

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Mountain Home Commercial Historic District  
other names/site number BA0155

**2. Location**

street & number Roughly bounded on the north by E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, South Street on the East, and Hickory Street on the west  not for publication  
city or town Mountain Home  vicinity  
state Arkansas code AR county Baxter code 005 zip code 72653

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination   
request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic  
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets   
does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
 nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional  
comments.)  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined eligible for the  
National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the  
National Register.  
 removed from the National  
Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

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

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

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

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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
36	21	buildings
	4 vacant lots	sites
		structures
		objects
36	25	Total

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

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

1

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE- Specialty Store; Financial Institution; Department Store; Professional; Restaurant

GOVERNMENT- County Courthouse; City Hall

RECREATION & CULTURE- Movie Theater

RELIGION- Religious Facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE- Specialty Store; Professional; Restaurant

GOVERNMENT- County Courthouse

RECREATION & CULTURE- Museum

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER- Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Vernacular Commercial; 20<sup>th</sup> Century Vernacular Commercial

MODERN MOVEMENT- Art Deco

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone; Brick; Concrete

walls Stone; Brick; Stucco; Wood; Synthetics

roof Asphalt; Metal

other

**Narrative Description**

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce
Government

Period of Significance

1892-1959

Significant Dates

1941-1943- Date of construction of Baxter County Courthouse
1951- Date of construction of First Baptist Church

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

T. Ewing Shelton- Baxter County Courthouse

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS).

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:



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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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## SUMMARY

Located in Mountain Home, Arkansas, Baxter County, the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District is comprised of 58 buildings, one of which is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Baxter County Courthouse, NR listed 05-26-95). Of the 58 (including the individually NR listed courthouse), 37 resources (64%) contribute to the significance of the district, while 21 (36%) do not contribute to the district's significance due to the lack of architectural integrity or because they were not constructed in the district's period of significance from 1892 to 1960. The majority of the buildings in the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District are representative of vernacular twentieth century commercial architecture. The significant buildings in the district retain their overall massing and setback and contribute to the historic character of the district, validating the history and development of Mountain Home, Arkansas, as a governmental and commercial center in its setting in the Ozark Mountains of north-central Arkansas.

## ELABORATION

Baxter County is located in the Ozark Mountain range of north-central Arkansas. The county contains approximately 554 square miles and is bounded on the north by Missouri, on the south by Stone County, on the east by Fulton County, and on the west by Searcy County. The county seat of Baxter County is Mountain Home, which is located near the center of the county. Situated on a plateau in the Ozark Mountain, Mountain Home has an elevation of 820 feet. The city covers ten acres with a population over 11,000 in 2000.

The first permanent white settler in the area that was to become Mountain Home was around 1810. A post office was established in 1857 and named Mountain Home. The "Male and Female Academy" opened in Mountain Home in 1853, but was burned during the Civil War along with most of the houses and businesses in town. Mountain Home and the Male and Female Academy were rebuilt after the war with the addition of several new businesses. Mountain Home was incorporated as a town in 1888. With its central location and strong educational background, Mountain Home became the county seat of Baxter County when it formed in 1873. The establishment of a college in 1893 further solidified the town as an educational center. Baxter County business was first conducted in a store at the edge of town in 1873, then in a former boarding house on Main Street. In 1882, the first official courthouse building was constructed on land donated by local businessman that had unofficially been used as the town square. A second courthouse was constructed on the town square in 1890. A third story was added in 1910. Construction of the current courthouse building by the WPA began in 1941 after the fire-damaged 1890 courthouse was razed.

A description of Mountain Home in 1879 indicated that there were a number of frame store buildings facing the square on all sides. A full array of businesses and services were offered in downtown Mountain Home including general mercantile store, shoe store, blacksmith shop, furniture and cabinet shop, attorney, doctor's office, drug store, and restaurant. All of the buildings from this period were frame and none remain, having all been replaced with masonry structures.

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From the 1850s to the turn of the century, Mountain Home received all of its goods from riverboats travelling up the White River. In 1903 a railroad line was constructed through the small town of Cotter, nine miles southwest of Mountain Home, providing the means to transport goods. Mountain Home grew slowly, but steadily during the first decades of the twentieth century.

