



Freedom Riders National Monument Cultural Landscape Report

May 2023



Interior Region 2:
South Atlantic – Gulf



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Freedom Riders National Monument
Cultural Landscape Report

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National Park Service

Interior Region 2: South Atlantic – Gulf



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Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science
Interior Region 2: South Atlantic – Gulf
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Atlanta, Georgia 30303

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Anniston, AL 36201

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Freedom Riders National Monument

Cultural Landscape Report

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Foreword

We are pleased to make available this cultural landscape report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the landscapes and historic structures of National Park Service units in Interior Region 2. A number of individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank the staff at Freedom Riders National Monument for their assistance throughout the process. We hope this study will be a useful tool for park management in continuing efforts to preserve the cultural landscape and for others interested in the significance of the park's many cultural resources.

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Introduction

Management Summary

The Freedom Riders National Monument, located in Anniston, Alabama, is composed of two sites. The first is the former Greyhound bus terminal where, on Sunday, May 14, 1961, a group of segregationists attacked a bus carrying African American and White Freedom Riders. The second is the site almost six miles to the west of central Anniston where the segregationist mob continued its attack on the fleeing bus, setting it on fire. Photographs of the burning bus—which appeared in hundreds of newspapers on Monday morning—became some of the most iconic images of the civil rights movement.

President Barack Obama created the Freedom Riders National Monument on January 12, 2017, through Proclamation 9566. The purpose of the monument is to “preserve and protect the historic objects associated with the former Greyhound bus depot in Anniston, Alabama, and the site of the bus burning outside Anniston in Calhoun County.”¹

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the monument from its offices in downtown Anniston. The Bus Depot includes the former Greyhound bus depot building, its urban lot, and the adjacent Mural Building. A mural of a 1961 vintage Greyhound bus and interpretive panels are displayed on the exterior of the north wall of the Mural Building. While the former bus depot building is open to the public only occasionally, the site, including the mural and panels, is open to public view every day. The interior of the Mural Building is closed. The Bus Burning Site is open to public view every day but has no formal parking or visitor facilities.

The 1978 National Parks and Recreation Act requires the NPS to complete a general management plan (GMP) for each unit of the National Park System. GMPs set long-term goals for the park and provide broad direction for resource preservation and visitor use. Planning for a GMP, which is typically park-wide in scale, takes an interdisciplinary approach with robust civic engagement. The Freedom Riders National Monument GMP has been funded for completion in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

The Freedom Riders National Monument Foundation Document was completed in October 2018. A foundation document provides a vision planning and management decisions affecting an NPS-managed park. It describes the park’s purpose, significance, fundamental resources and values, and interpretive themes, and identifies planning issues, planning products to be developed, and the associated studies and data required for park planning.

The foundation document identifies the park’s fundamental physical resources, which include:

- **The Greyhound Bus [Depot] and its Surroundings.** The Anniston Greyhound bus [depot], its adjoining alley, and the surrounding neighborhood largely retain historic integrity representing the segregated history of Anniston and the site of the Ku Klux Klan-led mob attack on the Freedom Riders on Mother’s Day, May 14, 1961. The building stands as a representation of the physical infrastructure of segregation in the Deep South; it contains historic architectural features that include the vestiges of segregated bathrooms, entrances, and waiting areas. The streetscape in which it resides looks much the way it did in 1961,

¹ President Barack Obama. “Establishment of the Freedom Riders National Monument,” Proclamation

9566, *Federal Register*, Vol. 82, No. 11 (January 18, 2017, 6259).

further enhancing the historic character of the building.²

- **The Greyhound Bus Burning Site.** Almost six miles outside of Anniston, Alabama, along the shoulder of the Old Birmingham Highway in Calhoun County, is the site of the Greyhound bus burning, a pivotal moment of the Freedom Rides. This event, during which a violent mob set fire to a bus carrying the Freedom Riders, epitomized the violent extremes by which White supremacists enforced racial inequality, and yet the episode featured small acts of compassion on the part of local residents who witnessed the brutality. The bus burning site has the potential to serve as a place to commemorate the sacrifice of the Freedom Riders and as a place to contemplate the ongoing struggle for equality and the need for racial reconciliation and healing. The site includes intact portions of the roadway and the shoulder where the bus was forced to pull over and subsequently set afire. Although the setting of the bus burning site has been considerably altered by the construction of Highway 202, a few houses that were present during the event are still extant.³

Planning for the renovation of the Bus Depot building will be funded in 2023 and begin shortly thereafter. Planning for visitor parking and access at the Bus Burning Site is underway and is funded to the end of Phase II. Phase III, which will provide construction documents, has not yet been funded.⁴

Other specific planning and data needs identified in the foundation document will be discussed in more detail in the treatment chapter of this report. They include a long-range interpretive plan and a general management plan.⁵ At the time this report was written, work on the long-range interpretive plan and the general management plan was anticipated to begin in fiscal year 2023.⁶

Another project recommended in the foundation document is the completion of this cultural landscape report (CLR). CLRs serve as principal treatment tools for the long-term management of cultural landscapes in the NPS system. They establish preservation goals for the landscape based on historical research, inventory and documentation of existing conditions, and evaluation of the historical significance of landscape characteristics and features according to National Register of Historic Places (National Register) criteria. The documentation included in this CLR forms the basis for recommendations for management, maintenance, treatment, use, and interpretation of the landscape consistent with the historical significance of the site.

Following this chapter, the Site History chapter describes the history of the region and locality of the park, then provides more specific information about the evolution of the cultural landscapes of the national monument's two sites. Existing Conditions describes the environmental, cultural, and political contexts of the park, then provides more specific information about the existing conditions of the two sites in 2021 and 2022. Analysis and Evaluation clarifies their potential National Register significance and determines their integrity through a comparison of historic and existing conditions. Treatment Recommendations presents guidance for the management and treatment of the park and the two sites based on issues identified by the National Park Service during the implementation of the CLR project.

Description of Study Boundary

Anniston is in northeast Alabama, about sixty-five miles east of Birmingham, ninety miles west of Atlanta, and four miles north of Interstate Highway 20 (Figure 1-1). The Bus Depot comprises the former Greyhound depot building

² National Park Service, *Foundation Document, Freedom Riders National Monument, Alabama*, October 2018, 7.

³ National Park Service, *Foundation Document, Freedom Riders National Monument, Alabama*, October 2018, 7.

⁴ Freedom Riders National Monument staff, CLR treatment meeting, Anniston, April 20, 2022.

⁵ National Park Service, *Foundation Document, Freedom Riders National Monument* (Atlanta GA: National Park Service, 2018), 2, 20-22.

⁶ Kris Butcher, email, July 8, 2022.

at 1031 Gurnee Avenue, its 0.17-acre urban lot, and the adjacent 0.06-acre Mural Building at 1029 Gurnee Avenue, in downtown Anniston (Figure 1-2). The Bus Burning Site comprises three parcels totaling 5.86 acres. It includes and surrounds the site where the Greyhound bus was burned in front of Forsyth & Son Grocery.⁷ The parcels are clustered around the intersection of the Old Birmingham Highway with State Route 202, Anniston's western bypass. In 2008, much of the acreage of the lots that contained Forsyth & Son Grocery and adjacent residences to the east and west was taken for the construction of the bypass; only two greatly reduced portions of those lots remain. On the far west end of the Bus Burning Site is Parcel 44, the 0.17-acre remnant of the lot on which the store and adjacent owner's residence stood. Across the Old Birmingham Highway to the east is Parcel 54, comprising 1.77 acres that were part of neighboring properties. Across the Old Birmingham Highway to the south is Parcel 38, a 3.92-acre lot bisected by the right-of-way of Barkwood Drive. A portion of this lot is the former site of a well engine repair shop that appears in historic photographs of the bus burning event.

Historical Summary

On May 4, 1961, a small interracial group of people boarded a Greyhound bus in Washington, D.C., headed for New Orleans. Sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality, or CORE, they embarked on their journey as part of the Freedom Rides campaign, designed to test



FIGURE 1-1. Map showing Freedom Riders National Monument between Birmingham and Atlanta. National Park Service.

compliance with a recent Supreme Court ruling against racial segregation in public transportation. The Freedom Riders on the Greyhound bus were four Black and three White passengers who traveled together with plans to integrate terminal accommodations at each stop. These seven people were the first of the hundreds of volunteers who participated in the Freedom Rides by the end of that summer.

The Freedom Riders experienced little violent resistance along the way until they arrived at Anniston's Greyhound terminal on Mother's Day, May 14. There, they were met by a segregationist mob of around 50 men, who attacked the Greyhound bus with iron bars and clubs and slashed its tires. The attack continued for about 20 minutes before the police cleared the crowd enough to allow the bus to leave the terminal. The bus limped along for almost six miles toward Birmingham before its tires gave out and the driver had to pull over at a country store on State Route 202 called Forsyth & Son Grocery. There, the segregationists, who had followed the bus into the countryside, continued their assault, during which someone tossed a firebomb into a broken bus window. The bus quickly caught on fire, and after a detective on the bus brandished his revolver, its riders, whom the mob had blocked from leaving the bus, were finally able to escape. Several victims were taken to Anniston Memorial Hospital, where many were refused treatment, and then transported to a Birmingham safe house.

The news coverage of the events, particularly the dramatic photographs taken by freelance photographer Joseph "Joe" Postiglione for the *Anniston Star*, brought international attention to the cause of the Freedom Rides and to the state of race relations in the Deep South. After the Anniston events, volunteers from all over the country poured into Alabama to carry on the Freedom Rides through the summer; they met with additional violent resistance in both Alabama and Mississippi. The violent reactions to the Freedom Rides in the Deep South earned the attention of President John F. Kennedy and his brother, U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. On May 29, 1961, the attorney general

⁷ The Mural Building is not discussed in detail in this CLR because it was not included in the project scope of work. Also note the discrepancy between the size

of the Bus Burning Site as described in Proclamation No. 9566 (5.79 acres) and the actual size of the site (5.86 acres).

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petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) that by November 1, it would comply with the 1955 *Sarah Keys v. Carolina Coach Company* ruling that prohibited segregation in interstate travel. Desegregation of

intrastate bus travel followed within a few years, but without the level of conflict experienced during the Freedom Rides. In Anniston, attempts toward racial reconciliation were met with resistance by the Ku Klux Klan. Local

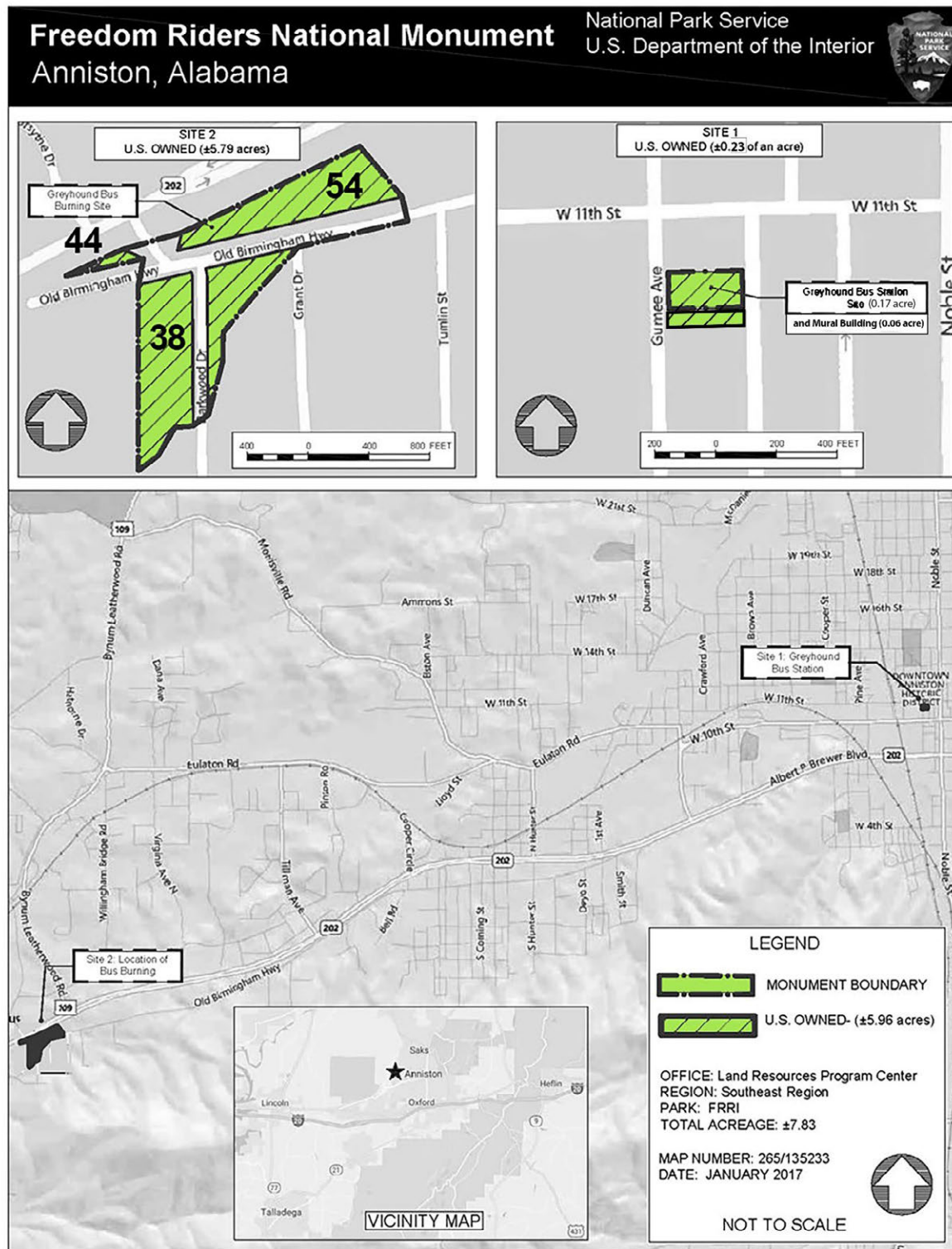


FIGURE 1-2. Map of Freedom Riders National Monument, annotated to label the three parcels that comprise the Bus Burning Site. National Park Service.

incidents of racial violence did not ease until the 1970s.

In 1967, Greyhound moved its depot from Gurnee Avenue to a new building on West Eighth Street. In 1969, Harrell & Sons Flooring moved into the former bus depot and stayed until 1978. Subsequent tenants of the building included Pete's Safety Cab Company and Anniston Business Machines. In 1995, Ben and Vickie Howell purchased the building and operated a sign shop there until the City of Anniston purchased the building from them in 2016. The city donated the property to the Conservation Fund, which immediately conveyed it to the National Park Service to create Freedom Riders National Monument on January 12, 2017.

The Bus Burning Site remained mostly unchanged until the 1970s, when the State of Alabama purchased the eight lots for the construction of Anniston's western bypass. Acreage that was not used for the bypass was reassembled into the three parcels (38, 44, and 54) that comprise the Bus Burning Site and conveyed to Calhoun County in 2009. Calhoun County donated the three parcels to the Conservation Fund, which immediately conveyed it to the National Park Service to create Freedom Riders National Monument on January 12, 2017.

When the park was proclaimed Freedom Riders National Monument in 2017, both the Bus Depot and the Bus Burning Site were automatically administratively listed in the National Register as components of the park. A National Register nomination, however, is still needed.⁸

The Bus Depot is also listed in the National Register as a contributing feature of the Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase, #10000270, 2010). The district is significant in the areas of Community Planning and Development, Commerce, Ethnic Heritage: Black, and Architecture in the period

of 1883–1965. The Bus Depot is on a block of downtown Anniston that has changed very little in appearance since 1961, which helps support its integrity of setting. The Bus Burning Site was not included within the boundaries of this district.⁹

Scope of Work and Methodology

Scope of Work

The CLR for the Freedom Riders National Monument was commissioned to:

- Describe the historical development of the two landscapes that make up the national monument setting;
- Document their existing site conditions;
- Analyze the landscapes' potential National Register significance to confirm the period of significance;
- Assess the landscapes' integrity by comparing their existing conditions to conditions during the period of significance;
- Identify the landscapes' character-defining features;
- Identify the preferred treatment alternative for these landscapes; and
- Provide detailed treatment recommendations and guidelines that balance preservation of site resources with contemporary needs of park operations.

The SOW also requested a prioritized list of 10 possible NPS Project Management Information System (PMIS) statements of landscape preservation or rehabilitation projects. These projects would be generated directly from the recommendations and guidelines developed in the treatment section of the CLR.¹⁰ The prioritized PMIS list is intended to provide a general outline for the work needed at the national monument to fully implement the recommended treatment. Park staff may further develop proposed projects, generate cost

⁸ Turkiya Lowe, email to William Hunter, October 27, 2022.

⁹ Pamela S. King and David B. Schneider, eds., "Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase)," National Register of Historic Places nomination, listed on April 1, 2010.

¹⁰ National Park Service, Statement of Work, Contract No. P16PC00099, Task Order No.

140P5121F0012, Freedom Riders National Monument, Anniston, Alabama – PMIS 265115/265113, Freedom Riders National Monument Cultural Landscape Report/Cultural Landscape Inventory, March 2021.

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estimates, and submit them for funding following National Park Service requirements.

Methodology

The CLR for the Freedom Riders National Monument has been prepared in accordance with guidance offered in the most recent versions of various federal standards documents, including:

- *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques;*
- *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes;*
- NPS Director's Order 10A: *Design and Construction Drawings;*
- NPS Director's Order 28: *Cultural Resources Management;*
- NPS-SER-82: *Biotic Cultural Resources: Management Considerations for Historic Districts in the National Park System, Southeast Region;*
- *Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard (ABAAS)*
- *Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design;*
- National Register Bulletin: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation;*
- National Register Bulletin: *How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes;*
- National Register Bulletin: *Guidelines for Documenting and Evaluating Rural Historic Landscapes;* and

The methodology used to prepare each component of this study is described in detail below.

Background Research and Data Collection

Prior to visiting the site in July 2021, CLR project team members collected documents and other data pertaining to the monument and its two landscapes. These included various secondary sources addressing the history of the site and region. In preparation for field investigations, the team created a base map from available GIS data provided by the National Park Service, the

City of Anniston, the State of Alabama, the Alabama Power Company, and Calhoun County.

Because this is a new park, there were only a few NPS documents available online. The NPS Technical Information Center (eTIC) provided the foundation document. The NPS Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA) portal online provided general ecological information, boundary data, and the historic structure reports for the Bus Depot building and the Mural Building.

Start-Up Meeting

On July 20, 2021, project team members met with NPS park and regional personnel at the Freedom Riders National Monument offices to initiate work on the CLR. The participants were:

South Atlantic – Gulf (Region 2) Office of the National Park Service (by phone):

- Susan Hitchcock, Historical Landscape Architect and Contracting Officer's Representative

Freedom Riders National Monument:

- Kristofer Butcher, Superintendent
- Jessica Epperson, Park Ranger and Education Specialist
- Max Farley, Community Volunteer Ambassador

Joseph K. Oppermann Architect, PA (by phone)

- Christopher Woollard, Project Manager

Laura L. Knott, Historical Landscape Architect, LLC

- Laura Knott, Historical Landscape Architect

City of Anniston

- Toby Bennington, Director of Economic Development and City Planning

Anniston Historic Preservation Commission

- John Valieant, Chairman

The meeting began with introductions and a review of the CLR process, its scope, and the project schedule. Park staff followed with a discussion of projects currently underway at the park; goals, concerns, issues to be addressed by the CLR; and available resources.

Park goals, concerns, and issues included:

- Visitor use and management, including impacts associated with increasing visitation related to the Anniston Civil Rights Trail, the Alabama Civil Rights Trail, and the U.S. Civil Rights Trail;
- Appropriate activities and uses that can be authorized in the area;
- Vegetation management, including invasive species and turf maintenance;
- Erosion control;
- Viewsheds and surrounding development;
- Impacts of storm events and stormwater management;
- Land ownership;
- Visitor safety and accessibility; and
- Resilience to natural hazards.

Afterward, the team toured the Bus Depot building.

Field Investigation

On July 20, 21, and 22, the project team conducted preliminary field investigations, documenting landscape resources associated with the site. Panamerican Consultants documented both sites, using GPS to collect shapefiles for project mapping. Team members photographed landscape features and made notes about materials, conditions, and other information to be used to annotate existing conditions maps.

Site History

Historical research was performed by the CLR team at the NPS IRMA website, NPS eTIC website, Calhoun County Probate Office, the *Anniston Star* and other newspapers and journals, and online collections and encyclopedias. The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute provided digital copies of historic photographs documenting the attacks on the Greyhound bus and the Freedom Riders in Anniston on May 14, 1961. The CLR team also consulted several books, including:

- Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2006)
- Grace Hooten Gates, *The Model City of the New South: Anniston, Alabama, 1872–1900*

(Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1978)

- Dennis Love, *My City Was Gone: One American Town's Toxic Secret, Its Angry Band of Locals, and a \$700 Million Day in Court* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007)
- Phil Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus: The Civil Rights Revolution in a Southern Town* (Montgomery: New South Books, 2003)
- Gary S. Sprayberry, 'Town Among the Trees': *Paternalism, Class, and Civil Rights in Anniston, Alabama, 1872 to Present*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 2003

While Arsenault provided the civil rights context for the Freedom Riders campaign, the other books provided information about different eras of Anniston's history, particularly the social history that led to the violence that occurred on May 14, 1961.

Online resources were particularly valuable regarding the evolution of the Old Birmingham Road and its surrounding site. The Alabama DOT provided copies of documents related to construction of Anniston's western bypass as it affected the Bus Burning Site.

Base Mapping

The CLR team created the base map using GIS shapefiles provided by the National Park Service and local, state, and other federal sources. They prepared the existing conditions and photopoint plans by adding to the base map GPS data gathered on the two sites of the national monument during fieldwork in 2021.

Historic Period Plan Preparation

The CLR team developed the period plans by comparing historic base maps with 2021 existing conditions information. They used historic aerial and ground-level photographs to refine the maps to reflect conditions at both sites on May 14, 1961.

Existing Conditions Documentation

The CLR team conducted a field survey to document existing conditions, primarily during the summer of 2021, with follow-up photographs taken in spring 2022. They based descriptions of existing conditions on base maps, notes from field investigations, field photography, and review of cultural and natural

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resource documents received from the National Park Service or acquired through research.

The team organized this documentation using the framework established in NPS guidelines and National Register bulletins. The narrative descriptions, accompanying photographs, and existing conditions plans describe the following cultural landscape characteristics:

- natural systems and features and responses to natural resources
- topography and topographic modifications
- patterns of spatial organization
- land uses and activities
- circulation patterns and features
- cultural vegetation
- views and vistas
- buildings and structures
- small-scale features
- archeological resources

Each feature was assessed using the categories suggested by the *Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*: good, fair, poor, and unknown. The conditions ratings were annotated to include specific condition-related observations made in the field that help to justify the ratings.

Significance Evaluation

To evaluate the historical significance of the two sites, the CLR team undertook a comprehensive investigation into the history of the landscape. They also referred to the information presented in the National Register nomination for the *Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase)* and the guidance provided by the National Register bulletin, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

Comparative Analysis of Historic and Existing Conditions

To better understand the relationship between the existing landscapes and their character during the period of significance identified in the CLR, the team compared historic and existing landscape conditions. The three primary goals of the comparative analysis were to:

- discover which features survive from the period of significance;
- establish the basis for an integrity assessment; and

- understand the similarities and differences between historic and existing conditions to inform a well-grounded treatment plan for the cultural landscape.

The resulting analysis includes a discussion focused on extant features and their dates of origin. The narrative is illustrated with photograph pairs that compare historic with existing conditions.

Identification of Character-Defining Features

As part of the comparative analysis, the CLR team identified the character-defining features of the national monument's two sites. Character-defining features are the prominent or distinctive aspects or physical qualities of a cultural landscape that contribute significantly to its physical character. The analysis describes if and how individual features contribute to the significance of the historic landscape. Contributing features are those surviving from the period of significance with integrity that can be tied to the site's associated historic contexts; noncontributing features are those that originated after the period of significance, have lost integrity, or are not associated with significant historic contexts for the developed area. The team also identified missing features; that is, features known to have existed on the site during previous periods but that are no longer evident, except possibly in the archeological record.

Integrity Analysis

Based on an understanding of the character-defining features of the national monument's two cultural landscapes, the project team determined their physical integrity to the period of significance. They did this by analyzing the seven qualities of integrity as described in the National Register bulletin, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. For the Bus Burning Site in particular, National Register bulletin *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields* supported the project team in giving more weight to location, setting, feeling, and association.

Treatment Meeting

On April 20, 2022, project team members met with NPS park and regional personnel at the Freedom Riders National Monument offices to discuss outstanding questions regarding the CLR 55% draft and clarify the issues and goals to be addressed in the treatment plan. Those participating in the meeting included:

South Atlantic – Gulf (Region 2) Office of the National Park Service (by phone):

- Susan Hitchcock, Historical Landscape Architect and Contracting Officer's Representative

Freedom Riders National Monument:

- Kristofer Butcher, Superintendent
- Jessica Epperson, Park Ranger and Education Specialist

Joseph K. Oppermann Architect, PA (by phone)

- Christopher Woollard, Project Manager

Laura L. Knott, Historical Landscape Architect, LLC

- Laura Knott, Historical Landscape Architect
City of Anniston

- Toby Bennington, Director of Economic Development and City Planning

Anniston Historic Preservation Commission

- John Valieant, Chairman

JRWA

- Rod Wilburn, Principal

The meeting began with introductions and explanations of roles and responsibilities. This was followed by a discussion addressing park management goals, issues, and concerns as listed in the project SOW and the park's foundation document. The group went on to review the conceptual site development plan that JRWA developed for the Bus Burning Site.

The group then discussed goals for the future long-range interpretive plan. Part of the plan should consider signage along the historic route between the Bus Depot and the Bus Burning Site. Park staff will collaborate with the Alabama Department of Transportation

(ALDOT) on locations and content of cultural sites signs and a park portal or identity sign.

Butcher reported his work with Keena Graham, superintendent of the new Medgar and Myrtle Evers Home National Monument, on a virtual reality experience. He is also collaborating with Jacksonville State University on a study map with QR codes that visitors can scan with cell phones at either site. While there is no plan to develop a monument at the Bus Burning Site for the next few years, the park hopes to engage the surrounding Wellborn community and ALDOT in conversations about the future of the site.

Other issues to address will be an archeological investigation of the roadside where the Greyhound bus was burned to see if anything remains of the road shoulder where it stood. Invasive species will also be inventoried and addressed.

Treatment Plan

The CLR culminates in a treatment plan that provides preservation strategies and specific recommendations for the long-term management of the cultural landscape based on its significance, existing condition, and use. The CLR treatment plan contains a discussion of the overall management objectives for the park, as expressed in its foundation document, and addresses the issues, concerns, and needs identified by NPS park and regional personnel during meetings conducted over the course of the project.

Key recommendations made in the treatment plan are developed further in a series of implementation projects presented at the end of the treatment chapter. These projects, which prioritize and coordinate treatment recommendations into a series of discrete tasks, are conveyed in a format similar to PMIS so that they can be easily transferred to NPS Facility Management Software System (FMSS) work orders where applicable.

Summary of Findings

The two sites comprising the Freedom Riders National Monument contain features associated with the historic attack on Freedom Riders at the Anniston Greyhound bus depot on Sunday,

SITE HISTORY

May 14, 1961, and the continuation of this attack at a rural grocery store about six miles west of Anniston. The Bus Depot contains the former Greyhound bus depot building and its surrounding site and urban context where the attack began. The Bus Depot building and its site are in good condition and possess sufficient integrity to convey its historic association with the Freedom Rides.

The following features contribute to the integrity of the Bus Depot:

- Bus Depot building
- Spatial arrangement of the Bus Depot and its relationship to its setting
- Patterns of circulation within the site, including building entrances and exits
- Views to and from the Bus Depot from and to its neighborhood setting

The primary treatment goals for the Bus Depot are to restore the building to its appearance in 1961 and rehabilitate the site to accommodate accessibility features, control access, and interpret the Freedom Riders events to the public. The park plans to continue working with its local partners to preserve and interpret the building's urban setting.

The Bus Burning Site contains only a small sliver of land representing the road shoulder and driveway where the Greyhound bus was burned in front of Forsyth & Son Grocery. The rest of the site was razed in preparation to build Anniston's western bypass, now State Route 202. Nonetheless, the site's location and setting possess sufficient integrity to convey its historic association with the Freedom Rides. It is possible that archeological investigation of the site may uncover resources that can provide additional information about the event.

The following features contribute to the integrity of the Bus Burning Site:

- Old Birmingham Highway (old State Route 202) and highway shoulder on Parcels 44 and 54
- Views looking east on Old Birmingham Highway and looking south at residences across Old Birmingham Highway
- Topography, stormwater conveyance, and enclosure created by woodland on Parcel 38

The primary treatment goal for the Bus Burning Site is to rehabilitate its three parcels to support visitation. This includes installing signage and waysides to interpret the event of the bus burning to the public; providing visitor services, including parking, restrooms, and a ranger contact station; and identifying a location for a future memorial to the Freedom Riders.

Implementation Projects

1. Complete a National Register nomination for Freedom Riders National Monument.
2. Prepare plans to restore the exterior of Bus Depot building.
3. Improve and control access to the Bus Depot site and protect historic viewsheds.
4. Complete an archeological survey of the site of the bus burning.
5. Underground all overhead utility lines crossing Parcels 44 and 54.
6. Reforest the east half of Parcel 54.
7. Complete planning and design for visitor use and access on Parcels 44 and 38.
8. Implement a green stormwater infrastructure solution on Parcel 54.
9. Prepare a vegetation management plan for the Bus Burning Site.
10. Develop partnerships with property owners along Gurnee Avenue and the Old Birmingham Highway to preserve the park's historic setting.

Site History

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the history of Anniston, including its race relations, a brief context of the Freedom Rides relative to key events in the civil rights movement, and a more detailed description of the events of the May 14, 1961, including the attacks on the Freedom Riders and the aftermath. The chapter concludes with a description of the physical evolution of the two sites that comprise the national monument.

Prehistory

Prior to European contact, the area that would become Calhoun County lay in the northern reaches of the Muscogee (Creek) territory. The early Muscogee were descendants of people who established the Mississippian culture along major rivers in the southeastern United States, starting around 1,000 AD. The Mississippian people, also known as the “moundbuilders,” established trade with Mesoamerica and began to adapt maize as a principal food crop, leading to agricultural surpluses and population growth. This spurred the rise of urban centers with stratified societies organized into regional chiefdoms. Most of the Mississippian people spoke a branch of the Muscogean language family with variations that were mutually intelligible. Evidence of these urban centers remains today in the form of burial and temple mound complexes extant throughout the region. After contact with Europeans brought disease and war to the region, the survivors dispersed to

smaller settlements and formed individual tribes, including the Muscogee.¹

Contact through Early Settlement, 1539–1871

European Contact

Europeans appeared in the Muscogee territory starting around 1539 with the first expedition of the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto, who was searching for gold and other riches thought to be available in the region. Arriving at Tampa Bay, de Soto and his army traveled northward through Florida and Georgia into South Carolina, westward into North Carolina and east Tennessee, then southward into Alabama along the Coosa River, passing within twenty miles of where Anniston would be established over 300 years later. As word spread through the region of de Soto’s brutal treatment of indigenous people, the Muscogee began to fight back, starting in 1540 with the Battle of Mabila in southwest Alabama.²

The Spanish expedition brought with it European diseases, causing epidemics of smallpox and measles among the indigenous people. Losses from these diseases, as well as the Indian slave trade begun by the Spanish, led the Muscogee to reorganize in the eighteenth century into a loose confederacy that the British called the “Creeks.” As European and American settlements encroached upon indigenous territory, the Muscogee began to split into two groups. Those who lived in southwest Georgia and north Florida, called the Lower Creeks by the British, had closer contact with Europeans

¹ Theodore Isham and Blue Clark, “Creek (Mvskoke),” *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry?entry=CR006>.

² Charles Hudson, *The Southeastern Indians* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1976), 107–114.

and Americans and wished to live among them in peace. Those who lived in east central and southeast Alabama, called the Upper Creeks by the British, were more isolated and maintained their traditional lifeways; they sought to prevent encroachment into their homelands.³

The Red Stick War, 1813–1814

Starting in 1813, the British, who by that time had become involved in the War of 1812 against the Americans, encouraged the Upper Creeks, also called the “Red Sticks” for the color of their red-painted war clubs, to fight against American encroachment. Not only did the Red Sticks attack American settlements, but they also fought groups of Lower Creeks.⁴

On November 3, 1813, American militiamen led by Gen. John Coffee destroyed the Muscogee town of Tallushatchee, the site of which is in the northwest corner of Calhoun County, twelve miles northwest of Anniston. The Americans killed 186 of the town’s residents, including women and children.⁵

The Battle of Tallushatchee was the first of five of the battles of the Red Stick War. It was significant because it convinced more Lower Creeks to side with the Americans against the Red Sticks. The war ceased after the Red Sticks were defeated by the Americans at the March 27, 1814, Battle of Horseshoe Bend, effectively breaking the power of the Muscogee in the region. The formal end of the war was marked by the signing of the Treaty of Fort Jackson on August 9, 1814.⁶

Indian Land Cessions and Removal

Under the Treaty of Fort Jackson, the Muscogee were forced to cede twenty-three million acres

of land in east Alabama and part of south Georgia to the United States. Several additional treaties between the Muscogee and the United States followed, leading to further cessions of Muscogee land.⁷

On May 28, 1830, U.S. President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act into law. The new law authorized the United States to negotiate with the southern tribes, including the Muscogee, for their removal to federal territory west of the Mississippi River—generally in the area of Oklahoma—in exchange for their lands. This forced displacement lasted well into the late 1840s and resulted in the relocation of around 60,000 members of the Muscogee, Cherokee, Seminole, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations.⁸

In 1832, two years after the Indian Removal Act was signed, the remainder of Muscogee lands east of the Mississippi River, including the area that became Calhoun County, were ceded to the United States under the Treaty of Cusseta.⁹ The Muscogee in this area were also forced off their land and sent westward during the Removals.

All that remains of the Muscogee today are their place names and a few archeological sites. Muscogee place names in Calhoun County include Choccolocco, Tallaseehatchee, and Coosa.¹⁰ The most well-known archeological site in the county related to the Muscogee and their forebearers is the Choccolocco Creek Archaeological Complex. The site, which contains a large reconstructed ceremonial mound, is now a public park with trails that interpret the nineteenth-century Muscogee town of Choccolocco.¹¹

³ National Park Service, “The Muscogee Creek: 1600–1840” (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2021), <https://www.nps.gov/liri/learn/historyculture/the-muscogee-creek-1600-1840.htm>.

⁴ The Red Stick War is also commonly known as the Creek War of 1813–1814.

⁵ J. “Jim” Lewis Herbert, “Battle of Tallushatchee” *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2350>

⁶ National Park Service, “The Muscogee Creek”; Ove Jensen, “Battle of Horseshoe Bend,” *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1044>; Herbert, “Battle of Tallushatchee.”

⁷ Kathryn Braund, “Summer 1814: The Treaty of Ft. Jackson Ends the Creek War” (Washington, DC:

National Park Service, 2017), <https://www.nps.gov/articles/treaty-of-fort-jackson.htm>.

⁸ National Park Service, “Permanent Indian Frontier” (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2022), <https://www.nps.gov/articles/pifront.htm#:~:text=On%20May%2028%2C%201830%2C%20Jackson,their%20holdings%20in%20the%20East.>

⁹ Christopher Maloney, “Treaty of Cusseta (1832),” *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-3083>.

¹⁰ Don C. East, “The Indians of East Alabama and the Place Names They Left Behind,” <https://alabamaclaycounty.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/THE-INDIANS-OF-EAST-ALABAMA.pdf>.

¹¹ “History of the Land,” Choccolocco Park, <http://choccoloccopark.com/info/history/>.

Early Settlement of Calhoun County

Calhoun County was originally named Benton County in honor of Red Stick War veteran Col. Thomas Hart Benton. In 1858, after Benton, who was himself an enslaver, expressed his opposition to slavery in the runup to the Civil War, Benton County citizens renamed their county to honor John C. Calhoun, the seventh vice president of the United States and a staunch supporter of slavery.¹²

American settlers poured into the county after 1832. Most were small farmers who scratched out a living growing small patches of corn and cotton in the area's hilly and rocky landscape. Fewer of these settlers owned slaves when compared with counties in the cotton growing Alabama Black Belt, but those with larger farms often enslaved workers. By 1840, around 20% of the residents of Benton County were enslaved. This number rose slightly in 1850 to around 22% then dropped in 1860 to just over 20%.¹³

An enterprising few of the county's settlers took advantage of its natural resources and established iron works powered by water and heat from charcoal. The first iron works in the county were established in the early 1840s on Cane Creek about 6–7 miles east of its confluence with the Coosa River. Known variously as the Cane Creek, Benton, and Crowe's iron works, or Moore & Goode or Old Pokeville furnaces, the operation was run chiefly through slave labor. With the onset of the Civil War in 1861, the Cane Creek works began to manufacture items for the Confederate Army. The works were destroyed by Gen. Lovell H. Rousseau of the Union Army on July 14, 1864.¹⁴

In 1862, the Confederate Army commissioned the construction of two additional iron works in Calhoun County, the Oxford and Janney furnaces. The Oxford furnace stood at the future site of Anniston, while the Janney furnace was

about fifteen miles to the northwest. Along with the Cane Creek works, Rousseau's Union forces also destroyed the Janney furnace in 1864.

Union Gen. J. H. Wilson's cavalry destroyed the Oxford furnace in April 1865.¹⁵

The Noble Family

In addition to constructing its own new iron works in 1862, the Confederate government also commissioned established iron-making companies to produce ordnance. One of these, Noble Brothers and Company, of Rome, Georgia, was commissioned to produce cannon and cannon carriages. Englishman industrialist James Noble had established the Rome foundry in 1855 after having been twice flooded out of his Pennsylvania foundry. Noble brought his entire family with him to Georgia, including his wife, daughters, and sons: Samuel, William, and Stephen. Noble's works in Rome included a foundry, rolling mill, machine shop, nail factory, rifle factory, carriage shop, railroad car works, stove works, and cast iron cooking utensil shop.¹⁶

Of Noble's sons, Samuel was the one who emerged as the leader of the family business. After the family's carriage shop and rifle factory burned in 1862, it was Samuel who took on building a canal to power a new furnace on the Coosa River in Alabama. In 1864, Federal troops closed Noble's remaining Rome foundry and shops, shipped the machinery to Union operations, and destroyed the rest of the Rome works buildings. Left without capital resources, Samuel made use of family alliances with Northern friends to immediately set up a cotton brokering business during the final months of the war and the following year. It was also through these connections that Samuel Noble was able to gain the financial backing to begin reconstructing the family's Rome works in mid-1865, renaming the facility the Rome Steam Engine and Machine Works.

¹² Patricia Hoskins Morton, "Calhoun County," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1198>.

¹³ Lincoln Mullen, "The Spread of U.S. Slavery, 1790–1860," interactive map, <https://lincolnmullen.com/projects/slavery/>.

¹⁴ Ethyl Armes, *The Story of Iron and Coal in Alabama* (Birmingham AL: Chamber of Commerce, 1910), 90–93.

¹⁵ Grace Hooten Gates, *The Model City of the New South: Anniston, Alabama, 1872–1900* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1978), 16–17.

¹⁶ The information presented in this section was derived from Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 18–31.

With their Rome works back in operation after the war, the Nobles began looking for new sources of ore for railroad car wheels and a new location for a furnace. The 1865 replacement furnace in Rome never functioned well, then its stack collapsed in 1870. In his travels to and from the Coosa furnace in the late 1860s, Samuel had visited the ruins of the Oxford furnace in Calhoun County. There, he saw the rich local deposits of hematite ores and vast expanses of longleaf pine in the surrounding Choccolocco Valley. On November 16, 1869, Samuel bought one hundred acres of land in the county. In 1871, he purchased the old Oxford furnace property, leveraging money he borrowed from the Quintard family in New York. By 1872, he owned over 1,300 acres of ore and timber land in the area that would become Anniston.

To develop the land, Samuel Noble needed additional funding. In spring 1872, on the way home after visiting wealthy friends in the North, Samuel called on Alfred Tyler, owner of South Carolina Railroad. Tyler's elderly father, Gen. Daniel Tyler, was visiting his son's offices and joined the conversation, showing particular interest in the availability of iron ore in the South. Noble described his newly purchased ore-rich holdings in Alabama and the elder Tyler agreed to visit him for a tour.

Daniel Tyler had studied coal mining, furnace building, and rolling mills in Great Britain in preparation for starting his own operations in the United States. His Pennsylvania factory was unsuccessful, but he went on to serve as president of the Norwich and Worcester Railroad, Morris Canal and Banking Company, Macon and Atlanta Railroad, and the Schuylkill and Susquehanna Railroad, helping each business recover from financial troubles. With the onset of the Civil War, the governor of Connecticut selected Tyler to command the state's first regiment. He served the Union for three years until he retired upon the death of his wife in April 1864.

Tyler arrived in Rome in early April to join young Noble on a train trip to Oxford, Alabama. In Oxford, they leased horses and explored the area for three days. So impressed was Tyler with

the area's iron and timber resources, he invited his son Alfred to view Noble's holdings. On April 29, 1872, the Noble and Tyler families convened to incorporate the Woodstock Iron Company at the site that would become Anniston.

Early Anniston, 1872–1899

The establishment of the Woodstock Iron Company in 1872 could not have been timelier. Post-Civil War rebuilding campaigns included the repair and construction of railroads throughout the region, creating an increased demand for iron and an explosion in the price per ton.¹⁷

Samuel Noble and Daniel Tyler began work on the new Woodstock furnace right away, starting by recruiting skilled workers from neighboring counties and states, as well as from Great Britain, Sweden, and Poland. These masons, carpenters, charcoal burners, and other skilled workers completed the first furnace and set it alight on April 29, 1873. Noble and Tyler feted the workers with a celebration or "grand jubilee," including a massive barbecue. The new furnace made pig iron that was used primarily to make railroad car wheels. The company managed to survive the Panic of 1873 due to its choice of product, use of local resources, lack of debt, and the salesmanship of Samuel Noble, and went on to complete its second furnace in August 1879.¹⁸

Woodstock Iron Company also employed local men, often former farmers, both Black and White, to work the furnaces, mine ore, and cut timber for charcoal. Their wives and children also worked locally, milling cotton, working as domestic servants, and providing other services. Many of these workers lived in racially integrated neighborhoods and followed the same paths to work each morning.¹⁹

Noble and Tyler designed and built a village around the furnace to house their workers, calling it Woodstock. They kept it as a private endeavor for the first ten years to "lay the basis of the city in a proper way. . . and give the citizens convenience and comfort" in addition to their "lucrative and fitting employment." The

¹⁷ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 32.

¹⁸ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 33-38.

¹⁹ Gary Sprayberry, "Anniston," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1464>.

founders felt that the effort and expense of developing plans for the kind of town they visualized was only possible if the public, with its “various grades of wealth and of diverse ideas,” was not involved in the process.²⁰

The town was originally planned to accommodate a maximum of 20,000 people. It was organized as a grid of paved streets, with the north-to-south streets named after the company’s founders and investors, such as Noble Street and Quintard Avenue. Those main streets, “straight as a line, wide and well macadamized,” were paved by laying lifts of crushed slag from the furnaces, which were rolled to a smooth, hard surface and lined with sidewalks.²¹

The town was also ordered by function, with Noble Street serving as the main business and commercial artery and the dividing line between the east side, reserved for elite residences, and the west side, where industry and worker housing were built in close vicinity. Many workers’ houses had 1/4-acre lots large enough for expansive vegetable gardens. Anything that could not be raised at home could be purchased with scrip from the company store, including produce raised by nearby farmers.²²

The Woodstock Iron Company established parks in the town and planted them in bluegrass, evergreen shrubs, and roses. In 1881, the company bought 100,000 water oaks (*Quercus phellos*) to be planted in rows along the main streets. In 1882, the company installed the town’s first public water system and its first streetlights, with power furnished by the Woodstock Furnace Number One. The company also operated its own flour mill and butcher shop. The founders believed that the

design and amenities would bring to the new town a sense of “beauty, order, and prosperity.”²³

The sense of local order was protected with bans against vagrants and drifters from entering the town. To keep their employees healthy, moral, and industrious, the founders of the Woodstock Iron Company also forbade alcohol consumption. Nonetheless, enterprising local brewers of mountain “white lightning” secreted their products into the town, often in packages marked “drugs.”²⁴

In 1873, the employees of the Woodstock Iron Company voted to incorporate the village under general laws, and elected Samuel Noble and four other close company affiliates as city councilmen. During the process, it was discovered that there was another Alabama community named Woodstock, so the new council chose the name of “Anniston,” in honor of Daniel Tyler’s daughter-in-law, Annie Tyler. In 1879, Anniston was incorporated by the state legislature, with its city limits set as a circle with a radius of 1-1/2 miles around a point at the intersection of 17th and Noble Streets.²⁵

In 1879, Noble and Tyler began planning their first cotton mill, taking advantage of a yet-untapped resource: the labor of the wives and children of furnace workers.²⁶ In 1880, the Anniston Cotton Manufacturing Company was incorporated, and in 1881 produced its first yard of cloth.²⁷ The diversification of industry in Anniston marked the beginning of change in the company town.

