

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 any 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 Laurinburg Commercial Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Church, Atkinson, Biggs streets and the Laurinburg & Southern Railroad not for publication N/A
city or town Laurinburg vicinity N/A
state North Carolina code NC county Scotland code 165 zip code 28352

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Jasper Crow SAPP 10/23/03
Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or 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 or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- 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): _____

Laurinburg Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Scotland County, NC
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check 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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
51	13	buildings
0	0	sites
2	0	structures
0	0	objects
53	13	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>COMMERCE</u>	Sub: <u>specialty store</u>
<u>COMMERCE</u>	<u>department store</u>
<u>COMMERCE</u>	<u>financial institution</u>
<u>GOVERNMENT</u>	<u>post office</u>
<u>FUNERARY</u>	<u>mortuary</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>religious facility</u>
<u>TRANSPORTATION</u>	<u>rail-related</u>

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>COMMERCE</u>	Sub: <u>specialty store</u>
<u>EDUCATION</u>	<u>education related</u>
<u>FUNERARY</u>	<u>mortuary</u>
<u>RELIGION</u>	<u>religious facility</u>
<u>TRANSPORTATION</u>	<u>rail-related</u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

<u>Colonial Revival</u>	<u>Moderne</u>
<u>Late Gothic Revival</u>	<u>Art Deco</u>
<u>Commercial Style</u>	

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
 roof Metal
 walls Brick
 other _____

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

c. 1893-1953

Significant Dates

c. 1893

1877

1899

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Bonitz, Henry E., architect

Simon, Louis A., architect

Weaver, John A., architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

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

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Laurinburg Commercial Historic District
Name of Property

Scotland County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 20 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 640720 3849400
2 17 640880 3849380

Zone Easting Northing
3 17 640640 3848760
4 17 640500 3848820
___ 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 Beth Keane

organization Retrospective date September, 2003

street & number 2001 Metts Avenue telephone 910-815-109

city or town Wilmington state NC zip code 28403

12. 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Laurinburg Commercial Historic District
Scotland County, North Carolina**

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Laurinburg Commercial Historic District, located in southern Scotland County, is centered along Main Street. Incorporated in 1877, Laurinburg is the largest town in Scotland County and contains older residential neighborhoods, new subdivisions, a late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century downtown commercial section, suburban shopping centers and industrial diversification in the outlying areas. The town is served by U. S. Highways 74 and 401. Biggs and Atkinson streets roughly bound the commercial historic district on the east and west, while Church Street and the Laurinburg and Southern Railroad tracks generally define its southern and northern edges.

Church Street (Highway 74) was the original main street of the community in the early nineteenth century, linking the towns of Rockingham and Lumberton. A new road appeared somewhat later, corresponding roughly to the current Main Street. It was designed to connect Low Bluff (now Society Hill, South Carolina), the head of navigation on the Pee Dee River, with Cross Creek (now Fayetteville), the head of navigation for the Cape Fear River. The intersection of these major arteries of trade is now the location of the center of downtown Laurinburg. The Methodist Church occupies the southwest corner, as it has since 1918, and marks this end of the Laurinburg Commercial Historic District. The former Belk Store, currently the A. B. Gibson Education Center, stands on the former site of the Scotland County courthouse, built shortly after the 1899 formation of the county.

The topography of Laurinburg is relatively flat. The streets of the commercial historic district are laid out in a grid pattern with Atkinson, Main, and Biggs streets running approximately south and north. The district also includes the following east-west oriented streets lying between Atkinson and Biggs Streets: Church, Cronly, McKay, Fairly, Roper, Railroad, and Bizzell. Several sets of railroad tracks run through the northern edge of the district in a roughly east-west direction. The arrival of the Wilmington-Charlotte-Rutherford Railroad (now a part of Seaboard Coastline) (#22) signaled the beginning of Laurinburg as a business leader in the region. This area was the site of railroad shops and auxiliary buildings continuously from 1867 until 1894. In 1909, a second railroad, the Laurinburg & Southern (L & S) (#25), was chartered by a local cooperative of businessmen. The L & S enterprise, located about one block north of the Seaboard Coastline tracks, continues rail service to the area today, providing a major service to county industries.

Buildings belonging to the railroad were built primarily from wood and were located near the tracks where they were dangerously prone to fire. Over the years, this resulted in the destruction of three depots as well as many other wooden structures

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clustered near the railroad tracks. The destroyed wooden buildings were gradually replaced with one- and two-story brick buildings lining Main Street south of the railroad. The oldest building in the district, the c. 1893 two-story brick Central Hotel (#62), is located between the two sets of railroad tracks, along Bizzell Street. Several additional early landmarks remain standing along Main Street. The c. 1904 building which housed McDougald's Furniture Store and Funeral Parlor (#21), one of Scotland County's oldest business establishments, is located just south of the Seaboard Coastline railroad tracks on the southwest corner of Main Street and Railroad Street. The prominent three-story brick Romanesque-style building retains its lower level cast iron storefront and decorative brickwork.

Another early building, the c. 1904 Everington's Drug Store (#41), has been continuously occupied by the business. At the time it was built, the location near the bustling railroad station was deemed an ideal site. The one-story brick early twentieth-century Commercial Style building features decorative brick work at the cornice and a recessed brick panel below the cornice. Many of the original fixtures in the store remain and have been refinished and reworked. The leaf-design ceiling, an ornate tinwork material, also remains. Another early drug store, the Scotland Pharmacy (#33), has been in the same location in the 100 block of South Main Street since 1935. The two-story, early twentieth-century commercial building is three bays wide with a raised parapet, stepped on the side elevations. Currently divided into two commercial spaces, the facade has been altered with replacement brick, windows, and storefronts.

Several buildings along Main Street continue to serve as a reminder of the theatrical entertainment once available to the citizens of Laurinburg, including two movie houses. The 1940 Gibson Theater (#3) at 329 South Main Street drew crowds downtown into the 1980s to view the latest Hollywood productions. The Gibson Theater is Laurinburg's only commercial building influenced by the Art Deco style. The two-story building features full-height pilasters rising to a central stepped parapet. The Scotland Theater (#5), later known as the Centre Theater, was located in a large brick building anchoring the southwest corner of South Main and Cronly streets. Along with the Scotland Theater, the combined two- and three-story multi-purpose building originally housed an automobile sales and showroom and a drug store. The building features a raised parapet and rows of single and paired windows marking each level of the building.

The majority of the buildings within the Laurinburg Commercial Historic District are popular late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century commercial designs, typical of the one- and two-story brick buildings built in downtown areas all over eastern North Carolina in the early years of the twentieth century. Those buildings dating to the turn of the twentieth century generally display more brickwork in relief, including

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corbelling, mousetothing, and pendants. A plain, flat appearance, often relieved by the use of panels of brick laid in patterns, is more common for 1920s and 1930s buildings. Segmentally-arched windows, recessed panels beneath the cornice, and parapeted rooflines are additional architectural elements added to commercial buildings of the era. Many of the buildings standing along Main Street once housed general merchandise businesses, early grocery stores, hardware stores, millinery shops, barber shops, and small restaurants. Today, they continue to serve the community as antique stores, jewelry shops, gift and flower shops, furniture stores, and restaurants. Offices or apartments are typically located on the second and third levels.

In 1939, the Federal Works Administration constructed a new Federal Post Office (#46) in the Colonial Revival style one block west of Main Street, on the corner of Atkinson and Fairly streets. The architect was Louis A. Simon, the United States government's supervising architect credited with the design of innumerable New Deal-era post offices across North Carolina and the country. The building served as a post office until 1978 when it was taken over by the Richmond Community College and now serves as a continuing education center.

