

**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 DeWitt Commercial Historic District

other names/site number AR Resource # AR0355

**2. Location**

street & number Roughly bounded by N. Washington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, S. Adams and Gibson Avenue  not for publication

city or town DeWitt  vicinity

state Arkansas code AR county Arkansas code 001 zip code 72042

**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.)

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

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

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

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

GOVERNMENT- City Hall; Courthouse; Post Office; Fire Station

SOCIAL- Civic

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCIAL/TRADE- Specialty Store; Professional; Restaurant

GOVERNMENT- City Hall; Courthouse; Post Office

RELIGION- Religious Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN- Italianate

LATE 19th AND EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS- Classical Revival

MODERN MOVEMENT- Art Deco

OTHER- Early 20th Century Vernacular Commercial Mid-20th Century Vernacular Commercial

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick; Concrete

walls Brick; Stucco, Cast Concrete; Metal; 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.)

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

Local

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**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning & Development

Commerce

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**Period of Significance**

c.1904-1960

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**Significant Dates**

1931-1932- Construction of AR County Courthouse

1939- Construction of Federal Post Officer

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**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

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**Cultural Affiliation** (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

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**Architect/Builder**

Burks, H. Ray

Simon, Louis A.

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**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):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_



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## SUMMARY

The DeWitt Commercial Historic District, located in DeWitt, Arkansas, in Arkansas County, is comprised of 54 buildings in the blocks surrounding and near the Arkansas County Courthouse - Southern District. Two buildings in the district have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The 1931 Art Deco style Arkansas County Courthouse (NR listed 11-20-92) is located on the town square and the 1931 U. S. Post Office at 221 W. Cross Street (NR listed 08-14-98) is two blocks west. Excluding the two National Register listed properties, 36 (69%) resources maintain integrity and contribute to the district's significance while 16 (31%) do not contribute to the district's significance due to the lack of integrity as a result of modifications. Three of the non-contributing buildings were constructed after the district's period of significance of 1905 to 1960. The majority of the buildings in the district are representative of twentieth century commercial architecture, while a few have characteristics of styles such as Italianate and mid-twentieth century Art Moderne. All of the contributing buildings in the district retain their overall massing and setback, remaining true to the historic character of the small southern Arkansas town court square. The Arkansas County Courthouse - Southern District is the centerpiece of the historic district, and is surrounded by 32 buildings on the four sides of Court Square and another 21 buildings on the streets intersecting Court Square.

## ELABORATION

DeWitt, Arkansas, is situated in the geographical center of Arkansas County at an elevation of 189 feet. The county is located in the southeastern part of the state and contains an area known as the Grand Prairie of Arkansas. The Grand Prairie is a narrow, level tract of land between the lower White and Arkansas rivers. The land is adapted to rice cultivation because its level topsoil is underlaid by an impervious hardpan that holds water on the surface for days at a time. DeWitt is located approximately 100 miles southeast of Little Rock, 18 miles from the Northern District Arkansas County seat, Stuttgart, and 20 miles northwest of Arkansas Post.

The area that now makes up the city of DeWitt is contained within the land claimed by Hernando de Soto for King Charles V of Spain in 1541. The region was later claimed by the French government and then sold to the United States, becoming part of the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. The first settlement west of the Mississippi was established at Arkansas Post in 1686 (20 miles southeast of present day DeWitt) located in the southeast corner of what later became Arkansas County in the Missouri Territory. When Arkansas became its own territory in 1819, Arkansas Post was named the capital. The Arkansas Territorial capital was moved to Little Rock, centrally located in the territory, in 1821. When Arkansas became a state in 1836, Arkansas Post became the county seat of Arkansas County, the first and largest county in the state.

Arkansas Post's location in the extreme southeast corner of the county was a disadvantage in the growing county. The Arkansas County court in 1853 ordered an election of a committee to locate a new, centrally located site for the county seat. A site near the center of the county was chosen. Arkansas County surveyor Adam McCool, surveyed the newly chosen site, laid it off, and platted it into square blocks and lots that were

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advertised for sale in early 1854. The new county seat was named DeWitt and there was a slow, but steady inflow of population. DeWitt was never a boom town, but one of steady growth.

The design of DeWitt's downtown was planned and laid out to be a unique county seat. One of the few closed corner courthouse squares in Arkansas, the streets enter the DeWitt court square at right angles to the courthouse whereas most squares in Arkansas county seats are formed by streets running parallel to the courthouse, bisecting one another at each corner. In DeWitt, because of the arrangement and the decision to make the town square a continuous street, every building on the downtown square is on the same street. The design of the court square resulted in downtown DeWitt becoming a destination rather than a way to pass through the town. The two major arteries in town, Main and Cross Streets, do not intersect, but flow into the town square in the middle of the blocks.

Most squares in small towns in Arkansas have a major road or state highway on which the town square is situated. DeWitt was not built on a major road, waterway or railroad. Its town square is located two blocks north of the only state highway that passes through town. The majority of the early businesses in DeWitt provided services for the people who came to the town to take care of their county business. In 1880 DeWitt had a population of only 169, but had two hotels and nine attorneys.

DeWitt had no infrastructure for exporting goods, although it was surrounded by natural resources such as timber and farming land. A railroad line off of the St. Louis and Southwestern Railroad from Stuttgart was constructed through DeWitt in 1891, resulting in a period of building in the 1890s. The growth of DeWitt was steady until the introduction of rice growing in the Arkansas Grand Prairie in the early years of the twentieth century. Rice had become the major crop in Arkansas County by 1920. DeWitt had two large rice mills and was handling a large amount of Arkansas's rice production, and two timber-related businesses in addition to its county government-related businesses. The population doubled between 1910 and 1920. When the national economy collapsed in the 1930s, Arkansas County fared better than most small towns in the state as a result of its diversified economic base. Agriculture and timber-related industries sustained the area until after World War II. When mechanization eliminated many farm jobs, the population of DeWitt decreased. Other industries supplemented DeWitt's business base, but the county government-related nature of the city continues to support the city's economy.