The following year brought two events that would change the Woodstock Iron Company forever. In November 1882, Daniel Tyler died

²⁰ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 39, citing “A Card to the Public,” statement of the Anniston proprietors, *Atlanta Constitution*, July 1, 1883, p. 7. This quote is from a full-page advertisement announcing the opening of Anniston to the public.

²¹ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 39-59.

²² Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 39-59.

²³ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 39-59; Gary S. Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees’: Paternalism, Class, and Civil Rights in Anniston, Alabama, 1872 to Present” (Ph.D. diss, University of Alabama, 2003), 25-35, citing Armes, *The Story of Iron and Coal in Alabama*, 321; “Anniston, Alabama,” pamphlet, 1889, container LPR 118, Alabama Department of Archives and History; *Selma Times Journal*, April 29, 1882.

²⁴ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 31-33.

²⁵ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 39-45.

²⁶ The conditions of child labor in Southern cotton mills, including one in Anniston, were investigated by undercover journalist Bessie Van Vorst in the early twentieth century and reported in various magazines. Her articles were published in her book *The Cry of the Children: A Study of Child Labor* (New York: Moffat, Yard, and Company, 1908). She reported children as young as four or five years old as working in the Anniston mills and described factory workers’ living conditions as appalling. See Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 40-41.

²⁷ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 46-48.

during a trip to New York City, leaving Samuel Noble without his chief mentor and business partner. Then, in February 1883, the Georgia Pacific Railway reached Anniston from Atlanta, creating a direct connection to the largest nearby city and eventually forcing Anniston to open real estate sales to the public.²⁸

The Anniston portion of the Georgia Pacific Railway was constructed on a right-of-way granted by Noble and Tyler earlier in 1882 and intersected with the East Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad (formerly the Selma, Rome, and Dalton Railroad) just south of the town. In exchange for the right-of-way, the president of the railroad, Gen. John B. Gordon, agreed to extend spurs to serve Anniston's furnaces and other industries, and to build a passenger depot for the town. Once completed, the railroad provided excursion trains that would take visitors on day trips from Atlanta to tour Anniston. Land speculators took advantage of Atlantans' interest and began to promote land sales outside the town in the Choccolocco Valley.²⁹

Samuel Noble and his other partners in the Woodstock Iron Company initially resisted public offers to buy land in Anniston, so promoters planned another town between Anniston and Oxford they called "Oxanna." Sales of lots in Oxanna started that summer 1883, and in 1884, the Oxanna Hotel opened to host investors. The town was incorporated in 1886 and survived until 1901, when it was annexed into Anniston.³⁰

The appearance of Oxanna finally convinced Noble that it was time to open Anniston to public real estate sales. For years, Noble and Tyler had feared the destruction of their planned village by public ownership and the "present beautiful effect of everything." However, the arrival of the Georgia Pacific Railway made it impossible to exclude what Daniel Tyler's son, Alfred, a new owner of the company, described as the "lower grades." With

the help of editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* Henry Grady, Noble decided to spin the opening of the town as the "purposeful end" of its planning over the last decade.³¹

Grady published the first formal announcement of the town opening in the *Atlanta Constitution* on June 10, 1883, in an article entitled "A Man and a Town," referring to Noble. That July, Grady published a full-page advertisement for "Anniston, The Model City of The Southern States," announcing that after ten years, "Anniston is now thrown open to the public." Grady, who coined the term "New South," was a proponent of the shift from farming to industry in the post war South.³² Journalists who subsequently flocked to Anniston reported throughout the region of all the town's accomplishments. Realizing the value of this publicity, two months after Grady's article came out, Noble and Alfred Tyler started a local newspaper called the *Anniston Hot Blast* after an iron manufacturing process. The paper's first issue celebrated the working man, protested against employment abuse, and proclaimed that it was in favor of unions and against strikes.³³

Anniston's formal ceremony opening public sales was held on July 3, 1883. The sale of lots, however, had already begun, heralding a boom in local construction and related businesses, such as lumber and planing mills. Contractors erected two-story brick commercial buildings, churches, a city hall, an opera house, a railroad depot, and new industrial works. A new five-story hotel called the Anniston Inn was built that year to accommodate all the new visitors. So that it could be seen from the new railroad station, the inn was constructed on a prominent rise in the center of town.³⁴

House construction lagged behind demand, so newcomers lived in tents as they waited for their new homes to be completed. That October, Noble made it possible for his employees to purchase the homes they were renting from the company by establishing a financing system they

²⁸ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 48–49, 54, and 56–59.

²⁹ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 58.

³⁰ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 60–63.

³¹ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 64–77.

³² Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 58; Henry Grady, "The Model City of the Southern States!",

Atlanta Constitution, July 8, 1883; and Rob Dixon, "New South Era," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2128>.

³³ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 64–77.

³⁴ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 71–73.

could afford. In 1884, owners of the Woodstock Iron Company opened a separate business called the Anniston City Land Company to manage the land sales. In September of that year, the *Anniston Hot Blast* estimated the town's population to be around 6,000, compared to the 941 counted by the 1880 U.S. Census.³⁵

In 1887, the Anniston City Land Company commissioned Henry Wellge & Company of Milwaukee to publish a bird's-eye-view map featuring Anniston's mills and foundries in the foreground to promote the town's manufacturing strength (Figure 2-1). They published additional bird's-eye-view maps from other angles in 1888 and 1903 to accompany advertisements for the town published in various newspapers, including the *Anniston Hot Blast*. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company also published a series of maps of the town starting in 1885.

In 1885, the local Board of Trade published a pamphlet entitled "Anniston in North Alabama: The Model City of the South," to promote the town's attributes. In 1887, the Anniston Bureau of Information published another pamphlet titled "Anniston, The Model City of the South," claiming that no other city in north Alabama could equal it in "healthfulness, equability of temperature, cleanliness, beauty of location, school facilities, enterprise of citizens." In 1892, a third pamphlet praised the city's investment opportunities, law and order, and model citizenship. Many boosters emphasized the climate of Anniston, praising its location in the Appalachian foothills, pure water, "healthful breezes," and perfect drainage, assuring a "happy exemption" from diseases like malaria.³⁶

Samuel Noble died in 1888. At the time, he had been negotiating an extension of Anniston's railroad to the rich mineral resources of north

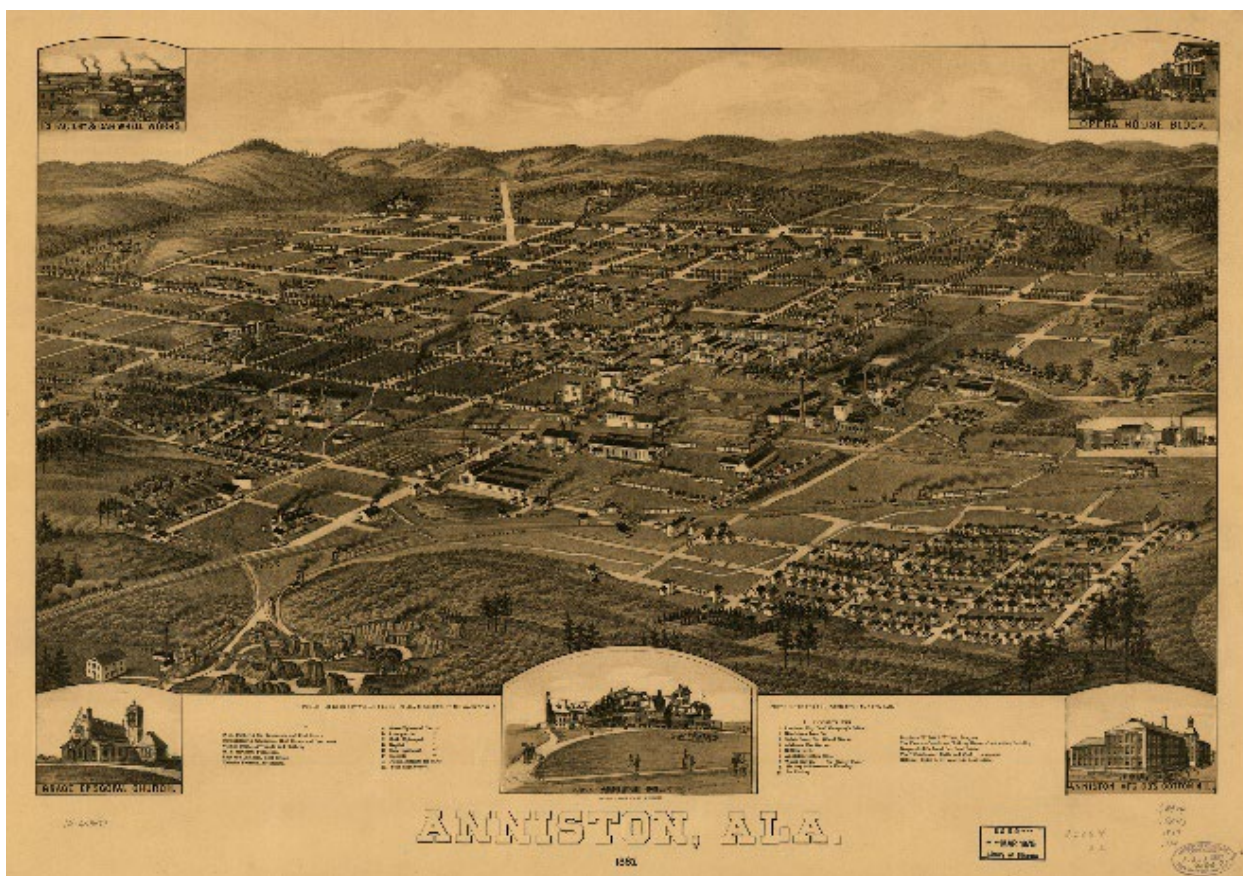


FIGURE 2-1. Bird's-eye-view map of Anniston published in 1887 by Henry Wellge & Company. Library of Congress.

³⁵ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 65–68, 90–91; Sprayberry, "Town Among the Trees," 29.

³⁶ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 222–223.

Alabama. He had also just completed construction three new furnaces that fired with coke instead of charcoal, hoping that his company could compete with the furnaces of nearby Birmingham, which had a natural coke supply. The railroad venture met one obstacle after another while the new furnaces sat idle. The company reorganized upon Noble's death but by July 1893, owed over \$1 million to investors and vendors. The debt, exacerbated by the Panic of 1893, was the final blow. The Woodstock Iron Company sold at auction at the corner of W. 10th and Noble Streets. Despite the new owners' attempts to revive it, the company folded in 1900.³⁷

Pre-World War II Anniston, 1898–1945

Two events saved Anniston's economy after the failure of the Woodstock Iron Company. First, in 1898, the War Department chose Anniston as the location for Camp Shipp during the Spanish-American War. The army purchased vast quantities of local lumber and other building materials to build the camp and commissioned supplies from local vendors. New local businesses responding to the influx of soldiers included restaurants, doctors' offices, retail stores, and construction companies. Second, in 1899, city leaders won a campaign to relocate the county seat from Jacksonville to Anniston. The new courthouse was built in 1900 at the corner of W. 11th Street and Gurnee Avenue.³⁸

The first two decades of the twentieth century saw Anniston's second major growth period. Anniston became the world's largest producer of cast iron pipe due to its thirteen iron foundries. Industry continued to diversify, adding more textile and carpet mills to its list of heavier industries.³⁹ Anniston also welcomed new types of industry, including the manufacture of industrial chemicals. During World War I, chemical engineer Theodore Swann arrived to

operate the Anniston Steel Company. In 1929, he formed the Swann Chemical Company in Anniston and began the first commercially viable production of "chlorinated diphenyl." Now called polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, the product was used as a nonflammable cooling and insulating fluid for industrial transformers and capacitors. In 1935, Monsanto Industrial Chemicals Company bought the company from Swann.⁴⁰

In 1917, the War Department established Camp McClellan (later Fort McClellan) on 18,000 acres of farmland about six miles northeast of downtown Anniston. The temporary installment became a rapid-mobilization base and permanent National Guard facility. By November, over 27,000 men were housed at the camp. The development and occupation of the new camp was, like Camp Shipp, a boon to the local economy.⁴¹

On July 1, 1929, the army redesignated its training camp as Fort McClellan, making it a permanent installation, which helped Anniston avoid the worst of the Great Depression. Starting in 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration added officers' quarters and barracks, a fire station and postal exchange, warehouses and workshops, and a gym, theater, officers' club, and chapel. In 1940, the army constructed a new weapons depot about eight miles west of downtown. In 1943, the federal government purchased an additional 22,168 acres for a troop training ground at Fort McClellan and a POW camp for German and Italian soldiers.⁴²

Anniston's population grew and business flourished as the town recovered from the Great Depression due to the presence of Fort McClellan and orders for war goods produced in local factories. By 1945, there were five bottling companies, seven foundries, fourteen labor organizations, a museum, two new churches, a grocery store, twenty-two real estate

³⁷ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 99–104.

³⁸ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 140–143, 239–251.

³⁹ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 105–121.

⁴⁰ "Theodore Swann," Bhamwiki, https://www.bhamwiki.com/w/Theodore_Swann; Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, "Polychlorinated

Biphenyls (PCBs)," <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/TSP/substances/ToxSubstance.aspx?toxid=26>.

⁴¹ Sprayberry, "'Town Among the Trees,'" 90.

⁴² Pamela S. King and David B. Schneider, "Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase)," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2010, 8-37 through 8-38.

companies, and nineteen physicians, all but two located on Noble Street.⁴³

Race Relations in Anniston

Although races had intermingled when Anniston was a new company town, after it opened to the public, the population began to adhere to customs of segregation and Jim Crow laws.⁴⁴ All institutions became segregated, and two separate business districts evolved. The center of the White business district was the intersection of W. 10th and Noble Streets, while African Americans conducted business primarily along W. 15th Street between Mulberry Avenue and the railroad. These few blocks were also the center of Black social life, being close to the segregated Black neighborhoods that clustered around the coke furnaces and foundries of west Anniston. Neighborhoods began to be identified by their racial composition: Factory Town, where most textile workers lived, was primarily White, south Anniston mostly Black, Furnace Hill mostly White, and an area close to the Anniston Inn, called Liberia, was primarily Black.⁴⁵

Most African Americans in Anniston were relegated to low-paying positions as unskilled laborers with little hope of advancement. It was more difficult for Black people to start businesses in Anniston since the capital and social connections that White people enjoyed were denied them. Nonetheless, a Black middle class developed slowly in Anniston, starting businesses, building churches and schools, and organizing civic clubs; these leaders promoted Anniston, claiming that it was the “best city for Negro development in the United States.”⁴⁶

The establishment of Camp Shipp in early 1898 led to the first large-scale violent racial incident in Anniston. In September of that year, the army

sent the Third Alabama, an all-Black regiment led by a few White officers, to the camp. When the new regiment arrived in Anniston by train, they were met by local Whites hurling insults and threats, a reaction that was repeated every time Black soldiers ventured out of the camp. Tensions escalated, and on Thanksgiving night, gunfire was exchanged as Black soldiers responded to the fatal shooting of one of their leaders as he returned to the camp from church. What became known as the “Battle of Anniston” lasted several hours and resulted in the deaths of three Black soldiers and one White provost guard, and many injuries. Afterwards, guards were deployed in the city to help subdue further conflicts. In the spring of 1899, the army dissolved the Third Alabama, closed and dismantled Camp Shipp, and discharged or transferred all its troops.⁴⁷

After the turn of the century, Anniston’s Black citizens continued to struggle with the restrictions of segregation. In 1900, less than two percent of Anniston’s Black population was considered part of the professional class. This meant that of the 3,669 African Americans residing in Anniston at the turn of the century, fewer than seventy-five were white-collar workers. They would have included schoolteachers, a handful of professional doctors, and a few tailors, insurance providers, ministers, and undertakers. Most other Black workers were unskilled laborers or domestic servants or had “no gainful occupation.”⁴⁸ The situation did not improve after 1901, when the State of Alabama enacted its new constitution with the purpose of establishing White supremacy and codifying full segregation of the races in marriage, education, and all public facilities, including transportation. It also had

⁴³ King and Schneider, “Downtown Anniston Historic District,” 8-37 through 8-38.

⁴⁴ “The term ‘Jim Crow’ refers to a set of laws passed in many states, mostly in the South, that placed severe restrictions on the rights and privileges of African Americans after the end of Reconstruction. The name itself probably originated with a stock character in minstrel shows dating to before the Civil War. The Jim Crow character was usually portrayed as a happy and simpleminded country slave. The name was later extended to refer to blacks in general, and then to laws restricting the rights of blacks in particular.” Nikki L. M. Brown and Barry M.

Stentiford, eds., *The Jim Crow Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1: A–J (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2008), xvii.

⁴⁵ Grace Hooten Gates, “Fifteenth Street Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places nomination, listed April 17, 1991; Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 169–171.

⁴⁶ Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 174, 183–185; Anniston Chamber of Commerce, *Attractive Anniston* (Anniston AL: Norwood Printing Company, 1913), cited in Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 58.

⁴⁷ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 52–57.

⁴⁸ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 73.

the effect of disenfranchising Black voters through literacy tests and poll taxes.⁴⁹

Despite these challenges, the first decade of the 1900s saw Black businesses in Anniston grow, thanks to the activities of the Negro Business Men's League. The league hoped to "secure the greatest development among the negroes of this section." Its members promoted Black business in the Anniston Chamber of Commerce pamphlet *Attractive Anniston*, stating that "good, straightforward colored men who come here, whether they be mechanics, merchants, real estate men, or common laborers, will find a hearty welcome and encouragement."⁵⁰ In 1924, the league contributed to a promotional piece for Black businesses published in the *Anniston Star*, stating that "Anniston affords opportunity to men of all races who are industrious, abiding, and progressive."⁵¹

After the United States declared war on Germany in 1917, the Army built Camp McClellan just north of Anniston. The new training facility brought hundreds of African American troops to the Anniston area. After a year free of racial incidents, on December 15, 1918, two Black soldiers boarded a streetcar in south Anniston. After one of them refused to move to the rear of the car, the two men were ejected. One of them fired his pistol at the streetcar, killing the conductor and wounding a second man. Within several hours, the shooter was apprehended and locked in the stockade back at the camp to protect him from being lynched. Just weeks after the shooting, a chapter of the NAACP opened in west Anniston to support local African Americans in their pursuit of justice in the face of such incidents.⁵²

The post-World War I period saw more Black workers employed at local factories in jobs previously reserved for White workers, who took this "as a sharp slap in the face."⁵³ At Rudisill Pipe Works in Oxanna, for example, 2,000 White workers went on strike until management promised to no longer employ

Black workers at the plant. Other White blue-collar workers in Anniston joined the Ku Klux Klan in protest. In January 1922, the Klan held an initiation ceremony at Oxford Lake, 4-1/2 miles south of Anniston, where it erected a large cross illuminated with electric lights to appeal to "Christian brothers." On April 10, the Klan burned down the Sacred Heart Catholic Church at E. 11th Street and Quintard Avenue. The local Klan often held parades on Noble Street and occasionally would march through Black neighborhoods in west Anniston.⁵⁴

In 1934, Calhoun County witnessed a plague of racially motivated violence. On July 13, a Black laborer from Anniston was accused of raping the wife of a White farmer. After a chase involving a mob of White men and their bloodhounds, the man was captured by law enforcement and transported to Kilby Prison for safekeeping. During the trial, in which he was sentenced to death for rape, a "roving gang of young white men" chased a group of Black people from downtown Anniston, leading to calls for the National Guard to patrol city streets. On July 31, a 16-year-old White woman accused a Black man of accosting her, leading to another chase through the countryside involving hundreds of White men, a pack of hounds, and the National Guard, but the suspect escaped. On August 9, a Black truck driver was accused of accosting a White woman in front of her downtown home and was arrested for disorderly conduct. On August 10, another White woman reported that a Black man entered her house in the county and tried to take her baby. A mob of White men looking for the accused nabbed a Black farmer named Art Bush; Bush was taken by law enforcement to a Birmingham jail for his safety. The mob returned to Bush's farm, set fire to his barn, and threatened his wife and child. While Bush sat in jail, the mob ambushed his brother, Woodrow, and killed him. In a rare instance of justice during that period, in 1936, Art Bush was

⁴⁹ "Constitution of Alabama," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Alabama. Many of these provisions were made unconstitutional by later federal laws in the 1950s. Sarah A. Warren, "Alabama Constitution of 1901," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-3030>.

⁵⁰ Anniston Chamber of Commerce, *Attractive Anniston*, 31, cited in Gates, *The Model City of the New South*, 185–186.

⁵¹ "Negro Businessmen of Anniston Show Progress," *Anniston Star*, March 6, 1924, 60–61.

⁵² Sprayberry, "'Town Among the Trees,'" 95–96.

⁵³ Sprayberry, "'Town Among the Trees,'" 99.

⁵⁴ Sprayberry, "'Town Among the Trees,'" 99–107.

found not guilty, and a White man was convicted of killing Woodrow Bush.⁵⁵

The violence ebbed in Anniston after the United States declared war on Japan in 1941. The conflict that became known as World War II (1939-1945) brought prosperity to Anniston, employing hundreds at the new Army Depot and boosting production at its foundries and mills. Anniston's population tripled in the decade between 1930 and 1940. Sidewalks were jammed with soldiers and shoppers, and the streets were filled with new cars bought with salaries from Fort McClellan.⁵⁶

Post-World War II Anniston, 1945–1960

The twenty years following World War II was a period of both economic prosperity and social tumult in Anniston. The army reactivated Fort McClellan in 1950 as a training center for the National Guard, the Army Chemical Corps, and the Women's Army Corps. Staff there doubled during the Korean War and continued to grow during the early Cold War era. Anniston evolved from being an important industrial center to one specializing in military arsenals and chemical manufacturing.⁵⁷

By the 1950s, Anniston's prosperity meant increased car ownership, and within the decade, traffic between Oxford and Fort McClellan had outgrown the capacity of Noble Street. In 1958, Quintard Avenue was extended southward to meet U.S. 431, which connected to U.S. Highway 78 toward Birmingham and Atlanta. Quintard Avenue, which until then had been an elegant residential boulevard, was redeveloped as a major thoroughfare and designated State Route 21. New subdivisions arose on the outskirts of town, attracting many commercial enterprises away from the old downtown core.⁵⁸

It was during this period that a new Trailways bus depot opened on Noble Street in 1957, and a new Greyhound bus depot opened on Gurnee Avenue in 1952.

Race Relations in Anniston

During this period, African Americans made up just slightly less than half of Anniston's population. Racial segregation was practiced in retail establishments, restaurants and clubs, entertainment venues, professional services, schools, and even churches. In the late 1940s, many Black-owned businesses still clustered along W. 15th Street, while several were located on Atlanta Avenue, a narrow street between Noble Street and Gurnee Avenue.⁵⁹

By 1950, the Black population had blossomed to 9,467, but only 157 of employed African Americans were categorized as "professional, technical, and kindred workers." The median income for all families in Anniston in the 1950 census was \$2,287, while the typical Black family earned just \$1,547 per year. Additionally, more than fourteen percent of White families had annual incomes of \$6,000 or more, while only 0.2 percent of Black families enjoyed comparable earnings. Anniston's Black schools were neglected, in poor condition, overcrowded, and lacked basic equipment and books. Because many Black children had to work to help their families, truancy among the Black population was high.⁶⁰

After the announcement of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, Anniston's African Americans readied themselves for desegregation. The head of the local NAACP convened a meeting with other branch members, and in a letter accompanied by a petition offered to help the local school board with desegregation plans. The school board declined, saying that the Alabama Board of Education was not ready to integrate until

⁵⁵ Sprayberry, "Town Among the Trees," 107–115.

⁵⁶ Sprayberry, "Town Among the Trees," 124–130.

⁵⁷ King and Schneider, "Downtown Anniston Historic District," 8-37 to 8-40. Until 1946, it had been known as the Chemical Warfare Service. With the change of name, the army added to its mission the defense against nuclear warfare and refinement of its offensive and defensive chemical capabilities, including biological warfare delivery systems. From 1952 until 1999, the Chemical Corps School was at Fort McClellan. "Chemical Corps," Wikipedia,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chemical_Corps#cite_note-pike-17.

⁵⁸ King and Schneider, "Downtown Anniston Historic District," 8-39.

⁵⁹ King and Schneider, "Downtown Anniston Historic District," 8-39 to 8-40.

⁶⁰ Sprayberry, "Town Among the Trees," 73, 153–155.

directed by state lawmakers. The *Anniston Star* denounced the local NAACP for having the nerve to “make demands” of the school board and published the names of all signers of the petitions, endangering their jobs, families, and property.⁶¹

Local segregationists were outraged by the 1954 Supreme Court ruling, including *Anniston Star* editor Harry Ayers, who warned readers of the “most violent upheaval in the South since Reconstruction.”⁶² In central and north Alabama,

in soot-layered factory towns like Tuscaloosa, Ensley, Birmingham, Gadsden, and Anniston—Klaverns sprang up like weeds after a rainstorm, drawing in hundreds, if not thousands, of angry and vindictive whites.⁶³

On November 27, 1954, 150 Klansmen met at Zinn Park, within earshot of Black neighborhoods, to hear speeches against integration and interracial marriage.⁶⁴

One of the rising Klan leaders was Kenneth Adams, the 35-year-old operator of a west Anniston gas station. Throughout the late 1950s and well into the 1960s, Adams was a person of interest in connection with numerous crimes in Anniston and the surrounding region against African Americans and civil rights advocates. One of his first known attacks occurred in April 1956, when Adams led a small group of four other Anniston Klansmen and a Birmingham man in an attack on singer Nat “King” Cole while he was performing in Birmingham for an all-White audience. Although unhurt, Cole was so shaken by the attack that he cancelled the performance and cut short his later show for a Black audience. Upon inspecting the attackers’ car, detectives found a homemade blackjack, a set of brass knuckles, and two loaded .22-caliber

rifles that the attackers claimed were for hunting.⁶⁵

Detectives subsequently learned that Adams and his gang belonged to the Birmingham-based North Alabama Citizens’ Council (NACC), led by Asa “Ace” Carter, Anniston-born radio personality and White supremacist. In February 1956, Alabama State Senator Sam Engelhardt had formed the Alabama Association of Citizens’ Councils (AACC) to coordinate the activities of the state’s numerous White supremacist citizens’ councils.⁶⁶ One of the AACC’s member groups was NACC but shortly after the formation of the state group, Carter led NACC’s withdrawal because he felt that the AACC did not support the White working man.⁶⁷

Carter’s NACC was notoriously White supremacist and anti-Semitic and hated Black music and rock ‘n’ roll. Now operating independently, the NACC evolved into a Ku Klux Klan-style organization that allied with Southern police departments and local and state government officials. During the most active years of the civil rights movement, members were responsible for an increase in White-on-Black violence, including murders, shootings, and bombings.⁶⁸

A few months after the Cole attack, Ace Carter rebranded the NACC as the “Original Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy.” The group lasted only a few years but was responsible for a series of violent racial incidents, some led by Adams, throughout northeast Alabama and into neighboring states. In 1956, Adams rallied a segregationist protest against the integration of schools in Clinton, Tennessee. In 1957, he and two others sued *Jet* magazine for its story about their beating of a White man for buying gas from a Black-owned station. In 1958, he was fingered for the October 12 bombing of a synagogue in

⁶¹ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 159–161.

⁶² Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 152.

⁶³ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 216–217.

⁶⁴ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 163.

⁶⁵ “Six Held in Attack on Negro Singer; Police Study Charges,” *Birmingham News*, April 11, 1956, 1–2.

⁶⁶ The NACC had been a branch of the Citizens’ Councils of America until it broke away to establish itself as an independent group in October 1955. Some White Southerners opposed to equal rights for Blacks organized groups called “Citizens’ Councils.” The Citizens’ Councils, sometimes called “White Citizens’ Councils” or “the uptown Klan,” were

groups made up primarily of businessmen and other professionals, including many local and state politicians. They threatened the jobs, homes, and businesses of Black and White civil rights activists using tactics like calling in their mortgages, denying them loans and business credit, and boycotting their businesses. See “Citizens’ Councils,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizens%27_Councils.

⁶⁷ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 136–140, 174–175.

⁶⁸ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 136–140, 174–175; “Ku Klux Klan,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ku_Klux_Klan.

Atlanta. In 1959, Adams pistol-whipped a young Black man from Talladega who pulled into his gas station with a flat tire, not seeing the “Whites Only” sign. Somehow, Adams managed to escape prosecution in each of the cases.⁶⁹

In the late 1950s, Adams chartered his own local klavern as part of the Chattanooga-based Dixie Klans, Inc., and established himself as the Grand Dragon.⁷⁰ Recruits came from his neighborhood around the Anniston Army Depot, from working-class White neighborhoods of west Anniston, and from his numerous customers, friends, and employees. Adams’s gas station on State Route 202, between the Monsanto plant and west Anniston, became the hub where Klan members would meet to share their grievances and plan acts of retaliation against perceived insults. Informants for the FBI reported that the group was one of the strongest in the state and a “keg of dynamite” about to explode.⁷¹ By 1960, Adams had “a legion of followers” representing every factory floor in west Anniston.⁷² On March 26 that year, Adams led his group on a campaign of cross burning throughout the southern part of the county, including several on top of 10th Street Mountain overlooking Anniston’s Black neighborhoods. On May 14, a motorcade of “white-robed men,” later found to have been led by Adams, burned two crosses in front of a Black family’s home on State Route 21 between Jacksonville and Piedmont.⁷³ In the spring, summer, and fall of 1960, Adams and his cohorts organized large Klan rallies at Zinn Park. At a rally on October 8, Adams declared, “I hope to win the fight against integration legally, but will shed every drop of blood I have before I will see Negro children in white schools.”⁷⁴

On January 2, 1961, Adams led an attack on two Black men, Arthur Bacon, a senior at Talladega

College, and Moses Lawler, a custodian at the college, outside Anniston’s Southern Railway Station. Bacon had been waiting for Lawler, his ride back to school, in the White waiting room. One of the attackers, Ormond L. Kirk, was arrested but the charges were dismissed based on a lack of evidence. On January 5, Adams was reported to have waved a pistol at Talladega College students who were marching in protest of the dismissal of charges.⁷⁵ On January 11 and 12, the homes of two local African American families, including that of Cleveland Jones, the pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, were shot at with a 12-gauge shotgun.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, Adams remained a free man. While Chief of Police J. L. Peek had promised to safeguard the Black community, only two White extremists had yet been jailed for the violent crimes of Adams’s group. Most arrests during 1960 and into early 1961 had been of Black people who had been defending themselves. The police continued to come under allegations of corruption and fraud, which had started in the 1950s with no end in sight—that is, until after the events of May 14, 1961, when Adams helped to lead the attack on both busloads of Freedom Riders as they passed through Anniston.⁷⁷

The Freedom Rides, 1961

The Freedom Ride that passed through Anniston on May 14, 1961, occurred within the larger context of the civil rights movement of the mid-twentieth century. It was the direct outcome of several key events of the movement, starting with the founding of CORE in 1942. This section begins with brief descriptions of those key events, then goes on to detail the attacks on the Greyhound bus in Anniston on May 14, 1961, from the time the bus entered the

⁶⁹ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 136–140, 220–222; “Original Ku Klux Klan of the Confederacy,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Original_Ku_Klux_Klan_of_the_Confederacy.

⁷⁰ Kenneth Adams, “Telegram from Kenneth Adams, the Alabama Grand Dragon of the Dixie Klans, Inc., to Governor John Patterson in Montgomery, Alabama,” 1960, Alabama Department of Archives and History, <https://digital.archives.alabama.gov/digital/collection/voices/id/2872>

⁷¹ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 220.

⁷² Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 217.

⁷³ “Robed Men Burn Crosses,” *Anniston Star*, May 15, 1960, 1. The identity of the family is not known, nor is the specific reason for the cross burning.

⁷⁴ “Klansmen Gather at Anniston Park,” *Anniston Star*, October 9, 1960, 6.

⁷⁵ “Negroes Attacked, White Man Held,” *Anniston Star*, January 3, 1961; *Birmingham World*, January 14, 1961; Maxine D. Jones and Joe M. Richardson, *Talladega College: The First Century* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990), 177–178; *Talladega Daily Home*, January 3, 1961. Cited in Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 223–226.

⁷⁶ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 222–223.

⁷⁷ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 222–236.

city to the aftermath of the bus burning, including the arrests of several of the attackers. It ends with a brief description of the continuation of the Freedom Rides that summer and the results of the campaign.

Civil Rights Precedents

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)

CORE was founded in Chicago in 1942 with the goal of ending racial discrimination through nonviolent direct action.⁷⁸ In June 1946, the Supreme Court ruled in *Morgan v. Virginia* that a state could not impose its Jim Crow regulations on interstate bus passengers. To test compliance, CORE volunteers set out in 1947 on an interracial bus ride through several Upper South states, which they called a “Journey of Reconciliation,” but only experienced more entrenched segregation. CORE’s work on a nonviolent movement against segregation stalled during the next few years as McCarthyism raged through the country with the start of the Cold War. Not until the mid-1950s did several events reignite the movement: the Supreme Court rulings in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), *Sarah Keys v. Carolina Coach Company* (1955), the Montgomery bus boycott (1955) and *Browder v. Gayle* (1956), *Boynton v. Virginia* (1960), and the “sit-in” movement (1960).⁷⁹

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

On May 19, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court announced its landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which made state-enforced racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. While the case was originally unrelated to segregation in public transportation, Chief Justice Earl Warren’s majority opinion concluded that any segregation policy “is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the negro group” and, as such, violates the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The ruling rejected the 1896 Supreme Court’s “separate but equal”

decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, destroying constitutional support for the entire Jim Crow system.⁸⁰

While it energized civil rights activists, the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision outraged White segregationists. They responded with what has come to be called “massive resistance” to desegregation. Tools of resistance ranged from the blatant violence of bombing and murdering civil rights activists, legal and commercial tactics of arresting and imprisoning protestors, evicting Black tenants who dared to vote, and refusing to make loans for Black businesses and homes, as well as acts of personal harassment such as threatening phone calls and Klan-sponsored cross burnings.⁸¹ Segregationist outrage increased through the next few years as the Supreme Court ruled time after time against racial segregation.

Sarah Keys v. Carolina Coach Company (1955)

Just after midnight on August 1, 1951, African American Women’s Army Corps (WAC) Private Sarah Keys was traveling between New Jersey and her hometown of Washington, North Carolina, when a bus driver asked her to yield her seat to a White Marine. She refused, and after an altercation, Keys was arrested, charged with disorderly conduct, jailed, convicted, and fined. Keys and her father brought the incident to the attention of the NAACP, which referred it to attorney Dovey Johnson Roundtree, a graduate of Howard University Law School who herself had been a WAC.⁸² Based on Roundtree’s convincing arguments, on November 7, 1955, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) condemned the “separate but equal” concept as subjecting Black interstate passengers to “unjust discrimination, and undue and unreasonable prejudice and disadvantage,” and banned segregation in interstate travel. Although eclipsed by the bus boycott in Montgomery two weeks later, the ruling in the *Sarah Keys v.*

⁷⁸ Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 23–26.

⁷⁹ Catherine A. Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow: The Desegregation of Southern Transit* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 58–60. For additional information, see Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 11–55.

⁸⁰ Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 92–94. For information on *Plessy v. Ferguson*, see “*Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896),” OurDocuments.Gov, <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=52>.

⁸¹ “Massive Resistance,” Segregation in America, <https://segregationinamerica.eji.org/report/massive-resistance.html>.

⁸² Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 87–88.

Carolina Coach Company case was a key event in the legal battle for civil rights.⁸³

Montgomery Bus Boycott (1955) and *Browder v. Gayle* (1956)

On December 1, 1955, Black civil rights activist Rosa Parks was arrested and fined in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give her city bus seat to a White man. Four days later, the Women's Political Council, a group of Black women working locally for civil rights, organized a boycott of the city's buses. It was planned to last only one day, but the boycott was so successful that the newly formed Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), led by local minister Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., vowed to continue the protest until its demands were met.

On January 30, 1956, segregationists bombed King's Montgomery home. King's wife Coretta, seven-week-old daughter Yolanda, and a neighbor were inside but no one was injured. Two days later, civil rights attorneys Fred Gray and Charles Langford filed a federal district court petition on behalf of four Black women who had been mistreated on Montgomery's city buses. The petition, which became known as *Browder v. Gayle*, challenged Alabama state statutes and Montgomery ordinances that required segregation on the city's public buses.⁸⁴

On June 5, 1956, the federal court in Montgomery ruled that laws requiring racially segregated seating on local and intrastate buses violated the Fourteenth Amendment. The city appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld the decision on December 20, 1956. City buses were integrated the following day, demonstrating the economic power of Black consumers.⁸⁵

***Boynton v. Virginia* (1960)**

On December 20, 1958, Bruce Boynton, a Black third-year law student at Howard University, was traveling from Washington, D.C., to his family home in Selma, Alabama, when he

entered the Richmond, Virginia, bus station for dinner. The "Colored" section of the segregated station diner was full, so he sat down at the "White" counter. The restaurant manager asked Boynton to leave and when he refused, called the police. The police arrested Boynton for violating a Virginia trespass law. In the subsequent trial, Boynton's lawyer contended that under the Motor Carrier Act and the commerce clause, as an interstate passenger, Boynton had a right to be served without discrimination in a bus station dining area. Nonetheless, Boynton was found guilty; on appeal in June 1959, his conviction was affirmed in the Virginia Supreme Court.

In September 1959, Thurgood Marshall and other attorneys of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund brought the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. In their December 1960 decision in *Boynton v. Virginia*, the court overturned the conviction and held that racial segregation in interstate public transportation violated the Interstate Commerce and Motor Carrier acts, which barred rail and bus lines from segregating interstate travelers. Justice Hugo Black, writing for the majority, clarified that where a "terminal and restaurant operate as an integral part of the bus carrier's transportation service for interstate passengers," those passengers had "a right to be served without discrimination." This landmark decision led directly to the Freedom Riders movement.⁸⁶

The Sit-In Movement (1960)

In 1960, African American students began a new kind of campaign called the "sit-in." The first sit-in was on February 1, 1960, when four Black students in Greensboro, North Carolina, sat down in the "Whites Only" section of a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter, inspiring similar actions in neighboring states that spring. On March 31, Black students integrated at least five lunch counters in downtown Birmingham. In each case, the police quickly arrested the students for violating Birmingham's segregation ordinance.⁸⁷ The sit-

⁸³ Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 97–102.

⁸⁴ "Browder v. Gayle, 352, U.S. 903," *The King Encyclopedia*, The Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/browder-v-gayle-352-us-903>.

⁸⁵ Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 108–145.

⁸⁶ Barnes, *Journey from Jim Crow*, 149; "Boynton v. Virginia," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boynton_v._Virginia.

⁸⁷ "Sit-In Movement," African American Civil Rights Movement, <http://www.african-american-civil->

in movement was the final push CORE needed to attempt another interracial bus ride.

The First Freedom Ride

In early 1961, CORE organized a bus trip from Washington, D.C., to New Orleans to test the *Boynton v. Virginia* ruling. On May 4, 1961, eleven Freedom Riders divided into two interracial groups left Washington, D.C.: one group on a Greyhound bus and the other on a Trailways bus. Both bus routes would pass through Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi on the way to New Orleans. The Riders would arrive in New Orleans on May 17 to celebrate the anniversary of the 1954 Supreme Court's ruling on *Brown v. Board of Education*. CORE cofounder and national director James Farmer later wrote that, "we were told that the racists, the segregationists would go to any extent to hold the line on segregation in interstate travel. So when we began the ride I think all of us were prepared for as much violence as could be thrown at us. We were prepared for the possibility of death."⁸⁸

The first group of Freedom Riders was led by Farmer and James Peck, a White, longtime civil rights activist who had been on the Journey of Reconciliation. Joining them was 21-year-old John Lewis, a student at the historically Black Fisk University and organizer of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). A White woman named Genevieve Hughes and a Black man named Joe Perkins, both of whom served as CORE field secretaries, also volunteered for the ride. They were accompanied by Walter and Frances Bergman, White activists who were active in CORE picketing campaigns. The other four volunteers were a White Quaker pacifist named Albert Bigelow, a young Black folk singer from New York named Jimmy McDonald, a White student and civil rights activist from Arizona named Ed Blankenheim, and a Black student from the historically Black Howard University named John Moody. Moody later withdrew from the Ride before it started but recruited his Howard roommate, Hank Thomas, who had grown up in

the Jim Crow system in Florida and had valuable firsthand experience in the South. They were joined by Charles Person, who was a freshman at Atlanta's historically Black Morehouse College and a veteran of the student sit-in movement.

The volunteers gathered on April 30 at the Quaker-run Fellowship House in Washington, D.C. for three days of preparation and training in nonviolence. The training included a short course in federal and state laws pertaining to discrimination in interstate transportation, as well as instructions on what to do if arrested. A sociologist spoke about what to expect from Whites in the South, including "the lengths to which the local populace probably would go to force compliance with their sacrosanct racial customs." The most important part of the training, however, was the series of "intense role-playing sessions," or "sociodramas," in which the volunteers would enact what might happen when trying to desegregate the buses or terminal dining areas. They practiced for three days, trading roles as volunteers, adversaries, or observers in many different scenarios, then evaluating their actions and reactions at the end of each session.⁸⁹

On the morning of May 4, the volunteers split into two groups. A group of seven arrived at the Washington, D.C. Greyhound station, bought tickets, and checked their bags for an 11:00 a.m. departure. James Farmer had already instructed the volunteers to make sure that one Black Rider would sit in a seat normally reserved for Whites, at least one interracial pair would sit in adjoining seats, and the remaining riders would scatter themselves throughout the bus. One Rider would serve as the designated observer, remaining aloof from the other riders and obeying the rules on segregated travel so that at least one volunteer could avoid arrest and contact CORE should trouble arise. The rest of the Riders were free to mingle with other passengers and discuss the Freedom Rides with them. Farmer headed the Greyhound group, which included Genevieve Hughes, Albert Bigelow, Hank Thomas, Jimmy McDonald, Joe Perkins, John Lewis, and Ed Blankenheim, as

rights.org/sit-in-movement/; Tom Dygard, "Birmingham Negroes Ask Counter Service at 5 Downtown Stores," *Anniston Star*, March 31, 1960, 1.

⁸⁸ Phil Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus: The Civil Rights Revolution in a Southern Town* (Montgomery AL: New South Books, 2013), 33–34.

⁸⁹ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 106–108.

well as Charlotte Devree, a White CORE activist and freelance writer.⁹⁰

The first stop was in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Although the terminal still displayed Jim Crow signage, the Freedom Riders integrated the restrooms and lunch counter without incident. Their integrations of the Richmond, Petersburg, and Lynchburg terminals also proceeded uneventfully. There were no hostile responses until the group arrived at the Danville terminal in southern Virginia, where a Black waiter refused to serve Ed Blankenheim at the “Colored” counter under threat of losing his job.⁹¹

The bus headed into North Carolina, stopping first in Greensboro, where journalist Moses Newson of the *Baltimore Afro-American* joined the volunteers. The next day, Perkins attempted to get his shoes shined at a chair designated for White people in Charlotte and was promptly arrested. After two nights in the Charlotte jail and one night in the county jail before his trial, Perkins was immediately acquitted. He and Blankenheim, who had waited for him in Charlotte, took the next bus to Rock Hill, South Carolina, where they learned that the first violent episode of the Freedom Ride had occurred in their absence.⁹²

On May 9, Lewis, Bigelow, and Hughes were attempting to integrate the “Whites Only” designated waiting room in Rock Hill when they were attacked by a group of White men. A police officer broke up the brawl, and Lewis, Bigelow, and Hughes were able to join the rest of the Riders in the terminal restaurant. The next day, Lewis left the Ride for an internship interview in Philadelphia, promising to return by Monday, May 15.⁹³

The Greyhound continued its journey through Chester, then to Winnsboro, South Carolina. There, they were briefly joined by James Peck, who had been one of the Riders on the Trailways bus that followed the Greyhound bus from Washington, D.C. After sitting together at the “Whites Only” lunch counter, Thomas and

Peck were arrested and placed in the city jail in separate Jim Crow cells. Frances Bergman, another of the Riders from the Trailways bus, stayed behind to await their release. Later that night, the police dropped Thomas off at the partially closed bus terminal, where a group of White men awaited him. Before the men could attack, a local Black minister that Bergman had called picked Thomas up and took him to the home of a local NAACP leader. The next day, Thomas and Bergman took a bus to Sumter, South Carolina, to rejoin the Riders. It was there that Mae Frances Moultrie, a student from the historically Black Morris College in South Carolina and a CORE activist, joined the Greyhound Riders. Meanwhile, Peck was detained for two more days until he was finally released and could rejoin the other Riders on the Trailways bus.⁹⁴

On Friday, May 12, the Riders boarded the Greyhound bus for Augusta, Georgia. There, they encountered resistance when a White server refused to serve Perkins and forced a Black server to do so instead. On Saturday, May 13, the group headed for Atlanta, where they were met with crowds of welcoming students. The Freedom Riders were able to test the waiting rooms and restrooms, but found the restaurant closed. That evening, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. drove up from Montgomery, where he had been attending an SCLC board meeting, to greet the Riders, praising them and offering help, but drawing the line at joining them on the next leg of the trip. King confided in journalist Simeon Booker, who had been on the Trailways bus, that there was a plot to disrupt the Ride with violence and that “you will never make it through Alabama.” Farmer already knew about the situation and warned the Riders that their nonviolent philosophy was about to be tested. Later that night, Farmer was awakened with the news that his father was near death in a Washington, D.C., hospital; after much soul-searching, he left for Washington, leaving Perkins in charge of the Greyhound group.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 111–112; Terry Gross, “Get on the Bus: The Freedom Riders of 1961,” *Fresh Air*, NPR Radio, 2006, <https://www.npr.org/2006/01/12/5149667/get-on-the-bus-the-freedom-riders-of-1961>.

