

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 Main Street Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Bounded roughly by Blanton Alley on the north, Huntley Street on the south, Yarboro Street on the west, and Broadway Street on the east. N/A not for publication

city or town Forest City N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Rutherford code 161 zip code 28043

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 Crow SHPO 2/5/02
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 commenting 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
(Choose as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Choose only one box)

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

- private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

- building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, 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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store
DOMESTIC: single dwelling
GOVERNMENT: city hall
GOVERNMENT: post office
RELIGION: religious facility
INDUSTRY: industrial storage
SOCIAL: meeting hall
LANDSCAPE: plaza

- COMMERCE/TRADE: business
COMMERCE/TRADE: specialty store
COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant
GOVERNMENT: city hall
LANDSCAPE: plaza

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Commercial Style
Classical Revival
Colonial Revival
Art Deco

- foundation brick
walls brick
concrete
roof asphalt
other limestone

Narrative Description

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

Name of Property

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

XX A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

[] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

XX C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

[] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

[] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

[] B removed from its original location.

[] C a birthplace or grave.

[] D a cemetery.

[] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

[] F a commemorative property.

[] G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

ca. 1900 - 1951

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Baldwin, James J.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

[] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

[] previously listed in the National Register

[] previously determined eligible by the National Register

[] designated a National Historic Landmark

[] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

[] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

[x] State Historic Preservation Office

[] Other State agency

[] Federal agency

[x] Local government Town of Forest City

[] University

[] Other

Name of repository:

Western Office, Archives & History

Main Street Historic District
Name of Property

Rutherford, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 11 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	7
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4	2	1	6	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	1	0	1	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing
2

1	7
---	---

4	2	1	4	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	0	9	9	9	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

3

1	7
---	---

4	2	1	3	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	1	0	0	6	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing
4

1	7
---	---

4	2	1	1	7	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	1	0	2	6	0
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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sybil Argintar Bowers, Preservation Consultant

organization Bowers Southeastern Preservation date August 27, 2001

street & number 166 Pearson Drive telephone (828) 253-1392

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28801

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name multiple, more than fifty owners

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

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

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Section number 7 Page 1 Main Street Historic District
Rutherford County, North Carolina

The Main Street Historic District in Forest City, North Carolina is located at the core of the commercial area of the town, roughly at the northern edge of the city limits. Forest City is located in Rutherford County, a geographically transitional county between the western mountains and the central piedmont. The historic district is bounded roughly by Blanton Alley on the north, Huntley Street on the south, Yarboro Street on the west, and Broadway Street on the east. The district, which encompasses approximately eleven acres, extends five blocks along the north and south sides of Main Street, with some additional contributing properties on adjacent side streets to the north and south. Incorporated within the boundaries are the historic landscaped medians, which, along with the rows of primarily brick, one to three-story buildings lining both sides of Main Street, form an intact configuration representative of the boom era in Forest City, from the late 1880s through the 1920s. Outside the district boundaries to the south and north are new commercial buildings. There is a modern commercial building to the west of the district along with a few scattered historic churches and school buildings. To the east of the district, separated from the Main Street Historic District by several blocks, is a grouping of early twentieth century houses. The concentration of contiguous contributing buildings which comprise the historic district has changed some during the period of significance from ca. 1900 to 1951, primarily in the alterations of storefronts and some upper facade changes. The layout of the center of town, however, has not changed, and it is obvious when entering the district from the east or the west that the historic commercial core of town has retained its overall integrity, despite some architectural changes to individual buildings.

The nominated district consists of fifty-seven contributing buildings, one contributing site (the landscaped medians) and twenty-two non-contributing buildings. Most of the non-contributing buildings were built after the period of significance, which ends in 1951, but there are some historic buildings that have been significantly altered and are considered non-contributing. Others have been covered with modern metal fronts which have the potential to be removed. Eight vacant lots are included within the district boundaries.

The central landscaped medians that extend down the length of Main Street are significant features in the district and include original granite curbing, an historic fountain, and fully mature deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs. The oldest section of this landscape, including the fountain, extends from Cherry Mountain and Depot streets to Mill Street. This section, representative of the early twentieth century civic planning efforts in Forest City, dates from ca. 1917, and is in the location of what is still known as the town square, just north of what was originally Government Square on Mill Street. In 1927, Forest City was chosen as one of the ten most beautiful and best planned towns by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.¹ Additional landscaping has been added from the 1970s to the 1990s, providing a central median

¹Hughey, Miles. "Forest City One of America's Loveliest Towns", The Charlotte Observer, 3 May 1953.

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extending from in front of the former post office at 152 W. Main Street (#21) all the way east to in front of the Masonic Lodge Hall at 163 E. Main Street (#47). A detailed description of these medians is included in the inventory entry (#80).

Particularly notable buildings in the district include the **Post Office** (#21, 1937), a Colonial Revival style building constructed during the Works Progress Administration program; the **Davis Sisters Building** (#22, after 1932) an unusual Art Deco building; the **Farmers Bank and Trust** building (#32, 1923), a three-story Classical Revival style building with an original copper and glass clock and a highly intact interior; the **Tuberculosis Center** (#35, 1902), one of the oldest and most elaborately detailed brick buildings on Main Street; the **Romina Theater** (#37, 1928), a three-story Classical Revival building; the **Town Hall** (#18, 1928), a Colonial Revival style building designed by James J. Baldwin; the **Blanton Hotel** (#11, 1925), a three-story brick building with a heavy metal cornice; the **Reinhardt Drug Company Building** (#65, by 1908), a Romanesque-influenced building with a notable corner entry; and the **First Wesleyan Church** (#15, 1922).

INVENTORY LIST

Buildings are listed in the order of north-south streets first, followed by east-west streets. North-south streets are listed with the west side of street first; east-west streets are listed with the north side of street first. Dating of buildings is based upon 1902, 1908, 1916, 1925, and 1932 Sanborn maps used in the field, some documentary photographs, and oral history interviews. These sources are noted with each entry. Some buildings have the same address, even though they are separate structures. This is due to the fact that one business may expand into two or more buildings. These are denoted by A, B, C by the address if they are separate buildings.

Thomas Street--west side:

1. 141 Thomas Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. 1940s.

One-story plus basement commercial building with parapet roof, brick veneer walls, and recessed, angled, metal frame storefront area. Front door is single light with transom. Windows at rear of building are multi-light metal frame. Part of a row of buildings along Thomas Street built after 1932, since this street does not appear on 1932 Sanborn maps. According to local residents, this and the adjacent buildings to the south on Thomas Street were built soon after World War II. Note: There is a large expanse of vacant lot to the north of this building, but all of the lot is included since it is all part of one tax parcel. (Sanborn maps, field observation, oral history).

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2. 129-139 Thomas Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. 1940s.

One-story plus basement commercial building with five storefront bays separated by brick pilasters, painted brick veneer walls, and parapet roof. All bays have a center door with transom, flanked by display windows. Transoms above storefronts appear to be covered with metal. Pilasters divide the bays. Some concrete block additions to rear with metal frame windows. (Sanborn maps).

3. 127 Thomas Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. 1940s.

One-story plus basement brick building with a parapet roof, similar in appearance to 141 Thomas Street (#1). Single light door with transom and an angled metal frame display window. Addition at rear with multi-light metal frame windows. (Sanborn maps).

4. 125 Thomas Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. late 1950s.

One-story building with striated, common bond, painted brick side and corner of the front walls, flat roof, corrugated metal on upper facade. Large aluminum frame display windows, angled to the front door at south end of building. Double glass door. (Sanborn maps).

Cherry Mountain Street--west side:

5. 121 Cherry Mountain Street. Telephone Exchange Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building, painted in front. Shallow sloping roof, modern metal storefront. Original second story windows boarded over. Original doorway to upstairs remains, but door is replaced with plywood. In 1925, this building was in use as an auto painting business. By 1932, the building was in use as a feed warehouse and the telephone exchange office. Wilkie Furniture was located downstairs in the late 1930s and 1940s. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

Depot Street--west side:

vacant lot

6. 124 Depot Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1925.

One-story brick building with flat roof and original storefront configuration. Original framing replaced with aluminum. Wood frame transom intact, and original front door of three-light-over-panel. Stucco on facade, and newer brick on north wall, replacing the original brick that covered the former party wall of the building to the north which has been torn down. Concrete block addition at rear. Sanborn maps from 1902 and 1908 indicate there were livery stables and dwellings located in this block. In 1925 and 1932, this building was in use as a store. (Sanborn maps).

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Rutherford County, North Carolina

7. 126 Depot Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. ca. 1925; alterations 1960s.
One-story brick building with covered facade and modern metal storefronts. Small concrete block addition at rear. This building and the adjacent one to the south (#8) currently have one applied corrugated metal facade. Historically they were two separate buildings, now operating as one business. Built as store buildings. (Sanborn maps).

8. 128 Depot Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. ca. 1925; alterations 1960s.

See description above for 126 Depot Street (#7). (Sanborn maps).

9. Depot Street. Garage. Contributing. ca. 1925.

One-story painted brick building with a flat roof and a small brick addition at rear. Two intact garage bays, one with the original multi-light door, and one infilled with concrete block. Interior brick chimney on south side. Multi-light metal frame windows on south side. Built as a garage. No address in tax records. (Sanborn maps).

10. 138 Depot Street. Coca-Cola Bottling Company. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building with a flat roof, and original storefront display area. One-story wing at rear, and large one-story brick addition at the southwest corner. Some second story windows bricked in, others are typical industrial multi-light metal sash. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

Depot Street--east side:

11. 123-125 Depot Street. Blanton Hotel. Contributing. 1925.