The DeWitt Commercial Historic District includes the Arkansas County Courthouse- Southern District and buildings on the four sides on Court Square. The district extends one-half block north of Court Square, two blocks south on S. Main Street, two blocks of S. Adams Street and W. Cross Street on the west, and one block of E. Cross Street on the east. Of the 54 buildings in the district, 32 are located on Court Square. Every building facing the courthouse has a Court Square address. The unique numbering of addresses on Court Square begins with 100 Court Square on the northwest corner of Court Square and N. Main, then runs counterclockwise around the square. The 200 block of Court Square begins after the intersection with W. Cross Street and ends at the intersection of Court Square and S. Main. The 300 block begins on the southeast

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corner of Court Square and N. Main Streets. The 400 block of Court Square begins north of the intersection of Court Square and E. Cross and continues around to the Latimer Drug Store Building at 432 Court Square, on the northeast corner of the beginning intersection. The closed square provides unique corner lots, three of which have buildings with beveled corners facing the square. In two portions of the district, buildings have fronts on two streets. The buildings at 204 and 206 Court Square have storefronts on their rear elevations, facing S. Adams Street. Buildings at 214, 216, and 220 Court Square have been opened to the buildings in the 100 block of W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, sharing interiors, but with storefronts facing two streets.

The oldest buildings remaining in the downtown business district were constructed in the first decade of the twentieth century. Although organization and development of DeWitt's commercial district began before the early twentieth century, no buildings from that time are extant, most having been frame one and two-story commercial buildings that were replaced with more substantial masonry ones. The next period of development began in 1910 as a result of the new rice growing industry. The history of the town during the 1920s is represented in the DeWitt Commercial Historic District by 19 buildings (34%). The 1930s are represented by 10 buildings in the district, including the Arkansas County Courthouse - Southern District and the U.S. Post Office, both constructed under Federal programs. Between 1920 and 1940, 29 buildings comprising 52% of the historic district were constructed. By 1940, 71% of the buildings in the district had been constructed

The DeWitt Commercial Historic District appears much as it did in the late 1950s by which time all but three of the existing buildings had been constructed. With the exception of the three-story courthouse, all of the buildings in the district are one or two story. Most are brick, with brick color varying from red to buff and combinations of both colors.

### 1900-1909

The early buildings on DeWitt's court square were one and two-story frame buildings. Construction of a substantial courthouse on the town square (the town's third) in 1893 spurred new construction in the next few years. But it was not until the turn of the century that frame business buildings began to be replaced with more substantial brick buildings. No buildings constructed before 1900 remain in the district and only two buildings remain from the first decade of the twentieth century.

The oldest building in the historic district is located on the north corner of Court Square and W. Cross Street at 140-142 Court Square. Constructed c.1904 the building is a two-story brick structure. However, the three exposed elevations of the two-story building are covered with metal and other than its form and placement in the streetscape, the building presents no indication of its original appearance. In contrast, the DeWitt Bank and Trust building at 114 Court Square constructed c. 1905, features Italianate style features in its second story pedimented window hoods, arched-top windows on the north elevation and rear, a decorative cornice, and front corner quoins.

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### 1910-1919

Eight buildings in the DeWitt Commercial Historic District were constructed in this period. Likely as a result of the construction of the two-story brick DeWitt Bank and Trust Building at 114 Court Square a few years earlier, a flurry of construction ensued on the 100 block of Court Square in the 1910s. Adjacent buildings at 100 and 106 Court Square are one story brick buildings with similar tall front brick parapets, giving the buildings a front height appearance close to the two-story buildings to their west. The buildings upper brick walls are elaborated with large recessed brick panels topped by bands of stack bond brick. The cornice is formed by three rows of projecting header-bond brick. The corner building is larger, containing two storefront spaces, while the building at 106 Court Square is a smaller, single storefront. Constructed at 108-112 Court Square c. 1918 is a two-story brick building with a center entry flanked by two-story brick pilasters. The upper story of the building is fenestrated with four pairs of double-hung wood windows. The two storefronts contain aluminum-framed glass doors and plate-glass windows.

The only rusticated block building in the district is located at 202 Court Square. Constructed c.1910, the two-story, single-storefront building is faced in rusticated block on the front (east) and south elevations. A one and one-half story brick addition on the rear of the buildings with loading dock opens onto S. Adams Street. The wall area around the second story (boarded) windows has been infilled with concrete block. Cast-iron columns are visible on the storefront.

The stand-alone building in the corner of the 200 block of Court Square, located at 212 Court Square is a two-story brick building with a hip roof constructed c. 1917. Befitting its corner position on the court square, the entrance to the building is located in a beveled corner of the building facing the square. Glass block windows have replaced the original plate-glass wood windows and are reflective of the number of buildings and remodeling that took place in downtown DeWitt in the years following the end of World War II.

Located at the intersection of Court Square and N. Main Street, the two-story Latimer Drug Store Building at 432 Court Square was constructed c. 1918. The second story was used as a hotel while the first floor housed a drug store through the mid 1940s when the current occupant, McGahhey Hardware purchased the building. The dark red brick building is denoted by inset cast-concrete squares on upper corners of window openings and cast concrete window sills. Although the storefront has been remodeled, the building presents much of its original appearance.

The large two-story brick J. M. Lowe Motor Company Building one block west of Court Square at 211 W. Cross was constructed c. 1913. The building features brick-arched window openings on the side and rear elevations. The building features modest brick pattern detail on its cornice. Three storefronts are located on the front (north) of the Lowe Building. The storefronts are partially boarded but the original configuration of plate-glass windows with transoms and wood-frame glass doors remain in their original configuration. Four evenly spaced pairs of double-hung wood windows are located on the second story of the front (north).

