

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 Thomasville Downtown Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Roughly bound by Main Street, Trade Street, Guilford Street,
and Commerce Street N/A not for publication

city or town Thomasville N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Davidson code 057 Zip code 27361

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 Crowe SAPO 7/13/05
Signature of certifying official Title Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
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:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(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	
46	21	buildings
1	1	sites
2	3	structures
2	3	objects
51	28	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

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/specialty store
- COMMERCE/department store
- COMMERCE/restaurant
- COMMERCE/financial institution
- COMMERCE/professional
- COMMERCE/business
- GOVERNMENT/city hall
- GOVERNMENT/government office

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/business
- COMMERCE/specialty store
- GOVERNMENT/city hall
- GOVERNMENT/correctional facility
- GOVERNMENT/government office
- GOVERNMENT/public works
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/monument
- INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals (Italianate)
- Commercial Style
- Classical Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Brick
- walls Brick
- Stone
- roof Asphalt
- other Metal
- Glass

Narrative Description

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

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Government

Architecture

Transportation

Industry

Period of Significance

1871-1957

Significant Dates

1871

1938

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Wetmore, James - architect (Post Office)

Haskins, Albert L. Jr. - architect (City Hall)

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):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS).

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:

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FUNCTION OR USE

Historic Functions

GOVERNMENT/post office
GOVERNMENT/public works
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related
RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater
RECREATION AND CULTURE/monument
INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility
HEALTH CARE/medical business/office
LANDSCAPE/plaza

Current Functions

HEALTH CARE/medical business/office
LANDSCAPE/plaza
LANDSCAPE/parking lot
TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

DESCRIPTION

Architectural Classification

Colonial Revival
Art Deco
Modern Movement

Materials

Walls: Wood
Concrete
Glass
Asphalt
Roof: Metal

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Narrative

The Thomasville Downtown Historic District is located in Thomasville, a railroad and industrial city of approximately 25,000 people on the eastern edge of northern Davidson County. Set in North Carolina's west-central Piedmont region, Thomasville, and especially its downtown area, has a relatively flat terrain. Composed of approximately twenty-seven acres—approximately six city blocks—the district includes the majority, and core, of Thomasville's commercial center. By far, the majority of the district's seventy-nine resources are commercial, but other resources include one industrial complex on the northeastern edge of the district, one public works resource (water tower), three government buildings (originally), two transportation-related resources, and six monuments and commemorative resources (all of which are on or facing the Town Common). There are sixty-seven buildings, two sites, five structures, and five objects in the district. There are also six parking lots (see district map) and several small parking areas associated with particular buildings.

The Thomasville Downtown Historic District is located along both north and south sides of the Town Common, through which the railroad tracks that were the historical lifeblood of the city run. Main Street is divided by the Town Common and runs along both sides of it. The center of the district, symbolically if not geographically, is the intersection of the roughly east-west Main Street with the roughly north-south Salem and Randolph streets. Salem Street lies north of the Town Common; south of the Town Common, the same thoroughfare is called Randolph Street. It is from this centerpoint that Thomasville's streets are designated as north and south and east and west. The north-south streets of the district's grid plan are Commerce Street, Salem Street/Randolph Street, and Trade Street. East-west streets are Guilford Street, J. W. Thomas Way, and Main Street. The district's buildings are concentrated most heavily along Main Street north of the Town Common and along Salem Street.

The district's historic green space is the Town Common, whose park-like setting on either side of the railroad tracks includes a grassy lawn, low hedges, trees, the Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot (NR, 1981), The Big Chair (local designation, 2002), and several miscellaneous resources. Non-historic green space includes the Willie Edward and Dorothy Lee Lindsay Harper Mini Park at the southwest corner of West Main and Randolph streets, where two historic buildings had been demolished earlier; the lawns associated with the former City Hall, the former Davidson County Office Building, the former United States Post Office, and the Dr. Orien R. Hodgin Dental Office; the landscaped walkway between 20 and 24 West Main Street, originally part of the site of the J. W. Thomas House (demolished); and the landscaped parking lot between 11 and 25 Salem Street, where the historic Cates Building once stood. In addition, small street trees are planted along Salem and Main streets.

The tight-knit character of the Thomasville Downtown Historic District is distinguishable from its surroundings. Beyond all four sides of the district, the buildings are spread more widely and, except for some houses, date from after the district's period of significance, 1871–1957. Immediately north of

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the district are several freestanding modern commercial buildings, beyond which is the residential Salem Street Historic District (local designation). East of the Thomasville Downtown Historic District are a large city cemetery, a parking lot, a couple of modern commercial buildings, two small groups of houses, and a former school. The modern Thomasville Public Library, a couple of large churches, and several houses lie immediately south of the district. Immediately west of the district are scattered modern commercial buildings and several vacant lots.

The relationship of the buildings in the district to each other and to the streets is consistent with that found in the historic commercial centers of North Carolina's towns and cities. Most of the buildings are contiguous to each other or are separated by narrow alleys. Among the few exceptions are the Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot, the former City Hall, the former Davidson County Office Building, the former United States Post Office, the Dr. Orien R. Hodgkin Dental Office, and the North State Telephone Warehouse. The facades of almost all the buildings abut the sidewalk. Among the very few that do not are the three government buildings that also are not contiguous to other buildings. The individual settings of these buildings serve to emphasize their importance in the community.

The district's buildings are almost evenly divided between one- and two-story structures. There are also three three-story buildings and one building—the First National Bank of Thomasville, now the City Hall—that has four stories (three stories and a mezzanine). Most of the buildings range from two to four bays wide, but several are considerably wider, such as the former City Hall, which is twelve bays wide, and the commercial building at 24-26 East Main Street, which is nine bays wide. There are also three surviving building "blocks," long rows of storefronts of identical design either built all at the same time or in different parts but in quick succession. These include the ten-bay-wide Crutchfield Building at 16 East Main Street, the eleven-bay-wide C. R. Thomas Block at 24-32 West Main Street and, most especially, the Finch Block with its two flanking, matching buildings spanning 14-30 Salem Street. The block and its flanking buildings as a whole were originally seventeen bays wide, although currently 14-18 Salem Street is covered with a ca. 1960 metal-paneled facade, leaving only eleven and a half bays still showing.

The predominant building material among the district's buildings is brick. Even the two buildings that have stone facades are otherwise brick. Several of the 1940s and 1950s buildings are built of concrete blocks with brick facades. The only frame buildings in the district are part of the Lambeth Furniture Company/Thomasville Chair Company along with the Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot and its adjacent restroom building.

Although Thomasville was established in 1852 and developed throughout the second half of the nineteenth century as a railroad town, only one building, the 1871 Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot, clearly survives from that period. A series of fires around the turn of the twentieth century wiped out a large portion of the town's commercial center that had developed to that point. In 1890, a fire leveled all the buildings on East Main Street. West Main Street lost several buildings in a blaze eight

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years later, and in 1902 the modest frame stores that lined the west side of Salem Street burned. Although these infernos brought tragedy to the town, they also allowed for the rebuilding of Thomasville in a manner that expressed the optimism that burgeoning railroad towns in the Piedmont felt as the new century dawned. Not surprisingly, brick became the material of choice as Thomasville's downtown rose from the ashes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Architectural Survey Report, 14).

Twentieth-century resources in the Thomasville Downtown Historic District span the years from ca. 1900 through 2002, but the period of significance—that period during which the district achieved the historic significance for which it is being nominated to the National Register—ranges in date from 1871 through 1957. Because the historic character of the district primarily reflects the downtown's growth during the first half of the twentieth century, Sanborn maps—with Thomasville maps dating from 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930, and 1948 (an updating of the 1930 map)—become an excellent source for understanding the general pattern of Thomasville's downtown development.

The Sanborn maps show a fairly steady progression of development in the district between 1908 and 1948 with the north side of the Town Common being most highly favored in this growth. By 1908, Salem Street had established itself as the primary commercial street, with one- and two-story brick buildings extending northward from Main Street on the west side nearly to East Guilford Street and on the east side about halfway to East Guilford. Filling in the east side of the first block of Salem Street from the middle of the block northward were two houses set back from the street. Except for the corner buildings at Salem and Main streets, much of the first block of East and West Main streets north of the Town Common remained vacant. The exception was the C. R. Thomas Block at 24-32 West Main. Still dominating East and West Main streets were John W. Thomas's house on West Main Street and the Thomasville Hotel on East Main Street. Both of these were set back from the street; neither survives. Buildings were already present at the Lambeth Furniture Company site on East Guilford Street, but these burned in a fire in 1911. The area south of the Town Common was occupied by scattered houses, although commercial development was beginning to take its place, particularly in a pair of stores at the southwest corner of West Main and Randolph Streets, a large livery just west of them, and a warehouse on the west side of Randolph Street.

By 1913, Lambeth Furniture Company had rebuilt and expanded. The west side of Salem Street was filling in, though the east side was slower to develop, except for a double-storefront building at the southeast corner with East Guilford Street. West Main Street north of the Town Common remained much as it was in 1908, but East Main Street had several new commercial buildings and a large hardware warehouse in the center of the block. Houses ran along the north side of West Guilford Street. The district south of the Town Common remained much the same as it was in 1908, and commercial growth in this area was still slow in 1923, although churches and warehouses (south of the district) were being erected along Randolph Street.

By 1923 West Main Street saw the addition of two-story commercial buildings adjacent to the

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building on the corner with Salem Street and at the other end of the block between 32 West Main Street and the corner with Trade Street. On East Main Street the Thomasville Hotel was gone and the block between Salem and present-day Commerce streets was quickly filling in with mostly two-story brick commercial buildings. A single dwelling remained in the block. By 1923, the First National Bank of Thomasville had replaced two earlier buildings on the west side of Salem Street, while on the east side of the street, the north half of the block between East Main and East Guilford streets had largely filled in with one and two-story commercial buildings. The Lambeth Furniture Company on the north side of East Guilford Street was continuing to expand, but there were still no commercial buildings on the south side of East Guilford Street.

By 1930, two commercial buildings had been erected on the south side of East Guilford Street. Commerce Street, with several commercial buildings on the west side, had been cut through between East Main and East Guilford streets. By 1930 the north side of East Main Street was completely filled in with commercial buildings, and a one-story building had been added on the east side of the corner with Commerce Street. The north side of West Main Street remained the same as in 1923, because the John W. Thomas House remained on its site. The east and west sides of Salem Street remained the same in 1930, except for additional commercial buildings erected on the west side at 34 and 46 Salem Street. On the south side of the Town Common, West Main Street saw the loss of its livery, and a warehouse was gone from the west side of Randolph Street. By 1930, the United States Post Office had been built at the southeast corner of East Main and Randolph streets.

Several significant changes took place between 1930 and 1948. A 1,000,000-gallon water tank was built in 1935 on the east side of Commerce Street next to a 100,000-gallon tank that had been erected ca. 1912. The monumental City Hall at 7 West Guilford Street had been built. The John W. Thomas House had been demolished, and in its place four commercial buildings stood on the north side of West Main Street. Additional buildings also appeared at the east side of Commerce Street, the east and west sides of Trade Street, the southwest corner of West Guilford and Salem streets, the south side of both East and West Main streets, and the west side of Randolph Street. In addition, J. W. Thomas Way (then just Thomas or Benton) had been cut between Salem and Trade streets.

More specific research on buildings in the district confirms the relatively steady growth exhibited by the Sanborn maps. After the fires at the turn of the twentieth century, four buildings, or blocks of buildings, were erected by 1910. As the town continued to get back on its feet, twelve buildings were erected in the 1910s. Eight followed in the 1920s, ten (surprisingly) in the 1930s, eight in the 1940s, and four between 1951 and 1957. Buildings, structures, and objects continued to be erected after the end of the district's period of significance, with eleven dating from 1958 through 1979 and nine between 1980 and 2004.

The district's buildings represent a continuum of styles popular in the design of town and small city commercial architecture from the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. The

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oldest building in the district is the Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot. Built in 1871, it is representative of the small frame depots built in North Carolina during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Its simple rectangular form with gable roof expresses a late Victorian sensibility of style in its use of a vertical-board wainscot with German siding above, a wide sawnwork frieze, and widely overhanging braced eaves.

Some of the earliest commercial buildings in the district are a continuation of Italianate design that was popular during the second half of the nineteenth century. Typical features of these buildings include segmental- or round-arched windows, often topped by brick hood molds, and corbeled and parapeted cornices, with corbeling ranging from simple to elaborate. Good examples from the first two decades of the century include the C. R. Thomas Block at 24-32 West Main Street, the Finch Block at 14-30 Salem Street, and the Crutchfield Building at 16 East Main Street. The oldest example is the C. R. Thomas Block, a two-story building with four storefronts dating from ca. 1900. A simple reflection of the Italianate style, the block originally had a continuous corbeled cornice across the facade and a row of twelve segmental-arched windows across the second-story level. Although three sections of the building row have been altered to varying degrees, the section at the east end remains largely intact. Its storefront has large display windows set on a low, paneled wood skirt and a central, recessed door. The two-story Finch Block, whose main section was erected in 1904 with identical flanking sections built ca. 1910, is more elaborate than the Thomas Block. Full-height pilasters divide the long facade into sections, with alternating round-arched windows of two sizes, all with fanlights and brick hood molds with keystones. Above the windows are layers of brick corbeling topped by a metal modillioned cornice with parapet. The two-story Crutchfield Building was constructed in two identical sections in 1913 and ca. 1918. It is a stripped-down version of the Finch Block with a plain brick facade whose decorative effect is achieved through the use of round-arched, fanlighted windows in two sizes and a simple metal cornice with plain parapet.

The Commercial Style appeared in Thomasville in the late 1910s through the 1930s. It dismissed the use of arched windows and instead emphasized a more rectilinear form and simple details. Characteristics were patterned masonry wall surfaces, stepped roofline parapets, and rectangular windows that were often arranged in groups ("Historic Commercial Architectural Styles," 18). Good examples are McLellan's Store, 10 East Main Street, built ca. 1920; the commercial building at 24-26 East Main Street, dating from ca. 1920; the Finch Building, erected ca. 1928 at 34 Salem Street; the ca. 1926 commercial building at 2-8 Commerce Street; the Hite Building, 9 East Guilford Street, erected in 1927; and the commercial building at 1-7 West Main Street, erected in 1932. The design of McLellan's Store is simple, with brick soldier-course borders and a plain stepped parapet. The design of the commercial building at 24-26 East Main Street is also relatively simple, but achieves its visual impact through its row of nine rectangular windows on the second story and a multi-layered corbeled cornice. Somewhat more elaborate is the Finch Building. Its second story features a pair of three-part windows

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with decorative heads and a stepped-parapet cornice. The first story retains its prism glass transom and has a dentiled and paneled frieze. Pilasters divide the four storefronts of the building at 2-8 Commerce Street. Each unit features a center door flanked by two windows. The upper facade of each has a masonry panel with diamond designs, above which is a soldier-course cornice. The Hite Building, one of the few three-story buildings in the district, has rows of three three-part sash windows on the upper two floors and a simple projecting cornice with a stepped parapet. The commercial building at 1-7 West Main Street has three storefronts divided by brick pilasters. Each has a brick-patterned upper facade.

Three styles dating from the 1920s through the 1940s made a strong impact on the architectural character of Thomasville's downtown, although examples were limited in number. These styles are the Neo-classical Revival, the Colonial Revival, and the Art Deco. The First National Bank of Thomasville, built in 1922 at 10 Salem Street, exhibits the Neo-classical Revival style that was frequently used for banks built in the 1920s. The style is achieved at the four-story (three-stories with mezzanine), brick, First National Bank through the use of a stone facade and two monumental Doric columns marking the recessed entrance and supporting a full classical entablature. The style continues on the upper floors through the use of classical pilasters and a classical cornice.

The Colonial Revival style used classical elements to achieve a sense of proud nationalism. The 1926 United States Post Office at 1 East Main Street is an excellent example. The approximately square, one-story, brick building has large fifteen-over-fifteen sash windows on the front and side elevations, a sophisticated classical entrance at the center of the facade, and a classical cornice with a balustraded parapet. A more modest example of the style is the Dr. Orien R. Hodgins Dental Office at 17 West Main Street. There, the Colonial Revival is expressed primarily in the classical entrance surround of this one-story brick building with gable roof.

The Art Deco style, with its use of setbacks and stylized geometric and floriate details, brought modernism to Thomasville's downtown in the 1930s and 1940s. One of the most architecturally significant buildings in the district and the best example in Davidson County of the Art Deco style is the 1938 former City Hall at 7 West Guilford Street. Set back from the street to emphasize its monumentality and importance in the community, the two-story-with-raised basement brick building has a cast stone ashlar facade and a vertical emphasis created by a series of setbacks from the main entrance bay. Stylized details are incised in the stone, and Art Deco glass-and-bronze light fixtures flank the building's entrances. The interior boasts a well-preserved Art Deco main lobby.

