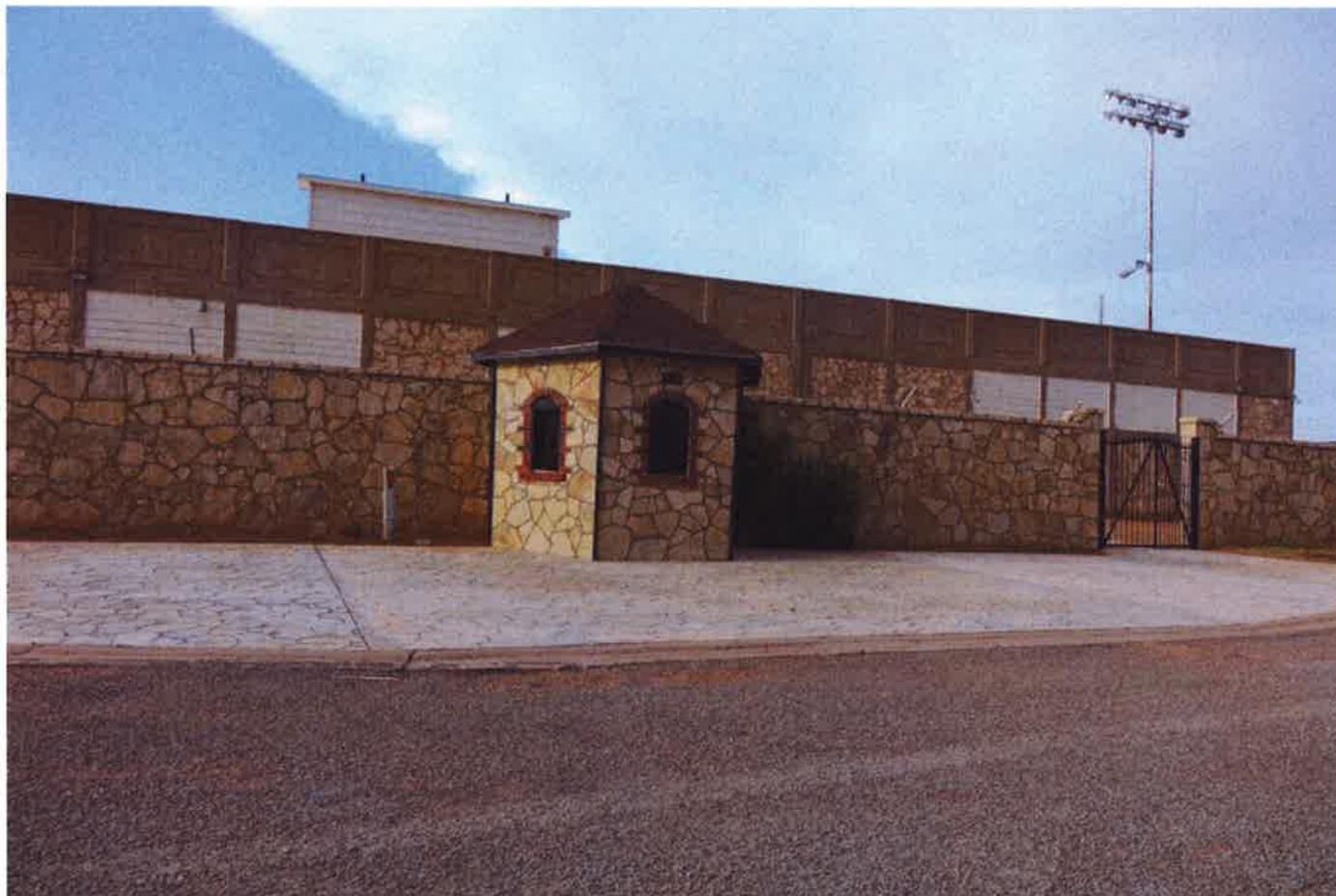
Photo 26  
Rock Field (baseball field), Fair Park



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 27  
Football Stadium (south side, ticket booth), Fair Park



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 28  
Football Stadium (south side grandstand), Fair Park



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 29

NYA monumnet and "coffin" table, north of park lake



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 30  
Masonic Amphitheater, Fair Park



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 31  
Lighthouse Fountain, Fair Park



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 32  
Fairy Ring, Fair Park



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 33  
Low wall and Table, south side of lake, Fair Park



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 34  
Barbecue Pits and Rotary Bowl, Fair Park



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 35  
Rhoads School Gymnasium and Playground 810 Avenue I NE



Childress Commercial & Civic Historic District, Childress, Childress County, Texas

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Photo 36  
Building at 214 S. Commerce (#34)  
Noncontributing building of historic age with substantial alterations



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