The years of the Great Depression were particularly hard on Baxter County which suffered a devastating drought in 1930 and again in 1931, causing many people to lose their farms and move away in search of work. The federal programs of the 1930s put locals to work building bridges and a new county courthouse. In 1941 construction of the Norfolk and Bull Shoals dams on the White River was begun. The federally-funded project was to provide flood control and hydroelectric power. Norfolk Dam was completed in 1944 and Bull Shoals Dam in 1951. Mountain Home greatly benefitted during the construction period, being located mid way between the two projects. The town boomed in the 1940s with workers needing goods and services and places of residence. The creation of Norfolk and Bull Shoals Lakes transformed the area into a tourist and recreational region beginning the late 1940s. The Mountain Home area has become most well known as a vacation resort and retirement community.

The Mountain Home Commercial Historic District contains 56 buildings in the historic commercial center of the city. The majority of the buildings in the district face the courthouse square on E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, and S. Baker Street on the east. S. Main Street (U.S. Highway 62) runs through the city on the west side of the courthouse square. Other buildings in the district are located in the blocks adjacent to the courthouse square. All but two of the resources are located east of S. Main Street.

### 1890s

The oldest building in the district is the Baker Building at 601-603 S. Baker Street. Constructed in 1892, the Baker Building was heralded as the town's first "modern" store building. The two story brick building is located on the northeast corner of the square and features Italianate style brick arched windows on the second story, decorative brick corbelling forming a cornice on the front (west), and a stepped parapet on both north and south walls. Three buildings located at the south end of the 600 block of S. Baker were constructed c. 1897. These one-story buildings are of similar design in their use of rusticated cut stone walls, featuring stone headers on cornices.

### 1900-1919

Mountain Home grew as the nearby railroad line constructed in 1903 provided dependable transportation to the area. Four buildings from the turn of the century are located in the district. Buildings at 607 S. Baker, 609 S. Baker, and 615 S. Baker are one-story and of stone construction. However the facades of these buildings are covered in fieldstone rather than rusticated cut stone. The People's Bank Building at 10-12 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street was constructed c. 1902 and was the first masonry building on its block. The rusticated cut-stone building features a slight Italianate influence with its arched window surrounds on the second story of its front.

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Two buildings in the district were constructed in the 1910s. The building at 700 S. Main was constructed as a general store. Located on the corner of S. Main and W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, the one-story rusticated cut stone building features a parapet on its north side that steps down. Although the storefront facing S. Main Street has been altered, the building retains its original form and important placement on the west side of the courthouse square. Constructed c.1918, the building at the corner of E. 6<sup>th</sup> and S. Main Street at 1 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street is also constructed with rusticated cut stone and features stone corbelling on its cornice.

### 1920s

The fifteen buildings in the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District that were constructed in the 1920s comprise 27% of the district. The 1920s in Mountain Home were marked by the construction of masonry buildings replacing the remaining frame downtown business buildings. The majority of the buildings in the district constructed in this period are one-story stone or brick vernacular commercial design. The building at 22 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, at the corner of E. 7<sup>th</sup> and S. Baker, is one of several in the district with a cut-away corner containing the main entrance. This building features a combination of rough-cut stone block and red brick and has a stepped parapet on its eastern side. Brickwork creates the appearance of quoins on the front eastern corner of the building. Similar corner buildings constructed in the 1920s with beveled corner entrances are located at 101 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, 701 S. Baker Street and 801 S. Main Street. Other buildings from this period are one-story simple brick or stone with minimal ornamentation such as buildings at 16 and 18 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street that appear to be one continuous building, but are separate structures.

### 1930s

The T.E. Robertson Building at 2 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street was constructed in 1936 as a general store. It is a two-story brick building, constructed in standard early twentieth century commercial style. The front of the building features an elevated central portion of the brick parapet while the parapet on the west elevation facing S. Main Street steps down to the rear. The seemingly simple design features some decorative brickwork, including soldier and stretcher courses as well as rows of header bricks, all in light buff brick. An inset stone panel centered in the building's upper front wall is engraved with "T.E. Robertson."

### 1940s

During this decade, business in Mountain Home began to change as construction of two dams near the town began. New business buildings on streets adjacent to the courthouse square housed needed services for the increase in population due to a dramatic increase in employment opportunities. Buildings in Mountain Home's downtown commercial district constructed during this period are largely one and two-story brick or stone buildings with minimal architectural detail.