Another expression of the Art Deco style in the district was the use of pigmented structural glass for the facades of buildings erected during the 1930s and 1940s. The only example that survives with almost all of its pigmented structural glass facade intact is the Boston Store, built ca. 1947 at 9 East Main Street. Here the entire facade and the front bay of the east elevation, excepting windows, is sheathed with slick black glass. A single large display window with a cast stone surround dominates the second story of the facade, while large display windows and the recessed entrance of the storefront are bordered

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by black structural glass. Another modern touch comes with the large, glass-block, first-story window near the front end of the east elevation. Smaller glass-block windows are also used on the second story of the east elevation.

During the 1940s and 1950s, commercial building design displayed a move toward modernism. This was an easy transition from the Commercial Style of the 1910s through the 1930s. Almost all ornamentation was shed in favor of stark simplicity. Box-like forms, expanses of plain brickwork, metal-framed glass doors and windows and, often, flat metal canopies sheltering large plate glass display windows were typical. A row of five contiguous buildings at 5-19 Trade Street illustrates well the commercial design typical of these decades. Each was built at a different time, moving progressively from south to north, with one-story 5-7 Trade Street dating from ca. 1940, one-story 9 Trade Street from ca. 1947, one-story 11 Trade Street from ca. 1950, two-story 13-15 Trade Street from ca. 1953, and two-story 17-19 Trade Street from ca. 1956. Yet all share the same design aesthetic. Other good examples from the period are the one-story Hudson-Belk Annex at 12 Commerce Street, built ca. 1950, and the commercial building at 1-5 J. W. Thomas Way, erected ca. 1957.

One building in the district went beyond the common treatment of small commercial buildings erected during the 1940s and 1950s. The former Davidson County Office Building, constructed in 1957 at 10 West Guilford Street, is a stronger, more sophisticated example of mid-twentieth-century modernism. Like the typical commercial buildings of the period, the one-story, nearly square building has a flat roof and plain brick elevations. However, here the similarities end. The asymmetrical facade features an off-center, projecting entrance bay that is taller than the rest of the building and a set of three contiguous windows west of the entrance that balances a low brick wall to the east. Groups of large windows lining both sides of the building are shaded by widely projecting eaves with slanting soffits.

By the end of the 1950s and continuing for several decades, some of the older buildings in the district were modernized in the name of progress. This happened in two primary ways. The most common way, affecting many buildings in the district and common in towns and cities across North Carolina and elsewhere, was the replacement of original storefronts, often recessed and with plain or prism-glass transoms and details in wood, with simpler storefronts dominated by large, metal-framed plate-glass windows and doors. In some cases, in addition to the modernized storefronts, old upper-level facades were covered with metal or brick, creating plain facades where there had been complex ornamentation. Examples of facades altered with metal or enameled-metal panels include the buildings at 14-18 Salem Street, 37-41 Salem Street, and 32 East Main Street. Remodeling at 20 West Main Street and 9 Salem Street included facades covered with a metal grill or with a combination of metal grills and panels. All or most of the original facades may remain intact beneath some of these metal facades. In some cases, plain brickwork was used to cover older facades. Examples include the buildings at 2 East Main Street, 8-10 West Main Street, 12 West Main Street, and 45-47 Salem Street.

In addition to the many style-conscious buildings erected in the Thomasville Downtown Historic

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District, other types of resources, not defined by style, also are part of the district. Typical industrial buildings of frame or brick with broad gable or stepped parapet roofs and rows of metal-framed industrial windows are located at the Lambeth Furniture Company/Thomasville Chair Company complex. Two different periods of tall, steel water tanks on stilt legs are found at the furniture company complex and on the east side of Commerce Street. The Lambeth tower, built in 1911, is cylindrical in shape with a conical roof and holds 50,000 gallons of water. The city tank, built in 1935 on Commerce Street, has a shape that is more like a mushroom or a round, padded cushion and holds 1,000,000 gallons of water. Finally, there are monuments and commemorative resources located on the Town Common. The most significant of these is The Big Chair, built in 1950 to replace a wood chair that had been erected in 1922 and removed in 1936 due to deterioration. The concrete-coated steel replica of a Duncan Phyfe dining room chair stands eighteen feet high on a twelve-foot-high limestone base. Across the railroad tracks from The Big Chair is the Lions Club Lion. A gold-painted lifesize lion on a pedestal was installed in the 1940s on the northeast quadrant of the Town Common, but was moved to its present site ca. 1970. Other monuments and commemorative pieces in the Town Common include the John W. Thomas Statue (2002), the Southern Railway Caboose X703 (placed on display in 1986), the bandstand (1983) the fountain (1969), and the clock tower (2002).

Of the seventy-nine resources in the Thomasville Downtown Historic District, sixty-five percent contribute to the historic associations or historic architectural qualities for which the district is significant. Those that do not contribute to the historic and architectural significance of the district were either built after the end of the period of significance (1957) or were substantially remodeled after that time, as described previously. Almost no additions have been made to buildings in the district since the end of the period of significance, and only one building—the Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot—has been moved. Overall, the general condition and integrity of the district's buildings are good. While there have been changes within the district, as described above, the cumulative power of the individually significant buildings and other contributing resources creates a unified historic district that retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and that is clearly distinguishable from its surroundings.

Inventory List

The following inventory list provides basic information on all properties in the Thomasville Downtown Historic District. Included are each property's name, current address or location, date or approximate date of construction and major alterations, contributing or noncontributing status, and a summary of each property's physical character and history. Historic names—based on the first known owner or use of a building or on a building's most historically significant owner or use—are used whenever possible. Parking lots and vacant lots are listed, but are not counted as either contributing or

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noncontributing resources. Buildings, sites, structures, or objects that add to the historic associations or historic architectural qualities for which the district is significant, were present during the district's period of significance (1871-1957), relate to the documented significance of the district, and possess historic integrity, or that independently meet the National Register criteria are contributing resources and are designated as such in the inventory list. Buildings, sites, structures, or objects that do not add to the district's historic associations or historic architectural qualities for which the district is significant; were not present during the period of significance; do not relate to the documented significance of the district; and due to alterations, additions, or other changes no longer possess historic integrity; or that do not independently meet the National Register criteria are noncontributing resources and are designated as such in the inventory list.

The inventory entries are based on a combination of the on-site recording and research conducted by Edwards-Pitman Environmental during the summer of 2004 as part of the historic architectural survey of Thomasville and on additional on-site recording and research conducted by Laura A. W. Phillips during December 2004 and January 2005. The primary sources of historical information used in the preparation of the inventory are the Sanborn Map Company insurance maps for Thomasville dating from 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930, and 1948, and the Thomasville city directories, from 1928-1929 (earliest available), 1935, 1937, and 1941-1990. Of additional help were various books and articles on Thomasville (see Bibliography) and a variety of documentary photographs, photocopies of which are included in the historic resource survey files maintained by North Carolina's State Historic Preservation Office in Raleigh.

The inventory is arranged alphabetically by street and, within each street, from lowest to highest address number. The east side of a street is listed before the west side, and the north side is listed before the south side. The intersection of Main Street and Salem/Randolph streets is the center point that divides Thomasville's streets into north and south and east and west. Addresses and contributing or noncontributing status of the district's resources are keyed to the accompanying district map.

Town Common and Railroad Right of Way

Contributing site

Both sides of the railroad tracks between Trade and Commerce streets

Rather than a square that serves as the community focal point in many towns and cities, Thomasville has a linear town common. Flanking the railroad tracks that have played a central role in Thomasville's history and economy, the town common within the historic district splits Main Street into north and south sections and extends from just west of Trade Street eastward to just past Commerce Street. The common is divided near its center by the north-south junction of Salem and Randolph streets. The common west of Salem Street has a grassy lawn, low hedges bordering the railroad right of way, and trees along the north side. The north side contains at its west end the Thomasville Railroad Passenger

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Depot, and moving eastward from it are a frame restroom building, a red caboose on a small stretch of track, a monument to John W. Thomas, a bandstand, and near the southwest corner of Salem and West Main streets, Thomasville's Big Chair. South of the tracks at the northwest corner of West Main and Randolph streets stands the Lion's Club Lion. Within the town common east of Salem Street, low hedges border the tracks and trees line the south half. The north half also contains the small Nona Ingram Welborn Memorial Park at the southeast corner of East Main and Salem streets. Just east of it stands the city's clock tower, and beyond that a public parking lot extends eastward past Commerce Street.

Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot
1871

Contributing building

The Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot is one of the oldest surviving frame depots in North Carolina. Originally located on the south side of the railroad tracks, it served as a passenger depot until 1912, at which time a brick depot (no longer standing) was erected. The frame depot was then moved to the north side of the tracks, where it served for many years as the freight agent's office. After it ceased to use the building, the Southern Railway Company gave the depot to the city. It was restored in the 1970s and listed in the National Register in 1981. Today it serves as Thomasville's Visitor Center. Representative of many of the railroad stations built in North Carolina after the Civil War, the passenger depot is a small-scale rectangular structure with a projecting bay on one side. It features German siding above a vertical-board wainscot and a frieze of decorative sawnwork detailing beneath the widely overhanging braced eaves of the gable roof (Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot National Register nomination, *Historic Thomasville Walking Tour, #1; A History of City Government, 45*).

Restroom Building
1999

Noncontributing building

Just east of the passenger depot stands a one-story, frame, public restroom building. A smaller, simpler version of the depot, it was erected in 1999 (*A History of City Government, 45*).

Southern Railway Caboose X703
Placed on display in 1986

Noncontributing object

East of the restroom building stands a red caboose on a short stretch of track. Standing parallel to West Main Street and the railroad tracks, it carries the painted inscription, "Southern X703." Although the date of the caboose is not known, it was placed on display in 1986, where it further reminds townspeople

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and visitors of Thomasville's railroad history (*A History of City Government*, 45).

John W. Thomas Statue
2002

Noncontributing object

Commissioned for Thomasville's sesquicentennial celebration, the approximately 1,200 pound, slightly larger than life-size, bronze statue set on a brick base—which holds a time capsule—was designed by artist Dick Idol and cost \$50,000. Subject John Warrick Thomas (1800-1871) was the founder and early leader of Thomasville. Serving in the General Assembly in 1842 and in the State Senate in 1848, he was a major proponent of the North Carolina Railroad Bill and contracted to build three sections of the line. In anticipation of the arrival of the railroad in eastern Davidson County, Thomas purchased 400 acres in the path of the chosen route and encouraged the creation of a town that could take full advantage of the many benefits that the railroad would bring (*Historic Thomasville Walking Tour*, #2).

Bandstand
1983

Noncontributing structure

East of the Thomas statue is the city bandstand. Octagonal in shape, it is a frame structure with a matching balustrade and frieze and bracketed posts that support a polygonal roof with a finial at the top. Local builder Parker Kennedy designed and built the bandstand, which replaced an earlier one of similar design. The bandstand was built in honor of Pauline Phillips Walker for her dedication to beautification and presented to the city by the Thomasville Garden Club Council. Buried next to the bandstand is a vault to be opened during the city's tri-centennial celebration in September 2052.

The Big Chair
1950 (Local designation, 2002)

Contributing object

By 1921 Thomasville had become such a major manufacturer of chairs that it gained the nickname "Chair Town." In 1922 the town built what was claimed to be the largest chair in the world as a symbol of the town's long and significant history in furniture manufacturing and craftsmanship. By 1936 this original wood chair, which contained enough lumber for one hundred ordinary chairs, had deteriorated so much that it was removed. The current chair was constructed in 1950 to replace the original. A reproduction of a Duncan Phyfe dining room chair in the Smithsonian, only six times larger, it stands eighteen feet high on a twelve-foot-high base of Indiana limestone. The base is twenty-two feet square with concave corners and is classically detailed. It contained a copper box time capsule filled with records of Thomasville's past and present and small samples of locally manufactured products. The

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capsule was opened in 2002 during Thomasville's sesquicentennial celebration. The chair itself is fabricated of a steel skeleton, made by the Salem Steel Company of Winston-Salem, on which wire mesh holds a concrete coating of cement and granite dust. The chair is painted to resemble Honduras mahogany and upholstered damask. James Buford Harvey was the sculptor. With its prominent location, The Big Chair—designated by the City Council as a local historic landmark in 2002—continues to serve as the proud symbol of Thomasville (*Historic Thomasville Walking Tour*, #3; Matthews and Sink, 173-174; Local Historic Landmark Designation Report for The Big Chair,).

Lions Club Lion

Contributing object

ca. 1945/moved early 1970s

The golden-painted life-sized lion stands on a pedestal at the northwest corner of West Main and Randolph streets. Originally it was located on the north side of the railroad tracks a block and a half east near Memorial Park Drive. The local Lions Club installed it there in the mid-1940s as a symbol of the prominent local organization. The lion was moved to its present site in the early 1970s. Although it has been moved, the lion remains prominently located within the town common and thereby maintains its integrity and significance (*The State*, July 26, 1947).

Nona Ingram Welborn Memorial Park

Noncontributing structure

1969

This small park at the southeast corner of East Main and Salem streets, across Salem Street from the Big Chair, centers on a round, brick-bordered pool with fountain. The pool is encircled by a flower bed and a brick walkway. Low shrubbery and four steel benches complete the diminutive park, which was dedicated on November 11, 1969, to the memory of Nona Ingram Welborn.

Clock Tower

Noncontributing structure

2002

Immediately east of the Welborn Memorial Park is Thomasville's clock tower and carillon. Dedicated on June 20, 2002, it is a tall, openwork steel structure with four clock faces above the carillon, all sheltered by a pyramidal roof topped by a weathervane. Dolen J. and Hazel Bowers donated it to the citizens of Thomasville on the city's 150th anniversary.

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COMMERCE STREET (East Side)**Commercial Building**

Contributing building

3-7 Commerce Street
ca. 1936

Three storefronts occupy this one-story red brick building with simple brickwork detailing, a narrow concrete band outlining each storefront, and tile cornice coping. Hamrick's Grocery occupied 7 Commerce Street in 1937; in 1941 Thomasville Auto Parts was located at 3 Commerce Street. This storefront has been replaced with a modern garage door. The central storefront (5) and the north-end storefront (7) are nearly identical. Each has a half-glazed center door—5 Commerce Street with diamond-shaped panes and 7 Commerce Street with rectangular panes—set between large display windows with transoms covered by modern wood paneling (City Directory, 1937, 1941-1942; Sanborn Map, 1930, 1948).

Hudson-Belk Storage Building

Noncontributing building

9 Commerce Street
ca. 1958

In the 1960s this small building was used for storage by the Hudson-Belk Store (later Belk-Yates). The one-story, plain, concrete block building with a common-bond brick façade and tile cornice coping has a recessed entrance and a single front window that has been boarded over (Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1954-1955, 1956-1957, 1958-1959, 1960-1961, 1962-1963, 1974).

Parking Lot**Thomasville Water Tank**

Contributing structure

Northeast side Commerce Street (13)
1935

Rising like a tentacled spaceship over Thomasville's downtown, the water tank has a round, cushion-like storage chamber at the top with multiple vertical supports, a web of bracing, a center pipe with a spiral stair, and stair access to the outer rim. The water tank was built at a cost of \$85,000 to supplement the adjacent 100,000-gallon tank that stood from ca. 1912 until it was dismantled and sold in 1963. The

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1935 metal tank holds 1,000,000 gallons, at the time of its construction an adequate day's supply for the city. Today it continues to provide a source of pressure and storage for Thomasville's water distribution system (*Twin City Sentinel*, November 17, 1938; *A History of City Government*, 75).

COMMERCE STREET (West Side)**Commercial Building**

Contributing building

2, 4, 6 and 8 Commerce Street
ca. 1926

This one-story brick building containing four separate stores was the first building, of those that stand, constructed on Commerce Street, which appeared on the Sanborn maps for the first time in 1930. Each of the four sections, which are defined by brick pilasters with masonry caps and bases, features a brick soldier course at the cornice line, a stuccoed masonry panel with diamond-shaped decorative elements on the upper facade, and a central door flanked by windows. The store at 2 Commerce Street housed a seafood market in the late 1920s, but by 1937 it was the home of the Modern Beauty Nook. The store at 4 Commerce Street was vacant in 1930, but by 1937 City Radio Repair had its shop here. By 1929, the store at 6 Commerce Street housed the offices of Dr. L.A. Curry, an African American physician, but by 1937 his office had been replaced by the National Bicycle and Lock Shop. In 1929, 8 Commerce Street contained a barbecue outlet called Buck's Place, but by 1937 it had become the shop of Mrs. Cleo Elliott, dressmaker. In subsequent years, the four shopfronts have continued to serve a variety of businesses (*City Directory*, 1928-1929, 1937; *Sanborn Map*, 1923, 1930).