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### 1920s

DeWitt was well established as the seat of county government and a regional business center by the time the cultivation of rice became the major crop in Arkansas County by 1920. As the rice crops increased, so did the construction of rice mills and other businesses related to rice in DeWitt. Electricity came to the town in 1920 and extensive improvements to the water works and telephone systems were made in this era of DeWitt's development.

New construction at the beginning of this decade continued steadily and the 1920s are represented in the district by 19 (34%) buildings. All but three of the buildings in the district that were constructed in the 1920s are located on Court Square. The majority of the buildings from this period of DeWitt's development reflect standard twentieth-century commercial architecture in their design. Although buildings in the district constructed in this decade are located on all sides of the square, they are particularly clustered in the 200 and 400 blocks of Court Square.

A simple brick version of the one-story brick commercial building constructed in the 1920s in DeWitt is the Watson Building at 204 Court Square. A recessed front door is flanked by plate-glass storefront windows and transom windows (now boarded). Minimal detail is denoted in the building, although a subtle brick beltcourse in the same color brick is located on the upper wall of the front. The buildings at 204 and 206 Court Square also feature storefront space on their rear elevations, facing S. Adams Street.

The two-story brick building at 210 Court Square features distinguishable Craftsman-style wood and glass doors entering two storefront spaces and leading to the second story. Decorative detail on the building is provided by small inset cast-concrete squares located on the second story level of the front and a cast-concrete band running under the sets of second story windows.

One of the most stylish commercial buildings in the district is located at 130 Court Square. The one-story red brick building features three bands of buff color, vertically-laid brick across its upper front wall. Constructed c. 1928, the aluminum-framed plate-glass windows and recessed door are topped by six transom windows and flanked by panels of black structural glass. Constructed in 1922, the one-story brick building at 138 Court Square features buff brick walls with red brick forming a rectangle within a larger rectangle denoted by inset cast-concrete squares at each of the corners. The original recessed center door is flanked by plate-glass windows.

### 1930s

DeWitt fared better than other small Arkansas towns during the national economic downturn, largely because of its diversity of business. Of the eleven (20%) buildings in the district that were constructed in the 1930s, two were constructed by Federal programs of the 1930s. The Arkansas County Courthouse-Southern

District, (NR listed 11-20-92) was constructed in 1931 and is located on the grassy, tree-shaded square in the center of downtown DeWitt. The fourth courthouse building in DeWitt, the 1931 Art Deco style courthouse

DeWitt Commercial Historic District

Arkansas County, Arkansas

Name of Property

County and State

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utilizes characteristics of stylized Classical elements in fluted pilasters and “zigzag” detail common to early Art Deco design.

Construction of the U. S. Post Office at 221 W. Cross in DeWitt in 1939 was a result of federal funding approved in 1937 for construction of post offices around the country. The one-story red brick building was listed in the National Register on 08-14-98 in “Arkansas Post Offices and the Treasury Department’s Section Art Program, 1938-1942” and contains a 1941 painting “Portrait of Contemporary DeWitt” by William Traher. The building continues to serve as DeWitt’s main post office.

The Telephone Building at 123 W. Cross was constructed in the early 1930s and is a two-story brick building with four storefronts facing W. Cross Street. Sets of three double-hung windows, although now boarded, are set into recessed brick panels on the second floor and are denoted by brick pilasters with cast-concrete bases and caps.

The buildings at 400 and 410 Court Square, on the northeast quadrant of the square, were built in 1938 after a fire destroyed the buildings previously located on the block. Both are large, one-story dark red brick structures with minimal detail. The corner building at 400 Court Square features storefronts on both Court Square and E. Cross Street. Other buildings constructed in the 1930s are one-story brick with varying versions of minimal detail.

### **1940s**

The five buildings in the district constructed in the 1940s were all built in the years after the end of World War II. Buildings in the 200 block, southwest side of Court Square were rebuilt after a fire in 1946 destroyed previous buildings. They are one-story buildings constructed with concrete block walls and brick veneer facades.

The most significant building in the district from this era is the Veteran’s Memorial Building at 112 N. Main, constructed in the late 1940s by the local American Legion. It served for many years as a community center. The two-story buff brick Art Moderne style building rests on a concrete foundation and is fenestrated with glass block windows. The front of the building is denoted by a two-bay center entrance with sets of double wood and glass doors. Glass block fills the space above the entries. The entry is surrounded by cast-concrete block with “Veterans Memorial” engraved across the top.

### **1950s**

The decade began with construction of a new fire station by the city in 1950. The two-story buff brick building located at 213 S. Adams housed the fire department, provided living quarters for the fire chief and family on the second story, and the mayor’s office and police department on the rear of the first floor.

Though no longer used as a fire station, the building retains the original two multi-pane glass and wood overhead doors on the front and two-over-two, double-hung, aluminum windows on first and second stories.

DeWitt Commercial Historic District

Name of Property

Arkansas County, Arkansas

County and State

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Another building constructed in the early 1950s is located at 209 S. Main and features a front buff color brick wall with rounded parapet, resembling Quonset hut design.

One-story, multi-storefront buildings at 113-117 W. 1<sup>st</sup> and 213 S. Adams are another building type constructed in the 1950s throughout small Arkansas cities. The low-profile buildings feature aluminum-framed, plate-glass windows and doors, are faced in dark red brick and have flat roofs.

#### **1960 to present**

Only three buildings in the DeWitt Commercial Historic District have been constructed since 1960. The large building at 204 S. Main was built for a grocery store, and is set back from the street and surrounded by parking. A building reconstruction in 2000 at 308 Court Square maintains the setback and general form of the historic buildings on the square. The other non-historic resource in the district is a small portable building in the 100 block of S. Adams Street used for food sales.

