

(Oct. 1990)

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 Greenville Commercial Historic District  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by West Third, South Evans and East and West Fifth Streets N/A  not for publication  
city or town Greenville N/A  vicinity  
state North Carolina code NC County Pitt code 147 zip code 27835

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 for 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.)

Stephen Brown SHPD 7/1/03  
Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ 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 certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.

other,  
(explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property

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 count.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private        | <input type="checkbox"/> building(s)         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State              | <input type="checkbox"/> site                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure           |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> object              |

Contributing	Noncontributing	
49	23	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
49	23	Total

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

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

3

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

COMMERCE/TRADE/professional

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/department store

GOVERNMENT/post office

GOVERNMENT/fire station

GOVERNMENT/county courthouse

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/business

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

GOVERNMENT/county courthouse

GOVERNMENT/municipal building

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Queen Anne

Classical Revival

Commercial Style

Art Deco

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

WOOD: Weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other Terra cotta

Stucco

**Narrative Description**

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

See 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.)

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

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

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**B** removed from its original location.

**C** moved from its original location.

**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**

1900-1952

**Significant Dates**

1860

1895

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Milburn and Hester; Hook and Rogers; Benton and Benton; and Wenderoth, Oscar.

**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:

State Archives, Wake County Register of Deeds

Greenville Commercial Historic District

Pitt, NC

Name of Property

County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Approximately 25

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>285020</u>	<u>3943520</u>	3	<u>18</u>	<u>285190</u>	<u>3943200</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>18</u>	<u>285200</u>	<u>3943460</u>	4	<u>18</u>	<u>285190</u>	<u>3943100</u>

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 Ellen Turco & April Montgomery

organization Circa, Inc date December 17, 2002

street & number P.O. Box 407 telephone 919-416-1016

city or town Durham state NC zip code 27702

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

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

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

**Photographs**

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

**Additional items**

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

**Property Owner**

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

name \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. 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 20303

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Greenville Commercial Historic District  
Pitt County, North Carolina

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## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The City of Greenville, located on the banks of the Tar River in North Carolina's coastal plain, is the county seat of Pitt County. The Greenville Commercial Historic District lies along the streets first laid out in 1771. An original town plat shows a grid street pattern with numbered streets running east-west, beginning with First Street just south of the Tar River; and Pitt, Green, Washington, Evans, Cotanche, and Reade Streets running north-south. Evans Street, which runs one-way north, bisects the town into east and west sections. The historic district is Greenville's original commercial core, situated primarily along South Evans and Fifth Streets, with a few resources on West Third and West Fourth Streets.

Urban renewal efforts of the 1960s and 70s eliminated a significant portion of downtown Greenville's historic building stock and rerouted its original grid street pattern. Aerial photographs reveal parking lots and vacant land making up much of the urban fabric immediately surrounding the district. One vacant lot is located within the district's boundaries. Angled parking spaces line the west side of the 300 and 400 blocks of South Evans Street. Parallel parking spaces are available along the south sides of West Third and West and East Fifth Streets. Newly planted trees in brick planters grow on both sides of South Evans Street. Typical of early-twentieth century downtown commercial centers, the majority of the buildings in the district are connected to adjacent buildings by common side walls and are aligned with the sidewalk. Residences and public buildings are set back from the street, creating transitional green space between the public right-of-way and the building.

All but seven of the seventy-two buildings in the Greenville Commercial Historic District were constructed for commercial purposes. Commercial uses include stores and offices, a bank, and a theater. Although the building sizes, materials, and architectural styles may differ, their forms are similar. Commercial buildings are one and two-story, with the exception of the four-story 1911 Proctor Hotel (# 11) and the three-story 1929 Montgomery-Ward Department Store (# 52) and display first-story glass storefronts or display windows that enable pedestrians to view the goods or services being offered. Generally, interior spaces are open on the first floor, and divided into smaller office spaces on the floors above, or in the case of the 1919 Dail-Hodges Building (# 61), into apartments.

Almost all of the district's commercial buildings fall into the architectural category of early-twentieth century standard commercial design. However, a few commercial buildings are also rendered in the Classical Revival, Art Deco and Art Moderne styles. Standard commercial design buildings are constructed of red or blonde brick and feature large, first-story display windows, and decorative brick or metal cornices, or parapets, on the upper part of the building. Patterned masonry is also common. Second-story windows have arched or flat arched openings. Surviving windows are wood divided light sash. Because many of the first stories and/or lower storefronts have been remodeled over the years, the style is most evident on the upper facades. A good example of standard commercial design is the 1924 Blount Building (# 70). The two-story, three bay, red brick building has a stepped parapet roofline and

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Greenville Commercial Historic District  
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limestone window sills and lintels. Raised brick pilasters with limestone caps and bases delineate the two first story entries. Blonde brick is used for the four-story 1911 Proctor Hotel, the one-story 1915 C. T. Munford Store (# 16), and in the cornice soldier course of the circa 1946 red brick commercial building at 308-310 South Evans Street (# 6).

The more formal Classical Revival style was a nationally popular style utilized for commercial buildings. The style is based on the ancient architecture of Greek and Rome and features symmetrical facades, columns or pilasters, pediments and elaborate cornices. The district's best commercial examples of the style are the circa 1915 Greenville Bank and Trust (# 32) and the circa 1915 111-115 West Third Street (# 71). The Greenville Bank and Trust is a two-story, temple-form, brick building faced with cut stone. Engaged Doric columns support the pedimented facade with modillion cornice and classical frieze. 111-115 West Third Street is a symmetrical, blonde brick, two-story, three-bay commercial building. Its bays are divided by full-height, raised and rusticated pilasters that support an elaborate paneled and corbelled cornice.

Three Art Deco commercial buildings are in the district. The style was fashionable for commercial buildings in the 1930s. Smooth wall planes, linear motifs, repetitive geometric forms and abstract ornamentation characterize the style. Carrara glass, tile, and terra cotta were used for their smooth texture and bright colors. These materials are in the district, as is glass block. All of the district's Art Deco commercial buildings are one-story, with the exception of the 1929 Montgomery-Ward Department Store (# 52), which is three stories. The Smith Electric Building (# 31) is a narrow, one-story building with a central entry bay and an orange and white vertical stripped carrara glass façade, added circa 1933. The Montgomery-Ward Department Store is a three-story, three-bay blonde brick building decorated with polychrome terra cotta tiles.

The circa 1950 Bissette's Drug Store (# 22) is the district's only Art Moderne building. The style was briefly popular nationally between 1930 and 1950, and is a simplified version of the Art Deco. Bissette's Drug Store is a highly intact one-story building covered with large, polished granite panels. The building retains its original blue neon signage.

The district has a collection of five buildings constructed for civic or governmental purposes, which represent approximately five percent of the district's building stock. All of the government buildings, with the exception of the jail, are two stories or more that allowed the public access at street level while providing workspace on the floors above. At the north end of the district the 1911, three-story, blonde brick Classical Revival Pitt County Courthouse (# 1) designed by Milburn and Heister and the 1913, two-story, stuccoed Florentine Renaissance Revival United States Post Office (# 2) designed by Oscar Wenderoth face one another on Evans Street. The 1938-1940 three-story, stone Art Deco Greenville Municipal Building (# 39) designed by Benton and Benton is located on West Fifth Street in the

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Greenville Commercial Historic District  
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district's southwest corner on land the city purchased from the James and Skinner families in 1938.<sup>1</sup> The Municipal Building replaced the former the 1909 two-story, blonde brick Police and Fire Departments (# 53) and one-story painted brick Lock-up (# 55), architect unknown, located two blocks east on the 100 block of East Fifth Street. Government buildings are differentiated from many of the district's commercial building by the use of less common materials. Their stone, blonde brick and stucco facades stand out from their red brick neighbors.

The use of high style architecture conveyed to the public the importance of the functions that occurred inside government buildings. The district's government buildings were designed to fully express the characteristic massing, decorative features and materials that define the Classical Revival and the Art Deco styles. While Classical Revival elements are used on several of the district's commercial buildings, such as the full-height brick pilasters on 111-115 West Third Street (# 71), the courthouse's three-story temple-front, colossal Ionic portico and domed cupola integrate all of design tenets of the style. The Municipal Building's smooth limestone façade is the archetype that the mass-produced applied carrara glass storefronts of 407 South Evans Street (# 29) and Smith Electric (#31) attempt to emulate. Renaissance Revival is rare in eastern North Carolina, so the use the style on the United States Post Office, emphasizes the regional importance of the building. Even the Police and Fire Department, with its fairly typical early twentieth-century patterned brickwork on the upper façade, features the arched door and window openings reminiscent of the Romanesque style.

