

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Saluda Main Street Historic District

other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number N & S sides Main St. bet Cullipher & Carolina Sts.  Not for publication

city or town Saluda  Vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Polk code 149 zip code 28773

### 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  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey J. Crow SHPO 4/4/96  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Saluda Main Street H. D.  
Name of Property

Polk Co., NC  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
16	5	buildings
1	0	sites
1	1	structures
0	0	objects
18	6	Total

Name of related multiple property listing  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/department store
- COMMERCE/specialty store
- COMMERCE/financial institution
- GOVERNMENT/city
- GOVERNMENT/post office
- RELIGION/religious facility
- INDUSTRY/communications facility
- TRANSPORTATION/rail related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/specialty store
- COMMERCE/business
- COMMERCE/department store
- COMMERCE/restaurant
- GOVERNMENT/city hall
- RELIGION/religious facility
- TRANSPORTATION/rail related
- LANDSCAPE/park

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Commercial Style
- Stick
- Late Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Brick
- walls Brick
- Wood
- roof Asphalt
- other Metal
- Stucco

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Saluda Main Street H. D.  
Name of Property

Polk Co., NC  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Transportation

**Period of Significance**

1878-1946

**Significant Dates**

1878

1881

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Saluda Main Street H. D.  
Name of Property

Polk Co., NC  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 5.2

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 17 | 377320 | 3899860  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 | | | | | | | | | |

3 | | | | | | | | | |  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laura A. W. Phillips, Architectural Historian

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 1/22/96

street & number 637 N. Spring Street telephone 910/727-1968

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27101

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Saluda Main Street Historic District  
Polk County, North Carolina

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### DESCRIPTION:

The Saluda Main Street Historic District is the focal point of this small mountaintop town which developed beginning in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This is a linear district running southeast to northwest primarily along Main Street between Cullipher and Carolina streets. Of the twenty-four resources in the district, seventy-five percent contribute to its historic and architectural character. All but three of the resources are buildings. The others consist of two structures and one site. Eighty percent of the district's resources are commercial in nature. Of those which aren't, two are church-related buildings, one is a government building, one is a small park, and one consists of the railroad tracks. More than three-fourths of the buildings are of brick construction, one building is pebbledash, and the remaining buildings are frame. The buildings are about equally divided between one and two-story structures, while one is three stories. Half are free-standing and half are attached to one or more other buildings in this tightly knit district. Consistent with commercial buildings in a downtown setting, most of the buildings abut the sidewalk or street.

Located at the top of the famous Saluda Grade, the Main Street Historic District forms the central core of Saluda with several residential hills rising around it. Main Street itself parallels the railroad tracks along a narrow plain, but from there Church Street and Carolina Street rise uphill to Henderson Street, so that when standing on Henderson Street, one can look decidedly downward to the rooftops of the Main Street buildings. In the main block between Cullipher and Church streets, an alley runs behind the buildings providing a rear access to them. Along this alley stands the only "outbuilding" in the district, a small frame warehouse (#9A) behind Thompson's Store (#9). Earlier in the century, other auxiliary buildings were also located along the alley. Within the district, intentional green space is achieved through a strip of grass and some trees between the railroad tracks and Main Street, small trees planted along much of the north side of Main Street, Spring Park on Church Street, and trees and other plantings around the Saluda Presbyterian Church property. Additional green space comes unintentionally with the vacant lot at the southeast corner of Church and Henderson streets. Other amenities along Main Street between Cullipher and Church streets include benches, planters, bike racks, and trash receptacles.

Most of the district's resources date from ca. 1900 to ca. 1935. The oldest known building in the district is the Saluda Presbyterian Church (#22), which dates from 1895-96. Several buildings, including

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the former Saluda Depot (#21), the Saluda City Hall (#12), the M. A. Pace Store (#5), Thompson's Store (#9), and the former United States Post Office (#8), were built during the first decade of the twentieth century. The balance of the other buildings are fairly evenly distributed between the 1910s, the 1920s, the 1930s, and post-1940.

Most of the buildings in the district exhibit the standard commercial style popular during the early twentieth century. These common-bond red brick buildings are either one or two stories in height and have stepped parapet side rooflines which recede from front to rear. Most entrances are recessed, windows are one-over-one or two-over-two sash with either segmental-arched or flat lintels, and upper facades are decorated with slightly recessed brick panels and/or corbeled cornices, some more decorative than others. The foremost example of the type is the remarkably intact M. A. Pace Store (#5) which has remained in Pace family ownership and operation since it was built between 1905 and 1910. Even its interior continues to strongly reflect the period in which it was built with its board floor, walls, and ceiling, original shelves and display cases, and open rear stair to the second story. Thompson's Store (#9) and the former Post Office (#8) are nearly identical in design to the M. A. Pace Store and were probably built at about the same time. Other commercial buildings share the same general characteristics but are more simply expressed. There are, however, three significant exceptions. The Saluda City Hall (#12), built between 1897 and 1906, exhibits standard commercial design in most ways but goes a step further. It has the only decorative pressed metal facade in Saluda and one of the few in this part of the state. From the top of the first story to the cornice it is richly embellished with a variety of classical details. Another exception to the standard commercial style most common in Saluda is the Pebbledash Building (#14), erected between 1911 and 1916. Not only is its exterior covered with pebbledash--a form popularized in western North Carolina beginning in the late 1890s with the work of architect Richard Sharp Smith in and around Asheville--but it has a gable roof, rather than a nearly flat parapeted roof, with the gable end facing the street. The third exception to the rule is the former Top Service Station (#2) which dates from the 1930s. This one-story brick building is typical of Standard Oil stations built in the period with its red tile parapet and brick pilasters which extend upward beyond the parapet at each corner and between the two primary bays.

Two non-commercial buildings in the district are also architecturally significant. The former Saluda Depot (#20), which was built in the first decade of the twentieth century, is a well-preserved and typical example of the combination passenger/freight

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depots built by Southern Railway during the period. The exterior of the one-story German-sided frame building reflects the influence of the late nineteenth-century Stick style and has a hipped roof with eyelid vents, widely overhanging flared eaves supported by large braces, bay observation windows, and a beaded board interior. The 1895-1896 Saluda Presbyterian Church (#22) is also a frame building, but it is a vernacular example of the Gothic Revival style. Salient features include a gable front, a corner two-stage entrance tower, a shallow rear apse, pointed-arched windows, and some simple carved and applied Gothic detailing.