In the years since 1960, DeWitt has maintained a fairly consistent population around 3,500. Changes to the downtown have occurred as a result of fire loss and changing business patterns and social centers as the town has grown. Overall, most of the buildings in the downtown historic district appear to be structurally sound and the majority are occupied. Only a few vacant lots in the district once contained buildings.

#### **INTEGRITY**

DeWitt's historic commercial area is a cohesive group of buildings that maintains the integrity needed to convey their architectural and historic significance. The buildings continue to maintain their integrity of association as they have continuously been used as places of commerce and local government business. The buildings that contribute to the district's significance express the original design, materials, and craftsmanship used in their construction. Many of the alterations that have occurred on the non-contributing historic buildings are reversible and largely confined to the storefront area. Although the streetscape has changed in appearance since the town first began development in 1855, the buildings in the DeWitt Commercial Historic District strongly convey their early to mid-twentieth century sense of time and place.

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## PROPERTY LIST DEWITT COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>AR Resource #</u>	<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Construction Date</u>	<u>Contributing/Non Contributing</u>
AR0039	101 Court Square	D. 1931-1932	NR Listed 10-20-92
AR0146	221 W. Cross Street	D. 1939	NR Listed 08-14-98
AR0303	100 Court Square	C. 1915	Contributing
AR0304	106 Court Square	C. 1915	Contributing
AR0305	108-112 Court Square	C. 1918	Contributing
AR0306	114 Court Square	C. 1905	Contributing
AR0307	120 Court Square	C. 1957	Contributing
AR0308	130 Court Square	C. 1928	Contributing
AR0309	136 Court Square	C. 1929	Non-Contributing
AR0310	138 Court Square	D. 1922	Contributing
AR0311	140-142 Court Square	C. 1905	Non-Contributing
AR0312	200 Court Square	C. 1910	Contributing
AR0313	202 Court Square	C. 1910	Contributing
AR0314	204 Court Square	C. 1925	Contributing
AR0315	206 Court Square	C. 1925	Contributing
AR0316	210 Court Square	C. 1926	Contributing
AR0317	212 Court Square	C. 1917	Contributing
AR0318	214 Court Square	C. 1921	Contributing
AR0319	216 Court Square	C. 1921	Non-Contributing
AR0320	220 Court Square	C. 1949	Non-Contributing
AR0321	224-226 Court Square	C. 1929	Non-Contributing
AR0322	304 Court Square	C. 1931	Contributing
AR0323	308 Court Square	D. 2000	Non-Contributing
AR0324	312 Court Square	C. 1928	Non-Contributing
AR0325	320 Court Square	C. 1922	Contributing
AR0326	326 Court Square	C. 1950	Contributing
AR0327	400-408 Court Square	C. 1938	Contributing
AR0328	410-416 Court Square	D. 1938	Contributing
AR0329	414 Court Square	C. 1927	Contributing
AR0330	416 Court Square	C. 1925	Non-Contributing
AR0331	424 Court Square	C. 1925	Contributing
AR0332	426 Court Square	C. 1929	Contributing
AR0333	428 Court Square	C. 1929	Contributing

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PROPERTY LIST  
DEWITT COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

<u>AR Resource #</u>	<u>Property Address</u>	<u>Construction Date</u>	<u>Contributing/Non Contributing</u>
AR0334	432 Court Square	C. 1918	Contributing
AR0335	112 N. Main Street	C. 1949	Contributing
AR0336	122 S. Main Street	C. 1931	Contributing
AR0337	122B S. Main Street	C. 1926	Contributing
AR0338	123 S. Main Street	C. 1930	Contributing
AR0339	201-201-205 S. Main Street	C. 1948	Non-Contributing
AR0340	209 S. Main Street	C. 1950	Contributing
AR0341	204 S. Main Street	C. 1960	Non-Contributing
AR0342	121 E. Cross Street	C. 1930	Contributing
AR0343	123 W. Cross Street	C. 1930	Contributing
AR0344	205 W. Cross Street	C. 1927	Non-Contributing
AR0345	211 W. Cross Street	C. 1913	Contributing
AR0346	110 W. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	C. 1948	Contributing
AR0347	113-117 W. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	C. 1956	Non-Contributing
AR0348	205 W. 1 <sup>st</sup> Street	C. 1935	Non-Contributing
AR0349	106 S. Adams Street	C. 1928	Non-Contributing
AR0350	113 S. Adams Street	C. 1932	Non-Contributing
AR0351	100 Blk. S. Adams Street	C. 2000	Non-Contributing
AR0352	123 S. Adams Street	C. 1949	Contributing
AR0353	201 S. Adams Street	C. 1958	Contributing
AR0354	213 S. Adams Street	D. 1950	Contributing

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## SUMMARY

The DeWitt Commercial Historic District contains 54 buildings centered on a courthouse square. The district is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** and is eligible for nomination under **Criteria A and C**. The buildings in the DeWitt Commercial Historic District reflect the city's establishment as a center of Arkansas County government and commerce and exemplify vernacular commercial building design during the district's period of significance from c.1904-1960.

## ELABORATION

DeWitt, Arkansas, is one of the two county seats (Stuttgart being the other) for Arkansas County. DeWitt lies near the center of Arkansas County, which is located south and east of the center of Arkansas and is the state's oldest county. At least two-thirds of the county's borders are comprised of waterways, the Arkansas River, St. Francis River and the cutoff that connect the two rivers. In addition Arkansas County is covered with swamps, small lakes, numerous bayous and creeks. Ground water can be found in most locations just fifteen feet below the surface, but no stones are found throughout the county, even at a depth of a hundred feet, except for a small deposit a few hundred yards long, sixteen miles west of DeWitt.

