

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Pikeville Commercial District (Name Change, Boundary Increase)

Other names/site number: see inventory

Name of related multiple property listing: Pikeville MRA

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by Hambley Boulevard, South Auxier Avenue, Main Street, and Huffman Avenue

City or town: Pikeville State: Kentucky County: Pike

Not For Publication: NA Vicinity: NA

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: Craig Potts/SHPO Date _____ _____ Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title :</p>	<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>50</u>	<u>15</u>	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>50</u>	<u>15</u>	Total

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 17

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

COMMERCE/business
COMMERCE/professional
COMMERCE/financial institution
COMMERCE/specialty store
COMMERCE/restaurant
COMMERCE/warehouse
DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC/hotel
RELIGION/religious facility
SOCIAL/meeting house
GOVERNMENT/city hall
GOVERNMENT/correctional facility/police station
GOVERNMENT/post office
GOVERNMENT/courthouse
EDUCATION/school
EDUCATION/college/university
HEALTH CARE/

Current Functions

COMMERCE/business
COMMERCE/professional
COMMERCE/financial institution
COMMERCE/specialty store
COMMERCE/restaurant
DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling
RELIGION/religious facility
SOCIAL/meeting house
GOVERNMENT/city hall
GOVERNMENT/correctional facility/police station
GOVERNMENT/post office
GOVERNMENT/courthouse
EDUCATION/college/university
HEALTH CARE/
FUNERARY/mortuary/funeral home
LANDSCAPE/parking lot
VACANT/Not in Use

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY/Gothic Revival

LATE VICTORIAN/Italianate

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Classical Revival

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Tudor Revival

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Bungalow/Craftsman

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Commercial Style

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne

Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property:

BRICK

WOOD

METAL/Aluminum

SYNTHETICS/Vinyl

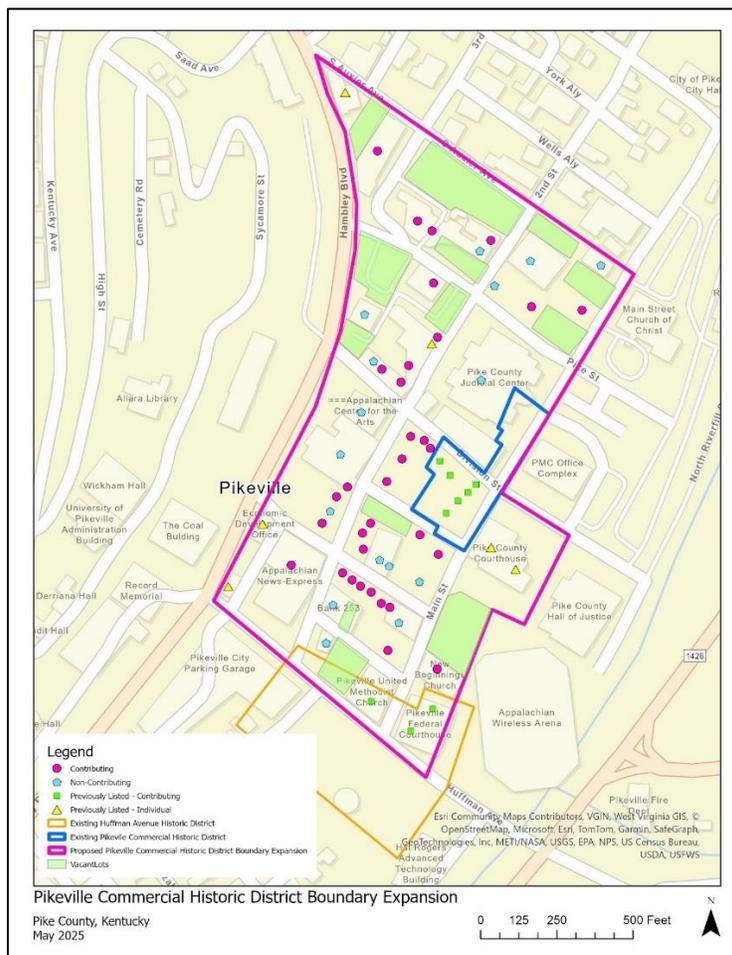
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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

This nomination proposes expansion of the “Commercial Historic District” (NRIS 84001916) an area of downtown Pikeville, seat of Pike County, Kentucky. The Commercial Historic District was listed on the National Register in 1984 as part of the Pikeville MRA (NRIS 64000250). The expansion of the Commercial Historic District will absorb a number of those individually listed buildings and parts of two districts listed in 1984. Because the emerging district emphasizes the commercial identity, the name is changed to “Pikeville Commercial District.” The 1984 nomination’s text does not quantify the district’s resources, but the map appears to define the district as containing 12 buildings, 10 of which contribute, and covering an area of 1.5 acres. The current project proposes expansion of the district to 34.86 acres, which includes 65 new resources, 50 of which contribute and 15 of which do not contribute. The inventory of those resources is found in a table at the end of the Description and shown in the map below.



Proposed boundary of the Pikeville Commercial District and expansion boundary area

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Character of Pikeville, Kentucky

The proposed boundary expansion for the Pikeville Historic District includes Hambley Boulevard to the west, South Auxier Avenue to the north, Main Street to the east and Huffman Avenue to the south. The boundary includes Pikeville's entire central business district including the Downtown Commercial Historic District (NRHP #84001916, listed in 1984), part of the Huffman Avenue District (NRHP #84001917, 1984), and individually listed resources: Pike County Courthouse, Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Passenger Depot, R. T. Greer and Company, and the Odd Fellows Building.

Pike County is located in the Big Sandy Valley in eastern Kentucky and borders West Virginia to the east and Virginia to the south. Pikeville is situated in the west central portion of the county. The Levisa Fork of Big Sandy River originally flowed around Pikeville creating an oxbow. Early residential and commercial development occurred in the center of that horseshoe-shaped area. Main and Second Streets, two of the main thoroughfares, stretch in a north-south direction with smaller streets including Division, Grace, and Pike crossing in an east-west direction. Expanding from the central commercial district in northeast and southwest directions are two early residential areas. The commercial and residence areas were platted close together on narrow, rectangular lots. Traffic flows in a one-way direction along Main Street and 2nd Street. The 200-block of 2nd Street between Division Street and Caroline Avenue is paved with brick installed in 2022 as part of a streetscape improvement project. The remaining streets are asphalt.

Pikeville's terrain is a largely flat, river basin surrounded by the Appalachian Mountains. Because of Pikeville's susceptibility to flooding, the Levisa Fork, Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Big Sandy Branch, and a four-lane highway were relocated during the Pikeville Cut-Through Project. The project diverted the river away from Pikeville and dirt was used to fill in a section of the river along Main Street. The project was completed in 1987. Evidence of the former river can be seen under the Appalachian Wireless Arena on Huffman Street.

Transportation was a primary factor in Pikeville's location and growth. Initially, the Levisa Fork carried steamboat traffic to and from the city. Later, the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad Big Sandy Branch and vehicular roads supplanted river navigation. While nineteenth-century construction in Pikeville was river-oriented, with docks, factories, and warehouses constructed along the Levisa Fork's banks, the commercial center shifted west when the railroad arrived in 1905. Early frame residences constructed in town were replaced with commercial buildings in the early twentieth century.