The architectural fabric of the district is completed by one early twentieth century frame warehouse, several post-1950 commercial buildings, and several which were built during the early twentieth century but which were remodeled in late century. While non-contributing, the later buildings are not particularly intrusive. In addition to the district's buildings, other resources include two railroad-related structures and one small park.

Sanborn Insurance maps are not available for Saluda to help construct the appearance of the district during its early years. However, information gleaned from various North Carolina business directories beginning in 1884 and several early twentieth-century photographs contribute to an image of Saluda's commercial core in earlier times. In 1884 only a post office and the general store run by Andrew Tanner were listed in Branson's North Carolina Business Directory. A decade later, in 1896, three general stores and one drugstore were listed along with the post office. By 1910 the population stood at 521 and there were seven general merchants, one bank, three doctors, two druggists, one dentist, one lawyer, and one insurance agent, along with churches, schools, and hotels and boarding houses. The earliest photographs, believed to date from the late nineteenth century, show the first frame depot and two gable-fronted frame commercial buildings of one and a half and two stories. Photographs from the 1910s continue to show frame commercial buildings along Main Street, but also show several brick buildings which survive in the district today. By the 1940s most of the remaining frame commercial buildings had been replaced by brick structures, and the district has changed very little since then.

Changes to the district in recent years have included the substantial remodeling of four buildings (#4, 6, 7, and 19), the restoration of City Hall (#12) and the Pebbledash Building (#14), the construction of the Education Building (#22A) of Saluda Presbyterian Church, (#22), and the moving into the district of the former Saluda Depot (#20). Non-intrusive rear additions have been made to several

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of the buildings. At the same time, many buildings have been only moderately altered--usually the first-story shop fronts--and some remain nearly untouched by change. All in all, the Saluda Main Street Historic District continues to convey to a remarkable degree the feel of a small-town, early-twentieth-century commercial center. The overall general integrity of its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and historical association contribute to this.

### INVENTORY LIST:

The following inventory is organized geographically, starting with the railroad tracks which form the southern boundary of the district, then picking up a single building on the south side of Main Street where it diverges from the railroad tracks, then crossing over Main Street and continuing northwest along the northeast side of the street, turning briefly north on Church Street, then continuing along Main Street to Carolina Street and turning briefly up Carolina Street. The inventory list provides the name, location, date of construction, contributing or non-contributing status, and a summary for each resource within the district. The inventory entries are keyed by number to the accompanying district map. It should be noted here that building locations are not always as precise as might be wished, owing to the fact that Saluda does not yet have assigned street numbers for individual properties. Because of Saluda's small size, some documentary resources often useful for urban properties were not available. Therefore, historical information is based largely on secondary source materials, the Saluda Magazine published in the 1930s, deeds, old photographs, county newspapers, and oral interviews with several lifelong residents of Saluda. For each property in the inventory there is an accompanying file which contains the property historic survey form, photo proofs, and any documentary information available. These files will be maintained at the Western Office of the Division of Archives and History in Asheville.

#### 1. SOUTHERN RAILWAY TRACKS

Paralleling the S side of Main St. bet Cullipher and Carolina  
Sts.

Contributing structure

The pair of railroad tracks paralleling the old commercial section of Main Street appropriately forms the southern boundary

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of the historic district, for it was the presence of the railroad which caused the town of Saluda to be created. The first train of the Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad, as it was then known, arrived at Saluda amid great celebration on July 4, 1878. To arrive at Saluda, the train had to conquer the nation's steepest standard-gauge mainline railway grade, known as the Saluda Grade. Extending around 2.5 miles from Melrose to Saluda, this grade rises for just over 600 feet with an average grade of 4.7%. Westbound trains heading up the mountain are separated into three sections at Melrose. These sections are then brought up the line individually for reassembly a mile or so west of Saluda. Eastbound trains heading down the mountain must stop in Saluda to have brake retainers on each car turned up, so that a portion of the air-brake pressure is continually applied during the downhill trip. Downhill trains also must not exceed a speed of 8 mph through an 800-foot timing section, or else an automatic track switch at Melrose will not permit the train to move onto the main line. Instead, the train is diverted onto a safety track to slow or stop it. This section of double track along Saluda's Main Street, with its safety crossbars at Greenville Street, is a constant reminder of the central role of the railroad in Saluda's history.

2. (FORMER) TOP SERVICE STATION 1930s  
S side Main St. bet Cullipher & Greenville Sts.  
Contributing building

The Summer, 1937 edition of The Saluda Magazine carried an advertisement for the Top Service Station, an "authorized Standard dealer" operated by Burgie Pace. This brick building replaced an earlier frame building and continued in use as an automobile service station until the late 1940s or 1950s when a new gas station was built next door. Since that time the building has been used as a variety of shops and businesses. Typical of Standard Oil stations built in the 1930s, its design includes the hallmark features of a red tile parapet and brick pilasters which extend upward beyond the parapet at each corner and between the two primary bays. Originally, one half of the building was used as the station office, while the other half was the service bay. The service bay has since been enclosed with large windows for use as interior shop space.

3. COMMERCIAL BUILDING

ca. early 1920s

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NE side Main St. bet Cullipher & Greenville Sts.  
Contributing building

This one-story brick building illustrates standard commercial design for the early twentieth century. Although its recessed shop front has been remodeled with sash windows and an enclosed transom, the remainder of the exterior appears to be intact. The upper facade features two recessed brick panels beneath a brick dentiled cornice, while the east side has a stepped parapet which decreases in height from front to rear in order to hide the shed roof. Through the years the building has been used for a variety of commercial purposes, including an insurance agency, a pool hall, a restaurant, and a barber shop.

4. **WESTERN AUTO BUILDING** ca. 1917; 1965  
NE side Main St. bet Cullipher & Greenville Sts.  
Non-contributing building

This one-story brick building was constructed around 1917 as a garage for M. A. Pace. One section of the building with its own entrance was used as Willie Pace's meat market. Later the building served as a dealership for Star automobiles. In 1965 it was completely remodeled for use by Western Auto. The present appearance includes a plain brick veneer facade with a single garage door and a band of plate glass windows with a recessed entrance.

