

Visit Thomson, GA

Downtown Walking Tour

This self-guided tour is designed to give you a look at the historic buildings, architecture and people who helped shape the city of Thomson and the Historic Commercial District. The homes on this tour are private residences or businesses, so please be courteous of the owners and view from the sidewalk.



Start this tour at the Thomson Depot located at 111 Railroad St, there is ample parking at there.

1. Thomson Depot

The stone portion of the Thomson Depot was constructed in 1860. The brick passenger station fronting Main St was added in 1904. The warehouse section

made of tooled tin siding was built in 1908. Today, the Thomson Depot is a meeting and event venue.

2. Women of the Sixties Monument

The granite statue of a woman in a homespun dress carrying a banner of the Confederacy is one of the few monuments in the South that is dedicated to the Confederate woman. This statue is unique in that it honors the women who aided and supported the civil War effort. Names of all the Confederate participants from the area are listed on either side of the monument's base. On the front it reads: "In memory of the women of the sixties and the Confederate Soldiers."

3. Community Mural

Community mural depicting (from left to right): Wrightsboro Quaker settlement and Bartram Trail; Blind Willie McTell, R.L. Norris (first black principal in Thomson), the Rock House, J. Edgar Thomson (railroad engineer our town is named after) Hickory Hill, Belle Meade Hunt; Agriculture in the town of Dearing.

Walk north on Main Street to the next stop

4. Highrail formerly Hadaways Department Store

Hadaway's Department Store was widely known in McDuffie County as early as the 1910s. Today, the building serves as the Highrail restaurant.

Turn right onto Journal Street to the next stop

5. Blind Willie McTell Mural

This new mural honors our hometown, blues legend Blind Willie McTell.

Go back to Main Street and turn right to the next stop



6. Architecture - Mission Revival

Private business, please view from the sidewalk.

According to the 1940 census, Pearl Wilkerson owned the building for 50 years as a home for her family. Her husband, John Wilkerson was the president of a local bank.

Mission Revival style was popular from 1890 - 1940, and was part of the Art & Crafts movement in the early part of the 20th century. Taking its character from the Spanish Franciscan mission churches of the Southwestern US. The style is quite simple with covered archways and half-rounded windows, smooth stucco walls that mimic the adobe walls of the Spanish missions, and flat or shallow sloped tile roofs.

7. Historic Courthouse

The 1870 legislation creating McDuffie County provided that the county's ordinary [probate judge] was to select a lot in Thomson on which to build a courthouse and jail. In Aug. 1872, the legislature authorized the ordinary to issue bonds up to \$15,000 to finance construction of a courthouse and jail, with the county to levy a special tax to repay the bondholders. Subsequently, a courthouse was erected. Wings were added and the courtroom was enlarged in 1934. Elevators and stairs were part of a major renovation in 1970. Today, the building houses the county board of elections.



8. Architecture - 1930 - Classical Revival

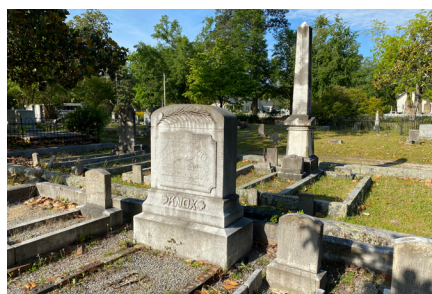
Private business, please view from the sidewalk.

This home was built by Mr. Paul Bowden, when he was president of the First National Bank. At one time, it was surrounded by beautiful gardens.

9. Thomson First United Methodist Church - Gothic Revival Style

The current building was built in 1902 and reflects the Gothic Revival Style. Thomson First United Methodist Church is known in the community as "the church with the stained glass windows." Three large palladium windows occupy most of three of the four main sanctuary walls. The stained glass windows of the sanctuary were complete with the final ten small stained glass windows added in 1951.

Turn left onto Tom Watson Way to the next stop



10. Thomson Memorial Cemetery

Thomson Memorial Cemetery was established in 1853. The earliest marked grave is that of Mary Sutton, who died on June 5, 1855. The Thomson Memorial Cemetery represents part of the 19th century "Rural Cemetery Movement" which advocated moving

cemeteries away from church-yards into more park-like settings, often on a high rise or bluff - considered prettier and more healthful; cemeteries became sites of recreation, picnics and family outings. Lawn cemeteries or memorial gardens emerged in the 20th century to retain a park-like atmosphere.