⁹¹ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 118.

⁹² Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 118–119.

⁹³ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 121–124.

⁹⁴ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 125–128.

⁹⁵ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 133–135.

The Riders did not know that leaders of the Klan in Birmingham were planning to violently protest the Freedom Ride. The Klan had known about the campaign since mid-April through a series of FBI memos that had been shared by the Birmingham Police with the Klan in the region. The Alabama Klan's plan was said to resemble a full-scale military operation, starting with the assault on the Riders in Anniston, then a "mop-up action" in Birmingham. The Birmingham Klan enlisted Kenneth Adams and his Anniston klavern to "help out with the welcoming party."⁹⁶

Anniston, May 14, 1961

On Mother's Day, Sunday, May 14, the Greyhound Riders left the Atlanta terminal at 11:00 a.m. eastern time (ET) for Birmingham, with a planned stop in Anniston on the way. On the bus were Hughes, Bigelow, McDonald, Perkins, Blankenheim, Thomas, and Moultrie. Journalists Devree and Newson accompanied them. Other passengers were Roy Robinson, the manager of the Atlanta Greyhound station; corporals Ell Cowling and Harry Sims, who were

two undercover plainclothes detectives from the Alabama Highway Patrol; and one regular passenger, Gladys Cornelius. The detectives sat in the back of the bus, unknown to the Freedom Riders seated in front of them.⁹⁷

Around 12:30 p.m. ET, the bus stopped in Tallapoosa, Georgia, without incident. It reached the Alabama state line at around 1:00 p.m. ET, then briefly stopped in Heflin, Alabama. The bus then headed west through De Armanville and Oxford before turning north on State Route 21 toward Anniston. On the outskirts of Anniston a few minutes before 1:00 p.m. central time, the driver of a southbound Greyhound motioned the northbound Greyhound over to warn the driver of "an angry and unruly crowd." As the bus entered downtown, it passed sidewalks lined with people who watched its progress toward the bus depot.⁹⁸

The Greyhound bus entered downtown Anniston along Quintard Avenue, then turned left on W. 10th Street, right on Gurnee Avenue,



FIGURE 2-2. Detail from the 1956 USGS map of Anniston, annotated to show the route of the Freedom Riders' Greyhound bus on May 14, 1961. U.S. Geological Service.

⁹⁶ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 135–139. For a brief summary of Kenneth Adams's mid-century campaign of violence, see Dan Carter, "The Violent Life of Kenneth Adams: A Story of Justice Delayed," *Anniston Star*, May 14, 2021, https://www.annistonstar.com/news/anniston/the-violent-life-of-kenneth-adams-a-story-of-justice-delayed/article_fac26ca0-b41b-11eb-979b-ef5468b35fd0.html.

⁹⁷ Sprayberry, "Town Among the Trees," 245; Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 141.

⁹⁸ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 141. Note that the dividing line between the eastern and central time zones runs along the boundary between Alabama and Georgia.

and right again on W. 11th Street (Figures 2-2 and 2-3). Just opposite the county courthouse, the bus turned right into the alley between Gurnee and Noble Street, then right again into the bus depot parking lot, where it stopped in the bus driveway adjacent to the depot around 1:00 p.m. The depot was closed and locked, and the area eerily silent. The depot manager, Herman Glass, had closed up the building just after noon and retreated to a position about a half-block away to watch the action.⁹⁹

Suddenly, a mob of around fifty White men armed with pipes, clubs, and chains, and led by local Klan leader William Chappell, approached and surrounded the bus, shouting threats and obscenities. Roger Couch, an 18-year-old Klan



FIGURE 2-3. The Freedom Riders' Greyhound bus heading north on Gurnee Avenue toward W. 11th Street on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 2-4. The Freedom Riders' Greyhound bus parked under the bus awning on the south side of the bus station on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

member, lay down on the pavement in front of the bus to prevent it from moving forward, while others smashed windows, dented the bus with their weapons, and slashed its tires. The attack lasted about twenty minutes (Figures 2-4 and 2-5).

The bus driver opened the bus doors, but the two onboard detectives hurried to the front to force them closed and prevent the mob from breaking in. Although Glass had warned local law enforcement earlier in the day of the potentially violent mob, the police waited fifteen minutes before arriving at the terminal. After the police chatted for a few minutes with members of the mob, they finally forced them back to allow the bus to leave.¹⁰⁰



FIGURE 2-5. Mob crowded around the front of the Freedom Riders' Greyhound bus on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 2-6. The Freedom Riders' Greyhound bus turning left onto Gurnee Avenue on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

⁹⁹ Sprayberry, "Town Among the Trees," 241.

¹⁰⁰ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 143.

SITE HISTORY

The bus turned left from the driveway to head south on Gurnee, then right on W. 10th Street toward State Route 202 (Figures 2-6 and 2-7). As it left downtown and headed west, the bus was followed by a police escort to the edge of the city limits, at the time drawn where W. 10th Street intersected with Clydesdale Avenue. There, the police turned around and left the Riders to their fate (see Figure 2-2). The attackers followed the bus in a convoy of around thirty to forty cars; another car carried a reporter and a photographer from the *Anniston Star* (Figure 2-8). Two of the attackers' cars pulled in front of the bus, forcing it to slow down. About six miles west of Anniston, the two tires that had been slashed on the driver's side of the bus went flat. The bus was forced to pull over onto the highway shoulder in front of Forsyth & Son



FIGURE 2-7. The Greyhound bus (center) on Gurnee Avenue about to turn right onto W. 10th Street on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 2-8. View looking south on Clydesdale Avenue toward State Route 202 on May 14, 1961. The location of the Greyhound bus is circled in red. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

Grocery with the attackers in pursuit. The bus driver and Robinson leapt from the bus and hurried into the store to call for replacement tires, leaving the passengers guarded by Cowling, who pulled out a revolver and stood in the bus doorway (Figure 2-9).¹⁰¹

The attackers abandoned their cars on the side of the highway behind the bus and for the next half-hour surrounded and attacked the bus again with pipes, chains, and clubs, shouting threats. Couch and mob member Cecil "Goober" Lewallyn ran around the bus, smashing windows with tire irons. The mob attack continued, even after the arrival of two state highway patrolmen, who made no effort to break up the riot.

Couch and Lewallyn ran back to a car, where Lewallyn reached in and grabbed a homemade firebomb. Approaching a broken rear window of the bus, he lit the device and tossed it in. The device exploded in flames, and dark grey smoke spread quickly through the inside of the bus. The attackers held the bus door shut to prevent the Riders from escaping, but two or three of the younger Riders climbed through broken bus windows and dropped to the pavement below. Not until Cowling brandished his revolver at the attackers were the other Riders able to escape through the bus doors. The surrounding mob finally dispersed after one of the bus's rear fuel tanks exploded. After the second fuel tank



FIGURE 2-9. Freedom Riders sitting in the bus while the mob surrounds them on May 14, 1961. El Cowling is standing in the doorway. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

¹⁰¹ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 144.

exploded, a state highway patrolman who had been casually watching the riot fired some shots into the air, signaling the end of the “would-be lynching party” (Figure 2-10).¹⁰²

Smoke from the fire was visible for miles throughout the countryside as the Anniston Fire Department tried to extinguish the blaze (Figure 2-11). Many of the Riders who had escaped the bus collapsed on the ground, choking and vomiting from smoke inhalation (Figures 2-12 and 2-13). A taxi driver who had cursed the



FIGURE 2-10. View of State Route 202, looking east toward Anniston on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 2-11. Anniston Fire Department working to put out the bus fire on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

Riders earlier in the day administered oxygen and offered rides to the hospital. Some neighbors invited a few of the Riders into their homes for water. Most notable was 12-year-old Janie Forsyth, one of the daughters of grocer Richard Forsyth, who brought cups and buckets of water to the Riders and tended to the injured. Other neighbors allowed Hughes to use their phone to call for an ambulance; when there was no answer, they drove her to the hospital. Meanwhile, the attackers' families, dressed in their best Sunday clothes, stood around to watch the scene, as did most of the other neighbors.¹⁰³

The state troopers eventually called for an ambulance. At first, the ambulance driver refused to transport any of the injured Black passengers, so the White patients who had already been loaded into the ambulance climbed back out. After a scolding by Cowling, the driver relented and allowed the mixed group to ride together to the hospital. In all, thirteen passengers were taken to Anniston Memorial Hospital for treatment, including some of the Freedom Riders.



FIGURE 2-12. Freedom Riders and other passengers resting in the Forsyth's front yard on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

¹⁰² Sprayberry, “Town Among the Trees,” 243–247; Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 144–146.

¹⁰³ Sprayberry, “Town Among the Trees,” 247–249; Stanley Nelson, dir., “Freedom Riders,” “The Young Witness,” clip. American Experience, PBS.

<https://www.pbs.org/video/american-experience-the-young-witness-a-short-film-from-freedom-riders/>; Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 145–146.

When the ambulance reached the hospital, it was met by a group of Klansmen, who tried to block the emergency room entrance. The medical staff resisted treating the Black passengers; finally, threatened by the Klan, the hospital superintendent ordered the Riders to leave. State troopers and local police refused to help, and it took Perkins an hour to arrange for the Riders' safe passage. Finally, he called Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth in Birmingham, who organized a convoy of eight cars, driven by armed men, to head to Anniston; the Riders finally made it out of town by sunset heading to Birmingham where they received medical treatment and were taken to a safe house.¹⁰⁴

Meanwhile, the Trailways bus carrying Freedom Riders departed Atlanta for Anniston shortly after the Greyhound bus. It had just left the terminal when a group of passengers—later identified as Alabama Klansmen—began to verbally harass the Freedom Riders. After buying lunch at the Anniston Trailways depot, the Riders reboarded. While the bus was still parked at the depot, Riders Charles Person, Herman Harris, and Walter Bergman were attacked and beaten by the Klansmen. The police were called but did nothing except assure the Klansmen that there would be no arrests. The bus finally left Anniston but took the back roads to



FIGURE 2-13. One of the Freedom Riders trying to recover from smoke inhalation on May 14, 1961. Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

Birmingham to avoid a mob waiting on the main highway. The Trailways bus was met in Birmingham by a mob of Klansmen, backed by the local police under orders of Police Commissioner Bull Connor not to intervene or protect the Riders. As the Freedom Riders left the bus, they were attacked and beaten by the mob with baseball bats, iron pipes, and bicycle chains. The wounded Riders were taken to local hospitals for treatment, then transported to Rev. Shuttlesworth's home to join other Riders to rest and plan for the bus ride to their next stop, Montgomery, the following day.¹⁰⁵

By morning on Monday, May 15, President John Kennedy and Attorney General Robert Kennedy had been alerted to the situation. At first, both men claimed to be blindsided by the crises, although the attorney general had been informed about the Rides on the evening of May 3 before the Riders left Washington, D.C. The Kennedys' first reaction was to downplay the significance of the events, but the Sunday evening and Monday morning flood of news articles and horrific photographs of injuries made complacency impossible. After learning that the Riders planned to continue to Montgomery Monday afternoon, the attorney general asked his aide, John Seigenthaler, to help organize a police escort. Meanwhile, the manager of the Birmingham Greyhound station canceled the 3:00 bus to Montgomery. Although the attorney general demanded that he make good on his schedule, the manager replied that none of his regular drivers were willing to take the trip because of the reports of mobs gathering on the planned route to Montgomery and at the terminal. By five o'clock that afternoon, the Freedom Riders, weary of the standoff, decided to leave Birmingham by airplane. Seigenthaler arranged for an Eastern Airlines plane to take the Freedom Riders from Birmingham to New Orleans, where they would appear at a civil rights rally.¹⁰⁶

Not satisfied with this solution, the Nashville Student Movement sent a fresh group of ten young people to Birmingham to continue the Ride. The students, accompanied by other Riders, some journalists, and one Justice Department official, left Birmingham for

¹⁰⁴ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 146–148.

¹⁰⁵ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 148–160.

¹⁰⁶ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 164–176.

Montgomery on a Greyhound bus on Saturday, May 20. In Montgomery, the Riders were brutally attacked by another mob. In a much more decisive response this time, Robert Kennedy immediately sent federal marshals to the city to stop the violence. During the next few days, more volunteers arrived in Montgomery to replace the ones still in the hospital. Two busloads of Freedom Riders left Montgomery for Jackson, Mississippi, on May 24, followed by another bus to Jackson on May 28. All the Freedom Riders on those three buses were arrested and jailed in Jackson.¹⁰⁷

Despite requests by the Kennedy administration for a “cooling-off period,” CORE, SNCC, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) escalated the campaign that summer, forming a Freedom Riders Coordinating Committee to keep the Rides going well into September. From May to mid-September, hundreds of Riders crossed the South to complete the Freedom Rides, most converging on Jackson; by the end of the summer, Jackson police had arrested over 300.¹⁰⁸

On May 29, Attorney General Kennedy petitioned the ICC to comply with the *Sarah Keys v. Carolina Coach Company* and *Boynton v. Virginia* rulings, but it was not until September 22 that the ICC issued the necessary orders, which would go into effect on November 1, 1961. Under the new rule, passengers could sit wherever they wanted on interstate buses and trains. “White” and “Colored” signs were removed from terminals, racially segregated drinking fountains, and toilets. Some waiting rooms serving interstate passengers were consolidated and some dining establishments in terminals were opened to all customers regardless of race.¹⁰⁹

Arrests Made

Most of Anniston’s city leaders condemned the attacks on the Freedom Riders. The editor of the *Anniston Star*, Harry M. Ayers, wrote in his May 15 editorial that “no thoughtful person

wants to come to a place where both human and property rights are held in such low repute.” Their reaction set a trend among the elite of finally speaking up against local “hateful and brutal bigots” in concern over “the ruinous publicity that we received all around the literate world.” One of the first actions by city officials was to demand “full disclosure” of local police activity related to the Freedom Ride events.¹¹⁰

The FBI began investigating the bus attacks within hours, starting in west Anniston where the Klan leaders lived. Within two weeks, they had arrested four men—Roger Couch, Frank D. Johnson, Jerry Eason, and Dalford Roberts—and charged them with the destruction of a motor vehicle engaged in interstate commerce. During the next few weeks, the FBI arrested six others: Kenneth Adams, William Chappell, Frank Tolbert, Goober Lewallyn, and Jerry Z. Willingham, all from Anniston, as well as Roger’s older brother Jerome Couch from Munford, a crossroads community southwest of Anniston. On September 1, seven of the ten men were indicted by a federal grand jury in Birmingham. Roberts became a witness for the prosecution, while Lewallyn was in a coma in the hospital after an unrelated car accident and Roger Couch was in the county jail for burglary. The same day, Eason, Johnson, and Willingham were released on bond. Kenneth Adams threatened to sue the FBI for false imprisonment and for violating his constitutional rights, claiming that it was the Freedom Riders themselves who set fire to the bus. On October 9, eight of the ten men originally arrested were arraigned and pled not guilty: Adams, Johnson, Willingham, Chappell, Eason, Tolbert, and Roger and Jerome Couch. Lewallyn did not appear in court because he was still too ill, and Roberts was serving as a witness for the prosecution.¹¹¹

The trial began in Birmingham on November 1, 1961, with U.S. District Judge H. Hobart Grooms presiding. Almost fifty witnesses for the prosecution took the stand, including Robinson, Postiglione, and highway patrolman T.J. O’Flinn,

¹⁰⁷ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 259–303.

¹⁰⁸ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 343–476.

¹⁰⁹ Arsenault, *Freedom Riders*, 343–476.

¹¹⁰ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 250–253.

¹¹¹ Cody Hall, “Four Arrested Here by FBI and Charged for Bus Burning,” *Anniston Star*, May 23,

1961; “Nine Indicted in Bus Burning Incident,” *Anniston Star*, September 1, 1961; “3 Released in Bus Case,” *Anniston Star*, September 2, 1961; “In Bus Incident ‘Not Guilty’ Pleas Entered by Eight,” *Anniston Star*, October 9, 1961; Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 263–265.

but the defense counsel called no witnesses. Four of the jurors reported being contacted by representatives of the defendants during the trial but were allowed to continue on the jury. On the morning of November 3, the judge released Adams from custody, saying that there was not enough evidence to convict him. That afternoon, the foreman announced that the jury was “hopelessly deadlocked.” The judge declared a mistrial, and the rest of the defendants were set free. A second trial was set for February 1962 in Birmingham, but the accused entered a plea of “no contest,” so there was no trial. The judge sentenced Roger Couch to a year in the state prison, while Chappell, Johnson, Willingham, Eason, and Jerome Couch each got one year of probation. Charges against Tolbert were dismissed for lack of evidence and those against Lewallyn dismissed due to his injuries.¹¹²

Recovery and Reconciliation, 1962–1999

Starting in 1962, Anniston began to recover from its worst period of racial conflict with help from a new biracial advisory group, the Human Relations Council. Despite a slow improvement in race relations locally, racial incidents continued well into the early 1970s.

In the 1970s, however, Anniston’s economy began to suffer as locally produced cast iron was replaced with plastic pipe manufactured outside the United States. Local plants began to close, and Anniston saw a rise in unemployment to seventeen percent.

Meanwhile, children and adults who lived and worked in west Anniston began to suffer from myriad health problems, including cancer, headaches, birth defects, low IQ scores in children, and respiratory distress. Testing revealed that the area was polluted from the PCBs that Monsanto had been discharging into Snow Creek and dumping in two local landfills.

In 1971, the plant stopped making PCBs, but tests continued to show elevated levels of the compound in fish caught downstream. The company did not warn the public of this hazard until 1993, when an angler caught a deformed fish, forcing the Alabama Department of Public Health to issue a warning. In 1996, three lawsuits, each with multiple plaintiffs, were filed against Monsanto. In 1997, Monsanto divested the plant to a subsidiary named Solutia, Inc.¹¹³

In 1999, just three years after the Monsanto lawsuits were filed, the U.S. Army’s Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission closed Fort McClellan to federal use. At that time, it was home to the U.S. Army Chemical School, Military Police School, Training Brigade, and Department of Defense Polygraph Institute, which were relocated, leaving only the Alabama National Guard training center and Officer Candidate School. Before it closed, Fort McClellan had employed around 10,000 military personnel, about half of whom were on permanent assignment, as well as 1,500 civilians. Upon the fort’s closure Anniston lost around 3,000 residents, along with the economic generator that the fort represented.¹¹⁴

At the same time, local business leaders began to promote historic preservation in the city. In 1981, Anniston’s city council approved restrictive zoning on the downtown portion of Quintard Avenue to “protect [its] parkway nature” after the street was designated a state highway. In 1993, the Spirit of Anniston Main Street Program, Inc., was created by local business leaders to revitalize the old downtown shopping district, preserve historic landmarks, refurbish storefronts, and attract new businesses to Noble Street. In 1994, Georgia Calhoun, Anniston resident and member of the Black Heritage Council, asked the Anniston City Council to set aside a site to commemorate the May 14, 1961, burning of the Freedom Riders’ Greyhound bus. “I’m always kind of

¹¹² Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 268–270.

¹¹³ Dennis Love, *My City Was Gone: One American Town’s Toxic Secret, Its Angry Band of Locals, and a \$700 Million Day in Court* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2007); “Poisoned by PCBs: Thirty Years Later, Court Documents Reveal Monsanto’s Toll on an Alabama Town,” *The Inside Story*, <http://www.chemicalindustryarchives.org/dirtysecrets/anniston/1.asp>; “Bates v. Stewart,” FindLaw, [https://caselaw.findlaw.com/al-supreme-](https://caselaw.findlaw.com/al-supreme-court/1599558.html)

[court/1599558.html](https://caselaw.findlaw.com/al-supreme-court/1599558.html); U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Anniston PCB Site (Monsanto Co), Anniston, Alabama, Cleanup Activities*, <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.Cleanup&id=0400123#bkground>.

¹¹⁴ Geni Certain, “Fort McClellan,” *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-3525>.

embarrassed and hurt when an anniversary comes by and nothing is out there,” she said. The city council declined to get involved since the site was outside its jurisdiction.¹¹⁵ This attitude would change as a movement started to commemorate Anniston’s civil rights events.

Race Relations in Anniston

Anniston’s Black community reacted strongly to the violence of May 14, 1961, and the inaction of the all-White police force. In early 1962, Rev. William B. (Bob) McClain, pastor of the all-Black Haven Chapel Methodist Church, and Rev. Nimrod Q. Reynolds, pastor of the all-Black Seventeenth Street Missionary Baptist Church, paid a visit to Rev. J. Phillips (Phil) Noble, the pastor of the all-White First Presbyterian Church. They described to Noble “the low-paying jobs, the treatment of black employees in janitorial and other positions of low esteem, the police brutality, the false arrests, the harassment of black people in general, the injustice to not register black people to vote, [and] segregation and its indefensiveness.” The three pastors wept and prayed together and pledged to act. The group organized a meeting with Rev. George Smitherman, pastor of the all-Black Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, and Rev. Alvin Bullen, pastor of the all-White Grace Episcopal Church. All five pastors agreed to work together to “build some bridges of communication” between the races to avoid more violence.¹¹⁶

Together, the ministers arranged larger gatherings of the local Black and White ministerial associations. Soon, the two groups were meeting monthly, eventually merging into one organization called the Anniston Ministerial Association (AMA). The AMA publicly opposed the activities of the Klan in various ways, including in letters to the editor of the *Anniston Star*. Local segregationist pushback included threatening anonymous phone calls to AMA

members and stalking of members by the highway patrol. In spring 1962, voters elected Claude Dear as mayor and Miller Sproull as finance commissioner, both of whom agreed to establish a biracial committee to advise the city administration on soothing racial turmoil. It would take a year for them to follow through on that promise.¹¹⁷

Meanwhile, on February 22, 1963, the *Anniston Star* reported that 200 children of Fort McClellan’s military would be removed from Anniston public schools and placed into desegregated schools on the base. This action was taken in response to a federal mandate to desegregate schools at military bases in the South, issued after the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare announced that children required to attend segregated schools do not get a “suitable” education. The segregated Anniston school system would also lose some federal funding, along with eight teachers, a move that was criticized by the local superintendent of schools.¹¹⁸

That April, Annistonians would have also been following the news of the “Birmingham Campaign,” a direct action organized by SCLC and Birmingham’s Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights to challenge the city’s system of segregation. On April 3, 1963, Birmingham campaigners began a series of mass meetings, lunch counter and public library sit-ins, kneel-ins at churches, marches on the Birmingham city hall and the Jefferson County administrative building, and boycotts of downtown White merchants who discriminated in their public facilities. Hundreds were arrested, including Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who was kept in solitary confinement, where he wrote his famous “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”¹¹⁹

On May 1, several of Anniston’s Black leaders formed the Calhoun County Improvement

¹¹⁵ Camille A. Bowman, “Quintard Avenue Median,” Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage Nomination Form, March 5, 1992; “About Us,” Spirit of Anniston, <https://spiritofanniston.org/about-us>; Brian Anderson, “Group Seeks Feedback on Freedom Riders Park Design,” *Anniston Star*, September 17, 2013, 8A; Dan Whisenhunt, “Marking History: Monument to Honor Freedom Riders Could Be in Works,” *Anniston Star*, May 14, 2006, 1B.

¹¹⁶ Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 42–48.

¹¹⁷ Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 69–73.

¹¹⁸ “On-Base School Is Scheduled for Fort McClellan Students: Plans Will Affect Some 280 Children,” *Anniston Star*, February 22, 1963, 1, 15.

¹¹⁹ “Birmingham Campaign, April 3, 1963, to May 10, 1963,” *The King Encyclopedia*, The Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/birmingham-campaign>.

Association (CCIA). Led by Rev. Reynolds, the CCIA became active in local civil rights causes, including voter registration, letters to city officials, picketing, and selective buying campaigns to encourage stores to desegregate and hire Black staff. Soon the group became affiliated with SCLC.¹²⁰

Local White supremacist reactions to the CCIA protests were swift and violent. On the morning of Mother's Day, May 12, 1963, a group of White men fired shotguns into the homes of two Black families and into St. John's Methodist Church; fortunately, no one was killed or injured. Compared to their response to the bus burning, the reaction of local police to the shootings was immediate. On May 20, the *Anniston Star* announced that the new police commissioner Jack Suggs had arrested Kenneth Adams in connection with the incidents. He also arrested William H. Boyd, Jr. in connection with another shooting the same afternoon, when Boyd, a passenger in a car driven by Adams, shot at a car driven by two women who had their children with them.¹²¹

The Human Relations Council

The Mother's Day shootings were the final push the mayor needed to go through with plans to establish the long-awaited biracial committee. On May 16, the City Commission adopted Resolution Number 3152, creating the Human Relations Council (HRC). The HRC, headed by Rev. Noble, was composed of nine Anniston citizens who were charged with making recommendations to the Board of Commissioners to improve racial relations. On May 20, the *Anniston Star* reported that the HRC was supported by local businesspeople and industrialists who understood that it was difficult to sell Anniston as a location for industry with "the spectre of racial clashes hanging over the city like the acrid smoke from a dynamite blast."¹²²

The HRC began by addressing issues that its Black members brought to light, including

occupational discrimination and segregation. Local Black workers were given primarily menial jobs in most industries, and labor unions were segregated. African Americans were not represented in retail or office environments, nor were there any Black police or firefighters. Public facilities were closed to Black citizens, including the main library, swimming pools, and golf courses, while public parks were segregated. Theaters and churches were segregated, and Black customers were not allowed to dine in White-owned restaurants. Public restrooms and drinking fountains were still signed "White" and "Colored." The Black members of the HRC did not demand immediate action, but the city council knew that progress must be made toward positive change to keep peace in the city.¹²³

By September 1963, after the HRC had met with local managers of retail chains, "White" and "Colored" signs were removed from drinking fountains and bathroom doors, and several lunch counters had been integrated. On the other hand, on September 15, when two local Black ministers attempted to integrate Anniston's "Whites Only" Carnegie Anniston Public Library, they were met by a mob of Klansmen. Rev. Reynolds was beaten to the ground and taken to the hospital by Rev. McClain. The police did not arrive until the event was over, but the next day the police agreed to accompany the same two men, along with White members of the HRC, as they entered the library and successfully borrowed books, officially desegregating the library. Four White men were arrested for assault with intent to murder, but only one was indicted. The same day, five Black teenagers attacked a White man as he walked down the street, and the Black owner of a café in Central City, west of Anniston, reported shotgun blasts by an unknown person into her restaurant that night. The five teenagers were arrested, and one was indicted.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 69.

¹²¹ Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 90–92; "Rewards Grow in Shooting Incident Here," *Anniston Star*, May 13, 1963, 1; and Cody Hall, "Adams Booked in Shooting Incident," *Anniston Star*, May 20, 1963, 1.

¹²² Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 73–85.

¹²³ Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 102–103.

¹²⁴ Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 108–121; King and Schneider, "Downtown Anniston Historic District," 8-46 through 8-47. For more details, refer to Gary S. Sprayberry, "'One Doesn't Integrate on Sunday': The Creation of the Human Relations Council and the Origins of Desegregation in Anniston, Alabama, 1961–1963," *The Alabama*

In 1964, Annistonians saw the gradual desegregation of theaters, public golf courses, and some restaurants. Although there were no personal attacks reported that year, there was a bombing at the local radio station after an announcer had asked for law and order. Roses Variety Store was tear-gassed after desegregating its lunch counter, and the entrance of the Anniston Hardware Company was dynamited because its owner, finance commissioner Miller Sproull, had appointed the biracial council. In September 1964, the CCIA paid for a full-page announcement in the *Anniston Star* called the “Anniston Manifesto,” asking for immediate action, stating that Black people were ready to be full citizens of their “Model City.”¹²⁵ In response, local segregationist Charlie Keyes published “Reply to Anniston Manifesto” in his newsletter, *The Keyes Report*. There, he warned that rapid desegregation would lead to the destruction of the country and the “mongrelization” of the races.¹²⁶

On May 1, 1964, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who had been invited to Anniston by Revs. Reynolds and McClain, spoke to a crowd of over 1,000 people at the Seventeenth Street Missionary Baptist Church. King warned listeners of hard days to come while encouraging them to work for victory nonviolently. Afterwards, activists passed out sample ballots as Rev. Ralph Abernathy spoke to the assembly.¹²⁷

On March 20, 1965, Dr. Gordon Rodgers, Anniston dentist and the president of the state NAACP, along with Rev. Reynolds, filed a suit in the federal district court against Anniston Memorial Hospital for maintaining segregated wards.

In response to the suit and other progress made by the HRC, about one hundred local Klan members led by Kenneth Adams held a rally on July 15 at the county courthouse. That night, fueled by speaker Connie Lynch’s angry racist rhetoric, a carload of White men randomly shot

at the back window a car transporting three Black workers on their way home from the Anniston Pipe Foundry. One of the bullets hit the driver, 38-year-old Willie Brewster, in the spine. After three days in the hospital with his pregnant wife Lestine at his side, Brewster died. Lestine lost her baby to miscarriage a month later.¹²⁸

Within twelve hours of the shooting, \$20,000 had been raised toward a reward for identifying the shooters. Coming forward to claim the award, a local man testified to hearing that Hubert Damon Strange, an employee of Adams, had been the shooter. Strange, along with two of his companions in the shooting, Johnny Ira Defries and Lewis Blevins, were arrested and indicted in August; Strange was convicted, but his companions were eventually acquitted. It was the first time during the civil rights era that a White person was convicted of killing a Black person in Alabama. Strange was never jailed because he was killed in a bar fight while out on bond pending an appeal.¹²⁹

Local Progress

The HRC, which had been originally appointed for a one-year term, was reappointed in 1964, after which it appears to have dissolved. Still, local progress continued to be made, although there continued to be setbacks. In 1965, U.S. District Judge Hobart Grooms, who had presided over the first trial connected with the violence against the Freedom Riders, ordered three cafes in Anniston and a service station to serve Black customers. In April 1965, Superintendent J. Reavis Hall announced plans to desegregate Anniston schools. In 1968, in a citywide referendum, Anniston voters agreed to transform the local government from a three-person commission to a council-manager government. Supporters hoped that through this approach, the mayor and his commission, accused by many citizens of mismanaging the civil rights crises, could be removed and the city

Review 61: 2 (April 2008), 105–138.

¹²⁵ “Anniston Manifesto,” *Anniston Star*, September 13, 1964, 7.

¹²⁶ Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 123–130.

¹²⁷ “Hot Blast: When Martin Luther King Jr. Visited Anniston,” *Anniston Star*, January 21, 2019, <https://www.annistonstar.com/opinion/hotblast/hot->

[blast-when-martin-luther-king-jr-visited-anniston/article_49f53c26-1d88-11e9-a9fc-97cf75223d56.html](https://www.annistonstar.com/opinion/hotblast/hot-blast-when-martin-luther-king-jr-visited-anniston/article_49f53c26-1d88-11e9-a9fc-97cf75223d56.html).

¹²⁸ Sara Bullard, *Free at Last: A History of the Civil Rights Movement and Those Who Died in the Struggle* (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 1993), 84-85; Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 131–134.

¹²⁹ Bullard, *Free at Last*, 84-85; Noble, *Beyond the Burning Bus*, 131–134.

could start over with a clean slate. In 1969, local public schools were officially integrated but in practice, they saw very little change until the city implemented a new neighborhood zoning plan that included combining the two segregated high schools into one large city-wide school. Meanwhile, African Americans in Anniston continued to fight for civil rights, marching and picketing to protest unfair hiring practices in which Whites were given the best jobs, leaving them with the poorest paid work.¹³⁰

The last known major series of racial incidents in Anniston occurred in 1971. On October 1, a 15-year-old Black male student at the newly integrated Wellborn High School was suspended after a White female student told the principal that the youth and some other Black students had attacked her. On October 26, a group around fifty Black students protested the suspension of another Black student for “violent misconduct” by walking out of classes and creating disturbances in the halls; those students were also suspended and removed from the campus by bus. The next day around one hundred concerned parents issued a list of grievances to the school board, citing the unfair expulsion of Black students, the playing of “Dixie,” the display of the Confederate flag, separate assemblies of Black and White students, and exclusion of Black students from extracurricular activities. These parents requested amnesty for the expelled students. On October 27, around one hundred Black students and their parents staged a sit-in at the county school board offices, where they were all arrested and charged with trespass. On October 28, the superintendent agreed to meet with them, along with Rev. Reynolds and Rev. John Nettles, pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church. Added to the list of grievances were accusations of the school transporting students on segregated buses and the principal and teachers physical handling Black students “to the point of violence.” The parents asked that the current principal be dismissed and that the school board

immediately appoint a biracial group of students and parents to handle all grievances. The principal, however, denied all accusations and stood firm on the playing of “Dixie.”¹³¹

On November 1, state troopers were sent into Anniston after six White-owned retail businesses reported firebombings late the previous evening and early morning. Several shootings were also reported with four persons wounded, including at the Downtowner Motel. Rev. Nettles’s home was also shot into.¹³²

While other racial incidents occurred during the following years, tensions began to ease. Several leading local civil rights activists were either elected to the city council or appointed to important boards, including the school board. In 1978, the National Civic League gave Anniston its annual All-America City Award for the city’s management of the racial crises.¹³³

Post-Army Era, 2000–present

In the past twenty-two years, the federal government and local leaders have taken action to address Anniston’s environmental problems, including Monsanto’s PCB pollution, hazardous materials at the old Fort McClellan site, and the chemical weapons being stored at the U.S. Army Depot. Meanwhile, Anniston’s population continued to grow. Traffic increased in the city, so the State of Alabama constructed the eastern and western bypasses to remove through traffic from Quintard Avenue. Anniston citizens also became more interested in historic preservation and commemoration of the civil rights movement in Anniston, including the Freedom Rides.

In 2003, the three lawsuits against Monsanto were consolidated into *Sabrina Abernathy et al. v. Monsanto Company et al*, resulting in a \$700 million settlement for claims filed by over 20,000 Anniston residents affected by decades of PCB contamination. The settlement included \$600 million in cash and another \$100 million to

¹³⁰ Sprayberry, “‘Town Among the Trees,’” 399–404; Noble, 135–136; King and Schneider, “Downtown Anniston Historic District,” 8–48 through 8–49.

¹³¹ Mike Sherman, “136 Arrested in Disorder at Wellborn,” *Anniston Star*, October 27, 1971, 1, 6; Frank Brock and Mike Sherman, “Blacks Crowd Courthouse, Meet with School Board,” *Anniston Star*, October 28, 1971, 1, 7.

¹³² Frank Brock and Mike Sherman, “Blockade around Area Lifted: Violent Night Leaves 3 Shot, 6 Businesses Damaged,” *Anniston Star*, November 1, 1971, 1, 9; King and Schneider, “Downtown Anniston Historic District,” 8–49.

¹³³ “All-American City Winners,” National Civic League, <https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/america-city-award/past-winners/>.

cover cleanup costs, along with prescription drug and other health care programs.¹³⁴

The area designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the “Anniston PCB site” was treated using the EPA’s “Superfund alternative approach.” This involved removing residences and businesses from contaminated sites, removing and treating contaminated soils and sediments, and capping contaminated areas.¹³⁵ The aftermath of this treatment can be observed today in the form of acres of fenced-in vacant lots that flank the western end of W. 10th Street and the section of Clydesdale Avenue from W. 10th to State Route 202, which is part of the historic route of the Greyhound bus from downtown to Forsyth & Son Grocery.

Also in 2003, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established the Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge on 9,016 acres of undeveloped land of the former Fort McClellan. The refuge contains some of the last remaining stands of mountain longleaf pine in the Southeast. Today, it is managed as part of the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge Complex, which includes six other refuges in the ecological region that have a related purpose and management needs.¹³⁶

In 2009, Governor Bob Riley signed an act to authorize development of Alabama’s closed military installations. In 2010, the McClellan Development Authority was established to manage the economic development of Fort McClellan. Ordnance cleanup, which had started at Fort McClellan in 2002, was completed in 2013 after eleven years of environmental remediation. The site has since become a master-planned, mixed-use community called “McClellan,” hosting residential, commercial, industrial, retail,

education, research, and technology development.¹³⁷

In 2003, the army began to incinerate the cache of 660,000 chemical weapons stored at the U.S. Army Depot. An M-55 rocket was the first of millions of pounds of these weapons to be burned at the Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility. Although army officials assured the public that the incineration was safe, they issued protective gear to residents around the site. In 2012, the U.S. Army completed destruction of the last of its stockpile of chemical weapons. The incinerator was closed in 2013.¹³⁸

Freedom Rider’s Park

In 2005, Black Heritage Council member Georgia Calhoun, who had first introduced the idea of commemorating the civil rights movement in 1994, joined Pete Conroy, director of Jacksonville State University’s Environmental Policy and Information Center, Alabama State Representative Barbara Boyd, and Calhoun County District 2 Commissioner Robert Downing to discuss a potential memorial at the Bus Burning Site. The group had its eye on a spot near where Forsyth & Son Grocery had stood, which would be accessible from the Old Birmingham Highway and visible from State Route 202. Two years later, the Theta Tau chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., of Anniston, with support from Mrs. Calhoun, funded an Alabama Historical Commission-sponsored marker at the site of the bus burning. In 2009, Calhoun County acquired the Bus Burning Site from the State of Alabama.¹³⁹

In 2010, the City of Anniston’s Civil Rights Trail Committee, a local nonprofit group called the Spirit of Anniston, the Alabama Department of Tourism, and the Alabama Historical

¹³⁴ “\$700 Million Settlement in Alabama PCB Lawsuit,” *New York Times*, August 21, 2003.

¹³⁵ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “Anniston PCB Site (Monsanto Co) Anniston, AL, Cleanup Activities” <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.cleanup&id=0400123>

¹³⁶ “Fort McClellan,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_McClellan.

¹³⁷ “Fort McClellan,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_McClellan.

¹³⁸ Jeffrey Gettleman, “Army Begins Burning Biological Weapons in Alabama Town,” *New York*

Times, August 10, 2003; Leada Gore, “One Year after Last Chemical Weapon Destroyed, Incinerator at Anniston Army Depot Closed,” *Advance Local*, May 8, 2013, updated March 6, 2019.

¹³⁹ Ana Rodriguez, “History Group Honors Local Resident,” *Anniston Star*, May 22, 2012, 5A; Dan Whisenhunt, “Marking History: Monument to Honor Freedom Riders Could Be in Works,” *Anniston Star*, May 14, 2006, 1B; “Memorial for Freedom Riders Planned,” *Clarion-Ledger* (Jackson, MS), March 10, 2007, 11; Calhoun County tax assessment reports for parcel numbers 22-05-16-0-002-044.000, 22-05-16-0-001-054.000, and 22-05-16-0-005-038.000.

SITE HISTORY

Commission's Black Heritage Council began to collaborate on a plan for a civil rights trail through the city. The trail would have nine stops at key civil rights sites, including the former Greyhound bus depot, the former Trailways depot, and the Anniston Memorial Hospital.¹⁴⁰

The four groups also planned several events in May 2011 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic Freedom Rides. The first was the May 10 screening of Stanley Nelson's "Freedom Riders" documentary. On May 11, the four organizations hosted a reception at the Anniston-Calhoun County Public Library to honor several of the original Freedom Riders, as well as the forty college students who had been chosen from hundreds of applicants to re-create the first Freedom Ride. The reception also served as the opening of the library's exhibit of Joe Postiglione's photographs of the attack on the Freedom Riders in Anniston. Hank Thomas attended the opening and was greeted with a hug from Richard Couch, whose father Jerome had been one of his attackers in 1961.¹⁴¹

Prior to the reception, Rep. Barbara Boyd spoke at the site of the bus burning about expanding the site for the planned monument into a new park that would provide more opportunities to commemorate the events of May 14, 1961. She described the future park as "a place of hope" that would include interpretive signs about the civil rights struggles in Anniston, the bus burning, and local reaction to the event. She reported that the group planning the park, which included herself, Pete Conroy, Georgia Calhoun, Phil Noble, and county commissioners, hoped to break ground in the summer of 2011 but had raised only a portion of the funds needed. That September, Calhoun County received a donation of \$67,555 from Jacksonville State University for the park.¹⁴²

The official park groundbreaking for Freedom Riders Park occurred in October 2012. The event included an unveiling of the park sign by Cobb Elementary students, along with speeches and poetry readings. The Freedom Riders Park Development Committee reported that the site was to be part green space and part museum, and displayed a concept sketch created by Steve Lewis, a California architect. The committee also announced that it needed \$2.5 million to complete the park as visualized.¹⁴³

On September 16-17, 2013, Lewis led a design charrette with members of the Freedom Riders Park Development Committee at the McClellan Center of Jacksonville State University. Participants included Boyd, Anniston attorney Charlie Doster, Conroy, Calhoun, and Toby Bennington, Director of Planning and Economic Development for the City of Anniston. To generate ideas, Lewis showed slides of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., and the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, Germany.¹⁴⁴

In October 2013, the State of Alabama Department of Transportation announced that it had allotted \$10,000 from Boyd's Legislative Community Service Grant funds to develop and maintain Freedom Riders Park. In August 2014, Calhoun County donated another \$10,000 through the Northeast Alabama Community Foundation. These funds were combined with Boyd's grant and \$25,000 donated by an unnamed national corporation. In summer 2015, Alabama Power's Eastern Division donated \$34,000 toward a Freedom Riders memorial. In January 2016, the park planning group received a \$25,000 grant for the park from the Coosa Valley Resource Conservation and Development Council.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ National Park Service, *Drive Through Anniston Civil Rights History*, <https://www.nps.gov/thingstodo/anniston-civil-rights-trail.htm>.

¹⁴¹ Laura Camper, "Anniston to Honor Freedom Riders," *Anniston Star*, September 8, 2010, 10A; Laura Camper, "Open Arms: Anniston Welcomes the Return of the Freedom Riders," *Anniston Star*, May 12, 2011, 1, 10.

¹⁴² Laura Camper, "Freedom Riders Park to Be Built," *Anniston Star*, May 12, 2011, 10; Laura Johnson, "Calhoun County Budget Balanced," *Anniston Star*, September 23, 2011, 7A.

¹⁴³ Laura Camper, "Freedom Riders Park Breaks Ground," *Anniston Star*, October 19, 2012, 1.

¹⁴⁴ Brian Anderson, "Group Seeks Feedback on Freedom Riders Park Design," *Anniston Star*, September 17, 2013, 8A; Bob Davis, "Freedom's Symbolism," *Anniston Star*, September 22, 2013, 2D.

¹⁴⁵ Donna Cope, "Freedom Rider Park: From a Burning Bus to Fanning the Flames of Progress," Alabama Power's Alabama Newscenter, July 30, 2015, <https://alabamanewscenter.com/2015/07/30/freedom-rider-park/>; Brian Anderson, "\$20M in State Funds to Aid 15 County Road Projects," *Anniston Star*, October 11, 2013, 4; Daniel Gaddy, "Calhoun

A New National Monument

In spring 2014, Pete Conroy and Hank Thomas visited National Park Service offices in Atlanta to pitch the idea of turning the park into an NPS unit. Conroy reported that “we’re discussing the possibility of some kind of designation for the park,” referencing the designation of the Edmund Pettus Bridge as a national historic landmark in 2013.¹⁴⁶ He also reported that the Freedom Riders Park Development Committee was still working on a design for the park that would include a statue depicting Janie Forsyth giving a glass of water to Thomas. He said that they need \$200,000 to start construction but had only \$100,000 so far. Conroy reported that the committee was teaming with Southern Custom Exhibits of Anniston to help plan the project, and that they would send out a request for proposal for the park master plan.¹⁴⁷

The group chose Holloman Architecture, PA, of Jackson, Mississippi, to produce the master plan, paying \$30,000. On May 29, 2015, the committee held a public meeting attended by forty-nine residents so that citizens could view the plan. About the design, architect Bud Holloman explained that the park would have two sections: “One would be kept pristine and reserved for the exact site where the bus came to a stop and [was] set on fire,” while the other part would tell the story of the bus riders, the Freedom Rides in general, and the specific events leading to the bus burning. In addition to the statue of Forsyth and Thomas, a row of seven stones would represent the seats of the seven riders. Mayor Vaughn Stewart said that although the site is outside the city limits, the city still supports the completion of the park. Ben West, NPS planning and compliance regional chief, also attended the meeting and announced that, based on a request by U.S. Senator Richard Shelby, the National Park Service would do a reconnaissance survey

of the site of the bus burning to determine its national significance.¹⁴⁸

On July 14, 2016, U.S. Representative Mike Rogers introduced a bill to establish Freedom Riders National Historic Park; it was sent to the House Subcommittee on Federal Lands on August 4. That month, the National Park Service announced that it would be completing the reconnaissance survey of the site of the bus burning in early September. Representatives also recommended adding the former Greyhound bus depot because it was important to have a standing structure as a basis for the national park. Conroy agreed and said in a phone interview that the site of the bus burning is “the ground zero for this freedom riders story” but that both sites are needed to tell the story.¹⁴⁹ The City of Anniston promised that if the legislation failed and President Obama did not intervene, it would move forward to preserve the bus depot on its own, adding it to the city’s museum complex. On October 17, 2016, the city council agreed to buy the former bus depot for \$82,000. A consulting architect estimated that it would cost about \$500,000 to restore it to the 1960s period and to install a permanent 1960s bus in the bus driveway; the city promised to help with the fundraising. The city manager reported that the city applied to the federal African American Civil Rights Grant Program to pay for the restoration.¹⁵⁰

On October 27, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis toured the two sites to see if they warranted national monument designation. Jewell said that although two bills had already been introduced in Congress to create a national historical park, she felt that the best path was through presidential proclamation designating it a national monument. The bus depot and surrounding buildings were so well preserved,

County Oks \$10K Donation toward Freedom Riders Park,” *Anniston Star*, August 29, 2014, 1A, 10A; “Freedom Riders, Inc., Receives Grant for Freedom Riders Park,” *Anniston Star*, January 22, 2016, 1D.