The brick 1918 Gothic Revival-style First United Methodist Church (#1) that anchors the southern edge of the historic district replaced an earlier frame church formerly located on Roper Street. Built by contractor W. D. Tucker, the impressive church features two corner crenellated towers, one taller than the other, gothic stained-glass windows, a central rose window, and a large open auditorium plan on the interior. The Methodist church property includes an attached education building completed in 1952 and the Nettie Hammond Fellowship Hall (#1B) built in 1989. In 1967, the church also acquired the adjacent Ed Guest Building (#1A), built in 1951 as the Scotland Memorial Library. Built in a handsome rendition of the Colonial Revival style, the building features a five-bay symmetrical façade, a modillioned cornice, eight-over-eight segmentally-arched windows, exterior-end chimneys, and a side-gable slate roof with parapeted gable ends.

A large brick warehouse historically known as The Hammond Company Building (#45) anchors the northern edge of the Laurinburg Commercial Historic District, along with the railroad tracks upon which the building's uses historically were dependent. The two-story building features a raised central parapet, several rows of brick corbelling at the cornice, segmentally-arched windows, and a large open interior supported by massive timbers. The building served for many years as a wholesale grocery warehouse.

Several mid-twentieth-century Commercial Style buildings also are contained within the historic district. Typically, they are one-story buildings with flat roofs, brick

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exteriors, large expanses of glass, and little architectural detailing. The one-story brick 1953 (former) Winn Dixie Grocery Store (#49) located at 121 Cronly street is typical of the type of building constructed during this time period.

Main Street suffered a loss in 1964 when the 1901 Neo-Classical Revival-style courthouse was torn down. A new courthouse was built to replace it the same year and is located one block east on Biggs Street, outside of the historic district. The presence of a courthouse in the downtown area, however, continues to draw patrons to the historic district, allowing for a vibrant and thriving commercial district.

Paved parking lots located behind two blocks of Main Street store buildings were built in the 1970s. This encouraged the cleaning up of back alleys and resulted in some merchants opening rear entrances to their stores. In the early 1980s, brick planters were built at intervals along three blocks of Main Street, providing space for flowers, trees, and small benches

The Laurinburg Commercial Historic District retains a significant assemblage of nineteenth- and early- to mid-twentieth-century buildings. Taken as a whole, the architecture of downtown Laurinburg, together with the setting, feeling, and association present in the historic district, conveys a sense of its development as a mid-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century railroad town and county seat. There are fifty-three contributing resources, including fifty-one buildings and two structures, and thirteen non-contributing resources in the district.

Laurinburg Commercial Historic District Inventory List

The inventory list is organized on a street-by-street basis. The streets were surveyed in the following order: Church Street, South and North Main Street, Atkinson Street, Cronly Street, Fairly Street, Roper Street, Railroad Street, McKay Street, and Bizzell Street. North-south oriented streets are listed west side first, then east side. East-west oriented streets are listed south side first, then north side. Buildings are listed either by their historic name or by the name of the original owner, when available. A combination of documentary sources was utilized to determine the original date and owners of the buildings, including deeds, secondary sources, tax records, survey files, Sanborn Maps, and interviews. All buildings are categorized as C (contributing) or N (noncontributing). A noncontributing classification is based on the following criteria: 1) any building built after the end of the c. 1953 period of significance is noncontributing due to its age; 2) buildings built before 1954 that have lost their architectural integrity because of substantial non-historic additions and/or alterations (less than fifty years) are also categorized as noncontributing.

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C = Contributing resource
N = Noncontributing resource
B = Building
S = Structure

100 block south side of West Church Street

1. First United Methodist Church C/B 1918 101 W. Church St.

The only church and the only Gothic Revival-style building in the historic district; brick church built by contractor W. D. Tucker; facade divided into three sections; central section with gable-front roof flanked by two crenellated towers; taller bell tower on northeast corner; each tower has two rectangular stained-glass windows at the first level and two round-arched stained-glass windows at the second level; rose window in gable of central section; arcaded porch in central section with three round-arched entrances with keystones; three segmental stained-glass windows in first level of central facade; patterned brick work with diamond shapes between first and second level of tower windows; education building attached to rear (south side) of church; three-bays wide with segmental arched windows; patterned brickwork and limestone designs; central projecting block portico; interior includes a large auditorium with three sections of pews set in a fan-like pattern facing a corner altar; a small chapel is located in one of the corner towers and a vestry room is located in the second tower; a large pipe organ is situated to one side of the altar with choir seating behind the organ; building set on large corner lot with mature shade trees; church was an outgrowth of Caledonia Methodist Church; first church located on Roper Street burned in 1893; replaced with white frame church; lot for present church bought in 1913; first service held on December 22, 1918; attached education building completed in 1952.

1A. (former) Scotland Memorial C/B 1951 125 W. Church St.
Library

Very fine academic rendition of a Colonial Revival-style building situated adjacent to the First United Methodist Church; one-and-one-half-story brick building laid in Flemish bond; side-gable slate roof; five gable dormers; modillioned cornice; five-bay symmetrical facade; central double-leaf door flanked by pilasters and surmounted with multi-light transom; eight-over-eight segmentally-arched windows; parapeted gable ends; exterior-end chimneys; former Scotland Memorial Library (1951-1967); acquired by the First United Methodist Church in 1967; named the Ed Guest Building by church to honor a member of the church who edited a newsletter during World War II and mailed it to soldiers stationed overseas.

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1B. Nettie Hammond Fellowship N/B 1989 101 W. Church St.
Hall

Two gable-front brick buildings with steeply-pitched roofs attached to each other with a central gable-front entrance foyer; circular windows in center of gables; three tall circular arched windows in front of south side facade.

300 block west side of South Main Street

Vacant Lot

2. Gibson Theater C/B 1940 329 S. Main St.

Downtown Laurinburg's only building showing obvious influences of the Art Deco style; two-story brick building; full-height pilasters rise to central stepped parapet; stepped parapet on south side; flat, stuccoed façade; central door flanked by plate-glass windows; shingled awning over lower level; four small rectangular windows (covered) in second story of facade; occupied by Gibson Theater from 1940 through 1978; currently occupied by Pot Luck Restaurant; built on site of former "Garage Building".

3. Dr. W. D. James Bldg. C/B 1911 327/325/323/321 S. Main St.

Two-story brick Neoclassical Revival-style commercial building; second-level fenestration includes one-over-one sash windows alternating with paired one-over-one sash windows surmounted by fanlight transoms; decorative brick work at cornice; altered storefronts; replacement plate-glass windows, doors, and transoms across southern section of first level of facade; building originally divided into three commercial spaces; the corner unit originally occupied by the Laurinburg Exchange; the remaining two units initially occupied by an office and a bicycle shop; subsequent long term occupants have included the Laurinburg Bakery, the City Barber Shop, and Mary's Taxi Service; second-floor utilized as office space.

Vacant Lot - parking

4. Commercial Cafe Bldg. C/B after 1930 313 S. Main St.

One-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; stepped parapet along south side of building; three recessed panels in upper facade; central modern glass door flanked by plate-glass windows; cloth awning over lower level; one-

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story rear addition; building occupied by the Commercial Cafe for many years; currently vacant; built on a lot formerly occupied by a miniature golf course.