The current built environment of Pikeville reflects its development as a regional economic, educational, and entertainment hub for Eastern Kentucky. Pikeville's central commercial district developed within Hambley Boulevard, Main Street, Scott Avenue, and Huffman Street. Buildings housing a vast range of services, products, amenities, and activities were constructed within the city's central commercial blocks. A variety of businesses were established along

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Second Street, combination commercial and residential buildings were constructed on the smaller streets, and government buildings, financial institutions and other businesses developed along Main Street. The uninterrupted streetscapes of commercial and institutional buildings give Pikeville an urban setting that is unique in Pike County.

Most of Pikeville’s extant commercial buildings date from the early-to-mid twentieth century, with the majority constructed between 1900 and 1949. Pikeville has a mix of commercial, residential, educational and governmental buildings. The downtown has numerous mixed-use buildings with storefronts on the first story and offices or residential apartments on the second and third stories. Most of the commercial buildings are two-story or three-story brick buildings with two- or three-bay façades. The commercial buildings were constructed adjoining or close together and many feature storefronts and large display windows. Aside from a few high-style governmental buildings, decorative details are generally modest and include brick cornices, corbels, modillions, belt courses, pilasters and stonework. Side elevations, when visible, usually lack ornamentation but sometimes contain large painted advertisements. Building types/functions are summarized in Table 1.

Building Type	Count
Commercial	49
Entertainment	1
Fraternal	1
Fraternal/Government	1
Rail Related	2
Religious	2
Vacant Lot	13
Residential	1
Restaurant	1
Road (Vehicular) Related	1
Funerary	1
Government	6

Table 1. Building Types in Pikeville

Building Types of the District

Commercial Buildings

The vast majority of the structures in the commercial historic district are early-to-mid-20th century brick commercial buildings of one, two, or three stories. Streetscapes along 2nd Street, Caroline Avenue, Grace Avenue, Division and Main Streets retain the scale and continuity of Pikeville as it appeared in the early 20th century. In addition, the narrow street width, particularly

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on side streets, and closeness of the buildings gives the downtown area a feeling of urban density as it was in the early 20th century. Representative buildings include the Hotel Anthony (ca. 1920-25) at 143 Main Street across from the Pike County Courthouse (Photo 1). At four stories, this is one of Pikeville's tallest historic commercial buildings. The building, like many remaining brick commercial buildings in the city, has a straightforward symmetrical grid of bays and stories and lack of façade ornamentation; attention would have been drawn by the large expanses of street-level storefronts, signage, and cantilevered marquees.



Photo 1. Hotel Anthony, 143 Main Street

Buildings sharing the block of Main Street with the Hotel Anthony (Photo 2) had somewhat more detailed façades, consistent with the early 20th century practice of “buildings as advertisement” – ornamentation and stylistic choices were used to convey prosperity, steadfastness, security, and similar values. The ornamentation of the Pauley/Friend Building (ca. 1920-25) at 147 Main Street and stylized classical elevations of the Day and Night Bank Building (1927) on the corner of Main and Division Streets illustrate this intersection of architecture and commerce.

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Photo 2. Main Street between Grace Avenue and Division Street

Pikeville's commercial streetscapes convey variety and abundance. Brick commercial buildings on side streets trend towards simple largely unornamented brick elevations with stories and bays marked by soldier courses, vertical piers, modest corbelling and other brickwork. While individual buildings may be described as simple in design, structures within a streetscape vary in height, width, and detail. The buildings, each constructed by a different owner at different points in time, are not uniform, but representative of the property owner's goals, desires, and means. This is consistent with Pikeville's significance as a place where people traveled to shop, bank, socialize, and do business in countless other ways.

Historic functions of buildings within the district were compiled from Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps published in 1910, 1920, 1925, 1932, and 1949 (See Table 2). A wide variety of businesses and functions were housed within Pikeville's downtown commercial buildings, including hotels, stores, restaurants, offices, post offices, school rooms, fraternal organizations, and entertainment facilities. Most buildings are noted as unspecified "stores," but along the more specific designations are millinery, general, drug, electrical supply, hardware, paint, and dry-cleaning establishments. Many buildings were mixed-use, combining retail with other functions such as offices and meeting halls. Pikeville also had two movie theaters and a roller rink at various points in time. The mixed-use and dense character of Pikeville's commercial center continues to convey its history as a center of government, retail, travel, trade, and banking.

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Photo 3. Second Street, looking north from Grace Avenue.



Photo 4. Division Street: Friend Building (1878) in center.

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Photo 5. Caroline Avenue, looking west from Main Street.

Government Buildings

As the seat of Pike County, Pikeville's earliest role was the location of the county courthouse. This status contributed to its commercial growth since county residents and others with government business traveled to Pikeville and required services such as food and lodging. This continued significance is reflected in the governmental buildings extant within the historic district, including the Pike County Courthouse/Jail, United States Courthouse, and United States Post Office. These buildings, located prominently along Main Street, are larger and more architecturally detailed than the surrounding downtown commercial buildings. This creates a sense of importance and monumentality along the east side of Main Street in the historic district.

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Photo 6. The Pike County Courthouse (left), looking south on Main Street from Division Street.

Transportation Facilities

The only remaining facilities related to Pikeville's early transportation history are the C&O Passenger Depot and Baggage Depot, located along Hambley Boulevard, the former alignment of the C&O railroad. Pikeville was originally oriented along the Levisa Fork due to the importance of river navigation in the 19th century. The county courthouse was centrally located on a large public square along the river. Early in the town's history, docks, warehouses, and industrial buildings lined the bank. When the railroad was built to the west, curving around the base of Peach Orchard Mountain, the commercial center shifted west accordingly, giving rise to the dense commercial blocks present today between the governmental buildings on Main Street and the railroad. No buildings of the river navigation era remain, making the former C&O passenger station and baggage depot the sole transportation-related resources in the district.

Table 2. Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources within the Pikeville Commercial Historic District Boundary Expansion.