Noteable Burial: Thomas Edward Watson (1856-1922) was born September 5, 1856 two miles from Thomson, Georgia, oldest son of John Smith Watson and Ann Eliza Maddox. His family descended from Georgia's early Quaker residents who had settled the area in 1768.

11. Tom Watson Birth Cabin

Private business, please view from the sidewalk.

This 1820 cabin was moved from it's original site to it's current location. The property is owned by the Watson - Brown Foundation.



12. Thomas E. Watson Home - 1880 High Style Victorian

Private business, please view from the sidewalk.

A National Landmark structure, Thomas E. Watson lived in this house when he was active in the campaigns of 1895. Located near Hickory Hill it was the

original Watson House. This house displays some of the finest Victorian detailing in the area.

13. Architecture - 1900 Victorian Cottage

Private residence, please view from the sidewalk.

Victorian cottage with gingerbread detailing along the front porch, also once owned by Thomas E. Watson.

Turn left onto Lee Street to the next stop

14. Architecture - 1918 Italianate

Private residence, please view from the sidewalk.

Of all the homes built in the United States during the Victorian era, the romantic Italianate style became the most popular for a short period of time. With their nearly-flat roofs, wide eaves, and massive brackets, these homes suggested the romantic villas of Renaissance Italy. The Italianate style is also known as Tuscan, Lombard, or bracketed.

15. Architecture - 1859 Federal Style

Private residence, please view from the sidewalk.

The Federal style dominated the American architectural landscape from roughly 1780 to 1840, having evolved from Georgian, the principal design language of the colonial period.

Typically, a Federal-style house is a simple square or rectangular box, two or three stories high and two rooms deep. Many Federal-style design elements are notably understated. Exterior decoration, for example, is generally confined to a porch or entry element.



16. Architecture - 1937 International Style

Private residence, please view from the sidewalk.

This International style home is an Edward Durell Stone design that is known as the Colliers Model Home, published March 1936 as part of a series of six articles in Colliers Magazine.

The model was very popular and was built in several variations over the next decade.

17. 1925 - Craftsman Bungalow Style

Private residence, please view from the sidewalk.

IDENTIFYING FEATURES OF THIS STYLE: Low-pitched, gabled roof; wide overhanging eaves, exposed rafters (rafter tails) under eaves; decorative brackets (knee braces or corbels); front or corner porch under the roofline; tapered (battered) or square columns supporting roof or porch; 4-over-1, or 6-over-1 sash windows, often with Frank Lloyd Wright design motifs; hand-crafted stone or woodwork, often mixed materials throughout structure. Bungalows can either be front-gabled, side-gabled, or cross-gabled.

18. Bartlett House 1 - American Foursquare

Private residence, please view from the sidewalk.

Architect, Jonathan Hodgkin "Cap" Bartlett lived in Thomson from 1900-1925. He built 8 homes during that period. This is the first of 2 on this street. His trademarks are ornate architectural features and exceptional craftsmanship. These homes were built for the most prominent families of local commerce.

19. Bartlett House 2 - American Foursquare

Private residence, please view from the sidewalk.

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Turn left onto Milledge Street to the next stop



20. Usry House - Georgian Colonial Style

Private residence, please view from the sidewalk.

William Usry built this as a one or two room cabin around 1795-1805. A planter with large land holdings, the family also owned a lumber mill or grist mill a few miles away. Over the

years, the house grew to become a Plantation Plain style (2 rooms over 2 rooms).

This house was the center of antebellum society in the area. Marquis de Lafayette toured all 24 states in the US (yep, there were only 24 states at this time) during 1824 and 1825. He spent a couple of weeks in Georgia, and is said to have visited here. Imagine the honor of entertaining this Revolutionary War Hero at your home! General Lafayette was the last living French general that had participated in the Revolutionary War. Travel was slow, there were no railroads yet, so it was all via horse carriages.

Turn right onto Main Street to the next stop

21. 1930's WPA Post Office now Forward McDuffie office

Visitor information is available inside.

22. McDuffie Museum

Formerly the First National Bank, built in 1899.

The McDuffie Museum permanently displays historical artifacts and current exhibitions of Thomson, Dearing, Boneville and McDuffie County, GA. Its rotating temporary gallery displays exhibits of interesting and historic subjects which usually run for three or four months. Admission is free. It is conveniently located in downtown Thomson diagonally across from the Depot.