5. McNair Buick Dealership/ C/B c. 1924 311/309/307/305/303/301
Scotland Theater/Legion S. Main St.
Drug Store

Large two- and three-story brick early-twentieth-century commercial design; two-story southern section is six bays wide; another two-story section attached to west side facing Cronly Street is four bays wide; solid glass second-story windows in two-story south section; three-story northern section is five bays wide with single and paired windows (replacement glass) at second and third levels; recessed panels in upper facade; lower level altered with plate-glass display windows and replacement bulkheads; building originally occupied by McNair Buick automobile sales and showroom; later occupied by McLaurin-McArthur Chevrolet dealership; occupied by The Outlet Furniture Store from 1969 through 1983; central unit originally occupied by the Scotland Theater, later known as the Center Theater; corner unit was occupied by the Legion Drug Store for many years; currently divided into three commercial units with offices on the second level; Quick Copy Center in southern section since 1996; Bob's Jewelers in corner unit for past decade.

200 block west side of South Main Street

6. Wachovia Bank Building C/B 1951 243/241/239 S. Main St.

Large, rectangular four-story brick post-war modern commercial building; three bays wide; thirteen bays deep; bands of windows with cast stone window surrounds and string courses at each level create a horizontal effect; central recessed door with two-level stone surround; modern plate-glass in windows; stone foundation; lot owned by State Bank since 1907; built on site of former bank building; originally occupied by State Bank (1951-1969); merged with Wachovia Bank in 1964; occupied by Wachovia until 1997; currently vacant.

7. McCall's Jewelry Store N/B c. 1935/1968 221 S. Main St.

One-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; altered façade includes recessed entrance on north side flanked by a large multi-pane display window set at an angle; flat metal awning suspended over lower level; occupied by McCall's Jewelry for many years; currently occupied by The Daily Grind, a coffee shop.

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100 block west side of North Main Street

22. (former) Wilmington, Charlotte, C/S c. 1861 runs east to west through
Rutherford Railroad tracks northern end of district
(Seaboard Coastline)

The tracks were a part of the Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad. The first trains operated in 1861. With the outbreak of the Civil War, the railroad shops soon moved from Wilmington to Laurinburg, bringing growth and prosperity to the town. The tracks are now a part of the Seaboard Coastline railroad.

23. (former) Esso Service Station C/B c. 1931/ 101 N. Main St.
c. 1950

One-story brick service station later covered with metal panels; flat roof; two square service bays in south half of building; office and store with replacement storefront in north half; gas pumps in front of building; occupied by Carl Steven's Esso from through 1974; and B & B Service Station from 1978 through 1997; currently occupied by B & M Performance.

200 block west side of North Main Street

24. Scotland Oil Co. C/B c. 1931 201 N. Main St.

One-story stuccoed brick building; flat roof; three square brick composite piers support a front porte-cochere; former service bays now filled with plate-glass windows and brick bulk head on north side of building; building converted to a restaurant; occupied by Main Street 66 Service Station in 1961, City Gulf Service Station from 1964 through 1974; converted to a Mini-Mart Grocery Store in the 1980s; currently occupied by Jesse's Pizza and Subs.

25. Laurinburg & Southern C/S c. 1909 runs east to northwest
Railroad Tracks marking the northern
boundary of the district

The Laurinburg & Southern was chartered in 1909 by a local cooperative of businessmen. The line ran from Johns to Wagram and expanded its run to Raeford around 1919. The railroad conveyed farm products including cotton, melons, corn, and lumber.

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200 block east side of South Main Street

26. Commercial Building N/B 1970 212 S. Main St.

One-story brick post-war modern commercial building; lattice panels (removable) cover upper main facade of building and rise about fifteen feet above roof level; recessed central double-leaf glass doors flanked by plate-glass display windows on lower level; flat metal awning suspended over lower level; occupied by Eastern Auto Stores of Laurinburg from 1959-1964 and the Diana Shops from 1974-1983; currently occupied by Gospel Music and Christian Bookstore; former site of hotel known consecutively as Hotel Morgan, Chewyn Hotel, and Cottonland Hotel.

27. Commercial Building C/B c. 1935 210 S. Main St.

One-story brick popular early-twentieth-century commercial design; facade covered with multi-color brick in Flemish bond with two bands of brick in basketweave pattern; original storefront with central recessed double-leaf wood and glass doors flanked by plate-glass display windows; cloth awning over lower level; occupied by a variety of businesses through the years; currently occupied by Scott's Jewelry.

28. Commercial Building C/B c. 1935 208/206/204/202 S. Main St.

One-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; currently divided into four commercial spaces; raised parapet on front facade; stepped parapet on side elevation; recessed panels in upper level of facade; modern store fronts with glass doors and plate-glass display windows; northern unit (#208) occupied by various businesses through the years; middle unit (#206) occupied by Robert's Jewelers from 1959 through 1983 and currently occupied by Our Little Consignment Shop; unit #204 occupied by a variety of shops through the years, including a shoe store, a floral shop, a book store, and a tailoring shop and currently occupied by Veronica's Boutique; southern unit (#202) occupied by J. T. Fields Drug Store in the 1950s and early 60s and by Harper's Jewelry from 1974 through present.

100 block east side of South Main Street (McKay Street intersects)

29. Commercial Building C/B c. 1924 158/156 S. Main St.

One-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; originally consisted of three commercial spaces; currently divided into two commercial spaces; two bands of decorative corbelling in upper level; recessed panel remains visible in narrower

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-
- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|---------------------|----------------------|
| 33. Scotland Pharmacy | C/B | c. 1935/
c. 1950 | 140A/142 S. Main St. |
|-----------------------|-----|---------------------|----------------------|

Two-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; three bays wide; replacement brick on front facade; paired windows with replacement glass; stepped parapets on side elevations; building currently divided into two commercial spaces; modern store fronts with glass doors and plate-glass windows; continuously occupied by the Scotland Pharmacy with offices on second level.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|-----------------|
| 34. Commercial Building | C/B | c. 1898 | 138 S. Main St. |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|-----------------|

One-story brick nineteenth-century commercial design; brick mousetoothing above a row of header bricks at cornice; four narrow recessed panels on upper facade; stepped parapet on side elevation; modern store front with recessed glass door on north side of facade flanked by plate-glass window; flat metal awning over lower level; originally occupied by a general merchandise store; occupied by Pender's grocery store in the 1920s, by Sears, Roebuck, and Company in the 1950s and 60s, by CATOs from 1969 through 1983, and currently by the law office of W. Philip McRae.

Roper Street intersects

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|-----------------|
| 35. Commercial Building | C/B | c. 1924 | 130 S. Main St. |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|-----------------|

One-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; raised parapet; two narrow bands of brick corbelling along cornice punctuated with short brick pilasters; lower level clad with wood shingles; dentil stringcourse marks the division between the lower level shingles and the upper level bricks; two recessed entrances with original double-leaf glass doors flanked by plate-glass display windows; curved metal awning over entrances; stuccoed north wall; segmental arched lintels on rear wall; occupied by Eubanks 5 & 10 Cent Store from the 1950s through 1983 and by English Designs, Ltd. since 1993.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|-----------------|
| 36. Commercial Building | C/B | c. 1924 | 128 S. Main St. |
|-------------------------|-----|---------|-----------------|

One-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; several rows of brick corbelling along cornice; central recessed entrance with original double-leaf glass doors flanked by plate-glass display windows; cloth awning over lower level; occupied by Paylor's Book Store from 1950s through 1974, by needle craft store from 1978 through 1983, and currently by Julie's Jumpers and Party Plus.