The land of Arkansas County is relatively flat with good drainage, alternating between forest and prairie. The old growth forest existed in islands or fingers extending into the prairie lands and included an amazing variety of trees: nine species of oak, three species of hickory, two species of gum, elm, walnut, mulberry, hackberry, wild cherry, pecan, poplar, dogwood, willow, ash, cypress, sycamore, hawthorn, sassafras, persimmon, redbud, and plum. In marked contrast, the treeless prairie lands contained only grasses and shrubs. Several ancient prairies exist in Arkansas County and play a unique role in its development. The Grand Prairie is the largest of the prairies, extending northwest through the county with a width of two to ten miles with branches separated by stands of thick forest. Other prairies in Arkansas County include the Sassafras, the Lagrue, the White River and the Little Prairie. Of the sixteen creeks and bayous, that drain these prairies and nourish the surrounding dense forests, only three originate outside of the county.

Native Americans had settled and built towns in this diverse land long before the first European explorers arrived. The expedition of Hernando De Soto crossed the Mississippi River into Arkansas in the summer of 1541. Exploring Arkansas, De Soto first turned north then south passing through the region between the junction of the Arkansas and White rivers before he died in Arkansas on May 21, 1542. As a result of the De Soto expedition, Spain was able to claim a vast section of land in North America. However, the Spanish did not return to or attempt to settle the region. After one hundred and thirty-two years, the French began to venture into the area. In 1673, French explorers, Marquette and Joliet, traveled down the Mississippi River to the mouth of the Arkansas River where they discovered a village, but fearing capture by the Spanish, they returned to French Territory without reaching the mouth of the Mississippi River.

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Nine years later another Frenchman, Sieur De la Salle, would descend the Mississippi River. At the junction of the Arkansas River, he found a village named Kappa and at that site on March 14, 1682, he raised a cross bearing the arms of France. Continuing on down the Mississippi he reached the mouth of the river on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 1682 and claimed for France the vast tract of land that the Spanish had first claimed. He named the territory that stretched from the Alleghenies to the Rocky Mountains and from the Gulf coast to the furthest springs of the Missouri River, Louisiana in honor of Louis XIV, King of France. According to John Gilmary Shea in his *History of Catholic Missions*, fellow French explorer Henry de Tonti and faithful lieutenant was granted "a considerable tract on the Arkansas River" by La Salle.

In 1686, De Tonti, then governor of Fort St. Louis, made his second excursion down the Mississippi River. Ten men in his party asked if they could establish a settlement on his land holdings on the Arkansas River. They chose a site at the first bluff on the north side of the river above its junction with the White River. French historian, Joutel, stated that "the nation we were then with was called Accancea." De Tonti in his memoirs refers to the region as "Arkansia." In July 1686, the men of Henry de Tonti's party began building a house and a fort they named Arkansas Post.

De Tonti returned to Fort St. Louis and on November 26 of that year he gave Father Dablon, superior of the Canadian mission eight acres east of his fort for the purpose of building a Jesuit chapel and mission house. The Jesuit mission began in November 1690, the oldest of all projects by the Jesuit in what would become the United States.

Arkansas Post remained the lone settlement west of the Mississippi River until 1719. That year Scotchman John Law, working in France as the comptroller-general of the "Company of Mississippi" sent two ships of slaves and German settlers to establish his land holdings along the Arkansas River southwest of Arkansas Post. John Law vanished in 1722 and so did his settlement a few years later. The French government in 1721 organized the huge Louisiana territory into nine districts, Arkansas was number eight. Arkansas Post was chosen in 1722 as the civil and military command post and the site of records for the District of Arkansas which included all the territory watered by the Arkansas River from its source to its mouth.

On December 20, 1803, France sold its vast holdings in North America to the United States in an agreement known as the Louisiana Purchase. The legislature of the newly designated Territory of Louisiana established the District of Arkansas on June 27, 1806. Again, Arkansas Post became the seat of government and military issues. Soon after the Louisiana Purchase, new settlers began to move into the remote region and by 1810 the population of Arkansas Post had grown to 874.

Louisiana became a state on April 8, 1812. The remaining land in the original Louisiana Purchase became the Missouri Territory by act of Congress of June 4, 1812. The Missouri Territorial Legislature established

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Arkansas County on December 13, 1813, to include land that covers most of the current counties of the State of Arkansas. To fulfill land grants promised to veterans of the War of 1812, Congress set aside six million acres of the Missouri Territory, two million between the Arkansas and the White rivers. Four hundred and seventy warranties were authorized and documented at Arkansas Post, the Territorial Capital. In 1814 an additional judge was appointed to preside over the increased number of court hearings at Arkansas Post.

War of 1812 Veterans and early settlers arrived in Arkansas from states to the east like Tennessee, Mississippi, and Kentucky. For the most part they saw the timber-scarce prairie as unacceptable for homesteading. Most moved on to more fertile land in the territory. Those who did settle in Arkansas County did so along the rivers and bayous. Political unrest in Germany beginning in the 1820s resulted in a new wave of German immigrants coming to America. The majority settled in Nebraska but a few came to homestead in Arkansas.

The first newspaper west of the Mississippi River was the *Arkansas Gazette*, printed at Arkansas Post on November 20, 1819, by William Woodruff, a New York native. He continued to publish his newspaper at Arkansas Post, the capital of Arkansas Territory until 1821 when the capital and the newspaper were moved to Little Rock. By 1830 the importance and size of Arkansas Post had diminished. Although the population of the county had increased to 1,426, it had dropped to 114 at Arkansas Post. A few of the houses and structures that the French had built in the 1700s were still standing but in poor condition. In the book *Early Days in Arkansas*, the author noted that Arkansas Post “presented a very forlorn and desolate appearance.”

On June 15, 1836, Arkansas became the twenty-fifth state. The land that had once been the Arkansas District in the Louisiana Purchase, then Arkansas Territory of the United States, became Arkansas County in the new state of Arkansas, its first and largest county. Once again, Arkansas Post became a seat of government. This time for a county so large it engulfed several tracts that would later be taken to form over half of Arkansas’s seventy-five counties.