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Address				Function		
No.	Street	Year Built	Status	Name (Current, <i>Historic</i>)	Current	Historic
175	2nd Street	1952-1983	NC	AT&T/ Bellsouth	Telecommunications	Telecommunications
178	2nd Street	1910-1920	C	Alternative Service Concepts	Commercial	Grocery; Dry Cleaner
180	2nd Street	Replaced or altered after 1952	NC	Residence	Residential	
200	2nd Street	1910-1920	C	<i>Kentucky Wholesale Grocery Co.</i>	Commercial	Wholesale Grocery
206	2nd Street	1915	C	<i>IOOF Pikeville Lodge 294</i>	Fraternal	Grocery; Fraternal
208	2nd Street	1932-1949	C	Jones & Jones Ward Building	Commercial	Store
210	2nd Street	1925-1932	C	WYMT News	Commercial	Store
218	2nd Street	2013-2014	NC	Appalachian Center for the Arts	Entertainment	
225	2nd Street	1920-1925	C	The Shoppes at 225	Commercial	Stores; Movies
229	2nd Street	1946	C	<i>Cline Building</i>	Commercial	Stores
232	2nd Street	1925-1932	C	<i>Call Bros. Hardware Company</i>	Commercial	Store
234	2nd Street	1932-1949	C	Ritchie's Art & Gift Shoppe	Commercial	Store
763	Hambley Blvd	1948	C	<i>Hopkins Building</i>	Lodging	Movie Theater; Store
236	2nd Street	1925-1932	C	Appcycled	Commercial	Store
237	2nd Street	1920	C	Greg B. Justice Building <i>Hotel Lloyd</i>	Commercial	Hotel
239	2nd Street	1920-1925	C	Kate & Kris Boutique	Commercial	Store
253	2nd Street	ca 1980	NC	Bank 253	Restaurant	
261	2nd Street	1952-1983	NC	Road Tested Wrecker	Auto Repair	
685	Auxier Avenue	1912	C	<i>Greer & Son/Flat Iron Building</i>	Commercial	Pharmacueticals
703	Auxier Avenue	1932-1949	C	J.W. Call & Son Funeral Home	Funerary	Grocery Wholesale; Bakery
107	Caroline Avenue	1932-1949	C	Joyce's Place	Restaurant	Store
109	Caroline Avenue	1932-1949	C	Myer's Optometry	Commercial	Store
111	Caroline Avenue	1932-1949	C	Stephanie Coleman, Attorney	Commercial	Store
112	Caroline Avenue	1920-1925	NC	Gary Johnson Law Offices	Commercial	Movie Theater

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Address				Function		
No.	Street	Year Built	Status	Name (Current, <i>Historic</i>)	Current	Historic
113	Caroline Avenue	1920-1925	C	Levi's Floral <i>Peters Home and Auto Supplies</i>	Commercial	Store/Restaurant
116	Caroline Avenue	1920-1925	C	Gary Johnson Law Offices	Commercial	Movie Theater
115- 117	Caroline Avenue	1920-1925	C	Hamilton Law Offices	Commercial	Store/Offices
118	Caroline Avenue	1920-1925	C	Steph's Uptown/Lush	Commercial	Store/ Drugstore
119	Caroline Avenue	1920-1925	C	CC Belle	Commercial	Store
125- 131	Caroline Avenue	1925-1932; ca 2000 (addition)	C	U. of Pikeville <i>Appalachian News Express</i>	Education	Newspaper; Printing
107	Division Street	1983-1995	NC	Studio 23 Hair	Commercial	
109	Division Street	1932-1949	C		Vacant	Store
122	Division Street	1925-1932	C	Brothers Wright Distillery	Commercial	Store
124	Division Street	1925-1932	C	Lovey's Barber	Commercial	Store
126	Division Street	1925-1932	C	Dance World	Commercial	Store
134	Division Street	1878	C	Friend Building	Commercial	Post Office/ Offices/Lodge/Store
128- 132	Division Street	1920-1925	C	Amber Hunt Sisco Law	Commercial	Store; Drugstore
172	Division Street	1875-1899	C	<i>Old Pike County Jail</i>	Government	Jail
107	Grace Avenue	Pre-1910	C	Mane Attraction	Commercial	Post Office; School Room; Store
745	Hambley Boulevard	2018	NC	Dueling Barrels Distillery	Commercial (Brewery/ Distillery)	
773	Hambley Boulevard	1923	C	Pikeville Visitor Center <i>C&O Passenger Station</i>	Tourism	Railroad Depot
787	Hambley Boulevard	1923	C	<i>C&O Baggage Depot</i>	Retail	Railroad Baggage Depot
104	Main Street	1931	C	U. S. Post Office	Post Office	Post Office
107	Main Street	1912; 1952- 1983 (addition)	C	Pikeville United Methodist Church	Church	Church
110	Main Street	1940	C	U.S. Court House	Court House	Court House
116	Main Street	1932-1949	C	New Beginnings	Religion	Store

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Address				Function		
No.	Street	Year Built	Status	Name (Current, <i>Historic</i>)	Current	Historic
119	Main Street	1932-1949	C	Pikeville U.M. Church <i>Kentucky Power</i>	Religion	Commercial; Electrical Supplies
121	Main Street	1949-1952	NC	Broken Throne Brewing	Restaurant	Filling Station
131	Main Street	1983	NC	U.S. Bancorp	Vacant	Financial
137	Main Street	1888; 1952	C	Community Trust Bank <i>First National Bank of Pikeville</i>	Financial	Financial
143	Main Street	1920-1925	C	<i>Hotel Anthony</i>	Commercial	Hotel
146	Main Street	1888; 1932- 33	C	Pike County Courthouse	Government	Government
147	Main Street	1920-1925	C	Friend Building <i>Pauley Building</i>	Commercial	Store
149	Main Street	1890	C	<i>Yost Building</i>	Office	Store
151	Main Street	1927	C	<i>Day and Night Bank</i>	Office	Bank
179	Main Street	2010-2013	NC	Pike County Judicial Center	Government	
193	Main Street	1932-1949	C	Signature Smiles	Commercial	Telephone Exchange
203	Main Street	1952-1983	NC	Combs & Combs	Office	
111	Pike Street	1920-1925	C	Faith Tax	Office	Garage
115	Pike Street	1920-1925	C	Domino's Pizza	Restaurant	Roller Rink/Garage
120	Pike Street	1974	NC	Army Recruiting Office/ Masonic Temple	Fraternal/Government	
130	Pike Street	ca 2000	NC	Small Town Tattoo	Commercial	
137	Pike Street	1925-1932	C	Pack and Diddle Attorneys	Office	Feed; Furniture
138	Pike Street	1932-1949	C	Grace Custom Signs	Commercial	Storage
111	Scott Avenue	1983-1995	NC	Pikeville City Police	Government	Government

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

Criteria Considerations

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1905-1950

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Significant Dates

1905

Significant Person

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

H. P. McDonald & Brother, Architect

James A. Wetmore, Architect

Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, Builder

Works Progress Administration, Builders

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Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The Pikeville Commercial District meets National Register Criterion A and is significant in the Area of Commerce. Its significance is evaluated within the historic context “The Rise of the Coal Industry in Pike County, Kentucky, 1905-1975.” Pikeville, the county seat of Pike County, was the site of the first permanent European settlement in the county and was founded in 1824. The town experienced slow development throughout much of the 19th century, primarily relying on steamboat navigation of the Levisa Fork for commercial transportation. The arrival of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad in 1905 opened the Eastern Kentucky coalfields to development. The commercial activity of Pike County was transformed radically, as coal companies opened towns on the rail line and mining provided an influx of capital—creating communities overnight populated by a population of immigrants to Pike County. Between 1905 and 1950, the mineral extraction underway in the county brought financial resources to Pikeville in the form of industry, businesses, and amenities. Since around World War II, mining companies, most of which were based outside of Kentucky, have withdrawn their ownership and support of the company towns, and local coal developers began to extract the remaining coal through strip mining. As the company towns shrank or disappeared, Pikeville continued to anchor commerce and related social affairs in the county. The collection of early 20th century buildings of the central business district continues to give a strong impression of the role the county seat played within a county that largely was under the financial control of interests located outside of Kentucky. The district’s Period of Significance is 1905 to 1950, beginning with the date of the arrival of the railroad, which transformed the commerce and industry of the County, and ending at the time of the city’s peak commercial development, when the shift from shaft mining to strip mining began to reshape the local commercial and political climate.