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doors flanked by plate-glass display windows; cloth awning over lower level; formerly occupied by Sammy Solomon's Grocery Store and Anthony's Grocery Store; occupied by Super Discount Store from 1964-1966, by Value-Pak Department Store from 1969 through 1978, and currently by Woody's Printing and Copy Shop.

41. (2nd) Everington's Drug Store C/B c. 1904 110 S. Main St.

One-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; brick mousetoothing bands along cornice; recessed brick panel just below cornice; two entrances on facade; south entrance occupies a broad, round-arched opening with a transom (now wood-paneled) filling the arch and spanning the central door and flanking single-pane windows; full replacement storefront with recessed north entrance consisting of double-leaf glass doors flanked by plate glass display windows; store continuously operated as Everington's Drug Store since it was first built; currently operated by W. N. Robertson Jr., the grandson of the original owner, Dr. G. D. Everington, physician and druggist (1857-1915); Everington's son-in-law, W. N. Robertson, Sr. (1886-1969), operated the store for many years.

42. Commercial Building N/B c. 1904/
c. 1960 106 S. Main St.

Two-story brick early twentieth-century commercial building originally constructed as two commercial spaces; upper facade completely covered with aluminum panels; modern store front with recessed entrance flanked by plate-glass display windows; originally occupied by a dry goods store; later occupied by Efrid's Department Store, by Hallum's Furniture Store through the 1950s and 60s, by Dossenbach's Furniture Store from 1969 through 1991, and currently occupied by C&M Photography and Trophy World.

43. Creech's Hardware Store N/B c. 1904/
c. 1960 102 S. Main St.

Two-story brick early twentieth-century commercial building; four bays wide on upper level; window openings covered with plywood; two central windows exhibit round arches flanked by windows with segmental arches set into a recessed rectangular panel topped by plain corbelling and dentil work; large five light panel between storefront and upper level windows; modern replacement storefront with recessed entrance flanked by plate-glass display windows; aluminum panels cover north elevation; originally occupied by a general store; occupied by Creech's Hardware for many years through 1978; currently occupied by Art by Design.

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100 block east side of North Main Street

44. Service Oil Station C/B c. 1924 102 N. Main St.

One-story brick commercial building; divided into three sections; central section is the original filling station building; hipped roof with overhanging eaves; central door and flanking windows in large recessed area of facade; south-side shed roof addition built by 1930; north-side hipped roof addition added later; building used as a lunch restaurant through the 1950s and 60s; occupied by Grace's Boutique Shop during the 1970s and early 80s and by Brenda's Touch of Love Hair Salon from 1990 through 2001; currently occupied by Watson Used Furniture.

Vacant Lot

45. The Hammond Company Bldg. C/B c. 1914 204 N. Main St.

The only warehouse building located in the historic district; large two-story brick warehouse with an open interior; five bays wide and six bays deep; segmentally arched window and door openings, many covered with wood panels; flat roof; central stepped parapet; several bands of brick corbelling at cornice; massive support timbers on interior; originally utilized as a wholesale grocery warehouse; occupied by UpTown Furniture & Floors since 1995.

200 block west side of Atkinson Street

46. United States Post Office C/B 1939 201 Atkinson St.

One-story brick Colonial Revival-style building; side-gable roof; pedimented gables with fanlights in gables; symmetrical five-bay facade; central double-leaf door and Doric columns in antis supporting a full entablature, all set in a round-arched opening with an eagle in relief in the arch; rectangular leaded-glass transom; twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash windows; raised basement; central four-sided cupola with a vent in each side; built by the Federal Works Administration as a United States Post Office and Federal Building; Louis A. Simon, architect; Neal A. Melick, Supervising Engineer; occupied by post office through 1978; currently occupied by Richmond Community College's Continuing Education Center for William R. Purcell.

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the City Cafe, Dixie Guano Company, McNair Investment Company, D. A. Cochs Hardware, Willis Light Company, and Daniel's Restaurant; John F. McNair's Farm Supply Store located at 121 Fairly for many years; E. M Stubbs Electronics & Repair located in building since 1935.

North side of 100 block of Roper Street

54. Commercial Building C/B c. 1924 116 Roper St.

One of the most architecturally distinctive and intact buildings in the historic district; large two-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; upper level is ten bays wide and eleven bays deep; six-over-one sash windows; central stepped parapet with peaked center; limestone diamonds, panels, and designs embellish the facade; recessed double-leaf glass doors flanked by plate-glass display windows; building divided into three commercial units; a post office originally occupied the western unit; former furniture stores occupying the building have included Star Furniture; Peacock Furniture, and Value House Furniture; building currently vacant.

55. McLean Automotive Supply C/B 1946 114 Roper St.
Store

Large one-story brick post-war commercial style building; flat roof; raised parapet with band of cement coping; double-leaf glass doors flanked by large plate-glass windows, surmounted by tall jalousie windows; currently divided into two commercial units; occupied by McLean Automotive Supply and McLean Machinery Shop from 1946 through 1981; currently occupied by Brooks Office Systems and Supplies and Habitat for Humanity Store; built on old Methodist Church lot.

South side of 100 block of Railroad Street

56. (1st) McLean Automotive C/B c. 1910 107 Railroad St.
Supply Store

One-story brick popular early twentieth-century commercial design; raised parapet; several rows of patterned brick work along cornice including pendants and mousetothing; three recessed areas on lower level give appearance of three small storefronts; double-leaf glass doors located in central section; large-plate glass display windows in flanking sections; building originally divided into three spaces with a bottling works occupying the western two spaces; east space utilized for furniture storage;

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level features a central door; segmental arched opening with keystone on east side of porch; awnings over doors and window; attached neon-lit sign reading Morris Funeral Home centered over door; occupied by Morris Funeral Home continuously since 1947.

Parking lot

61. Commercial Buildings N/B c. 1955 112 & 114 McKay St.

One-story brick post-war commercial building; glass doors flanked by plate glass windows; currently occupied by Angela's Beauty Salon and C C Cosmos, a design firm.

North side of 100 block of East Bizzell Street

62. Central Hotel C/B c. 1893 102 E. Bizzell St.

Oldest surviving building in the historic district; two-story brick building located adjacent to the railroad tracks; flat roof with raised parapet; two bands of brick corbelling at cornice; three bays wide and six bays deep; central door on both levels flanked by six-over-six double-hung sash windows on second story and eight-over-eight on first; double-tier porch supported by wood posts; recent picket balustrade encloses upper porch; small one-story addition on east side; originally known as the Central Hotel; from 1904-1909 known as the Hotel Dixie; occupied by a pool room and boarding house in 1914; listed as the "colored" hotel in 1924 and 1930 Sanborn Maps; occupied by Pollard's Place Restaurant from 1959 through 1970 and Mildred's Catering and Dining from 1983 through 1996; currently vacant.

Parking lot

63. Veteran's Barber Shop C/B c. 1935 106/108 E. Bizzell St.

Two-story brick building; two-bays wide at second level; flat arch soldier course lintels over windows; two commercial units in lower level, each with wood-framed glass door and one window; western unit (#106) occupied by Veteran's Barber Shop since 1959; eastern unit (#108) formerly occupied by Midway Beauty Shop; currently vacant.