Two dwellings are located in the district, the 1860 Charles Greene House (# 69) and the 1895 Robert Lee Humber House (# 44). Both residences date prior to 1900 about the time that suburban living became an option for Greenville's upper classes. The Greene and Humber houses represent the time when dwellings co-existed with commercial and governmental in the city's core. The houses are the district's only examples Greek Revival and Queen Anne architecture, as well as the only wood frame buildings in the district.

The Charles Greene House is a two-story, three-bay, single-pile, frame symmetrical Greek Revival house surmounted by a hipped roof. The main block is stuccoed and scored to resemble stone blocks. It is unknown if the stucco is original to the house. A later, two-story, one-bay wide, pedimented portico with square posts shelters the original entry with sidelights and transom. The Robert Lee Humber House is a two-and-half story, T-plan, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style frame house covered with weatherboards and a pedimented front-gable, one-story wraparound porch supported by Ionic columns.

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<sup>1</sup> Greenville Municipal Building local landmark report, 3.

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Pitt County, North Carolina

## *Integrity*

The district contains seventy-two resources. Forty-nine, or sixty-eight percent, of these resources contribute to its historic significance. A few, such as the Greenville Municipal Building (# 39), the Pitt County Courthouse (# 1), the former United States Post Office (# 2), Bissette's Drug Store (# 22), and Lautares Brothers Jewelers (# 21) display exteriors virtually unchanged since their construction. Some historic facades, such as White's Theater (# 42), are completely obscured by modern materials. Many of the contributing buildings have undergone alterations post-dating the district's 1860-1952 period of significance. However, lower façade alterations are not uncommon in early-twentieth century commercial areas, as merchants attempted to modernize their aging storefronts. As a whole, the district retains the general streetscape and much of the architectural detail from the period of significance c. 1860-1950. The Greenville Commercial Historic District maintains its overall integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

## INVENTORY LIST

The historic district is roughly laid out in an inverted "T" configuration. The inventory is arranged alphabetically by street name, beginning with Evans Street, followed by Fifth, Fourth and Third Streets, which are listed from west to east. The information in this inventory list is based on the 1992 survey of the area conducted by Kate M. Ohno. The survey was updated in 2001-2002 and this list was prepared from that updated information. The following sources were used in preparing the inventory list: NC HPO architectural survey files for the City of Greenville and Greenville City Directories for the years 1916, 1926, 1936, 1941, 1944 and 1951. (The only years for which City Directories survive.) Sanborn maps for the years 1898, 1900, 1905, 1911, 1916, 1923 and 1929 and current property tax records on file with Pitt County were also used.

The historic district is made up of contributing and non-contributing resources. A resource is categorized as contributing if it was present during the period of significance (c.1860-1950) *and* it possess physical integrity that dates from the period of significance. Non-contributing resources either date from after the district's period of significance or, have been altered to an extent that the building's historic appearance has been significantly altered or obscured.

### 200 Block South Evans Street, West Side

**1 210 South Evans Street Pitt County Courthouse contributing 1911/1965**

The Pitt County Courthouse occupies most of south end of the block bounded by Evans, West Third, Washington and West Second Streets.<sup>2</sup> It is surrounded on the east and south sides by a low, concrete

<sup>2</sup> The Edwards Building, now demolished, occupied the north half of the block. It housed law offices.

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wall. Built in 1910-11, it is the fifth county courthouse, and the third on this site. The preceding courthouse was destroyed by fire on February 10, 1910. The Washington, DC architectural firm of Milburn and Heister, designers of eleven county courthouses in North Carolina, were responsible for the design. The building was built by the Central Carolina Construction Company of Greensboro, North Carolina. It was listed in the National Register in 1977.

The courthouse is a three-story, hipped-roof, blonde brick building in the Classical Revival style. The rectangular structure rests on an ashlar base and is adjoined on the west side by a blonde brick connector that leads to a concrete and glass annex built in the Brutalist style in 1965. The east and south elevations of the main block feature massive pedimented porticoes supported by four stone columns with Ionic capitals and ashlar bases. A classical dentil and modillion cornice decorates the pediment and continues around the building under the projection of the hipped roof. A domed, three stage cupola surmounts the building's copper standing seam roof. The exterior wall surfaces are enlivened by corner quoins. The one-over-one windows feature stone jack arches with keystones and stone lintels. Tall, round arched windows which illuminate the courtroom appear in the second story center bays on both the east and south facades.

### 200 Block South Evans Street, East Side

**2 215 South Evans Street former United States Post Office contributing**  
**1913/1936**

This Florentine Renaissance Revival building was constructed in 1913 as Greenville's first permanent post office building. Oscar Wenderoth of the U.S. Treasury Department was the supervising architect and W. J. Brent Construction Company of Norfolk, Virginia was the general contractor. The building served as Greenville's post office until 1969, when it moved to another location and the building was remodeled for federal offices. The Post Office is one of only two Florentine Renaissance Revival public buildings standing in eastern North Carolina.<sup>3</sup> It was listed in the National Register in 1986.

The two-story, five-bay, brick structure is covered with smooth stucco and detailed with concrete trim. A distinctive low-hipped, red, terra cotta tile roof surmounts the rectangular main block. A one-story rear addition was added in 1936-37. The materials and decorative motifs of the main block are replicated in the addition. Each corner of the main block is emphasized by a plain pilaster that supports a plain frieze band. Atop the band is a cornice of egg-and-dart and dentil moldings. The soffit is embellished with plain recessed panels interspersed with drop panels at each corner and over each bay. The drop panels feature floral decorations. The original second story windows are set in simple concrete surrounds. The first story nine-over-nine sash are topped by a large architraves. The projecting sills are supported by modillions brackets. The windows of the north and south elevations reflect those

<sup>3</sup> The other is the Municipal Building in Morehead City.

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of the front façade. The windows on the rear addition are similar to those on the first story of the main block, but without the architraves. The building is given its Renaissance flavor by the full height, three-bay, front entry loggia. The main entry and flanking window bays are recessed behind three, large keystone arches supported by Tuscan columns. The recessed door and window bays are topped by arched windows that mirror the arches of the loggia. The original cast iron handrails enclose the north and south loggia arches. A secondary entrance to the main lobby is located in the southwest corner of the south-facing facade. The entry door is set in an architrave and is topped by a balconette. On each side of the secondary entry door remains pendant-shaped cast iron light fixtures with white globes.

### 300 Block South Evans Street, West Side.

**3 300 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing c.1958**

One story, brick commercial structure currently occupied by the Courtside Café. The fat-roofed building has metal roof eaves.

**4 302 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1946**

One-story, brick commercial building. A modern storefront with an early-twentieth century design was added in the 1990s. Upper facade has flat brick panel surrounded by brick soldier course. The 1951 city directory lists Bell's Pharmacy as the occupant of this space.

**5 304-306 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1946**

One-story red brick commercial building. Two modern storefronts with an early-twentieth century design were added in the 1990s. Upper façade is decorated by six triple vertical brick courses. The 1951 city directory lists Carolina Equipment Company at 304 and the Ideal Beauty Shop at 306.

**6 308-310 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1946**

One-story red brick commercial building. Early-twentieth century design storefronts were added in 1990s. Upper façade is decorated by six, triple vertical brick courses like those seen on 304-306 South Evans. However, the vertical courses on 308-310 are blonde brick. The cornice is made up of two soldier courses of blonde brick. The 1951 city directory lists the New Greenville Café as the occupant at 308 and the Greenville Production Credit Association at 310.

**7 314-318 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1920**

One-story painted brick commercial building with three modern glass and metal storefronts and intricate brickwork on upper facade. Brickwork includes sawtooth and soldier courses topped by a corbelled cornice. 314 and 316 have awnings. City directories list the following occupants: 314, Brown's Market in 1926 and 1936, Russ Clarence, plumber in 1944, professional offices in 1951. 316, Sam Lee's Chinese Laundry in 1926 and 1936, Nichols Market in 1944, Mrs. Morton's Bakery in 1951. 318, Kitlow Cafeteria in 1926 and 1936, Norfolk Shoe Shop in 1944, Hill's Clothier in 1951.

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**8 320 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing c. 1960**  
One-story painted brick veneered commercial building with a modern glass and metal storefront sheltered by a fixed canvas awning.