Hudson-Belk Annex

Contributing building

12 Commerce Street
ca. 1950

The sides and rear of this large, one-story building are constructed with concrete blocks. The facade, however, is composed of common-bond brick and has a plain central parapet, an off-center door, and large display windows. According to the building's current owner, Hudson-Belk constructed the building as an annex to their popular department store located on East Main Street (Sue Hunter Interview; *Sanborn Map*, 1948; *City Directory*, 1949-1950, 1951-1952).

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EAST GUILFORD STREET (North Side)**Lambeth Furniture Company/Thomasville Chair Company**
12-14 East Guilford Street

A significant member of Thomasville's early-twentieth-century furniture industry, the Lambeth Furniture Company was established in 1901 to manufacture wooden kitchen safes, cabinets, and cupboards. Principal stockholders included J. W. Lambeth, R. L. Lambeth, F. S. Lambeth, and D. T. Lambeth. The original plant on East Guilford Street burned in late March 1911, but was quickly rebuilt at the same location. In 1928, at the peak of prosperity, the Lambeths sold the factory to the Knox Furniture Manufacturing Company. In 1932 Thomasville Chair Company purchased the manufacturing plant. At this time one part of the factory began to manufacture living room suites, while the rest was used for the making of high grade furniture of period design using such woods as mahogany, walnut, and maple. Under Thomasville Chair Company's ownership, which extended at least until the 1960s, the facility was known as Plant L (*The Davidsonian*, March 31, 1911; *The State*, June 20, 1936; Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1937).

Office Building (A)
1911

Contributing building

Located just west of the industrial buildings at 12 East Guilford Street, the office is a two-story brick building three bays wide and five bays deep. The facade features an entrance with transom in the westernmost bay, six-over-six sash windows with altered lintels, and a corbeled and dentiled parapeted cornice. The windows on the side elevations have segmental-arched heads.

Water Tower (B)
1911

Contributing structure

Located north of (behind) the office building is the steel water tower, a conical roofed, cylindrical tank with a catwalk, a ladder to the roof, and four support legs. The tower stands sixty feet high and has a capacity of 50,000 gallons.

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1920

Contributing building

North of the water tower is a one-story frame storage warehouse sheathed in brick-styled asphalt with a shed roof. Originally separate from the other manufacturing buildings, it is now (post 1948) connected by an enclosed frame passage and loading dock to the adjacent building on the east.

Building (D)
1911-ca. 1948; ca. 1960

Contributing building

The remaining elements of the Lambeth Furniture Company/Thomasville Chair Company complex, the majority of the manufacturing facilities, were erected soon after the 1911 fire and expanded until around 1948, connecting to other buildings as they evolved. The central building (1911) at the rear of the complex is a two-story frame structure sheathed in brick-styled asphalt, with a stepped parapet on the south end. Attached to the south end is a small, one-story frame shed covered with brick-styled asphalt, added post 1948, and a frame, two-story rear ell added between 1923 and 1930 that replaced a ca. 1911 one-story rear section. The rear section was the planing room. The main body of the building was used as the machine room in the basement and first floor, with a portion of the first floor also being used as the steam glue room; the second floor was the cabinet room. Attached to the east side of this building is a brick engine room (ca. 1911). East of it are the one-story, brick, steam dry kilns (ca. 1911-1948), to which is attached a huge, frame, flat-roofed, open lumber shed (built between 1930 and 1948) that extends to Memorial Park Drive (formerly Cemetery Street). Extending across most of the front of the complex on East Guilford Street from east of the office to Memorial Park Drive is a two-story, frame, shipping and storage building sheathed in brick-styled asphalt with a gable roof. Large, twelve-light, metal, pivot industrial windows line the second story. According to the Sanborn maps, the earliest section apparently was erected ca. 1911, but the building was expanded eastward by 1923, again by 1930, and finally by 1948. The first floor of this building was used for shipping, while the second floor was for storage. Sometime after 1948, perhaps ca. 1960, a two-story brick section on steel stilts was added along the rear of the building. Near the west end of the building, a two-story, brick, finishing wing (ca. 1911) extends northward, connecting at the north end by a second-story enclosed bridge to the building with the machine and cabinet rooms. Northeast of the finishing wing is the two-story, brick, boiler room, built between 1930 and 1948. Immediately north of the manufacturing complex is the employee parking lot, which is entered from Memorial Park Drive.

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EAST GUILFORD STREET (South Side)**Commercial Building**

Contributing building

3-7 East Guilford Street
ca. 1950

This plain, one-story brick building originally housed three businesses. Typical of many commercial buildings erected during the late 1940s and 1950s, the facade is veneered with stretcher-bond brick, has a concrete cornice coping, and metal-framed glass doors and windows. The brick surround of the storefront and upper facade of 3 East Guilford Street remains intact, as does the off-center glass door, but the area once taken up by the display windows has been infilled with brick and slightly recessed to distinguish it from the rest of the facade. The facade of number 5 (now part of number 7) has been partially enclosed with brick, but the storefront of number 7 retains its glass door and shop window as well as its flat metal awning sheltering them. Even with the various changes to the overall facade, the three-storefront building continues to project the image of a typical 1950s commercial building. Initially, 3 East Guilford Street housed the Thomasville Tribune newspaper (interestingly, it is currently occupied by a commercial printer), 5 East Guilford Street was the Thomasville Bowling Center, and 7 East Guilford Street was storage. While number 3 was still the Thomasville Tribune in the mid 1950s, numbers 5 and 7 had become the Davidson Wholesale Company (City Directory, 1949-1950, 1951-1952, 1954-1955; Sanborn Map, 1948).

Hite Building (Star Furniture)

Contributing building

9 East Guilford Street
1927

The three-story, brick Hite Building has a three-bay facade crowned with a metal cornice with a raised parapet above it bearing a central masonry panel incised with the name "Hite." The street level facade has been altered by the bricking-in of the entrance and covering of the windows with wood, but the second and third floors of the facade retain their three-part windows with one-over-one sash. The side elevations are windowless. Meade Botts Hite, from Virginia, established Thomasville's second retail furniture store, Star Furniture, in 1904. Initially it was located in a frame building on West Main Street, but when that building burned in 1916, the store moved to Salem Street. When Hite constructed the building on East Guilford Street in 1927, he first used it as a warehouse, but within a few years he moved his complete business there and expanded his line of furniture. Although Hite died in 1940, Star Furniture continued to operate from this building at least until the 1960s. Adjacent to the building on the

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east is a small parking lot (Sanborn Map, 1930; *Thomasville Times*, August 30, 1960).

Office Building

Noncontributing building

19 East Guilford Street
Late 1920s; 1998 and 2001

In the late 1920s a one-story building was erected at this location. It was used for farm machinery sales and service. The present building may have evolved from that initial building, but the only visual evidence is the sloping stepped parapet along the east wall. Otherwise, the building has been completely remodeled on both exterior and interior. The present appearance dates primarily from changes made in 1998 and 2001. Now an office building, it is covered in artificial stucco, has a heavy cornice across the facade and the west elevation, and round-arched false windows down either side. Adjacent to the building on the west is a parking lot for employees and clients (Sanborn Map, 1930, 1948; Melissa Varner Interview, January 10, 2005).

WEST GUILFORD STREET (North Side)**(former) Davidson County Office Building**

Contributing building

10 West Guilford Street
1957

On December 17, 1957, the Davidson County Office Building was dedicated and immediately put into use. The first county government structure erected in Thomasville, it cost \$76,700. Located across the street from the Thomasville City Hall, the new building initially housed offices for sheriff's deputies, public health nurses, welfare department caseworkers, and a veterans service officer. The fact that most of these offices had been using space previously in the City Hall allowed for improvements in that building also. When the County Office Building was constructed, its restrooms were the only ones in Thomasville for public use other than those in the basement of City Hall. The Cooperative Community Ministry currently uses the building. Although the architect is not known, the one-story brick building is a good example of mid-twentieth-century modernism. It is square, or nearly so, with a flat roof. The asymmetrical facade has an off-center entrance bay that is taller than the rest of the building. The glass-walled double entrance is recessed and is set within two brick walls that project several feet in front of the rest of the facade. Immediately left of the entrance bay are three contiguous windows, each with four horizontal lights, the bottom one being a bottom-hinged casement; to the right, a low brick wall that originally encompassed plantings extends eastward from the projecting entrance wall and then returns to

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the main facade wall several feet short of the east end of the facade. Large, sixteen-light windows line the side elevations, sheltered by widely projecting eaves with slanting soffits (Capel, *A Recent History of Thomasville*, 165; *Picture Your Future in Thomasville*).

WEST GUILFORD STREET (South Side)**(former) Thomasville City Hall**
7 West Guilford Street
1938

Contributing building

One of the most architecturally outstanding buildings in downtown Thomasville is the former City Hall. It is also the best example of the Art Deco style in Davidson County. Set back from the street, the two-story-with-raised-basement brick building has a flat roof and ashlar cast stone covering the twelve-bay facade and part of the side elevations. Verticality is emphasized by the various setbacks from the projecting entrance bay. Stylized details—circles, vertical bars, and zigzags superimposed on wavy lines—are incised in the stone near the top of the building, and at the head of the center bay is the round city seal. The building has steel casement windows, and the spandrels beneath the first-floor facade windows have “concentric” squares. Flanking the facade entrances are original Art Deco-style bronze light fixtures. The interior of the well-preserved building possesses an Art Deco entrance hall and lobby. The well-detailed area includes a terrazzo tile floor, a high cast stone ashlar wainscot, fluted cast stone posts with abstract foliate capitals, and a plastered ceiling that is recessed in three steps and has a stylized triglyph frieze. Original white-glass-and-metal Art Deco light fixtures hang from the ceiling. In addition to the central lobby and administrative offices, the building originally contained the fire department in the east wing and the city library in the west wing. Directly behind the former City Hall is a small parking lot for employees. Prior to the construction of this building, city offices occupied space in the Cates Block (no longer extant) on the east side of Salem Street, and then moved across Salem Street to the Finch Block. But as space needs continued to grow, the city purchased a lot on the south side of West Guilford Street and prepared to build a separate building to serve as the city hall. The federal Public Works Administration allocated \$60,000 for the project, and the city issued bonds for an additional \$60,000 to complete the cost of the building. The Raleigh firm of William C. Olsen and Associates, Engineers and Architects, designed the building. Albert L. Haskins Jr. was the architectural associate, and Olsen was the consulting engineer. When City Hall opened, it had ample room for the administrative department, the judicial department, the police station and jail, the welfare department, a health clinic, and the fire station. For nearly twenty years, until the County Office Building and a library building were erected, the city branch of the public library and other county agencies were also housed at

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City Hall. In 1991, City Hall moved from its 1938 building to the First National Bank building at 10 Salem Street. At that time, the 1938 building was turned over to the exclusive use of the police department, which it remains today (Matthews and Sink, 102; *A History of City Government*, 62).

Police Protector Memorial
2001

Noncontributing object

In front of the main entrance to the police department on the easternmost recessed wing of the building is a bronze sculpture of a policeman holding the hand of a young girl set on an inscribed stone base. Honoring officers slain in the line of active duty, the statue cost \$49,000, which was paid for by citizen and organization donations (*A History of City Government*, 93).

EAST MAIN STREET (North Side)**Mann's Drug Store**
2 East Main Street
ca. 1905; late 1950s

Noncontributing building

Sanborn maps indicate that a two-story brick building was here at least as early as 1908, when it was a clothing store. However, its present appearance dates from the late 1950s, when it was drastically remodeled. At that time, it was brick veneered, obscuring the historic fabric, and a cast-stone stringcourse between floors and a cast-stone cornice coping were added. Two large, fixed-glass, horizontal, second-floor windows rest on the stringcourse of the facade. Similar, but smaller, louvered windows sit on the stringcourse of the west, Salem Street, elevation. The shopfront, which is sheltered by a fabric awning, was also changed during the 1950s remodeling from one composed of a wall of windows and a door to the current recessed shopfront. At the time of the remodeling, the brick veneering took in an additional old building behind this one that faced Salem Street. A 1920s photograph shows that originally the corner building had large, three-part windows on the facade, with smaller ones down the Salem Street elevation, all with low segmental-arched lintels. At the top of the building was a band of heavily corbeled brickwork, above which was a molded cornice crowned by parapets and acroteria. (By 1940 the parapets and acroteria had been removed.) A fabric awning sheltered the shopfront. The two-story building that faced Salem Street was three bays wide and had tall, round-arched windows—the center one taller and larger than the other two—and a classical cornice. For most of its history, from at least as early as 1913 until at least the mid 1960s, this building was a drugstore. During the late 1920s, Harville Drug Company was here, but by 1937, the store had become Mann's Drug Store, which it

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remained for at least two decades. By 1966, the building was occupied by Super-D-Discount (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955, 1966; *The State*, July 26, 1947, 21; Matthews and Sink, between 228 and 229).

Rose's 5, 10, 25 Cent Store

Contributing building

6 East Main Street

First quarter twentieth century

This two-story brick building may have been erected by 1908, but its present appearance suggests a date in the 1910s or 1920s. The building is distinguished by three bands of slightly projecting and darker brick beltcourses above the five boarded-up windows (originally one-over-one sash) on the second floor. Other features include a corbeled cornice and a soldier course above the first story and as a continuous lintel above the second-story windows. A bellcast metal awning (post 1959) shelters the metal-framed glass display windows and recessed double-leaf door. The remnants of a Pepsi-Cola mural remain on the upper east wall. The building has had a variety of commercial occupants, but from at least the late 1920s through the mid 1940s it housed Rose's Five, Ten, and Twenty-Five Cent Store (Sanborn Map 1908, 1913, 1923; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955; *The State*, July 26, 1947).

Peace's Restaurant

Contributing building

8 East Main Street

ca. 1910

This modest one-story brick building may have been erected as early as ca. 1910, but with some remodeling later. Nevertheless, its present appearance is very similar to that shown in a 1940s photograph. The building has only a brick header course above the shopfront and a projecting row of bricks at the cornice to relieve the plain brickwork that covers the rest of the upper facade. A flat metal awning shelters the storefront, which is composed of large, metal-framed display windows and a central glass door. Arched windows pierce the rear elevation. In 1913, this was a pool room, but Peace's Restaurant was located here from the late 1920s through at least the mid 1950s (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1923; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955; *The State*, July 26, 1947).

McLellan's Store

Contributing building

10 East Main Street

ca. 1920

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The two-story, brick building features a stepped parapet and three sets of paired one-over-one sash windows on the upper floor. The plain brickwork of the upper facade is relieved by decorative brickwork in the form of bands around the windows, along the sides of the facade, and outlining the cornice. A narrow cornice runs across the top of the shopfront. A flat metal awning, beneath the boarded-up transom, shelters the large glass display windows and metal-framed, recessed, glass doors that make up the shopfront. The interior retains a decorative pressed-metal ceiling, one of only a few buildings in the district to do so. The exposed west-side elevation exhibits five-to-one common-bond brick with the header courses darker than the stretchers. The rear elevation features arched-head windows and three small additions: a brick shed-roofed furnace room on the west end, a cinderblock and plywood addition near the center, and a concrete block addition with the words "McLellan's Freight Door" still visible on the door at the east end. In the late 1920s, two stores occupied the building, which was numbered 10-12: Green Furniture Company and J. C. Green and Sons, Undertakers at number 10 and Murphy's Drug Store at number 12. However, from the mid 1930s through at least the mid 1950s, McLellan's, a department store, occupied the entire building as number 10 (Sanborn Map, 1913, 1923; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955).

Crutchfield Building

16 East Main Street

(formerly) 14-16-18 East Main Street
ca. 1918

Contributing building

(formerly) 20 East Main Street
1913

Contributing building

Though unified in its design, this two-story block actually consists of two separate buildings. The first built, in 1913, was 20 East Main Street, a hardware store. It is shown, by itself, in a period photograph, clearly identifiable with the building today. The remainder of the block, 14-16-18 East Main Street, followed ca. 1918. (The 1913 Sanborn Map shows both 18 and 20 "from plans," but the plans apparently changed, so that 18 was erected slightly later, with 14-16. Sixteen East Main Street was the designated address for the variety of offices housed on the second floor.) A row of ten round-arched windows on the second floor of the facade distinguishes the block. What was previously 20 East Main Street has three windows, the center one larger than the other two. The remainder of the building, formerly 14-16-18 East Main Street, follows this arrangement, but with an additional window of the smaller size in the center. The smaller windows are one-over-one sash, while the larger windows are paired one-over-one

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sash. A fanlight is in the round arch of each. A stringcourse at arch impost height carries across the facade. Above the windows, a metal cornice runs across the entire length of the building, except where it has been lost over one bay at the far west end. Above the cornice is a parapet. When 20 East Main Street was built, it had a stepped parapet, but it probably was removed when the rest of the block was added. At first-story level, the cornice has been removed, and the transom area has been covered. The altered storefront consists of large display windows and doors framed in metal. Central Motor Company (14), The Boston Store (18), and Crutchfield Hardware (20) were among the tenants in the late 1920s. A large warehouse for the hardware business once stood behind Crutchfield Hardware (20) and the two were joined by a second story connector. In 1937, Eugene A. Pegg, jeweler, had taken over 14, but the occupants of 18 and 20 remained the same. The listings were the same in the mid 1940s. However, by the mid 1950s, although Crutchfield Hardware was still at 20, 14-18 had joined to create one store, Rose's (Sanborn Map, 1908 1913, 1923, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955; *Thomasville: "The Chair Town,"* 47).