64. Commercial Building C/B c. 1935 112 E. Bizzell St.

Two-story brick commercial building; triple one-over-one-sash window in upper level with flat arch soldier course lintel; two entrances, each with a multi-light transom, flank a central three-part window; divided into two commercial spaces.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Laurinburg Commercial Historic District is locally significant for listing in the National Register under Criterion A in the area of commerce and Criterion C for architecture. The period of significance for the district begins in c. 1893, the date of the earliest extant building, the former Central Hotel, and extends to 1953, after which little development occurred within the district and significance in the area of commerce was not exceptional.

Laurinburg's intact late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century brick commercial buildings reflect the town's thriving business district at the turn of the twentieth century. Continued building into the mid-twentieth century illustrates the growth of the town at a time when other similar North Carolina towns were declining. The needs of Laurinburg's growing population were met with a mix of businesses, shops, industry, and banking institutions. The arrival of the Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford railroad in 1861 and the transfer of the railroad shops from Wilmington to Laurinburg during the Civil War spurred initial growth in the town. When the railroad shops relocated to Hamlet in 1894, the anticipated recession did not take place. Instead growth continued with the organization of the city's first textile mill in 1899, followed by several additional mills in the early twentieth century. The designation of Laurinburg as the county seat in 1899 also contributed to the growth and prosperity of the town.

Laurinburg thrived during the first half of the twentieth century as Scotland County's governmental seat, cultural center, and major business locality. Large department stores, including Rizk's, in the same location since 1922, attracted shoppers from all over the county. The town, continuing to expand, underwent a second major building boom during the later 1940s and early 1950s when former frame buildings were replaced with post-war modern one-story brick commercial buildings. Several currently vacant buildings are slated for restoration as the city recognizes and seeks to preserve its unique heritage and historically significant built environment.

Historical Background and Commerce Context

The earliest settlers in the region now known as Scotland County were largely composed of Highland Scottish emigrants from Skye, Argyleshire, Islay, Coll, and other western isles of Scotland. Many of the Highlanders were living here as early as 1729 at the time of the separation of the province into North and South Carolina. In the latter part of the eighteenth century, English and lowland Scots and a small number of Welsh came

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by way of the Pee Dee River; and somewhat later, great numbers of Scotch-Irish from Ulster settled near the headwaters of the Cape Fear and Pee Dee Rivers (McKay, p. 7).

The population of Scotland County today is largely made up of descendants of this early stock. A large percentage of African Americans also make up the population, many of them descended from the early slaves brought into this country to tend the large cotton plantations. When the county was formed in 1899, the total population was 12,553. The 1940 census reported the population to have grown to 23,232, while the latest figures put the population at approximately 35,000 (McKay, p. 7).

The first families to settle in the area now known as Laurinburg arrived in 1785. The name comes from the prominent McLaurin family, who operated a general store in the area in the early- to mid-1800s. The name of the town was first written with an "h" -- Laurinburgh -- and was pronounced Laurinboro. The first post office, chartered on December 6, 1856, with the appointment of L. A. McLaurin as postmaster, was initially called Laurinburgh, but later the "h" was dropped (McKay, p. 8). By 1840, the settlement still consisted of only three dwellings, the store, a saloon, and several small outbuildings. In 1852, a private academy named Laurinburgh High School was organized with Duncan McLaurin serving as the school's first principal (Myers, p. 4).

In 1853, the Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad announced that it would build through Laurinburg and the first trains began running in 1861. During the Civil War, the railroad moved its railroad shops from Wilmington to Laurinburg. The Union Navy was concentrating a good deal of its effort on closing the entrance to Wilmington at Fort Fisher and the railroad management felt that the shops would be safer inland. Although originally intending to remain in Laurinburg only until the end of the war, they later purchased additional land and remained until 1894. Many people in the town lived in fear that when the shops left, the entire economy of the area would collapse (Myers, p. 8).

The railroad shops, which were located along Railroad Street southeast of the Main Street intersection, brought the first taste of outside life to Laurinburg and began a boom era in the former rural trading crossroads. Railroad employees, along with their families, moved to town and began demanding more services than a rural crossroads could provide. In anticipation of the arrival of the railroad and the town's future importance, a group of the area's Presbyterians separated from Laurel Hill Presbyterian Church and organized the Laurinburg congregation on March 5, 1859. The Hotel Laurinburg opened its doors in 1869, and there were at least ten merchants doing business in Laurinburg by the time the town incorporated in 1877. Washington A. Gill served as the first mayor of the new town. Although the Act of Incorporation had the

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town as Laurenburg, the spelling was changed in 1883 to Laurinburg (Butchko, p. 49).

Laurinburg's commercial district was located primarily along Main Street. As fire and age took their toll, the original frame stores were gradually replaced with brick buildings. There were about fifteen grocery or general merchandise stores in Laurinburg in the late 1880s. The stores along Main Street were operated by some of the town's most prominent citizens. John F. McNair started his business at his father's store near Springfield and moved his operations to the town of Laurel Hill in the 1860s; subsequently moving to Laurinburg in 1872. With the arrival of McNair, Laurinburg became headquarters for the largest and most financially successful mercantile, industrial, and agricultural enterprises in the county's history. McNair was a prominent businessman with far-reaching interests in land, textiles, banking, and, flour mills, seed mills, fertilizer plants, farming operations, and mercantile operations. The far-reaching business activities of McNair, more than any other individual, spurred the business activity and growth of the thriving little town (Butchko, p. 56).

Three businesses which started in the post-Reconstruction era continue to the present: The *Laurinburg Exchange*, Everington's Drug Store, and McDougald's Funeral Home. George D. Everington, a native of Beaufort County, came to Laurinburg in 1880. He obtained his license as a druggist in 1881 after interning with druggists in his home town. He studied medicine at Davidson College in 1898 and obtained a physician's license. He was also an optometrist and a founding member of the North Carolina Pharmaceutical Association (Gibson, pp. 188-189). The drug store continues to be operated today by his grandson, W. N. Robertson, also a pharmacist.

Malcolm A. McDougald began a furniture and undertaking business in 1881. McDougald, a carpenter from Robeson County, moved his family to Laurinburg after the Civil War and worked in the railroad shops. His carpentry skills evolved into a furniture and undertaking enterprise advertised in business directories in the 1880s and 1890s. McDougald is responsible for the handsome c. 1904 three-story building on the northwest corner of South Main Street and Railroad Street. McDougald's sons later assisted him with the business. During the Depression, the family sold the furniture sector of the business. The surviving undertaking business then moved to Biggs Street in 1938 and to the former James L. McNair home on East Church Street in 1958. It continues today to be a family-run business (Scotland Piper, Vol.9, No. 4, p. 7).

Women in Laurinburg could support themselves as milliners or hat makers. Octavia Blakely, E. V. Butler, and Sarah Rico were milliners in Laurinburg around 1880. Carrie Emma Odom's dry goods, notions, and millinery store, started in the 1890s,

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became a successful establishment which lasted into the twentieth century (Gibson, p. 189).

Walter P. Evans, an African American born and schooled in Wilmington, began a business in a sixteen- by twenty-foot room in the early 1900s, and later built a three-story brick building on Main Street where he operated a clothing store which specialized in good quality shoes. Mr. Evans was a highly respected businessman who also opened a woodyard business, planted 200 acres of cotton, and was a mail contractor between Laurinburg and Brightsville, South Carolina. When Evans's store closed during the Depression, his assets amounted to around \$75,000. Other black merchants included Eli Roper, called Col. Roper, who ran a general store from 1889 to 1896. C. B. Harris was a jeweler known as "Goldsmith" and Henry McNair was a butcher and restaurant manager (Gibson, p. 189).