5. **M. A. PACE STORE** between 1905 and 1910  
NE side Main St. bet Cullipher & Greenville Sts.  
Contributing building

The M. A. Pace Store is highly significant because of the unusually intact character of both its exterior and interior and because it has been operated continuously by the Pace family since its construction between 1905 and 1910. In many ways it epitomizes the small-town flavor of Saluda. Thompson-Ward family tradition claims that the store was designed by carpenter-turned-merchant George Lafayette Thompson, while Pace family tradition says that it was actually constructed by the Fiske-Carter Construction Company of Spartanburg. The double store was first operated jointly by George Lafayette "Fate" Thompson and Mack Andrew Pace as the Thompson and Pace Store. After several years that partnership dissolved, and the two men each operated a store

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individually in half of the building with Pace in the eastern half and Thompson in the western half. Thompson was succeeded in business by his daughter, Lola Thompson Ward, and her husband, who retained the name Thompson's Store and continued to operate in the western half of this building until moving to their present location down the street in 1941. Following the departure of Thompson's Store, Pace expanded to occupy the entire first story of the building for his store. The second story of the building has been variously used as an apartment, an office for Dr. John Orville Hooper Sr. in the 1920s, the meeting hall for the Woodmen of the World in the 1920s and 1930s, the Vogue Beauty Shop run by Euva "Boo" Pace Franklin from the late 1930s to ca. 1975, and for storage. In addition to operating his general merchandise store, M. A. Pace (1872-1945) sold insurance, ran a building and loan company, and served at various times in the early twentieth century as mayor, tax collector, chief of police, and bank president. After his death in 1945, Pace's Store continued to be operated by M. A. Pace's children. The store is a handsome two-story brick structure whose facade features a pair of recessed shop entrances flanking a central door to the stair, segmental-arched doors and windows, an added metal awning sheltering the first story, one-over-one sash second story windows headed by recessed brick panels, and a decorative corbeled cornice. The sides of the building have two-over-two sash windows with flat-arched lintels at second story height, and the rear has matching windows and shop doors. Four outbuildings--a blacksmith and wagon shop, an ice house, a grist mill, and a hay house--once stood behind the M. A. Pace Store, but these no longer survive. The interior of the store conveys a strong sense of the early twentieth century with its board walls, floor, and ceiling, original shelves and display cases, and open rear stair to the second story. Various artifacts associated with the store's long history, including M. A. Pace's desk, a pot-bellied stove, old scales (still certified and in use), and an old cash register add to the period feel of the place.

6. (FORMER) PRINCESS THEATRE ca. 1920  
NE side Main St. bet Cullipher & Greenville Sts.  
Non-contributing building

This building has an interesting history, although physically it has been heavily altered. The first story has been completely modernized with glass, metal, and brick, and the upper level has

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replacement windows. A large brick addition has been added to the rear of the building. The building began as the Princess Theatre, which showed silent movies accompanied by the piano playing of "Snowball" Irvin. The ticket office was in the center of the facade with store fronts on either side, variously housing a vegetable and fruit stand, a hardware store, and an insurance office. The theatre closed during the Depression, after which the seats and wooden floor were removed to expose the dirt floor. The space then became the first enclosed gymnasium in Polk County, operated by the school and used for basketball until the new school gym was completed. Commonly known as the "Rose Bowl," it was damp and often had puddles of water because of the springs over which the building was erected. L. L. Clippard used the building for his insurance business during the late 1930s and 1940s, and subsequently it has had a variety of tenants.

7. **COMMERCIAL BUILDING** ca. 1993  
NE side Main St. bet Cullipher & Greenville Sts.  
Non-contributing building

Until recently, this was a one-story commercial building. It was used for years as Dr. Little's Drugstore and was known for its beautiful soda fountain. During the Depression, the rear of the store behind a partition was a popular gathering place for men, who spent hours playing cards and checkers and sharing the local news. In the 1990s the first story was remodeled and the upper two floors were added. Although a lighter colored brick veneer was used on the facade than is found on the neighboring buildings, some effort was made to make the new structure blend with the old through the use of segmental-arched second-story windows with one-over-one sash and a corbeled cornice matching that of several other buildings on Main Street.

8. **(FORMER) UNITED STATES POST OFFICE** ca. 1910  
NE side Main St. bet Cullipher & Greenville Sts.  
Contributing building

A post office was established in Saluda in 1878. However, this brick building--which served as Saluda's post office for years--was probably not erected until ca. 1910, judging from the design similarities it shares with the M. A. Pace Store and Thompson's Store, both of which were built between 1905 and 1910. The well preserved two-story brick building features a glass and wood shop

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front with a double-leaf entrance to the first story and a single-leaf entrance to the stairs which lead to the second story. The second story facade is composed of segmental-arched windows with one-over-one sash, above which are two recessed brick panels and a decorative corbeled brick cornice. The sides and rear of the building have common-bond brickwork and segmental-arched doors and windows with two-over-two sash. While the first story has been used as a post office and commercial space (now the Saluda Mountain Telephone Company), the second story has been used for apartments and, in the early years, as the office of Dr. E. M. Salley.

9. **THOMPSON'S STORE** between 1905 and 1910  
NE side Main St. bet Cullipher & Greenville Sts.  
Contributing building

For more than the last half century this mercantile establishment has been known as Thompson's Store, operated by Lola Thompson Ward and her sons. It was built about the time of the M. A. Pace Store and is identical to it in design. The earliest occupants are believed to have been Quinton C. Sonner and Billy Morris. According to Ward family tradition, Morris willed his part of the store to Miss Arrie Lankford, who ran the store for a time with Sonner. Lankford later sold her share in the store to H. L. Capps, and for a time he and Sonner continued joint operation of the business. They later dissolved their partnership, and each operated a store individually in half the building like Thompson and Pace had done down the street. In the 1930s Q. C. Sonner & Co. advertised groceries, hardware, dry goods, and notions, while H. L. Capps advertised groceries, hardware and paints, and fertilizers. Capps also served as mayor of Saluda and started the town cemetery. After Capps died, Lola Thompson Ward and her family, operating as Thompson's Store, took over Capps' left half of the building and later expanded to include Sonner's right half. Like the M. A. Pace Store, Thompson's Store is a handsome two-story brick structure with very few alterations. The first story of the facade features a central door to the stairs flanked by shop windows and recessed shop entrances. An added metal canopy shelters the first story. The second story facade carries a row of segmental-arched one-over-one sash windows, above which is a decorative paneled and corbeled brick cornice. The exposed side and rear of the building also have segmental-arched fenestration. Inside, the store and adjacent grill maintain the

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atmosphere of a by-gone period, although the fixtures are generally newer than those in the M. A. Pace Store.