Alley (to LSB Courtyard)

Added in 2003, an ironwork arch that says "LSB Courtyard" spans the narrow alley between 20 and 24 East Main Street.

Commercial Building
24-26 East Main Street
ca. 1920

Contributing building

Built on the site of the Thomasville Hotel, this two-story brick building has nine windows with soldier-course lintels across the second floor of the facade. The former one-over-one sash have been replaced recently with windows with four-light transoms. Above the windows, a course of dogtooth bricks and three projecting brick beltcourses near the cornice carry across the facade. A narrow cornice heads the first story, but the transoms have been boarded-up. Fabric awnings shelter the shopfronts, which have been altered with replacement display windows and doors. The exposed west elevation has common-bond brickwork and slightly arched windows. The interior of 26 retains a decorative pressed-metal ceiling. In the late 1920s this building contained three business: S&S Variety, the Princess Theater, and the Palace Barber Shop. In 1937, the Dixie Store, a women's clothing store, the Palace Barber Shop, Hill Jewelry Company, and Cut Rate Furniture Company were here. The Dixie Store and Cut Rate Furniture were still occupants of the building in the mid 1950s (City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1954-1955; Sanborn Map, 1913, 1923).

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Thomasville Downtown Historic District
Davidson County, North Carolina**Commercial Building**

Noncontributing building

32 East Main Street
ca. 1920; ca. 1925; ca. 1959

The plain, metal-paneled facade of 32 East Main Street hides two earlier two-story brick buildings beneath it: 30-32 East Main Street, built between 1923 and 1930, and 34-36-38 East Main Street, built between 1913 and 1923. The facades of these buildings may survive beneath the more recent metal sheathing. Nine windows divided into three bays by projecting brick pilasters on the second story and prism-glass transoms above the shopfronts characterized 30-32 East Main Street. Hedrick Auto Company was probably the first occupant of this building, but by 1937 and for many years thereafter, it was home to the Hudson-Belk Store. The adjacent building to the east, 34-38 East Main Street, had two shopfronts and six windows across the second level of the facade. In the late 1920s, this was the Hall Motor Company, but in later years it held a variety of other businesses, including the Cranford Groceteria in 36 and the Rose Furniture Company in 38. A 1959 photograph shows the facade of 30-32 East Main Street with its metal sheathing (it was still uncovered in 1956), and the facade of 34-38 probably was sheathed soon thereafter. In addition to the current metal-sheathed upper facade, a flat metal awning shelters the entire first story. The store windows and doors are deeply recessed, and two brick piers support the front edge of the first story (Sanborn Map, 1913, 1923, 1930; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955; *Picture Your Future in Thomasville*; *Thomasville Times*, September 29, 1990, 21-I).

Commercial Building

Contributing building

40 East Main Street
ca. 1925

This one-story brick building has a decorative band of soldier course bricks at the cornice and bordering a horizontal stuccoed panel decorated with terra cotta diamond shapes above the storefront. It is nearly identical in appearance to 2, 4, 6, and 8 Commerce Street behind it. The street level is covered with formstone, a later alteration, which surrounds the shop windows and central, recessed, metal-framed glass door. A wide, prism-glass transom remains intact beneath a fabric awning. In the late 1920s, C. N. Brown, jeweler, was located here. Other tenants occupied the building in the 1930s and 1940s, but by the mid 1950s, this was the home of the Tasty Bakery. The Rolling Pin, also a bakery, is now located here (Sanborn Map, 1923, 1930; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955).

(Intersection with Commerce Street)

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Davidson County, North Carolina**Commercial Building**
42-46 East Main Street
ca. 1928

Contributing building

This one-story brick building has modest decorative elements executed in brick—including diamond motifs and a wide band of vertically-laid bricks—in the upper facade. Brick pilasters divide the building into three storefronts, whose transoms have been boarded-up. The center shop has a recessed entrance, while those on either side are flush with the facade. Large shop windows are set on low bulkheads; glass doors are surrounded with wood. Small windows along the Commerce Street elevation have been bricked-up. Sanborn maps suggest that a wide canopy once carried across the facade and continued a short way around the corner of the Commerce Street elevation. Along the exposed east wall of the building is a mural depicting the history of the Mills Home orphanage. It is one of three wall murals painted in the city in 1993. The building has had a variety of tenants, but from the mid 1930s through at least the mid 1950s, Rose Marie Beauty Shoppe occupied 46 East Main Street (Sanborn Map, 1923, 1930; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955; *Historic Thomasville Walking Tour*, #18).

EAST MAIN STREET (South Side)**(former) United States Post Office**
1 East Main Street
1926

Contributing building

The United States government, under supervising architect James Wetmore, erected this small but well detailed Colonial Revival-style building. The approximately square, one-story brick building is five bays wide and five deep. Large fifteen-over-fifteen sash windows on the front and two sides of the building are set within round-arched brick moldings, while the side elevations also have three pairs of windows with transoms and segmental-arched heads. The classical entrance is composed of a recessed door with transom set within fluted pilasters and a full entablature with triglyphed frieze and dentiled, pedimented cornice. The building has a heavily molded and dentiled wood cornice, above which rises a brick parapet with interspersed sections of turned balusters across the facade. A loading dock and a small parking lot are located at the building's rear. The post office occupied this building until 1963. In 1972, the federal government conveyed the building to the City of Thomasville, which now uses it as the offices of the Parks and Recreation Department. The Thomasville City Council designated the building as a local

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historic landmark in 2001 (Capel, *In Words and Pictures*, 28; *Historic Thomasville Walking Tour*, # 14).

Swicegood's Soda Shop/Post Office Annex

Noncontributing building

3 East Main Street
ca. 1947; ca. 1970s

This one-story brick building appears to have had originally a simple Art Deco facade with a central semi-elliptical window. However, probably during the 1970s, the original facade was replaced with a plain brick one. The present storefront window differs in shape, though not in its position, from the original window; the single-leaf glass door is just west of it. Although Swicegood's Soda Shop apparently was the original occupant, by late 1949 and thereafter, the building was listed as the Post Office Annex (Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1945-1946, 1947-1948, 1949-1950, 1956-1957; *Pictorial History*, 110).

Building

Noncontributing building

5-7 ½ East Main Street
ca. 1948; ca. 1980s

The two-story brick building has a replacement stuccoed façade and replacement windows with crowning pediments on the upper story. A large, shingled, hipped-roof awning shelters the storefronts, which appear to be in original form but sheathed in modern synthetic materials. The building has held a variety of businesses. In the late 1940s, the Ashmore Business College, dentists Edwin Cuthrell and J. Clairborne Pennington, the North Carolina Employment Services Commission, the Palace Barber Shop, and Pegg-Hilton Jewelers were the occupants (Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1945-1946; 1947-1948, 1949-1950).

The Boston Store

Contributing building

9 East Main Street
ca. 1947

In the 1930s and 1940s, several downtown buildings sported Art Deco-style pigmented structural glass facades. The Boston Store is the only one of these facades that survives. Black pigmented structural glass sheathes the facade and part of the east side elevation of this two-story brick building. A single large display window with a simple cast-stone surround and with a striped metal awning dominates the center of the façade. The intact street-level displays large windows and a deeply recessed glass door. A

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large, glass-block window pierces the black glass of the east elevation near the front corner of the building. Second-story windows on the east elevation also are glass block. The Boston Store was the original occupant, remaining at this location until recent years (Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1945-1946, 1947-1948, 1949-1950. 1956-1957; Charlotte Sears Interview).

WEST MAIN STREET (North Side)**State Commercial Bank**
6 West Main Street
1902; 1953; 1980s-1990s

Contributing building

This prominent, brick, corner building was constructed as a two-story building with the name "Lambeth" at the top in 1902. It displayed a primary corner entrance and shopfronts on the West Main Street elevation with large windows and transoms and tall, slender supporting colonettes. The second story had tall, round-arched windows with keystone hood molds and a heavily corbeled brick cornice topped by a parapet with finials and a raised corner decoration. In 1953, the building was greatly altered. At that time, the two floors were converted to three (within the same building height), and the building was re-surfaced with brick, giving a very stripped-down effect. The brick walls were plain, with two rows of louvered windows with a stone stringcourse forming a continuous sill at the bottom of each row and with flat-arched brick lintels. New windows at street level replaced two of the original shopfronts; the remaining shopfront on the west end of the West Main Street elevation was modernized. In the 1980s or 1990s, the building was again altered, but to a much lesser extent. At this time the building was painted white, the first floor windows were changed to almost-square windows with a double-cross pattern of muntins, the upper-floor windows were replaced with one-over-one sash, and a three-sided metal cap was added to the cornice at the corner of the building. Several drug stores (Thomasville Drug Store, C. R. Thomas Drug Store, Poole's Drug Store) occupied the building during its two-story phase in the first half of the twentieth century, and Lambeth Hall was on the second floor during part of this time. However, State Commercial Bank converted the building to its present three-story appearance and was the primary occupant for many years beginning in the 1950s (Sanborn Map 1908, 1948; Capel, *In Words and Pictures*, 12, 16).

Commercial Building
8-10 West Main Street
Mid-1920s; ca. 1980

Noncontributing building

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This two-story brick building with blank, brick-veneered upper facade and metal-framed glass display windows and doors on its street-level shopfronts that are sheltered by a broad, flat, metal awning, dates from the ca. 1980 remodeling of a mid 1920s building. That building had two shopfronts, four round-arched windows on the second floor, and a parapeted classical cornice. From at least 1937 through the mid 1950s, the Reliable Shoe Store occupied one of the shopfronts (Sanborn Map, 1923, 1930; City Directory, 1937, 1956-1957).

Jones Department Store/Lambeth Building

Noncontributing building

12 West Main Street
ca. 1935; 1970s

The plain, brown, stretcher-bond brick facade of this three-story-with-mezzanine building probably dates from the 1970s. The two upper stories have rows of thirteen one-over-one sash windows. The street-level has a modern recessed entrance and two show windows sheltered by a full-width fabric canopy. The exposed sides of the building are windowless; the rear has rows of two-over-two sash windows. The first floor interior retains its iron support columns and mezzanine. Only the number and placement of the windows on the upper floors survive from the original facade of this building. When built ca. 1935 until it was remodeled in the 1970s, the building (then listed as 12-14-16) boasted a sophisticated Art Deco facade composed of pigmented structural glass in contrasting colors (black and white?). A dark band surrounded the facade, and it, along with a zigzag band of alternating light and dark glass formed the cornice. "Lambeth Building" in Art Deco lettering was placed between the second and third floors. Dark bands with a row of dark diamonds divided the upper floors from the storefront. The west side of the storefront had a wide dark vertical stripe. Near each end of the storefront were small narrow decorative windows in a stretched-octagon shape. The shopfronts were composed entirely of window glass set on a base of pigmented structural glass, and the three entrances were recessed. Initially, and until the late 1940s, this was the Jones Department Store. From that point until the mid 1970s, Efird's Department was the primary tenant. The upper floors held multiple professional offices as well as a beauty shop and other businesses (Sanborn Map, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1937, 1941-1942, 1945-1946, 1947-1948, 1949-1950; *Thomasville Times*, August 30, 1960, and September 29, 1990, 28-J and 2-L; Matthews and Sink, next to 153; *Centurama*; *The State*, July 26, 1947).

Commercial Building

Noncontributing building

18 West Main Street
ca. 1935; ca. 1980s

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Probably built about the same time as the Jones Department Store, this small, one-story, brick building also had a facade sheathed in pigmented structural glass. It had a modest Art Deco design with narrow dark stripes down the left side against a light background. Around the 1980s, the structural glass was removed, revealing the plain brickwork underneath. A new, narrow, dentiled cornice was added, as was a shingled shopfront canopy supported by a pair of classical posts. Initially, this was Shane's Men's Clothing, but by the 1950s it had become the Jewel Shoppe. There have been a variety of other tenants (Sanborn Map, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1937, 1954-1955; *The State*, July 26, 1947).

Commercial Building

Noncontributing building

20 West Main Street
ca. 1935; ca. 1975

The upper facade of this ca. 1935 one-story brick building was covered, probably in the mid 1970s, with a three-dimensional (with regular peaks and valleys) perforated metal grill. A flat, metal awning covers the shopfront with its center, recessed door flanked by large display windows. Vinyl siding covers the rear. Originally, the building had a pigmented structural glass facade, black with a light-colored name panel in the center and a zigzag cornice in contrasting light and dark glass like that on the Jones Department Store. Some of the black structural glass can still be seen along the east edge beneath the metal grill, although most of it is gone. A fabric canopy covered the glass shopfront. In 1937 the building housed Stadiem's Department Store. By the mid 1950s, the Gold Shop, women's wear, was at this location. It occupied the building for at least some of the time that the metal facade was in place, for according to the present owner, the word "Gold" had been painted on the grill (Sanborn Map, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1937, 1954-1955; *The State*, July 26, 1947; *Thomasville Times*, September 29, 1990; Rotha Dawkins Interview).

Walkway

When a ca. 1935 one-story brick building (22 West Main Street) was torn down in 1982, this landscaped (small trees and a variety of small plantings) walkway to the block's interior parking lot took its place. Originally this was the site of John W. Thomas's house, and a plaque commemorating the homeplace of the founder of Thomasville stands on the east side of the walkway.

C. R. Thomas Block
24-32 West Main Street
ca. 1900

Contributing building

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A split in the brickwork at the rear of this two-story brick building, between 24-26 and 28-32 West Main Street, suggests that the two sections may have been erected at different times. If so, the second part must have been built almost immediately after the first, for the earliest photograph of the building, labeled "C. R. Thomas Block" and taken by 1912, shows all four units in place, as does the earliest Sanborn Map of 1908. Today, the four sections of the block exhibit varying degrees of preservation. The most intact is the section at the east end of the row, 24 West Main Street. The second story of the facade retains its heavily corbeled cornice and three segmental-arched windows with two-over-two sash. The mostly intact storefront consists of cast metal columns fronting large display windows set on a low, paneled wood skirt and angled slightly inward to the recessed central door. Segmental-arched windows on the east side and rear elevations have been filled with brick. The next section of the block, 26 West Main Street, is the most altered (probably third quarter of the twentieth century) with a plain, replacement brick-veneered facade pierced by two metal-framed windows with horizontal lights on the second story and a storefront extending across most of the facade with two pairs of metal framed windows flanking a center, fully-glazed door. Arched windows on the rear elevation have been infilled with brick. Interestingly, while this is the most altered of the four sections of the block, it is also the only one that differed from the other three in the early photograph of the block. In the photograph, it carried the sign "The Bank of Thomasville," and while the second story was identical the other three, the first story did not have the usual storefront. Instead, and doubtless due to the additional security needed for its banking function, the first story featured only a central segmental-arched door flanked by two segmental-arched windows matching those on the second floor. The next two sections of the C. R. Thomas Block, 30-32 West Main Street, retain the original corbeled cornice. While the brick segmental arches of the second-story windows remain at 30 West Main Street, the windows themselves have been replaced with smaller, metal-framed windows like those on 26 West Main Street. The segmental-arched window openings of 32 West Main Street survive, although the window sash have been replaced with boards. The cornice that once surmounted the storefront at 30 West Main Street has been removed and replaced with new brick. Plywood stretches across the location of the original transom. The cornice and prism glass transom (the transom probably dating from the 1920s) remain at 32 West Main Street. The street-level storefronts of both 30 and 32 West Main Street are modern replacements composed of metal-framed windows and doors. Adjacent to the east end of the storefront at 30 West Main Street is a door (replacement) to the stair that originally led to the block's second floor (28 West Main Street). Windows on the rear elevations of both 30 and 32 retain their arched heads, but have been filled with brick. Many businesses have occupied the four sections of the C. R. Thomas Block through the years. Initially, the C. R. Thomas Drug Store was located in 24, but by 1913, this part of the block housed a general merchandise store, with the telephone exchange on the second floor. In the late 1920s, the Motter Dry

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Goods Store was located here, and by mid century, 24 housed both the Home Building and Loan Association and the Thomasville Realty and Trust Company. Although the Bank of Thomasville was located at 26 prior to 1912, the 1908 Sanborn Map shows a clothing store at this location, and in 1913 it was the Southern Express Office. By the late 1920s, the Simon and Hegler Confectioners called 26 home, but by mid century it housed Poole's Drug Store and the CIO Union Headquarters, United Furniture Workers. In 1908, 30 West Main Street was a grocery and 32 West Main Street was vacant. By 1913 the two, combined, were used as a dry goods and clothing store, and in the late 1920s they were Stark Clothiers. By mid century, the Wallace and Company Department Store, as well as a radio repair shop (perhaps upstairs) were in 30, while Alman and Shaw Furniture Company was located at 32 (Capel, *In Words and Pictures*, 8; Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1923, 1948; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1949-1950).