Laurinburg also had an opera house located in the second floor of the building on the corner of Main and Roper Streets. The space was used for traveling shows as well as community events and was known simply as "The Opera House" (Myers, p. 7).

With the influx of out-of-town workers and a proliferation of saloons, Main Street soon acquired a rough reputation among the more refined citizens of the area. There were about fifteen grocery or general stores in the late 1880s and most of them sold whiskey. Main Street was described by Nettie McCormick Henley in her book, *The Home Place*:

A good many decent people lived in Laurinburg, but womenfolk generally thought of Main Street about the same way as the movies show Western frontier towns. The young sports would brag, "There are thirteen barrooms and I had a drink in every one of them last Saturday.

Finally, in 1892, the bar rooms were permanently closed as a result of the Temperance Movement. Whiskey distilling, a legal occupation with a long-standing tradition in rural areas, was abolished (Butchko, pp. 54-55).

Apparently, all of this outside influence was more than the strong and proper Presbyterian older families wanted. In the early 1890s, after the Carolina Central Railroad had been merged into the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, the Seaboard wanted to run its main north-south line from New York to Atlanta through Laurinburg. The local powers, members of this Scottish pioneering group, vetoed the proposition despite fears of economic repercussions, and the railroad withdrew to Hamlet, making that small

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Richmond County village the line's principal stop between the North and Deep South for the first half of the twentieth century (Butchko, p. 55).

Although the railroad shops moved from Laurinburg to Hamlet in 1894, the feared economic disaster did not materialize, as new industries were introduced. The organization of the Scotland Mills just east of Laurinburg proper in 1899 brought about a renewed sense of activity and development to Laurinburg. It was quickly followed by Dickson Mill in 1900, Waverly Mill in 1909, and Prince Mill in 1919. This industrial area incorporated as Scotland Village in 1903 and changed its name to East Laurinburg in 1909. East Laurinburg is composed almost entirely of the villages, which were built around the textile plants. Although East Laurinburg is an incorporated town, legally separate from Laurinburg, the mills served to broaden Laurinburg's economic base, long rooted in agriculture and dependent on the railroad. In 1929, the four mill plants and companies were merged into one unit and one corporation, Waverly Mills, Inc. Subsequently, in 1939, Scotland Mills, Inc. was organized and took over the operation of the Dickson Mill and concentrated its operations in the manufacture of sheets and bedspreads (*History of Industry in Scotland County*, p. 10).

Alexander L. James organized the first bank in Laurinburg in 1893. The Bank of Laurinburg, later called First National Bank, was the second bank to open in Richmond County. The first was the Bank of the Pee Dee, which opened in Rockingham in 1891. Before 1891, local residents could bank either at Wilmington or at the New Hanover Branch Bank in Wadesboro. However, the New Hanover Branch Bank closed during the Panic of 1893 when banks around the country folded. Laurinburg's bank remained sound during the crisis. First National, said to have been the only bank between Wilmington and Rockingham in 1893, attracted business and prestige to Laurinburg. In 1904, James opened Scotland Savings Bank in Laurinburg and served as president until his death. Both banks closed in December 1930, early in the Great Depression (Gibson, p. 188).

The mid- to late-1890s generated a new spirit of civic pride through the political fight to gain the separation of Scotland County from Richmond County and to establish Laurinburg as its governmental seat. Created on February 20, 1899, by the General Assembly, Scotland County was cut from the eastern half of Richmond County, which had been carved out of Anson County in 1779. Peter McRae and W. H. McLaurin were named commissioners and were to meet with commissioners of Richmond and Robeson counties during the year 1900 to survey and to mark the boundaries as designated in the act creating Scotland County. The same act also provided that Laurinburg be the county seat and that the county commissioners should select a site for a jail within a mile of the center of the town. The county began to function in December 1900. The first courts

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were held in a rented building. In 1901, a brick courthouse was built; it stood on Main Street until 1964, when a new courthouse was built on Biggs Street (McKay, p. 6).

The period of the late 1890s and first two decades of the twentieth century were a time of good prices and an expanding agriculture. A larger number of farms, raising more crops and making increased profits, required additional commercial goods and services. The increased business and mercantile activity at Laurinburg related directly to the county's flush agricultural economy. All these factors--expanding agriculture, an increasing commercial base, the cotton mills, and the McNair interests--effected a long term and steady population increase in Laurinburg. Figures from the Sanborn Insurance Maps indicate a populace of 1,500 in 1893, 1,600 in 1898, 1,900 in 1904, 2,200 in 1909, 2,500 in 1914, and 3,500 in 1924 (Butchko, p. 56).

Buildings belonging to the railroad and built primarily from wood were located near the tracks and were dangerously subjected to fire in those days. Three different depots, as well as many other wooden structures on the street, were lost to fire. A welcomed 1924 purchase of a new fire truck promised residents and businesses a new measure of safety while also ensuring a reduction in fire insurance rates (Batchelor, p. 8).

Main Street was paved in 1917 and water mains and sewer lines were installed in 1924. The same year, the Scotland County Chamber of Commerce formed to assist and promote Laurinburg's downtown merchants and businesses. In addition to urging all citizens with their slogan, "A Good County for Good People," the Chamber published an informative and inspirational column in *The Laurinburg Exchange* (Batchelor, p. 8).

The railroads continued as an important part of the community, despite the Seaboard's relocation of its shops. The Laurinburg & Southern was chartered in 1909 by a local cooperative of businessmen. The line ran from Johns to Wagram and expanded its run to Raeford around 1919. The railroad conveyed farm products including cotton, melons, corn, and lumber. In the first half of the century, hundreds of carloads of cantaloupes and watermelons were shipped by rail from Laurinburg and the surrounding towns. Laurinburg became known as "The Capital of the Cantaloupe World" (Batchelor, p. 8).

Another title Laurinburg has given itself is "The City of Beautiful Trees." Efforts have been made from the town's beginning to preserve and protect distinctive trees. An early ordinance read: "No person shall willfully, carelessly, or negligently damage or destroy any of the shade trees." The decade of the 1920s saw the planting of the willow oaks which now line the residential streets of Laurinburg. These majestic trees are the common element that binds together various neighborhoods of the city (Myers, p. 9).

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Laurinburg has twice received the distinction of being named an All-American City: in 1956 and again in 1967.

Laurinburg's commercial district thrived from the 1920s through the 1950s. By 1930, the population of Laurinburg remained steady at approximately 3,500. There were approximately seventy-five stores in downtown Laurinburg in 1930, mostly clustered along Main Street. The Chetwynd Hotel (demolished in the 1960s) occupied a half of a city block on Main Street and included its own dining room, drug store, and Western Union Office, as well as several additional stores on the first level. Businesses included a Chinese laundry, a shoe repair shop, several drug stores, a wholesale grocer, general merchandise shops, *The Laurinburg Exchange* newspaper office, furniture upholstery and repair, and automobile sales and repair shops. Entertainment diversions could also be found along Laurinburg's Main Street including a miniature golf course, a bowling alley, and a movie theater (1930 Sanborn map).

Through the years, Laurinburg's Main Street has been the scene of many important celebrations for the county and the city including Scotland County's Jubilee Parade in 1949, the celebration of the coming of St. Andrews Presbyterian College in 1956, Laurinburg's two All-American City celebrations, Laurinburg's centennial parade in 1977, and the John Blue Street Festival in 1987. Local merchants are committed to having at least one street festival per year (Batchelor, p. 9).