9A. **WAREHOUSE**  
Contributing building

Behind Thompson's Store is a board-and-batten frame shed with entrance on the gable end. It is believed to have been built soon after the brick store and was used as a warehouse for the store.

10. **COMMERCIAL BUILDING** 1930s  
NE side Main St. opp Greenville St.  
Contributing building

This one-story brick commercial building was probably built in the 1930s and has housed a variety of businesses. Perhaps the longest in operation was the barber shop run by Will Forrest for around forty years. A "pressing club" where clothes were steam pressed was for a time located in the rear of the building. Typical of standard commercial buildings of the time, this structure has glass-and-wood-paneled entrances flanked by shop windows and surmounted by transoms. The decorative brickwork corbeled cornice includes both a dentil course and a sawtooth course. Small sheds are attached to the rear of the building.

11. **COMMERCIAL BUILDING** 1930s  
NE side Main St. opp Greenville St.  
Contributing building

Although it is currently a specialty shop, this building has served for most of its years as a grocery store, and some local tradition claims it was originally an A&P store, if only for a few years. The facade of this one-story brick building has a recessed central entrance flanked by shop windows, recessed brick panels, and a parapeted cornice with shallow shed roof. Except for a single side entrance, the west elevation consists of a plain brick wall laid in common bond and a stepped parapet roofline. Adjacent to the building on the west is a small vacant lot treated as an informal garden with potted plants for sale by the Shady Lane business.

12. **SALUDA CITY HALL** between 1897 and 1906

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NE cor Main & Church Sts.  
Contributing building

The Saluda City Hall is among the oldest and most handsome of the town's non-residential buildings. It is the only one with a decorative pressed metal facade with various bands of classical designs and rusticated "stone." The exterior of the facade was restored during the last decade, happily uncovering the original wood and glass-paneled recessed entrances and windows. The six-bay facade is neatly divided into two sections with an entrance to the stair in the center. The second story windows across the front are one-over-one sash with flat lintels, while those on the sides and rear are segmental arched with two-over-two sash. The interior of City Hall retains the large built-in vault which dates from the building's use as a bank. While the exact date of construction for this building is unknown, it was certainly between 1897 and 1906. When W. C. Robertson purchased the property from George A. Smith and his wife in 1897, it was described in part as Staton and Robertson's old store place. However, when Robertson sold the east half of the property to the Carolina State Bank on July 14, 1906, the lot was described as being covered by a two story brick building, the west half of which was retained by W. C. Robertson. The first story of the half bought by the bank was at the time occupied by the store of Thompson and Pace, while the second story was being used for a fraternity hall. In 1911 Robertson and his wife sold the western half of the building, considered "One Brick Store Building and lot known as the W. C. Robertson Store Building....adjoining the Carolina State Bank Building" to J. B. Bradley. The Carolina State Bank folded along with the other banks in Saluda during the Depression, and sometime thereafter the city bought the building for municipal use. The right half is currently used as the Saluda City Hall, while the left half houses the police department.

13. **SPRING PARK**  
SE side Church St. behind City Hall  
Contributing site

Directly behind City Hall on Church Street is a small park with a rock-lined spring as its focus. This spring was referred to in deeds associated with the Saluda City Hall property at least as far back as 1896. It was one of several springs which supplied

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central Saluda with water during the town's earliest years. Like many of the other springs it was later covered (see, e.g. #6, the former Princess Theatre). In 1980 the spring was reclaimed and the area around it was converted to a small, contemplative park. Stone steps lead down to the spring, which is lined with a rock wall. A wooden fence outlines the north edge of the park, and a tree near the street provides shade.

14. **PEBBLEDASH BUILDING** between 1911 and 1916  
SE side Church St. bet Main & Henderson Sts.  
Contributing building

The first known written mention of this building appears in the December 19, 1916, deed for the property from W. C. Robertson and his wife to J. B. Bradley in which it is described as "the W. C. Robertson Pebbledash Store lot." In the 1911 deed from W. C. and Sallie E. Robertson to J. B. Bradley for the western half of the two-story brick building which is now City Hall (see #12), this same property had been described only as "Robertson's lot." Thus it seems likely that the Pebbledash Building was erected between those years. The use of pebbledash--stucco mixed with pebbles-- for the exterior surfaces of the building was unusual for Saluda but reflects the popularization of this technique in western North Carolina after English architect Richard Sharp Smith popularized its use in Asheville's Biltmore Village and elsewhere in the mountains beginning in 1896. Saluda's Pebbledash Building has been used for various purposes, including a hardware and building supply store, a feed store, a cleaner's and pressing club, and a storage building. In 1993 the building was carefully restored by present owners Roy and Dotty Eargle in consultation with the staff of the State Historic Preservation Office. The two-story building features a stone foundation, pebbledash walls, a three-bay-wide gable-fronted facade, a central recessed entrance with double-leaf door flanked by shop windows, and two-over-two sash windows. A second story porch has been added to the rear of the south elevation. The first story remains shop space, while the second story contains an apartment.

15. **COMMERCIAL BUILDING** ca. 1930  
SE side Church St. bet Main & Henderson Sts.  
Contributing building

Apparently built around 1930, this simple two-story brick

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commercial building exhibits a rather standard design for the time. Its common bond brickwork is enlivened only by a decorative brick panel which stretches across the facade beneath the plain cornice. The main facade entrance is off-center to the right of the shop windows, and immediately to the right of the shop entrance is the entrance to the stair leading to the second story. Both doors are wood paneled with vertical lights superceded by plain transoms. Second story paired windows as well as the side and rear windows feature four-over-one sash. A one-story open shed has been added to the rear of the building. Edwin C. Leland purchased this building around 1936 when it was only a few years old. The first story was used jointly for his electrical repair business and for the Excelsior Printing Company, which was operated by his sister, Susan Anne Leland Craig, in the 1930s. Excelsior Printing published the promotional Saluda Magazine between 1936 and 1938. The Leland family lived at that time on the second floor of the building, where Ed Leland also operated the switchboard of the local telephone system. When Leland bought the Appalachian State Telephone Company in 1936 there were sixteen crank telephones in town. He renamed the company Saluda Mountain Telephone, and it grew and prospered, remaining Saluda's telephone system today. When Saluda Mountain Telephone converted to the dial system in 1945--the first in the county to do so--Leland moved all the phone operations downstairs. As the company grew, it expanded to the adjacent building (see #16), and later the office was moved to Leland's new home on Henderson Street. In the 1980s the telephone company moved to Main Street, where it remains (see #8), and in the early 1980s a new switching building was constructed on Henderson Street outside the historic district.