Commercial Building
34-36 West Main Street
ca. 1918

Contributing building

The second-story detailing of the two-story brick building is enhanced by the use of contrasting red and yellow brick. The cornice is corbeled and has recessed blocks of yellow brick as well as three yellow-brick corbeled pendants. The second story has four oversized arched windows with yellow-brick arches, projecting red brick hood molds with yellow-brick keystones, yellow-brick corbeled sills, and brick pilasters between the windows that have red- and yellow-brick caps integrated into a belt course that crosses the entire facade. The window arches are filled with rusticated stucco, possibly original, and lattice now covers the windows themselves. At one time, pigmented structural glass—probably dating from the 1930s—partially covered the two storefronts, but most of it has been removed. Vinyl German siding covers the skirt wall beneath the display windows on the east storefront (34), while the same area on the west storefront (36) is sheathed in narrow bricks. Both storefronts feature metal-framed glass display windows and single-leaf recessed doors. The recessed entrance to 34 has a patterned-tile floor. A much smaller storefront, 34-A, is deeply recessed. Between 34-A and 36, a door opens to a narrow stair to the second floor. Windows on the rear elevation have arched heads. The store at 36 West Main Street retains its decorative pressed metal ceiling. Kress Dry Goods and Hanes Café occupied this building in the late 1920s. By mid century, Waggoner Jewelry Company and Advance Stores Company, auto parts, were here (City Directory, 1928-1929, 1949-1950; Sanborn Map, 1913, 1923).

Commercial Building
38 West Main Street

Contributing building

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ca. 1918

A three-part window with a central six-over-one sash flanked by two three-over-one sash is the focal point of the second story of this brick building. Above it is decorative coursing: a soldier course, a projecting course, a stretcher-bond layer, a row of bricks set at an angle on-edge, a stretcher-bond layer, a soldier course, and a projecting course. Topping this is a corbeled cornice. Pigmented structural glass remains above and around an intact storefront composed of angled display windows flanking an off-center door. The storefront may be a remodeling dating from the mid 1930s, when other buildings in the district were using pigmented structural glass. The rear elevation displays a wooden bracketed cornice and arched-head windows. A Piggly Wiggly grocery store operated here in the late 1920s, but a variety of other occupants followed, including Superior Food Store and Jester's Clothing (Sanborn Map, 1913, 1923; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1949-1950).

Commercial Building42 West Main Street
ca. 1918; ca. 1935

Contributing building

Although this two-story brick building—originally two stores, now one—was erected between 1913 and 1923, the facade clearly gives the appearance of having been remodeled, probably in the 1930s or 1940s. The upper level of the facade is composed of stretcher-bond brick except for a soldier course above and below the windows and at the cornice line. Three metal-frame casement windows pierce the second story of the facade. Beneath the windows, a broad metal panel of vertical ridges with a metal mitered surround doubtless covers the location of the original transom. The storefront is composed of metal-framed windows and a recessed central double-leaf glass door in a metal frame. A metal skirt runs beneath the display windows. The west side and rear elevations show the ghost marks of arched-head windows now infilled with brick. The west elevation carries a painted mural depicting the ca. 1912 brick Southern Railway Depot, a Southern Railway engine, and the Mock Hotel which stood on the south side of the railroad. The mural, one of three painted in Thomasville in 1993, was created by artist Phil Christman. A bakery operated in the west half of the building in the late 1920s; at mid century, Tomlinson Grocery Store was here (Sanborn Map 1913, 1923; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1949-1950; *Historic Thomasville Walking Tour*, #47).

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WEST MAIN STREET (South Side)

Willie Edward and Dorothy Lee Lindsay Harper Mini Park Noncontributing site
Southwest corner of West Main and Randolph streets

Dedicated in July 1989, the Harper Mini Park is characterized by a grassy lawn and shrubbery. It was created on the site of a pair of two-story brick buildings that for many years housed the City Grocery and Thomasville Hardware with a lodge hall on the second floor.

Until their demolition in the 1980s, the City Grocery and Thomasville Hardware buildings at the corner were listed as 1 and 3 West Main Street. Therefore, what is now 1-7 West Main Street was originally 5, 7, and 9, and what is now 9 and 11 were listed originally as 11 or 11 and 11 1/2.

Commercial Building Contributing building
1-7 West Main Street
1932

The three shopfronts of this one-story brick building are divided by slightly projecting brick pilasters between the stores and at each end of the building. While the shopfronts at 3-5 and 7 are equal in width, the shopfront at 1 West Main Street is only half the width of either of the other two. The transom area of all three shopfronts has been covered with modern materials, all three have metal-framed glass windows and doors, and part of the lower section of number 7 has been infilled with brick. The upper level of the building's facade is decorated with alternating vertical columns of brick headers and stretchers. A date block near the bottom of the building at its west end proclaims its date of construction as 1932. The original occupants of the building, who continued to occupy it for at least two decades, were Standard Barber Shop (1), Textile Distributors Inc. Manufacturing Agent (3-5), and the News and Times, later with Paramount Printers (7) (Sanborn Map, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1937, 1941-1942, 1945-1946, 1947-1948, 1949-1950, 1960-1961).

Bus Station and Restaurant Contributing building
9-11 West Main Street
ca. 1937; ca. 1946

The histories of 9-11 West Main Street are intertwined and, in fact, 11 West Main Street may have been built as an addition to 9 West Main Street. Historically, the two were always listed as 11 West Main

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Street. The current 9 West Main Street is a small, one-story brick building set back from 1-7 West Main Street. A wood-shingled awning carries across the facade and most of the exposed west elevation. The front has a door and a window; the west side has a door and an enclosed window. Set back from the one-story 9 West Main Street is the plain, two-story brick 11 West Main Street. It is three bays across and nine bays deep. The front has a center door and flanking windows (west window enclosed); the door has a metal awning, while wood-shingled awnings shelter the windows. Matching windows with awnings are on the front half of the west elevation. The center of the west elevation has a door and a smaller window on its south side; this door and window are repeated near the rear of this elevation. The second floor has modern two-over-two sash windows. City directories indicate the occupants of the building over time; however, they do not tell which occupants were in the one-story versus the two-story sections of the building. Ivey L. Pierce was listed with a restaurant here in 1937. Occupants in 1941-1942 were the bus station and Pierce's Bar-B-Q and Restaurant. By 1945-1946, the Reliable Bond and Loan Company, the Thomasville Transit Company, and Pierce's Bar-B-Q and Restaurant were occupants. In 1947-1948, the building housed the Cozy Beauty Shop and "Woodrow W. Lambeth (8)," probably eight rooms, the first suggestion that the two-story building would have been present if this was partly a rooming house. In the 1949-1950 directory, the occupants included "William F. Benton, furnished rooms (10)," along with the Cozy Beauty Shop and Muzzy's Grill. By 1960 the building was vacant (Sanborn Map, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1937, 1941-1942, 1945-1946, 1947-1948, 1949-1950, 1960-1961).

Dr. Orien R. Hodgin Dental Office
17 West Main Street
1939

Contributing building

This small, one-story, single-pile, brick veneer building has a side-gable roof and an interior chimney. The four-bay facade, which actually faces Mock Street, has an off-center door with a Colonial Revival surround and three windows, all covered by fabric awnings. The north elevation, on West Main Street, has a single large window. The east elevation has four windows, and the south elevation has a door and two windows. The north and south gables each have a small round window. The building has had only two owners. Dr. Orien R. Hodgin, a dentist, built it in 1939 as his dental office. He had earlier occupied an office in the First National Bank Building on Salem Street. Hodgin married Catherine Mock, whose father was a doctor and lived in an old house on West Main Street. According to local tradition, Dr. Mock gave Hodgin a front corner of his lot on which to build his dental office. At the time of its construction, the office was considered by professionals in the field to be a model of the modern dental office. Dr. Hodgin practiced dentistry until he was seventy-five years old. When he retired, he gave the dental office to Dr. Robert L. Sprinkle II, who has since then operated a foot and ankle clinic in the

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building (Robert L. Sprinkle Interview; Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1937, 1941-1942).

RANDOLPH STREET (West Side)**Alley****Thomasville Store Grocery/Movie Theatre**
6 Randolph Street
1939

Contributing building

The six-bay facade of this two-story brick building retains defining original features such as brick pilasters that rise at either end of the facade and at the center, a masonry cornice coping with the inscribed building date above the center pilaster, and masonry lintels above the six second-floor windows and above what had been the storefront. The storefront has been enclosed with a stuccoed wall with two doors and a small window, and the second-floor facade windows have been partially enclosed. A 1993 mural depicting Main Street at its intersection with Salem Street in the late 1920s covers the north elevation. Paid for by Holton Furniture Company and the citizens of Thomasville, it was created by artist Phil Christman. In 1941, the Thomasville Store Grocery was located here. By 1954 the Davidson Theatre and the Davidson Soda Shop occupied the building (City Directory, 1941-1942, 1954-1955).

Westmoreland's Music and Furniture Store
8 Randolph Street
ca. 1936

Contributing building

This two-story brick building has a stepped parapet across the facade, four pairs of six-over-six sash windows (replacement sash), and two shallow horizontal panels above each pair of windows. The storefront has a deeply recessed central entrance but otherwise has been remodeled with replacement show windows and polished stone marquetry surrounds. In 2004 metal cornices were added at the facade roofline, above the pairs of second-floor windows, and above the storefront. Westmoreland's Music and Furniture Store occupied the building for at least its first forty years (City Directory, 1937, 1941-1942, 1954-1955, 1976).

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SALEM STREET (East Side)**Bank of Thomasville**

Noncontributing building

9 Salem Street
ca. 1905; ca. 1960

Perhaps as early as 1960, this three-story building was modernized, taking on its current appearance. A flat metal awning shelters the metal-framed glass storefront, and the upper two stories are sheathed in vertical bands of enameled-metal panels separated by vertical bands of metal grilling. Much of the original granite facade can be seen through the grill, suggesting that if the modern facade were removed, the building could once again contribute to the historic character of the district. Initially this was the Bank of Thomasville, organized in 1899. The building probably was erected soon thereafter, but certainly by 1908. The three-story, two-bay-wide, brick building had a Romanesque Revival-style rusticated stone facade with pilasters dividing the first story into an entrance bay and a window-filled bay. The second floor had two pairs of one-over-one sash windows, and the third floor had round-arched compound windows, the whole topped by a classical cornice. From 1923 to 1933, the building housed the Page Trust Company with a photography studio on the second floor. A one-story brick section attached to the rear of 9 and 11 Salem Street held bank offices in the late 1920s. During the 1950s, a savings and loan company occupied the building (*Thomasville: "The Chair Town,"*; Capel, *In Words and Pictures*, 34; Sanborn Map, 1930; City Directory, 1928-1929).

Commercial Building

Noncontributing building

11 Salem Street
ca. 1905; 1960s

This two-story brick building originally had a typical early-twentieth-century shopfront, four segmental-arched windows on the second floor, and a corbeled brick cornice. The building was modernized, probably during the 1960s, so that its current facade is completely different from the original. Now, a flat metal awning shelters the metal-framed glass storefront, and the rest of the facade is covered with formstone. Modern horizontal-light windows replace the originals. Stucco covers the north elevation where the Cates Block once stood. A barbershop occupied the first floor during the 1910s and 1920s. A one-story, brick building attached to the rear of this building and the building at 9 Salem Street functioned as offices for the bank located at 9 Salem Street in the late 1920s (City Directory, 1928-1929; Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1930).

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Parking Lot

The parking lot between 11 and 25 Salem Street fills the space left by the 1980 demolition of the early-twentieth-century Cates Block, a long two-story building with three storefronts and round-arched windows stretching across the second story. The parking lot has a low brick wall across the front with small trees.

North State Communications Building

Noncontributing building

25 Salem Street
ca. 1918; ca. 1985

Built between 1913 and 1923, this building was originally a two-story brick structure with round-arched second-story windows and a stepped-parapet cornice. It was drastically altered, probably during the 1980s, when new construction incorporated it with the two adjacent one-story buildings to the north (formerly 27 and 29 Salem Street) and a taller addition was built on the rear of 25 Salem Street. The entire newly created facade was sheathed in white travertine, while the sides and rear were covered with stuccoed panels (Sanborn Map, 1913, 1923; City Directory, 1928-1929; *Greensboro Daily News*, September 14, 1952).

Commercial Building

Non-contributing building

31-33 Salem Street
ca. 1920; ca. 1935; ca. 1990

This one-story brick building has two storefronts with deeply recessed metal-framed glass doors and show windows, the whole surrounded by a brick border. The entire upper facade is sheathed with vinyl weatherboarding. Sanborn maps suggest that it was created by the joining of three one-story buildings, of which 31 and 33 were built ca. 1920 and 35 was erected ca. 1935 (Sanborn Map, 1913, 1923, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1937).

Palace Theater

Noncontributing building

37-41 Salem Street
ca. 1923; ca. 1960

A slightly projecting and receding grid of metal panels, probably dating from ca. 1960, covers the entire facade of this three storefront building. The central storefront is deeply recessed, while the flanking two

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are only slightly recessed. Each uses metal-framed glass doors and windows, and each is sheltered by a (separate) flat metal awning. Originally, most of the building housed the Palace Theatre. The smaller storefronts that flanked the theater entrance held Swicewood Confectioners in 37 Salem Street and a Western Union office in 41 Salem Street (City Directory, 1928-1929; Sanborn Map, 1923, 1930).

Southern Public Utilities Company Building

Contributing building

43 Salem Street
ca. 1920

The storefront of this two-story brick building has been altered by the addition of stucco and placement of a new door and new windows. The second story, however, appears to reflect the building's ca. 1920 origin. It is sheathed with common-bond brick with a row of eight-over-one Craftsman-inspired sash windows arranged with a three-part central window flanked by a single window on either side. In the late 1920s, Southern Public Utilities Company had its offices here. By 1937, Duke Power Company occupied the building (City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937; Sanborn Map, 1923, 1930).

Wholesale Grocery

Noncontributing building

45-47 Salem Street
ca. 1912; post 1960

This two-story brick commercial building was erected ca. 1912 but was heavily remodeled after 1960. The only remaining details from its original appearance are the East Guilford Street windows, although the sash themselves have been replaced in recent years. The Salem Street facade has been covered with plain brickwork, the original angled corner has been removed, the second-story windows have been changed in both form and number (they are now eight-over-eight sash), and the first-story door and windows are now metal-framed glass. Attached to the rear of the building is a one-story stuccoed garage with upper deck. When built, 45-47 Salem Street was typical of the better corner commercial buildings erected in towns and small cities across North Carolina during the early twentieth century. The entrance to 47, the Dorsett-Godwin Company, grocers, was on the corner, so that it addressed both Salem Street and East Guilford Street. Crowell Feed Company, the other original business, at 45 Salem Street, had a recessed entrance facing Salem Street. Round-arched sash windows with brick hood molds and stone keystones lined the second story of the Salem Street and East Guilford Street elevations as well as the corner bay. Above the windows were layers of brick corbeling. The second floor of the building housed an armory. In the late 1920s, Davidson Wholesale Grocery occupied the building. In 1948 the occupant was still a wholesale grocer (*Thomasville: "The Chair Town, 28-29; City Directory, 1928-1929; Sanborn*

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Map, 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930, 1948).