But by 1845, Arkansas Post had only twelve families, “with a total less than a hundred souls.” Arkansas County was much smaller too, due to land lost to other counties. It still had very few good roads. Citizens found it hard to do county business because of Arkansas Post’s location in the very southeast corner of the county. A commission was elected in January 1853 to locate a site for a new county seat. The three-man commission chose a tract near the center of the county, half of which belonged to the state and the other half to the federal government. Two hundred and fifty dollars was allotted for purchase of the land and to defray the commissioners’ expenses.

The new county seat was platted early in 1854. At a meeting to name the town, two members of the site-committee and Adam McCool, the surveyor who had laid out the city, each wrote their suggestion on a piece

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of paper and placed in a hat. McCool's paper was pulled from the hat. He was a great admirer of General DeWitt Clinton of New York. The name Clinton, was already taken by another Arkansas town, and so by default the new Arkansas County seat was named DeWitt.

The site for DeWitt was chosen strictly for its central location in the county, not because it was located on any navigable waterway, railroad, or near any trail, trace or roadway, ancient or newly established, which so often determined a town's ordination and location. DeWitt was laid around its only feature a center public square reserved for a permanent courthouse. Like the spokes of a square wheel, the two main roads the east/west Cross Street and the north/south Main Street radiate out from Court Square Street which surrounds the courthouse square. A temporary courthouse was built in the block south of the public square. This first courthouse actually consisted of three log buildings, one for a courtroom, the second for the clerk and sheriff's office, and the third for a jury room. There were no more than five families living within five miles of DeWitt when it was established. The closest DeWitt had to founding fathers were the commissioners who had been elected to choose the town site. DeWitt was a town without any background of settlement before its founding.

On September 1, 1855, DeWitt received its own unique connection not only to the early history of Arkansas but to some of the earliest history of America when 125 years of records from Arkansas Post were moved to the log courthouse in DeWitt. The documents that reflected the battles and occupation of Arkansas County by the Spanish, French, and the English were later moved to a new brick courthouse in DeWitt in 1862. The square brick structure, built in the midst of the Civil War, sat in the center of the public square and housed the historical documents of Arkansas Post until 1893 when the third courthouse was constructed on the same site. These records are now housed in a building constructed for their storage on the courthouse grounds.

Ten miles west of DeWitt, on June 17, 1862, one of the famous shots of the Civil War was fired at the port town of St. Charles in a Union naval assault on the White River. A single shot passed through a momentarily opened hatch of a Union ironclad ship, the *USS Mound City*, and ruptured the steam drum disabling the ship and killing many of the men inside. Union forces eventually captured Arkansas Post on January 9, 1863. Most of the wooden buildings in DeWitt were burned by advancing Union forces. They tried to burn the courthouse just before leaving town, but the flames were discovered by Martin B. Billingsley, a fourteen-year-old boy who put out the blaze before it could do any harm. The young Billingsley is credited with saving the collection of Arkansas's oldest records.

After the Civil War, settlements sprang up across Arkansas County indirectly aided by a land grant program that awarded forty acres of land to war veterans. Charles Payer, a German immigrant from Illinois, saw great possibilities in the prairie land of Arkansas County. He brought awarded tracks from veterans dismayed with the possibility of homesteading what looked like poor land. He advertised "fine land" for sale and a large part

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the German community near Highland, Illinois, invested in Payer's prairie land dream. Other Germans who had grown weary of Nebraska winters took advantage of his offer. In the 1880s Swiss immigrants began arriving in Arkansas County. Accustomed to raising crops on small over-farmed plots they found the prairie soil challenging but well suited for their farming methods. Settlements with names like Stuttgart, Slovak, Ulm, Waldheim, and Humnoke began to dot the county.

The population of Arkansas County more than doubled in the ten years between 1850 and 1860 to 8,844. But the population of DeWitt remained less than 160 through its first twenty-five years of existence. DeWitt's only means of shipping or receiving goods was over a crude wagon trail from the White River port of Crockett's Bluff, twelve miles to the east over two creeks and two bayous. DeWitt was incorporated on December 7, 1875, and throughout the early 1880s it had only one export business, a steam-powered saw, gin and grist mill owned by William H. Halley. The economic underpinning of DeWitt's growth in the early years was in providing services to the citizens of Arkansas County who had business at the courthouse.

The April 13, 1883, issue of the "*Arkansas Gleaner*," featured an article by owner and editor, Col. Robert H. Crockett, grandson of Davy Crockett, and namesake of Crockett's Bluff, describing his newly adopted town of DeWitt. He stated that it had "about 500 souls and an equal number of dogs," along with nine lawyers, two doctors, two hotels, a real estate agent, one newspaper (the *Arkansas Gleaner*), one each of a drug store, a shoe shop, a jewelry store, a millinery, a barber shop and a blacksmith and wagon shop. "The town boasts," the article continued, "in the record office are many documents of historical interest, being the oldest deeds and other papers in the state." In a county where many of the surrounding towns and village have strong European immigrant ties, DeWitt appears more diverse. Crockett writes "The citizens of all professions and following, creeds and denominations, live together as one family. There are no quarrels, bickerings, or heartburnings . . . All is peace, quiet, and good fellowship."

DeWitt's sense of communal harmony was demonstrated in 1891 when a spur line off of the St. Louis and Southwest Railroad was under construction from Stuttgart in the northwest corner of Arkansas County south to Gillett in the southeast corner. The people of DeWitt, in short order, raised \$10,000.00 to pay for a three-mile bend in the planned route so the rail line would pass through their town. When the railroad line was built in 1891, DeWitt, for the first time, had the means to transport the vast resources that surrounded it. The *DeWitt Era-Enterprise* in a special Sesquicentennial Edition in 2003 stated that "A considerable boom followed" the arrival of the railroad. A new brick courthouse was completed in 1893. The town's first brick store was constructed on the west side of the square by Mr. Quertermous the first postmaster of DeWitt.