23. Bank of Thomson Building

Built in 1892, this building was home to Thomson's first bank, the Bank of Thomson. Prior to this bank being chartered, the closest banks were in Augusta. Most people kept their cash hidden around the house and a lot of trade was through the barter

system.

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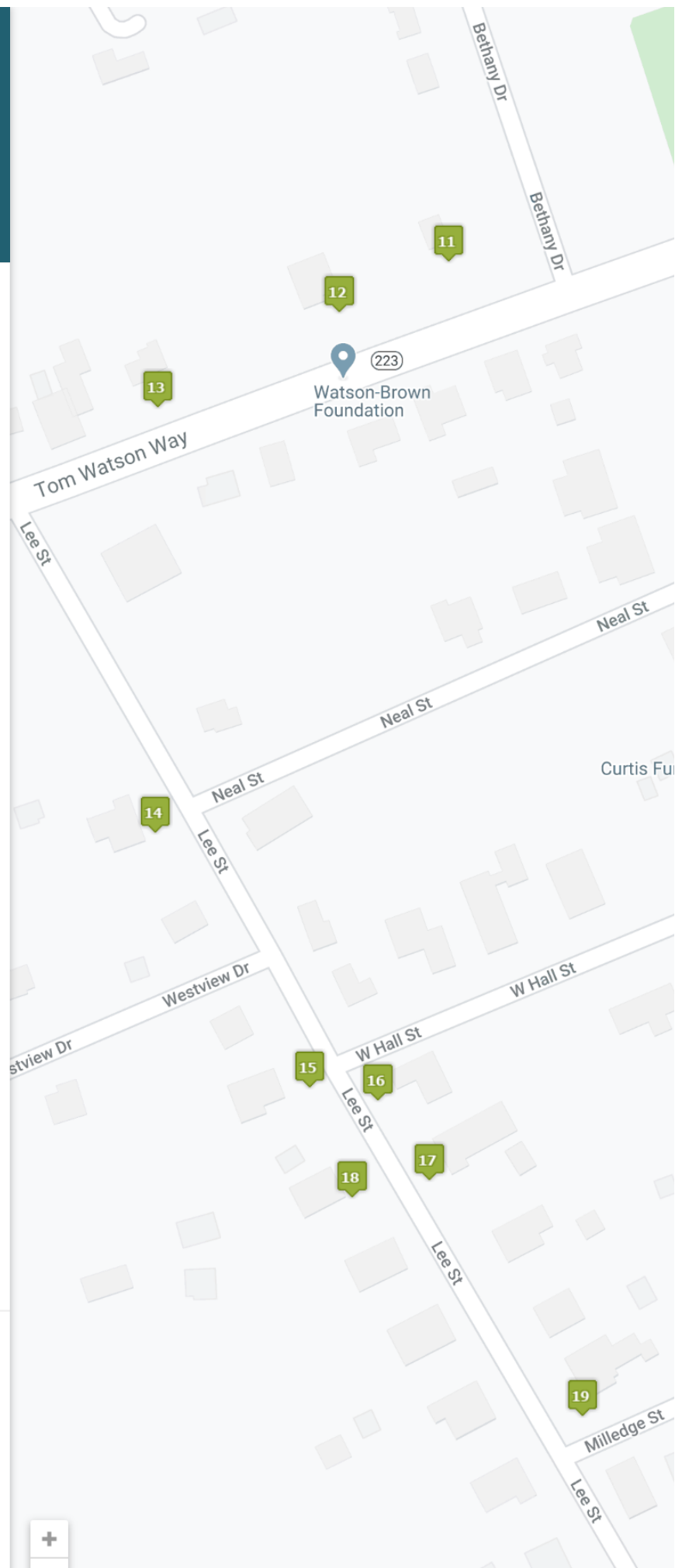
Downtown Walking Tour