Historic Context: The Rise of the Coal Industry in Pike County, Kentucky, 1905-1975 *Statehood and County Formation*

When the Commonwealth of Kentucky was admitted to the Union in 1792,¹ present-day Pike County was included within the boundaries of Floyd County. As population in Eastern Kentucky increased, and since Prestonsburg, the seat of Floyd County was as far as 40 miles from the easternmost part of the county, the Kentucky General Assembly authorized the subdivision of Floyd into Pike County on December 19, 1821.

It took until December 1823 for the county commissioner to select a site for the new county’s seat, one that met the requirements of “ample, level land, near the river for navigation and at a crossing of roads.” One acre of land was donated by Elijah Adkins on the Levisa Fork opposite the mouth of Chloe Creek and the town was surveyed and laid out by James Honaker. The Post Office was first called “Pike,” then changed to “Piketon” in 1829, before finally becoming “Pikeville” in 1881.

¹ https://uknowledge.uky.edu/upk_united_states_history/138/

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The original plat of Pikeville laid the town out in lots surrounding a central public square (Figure 1). Several streets in present-day Pikeville remain from this earliest organization of the city's landscape: Main Street, 2nd Street, Huffman Avenue, Division Street, Pike Street and several alleys. Five lots were located on either side of Main Street extending from the south side of the square to Huffman Avenue, and eight lots extended north along either side of Main Street to Wells Alley. Five larger lots were also platted south and west of 2nd Street. The positioning of the courthouse and public square signaled the importance given to this civic space. Its centrality announced to road or river travelers to Pikeville the substance of the emerging city.

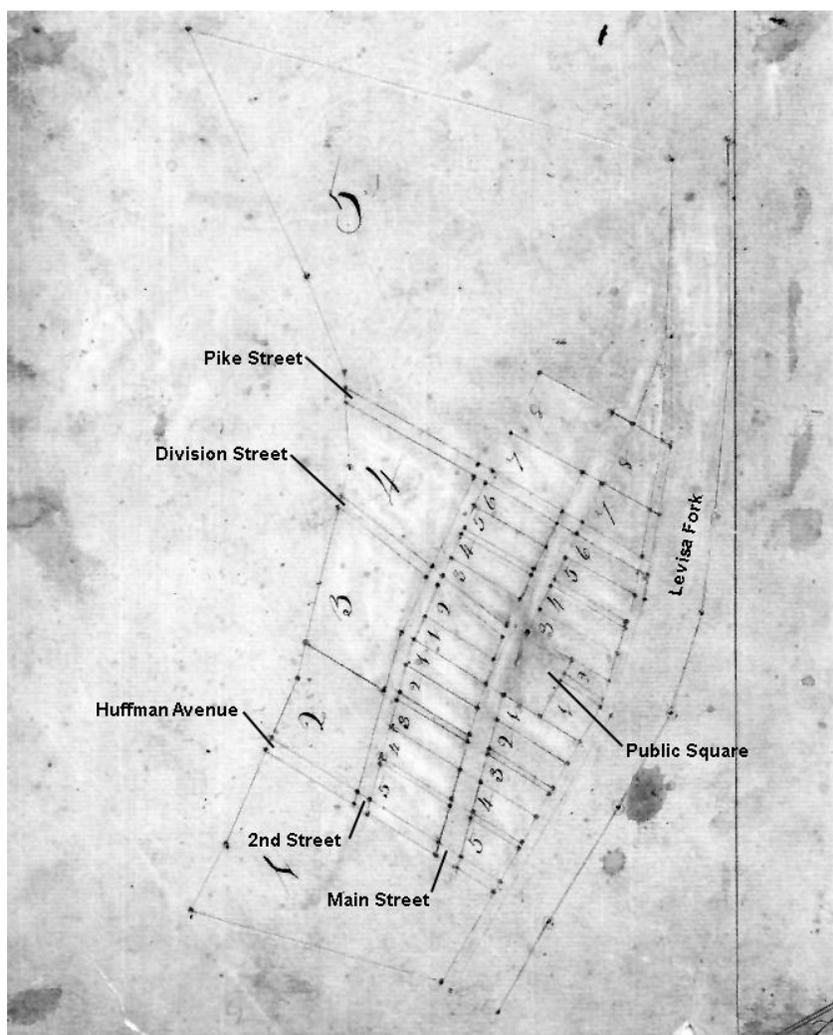


Figure 1. 1827 Plat of Pikeville with Reference Labels for Modern Streets²

The 1830 census reported that there were 49 residents living in Pikeville. The 1840 census for Pike County reveals that the majority of residents were farmers, with others employed as carpenters, laborers, blacksmiths, merchants, and lawyers. There were 98 enslaved people living

² Pike County Clerk of Courts, Deed Book A, Page 252, March 7, 1827. Reference labels added by preparer.

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in Pike County in 1840. Ely's 1887 history of the Big Sandy Valley notes that Pikeville "improved but little until 1845" when a frame Methodist Church was built.³

River Navigation

The Big Sandy River, stretching 30 miles from Louisa to Catlettsburg, where it empties into the Ohio River, was found to be navigable by steamboat in 1837. Within a few years, steamboats were traveling further up the Levisa Fork from Louisa to Prestonsburg and finally, to Picketon.⁴ River navigation, an alternative to the rough overland paths and trails, greatly improved access to the remote mountain region. As the county seat and last point upstream reachable by steamboat, Picketon became a center of commerce for the surrounding area.⁵ The boat landing in Pikeville was located directly behind the Pike County courthouse.⁶

As steamboat traffic increased on the Levisa Fork and beyond, the demand grew for coal, rather than wood, to fuel boats. The first commercial coal operation in Pike County was established in 1823 by William Weddington and James S. Layne. By 1849, mineral speculators were visiting Pike County and in 1850, the Kentucky General Assembly passed an act permitting the Pike County to grant "passways," essentially rights-of-way, to commercial ventures to connect with the river for shipping. A handful of coal companies were established prior to the Civil War.

Growth of Industry and the Railroad

The years after the Civil War were marked by steady population growth and increased commerce. Natural resource extraction, which came to dominate the local economy during the Period of Significance, ascended to its primary role during this post-bellum era as transportation improvements were made. Timber harvesting became a major industry in 19th century Pike County, with logs felled close to waterways, floated during rainy seasons down tributaries to the Big Sandy and ultimately the Ohio River.⁷ Coal was also shipped by steamboat in the decades before and after the Civil War. Railroads were being expanded throughout Virginia in the 1850s, including the Virginia Central, which was completed to Clifton Forge in 1856, and the Covington & Ohio, chartered by the Virginia General Assembly to cross the Appalachian Mountains. Following the Civil War, railroad magnate Collis P. Huntington invested in the Virginia Central and Covington & Ohio, incorporating them into the Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Railroad. The C&O was completed to Huntington, West Virginia in 1873.⁸

³ William Ely, *The Big Sandy Valley: History of the People and County from the Earliest Settlement to the Present Time*, 304.