¹⁴⁶ Tim Lockette, “Marking Time: As Thousands Gather in Selma, Anniston Makes Bid for Place in History,” *Anniston Star*, March 9, 2014, 1A, 5A.

¹⁴⁷ Tim Lockette, “Marking Time”; Daniel Gaddy, “Calhoun County Oks \$10K Donation.”

¹⁴⁸ Patrick McCreless, “Public Meeting Friday for Planned Freedom Riders Park,” *Anniston Star*,

May 27, 2015, 5A; Patrick McCreless, “Bus Burning Site near Anniston to Be Considered for National Park Status,” *Anniston Star*, May 30, 2015, 1; Ben West, interview by Laura Knott, August 13, 2021.

¹⁴⁹ Eddie Burkhalter, “2nd Location Could Be Added to Proposed Freedom Riders Park Complex in Anniston,” *Anniston Star*, August 23, 2016, A01, A07.

¹⁵⁰ Eddie Burkhalter, “2nd Location”; “Preserving History: Federal Officials to Visit Anniston, Consider National Monument Distinction for Freedom Riders Sites,” *Anniston Star*, October 21, 2016, A01, A05.

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she said, “that [the] story can be told in a way that people can see themselves there.”¹⁵¹ She added that the homes around the site of the bus burning give it a sense of integrity. The two officials spoke at a public meeting at First United Methodist Church to take questions on the possible designation. Three Freedom Riders were present: Hank Thomas, Charles Person, and Bill Harbour, as well as Janie Forsyth McKinney. The public meeting attracted over 450 people; speakers there told their own stories of segregation, and many others encouraged the federal officials to recommend a national monument designation.¹⁵²

In late fall of 2016, the City of Anniston completed its purchase of the bus depot property and, working through the Conservation Fund, donated it to the federal government. Calhoun County donated the site of the bus burning through the Conservation Fund on January 1, 2017. On January 12, President Barack Obama proclaimed the creation of the Freedom Riders National Monument in Anniston. The same day, the National Park Service announced that the City of Anniston had received a \$496,375 grant from the federal African American Civil Rights Grant Program to restore the bus depot.¹⁵³ In 2021, the Mural Building was officially transferred to the NPS as a component of the park.

Site History

Bus Depot

Lot 18 of Block 32, where the bus depot was constructed in the 1950s, appears on the first detailed map of downtown Anniston, which was created in 1885 by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company. The map shows a 1-1/2-story duplex on the lot, one of six identical structures on the east side of the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue (Figure 2-14). It is likely that these houses had been built for employee housing when Woodstock Iron Company owned the entire town prior to 1883. In July 1883, after the town

went public, a German immigrant named Charles Nonnenmacher purchased Lot 19, adjacent to Lot 18 to the north, from the Woodstock Iron Company and built an addition fronting W. 11th Street to house his bakery. In 1890, he replaced the entire wood-framed building with the two-story brick building that is extant today.¹⁵⁴

The Anniston City Land Company issued three bird’s-eye-view maps of Anniston from 1887 to 1903 and a plat map in 1890. The maps clearly demonstrate the planning philosophy of the town’s founders: one can see the orderly grid of streets, segregation of industry to the west with clusters of workers’ houses built nearby, a concentration of commercial buildings downtown, and elite homes east of downtown and on the slopes of the eastern mountains (see Figure 2-1).

The 1887 bird’s-eye-view map depicts the houses that stood on the east side of Gurnee between W. 10th and W. 11th Streets but shows two-story, single-family houses instead of duplexes (Figure 2-15). The 1899 Sanborn map shows Nonnenmacher’s new brick building on Lot 19 adjacent to the future bus depot lot (Figure 2-16). The Anniston City Land Company plat map of 1890 shows the 1000 block of Gurnee with a row of single-family houses

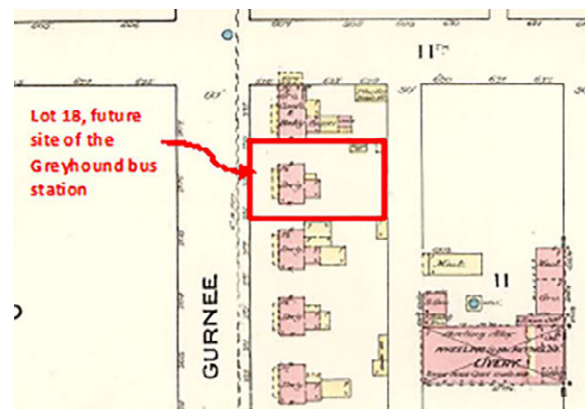


FIGURE 2-14. Detail from the 1885 Sanborn map, annotated to show the location of Lot 18. Library of Congress.

¹⁵¹ Eddie Burkhalter, “Monumental: Feds Hear Call to Create Freedom Riders Monument in Anniston,” *Anniston Star*, October 28, 2016, 10A.

¹⁵² Eddie Burkhalter, “Preserving History,” Eddie Burkhalter, “Monumental.”

¹⁵³ Ben West, interview by Laura Knott, August 13, 2021; Eddie Burkhalter, “Mayor: ‘Great Day for

Anniston’ and ‘Greater Day for the Freedom Riders,’” *Anniston Star*, January 13, 2017, A1, A4.

¹⁵⁴ City of Anniston, Christian & Associates Architects, Inc., and Schneider Historic Preservation, LLC, *Greyhound Bus Depot, Anniston, Alabama, Historic Structure Report*, December 2016, revised March 7, 2017, 14.

(Figure 2-17). The 1903 bird's-eye-view map depicts the rear of Lot 18 and its neighbors with more detail, including their one-story additions and the shade trees lining that block of Gurnee. Sanborn maps for 1895, 1899, 1900, 1905, 1910, and 1917 show similar conditions. By 1947, the house on Lot 18 had been demolished; the Sanborn map indicates a parking lot in its place (Figure 2- 18).¹⁵⁵

Deed research suggests that Lot 18 had always been owned by the Noble family and upon Samuel Noble's death was inherited by his children, then grandchildren. In 1951, the lot

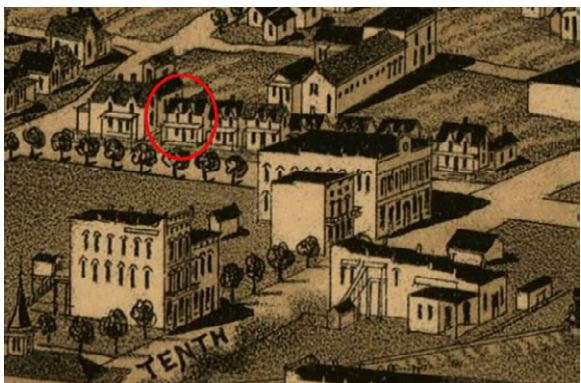


FIGURE 2-15. Detail from the 1887 bird's-eye-view map of Anniston with red circle around the building on Lot 18. Library of Congress.

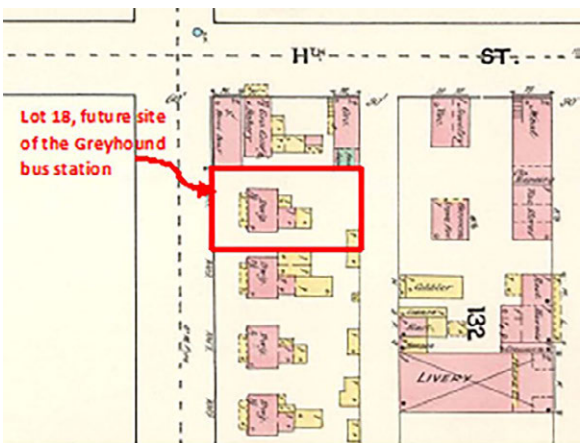


FIGURE 2-16. Detail from the 1899 Sanborn map, annotated to indicate Lot 18. Nonnenmacher's new brick building is adjacent to Lot 18 to the north. Library of Congress.

was owned by Christina McCaa Tyler, Fanny McCaa McLaughlin, and John C. B. McLaughlin. Christina's maiden name was Christina Noble McCaa; she was the daughter of Ada Leona Noble, whose father was Samuel Noble. Christina was married to Frederick Osgood Tyler, president of an Anniston textile company, who had died in 1948. Fanny's maiden name was Fanny Dargan McCaa; she was Christina's sister and was married to John McLaughlin.¹⁵⁶

On December 28, 1951, Christina Tyler, Fanny McLaughlin, and John McLaughlin sold Lot 18 to Alice Martha Lloyd, the widow of a local grocer. On January 4, 1952, she sold the lot to her son William Clifton (Willie C.) Lloyd, who was a realtor. Willie Lloyd leased the property to Terminal Restaurants, Inc., which was headquartered in Tuscaloosa and owned by R. H. Vaughn, who operated ten terminals for Greyhound. Construction began on the new bus depot in spring 1952 and was completed in mid-summer. The new terminal opened on August 9.¹⁵⁷

On August 8, 1952, Greyhound ran an advertisement in the *Anniston Star* for its new depot, boasting that "no effort has been spared to make this bus station a fine addition to



FIGURE 2-17. Detail from the Anniston City Land Company plat map of 1890, annotated to show the location of Lot 18. Calhoun County Probate Office.

¹⁵⁵ Gates, *Model City of the New South*, 97; City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 14.

¹⁵⁶ This information was gathered from Ancestry.com. There are no deed records available showing how Christina and Fanny acquired the lot,

so we assume that they inherited it from their family.

¹⁵⁷ Calhoun County Judge of Probate, Deed Book 738, page 390; Ancestry.com; Calhoun County Judge of Probate, Deed Book 738, page 385; City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 16–17.

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Anniston . . . to provide travelers the finest in comfort and convenience” (Figure 2-19). The depot was described as “including large waiting rooms for both white and colored[;] clean, comfortable rest rooms[;] . . . a modern restaurant and lunch counter serving good food—a restaurant for colored passengers, also—plenty of bus loading zones. . . nation-wide travel information service, and many other conveniences.”¹⁵⁸ On October 14, Greyhound ran an advertisement in the *Anniston Star*, introducing Herman B. Glass as the new depot manager. In 1953, Anniston’s city directory listed the Greyhound Bus Terminal, Southeastern Bus Line, and Rebel Coffee Shop at 1033 Gurnee Avenue. It named Glass as the depot manager, his wife Mae as the coffee shop manager, and Vera Sharp as the ticket agent. The name “Southeastern Bus Line” is likely short for Southeastern Greyhound Lines. The company had begun as Consolidated Coach Company in 1926, buying up several small Southern bus lines; in 1931 Consolidated rebranded itself as Southeastern Greyhound Lines.¹⁵⁹

On January 10, 1956, Anniston’s Southern Railroad station removed its signs designating “White” and “Negro” waiting areas to comply with the *Sarah Keys v. Carolina Coach Company* ruling, which made segregation of interstate passengers illegal. It replaced the sign for the “Whites Only” waiting room with one that read

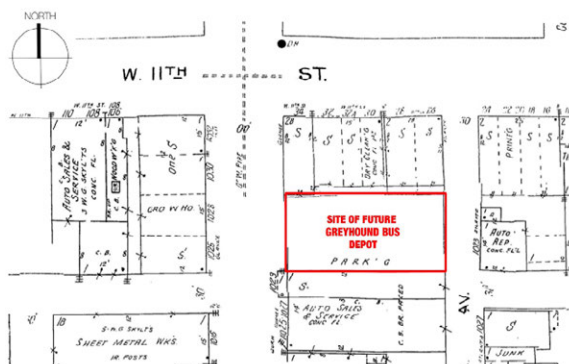


FIGURE 2-18. Detail from the 1947 Sanborn map, annotated to show Lot 18. City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*.

¹⁵⁸ “Greyhound Lines Present a New Bus Station,” advertisement, *Anniston Star*, August 8, 1952, 14.

¹⁵⁹ “See This Man,” *Anniston Star*, October 14, 1952, 6; City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 17; “Southeastern Greyhound Lines,” Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southeastern_

“Waiting Room” and the ones for the Black waiting room for “Negroes and Intrastate Passengers.” At the Greyhound depot, however, Glass had been instructed by Terminal Restaurants to resist the regulations. He told reporters that because the building was leased to a private company, the new ruling did not apply to his depot. The operator of the Trailways depot made a similar statement.¹⁶⁰ This interpretation was not challenged until the Freedom Riders arrived in Anniston in 1961.

In 1960, Willie Lloyd transferred ownership of 1033 Gurnee Avenue to his company, W. C.

FIGURE 2-19. Advertisement for the new Greyhound bus station, August 8, 1952. *Anniston Star*.

Greyhound Lines. Sometime in the late twentieth century, the address of Lot 18 was changed from 1033 Gurnee to 1031 Gurnee.

¹⁶⁰ “Signs Changed at Southern After Ruling,” *Anniston Star*, January 10, 1956, 1–2.

Lloyd, Inc. That year, the city directory listed the Ingram Bus Line and the Terminal Restaurant operating out of the building. The name indicates that Ingram Bus Line leased the building from Lloyd and had a use agreement with Greyhound. The following spring, on May 14, 1961, the Freedom Riders arrived in Anniston at the Greyhound depot. In 1967, Greyhound relocated to a new building on W. Eighth Street. The new facilities were developed and operated by Associated Restaurants, which was partially owned by Herman Glass.¹⁶¹

In 1969, Harrell & Sons Flooring moved into the former Greyhound depot building, where it remained until July 1978. Subsequent tenants of the former depot included Pete's Safety Cab Company and Anniston Business Machines. In August 1979, after twenty seven years of ownership, Willie C. Lloyd sold the former bus depot to Christian Baertsch, a Swiss immigrant who had moved to the United States in 1954. Baertsch was an executive with the Royal Typewriter Company, working in New York, Memphis, and Birmingham. In 1970, he purchased Anniston Business Machines, which was operating out of 1033 Gurnee Avenue, then subsequently bought the building. In 1995, Baertsch sold the property to Ben F. and Vickie Howell. The Howells ran Howell Signs in the old Greyhound bus depot building until 2016, when it was acquired from them by the City of Anniston.

In 2008, Anniston businessman Steve Taylor bought 1029 Gurnee Avenue, the building adjacent to the former Greyhound bus depot to the south. This building forms the south wall of the bus driveway where the 1961 bus attack took place. Now known as the Mural Building, it was constructed in 1946 to house a variety of commercial businesses. In 2011, Anniston artist Joseph Giri was commissioned to paint the

mural of the Greyhound bus that is extant on the exterior of that wall.¹⁶²

In 2016, the City of Anniston Historic Trails Program erected a historical marker in front of the former Greyhound bus depot to mark the site of the attack on the Freedom Riders on May 14, 1961. In 2017, the City of Anniston donated the property to the Conservation Fund, which immediately conveyed the property to the United States of America for use by the National Park Service to create Freedom Riders National Monument.¹⁶³

On January 12, the National Park Service announced that the City of Anniston had received a \$496,375 grant from the federal African American Civil Rights Grant Program to restore the bus depot building.¹⁶⁴ In 2021, the Mural Building was transferred to the NPS as a component of the park.

Bus Burning Site

The Bus Burning Site was assembled from the remnants of eight privately owned lots that lined both sides of what was called State Route 202 on May 14, 1961, now the Old Birmingham Highway. Starting in the 1970s, the State of Alabama purchased the eight lots for the construction of Anniston's western bypass. Acreage that was not used for the bypass was reassembled into the three parcels (38, 44, and 54) that comprise the Bus Burning Site and conveyed to Calhoun County in 2009 (Figure 2-20). Calhoun County donated the three parcels to the Conservation Fund, which then conveyed it to the National Park Service on January 12, 2017.

Old Birmingham Highway

The three parcels lie adjacent to the Old Birmingham Highway. Parcels 44 and 54 are sandwiched between the two-lane Old Birmingham Highway and the new four-lane

¹⁶¹ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 17; Calhoun County Deed Book 1069, page 629; "Bus Station Move Slated," *Anniston Star*, January 22, 1967, 8; "Greyhound Opens New Terminal," *Anniston Star*, February 2, 1967, 2.

¹⁶² Lord Aeck Sargent, *Historic Structure Report: 1029 Gurnee Avenue*, "The Mural Building," draft, November 16, 2020.

¹⁶³ "Harrel & Son is Moving" *Anniston Star*, January 31, 1969, 6; "We're Moving!" *Anniston Star*, July 18, 1978, 3; City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 17;

Calhoun County Deed Book 1495, page 692; Calhoun County tax assessment report for 1031 Gurnee Avenue; Calhoun County Deed Book 1933, page 77; "Greyhound Bus Station Protest, May 14, 1961," The Historical Marker Database, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=106621>; and Proclamation 9566 (January 12, 2017).

¹⁶⁴ Ben West, interview by Laura Knott, August 13, 2021; Eddie Burkhalter, "Mayor: 'Great Day for Anniston' and 'Greater Day for the Freedom Riders,'" *Anniston Star*, January 13, 2017, A1, A4.

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bypass now designated State Route 202. Parcel 38 straddles the right-of-way of Barkwood Drive on the south side of the old highway.

The Old Birmingham Highway has undergone several changes in designation since it was first built. The stretch that runs through the Bus Burning Site was established in 1916 through the efforts of the Alabama Good Roads Association and named for Alabama politician John Hollis Bankhead. The Bankhead Highway led from Aiken, South Carolina, to Memphis, Tennessee (Figure 2-21). It connected with other highways established in the period that together provided a contiguous and dependable connection from Washington, D.C., through Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona, before ending in San Diego, California. In 1926, the Bankhead Highway became U.S. Highway 78 when it was incorporated into the national highway system. In 1953, U.S. Highway 78 was rerouted to bypass Anniston, extending directly from Oxford to Birmingham. In 1961, the section of former U.S. Highway 78 that ran west of Anniston was redesignated State Route 202.¹⁶⁵

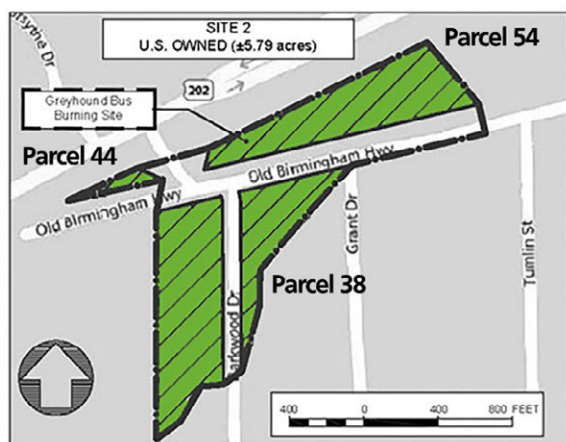


FIGURE 2-20. Map of the Bus Burning Site showing the locations of the three parcels, 2017. National Park Service.

In the 1970s, planning began on a western bypass of Anniston's Quintard Avenue to relieve some of its traffic. The first phase created the Bynum/Leatherwood Road to connect the north section of U.S. 431 with one of the two main entrances to the Anniston Army Depot, which stood just west of the Bus Burning Site. The second phase created a new four-lane highway that started at the intersection of E. Eighth Street and Quintard Avenue, extended west over bridges that crossed the rail lines, then intersected with State Route 202 on the eastern reaches of the Bus Burning Site. To build this section, the State of Alabama worked from 1970 to 1977 to acquire the needed land.¹⁶⁶ Upon completion, the new highway was designated State Route 202, and the old route renamed the Old Birmingham Highway. This project left the site of the bus burning at Forsyth & Son Grocery untouched (Figure 2-22).

The third and final phase extended the new western bypass southward to meet Interstate 20. From 1993 to 2002 the State of Alabama acquired land that spanned from the Bynum/Leatherwood Road intersection with State Route 202 all the way to Interstate Highway 20. Construction work on the final phase started in 2002 and was completed in 2008. As part of that project, the new section was



FIGURE 2-21. Map showing the Bankhead Highway, ca. 1916, in red. Anniston is close to the eastern state boundary. *Encyclopedia of Alabama*.

¹⁶⁵ "Bankhead Highway," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/m-8373>; "Alabama State Route 202," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alabama_State_Route_202. The Good Roads Movement was a campaign that started in the late 1800s to improve the condition of rural roads in the United States. Prior to that, rural roads were either dirt or gravel-paved,

muddy in the winter and dusty in the summer, and connected towns and cities only indirectly. The campaign lasted until the federal government created the national highway system in 1926.

¹⁶⁶ State of Alabama Highway Department, Right of Way Map, Project No. F-200(9), Eulaton to Monsanto Chemical Co., Calhoun County, June 1970; "Alabama State Route 202," Wikipedia.

rerouted through what was left of the Bus Burning Site, leaving only a sliver of the original Forsyth & Son Grocery lot. The Old Birmingham Highway terminated close to it (Figure 2-23).¹⁶⁷

Parcels 38, 44, and 54

The land in Alabama that was ceded by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to the United States by the 1832 Treaty of Cusseta was divided into sellable plots using the Public Land Survey System (Figure 2- 24). In north Alabama, surveyors established a grid of six-mile by six-mile squares. East-to-west gridlines were township lines and north-to-south lines were range lines, while each square in the grid was called a township. Each township was

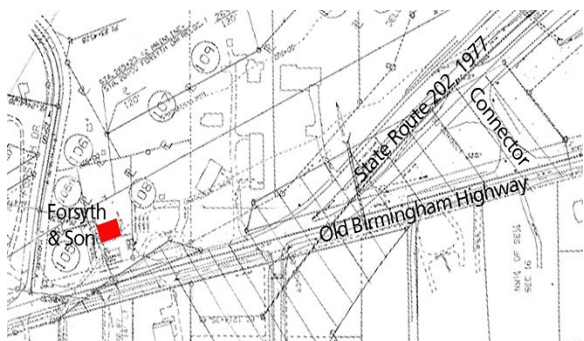


FIGURE 2-22. Alabama DOT 1993 right-of-way map showing the western bypass second phase, completed in the late 1970s. Annotated to show the site of Forsyth & Son. Alabama Department of Transportation.



FIGURE 2-23. Detail from 2020 USGS topographic map, showing the completed western bypass and annotated to show the site of Forsyth & Son. U.S. Geological Survey.

subdivided into thirty-six sections of approximately one square mile each, which were then subdivided into halves, quarters, etc.¹⁶⁸ This survey system was used to distribute the land in Parcels 38, 44, and 54, which together make up the Bus Burning Site (Map 2-2 and see Figure 2-20).

Parcel 44: Forsyth & Son

The site where the Greyhound bus was firebombed on May 14, 1961, was the gravel parking area in front of Forsyth & Son Grocery. Parcel 44 contains all that remains of the grocery property and the adjacent lot to the east. For purposes of this report, the remnants of the grocery store lot will be referred to as Lot A and the adjacent remnant as Lot B (Figure 2-25).

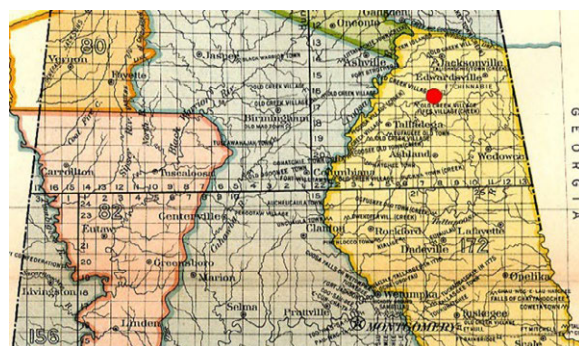


FIGURE 2-24. Detail from the 1897 *Map of Indian Land Cessions in Alabama*, annotated with red dot showing the location of Anniston in the area ceded by the Treaty of Cusseta in 1832. Library of Congress.

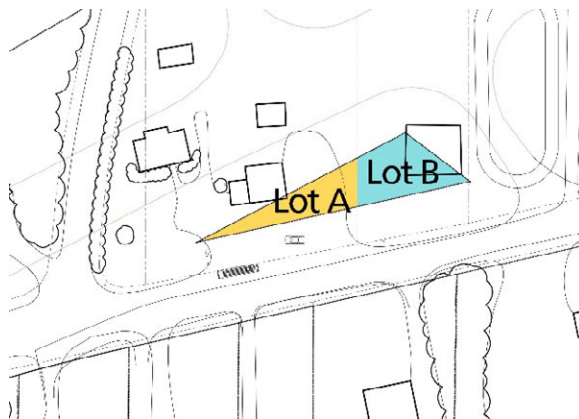


FIGURE 2-25. Lot A in Parcel 44 of the Bus Burning Site laid over the 1961 period plan. Laura Knott.

¹⁶⁷ Alabama Department of Transportation, Right of Way Map, Project No. DBOA-7441(3) & Project No. DBOA-7441(4), Anniston W. Bypass from SR 202 S to Urban Boundary, Calhoun County, 1993; "Alabama State Route 202," Wikipedia.

¹⁶⁸ "Public Land Survey," University of Alabama, Alabama Maps, <http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/contemporarymaps/alabama/basemaps/tnr.pdf>.



FIGURE 2-26. Composite image from the "Freedom Riders" documentary, showing Forsyth & Son Grocery to the right and the Forsyth home to the left, on the day of the Greyhound bus burning, May 14, 1961. Stanley Nelson, dir.

In 1961, these two lots were owned by Richard E. Forsyth, the proprietor of Forsyth & Son. Forsyth's residence stood at the northeast corner of the intersection of State Route 202, now the Old Birmingham Highway, and a two-lane road, now named Forsythe Drive, that led north to the small community of Tarsus.¹⁶⁹

The grocery store and Forsyth home stood on a nearly flat site that sloped almost imperceptibly toward an unnamed creek to the east. The store was a simple concrete-block building with a roof that sloped slightly to the rear. It had a low, concrete-block addition on the west side and a freestanding outbuilding on its east side. The wood-framed house was built in the Southern vernacular style with a full-width front porch and two dormers facing the road (Figure 2-26). There were at least two other outbuildings on the property. One likely served as storage for the store and the other would have been the small dwelling that Janie Forsyth reported in an interview was built by her father for their housekeeper.¹⁷⁰

The wide gravel parking area at the front of the grocery extended from the highway edge to the storefront, then between the house and store, forming a driveway. Gravel paving extended around the eastern side of the store, where it became what was likely a work yard.

The front yard of the Forsyth home was kept in turf, which sloped down from the roadway edge. The front porch was screened from view by a variety of large evergreen shrubs. The house and yard were also screened from the road to Tarsus with a row of shrubs that ran from the front of

the property past the house and around the back yard to the outbuilding (Figure 2-27). A few trees were scattered around the northern portion of the property, but their species is unknown.

Richard and Cleo Forsyth bought the property with the store and family home, represented by Lot A, in 1941 from the Pollock and Glass families. In 1943, the Forsyths bought the adjoining property to the east, represented by Lot B, from Cleo's parents, the Mundys. Richard Forsyth died in 1974, leaving the property to his wife. In 1982, she sold it to Jack and Frances Green. The Greens remodeled the grocery store building into a gas station, removing its additions and installing covered gas pumps at the front (Figure 2-28). In 1996, the Greens sold the property to the State of Alabama for the western bypass. The state demolished all buildings and structures on the parcels that became Lots A and B, cleared all the vegetation, and graded the area in preparation for road building.¹⁷¹



FIGURE 2-27. View of Forsyth & Son from the west on May 14, 1961, showing the row of shrubs that screened the front yard from the road. Stanley Nelson, Jr.

¹⁶⁹ Forsythe Drive, although possibly named for the Forsyth family of the Forsyth & Son Grocery, is spelled with an "e" at the end on maps.

¹⁷⁰ Stanley Nelson, dir., "Freedom Riders," American Experience, PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/video/>

american-experience-the-young-witness-a-short-film-from-freedom-riders/.

¹⁷¹ Calhoun County Tax Assessment Report for parcel number 22-05-16-0-002-044.000; Calhoun County Probate Office.

Parcel 54

Parcel 54 comprises Lots C, D, E, and F (Figure 2-29). On May 14, 1961, Lot C was owned by M. T. and Leona M. Wright, who had purchased it in 1953. In 1993, Leona Wright sold the lot to Marvin and Gail Williams, who then sold it to the State of Alabama in 1997 for the western bypass. Lot D was owned by J. M. and Lucile Grant Warr; they sold the property to the State of Alabama in 1971 to be used for the bypass. Some of Lot D was taken for the portion of the bypass completed in the late 1970s, while the rest was used when it was extended to Interstate 20 in 2008. Lot E was owned by Fred A. and Henrinell Horn; in July 1961, they sold the lot to James A. and Myrtle Horn Stewart. Myrtle Stewart sold the property to the State of Alabama in 1973 for the bypass.¹⁷² Information



FIGURE 2-29. View of the remodeled grocery store ca. 1980s taken from a neighboring residence to the southwest. National Park Service.

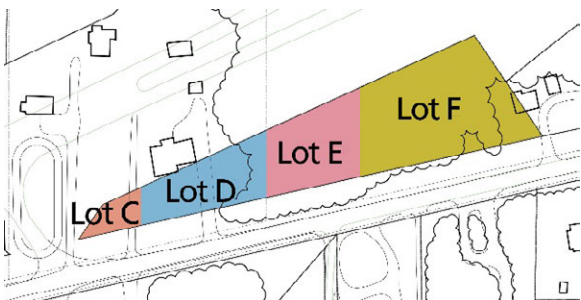


FIGURE 2-29. Lots C, D, E, and F in Parcel 54 of the Bus Burning Site. Laura Knott.

on the transfer of land in Lot F is not available. The transfer from private landowner to the State of Alabama, however, would have occurred in the 1970s because the connector between State Route 202 and the Old Birmingham Highway was ran through Lot F until it was moved as a part of the bypass extension completed in 2008 (see Figures 2-22 and 2-23). An electrical easement about fifty feet wide extended through all four lots about 400 feet north of the highway.

Lots C, D, E, and F were almost flat and sloping imperceptibly toward an unnamed creek to the east. The creek ran through the east side of lot D, where it joined another stream extending through Lots E and F from the east. Only one tree stood on Lot C, while the east edge of Lot D and all of Lot E were completely wooded. Lot F was mostly wooded except for its eastern corner, where a house and outbuilding stood. The parcels that became Lots C and D were cleared of their dwellings and outbuildings. There were no buildings on Lot E.

Parcel 38

Parcel 38 comprises 3.92 acres bisected by the right-of-way of Barkwood Drive. In 1961, the area of Parcel 38 was made up of two different properties, represented by Lot G and Lot H (Figure 2-30). At the time of the bus burning in 1961, the property represented by Lot G was occupied by Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop, which had opened in February 1960 to service water well engines. The lot's owner was likely Alton Chester Taylor, who died in 1970. In 1971, his family sold the property to a group of investors led by J. C. Fleming and Charles Strickland, who subdivided it to create the Mountain Terrace Subdivision. The property represented by Lot H was owned by Raymond and Marjorie Morris in 1961; they had purchased the property in 1952. In 1973, the Morris and the Fleming and Strickland investor group sold the portions of their land represented by Lots F and G to the State of Alabama for the western bypass project. At some point after the sale and before 1981, the investors built Barkwood Drive and completed the development of Mountain Terrace. It may

¹⁷² Calhoun County Tax Assessment Report for parcel number 22-05-16-0-001-054.000; Calhoun County Probate Office.

SITE HISTORY

have also been around this time that the Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop building and its associated residence were demolished. The state ended up not using Lots F and G for the bypass, and in 2009 it relinquished them to Calhoun County to become part of Freedom Riders Park.¹⁷³

In 1961, the northern ends of Lots G and H were fairly flat and gently sloping down toward the highway. As it climbed the toe of Coldwater Mountain, the terrain of Lot G rose around sixty-eight feet above the highway ascending Coldwater Mountain.

Most of Lot G was forested except its southern reaches, where the Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop and its associated residence stood. The immediate vicinity to the south and west of the shop building was paved, likely in gravel and compacted earth. A drainage ditch that ran along the south side of State Route 202 carried runoff from Coldwater Mountain to culverts, where it was then conveyed under the highway toward Coldwater Branch.

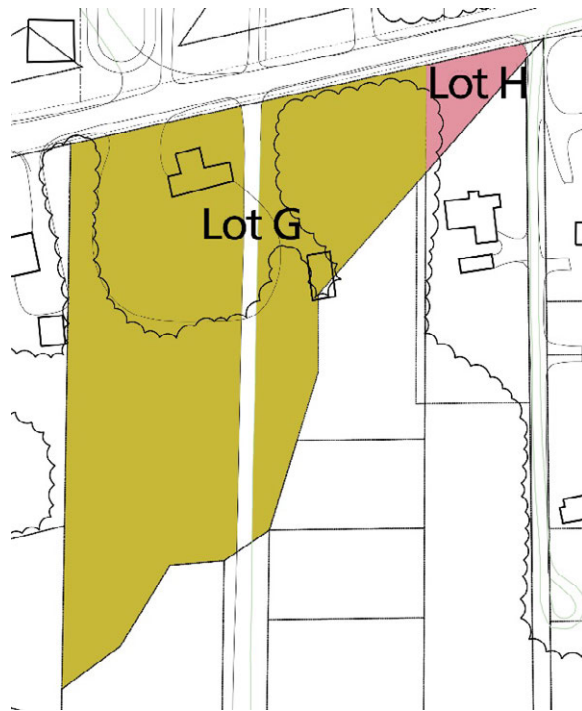
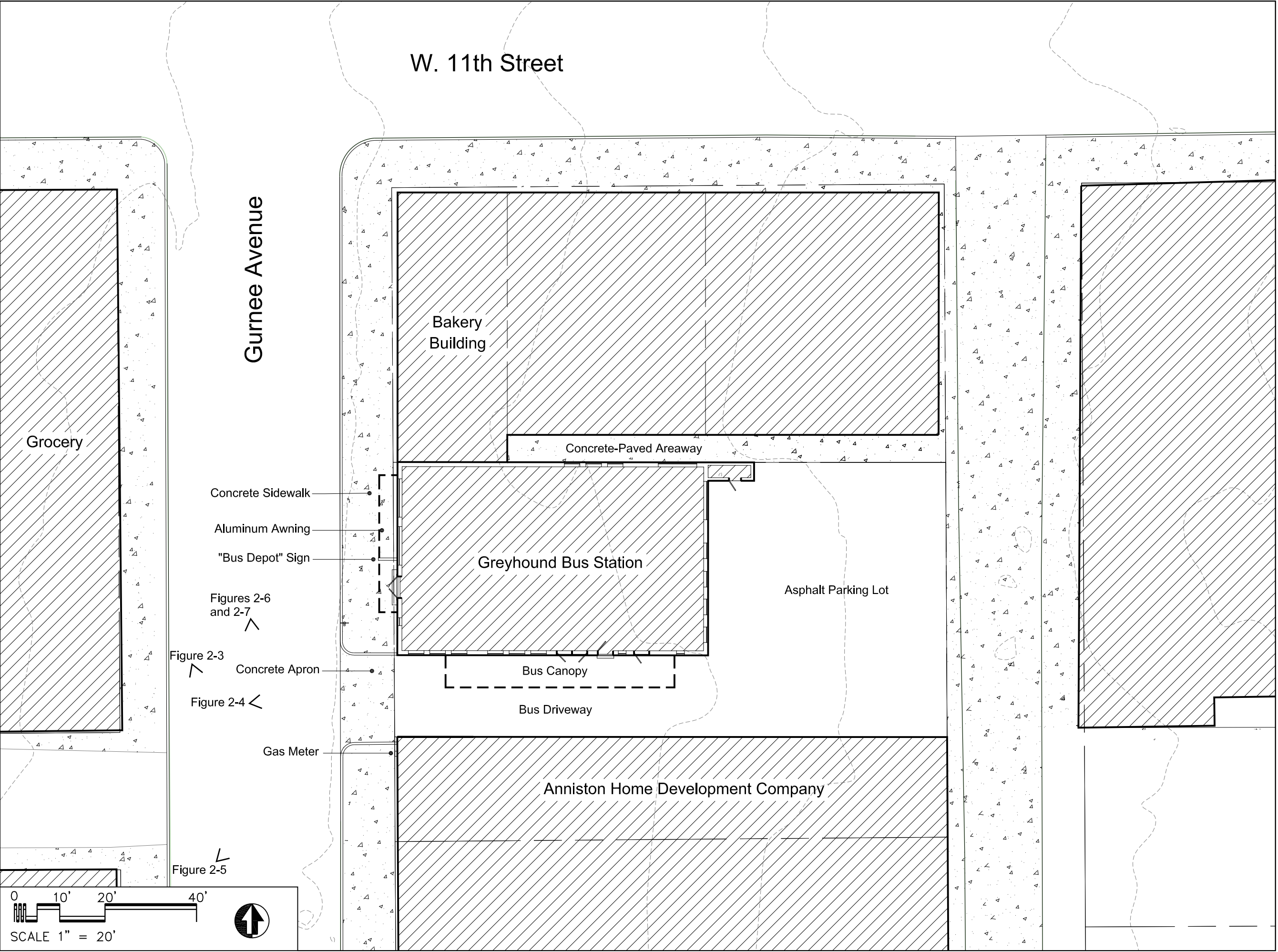
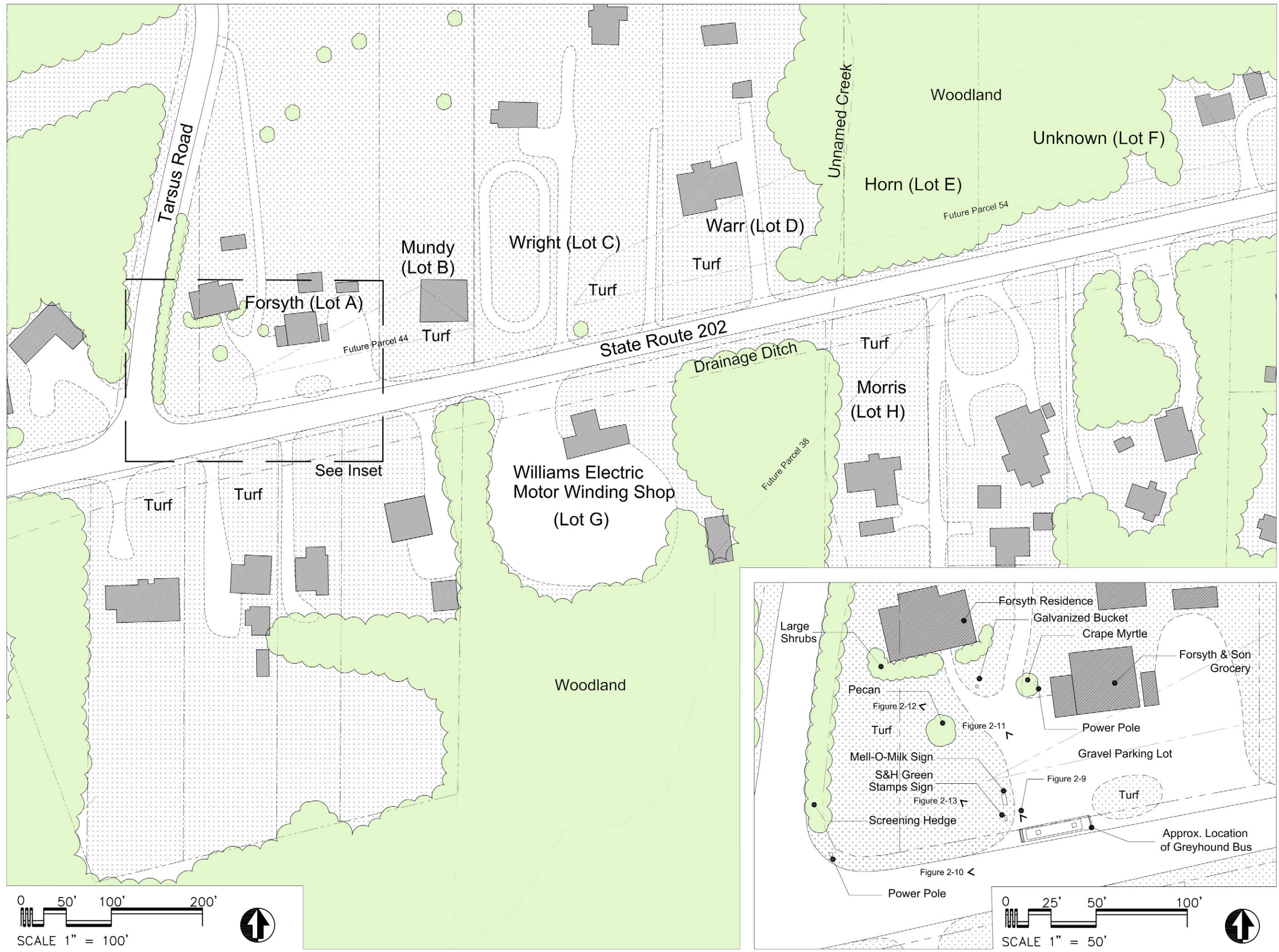


FIGURE 2-30. Lots G and H in Parcel 38 of the Bus Burning Site. Laura Knott.

¹⁷³ "Announcing the Opening of Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop," *Anniston Star*, February 22, 1960, 2; "Alton Chester Taylor," Find-A-Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/>

43844914/alton-chester-taylor; Calhoun County Tax Assessment Report for parcel number 22-05-16-0-005-038.000; Calhoun County Probate Office.





Legend:

- Buildings
- Vegetation/Woodland
- Property Line
- NPS Parcels
- Turf
- Photopoints

- Notes:
1. Dimensions and locations are approximate, based on field-gathered GPS, local government GIS data, utility GIS data, NPS-provided GIS data, and field observations.
 2. GIS data provided by local government and utilities is for general information only and should not be relied on in lieu of a site survey.

Map 2-2.
Bus Burning Site
1961 Period Plan

Existing Conditions

Introduction

This chapter describes, through narrative text, photographs, maps, diagrams, and site plans, the current conditions of the two sites that comprise the Freedom Riders National Monument. The primary goal is to understand the range and breadth of features that characterize the two sites and to identify, describe, and locate them on a map as baseline information. The second goal is to generate an inventory of features that can be used to develop cultural landscape analyses. The third goal is to provide a record of each site that may prove useful to future research efforts and management decisions made for the park.

Following this introduction, the second section of the chapter—Site Description—begins by describing the primary organizing elements and settings that characterize the overall national monument. It goes on to describe its regional and local cultural and environmental contexts.

The third section—Landscape Description by Characteristic—describes individual extant landscape features in the two sites that make up the national monument. These feature descriptions are organized into landscape characteristic categories. Landscape characteristics include those tangible and intangible aspects of a site that collectively convey its character and aid in understanding its cultural importance. Each cultural landscape feature is identified by at least one of several characteristics defined by the National Park Service in *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*:

Contents, Process, and Techniques: natural systems and features and responses to natural resources, topography and topographic modifications, patterns of spatial organization, land uses and activities, circulation patterns and features, cultural vegetation, views and vistas, buildings and structures, small-scale features, and archeological resources.¹

The condition of each cultural landscape feature is assessed as either good, fair, poor, or unknown:

- **Good** indicates that the feature shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. It is as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.
- **Fair** indicates that the feature shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within three to five years to prevent further harm to its historical and/or natural values. The cumulative effect of the deterioration, if left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, will cause the feature to degrade to a poor condition.
- **Poor** indicates that the feature shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the feature.

¹ Derived from Linda Flint McClelland, J. Timothy Keller, Genevieve Keller, and Robert Z. Melnick, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural*

Historic Landscapes (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1999).

- **Unknown** indicates that not enough information is available to make an evaluation.²

The narrative description of the landscape is illustrated with graphic documentation in the form of maps and photographs that illustrate many of the features described in the text. Primary features are identified on Maps 3-1 and 3-1.

Site Description

The Freedom Riders National Monument is in Anniston, Alabama. Anniston is in the northeast corner of the state, about 65 miles east of Birmingham, 90 miles west of Atlanta, and four miles north of Interstate Highway 20 as it passes through the neighboring town of Oxford.

The national monument is composed of two sites: the Bus Depot and the Bus Burning Site. The Bus Depot is the former Greyhound bus depot where, on Sunday, May 14, 1961, a group of segregationists attacked a Greyhound bus carrying the Freedom Riders. The site comprises the former Greyhound depot building at 1031 Gurnee Avenue, its 0.17-acre urban lot, and the adjacent 0.06-acre Mural Building at 1029 Gurnee Avenue. The Bus Depot is one block west of Noble Street, which was the center of the town's historic commercial district until the 1960s. The site is surrounded by one- and two-story commercial buildings, all of which were constructed before 1961. At the corner of Gurnee and W. 11th Street stands the three-story 1900 Calhoun County Courthouse. Across Gurnee Avenue from the county courthouse is the new three-story federal courthouse, completed in 2021.

The Bus Depot is close to the northwest corner of the city block formed by W. 11th and W. 10th Streets to the north and south, Gurnee Avenue to the west, and Noble Street to the east, and is bisected by an alleyway. West 10th Street was once the major artery leading westward from

downtown Anniston. This changed in the 1970s when the second phase of the western bypass was built, extending W. Eighth Street westward as State Route 202. One and one-half blocks west of the Bus Depot is the abandoned right-of-way of the Southern Railroad. The tracks have been removed and replaced with turf.