16. **COMMERCIAL BUILDING** 1930s  
SE side Church St. bet Main & Henderson Sts.  
Contributing building

This commercial building was probably erected in the 1930s, although the exact date of construction and the original use are not certain. By the 1940s the building was being used as a flour mill operated by Luther Peace. After the flour mill, Doris Pace operated a laundromat on the first floor, while an apartment was on the second floor. Around the 1960s, Ed Leland purchased the building and moved the Saluda Mountain Telephone office upstairs while using the downstairs for storage. (See also #15.) The two-

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story brick building achieves decorative interest on the facade through patterns created by alternating colors of brick, a slightly recessed patterned brick panel beneath the cornice, and a brick cornice comprised of a dentil course and a sawtooth course. The second story of the facade features two pairs of one-over-one sash windows, while the first story has a central double leaf entrance flanked by windows. The stair entrance is located at the south end of the facade. A cinderblock and frame addition, date unknown, has been built to the rear of the building.

17. **VACANT LOT**  
SE cor Church & and Henderson Sts.

This is a grass-covered vacant lot.

18. **J. L. HART STORE** 1926  
SW side Henderson St. bet Church & Cullipher Sts.  
Contributing building

James Leander "Daddy" Hart (1858-1942) helped survey the railroad into Saluda in the 1870s and then stayed to help Col. Andrew Tanner survey the town. He was a long-time Main Street merchant, building several frame stores, and served as postmaster for seventeen years. In 1926 he built this one-story brick building on Henderson Street, operating a store on the main floor and an undertaking business--the only one in town--in the basement. During the last years before his death, Hart also lived in the building. The plain brick building laid in common bond appears to be only a one-story structure from Henderson Street, but because of the slope the land, the rear actually has two stories. The only decoration is a recessed brick panel across the upper facade, although the interior is said to retain its decorative pressed metal ceiling. While the recessed central entrance and flanking shop windows have been altered for the building's current use as a dwelling, the multi-paned transom remains intact. The rear features a variety of windows and service doors.

19. **SALUDA REALTY COMPANY** mid 20th cent.; 1980s  
N side Main St. bet Carolina & Church Sts.  
Non-contributing building

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This handsome two-story frame building is designed to reflect the style of the former railroad depot adjacent to it on the west. The use of German siding, multiple windows, a low hipped roof with widely overhanging braced eaves, and eyelid roof vents all contribute to this image. However, the building actually began in the mid-twentieth century as a one-story moderne Gulf gasoline station with shiny blue and white tiles. In the mid 1980s, after moving the depot to its present location, Roy and Dotty Eargle rebuilt this building, creating its present appearance for use as their real estate office.

**19A. CABOOSE**  
Non-contributing structure

In the 1980s, the Eargles also moved this caboose from its earlier location next to the depot's original site and restored it with the help of plans lent by Southern Railway. They attached a covered deck across the south side of the caboose, which now stands behind the Saluda Realty building.

**20. (FORMER) SALUDA DEPOT** ca. 1900-1910  
N side Main St. bet Carolina & Church Sts.  
Contributing building

The exact date of construction for the former Saluda Depot is not known, but it was likely built during the first decade of the twentieth century. Some local tradition claims that it replaced the earlier depot, which had been located on Main Street in the center of town, in 1910. The "new" depot was built about a quarter of a mile away, parallel to the north side of the tracks and west of the present U.S. 176 overpass. In a town which owed its existence to the railroad and which depended on the railroad to transport its many summer dwellers and tourists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the depot was one of the most important buildings in town. In 1983 the depot was moved to its present location in order to assure its preservation. Although the depot is now positioned perpendicular to Main Street and the railroad tracks, it is architecturally very intact. It is a long rectangular structure defined primarily by its flared hipped roof with eyelid vents, widely overhanging braced eaves which cover the encircling platform walk, and stick style detailing. The combination passenger and freight station has German siding on the exterior, bay windows,

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six-over-six sash windows, and large freight doors as well as pedestrian doors. The well-preserved interior retains its unpainted vertical beaded board sheathing and paneling and some counters. In its new location, the depot has new chimneys, a new foundation, and an added railing around the outside.

21. **COMMERCIAL BUILDING** ca. 1919  
N side Main St. bet Carolina & Church Sts.  
Contributing building

This well-preserved standard commercial building was built by M. A. Pace for rental purposes, according to family tradition. For a time it was used as the Martin Tea Room on the first floor and as residential space on the second floor. Several other businesses have occupied the building, which now stands vacant. It is a two-story brick structure with a slightly recessed decorative brick panel across the facade beneath a simple corbeled cornice. Second story windows are two-over-two sash. The intact shop front consists of a facade-width transom, a central, double-leaf, recessed entrance, and large shop windows with a paneled wood dado underneath. The sides of the building have a stepped parapet roofline and two-over-two sash windows. An exterior stair and entrance to the second story remain on the west elevation, while a shed-roofed frame porch is attached to the rear of the building.

22. **SALUDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** 1895-1896  
SE side Carolina St. bet Main & Henderson Sts.  
Contributing building

The Saluda Presbyterian Church was built in 1895-1896 with funds provided by both Saluda residents and summer visitors. At first it functioned as a community church for all those who were not already attending the Baptist, Methodist, and Episcopal churches. In 1914 the church was formally organized as a Presbyterian congregation with twelve charter members and was a part of King's Mountain Presbytery. The first meeting of the session was held October 25, 1914. For many years student ministers or guest ministers from nearby towns supplied the pulpit during summer months. The exterior of the church remains a well-preserved example of late nineteenth-century vernacular Gothic Revival. The weatherboarded structure features a gable front, a corner two-stage entrance tower, a shallow rear apse, and pointed-arched

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windows. Such details as carved rafter ends, decorative eaves brackets on the tower, decorative bracing at the front gable peak above a quatrefoil roundel, and a double-leaf entrance surmounted by a decoratively carved triangular pediment greatly enliven the exterior. The only exterior alteration consists of the ca. 1941 shed-roofed addition of two Sunday school rooms on the north side of the building. The interior of the sanctuary has been altered by the application of fiberboard block panels on the walls, but the beaded board ceiling and wainscot survive, and the sawnwork pews appear to be original.