SALEM STREET (West Side)**Parking Lot****First National Bank of Thomasville**
10 Salem Street
1922

Contributing building

The monumentality and, at the same time, the restrained classicism of the First National Bank building express both its prominent role in the community and the sense of stability and permanence that banks erected in the 1920s chose to convey. The four-story (three stories plus a mezzanine), brick, Neoclassical Revival-style vault-form building has a stone facade with a pair of monumental, two-story tall Doric columns-in-antis marking the entrance and supporting the full classical entablature with triglyphs across the frieze. Classical pilasters and a classical cornice define the upper half of the building. All facade windows and the glass front entrance are replacements. The south elevation is painted brick with two-over-two sash on the upper two floors. A two-story, brick, rear addition, attached to the original building by a glass and metal two-story hyphen, appears to date from the 1960s or early 1970s. The interior has been remodeled. The 1922 bank was built on the site of First National Bank's first building, a two-story brick structure with round-arched doors and windows erected after the institution was organized in 1907 with \$25,000 capital. Prominent Thomasville business and industrial leaders composed the officers and board of directors. C. F. Lambeth was the bank's first president and T. J. Finch was the vice president. During the last third of the twentieth century, the First National Bank of Thomasville was taken over by Wachovia Bank. Since 1991, after the closing of this bank branch, the building has served as the Thomasville City Hall. (Sanborn Map, 1923; *Thomasville: "The Chair Town,"* 13, 46; Capel, *In Words and Pictures*, 36).

Commercial Building
14-18 Salem Street
1904; ca. 1910; ca. 1960

Noncontributing building

The present appearance of this building probably dates from ca. 1960, when numerous older commercial buildings in North Carolina were remodeled as a part of urban renewal. The facade of the two-story brick building is encased in metal paneling, except for a single modern window cut into the paneling

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near the south end of the building. Metal awnings shelter the storefronts. What is now unified beneath the metal facade was originally one and a portion of another building. Number 14 was a commercial building erected ca. 1910 that matched 30 (then 28) Salem Street of the same date. The two, in turn, served as matching bookends to the Finch Block (20-28 Salem Street). A ca. 1913 photograph of 14 Salem Street shows what the buildings in this row originally looked like. The primary features of the building were a storefront with a prism glass transom topped by a metal classical cornice. The second floor consisted of a central pair of one-over-one sash windows with a round-arched fanlight and keystone hood mold flanked on either side by single one-over-one sash windows with proportionally smaller fanlights and keystone hood molds. Stringcourses carry across the facade at impost level and again above the windows. The whole is crowned by a metal modillioned cornice topped by a parapet. Numbers 16-18 Salem Street are part of the 1904 Finch Block, consisting of two round-arched windows (like the smaller windows of 14 Salem Street) and half of a larger round-arched window. It is likely that were the metal facade removed, the original facades would remain largely intact. In 1913, 14 Salem Street was a haberdashery, and 18 Salem Street was a hardware store. In the late 1920s, 14 Salem Street was occupied by R. V. Yokley, Physician, and Rose Marie Beauty Shop; 6 Salem Street was occupied by Thomasville Realty Trust Company Home Building and Loan Association and Thomasville Credit Company; and 18 Salem Street was A. L. Smith drygoods. In 1937, 14 Salem Street had become the State Theatre, which it remained until at least the mid 1950s (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955; *Thomasville: "The Chair Town,"* 13).

(Part of) Finch Block20-28 Salem Street
1904

Contributing building

Along with 18 Salem Street, now covered by a metal facade, 20-28 (originally 20-26) Salem Street constitutes the Finch Block, one of the most architecturally impressive commercial buildings erected in early-twentieth-century Thomasville. The center point of the two-story brick block was 22 Salem Street, which led to the second floor. A narrow bay flanked by full-height pilasters, it consists of a door on the first story, a round-arched window on the second story, and the building cornice. Above the window is a stone block inscribed with "T. J. Finch & Bro. 1904." Flanking the stair entrance are three bays per side, each defined by full-height pilasters. Moving outward from 22 Salem Street in either direction, the first bay has a pair of windows with round-arched fanlights with keystone labels, the second bay has one identical but larger window, and the third bay has two identical windows. A granite stringcourse connects the windows at impost height. Above the windows, a corbeled cornice—deeper and fancier above the paired windows—carries across the building. A metal modillioned cornice topped by a parapet

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crosses the facades of 24-28 Salem Street, but the metal cornice has been lost from the facades of 20-22 Salem Street. The first-story shopfronts have been altered in various ways. In 1908, 20 Salem Street was a clothing store, 24 was a furniture store, and 28 (then 26) was a general store. By 1913, 20 Salem Street had become a drug store. This may have been the Thomasville Drug Company, which was listed in the city directories at this location from 1928-1929 through 1985. From the late 1920s until the new city hall opened in 1938, the second floor of the Finch Block housed the city hall. Another long-term tenant was the Thomasville Store Company, which occupied 24-28 (now 30) Salem Street during the late 1920s as a general merchandise firm. In 1937 Thomasville Store Company, shoes, was at 26 (now 28) Salem Street, and Thomasville Store Company, grocery, was at 28 (now 30) Salem Street. In the mid 1940s Thomasville Store Company, grocery, was at 26-28 (now 28-30) Salem Street, and in the mid 1950s the store was confined to 28 (now 30) Salem Street. Thomasville Dry Goods Company was at 24 Salem Street in both 1937 and the mid 1940s (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955, 1960-1961, 1974, 1985).

Commercial Building

Contributing building

30 Salem Street
ca. 1910

This two-story brick building, like 14 Salem Street, is architecturally identical to the 1904 Finch Block (20-28 Salem Street), but was built several years later. Its north elevation, which faces J. W. Thomas Way, has a row of segmental-arched windows at second-story level. These windows, along with those on the upper story of the facade, have been closed from the interior. A small, one-story, brick addition built between 1930 and 1948 is located on the rear elevation. Originally carrying the number 28 Salem Street, this building served in the mid 1920s as the post office, but for many years it was the home of the Thomasville Store Company grocery. In 1948, the second floor was a lodge hall (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930, 1948; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955).

Junction with J. W. Thomas Way**Finch Building**

Contributing building

34 Salem Street
ca. 1928

Although there is some documentary evidence suggesting that the construction of this two-story brick building was completed in 1911, Sanborn Maps indicate that it was not built until between 1923 and

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1930. It is one of the least altered commercial buildings in the district. The shopfront, which is flanked by pilasters with cast stone trim, retains a prism glass transom topped by a cast stone dentiled cornice with decorative paneled frieze. A flat metal awning shades the glass entrance and flanking windows. The second-story of the facade has a pair of three-part windows with one-over-one sash flanking wider two-over-two sash. Decorative round masonry arches crowning the center windows provide the overall effect of Palladian windows. The stepped parapet cornice with tile coping contains a stone panel on which "Finch," for purported builder Charles Finch, is inscribed. Windows on the exposed south-side elevation are two-over-two sash. The rear elevation features upper floor freight doors and the remnants of a winch system, as well as metal frame windows. The first floor of the interior retains a pressed metal ceiling along with a mezzanine and stair at the rear. From at least 1937 through 1986, the building housed a hardware store (*The Davidsonian*, December 2, 1910; Sanborn Map, 1913, 1923, 1930; City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1945-1946, 1954-1955, 1960-1961, 1986).

Commercial Building

Noncontributing building

36 Salem Street
ca. 1910; ca. 1985

When built, this one-story brick building probably was a typical representative of its period. However, it has been radically altered with a stuccoed facade with new doors (one a round-arched, recessed entrance) and windows. Originally, it was a five-and-dime store (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1930).

Commercial Building

Noncontributing building

40 Salem Street
ca. 1910; ca. 1980

When built, 40 and 42 Salem Street may have been a single, two-storefront building, but their physical histories have diverged dramatically. Originally, this building was a Chinese laundry, but by 1937 it was occupied by Charles N. Brown Jeweler. In the mid 1950s it was the Davidson Army Store. The one-story brick building has been drastically remodeled with a new brick lower facade with a new door and window and an upper facade covered with wood shingles (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1923; City Directory, 1937, 1954-1955).

Commercial Building

Contributing building

42 Salem Street
ca. 1910; ca. 1950

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Initially this one-story brick building was used as a meat market. In the 1920s it housed a printing company, but by 1937 it had become the DeLuxe Barber Shop, a use it retained until at least the mid 1950s. Probably around 1950, the building was remodeled to look like a typical small commercial building of that time. It has a plain brick facade with masonry cornice coping and a flat metal awning that shelters the large metal-framed windows and metal-framed glass door (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930; City Directory, 1937, 1954-1955).

Commercial Building

Contributing building

44 Salem Street
ca. 1910; ca. 1940

This one-story brick building has plain brick pilasters framing the facade and a soldier course topped by simple brick corbeling at cornice height. A flat metal awning shelters the large display windows and center single-leaf door. The building's multiple occupants have included a grocery in 1913, Myers Auto Service in 1930, and a restaurant in 1948 (City Directory, 1928-1929, Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1930, 1948).

Commercial Building

Contributing building

46 Salem Street
ca. 1910; ca. 1930

Although Sanborn maps indicate that this building was erected between 1908 and 1913, its present appearance probably dates from a ca. 1930 remodeling. The one-story brick building features a largely intact storefront (except for the covered-over transom) with black ceramic tile skirting below large display windows whose center panes are angled inward toward the single-leaf door. Brick pilasters with cast stone bases and caps enframe the storefront; cast stone is also used as a cornice above the transom and as cornice coping. Between 1930 and 1948, the building was doubled in depth. Initially the building was used as an office, but by the late 1920s it housed Singer Sewing Machine and Hanes Electric. In 1937, City Shoe Shop was here, and during at least the 1940s and 1950s, Sink Electric occupied the building (City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937, 1941-1942, 1949-1950, 1956-1957; Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1930, 1948).

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J. W. THOMAS WAY (North Side)

This street first appears as Thomas (Benton) (no Street, Avenue, etc.) on the 1948 Sanborn Map. Some maps today refer to it as Thomas Street. However, the City Council officially renamed the street J. W. Thomas Way in 2002.

Parking Lot

The parking lot on the north side of J. W. Thomas Way extends from the rear of the commercial buildings on the west side of Salem Street to Trade Street. Historically, at least after construction of the City Hall in 1938, this area was a combination of unpaved parking and open land connected with the municipal building.

J. W. THOMAS WAY (South Side)**Commercial Building**

Contributing building

1-5 J. W. Thomas Way
ca. 1957

Typical of many small commercial buildings erected during the 1950s, this one-story brick building has a long, flat, metal awning sheltering three storefronts. Each storefront displays a slightly recessed, metal-framed door flanked by two metal-framed windows that slant inward toward the door. The building features a flat masonry facade parapet and tile coping along the east elevation. The first occupants of the building were the Elite Café (1 Thomas Way), C.L. Loflin Shoe Shop (3 Thomas Way) and National Barber Shop (5 Thomas Way) (City Directory, 1958-1959).

5 E's Building

Noncontributing building

7-9 J.W. Thomas Way
ca. 1959

This two-story brick building has two front entrances, oversized, fixed metal-frame windows on both levels of the facade and on the second story of the west elevation, and a flat canopy across the first story of the facade. Initial occupants included optometrist F. Lee Hanner, who had his office at 7 Thomas Way, and the offices of Mutual Insurance Agency and Fred C. Murphy Real Estate at 9 Thomas Way (City Directory, 1960-1961).

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Parking Lot

The parking lot that faces J. W. Thomas Way serves both the businesses on that street and the rear of buildings facing the east side of Trade Street, the north side of West Main Street, and the west side of Salem Street. Historically, this was part of the mid-nineteenth-century home site of Thomasville's founder, John W. Thomas. By ca. 1935 the house had been demolished, leaving open space in the interior of the block that later was used for parking.

TRADE STREET (East Side)**Alley**

An alley runs from Trade Street between the rear of 34-42 West Main Street and 5 Trade Street to the interior of the block bounded by Trade, West Main, and Salem streets and J. W. Thomas Way.

Commercial Building

Contributing building

5-7 Trade Street
ca. 1940

This one-story brick building contains two storefronts with metal-framed windows and doors. A long, horizontal, stuccoed, recessed panel extends atop each storefront. In the early 1940s, Piedmont Novelty occupied 5-7 Trade Street, but by 1945 Holton Furniture Company storage used the building. In 1951, the occupant of 7 Trade Street was the CIO Union Headquarters. There have been a wide variety of subsequent tenants at both 5 and 7 Trade Street (Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1941-1942, 1945-1946, 1951-1952).

Launderette

Contributing building

9 Trade Street
ca. 1947

The one-story building with brick facade and metal-framed central door and flanking windows is nearly identical to the storefronts of 5-7 Trade Street, except that it lacks the recessed panel across the upper facade. For at least its first decade, the Launderette occupied the building (Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1947-1948, 1949-1950, 1951-1952, 1956-1957, 1958-1959).

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Thomasville Downtown Historic District
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Contributing building

11 Trade Street
ca. 1950

This simple one-story building has a brick facade and a metal-framed central door and flanking windows. During its early years, it was occupied by the Crowell-Newby Gift Shop (City Directory, 1951-1952, 1954-1955, 1956-1957, 1958-1959).

Commercial Building

Contributing building

13-15 Trade Street
ca. 1953

This two-story, brick-faced building features a pair of recessed entrance doors at the center of the facade between large display windows. The second floor has four twelve-light metal windows, and a band of darker red brick distinguishes the cornice. Hodgin Furniture Company initially occupied the building, but shortly thereafter Nance's Flower Shop and Friendly Loan Service were the occupants (City Directory, 1954-1955, 1956-1957).

Commercial Building

Contributing building

17-19 Trade Street
ca. 1956

Twelve-light metal-frame windows carry across the facade and the two exposed elevations of this two-story brick building. The altered storefront at 17 Trade Street is recessed and composed of a modern, metal-framed door with flanking windows. The storefront at 19 Trade Street is flush to the front of the building and features a central metal-framed door and flanking windows. Smith Clothing Company was the first occupant of 17 Trade Street; by 1960, the Thomasville Times was occupying 19 Trade Street (City Directory, 1956-1957, 1958-1959, 1960-1961).

TRADE STREET (West Side)**North State Telephone Warehouse**

Contributing building

16 Trade Street
ca. 1940

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Although the earliest tenant of this small warehouse appears to have been Reed Supply and Mill Construction, since 1947 it has been used as the North State Telephone Stock Room. The one-story concrete block building with brick façade displays a stepped parapet and projecting brick bands that carry across the entire facade except for the small extension at the south end. A single garage door is centered on the façade. South of the garage door is a large multi-light, metal-framed window. The bay north of the garage door contains the entrance door sheltered by a flat awning and a metal-framed multi-light window (Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1941-1942, 1947-1948).

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architect/Builder

Olsen, William C. - engineer (City Hall)

Summary

Located on the eastern edge of Davidson County in piedmont North Carolina, Thomasville is a railroad and industrial city of approximately 25,000 residents. State Senator and railroad booster John W. Thomas (1800-1871) established the town that took his name in 1852 specifically to take advantage of the coming of the long-awaited North Carolina Railroad that connected eastern North Carolina with Charlotte. Thomasville quickly blossomed as an industrial center, becoming famous in the twentieth century for its furniture manufacturing and particularly its chairs, as celebrated by the Big Chair—a Duncan Phyfe chair, only six times larger, located along the still-active railroad at Thomasville's central intersection.

The Thomasville Downtown Historic District is a tightly knit group of seventy-nine resources, mostly commercial and mostly one-and-two-story brick buildings, distinguishable from its surroundings, and centered on the railroad tracks and Town Common and the intersecting Main and Salem streets. Historically, this was the center of commerce and government in Thomasville. A series of fires at the turn of the twentieth century destroyed Thomasville's nineteenth-century, mostly frame, commercial buildings, but one- and two-story brick buildings soon replaced them, particularly along Main and Salem streets, and continued to be built until mid century. A series of banks also operated in the district, the longest-lived and most prominent of which was the First National Bank of Thomasville. As Thomasville's historic commercial center, the district is locally significant in the area of commerce. As the historical and current seat of local government, the district is locally significant in the area of government. Within the district are the monumental 1938 former City Hall (now used as the Police Department), the 1926 former United States Post Office (now used as the city's Recreation Department), and the modernist 1957 former Davidson County Office Building. The district holds local industrial significance, because it contains the Lambeth Furniture Company/Thomasville Chair Company, an important part of Thomasville's early-twentieth-century furniture industry and reportedly the largest manufacturer, in the early part of the century, of kitchen safes, cabinets, and cupboards in the South (Matthews and Sink, 25). The district is also locally significant in the area of transportation, because the railroad was the reason for Thomasville's establishment and enabled its prosperity through the years. Trains still run through the district several times a day, and Thomasville's first passenger depot, built in

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1871 and now a rare example of nineteenth-century frame depots in the state, remains along the tracks in the district, though now used as the city's visitor center. Because of its local significance in the areas of commerce, government, industry, and transportation, the Thomasville Downtown Historic District meets Criterion A for listing in the National Register.