The most important building in the district constructed in this era is the Baxter County Courthouse. Built by the Works Progress Administration between 1941 and 1943, the courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 05-26-95. Located on the courthouse square, the 1940s courthouse replaced a 1890 brick courthouse building that had been demolished due to extensive fire damage. The Baxter County Courthouse is a three-story building with buff brick walls resting on a rusticated cut stone foundation.

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Designed by architect T. Ewing Shelton of Fayetteville, Arkansas, the courthouse building features some design elements of the Art Deco style. Although the building does not feature elaborate decoration, the use of marble on stringcourses, pilasters, cornice, and quoins add character to the otherwise plain design.

The Baxter Theater Building, located in the 800 block of S. Baker Street, two blocks south of the courthouse square, was constructed in 1948. The two-story brick building features the decorative use of brick on the façade forming large diamond patterns. The original entrance and ticket office was located on the north end of the front of the building and although the theater marquee is gone, the original recessed entry arrangement remains intact. The Baxter Theater operated in the building until the mid 1970s. The building has been renovated for use by a bank.

Two resources in the district, now occupied by businesses, were originally constructed as single family residences. Located on the northern edge of the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District, the house at 107 E. 5<sup>th</sup> is a minimal traditional style house with Colonial Revival features, built on a stone foundation. Next door, the mixed masonry house at 113-115 E. 5<sup>th</sup> features fieldstone walls with dark red brick trim on corners, porch columns, and surrounding windows and doors.

### 1950s

The population of Mountain Home had more than doubled between 1940 and 1950 due to the influx of workers during the construction of the Bull Shoals and Norfolk dams. The dedication of both Bull Shoals and Norfolk dams in 1952 marked a period of rapid growth in Mountain Home. The formation of Bull Shoals and Norfolk lakes transformed the area into a tourist and recreational center and business boomed. The largest period of development represented in the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District is the 1950s when 17 (30%) of the buildings were constructed. All of the buildings in the district constructed in this era are located in the blocks adjacent to the courthouse square on S. Baker, S. Main and E. 5<sup>th</sup>, E. 6<sup>th</sup>, E. 7<sup>th</sup> and E. 8<sup>th</sup> Streets.

The largest of the buildings from this period is the First Baptist Church at 216 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The building was constructed in 1951 and features light color fieldstone walls with red brick trim around windows and doors. A contemporary addition to the rear (north) of the building was constructed in 1971. Situated in the middle of the block, the buildings are now owned by Baxter County and are occupied by county offices.

Several of the buildings in the district from this era are constructed of concrete block, but have fronts veneered in brick. The two story building at 510-512 S. Baker is of concrete block construction with stucco covering side and rear walls and a façade veneered in dark red brick with inset panels of large buff brick. Glass block and metal Hopper windows were introduced to buildings in Mountain Home during this period, but are almost always located on rear or side walls as seen on the 510-512 S. Baker Street building.

In general the buildings in the district constructed in the 1950s are smaller than the older buildings, but retain similar setbacks and characteristics. The building at 800 S. Baker Street is simple low, one-story brick



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structure with a cut-away corner entrance similar to several of the 1920s corner lot buildings in the district. The building at 813 S. Main was constructed in the early 1950s adjacent to an earlier building. Although 813 S. Main Street is a concrete block building, its setback, form, and storefront is similar to adjacent buildings.

### 1960 to present

Only six buildings in the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District have been constructed since 1960. Constructed in the early 1960s, the Century Tel Building at 503 S. Baker Street is a long, one-story concrete block building faced in dark red brick on the north, east, and west elevations and covered with a flat roof with projecting eaves. Other buildings from this period are simple one-story with brick veneering such as seen at 703 S. Baker. A recently constructed small brick structure on the west side of the 500 block of S. Main Street contains an ATM machine.

The majority of buildings in Mountain Home's downtown commercial district remain occupied and in good condition. The non-contributing historic buildings in the district have been altered on their fronts, but most of these alterations are reversible.