Three-story brick building with a parapet roof and heavy metal cornice on the facade. First floor has three bays comprised of storefronts on either side of a central door to upstairs. Storefronts altered. Second and third floors have seven bays. Windows are two-over-two with flat brick lintels. Substantial concrete block addition to rear faces Mill Street, but is not visible from front of building. George Jones, who came to Forest City from Boston, constructed this building in 1925 for offices. In 1928 the building became the Blanton Hotel, when the Blanton family moved in. The structural system is solid masonry with concrete slab floors. The hotel accommodated traveling salesmen. Rooms could be rented with or without a bath. There were no closets and no heat in the building originally. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

12. 139-A Depot Street. Forest Dale Laundry Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1925.

One-story brick building with a parapet roof and original storefront configuration. Corbeled cornice. Built as a store building. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

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13. 139-B Depot Street. Florence Mill Warehouse. Contributing. 1930s.

One-story brick building with a flat roof to rear and an extended parapet wall at facade. Five bays on facade, with alternating display windows and doors; the southernmost one appears to be original. Substantial arched truss brick addition at rear. Multi-light metal sash windows on north side. (Sanborn maps, field observation, oral history).

Mill Street--west side:

14. 112-116 Mill Street. Commercial Bldg./Town Hall (former). Contributing. ca. 1915.

One-story brick building with a stepped parapet roof and three distinct storefront bays. The northernmost one (112) retains its original configuration, with some alterations and covering of the transom. The center portion (114) is the most intact, with the transoms painted as the only change. This portion was a building and loan business. The southernmost section (116) has a modern pent roof covering the transom lights, and altered storefront, but retains its original tin ceiling inside. This portion of the building was the original location of the Town Hall, from ca. 1915 until ca. 1925. The wide section of Mill Street was originally known as Government Square. The other sections of the building were in use as retail stores, including a shoe repair shop. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

Mill Street--east side:

four vacant lots (parking)

15. 127 Mill Street. First Wesleyan Church. Contributing. 1922.

Brick church with prominent bell tower on the facade and front gable roof. Tin shingle roof covering. Central entry below bell tower, with arched windows on either side. Windows are colored glass, and front door is double leaf two-light-over-panel. Small addition to rear, built after 1932. The First Wesleyan Church of Forest City was founded on November 2, 1902. It built its first structure on Liberty Street in 1907. This church building was built on Government Square in 1922 through the generosity of Dr. T. C. McBrayer, a prominent physician in Forest City from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, who contributed to many other buildings in town, including the now gone Hotel Mabree. (Sanborn maps, oral history, Rutherford County 1979: A People's Bicentennial History, p. 158.).

16. 135 Mill Street. Morris Baking Co. Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1920; alterations 1940s.

Two-story square brick building with a flat roof. Windows are typical metal frame multi-light industrial, with some six-over-six and some boarded over. Replacement doors. Several changes to the building, including a 1940s arched truss brick rear addition, and a one-story concrete block addition to the south side. This building was originally occupied by the Morris Baking Co., by 1932 was used as the Florence Mills cotton warehouse. (Sanborn maps).

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Powell Street--east side:

17. 116 S. Powell Street. House. Contributing. ca. 1900; moved 1940s.

One and one-half story house with paired clipped gable roof bays at front. Pressed tin shingle roof covering, and weatherboard siding. Bungalow porch, with northeast corner a porte cochere. Two interior chimneys, now stuccoed. Arched windows on front gable ends are covered with louvers. Remaining windows are multi-light casement or two-over-two, with bay windows onto porch on either side of front door. Wide, multi-light front door. One-story wing at rear. This house was originally located facing Main Street and was moved around the corner in the 1940s when the three buildings at the corner of S. Powell and E. Main Street were constructed, directly north of the current location of this house. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

18. 128 N. Powell Street. Town Hall. Contributing. 1928.

Two and one-half story Colonial Revival building with a center hall plan. The town hall and the fire department were originally two separate buildings but are now joined by an enclosed walkway between the two buildings which encompasses interior office space. The town hall portion to the south has five bays on the facade, divided by cast stone pilasters. There is also an elaborate cornice, cupola, broken pediment over the main entry, and a side gable roof on this side of the building. Palladian window on south elevation. There are three bays on the fire department side of the building and a front gable roof. There is a small one-story projecting bay added to this side of the building. Windows on the building are nine-over-nine and six-over-six, with some replacements. Designed by James J. Baldwin, and built by W. H. Hand & Sons, this structure was completed in 1928, at a cost of approximately \$27,000. Charles Z. Flack was mayor, and aldermen were B. B. Doggett, V. T. Davis, G.V. Frye, R. K. Hollifield, and W. E. Moore. 1932 Sanborn maps indicate the town hall and the fire department were two separate buildings, later joined by an arched walkway. This walkway appears by 1957 (see photo), and is currently enclosed for interior office use. 1932 Sanborn also indicates a one-story wing at the rear of the town hall, and the building is noted as "ideal construction", meaning fireproof construction. According to town minutes, the building was built of hollow clay tile with a brick facing. Note: There is a large expanse of parking around the building, but all of the lot is included since it is all part of one tax parcel. (Sanborn maps, documentary photo, plaque on building, town minute books).

19. 116 N. Powell Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. late 1940s.

One-story brick building with an extended parapet wall on the facade. Building has two separate store spaces and entrances. Six bays on facade. Fixed display windows on either side of central door for each business. Replacement door on north end; south side has original double leaf four-light-over-panel door. Two-story concrete block addition at rear with metal frame windows. A hot dog stand was formerly located in this building. (oral history).

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20. 110 N. Powell Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. 1940s.

One-story frame building with a front gable roof. Building is covered with v-crimp metal siding, a material generally used for roofing beginning in the 1940s. Door is four-vertical-lights-over-panels. Building is set on concrete piers. This building was moved to this lot from another location in the late 1950s. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

Main Street--north side:

21. 152 W. Main Street. Post Office (former). Contributing. 1937.

One-story Colonial Revival style brick building with a hip roof covered with standing seam metal. Replacement windows and door, but original door trim and fanlight is intact. Original segmental arches and concrete sills of windows are intact. New door added at west side of building when it was a bank, along with a covered bank drive-through on the west side. A Works Progress Administration project of the 1930s. Cornerstone notes Henry Morganthan, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury; James A. Farley, Postmaster General; Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect, and Neal A. Melick, Supervising Engineer. Building is currently undergoing renovation into an office building. (Sanborn maps, documentary photographs, survey files).

22. 140 W. Main Street. Davis Sisters Building. Contributing. ca. 1935.

One-story Art Deco style building, with a second story on the rear east portion of the building. Extended parapet walls on the front and rear of the western section. The building is divided into two separate businesses. Facades are original glazed tile with storefront cornice detailing. Original recessed storefront configurations, with a metal awning added to the western storefront. Aluminum storefront framing and replacement door on the west, and original wood framing and double doors on the east. Multi-light awning windows on the west elevation. Occupants in this building included Davis Sisters, a general store, an A & P grocery store, and a post office. (Sanborn maps, oral history)

23. 136 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1935.

One-story building with a flat roof, and angled display area with aluminum frame entry door. Front facade has glazed tile like the building to the west (#22). (Sanborn maps).

24. 132 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. 1940s.

One-story brick building with two storefront bays, apparently in their original configuration. Storefront surrounds appear to be Carrara glass. Original storefront and door framing replaced with aluminum framing. Multi-light windows at rear. (Sanborn maps).

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25. 126 W. Main Street. Farmer's Federation Bldg. Non-contributing. 1940s.

One-story painted brick building with stuccoed facade and completely altered storefront. Small, multi-light, metal frame windows on west elevation. Occupants of this building have included the Farmer's Federation, and a cafe. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

26. 122 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. late 1930s.

One-story building with two storefront areas which appear to be in their original configuration. Paneled wood kickplates, and original tile entry floor. Changes to the building include the removal of the center portions of the wood pilasters at either end of the building, and the addition of the pent roof over the upper facade extending out from the storefronts. Central elliptical shape column on paneled pier appears original. Brick addition at rear. (Sanborn maps).

27. 118 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. late 1920s.

One-story building with stone veneer facade (modern application), and brick to rear. Concrete block addition to rear. Flat roof, aluminum frame modern storefronts. Original use was two retail stores. (Sanborn maps).

28. 116 W. Main Street. Forest City Motor Co. Bldg. Non-contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story building with altered storefront and applied tile facade. New facing brick on rear elevation. Parapet roof, windows covered by replacement facade material. Arched door and window openings bricked in on west elevation. Original use of building was Forest City Motor Company, and later Dixie Home Stores. (Sanborn maps, documentary photographs).

29. 110 W. Main Street. Farmer's Hardware Bldg. Non-contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story building with completely altered storefront and upper facade. One-story brick addition at rear, ca. 1940s to 1950s. One-over-one arched windows at rear on the second floor, with multi-light metal frame windows set within the original arched openings on the first floor. Original use of building was "hardware, paints, and oils". (Sanborn maps).

30. 108 W. Main Street. Barber Shop. Contributing. ca. 1925.

One-story brick building with a flat roof and original storefront, including transoms. Front door is single light and display windows have replacement aluminum framing. Separate door to west leads to a large room at rear. A barber shop business has always been in this building. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

31. 104-106 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1925.

One-story brick building with a flat roof. Two separate businesses and storefronts. 106 W. Main has aluminum framing replacing the original, and transom lights are boarded over. The storefront at 104 W. Main is nearly intact, with the only change being the painted transom lights. Original double leaf door with single lights. (Sanborn maps).