The Bus Burning Site is where the segregationist mob continued its attack on the fleeing bus, setting it on fire in front of Forsyth & Son Grocery. The site is about six miles west of the Bus Depot and outside the city limits. It is made up of three parcels totaling 5.79 acres that cluster around the intersection of the Old Birmingham Highway with State Route 202, Anniston's western bypass. In 2008, much of the property that contained Forsyth & Son Grocery and adjacent residences to the east and west was taken for the construction of the bypass; only two greatly reduced portions of those properties remain as the two northern parcels of the Bus Burning Site. The third parcel is a 3.92-acre lot across the Old Birmingham Highway to the south.

The setting of the Bus Burning Site south of the Old Birmingham Highway is a rural, primarily residential neighborhood, much as it was in 1961. In contrast, the busy four-lane western bypass, State Route 202, forms the setting to the north of the site.

The two sites of the national monument are connected by a leg of the Anniston Civil Rights Trail that begins at the Bus Depot and joins State Route 202, heading westward to the Bus Burning Site. The route approximates that taken by the Greyhound bus on that historic day.

Cultural Context and Setting

National Park Service

Freedom Riders National Monument was established by President Barack Obama through presidential proclamation on January 12, 2017.³ The proclamation was the result of years of collaboration between city, county, state, and

² Robert R. Page, Cathy A. Gilbert, and Susan A. Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1998), 53 and 67.

³ Proclamation No. 9566, 82 Fed. Reg. 6159 (Jan. 12, 2017).

national officials and administrators, working closely with local supporters.

On the same day, President Obama also established the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument to preserve and commemorate the work of the civil rights movement. Birmingham's national monument is approximately 65 miles west of Anniston. The two sites are being managed jointly by the same park superintendent.

Historic Designations

When the park was proclaimed Freedom Riders National Monument in 2017, both the Bus Depot and the Bus Burning Site were automatically administratively listed in the National Register as components of the park. A National Register nomination, however, is still needed. The National Register documentation that would identify contributing and noncontributing resources had not been completed.⁴

The Bus Depot is a contributing property in the Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase, 2010, NRIS ID #91000663), a National Register designation. When the original Downtown Anniston Historic District National Register nomination was completed in 1990, the site was not included because it was not yet 50 years old. The update and boundary increase, however, almost doubled the number of contributing resources in the district, including the former Greyhound bus depot. It also expanded the period of significance from 1941 to 1965 and added Ethnic Heritage: Black as a fourth area of significance.

The Bus Depot is also part of the City of Anniston's Downtown Historic District, a local designation. In this district, most changes that will affect the exterior architectural or environmental character of a historic property are subject to design review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). This

includes any activities requiring a building permit as well as:

- Reconstruction or alteration of the size, shape, or façade of a historic property, including relocation of any doors or windows or removal or alteration of any architectural features, details, or elements;
- Demolition or relocation of a historic structure;
- Commencement of excavation for construction purposes;
- Change in the location of advertising visible from the public right of way; or
- Erection, alteration, restoration, or removal of any building or other structure within a historic property or district, including walls, fences, steps and pavements, or other appurtenant features.

Interior modifications and routine maintenance do not require a COA.⁵

The Bus Burning Site is not individually listed in the National Register nor is it a contributing feature of any historic district.

Local, State, and Federal Government

The Bus Depot is in the City of Anniston and Calhoun County's District 1, which includes most of Anniston and several small adjacent communities. It is also in District 32 of the Alabama House of Representatives. The Bus Burning Site is outside the city limits in the county's District 3, which extends to the western edge of the county, and in District 35 of the Alabama House. All of Calhoun County is in Alabama Senate District 12 and the Third U.S. Congressional District.

Much of the City of Anniston falls in Census Tract 01015000800, which is a qualified HUB zone.⁶ This includes portions of east Anniston, most of west Anniston, and the area now known as McClellan, formerly the U.S. Army's Fort McClellan. This means that small businesses

⁴ Turkiya Lowe, email to William Hunter, October 27, 2022.

⁵ City of Anniston, Goodwyn Mills Cawood, and P.S. King Associates, *Anniston Historic District Design Guidelines*, n.d., 7-8.

⁶ U.S. Small Business Administration, *HUBZone Map*, <https://maps.certify.sba.gov/hubzone/map#center=33.667838,-85.859423&zoom=13&latlng=33.658661,-85.829039>.

may qualify for the HUBZone Program if they are at least 51 percent owned by a U.S. citizen, community development corporation, agricultural cooperative, or Indian tribe; if they have their principal office in a HUBZone; and if 35 percent of their employees reside in a HUBZone. Benefits include competitive and sole-source contracting, 10 percent price evaluation preference in contract competitions, and contracting opportunities.⁷ This may become especially important in future planning for private properties in the neighborhood along Gurnee Avenue close to the Bus Depot.

Demographics

Calhoun County is in northeast Alabama and bordered by Cherokee, Etowah, Cleburne, Talladega, and St. Clair Counties. It measures 611 square miles and has a population of 113,605. Anniston is the county seat and the largest city in the county. Other larger towns in the county are Jacksonville (home of Jacksonville State University), Oxford, Piedmont, and Weaver. The county has a commission form of government with five commissioners, each representing a section of the county.

As of 2020, Anniston had an estimated population of 21,090.⁸ In 2010, 23,106 people were estimated to live within the city limits. Of this total, 49.5 percent identified as African American, 44.8 percent as White, 3.6 percent as two or more races, 1.9 percent as Asian, 1.8 percent as Hispanic or Latino, and 0.1 percent as American Indian.⁹ Around 25 percent of employed people work in education, health care, and social assistance. Manufacturing employs just under 19 percent, a stark contrast to the late nineteenth century, when almost all employed people worked in the foundries or cotton mills. Almost 18 percent work in professional jobs, management, or administration. Around 13 percent of workers are in arts, entertainment,

recreation, hotels, or food services, and almost 13 percent work in retail. The rest are employed in construction, finance, insurance, real estate, transportation, information services, wholesale trade, and other services.¹⁰

Transportation

Anniston was originally laid out in a north-to-south grid of streets, which has been maintained to the present day. Its primary north-to-south artery is Quintard Avenue, or State Route 21. State Route 202, Anniston's western bypass, leads west from the city core toward Interstate 20. U.S. Highway 431 provides an eastern bypass around the city, connecting Interstate 20 to McClellan and northward. There is a small airport north of the city for general aviation.¹¹

Cultural Amenities

In addition to the new national monument, Anniston's cultural amenities include the Anniston Museum of Natural History and the Berman Museum of World History. The Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge is a relatively new park that was formed out of acreage once belonging to Fort McClellan. Other outdoor recreational amenities include the Chief Ladiga Trail, the North Alabama Birding Trail, the Coldwater Mountain Bike Trail, and seven golf courses.

Environmental Context and Setting

Climate

Mean annual temperatures in Calhoun County range from 44 degrees in winter to 77 degrees in summer, with the first killing frost occurring in early November and the last in early April. Mean annual precipitation is around 50 inches and is evenly distributed throughout the growing season. The topography, soils, and climate allow for a diversified agriculture, including stock raising.¹²

⁷ U.S. Small Business Administration, "HUBZone," <https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/ohp/spotlight>.

⁸ U.S. Census 2020, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/annistoncityalabama>. Note: detailed population breakdown was not available at the time this report was written.

⁹ As of the completion date of this CLR, the racial composition of the city in 2020 had not been made public.

¹⁰ Sprayberry, "Anniston."

¹¹ Sprayberry, "Anniston."

¹² Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921), 192.

Physiography

Calhoun County is situated in the Valley and Ridge physiographic province, which makes up around 9 percent of the state. On a map, this province appears as a long, roughly rectangular area oriented northeast to southwest through central and east-central Alabama, where it encompasses Calhoun County as well as Shelby, St. Clair, Cherokee, and parts of Jefferson, Bibb, Talladega, and Etowah Counties (Figure 3-1). The Valley and Ridge province is characterized by tightly folded layers of Paleozoic sedimentary rocks with thrust faults, which form long, zigzagging ridges separated by parallel deep, steep-sided valleys. The ridges are topped with Pennsylvanian sandstone, while the valleys cut through bands of shale, limestone, and

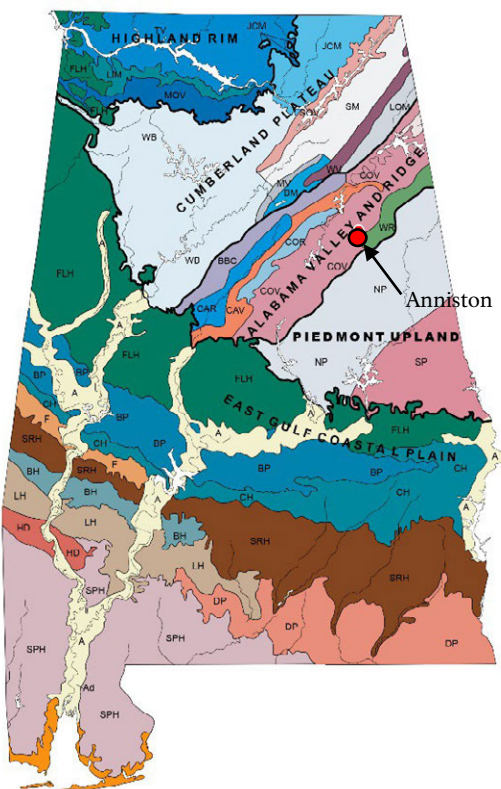


FIGURE 3-1. Physiographic regions of Alabama. University of Alabama Department of Geography.

dolomite.¹³ The resulting topography of the county is generally rolling to hilly and mountainous, with elevations ranging from around 600 feet to over 2,000 feet at the Choccolocco and Coldwater Mountain peaks.¹⁴

Anniston developed in the Snow Creek valley between Coldwater and Choccolocco Mountains. The valley floor bedrock is composed primarily of limestone, dolomite, shale, and siltstone, with some smaller deposits of clays, sands, and gravels (Figure 3-2).¹⁵ Local soils derived from this bedrock include stony loam, shale loam, clay loam, and fine sandy loam. Mineral resources include Knox dolomite, manganese ore, china clay or kaolin, galena, barite, limestone, Weisner sandstone, slate, chert, and small areas of Warrior coal.¹⁶

The region's abundance of brown hematite iron ore was of particular interest to Anniston's founders (Figure 3-3). They also valued the region's extensive forests of longleaf pine from which they could make charcoal to fuel Anniston's ironmaking blast furnaces.¹⁷ In the end, however, the iron industry of Anniston

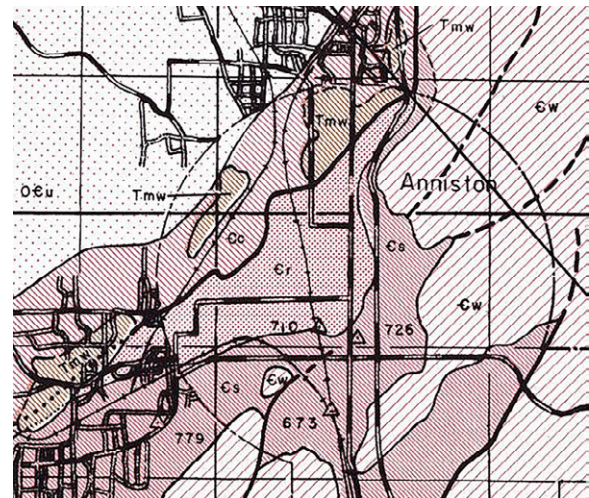


FIGURE 3-2. Detail from the 1962 *Geologic Map of Calhoun County*. The formations shown are primarily limestone, dolomite, shale, and sandstone, with some areas of clay, sand, and gravel, labeled "Tmw." University of Alabama.

¹³ Mike Neilson, "Tennessee Valley and Ridge Physiographic Section," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, <http://encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1308>.

¹⁴ Owen, *History of Alabama*, 192.

¹⁵ Neilson, "Tennessee Valley and Ridge Physiographic Section." The University of Alabama's

Department of Geography calls this the "Alabama Valley and Ridge" physiographic region. For simplicity, the CLR refers to it as the Valley and Ridge province.

¹⁶ Owen, *History of Alabama*, 192.

¹⁷ Gates, *Model City*, 26.

weakened because of its dependence on a limited resource like local lumber. Birmingham's iron industry soon dominated the state because it could rely on locally quarried coke.¹⁸

Hydrology

Calhoun County is framed by two important waterways. The Coosa River forms a portion of the county's western boundary, while its southern and eastern boundaries parallel the course of Chocolocco Creek which runs around two miles inside the county line. Most of the waterways in the county, including Chocolocco Creek, are tributaries of the Coosa River.

Most of the developed area in the city limits of Anniston is in the Snow Creek watershed. Snow Creek flows generally north-to-south through the west side of the city and meets Chocolocco Creek south of Oxford. The area west of Anniston to the Army Depot and south to Coldwater Mountain is in the Coldwater Spring Branch watershed (Figure 3-4).

Vegetation

Calhoun County lies in the Southern Limestone/Dolomite Valleys and Low Rolling Hills

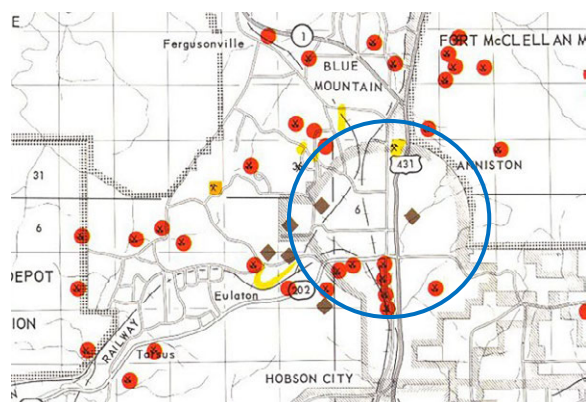


FIGURE 3-3. Detail from the 1973 *Map of Mineral Resources of Calhoun County*. Orange dots represent hematite iron ore, brown diamonds show manganese, and irregular yellow strips indicate sand and gravel resources. The original Anniston city boundary is shown in blue. University of Alabama.

¹⁸ Gates, *Model City*, 97.

¹⁹ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, "Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge, Alabama," https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Mountain_Longleaf/;

ecoregion of the Valley and Ridge province (Figure 3-5). Its soils, hydrology, and climate support oak-hickory and oak-pine forests that contain a wide variety of native trees. These include chestnut (*Quercus montana*), black (*Q. nigra*), and scarlet (*Q. coccinea*) oaks; mockernut (*Carya tomentosa*), pignut (*C. glabra*), and sand (*C. pallida*) hickories; black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*); sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboretum*); tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*); and various pines. Of the pines, the longleaf (*Pinus palustris*) is the dominant species. Although usually associated with the Coastal Plain province, the longleaf also grows near the tallest peaks in the region. Just outside of Anniston, a 9,016-acre portion of what was the U.S. Army's Fort McClellan has become the new Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge, operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW). USFW has developed a habitat management plan that includes prescribed burning to protect, conserve, and restore the mountain longleaf pine community.¹⁹

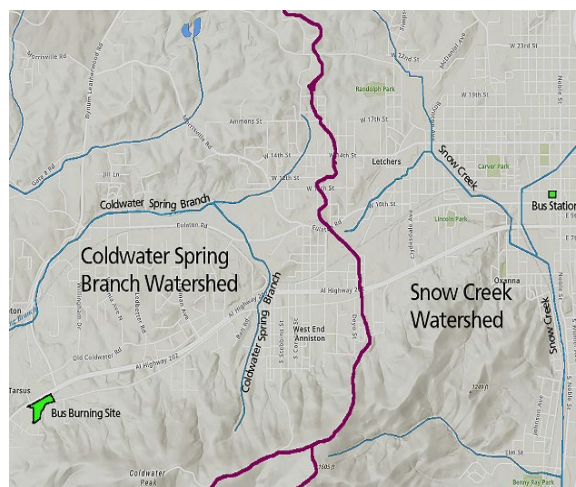


Figure 3-4. Map showing the locations of the two national monument sites in their respective watersheds. Adapted from EPA.gov.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, *Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge Habitat Management Plan*, 2005, <https://corpora.tika.apache.org/base/docs/govdocs1/228/228683.pdf>.

Landscape Description by Characteristic

(Maps 3-1 and 3-2, Existing Conditions)

Natural Systems and Features and Responses to Natural Resources

Natural systems and features are the environmental resources and qualities that have influenced the development and physical form of a landscape. These include the underlying landform and topography, soils, water resources, and attendant native plant communities.

Responses to natural resources describe cultural responses to these natural systems and features, such as the siting and clustering of buildings and structures, the use of native materials, and other connections between the built and natural environment.

Bus Depot

The former Greyhound bus depot and its urban neighborhood were established on Anniston and Allen gravelly loams. These loamy soils developed from sandstone and shale river gravel and are deep, strongly acidic, and well-drained. The typical profile of this soil type shows a thin layer of gravelly loam—less than 12 inches—atop clay or clay loam about six feet deep.²⁰

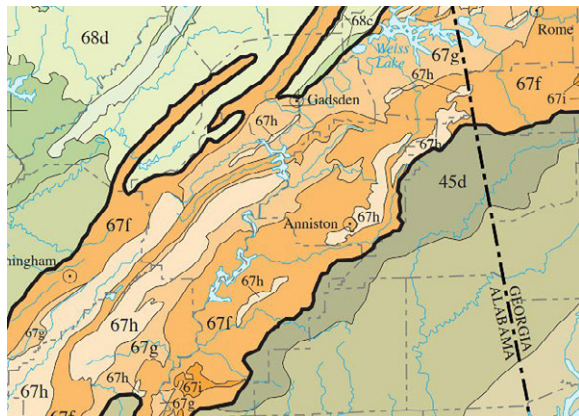


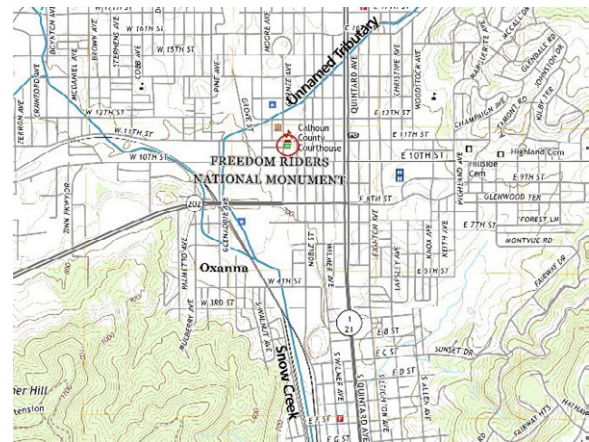
Figure 3-5. Detail from *Ecoregions of Alabama and Georgia*, showing Anniston in the Southern Limestone/Dolomite Valleys and Low Rolling Hills (67f) ecoregion. EPA.gov.

²⁰ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Calhoun County*, No. 9, September 1961, 47; U.S. Department of Agriculture,

The Bus Depot lies in the watershed of an unnamed tributary of Snow Creek that runs northwest of the site. Stormwater appears to be conveyed from the site into the city stormwater system. From there it is likely directed to the unnamed tributary and conveyed southward to Snow Creek (Figure 3-6).

Bus Burning Site

The Bus Burning Site and its rural neighborhood developed at the base of Coldwater Mountain



on gently sloping Anniston and Allen gravelly loams and Jefferson stony fine sandy loams that trend to the north (Figure 3-7). The Anniston and Allen soils have a thin layer of gravelly loam, less than 12 inches, atop about six feet of clay or clay loam. The Jefferson soils developed from sandstone, shale, and Weisner quartzite alluvium washed down from the crest of Coldwater Mountain. They are deep, strongly acidic, and well-drained with less than six inches of cobbly fine sandy loam atop about two feet of gravelly loam with up to six feet of clay underneath.²¹

The site is in the watershed of Cold Spring Branch (Figure 3-8). Around 2008, the drainage patterns of the site were altered to direct stormwater runoff under State Route 202. Stormwater runoff from residential lots on the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway is directed into a deep swale and conveyed under the road via a large concrete pipe. From there, runoff drains northward through the site via an open concrete culvert. On the north boundary of the site, stormwater enters another concrete pipe that sends it under State Route 202 and toward Cold Spring Branch.

Topography and Topographic Modifications

Topography and topographic modifications include descriptions of the form of the land and

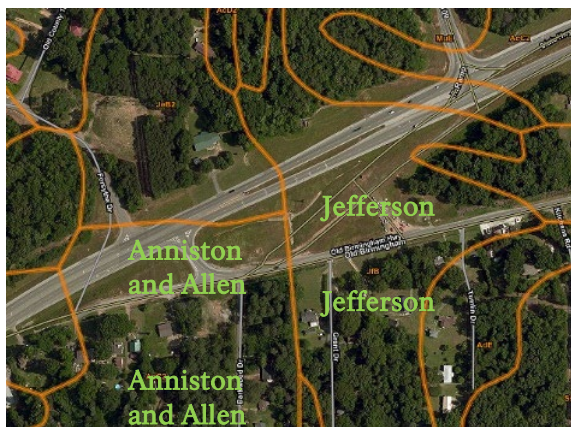


Figure 3-8. USDA soil map for the Bus Burning Site and its neighborhood. U.S. Department of Agriculture.

²¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Calhoun County, Alabama*, 47; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources

any alterations made to the elevations of the land surface for accessing potable water, grading roads, siting buildings, draining stormwater, or other purposes.

Bus Depot

The Bus Depot site slopes from east to west at around 2 percent (see Map 3-1). The north to south slope from the corner of Gurnee Avenue and 11th Street is almost flat, at around 0.2 percent, with a slight tilt that ensures drainage toward the gutter. The steepest part of the site is the area that is today reserved for parking, around 30 feet extending from the back wall of the building eastward. It appears that this was a deliberate modification in the site grading that achieves a relatively flat slope of 1.2 percent for the bus driveway to facilitate loading and unloading.

Bus Burning Site

The topography of the Bus Burning Site varies from almost flat to steeply sloping, but trending generally from south to north toward Coldwater Creek (see Map 3-2). The area of Parcel 44, including the surrounding right-of-way, slopes downward generally to the northwest at an average of 6 percent. Most of this slope is taken up in the right-of-way, with the Old Birmingham Highway right-of-way sloping at around 9–13 percent and the State Route 202 right-of-way at around 12 percent. Within its boundaries, Parcel 44 is relatively flat, at around 2.5 percent.

The area of Parcel 54 has a complex topography. Overall, including the surrounding rights-of-way, the parcel slopes an average of 1 percent to the southwest and appears to be almost flat when viewed from the Old Birmingham Highway. It is bisected, however, by a “Y” shaped concrete-bottomed drainage structure that drops to around 14–16 feet below the surrounding landscape at its lowest point. The structure’s turfed sides slope around 15–20 percent, but the areas on either side are

Conservation Service, *Calhoun County Web Soil Survey*.

relatively flat. There are two high points in the parcel: one is at the south property line across from Grant Drive and the other at the far west corner of the parcel. The Old Birmingham Highway right-of-way slopes at an average of 4 percent to the southeast, while that of State Route 202 slopes at an average of 8 percent to the southwest.

The area of Parcel 38 shows the greatest variation in topography of all three parcels. It rises some 42 feet from north to south as the parcel climbs the lower slopes of Coldwater Mountain. Within the narrow right-of-way of the Old Birmingham Highway is a deep ditch that collects runoff from Coldwater Mountain and conveys it under the road into the concrete drainage structure in Parcel 54. Parcel 38 slopes around 4 percent to the south, but after 200 feet, it begins to ascend the mountain. At around 250 feet from the right-of-way is a 40-foot-wide band of ground sloping at around 30 percent, likely representing soil excavated to flatten the roadside area. From that point southward, the surface of the parcel slopes at around 7–8 percent. The two parts of Parcel 38 both have the same general topography except for a driveway cut from Barkwood Drive on the east side.

Patterns of Spatial Organization

Patterns of spatial organization reflect the three-dimensional organization of physical forms and visual associations in a landscape, including the articulation of ground, vertical, and overhead planes that define and create spaces.

Bus Depot

The Bus Depot is on a 0.17-acre urban lot on the west side of downtown Anniston (Figure 3-9). It stands one block west of Noble Street—historically Anniston’s main commercial thoroughfare—and one-half block south of the Calhoun County Courthouse on W. 11th Street.

Adjoining the Bus Depot building to the north is an Italianate-style two-story brick commercial building that dates to around 1890.²² The two buildings adjoin for 24 feet, then a 6-foot-wide areaway opens between the depot and the rear walls of the other buildings along W. 11th Street to the alley. Various utilities that serve all the buildings are accessed from the areaway.

To the south of the depot is a one-story brick commercial building that is currently vacant. Across Gurnee to the west stands a one-story brick commercial building that houses a home improvement business. Across the alley to the east stands a one-story stuccoed brick addition to a two-story commercial building that faces W. 11th Street.

The Bus Depot building stands in the northwest corner of its lot. A 17-foot-10-inch-wide bus driveway separates it from the adjacent Mural Building. Four parking spaces are delineated on the building’s east side. The parking area is accessed via an alley that extends southward through the block from W. 11th Street to W. 10th Street. The passenger exit doors from the depot’s waiting areas, as well as the door to the baggage room, are on its south façade facing the driveway and protected from the weather by a broad awning. One of the exit door openings is bricked up while the other is blocked with a sheet of plywood. The baggage room door remains as it was historically.²³



FIGURE 3-9. View of the front of the Bus Depot building, looking east, 2021. Laura Knott.

²² Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company, 1890, Anniston, Alabama, Sheet 6.

²³ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 22, Appendix G.

Bus Burning Site

The 5.79-acre Bus Burning Site comprises three parcels. Two are on the north side of the Old Birmingham Highway, and the third is on the south side. Each is separated from the other by the Old Birmingham Highway.

The two parcels that lie north of the Old Birmingham Highway are flat and open (Figure 3-10). They are separated by the west end of the Old Birmingham Highway, which turns from its original alignment to become a short access road that connects the old highway to State Route 202. The third parcel is partially cleared on its northern end but densely forested farther south (Figure 3-11). Its terrain rises around 60 feet above the highway as it begins to climb Coldwater Mountain.



FIGURE 3-10. View looking west from the east edge of Parcel 54 of the Bus Burning Site, showing its general character north of the Old Birmingham Highway, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-11. View of Parcel 38 looking west, 2021. Laura Knott.

Across the Old Birmingham Highway from Parcels 44 and 54 is a rural neighborhood composed primarily of single-family houses. They stand on long narrow lots and face the highway (Figures 3-12 and 3-13).

Land Uses and Activities

Land uses and activities illustrate the principal human activities that form, shape, and organize a landscape.

Bus Depot

The Bus Depot building is currently being used as exhibit space. The adjacent Mural Building is empty and unused, but a mural of a vintage 1961 Greyhound bus has been painted on the outside of its north wall and interpretive signs installed within and adjacent to the mural. Other buildings on the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue



FIGURE 3-12. View of the neighborhood across the Old Birmingham Highway from Parcel 54 of the Bus Burning Site, looking southeast, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-13. View of the houses directly across the road from where the Greyhound bus was burned, looking south, 2021. Laura Knott.

are either vacant or are being used for the same purpose as they were in 1961. The former grocery store building across the street is still being used for retail sales, while Haynes Sewing Machine Company and Model City Glass are still owned and operated by the same families.

Land use on other streets in downtown Anniston is mostly commercial with some institutional use in buildings occupied by county government. The Calhoun County Courthouse stands just one-half block to the north of the Bus Depot. Just across Gurnee Avenue from the county courthouse is the recently completed federal courthouse.

Bus Burning Site

Most of the site where the Greyhound bus was burned was taken to build Anniston's western bypass, now State Route 202, in 2008. The remaining acreage is now used by the National Park Service as parkland. The large lots surrounding the Bus Burning Site are in residential use.

Circulation Patterns and Features

Circulation patterns and features are the spaces, features, and applied material finishes that constitute the systems of movement in a landscape.

Bus Depot

The Bus Depot sits within Anniston's original grid of streets. The site around the former depot building is fully paved for both vehicular and pedestrian use. Pedestrians access the site via a six-foot-wide concrete public sidewalk (Figure 3-14). Pedestrians also freely use the rest of the site, particularly the bus driveway, to view the depot building and the Greyhound mural painted on the wall of the Mural Building to the south (Figure 3-15). The sidewalk is new and in good condition. The bus driveway is newly paved in asphalt and in good condition.

Vehicles can access the site via the alley behind the Bus Depot and park in the parking lot (Figure 3-16). They can exit via the alley or through the bus driveway that historically served as the bus loading zone (see Figure 3-15). Vehicles can also park at the curb along Gurnee

Avenue (see Figure 3-14). The parking area is newly paved and in good condition, and the street paving is also in good condition.



FIGURE 3-14. Concrete sidewalk in front of the Bus Depot building, looking north, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-15. The Bus Depot driveway, looking east, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-16. The Bus Depot parking lot viewed from the alley between W. 10th and W. 11th Streets, looking southwest, 2021. Laura Knott.

Bus Burning Site

The Bus Burning Site straddles the Old Birmingham Highway, which was the major road leading from downtown Anniston toward Birmingham during the period of significance. Today, the northern two parcels comprising the site are sandwiched between the Old Birmingham Highway and State Route 202.

There are no designated pedestrian or vehicular facilities on the site. Visitors typically park their vehicles on the road shoulder, on a patch of gravel at the edge of Parcel 54, or in the grass (Figure 3-17). The patch of gravel used for parking in Parcel 54 is a remnant of a paved connector that had been built in the 1970s between the new State Route 202 and the Old Birmingham Highway and removed around 2008. This is not a formally designated parking area and is in poor condition.

Pedestrians must walk through turf to get to the three-sided interpretive sign. This is not a formally designated pedestrian walkway and is in poor condition.

Cultural Vegetation

Cultural vegetation includes the deciduous and evergreen trees, shrubs, vines, ground covers, and herbaceous plants that have been introduced in a landscape by cultural activities.

Bus Depot

Except for a few weeds in the pavement, no vegetation grows on the Bus Depot site.



FIGURE 3-17. Gravel remnant of the 1970s connector now used informally as a parking area in Parcel 54 of the Bus Burning Site, 2021. Laura Knott.

Bus Burning Site

The two north parcels of this site are covered in mown turf (see Figure 3-10). The portion of the south parcel that lies east of Barkwood Drive is heavily vegetated in a mix of oak and pine (see Figure 3-11). The front half of the portion west of Barkwood is covered in broken paving and gravel that is starting to revegetate in turf and weeds, while the rear half maintains a dense covering of oak and pine woodland.

Tree species identified on the Bus Burning Site include water oak (*Quercus nigra*), pin oak (*Q. palustris*), black oak (*Q. velutina*), red oak (*Q. rubra*), arborvitae (*Thuja* sp.), pine (*Pinus* sp.), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), hickory (*Carya* sp.), pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*), winged elm (*Ulmus alata*), and wild plum (*Prunus americana*).

Shrub and herbaceous species identified include mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*), common privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), American beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*), pyracantha (*Pyracantha coccinea*), cherry laurel (likely *Prunus laurocerasus*), grape (*Vitis* sp.), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), vervain (*Verbena* sp.), and kudzu (*Pueraria montana*). Of these, mimosa, common privet, pyracantha, and kudzu have been identified as invasive plants in Alabama.

The composition of the turf is not known. There were many other nonnative grasses and forbs that could not be identified.

Views and Vistas

Views are generally defined as being expansive and panoramic prospects, whether naturally occurring or designed, while **vistas** are deliberate and are often meant to direct the gaze to a linear feature or focal point.

Bus Depot

The front façade of the Bus Depot building is clearly visible to passersby going both ways on Gurnee Avenue in vehicles and on foot (see Figure 3-9 and Figures 3-14 through 3-16). This also applies to the views of the depot from the

alley from which the Greyhound bus approached the building on May 14, 1961. There are no designed vistas related to this site.

Bus Burning Site

Because the Bus Burning Site is relatively flat and open without buildings or substantial structures, it can be viewed clearly from most directions (see Figures 3-10-13, and 3-17). This applies to views from both the Old Birmingham Highway and State Route 202. There are no designed vistas related to this site.

Buildings and Structures

Buildings are elements constructed primarily for sheltering any form of human activity in a landscape, while **structures** are elements constructed for functional purposes other than sheltering human activities.

Bus Depot

The Bus Depot has one building; it served as the Greyhound bus depot in 1961. According to the recently completed historic structure report, the exterior of the building is largely unchanged from the period of significance.²⁴ It still maintains its original exterior glazed brick, clay tile copings, and steel windows on its north and east elevations. On the west elevation, its original steel windows have been replaced with fixed glazing, its main entrance doors with aluminum storefront doors, and its metal awning with an acrylic awning (see Figures 3-9 and 3-15). On its south elevation—facing the bus driveway—the original exit door from the front waiting room, which was historically reserved for White passengers, has been infilled with brick to match the rest of the building (Figure 3-18). The original exit door from the rear waiting room, signed for “colored” passengers, has been filled with painted plywood. The original baggage door is extant, as are all the steel windows on this façade. The original bus canopy is extant, although its soffit and roof have been altered. The exterior of the Bus Depot building is in overall good condition.

The historic structure report documented the original overhead electrical service attaching to

the northeast corner of the depot. The original electrical enclosure also exists on the depot’s exterior north wall and is accessible from the areaway (Figure 3-19). The report also documented the former natural gas service in the north areaway. The working conditions of these utilities are not known.

A four-inch line of the City of Anniston’s public water system runs the length of this block of Gurnee under the public sidewalk. There is one water meter in front of the depot (Figure 3-20). The public sewer gravity main runs



FIGURE 3-18. South exterior of the Bus Depot building, looking northwest, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-19. Looking west into the areaway with the Bus Depot building to the left, 2021. Laura Knott.

²⁴ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 23.

underground along the alley behind the building.²⁵ The working conditions of these utilities are not known.

Bus Burning Site

There are no buildings on this site. The only structures are two low steel guardrails set in the right-of-way of the Old Birmingham Highway. One is at the approximate location of the bus burning in front of Parcel 44 and the other is across the road along the front of the western portion of Parcel 38 (Figures 3-21 and 3-22).

The Bus Burning Site is crossed by electric, water, and sewer utilities. Overhead electrical



FIGURE 3-20. Manhole covering the water meter that serves the Bus Depot, looking east, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-21. Guard rail adjacent to the site of the bus burning, looking northwest, 2021. Laura Knott

lines run along the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway and across the front of Parcel 38 (see Figure 3-11). Overhead electrical lines also run along the north side of the highway around 200 feet into Parcel 54, at which point they split to cross the site, presumably to service streetlights on State Route 202 (see Figures 3-10 and 3-17). A second line crosses the highway to extend south on Grant Drive. These lines are served by a utility box that stands on the eastern edge of Parcel 54 (Figure 3- 23). The working conditions of these utilities are not known.

A large concrete stormwater drainage structure associated with the western bypass extends into Parcel 54 (Figure 3-24). Information about the locations of underground water and sewer utilities at this site was not available for this



FIGURE 3-22. Guard rail on the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway, 2021. Laura Knott



FIGURE 3-23. Utility box that serves the electrical lines that cross the Bus Burning Site, 2021. Laura Knott.

²⁵ Anniston Waterworks & Sewer Board, map of water and sewer lines serving 1031 Gurnee Avenue.

report. The working conditions of these utilities are not known.

Small-Scale Features

Small-scale features provide detail and diversity for both functional needs and aesthetic concerns in a landscape.

Bus Depot

Small-scale features at the Bus Depot include two historical markers, three bollards, and two traffic control signs. On the wall of the Mural Building are a mural of the Greyhound bus, several interpretive signs, and a gas-fired steel lantern.

A historical marker identifying the Bus Depot as a site contributing to the Anniston Civil Rights Trail is set into the sidewalk in front of the Bus Depot building (Figure 3-25). The sign provides information about the attack at the Greyhound depot on May 14, 1961. Next to it is an interactive exhibit that plays an audio recording of Hank Thomas, one of the Freedom Riders. A second historical marker is mounted on the front of the depot building and identifies 1031 Gurnee Avenue as being listed in the National Register (Figure 3-26). All these items are in good condition.

Vehicles are blocked from entering the bus driveway from Gurnee by three yellow-painted steel bollards set into the pavement (Figure 3-27). They are in good condition. Mounted on the rear wall of the depot building is a sign that reads:



FIGURE 3-24. Looking north at a portion of the large stormwater drainage structure that crosses Parcel 54, 2021. Laura Knott.

PRIVATE DRIVE
LOADING ZONE
SPEED LIMIT 5 MPH

The sign is black with white letters and is in good condition (Figure 3-28).

A second traffic sign is mounted on the north wall of the Mural Building, facing the depot building. It reads:

NO PARKING
IN THIS DRIVEWAY
ANYTIME!



FIGURE 3-25. Historical marker and audio device installed for the Anniston Civil Rights Trail, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-26. Historical marker indicating that 1031 Gurnee is in the National Register, 2021. Laura Knott.

This sign is red with white letters and is in good condition (Figure 3-29).

A mural of a 1961-era Greyhound bus has been painted on the north side of the Mural Building, facing the depot building (Figure 3-30). It was repainted in 2022 and is in good condition.

On either side of the bus painting, interpretive signs funded by the City of Anniston have been mounted on the wall (Figures 3-31 and 3-32). They provide information on the historical context of the event in Anniston, including what the Freedom Rides were, who the riders were, how they were selected, and who the segregationists were. Then they outline the events of May 14, 1961, in Anniston and at the grocery store where the bus was burned, and describe the aftermath. Finally, they provide a list of resources and information about the

Anniston Civil Rights Trail. These signs are in good condition.

A Colonial Revival gas lantern fashioned out of stainless steel is mounted at the northeast corner of the Mural Building (Figure 3-33). The wall-mounted sign below it reads, “Lighting the Way,” and says that the lantern was dedicated on August 23, 2013, by Alagasco (Alabama Gas Corporation) in honor of the Freedom Riders, “the men and women who rode into history on May 14, 1961,” and the City of Anniston “for embracing the past to look to the future.” The lamp is in good condition and in working order.

Bus Burning Site

There are several small-scale features in the Bus Burning Site. These include a historical marker, a three-sided kiosk, a park identification sign, several utility poles, a utility box, several light

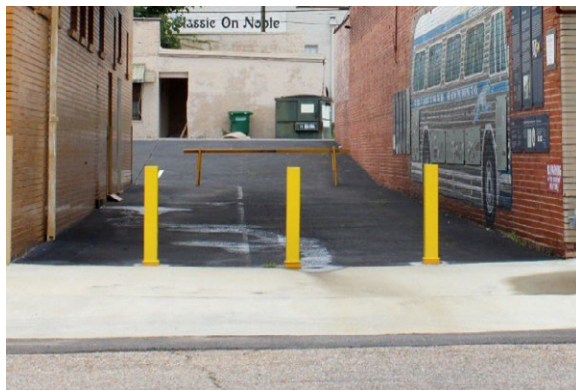


FIGURE 3-27. Three yellow-painted steel traffic bollards that block the bus driveway, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-29. “No Parking” sign on the north wall of the Mural Building, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-28. “Private Drive” sign on the rear wall of the Bus Depot building, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-30. Mural of a 1961 vintage Greyhound bus painted on the north side of the Mural Building, 2021. Laura Knott.

poles, and a few traffic signs. On the north edge of the Parcel 44 stands a historical marker installed by the Alabama Historical Association in 2007. The marker, which stands 100 feet east of the precise location where the Greyhound bus was burned, describes both May 14, 1961, incidents involving the Greyhound bus (Figure 3-34). The marker is in good condition.

A three-sided kiosk stands in Parcel 54 close to the gravel patch used informally for parking (Figure 3-35). It was installed by the National Park Service and provides information about the Freedom Rides and related incidents in and around Anniston. The kiosk is in good condition.

Facing State Route 202 is an NPS park identification sign (Figure 3-36). The sign is a banner stretched over a previous sign that had been installed by Calhoun County to identify the

Freedom Riders Park. The sign is in fair condition, given that it is a temporary banner.

Other small-scale features include traffic signs, street signs, light standards, utility poles, and utility boxes (Figure 3-37). The traffic and streets signs and light standards are in good condition, and the utility poles and utility boxes appear to be functional.

Archeological Resources

Archeological resources are the traces or deposited artifacts in a landscape, evidenced by the presence of either surface or subsurface features. No archeological investigations have been undertaken at either national monument site.



FIGURE 3-31. Interpretive signs mounted on the north side of the Mural Building east of the bus mural, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-32. Interpretive signs mounted on the north side of the Mural Building west of the bus mural, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-33. Stainless steel gas lantern mounted by Alagasco, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-34. Freedom Riders historical marker at the Bus Burning Site, looking northwest, 2021. Laura Knott.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



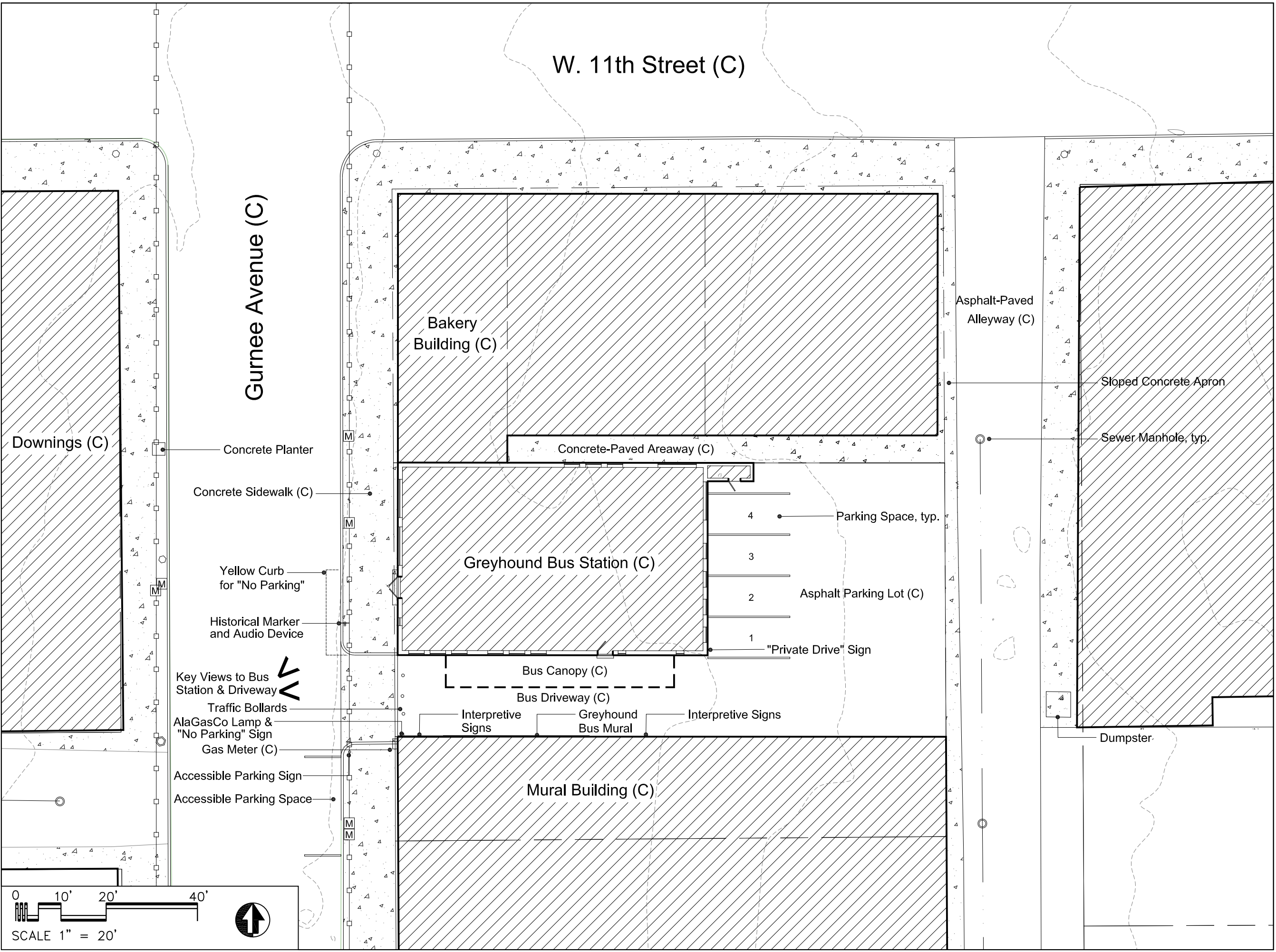
FIGURE 3-35. Three-sided kiosk providing information about the Freedom Riders, 2021. Laura Knott.