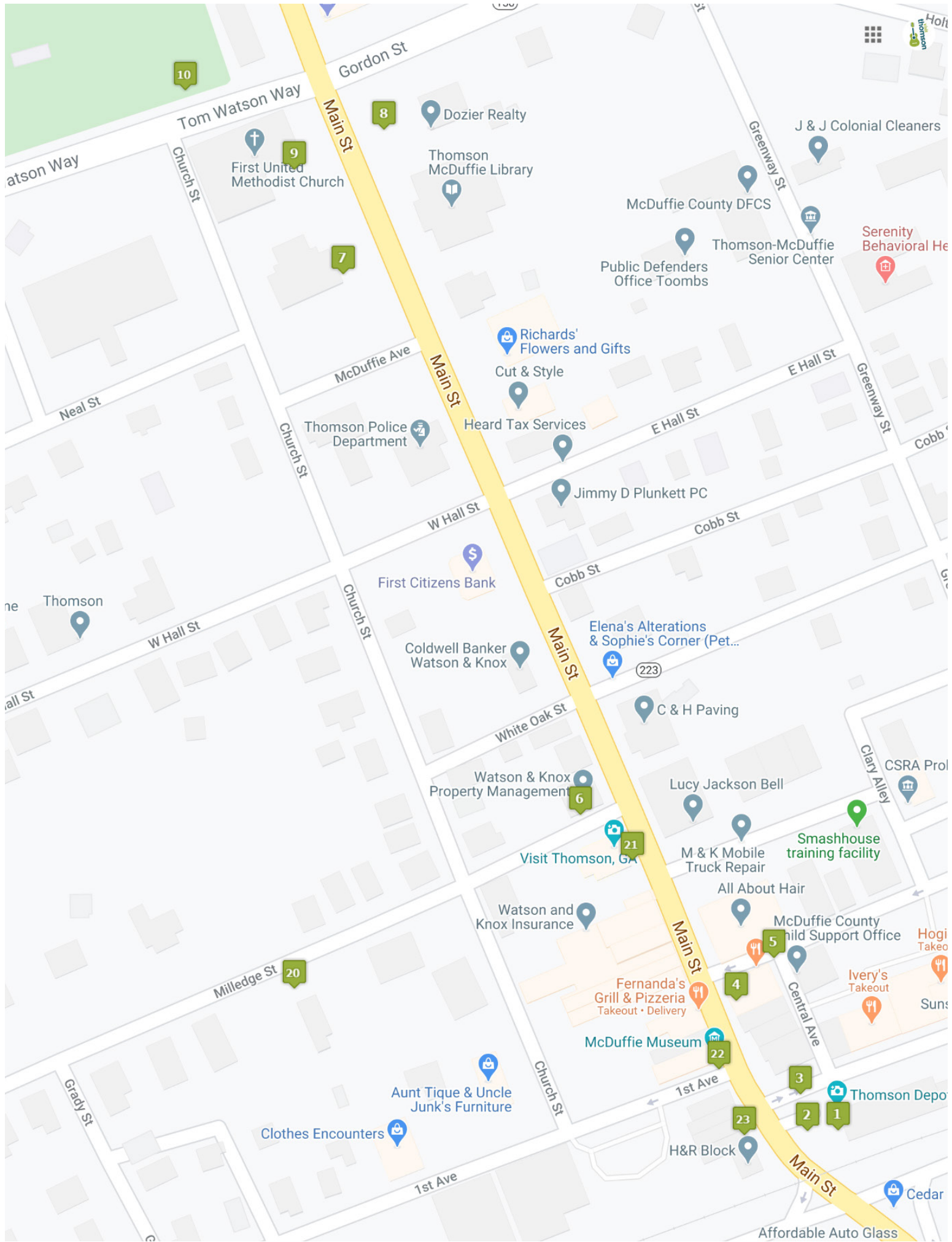
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For more information,
visit our website at
www.visitthomsonga.com





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First United Methodist Church

Dozier Realty

Thomson McDuffie Library

McDuffie County DFCS

Thomson-McDuffie Senior Center

Public Defenders Office Toombs

Serenity Behavioral He

Richards' Flowers and Gifts

Cut & Style

Thomson Police Department

Heard Tax Services

Jimmy D Plunkett PC

First Citizens Bank

Coldwell Banker Watson & Knox

Elena's Alterations & Sophie's Corner (Pet...

C & H Paving

Watson & Knox Property Management

Lucy Jackson Bell

Visit Thomson, GA

M & K Mobile Truck Repair

Smashhouse training facility

Watson and Knox Insurance

All About Hair

McDuffie County Child Support Office

Fernanda's Grill & Pizzeria
Takeout · Delivery

Ivery's Takeout

Suns

McDuffie Museum

Aunt Tique & Uncle Junk's Furniture

Thomson Depo

Clothes Encounters

H&R Block

Cedar

Affordable Auto Glass