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32. 102 W. Main Street. National Bank of Forest City. Contributing. 1923.

Three-story Classical Revival style building located at a prominent corner of Main Street. First floor facade divided into three bays separated by brick pilasters. Storefront display windows aluminum frame. Windows are one-over-one, some are bricked in and stuccoed over. Decorative cornice and dentils at parapet roofline. Small shed roof addition at rear. Front entrance retains original classical detailing, although door is replacement. Door to upper floors located on east elevation, with original pediment above door. Notable original clock of copper and glass on the southeast corner. Interior of building is highly intact, including the original bank vault on the first floor, and original office configurations and woodworking on the upper floors. Originally, there were medical and legal offices upstairs, and a barber shop in the basement. A newspaper article from the Forest City Courier contains an ad for the grand opening of this bank building. (Sanborn maps, survey files, oral history).

33. 101 E. Main Street. Florence Mill Store. Non-contributing. ca. 1900.

Two-story building completely altered from its original design. Vinyl siding on upper facade, altered storefront, stucco at rear, and new facing brick on west elevation. Sanborn maps and documentary photos indicate this building was here from at least 1902, but has gone through several changes. Former businesses in this building included the Florence Mill store (this was built for the mill), Collins Department Store, Efird's Department Store, Jones Grocery, and A & P Grocery. (Sanborn maps, documentary photos, oral history).

34. 115 E. Main Street. Flack Hardware Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1905; 1940s alteration.

Two-story brick building, with 1940s replacement brick facade. Stuccoed at rear and east facade. All windows infilled except on the front. New window sash, but within the original openings. Parapet roof, modern storefront, with transoms above covered by pent roof addition. This building replaces two smaller stores which were on this site prior to 1908. Former businesses included Kress, Flack Hardware and the Bee Hive. (Sanborn maps, documentary photos, oral history).

35. 121 E. Main Street. Tuberculosis Center. Contributing. 1902.

One of the oldest buildings on Main Street, this three-story Romanesque Revival style brick structure is also one of the most ornamented. Original storefront configuration, with new aluminum framing and a flat roof metal awning over sidewalk. Five bays on second and third floors divided by brick pilasters. Arched windows with four-over-four sash on west side, and one-over-one on facade. Highly decorative cornice, and center and corner parapets at roofline. Small addition at rear. Original tin ceiling inside. This building was originally built as a center for tuberculosis treatment by Dr. T. C. McBrayer, and still retains many of the original patient

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rooms upstairs. Some crumbling brick on facade. In the 1930s and 1940s, Horn's Department Store was located here. (Sanborn maps, oral history, Essays on North Carolina History, p. 160).

36. 123 E. Main Street. Horn Mercantile Bldg. Non-contributing. late 1920s.

Three-story brick building with modern stuccoed facade. Applied half-timbering on facade, and applied diamond muntins on original windows. Parapet roof, altered storefront. Horn Mercantile was formerly located in this building. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

37. 131 E. Main Street. Romina Theater. Contributing. 1928.

Three-story Classical Revival yellow brick building, built as a theater. Altered storefront. Upper floors six bays each. Second floor windows twelve-over-twelve, with flat arches and keystones; third floor replacement metal frame multi-light windows with keystones. Parapet roof with decorative cornice, "1928" in a medallion, with decorative swags. Cables extend from metal lion heads to the current awning, but these probably originally held up the movie marquee. Built as the Romina Theater, of fireproof construction, this building also housed a soda shop and a jewelry store. The theater included a performance stage. Later uses of the building included Hardin's Drugs. (Sanborn maps, documentary photos, oral history).

**38. 133 E. Main Street. Coca-Cola Bottling Works Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1900.
alterations 1940s.**

One-story brick building with original storefront configuration, and replacement aluminum frame display windows and doors. New brick facade from the 1940s, older brick at rear. Metal awning. Arched windows on rear are bricked in. The Coca-Cola Company had a bottling plant in this location, beginning in 1908. An addition was constructed to the rear between 1925 and 1932. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

39. 139-A E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. ca. 1925.

One-story brick building, with stuccoed facade and altered storefront. Metal awning. Windows bricked in at rear. The original use of this building was for the sale of wholesale drugs. (Sanborn maps).

40. 139-B E. Main Street. Cone's Department Store. Non-contributing. ca. 1925.

One-story brick building, with numerous alterations. Projecting sign covers upper facade, and pent roof added over storefronts. Storefronts altered. All windows at rear bricked in or covered with plywood. Modern doors front and rear. Sanborn map from 1925 notes the wall in center of building extended to the ceiling only, and was thus not a firewall, but just divided the building into two sections. This building at one time was occupied by Cone's Department Store (Cone Mills). It was built on the site of the Mabree Hotel, which burned in 1918. (Sanborn maps, documentary photos, oral history).

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41. 139-C E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. ca. 1935.

One-story building with numerous alterations to storefront and upper facade. Modern display windows and door, with new brick all around storefront. Plywood paneling on upper facade. All windows at rear bricked in. (Sanborn maps).

42. 145 E. Main Street. Smith's Department Store. Contributing. ca. 1935.

Two-story painted brick building with parapet roof, gabled in center. Modern aluminum frame storefront, metal awning. Upper facade has original one-over-one windows. Windows at rear are four-over-four and six-over-six. Door at rear is three vertical lights-over-panel, with a transom. Smith's Department Store was formerly located in this building, with a beauty parlor on the second floor. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

**43. 149 E. Main Street. Graham Cash Dept. Store. Non-contributing. 1930s.
alterations 1950s and 1960s.**

One-story building from the 1930s, but with ca. 1950s to 1960s remodeling of storefront and upper facade. Storefront configuration has three bays, with the center display window projecting to the front. Brick veneer on east and rear elevations, with mural painted on east elevation. Some original windows at rear bricked in. (Sanborn maps, documentary photos, oral history).

44. 155 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. late 1930s.

One-story brick building with a parapet roof and original storefront configuration. Paneling covers transom windows. Original single light-over-panel door and display window. Two-over-two possible replacement windows at rear. This building, and the adjacent ones to the east (#45 and #46) were all built at the same time, but are separate structures. Originally the Hotel Mabree occupied this corner, with N. Powell Street not being constructed until sometime between 1925 and 1932. (Sanborn maps, oral history, documentary photographs).

45. 157 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. late 1930s.

One-story brick building with parapet roof, and some changes to bays. Windows are a combination of replacement fixed panes and original one-over-one. Modern door. One-story shed roof addition at rear. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

46. 159 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. late 1930s.

One-story brick building with parapet roof and original door and display window. Door is four vertical-lights-over-panel. Transom intact. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

47. 163 E. Main Street. Masonic Lodge Hall. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building with retrofitted replacement windows and some infilled windows on upper facade. Central door framed by brick pilasters with large display windows either side and around to the west elevation. Probably original configuration. Two-story concrete block

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addition at rear with metal frame, multi-light windows, same as the replacements on the front. The Masonic Lodge Hall was one of the early occupants of this building. Other occupants have included a restaurant, a bakery, and Logan Hardware. (Sanborn maps, documentary photos, oral history).

48. 167 E. Main Street. Family Shoe Store Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building in a Mission Revival style. Original pent roof with tile and paneled soffit. Original storefront configuration, with replacement aluminum framing on door and windows. Original windows are covered by louvers; rear windows are one-over-one, some covered with plywood. Family Shoe Store and Graham Brothers once occupied this building. The 1925 Sanborn maps noted that "lodge rooms" were available for rent. (Sanborn maps, oral history, documentary photo).

49. 171-A E. Main Street. Forest City Courier Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick Mission Revival style building similar to the adjacent building to the west (#48). Storefront altered, but retains the original pent roof with asphalt covering (probably originally tile). Windows on upper facade are infilled with plywood, but openings are intact. Concrete block addition to rear. The Forest City Courier and the Barbecue Grill originally occupied this building. (Sanborn maps, oral history, documentary photo).

50. 171-B E. Main Street. Harry Long Appliance Building. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building with notable brick corbeling on upper facade and cornice. Modernized storefront; upper facade intact except windows are bricked in. One-story brick addition at rear with a stepped parapet roof. Harry Long Appliance originally occupied this building. (Sanborn maps, oral history, documentary photo).

Main Street--south side:

51. 129 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. 1940s.

One-story brick building with facing brick on facade, concrete block to rear, parapet roof and metal awning. Three bays, a central door flanked by display windows; appears to be original configuration with single light door. (Sanborn maps).

52. 127 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. 1970s.

One-story frame building with aluminum siding, front gable roof, and extensive alterations on facade. Entry porch and door added. From the rear, it appears that an older building is encased by this new structure. One-story addition to rear with flat roof. (Sanborn maps).

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53. 125 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. 1940s.

One-story brick building with parapet roof, original storefront on west side, and boarded up display and door on east side storefront. Door on west storefront original single light with transom. One-story brick addition to rear. (Sanborn maps).

54. 123 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. 1940s.

One-story building with extensive alterations, including modern storefront, stucco and plywood on facade. Two concrete block additions to rear. (Sanborn maps).

55. 119-121 W. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. 1940s.

One-story concrete block building with flat roof, and two storefronts. Appear to be original configurations. Doors are single light. (Sanborn maps).

vacant lot to east

56. 107-111 W. Main Street. Central Hotel. Non-contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building with stepped parapet roof and alterations at storefronts and facade. Three bays on first floor, with original configurations of storefronts on east and west; aluminum framing on doors and windows. Upper facade has been stuccoed, plywood paneling added on lower portion of facade. Original arched window openings bricked in on west elevation. Arched door openings at rear replaced with modern infill. Modern replacement door at center entrance at front. The original use of this building was a hotel and a wholesale grocery. By 1932 it was known as the Central Hotel. Later, this building was occupied by Belk's Department Store. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

57. 105 W. Main Street. Farmers Bank and Trust Co. Bldg. Non-contributing. early 1910s.