The district also fulfills Criterion C because it possesses local architectural significance. In addition to the 1871 Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot (NR, 1981), which embodies the distinctive characteristics of small, frame, passenger depots with sawnwork detailing that were erected during the last several decades of the nineteenth century, the ca. 1900 C. R. Thomas Block and 1904/ca. 1910 Finch Block illustrate the continued influence of the late-nineteenth-century Italianate style. Good examples of a range of architectural styles popular during the first half of the twentieth century also survive intact and well preserved in the district. Among these are numerous examples of the Commercial Style from the 1910s through the 1930s; the 1922 Neo-classical Revival-style First National Bank of Thomasville (now the City Hall); the Colonial Revival-style former United States Post Office, erected in 1926 with James Wetmore as the supervising architect; the 1938 Art Deco-style former City Hall—the best example of the style in Davidson County—designed by Albert L. Haskins Jr., architectural associate for William C. Olsen and Associates; several buildings demonstrating the move toward simple modernism in commercial buildings of the 1940s and 1950s; and the 1957 former Davidson County Office Building, which ably displays a more fully developed mid-twentieth-century modernism.

One of district's most significant buildings, the 1871 Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot, was moved from its original site in 1912, when a brick depot was erected in its place on the south side of the tracks and the old depot was moved to the north side, turned perpendicular to the tracks, and turned into the office of the freight depot for some years. It was moved again in 1976 and restored, so that once again it parallels the railroad tracks, and now serves as Thomasville's visitor center. Nevertheless, the depot meets Criteria Consideration B, because it is architecturally significant, it remains close to its original site along the railroad tracks, and it is the surviving building directly associated with Thomasville's important railroad activity during the nineteenth century.

The period of significance for the Thomasville Downtown Historic District extends from 1871, when the Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot was built, to 1957, when the modernist former Davidson County Office Building was erected. Although the Davidson County Office Building is just under fifty years old, it nevertheless represents an important continuation of the district's architectural development as a good example of mid-twentieth-century modernism. Additionally, it fulfilled a significant role in local government, whereby the county was better able to provide services to its citizens.

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Historical Background and Transportation, Commerce, Industry, Government, and Architecture Contexts

The early history of Thomasville hinges on the role of John Warwick Thomas (1800-1871) and the North Carolina Railroad. Thomas, a resident of Fair Grove in eastern Davidson County in North Carolina's Piedmont, was a member of the lower house in the General Assembly in 1831 when the first bill was introduced to charter a state-owned railroad. That bill failed to pass, but the need for a railroad that would traverse central North Carolina to provide ready access to major markets persisted. Thomas was in the State Senate in January 1849 when the bill passed that finally granted a charter for the North Carolina Railroad. The charter authorized the construction of a railroad that, connecting in the east at Goldsboro with the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad, would proceed westward to Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro, Salisbury, and finally to its terminus at Charlotte (Matthews and Sink, 6-7).

Thomas became a major advocate for the North Carolina Railroad. Anticipating that the rail line would pass through his Fair Grove property, he became Davidson County's designated agent for selling railroad stock. Thomas both sold and bought with enthusiasm, securing future fortunes for him and other buyers. At one point, stock subscriptions from Davidson County more than doubled those from any other county. Thomas himself was one of the top twenty-five stockholders in 1859 and one of the top ten in 1870. When the railroad's chief engineer finally settled on the much-discussed route between Greensboro and Lexington, Thomas discovered that his own property was not near the selected line after all. Not one to give up easily, Thomas solved his financial dilemma by acquiring a tract of four hundred acres in the path of the chosen route. He then began the work of creating a town (Architectural Survey Report, 5).

Thomas deeded the right-of-way through his land for the railroad, but reserved a "Commons" for the town-to-be that would run along either side of the tracks. He established a sawmill to enable construction and a gristmill and general store to stock necessary provisions. The store stood at the corner of present Main and Salem streets until it burned in 1898 and was replaced with a two-story brick building (extant, at 6 West Main Street, but significantly altered in 1953). With construction on the railroad begun in 1851, others began speculative projects based on anticipated traffic. Thomas's eldest son, Lewis L. Thomas, built a hotel near the railroad right-of-way. William Foster began building houses while his wife ran a boarding house for men who had left home for the tree-clearing and construction work in the area. Once congregations formed, John Thomas gave land for Methodists and Baptists to build churches, requiring that the buildings double as schools. A post office was established in 1852 and the settlement took the name Thomasville. It was not until 1857, however, that Thomas introduced the state legislation that incorporated the town, specifying that the corporate limits be one square mile centered on the railroad's water station (Architectural Survey Report, 5-6).

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On November 9, 1855, the first train arrived in Thomasville. An enthusiastic crowd of 5,000 gathered for the event and for the barbecue picnic provided by Thomas and his friends. The town still lacked a depot, so Lewis Thomas offered up a room in his hotel to meet the need. On January 29, 1856, the last spikes were driven, and the North Carolina Railroad between Goldsboro and Charlotte was completed (Matthews and Sink, 8-9, Architectural Survey Report, 6).

Although railroad construction was complete and trains were running through town, Thomasville itself was still largely under construction. The town's first industries—Thomas's early sawmill and the brickyard started by builder Robert Gray in 1855—provided necessary building materials. Soon, the presence of the railroad attracted a fledgling manufacturing industry to Thomasville. Shoe manufacturing was the town's first major industry, beginning in 1857 and continuing throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century. Eventually, several shoe factories stood along Main Street. Other small-scale concerns in Thomasville's earliest years included John Thomas's flour mill and a saddle and harness shop (Architectural Survey Report, 6).

John Warwick Thomas died following a brief illness in 1871. In settling his estate, another two acres were donated to the namesake town. On it, Thomasville's first structure built expressly to house a passenger depot was erected—nearly two decades after the railroad arrived—on the south side of the railroad tracks (Architectural Survey Report, 6). A rare survivor of the frame railroad depots built in North Carolina during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it is the oldest building in the Thomasville Downtown Historic District. A simple rectangular building with a gable roof, it reflects its late Victorian origin through the use of both vertical-board and German siding with a wide sawnwork frieze and widely overhanging braced eaves.

Shortly after Thomas's death, on September 11, 1871, the entire line of the North Carolina Railroad was leased to the Richmond and Danville Railroad for thirty years, later extended for five additional years. Before the lease's expiration, however, the Richmond and Danville went into receivership and was reorganized as the Southern Railway. In August 1895, the Southern Railway signed a ninety-nine-year lease with the North Carolina Railroad. As the new operator of the rail line, it continued to encourage the growth and prosperity of Thomasville (Matthews and Sink, 10). In 1907, Southern Railway laid a new double track, and after strong and prolonged complaining by Thomasville citizens, the railroad built a brick passenger station on the south side of the tracks ca. 1912 (demolished in 1975). At the same time, the 1871 frame depot was moved to the north side of the tracks and turned perpendicular to them. There it served for years as the office of the freight depot (not extant) (Matthews and Sink, 152; Architectural Survey Report, 10).

Thomasville developed primarily as an industrial town, and its industry spurred the growth of commerce. The remainder of the nineteenth century saw the continuation of the small-scale industrial activity, particularly shoe manufacturing, that had characterized Thomasville before the Civil War. At

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the same time, local industry became more diversified. Smelting works, chewing tobacco factories, stave factories, spoke and handle works, grist and roller mills, and a chair factory took their place in the town's industrial lineup alongside the town's shoe factories. Although nineteenth-century Thomasville was known statewide for its manufacture of shoes, that industry eventually came to a close, supplanted by another (Architectural Survey Report, 7).

A lone chair factory was the precursor to the twentieth-century furniture industry that would put Thomasville on the national map and start an impressive growth spurt in the town. In 1866, D. S. Westmoreland began making split-bottomed chairs in a small shop in the yard behind his house, employing his sons as assistants. Outgrowing his shop, Westmoreland built Thomasville's first real chair factory on Randolph Street (the continuation of Salem Street south of the railroad tracks) in 1879. He produced chairs there for nearly two decades before the factory burned to the ground in 1897 (Matthews and Sink, 21; Architectural Survey Report, 8-9).

At that point, others entered the industry and several factories replaced Westmoreland's: Standard Chair started in 1898 and Climax Chair in 1899, followed by Thompson Chair, Queen Chair, and Thomasville Chair Company in the first few years of the twentieth century. With all these factories turning out chairs, Thomasville soon earned the nickname "Chair Town of the South." Joining the chair factories, other factories quickly opened to build desks, tables, wardrobes, dressers, and kitchen cabinets, each tending to specialize in one or two types of furniture (Architectural Survey Report, 9).

One such factory was the Lambeth Furniture Company. Organized in 1901 and built on East Guilford Street in what is now the northeast corner of the Thomasville Downtown Historic District, it became one of Thomasville's most prosperous early furniture factories. In 1907, the *Thomasville Times* reported that the Lambeth Furniture Company was the largest manufacturer of kitchen safes, cabinets, and cupboards in the South. In 1911 Lambeth's main building burned down, but within two months the company had rebuilt and was once again ready to operate (Matthews and Sink, 25). Lambeth's manufacturing buildings are typical industrial buildings of the time: large frame and brick structures with broad gable or stepped parapet roofs and rows of metal-framed industrial windows.

Thomasville's burgeoning industry supported the growth of local commerce. As the town grew, more and more businesses of various types were established to serve the residents. By 1903, according to a writer in the *Winston-Salem Journal*, Thomasville could boast two good hotels, a public hall, a telephone exchange, a weekly paper, and over a score of stores, including two drug stores, along with a graded school building, twelve chair and furniture factories, a wagon factory, a roller mill, and three livery stables (Matthews and Sink, 26).

These commercial enterprises grew up along a small grid of streets in the center of town laid out in relation to the railroad tracks. Main Street ran east and west, parallel to and on either side of the tracks, and Salem Street ran north and south, perpendicular to the tracks. The directional center point

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of the town was the crossing of these two streets. What was initially known as North Main Street and South Main Street later was re-designated as East Main Street and West Main Street, with Salem Street serving as the dividing line between the two. South of the railroad tracks, Salem Street became Randolph Street. Until the late 1960s, after the advent of outlying shopping centers, these were the primary commercial streets in Thomasville. In addition, Guilford Street crossed Salem Street one block north of Main Street, and Trade Street ran perpendicular to West Main Street one block west of Salem Street. Commerce Street, running between East Main Street and East Guilford Street one block east of Salem Street, did not join the other streets until the early 1920s. Finally, J. R. Thomas Way, originally simply Thomas or Benton, was not cut between Salem and Trade streets until after 1930 (Sanborn Map, 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930, 1948).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, one- and two-story, mostly frame, stores were built along Salem and Main Streets north of the railroad. However, a series of fires around the turn of the twentieth century changed the face of downtown Thomasville. In 1890 a fire leveled all the buildings that stood on East Main Street. In 1898 several buildings were lost in a blaze on West Main Street. In 1902 four large fires in three months took more buildings, including the frame stores that lined the west side of Salem Street (Architectural Survey Report, 14; Matthews and Sink, 97). In rebuilding after these losses, brick construction replaced frame, and over time, even those frame buildings that survived the fires were replaced with brick buildings. Thus, though Thomasville had developed throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, surviving commercial buildings date from only as early as the turn of the twentieth century. The oldest of these are the ca. 1900 C. R. Thomas Block, located just west of John W. Thomas's large home (no longer extant) on West Main Street, and the Finch Block, built on the west side of Salem Street in 1904 with additions dating from ca. 1910. Both of these blocks of buildings reflect, stylistically, the influence of the popular late-nineteenth-century Italianate style (Matthews and Sink, 75, 77).

Census records reveal patterns in population growth in Thomasville. In 1860, less than a decade after the founding of the town, there were 308 residents. In 1900 this number had more than doubled to 751. The next decade saw a growth rate of 416.2 percent, with the 1910 population standing at 3,977. The next large increase was during the 1920s, when the population nearly doubled, growing from 5,676 in 1920 to 10,090 in 1930. Thereafter, the population of Thomasville slowly crept forward; today it has exceeded 25,000 (*A History of City Government*, 85).

Paralleling population growth was the development of Thomasville's infrastructure. In 1902 the Lambeth Furniture Company started operating an electric light plant for its factory, and from this plant electricity was obtained for street lights, a few stores, and other factories. In 1907 Thomasville's Board of Aldermen granted a franchise to B. F. W. Bryant of Boston, doing business as Thomasville Power and Light Company, for furnishing electric lights and power for the town. Bryant's power plant went into

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operation in 1908. Two years later, Thomasville Power and Light Company contracted with the Southern Power Company to distribute power in Thomasville. In 1913 the Southern Public Utilities Company (formerly Southern Power Company and later Duke Power Company) absorbed the Thomasville Power and Light Company. The town laid the first sidewalk along unpaved East Main Street in 1905, and the following year Salem Street was macadamized as far as West Guilford Street. By 1925 Thomasville had fifteen miles of concrete sidewalks and thirteen miles of hard-surfaced streets. In 1911 the town completed construction of a 100,000-gallon water tank, and by 1912 water and sewer lines had been laid. By 1913, double hydrants lined Main, Salem, and Randolph streets. In the mid 1920s a water treatment plant was built, and in 1935 a 1,000,000-gallon water tank was erected on Commerce Street adjacent to the earlier tank, which was dismantled in 1963 (Matthews and Sink, 71, 99; *A History of City Government*, 3, 75; Architectural Survey Report, 10).

Sanborn insurance maps, published for Thomasville in 1908, 1913, 1923, 1930, and 1930 updated to 1948, show relatively steady commercial development in downtown Thomasville during the first half of the twentieth century, primarily along Main and Salem streets. During this period, buildings in downtown Thomasville exhibited a range of architectural styles that were popular for the design of commercial buildings in towns and cities across North Carolina. As a group, they established the architectural character of downtown Thomasville.

During the 1910s through the 1930s, numerous buildings in downtown Thomasville were built in the popular Commercial Style of the period, dismissing the arched windows and rich corbeled cornices of earlier, Italianate-influenced, buildings in favor of a more rectilinear form and simple details. Patterned masonry wall surfaces, stepped roofline parapets, and rectangular windows that were often arranged in groups were all characteristic ("Historic Commercial Architectural Styles," 18). Good examples include McLellan's Store at 10 East Main Street, built ca. 1920; the commercial building at 24-26 East Main Street, dating from ca. 1920; the Finch Building, erected ca. 1928 at 34 Salem Street; the ca. 1926 commercial building at 2-8 Commerce Street; the Hite Building at 9 East Guilford Street, erected in 1927; and the commercial building at 1-7 West Main Street, erected in 1932. Commercial buildings during the period continued to house a variety of occupants, such as banks, hardware stores, grocery stores, clothing stores, beauty parlors and barber shops, dressmakers, radio repair shops, bicycle shops, restaurants, doctors' offices, newspaper offices, and movie theaters (City Directory, 1928-1929, 1937).

Banking was a necessary part of any town where commerce and industry were on the move. In Thomasville, the first Bank of Thomasville was chartered in 1861. However, it closed due to the effects of the Civil War. In 1899 a new Bank of Thomasville opened and lasted until the early 1920s. The People's Bank opened in 1916, but closed in 1921. In 1907 the First National Bank was chartered. Its first building was a small brick structure on the west side of Salem Street. In 1922 that building was

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replaced by the present three-story-plus-mezzanine brick structure at 10 Salem Street. The new home of the First National Bank was erected in the Neo-classical Revival style. The vault-form building has a stone facade and a pair of monumental, two-story columns that mark the entrance and support a full classical entablature. Classical pilasters and a classical cornice define the upper half of the building. The Neo-classical Revival was the style of choice for many banks built in the 1920s across North Carolina and elsewhere. The style's monumentality and refined classicism expressed both prominence in the community and a sense of stability, reliability, security, and permanence, all traits intended to engender public confidence in the financial institution (Matthews and Sink, 67-68).

Another form of classicism—the Colonial Revival style—was utilized in the design of the United States Post Office, erected at 1 East Main Street in 1926 under supervising architect James Wetmore. Popular from the late nineteenth century through the mid twentieth century, the style reflected, with varying degrees of accuracy, American architecture from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Able to achieve the appearance of proud nationalism, the Colonial Revival style was frequently used for post offices built in towns and small cities during the 1920s. Thomasville's post office is an excellent example of the style. The approximately square, one-story brick building has large fifteen-over-fifteen sash windows set in arched surrounds on the front and side elevations. Stylistic attention is focused on both the front entrance and the building's cornice. The entrance displays a recessed door with transom and paneled soffit and jambs, all set within fluted pilasters that support a full classical entablature with triglyphed frieze and dentiled, pedimented cornice. The building's cornice is heavily molded and dentiled and is topped by a brick parapet which, across the facade, is interspersed with sections of turned balusters.