The most significant characteristic of Mountain Home's historic commercial building stock is the materials of which they are made. The most prolific material used is stone. The abundant local supply of limestone and brown sandstone has been used in the buildings of all eras of construction in the city's downtown with limestone being the most dominant. There is a variety of stonework in the district; cut stone block, rusticated cut stone block, uncut fieldstone, flat flagstone, and stacked river rock, all in a variety of colors.

### INTEGRITY

The Mountain Home Commercial Historic District is a cohesive group of buildings that represent, in their appearance, the eras of the city's development and use of indigenous materials. These buildings possess integrity of location and setting in their original setbacks and configurations. With 37 (64%) of the buildings in the district contributing to its significance, the display of original building materials and design conveys the workmanship used in their construction and validates their representation of Mountain Home's development.

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### Mountain Home Commercial Historic District Property List:

<u>AR Resource #</u>	<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Construction Date</u>	<u>Contributing/Non-Contributing</u>
BA0045	1 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	D1941-1943	NR Listed
BA0025	621 S. Baker St.	c. 1897	Contributing
BA0035	601-603 Baker St.	c. 1892	Contributing
BA0156	415-417-419 S. Main St.	D1953	Contributing
BA0157	505 S. Main St.	c. 1922	Contributing
BA0158	507-509 S. Main St.	c. 1920	Non-Contributing
BA0159	511 S. Main St.	c. 1920	Contributing
BA0160	500 block S. Main St.	c. 2000	Non-Contributing
BA0161	700 S. Main St.	c. 1910	Non-Contributing
BA0162	706 S. Main St.	c. 1920	Non-Contributing
BA0163	801 S. Main St.	c. 1928	Contributing
BA0164	809 S. Main St.	c. 1928	Contributing
BA0165	813 S. Main St.	c. 1953	Non-Contributing
BA0166	503 S. Baker St.	c. 1968	Non-Contributing
BA0167	507 S. Baker St.	D1942	Contributing
BA0168	508 S. Baker St.	c. 1948	Non-Contributing
BA0169	510-512 S. Baker St.	c. 1948	Contributing
BA0170	511 S. Baker St.	c. 1920	Non-Contributing
BA0171	605 ½ S. Baker St.	c. 1968	Non-Contributing
BA0172	607 S. Baker St.	c. 1902	Contributing
BA0173	609 S. Baker St.	c. 1908	Contributing
BA0174	615 S. Baker St.	c. 1908	Contributing
BA0175	617 S. Baker St.	c.	Contributing
BA0176	619 S. Baker St.	c. 1897	Contributing
BA0177	703 S. Baker St.	c. 1928	Non-Contributing
BA0178	707 S. Baker St.	c. 1962	Non-Contributing
BA0179	712-718 S. Baker St.	c. 1940	Contributing
BA0180	800 S. Baker St.	c. 1950	Contributing
BA0181	804 S. Baker St.	c. 1949	Contributing
BA0182	806 S. Baker St.	c. 1950	Contributing
BA0183	808 S. Baker St.	c. 1950	Contributing
BA0184	812 S. Baker St.	c. 1950	Contributing
BA0185	109 E. 9 <sup>th</sup> St.	D1947	Non-Contributing

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### Mountain Home Commercial Historic District Property List:

<u>AR Resource #</u>	<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Construction Date</u>	<u>Contributing/Non-Contributing</u>
BA0186	1 <sup>st</sup> block, E. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1950	Non-Contributing
BA0187	101 E. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	D1940	Non-Contributing
BA0188	107 E. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1939	Non-Contributing
BA0189	113-115 E. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1947	Contributing
BA0190	1 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1918	Contributing
BA0191	5 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1928	Non-Contributing
BA0192	19 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1925	Non-Contributing
BA0193	21 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.		Contributing
BA0194	101-103 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1920	Non-Contributing
BA0195	115-117 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1947	Contributing
BA0196	119 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1963	Non-Contributing
BA0197	216 E. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	D1951	Contributing
BA0198	15 W. 6 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1950	Contributing
BA0199	2-8 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	D1936	Contributing
BA0200	10-12 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1902	Contributing
BA0201	16 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1920	Contributing
BA0202	18 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1920	Contributing
BA0203	22 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1920	Contributing
BA0204	100 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1920	Contributing
BA0205	104 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1920	Non-Contributing
BA0206	106 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1950	Contributing
BA0207	117 E. 7 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1980	Non-Contributing
BA0208	14 E. 8 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1950	Contributing
BA0209	18 E. 8 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1957	Contributing
BA0210	101-107 E. 8 <sup>th</sup> St.	c. 1928	Contributing