Extensively altered two-story yellow brick building set at a prominent corner of Main Street, across from another bank building (#32). Corner entry is one of the few original features of the building which remains intact. Recent alterations include retrofitted windows, new keystones, and modern doors which severely change the original appearance of the building. There are some original windows on the east elevation, with fixed panes, probably originally display windows. Parapet roof with metal cornice. Stuccoed at rear, with original brick remaining on upper east elevation and facade, but stucco on the lower half of these walls. This structure originally housed a bank, with some medical offices upstairs and a barber shop at the rear. Other occupants through the years have included a men's clothing store, a hotel, and Seller's Finance Company. A ca. 1920s photo in the collection of Bill McArthur shows this building with the original windows and a broken pediment over the corner entry. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

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**58. 102-106 E. Main Street. Blanton's Grocery. Contributing. ca. 1905.
alterations 1940s.**

One-story brick building with two separate storefronts, and a parapet roof. Storefronts retain their original configuration with some changes, including infill or covering or transom windows, and replacement aluminum framing of some windows and doors. West elevation has been stuccoed, and it appears that a new brick facade was added in the 1940s which makes the buildings appear as one from the front. One-story addition at rear, with a separate entrance. The western section of the building (102-104 W. Main) housed a bank in 1908, a drugstore beginning in 1916, and the addition at the rear was the telegraph office in 1925. The eastern section (106 W. Main) housed a grocery in 1908, a drugstore in 1916, a bank in 1925, and a retail store in 1932. Blanton's Grocery occupied this building at one time also. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

59. 108 E. Main Street. Post Office (former). Contributing. ca. 1905.

One-story brick building with original storefront configuration, replacement aluminum framing, and stucco on upper facade. The post office was located in this building in 1908, a restaurant was here in 1916, a retail store in 19125, and a cotton broker in 1932. (Sanborn maps).

60. 110 E. Main Street. Sherwin-Williams Bldg. Non-contributing. 1970s.

One-story brick building with recessed storefront bay. This building replaces an older structure which burned. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

61. 112 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1905.

One-story brick building with original, intact recessed entry storefront. Single light doors with transoms, brick kickplates, new wood awning. Uses in this building included a grocery from 1908 to 1916, a retail store in 1925, and a dry cleaner in 1932. (Sanborn maps).

62. 114 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1905.

One-story building with two distinct original storefront bays. Single light doors with transoms, central display window. New wood awning and new brick kickplates. Parapet roof. Uses of this building have included a general store from 1908 to 1916, a bank in 1925, and a retail store again in 1932. (Sanborn maps).

**63. 116 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. ca. 1900.
alterations 1990s.**

This one-story building is one of the oldest buildings on Main Street, but has been extensively altered, with new brick facade, modern storefront. In 1902, this building housed the post office. Sanborn map from 1908 indicates this building and the one to the east (#64) had "partly burned". In 1916, a jewelry store was here, and the building remained as a retail store through at least the

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1930s. The New York Cafe, and Bradley's Watch & Jewelry occupied this building at different times. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

64. 118 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1900.

One-story brick building which appears to have been sandblasted. Original arched doorway and window openings are intact, but door and windows are modern replacements. Parapet roof with corbelled cornice. A shoe shop, general store, grocery, and retail stores have all occupied this building. It had "partly burned" in 1908. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

65. 126-A E. Main Street. Reinhardt Drug Co. Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1905.

Two-story Romanesque-influenced brick building with a corner entry. Door is single light with two-light transom and sidelights. Original display windows with transoms. Parapet roof with corbelling. Lower portion of facade has been stuccoed. Nine-over-nine windows with fanlights. Original door at southwest corner of building. Reinhardt Drug Company, Hall's Drugstore, Dalton Brothers clothing, and legal offices have occupied this building through the years. (Sanborn maps, documentary photographs, oral history).

66. 126-B E. Main Street. B & S Grocery Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1915.

Two-story brick building, currently stuccoed over. Two separate entrances, with a display window between, which appears to be original storefront configuration. Applied metal panels on lower half of facade, around storefronts. Nine-over-nine windows on front with segmental arches; eight-over-eight at rear. Modern replacement doors at front, with original double leaf door at rear. Notable terrazzo floor at front entrances. The B & S Grocery occupied the eastern section of this building in 1916, along with a "picture show" on the west side. The entire building has been in use as a retail store from 1925. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

67. 132-136 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1915.

Two-story brick building which originally contained a band of segmental arch windows across the entire second floor facade, with a central door to the upper level dividing the two storefronts. First floor retains the two distinct storefronts, but the second story facade on the west has had windows replaced. Central door opening covered with plywood. Windows are covered on the east side, but original segmental arch openings are intact. Stucco on the upper facade and stone veneer applied around the modern storefront. Notable cast iron storefront framing has recently been uncovered on the east side, along with original storefront configuration. Windows at rear are one-over-one, also segmental arches; most are infilled. Doors at rear are modern infill. In 1916, the post office was located in the western side of the building, with a grocery on the east. This use remained the same in 1925. By 1932, there were retail stores on the first floor, and a photo studio on the second. Through the years, McKinney Dry Cleaners, City Dry Cleaners, the Candy Kitchen, a beauty shop, and Gilbert's Photo Studio, on the second floor, were occupants of this building. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

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68. 138 E. Main Street. Padgett & King Furniture Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1915.

Two-story brick building with original storefront configuration and cast iron framing. Transoms covered with corrugated metal. Four segmental arch windows on second floor infilled with plywood. Parapet roof. Windows at rear also segmental arch, infilled with wood; some one-over-one intact. Padgett & King Furniture, along with other retail stores, occupied this building through the years. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

69. 142 E. Main Street. Horn Theater. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building, built as a movie theater. Facade has been stuccoed, and windows have been partially infilled. All new storefront framing, but original configuration is intact. Parapet roof with dentils at projecting cornice. Brackets at cornice which appear in 1930s postcard have been removed. Segmental arch windows at rear also infilled. The Horn Theater, later the Grace Theater, and a newsstand once occupied this building. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

70. 144 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1950.

Two-story brick building, and an intact example of a mid-twentieth century commercial structure. Original storefront, with double leaf doors with single lights and transoms. Multi-light, metal frame casement windows on second floor, also typical of this time period. A small wood frame building once occupied this lot, but was demolished in the late 1940s. It was the location of Charlie's Soda Shop, a popular gathering place in town. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

71. 146 ~~4~~ E. Main Street. Moss Furniture Bldg. ~~Non~~ Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building with numerous alterations at the storefront, including shingle covering. On the second floor, original double hung windows have been replaced with single light fixed panes. Rear windows are still the original one-over-one; some are infilled or painted over. Interior tin ceiling is still intact. Moss Furniture once occupied this building. (Sanborn maps). *Historic storefront uncovered - now classified as contributing*

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72. 146 ~~4~~ E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1950.

Two-story brick building, similar in design to 144 E. Main Street (#70). Storefront area somewhat altered, with a pent roof above which extends to the adjacent building to the west (#71), and the addition of shingle siding. Second story windows are multi-light, metal frame casement, typical of the period. Parapet roof. This building, and the two adjacent to the east (#73 and #74) were all built approximately at the same time. The house that occupied this lot was moved to its present location on S. Powell Street (#17). (Sanborn maps, oral history).

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73. 150 E. Main Street. Sterchi's Furniture Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1950.

Two-story brick building with replacement windows and partially altered storefront. Parapet roof. Replacement windows and door at rear. Sterchi's Furniture and J. Hicks Appliance were occupants of this building at different times. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

74. 152 E. Main Street. Security Bank & Trust Co. Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1950.

One-story brick and concrete block building. Recessed center entry, with fixed pane windows on either side; this appears to be the original configuration. Possibly some retrofitting of original windows on east elevation and at rear. Notable curving vertical concrete bands frame front door and windows. This originally housed the Security Bank & Trust Company. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

vacant lot to east (parking)

75. 164 E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. late 1940s.

Two-story, basically intact example of a 1940s building. Storefront and second floor metal frame, multi-light awning style windows original. Original double leaf front door. Facade was originally marble, but was replaced with the present stone veneer soon after construction. Fireproof construction, including steel framing and terrazzo floors. This building originally housed an electric appliance store, and was built after World War II. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

vacant lot to east

76. 180-A E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building with parapet roof. Original second story window frames intact, but are covered with particle board. Storefront altered with new framing and covered transoms, but original rear garage door openings are intact. This building was built as an automobile showroom and service garage. (Sanborn maps).

77. 180-B E. Main Street. Horn Motor Company Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building with original display window bays intact on the first floor. Transoms covered with corrugated metal. Second story window openings intact, but are covered with particle board. This was built as an automobile sales showroom. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

78. 180-C E. Main Street. Commercial Building. Non-contributing. 1960s.

One-story modern infill brick building, with original storefront, parapet roof, and corrugated metal across upper facade. (Sanborn maps).

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79. 180-D E. Main Street. McKinney Dry Cleaning Bldg. Contributing. ca. 1925.

Two-story brick building with somewhat altered storefront, and transoms covered by corrugated metal. Second story windows infilled with plywood. Parapet roof. Small shed roof addition at rear, extends to building to west (#78). Windows at rear include original nine-over-nine and some ca. 1950s metal frame, multi-light replacements. Occupants of this building included McKinney Dry Cleaning, auto sales, and a florist. (Sanborn maps, oral history).