⁴ Russell L. Whitlock, "Levisa Fork of the Big Sandy River."

⁵ City of Pikeville, "Pikeville History."

⁶ Kelly, *Sesquicentennial of Pike County Kentucky, 1822-1972: A Compilation of Articles*, 8.

⁷ Whitlock.

⁸ "History of the C&O Railway," Chesapeake and Ohio Historical Society.

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Though the C&O continued to expand throughout Virginia and surrounding states in the late 19th century through construction and acquisition of branch lines, it was not until 1905 that the railroad reached Pikeville. The arrival of the railroad was transformative for the coal industry in Pike County. Although small commercial coal companies had been in operation in Pike County since the early 19th century, the Kentucky Geological Survey historical coal production records, which begin statewide in 1790, note zero tonnage in Pike County until 1889, when 1,962 tons were shipped, then zero tonnage between the years of 1890 and 1903. In 1904, coinciding with the upcoming expansion of the C&O into the county, coal production was 46,730 tons and rapidly increased from there (Figure 1). Pike County leads the state in cumulative coal production, producing over 1.6 billion tons since 1889.⁹

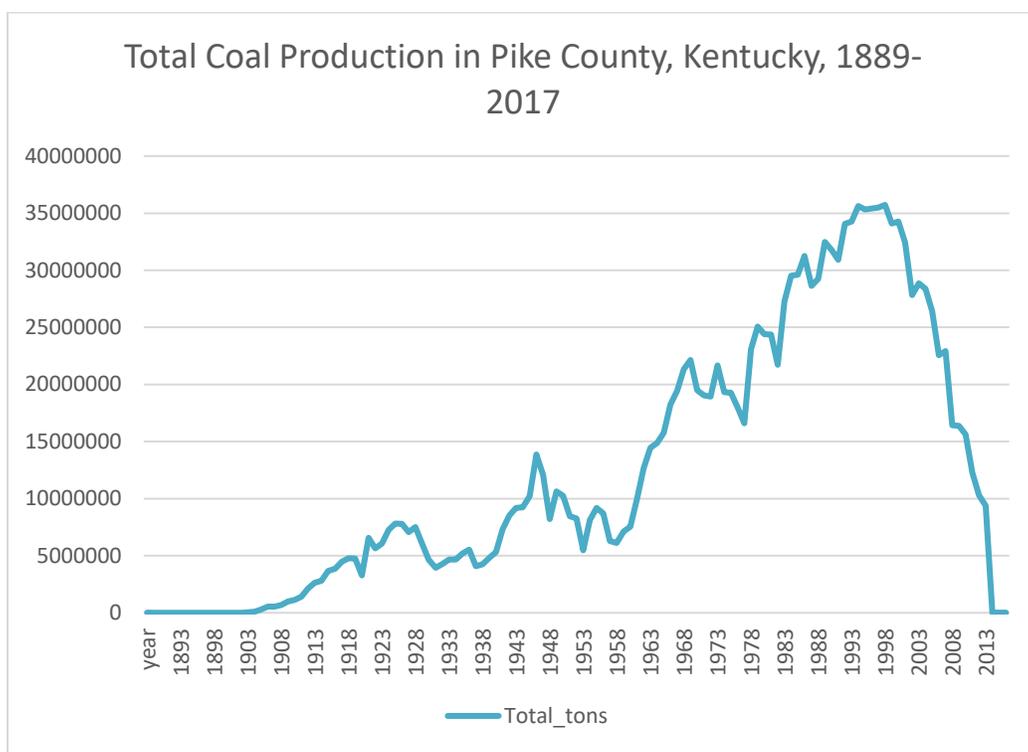


Figure 2. Coal Production in Pike County, Kentucky, 1889-2017¹⁰

The post-Civil War era also featured one of Pike County’s most notorious historic events, the Hatfield-McCoy family feud. The enmity between the McCoys of Pike County and the Hatfields of Mingo County, West Virginia had its roots in the Civil War and escalated through the end of the 19th century. Decades of violence, murder, and retaliation on both sides culminated in the 1889 trial and conviction of seven Hatfields and execution of Ellison “Cottontop” Mounts. After

⁹ Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet *et al*, *Kentucky Coal Facts*, 105-107.

¹⁰ Kentucky Geological Survey Coal Production Database.

<https://kgs.uky.edu/kgsweb/datasearching/coal/production/prodsearch.asp> Accessed 4 April 2024.

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this execution, hostilities eased, but the highly publicized and sensationalized feud had entered the American consciousness.¹¹

Historic mapping shows the dramatic effect of the railroad and coal industries on the growth of Pikeville. The earliest available USGS maps from the 1890s depict only the original core blocks of the town (Figure 3). In a historic photo from 1883, Pikeville looks like a low-scale agrarian village, with small frame houses and buildings lining Main Street and 2nd Street.¹² The original 1824 log courthouse was replaced in 1888 with a Victorian brick structure designed by MacDonald Brothers Architects of Louisville.¹³ The next available USGS map, drawn in 1914, shows the railroad and the expansion of the street grid to the north and west, following the curve of the river, and the streets filled with buildings (Figure 4). Between 1900 and 1910, the population leapt from 509 to 1,280, an increase of 152%. A water system and electric plant were constructed in Pikeville in the early 1900s.¹⁴ Also of note is the establishment the Pikeville Collegiate Institute by the Presbyterian Church in 1889, which filled a need for secondary and higher education. The institution added a teacher training school in 1901, and changed its name to Pikeville College and began offering associate degrees in 1909.¹⁵

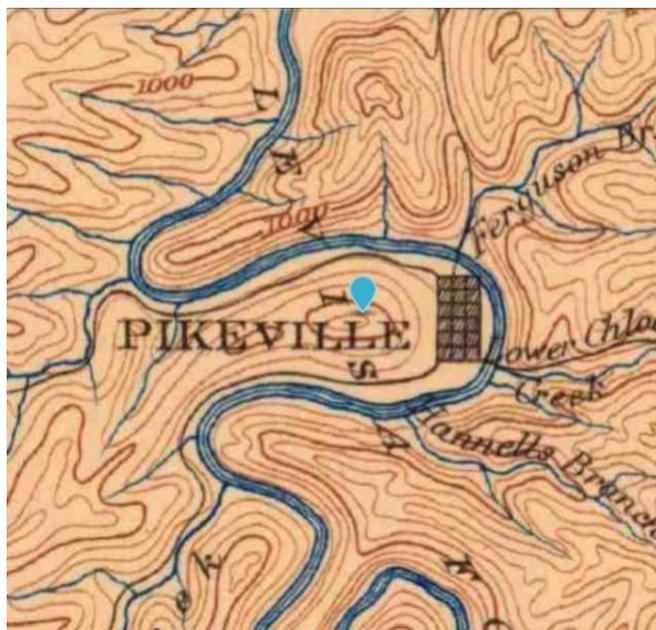


Figure 3. Excerpt, USGS Whitesburg Quadrangle, 1890.