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## SUMMARY

The Mountain Home Commercial Historic District is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion A** for its association with the establishment and development of the town as the county seat of Baxter County and as a regional center of commerce. The district is also being nominated under **Criterion C** for its collection of early to mid twentieth century commercial buildings, many of which utilized indigenous stone in their construction. The Mountain Home Commercial Historic District is comprised of 58 buildings; 37 (64%) contributing buildings and 21 (36%) non-contributing buildings. One of the buildings is listed in the National Register of Historic Places: Baxter County Courthouse (NR 05-26-95). This collection of buildings exemplifies the history of the city as it grew from a small county seat to a regional tourist center. The period of significance of the district spans the years from 1892 to 1960.

## ELABORATION

Mountain Home, Arkansas, is located in the central portion of Baxter County. Baxter County is situated on the northern edge of the state of Arkansas in the mist of the Ozark Mountain Range and was the state's seventy-third county. Baxter County was established on March 24, 1873. It was named for Elisha Baxter, who was governor of Arkansas 1873-1874. Baxter was an Arkansan who fought for the Union Army during the Civil War. In 1873 he pushed the Arkansas Legislature to form a new county in his honor, with land taken from Iazard, Fulton, Marion, and Searcy counties, while the representatives from affected counties and many others were away from the capital.

Baxter County shares its northern border with the Arkansas-Missouri border. The southern portion is covered in forests while the rest of the county's 554.4 square miles is prairie land. It was only after the land was plowed and crops planted on the prairie land did trees begin to grow in the area. Many of the first settlers in the region beginning in the early 1880s were of Native American heritage, having been forced out of states to the east. The earliest communities were Clarkridge, formed in 1819 on the northern edge of the county, and Big Flat, formed in 1820 in the most southern corner. Sometime around 1825, Jacob Wolf built a two-story, dog-trot log house near the north fork of the White River. The community formed around him was called Liberty and later Norfolk. The Jacob Wolf House (Listed in the National Register of Historic Places 04-13-73) served as the territorial seat of government for the northern part of the Arkansas Territory from 1828 until 1836, when Arkansas became state and all authority was moved Little Rock.

In the early 1850s Colonel Orin L. Dodd built a southern style plantation house on high ridge in an area named Rapp's Barren. Many areas in the region were called barren because of the lack of trees. The name Mountain Home is said to have come Dodd's slaves who boasted they had two homes, one in Augusta (the location of Dodd's second plantation) and the other at their "sweet mountain home". The community that

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grew up around Colonel Dodd's plantation was still designated as Rapp's Barren in the 1860 census even though the Mountain Home post office had been established three years earlier. The post office was located in Mountain Home's first store which was operated by John Quincy Wolf and Judge J. S. Russell. An acquaintance, Colonel Casey built his home and store in Mountain Home in 1855.

The most influential business in the early development of Mountain Home was the Male and Female Academy, established in 1853. It is not known what brought J. S. Howard, a professor and educator to leave Plattsville, Wisconsin, or caused Colonel Dodd to donate land for the academy. The Male and Female Academy was housed in a two-story Greek Revival style house that stood on the south end of Main Street. The sons and daughters from wealthy families all over northern Arkansas and southern Missouri were educated at the Academy. The school was closed at the beginning of the Civil War and later burned by "bushwackers," but in its first seven years of existence it brought business to Mountain Home and earned great respect for its quality of education.

During the Civil War and through the turbulent times that followed most all of Mountain Home's structures were burned or destroyed. By 1868, homes were being rebuilt, old and new businesses were opening on the square, and students were returning to the new Male and Female Academy Professor Howard had built. In 1873, Mountain Home was named the county seat for the newly established Baxter County. The first court proceedings of Baxter County were held in Colonel Casey's store on July 7, 1873. After using Casey's Store as a courthouse for almost a year, the county purchased, for \$600.00, a boarding house on Main Street to be the next Baxter County Courthouse. The building served as the county seat for eight years, until 1882 when the building was deemed an unfit place to conduct county business.