80. Landscaped Medians. Contributing. ca. 1917 and late 1920s.

There are three intact historic landscaped medians in the center of Main Street, denoted on the sketch map as sections C, D, and F. The oldest section of the medians (D, ca. 1917) in the center of Main Street, denoting the area known as the square, and north of the former Government Square on Mill Street, is comprised of a central fountain and sidewalks which radiate out from this. This is the widest section of the medians, approximately twelve to fifteen feet in width. Granite curbing lines the median on all sides. A ca. 1917 photo in the collection of Mr. Bill McArthur shows this area soon after it was completed, and no plantings had yet been added. The hemlock which still stands at the west side of this median is part of the original plantings. All shrubbery lining the sidewalks are replacement plants, but are in the same locations as they were originally. A second historic section of the medians, approximately eight feet wide and surrounded by granite curbing (C,) was apparently added in the late 1920s. There is a magnolia tree at the east end, and a marker from June 3, 1932 placed there by the United Daughters of the Confederacy for Captain H. D. Lee and the Company D 16th Regiment. A third historic section of the medians (F) is located just to the east of the widest portion (D), and was also completed by the late 1920s. Photos dating from the 1930s show this area with mature plantings, and it is not likely the work was implemented in the Depression years. Since the town was given an award in 1927, it is likely all three of these sections were completed by this time. It too is surrounded by granite curbing, and is approximately ten to twelve feet in width. There is a mature magnolia tree in the center, with newer plantings around the edges. There are two markers in this section, added in the 1970s. These are for three state troopers and an American Legion Post 74 memorial marker.

Beginning at the east edge of the historic district, in front of the former post office (#21), there have been new medians added through the years, beginning in the 1970s through the 1990s, when the town was involved in a beautification movement again. The first of these medians (A) is approximately six feet wide, with a few trees and shrubs planted within it. The second modern section (B) has a wider area on the west, and narrow concrete curbing with parking spaces on either side to the east. The marker (1977) denoting the former name of the town, Burnt Chimney, is located at the west edge of this median. New period lighting with hanging baskets, and trees at either end are located within this section. A third new area (E), divides East Main Street from the buildings located to the south. This consists of new concrete curbing and brick paving, with no plantings. The last three modern sections of medians (G, H, I) are narrower

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areas. Section G is a narrow area with parking on either side and no plantings. Section H is approximately four feet wide with some plantings. Section H is approximately the same width as G, with plantings and period lampposts with baskets. While newer, these added sections help to define the commercial core of Forest City, and are compatible with the older sections, maintaining the landscaped corridor of downtown and defining the east and west edges of Main Street. (photo collection, Bill McArthur; newspaper article 1953; historic photos).

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SUMMARY

The Main Street Historic District in Forest City is significant as an intact collection of turn-of-the-century to early twentieth century commercial buildings representative of an industrial community's boom time from ca. 1900 to 1940. Additional growth in the town in the 1940s and early 1950s is also represented within the district, extending the period of significance to 1951. The Main Street Historic District is also significant as an intact representation of early twentieth century civic landscape design with its wide dimensions and distinctive landscaped medians. The Main Street Historic District in Forest City is eligible for listing under National Register Criterion C for architecture and community planning and development and it meets Criterion A for its contribution to the commercial development of the town. Although the community continued to develop commercially after 1951, it has been determined that this period is not exceptionally significant, and therefore the fifty-year cut-off date for Criterion A is appropriate.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND AND COMMERCE CONTEXT

Rutherford County was formed from a portion of Tryon County on April 14, 1779.² The county seat of Rutherford Town was laid out in 1787. The community's economy was based primarily in agriculture, although some small industry developed in the 1780s, when James English established an ironworks on the Second Broad River.³ In the late 1790s, cotton became a major crop in the county, with twelve cotton gins in place in 1804. The county's population began to grow in the early nineteenth century, with 8,000 residents in 1790, and 13,000 by 1810.⁴ In 1828, gold was discovered in the northern part of the county, bringing with it an influx of settlers. From the 1820s to the 1840s, Rutherfordton became a major town in North Carolina. A courthouse was erected in 1836, a county school system was developed in 1839, and many grand homes were built in the town.⁵ After 1840, gold production in the county began to decline, and in 1841, Cleveland County was created from a part of Rutherford County. This in turn led to a significant loss of population. Then, in 1847, Polk County was divided from a portion of Rutherford County, leading to further decline in the number of residents remaining within the boundaries of Rutherford County. Some recovery within the county began in the 1850s, when the Wilmington-Charlotte-Rutherfordton Railroad began to be planned through the county. But yet another setback to the county's growth took place with the coming of the Civil War, and it wasn't until later in the nineteenth century that the railroad finally arrived and true economic recovery began to be seen.⁶

²Bynum, William B. The Heritage of Rutherford County, NC, Vol. 1, Winston-Salem: Hunter Publishing Company, 1984, p. XVI.

³Ibid, p. XIX.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid, p. XX.

⁶Ibid, p. XXI.

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Present day Forest City was incorporated in 1877 as the town of Burnt Chimney. Prior to the coming of the railroad in 1887, Forest City was a small community located at the intersection of the Shelby-Rutherfordton Road and one of the major north-south routes through the county (present-day Cherry Mountain Road and Depot Street in downtown Forest City).⁷ Some of the town's earliest residents included Dr. G. E. Young, the first mayor; Dr. T. C. Lovelace, Reverend J. H. Yarborough, A. H. McDaniel, John Blanton, John B. Harrill, Alfred Harrill, Thomas Wilkins, Amos McBrayer, Matt McBrayer, and Wallace Jackson, the town's first marshal.⁸ A. H. McDaniel, John Blanton, and R. M. Harrill, the town's first commissioners, were responsible for laying out the fifty-foot wide streets after the town was incorporated in 1877.⁹ The town at this time was located on the south side of Main Street, around Mill Street, the former Government Square.¹⁰ It included a few wooden store buildings, with mostly houses lining Main Street.¹¹ Early businesses included Jim Alley's store; R. M. Harrill's; R. H. McBrayer & Son; J. B. Blanton's; G. E. Young's; and Amos McBrayer's frame shop.¹² A fire in 1886 burned down most of the small wooden structures in the town.¹³ In 1887, after the fire, the name was changed to Forest City, for Forest Davis, a lumber merchant.¹⁴

It was not until the end of the nineteenth century that an economic boom began in Rutherford County and Forest City as the textile industry took hold and the arrival of the railroad created a flurry of new construction as it did in many other western North Carolina communities. In 1874, Gaston County Mills began operations in the county and located its cotton yarn mill near Caroleen. The coming of the railroad happened simultaneously with the industrial boom in the county, including the Wilmington-Charlotte-Rutherford Railroad (later Carolina Central and then Seaboard), completed to Rutherfordton, through Forest City, in 1887, and the Charleston-Cincinnati-Ohio Railroad (later Southern), which ran through the county and on to Marion in McDowell County, by 1890.¹⁵ The Clinchfield-Carolina-and Ohio Railroad was completed by 1909.¹⁶ Raleigh Rutherford Haynes (R. R. Haynes) built the Henrietta Mill in 1887, which grew

⁷Griffin, Clarence W. Essays on North Carolina History, Forest City: Forest City Courier, 1951, p. 145.

⁸Ibid, p. 148.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 149.

¹¹Ibid, p. 161.

¹²Ibid, p. 157. It is not known what types of businesses these early stores were. With farming continuing to be the major source of income until the railroad arrived, these were probably related primarily to farm supplies.

¹³Ibid, p. 145.

¹⁴The Historic Architecture of Rutherford County, p. 58.

¹⁵Ibid, p. XXIV.

¹⁶Merkel, Kimberly I. The Historic Architecture of Rutherford County. Forest City: Rutherford County Arts Council, 1983, p. 20.

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into the largest cotton cloth manufacturer in the state by 1892. Henrietta Mill No. 2 was built in 1896.¹⁷ The First Baptist Church in Forest City was built in 1889; the First United Methodist Church built its first building in 1892; and the First Presbyterian Church built its first building on Cherry Mountain Street in 1896.¹⁸ Florence Mill, founded by R. R. Haynes and S. B. Tanner, was built in 1897 in Forest City, on the site of the former Forest City Cotton Mill, which operated from 1890 to 1895.¹⁹ Florence Mill began operation with 12,200 spindles and originally had a mill village associated with it, but it was torn down in the 1950s.²⁰ By 1899, the population in Forest City was 1,000, with one cotton mill; one sawmill; one cotton gin; one woodworking shop; and one flour mill as some of the businesses in town. In the early 1900s, additional industries were built in the county, including Cleghorn Mill in Rutherfordton (1900); Cliffside Mill (1900), also designed and built by R. R. Haynes; Avondale and Haynes Mills (1916); Grace Mill in Rutherfordton (1916); S. B. Tanner in Spindale; Spencer Mill (1916); and Spindale Mill.²¹ A new courthouse was built in 1908, later demolished, and replaced with the current one in 1926.

The commercial core of downtown Forest City, centered on Main Street, developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a result of this building boom. With the arrival of the railroad and the opening of Florence Mills, the population of the town more than tripled from 419, in 1890, to 1592, in 1910, creating a need for additional goods and services downtown.²² Even though Rutherfordton was the county seat, and some industries located there and in other towns within the county, it was Forest City that saw the most growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the largest textile industries within the county located around Forest City, resulting in a surge in population and a significant amount of residential and commercial construction in the town's commercial core. A great diversification of goods and services became available in the town as it grew from the 1900s through the 1920s. Some of the retail businesses included groceries, general merchandise stores, shoe dealers, butchers, carriage dealers, clothiers, furniture, hardware and jewelry stores. As the automobile became more prevalent, car dealers and garages began to appear in the downtown. Medical, dental, and legal services were available in town, along with insurance agencies, banks, photographers, printers, building supply companies, undertakers, and several hotels and boarding houses. The number and variety of businesses in the town, including the availability of luxury items such as jewelry stores served as reminders of the economic well-being of the community in the early decades of

¹⁷Ibid, p. XXIII.