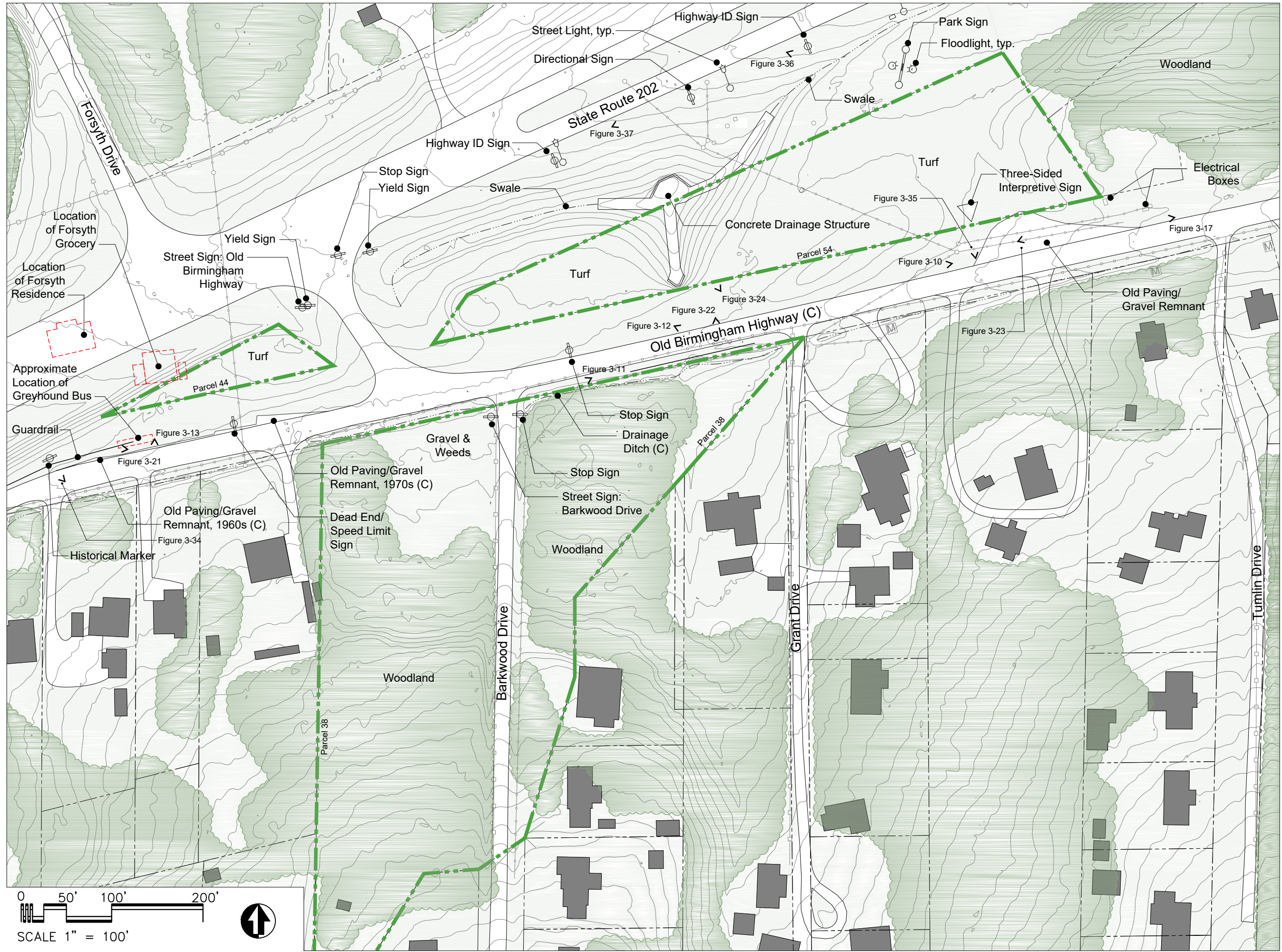


FIGURE 3-36. NPS park identification sign for Freedom Riders National Monument, 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 3-37. Utility poles, light standards, and information signs in Parcel 54 of the Bus Burning Site, looking east, 2021. Laura Knott.





- Legend:
- NPS Boundary
 - Buildings
 - Woodland
 - Water Line
 - Power Line
 - Property Line
 - Turf
 - Photopoints
 - Water Meter

- Notes:
- Dimensions and locations are approximate, based on field-gathered GPS, local government GIS data, utility GIS data, NPS-provided GIS data, and field observations.
 - GIS data provided by local government and utilities is for general information only and should not be relied on in lieu of a site survey.

Map 3-2.
Bus Burning Site
Existing Conditions Plan

Analysis and Evaluation

Introduction

This chapter is organized into three sections: a significance evaluation, a comparative analysis of historic and existing landscape conditions illustrated with comparative photo pairs, and an integrity assessment. These are followed by a summary list of features (Table 4-1).

The significance evaluation of the Freedom Riders National Monument's two cultural landscapes was done in accordance with guidance provided by the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). It identifies the important historical associations of the property, as well as its architectural, archeological, and social value. The property's significance is tied to a discrete period of time in which its important contributions were made, and to relevant national, state, and local historic contexts.

The comparative analysis examines the similarities and differences between historic and existing landscape conditions. This comparison reveals how much each historic site and its resources today reflects its character and appearance during the period of significance. Each section of the comparative analysis concludes with an inventory of resources, listing those that survive from the period of significance, those that are missing, and those that postdate that period. Those that retain integrity and are associated with the national monument's historic contexts are referred to as "contributing" features (see Maps 3-1 and 3-2 for locations). Features that are known to have existed during each site's history but are no longer extant are identified as "missing" resources. Resources that originated after the

period of significance and do not relate to the site's significant historic contexts are identified as "noncontributing." This information is summarized in Table 4-1, which lists each of the features described in this chapter. The table conveys the names and alternate names for inventoried landscape features through time, identifies which features contribute to the significance of the landscape, provides a condition rating for each feature, and lists dates of origin and modifications for each feature if known.

The integrity assessment summarizes to what degree the Freedom Riders National Monument's cultural landscapes retain their ability to convey conditions present during the identified period of significance. This assessment is based on an evaluation of seven aspects of a historic property developed by the National Register to define its integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Significance Evaluation

National Register Status

When the park was proclaimed Freedom Riders National Monument in 2017, both the Bus Depot and the Bus Burning Site were automatically administratively listed in the National Register as components of the park. A National Register nomination, however, is still needed. The National Register documentation that would identify contributing and noncontributing resources had not been completed.¹

In 2010, the former Greyhound bus depot was listed in the National Register as a contributing

¹ Turkiya Lowe, email to William Hunter, October 27, 2022.

property of the Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase, # 10000270, 2010). The building had not been listed in the original Downtown Anniston Historic District nomination in 1990 because it was only 33 years old at the time.² The Bus Burning Site is not included within the boundaries of the Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase), nor is it individually listed in the National Register.

Significance Context

To develop this analysis, the author conducted a comprehensive investigation into the history of the landscape, along with information presented in the *Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase)* National Register nomination. The analysis follows the guidance in the National Register bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Based on the information explored in this CLR, the two cultural landscapes that comprise the Freedom Riders National Monument were found to be nationally significant in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: Black, Law, Politics/Government, and Social History.³

National significance is appropriate because nonviolent direct action campaigns like the Freedom Rides during the modern civil rights movement, 1954 to 1964, were instrumental in pressing the federal government to enforce court rulings that declared segregation unconstitutional. Media coverage of the Freedom Rides, particularly the published photographs of the bus burning, bolstered the credibility of the civil rights movement in the United States, calling attention to Southern states' disregard for federal law and the violence used to maintain segregation. The direct action approach of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the persistence of the Freedom Riders, while criticized by many Southern White

Americans, inspired many Southern African Americans to become activists in voter registration, Freedom schools, and the Black Power movement.

Further, the Freedom Rides transformed CORE into a key national organization with a reputation for militant activism, while increasing its membership, financial contributions, and support from other liberal groups. The campaign also elevated James Farmer, who was the co-founder of CORE and its director from 1961 to 1966, into the "Big Six," a national coalition of top civil rights leaders.⁴

From the Freedom Rides campaign arose other successful actions, including the Birmingham Campaign of 1963, which sought to desegregate public facilities in Birmingham; the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom; the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches held in support of voting rights legislation; and the 1965 Chicago Freedom Movement to protest discrimination in housing, education, employment, and health care. These actions led directly to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

National Register Criteria

For a property to be eligible for listing in the National Register, it must possess significance under at least one of four criteria:

- A. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Association with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represents the work of a master; possesses artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.⁵

² King and Schneider, "Downtown Anniston Historic District"; Grace Hooten Gates, "Downtown Anniston Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1991.

³ U.S. Department of the Interior, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, National Register Bulletin (Washington, D.C.: National Park

Service, 1995), 40–41; King and Schneider, "Downtown Anniston Historic District," 3.

⁴ "The 'Big Six' Organizers of the Civil Rights Movement," Thought.Co, <https://www.thoughtco.com/men-of-the-civil-rights-movement-45371>.

⁵ U.S. Department of the Interior, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, 37.

Based on research, analysis, and consideration of all materials available for preparation of this CLR, the Freedom Riders National Monument was found to be nationally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: Black, Law, Politics/ Government, and Social History. It is significant in the area of Ethnic Heritage: Black as a pivotal site in African American history; in the areas of Law and Politics/Government for its contribution to our understanding of the interpretation and enforcement of desegregation of transportation under the Interstate Commerce Act; and in the area of Social History for its association with the Freedom Rides, which sought to promote the welfare of society.

Period of Significance

The proposed period of significance for the Freedom Riders National Monument is limited to the single day of May 14, 1961. That day, the bus carrying the Freedom Riders and other passengers was attacked at the Greyhound bus depot in Anniston and subsequently burned after it was forced to stop in front of Forsyth & Son Grocery almost six miles to the west.

Comparative Analysis

One of the goals of this CLR is to evaluate the ability of the existing landscape to reflect the period of significance. To better describe the relationship between the existing cultural landscape, as documented in Existing Conditions, and the landscape that existed during the period of significance discussed above, this section presents a comparative analysis of historic and existing conditions. The comparative analysis narrative is organized by the same landscape characteristics used to document the sites in Existing Conditions.

Natural Systems and Features and Responses to Natural Resources

Bus Depot

Historic Conditions

The former Greyhound bus depot and its urban neighborhood were developed on soils that slope toward the north and west about 2%.

Rainwater runoff from the site drained into the city stormwater system.

Existing Conditions

There have been no known changes to the natural systems and features or responses to natural resources at this site since the period of significance.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

General drainage patterns

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Bus Burning Site

Historic Conditions

The Bus Burning Site developed on gently sloping loams that trend to the north. During the period of significance, rainwater runoff from Lots A–F drained eastward into a tributary of Cold Spring Branch. Rainwater runoff from Lots G and H was collected in a ditch on the south side of State Route 202, then conveyed under the roadway and into the same tributary of Cold Spring Branch.

Existing Conditions

Around 2008, the drainage patterns of this site were altered to direct most stormwater runoff from the Old Birmingham Highway and adjacent neighborhoods under the new State Route 202 and toward Cold Spring Branch. Stormwater runoff from Parcel 44 collects in a ditch on the south side of State Route 202 and is conveyed westward. Runoff from Parcel 54 drains toward the center of the parcel, where it is collected in the concrete stormwater structure and conveyed northward under State Route 202. Stormwater runoff from Parcel 38 drains to the ditch along the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway as it did during the period of significance. From there, it is conveyed by a concrete culvert northward, passing through Parcel 54 via the concrete drainage structure.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

General drainage patterns, Parcel 44

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

General drainage patterns, Parcel 54

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

General drainage patterns, Parcel 38

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Stormwater structure, Parcel 54

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Topography and Topographic Modifications

Bus Depot

(See Figures 4-1 through 4-6)

Historic Conditions

The former Greyhound bus depot lot was designed to slope from east to west at around 2 percent. Historic photographs suggest that the parking lot was designed to slope more steeply than the bus driveway. This was likely done to create a relatively flat slope of 1.2 percent for the bus driveway to facilitate loading and unloading. Photographs also suggest that the sidewalks that flanked Gurnee Avenue were almost flat.

Existing Conditions

The topography of the Bus Depot site has not changed since 1961.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Slope of rear parking area

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Slope of bus driveway

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Bus Burning Site

(See Figures 4-15 through 4-22)

Historic Conditions

During the period of significance, Lots A-F sloped gently eastward at 1–2 percent toward a tributary of Cold Spring Branch. The known exceptions were the south and west edges of the Forsyth store and residential lots, which historic

photographs suggest sloped up perhaps 10–15% to meet the roadway edge. Lots G and H sloped perhaps an average of around 10%, except in areas where soil was likely scraped back to create a flat site for the Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop building and its parking lot on Lot G. This condition is not expressed in historical topographic maps, but is assumed based on current conditions. State Route 202, now the Old Birmingham Highway, passed through the site, gently sloping from east to west.

Existing Conditions

The topography of the Bus Burning Site today varies from almost flat to steeply sloping, but trending generally from south to north toward Coldwater Creek (see Figure 5). The Old Birmingham Highway maintains its historic alignment and gentle slope through the site from east to west.

Parcel 44 and its adjacent rights-of-way slope downward generally to the northwest at an average of 6 percent. Most of this slope is taken up in the Old Birmingham Highway right-of-way at around 9–13 percent and the State Route 202 right-of-way at around 12 percent. Within its boundaries, Parcel 44 is relatively flat, at around 2.5 percent.

The area of Parcel 54 has a complex topography. Overall, including the surrounding right-of-way, the parcel slopes an average of 1 percent to the southwest and appears to be almost flat when seen from the Old Birmingham Highway. It is bisected, however, by a “Y” shaped concrete-bottomed drainage structure that drops to around 14–16 feet below the surrounding landscape at its lowest point. Its turfed sides slope around 15–20 percent, but the areas on either side of the drainage structure are relatively flat. There are two high points in the parcel: one is at the south property line across from Grant Drive and the other at the far western corner of the parcel. The Old Birmingham Highway right-of-way slopes at an average of 4 percent to the southeast, while that of State Route 202 slopes at an average of 8 percent to the southwest.

The area of Parcel 38 shows the greatest variation in topography of all three parcels. It rises some 42 feet from north to south as the parcel climbs the lower slopes of Coldwater Mountain. Within the narrow right-of-way is a deep ditch that collects runoff from Coldwater Mountain and conveys it into the concrete drainage structure in Parcel 54. From there, the site slopes around 4 percent to the south, but after 200 feet, it begins to ascend the mountain. At around 250 feet from the right-of-way is a 40-foot-wide band of ground sloping at around 30 percent, likely representing soil excavated to flatten the roadside area. From that point southward, the surface of the parcel slopes at around 7–8 percent. The only known topographic modification to Parcel 38 since the period of significance is related to the construction of Barkwood Drive. Otherwise, the general topography of the two lots that comprise Parcel 38 as it falls to the north appears relatively unchanged when compared to the other two parcels.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Topography of Old Birmingham Highway and right-of-way

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Topography of State Route 202 (western bypass)

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Topography of Barkwood Drive and associated residential driveways

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Topography of Parcel 44

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Topography of Parcel 54

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Topography of Parcel 38

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Patterns of Spatial Organization

Bus Depot

(See Figures 4-1 through 4-12)

Historic Conditions

The former Greyhound bus depot was constructed on Gurnee Avenue, one block west of Noble Street—historically Anniston’s main commercial thoroughfare—and one-half block south of the Calhoun County Courthouse on W. 11th Street. Many of the buildings in the vicinity of the former bus depot predated its construction. Adjoining the former bus depot to the north stood an Italianate-style two-story brick commercial building that was built around 1890.⁶ To the south across the bus driveway stood a one-story brick commercial building that was constructed in the 1920s. Across Gurnee to the west stood a one-story brick grocery store that was also built in the 1920s.

The former bus depot building was constructed in the northwest corner of its lot, which allowed enough space for a parking area to the east and a 17-foot-10-inch-wide driveway for buses to the south. The parking area was accessed via an alley that extended southward through the block from W. 11th to W. 10th. The original exit doors from the depot’s waiting areas, as well as the door to the baggage room, were on its south façade facing the driveway and protected from the weather by a broad awning.⁷ Historically, the westernmost of the exit doors was reserved for White passengers and the easternmost exit door was reserved for Black passengers.

Existing Conditions

The Bus Depot remains at its original location in downtown Anniston, one block west of Noble Street and one-half block south of the Calhoun County Courthouse on W. 11th Street. The buildings that stand adjacent to the site have changed little in scale or appearance since the period of significance. The streetscape of the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue has changed little

⁶ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Company, 1890, Anniston, Alabama, Sheet 6.

⁷ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 22, Appendix G.

in its appearance since 1961, other than the addition of a concrete planter box in front of the nursery/homewares shop across the street and the historic marker and audio box in front of the Bus Depot building. The building, parking lot, bus driveway, and alleyway access remain as they were in 1961. The parking lot is accessed via the same alleyway that extended southward through the block from W. 11th to W. 10th in 1961.⁸ At some point after 1961, the exit door reserved for White passengers was bricked in, but the exit door reserved for Black passengers remains in place (Figure 44). The door to the baggage room has been boarded up.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Spatial relationship between the Bus Depot and adjacent buildings

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Locations and sizes of adjacent alleyways

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Spatial relationship between Bus Depot and Gurnee Avenue streetscape

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Spatial relationship between Bus Depot building and its parking lot

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Relative placement of White and Black exit doors and baggage room door

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Bus Burning Site

(See Figures 4-15 through 4-22)

Historic Conditions

During the period of significance, the three parcels that make up the Bus Burning Site were portions of eight lots in a rural neighborhood organized by the historic township and range

system. These lots, which varied in length between 400 and 600 feet and in width between 110 and 400 feet, extended north and south of what was then State Route 202. Forsyth & Son Grocery and the grocer's residence stood on Lot A at the northeast corner of the intersection of a two-lane country road with State Route 202. Like most of the residences along the highway, the grocer's house was set back about 120 feet from the edge of the highway, while the store stood about 65 feet back. Lot B contained a house that stood 60 feet from the road. Next to it to the east was a wide lot containing two houses set over 200 feet from the road. Between them and the road was a lozenge-shaped track and an open lawn, a portion of which comprises Lot C. Lot D contained a single dwelling and two outbuildings, while Lots E and F were wooded with no buildings or other development. Across the street from Forsyth & Son Grocery stood four residential lots with homes set between 95 and 120 feet from the road edge. Adjacent to these was Lot G, a broad lot occupied by the Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop, housed in a commercial building set only 50 feet from the highway edge. A building that was likely a residence also stood on the lot about 190 feet from the road. On Lot H stood a residence set about 170 feet from the road; a small outbuilding sat behind it.

Lots A, B, C, D, and H were mostly cleared of vegetation and had only a few trees and shrubs. Some of these lots had a concentration of trees only in areas far from the road. About half of Lot G was wooded, while Lots E and F were completely wooded. Some of the lots were defined by patchy fencerows, while others, such as the Forsyths', were deliberately screened with a maintained hedge.

Existing Conditions

Today, the Bus Burning Site is composed of three parcels separated by the Old Birmingham Highway right-of-way. Parcels 44 and 54 lie between the Old Birmingham Highway and State Route 202 and contain the remnants of former residential and commercial lots represented by Lots A through F. They are open and free from vegetation and buildings. Their topography was

⁸ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 22, Appendix G.

altered to construct State Route 202 and convey its stormwater drainage from the south to eventually meet Coldwater Branch. Parcels 44 and 54 are separated by the west terminus of the Old Birmingham Highway, which functions as a short access road connecting the two highways. Parcel 38 is on the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway. Lot G is the remnant of the property occupied by the well machine repair shop. All buildings have been cleared from the site, and Barkwood Drive now bisects the lot. Lot H remains much as it would have been during the period of significance; the house and outbuilding are extant, and the lot is about halfway cleared of vegetation. Lot G is open and partially covered in scrub vegetation on its north end but becomes forested with primarily pine farther south. It rises around 60 feet above the highway parcels on its south end.

Not included in the park but important as its setting are the four residential lots that stood directly across the street from Forsyth & Son Grocery. The buildings that stood on the easternmost lot during the period of significance have since been demolished and new buildings constructed in their place, and the lot is becoming more wooded. The next two homes to the west are extant from the period of significance, while the last home on the west end has since been demolished and a newer building constructed in its place.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Relationship of residential and commercial buildings with the Old Birmingham Highway and each other

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Screening hedge on west edge of Forsyth residential property

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Enclosure created by woodland in Parcel 38

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Enclosure created by woodland on eastern edge of Lot D

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Land Use and Activities

Bus Depot

Historic Conditions

During the period of significance, the former Greyhound bus depot was used for transportation and transportation-related services. The former bus depot supported this use until the Greyhound line relocated its terminal in 1967.⁹ During the period of significance, surrounding land use in downtown Anniston was primarily commercial with institutional use of buildings occupied by local, county, and federal governments.

Existing Conditions

Today, the Bus Depot is used to display exhibits about the Freedom Rides. The adjacent Mural Building is empty, but a mural of a vintage 1961 Greyhound bus has been painted on the outside of its north wall. The National Park Service has installed interpretive signs within and adjacent to the mural. Surrounding land use in downtown Anniston continues to be primarily commercial with institutional use of buildings occupied by local, county, and federal governments.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Transportation

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Museum

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Bus Burning Site

Historic Conditions

The site where the Greyhound bus was burned was being used as a commercial grocery store and related residence in 1961. The lots on either side of the store were residential. While the large lot across the Old Birmingham Highway was

⁹ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 14-20.

being used to service well pump engines, most of the other lots were in residential use in 1961.

Existing Conditions

At the Bus Burning Site, only a sliver of the grocery store property and portions of the neighboring lots remain; most of the land was taken to build the western bypass in 2008. The remnants of these properties are now part of the national monument and used for outdoor recreation and commemoration through the placement of historical markers. The lot across the Old Birmingham Highway that was being used to service well pump engines has been cleared and abandoned and is also now part of the national monument. The other lots across the Old Birmingham Highway remain in residential use.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Commerce/Trade

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Residential

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Outdoor Recreation

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Monument/Marker

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Circulation Patterns and Features

Bus Depot

(See Figures 4-1 through 4-6)

Historic Conditions

The former Greyhound bus depot was constructed in the northwest corner of its lot to allow for an asphalt parking area to the east and an asphalt driveway for buses to the south. The parking area was accessed via an alley that extended southward through the block from W. 11th Street to W. 10th Street. The original exit doors from the depot's waiting areas, as well as the door to the baggage room, were on its south façade facing the driveway and protected from

the weather by a broad awning. The westernmost of the exit doors was reserved for White passengers, while the center exit door was reserved for Black passengers. The double-leaf front door of the bus led to two stairs, about 6 inches each in height, to a broad concrete sidewalk that extended from the street curb to the building façade. Parking for cars was available along the curb. The Gurnee end of the bus driveway terminated in a broad concrete apron extending about 6 feet past the street curb.

Existing Conditions

Circulation features at the Bus Depot today remain much as they were during the period of significance. The only change evident is the installation of the three yellow-painted steel bollards at the west end of the bus driveway. White striping has been added to define four parking spaces adjacent to the rear of the building; it is not known if the parking area was striped during the historic period.

The doorway that was historically reserved for White passengers has been removed and blocked in. The doorway that was reserved for Black passengers has been boarded up. The baggage room door is extant. The double-leaf front door is extant, as are the two steps that lead to it. The broad sidewalk remains much as it was, as does the concrete bus driveway apron.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Asphalt parking area

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Asphalt bus driveway

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Door historically reserved for White passengers on south façade

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Door historically reserved for Black passengers on south façade

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Baggage room door on south façade

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Concrete front sidewalk

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Front door

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Concrete front steps

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Steel bollards

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

White striping

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Bus Burning Site

(See Figures 4-13 through 4-22)

Historic Conditions

The rural neighborhood that was the site and setting for the Greyhound bus burning incident was dominated by State Route 202. The highway was part of the route that the Greyhound took on May 14, 1961, from the bus depot in downtown Anniston to where it was forced to stop at Forsyth & Son Grocery because the tires, which had been slashed by members of the mob, went flat. From the highway extended the two-lane country road that ran from just west of the Forsyth property north toward Tarsus. Each of the rural properties along State Route 202 had its own driveway that extended from the highway to serve one or more residences or commercial buildings. A portion of the lot where the Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop was located was paved in what was likely gravel.

The center of action on May 14, 1961, was the asphalt highway shoulder where the Greyhound bus stopped in front of Forsyth & Son. The grocery had a gravel parking area in the front that was accessed by two driveways flanking a

central island kept in turf, creating a circular drive. The west driveway had a concrete apron that met the highway shoulder and led to a gravel parking area for the Forsyth residence (see Figure 2-11). The east driveway led to the store's outbuilding and the residence east of the Forsyths'. The store had a full-length concrete stoop under its broad awning.

Existing Conditions

Only a few circulation features remain today from the period of significance since most of the Bus Burning Site was demolished for the western bypass. The Old Birmingham Highway remains in the same place and in much the same condition as it was in 1961. Just west of the Bus Burning Site, however, it has been realigned slightly to become a driveway for two residences. The western bypass work also required demolition and realignment of around 650 feet of the old road to Tarsus. The relocated section, which has been renamed Forsythe Drive (spelled with an "e" on maps), intersects with State Route 202 on its north edge. It is possible that a small portion of the driveway apron for Forsyth & Son may have survived the demolition that occurred for the construction of the western bypass (see Figure 4-18). Archeological investigations may uncover additional remnants. A gravel area used informally for parking in the eastern part of Parcel 54 is a remnant of a paved connector that had been built in the 1970s between the new State Route 202 and the Old Birmingham Highway. The connector was removed around 2008.

In 1971, the Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop lot was subdivided to create Mountain Terrace Subdivision. At some point before 1981, Barkwood Drive was constructed and driveways installed to serve the new lots.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Old Birmingham Highway (old State Route 202)

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Fair

State Route 202

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Intersection of the Tarsus Road with the Old Birmingham Highway

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Barkwood Drive and residential driveways

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Old Birmingham Highway shoulder at site of bus burning

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Unknown

Gravel parking area at Forsyth & Son Grocery

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Gravel area used for parking in Parcel 54

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Poor

Gravel paving at Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop property

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Poor

Cultural Vegetation

Bus Depot

Historic Conditions

There was no known cultural vegetation at this site during the period of significance.

Existing Conditions

There is no cultural vegetation at this site.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

None

Bus Burning Site

Historic Conditions

Cultural vegetation in Parcels 44, 54, and 38 in 1961 included a variety of trees and shrubs. Homeowners maintained turf grasses around their homes, shade trees close to residences, screening hedges, and ornamental shrubs. Lots E and F and the eastern edge of Lot D were densely wooded. At the Forsyth residence, a

hedge on the western edge of the front yard provided a screen from the road to Taurus, a crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) stood close to the west wall of the grocery store, a pecan (*Carya illinoensis*) stood in the center of the front yard, and ornamental evergreen shrubs of an unknown species were maintained around the front porch. Except for the gravel parking area around the winding shop, Parcel 38 was almost completely covered in what would have been an oak and pine woodland.

Existing Conditions

Today, the only cultural vegetation evident in Parcels 44 and 54 is the turf planted between State Route 202 and the Old Birmingham Highway on completion of the western bypass in 2008. There are no trees or shrubs, including in the areas of former Lots D, E, and F. Most of Parcel 38 is covered in oak and pine woodland. At least four species of invasive plants grow around its edges: mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*), common privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), pyracantha (*Pyracantha coccinea*), and kudzu (*Pueraria montana*).

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Shade trees and shrubs at residences

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Woodland in Lots D, E, and F

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Screening hedge, crape myrtle, pecan, and ornamental shrubs at Forsyth residence

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Turf

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Oak and pine woodland

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Invasive plants

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Views and Vistas

Bus Depot

(See Figures 4-1 through 4-12)

Historic Conditions

In 1961, views of the front of the former Greyhound bus depot and its adjacent bus driveway were documented in photographs before and during the attack on the Greyhound bus (Figures 4-1, 4-5, and 4-7). Other photographs documented the bus headed north on Gurnee before the attack and south on Gurnee after the attack (Figures 4-3, 4-9, and 4-11). Onlookers standing on surrounding sidewalks would have had clear views of the bus entering and exiting the site and sporadic views of the attack as cars passed on the street. There were no planned vistas at the site.

Existing Conditions

Today, the site is very much as it was in 1961. There are clear views of the Bus Depot building when there is no car parked at the curb in front. Views of the location of the attack in the bus driveway are slightly impacted by the presence of the three yellow-painted steel bollards that were installed there. Views up and down Gurnee Avenue and along the surrounding streets are also very much as they were in 1961 since most of the buildings are still standing. The only building missing is the one-story brick office building that once stood at the northwest corner of Gurnee and W. 11th Street. It has been replaced by the parking lot that serves the recently constructed multi-story federal courthouse building.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

View of the bus driveway

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Fair

View of the Bus Depot building

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

View south of the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

View north of the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Fair

View from the Bus Depot to new federal courthouse

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Bus Burning Site

(See Figures 4-15 through 4-22)

Historic Conditions

In 1961, views of the bus burning event were documented in photographs before, during, and after the attack on the Greyhound bus. Following the attack at the bus depot, the photographer captured a view of the bus as it traveled along what was then State Route 202 toward its fate at Forsyth & Son Grocery (Figure 4-13). The next set of photographs recorded various dynamic views of the bus burning event as the photographer moved around the site and as cars, people, and plumes of smoke came and went (Figures 4-15, 4-17, 4-19, and 4-21). During the event, onlookers would have seen the hobbled bus, Forsyth & Son Grocery and the Forsyth residence behind it, the attackers' cars parked along the highway, and the houses adjacent to and across the street from the site.

Existing Conditions

Views of the site of the bus burning have changed dramatically since 1961. Bypass-related construction meant the demolition and removal of all the buildings on the eight lots within the Bus Burning Site and their surrounding landscapes. This affected not only the actual site of the burning but also its setting on the north side of what is now the Old Birmingham Highway and on Parcel 38 to the south. All that remains from 1961 are the eastern extents of the highway within the viewshed of the park and three residences across the street that form a portion of the site setting (Figures 4-16, 4-18, 4-20, and 4-22).

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Dynamic views of the burning bus

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Views of Forsyth & Son Grocery and the Forsyth home

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Views looking east on Old Birmingham Highway (former State Route 202)

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Views looking west on Old Birmingham Highway (former State Route 202)

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Views looking south at residences across Old Birmingham Highway (former State Route 202)

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Fair

Buildings and Structures

Bus Depot

(See Figures 4-1 through 4-6)

Historic Conditions

The Greyhound bus depot was the only building on the site during the period of significance (Figure 4-1). There were no structures. The presence and condition of utilities at the former Greyhound bus depot during the period of significance are not known.

Existing Conditions

The Bus Depot building is the only building or structure on the Bus Depot site (Figure 4-2). It is largely unchanged in appearance since 1961 and is in good condition. The original exterior glazed brick, clay tile copings, and steel windows are largely intact, especially on the south, east, and north elevations. On the west elevation the original windows have been replaced with aluminum storefront and fixed glazing in the original masonry openings. The acrylic awning attached to the wall above the front doors is a recent addition. The attachment points for original the metal awning and Greyhound bus depot signage shown in photographs from 1961 are still evident on the west façade.¹⁰

On the south elevation—facing the bus driveway—the original exit door from the front waiting room, which was reserved for White passengers, has been infilled with brick to match the rest of the building. The original exit door from the rear waiting room, signed for “Colored” passengers has been filled with painted plywood. The original baggage door is extant, as are all the steel windows on this façade.

The original bus canopy is extant, although its soffit and roof have been altered. The original metal soffit has been removed and replaced with oriented strand board. Evidence of the original metal fascia and trim at the perimeter of the bus canopy remains, as does the original interior downspout. A sloping wood-frame roof with composition shingles was added above the original flat roof of the canopy. The main portion of the Bus Depot building roof remains largely unchanged from the early 1960s.

The north and east elevations of the Bus Depot building are essentially unchanged from the early 1960s. It is not known if the exhaust hood discharge near the center of the east elevation is historic. Further, there is evidence of a small opening to the north areaway that has since been filled with brick.

The interior of the Bus Depot building has been altered significantly since 1961. It does, however, retain some key features of the segregated facility from the period of significance, including marks on the floor that indicated locations of restrooms and waiting areas.

The historic structure report documented the original overhead electrical service attaching to the northeast corner of the Bus Depot building. The original electrical enclosure also exists on the depot’s exterior north wall and is accessible from the areaway. The report also documented that the former natural gas service was in the north areaway. The working conditions of these utilities are not known.

The City of Anniston’s water system uses a four-inch line that runs the length of this block of Gurnee under the public sidewalk. There is one

¹⁰ The following description of the bus depot building is based on information from City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*.

water meter in front of the Bus Depot. The public sewer gravity main runs underground along the alley behind the Bus Depot. The working conditions of these utilities are not known.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Bus Depot building

- Contribution Status: Contributing
- Condition: Good

Bus canopy soffit and roof

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Front awning

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Bus Burning Site

(See Figures 4-15 through 4-22)

Historic Conditions

There were around nine buildings on the Bus Burning Site during the period of significance. Featured most prominently in historic photographs were the Forsyth & Son Grocery and the adjacent Forsyth residence. Three other buildings also appeared in many photographs taken on May 14, 1961, and were important parts of the event's setting. One was the Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop, which was across the street and east of Forsyth's on what became Parcel 38. It was a side-gable building with an attached front-gable *porte cochere*. The other two were residences directly across the street, both front-gabled 1920s bungalows with partial-width porches. The westernmost bungalow had dog-eared gable corners. Most of the residences directly across the highway from Parcel 54 would have also been present during the event, but were not documented in the historic photographs.

Historic photographs of the burning bus show electrical service to the Forsyth & Son Grocery site. This came from electrical lines set on wood poles that lined the highway on both sides. Nothing is known about other utilities on the site.

Existing Conditions

Of the buildings documented in historic photographs of the bus burning, only the two front-gabled 1920s bungalows across the Old Birmingham Highway remain from the period of significance. Now addressed as 5062 and 5072 Old Birmingham Highway, neither are within the boundaries of the Bus Burning Site, but they remain in good condition and are important features in its setting. Three residences across the highway from Parcel 54 also remain in place from 1961. The only structures are the steel highway barriers that stand in the right-of-way of the Old Birmingham Highway adjacent to the historic marker and across the street.

The site is crossed by electric, water, and sewer utilities. Overhead electrical lines run along the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway and across the front of Parcel 38. Overhead electrical lines also run along the north side of the highway around 200 feet into Parcel 54, at which point they split to cross the site, presumably to service streetlights on State Route 202. A second line crosses the highway to extend south on Grant Drive. These lines are served by a utility box that stands on the eastern edge of Parcel 54. The working conditions of these utilities are not known.

A large concrete stormwater drainage structure associated with the new State Route 202 extends into the northeast parcel. Information about the locations of underground water and sewer utilities at this site is not available through any of the utility providers. The working conditions of these utilities are not known.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Steel highway barriers

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Electrical lines and service equipment

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Stormwater conveyances

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Small-Scale Features

Bus Depot

(See Figures 4-1 through 4-6)

Historic Conditions

No small-scale features are evident at this site from photographs taken before, during, and immediately after the 1961 attack. There may have been features in the parking lot, but they have not been documented. It is not known if the “No Parking” and “Private Drive” signs mentioned below are from 1961.

Existing Conditions

Small-scale features at the Bus Depot include the three steel bollards installed at the west end of the bus driveway, a historical marker and audio device installed in the sidewalk in front of the Bus Depot, a National Register marker mounted on the front of the Bus Depot building, a “No Parking” sign attached to the southwest corner of the building, a “Private Drive” sign attached to the Mural Building, interpretive signs attached to the Mural Building, a mural of a 1961 vintage Greyhound bus painted on the side of the Mural Building, and a steel gas lantern installed on the northeast corner of the Mural Building by Alagasco.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Steel bollards

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Historical marker and audio device

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

National Register marker on front wall of Bus Depot building

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

“No Parking” sign

- Contribution Status: Unknown
- Condition: Good

“Private Drive” sign

- Contribution Status: Unknown
- Condition: Good

Interpretive signs attached to Mural Building

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Mural of 1961 vintage Greyhound bus

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Alagasco lantern

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Bus Burning Site

(See Figures 4-15 through 4-22)

Historic Conditions

Historic photographs of the bus burning event show only three small-scale features in the immediate vicinity. Two were signs: a portable S&H Green Stamps sign and a Mell-O Milk-Ice Cream sign. The third was the galvanized steel bucket that Janie Forsyth used to provide water for the victims of the attack. Small-scale features present in the neighborhood setting included wood electrical poles, signs that appear on the north and south sides of the highway for Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop, and a steel guardrail across the highway to the south and slightly east of the site.

Existing Conditions

There are no small-scale features remaining on the Bus Burning Site from 1961. Small-scale features added after the period of significance include the historical marker, the three-sided kiosk, the NPS park identification sign stretched over a previous sign, and various traffic signs, street signs, utility poles, and utility boxes.

Contributing Status and Condition Rating

Portable S&H Green Stamps sign

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Mell-O Milk-Ice Cream sign

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Galvanized steel bucket

- Contribution Status: Missing
- Condition: n/a

Historical marker

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Three-sided kiosk

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

NPS park identification sign

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Traffic signs and street signs

- Contribution Status: Noncontributing
- Condition: Good

Archeological Sites

No archeological investigations have been conducted at either site of the Freedom Riders National Monument.

Integrity Assessment

The historic integrity of a cultural landscape depends on its ability to convey its significance—that is, if its characteristics and associated features, along with its spatial qualities, are present in much the same way as they were historically. This is determined by evaluating the property based on seven aspects developed by the National Register to define the integrity of a historic property: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. These are defined as follows:

- **Location** is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred;
- **Setting** is the physical environment within and surrounding a property;
- **Design** is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property;
- **Materials** are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property;

- **Workmanship** is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory;
- **Feeling** is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time; and
- **Association** is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

For a property to convey its historic significance, it must possess integrity in at least a few of these seven aspects.

The analysis and evaluation of integrity for Freedom Riders National Monument was completed with guidance from National Register Bulletin: *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields*. As with a battle, the attack on the Freedom Riders by White supremacists in Anniston on May 14, 1961, was historically significant but brief and violent, leaving little material evidence. For such landscapes, location, setting, feeling, and association are usually the most important aspects of integrity.¹¹

Location

Bus Depot

The former Greyhound bus depot building, parking lot, bus driveway, and front sidewalk all remain as they were when the bus attack occurred on May 14, 1961. Therefore, the Bus Depot has integrity of location.

Bus Burning Site

Very little remains of the site where the Greyhound bus was burned except a portion of the highway shoulder where the bus pulled over. Nonetheless, the Bus Burning Site has integrity of location.

Setting

Bus Depot

The 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue, which is the setting of the former Greyhound bus depot, has changed little in appearance since the 1961 bus

¹¹ U.S. Department of the Interior, *Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields*, National Register Bulletin

(Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1992), 10-11.

attack. The buildings present in 1961 remain standing today and, except for details such as paint and signage, they look very much the same as they did then. The streetscape has changed little, except for the addition of a few utility poles; therefore, the Bus Depot has integrity of setting.

Bus Burning Site

Except for the Williams shop and residence, most of the houses and commercial buildings that provided the setting of the bus burning on the south side of the highway are extant, as is the stretch of the Old Birmingham Highway in front of the site. The northern portion of the setting of the Bus Burning Site, however, has changed dramatically with the construction of the western bypass and lacks integrity to the period of significance. Nonetheless, due to the extant residences across the Old Birmingham Highway that witnessed the bus burning event and the presence of the old road itself, the Bus Burning Site has moderate integrity of setting.

Design

Bus Depot

The exterior appearance of the former Greyhound bus depot and the organization of its site have changed little since the 1961 bus attack. On the west façade, the entry door canopy has been replaced and the former Greyhound bus depot sign removed, but evidence of their attachments remains. The west windows have also been replaced but the openings themselves have not been altered. The original bus canopy has been altered slightly by replacement of the fascia and trim and the addition of a pitched roof to improve drainage. The exit door reserved for White passengers has since been bricked up, but its former location is evident in the age of the brick. The exit door reserved for Black passengers has been boarded up with painted plywood, but the opening remains unchanged. The door to the baggage room remains in place. The grading of the site also reflects the original design, which provided a flat driveway for bus loading and unloading. Changes to the building are minor and reversible; therefore, the Bus Depot has integrity of design.

Bus Burning Site

The site of the Greyhound bus burning has changed dramatically since the period of significance. Work to create the western bypass led to the demolition or alteration of most character-defining features on the eight lots that comprise the Bus Burning Site. Although it is possible that there are archeological remains within the boundaries of Parcel 44 and the driveway apron where the bus was parked when it was burned, the Bus Burning Site lacks integrity of design.

Materials and Workmanship

Bus Depot

On the west façade of the Bus Depot building, the entry door canopy has been replaced and the former Greyhound bus depot sign removed, although evidence of their attachments remains. The west windows have been replaced, as have the fascia and trim on the bus canopy. The bus canopy was altered slightly with the addition of an asphalt-shingled pitched roof over the original flat roof. The exit door reserved for White passengers has since been bricked up with glazed brick that matches the rest of the building exterior. The exit door reserved for Black passengers has been boarded up with painted plywood, but the door to the baggage room remains in place. The rest of the lot has most likely been repaved since the period of significance and was recently restriped to create parking spaces.

The replacement of the windows and bus canopy materials and the bricking up of the exit reserved for White passengers are reversible changes to the depot building, so the exterior of the Bus Depot has integrity of materials and workmanship.

Bus Burning Site

The site of the Greyhound bus burning has changed dramatically since the period of significance. Work to create the western bypass led to the demolition or alteration of most character-defining features on the eight lots that comprise the Bus Burning Site. Although it is possible that there are archeological remains within the boundaries of Parcel 44 and driveway apron where the bus was parked when it was

burned, the Bus Burning Site lacks integrity of materials and workmanship.

Feeling

Bus Depot

The exterior appearance of the former Greyhound bus depot and the organization of its site have changed little since the 1961 bus attack. In addition, its setting also remains much the same in appearance and organization since the period of significance. While there are some minor changes to the building's design and materials, these changes are reversible, so the Bus Depot maintains integrity of feeling.

Bus Burning Site

The site of the Greyhound bus burning has changed dramatically since the period of significance. Work to create the western bypass led to the demolition or alteration of most character-defining features on the eight lots that comprise the Bus Burning Site, although it is possible that there are archeological remains of the highway shoulder where the bus was parked when it was burned. However, the extant residences across the Old Birmingham Highway that witnessed the bus burning event and the old highway itself help support its integrity of feeling.

Association

Bus Depot

The exterior of the former Greyhound bus depot and its site have changed little in appearance since the 1961 bus attack. The site represents the event well and retains integrity of association.

Bus Burning Site

Despite the removal of all buildings that stood on the site during the period of significance, the continued presence of that portion of the Old Birmingham Highway and the residences across it to the south are intact enough to convey the association of the site with the bus burning to an observer. Two of these residences appear in historic photographs and these views can be compared favorably with similar views today. Therefore, the Bus Burning Site retains integrity of association.

Overall Integrity

Overall, the integrity of Freedom Riders National Monument remains high due to the numerous surviving resources, particularly the Bus Depot and its surrounding urban setting. The most dramatic change to the park landscape that has affected its integrity is construction of Anniston's western bypass, which removed a portion of the setting of the Bus Burning Site.

Bus Depot

The historic resources of the Bus Depot represent its appearance on May 14, 1961, when the first busload of Freedom Riders was attacked there by a mob of White supremacists. Based on a comparison of its historic and existing character, the integrity of the exterior of the Bus Depot to its period of significance is high. The former Greyhound bus depot building and its parking lot, driveway, and front sidewalk all remain much as they were when the bus attack occurred, changing little in appearance since 1961. In addition, the urban setting of the Bus Depot remains the same, except the one-story brick office building that once stood at the corner of W. 11th Street and Gurnee Avenue, which was demolished around 2020. Because its appearance and setting have changed very little since the period of significance, the Bus Depot also maintains a high level of integrity of feeling and association.

Bus Burning Site

The historical integrity of the Bus Burning Site, where the Greyhound bus was burned in front of Forsyth & Son Grocery, has diminished since 1961. Work to create Anniston's western bypass in the 1970s and 2000s meant the demolition or alteration of most of the character-defining features on the eight lots that comprise the Bus Burning Site today. Therefore, the Bus Burning Site has poor integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. On the other hand, the Bus Burning Site has integrity of location because it contains the site of the bus burning, and moderate integrity of setting because the Old Birmingham Highway in front of the site and most of the houses and commercial buildings present in 1961 south of the highway are extant. Because of these surviving elements, which were documented in photographs during the bus

burning event, the site has integrity of feeling. Further, that section of the Old Birmingham Highway and the extant historic residences across to the south are enough to convey the association of the site with the bus burning to an observer through comparison of historic and existing conditions photographs. Therefore, the Bus Burning Site has integrity of association.

Summary

When the National Register nomination is completed for Freedom Riders National

Monument, the park should be nominated as a historic district. In addition to the Bus Depot and Bus Burning Sites, the district's boundary should be extended to encompass the historic route taken by the Greyhound bus from the Anniston Greyhound depot to the site where the bus was burned. Most of this route retains integrity from 1961 and its inclusion will strengthen the nomination.



Figure 4-1. View of Greyhound bus depot building in 1961, looking northeast. Courtesy of Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



Figure 4-2. Same view of the Bus Depot building, taken in 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 4-3. View of segregationists threatening the Greyhound bus at the Anniston depot on May 14, 1961. Courtesy of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 4-4. Same view of the Bus Depot driveway taken in 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 4-5. View of segregationists threatening the Greyhound bus on May 14, 1961. Courtesy of Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 4-6. Same view of the Bus Depot building, taken in 2021. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 4-7. View looking south on Gurnee Avenue at the Greyhound bus as it approaches W. 11th Street, where it will turn right, then right again to enter the alley behind the bus depot. Courtesy of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 4-8. The same view looking south, taken in 2022. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 4-9. Greyhound bus leaving the Anniston depot on May 14, 1961. Courtesy of Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 4-10. Same view of Gurnee Avenue, taken in 2022. Laura Knott.