**22A. EDUCATION BUILDING**

early 1950s

Non-contributing building

Just south of the church and mimicking it in general design is the education building, a brick veneered structure with a gable-front roof, a recessed corner entrance, and a corner tower with spire. Between the south side of the education building and Main Street is the church parking lot.

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

#### Summary:

With the arrival of the Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad in 1878, Saluda began to develop as a mountain resort community known for its healthful and invigorating climate. The local significance of the Saluda Main Street Historic District lies in the fact that it has managed to a remarkable degree to maintain its small-town, early twentieth-century commercial appearance and atmosphere in a world of otherwise rapid change. The district fulfills Criterion A for listing in the National Register because of its association with the development of rail transportation in the mountains of western North Carolina and more specifically for its association with the famed Saluda Grade--the steepest standard-gauge mainline railroad grade in the nation. Criterion A is also met because of the district's central role in the commercial development of this small railroad town. The Saluda Main Street Historic District is architecturally significant and fulfills National Register Criterion C because it comprises an excellent and compact collection of well-preserved late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century buildings which includes numerous representatives of the period's standard commercial style as well as notable examples of the Stick style and the late Gothic Revival style. The district's period of significance begins with the arrival of the railroad in 1878 and continues to 1946, the last year in which the district meets the fifty-year criterion for listing in the National Register and also the beginning of the post-World War II era when Saluda's fortunes as a resort community began to wane. Today Saluda has been discovered by world-weary urbanites who have a strong sense of the special quality of the town. Town officials see National Register listing as a basic planning tool for helping to preserve that special quality.

#### Historical Background/Transportation and Commerce Contexts:

When the first train arrived at the mountaintop plateau community that was to become Saluda, it was met by a crowd of people who had gathered from miles around to celebrate the event. A celebration was in order, for an important chapter in railroad history had just been completed ("Our Cover Design," 18).

Prior to the coming of the railroad, Pace's Gap, as this area was known, was only a crossroads with a few scattered houses. A drover's

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inn run by the Pace family provided lodging for the traders who carried goods and drove herds of livestock through the gap from the western mountain settlements (Polk, 67). This area of North Carolina had earlier in the nineteenth century been "discovered" by low country South Carolinians who sought to escape the extreme heat and accompanying illnesses associated with summertime. Summer colonies had developed nearby in the cool mountains of Henderson and Transylvania counties--the most prominent of which was Flat Rock--but the only way to reach these areas was by horse or stagecoach. Polk County, on the North Carolina-South Carolina border, provided the logical route between the lowlands and the mountains.

Originally known as the Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad, the line through Polk County was first proposed shortly after the Civil War. This first railroad to crest the Blue Ridge Mountains from the south was intended to connect in Asheville with a line to Tennessee, thus providing a long-envisioned link between eastern seaports and the midwest (Patton, 57). By 1877 twenty-six miles of track had been laid through South Carolina to the state line where Tryon is now located (Prince, 161). As originally surveyed, the line was to run by the county seat of Columbus and along the side of Tryon Mountain, crossing through Howard's Gap. However, this route required thirteen miles of heavy grading and several tunnels and, in addition, it was determined that the ground was unstable, that the mountain was continually shifting due to underground springs. Captain Charles W. Pearson, the engineer for the project, was left with no viable choice but to run the line straight up Saluda Mountain along the steep gorge of the Pacolet River (Clodfelter, 29). This was a difficult feat because of the intensity of the grade. Pearson's choice meant that when the tracks finally reached the top of Saluda Mountain, they had covered the steepest mainline standard gauge grade in the United States (Polk, 67).

During construction of the railroad, many of the laborers lived in tents and shanties near the tracks along the route, but the foremen and engineers sought better accommodations at the top of the mountain. In 1877 Andrew Tanner, a contractor from Rutherford County who had been hired to help build the roadbed up the mountain, bought property along the proposed site at the top of the grade. Recognizing a market when he saw one, Tanner built a commissary for the railroad employees and a boarding house, called Mountain House, to provide lodging (Polk, 67).

Building the track was costly in both money and lives, but finally a successful completion was achieved. It was a year before the tracks were continued to Hendersonville, and it was not until

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December, 1885 that they reached their ultimate destination, Asheville. What began as the Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad was later called the Asheville and Spartanburg Railroad, then was leased to the Richmond and Danville Railroad, and finally became a part of the Southern Railway System in 1894 (Patton, 60; Jefferys, 2). Along the line, towns prospered from the transportation link provided by the railroad. Completion of the Spartanburg to Asheville route along with the Western North Carolina Railroad line to Asheville brought increases in trade and travel throughout the mountainous region known as the "Land of the Sky." The scenic beauty and moderate climate of the region had already made tourism an important economic factor which the railroad simply intensified. Tryon and Saluda in Polk County were born and developed as a result of the rail line, and Hendersonville and Asheville experienced significant expansion.

Once built, the railroad continued to play an active role in Saluda's development until the mid twentieth century. The presence of the railroad--particularly a railroad with the special conditions that accompanied the Saluda Grade--required continued maintenance and the operation of a depot. The first depot was a frame structure located on what became Main Street near the present center of town. It was replaced during the first decade of the twentieth century by a new Stick style depot located about a quarter of a mile to the west.

The Saluda Grade between Saluda and Melrose was a stretch of railroad that was both difficult and dangerous and there were numerous accidents which resulted in death and injury to train crews. Various measures were instituted to help alleviate the problems of the grade. A pusher engine, known as the "Helper," was kept on a siding at the Saluda station. Whenever a train was coming up the mountain, the Helper would go downhill to meet it. Built for traction rather than speed, the Helper engine would be connected to the end of the train, help push it up the mountain, and then be disconnected after the train had reached the top of the grade. Eastbound trains heading downhill from Saluda were more of a problem because of the risk of runaway trains. Southern Railway's answer to the problem was the institution of special procedures which trains traveling the Saluda Grade were required to follow and the construction of two safety tracks which could divert a runaway train uphill to a stop. In addition, night and day inspectors and a hill supervisor were added to the crews already handling trains on Saluda Mountain (Prince, 162; Jefferys, 2, 4; Polk, 68). These crews required living arrangements, and the growing community of Saluda became home base. At the height of Saluda's development, eight passenger trains passed through the town daily in addition to freight trains (Osborne, Then and Now, 13). This traffic

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had a decidedly positive effect on the development of the town and, in particular, on the commerce it generated.