Baxter County's first courthouse designed and built to be a courthouse was a wood-frame building erected on land donated by local merchant J. S. Russell in 1882. The land was in the center of Mountain Home, on what had always been the unofficial town square. The town square became the official Baxter County courthouse square. From the time Mountain Home became the county seat it began a slow but steady growth. In addition to its already established stores that included two general stores, several blacksmith shops, two tanning yards, a drug store, three doctors, a tin shop, a wagon shop, and an archer's store. The town's first brick kiln was built in the spring of 1874. The following year brought the first ice house and Mountain Home's first newspaper, the *Quid Nunc* (What Now), published by N. H. Biggers from Marshfield, Missouri.

A mining boom took hold of Baxter County when iron ore, zinc, and lead were discovered around Buffalo City on the southern border. The St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern Railroad constructed a rail line that basically followed the White River upstream pass Norfolk, through Buffalo City to Cotter which was nine miles from Mountain Home, and on through the western border of Baxter County in 1903. Cotter's newfound importance, growth, and prosperity due to the railroad line prompted an election to have the county seat moved from Mountain Home to Cotter. The proposal failed due to some lost ballot boxes. With the railroad came the decline of the steamboat trade that had supplied all of Baxter County since the 1850s. At Cotter the

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rail line turned west passing through a small mining community appropriately named Zinc, before winding north through the Ozark Mountains to Springfield, Missouri. Trade goods came into Baxter County from the north through railroad depots on the White River instead of from the south through river ports on the White River.

The population of Mountain Home increased by 56% between 1880 and 1890. The town had a plant to gin the cotton raised in the river bottoms, a mill south of town to grind the corn and wheat grown on the prairies and a strong beef cattle export business. A second institution of education, the Mountain Home College opened in 1893.

Mountain Home experienced a boom in businesses around the square during the 1890s. The Bank of Mountain Home was chartered in 1895 with B. E. Massey as president and located in the Massey building on the west side of the square. Also on the west side of the square was Mountain Home Drug Store established in 1893, C. A. Carr, Photographer, established in 1891, Chenoweth, Brown and Co., Real Estate, James T. Tracy's General Merchandise established in 1897, and R. P. London, Jeweler, established in 1899. Unfortunately, the buildings on the west side of the square fell into disrepair and were razed in 1999.

Sam Wilkes Grocery and Feed Store opened on the east side of the square in 1896. Two stone business buildings were constructed on that side for L. G. Talbert's furniture and undertaking business and the R. C. & O. Livingston General Merchandise and Millinery Store was established in 1896. Also on the east side was East Side Drug Store and A. J. Truman, General Merchandise, established in 1896. Russell Brothers' General Merchandise had occupied the north side of the square since 1880. On the north and new to the square and Mountain Home was its third newspaper the *Baxter County Citizen*.

On the opposite side of the courthouse square was Mountain Home's second newspaper, the *Baxter Bulletin*, established in 1891. The business firm of the Baker Brothers, General Merchandise and Cotton Buyers first established in Big Flat in 1868 was moved to a two-story brick building on the east side of the square in 1892. In 1896 a new post office building was constructed on the same side with Morris & Sons Farm Implements. After the turn of the century on the south side of the square, Combs & Baker General Merchandise was established in 1900. City Grocery and H. L. Massey General Merchandise were both established in 1901. Around 1902, the People's Bank moved into their new cut-stone two-story building on the south side of the square.

Mountain Home entered the twentieth century with a strong and impressive business district around its courthouse square. Yet, nine miles to the west, the community of Cotter had in the eight years following the arrival of the railroad in 1903 grown to three times the population of Mountain Home. Cotter began a second effort to remove the county seat from Mountain Home. To end the move the citizens of Mountain Home took advantage of an obscure law that stated that the seat of government could not be removed from a courthouse that had three floors. In 1910, a third floor was added to the brick courthouse built in 1890 in Mountain

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Home. The third floor featured a slanted shingled roof with ten dormer windows.

The citizens of Baxter County voted for a bond issue to fund the construction of a new courthouse on October 28, 1939. In another failed attempt to gain the county seat, Cotter contested the election, but nothing came of it. The old courthouse burned in 1940 and was demolished due to extensive fire damage. In November 1940, the proposal to build a new courthouse was approved as a Works Progress Administration project. Work began on a new three-story buff-brick courthouse in August of 1941, and was completed two years later in August, 1943. The Baxter County Courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 05-26-95.