FIGURE 4-12. View of the Greyhound bus heading south on Gurnee Avenue toward the Birmingham Highway on May 14, 1961. Courtesy of Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



FIGURE 4-11. Same view looking south on Gurnee Avenue, taken in 2022. Laura Knott

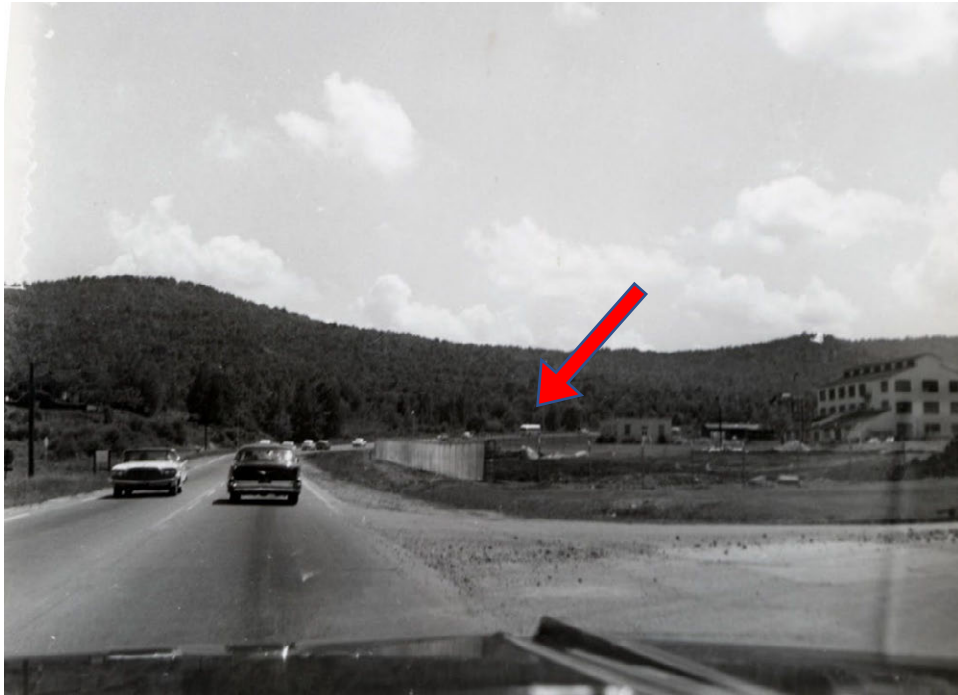


Figure 4-13. View from a car traveling on the Birmingham Highway behind the Greyhound bus on May 14, 1961. The location of the bus is indicated with a red arrow. Courtesy of Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



Figure 4-14. Same view of what is now Clydesdale Avenue in 2022. The road now swings to the left so that it can meet the new State Route 202 at a right angle. Laura Knott.



Figure 4-15. View of the burning Greyhound bus on May 14, 1961, looking south from the gravel parking lot of Forsyth & Son Grocery. Courtesy of Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



Figure 4-16. Same view showing the bungalow that appears in the 1961 photograph and is extant today, taken 2021. The approximate location of the bus is indicated by the red rectangle. The mountain does not appear because the grade was lowered in the area of the bus burning for the new highway. Laura Knott.



Figure 4-17. View of state troopers standing in front of the burning bus on May 14, 1961, looking east on the Birmingham Highway. Courtesy of Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



Figure 4-18. Similar view in 2021, looking east. The approximate location of the bus as seen from the same viewpoint is indicated by the red outline. Laura Knott.

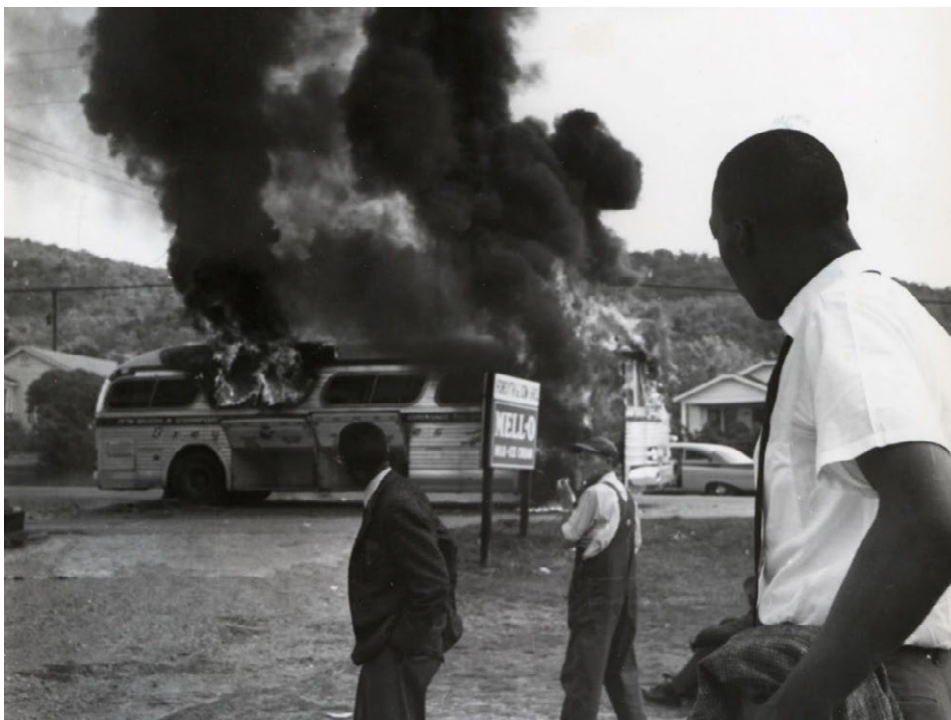


Figure 4-19. View of the burning bus looking south from Forsyth & Son Grocery on May 14, 1961. Courtesy Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



Figure 4-20. Similar view of site of bus burning, looking south. The approximate location of the bus is indicated by the red outline. The house on the left edge is now missing. Laura Knott.



Figure 4-21. View of the burning bus, looking south from Forsyth & Son Grocery on May 14, 1961. Courtesy Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.



Figure 4-22. Similar view, looking south. The approximate location of the bus is indicated by the red outline. The house shown to the left in the historic photograph is now missing. Laura Knott.

Table 4.1 Contributing, Noncontributing, and Missing Features				
Feature	Condition	Date of Origin	Alterations	Contributing Status
Natural Features and Systems and Responses to Natural Resources				
Bus Depot				
General drainage patterns	Good	Pre-1961		Contributing
Bus Burning Site				
General drainage patterns, Parcel 44	Good	2008		Noncontributing
General drainage patterns, Parcel 54	Good	2008		Noncontributing
General drainage patterns, Parcel 38	Good	Pre-1961		Contributing
Stormwater structure, Parcel 54	Good	2008		Noncontributing
Topography and Topographic Modifications				
Bus Depot				
Slope of rear parking area	Good	Pre-1961		Contributing
Slope of bus driveway	Good	Pre-1961		Contributing
Bus Burning Site				
Topography of Old Birmingham Highway and right-of-way	Good	Pre-1961		Contributing
Topography of State Route 202 (western bypass)	Good	2008		Noncontributing
Topography of Barkwood Drive and associated residential driveways	Good	Ca. 1975		Noncontributing
Topography of Parcel 44	Good	Pre-1961	2008	Noncontributing
Topography of Parcel 54	Good	Pre-1961	2008	Noncontributing
Topography of Parcel 38	Good	Pre-1961	Ca. 1975	Contributing
Patterns of Spatial Organization				
Bus Depot				
Spatial relationship between the Bus Depot building and adjacent buildings	Good	1951		Contributing
Location and sizes of adjacent alleyways	Good	1880s, 1952		Contributing

Spatial relationship between the Bus Depot and Gurnee Avenue streetscape	Good	1952		Contributing
Spatial relationship between Bus Depot building and its parking lot	Good	1952		Contributing
Relative placement of White and Black exit doors and baggage room door	Good	1952		Contributing
Bus Burning Site				
Relationship of residential and commercial buildings with the Old Birmingham Highway and each other	N/A	Pre-1961	1970s–2008	Missing
Screening hedge on west edge of Forsyth residential property	N/A	Pre-1961	2008	Missing
Enclosure created by woodland in Parcel 38	Good	Unknown	Ca. 1975	Contributing
Enclosure created by woodland on eastern edge of Lot D	N/A	Pre-1961	2008	Missing
Land Use and Activities				
Bus Depot				
Transportation	N/A	1952	1962	Missing
Museum	Good	2017		Noncontributing
Bus Burning Site				
Commerce/Trade	N/A	Pre-1961	2000s	Missing
Residential	N/A	Pre-1961	2000s	Missing
Outdoor Recreation	Good	2017		Noncontributing
Monument/Marker	Good	2007		Noncontributing
Circulation Patterns and Features				
Bus Depot				
Asphalt parking area	Good	1952		Contributing
Asphalt bus driveway	Good	1952		Contributing
Door historically reserved for White passengers on south façade	N/A	1952	Unknown	Missing
Door historically reserved for Black passengers on south façade	Good	1952	Unknown	Contributing

Baggage room door on south façade	Good	1952		Contributing
Concrete front sidewalk	Good	Pre-1951		Contributing
Front door	Good	1951		Contributing
Concrete front steps	Good	1951		Contributing
White striping	Good	2021		Noncontributing
Bus Burning Site				
Old Birmingham Highway (old State Route 202)	Fair	1917	1970s, 2000s	Contributing
State Route 202	Good	1970s	2000s	Noncontributing
Intersection of the Tarsus Road with the Old Birmingham Highway	N/A	Unknown	2000s	Missing
Barkwood Drive and residential driveways	Good	c. 1975		Noncontributing
Old Birmingham Highway shoulder at site of bus burning	Unknown	Unknown	2000s	Contributing
Gravel parking area at Forsyth & Son Grocery	Good	1940s	2000s	Missing
Front path to Forsyth residence	Good	1920s	2000s	Missing
Gravel area used for parking in Parcel 54	Poor	1970s	2008	Noncontributing
Gravel paving at Williams Electric Motor Winding Shop	Poor	Unknown	Ca. 1975	Contributing
Cultural Vegetation				
Bus Depot				
None	N/A	N/A		N/A
Bus Burning Site				
Shade trees and shrubs at residences	N/A	Pre-1961	1970s-2008	Missing
Woodland in Lots D, E, and F	N/A	Pre-1961		Missing
Screening hedge, crape myrtle, pecan, and ornamental shrubs at Forsyth residence	N/A	1920s-1960s	2000s	Missing
Turf	Good	1920s-1960s	2000s	Contributing
Oak and pine woodland	Good	Unknown		Contributing
Invasive plants	Good	Unknown		Noncontributing

Views and Vistas				
Bus Depot				
View of the bus driveway	Fair	1951		Contributing
View of the Bus Depot building	Good	1951		Contributing
View south of the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue	Good	1920s		Contributing
View north of the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue	Fair	1920s		Contributing
View from the Bus Depot to new federal courthouse	Good	1921	2021	Noncontributing
Bus Burning Site				
Dynamic views of the burning bus	N/A	1961		Missing
Views of Forsyth & Son Grocery and the Forsyth home	N/A	1961	1970s-2000s	Missing
View looking east on Old Birmingham Highway (former State Route 202)	Good	1961		Contributing
View looking west on Old Birmingham Highway (former State Route 202)	N/A	1961	2000s	Missing
View looking south at residences across Old Birmingham Highway (former State Route 202)	Fair	1961		Contributing
Buildings and Structures				
Bus Depot				
Bus Depot building	Good	1951	1960s-1990s	Contributing
Bus canopy soffit and roof	Good	1951	Unknown	Noncontributing
Front awning	Good	Unknown		Noncontributing
Bus Burning Site				
Steel highway barriers	Good	2000s		Noncontributing
Electrical lines and service equipment	Good	2000s		Noncontributing
Stormwater conveyances	Good	2000s		Noncontributing

Small-Scale Features				
Bus Depot				
Steel bollards	Good	2010s		Noncontributing
Historical marker and audio device	Good	2010s		Noncontributing
National Register marker on front wall of Bus Depot building	Good	2010s		Noncontributing
“No Parking” sign	Good	Unknown		Unknown
“Private Drive” sign	Good	Unknown		Unknown
Interpretive signs attached to Mural Building	Good	2010s		Noncontributing
Alagasco lantern	Good	2013		Noncontributing
Bus Burning Site				
Portable S&H Green Stamps sign	N/A	Unknown		Missing
Mell-O Milk-Ice Cream sign	N/A	Unknown		Missing
Galvanized steel bucket	N/A	Unknown		Missing
Historical marker	Good	2007		Noncontributing
Three-sided kiosk	Good	2021		Noncontributing
NPS park identification sign	Good	2008	c. 2017	Noncontributing
Traffic signs and street signs	Good	Unknown		Noncontributing

Treatment Recommendations

Introduction

Treatment is a preservation strategy for long-term management of a historic property. It is intended to direct physical work on a property so that the distinguishing characteristics and features that contribute to its significance and historical integrity are preserved. One of the goals of the treatment plan portion of a cultural landscape report (CLR) is to enhance the historic character of a cultural landscape while accommodating contemporary function and use. A CLR also addresses other park management goals such as access, sustainability, and interpretation, as well as routine and cyclical maintenance measures necessary to perpetuate the desirable character of the landscape.

This treatment plan has been prepared to provide the National Park Service (NPS) with an overall vision for the Freedom Riders National Monument cultural landscape that will guide and support use and management. The plan responds to the specific issues, concerns, and objectives shared with the CLR team by park and regional NPS personnel during the project's start-up and treatment meetings. It also addresses the needs and goals for site management identified in the park's 2018 foundation document.

This chapter is organized into six sections:

1. **Park Management Goals, Issues, and Concerns** describes the goals discussed and issues and concerns raised by the National Park Service in the foundation document and the project scope of work.
2. **Recommended Treatment Approach** presents the four approaches recognized by the Secretary of the Interior for treating historic properties and identifies the approach recommended for the Freedom

Riders National Monument cultural landscape.

3. **General Management and Design Guidelines for Treatment** provides an overarching set of guidelines that applies to all resource management activities conducted within Freedom Riders National Monument.
4. **Treatment Concept** conveys the overarching vision or concept for landscape treatment within the park that meets NPS issues, goals, and concerns identified as part of this project.
5. **Treatment Recommendations** presents cultural landscape treatment actions, organized by site, that address the park's management goals, issues, and concerns.
6. **Implementation Projects** identifies and describes ten projects for implementing several of the CLR treatment recommendations, focusing primarily on efforts required to address the park's identified goals, issues, and concerns.

Park Management Goals, Issues, and Concerns

The National Park Service has identified the following goals, issues, and concerns to be addressed in the CLR:

- *Visitor use and management, including impacts associated with increasing visitation related to the Anniston Civil Rights Trail, the Alabama Civil Rights Trail, and the U.S. Civil Rights Trail.* The national monument does not yet have its own sole-use visitor center, museum, or dedicated parking areas. The park would like guidance on how it might provide these services using existing

facilities around the Bus Depot, or with the use of digital tools and the addition of modest facilities at the Bus Burning Site.

- *Appropriate activities and uses that can be authorized in the area.* At the Bus Depot, these include interpretive programming and a walking tour to nearby sites. At the Bus Burning Site, appropriate activities would be encouraged with better visitor services, interpretation, and opportunities for commemoration.
- *Vegetation management, including invasive species and turf maintenance, and erosion control.* This concern addresses primarily the Bus Burning Site, which is covered primarily in turf. Several invasive species also grow within the site and should be identified and controlled to prevent spread. Steeper areas of the site are vulnerable to erosion, particularly during heavy rains exacerbated by climate change. Wetlands should be delineated by a qualified wetland scientist.
- *Viewsheds and surrounding development.* This concern affects both sites of the national monument. At the Bus Depot, the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue served as the historic scene and its preservation is key to communicating the story of the bus attack to the visitor. At the Bus Burning Site, preservation of views of the rural residential development along the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway are key to communicating the story of the bus burning.
- *Impacts of storm events and stormwater management.* Both sites of the national monument are impacted by the increase in severity of storm events due to climate change. More work is needed to further study the patterns of these events and prepare existing facilities to handle these changes.
- *Land ownership.* Both sites of the national monument are vulnerable to loss of integrity of setting. At the Bus Depot, vacancy and possible deterioration of neighboring structures could damage the integrity of the surrounding historic district and the site's historic context. At the Bus Burning Site,

which is outside of incorporated Anniston, there is potential for incompatible development on adjacent properties because there are no zoning restrictions. There are no controls over building renovations and demolition. Modification or removal of neighboring structures that were present at the time of the bus burning and contribute to the historic setting may have a negative impact on the historic character of the site.

- *Visitor safety and accessibility.* While there is adequate visitor parking close to the Bus Depot and an accessible parking space at the curb, the front entrance to the building is not accessible. The Bus Burning Site has no designated public parking or pedestrian access, which discourages visitation and presents a challenge to neighbors. It will also be important to develop physical connectivity between the national monument's two sites.
- *Resilience to natural hazards.* Of particular concern for both sites are the dangers to facilities from increasingly severe rainfall events, which can cause flooding and damage to buildings and structures. When not threatened by heavy rainfall and flooding, the Bus Burning Site may suffer the results of drought. In addition, visitor safety at both sites may be affected by increasingly hot days if shade is not provided.

Recommended Treatment Approach

Treatment Alternatives

The four treatment approaches recognized by the Secretary of the Interior for historic properties were considered together with the park's objectives to determine the approach most suitable for the Freedom Riders National Monument's cultural landscape. Described in the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Historic Properties* as forming "the philosophical basis for responsible preservation practice and enable long-term preservation of a landscape's historic features, qualities, and materials," these approaches are defined as follows:

Preservation: The act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a historic property. Includes stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing preservation maintenance and repair of historic materials and features.

Rehabilitation: The act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Restoration: The act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period by removing features from other periods in its history and reconstructing missing features from the restoration period.

Reconstruction: The act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period and in its historic location.¹

Preferred Treatment

Based on the park's need to meet current and projected future interpretive, functional, and management goals, **rehabilitation** is recommended as the most appropriate overarching treatment approach for the two sites of the Freedom Riders National Monument.

Other treatment alternatives are inappropriate as stand-alone alternatives for these two landscapes. By itself, preservation is overly restrictive because it does not allow for the changes to the landscape to accommodate contemporary needs, such as accessibility enhancements and interpretive features. Neither restoration nor reconstruction alone are appropriate because each assumes, as a prerequisite, that sufficient documentation exists to accurately portray most lost historic conditions.

Rehabilitation is best as the overarching treatment because preservation, restoration, and reconstruction can be subcomponents of rehabilitation, even when new uses are accommodated. The rehabilitation approach supports protection of the site's historic character and resources while meeting the need for interpretation, visitor amenities, and vegetation management.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

This section summarizes the standards for rehabilitation espoused by the Secretary of the Interior for historic properties. These standards apply to historic properties of all periods, locations, sizes, conditions, and uses and create a baseline of guidance to which intended changes to the historic landscape must be compared. These standards are neither technical nor prescriptive but promote responsible preservation practices.

The 10 basic principles that comprise the standards are intended to help preserve the distinctive character of a site while allowing for reasonable changes to meet new needs. They are as follows:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

¹ Page, Gilbert, and Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*, 82.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.²

Additional standards apply for restoration, reconstruction, and preservation. Restoration and reconstruction are permissible when archeological, documentary, or physical evidence is sufficient to permit accurate restoration or reconstruction with minimal conjecture; or when restoration or reconstruction is essential to public

understanding of the historical associations of a park. If needed for building or structure preservation, reinforcements required for stability of existing support systems and protective or code-required features are concealed whenever possible so as not to intrude upon or detract from a cultural landscape's aesthetic and historical qualities, except where concealment would result in the alteration or destruction of historically significant features, materials, or physical or visual relationships.

In all cases, only qualified technicians should perform maintenance work following approved work procedures; if not, the appropriate cultural resource specialist should be consulted. All preserved features should be regularly inspected, and their condition noted in the NPS's Cultural Resource Inventory System (CRIS).

General Management and Design Guidelines for Treatment

This section provides general guidelines that support the rehabilitation approach in the treatment of the two landscapes that comprise Freedom Riders National Monument. These guidelines relate to a philosophy of cultural landscape treatment based on the *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* and a comprehensive view of the park as a whole. They should be used when planning for any landscape changes and considered in connection with each of the specific landscape treatment recommendations included in this CLR.

Buildings and Structures

- Avoid conjectural reconstruction of historic buildings and structures.

Circulation

- Minimize the visual impacts of new pedestrian access systems.

² Charles A. Birnbaum and Christine Capella Peters, eds., *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic*

Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1996), 49.

- Design and locate contemporary structures that facilitate access, such as ramps, railings, signs, and curb cuts, to minimize adverse impacts on the character and features of the cultural landscape.
- Ensure that all paths are evenly graded and well-drained to prevent vegetation damage, soil compaction, and path margin erosion.

Sustainability

- Use cultural and natural resources treatment and maintenance methods that are environmentally sensitive and sustainable over the long term.
- Encourage the application of Best Management Practices (BMPs), Integrated Pest Management (IPM), and soil and erosion control measures in all maintenance and management practices to minimize water pollution and degradation of natural systems.
- Minimize the extent of any ground disturbance, including earth grading and compaction, where there may be archeological resources and avoid drainage pattern alteration unless in the service of environmental restoration.
- Promote biodiversity and use native plant species in new plantings.
- Take into consideration the life-cycle costs of materials, including long-term wearing capacity and maintenance costs, when evaluating options. Always consider materials that are nontoxic, durable, and low maintenance.

Topography

- Preserve existing landforms and natural drainage patterns to the greatest extent possible unless in the service of environmental restoration.
- Avoid reconstructing or restoring historic grades unless supported by clear

documentary evidence of their appearance or original design during a specific period.

Resilience

- Prepare for the effects of climate change in Alabama. These include hotter, drier summers with more intense and longer droughts, increases in annual rainfall occurring in heavy downpours, causing flooding and soil erosion, and drier soils due to fewer occurrences of light rainfall. Other effects include an increase in unpleasantly hot days with the accompanying increase in risk of heat stroke and other heat-related illnesses.³
- Plan new stormwater management and irrigation systems to accommodate more frequent heavy downpours, drought, and the impact of heat on plant transpiration.
- Plant shade trees and build shade structures to provide visitors with relief from unpleasantly hot days.
- Provide a water bottle refill station at both sites to ensure visitors remain hydrated.
- Increase stormwater gutter and pipe sizes to accommodate increasingly heavy flows and avoid backsplash onto buildings. Ensure positive drainage so that water does not pond or pool near buildings and structures.

New Design and Construction

- Avoid altering existing features or adversely affecting the landscape's historic character when adding new features for interpretation, management, and visitor access. Design new features to facilitate access and interpretation while minimizing adverse impacts on the historic character and features of the landscape.
- Undertake sufficient study and recordation of landscape features requiring modification, repair, or replacement before work is performed to understand and protect research and interpretive values.

³ Janet Cakir, "Freedom Riders National Monument Climate Change Summary 2022" (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2022); U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "What Climate Change Means for Alabama," <https://nepis.epa.gov/>

Exe/tiff2png.cgi/P100QV8E.PNG?-r+75+-g+7+D%3A%5CZYFILES%5CINDEX%20DATA%5C16THRU20%5CTIFF%5C00000053%5CP100QV8E.TIF.

- Limit the use of destructive techniques, such as archeological excavation, to those necessary to provide sufficient information for research, interpretation, and management needs.
- Retain and maintain historic materials, features, finishes, construction techniques, spaces, and spatial relationships when implementing changes to the cultural landscape.
- Design all new additions and alterations to be a product of their time and compatible with historic resources in material, size, scale and proportion, and massing. Differentiate new work from historic.
- Design and site new additions and alterations to the landscape in such a way that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the cultural landscape would be unimpaired.
- Retain and maintain changes to the cultural landscape that have acquired historic significance in their own right.
- Repair, rather than replace, deteriorated historic features. Replacement of severely deteriorated features should be based on archeological, documentary, or physical evidence. New features should match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.
- Avoid landscape changes that create a false sense of historical development, including adding conjectural, typical, or representative features. Instead, consider interpretation of typical features in cases where restoration is not possible, but where providing the information is important to the visitor experience.
- Establish wayside exhibits in the least intrusive manner by placing them out of key historic viewsheds.
- Avoid the use of chemical or physical treatments that cause damage to cultural resources and natural systems. Undertake

surface cleaning of structures using the gentlest means possible.

Adjacent Lands and Visual Quality

- Monitor local zoning and planning activities related to nearby adjacent development that may adversely impact the character and cultural resources within the viewshed of the park. Participate in the early stages of any development plans for adjacent sites by working with developers during the planning process, suggesting increased setbacks and the least intrusive siting and character for new structures and roads.
- Coordinate with planning authorities on the development and construction of new features within view of either site of Freedom Riders National Monument that may have a visual or physical impact on the park. These could include roads, zoning changes that may result in higher density residential or nonresidential uses, sale of land to nongovernmental entities, and cell towers or antennae.
- Develop or maintain visual buffers along property lines abutting intrusive development. Develop relationships with adjacent landowners to determine the need for establishing additional buffers.
- Utilize screening methods that blend with the surrounding character of the site and do not become a secondary visual intrusion.
- Coordinate with adjacent and nearby property owners to determine if they are amenable to selling or donating scenic easements for adjacent properties that are visible from the park.

Access and Interpretation

- Provide universal accessibility throughout both sites without negatively impacting historic cultural landscape resources.
- Design accessible walkways in compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard (ABAAS).⁴

⁴ U.S. Access Board, "Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards," <https://www.access-board.gov/aba/>.

- Follow ABAAS guidelines when designing interpretive, wayfinding, and park information signs, including using the recommended fonts, font sizes, and color contrast, as well as providing the same information in Braille and audio form.
- Ensure that pamphlets, fliers, and other documents available online have been reviewed for 508c compliance. All documents distributed at the park should also be available in Braille and audio formats.
- Provide an alternative means for interpretation of features located in areas that cannot be made universally accessible or where new interpretive features would be a visual intrusion. These might include a visitor center exhibit or interactive video monitoring system. The National Park Service has begun to offer immersive 3D interactive tours so that challenges to physical access, whether due to location or ability, can be overcome.⁵
- Erect the minimal number of signs possible for identification, directional, interpretive, and regulatory needs to prevent clutter at historic sites.

Role of Preservation Specialists

- Undertake all treatment projects under the direction of appropriate specialists, including historical landscape architects, historical architects, archeologists, conservators, natural resource management specialists, and qualified technicians and artisans.

Documentation

- Document, through drawings, photographs, and notes, all changes to and treatments of the historic landscape. Consider using light detection and ranging (LiDAR), ground penetrating radar (GPR), global positioning system (GPS), and geographic information

system (GIS) technology in documentation efforts. Maintain records of treatments and preserve this documentation according to professional archival standards.

- Accession and catalog representative features salvaged from the cultural landscape if they fall within the park's scope of collection.

Treatment Concepts

This section conveys the overarching visions or concepts for treatment of each of the two sites of the Freedom Riders National Monument. These concepts are intended to address the issues, goals, and concerns identified by the National Park Service to preserve the fundamental physical resources.

The treatment concept for the Bus Depot focuses primarily on preserving or restoring historic resources, including features of the Bus Depot building itself, the site's spatial organization, and its historic viewsheds. It also recommends rehabilitative changes to the site to provide for and control visitor access in a way that does not have a negative impact on the site's historic character. The concept also addresses the preservation of the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue, which is the historic urban setting of the Bus Depot and where the attack took place.

The treatment concept for the Bus Burning Site focuses primarily on rehabilitation projects aimed at educating visitors and enhancing their experience at the site. Interpretation will memorialize the event of the burning of the Greyhound bus in the context of the story of the Freedom Riders and the larger narrative of the civil rights movement in Alabama. Treatment recommendations also address restoring the character of the eastern reaches of the site, identifying a location for a memorial, improving environmental conditions, and mitigating the effects of the western bypass on the north side of the site. It also addresses preservation of the site's setting on the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway.

⁵ National Park Service, "Immersive 3D Interactive Tours," <https://www.nps.gov/articles/3d-tours.htm>.

Treatment Recommendations

These treatment recommendations are organized into three sections. The first lists research and planning documents that are needed for the park. The second and third focus more on physical changes proposed for each of the two park sites to preserve and interpret historic resources, provide and control visitor access and use, and to improve environmental conditions.

Overall Park

The following are recommendations for projects that are needed to support future planning efforts at the park.

1. *Prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the park.* When the park was proclaimed Freedom Riders National Monument in 2017, both the Bus Depot and the Bus Burning Site were automatically administratively listed in the National Register as components of the park. A National Register nomination, however, is still needed.⁶

Prepare a determination of eligibility (DOE) form for the park as a historic district and submit it to the Alabama Historical Commission for review and approval. An archeological investigation is recommended prior to completion of the DOE to determine if there are any subsurface remnants of the highway shoulder where the Greyhound bus was burned. The result will inform questions about the site's integrity of design, materials, and workmanship.

Once the DOE is approved, develop a National Register nomination for the park as a historic district. In addition to the Bus Depot, Mural Building, and Bus Burning Site, the district's boundary should encompass the historic route taken by the Greyhound bus from the Anniston depot to the site where the bus was burned. Most of this route retains integrity from 1961 and its inclusion will strengthen the nomination.

2. *Complete a general management plan for the park.* A general management plan (GMP) is required by law for every area administered by the National Park Service. The purpose of a GMP is to ensure that each park has a defined direction for resource preservation and visitor use. The plan focuses on why the park was established, states its mission, identifies those resource conditions and visitor experiences that should be achieved and maintained over time, and provides management prescriptions. GMPs take a long-term view of a park and are updated as conditions change, usually about every 15–20 years.

According to the 2020 preliminary GMP completion report, two steps must be taken before work on the GMP begins: complete a determination of eligibility (DOE) for the Bus Burning Site and obtain an evaluation of Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) limitations on development at the Bus Burning Site.⁷ An archeological investigation should be undertaken at the Bus Burning Site before a DOE is developed because the extent of subsurface remains at the site of the Greyhound bus bombing is not yet known.

Some ALDOT limitations on development at the Bus Burning Site are described in the 2017 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the National Park Service and ALDOT but additional agreements may be required. In the MOU, the National Park Service agreed to not interfere with or encroach on the ROW of State Route 202, including installing parking areas or providing for pedestrian use of that ROW. The National Park Service also agreed to not change or alter the drainage within the property without prior written approval of ALDOT.

3. *Develop a long-range interpretive plan for the park.* A long-range interpretive plan (LRIP) includes foundational elements (e.g., purpose, significance, interpretive themes,

⁶ Turkiya Lowe, email to William Hunter, October 27, 2022.

⁷ National Park Service, *Freedom Riders National Monument General Management Plan Preliminary*

Project Planning Completion Report, September 2020, 11.

audience experience goals), recommendations for services throughout the park, and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive, education and visitor services program. This plan would also address:

Interpretive waysides, audio tours, and digital interpretation to increase visitor understanding of the national monument and its relevance today. Use the site as an educational conduit to the greater civil rights story in Alabama. Encourage and enhance a commemorative and reflective experience for visitors. Consider a range of options for providing interpretive information, including posting historic information on the park website and in the park visitor center or ranger station, including QR codes on interpretive signs, providing audio tours, and installing wayside exhibits and information panels at the site. It is unlikely that park staff will be stationed at the Bus Burning Site for the foreseeable future, so assume that visitors will take advantage of self-guided tours. The park, however, may offer guided tours from the Bus Depot to supplement self-guided tours.

Improved interpretive connectivity among the Anniston Civil Rights Trail and the two Freedom Riders National Monument sites. The Anniston Civil Rights Trail map includes a route to the Bus Burning Site, but it does not follow the historic route. The map should be revised to follow W. 10th Street to Clydesdale Avenue, turning right on State Route 202, heading west around a quarter of a mile, then turning left onto the Old Birmingham Highway. In this way, the drive will approximate the route travelled by the Freedom Riders. In addition, provide a small shuttle bus for visitors between the two sites during peak visitation periods. This

would provide alternative transportation for those who do not wish to or cannot travel in private vehicles.

Interpretive exhibits. The exhibits should support a fuller understanding of the social environment that led to the implementation of the Freedom Rides and to the response in Anniston that began with the assembled mob at the Greyhound bus depot on May 14, 1961, and ended with the bus burning. While the interpretive panels currently mounted on the exterior of the north wall of the adjacent Mural Building provide a timeline for the events in Anniston, rehabilitation of the Mural Building as a museum will prepare it to support more in-depth interpretation. The building may also be able to host more visitor services, park administrative offices, storage space, and a gift shop. Consider supplementing the museum experience with digital interpretation utilizing virtual and augmented reality, both visual and aural, and video mapping, all accessible through smart phones and tablets.⁸

4. ***Prepare a park-wide integrated pest management (IPM) plan.*** This plan should address animal, insect, and vegetative pests and be based on a comprehensive pest inventory. It should also include treatments for invasive plants.⁹

IPM is a science-based decision-making process used by the National Park Service since 1980. This approach provides managers with the most appropriate and cost-effective solution for the specific pest situations. NPS staff follow an 11-step process to craft and implement effective IPM strategies. More information is available at the NPS Biological Resources Division's "Integrated Pest Management" website.¹⁰

⁸ National Park Service, *Freedom Riders National Monument General Management Plan Preliminary Project Planning Completion Report*; Lord Aeck Sargent, *Historic Structure Report, 1029 Gurnee Avenue, "The Mural Building"*, November 16, 2020, 11; Shawn Graham, Neha Gupta, Jolene Smith, Andreas Angourakis, Andrew Reinhard, Kate Ellenberger, Zack Batist, Joel Rivard, Ben Marwick, Michael Carter, Beth Compton, Rob Blades, Cristina Wood, & Gary Nobles, "4.3 Place-Based

Interpretation with Locative Augmented Reality," Open Digital Archaeology Textbook, <https://o-date.github.io/draft/book/place-based-interpretation-with-locative-augmented-reality.html>.

⁹ National Park Service, "Integrated Pest Management," <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1103/ipm.htm>.

¹⁰ National Park Service, "Integrated Pest Management."

Bus Depot

Map 5-1, Bus Depot Treatment Plan

The goal of these treatment recommendations is to restore the Bus Depot building to its appearance on May 14, 1961, when rioters attacked the Greyhound bus carrying the Freedom Riders. These recommendations also address rehabilitation of the Bus Depot site for accessibility, security, and interpretation, and planning and partnerships to preserve the Bus Depot's historic setting along the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue.

Bus Depot Building

- *Prepare plans to restore the exterior of Bus Depot building.* Follow recommendations from the historic structure report for the Bus Depot building, which calls for an “accurate restoration of all of the building’s exterior components . . . based on available documentation.”¹¹ Specific projects listed by the report include:
 - Replace nonhistoric aluminum storefront fixed windows and doors at west façade with windows and doors that match historic.
 - Restore or reconstruct historic bus canopy fascia and soffit.
 - Reconstruct double-leaf “White” exit doorway and door to match historic.
 - Restore extant baggage room door.
 - Remove plywood and restore single-leaf “Colored” exit door to match historic.
 - Replace small front door awning with a building-wide aluminum awning to match historic.
 - Replace missing Greyhound projecting sign to match historic.
- *Prepare a historic furnishings report for the Bus Depot building.* As with the interior

restoration, this report could be created once more information is available about the appearance of the building’s interior in 1961.

- *Prepare plans to restore the interior of the Bus Depot building.* Plans should follow recommendations from the historic structure report for the Bus Depot building. While the report provides drawings showing the layout of the interior in 1961, additional research is necessary to provide information about its interior finishes. Until that information is available, sensitive adaptive reuse of these areas could be implemented.¹²
- *Create an ABAAS-compliant front building entrance.* This may require adaptations to add a wheelchair ramp to the front of the building and/or to lower the entrance threshold. The public sidewalk is 12 feet wide in front of the building, which may accommodate a wheelchair ramp. The ramp should be installed only on the north side of the entrance to protect historic views to the building from the southwest.
- *Prepare a structural fire management plan for the Bus Depot building.* This management plan could be supplemental to the building restoration plan.
- *Study current and future stormwater events and modify existing gutters and drains to accommodate heavier rainfall.* This work could be supplemental to the building restoration plan.
- *Rehabilitate the Mural Building to support park visitation and operations.* Follow recommendations from the historic structure report for the Mural Building. It suggests that the front space could be used to provide both interpretative and visitor services, including possibly a gift shop. The rest of the building could provide office and storage space for the park.¹³

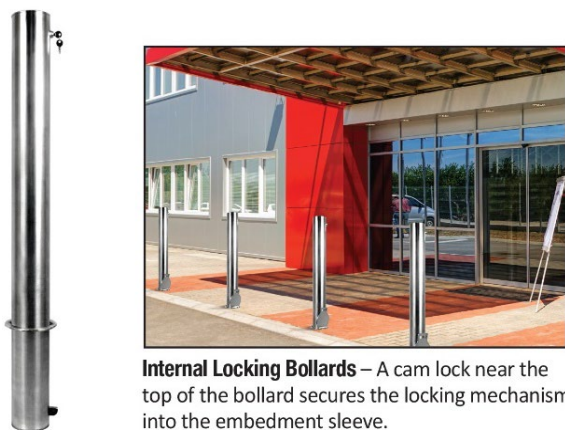
¹¹ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 37, 41.

¹² City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 37, 41, Appendix G.

¹³ Lord Aeck Sargent, *Historic Structure Report*, 11.

Bus Depot Site

- *Relocate the Anniston Civil Rights Trail sign and audio exhibit.* The sign and its audio component currently stand in the key historic viewshed to the front of the Bus Depot building from the southwest. Relocate the sign and audible component about 30 feet north to a location across from the northwest corner of the building.
- *Reserve the rear parking lot for staff and other park-related vehicles.* Add barriers as described below and sign for National Park Service use only.
- *Install a concrete sidewalk along the alley behind the Bus Depot.* Reconstruct the existing concrete apron along the alley to create a flat, safe visitor walking surface.¹⁴
- *Replace existing yellow-painted square pipe bollards.* Substitute with three six- to eight-inch diameter round stainless steel removable internal locking bollards spaced a maximum of five feet apart. This size is rated to stop a 5,000 pound vehicle (i.e., F-150 pickup) moving at 20–30 mph (Figure 5-1).
- *Add bollards and an automatic gate or barrier arm along the alley side of the rear parking area to block public access.* The seven six- to eight-inch diameter round stainless steel removable internal locking bollards should be spaced a maximum of five feet apart. The gate would be installed at the southeast corner of the lot for use by staff and other National Park Service vehicles using remote control or a phone app (Figure 5-2).
- *Monitor and maintain mural of Greyhound bus painted on the north side of the Mural Building on an annual basis.* Utilize mineral silicate paints for touchups. Unlike latex or acrylic, this type of paint does not trap the moisture that causes brick to spall.
- *Prevent parking directly in front of the Bus Depot building to keep the southwest historic viewshed open.* Use curb painting rather than signage that may block the view.
- *Relocate the signed accessible parking spot in front of the Mural Building.* Move the space past the northwest corner of the Bus Depot building so that the sign does not block the southwest viewshed.
- *Relocate the Alagasco lantern to the interior of the Mural Building.* The lantern does not appear in photographs from the period of significance. It can, however, become part of an interior exhibit about the role of NPS partners in commemorating the Freedom Rides.



Internal Locking Bollards – A cam lock near the top of the bollard secures the locking mechanism into the embedment sleeve.

FIGURE 5-1. Example of a stainless steel removable internal locking bollard. 1-800-BOLLARDS.



FIGURE 5-2. Example of a barrier arm gate with a 16-foot arm that may match the stainless steel bollards in color and style. Gatehouse Supplies.

¹⁴ J.R. Wilburn and Associates, Inc., *Freedom Riders National Monument Infrastructure Needs*

Assessment (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2020), G-3.

- *Collaborate with the owners of 16-24 West 11th Street to relocate their dumpster out of the Bus Depot viewshed.* This item could be moved to the southwest corner of the building adjacent to the alley.

Bus Depot Setting

- *Collaborate with owners of other buildings in the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue and the intersections of Gurnee with W. 11th and W. 10th Streets to preserve and maintain historic façades.* These include 36 W. 11th Street, 1008 through 1030 Gurnee Avenue, 33 W. 10th and 101 W. 10th Street (Figure 5-3). Several tools may be available to support this work, including:

Preservation easements, which are available through the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) for buildings that are contributing elements of a historic district. These easements protect the basic historic and aesthetic qualities of a property on a permanent and ongoing basis, and in return provide a tax benefit to the donor.¹⁵ Fees for easement administration begin at \$10,000 and go up, depending on the fair market value of the property. It may be possible for the National Park Service to craft an agreement with the AHC to take responsibility for easement administration, which may result in lower fees for partners.¹⁶

Federal historic preservation grant programs, which are managed through the Alabama Historical Commission, are available to public and non-profit organizations that own and operate historic sites with an education-based mission.¹⁷

Main Street Façade Improvement grants, which are managed by the nonprofit Main Street America. Funds come from the NPS's Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program and are distributed by the grantee, which

could be a state historic preservation office, a certified local government (CLG), or a regional nonprofit. These entities can then distribute funds for façade improvement to properties listed in the National Register that are located in rural towns with populations under 50,000.¹⁸ Anniston is a



FIGURE 5-3. Plan of buildings in the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue. The NPS owns the buildings outlined in green. The buildings outlined in orange are privately owned and could benefit from assistance in façade preservation. Laura Knott.

¹⁵ Alabama Historical Commission, "Alabama Historical Commission Easement Program," <https://ahc.alabama.gov/PDF/AHC%20Easement%20Handout%202020.pdf>.

¹⁶ Evelyn Causey (Alabama Historical Commission Preservation Easement and National Register Coordinator) in discussion with the author, May 2022.

¹⁷ Alabama Historical Commission, "Grants," <https://ahc.alabama.gov/Resources/grants.aspx#:~:text=AHC%20will%20administer%20a%20%242%2C300%2C000,commemorate%20historical%20events%20and%20places.>

¹⁸ Main Street America, "NPS Main Street Façade Improvement Grant," <https://www.mainstreet.org/ourwork/projectspotlight/facadeimprovements/npsgr>

CLG with a population of around 21,000, so it would be considered eligible.

- *Collaborate with the City of Anniston to continue providing free public parking within walking distance to the Bus Depot.* The closest free parking lots include one just west of Atlanta Avenue that provides around 70 spaces and another just west of The Peerless Saloon and Grill that provides around 26 spaces (Figure 5-4).¹⁹ These parking lots are within 1/2 block of the Bus Depot.
- *Continue interpretive programming and a walking tour to nearby civil rights sites.* These include those that are part of the Anniston Civil Rights Trail.²⁰

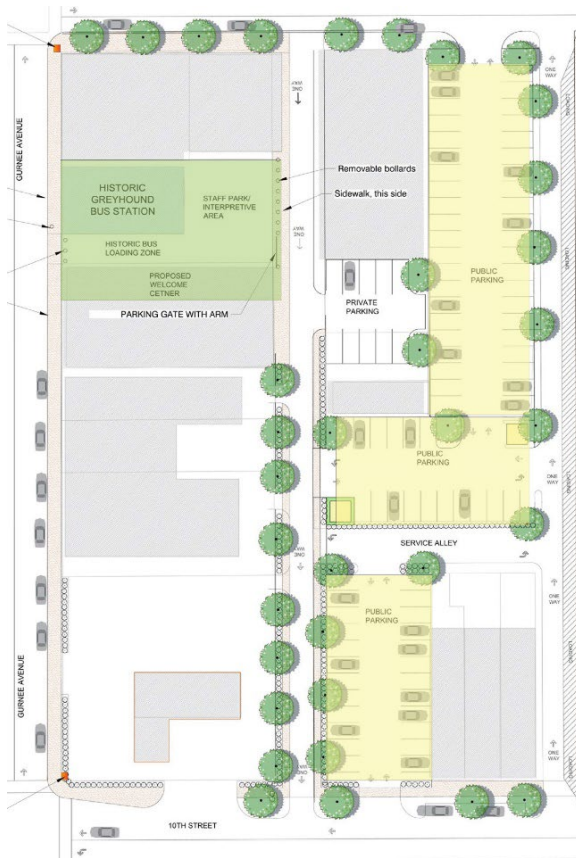


FIGURE 5-4. Plan showing free public parking lots (yellow) close to the Bus Depot site (green) in downtown Anniston. JRWA, annotated by Laura Knott.

Bus Burning Site

Map 5-2, Bus Burning Site Treatment Plan

The goal of these treatment recommendations is to interpret and commemorate the bus burning event that occurred on Parcel 44 on May 14, 1961, provide visitor support in the form of vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and improve environmental conditions.

Overall Site

- *Prepare a vegetation management plan for the site.* Initiate the plan with an inventory of vegetation present on all three parcels. Then identify protocols for turf maintenance, tree and shrub care, invasive plant control, existing plant replacement, buffer establishment, and the use of plants to support the design of new visitor access, screening, and interpretive improvements. Initiate an invasive plant control program as part of the larger management plan. Prior to preparing the plan, have any potential wetland areas on the site inspected and delineated by a qualified wetland scientist per the National Park Service Procedural Manual 77-1: Wetland Protection.²¹

Parcel 44, Site of Greyhound Bus Burning

- *Complete an archeological survey of the site of the bus burning.* The purpose of this work would be to uncover any below-ground resources and other information associated with the property. Utilize this information to improve understanding of the site's historical integrity and inform interpretation.
- *Relocate the existing Alabama Historical Commission marker.* Move it to a location about 100 feet eastward to the end of the guardrail. This is closer to the historic location of the Greyhound bus when it was burned.

ant and National Park Service, "Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants Program," <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/paul-bruhn-historic-revitalization-grants-program.htm>.