**9 324 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing c. 1980**  
Two-story commercial building with steel and glass façade.

**10 330 South Evans Street Blount Harvey Department Store non-contributing c.1960**  
Two-story, flat-roofed brick commercial building with smooth brick wall surfaces and a plain metal fascia. The bay openings on the first story correlate with the openings of the circa 1927 Blount Harvey Department Store, indicating that the original building may survive underneath.<sup>4</sup> City Directories reveal that the Blount-Harvey Department Store operated from the mid-1920s through the mid-1980s at various locations on the 300 block of South Evans Street.

## 300 Block South Evans Street, East Side

**11 301 South Evans Street Hotel Proctor contributing 1911/1970**  
The Proctor Hotel occupies a prominent location at the southeast corner of South Evans and Third Streets. Although altered in the 1970s, the building retains its overall design. The four-story, blonde brick building laid in common bond is the largest example of the early-twentieth century standard commercial form in the district. The building's symmetrical façade displays classical proportions and detailing. Five rows of window openings pierce the recessed central bay, and three rows of openings pierce each projecting end bay. The first story originally was comprised of three storefronts and the hotel lobby entrance on the South Evans Street elevation, and office entries on the East Third Street elevation. This first story fenestration was eliminated during the 1970s alterations. Today, the ground floor elevations have been covered with stucco, and the door and window openings have been reconfigured. The front and side elevations on the second, third and fourth stories of the hotel display two window opening sizes. Documentary photos show that these openings accommodated twelve-over-one sash, and smaller six-over-one sash. Paired window openings are found on the third and fourth stories of the front façade projecting end bays, and arched openings on the second story end bays. Despite an intact fenestration pattern on the second, third and fourth stories, all original window sash have been removed. However, all window openings retain their stone sills. During the 1970s, five vertical metal pilasters were placed between the window openings on the recessed central bay of the building. Also, the original cast iron fire escape and second floor balconies have been removed. A large, dentil cornice and flat parapeted roof caps the building. Raised brickwork decorates the frieze.

<sup>4</sup> See documentary photo in NC HPO Survey File, "PT 1521, 300 block Evans Street, west side."

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W. E. Proctor built the Proctor Hotel in 1911 at a cost of \$800,000.<sup>5</sup> The building was designed by the firm of Hook and Rogers of Charlotte. The hotel's seventy-seven guest rooms were "the traveling man's home in Greenville."<sup>6</sup> In addition to guestrooms, the building housed service-oriented businesses for the convenience of the guests. 1916 and 1926 city directories list early tenants as Proctor Hotel Shaving Parlor, the Proctor Hotel News and Cigar Stand. The hotel also had a dining room for guests and the public.

**12 311-313 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing  
c.1920**

One-story painted brick commercial building with two altered storefronts and fixed, metal awning. Upper part of façade displays brick soldier course and a decorative brick "droplet" cornice.

**13 315 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing  
c.1945/1980**

Two-story six-bay, flat-roofed masonry commercial building. Lower façade has been brick veneered and the door and window openings reconfigured. A fixed canvas awning spans the building's length.

**14 321 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing c. 1920/1980**

Heavily altered two-story, three-bay, flat-roofed, brick commercial building. The eight, second-story, segmental arch window openings have fixed-pane windows and stone sills. A stone belt course divided the first and second stories. The fenestration of the first story has been rearranged from its original configuration. Two windows on either side flank a central recessed entry.

### 400 Block South Evans Street, West Side

**15 400 South Evans Street Pender Grocery Building non-contributing c. 1920/1970**

Two-story, three-bay brick commercial building with stepped parapet roofline. Façade is covered with stucco, but the brick remains on the side (north) elevation. The windows and the original storefront are also replacement. City directories list the McKay-Washington Dry Goods at this location in 1926 and the Pender Grocery in 1936, 1940, 1944. Recreation Center (billiards) is listed in 1951.

**16 402-404 South Evans Street C. T. Munford Store contributing 1915/1990**

The construction of this building is attributed to local merchant, real estate developer and tobacco warehouse owner C. T. Munford. One-story blonde brick building with stepped parapet and limestone trim. A limestone plaque with raised letters is inset in the central parapet and reads "CT Munford."

<sup>5</sup> Greenville City Directory, 1926.

<sup>6</sup> Greenville City Directory, 1926

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Below it is a corbelled brick cornice. The three lower façade storefronts were constructed in the mid 1990s. The city directories of 1916, 1926, and 1936 list the C. T. Munford Store as the occupant.

**17 406 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing c.1920/1960**

The façade of this one-story brick commercial building has been covered with a corrugated metal screen likely dating from the 1960s.

**18 408 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1920**

One-story simple brick commercial building with modern, redesigned storefront. The sole ornamentation on this structure are the brick soldier courses at the cornice and above the storefront opening. City directories state that Warren Drugs was located at 208 Evans in 1916, 1926 and 1936 and 1951.

**19 410 South Evans Street Brody's Department Store contributing c.1925**

With its parapet roof line and terra cotta veneer façade this two-story Gothic-inspired building has distinctive corner turrets. Although the storefront has been altered, the second story retains its integrity. Three arched metal casement windows on the second story are set in vouissour surrounds. The windows surmount a decorative band of blind arches. This design element is repeated in the cornice. Although Brody's operated out of this building in the 1940s and 1950s, city directories name Coburn Shoes as the occupant in 1940, and W. B. Dry Goods in 1926.

**20 412 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1920**

One-story, brick commercial building with replacement storefront and flat metal awning on lower façade and brick parapet above.

**21 414 South Evans Street Lautares Brothers Jewelers contributing c.1940**

The Art Deco Lautares Brothers Jewelers building is blonde brick with raked mortar joints. The Art Deco façade is punctuated by five vertical courses of black glass blocks. The glass block courses terminate at the stepped, crenellated roofline. A modern canvas awning shelters an original storefront consisting of a recessed entry with flanking display windows. City directories indicate that Lautares Brothers Jewelers opened in this location between 1940 and 1944.

**22 416 South Evans Street Bisette's Drug Store contributing 1950**

This highly intact one-story Art Moderne style building is covered with large, polished granite panels. The store retains its original exuberant neon signage. Awnings have been added over the display windows however, they do not detract from the building's overall appearance. City directories reveal that Bisette's was operating on the east side of the 400 block of South Evans Street as early as 1936.

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**23 420 South Evans Street Brody's Department Store non-contributing c. 1970**  
The building is a two-story, flat-roofed, unadorned brick box with glass storefronts on the first-story facade. Although tax records indicate a 1950 date of construction for this structure, no exterior details suggest that date.

**24 422 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1930**  
One-story yellow brick commercial building with square limestone accents and a corbelled cornice. The three-part storefront has been altered. Sanborn maps suggest a post-1929 date of construction. City directories suggest, but do not confirm, this address may have been the location of the Vanity Box Beauty Shop in the 1930s and 1940s.

**25 430 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing c. 1970**  
Two-story, five-bay commercial building of stretcher bond brick. The two storefronts are sheltered by a flat-roofed awning. The south elevation displays a five-bay, full-height blind arcade.

### 400 Block South Evans Street, East Side

**26 401 South Evans Street Frank Wilson Store contributing c. 1900/1960**  
Two-story, four-bay brick commercial building. The original storefront has been removed and the corner entrance reconfigured to the central bay of the replacement storefront. A flat-roofed awning shelters the storefront. The second story retains arched window openings--although infilled with brick. Above the window openings are a corbelled brick course, topped by honeycomb brick panels and surmounted by a metal dentil cornice. Sanborn maps show a corner-entrance commercial building on this site since 1900. City Directories list 401 South Evans Street as the site of Frank Wilson Men's Clothing from 1916-1951.

**27 403 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1901/1970**  
Two-story, three-bay, stretcher bond brick commercial building. The original storefront has been replaced with a circa 1970 entry. A flat-roofed awning shelters the storefront. Three arched window openings pierce the second story. The openings have been partially infilled with brick and the original sash has been replaced with 2/2 aluminum sash. Decorative brick corbelling distinguishes the cornice. Tax records and Sanborn maps indicate a 1901 construction date. City Directories list the following tenants: R.L. Carr, dentist (1916), J.L. Hearn Brothers, merchandise brokers (1926), Home Building and Loan Association (1936, 1940, 1944 and 1951), H. A. White and Sons, real estate (1936, 1940, 1944 and 1951), H. L. Rivers, civil engineer (1926 and 1936), and Ruma-Ban Laboratories, medicine manufacturers (1940, 1944 and 1951).