¹⁸History of Old Tryon and Rutherford Counties, pp. 115, 144, and 146.

¹⁹The Historic Architecture of Rutherford County, p. 150.

²⁰The Heritage of Rutherford County, p. XXIII and The Historic Architecture of Rutherford County, p. 21.

²¹Ibid, p. XXIV.

²²The Heritage of Rutherford County, p. 154.

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the twentieth century. As in towns throughout the rest of the county and western North Carolina, downtown, as it recovered in the 1940s and on through the 1950s and 1960s was the only location available for all the goods and services needed by the community.

By 1900, "...Forest City became the metropolis of Rutherford County, and has held that distinction since..."²³ The Forest City Telephone Company was established by 1901, and began providing some phone service in the village soon thereafter.²⁴ In 1902, the population in Forest City was 1090, with Florence Mills being the only mill. It employed 350 individuals at the time, producing sheeting and drills. The superintendent at the time was E. J. Barnett.²⁵ Also in 1902 there were five dentists and doctors; four general stores, including the Florence Mills store; three retail grocers; one newspaper; two druggists; one hardware store; and one undertaker.²⁶ Dr. T. C. McBrayer built a tuberculosis center on Main Street in 1902. Dr. McBrayer, "...a physician and man of means. . .", built this building as well as the Mabree Hotel, a resort hotel, in 1904.²⁷ Dr. McBrayer's tuberculosis clinic operated for many years, but this apparently was the only health center that Forest City ever witnessed.²⁸ While Forest City never developed into the resort community that nearby Lake Lure (Rutherford County) did, Forest City in the early part of the twentieth century did build several hotels in the downtown. The Mabree, which burned in 1918, was by far the biggest, two stories in height and with over one hundred rooms. It filled the east end of Main Street, but once it burned no hotel of this scale was ever built in the town. The Commercial Hotel, run by C. M. Martin was another early hotel in downtown, built in 1902, but also no longer stands.²⁹ In 1904, the city's first bank, First National Bank of Forest City, opened and remained in business until 1915 when it consolidated with the First Bank and Trust Company.³⁰

By 1910, Forest City was a flourishing community. It had completed its development of a waterworks and electrical system.³¹ There were twelve passenger trains into town daily.³² The population had reached 2600 and there were three churches; one grade school; four hotels and

²³Essays on North Carolina History, p. 154.

²⁴Ibid, p. 152.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶North Carolina Year Book, 1902. Raleigh, North Carolina: News and Observer.

²⁷Ibid, p. 165.

²⁸Dr. McBrayer practiced medicine in Forest City until ca. 1925, but there is no record as to how long he operated the tuberculosis clinic.

²⁹Ibid, p. 160.

³⁰Essays on North Carolina History, p. 151.

³¹The Heritage of Rutherford County, p. XXIII.

³²Historical Subcommittee of the Rutherford County Bicentennial Committee. Rutherford County 1979: A People's Bicentennial History. Rutherfordton: Rutherford County Bicentennial Committee, 1979, p. 467.

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boarding houses; one architect; two banks; one building and loan association; two brick manufacturers; four boot and shoe dealers; one bookstore; one butcher; two carriage dealers; and two textile mills, Florence Mills and Dixie Knitting. Additional businesses included one confectionery; three builders; one coal and wood dealer; two clothiers; two cotton gins; one depart store; six dentists and doctors; three druggists; seven dry goods stores; one power and light company; one fertilizer dealer; one fish and oyster dealer; one foundry; two furniture stores; eight groceries; one hardware store; two insurance agents; two jewelers; one lawyer; two lumber manufacturers; one marble works; one machinery dealer; two photographers; one printer; and one real estate agent.³³ In 1914, a group of women in Forest City gathered to form the Forest City Betterment Club, with the goal of creating a more beautiful downtown which would be outstanding within the county. The landscaped medians on Main Street centered within what is still known as the square, just north of the former Government Square on Mill Street, is the result of this group's early efforts.³⁴

By 1915, Forest City had six hotels and boarding houses, including the Hotel Wilkie and the Hotel Mobile; three churches; six hotels and boarding houses; the Florence and Dixie Mills; and most of the same stores as in 1910.³⁵ In 1917, some of the businesses in Forest City included a surveyor, two doctors, a bank, a lumber company, a feed store, a garage, a hotel, a bottling company, a restaurant, two groceries, a city market, four general stores, a jewelry store, a furniture store, and two insurance companies. While not a complete listing of the businesses located downtown in 1917, this is representative of the continuing diversification of downtown through the 1910s as the town was growing.³⁶

Expansion of the cotton textile industries throughout both Rutherford County took place during the 1920s, and Forest City was no exception to this trend. The commercial core of downtown continued to prosper. Large schools were built throughout the county and State Highway 20 was paved in 1922. Many civic organizations developed in Forest City in the 1920s, including the Forest City Kiwanis Club.³⁷ The First Wesleyan Church, built in 1922, was located on Mill Street and was part of the growing need for religious buildings as a result of the population growth through the 1920s. The National Bank of Forest City was organized on September 25, 1923, consolidating with Farmers Bank.³⁸ By 1925, there were two mills operating in the city, Florence Mills and Alexander Manufacturing Company. There was one weekly newspaper, the

³³North Carolina Year Book, 1910. Raleigh, North Carolina: News and Observer.

³⁴"Forest City One of America's Loveliest Towns".

³⁵North Carolina Year Book, 1915. Raleigh, North Carolina: News and Observer.

³⁶A People's Bicentennial History, p. 675.

³⁷Griffin, Clarence. History of Old Tryon and Rutherford Counties, NC, 1730-1936. Asheville: The Miller Printing Company, 1937, p. 501.

³⁸Essays on North Carolina History, p. 151.

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Forest City Courier, three attorneys, two physicians (including Dr. T. C. McBrayer); and one high school.³⁹ Businesses in the town in 1926 included a newspaper, several banks, drugstores, a bottling company, woodworking and lumber companies, car dealerships and garages, theaters, insurance agencies, building supply shops, groceries, department stores and milliners, confectioneries; dime stores, and shoe stores.⁴⁰ In 1927, the town was selected by the United States Department of Agriculture as one of the ten most beautiful and best planned cities in the United States, with Pinehurst being the only other North Carolina town selected.⁴¹ The early work of the Forest City Betterment Club, the purposeful planning of wide streets, landscaped medians, and the central location of Government Square (present location of Mill and Main Streets), no doubt led to this high honor. In 1928, the Colonial Revival Town Hall and Fire Department were built at a cost of approximately \$27,000.⁴² These two buildings, separate originally, but now joined as one building, were quite elaborate, being built of solid masonry with cast stone trim, and a slate roof.⁴³

The Depression, like everywhere else, slowed the economic growth that Forest City and the county had experienced in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. A national textile strike in 1934 closed all but two of the county's mills, one of which was the Florence Mill. Even though it did not close down, the mill production slowed considerably in the 1930s.⁴⁴ Despite the economic downturn, however, Forest City advertised itself in the 1934 business directory, as the "Trade Center of Rutherford County". Some of the businesses advertising in the 1934 business directory included department stores, appliance companies, insurance agencies, undertakers, hotels, dress shops, a dairy, a bottling company, department stores, feed companies, and coal companies. Other businesses listed in this directory included an ambulance company; eight women's apparel stores; six men's apparel stores; three apartment buildings; an awning company, six attorneys; three car dealers; four auto service shops; a bakery; three barbers; four restaurants; two beauty parlors; two building suppliers; two bottling companies; five carpenters; three dry cleaners; four coal companies; two cotton merchants; a chiropractor; two dressmakers; three drug stores; one appliance company; two fertilizer companies; a florist; nine filling stations; two funeral homes; two furniture companies; eleven groceries and markets; two hardware stores; two hotels (Blanton's and Central); two ice companies; an ice cream parlor; five insurance companies; two jewelers; a photo studio; a laundry; two lumber companies; a locksmith; a music store; eight physicians and surgeons; three painters; a plumber; two real estate offices; two soda

³⁹North Carolina Year Book, 1925. Raleigh, North Carolina: News and Observer.

⁴⁰A People's Bicentennial History, p. 680.

⁴¹History of Old Tryon and Rutherford Counties, p. 505.

⁴²"Forest City One of America's Loveliest Towns".

⁴³Minutes of Town of Forest City, March 20, 1928 to June 1, 1935.

⁴⁴The Heritage of Rutherford County, p. XXV. McArthur, Bill. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 9 August 2001. Mr. McArthur remembers the Spindale factory closing and the National Guard being called in, but noted there was never "any trouble" at the Florence Mill and it remained open.