The population of Mountain Home remained stable through the first part of the 1900s. Between 1930 and 1940 the town's population increased over 60%. While the rest of the country was dealing with or trying to rebuild in the latter years of the 1930s, Baxter County was fortunate to have the impending construction of a new courthouse by the WPA and two large federally funded and operated construction projects nearby. The White River had served Mountain Home well as a means of transporting goods and products, but it also isolated the town because of the lack of bridges. Local citizens were put to work constructing the Marsh Rainbow Arch Bridge over the White River at Cotter 1929. The bridge was dedicated November 11, 1930.

Three years later in 1933, work began on the Henderson Bridge to cross the North Fork River at Henderson, a few miles east of Mountain Home. The wide North Fork River had always separated the citizens in this large section of eastern Baxter County from their county seat until January 1, 1935 when the new bridge was dedicated. Two years later on June 17, 1937, the Highway 5 bridge over the North Fork River at the town of Norfork was dedicated. These three bridge projects along with the impending courthouse project not only provided jobs for the locals, it also brought in outside workers and specialized labor, increasing the demands for local goods and services. The number of WPA and other New Deal projects that took place in Baxter County succeeded in providing Mountain Home and Baxter County a relatively stable economy, as compared to many rural Ozark Mountain towns during the years of the Great Depression. With the completion of the three bridges during the 1930s, Mountain Home was situated at the crossroads of two major highways connecting the country from east to west and north to south.

During the 1930s the town people and government workers would gather at the courthouse square to tell stories or stroll along in front of the businesses as they circled the square. Occasionally, a traveling show would come through town and sometimes silent movies were shown at the Baptist College or the schoolhouse. The Evans Theater, Mountain Home's first motion picture establishment opened on the east side of the square in 1939. With ticket prices at ten cents for child and fifteen cents for an adult the matinees were sold out most Saturdays.

Baxter County's largest federally funded projects were yet to come in the 1940s. A series of hydro-electric dams on the White River to control the disastrous seasonal flooding had been in the planning for a number of

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years. An estimated crowd of 12,000 gathered on May 23, 1941, in Norfolk at a grand celebration to commemorate the beginning of the Norfolk Dam project. Within months of the start of the construction, the number of new workers in town equaled or exceeded the total population of Mountain Home. The boom was postponed when Japan attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. All WPA projects were suspended in 1942, but eventually the construction resumed under military guard for fear of sabotage. The dam became operational 1943 and its two large power generators came online 1944. The Norfolk Dam was opened to the public on June 2, 1944, with the growing Norfolk Lake slowly filling up behind it.

Following on the heels of the successful Norfolk Dam project, construction started on the Bull Shoals Dam on June 1, 1947. Once again a population boom came to Baxter County. Bull Shoals Dam was much larger than the Norfolk Dam. It was one of the largest dams in the country at the time of its completion in July 1951 and its power plant began producing electricity in 1952. Both dams were dedicated on June 2, 1952, by President Harry S. Truman, accompanied by a large entourage of cabinet members and congressmen. As a result of the three bridges and two dams projects, the once somewhat isolated town of Mountain Home found itself rapidly growing as the center of a new tourist and recreational region. The population of Mountain Home increased almost 150% from 1940 to 1950. Many new buildings were constructed in downtown Mountain Home and around its courthouse square, during the dam building period. As an example of the growth and direction of the town's new business ventures, Mountain Home had three movie theaters by the early 1950s.

The two dam projects created Lake Norfolk and Lake Bull Shoals which together offer over 1,500 miles of shoreline surrounded by the scenic Ozark Mountains. One of the largest fish hatcheries in the world was constructed at the base the Norfolk Dam in 1957. The hatchery produced trout used to stock the White River and other nearby streams attracting fishermen from all over the country and earning the region the title of "trout capital of the world."

The tourist and recreational industry fueled the steady growth of Mountain Home and Baxter County through the 1960s and 1970s. Mountain Home is situated less than fifteen miles from either of the two huge lakes and the scenic White River. Mountain Home has expanded out along the two intersecting state highways and become a regional vacation resort.