**28 405 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing c.1920/1970**

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One-story commercial building with circa 1970 stucco panel veneer, flat-roofed entry awning and replacement store front. Tax records give a 1920 construction date.

**29 407 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1900/1970**

Narrow, one-story, one-bay brick commercial building. Lower façade features a green and black carrara glass storefront dating from the 1930s or 1940s. The brick upper façade has a recessed signage panel and a corbelled cornice. The 1944 and 1951 City Directories list Stauffer's Jewelers at this address. Tax records list a 1920 construction date. Sanborn maps suggest a somewhat earlier date around 1900.

**30 409-411 South Evans Street McClellan's Stores contributing c. 1930/1970**

Two-story, four-bay, brick commercial structure. The lower façade has been substantially altered in the 1970s. A limestone belt course delineates the first and second stories. Intact decorative features of the second story include limestone lozenges and a twin-peaked parapet roofline with limestone coping. Original windows have been replaced with fixed-sash. City Directories between the years 1936 and 1951 list McClellan's Stores at this address, although city directories indicate that the chain was operating in Greenville as early as 1926. The McClellan's chain operated five and dime stores in small and medium-sized towns throughout the Southeast.

**31 415 South Evans Street Smith Electric Building contributing c.1920/1933**

A narrow, one-story commercial building with Art Deco orange and white vertical stripped carrara glass on the upper façade and a black and white basketweave tile entry floor. Brothers Milo and Jesse Smith purchased this property in 1927. The carrara glass storefront with recessed entry was added by them around 1933. The vertical stripes of the façade resemble the Art Deco Lautares Jewelers Building across South Evans Street at number 414. This building possesses one of three carrara glass facades in the district.

**32 417 South Evans Street Greenville Bank and Trust contributing c. 1915/1970**

A two-story, temple-form, Classical Revival brick building faced with cut stone. This classically inspired building takes a common form for an early-twentieth century bank. Engaged Doric columns support the fully expressed entablature featuring a pediment with modillion cornice and classical frieze. Documentary photographs show the columns once sheltered a recessed entrance and the bank's massive entry doors. During the 1970s, the façade was reconfigured to accommodate a commercial storefront. The columns were cut off at the second story level, the window display storefront installed, and a large, nine-pane fixed sash window was set between the columns in the second-story. Sanborn maps indicate the bank was erected between 1911 and 1916.

**33 419 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing 1953/1970**

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A very simple one-story stretcher bond brick commercial building with a full-façade, flat-roofed entry awning. Storefront may date from the 1960s or 1970s.

**34 421 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1915/1985**  
One-story commercial building covered in blonde brick with horizontal raked mortar joints. Survey files indicate the glass replacement storefront and canvas awning is post 1982. Original upper façade architectural details include a recessed central panel decorated with three inlaid brick lozenges, and the stepped parapet roofline topped by brick header course. Sanborn maps indicate a construction date between 1911 and 1916. City Directory listings at this location include A. B. Ellington Books and Stationary, (1916), Curtis Perkins Men's Furnishings, and Sally Frocks (1936).

**35 423 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1915/1980**  
A one-story, brick commercial building with three-part storefront and a stepped parapet roofline. Replacement storefront may date from the mid-1980s. Tax records give a 1920 date of construction and Sanborn maps show a building of this approximate size at the 421-423 location in 1916. City directories list The Interstate 5,10 & 25 Cent Store at this location in 1916, the McClellan's Stores in 1926 and W. T. Grant Company Department Store in 1936.

**36 425-427 South Evans Street commercial building contributing c. 1920/1970**  
Two-story, two-bay red brick commercial building with two storefronts. Canvas entry awnings shelter the later, replacement storefronts. Three ten-pane casement windows pierce the second story. Two raised brick panels are above the windows. Tax records give the building a 1920 construction date. A similarly configured building appears on the 1929 Sanborn maps. City directories reveal that this building was the original location of Bissette's Drug Store as early as 1936.

**37 429-431 South Evans Street commercial building non-contributing c. 1969**  
This one-story, six-bay brick commercial building was built by the father of the current owner in 1969.

### 500 Block South Evans Street, East Side

**38 501 South Evans Street Greenville Drug Company contributing 1905**  
Two-story, six-bay, painted brick commercial structure with two storefronts, one with a corner entrance. The cast stone veneer storefronts are replacement, dating from the 1980s. Second-story segmental arched window openings have been partially infilled with brick and the original sash has been replaced with 1/1 metal sash. The window openings retain the stone sills. Vinyl shutters flank each window. A metal cornice survives above the first story storefronts. Decorative brickwork is limited to the corbelled cornice. City directories reveal the Greenville Drug Company operated here from 1916 through at least the early 1950s.

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## 200 Block West Fifth Street, South Side

**39 201 West Fifth Street Greenville Municipal Building contributing 1938-40**  
The Art Deco Greenville Municipal Building was designed by architect Frank W. Benton of Benton and Benton Architects in Wilson and constructed between 1938 and 1940. This three-story structure with a set-back fourth floor jail is built of steel and concrete. The West Fifth and Washington Street elevations are faced with Indiana limestone. The side and rear elevations are of blonde brick. Characteristics of the Art Deco style, namely the vertical façade divisions and the geometric interpretations of classical forms are evident along the street facades. Cast iron spandrels, stone grilles, glass blocks, stainless steel and decorative cast stone convey the Art Deco style. The five-bay Fifth Street elevation is distinguished by a projecting central entry pavilion with a parapet. Decorative stonework elements include fluted spandrels between the first and second story windows and a dentil band on top of the parapet. Curved, stainless steel Art Deco awnings shelter each of the three entries. Windows are metal casements. The vertical, glass block fenestration seen in the end bays provide natural light in the interior corner stairwells. The fifteen-bay Washington Street elevation has two Art Deco entry portals, each flanking the five-bay central projecting pavilion. Stylized corner pilasters serve to further embellish the pavilion. Horizontal stone bands delineate the first and second stories.

Construction of the Greenville Municipal Building was funded in part by P.W.A. Project # 1355-F and in part by a \$80,000 municipal bond for “paying a portion of cost of erecting an equipping a municipal building to provide a court room, jail and offices for various town departments...”<sup>7</sup> The project was begun under Mayor M.K. Blount and completed under Mayor Jack Spain. Originally, the building housed city administrative offices, the Water and Light Commission, the Police Department local offices of the American Legion, WPA, and State Highway Patrol. The Herman-Snipe Company of Conover, North Carolina was the general contractor.

## 100 Block West Fifth Street, North Side

**40 120 West Fifth Street J. E. Winslow Stables contributing 1910**  
This one-story, brick, L-shaped former stable fronts both West Fifth Street and Washington Streets. The West Fifth Street façade consists of a recessed entry bay flanked by display windows. Documentary photographs reveal that originally a large arched opening occupied the central bay. A stepped parapet gives the building its distinctly early-twentieth century appearance. The image of a galloping horse has been painted above the entry and is a replica of the original signage.<sup>8</sup> The Washington Street elevation is also a three-bay façade with a parapet roofline. However, the central

<sup>7</sup> Greenville Municipal Building Local Landmark Designation Report, 5.

<sup>8</sup> Cotter, 102.

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and southern arched openings remain. Early surviving interior features include wood flooring and a pressed metal ceiling.

120 W. Fifth Street was built in 1910 for J. E. Winslow's livery stable. The 1936 city directory lists Baker and Davis Hardware as the occupant. In 1951 Globe Hardware was listed as operating the address.

**41 116 West Fifth Street commercial building contributing c. 1950**

One-story, blonde brick commercial building. The three-part storefront is decorated with glass block and carrara glass. Tax records give a 1948 date of construction for the structure. However, the 1950 city directory does not list a building at this location.

**42 114 West Fifth Street White's Theater non-contributing c. 1914/c.1970**

The two-story, three-bay, brick building with a rounded parapet is obscured by circa 1970 metal screen on the upper façade. The lower façade is blonde brick veneer with a recessed glass and metal entry.

**43 112 West Fifth Street commercial building non-contributing c.1960**

Two-story, blonde brick commercial building. Lower façade features glass and metal recessed entry flanked by display windows and topped by a flat metal awning. Upper façade is pierced by four small window openings.