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shops (one in the Romina Theater); two shoe shops; two taxi services; two ten cent stores; two theaters; four tailors; a veterinarian; three watch repair businesses; a wholesale candy and tobacco company; two wholesale groceries; and a wholesale paper products company, most of which were located along Main Street and the adjacent streets to the north and south.⁴⁵

It would appear from the city directory that there were indeed many thriving businesses in downtown, but through the early part of the 1930s the town experienced a great deal of economic hardship. Advertising in the directories continued for many businesses, but that alone is not an indicator that the town was thriving economically. Indeed, this was not the case, and the Depression years affected Forest City adversely, as everywhere else in the county. Union Trust Company of Shelby opened a branch bank in Forest City on February 17, 1930, but this was primarily to replace other banks which had failed by this point. A perusal of the town minutes from March 20, 1928 to June 1, 1935 is a clear indicator of the economic difficulties the town experienced in the Depression years. The annual town budget from June 1, 1928 to May 31, 1929 was \$754,000; from June 1, 1929 to May 31, 1930 \$827,994, and the 1930 to 1931 budget was \$820,525. In stark contrast to these thriving budgets, the 1931 to 1932 budget was \$111,802, and was even further reduced in 1934 to 1935, with only \$90,712.⁴⁶ All through the early 1930s references are made in the minutes to the difficulty of collecting property taxes. In two separate instances, the town had to borrow money to meet their budget requirements. On May 8, 1931, the town borrowed \$3500 from the Local Government Commission to pay principal and interest due on town bonds. The town defaulted on this loan, but was extended a longer due date by the bank. The entry for June 30, 1931 noted there were ". . . no surplus revenues. . .". Then, on September 9, 1932, the town had to borrow an additional \$10,000 in funds because it was ". . . impossible for the Town to meet its present debt obligations. . . [the town was] unable to make sufficient collections in property values and earnings, the principal industry of the Town of Forest City, namely, textile mills, has suffered the burden of inactivity common to this industry in other parts of the country. . . and the largest bank in the community closed its doors in February 1930 [Farmers Bank & Trust Company] with approximately \$42,000.00 of the Town's funds. . .".⁴⁷

Businesses may have remained open in the early 1930s, but the economic turnaround to make them successful once again did not happen until the late 1930s and then World War II. First Industrial Bank of Forest City opened in 1935, changing its name to Security Bank & Trust company on July 1, 1942.⁴⁸ In 1937, the population of Forest City was 4069, with five attorneys; six doctors, Alexander Manufacturing Company; and Florence Mills continuing in

⁴⁵1934 Classified Business and Professional Directory.

⁴⁶Town minutes, Forest City. March 20, 1928 to June 1, 1935.

⁴⁷Ibid, pp. 310-313.

⁴⁸Essays on North Carolina History, p. 152.

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operation, along with many businesses. Alexander Manufacturing produced cotton sheeting, sheets, and pillow cases, operating 16,896 spindles and 382 looms. Florence Mills produced primarily flannels, operating 17,422 spindles and 555 looms.⁴⁹ The Rutherford County Electric Membership Corporation, based in Forest City, was established in 1938; library services were expanded throughout the county; and Wright-Bachman Lumber Company built a plant near Forest City, all in the late 1930s. In February 1939, Forest City was granted \$135,000 from the Works Progress Administration for street, sidewalk, and gutter improvement programs, followed in May by a grant for \$13,409 for a sewage treatment plant.⁵⁰ The population of Forest City in 1940 was 5035, making it the largest town in the county.⁵¹ With the onset of World War II, Florence Mill dedicated 75% of its production to the war effort, producing cotton flannels for use by the military.⁵² Capitalized in part in 1941 by American Spindle, the operating budget for Florence Mills was over two million dollars. Alexander Mills, in contrast, in 1941, was operating with a budget of \$800,000, but still devoted over 50% of its production to the war effort.⁵³ This boost to the main textile industry in town began the economic turnaround for Forest City, leading to a much more economically viable time through the 1940s and early 1950s.

Like many other western North Carolina towns in the 1940s and 1950s, downtown Forest City was the center of social life for the community. At one time, there were three movie theaters downtown, including the Horn Theater, later the Grace Theater, the Romina Theater, and the Griffin Theater. The Griffin, an Art Deco building, was located west of downtown, and was the last of the three to be built. It was recently torn down. These theaters, from the 1920s through the 1950s, provided much of the social life of the town. As commerce began to move out of the central downtown in the 1960s, first the Grace, then the Romina, and last the Griffin closed their doors. In addition to the theaters, there were several restaurants, soda shops, and community parades to draw the population to town through the early 1950s.

ARCHITECTURAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Unique to Forest City, in comparison to many other western North Carolina towns, is the layout of Main Street with its wide dimensions and landscaped medians which have been in place since ca. 1917, with additions made in the late 1920s and again from the 1970s to the 1990s.⁵⁴ The

⁴⁹North Carolina Year Book, 1937. Raleigh, North Carolina: News and Observer.

⁵⁰History of Old Tryon and Rutherford Counties, p. 11.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Griffin, Clarence W. History of Rutherford County 1937-1951. Forest City: Forest City Courier, 1951, p. 29.

⁵³North Carolina Year Book, 1941. Raleigh, North Carolina: News and Observer.

⁵⁴McArthur, Bill. Life-long resident of Forest City and photographer. Mr. McArthur has in his collection a photo which shows the layout of the oldest part of the landscaping, dated ca. 1917. This was

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layout of Main Street was designed by A. H. McDaniel, John Blanton, and R. M. Harrill soon after the incorporation of the town as Burnt Chimney in 1877. These fifty foot wide streets have remained in place and the landscaped medians represent civic planning efforts in the city which have continued to today.

At the end of the nineteenth century, as a reaction to the heavy industrialization taking place in many of the country's big cities, a movement began which would soon be known as the City Beautiful Movement. The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago was the premier event for this reactionary movement to "tidy up" America's communities.⁵⁵ The Chicago Exposition showcased the town as an entire planned city which could be developed in such a way as to bring order and beauty back into the community. In addition to planned landscaping and park improvements, the Exposition also put forth the idea that architecture should return to classical design, especially in civic architecture. The philosophies of the Exposition reached people in communities all over the country, and the impetus to plan civic improvements and beautify cities rapidly became a truly grassroots movement, with citizen groups in both large and small communities looking to beautify their towns. ". . . Improvement societies, in city and small town alike, set their sights more modestly on projects of street paving, tree-planting, and the artistic design of lampposts. . . ." ⁵⁶

Daniel H. Burnham, a prominent American architect, began in the early years of the twentieth century to develop plans for large cities, including Washington, D.C., Cleveland, San Francisco, and Chicago.⁵⁷ Other cities including Berkeley, California; Duluth, Minnesota; and Springfield, Massachusetts followed suit, developing plans for the ". . . greening up and organizing of the mess. . . ." ⁵⁸ Burnham and others in the City Beautiful movement followed the philosophy stated by Burnham to ". . . Make big plans, aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die. . . ." ⁵⁹ The City Beautiful movement often worked well in cities, but smaller towns like Forest City had to adapt this philosophy to make it workable and affordable within less grandiose plans, making sure that ". . . if something is really well done for a particular time and place, it tends to remain functional for a long, long time to come. . . ." ⁶⁰ The profession of city planning was born as a result of the City Beautiful movement, with many planning organizations begun throughout the country. Hartford, Connecticut, was the first community to establish a town planning board in 1907. In 1909 the

⁵⁵Kistof, Spiro. America By Design. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 184.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid, p. 188.

⁶⁰Whyte, William H. The Last Landscape. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1968, p. 353.

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first national conference on city planning took place and in 1911 the National Housing Association was formed. In 1913, there were planning boards in eighteen cities in the country, and in the same year Massachusetts was the first state to make city planning a mandatory responsibility of local governments.⁶¹ Also in 1913, the American Institute of Architects reported that 233 cities nationwide were involved in some sort of civic improvement program.⁶²

Indeed, making plans that would last for a very long time was what happened in the small North Carolina town of Forest City. The Forest City Betterment Club, a women's organization founded in 1914 at the height of the new civic awareness, was responsible for the civic planning and landscaping of the square in the center of Main Street. Founding members of this group included Mrs. T. R. Padgett, Mrs. A. V. Falvey, and Mrs. G. P. Reid. This group of women developed the plans and raised the funds necessary to put it in place.⁶³ On October 30, 1924, the club changed its name to the Forest City Woman's Club which continued to provide public services to the community, especially during World War II. Officers in 1924 included Mrs. W. A. Ayers; Mrs. J. F. Alexander; Mrs. W. C. Bostic; and Miss Mary Moore.⁶⁴ Through the continued efforts of this group of women, Forest City was granted an award in 1927 from the United States Department of Agriculture as one of the ten "best planned cities in the United States".⁶⁵ Most notably, in comparison to other towns in Rutherford County, Forest City is the only one that was purposefully planned in this way. The original section of the landscaping, built ca. 1917, consisted of a median approximately fifteen feet wide with a fountain at the center. Sidewalks radiated out from this center in all directions. Hemlocks were planted at either end, with evergreen shrubbery lining the sidewalks. The completion of the plan in keeping with the City Beautiful Movement came to pass with the completion of the new Town Hall in 1928, a Colonial Revival structure designed as an example of the revival of earlier classical styles so prominent in America's towns as a direct result of the Columbian Exposition.

Rutherfordton, incorporated in 1787, while similar in some ways architecturally to Forest City in its array of two-story brick buildings lining both sides of Main Street, does not portray the same kind of setting or variety of styles of architecture as Forest City. Forest City's downtown is notably defined by the historic and modern-day landscaped corridor and contains several buildings of a larger scale and architectural detail than those in Rutherfordton. As noted earlier,

⁶¹Gallion, Arthur B. and Eisner, Simon. The Urban Pattern. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1963, p. 82.

⁶²Goodman, William I. Principles and Practice of Urban Planning. Washington, D. C.: International City Managers' Association, 1968, p. 20.