The railroad, in fact, was the major impetus in the creation of the town of Saluda. The effect, however, was somewhat different from that seen in many North Carolina towns which acquired rail transportation. Rail transportation generally brought greatly increased markets for farm goods and facilitated the growth of industry. In the mountain town of Saluda, however, the impact was felt most strongly in the growth of tourism and of the town as a health resort.

At first, the budding settlement served the needs of the railroad workers by providing food, lodging, and supplies. Then, the very fact that Saluda was the end point on the Spartanburg and Asheville Railroad for a year before the line was completed to Hendersonville in 1879 meant that travelers to Flat Rock, Hendersonville, and other resort points beyond had to stop at Saluda to transfer to a stagecoach or some other form of travel. These people usually required at least food and lodging before continuing their travels, and thus the need for commerce in Saluda increased. Soon, Saluda became an end in itself as tourists from the South Carolina low country discovered the natural beauty, healthy climate, and easy access offered by the town (Polk, 67; Saluda, 3; "Our Cover Design," 18).

Only three years after the railroad arrived, the town of Saluda was chartered by the North Carolina Legislature on February 1, 1881. The corporate limits, as prescribed by the charter, included "one mile square with the railroad depot exactly in the center." The town was spread over seven hills with an average altitude of 2,100 feet above sea level. Not surprisingly, the first appointed mayor was Andrew Tanner, the railroad contractor who had earlier bought up land at the top of the Saluda Grade and built a commissary and boarding house to serve the railroad workers (Patton, 67; Osborne, Then and Now, 1,3).

North Carolina business directories in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provide a feel for the growth of the town. The first listing for Saluda in Branson's North Carolina Business Directory was in 1884. In that year only a post office and one general store were listed. A decade later in 1896, Branson's Directory gives Saluda's population as 250 and lists a post office, three general stores, one drugstore, one doctor, one building and contracting business, one iron and wood working business, one academy, and eight boarding houses. Clearly the business of building the town and providing housing and other services for tourists and year-round residents alike was well underway. By 1904 there were eight merchants in town, and by 1906 the number of hotels and boarding houses had

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climbed to fifteen. In that year the mercantile firm of Thompson and Pace--who together and individually played a long-term role in Saluda's commercial life--was listed for the first time, and the following year the Carolina State Bank first appeared in the directories. By 1910 Saluda's population stood at 521. In 1916 The North Carolina Year Book and Business Directory proclaimed that Saluda could boast one lawyer, one bank, one barber shop, two blacksmith and repair shops, three contractors and builders, two dentists, two druggists, one garage, four general merchants, one hospital, eighteen hotels and boarding houses, two insurance agents, four livery stables, one manufacturing plant (Thompson and Pace Corn Products), four churches, two photographers, two physicians, two plumbers, one real estate agent, one undertaker, one seminary, and a power and light plant. The 1916 directory also listed the Saluda Board of Trade, a sure sign that the town was taking its commercial development seriously (Branson, 1884, 1896; North Carolina Year Book, 1904, 1906, 1910, 1916). At about the same time, the Southern Railway Company published a promotional brochure which described Saluda thusly:

"Saluda is peculiarly favorably located as a resort for health and pleasure seekers....In recent years it has become widely known as a health resort. Its high altitude and fine, dry air are energizing and recuperative to a wonderful degree. The ozone laden atmosphere, pure water and freedom from fogs and humidity render Saluda a most desirable and attractive resting place for persons afflicted with insomnia or nervous disorders, or with heart, throat, or rheumatic troubles" (Autumn and Winter).

Saluda's cool summer climate and fresh air, along with its easy accessibility by rail, were largely responsible for one of the town's amenities listed in the 1916 directory--the hospital. In 1914 Dr. Lesesne Smith, a Spartanburg pediatrician who had a summer home in Saluda, decided to open a private children's sanatorium on land near his home. The Infants and Children's Sanitarium was designed as a place where anxious parents could get skilled attention, careful diet, and treatment for suffering children during the hot summer months. The sanatorium started out with one eight-room cottage and grew to include a diet kitchen, dining room, assembly hall, examination and treatment rooms, and twelve cottages where mothers could stay with their children. The same year, the Spartanburg Baby Hospital was founded in Saluda as a free institution for children who could not afford private care. Dr. Smith formed the hospital association and became its superintendent. Located across the street from Smith's

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private institution, the hospital was supported by the Spartanburg Community Chest and the Duke Foundation. Smith's work with infants and children was so successful that doctors from elsewhere came to study his methods. In 1921 the Southern Pediatric Seminar was founded in Saluda and thereafter every July for several decades pediatricians and family physicians from throughout the South and beyond came for two or three weeks for a post graduate course in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of children's diseases. Naturally, many brought their families and enjoyed the other advantages of Saluda. The hospital closed when Dr. Smith died in 1946--a time when air conditioning was making escape from the lowland heat less desperate--but the seminar continued until 1958 (Polk, 68; Sense of Heritage, 24).

Saluda continued its role as a healthful resort with numerous residential accommodations of various types and with a strong commercial core to service residents and visitors alike. Unlike nearby Tryon, which was approximately 1,000 feet down the mountain and which was considered a prominent winter resort, Saluda was a summer resort. Thus, although it had a steady year-round population, its ranks swelled substantially during the summer months (Cooper, 6).

The Depression was hard on Saluda. By the late 1920s, highways were making other resorts more accessible by automobile, and during the Depression many people were no longer in a financial position to vacation in the mountains--for a brief stay or for the whole summer. It was at this time that some of the hotels, inns, and boarding houses burned, were demolished, or were converted to private residences (Polk, 68; Osborne, One Hundred Years, 14). In the late 1930s there was a revival of sorts in Saluda with increased activity all around. The promotional Saluda Magazine was published between 1936 and 1938, the Saluda Mountain Telephone system expanded, several one and two-story brick commercial buildings were erected, and the Chamber of Commerce was reorganized and a planned system of advertising was undertaken ("Sharing Saluda," 15).