### 100 Block West Fifth Street, South Side

**44 117 West Fifth Street Robert Lee Humber House contributing 1895/1916**

A two-and-half story, T-plan, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style frame house. The weatherboarded house fronts on West Fifth Street. From this elevation the pedimented front gable and one-story wraparound porch supported by Ionic columns is visible. A diminutive version of this porch is reproduced on the west elevation. Two roof dormers and a first-story bay window are on the west elevation. The rear (south) elevation of the dwelling has had several additions over the years. The c. 1916 porch replaced a Victorian-era porch with turned posts and balustrade. The two-story wing on the east elevation was also added c. 1916. The house originally had two-over-two window sash, however it was replaced in the around 1940 or 1950 with twelve-over-twelve sash. The house is significant for its association with Dr. Robert Lee Humber, Jr. patron of the arts and promoter of world peace through his World Federation Organization, precursor to the United Nations. The Robert Lee Humber House was listed in the National Register in 1981.

**45 117 West Fifth Street Filling Station contributing c. 1920**

A square, one-story, stuccoed brick former filling station with a pyramidal tin tile roof sits behind the Robert Lee Humber house.

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## 100 Block East Fifth Street, North Side<sup>9</sup>

**46 109 East Fifth Street commercial building non-contributing c. 1925**  
One-story painted brick commercial building with stepped parapet roofline between two paneled brick pilasters. Storefront has been infilled with red brick and the door and window arrangement has been reconfigured. Sanborn maps suggest a construction date between 1923 and 1929. This building is labeled as an "ice cream manufactory" on the 1923 and 1929 maps.

**47 111 East Fifth Street commercial building non-contributing c. 1923**  
One-story, three-bay, brick commercial building with corner pilasters. Parapet masks flat roof. The storefronts have been infilled with modern garage doors. Sanborn maps and city directories from 1923 through 1936 identify this building as the location of the Parkerson Service Station.

**48 113 East Fifth Street commercial building contributing c. 1924**  
A simple, one-story brick commercial building with corner pilasters, paneled parapet wall and a corbelled cornice. Original storefront has been replaced by a three-part metal and glass storefront. Tax records give a 1924 construction date for the building. Sanborn maps indicate a brick commercial building was constructed on this site between 1923 and 1929. This building may have been part of the Parkerson Service Station complex.

**49 115 East Fifth Street commercial building non-contributing 1963**  
One-story brick commercial building with roof parapet with concrete coping. Constructed in 1963. This site was the location of a filling station constructed between 1923 and 1929.

## 100 Block West Fifth Street, South Side

**50 108 East Fifth Street commercial building contributing c. 1925**  
One-story painted brick commercial building with parapet on upper façade. One pilaster remains on the west side of the front elevation. Glass and frame replacement storefront.

**51 110 East Fifth Street commercial building non-contributing c. 1925**  
Heavily altered one-story commercial building. The building has been brick veneered, the storefront has been replaced and the adjacent vacant lot has been landscaped as a courtyard. Tax records date the building from 1925. Sanborn maps and city directories are unclear on its date of construction.

<sup>9</sup> The 100 and 200 blocks of East Fifth Street were numbered with the even numbers on the north side of the street and the even numbers on the south side of the street until some time between 1945 and 1950 when the odd and even sides were reversed to their current numbering system.

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**52 114 East Fifth Street Montgomery Ward Department Store contributing 1929**

A three-story, three-bay Art Deco brick commercial building with polychrome terra cotta façade. The building is ornamented with colored and raised terra cotta tiles above and below the third story windows and underneath the cornice. Above the central window bay on the third story is a large tile featuring a female figure—the trademark of Montgomery Ward. Documentary photographs show the building originally had rounded parapets within each bay. These elements were likely removed during the installation of a full height aluminum façade in the 1960s. This façade was removed during a restoration in the 1980s. The building's original Chicago windows have been replaced by similar windows with a moveable middle sash. The original first story storefront has been replaced and is sheltered by a canvas awning.

The Montgomery Ward Store was constructed in 1929 as the area's first outlet for the national chain. Montgomery Ward closed their Greenville store in the early 1930s. The building was purchased by the Charlotte-based Belk chain, which operated the store in conjunction with Arthur Tyler of Rocky Mount until 1979.

**53 116-118 East Fifth Street Police and Fire Departments contributing 1909**

This blonde brick Classical Revival building is two-stories tall and three bays wide. City Council minutes state that C. B. West was the builder. Corner pilasters and intricate corbelled and paneled brick cornice enhances the façade. The second-story displays two central arched windows flanked by two flat arched windows, all with keystones. Originally the lower façade contained a broad, arched opening on the left side with diagonal-board folding doors to accommodate the fire truck. On the right, a storefront flanked by two doors accessed the police department and the second story that housed the "Fireman's Hall." The diagonal-board doors and the original storefront have been removed. Municipal services for the City of Greenville were centered here until the present Municipal Building at 201 W. Fifth Street was constructed in 1938-1940.

**54 120 East Fifth Street Market House non-contributing 1904**

This one-story brick building has been heavily altered. Originally, the structure was three bays wide with a central arched entry flanked by arched windows. Decorative pilasters that projected above the roofline flanked the entry and emphasized the corners. The first floor fenestration has been completely obscured by modern storefronts and the decorative brickwork of the upper part of the front elevation has been covered with a brick veneer.

The Market House played an important role in Greenville's early-twentieth century history. The building was constructed to house the local meat market. The 1916 City Directory lists the following meat merchants" Z. W. Brown, Henry Knox, D. R. Little, J.T. Perkins and J.B. Williams. The Market House was converted to offices for the city's water and light office around 1920. The building served

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as city offices until the present Municipal Building at 201 W. Fifth Street was constructed in 1938-1940.

**55 (rear) 120 East Fifth Street Lock-up contributing 1909**

This solid, one-story, hipped-roofed brick building served as the jail for the police department at 116 E. Fifth Street. Small, rectangular windows are set high up, just under the building's wide, overhanging eaves. Iron window bars are still in place.

### 200 Block East Fifth Street, North Side

**56 201-205 East Fifth Street commercial buildings contributing c.1920**

This one-story brick commercial building consists of three repeating storefronts on one tax parcel. Prominent brick pilasters with cast concrete geometric decorative elements delineate each storefront. Stepped and arched parapet rooflines further distinguish each storefront. The original storefronts on 210 and 205 have been replaced with modern storefronts of early-twentieth century design. 203 has a bay window.

This building appears on the Sanborn maps between 1916 and 1923. Many businesses have occupied these spaces. The 1936 city directory lists 201 as vacant, 203 as Auto Service and 205 as Garris Grocery. The 1941 city directory lists 201 as Greenville WPA Gallery, 203 as Auto Service Shop and 205 as City Radio and Electric Shop. The 1944 city directory lists 201 as vacant, 203 as Bray's Radio and Refrigerator Service, and 205 as Greenville Health Center (bowling). The 1951 city directory lists 201 as Perkins-Proctor Clothing, 203 as Auto Service Shop and 205 as Mosley Electric.

**57 207 East Fifth Street commercial building contributing c. 1925**

Two-story, three-bay brick commercial building. Decorative brickwork is limited to a projecting brick course above the paired segmental arched windows on the second story. Original window sash has been replaced with six-pane replacements. subtle raise brick arched over the second-story windows, which are replacement. The original storefront has been replaced as well. This building appears on the Sanborn maps between 1923 and 1929. The 1936 through 1951 city directories list the building as the location of White Chevrolet.

### 200 Block East Fifth Street, South Side

**58 200-204 E. Fifth Street Savage and Son Stable contributing c.1915**

The building is one-story, three-bay brick building topped by a stepped parapet with a tall center section which serves to shield the building's full-length monitor roof from view. Pilasters are set at each corner of the front elevation, and also at the corners of the tall center parapet. The original entry

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bays have been converted to storefronts. This "Stable and Livery" building is first seen on the 1916 Sanborn map.

**59 206 East Fifth Street commercial building contributing c.1925**  
One-story brick commercial building distinguished by brick corner pilasters and a corbelled cornice. Tax records date this structure to 1925. Sanborn maps support this date. Occupants of this building include: Pitt Market (meats) (1926), Palace Barber Shop (1936), Bostic Sugg Furniture Co. (1941), Appliance Sales and Service Corp. (1944), and Lee's Sport Shop (1951).

**60 208 East Fifth Street Honeycutt Grocery non-contributing c.1970**  
This heavily altered one-story brick commercial building was the home of the Honeycutt grocery in the 1940s and 1950s. The building has lost its original storefront and a metal screen obscures the upper part of the façade. Tax records date this structure to 1925. Sanborn maps support this date.