With the railroad came new facilities for shipping hay and livestock. Prairie-grown hay was prized by many ranchers and grew into a large summer industry that produced, at one time, a quarter of a million tons in Arkansas County. "There are more hogs and cattle raised in the DeWitt trade territory than in any five

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counties of the state,” wrote the *DeWitt Era-Enterprise*. Between the prairie lands lay tracts of some of the greatest hardwood timber sections in the state. H.A. Soakland built a large saw mill at DeWitt in the early 1880s. The timber industry grew steadily into and through the 1930s, helping to sustain DeWitt through the years of the Great Depression.

As the timberlands were cleared, farmers began planting a wide variety of crops, but mostly cotton, the cash crop of the time. Two gins were built in DeWitt, ginning 3,000 bales per season. The woodlands and river bottoms could produce as much as 1,800 pounds of cotton per acre. Prairie land possessed as good soil, but it lacked enough lime and organic matter to grow cotton. Increased livestock grazing and hay harvesting on the prairie was further depleting the soil. Looking for a solution to this problem a Nebraska transplant, William H. Fuller, planted his first crop of rice in the spring of 1897. The harvest was less than a triumph, but Mr. Fuller remained committed. He traveled to Louisiana to study their rice cultivation process. In 1907, he produced 5,225 bushels of rice on seventy acres. His success changed the entire nature of the Arkansas Grand Prairie. Within a generation, the prairie lands around DeWitt became known as “the rice capital of the world.” During the hard times of the early 1930s, DeWitt had two large rice mills and handled one-third of Arkansas’s total rice crop.

The success of rice farming in Arkansas County led to the timely decline in the amount of cotton planted. The move away from a cotton dominant economy meant that for the most part the citizens of Arkansas County were spared the stranglehold that “King Cotton” had on the rest of the Mississippi Delta. Elsewhere in the delta landowner controlled vast tracts of rich farmland and required their sharecroppers and tenant farmers to plant cotton. Cotton grew well in eastern Arkansas but for the poor farmer, a good year meant too much cotton produced and a price drop. A bad year meant floods, drought, disease, insects causing crop loss and for the farmer it often meant the loss of his land and home to a bank or the landlord.

As growing poverty and unrest pulled down the rest of the eastern farming region of Arkansas in the early 1900s, growth in DeWitt continued at an easy, steady pace. In 1903 DeWitt had a population just over six hundred, as reported by W. H. HalliBurton in his *History of Arkansas County, Arkansas*. He attributed the difference in his count with that of the census of 1900 to the fact that only one third of the town at that time was incorporated and at least as many people lived in the unincorporated sections of town as in the counted incorporated section. Twenty years after Bob Crocketts’ description of DeWitt, Mr. HalliBurton noted that the town had fewer lawyers, only five, but two more doctors, four in total. The town still had two hotels but had grown from one to two drug stores, two blacksmith shops and two livery and sales stables. The number of general mercantile businesses increased from four to seven while adding many new types of businesses including a furniture store, a wood shop, a photo gallery, a hardware store, and a grain and feed store. DeWitt’s industries still included a saw mill and a cotton gin but by 1903, it also included a corn mill and a brick and tile factory.

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DeWitt Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

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Arkansas County, Arkansas  
County and State

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The printed word was important to the people of DeWitt from its beginning. Just three years after the town was laid out the *Sentinel* began publishing DeWitt's first newspaper in 1858. Since then, the citizens of DeWitt have been informed by no less than seventeen different newspapers. Including the *Sentinel*, eleven newspapers, the *DeWitt Chronicle*, *Democrat*, *Enterprise*, *DeWitt Elector*, *Indicator*, *DeWitt Sentinel*, *Arkansas County Democrat*, *Arkansas County Gazette*, *Sentry*, and the *Arkansas Reporter* all began and failed in DeWitt before 1882. That was a banner year for newsprint, three new papers started up in 1882. *The Arkansas Post* suspended publication after a few issues. Bob Crockett's newspaper *The Arkansas Gleaner*, closed because of Crockett's health problems. Then there was the *DeWitt New Era* founded by Charles H. Spiller in 1882 and appropriately named because it broke from the old era of short-lived newspapers. In 1929, the *DeWitt New Era* absorbed the *DeWitt Enterprise* founded in 1916. Under the name *DeWitt Era-Enterprise* the paper continues, claiming to have never missed an issue in one hundred and twenty-seven years.

The town's first bank was the Bank of DeWitt located in a two-story wooden structure on the square. The wooden building was moved down the block to make way for the construction of the DeWitt Bank and Trust two-story brick building at 114 Court Square. The old wooden building was then moved again to South Main Street where it served as grocery and a feed store until was razed in the 1940s. The bank building at 114 Court Square faces south. The building at 130 Court Square faces east and on the unique corner lot in between the two buildings is the DeWitt City Hall. The City Hall building does not have street access to Court Square but sits back, far enough, to allow the Court Square sidewalks to cross and continue as a walkway between the buildings. These setback corner lots are found in all four corners of DeWitt's Court Square but at present only three are occupied with a building.

The First National Bank of DeWitt opened at 200 Court Square in 1912 and remodeled the building twice in 1923 and in 1940. First National survived the Depression to become the oldest bank in Arkansas County. When banks in neighboring town like the Bank of St. Charles failed on June 20, 1922, First National Bank took them over. According the *DeWitt Era-Enterprise*, DeWitt's banks had more money in them than in the banks of any other city of its size in the state.