⁶³Essays on North Carolina History, p. 162. There is no record of a planner being hired to develop the landscape plans.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵The Historic Architecture of Rutherford County, p. 58.

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while Rutherfordton was the oldest town and the county seat, it never experienced the growth in population or prosperity as Forest City.⁶⁶

The Main Street Historic District contains historic buildings dating from ca. 1900 to the 1950s, and like commercial buildings in many small towns they are one or two-story brick structures ranging in style from Romanesque Revival to Art Deco. Many retain their original storefronts or storefront configurations with the addition of modern materials. These configurations generally consist of a central recessed entry framed by large display windows. As construction techniques improved in the late nineteenth century and materials such as steel, iron, and larger sheets of plate glass became more readily available, the size of display areas could be greatly increased.⁶⁷ Some buildings, if they are large enough, have two separate storefronts. Two or three story buildings often have a central stair, flush with the facade, to the upper floors located between the storefronts.⁶⁸

It is typical to see storefronts and building facades change over time, and it is rare to find a building that retains all of its original architectural features. This is applicable to Forest City with most of the changes to the buildings having taken place in the storefront areas. While there are some examples of upper facade changes including new windows or metal coverings, it is the storefront that has been adapted to fit modern times. ". . . Storefronts are the front porches of Main Street. . . they have been frequently altered to fit new business identities and changing architectural fashions. . .".⁶⁹ Unlike residential buildings which tend to retain more of their original architectural identities, commercial buildings must change with the time to keep up with current marketing trends and business changes.

Commercial buildings in downtown Forest City are typical in many ways of the design of commercial buildings common to towns all over the country in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Most are one or two-story brick structures in the Commercial Style, a style prominent in American towns from 1900 to 1930. The Commercial Style generally was a reaction to the more ornate Queen Anne or Romanesque Revival styles of the late nineteenth century, maintaining the basic elements of the commercial building but simplifying the details. Ornamentation, if any, generally consisted of some patterned brick in facades or corbelling at the cornice. Parapet rooflines were common, along with large rectangular windows arranged in bands.⁷⁰ Some notable examples of this style in the Main Street Historic District include **Commercial Buildings** (#24, #31, #61, and #62).

⁶⁶Ibid, p. 112.

⁶⁷"Storefronts on Main Street: An Architectural History", Illinois Preservation Series, Number 19, 0. 3.

⁶⁸Ibid, p. 4.

⁶⁹Ibid, p. 1.

⁷⁰Ibid, p. 18.

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Other building styles within the Main Street Historic District include the Romanesque Revival (Tuberculosis Center, #35 and Reinhardt Drug Company Bldg., #65); Classical Revival (National Bank of Forest City, #32 and Romina Theater, #37); Colonial Revival (Town Hall, #18); Mission Revival (Family Shoe Store Bldg., #48 and Forest City Courier Bldg., #49); and Art Deco (Davis Sisters Building, #22). The Romanesque Revival buildings in Forest City incorporate many of the elements of the style, including arched windows, red brick (although the Reinhardt Drug Company Bldg. has been painted), and elaborate brick corbelling. The Classical Revival buildings in the town incorporate elements of this style as well, including pedimented entries, elaborate, massive cornices, pilasters, and keystones over the windows. The Town Hall is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style through the use of the balanced massing, end parapet walls, pedimented entry, pilasters, and side gable roof. The key element creating the Mission Revival style buildings in the district is the use of the pent roof, originally covered with tile. The Art Deco example given utilizes the simplicity of the Art Deco style with glazed tile and geometric bands above the storefront being typical details. In addition to the use of popular building styles, it is also important to note how the buildings are set in a steady rhythm lining both sides of the street, often with alleys or parking areas to the rear. Building lots are small, often no more than twenty feet in width. Forest City is no exception to the trend of changing faces to keep up with the times, exhibiting on many of its buildings storefront and facade changes through the years. Despite these changes, however, the rhythm and overall integrity of the district has only been minimally affected, and the retention of the prominent landscape feature down the center of Main Street has served to maintain a distinctive commercial core.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1 Main Street Historic District
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Additional UTM References

- 5. 17 421300 3910400
- 6. 17 421590 3910240

Boundary Description

The boundaries for this nomination are indicated on the accompanying tax/sketch map, with a scale of 1" = 100'.

Boundary Justification

Boundaries include the area with the greatest concentration of late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century commercial, civic, and residential buildings located within downtown Forest City.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Photos Page 1

Main Street Historic District
Rutherford County, North Carolina

Main Street Historic District Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs, except where noted.

Name of property: Main Street Historic District
Forest City
Rutherford County
North Carolina

Photographer: Sybil Argintar Bowers
Date of photos: September 2000 unless otherwise noted
Location of original negatives: Division of Archives and History
One Village Lane
Asheville, North Carolina 28803

1. Main Street, view southeast (October 2000)
2. Main Street, view northwest
3. Main Street, view northeast
4. Landscaped median, ca. 1917, view east
5. National Bank of Forest City, 102 W. Main Street, view northwest
6. Tuberculosis Center, 121 E. Main Street, view northeast
7. Graham Cash Dept. Store, 149 E. Main Street, non-contributing building, view north
8. Forest City Courier Building and Harry Long Appliance Building
171 E. Main Street, view northwest
9. Town Hall, 128 N. Powell Street, view northeast
10. Blanton alley, view southwest
11. Blanton Hotel, 123-125 Depot Street, view southeast

207

MOODY ST.

208

208

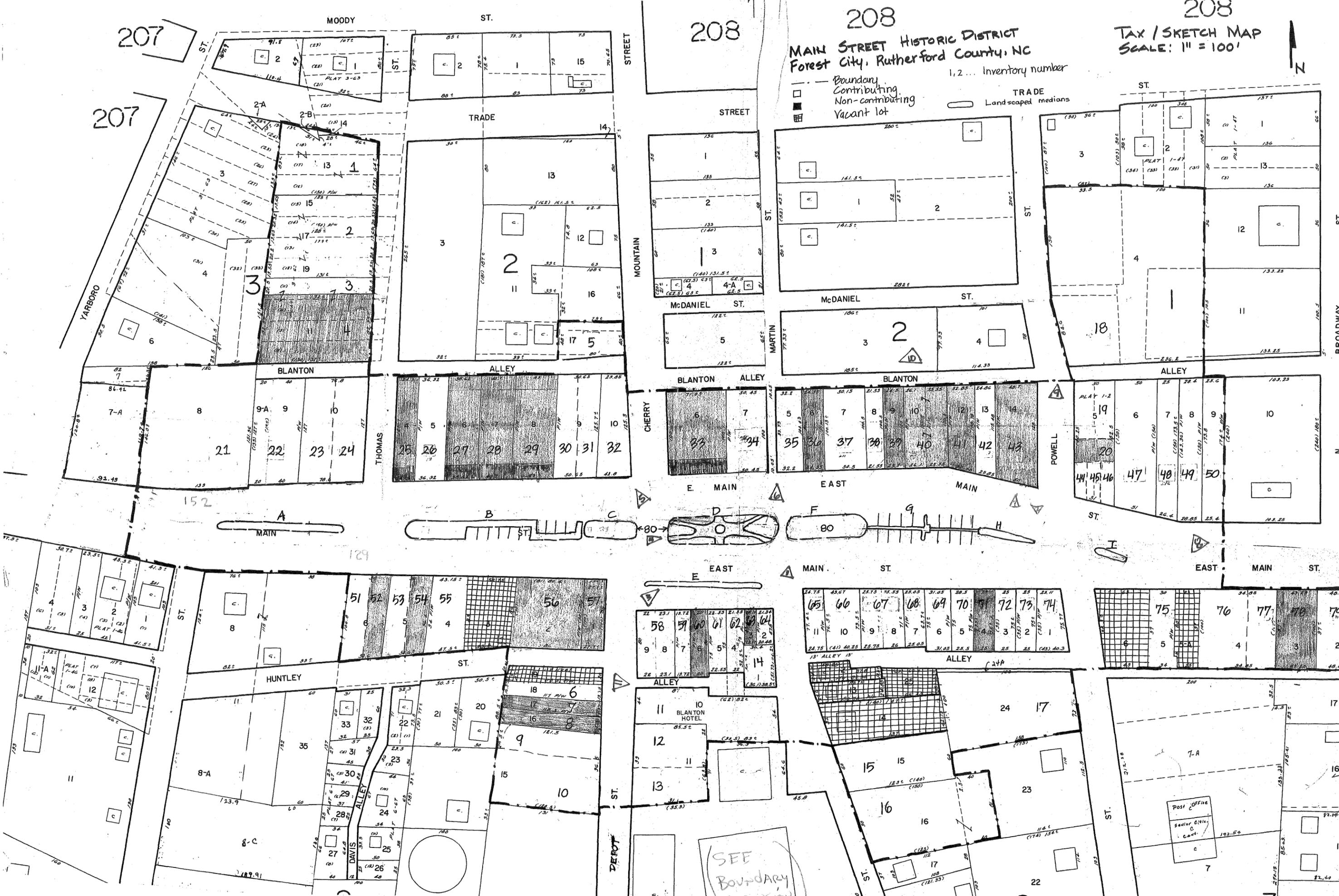
208
TAX / SKETCH MAP
SCALE: 1" = 100'



MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT
Forest City, Rutherford County, NC

1, 2 ... Inventory number

- Boundary
- ▣ Contributing
- ▢ Non-contributing
- Vacant lot
- Landscaped medians
- TRADE



152

A

B

C

D

F

G

I

E

MAIN ST.

EAST MAIN ST.

ALLEY

ALLEY

ST.

ST.

ST.

2

SEE BOUNDARY EXPANSION