¹¹ Kathy Alexander, "The Bloody Feud of the Hatfields and McCoys," <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/hatfields-mccoys/>

¹² Pike County Historical Society, "A.R. Crandall Photo 1883," <https://pikecountykyhistoricalsociety.com/pikeville-post/>. Accessed 4 April 2024.

¹³ Frank Forsyth, "Pike County Courthouse," *Pike County Kentucky 1822-1976 Historical Papers, Number Two*, 1-3.

¹⁴ Kelly, *Sesquicentennial of Pike County Kentucky, 1822-1972: A Compilation of Articles*, 25-28.

¹⁵ "History," <https://www.upike.edu/about/history/>.

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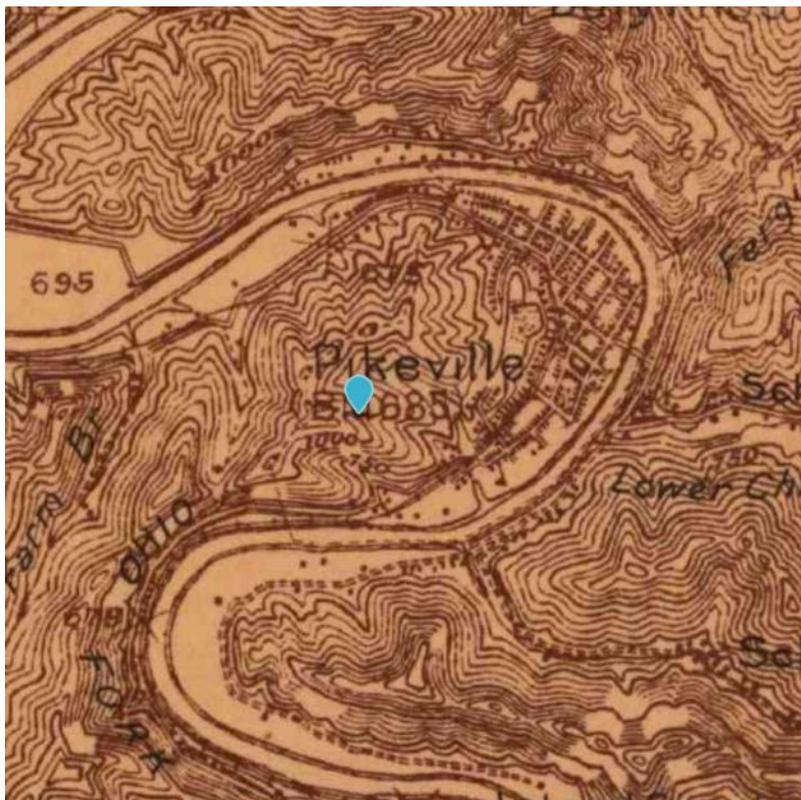


Figure 4. Excerpt, USGS Vergie Quadrangle, 1914.

Pikeville's location on major transportation routes and its county seat status meant that as coal activity increased throughout the county, commercial growth followed in Pikeville. The C&O was the first major railroad to connect Pike County to the rest of the nation, making Pikeville a waypoint for many travelers associated with the coal industry. In addition, a larger population of county residents needed to travel to Pikeville for government business. Additional amenities including lodging, restaurants, retail shops, law offices, banking, and entertainment options were in demand. The number of hotels in the downtown area grew from two in 1910 to six in 1932.¹⁶ Wholesale food companies, warehouses, and manufacturing facilities were located in the northern part of the commercial district, many accessed by railroad sidings.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1910, 1920, and 1925 depict a multitude of changes to the Pikeville landscape that was a product of this influx of capital into the county brought by coal mining. In this short 15-year span of time, the transformation of the local commercial landscape was stunning.

The 1910 Sanborn maps reveals a Pikeville at the end of the pre-coal boom period as a typical county seat within a county rich in natural resources. Already by the end of the nineteenth century, Pikeville had begun to be shaped by the riches from natural resource exploitation, when

¹⁶ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for 1910, 1920, 1925, 1932, and 1949, loc.gov.

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timber barons removed the county's valuable lumber. The downtown was populated by the mix of uses from the nineteenth century. Dwellings, commercial, industrial, and social buildings were interspersed, as was typical within any nineteenth century eastern Kentucky county seat town at the opening of the twentieth century. In 1910 (Figure 5), most buildings were of frame construction (depicted in yellow) and one or two stories, with a handful of brick structures (depicted in pink) in the core commercial area near the intersection of Main and Division Streets.



Figure 5. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Pikeville, Kentucky, 1910.

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The progression from moderate density frame buildings to a dense concentration of brick buildings is visually apparent in the map progression from 1910 to 1920 (Figure 6) to 1925 (Figure 7). As brick commercial buildings replaced detached dwellings in the commercial core, residential development expanded to the south and northwest.

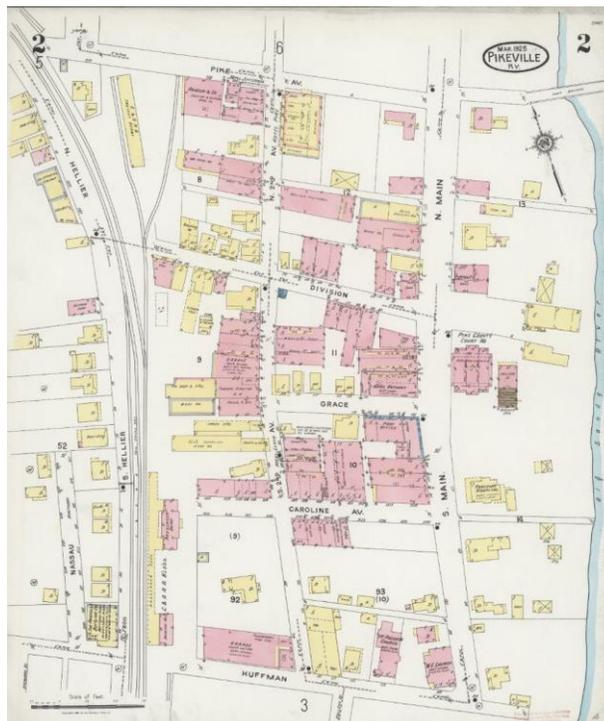
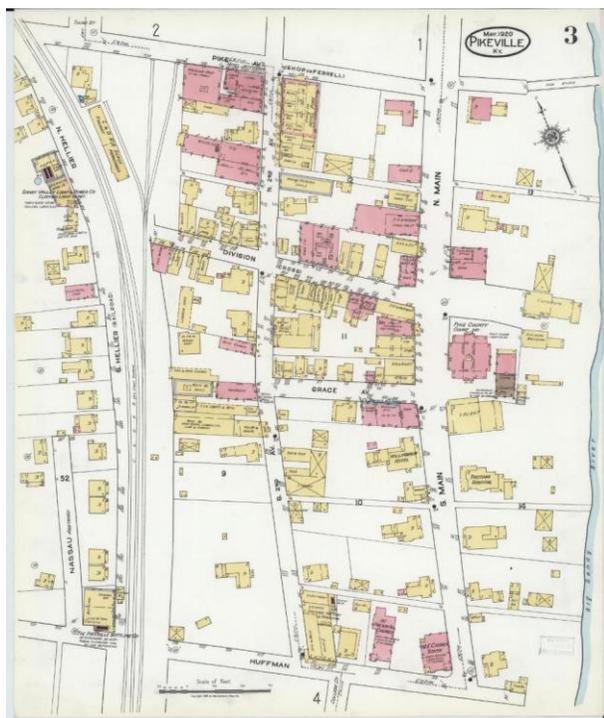


Figure 6: Pikeville, KY, 1920 Sanborn Map **Figure 7: Pikeville, KY, 1925. Sanborn Map**

Of note in the 1920 map is the conversion of a frame dwelling south of the courthouse to the Trachoma Hospital, and in 1925, a C&O Passenger Depot appears alongside the railroad north of Huffman Street. These and other changes indicate a city with a growing population and increasing amenities and services.