The Laurinburg City Council adopted the Laurinburg Downtown Urban Redevelopment Plan in 1961. This "urban renewal project" involved tearing down a slum area one block off Main Street known as "Bloodfield" for the crime and corruption the area attracted. It also involved demolishing the old Scotland County Courthouse and building a new courthouse one block off Main Street. Cronly and Roper streets were extended, offering better access to Main Street. A large department store and parking lot took the place of the old courthouse. Formerly a Belk department store, the building is now utilized as an education center (Batchelor, p. 12).

In 1975, another organized effort to improve the city began with the formation of a Downtown Advisory Committee. This committee made recommendations on parking, installation of canopies on stores, renovation of facades and beautification measures. New paved parking lots located behind two blocks of downtown store buildings were built in the 1970s. This encouraged the cleaning up of back alleys and resulted in some merchants opening rear entrances to their stores. In the early 1980s, brick planters were built at intervals along three blocks of Main Street, providing space for flowers, trees, and small benches (Batchelor, p. 12).

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The Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Corporation has been formed to pursue approaches for preserving and revitalizing Laurinburg's commercial district. This effort was prompted in part by the recognition of the threat posed by outlying shopping and services, which had been generated by growth on the outskirts of town attributable to St. Andrews College, established in 1956, and an expanding industrial base. Town leaders, interested citizens, and members of the Chamber of Commerce met in 1988 with an Urban Design Assistance Team provided by the American Institute of Architects. As a result of this meeting, a plan was formed to guide the growth of the downtown area, including specific actions for improving existing buildings, upgrading streets, adding landscaping, and creating additional open space. Recent efforts include improving the landscaping along Main Street, seeking a North Carolina Department of Transportation grant to bury electric and telephone wires (currently in progress), and working to create a downtown historic district. The latter will assist in increasing public appreciation and pride in Laurinburg's heritage and built environment and will provide tax incentives for owners seeking to renovate their commercial buildings.

Architecture Context

The architecture contained within the Laurinburg Commercial Historic District spans a time period beginning in the early 1890s and extending up to the middle of the twentieth century. The extant buildings assist in an understanding of the rich history of the town as first a bustling railroad town, and later a prosperous county seat. The district is free of industrial buildings which tended to be located on the outskirts of town.

Although the first settlers to the Laurinburg area arrived as early as 1785, the architecture of the Laurinburg Commercial Historic District dates only to the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries. The arrival of the Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad in 1861 resulted in a population surge for the small town, which in turn, led to an expansion of the commercial district. Early buildings were centered near the railroad and were primarily constructed of wood. As fire and age took their toll on these early buildings, they were gradually replaced with fire-resistant brick buildings.

The c. 1893 Central Hotel (#62) is one of the historic district's few remaining buildings associated with the railroad. Situated on the northeast corner of North Main and East Bizzell streets, adjacent to the railroad tracks, the small brick two-story hotel with double-tier porches provided shelter to visitors arriving in Laurinburg by passenger train. Although the modest building reveals little architectural embellishment, its sturdy masonry construction has allowed it to withstand the destructive fires that destroyed

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many of the former frame buildings clustered near the railroad tracks, and today it is the district's oldest building..

The c. 1914 Hammond Company Building (#45), located on North Main Street adjacent to the railroad tracks, also recollects the railroad's role in Laurinburg's development during the early years of the twentieth century. The building's thick brick walls, large open interior spaces, and heavy internal timber structures are illustrative of industrial architecture of the period. Large warehouse buildings typically were located near railroad stops for the storage of produce and products transloaded from the trains. The town of Clinton in Sampson County retains a number of warehouses near the outskirts of town adjacent to its railroad depot. Wilmington, New Hanover County's county seat and the former headquarters of the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad, also retains several significant warehouses near the site of the former railroad headquarters.

As the railroad shops, originally clustered around the railroad tracks, gradually disappeared, they were replaced in the 1930s with automobile gas stations and service centers. Three surviving early filling stations within the historic district are clustered near the railroad tracks at the northern end of the district. Constructed of brick, the three stations sit back from the road, allowing room for gasoline pumps and automobile parking. Standard filling station architecture of the time normally entailed blocky brick structures with a projecting front canopy. Although the c. 1931 Scotland Oil Company (#24) has recently been converted to a restaurant, the building maintains its original blocky form including the front canopy supported by large square brick piers. The brick exterior of the former Esso station (#23) was clad with enamel metal panels, probably during the 1950s or early 1960s. The third station (#44), atypical in that it was built in a bungalow style with a hipped roof and overhanging eaves, found adaptive reuse as a restaurant for many years.

Laurinburg's commercial district experienced a sustained growth of its Main Street commercial fabric from about the turn of the twentieth century, with the formation of Scotland County in 1899 and Laurinburg's subsequent designation as the county seat. The organization of Scotland Mills in 1899, followed by Dickson Mills in 1900 and Waverly Mills in 1909, also contributed to the growth and prosperity of the town through the 1920s. Commercial prosperity was often measured by the use of iron fronts or other manufactured metal trim on a town's commercial buildings. Popular cast-iron or metal features included Italianate and classical motifs on columns, arcades, cornices, and quoins. The 1901 McDougald's Furniture Store and Funeral Parlor (#21), designed by Wilmington architect Henry E. Bonitz, retains its original cast-iron storefront. The three-story furniture store and funeral home also features Bonitz's characteristically bold brickwork. Bonitz was one of the best known and most prolific of turn-of-the-twentieth-century Wilmington designers. The Bonitz Buildings at 211-215 Princess Street in

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Wilmington include identical commercial buildings flanking a more ornate center building at 213 Princess. The building retains its decorative metal cornice and one of the original cast-iron storefronts.

The majority of the buildings lining Main Street are one- and two-story brick of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial design, typical of the commercial fabric of many of North Carolina's small and medium-size towns. The design developed around the turn of the twentieth century as a reaction to the ornate styles of the late nineteenth century. It proved popular because of its adaptability to a variety of building types, especially the new one-story flat-roof commercial building. Recessed entrances flanked by plate-glass display windows characterize the one- and two-story buildings with modestly decorated facades. Often a sizable wall area exists between the windows and cornice, providing a place for advertising, as well as making the facade appear larger and more urban than would otherwise be the case. In some instances, the stores are grouped together, comprising three or more retail spaces and presenting a larger facade to the street. Decorative embellishments are generally limited to raised parapets, segmentally arched windows, recessed upper panels, and in a few cases, decorative brick work at the cornice. Buildings of the late 1930s and 1940s tend to be more simply detailed with ornamentation restricted to simple flat, rectilinear courses of brick at openings and cornices.

Many examples of standard commercial design can be found along Main Street, including three late-nineteenth-century buildings located on the west side of the 100 block. The c. 1898 building at 123 S. Main Street originally served as a United States Post Office (#16). The one-story building features a recessed central entrance flanked by plate-glass display windows, a raised parapet, and a recessed panel outlined with corbelled brick. The adjacent building to its south was built c. 1893 and was occupied by Everington's Drug Store (#17). The tall facade displays somewhat more embellishment than its neighbors, with a cornice of decorative brickwork. It also features a recessed central entrance and plate-glass display windows. The third building at 117 S. Main Street (#18), also built c. 1893, is comprised of beige brick with corbelled stringcourses and three small square vent openings.