¹⁹ J.R. Wilburn and Associates, Inc., *Freedom Riders National Monument*, Appendix D.

²⁰ City of Anniston, "Anniston Civil Rights Trail," <https://www.anniston.al.gov/parks-recreation/anniston-civil-rights-trail/>.

²¹ *National Park Service Procedural Manual 77-1: Wetland Protection* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2016).

- *Relocate “Dead End” sign further west.*
Currently, the sign blocks views to the exact location where the bus was burned. Relocate the sign approximately 165 feet to the west.
- *Explore the use of digital technology to enhance the visitor experience and understanding of the bus burning event.* For example, augmented reality mobile apps can overlay photographs and videos of the event onto existing views (Figure 5-5). These apps can also link to other images, maps, documents, and interviews.²²
- *Identify, using interpretive signs or markers, the location of the Greyhound bus when it was burned in front of Forsyth & Son Grocery.* Provide QR codes on markers that provide more information about the event and its context within the civil rights movement (Figures 5-6 and 5-7). Consider indicating its location and footprint using paint, pavement insets, corner markers, or other techniques (Figure 5-8).
- *Plant an intermittent vegetative buffer between the parcel and State Route 202.* Leave breaks in the buffer to represent the spaces where Forsyth & Son Grocery once stood. Confirm with ALDOT the required clear zone for limited-access state highways in Alabama and avoid planting any trees or woody shrubs over four-inch caliper within around 30 feet of the edge of pavement of the highway unless otherwise indicated.²³



FIGURE 5-5. Augmented reality app by Interactive Knowledge depicting a fictionalized scene from the Battle of Gettysburg overlaid onto a view of today's battlefield. Courtesy of the American Battlefield Trust.

²² For examples of various tools that can be used, see the Interactive Knowledge website at <https://interactiveknowledge.com/work/augmented-reality-app-recreates-gettysburg-events>.



FIGURE 5-6. Marker with a QR code at Melrose estate, Natchez National Historical Park. National Park Service.



FIGURE 5-7. Marker displaying a phone number and QR code by which the visitor can access an audio tour. National Park Service.

²³ For the precise clear zone, refer to AASHTO, *Roadside Design Guide* (Washington D.C.: Federal Highway Administration, 2022).

Plant low canopy, screening-type native trees such as holly (*Ilex* sp.), pine (*Pinus* sp.), or Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*).

- *Add a walkway from the proposed parking area on Parcel 38 and across the Old Birmingham Highway to the site of the bus burning.* The walkway should be at least six feet wide, but preferably eight feet wide to allow visitors to pass each other easily. Include a painted crosswalk across the highway.

Parcel 54, Future Monument Site

- *Consider adding an NPS identify sign at the intersection of the Old Birmingham Highway with State Route 202.* The identity sign could be sited on Parcel 54 facing eastbound traffic or could be designed as a portal to flank the Old Birmingham Highway on both sides (Figure 5-9).
- *Remove, relocate, or underground all overhead utility lines crossing this parcel.* Do this work in collaboration with Alabama Power Company. See *Implementation Project #6, Underground all overhead utility lines crossing Parcels 44 and 54.*
- *Move the three-sided kiosk in this parcel to Parcel 44.* Move any onsite interpretation kiosks or signs from Parcel 54 to Parcels 44



FIGURE 5-8. Pavement paint at Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington, DC. District of Columbia.

and 38, except for the area proposed for a future monument.

- *Revegetate areas currently used for informal parking in this parcel.* Consider using a native grass seed mix that requires only annual mowing. Alternatively, refer to Section 860 of ALDOT's Standard Specifications for Highway Construction for recommendations on standard roadside revegetation.²⁴
- *Develop a design for this parcel by addressing it in three sections:*

East: Reforest the east half of the parcel to restore the woodland that existed there in 1961, using trees native to the area. These may include longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*), shortleaf pine (*P. echinata*), post oak (*Quercus stellata*), red oak (*Q. rubra*), blackjack oak (*Q. marilandica*), beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), walnut (*Juglans nigra*), hickory (*Carya* sp.), elm (*Ulmus* sp.), and ash (*Fraxinus* sp.). Underplant with a native grass and wildflower seed mix that requires only annual mowing.

Central: Redevelop the concrete stormwater structure at the center of the parcel by utilizing Low-Impact Development (LID) strategies. These may include bioswales, infiltration basins, constructed wetlands,



FIGURE 5-9. Example of an NPS identity sign that marks the entrance to the park. National Park Service.

²⁴ Alabama Department of Transportation, *Standard Specifications for Highway Construction* (Montgomery: ALDOT, 2022), 776,

<https://www.dot.state.al.us/publications/Construction/pdf/Specifications/2022/SpecBookComplete.pdf#page=785>

and other techniques (Figure 5-10).²⁵ Do this work with permission from, and in collaboration with, ALDOT.

West: Reserve the high point at the western point of the parcel for future development of a memorial to the Freedom Riders and the bus burning event.

- Maintain areas to remain in turf following ALDOT's roadside vegetation management guidance in *A Manual for Roadside Vegetation Management*.²⁶ Refer also to NPS Turf Management Standards, which recommend Turf Class B2: Functional-Tall in areas not expected to have visitor foot traffic. This class comprises any warm and/or cool season grasses that are maintained from four to 18 inches in height. In areas where visitor foot traffic is expected, the standards recommend Turf Class B1: Functional-Short, which includes warm and/or cool season grasses, maintained to a height between three and six inches with more frequent mowing.²⁷

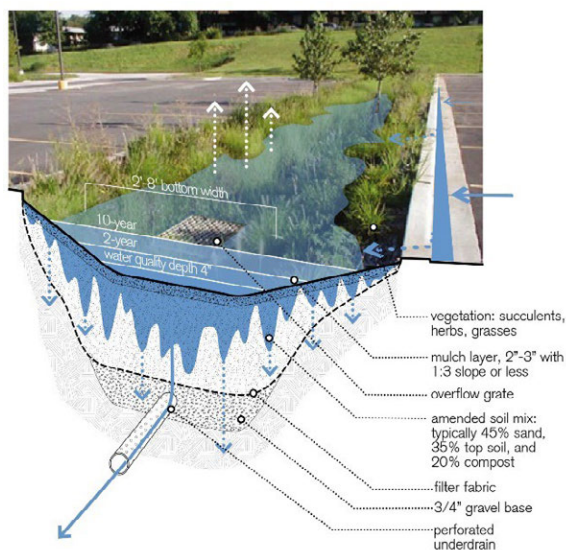


FIGURE 5-10. Illustration of bioswale component of a low-impact development. University of Arkansas.

²⁵ University of Arkansas Community Design Center, "LID, Low-Impact Development, A Design Manual for Urban Areas" (Fayetteville AR: University of Arkansas Community Design Center, 2010).

²⁶ Alabama Department of Transportation, *A Manual for Roadside Vegetation Management*

Parcel 38, Visitor Services Area

- *Complete planning and design for visitor parking, restrooms, and a future welcome center/park ranger's office on Parcel 38.* The Phase I concept has already been completed and Phase II has been funded but not yet completed (Figure 5-11). Consider changes to the concept as presented in Map 5-2.
- *Consider a property trade in the eastern portion of Parcel 38 to gain more space for visitor and bus parking.* The shape of the parcel reflects its original purpose as a utility easement and no longer serves its new use as a park.
- *Preserve the large oak that stands in the middle of the eastern portion of Parcel 38.* Reserve an extensive area around it to protect the tree and use as a picnic area for visitors.
- *Consider selling the north end of the west side of Parcel 38 to the adjoining property owner.* This triangle-shaped area contributes little to the overall utility of the rest of the parcel.
- *Control invasive vegetation within Parcel 38 utilizing IPM protocol.* Invasive vegetation identified in the field includes mimosa (*Albizia julibrissen*), common privet

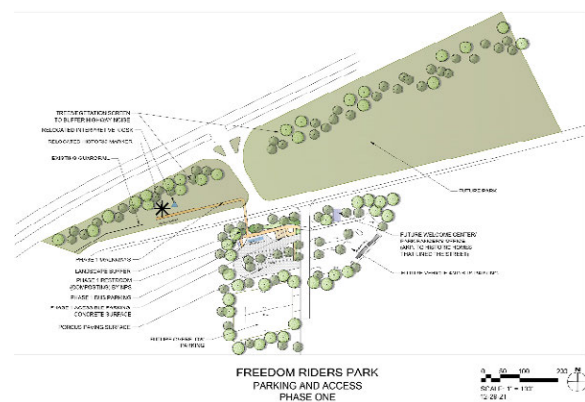


FIGURE 5-11. Phase I concept design for the Bus Burning Site, 2021. JRWA.

(Montgomery AL: Alabama Department of Transportation, April 2018).

²⁷ National Park Service, "NPS Turf Management Standards," white paper, n.d.

(*Ligustrum sinense*), pyracantha (*Pyracantha coccinea*), and kudzu (*Pueraria montana*).

Bus Burning Site Setting

- *Invite the Wellborn community to discuss their interests for the future of the site.* Provide opportunities for public review of proposed improvements.
- *Encourage the owners of 5062, 5072, and 5201 Old Birmingham Highway to donate conservation easements on structures that were present on May 14, 1961 (Figure 5-12).* Conservation easements can ensure compatible development adjacent to the site and protect against incompatible modifications or removal of structures that contribute to the historic setting of the site. There are no specific zoning restrictions outside of incorporated Anniston that could otherwise protect their historic character.



FIGURE 5-12. Detail from Existing Conditions Plan showing the three properties that are in the historic viewshed of the Bus Burning Site. Laura Knott.

Implementation Projects

This section provides guidance for implementing many of the recommendations described above. It is organized as a series of 10 projects, each presenting a goal or vision for treatment and laying out a process for achieving it. These implementation projects are intended to support the park's ability to secure funding and are presented in a format that is consistent with the NPS's Project Management Information System (PMIS).

Each project is presented individually with its information organized into the following categories: 1) description of the project; 2) the project's location; 3) justification for the project; 4) the project implementation process; 5) additional studies recommended; and 6) related implementation projects.

The 10 implementation projects presented below are:

1. Prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for park.
2. Prepare plans to restore the exterior of Bus Depot building.
3. Improve and control access to the Bus Depot site and protect historic viewsheds.
4. Complete an archeological survey of the site of the bus burning.
5. Underground all overhead utility lines crossing Parcels 44 and 54.
6. Reforest the east half of Parcel 54.
7. Complete planning and design for visitor use and access on Parcels 44 and 38.
8. Implement a green stormwater infrastructure solution on Parcel 54.
9. Prepare a vegetation management plan for the Bus Burning Site.
10. Develop partnerships with property owners along Gurnee Avenue and the Old Birmingham Highway to preserve the park's historic setting.

1. Prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the park.

Description. Prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the park that includes both sites.

Location. The nomination would address the Bus Depot at 1031 Gurnee Avenue, including the former depot building, its site, and the adjacent Mural Building at 1029 Gurnee Avenue, and Parcels 44, 54, and 38 of the Bus Burning Site on the Old Birmingham Highway. The park should be nominated as a National Register district that would include a section of the original route that the Greyhound bus took between the two sites in 1961 (see Figure 2-2).

Justification. When the park was proclaimed Freedom Riders National Monument in 2017, both the Bus Depot and the Bus Burning Site were automatically administratively listed in the National Register as components of the park. A National Register nomination, however, is still needed.²⁸

Project Implementation Process.

1. Submit a determination of eligibility (DOE) form to the Alabama Historical Commission for review and approval. Because the park consists of two discontinuous sites, it should be put forth in the DOE as a historic district comprising the Bus Depot and Mural Building, the Bus Burning Site, and the historic route that connects them.
2. Develop a National Register nomination for the park as a district.

Additional Studies Recommended. None.

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 4. Complete an archeological investigation of the site of the bus burning.

2. Prepare plans to restore the exterior of the Bus Depot building.

Description. Prepare plans to restore the exterior of the Bus Depot building based on recommendations included in the historic structure report for the building.²⁹

Specific projects recommended in the report include:

- Replace nonhistoric aluminum storefront fixed windows and doors at west façade with windows and doors that match historic.
- Restore or reconstruct the historic bus canopy fascia and soffit.
- Reconstruct the double-leaf “White” exit doorway and door to match historic.
- Restore the extant baggage room door.
- Remove plywood and restore the single-leaf “Colored” exit door to match historic.
- Replace the front door awning with a building-wide aluminum awning to match historic.
- Replace the missing Greyhound projecting sign to match historic.

This work should also include remodeling the depot’s front entrance to comply with ABAAS. This may require adaptations to add a wheelchair ramp to the front of the building and/or lower the entrance threshold. The public sidewalk is 12 feet wide in front of the building, which can accommodate a minimum-width wheelchair ramp parallel to the building façade while leaving adequate space for pedestrians to pass. A ramp should be installed on the north side of the entrance so that it does not distract from the historic view of the building’s southwest corner.

The design process should also include a study of current and future stormwater events and modifications of existing gutters and drains to accommodate heavier rainfall resulting from climate change.

²⁸ Turkiya Lowe, email to William Hunter, October 27, 2022.

²⁹ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*.

Location. The plans would pertain to the exterior of the Bus Depot building at 1031 Gurnee Avenue.

Justification. The Bus Depot is one of the fundamental resources of the park. Restoration of the exterior of the Bus Depot building to its 1961 appearance is key to interpretation of the events of May 14th, 1961.

Project Implementation Process.

1. Review recommendations from the historic structure report (HSR) for the Bus Depot building, which calls for an “accurate restoration of all of the building’s exterior components. . . based on available documentation.”³⁰
2. Conduct an inventory of features and their conditions to identify any condition changes since the completion of the HSR in 2017.
3. Prepare design development plans for the restoration. In this phase, the plans and elevations from the HSR are reviewed, revised, and expanded to incorporate the details and specifications required for construction. Decisions will be made regarding items to be removed, features to be restored or refinished, exterior materials and finishes, adjustments to stormwater management, and renovations to create ABAAS-compliant entrances. The architect will also determine the location for mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in a way that minimizes their impact on the historic character of the building. They will also ensure that the proposed work complies with the local building code, including required certificates of appropriateness (COA). The work should also include outline specifications and a preliminary cost estimate. Of particular importance as part of the NPS process is compliance with Section 106 review for historic buildings by providing plans and sections and describe planned modifications and methods that illustrate the preservation approach for mitigating impacts. All work related to this phase

should result in the deliverables described by the NPS Denver Service Center on its Design-Bid-Build (DBB) website.³¹

4. Prepare construction documents necessary to complete the work. These will include plans, sections, elevations, details, and other information that will make it possible to bid on the work. This information would include a project manual with Division 1 specifications and Division 2 through 49 construction specifications, cut sheets describing purchased items, statement of structural tests and special inspections, a price schedule, list of permits needed, submittal list, and a Class A construction cost estimate, among other items required by the Denver Service Center.³²

Additional Studies Recommended.

- Conduct an analysis of stormwater capacity of roof, gutters, and downspouts to address increasing storm severity from climate change.
- Include a structural fire management plan in the work proposed.
- Coordinate work on exterior of Bus Depot building with work to restore the building interior.

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 3. Improve and control access to the Bus Depot site and protect historic viewsheds.

3. Improve and control access to the Bus Depot site and protect historic viewsheds.

Description. This implementation project includes site work required at the Bus Depot site to improve and control visitor access and to restore and protect key historic viewsheds (see Map 5-1). This work includes smaller projects that are combined into one larger task because they are all site related. This will simplify funding and implementation since the work can

³⁰ City of Anniston, *Greyhound Bus Depot*, 37, 41.

³¹ National Park Service, “DBB Design Development (DD) Documents, Design Deliverables,” https://www.nps.gov/dscw/del_designdevelopdbb.htm.

³² National Park Service, “DBB Construction Documents (CD), Design Deliverables,” https://www.nps.gov/dscw/del_constructiondbb.htm

be accomplished by one contractor with minimal subcontractors.

Specific projects listed in the report include:

- Relocate the Anniston Civil Rights Trail sign and audio exhibit. The sign and its audio component currently stand in the key historic viewshed to the front of the Bus Depot from the southwest. Relocate the sign and audible component about 30 feet north to a location across from the northwest corner of the building.
- Relocate the signed accessible parking spot that stands in front of the Mural Building. Move the space past the northwest corner of the Bus Depot building so that the sign does not block the southwest viewshed.
- Extend the front “no parking” zone. Prevent parking directly in front of the Bus Depot building to keep southwest viewshed open. Use curb painting instead of signage, which may block the view.
- Replace the existing yellow-painted square pipe bollards. Substitute with three six-to-eight-inch diameter round stainless steel removable internal locking bollards spaced a maximum of five feet apart (see Figure 5-1). This size is rated to stop a 5,000 pound vehicle (i.e., F-150 pickup) moving at 20–30 mph.
- Add bollards and an automatic gate or barrier arm along the alley side of the rear parking area to block public access. The seven six-to-eight-inch diameter round stainless steel removable internal locking bollards should be spaced a maximum of five feet apart (see Figures 5-1 and 5-2). The gate would be installed at the southeast corner of the lot for use by staff and other NPS vehicles using remote control or a phone app.
- Install a concrete sidewalk along alley behind Bus Depot. Reconstruct the existing concrete apron along the alley to create a flat, safe visitor walking surface that is at least six feet wide.
- Collaborate with owners of 16-24 West 11th Street to relocate their dumpster out of the Bus Depot viewshed. This item could be moved to the southwest corner of the building adjacent to the alley.
- Monitor and maintain the mural of the Greyhound bus painted on the north side of the Mural Building on an annual basis. Utilize mineral silicate paints for touchups. Unlike latex or acrylic, this type of paint does not trap the moisture that causes brick to spall.
- Relocate the Alagasco lantern to the interior of the Mural Building. The lantern does not appear in photographs from the period of significance but can become part of an interior exhibit about the role of NPS partners in commemorating the Freedom Rides.

Location. This work is for the site of the Bus Depot building at 1031 Gurnee Avenue and the Mural Building at 1029 Gurnee Avenue.

Justification. This work will support preservation of the historic character of the site while improving and controlling visitor access.

Project Implementation Process.

1. Conduct an inspection of the site to confirm the conditions documented in this CLR. Note any changes that might affect the list of smaller projects, and projects that may have been completed or projects that should be added.
2. Prepare design development plans for the work. All work related to this phase should result in the deliverables described by the NPS Denver Service Center on its Design-Bid-Build (DBB) website.³³
3. Prepare construction documents necessary to complete the work. These will include plans, sections, elevations, details, and other information that will make it possible to bid on the work. This information would include a project manual with Division 1 specifications and Division 2 through 49 construction specifications, cut sheets describing purchased items, statement of

³³ National Park Service, “DBB Design Development (DD) Documents, Design Deliverables.”

structural tests and special inspections, a price schedule, list of permits needed, submittal list, and a Class A construction cost estimate, among other items required by the Denver Service Center.³⁴

Additional Studies Recommended. None.

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 2. Prepare plans to restore the exterior of Bus Depot building.

4. Complete an archeological investigation of the site of the bus burning.

Description. Complete an archeological survey at the Bus Burning Site to determine the presence of any below-ground resources and information potential associated with the bus burning incident. Consider conducting archeological excavation to locate the road shoulder in front of Forsyth & Son Grocery and any remnants of the driveway from the highway to the store as it existed in 1961. Use the information to improve understanding of the site's historical integrity and inform interpretation.

Location. The investigation should be conducted in Parcel 44 and along the shoulder of the Old Birmingham Highway in the area close to where the Greyhound bus was burned.

Justification. Turf has become established where the driveway to Forsyth & Son Grocery was located and it is not known if portions of the highway shoulder and driveway that comprised the scene of the burning are extant as subsurface resources. It is possible that these features were demolished as part of the construction of the new State Route 202, but this has not been investigated. This information will inform the historical integrity of the site during the development of the DOE and National Register of Historic Places nomination.

Project Implementation Process.

1. Phase I:
 - a. Prior to conducting any subsurface investigations, develop research

questions to be addressed by the endeavor.

- b. Use noninvasive techniques to locate potential subsurface resources in Parcel 44 and the adjacent shoulder of the Old Birmingham Highway. These techniques might include GPR, a gradiometer survey, LiDAR, and a metal detector survey.
 - c. Shovel test at intervals determined by the results of the noninvasive techniques listed above to locate buried archeological sites.
2. Phase II: Conduct further testing and excavation of any anomalies based on Phase I results. Ensure that all archeological investigations are fully documented, and that the findings as well as the artifacts are archived at the park.
 3. Determine integrity and potential National Register eligibility of the Bus Burning Site as identified through the survey.
 4. Utilize information gained through archeological investigations to guide interpretation of the historic landscape and the siting of proposed new park features.

Additional Studies Recommended. None.

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 1. Prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the park.

Implementation Project 7. Complete planning and design for visitor use and access on Parcels 44 and 38.

5. Underground all overhead utility lines crossing Parcels 44 and 54.

Description. Collaborate with Alabama Power Company to underground the overhead power lines that diagonally cross the Bus Burning Site to improve its historical integrity. Those that cross Parcels 44 and 54 are primary electrical power distribution lines. They extend from the

³⁴ National Park Service, "DBB Construction Documents (CD), Design Deliverables."

primary lines that run along the south side of Old Birmingham Highway, across the two parcels and State Route 202, to serve properties on its north side. The National Park Service has an account with Alabama Power for the electricity that powers the lighting for the Freedom Riders National Monument identity sign on Parcel 54. Alabama Power has established a process to address requests for undergrounding power lines.

Location. Parcels 44 and 54 of the Bus Burning Site.

Justification. This work would improve the historical integrity of the Bus Burning Site. “Undergrounding” involves the removal of overhead power distribution lines and transformers and replacing them with underground lines; some equipment, however, must necessarily remain above ground for maintenance purposes. In addition to improving the appearance of a property by reducing clutter, undergrounding also protects lines from exposure to damage from trees, vehicles, and severe weather (Figure 5-13).

Project Implementation Process.

1. Contact the local Alabama Power office to speak with a distribution engineer for the area. There is an Alabama Power office at 925 Quintard Avenue in Anniston; the phone number is (800) 245-2244.
2. Meet the engineer on the site to discuss the work prior to their preparation of a cost estimate for implementation.

3. Alabama Power will conduct research to ensure that the power line is already in an electrical easement; if not, legal documents to establish the easement must be processed prior to moving ahead with the project.
4. If park staff agree with the fee, they will receive an invoice for payment.
5. Once payment is received, Alabama Power will schedule the construction work.

Additional Studies Recommended. None

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 1. Prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the park.

Implementation Project 6. Reforest the east half of Parcel 54.

6. Reforest the east half of Parcel 54.

Description. Reforest the east half of Parcel 54 to its 1961 appearance.

Location. Parcel 54 of the Bus Burning Site.

Justification. In 1961, trees covered a portion of Lot D, all of Lot E, and most of Lot F (see Figure 2-29). The goal of this project is to restore that woodland to its 1961 extent and appearance as feasible within the limits of Parcel 54.

Project Implementation Process.

1. Stake out the historic edge of the woodlands as shown in Map 2-2.
2. Work with a consulting forester to develop a



FIGURE 5-13. Before and after undergrounding utilities on a highway. Courtesy of Scenic America.

list of native trees that would be appropriate for the area and establish guidelines for planting density, i.e., longleaf pine at 30 feet o.c., red oak at 60 feet o.c., etc. Appropriate native species may include longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*), shortleaf pine (*P. echinata*), post oak (*Quercus stellata*), red oak (*Q. rubra*), blackjack oak (*Q. marilandica*), beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), walnut (*Juglans nigra*), hickory (*Carya* sp.), elm (*Ulmus* sp.), and ash (*Fraxinus* sp.). Smaller trees may include Eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), or sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboretum*).

3. Underplant with a native grass and wildflower seed mix that requires only annual mowing.

Additional Studies Recommended. Conduct an inventory of nearby woodlands to develop a list of species that may thrive in that location.

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 5. Underground all overhead utility lines crossing Parcels 44 and 54.

Implementation Project 9. Prepare a vegetation management plan for the Bus Burning Site.

7. Complete planning and design for visitor use and access on Parcels 44 and 38.

Description. The Phase II concept plan for this work has been completed by JRWA, and further development of the concept has been funded but not yet completed (see Figure 5-11). The plan proposes visitor services for Parcel 38, including parking lots, restroom, pedestrian access, wayfinding, interpretation, and future welcome center/park ranger's office. From there, a pedestrian walkway is planned to extend across the Old Birmingham Highway to Parcel 44 and lead to the site of the bus burning and related interpretive features.

Location. This work is planned for Parcels 38 and 44 of the Bus Burning Site.

Justification. Opportunities for visitation and interpretation at the Bus Burning Site are

limited. There is one three-sided kiosk for interpretation but no other visitor services, such as parking, safe pathways, restrooms, or ranger services. Concept plans to improve visitor access and interpretation have been developed but have not yet been implemented (see Figure 5- 11).

Project Implementation Process.

1. Revise the JRWA concept plan to reflect changes proposed in Map 5-2, including preserving the large oak tree in the eastern portion of the parcel. If the tree is preserved, the area under it could be used as a picnic area. The plan also proposes additional trees that will serve to provide shade and increase biodiversity at the site. As part of the revision, consider the proposed land swap east of Barkwood Drive, which will provide more space for visitor parking, and the sale or reversion to adjacent property owners of the irregular southern end of Parcel 38.
2. Implement a design development plan, from which initial costs can be estimated.
3. Complete construction drawings and specifications for the project and submit for bids.

Additional Studies Recommended. Investigate the feasibility of the proposed land swap in portion east of Barkwood Drive. Also investigate the feasibility of the sale or reversion of the irregular southern end of the parcel.

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 4. Complete an archeological investigation of the site of the bus burning.

Implementation Project 9. Prepare a vegetation management plan for the Bus Burning Site.

8. Implement a green stormwater infrastructure solution on Parcel 54.

Description. Convert the ditch and concrete culvert system on Parcel 54 to a green stormwater infrastructure solution, such as a bioswale, retention pond, rain garden, or constructed wetland. A bioswale is a vegetated channel that conveys stormwater flows while

also improving water quality through removal of pollutants through vegetation. It also reduces the amount of stormwater to be conveyed through delay and absorption. A retention pond does similar work; because water is retained, the pond also reduces sedimentation. Rain gardens and constructed wetlands do much of the same work at different scales. Refer to NPS guidance for using an ecosystem approach to developing infrastructure projects.³⁵

Location. Parcel 54 of the Bus Burning Site.

Justification. The current ditch and concrete culvert system on Parcel 54 lies almost in the center of the parcel, limiting its usefulness to the National Park Service. Further, the system is unsightly and contributes little to the agency's mission to enhance natural and cultural resources. This project would allow the National Park Service to expand its goals for the park to include environmental education.

Project Implementation Process.

1. Consult with the Alabama Department of Transportation on the feasibility of this project.
2. Consult with a hydrological engineer and water quality biologist to develop plans to convert the current system to green infrastructure.

Additional Studies Recommended. Consider involving the local community in the project, as outlined in EcoAdapt's recent study, "Incorporating Nature-Based Solutions into Community Climate Adaptation Planning."³⁶

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 6. Reforest the east half of Parcel 54.

Implementation Project 9. Prepare a vegetation management plan for the Bus Burning Site.

9. Prepare a vegetation management plan for the Bus Burning Site.

Description. A vegetation management plan identifies short- and long-term goals and appropriate maintenance procedures for plants growing within a park. The plan should identify protocols for turf management, tree and shrub care, invasive plant control, existing plant replacement, buffer establishment, and the use of plants to support the design of new visitor access and interpretive improvements. Consult with a qualified wetland scientist to delineate any wetlands and include their protection in the plan. Specific goals for vegetation management include revegetating a portion of Parcel 54, choosing plant materials for stormwater management, developing seed mixes for turf vs. native wildflower plantings, managing plant communities for ecological health, and controlling invasive plant species.

Location. This plan should be prepared to address vegetation management on Parcels 44, 54, and 38 of the Bus Burning Site.

Justification. A vegetation management plan would provide strategies for controlling, establishing, and maintaining vegetation within the Bus Burning Site to improve visitor comfort, control viewsheds, reduce maintenance, and increase biodiversity.

The plan should ensure that turf management complies with ALDOT's roadside vegetation management guidance in *A Manual for Roadside Vegetation Management*, as well as NPS Turf Management Standards.³⁷ The NPS Turf Management Standards recommend Turf Class B2: Functional-Tall for areas not expected to have visitor foot traffic. This class comprises any warm and/or cool season grasses that are maintained from four to 18 inches in height. In areas where visitor foot traffic is expected, the standards recommend Turf Class B1: Functional-Short, which comprises warm and/or cool season grasses, maintained to a

³⁵ National Park Service, "EcoLogical - An Ecosystem Approach to Developing Infrastructure Projects," <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/ecological.htm>.

³⁶ A. Pathak, P. Glick, L.J. Hansen, L.E. Hilberg, J. Ritter, and B.A. Stein, *Incorporating Nature-based Solutions into Community Climate Adaptation*

Planning (Washington, DC: National Wildlife Federation and EcoAdapt. 2022).

³⁷ Alabama Department of Transportation, *A Manual for Roadside Vegetation Management* (Montgomery AL: Alabama Department of Transportation, April 2018).

height between three and six inches with more frequent mowing.³⁸

The plan should include planting designs for restoring the forest on Parcel 54, adding screening plantings along the north edge of Parcel 44, and redeveloping Parcel 38 for visitor use. It should also include a list of appropriate plants designed to provide variation in terms of texture, height, and color and avoid the establishment of a monoculture. Plantings should have a varied height composed of canopy and subcanopy trees, both deciduous and evergreen, and shrubs to enhance natural character and support biodiversity. The management plan should also include special measures, planned in collaboration with a certified arborist, to preserve and protect the large oak tree that stands in the eastern half of Parcel 38, as well as existing trees to remain in the southern reaches of the parcel.

Strategies for maintaining native woodland, screen plantings, new plantings, and native grass and forb meadow plantings should also be included in the vegetation management plan. Vegetation at the site will require ongoing maintenance by park staff and/or their partners, so the plan should include operational guidelines. Operational guidelines would provide an outline of tasks for park maintenance staff based on clear objectives and benchmarks for meeting the objectives, as well as a schedule of annual, seasonal, monthly, and weekly tasks. The guidelines should identify the specific maintenance equipment required to manage the property as well as equipment maintenance procedures. The operational guidelines would also identify procedures for record keeping and monitoring.

Vegetation maintenance guidelines would also include tree removal and replacement protocols developed in collaboration with a certified arborist. These would help determine when a tree poses a risk of falling or dropping limbs due to damage, age, and/or its morphology. In addition, the plan would propose an approach for conducting tree removal that includes

appropriate equipment, specific procedures such as sectioning and lowering limbs and trunks to the ground rather than dropping them, and treatment of stumps, such as promoting decay, grinding, or extracting, depending on the location of the tree. Where hazard trees are removed, and replacement is desirable to perpetuate the tree canopy, trees could be replaced in kind. Generally, it is desirable to plant younger trees where possible since they can become adapted to a site more quickly than larger or mature trees. The vegetation management plan would provide guidance on best practices for planting trees, caring for them during the establishment period, which typically lasts a year, the appropriate species to be used, and sources for plant material.

Finally, initiate an invasive plant control program. Appropriate control measures, follow-up monitoring, early detection and treatment, and the establishment of native plant cover following invasive control are all critical components of successful invasive management.³⁹ The vegetation management plan would provide guidance for the process of control, beginning with specific information related to the invasive species that grow at the site. While eradication of invasives is a desirable goal, this can be difficult to accomplish given the constant influx of germ material through transport by wind, water, and animal dispersal. Thus, control rather than eradication may be the focus of the vegetation management plan. Methods for invasive plant management may include mechanical, chemical, and/or biological treatments that comply with NPS practices. Sources of information to be consulted include the Alabama Invasive Plant Council and the NPS program on invasive plant control.⁴⁰

The vegetation management plan would provide monitoring protocols to guide follow-up management and maintenance. Monitoring is an essential part of the process since once initial efforts of removal are undertaken, early detection and treatment will be far easier to address than with well-established plants or

³⁸ National Park Service, "NPS Turf Management Standards," white paper, n.d.

³⁹ James H. Miller, *Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests: A Field Guide for Identification and Control* (Asheville, North Carolina: U.S. Department

of Agriculture, Forest Service, Southern Research Station, 2003).

⁴⁰ Alabama Invasive Plant Council, <https://www.se-eppc.org/alabama/>; "Invasive Plants," <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/invasive/plants.htm>.

extensive infestations. In addition to treatment of existing stands, invasive management also entails the establishment of appropriate native plant cover to discourage the establishment of new stands of invasives. The vegetation management plan would include a list of native plant species to be planted in disturbed areas and where invasives have been removed. Considering working with a partner to address recommended invasive plant control measures.

Project Implementation Process:

1. Inventory, document, and evaluate existing species and vegetation communities found at the Bus Burning Site.
2. Consult with a qualified wetland scientist to delineate any wetlands and include wetland protection planning.
3. Develop a turf management plan for the site.
4. Develop a planting plan and reforest the eastern half of Parcel 54, establish a buffer along the northern border of Parcel 44, and plant for shade and screening on Parcel 38.
5. Engage an arborist as needed and address hazard tree removal needs and replacement in kind as needed.
6. Establish management zones related to the different plant communities with appropriate maintenance protocols that identify the vegetation maintenance strategies, routines and schedules that are necessary to maintain the site's natural and cultural resources.
7. Establish a strategy for the removal of invasive plant species, particularly species that threaten the site's resources.

Additional Studies Recommended.

- Documenting, using GPS equipment, the locations of existing vegetation species and communities, including invasive species.
- Soil testing, followed by subsequent soil amendment, as needed.

Related Implementation Projects.

Implementation Project 5. Underground all overhead utility lines on Parcels 44 and 54.

Implementation Project 6. Reforest the east half of Parcel 54.

Implementation Project 7. Complete planning and design for visitor use and access on Parcels 44 and 38.

Implementation Project 8. Implement a green stormwater infrastructure solution on Parcel 54.

10. Develop partnerships with property owners along Gurnee Avenue and the Old Birmingham Highway to preserve the park's historic setting.

Description. The streetscape of the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue and the south side of the Old Birmingham Highway contribute to the park's historical integrity. Preservation of these streetscapes through collaboration with property owners is one of the important goals of this treatment plan.

Location. The 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue, from 10th Street to 11th Street and 5062, 5072, and 5201 Old Birmingham Highway (see Figures 5-3 and 5-12).

Justification. Both sites of the national monument are vulnerable to loss of integrity of setting. At the Bus Depot, vacancy and possible deterioration of neighboring structures along the 1000 block of Gurnee Avenue could damage the integrity of the surrounding historic district and the site's historic context. At the Bus Burning Site, which is outside of incorporated Anniston, there is potential for incompatible development on adjacent properties because there are no zoning restrictions. There are no controls over building renovations and demolition, so the neighboring structures that contribute to the historic setting could be modified or removed. This may have a negative impact on the historic character of the site.

Project Implementation Process.

1. Conduct research to confirm which tools are available for use to preserve the historic character of these two sites. These may include preservation easements, federal historic preservation grants, and Main Street Façade Improvement grants.
2. Investigate the process for obtaining preservation easements from the Alabama

Historical Commission (AHC) for buildings that are contributing elements to the Downtown Anniston Historic District (Update and Boundary Increase). These easements protect the basic historic and aesthetic qualities of a property on a permanent and ongoing basis, and in return provide a tax benefit to the donor.⁴¹ Fees are quite high for easement administration, beginning at \$10,000 and going up, depending on the fair market value of the property. It may be possible for the National Park Service to craft an agreement with the AHC to take responsibility for easement administration, which may result in lower fees.⁴²

3. Investigate the potential for partners to apply for federal historic preservation grant programs that are managed through the Alabama Historical Commission. These grants are available to public and nonprofit

organizations that own and operate historic sites with an education-based mission.⁴³

4. Investigate Main Street Façade Improvement grants, which are managed by the nonprofit organization Main Street America. Funds come from the NPS's Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program and are distributed by the grantee, which could be a state historic preservation office, a certified local government (CLG), or a regional nonprofit. These entities can then distribute funds for façade improvement to properties listed in the National Register that are located in rural towns with a population under 50,000.⁴⁴ Anniston is a CLG and has a population of around 21,000, so it would be considered eligible.

Additional Studies Recommended. None.

Related Implementation Projects. None.

⁴¹ Alabama Historical Commission, "Alabama Historical Commission Easement Program," <https://ahc.alabama.gov/PDF/AHC%20Easement%20Handout%202020.pdf>

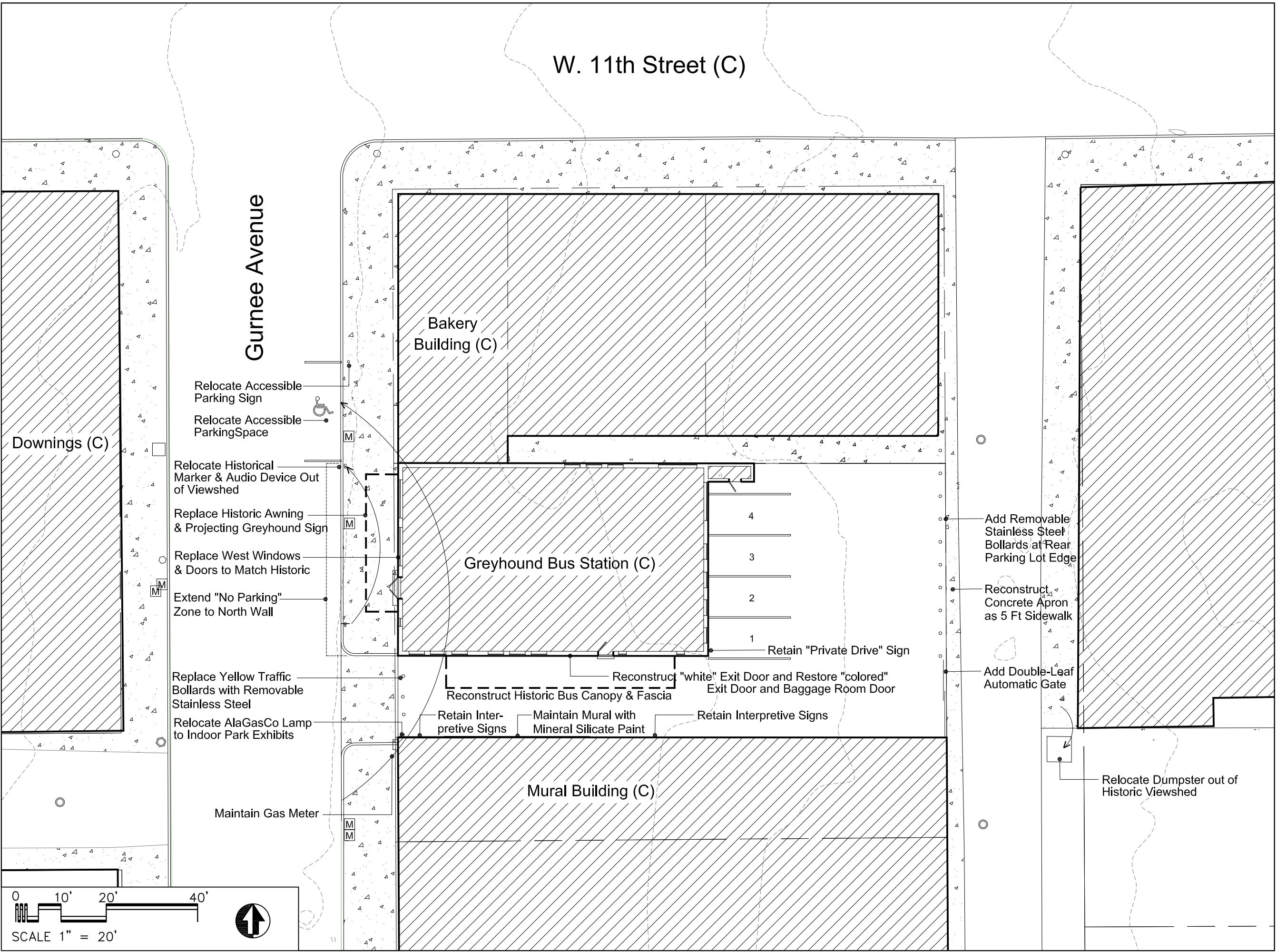
⁴² Evelyn Causey (Alabama Historical Commission Preservation Easement and National Register Coordinator) in discussion with the author, May 2022.

⁴³ Alabama Historical Commission, "Grants," <https://ahc.alabama.gov/Resources/grants.aspx#:~:text=AHC%20will%20administer%20a%20%242%2C30>

[0%2C000,commemorate%20historical%20events%20and%20places.](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/paul-bruhn-historic-revitalization-grants-program.htm)

⁴⁴ Main Street America, "NPS Main Street Façade Improvement Grant," <https://www.mainstreet.org/ourwork/projectspotlight/facadeimprovements/npsgrant> and National Park Service, "Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants Program," <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/paul-bruhn-historic-revitalization-grants-program.htm>.

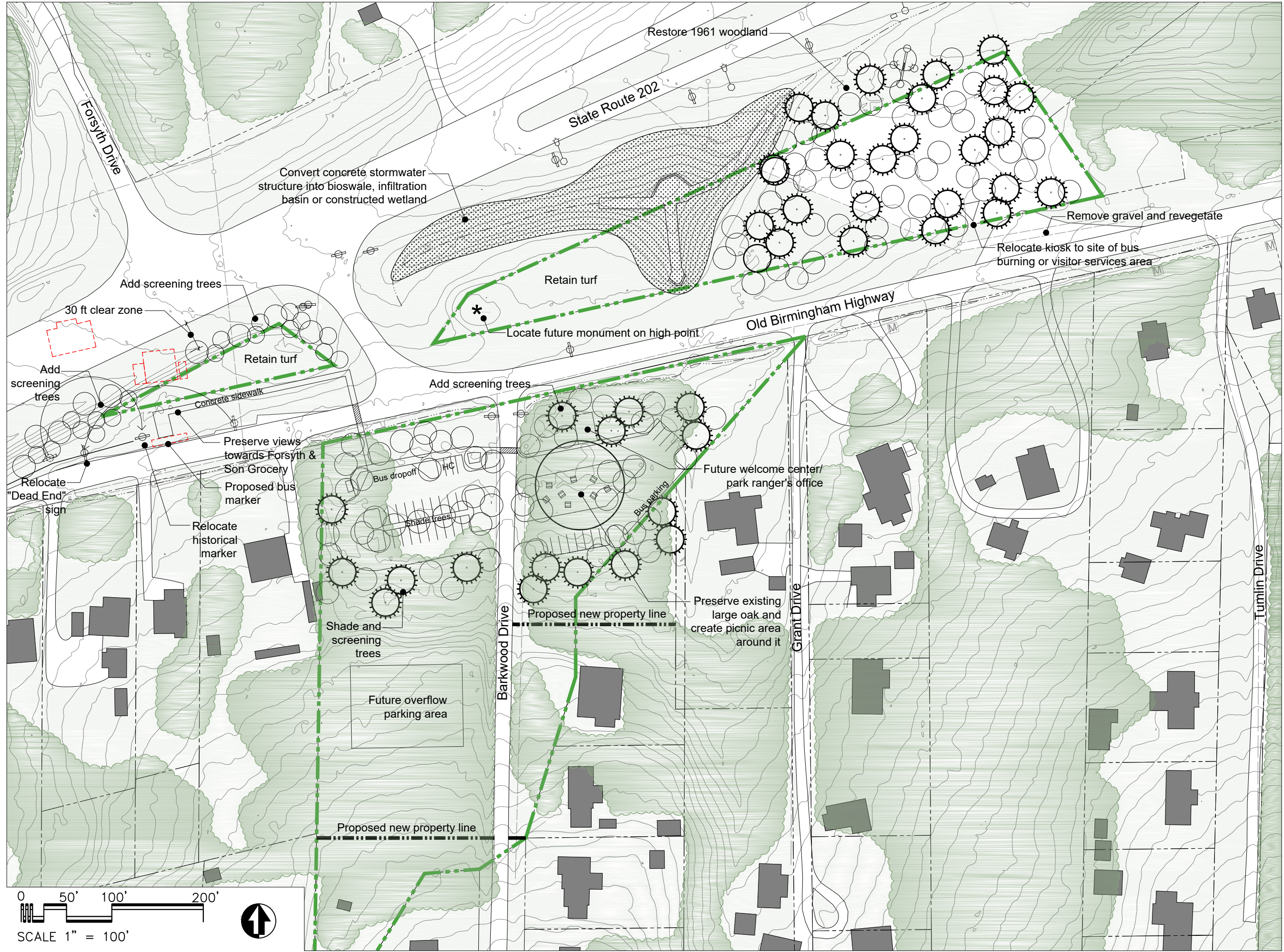
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- Legend:
- Buildings
 - Concrete Paving
 - Water Line
 - Power Pole
 - Light Standard
 - Property Line
 - Photopoints
 - Water Meter
 - (C) Contributing

- Notes:
1. Dimensions and locations are approximate, based on field-gathered GPS, local government GIS data, utility GIS data, NPS-provided GIS data, and field observations.
 2. GIS data provided by local government and utilities is for general information only and should not be relied on in lieu of a site survey.

Map 5-1.
Bus Station
Treatment Plan



Map 5-2.
Bus Burning Site
Treatment Plan

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