

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER/GEORGIA REGISTER NOMINATION

1. Name: M.C. Kiser Company Building

2. Location: 210 Pryor Street SW, Atlanta, Fulton County, Georgia

3a. Description: The M.C. Kiser Company Building is a three-story, masonry commercial building with a full basement located on a gently sloping lot in south downtown Atlanta at the intersection of Trinity Avenue and Pryor Street. Constructed in 1923 to house the M.C. Kiser Company's Shield Brand shoe manufacturing and wholesale retail operation, the building is an example of the two-part commercial block type, with retail on the ground floor and factory and warehouse functions on the upper floors. The building's exterior walls are constructed of brick in common bond, with five stretcher courses separated by a single header course, and the interior consists of "slow burning," heavy timber construction that allowed for largely open floor plans. Due to its utilitarian function, the building is mostly devoid of ornamentation with the exception of its front, western façade. The three-story, front facade facing Pryor Street consists of three bays delineated by four brick pilasters that extend slightly above the parapet wall. The uppermost portion of each pilaster is adorned with terra cotta panels depicting stacked acanthus leaves topped by a lion's head. Additionally, a terra cotta panel at the top of the central bay reads "M.C. Kiser Co." The northern elevation facing Trinity Street consists of eleven bays also defined by pilasters, with the outermost pairs of pilasters mimicking those of the front elevation. As the lot slopes down to the rear, the walkout basement becomes visible on the Trinity Street elevation and reveals a full four floors towards the eastern side. Four floors are also visible on the rear, eastern elevation, which consists of three bays with arched openings into the basement in the outer two bays. There are three different eras of windows on the main elevations of the building: the original multi-light metal windows occupy the exposed basement bays and rear elevation; large 1970s metal windows with one or two single-hung windows surrounded by multiple lights are located in the upper floors of the western and northern facades; and metal storefront windows from the 2017 rehabilitation occupy the ground floor bays. The southern elevation is devoid of fenestration with the exception of two windows added during the 2017 rehabilitation. This recent rehabilitation converted the historically open building into apartments, partitioning the open spaces with metal stud walls clad in gypsum board. The rehabilitation retained original exposed brick and support posts and uncovered and restored the original wood floors, bead board ceilings, heavy timber beams, and plaster along the exterior walls. During this rehabilitation, the two adjacent buildings (1949, 1960) were connected to the M.C. Kiser Company Building, but these are not within the proposed boundary.

3b. Period of Significance: 1923-1933

3c. Acreage: Less than one acre.

3d. Boundary Explanation: The proposed boundary is the building footprint.

4a. National Register Criteria: Criteria A and C

4b. National Register Areas of Significance: Commerce and Architecture

4c. Statement of Significance: Following the Civil War, prominent Atlanta businessman Major Marion C. Kiser and his brother entered the growing industry of wholesale dry goods and established the M.C. and J.F. Kiser Company, which became the M.C. Kiser Company in 1894 following M.C. Kiser's death and subsequent mergers and subdivisions with other notable mercantile houses. The M.C. Kiser Company that emerged was solely dedicated to the wholesale of shoes, launching its signature Shield Brand Shoes in 1894. Noted in the *Atlanta Constitution* in 1920 as "one of the most important business establishments of Atlanta," the burgeoning M.C. Kiser Company outgrew three prior locations, necessitating the construction in 1923 of a large, state-of-the-art building to house their operations. The company remained at this location until 1933 when it shut its doors and was followed by a succession of other commercial businesses. The M.C. Kiser Company Building is significant in the area of architecture as a good, representative example of early 20th century warehouse/commercial construction that remains relatively intact with original brick walls, interior ceiling beams, window openings, and minimal ornamentation. This type of construction, known as "slow burning" construction, was commonly used in textile mills and warehouses throughout Georgia in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The M.C. Kiser Company building is also significant in the area of commerce for its association with the mercantile and manufacturing industry that blossomed in postbellum Atlanta. The M.C. Kiser Company grew from a small dry goods wholesaler to one of the largest shoe manufacturers and distributors in Atlanta, embodying the city's entrepreneurial spirit during the early 20th century and the mercantile industries that facilitated the city's growth and development.

4d. Suggested Level of Significance: The M.C. Kiser Building is significant at the local level as a good example, in the city of Atlanta, of a minimally ornamented two-part commercial block that conveys the city's commercial growth.

4e. National Register Status: The M.C. Kiser Building received final certification from the Historic Preservation Division for the state property tax abatement and state tax credit programs on April 27, 2018, and it received final certification from the Technical Services Branch of the National Park Service on April 6, 2018.

5. Sponsor: The nomination is sponsored by the property owner, and nomination materials were prepared by Ray, Ellis, & LaBrie Consulting.