**61 210-212 East Fifth Street Dail-Hodges Building contributing c.1919**  
The Commercial Style Dail-Hodges Building was constructed c. 1919. It is a two-story, seven-bay, brick commercial building. The front facade is articulated on the first floor by two storefronts separated by an arched stairhall entrance to the second floor. Handsome corbelled cornice brickwork and segmental arched single and paired windows with original Craftsman style sash distinguish the second story. Although painted, the store retains its principal exterior design elements and fenestration.

Built by W. H. Dail, Jr. the building originally housed the H. L. Hodges Company, a feed and seed store, and C. H. Edwards Hardware Store on the first floor. Four apartments known as the Dail Apartments occupied the second floor. In 1923 these apartments were converted into the Fifth Street Hospital and briefly served as such until the new Pitt Community Hospital was completed in 1924.<sup>10</sup>

**62 214 East Fifth Street commercial building contributing c.1925/c.1970**  
One-story brick commercial building. Design elements are limited to corbelled brickwork and a basketweave patterned paneled parapet on the upper part façade. Building has a modern, altered storefront. A brick building appears at this location on the Sanborn maps between 1923 and 1929. Perkins Hardware is listed at this address in 1926. Lance Packing is listed at this address in 1936, 1940, 1941 and 1951.

**63 218 East Fifth Street commercial building non-contributing c.1925/1990**  
One-story brick commercial building with replacement storefront and metal screen on upper part of front façade.

<sup>10</sup> Dail-Hodges Building Tax Credit Application.

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**64 220 East Fifth Street commercial building contributing c.1925**  
Two-story brick commercial building with replacement storefront, transom and large picture windows on the front and east elevations of the second story. City directories list the following occupants: 1926, Denton's College Store; 1936 and 1940 Pleasant College Store; 1944, U. S. Employment Service and the North Carolina Unemployment Compensation Commission; 1951, Employment Security Commission of North Carolina.

### 100 Block West Fourth Street, South Side

**65 107 West Fourth Street commercial building contributing c.1915**  
One-story, painted brick, commercial building with brick panel in parapet. Original storefront has been replaced with a modern glass and metal storefront of early-twentieth century design.

**66 105 West Fourth Street commercial building contributing c.1915**  
One-story, painted brick, commercial building with parapet and corbelled brickwork on upper facade. Original storefront has been replaced with a modern glass and metal storefront of early-twentieth century design.

**67 103 West Fourth Street commercial building contributing c.1915**  
One-story, painted brick, commercial building with parapet and corbelled brickwork on upper facade. Original storefront has been replaced with a modern glass and metal storefront of early-twentieth century design.

### 100 Block East Fourth Street, South Side

**68 106 East Fourth Street commercial building contributing c.1900**  
A small, one-story, brick commercial building. Decorative brickwork includes corbelling on the upper façade and a projecting brick course above the single arched window opening. The half-glazed and paneled entry door and a two-over-one window sash are original. This building was used as the tailor shop for the adjacent Frank Wilson store at 401 South Evans Street.<sup>11</sup>

### 100 Block West Third Street, South Side

**69 123 W. Third Street Charles Greene House contributing 1860/c.1900**  
The Charles Greene House, (known locally as the Skinner-Moye House), is a two-story, three-bay, single-pile, frame Greek Revival house with a hipped roof. The dwelling's chimneys have been removed. The main block is stuccoed and scored to resemble stone blocks. It is unknown if the stucco

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<sup>11</sup> York interview.

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is original to the 0000house. A two-story, one-bay wide, pedimented portico supported by four square posts shelters an entry with sidelights and a transom. The portico is simply finished with flush boards in the pediment. Three drop pendants hang from the arcaded porch frieze. A nearly full façade portico appears on the house on the 1885 Sanborn map and it is likely that this porch dates from a renovation undertaken by J. G. Moye who owned the building between 1898 and 1917. The local landmark designation report cites an early-twentieth century photograph showing the present porch with an inserted second floor. Windows are one-over-one sash and are not original. However, the original three-part window surrounds remain. On the east side elevation is what may be an original detached office although it has now been incorporated into the main block. The one-story, hipped-roof, frame building is covered with weatherboards and displays cornerboards and a wide, plain frieze that matches that of the main block. One six-over-six-window sash remains on the rear elevation. Two one-story, hipped-roof additions and one-story, shed-roof addition have been constructed on the rear elevation of the Greene House. A one-story, hipped-roof porch connects these additions. It is unknown when the additions were constructed. Sanborn maps indicate that these rear additions were frequently reconfigured between the 1880s and the 1920s. The 1929 the Sanborn maps show a building footprint that matches the current plan. Interior woodwork dates from around the turn of the twentieth century. Although heavily altered, the house retains is original form and is the only antebellum structure remaining in the historic district.

Deeds indicate that Charles Greene constructed the dwelling sometime between 1845, when he purchased the lot, and 1861 when he died. Greene's son Robert purchased the property from his father's estate. Harriett L. Dill, wife of David Dill agent for the Old Dominion steamship line, purchased the house in 1863. The family owned the house until they sold it to Harry Skinner, a lawyer and a developer of Greenville's Skinnerville subdivision in 1888. Skinner immediately sold the property to Dr. Frank Brown, Pitt County Superintendent of Health. Brown resided in the property until his death in 1898. Joseph George Moye, mayor of Greenville from 1899 to 1900 and President of the Greenville Cotton Mill was perhaps the last person to reside in the house. Moye lived there from 1898 through 1917 and it is likely that he is responsible for the current porch and Victorian interior woodwork. The Moye family sold the property to Dr. Louis C. Skinner in 1917. Skinner used the house as an office. Skinner's heirs sold the building in 1968. Greenville City Directories indicate that the house has been used as office space since the sale to Louis C. Skinner.<sup>12</sup>

**70 119 West Third Street Blount Building contributing 1924**

The Blount Building is a two story, three bay, red brick building. The relatively simple façade is somewhat distinguished by its stepped parapet roofline with coping and limestone window sills and lintels. An inset limestone panel just under the parapet reads "19 BLOUNT BUILDING 24." Raised brick pilasters with limestone caps and bases delineate the two first story entries. The larger entry, on

<sup>12</sup> Louis C. Skinner Building local landmark report, 8-9.

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the west end of the front façade, accesses the first floor and is topped by a triangular limestone hood. The smaller entry door to the east is also surmounted by a triangular hood. Metal replacement doors and windows are found throughout the building. 119 West Third Street was constructed by the general contracting firm of Ballard and Ballard for Mr. M. K. Blount, Sr. City directories reveal that the Blount Building has housed law offices and other professional offices since its construction.

**71 111-115 West Third Street commercial building contributing c. 1915**

The blonde brick and Classical Revival style of this symmetrical, two-story, three-bay brick commercial building differentiates it from its neighbors. Its sophisticated decorative brickwork further distinguishes the building. The front façade displays a narrow entry bay flanked by multi-paned glass storefront bays. The bays are divided by four, full-height, raised and rusticated pilasters. The lower level of the façade has been altered by the addition of a pent roof with a dentil cornice, and replacement store fronts. On the second story, the large, paired, arched windows are embellished by raised brick arches set into recessed brick panels. Brick corbelling transitions the panels to the building's cornice. City directories state the offices have been rented to doctors, lawyers and judges throughout the twentieth century. Sanborn fire insurance maps reveal that this building was constructed sometime after 1911 and prior to 1916.

**72 107-105 West Third Street Hassell-James Building contributing c. 1915**

The Hassell-James Building is a two-story brick structure with classical design elements built circa 1915. The symmetrical front façade is distinguished by its stepped parapet roofline and the decorative brick work that enhances the otherwise plain stretcher bond. The building is divided into three bays. The arch of the central entry is punctuated by six raised limestone voussoirs. Above the entry are paired, arched windows that display the voussoirs seen on the entry. The arched portion of the windows have a multipane fixed sash, while the lower parts have fifteen-over-one sash. Under the second story paired windows is a cast iron balcony. The bays east and west of the central entry bay feature identical storefronts consisting of a central glazed entry door framed on each side by plate glass display windows. Above each storefront is a projecting bay window supported by a pair of cantilevered beams. Above the second floor, the building has a stepped parapet set off from the lower level by a soldier brick course. A large, brick oculus raised keystones set at the compass points is set just below the center of the parapet.