In 1938 construction was completed on the (former) Thomasville City Hall, one of the most important buildings in downtown Thomasville then and now. Prior to the construction of the building, city offices had occupied space first in the Cates Block (not extant) on the east side of Salem Street and then across the street in the Finch Block. The new building—the first dedicated to city offices—was funded by an allocation of \$60,000 from the federal Public Works Administration and city bonds issued for an additional \$60,000. It was designed by architect Albert L. Haskins Jr. of the Raleigh firm of William C. Olsen and Associates, Engineers and Architects. Olsen was the consulting engineer. The 1938 City Hall is architecturally significant as the best example of the Art Deco style in Davidson County and as a tangible symbol of the important role of Thomasville's local government. The size of the two-story-with-raised-basement brick building is magnified by its deep setback from West Guilford Street, allowing for a landscaped lawn, trees, and walkways. The building's cast stone ashlar facade also contributes to its monumental feel. Art Deco-style modernism is seen in the vertical emphasis of the building created by a series of setbacks from the main entrance bay, in the stylized details incised in the stone, and in the glass-and-bronze light fixtures flanking the building's entrances. The main lobby

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continues the use of well-executed Art Deco detailing (Matthews and Sink, 102; Architectural Survey Report, 18).

From a practical standpoint, the 1938 City Hall building had ample room for not only the city's administrative department, but also for the judicial department, the police station and jail, the welfare department, a health clinic, and the fire station. In addition, for two decades, until the Davidson County Office Building and a library building were erected, the city branch of the county public library and other county agencies also were housed in the City Hall at 7 West Guilford Street. The 1938 City Hall continued to be used as such until 1991, when the city's administrative offices housed in City Hall moved to the First National Bank—another monumental, stone-fronted building—at 10 Salem Street, and the 1938 building became used exclusively by the police department (Matthew and Sink, 102; *A History of City Government*, 4).

Thomasville's city government was often on the cutting edge of modern practice in the state, and the 1938 City Hall served as a proud reflection of the city's accomplishments. In 1915 Thomasville's city charter was changed so that the city could abandon its Mayor-Council governing body and adopt the innovative Council-City Manager form of government. This plan called for a paid administrator who could more efficiently accomplish what the council envisioned. Thomasville became the third municipality in North Carolina to adopt the Council-City Manager plan that later became common practice in the state. Articles about Thomasville and Davidson County appearing in *The State* magazine thirty years later continued to brag about the early implementation of this system. Thomasville achieved another governmental milestone in 1930, when a zoning ordinance was passed. It divided the city into residential, business, and industrial districts and prohibiting the erection of buildings without a permit from the city. Thomasville was among the first cities of its size in North Carolina to adopt a system of zoning (*A History of City Government*, 2-3; Matthews and Sink, 102; Architectural Survey Report, 10).

The Art Deco style seen in the 1938 City Hall also influenced the design of several commercial buildings erected in Thomasville's downtown during the 1930s and 1940s. All made use of pigmented structural glass applied to the underlying structural brick. This recently developed modern material provided infinite opportunities for creative design. It could be applied to both the exterior and the interior of a building and could be cut, sculptured, laminated, curved, colored, textured, and illuminated. Pigmented structural glass was used with both new construction and to remodel older buildings. Either way, it gave buildings a modern look. Only one building in downtown Thomasville retains, nearly intact, its pigmented structural glass facade. Built ca. 1947, the two-story brick Boston Store, located at 9 East Main Street, displays an entire facade of black structural glass that extends around the corner to cover the front bay of the east elevation, giving the whole a glossy, streamlined look. The glass is interrupted only by a single large display window with cast-stone surround on the second story of the facade and a large, glass-block window near the front of the east elevation, along with the display windows and

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recessed entrance—themselves bordered with black glass—across the first story of the facade. Other examples of note, historically, but where the pigmented glass no longer remains, are the buildings at 12, 18, and 20 West Main Street, all dating from the mid-1930s (*Thomasville Times*, August 30, 1960; *The State*, July 26, 1947; “Art Deco Glass,” 1).

In 1950 the most famous landmark in Thomasville was erected in the Town Common at the intersection of Main and Salem streets, the focal point of downtown Thomasville. Paid for by the Thomasville City Council and the newly organized Chamber of Commerce, the Big Chair has been a point of pride in the community, recognizing the central role of the furniture industry, and particularly chair manufacturing, in the city’s history. An oversized example of Thomasville’s main product, the chair visually proclaims Thomasville’s international status as the Chair City. By 1921 Thomasville was producing more chairs than any other city in the world, and the town decided to advertise that fact by having the “world’s largest” chair built on the Town Common (Matthews and Sink, 173). Completed in 1922, the first chair was constructed entirely of wood and stood thirteen-and-a-half-feet tall. By 1936 it had become so deteriorated by the weather that it could hardly advertise something of which Thomasville was proud. The chair was taken down, and the site remained vacant for fourteen years until the present chair was constructed. Although the first chair had contained enough wood for the construction of one hundred chairs of normal size, it had not withstood the elements. To correct this problem, the new Big Chair was built of steel and concrete. Standing eighteen feet tall above a twelve-foot-high limestone base, the 1950 chair is a copy—only six times larger—of a Duncan Phyfe dining room chair in the Smithsonian. It is painted to resemble Honduras mahogany with a seat suggesting upholstery in gold-and-maroon-striped damask. Artist Thomas Johnson designed the reproduction chair and Thomasville artist James Harvey produced the concrete sculptural work that went on the steel framework. The bronze plaque on the monument’s base reads: “The Chair is an exemplar and inspiration for future generations to emulate and perpetuate the achievements of our time-honored furniture designers and craftsmen. . . .” (Matthews and Sink, 173-174; Landmark Designation Report for The Big Chair).

During the late 1940s and 1950s, commercial building design became much simpler than in earlier decades, displaying a definite move toward modernism. During these decades buildings took on more box-like forms, expanses of plain red brickwork, roofs that were either flat or gently sloped to the rear, metal-framed windows and doors, and often flat metal canopies that sheltered large plate glass windows. Among the several good examples in downtown Thomasville, the best is the row of five contiguous buildings located at 5-19 Trade Street. Each of these one- and two-story brick buildings was erected at a different time, between ca. 1940 and ca. 1956. Other examples of this stripped-down commercial design include the one-story Hudson-Belk Annex built ca. 1950 at 12 Commerce Street and the one-story, brick commercial building with three storefronts erected ca. 1957 at 1-5 J. W. Thomas

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Way (Sanborn Map, 1948; City Directory, 1941-1942, 1945-1946, 1947-1948, 1949-1950, 1951-1952, 1954-1955, 1956-1957, 1958-1959).

In 1957 local government achieved another goal and at the same time gave downtown Thomasville a building that went beyond the typical commercial design of the period by creating an architectural statement that was decidedly modernist. The Davidson County Office Building, an annex of the main office in the county seat of Lexington and the first county government structure erected in Thomasville, opened at 10 West Guilford Street on December 17, 1957, at a construction cost of \$76,700. Since 1938, county agencies had been located across the street at City Hall, causing overcrowding for the city's own needs. The new county building initially housed offices for sheriff's deputies, public health nurses, welfare department caseworkers, and a veterans service officer. Typical of commercial buildings of the period, the one-story, nearly square building has a flat roof and plain red brick elevations. Its sophisticated design, however, translates the building into a strong example of mid-twentieth-century modernism. The asymmetrical facade displays an off-center entrance bay that is taller than the rest of the building. It has a recessed, glass-walled double entrance set within a pair of brick walls that project several feet in front of the facade. A set of three contiguous windows abuts the entrance bay on the west. In contrast, the facade east of the entrance bay is windowless. Rather, on that side, a low brick wall extends eastward from the projecting entrance wall and then returns to the facade several feet short of the building's east end, thereby creating an area for planting. The asymmetry of the facade creates a visual tension that encourages the modernist feeling of the building. Another modern feature are the groups of large windows that line both sides of the building and are shaded by widely projecting eaves with slanting soffits. The architect of the building is not known (Capel, *A Recent History of Thomasville*, 165; *Picture Your Future in Thomasville*).

During the second half of the twentieth century, industry continued to fuel Thomasville's economy and a diversity of manufacturers remained an effective protection against financial downturns. The furniture industry remained dominant, and by the 1990s, Thomasville Furniture Industries was one of the top five furniture producers in the United States (Architectural Survey Report, 41).

Despite the solid local economy, changes occurred during the second half of the twentieth century that threatened Thomasville's historic downtown. After a steady decrease in passengers, Southern Railway discontinued its passenger stop in downtown Thomasville in 1967. As happened across North Carolina and the United States in the mid-twentieth century, shopping malls and shopping centers, like the Southgate Shopping Center that opened on Randolph Street at the city limits in 1965, began draining customers from downtown stores (Architectural Survey Report, 41; Downtown Thomasville Study List Application). In an attempt to counteract this trend, one response was the remodeling of some downtown buildings as a part of urban renewal. Community planners and merchants believed that modern facades would help attract shoppers back to downtown. Most stores underwent the

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remodeling of storefronts—sometimes more than once—leaving larger, metal-framed, plate-glass windows and doors. Having a greater visual impact on downtown's old buildings, some stores during the period had their upper facades sheathed in new materials. Some examples of this are the upper facades of buildings at 14-18 Salem Street, 32 East Main Street, 9 and 11 Salem Street, 2 East Main Street, and 8-10 West Main Street. Although these changes have left their mark on the historic architectural character of downtown Thomasville, many other buildings still display the rich architectural detailing with which they were first constructed. In some cases, such as 20-22 Salem Street, later facades, in this case metal, have been removed, revealing the original architectural ornamentation.

Several events during the late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries hold promise for the future of Thomasville's historic downtown. In 1972 Southern Railway donated the 1871 passenger depot to the City of Thomasville. In 1976 the depot was repositioned to face West Main Street at its juncture with Trade Street. In 1978 the City of Thomasville and the Thomasville Historical Society completed restoration of the building, and in 1981 it was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The former depot now serves as the city's visitor center (*Enterprise*, February 24, 1978; *Thomasville Times*, July 18, 1981). In 1999 the city established the Thomasville Historic Preservation Commission. In addition to successfully recommending individual properties and one district for local historic designation, the commission has become a leader in local preservation, most recently initiating the 2004 architectural survey of Thomasville and subsequently this nomination of the Thomasville Downtown Historic District to the National Register.

The evolution of Thomasville's downtown continues. After suffering from decreased activity during much of the second half of the twentieth century, it is once again becoming a place full of activity, truly the center of the city. Department stores no longer grace downtown Thomasville, but numerous specialty shops and business and professional offices enliven the place, while the presence of City Hall on Salem Street since 1991 proclaims that downtown is the place to be in Thomasville.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Thomasville Downtown Historic District
Davidson County, North Carolina

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM References

5. 17/582620/3971240

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary of the Thomasville Downtown Historic District is shown by the heavy black line on the accompanying historic district sketch map, drawn to a scale of 1" = 150'.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Thomasville Downtown Historic District is drawn to include the most cohesive group of historic buildings, sites, structures, and objects associated with transportation, commerce, government, and industry in Thomasville and erected in the downtown core of the city from 1871 to 1957, the district's period of significance. As drawn, the district forms an entity that is distinguishable from its surroundings. Just outside the district boundary, several older buildings have lost their historic integrity, in general the buildings are more widely spaced, and most date from after the period of significance. In addition, there are some changes in land use, including residential properties and a cemetery.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

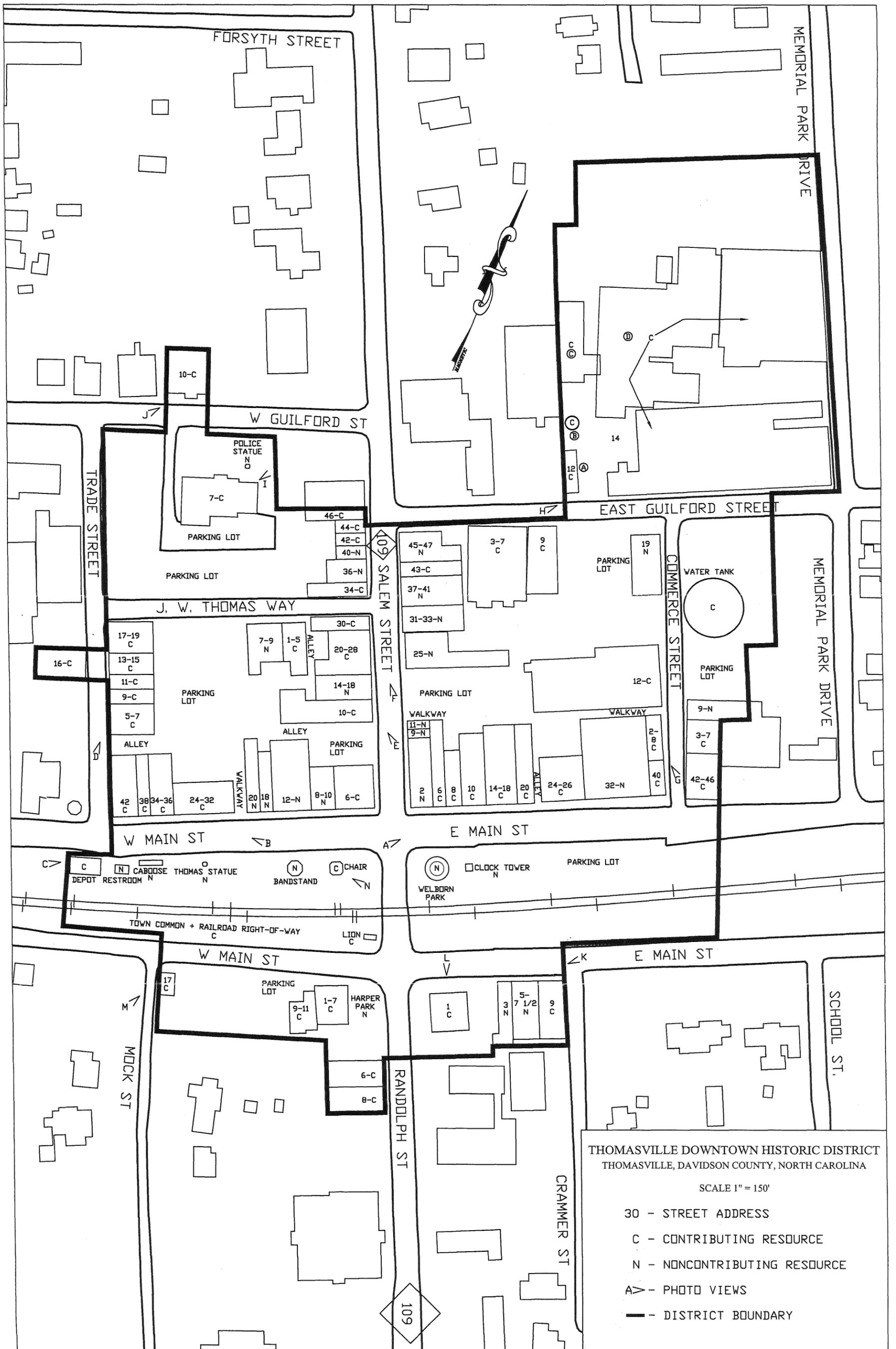
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Thomasville Downtown Historic District
Davidson County, North Carolina

PHOTOGRAPHS

The following information for #1-5 applies to all nomination photographs, except as noted:

- 1) Thomasville Downtown Historic District
- 2) Thomasville, Davidson County, North Carolina
- 3) Laura A. W. Phillips - A, B, F, G, H, I, J, M
Jennifer Martin - C, D, E, K, L
Paul B. Touart - N
- 4) N was photographed in 1983. A photo from that year most clearly shows the monument, which looks the same in 2005. All others were photographed in 2004.
- 5) North Carolina Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh
- 6-7) A: Streetscape, 2-32 E. Main St., view to NE
B: Streetscape, 24-42 W. Main St., view to W
C: Thomasville Railroad Passenger Depot, Town Common between railroad tracks and north side W. Main St., view to NE
D: Streetscape, 5-19 Trade St., view to N
E: First National Bank of Thomasville, 10 Salem St., and 14-18 Salem St., view to NW
F: Streetscape, 20-36 Salem St., view to NW
G: Streetscape, 2-12 Commerce St., view to NW
H: Lambeth Furniture Company/Thomasville Chair Company, 12-14 E. Guilford St., view to NE
I: (former) City Hall, 7 W. Guilford St., view to SW
J: (former) Davidson County Office Building, 10 W. Guilford St., view to NE
K: Streetscape, 9-1 E. Main Street, view to SW
L: (former) United States Post Office, 1 E. Main St., view to S
M: Dr. Orien R. Hodgin Dental Office, 17 W. Main St., and Town Common to north side W. Main St., view to N
N: The Big Chair, Town Common, view to NW



THOMASVILLE DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT
 THOMASVILLE, DAVIDSON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

SCALE 1" = 150'

- 30 - STREET ADDRESS
- C - CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE
- N - NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCE
- AV - PHOTO VIEWS
- - DISTRICT BOUNDARY