Comparison with Other Towns in Pike County

Almost all other towns in Pike County in the early 20th century were coal company towns, built solely for the purpose of housing coal miners and providing an infrastructure for coal extraction. These towns were largely closed economic systems; the coal company generally constructed and owned all housing, utilities, churches, schools, medical facilities, and the company store, which carried everything from groceries to furniture. Miners had rent, utilities, equipment expenses, and company store charges deducted directly from their wages. Both geographic isolation and company control of land and resources made alternative options for shopping and other services rare to non-existent in company towns.

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The historic context document *Coal Company Towns in Eastern Kentucky, 1854-1941*, drafted by the Kentucky Heritage Council in 1991, provides a detailed analysis of the development and built environment of the resource type. While some larger “model” coal company towns were carefully laid out and featured a variety of house designs and public amenities, many more were “haphazardly created collections of one or two house types, cloned by the hundreds in a single location and squashed together in a narrow stream valley.”¹⁷ Company towns documented in Pike County for the study included Justiceville, Marrowbone-Wolf Pit, Rockhouse-Henry Clay, Hellier, Huddy-Stone-McVeigh, Dunlop, Toler, Phelps-Freeburn, Penny-Esco, and Aflex. In 1991, these towns had already experienced significant loss of historic fabric through demolition and alteration. Stone was noted as one of the more intact examples and consists of the Fordson Coal Company Buildings (three large red brick buildings containing the movie theater, coal company offices, and company store), a variety of company and non-company housing, one commercial building, one former bank, three churches, two bridges, and the former Norfolk & Western railbed. The Fordson Coal Company Buildings were listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2002 (NRIS 02000917) and the surrounding town was listed in 2003 under the name Stone Historic District (NRIS 03001226).

In contrast to Stone, Pikeville’s lots and businesses were owned by individuals, making the nature of the city’s commerce fundamentally different from that of the company town. In company towns, the commercial value of the workforce is seen in the high percentage of residential buildings, while the concentrated power of the company is represented by a smaller number of monumental structures. Pikeville’s commercial strength lay in its variety of locally owned private businesses, densely packed into several city blocks and competing for attention via storefront displays and signage. While coal was the driving force behind the rapid growth of both Pikeville and company towns like Stone in the early 20th century, the industry’s impact on the free market in Pike County is uniquely manifested in the development of Pikeville’s commercial center.

Pikeville continued to grow throughout the mid-20th century. USGS maps from 1954 (Figure 8) and 1978 (Figure 9) show continued expansion upstream and downstream of the commercial center and increased residential development. By 1950, the city center of Pikeville was almost fully built-out, primarily with one-, two-, and three-story brick buildings constructed in the early to mid-20th century. A few frame dwellings and other structures remained interspersed within the commercial brick streetscapes. The city would remain thus until the 21st century brought large-scale construction projects including the Appalachian Wireless Arena, Pike County Judicial Center, Appalachian Center for the Arts, and Dueling Barrels Brewery and Distillery.

The coal industry remained strong into the 1990s, while other industries also developed, including banking, higher education, and healthcare. Pikeville College began offering four-year degrees in 1955, established a school of osteopathic medicine in 1997, and was designated a

¹⁷ L. Martin Perry, *Coal Company Towns in Eastern Kentucky, 1854-1941*, 28.

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university in 2011. In contrast to other commercial centers in the Appalachian coalfields which have experienced steady declines in population since the 1950s, Pikeville has maintained a steady population into the 21st century.

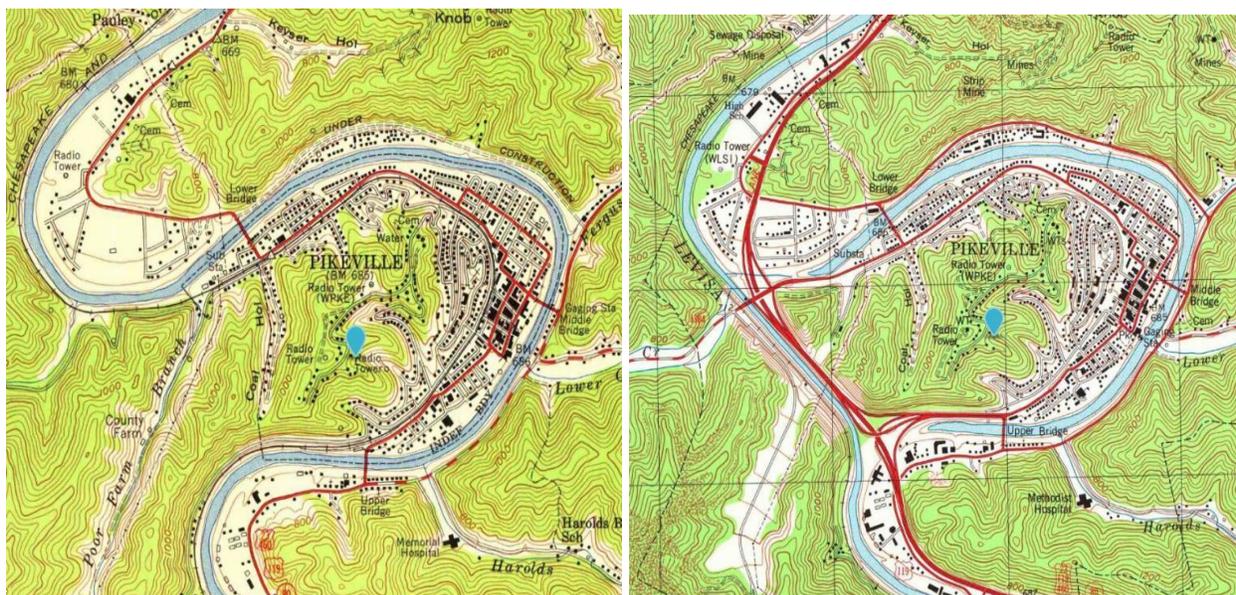


Figure 8. Excerpt, USGS Pikeville Quad, 1954 Figure 9. Excerpt, USGS Pikeville Quad, 1978.

Year	Population	% Change
1870	140	—
1880	246	75.7%
1890	456	85.4%
1900	508	11.4%
1910	1,280	152.0%
1920	2,110	64.8%
1930	3,376	60.0%
1940	4,185	24.0%
1950	5,154	23.2%
1960	4,754	-7.8%
1970	5,205	9.5%
1980	4,756	-8.6%
1990	6,324	33.0%
2000	6,295	-0.5%
2010	6,903	9.7%
2020	7,754	12.3%

Table 2. Historical Population of Pikeville¹⁸

¹⁸ United States Decennial Census, 1870-2020.