By the 1980s, Mountain Home experienced another growth spurt. When the town's hospitality, beautiful scenery, climate, and extensive recreational opportunities are combined with low tax rates the result is an ideal location for retirement communities. The population tripled from 1970 to 2000 in Mountain Home, a stable, thriving, modern city that maintains an abiding respect for its past, reflected in its strong and functioning court square business district.



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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Mountain Home Commercial Historic District is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criteria A and C** for its association with the development of the town as a county seat and center of commerce and for its assortment and quality of early to mid-twentieth century commercial buildings.

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1)	15	555164	4021422
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2)	15	555229	4021422
	Zone	Easting	Northing
3)	15	555229	4021439
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4)	15	555318	4021427
	Zone	Easting	Northing
5)	15	555319	4021397
	Zone	Easting	Northing
6)	15	555392	4021397
	Zone	Easting	Northing
7)	15	555391	4021325
	Zone	Easting	Northing
8)	15	555292	4021323
	Zone	Easting	Northing
9)	15	555292	4021214
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10)	15	555278	4021214
	Zone	Easting	Northing
11)	15	555278	4021170
	Zone	Easting	Northing
12)	15	555241	4021170
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13)	15	555241	4021104
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14)	15	555164	4021106
	Zone	Easting	Northing
15)	15	555164	4021211
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16)	15	555086	4021211
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17)	15	555086	4021247
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19)	15	555164	4021326
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20)	15	555086	4021326
	Zone	Easting	Northing
21)	15	555086	4021377
	Zone	Easting	Northing
22)	15	555164	4021377
	Zone	Easting	Northing

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### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District are shown on the accompanying sketch map and are roughly described as follows:

The boundary of the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District begins at a point at the northwest corner of the property line of the building located at 415 Main Street. The boundary runs east across the northern property line of the buildings in the first block of E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, crosses Baker Street and continues to run east along the northern property lines of the buildings located at 101, 107 and 113-115 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street. At the northeast corner of the property line of 113-115 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, the boundary turns to run south on the center line of Church Street to its intersection with E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street. At E. 5<sup>th</sup> and Church Streets the boundary turns and runs east along the center line of E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street to its intersection with South Street. At this juncture, the boundary turns to run south along South Street to its intersection with E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. At E. 6<sup>th</sup> and South Streets, the boundary turns and runs due west along the center line of E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the rear property line of the building located at 601-603 S. Baker Street. The boundary then runs due south along the rear (east) property lines of buildings in the 600 block of S. Baker Street to its intersection with E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street. At E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street the boundary continues to run south to across the street and down the east property line of the building located at 106 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, then turns to run west along the rear (south) property line of that building. At the rear property lines of the buildings at 106 E. 7<sup>th</sup> and 701 S. Baker Street, the boundary turns to run south along the rear (east) property lines of buildings at 701, 703, and 707 S. Baker Street to its intersection with E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street. At E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street then boundary runs west to its intersection with S. Baker Street. At E. 8<sup>th</sup> and S. Baker Streets, the boundary turns and runs south along the center line of S. Baker Street to its intersection with E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street. The boundary then turns to run west along the southern property line of 109 E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street to its intersection with S. Main Street. At E. 9<sup>th</sup> and S. Main Streets, the boundary runs north along the center line of S. Main then, turns to run west along the southern property line of the building at 706 S. Main Street to Hickory Street where it turns and runs north along Hickory Street to its intersection with W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street and S. Main Street. At this point the boundary runs north along the center line of S. Main Street to its intersection with W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street where it turns and runs west along W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street to Hickory Street. At W. 6<sup>th</sup> and Hickory Streets, the boundary runs north to the rear property line of the building at 15 W. 6<sup>th</sup> where it turns to run east to its intersection with S. Main Street. At S. Main Street the boundary turns and runs north to the point of origin.

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## Boundary Justification

The National Register boundary for the Mountain Home Commercial Historic District includes those properties that are historically associated with the commercial and governmental center of Baxter County during its period of significance (1892-1960) and retain adequate integrity to portray their relationship to the development of Mountain Home. Although both sides of S. Main Street were originally part of the business district of downtown Mountain Home, the boundaries have been drawn around a modern city plaza and city hall on the west side of the district.