City directories establish a date of construction sometime between 1911 and 1916. The building was built by physician Starke Hassell and attorneys Fernando Godfrey James, and his son James Burton James who was elected mayor in 1913, and served as county attorney from 1920 through 1932. In 1951, J. B. James formed a law partnership with W. W. Speight. The firm of James and Speight was headquartered in 105 West Third Street. Upon James' death in 1959, Speight purchased 105 West Third Street. Since the 1930s the Hassell family has rented 107 West Third Street to local attorneys

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drawn no doubt by the building's proximity to the courthouse. 107 West Third Street remained in the Hassell family until 1963.

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The City of Greenville was laid out on the south bank of the Tar River in 1774. A courthouse was constructed and the small town served as center for government and trade in Pitt County. Most Pitt County residents survived through subsistence farming. However, by 1860 Pitt County's economy had transformed from subsistence agriculture to a cash-crop system, becoming one of the leading cotton-producing counties in the state.<sup>13</sup> Steam-powered boats enabled shipment to distant markets. Greenville's status as a steamboat stop and courthouse town perpetuated its growth in the middle years of the nineteenth century. Greenville was linked to the rest of the state by rail in 1890. Pitt County farmers exported cotton and tobacco by rail and by 1900 Greenville became a major tobacco market along with the eastern North Carolina towns of Rocky Mount, Goldsboro and Wilson. As a result of Greenville's emergence as a major eastern North Carolina tobacco trading market, Greenville's commercial district continued to grow into the twentieth century, spurred on in part by the founding of the East Carolina Teachers Training School in 1907, which brought students and faculty from across North Carolina to Greenville. By the 1910s and 1920s the commercial core contained residences, retail stores, and offices and continued to be the county center of government and civic life. By the 1930s Greenville had a large enough population to attract national chain department stores such as McClellan's and Montgomery Ward in addition to locally owned businesses. After World War II, Greenville became one of the largest tobacco markets in the state, and the downtown continued to thrive. By the mid-1950s the area was beginning to be negatively affected by changes in architectural practices, suburban land use patterns and the county's shift from an agrarian to an industrial economy.

The Greenville Commercial Historic District is important as a representative and intact collection of commercial, civic and residential buildings dating from the period 1860-1952. The overwhelming majority of buildings are post-1900 brick commercial structures with retail space on the first story and offices above. This common building form proliferated nationally in the first half of the twentieth century. Greenville's examples are evidence of the city's status as a medium-sized town and regional commercial center. The district also retains examples of architect-designed civic buildings such as the 1911 Pitt County Courthouse designed by the Washington, D. C. architectural firm of Milburn and Heister, and the town's 1940 United States Post Office credited to eastern North Carolina architect Frank W. Benton. Due to Greenville's numerous fires in the central business district, the historic district retains only two buildings that date prior to 1900. The ca. 1860 Charles Greene House is highly significant as the district's only example of Greek Revival architecture. The Robert Lee Humber House, constructed in 1895 and updated in 1916, displays a synthesis of the Queen Anne and the Colonial Revival styles. The dwellings are a vestige of a time when residential buildings shared Greenville's downtown.

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<sup>13</sup> Power, 13.

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The Greenville Commercial Historic District is locally significant and contains seventy-two resources. Forty-nine of these resources contribute to the district's historic significance. The district meets Criterion A for commerce because it is significant for the town's growth as a regional center of commerce between 1900 and 1952. The district is also eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C for architectural significance because it contains an intact collection of civic, residential and commercial buildings. Buildings are rendered in nationally popular styles such as the Greek Revival, Classical Revival, Florentine Renaissance Revival, Queen Anne, Commercial Style, Art Deco, and Art Moderne styles. The district also contains excellent examples of the Classical Revival and Art Deco styles, most fully expressed in the district's public buildings. The period of significance for the Greenville Commercial Historic District is ca. 1860, 1895, and 1900 through 1952. The post-1952 period is not of exceptional significance and therefore 1952 is an appropriate date for the end of the period of significance.

### Historical Background and Commerce Context

In 1761 Pitt County was created from the northwestern part of Beaufort County. The act establishing the new county called for the construction of a courthouse, prison and stocks on the land of John Hardee, east of the present city limits of Greenville. Hardee's dwelling served as the first courthouse, as a separate building for that purpose was not constructed at the site.<sup>14</sup> A short time later in 1774, a new county seat called Martinborough, named in honor of royal governor Josiah Martin, was established on the banks of the Tar River, at the location of the historic district. The act incorporating the town specified the construction of a street grid, with each two-acre block divided into half-acre building lots. An original town plat shows numbered streets running east-west, beginning with First Street just south of the Tar River. Pitt, Green, Washington, Evans, Cotanche, and Reade Streets run north-south.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the basic arrangement of Greenville's streets has changed little from the eighteenth century. A frame courthouse was constructed at the northwest corner of Evans and Third Streets. Martinborough was renamed "Greensville" by act of the legislature in 1787 to honor Revolutionary War General Nathanael Greene.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Pitt County's economy consisted primarily of small-scale farmers growing subsistence crops such as corn, sweet potatoes, peas, beans, rice, peaches, apples and grapes. A few large landowners used slave labor to produce tobacco and naval stores. Settlers were dependent on rivers and streams for small-scale trade and transportation. However, by 1860 Pitt County's economy had transformed from subsistence agriculture to a cash-crop system, becoming one

<sup>14</sup> Power, 79.

<sup>15</sup> Cotter, 21.

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of the leading cotton-producing counties in the state. The cotton economy was made possible by slave labor as well as new modes of transportation that enabled shipment of the crop. Prior to the 1830s, human-powered pole boats and primitive roads were the sole means of transportation across eastern North Carolina. By the mid-nineteenth century, improvements in the state's plank road system and the arrival of steam-powered boats provided more efficient means to transport agricultural products. Tar River steamships transported Pitt County's crops to markets in Greenville and beyond. Greenville's location on the Tar River, coupled with its status as a "courthouse town," made the town an inland regional center for trade and commerce.

By 1860, the town had grown to a population of approximately 1,800 with seven doctors, three lawyers, a dozen merchants, six carpenters and two brick masons.<sup>16</sup> In 1859, a temple-form Greek Revival courthouse with a Doric portico and cupola was under construction on the site of the second courthouse that had burned the previous year. The location also is the site of the current courthouse, constructed in the Classical Revival style in 1910 after fire destroyed the 1859 structure. This block has been continuously used for government functions since the city's incorporation.

By the mid-nineteenth century railroads were replacing steamships and plank roads for commercial transport. Steam-powered boats were limited to areas with navigable waterways. And small, eastern North Carolina waterways such as the Tar River required constant dredging to remain passable. However, railroad service came relatively late to Greenville compared to other parts of eastern North Carolina. By 1858, the ninety-six mile Atlantic and North Carolina railroad from Goldsboro through New Bern to Beaufort was completed.<sup>17</sup> The line later became part of the larger Norfolk and Southern network. In 1885, Pitt County citizens voted down a proposed rail link that would have connected Greenville with Goldsboro, and from there to the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad. The proposal was rejected because it would have required the county to pay a hefty tax to fund the project. A few years later, the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad proposed the construction of a line from Halifax to Kinston, via Greenville. The history of Greenville may have been radically different had the town missed this second chance to connect with rail service. Greenville's citizens and the business community did not let this opportunity pass and finally embraced the rail line. In 1890, the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad line was run through Greenville providing both rail and passenger service. In 1907 the Norfolk and Southern Railroad also extended a line through the town.

With the completion of the railroad through town, Greenville was poised to become a major center of commerce in eastern North Carolina, along with Rocky Mount, Goldsboro and Wilson. However, it was the late nineteenth century demand for tobacco that secured Greenville's position. Cotton prices

<sup>16</sup> Cotter, 6.

<sup>17</sup> Newsome, 361.

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dropped in the 1880s and Pitt County farmers turned to tobacco to replace the loss. Census records indicate that only seventy acres of tobacco were grown in Pitt County in 1889. By 1899, tobacco grew on 12, 931 acres.<sup>18</sup> With the closest tobacco markets in Wilson and Oxford, Greenville capitalized on its location and the new railroad to become a regional market for area growers. Many tobacco-related businesses were founded in Greenville around the turn of the twentieth century. Such businesses include: the Greenville Tobacco Warehouse, the Farmers Consolidated Tobacco Company, Eastern Tobacco Warehouse, the Export Leaf Tobacco Company, the Planter's Warehouse, the Star Warehouse and the Imperial Tobacco Plant. Tobacco warehousing and processing facilities were located on the fringes of the commercial district, primarily along the railroad tracks south of what today is the Greenville Commercial Historic District. Important examples of Greenville's tobacco related architecture remain southwest of the historic district. The Greenville Tobacco Warehouse Historic District was listed in the National Register in 1997.