Many of the district's storefronts have had some degree of alteration, but a few retain their original wood frame door and window surrounds, including a c. 1935 commercial building at 210 South Main Street (#27). The handsome one-story brick building features a multi-color brick façade in Flemish bond with two bonds of brick laid in a basketweave pattern. The original storefront consists of centrally recessed double-leaf wood and glass doors flanked by plate-glass display windows. Many of the alterations to the district's buildings occurred in the late 1940s and 1950s and consisted

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of the installation of new aluminum framed plate glass display windows and glass doors. Large enamel metal panels were also applied to the facades of several buildings.

The popular Colonial Revival style of the early twentieth century was not often applied to commercial buildings. The Laurinburg Commercial Historic District includes two Colonial Revival-style buildings, neither of which was intended for commercial purposes. The 1939 (former) United States Post Office (#46) at 201 Atkinson Street was designed by architect Louis A. Simon, the United States government's supervising architect credited with the design of scores if not hundreds of New Deal-era post offices. Built by the Federal Works Administration, the one-story brick building exhibits typical Colonial Revival details such as a symmetrical five-bay facade, a recessed, central double-leaf door surmounted by a leaded-glass transom and a carved eagle set within a semi-circular arch. The side-gable building is surmounted with a central four-sided cupola with a vent in each side. The building is similar to Clinton's (Sampson County) 1936 post office and Morehead City's (Carteret County) 1941 post office, both designed by Simon. Another fine rendition of the Colonial Revival style is the Ed Guest Building, built in 1951 as the Scotland Memorial Library (#1A). The one-and-one-half-story brick building is laid in Flemish bond and features a five-bay symmetrical facade, a modillioned cornice, gabled dormers, eight-over-eight segmentally-arched windows, exterior-end chimneys, and a side-gable slate roof with parapeted gable ends.

The 1940 Gibson Theater (#2) is the only building in the district with slight allusions to the Art Deco style. Art Deco is characterized by smooth wall planes often articulated with vertically banded windows, fin-like piers that extend through the parapets, and the concentration of flat, rectilinear, or highly stylized ornament around the entrance and at the roofline. Typical ornamental features include smooth, polished marble in rich colors, patterned terra cotta or carved limestone panels, and intricate metal grilles. Additional design motifs included zigzag lines, chevron patterns, stylized foliage, and stepped arches. The two-story brick Gibson Theater features a smooth stuccoed facade with the upper level punctuated by four small vertical narrow windows spaced widely apart. A raised central stepped parapet flanked by full-height pilasters contributes a sense of verticality to the building.

The more curvaceous Art Moderne style succeeded the angular Art Deco in popularity in the 1930s and remained popular through the 1940s. It was the slick modern architecture of its era and was often used to re-face older commercial storefronts to give them an up-to-date look. Barron's Department Store, formerly known as McNair's General Merchandise Store (#13), at 131 South Main Street, commands a striking presence in the commercial historic district. Built in 1938 and designed by architect John A. Weaver, the 7,000 square foot store takes up all of the very narrow, island-like block between Fairly and Roper streets. Built of second-hand brick, the striking building

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features Art Moderne design concepts including canted corners with central panels of textural brick striations at the upper level, smoothly curved corners at the entrances, and six narrow, closely-spaced glass block windows, at the façade's second level.

The 1951 Wachovia Bank Building (#6), which replaced an earlier bank building, also commands an impressive presence on South Main Street. The four-story, freestanding brick building is characteristic of multi-story commercial buildings built after World War II. The large rectangular building, sitting on the northwest corner of South Main and Cronly streets, reads as a solid mass, relieved only by a recessed entrance outlined with multicolored flat stone blocks. There is little differentiation between the ground floor and those above it or between the different elevations. Stone stringcourses and horizontal bands of windows mark the four levels.

Several one-story buildings located along the side streets also represent the mid-twentieth century. Typical of commercial buildings constructed after World War II, the buildings exhibit stark simplicity. Characteristically, the one-story rather plain brick buildings have a flat roof and large glassy storefronts. The 1946 (former) McLean Automotive Supply Store (#56) is typical of the era with its flat roof, slightly raised parapet, and large expanses of windows across the facade. Several other examples include the 1953 Winn Dixie Store (#49) and the 1950 Laurinburg Exchange Office (#50).

The only ecclesiastical building in the district is the First United Methodist Church (#1) built in 1918. Built in the Gothic Revival style, the impressive brick edifice features two crenellated towers and an arcaded entry porch with Tudor arches and a rose window in the front gable. The building is representative of the many buildings in Laurinburg constructed by master carpenter and contractor William Daniel Tucker (1880-1949). A versatile builder, Tucker built in all the prevailing styles of the day and is responsible for many of the more impressive residences in town. The church was expanded in 1952 with an attached education building featuring patterned brick work and limestone detailing.

The commercial fabric of Laurinburg recalls that of numerous small and medium-sized towns across North Carolina whose commercial centers expanded in the early years of this century in response to significant transportation and industrial development. For example, nearby Maxton (NR 1998) also developed as a railroad town in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Maxton, however, never fully recovered from the downturn of the 1920s. As a consequence, the town's development stagnated, resulting in a retention of its early railroad character, including Union Depot and two frame warehouses located adjacent to the tracks. The town retains a number of landmark buildings, including several with cast-iron storefronts, along with more modest

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connective buildings. Maxton is less than ten miles from Laurinburg and it is likely that area contractors were responsible for construction in both districts.

The downtown Laurinburg district merits comparison to certain National Register districts in other counties of the region. Wadesboro Downtown Historic District (NR 1999) in nearby Anson County also developed around the turn of the twentieth century as a commercial, governmental, and civic center. The vast majority of its historic resources date to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Wadesboro developed as an important industrial and market town with agricultural prosperity and textile manufacturing. Like Laurinburg, most of the commercial buildings conform to the standard commercial designs of the period with simple, rectangular plans, red-brick veneers, flat roofs (often with parapets), simple decorative detailing, and a variety of segmental arched, round arched, or large display windows. Ornamentation is expressed generally through decorative brickwork and includes such elements as corbelling along the parapet, raised or recessed brick panels, stringcourses, and quoins.

Closer to Scotland County, the Hamlet Main Street Commercial District (NR 1992) in neighboring Richmond County, also exhibits styles and characteristics of similar, turn-of-the-century railroad, commercial, and manufacturing centers in North Carolina. Hamlet experienced sustained growth of its commercial fabric from 1900, when the Seaboard Air Line passenger depot and division office was built, through the 1920s. Like Laurinburg, Maxton, and Wadesboro, the town expanded in the early years of this century in response to significant transportation and industrial development. Again, the commercial architecture is almost uniformly of brick one-, two-, or three-story buildings displaying the restrained, conservative detailing of the ubiquitous main street Commercial Style.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Laurinburg Commercial Historic District are as shown by the solid line on the accompanying Laurinburg map (scale of 1 inch equals 200 feet).

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Laurinburg Commercial Historic District are drawn to include as much as possible of the original area of the town and of contiguous areas of development up to 1953, while eliminating non-contributing properties wherever possible. Non-contributing properties include buildings which were built after the end of the c. 1893 to 1953 period of significance or those which have lost their architectural integrity because of substantial non-historic additions and/or alterations.

LAURINBURG COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
 LAURINBURG, SCOTLAND COUNTY
 NORTH CAROLINA

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1 inch = 100 feet

- Key:
 ▲ = Contributing Building
 △ = Noncontributing Building
 ○ = Contributing Structure
 (A) = Photo view



