



In the realm of man-made terrain, many cities throughout the country have at least a loose sense of racial division. Most major cities have neighborhoods that are predominately one particular race, ethnic group, or culture. Most Southern cities have a whole half, or side, – east or west, north or south – of town that is predominately people of color. Usually there is some dividing line, a major highway or a railroad. In the smaller cities and towns, the railroad is a reliable divider of the “white side of town” and the “black side of town.” Some examples in North Alabama include Courtland, Town Creek, and Moulton in Lawrence County, Decatur and Hartselle in Morgan County, Athens and Greenbrier in Limestone County, Leighton in Colbert County, Madison Crossroads in Madison County, and Rogersville in Lauderdale County. All of these communities have a distinct north-south, east-west, or otherwise divide that can clearly be determined using historical documents.

Another spatial demographic divider can be rural/urban. Although North Alabama has few large urban centers, there are downtowns with planned streets and commercial buildings on a small scale across the area. Oftentimes when the population within a census district grows large enough to divide into precincts, towns can be singled out for their

(Top Left) “Colored Picnic Grounds,” July 5, 1948; Records of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Record Group 142; National Archives and Records Administration – Atlanta. Photograph No. 36260 F. **(Top Right)** “Joe Wheeler State Park – Negro Area,” September 30, 1953; Records of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Record Group 142; National Archives and Records Administration – Atlanta. Photograph No. 56966 D. **(Right)** Photograph of Belle Mina Railroad Station, 1941 – Note the Two Entrances, the One of the Right is Marked “Colored.” (Limestone County Archives, Athens, Alabama via AL.com)