During 1916, in the midst of World War I, a new business, "The New York Bargain Store" at the corner of Court Square and South Main Street, advertised the "Greatest Clearing Sale in the history of Arkansas County." Later at that same location, 226 Court Square, the food chain, Kroger opened a grocery store in 1935, where they remained until 1968. On the north side of the square at 432 Court Square, the Latimer Pharmacy opened for business in 1918 and remained until 1945. The building was taken over by McGahhey Hardware in 1946 and continues to serve the people of DeWitt.

DeWitt Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

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In the rest of the Mississippi Delta, the years of the 1920s and 1930s were filled with uncertainty, unemployment, and business failures, but in DeWitt this period marked an upswing in new construction of business buildings, especially around the square. During this time many new residences were also constructed along with new buildings for the Baptist and Methodist churches as well as three new churches. On August 19, 1920, electric light lit up downtown DeWitt.

The diversity of resources in the developing Arkansas County kept the wheels of progress and growth rolling in DeWitt. Its population increased roughly 80% from 1910 to 1920 and again from 1920 to 1930. By the 1930s in addition to its two rice mills and two saw mills, DeWitt had a stave mill, three hickory mills and two cotton gins. In the 1930s visitors to DeWitt could entertain themselves at DeWitt's New Theater or at the Archery Gallery on the south side of the square, or maybe attend a concert by DeWitt's own 10-piece orchestra, the Sophisticated Swingsters.

In 1931 a new courthouse was built and the records from the first settlement west of the Mississippi River were again moved to better facility. During the late 1930s and early 40s DeWitt built a new public school and a new post office at 221 W. Cross in 1939. Despite influx of new public buildings, the population of DeWitt leveled off in the 1930s. From 1930 to 1950 the population increased less than 340 people.

A new fire station at 213 South Adams Street was dedicated on August 24, 1950. But the big event of the 50s in DeWitt was the opening of Young's Department Store at 326 Court Square, in 1954. The store had two floors of everything from toys to clothes and furniture to appliances and DeWitt's first mechanical pony. The post war economy afforded the US workers more leisure time and DeWitt discovered that it was surrounded by another natural resource. The bayous, river-bottoms, and prairies of Arkansas County offered an abundance of varied wild game. Eighty pound catfish and over hundred pound gar were often pulled out of the rivers. From prehistoric time water fowls have migrated along the lower White River basin. The introduction of a new water reservoir for rice cultivation and large harvest drying in the fields drew more birds every year. Arkansas County became known as the duck hunting capital, attracting hunters and sportsmen from across the nation.

The population of DeWitt over the next forty years to 1990 increased by only 710. Holding steady at somewhere ten times the population of the town in 1890 (the first growth period), the DeWitt Commercial Historic District maintains a strong sense of community and unique history, by continuing a strong business presence in the historic buildings that all face inward to the heart of DeWitt, the Court Square.

DeWitt Commercial Historic District  
Name of Property

Arkansas County, Arkansas  
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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Dewitt 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 DeWitt as a county seat and center of commerce. It is also being nominated under **Criterion C** for its collection of early to mid-twentieth century vernacular commercial buildings. All but three of the 54 buildings in the district were constructed during the period of significance from 1900 to 1960.

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## Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the DeWitt Commercial Historic District begins at a point at the center line of N. Main Street and the northeast corner of the Veteran's Memorial Building located at 112 N. Main Street. The boundary runs due east from this point to the rear property line of 112 N. Main Street at which point it turns to run south to the rear property line of the building at 416 Court Square. At this point the boundary turns and runs east along the northern property line of the building at 414 Court Square to its rear property line where it continues to run east to its intersection with N. Washington Street. At this juncture, the boundary turns and runs due south along the center line of N. Washington Street to the southeast corner of the rear property line of the building located at 320 Court Square. The boundary then runs due west along the southern property line of the building at 320 Court Square to its intersection with Court Square. At this point the boundary turns and runs south along the eastern property line of the building at 312 Court Square, crosses E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street and continues to run due south along the rear property lines of the buildings at 201-205 S. Main and 209 S. Main Street to the southeast corner of the property line of 209 S. Main. The boundary then turns and runs west along the southern property line of 209 S. Main Street. At this point the boundary turns to run due west to the northeast corner of the property line of the building at 213 S. Adams where it turns and runs south along the rear property line, then turns to run west along the southern property line of this building to its intersection with S. Adams Street. At S. Adams Street, the boundary runs north along the center line of the street to its intersection with W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street where it turns and runs west along the southern property line of the building at 205 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street. At the western edge of the property line of 205 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street the boundary turns and runs north along the rear property lines of buildings at 205 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 106 S. Adams Street to its intersection with the alley south of the 200 block of West Cross Street. The boundary then runs west along this alley to its intersection with S. Jefferson Street, or the southwest corner of the U.S. Post Office property at 221 W. Cross Street. The boundary then turns and runs north along the Post Office property to its intersection with W. Cross Street. At W. Cross Street, the boundary turns and runs due east along the center line of the street to its intersection with S. Adams Street. At W. Cross and S. Adams Streets, the boundary turns and runs due north along the center line of S. Adams Street to its intersection with the rear property line of DeWitt City Hall property at 120 Court Square. At this northwest corner of the City Hall property, the boundary turns and runs due east along the rear property lines of buildings on the north side of the 100 block of Court Square to its intersection with the point of origin at the northwest corner of the property at 112 N. Main Street.

The boundary of the DeWitt Commercial Historic District is indicated on the attached sketch map.

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### Boundary Justification

The boundary of the DeWitt Commercial Historic District encompasses the intact, historic, and contiguous resources associated with the development of the city of DeWitt. The district is contained in an area within the platted area of "City of DeWitt". Property on the north side of W. Cross Street is not included because it has no remaining historic resources. Likewise, the west side of the 200 block of S. Adams Street contains no historic resources and is not included in the boundaries of the district. The northern and eastern boundaries of the district are defined by the historic commercial area of DeWitt and the beginning of surrounding residential areas.