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The Pikeville Cut-Through Project was a major undertaking that was initiated in 1968 by Mayor William C. Hambley to alleviate the flooding and congestion caused by Pikeville's location within an oxbow of the Levisa Fork. The river was rechanneled to the southwest of Peach Orchard Mountain and the railroad and major highways were rerouted. The project, completed in 1987, is one of the largest civil engineering projects in the western hemisphere.¹⁹

Evaluation of the Significance of the Pikeville Commercial District within the Context "The Rise of the Coal Industry in Pike County, Kentucky, 1906-1975"

The Pikeville Commercial Historic District is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Commerce. Established as the Pike County seat in 1824, Pikeville had early importance as the center of government, and as a steamboat port on the Levisa Fork of the Big Sandy River. Pikeville's status as a population, governmental, and commercial center, as well as its geographic location in the Big Sandy River Valley led the C&O Railroad to be constructed through the city in 1905. Prior to the arrival of the railroad, coal deposits in Pike County had been explored but relatively little mining had occurred. The railroad opened Pike County to national and global markets, and over the course of the twentieth century, Pike County became Kentucky's leader in cumulative coal production. While the proliferation of coal company towns in Pike County and the influx of miners were responsible for the extraction of the valuable coal reserves, the multitude and variety of commercial structures constructed in Pikeville demonstrate the impact of the coal boom on the local economy and independent business owners. Pikeville's dense concentration of early 20th century brick commercial buildings, sandwiched between large governmental buildings on Main Street and the former C&O alignment on Hambley Boulevard, have no rivals in Pike County.

Pike County is by far Kentucky's largest county, at 786 square miles, where Kentucky's mean county size is 337 square miles, and the median size is 305 miles square. Kentucky's average county size is the second lowest in the nation, with the nation's smallest state, Rhode Island, the only one having a smaller average county size. Kentuckians established this pattern during the nineteenth century, in which citizens' interests and power-holding were a balance between individuals, small communities, and county government. If citizens in a portion of a county, or in a community outside the county seat, felt their interests were not being served, they would split from the larger county and form a new one. Smaller counties served the local interest historically, but have become a crushing financial burden in the 21st century.

Despite its great size, Pike County's social and economic organization has departed from this pattern. It had extremely few self-directed communities during the Period of Significance, which was typical throughout the eastern coal field but not typical statewide. During the 1906-1950 era, the obvious power holders were commercial and governmental interests in Pikeville (a city and seat of county government) and in the hands of coal company owners living outside of the county. The great population of miners throughout the county, during the Period of Significance,

¹⁹ "Pikeville History."

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lived in communities with names, but their social lives were circumscribed by their employers, which differed from the character of community life elsewhere in the state.

At present, many small communities are scattered throughout the county, villages which are the remnants of those company-owned coal towns. These small communities came into being when the coal companies divested themselves of their Pike County holdings near the end of this nomination's Period of Significance. In the post-World War II-era of strip mining of coal, Pike County's coal production continued to increase dramatically, dominating the local economy and impacting the local landscape. While individual mining owners and their declining workforce profited from this new method of coal mining, these small communities did not benefit proportionally *as communities*. Today, Pike County has only two other incorporated towns, Elkhorn City and the City of Coal Run. With the recent steep decline in coal mining beginning in the mid-1990s, Pike County's economic strength and commercial landscape has further concentrated in Pikeville.

Evaluation of the Integrity between the Significance of the Pikeville Commercial District and the Physical Condition of the District Today

The Pikeville Commercial Historic District retains integrity of setting, location, design, materials, feeling, and association. The district retains uninterrupted streetscapes of early 20th century brick commercial buildings, evoking a low scale yet dense urban setting. Most resources retain their original façade materials and fenestration and are discernible as early 20th century commercial buildings. Common alterations such as storefront and window replacements have occurred in some resources, and large-scale development projects, including the Pike County Judicial Center, Appalachian Center for the Arts, and Dueling Barrels Distillery have resulted in the demolition of some resources. In spite of these changes, the district retains a sense of feeling and association as a historic downtown commercial area.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 35
Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17N | Easting: 365766 | Northing: 4148919 |
| 2. Zone: 17N | Easting: 365600 | Northing: 4149060 |
| 3. Zone: 17N | Easting: 365688 | Northing: 4149489 |
| 4. Zone: 17N | Easting: 365939 | Northing: 4149314 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the historic district begins at the intersection of Hambley Boulevard and Huffman Avenue, then proceeds north along Hambley Boulevard to its intersection with South Auxier Avenue, then proceeds southeast along Auxier Avenue to its intersection with 2nd Street and continues southeast along the same bearing to Main Street, then proceeds southwest along Main Street to its intersection with Division Street, then proceeds southeast along Division Street to the northeast corner of Parcel [#####] then proceeds southwest along the parcel line to [skirts around arena and goes along the back of the 116 and 104 Main Street] to Huffman Avenue, then proceeds northwest along Huffman Avenue to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the city blocks that historically have comprised the commercial center of Pikeville and excludes large-scale buildings constructed after 2000 on the east side of Main Street.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Courtney Zimmerman & Sarah Elswick, Architectural Historians
organization: Aurora Research Associates, LLC
street & number: 1436 Graham Road
city or town: Silver Lake state: Ohio zip code: 44224
e-mail courtney@aurora-llc.com; sarah@aurora-llc.com
telephone: 304-685-7410
date: April 1, 2024

Photographs

Photo Log

Name of Property: Pikeville Historic District
City or Vicinity: Pikeville
County: Pike
State: Kentucky
Photographer: Sarah Elswick
Date Photographed: March 21-22, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 8. Street view of Caroline Avenue, camera pointing southeast.
- 2 of 8: Street view of Division Street, camera pointing southeast.
- 3 of 8: Street view of 100 block of Main Street, camera pointing southwest.
- 4 of 8. Main Street, Pike County Courthouse at left, camera pointing south.
- 5 of 8. Kentucky Wholesale Grocery Co., and Odd Fellows Building, 200-206 2nd Street.
- 6 of 8. Caroline Street, camera pointing west from Main Street.
- 7 of 8. C&O Passenger Depot and Baggage Depot on Hambley Boulevard, camera pointing south.
- 8 of 8. 2nd Street, camera pointing north from Caroline Street.

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Photo 1: Street view of Caroline Avenue, camera pointing southeast.



Photo 2: Street view of Division Street, camera pointing southeast.

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Photo 3: Street view of 100 block of Main Street, camera pointing southwest.



Photo 4. Main Street, Pike County Courthouse at left, camera pointing south.

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Photo 5. Kentucky Wholesale Grocery Co., and Odd Fellows Building, 200-206 2nd Street.



Photo 6. Caroline Street, camera pointing west from Main Street.

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Photo 7. C&O Passenger Depot and Baggage Depot on Hambley Boulevard, camera pointing south.



Photo 8. 2nd Street, camera pointing north from Caroline Street.