Then came World War II and the changes which it brought to the country at large. After the war a series of events took place that conspired to turn Saluda from a thriving resort town into a more quiet residential community. The advent of air conditioning made many lowlanders just as happy to stay at home for more of the summer. Around 1950 Southern Railway dispensed with the section crew stationed at Saluda to test the brakes on the trains, and the Helper engine was removed with the introduction of diesel-powered trains. The Baby Hospital closed in 1946, and the Pediatric Seminar ceased in 1958. Good roads to other parts of the mountains caused railroad traffic to

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dwindle, and the last passenger train made its last run in 1968. Finally, in 1976 Interstate 26 linking Charleston and Asheville was completed, bypassing Saluda and removing the increasingly heavy traffic from Main Street-US 176 (Osborne, One Hundred Years, 16). This last event has actually had a positive effect in helping to preserve the early twentieth-century, small-town character of Saluda's commercial core.

Today Saluda has been discovered by world-weary urbanites who have a strong sense of the special quality of the town. Town officials want to preserve that special quality and see National Register listing of the Saluda Main Street Historic District as a basic planning tool for helping to achieve that goal.

### Architecture Context:

The buildings which comprise the Saluda Main Street Historic District form a cohesive group of mostly early twentieth-century commercial buildings which together convey a strong sense of commercial life in small North Carolina mountain towns in the early part of the century. This image is projected not only through the unity of the whole, but also through numerous buildings individually and through the fact that some of the establishments have been owned and operated by the same families for many years. The M. A. Pace Store (#5), in particular, not only epitomizes the well-built, standard commercial style in Saluda, but also has been run by the Pace family since it was built between 1905 and 1910. This handsome two-story brick store is remarkably well-preserved with a decorative brickwork cornice, segmental-arched one-over-one sash windows on the facade, flat-arched two-over-two-sash windows on the side and rear, original store fronts with recessed entrances, and a largely intact interior with board walls and original counters, shelves, and other fixtures. Thompson's Store (#9) and the former Post Office (#8) of the same period utilize much of the same design features as the Pace Store, and a recently remodeled commercial building (#7) strives for the same appearance. The Saluda City Hall (#12) features a classically-inspired decorative pressed metal facade--the only example in Saluda and one of the few surviving in western North Carolina. The early 1910s Pebbledash Building (#14) reflects the influence of architect Richard Sharp Smith in Asheville and the surrounding mountain area after his work on Biltmore Village in the late 1890s popularized the use of pebbledash in western North Carolina. The former Saluda Depot (#20), although moved to its present location from

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its original site along the railroad tracks to the west, continues to represent well the typical small town depot built by Southern Railway in the early twentieth century. The one-story frame German-sided structure which served as a combination freight and passenger depot is characterized by a hipped roof with flared eaves supported by large wooden braces, bay observation windows, and a beaded board interior. It reflects the Stick style in its horizontal and vertical wood banding. The oldest building in the district is the Saluda Presbyterian Church (#22), located adjacent to the commercial buildings. Built in 1895-1896, it is one of the four frame churches built in Saluda during the late nineteenth century, three of which are still being used by their congregations. This vernacular Gothic Revival church is replete with locally interpreted details of the style, including pointed-arched windows, bracketed eaves, gable peak ornamentation with a quatrefoil roundel, and a corner two-stage tower which features an entrance with decorative carving in the triangular pediment. One significant representative of the 1930s in the district is the former Top Service Station (#2). Built by 1937, the one-story brick structure is typical of the stations built by the Standard Oil Company at the time. Its salient features include a red tile parapet and brick pilasters which extend upward beyond the parapet at each corner of the building and between the two primary bays.

When compared to other nearby mountain towns whose development was influenced by the coming of the railroad, Saluda stands strong. Tryon, down the mountain from Saluda, has several commercial buildings of a more decorative nature than most in Saluda, but as a whole the district has been more altered and is not as cohesive as the commercial core of Saluda. To the north, Hendersonville was reached by the railroad the year after Saluda. However, it was already a county seat town, and its combination of commerce, industry, government, and tourism yielded a much larger town than Saluda could ever have been. Its commercial areas are significantly larger and generally more elaborate than that in Saluda, and consequently it no longer reflects the small-town atmosphere displayed by Saluda's Main Street Historic District. Brevard is another county seat town that prospered greatly with the coming of the railroad. Its downtown grew with rows of impressive brick commercial buildings and is still a bustling place today. However, while some of the commercial buildings in Brevard survive in a well-preserved state, the physical character of the downtown as a whole has been significantly altered since mid-century and, like Hendersonville, no longer conveys the truly small-town qualities found in Saluda.

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### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The boundary of the Saluda Main Street Historic District is shown as the heavy black line on the accompanying Polk County Tax Map S-9 drawn to a scale of 1"=100'.

**Boundary Justification:** The boundary of the Saluda Main Street Historic District is drawn to include the buildings of Saluda's commercial core which were erected primarily along Main Street, but also along Church Street, Henderson Street, and Carolina Street during the district's period of significance, 1878-1946, and which continue to contribute to the historic and architectural cohesiveness of the district. The south boundary of the district is formed by the railroad tracks paralleling Main Street which played a pivotal role in the development of Saluda and its commercial core. Beyond the boundaries of the district the land use differs from that in the district and/or the buildings post-date the period of significance.

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### PHOTOGRAPHS:

The following information applies to all nomination photographs:

- 1) Saluda Main Street Historic District
- 2) Saluda, Polk County, North Carolina
- 3) Laura A. W. Phillips
- 4) 10/95
- 5) State Historic Preservation Office

The photographs are keyed by letter to the district map.

A:    1) Streetscape: N. side Main St. from railroad overpass  
      6) View to east

B:    1) Streetscape: Main St.  
      6) View to northwest

C:    1) Streetscape: Main St. from Greenville St. to Carolina St.  
      6) View to northwest

D:    1) Streetscape: E. side Church St.  
      6) View to northeast

E:    1) M. A. Pace Store  
      6) View to northeast

F:    1) (former) Top Service Station  
      6) View to west

G:    1) Detail, Saluda Presbyterian Church  
      6) View to east

# SALUDA MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Polk County, NC

- 15 INVENTORY NUMBER
- C CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE
- N NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE
- VL VACANT LOT
- A> PHOTO VANTAGE POINT
- DISTRICT BOUNDARY

Polk Co. Tax Map S-9  
1"=100'