Although the commercial buildings in the historic district are not directly related to the warehousing and processing of tobacco, they stand due to the economic and population growth that resulted from the success of the industry. All but one building (the circa 1860 Charles Greene House) in the Greenville Commercial Historic District date from this period of growth which was caused by the rise of Greenville's tobacco economy. Greenville's population increased from 2,200 in 1885, to 5,000 in 1911, and to 16, 274 in 1950.<sup>19</sup> The growing population required expanded government services as well as consumer goods such as department stores, general merchandise outlets, pharmacies, banks, professional services, hotels, restaurants, grocery stores, and theaters. "Five Points" formed by the intersection of Fifth Street, Evans Street and Dickenson Avenue (the former plank road to Wilson), formed the commercial core of town. Early-twentieth century wealthy and middle class Greenvillians lived in new subdivisions such as Skinnerville, College View, Forbestown and South Greenville.

Another reason that the majority of commercial buildings in downtown Greenville date from this era is that repeated fires destroyed much of the area during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Fires were not uncommon in densely constructed urban cores during this period. Urban areas were almost exclusively filled with frame buildings; that combined with the lack of efficient water conveyance systems allowed fire to spread quickly. Greenville had more than its fair share of such disasters with fires burning the city's downtown in 1878, 1896 1899, and 1910. The fire of 1899 was the city's worst, destroying or damaging twenty-seven businesses on the east and west sides of Evans Street. The blaze was described by the *King's Weekly*, a local newspaper, as "Greenville's greatest fire."<sup>20</sup> According to the newspaper account, the 1899 fire started in the two-story building of E. M.

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<sup>18</sup> Cotter, 11.

<sup>19</sup> Cotter, 170.

<sup>20</sup> *King's Weekly*, May 9, 1899.

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Cheeks Bar, on the east side of the 400 block of South Evans Street. The flames soon spread to the adjacent wood buildings and to those across the street. The newspaper reported, "The large wood buildings were fine food for the devouring flames and by the time the fire engine was at work they were beyond the hope of being saved." Rebuilding began immediately. In the weeks following the 1899 fire, the newspaper ran several brief articles identifying Mr. Riddick, Mr. Linthicum and J. A. Andrews as the builders hired to reconstruct the damaged structures.<sup>21</sup> The 1899 fire prompted the Board of Alderman to require all new construction along Evans Street be of brick.<sup>22</sup>

As a result of the 1899 fire and the Board of Alderman's actions, the predominant building material in the district today is brick. The two-story brick Frank Wilson Store (# 26) was built after the 1899 fire circa 1900. A brief item in the May 5, 1899 edition of the *King's Weekly* noted that the store had temporarily moved into a shared space with the Pender Store as a result of the fire.

The growth of the commercial district was fostered by an activist group of citizens called the Citizens Business and Industrial Association, formed in 1899. Former North Carolina Governor Thomas Jordan Jarvis chaired the association. Members included newspaper editor David J. Whichard and merchant and businessman C. T. Munford. The group recognized the city's potential for growth and actively pursued business ventures and public facilities and amenities they thought would benefit the city and region. Perhaps the association's biggest success was the establishment of the East Carolina Teachers Training School, now East Carolina University, east of the commercial district, in 1907. The construction of the campus was the largest building project ever carried out in Greenville and influenced Greenvillians architectural preference for brick period revival residences. In October 1909, an extension of East Fifth Street was completed from the commercial district to the school, and a plank sidewalk was installed on Fifth Street from Cotanche Street to the campus. Students and teachers at the college formed a new client base for the surrounding businesses.

Greenville's Florentine Renaissance Revival Post Office (# 2), is also credited in part to the efforts of the Citizens Business and Industrial Association. In 1908, members of the association traveled to Washington D. C. to appear in front of the House Appropriations Committee to state their case for the new postal facility. In 1912, Congress appropriated \$12,000 for the structure. Later that year *Daily Reflector* editor David J. Whichard wrote, "about the middle of 1913 the Greenville post office will be constructed and it will be more than likely that the (Proctor) hotel will be in operation and the Court House Square will present an aspect of prosperity and solidarity of which all Greenvillians should feel proud."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *King's Weekly*, May 9, 23 and 26, 1899.

<sup>22</sup> Cotter, 28.

<sup>23</sup> *Daily Reflector*, March 20, 1912. (Whichard served as postmaster from 1913 to 1939.)

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Several department stores provided clothing and other goods to the people of Greenville, as well as those from surrounding towns and rural communities. Greenville City Directories indicate the Commercial Historic District was home to at least six department stores in the early-twentieth century: Montgomery Ward (# 52), McClellan's (# 30), the C. T. Munford Store (# 16), the Frank Wilson Store (# 26), the Blount-Harvey Department Store (# 10), and Brody's Department Store (# 23). While the four latter stores were locally owned, the Montgomery-Ward and McClellan's were owned by national chains. The Montgomery-Ward store at 114 East Fifth Street was the first regional outlet for the chain. The company built its stores in the popular Art Deco style and embellished them with trademark decorative motifs, making the structures easily identifiable as part of the chain. The Greenville store displays the Art Deco style and decorative motifs. McClellan's (# 33) was another chain store that operated in Greenville between mid-1920s through the mid-1950s. The New York City-based McClellan's Stores Company operated five-and-dime stores in medium-sized towns throughout the southeastern United States. The presence of chain stores in Greenville is evidence that the town had achieved a size and stability to warrant notice from national retailers.

The presence of two hotels was another indicator Greenville's status as a regional commerce center. The 1926 City Directory lists the Princeton Hotel at 115 Fifth Street and the Hotel Proctor (# 11) at 301 Evans Street. The hotel still stands at the northeast corner of South Evans and East Third Streets. Called "the traveling man's home in Greenville," the seventy-seven room Hotel Proctor was constructed in 1911 to accommodate the increasing numbers of business travelers to the town.<sup>24</sup> Again, the Citizens Business and Industrial Association was involved with actively recruiting this hotel to town.

Construction dates in the district coincide with national events, with most of the buildings constructed between 1900 and 1925. Greenville prospered through the late 1920s until the arrival of the national economic depression. The Depression caused a drop in agricultural prices, which effected both farmers and merchants. In the early 1930s Greenville benefited from federal programs intended to help local economies recover from the Depression. In 1936 a Greenville branch of the North Carolina Farm Bureau was opened. The Farm Bureau helped ease the economic problems associated with low agricultural prices. Federal Public Works Administration (PWA) projects were intended to provide work opportunities for those unemployed as a result of the national depression and to build needed public facilities. The Greenville Municipal Building (# 39) was begun in 1939 as part of a PWA project. A WPA Art Gallery was located at 201 East Fifth Street (# 56) in 1941. The municipal building and the McClellan's Department Store (# 30) represent the only buildings erected between 1930 and World War II.

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<sup>24</sup> Greenville City Directory, 1926.

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In the years immediately following World War II, Greenville, like the rest of the state and nation, focused on a return to normalcy. The city emerged as one of the state's largest tobacco markets, continuing an economic trend that began in the 1880s. By 1950, Greenville's population had reached over 16,000, almost doubling from twenty years before. Building construction picked up again after the war, with seven of district's commercial buildings constructed between 1946 and 1950. Enrollment at East Carolina Teachers College increased as a result of the G.I. Bill. By 1965, the college had become the third largest state-supported college with an enrollment of 8,000 students. The school was renamed East Carolina University in 1967. The ECU Medical School admitted its first class in 1977. The late 1960s brought large research and manufacturing enterprises such as Burroughs Wellcome to Greenville as the county's historically agrarian economy began to shift to an industrial one.

Ironically, Greenville's economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s contributed to the decline of the historic district. Sprawling patterns of suburban growth diverted residents and visitors from Greenville's historic core. In the 1970s, redevelopment efforts intended to recapture business lost to suburban commercial areas had a major impact on the character of the historic district. Dickenson Street was terminated at Greene Street and the large brick commercial buildings that fronted West Fifth Street were demolished, eradicating Greenville's historic Five Points intersection. Urban renewal projects also demolished much of the housing stock in the immediate area, further reducing the population density that supported businesses in the district. In an attempt to counter the draw of suburban shopping centers the 300 and 400 blocks of Evans Street were blocked off to create a pedestrian mall in the 1970s. Many of the buildings were "modernized" with metal façade screens or replacement storefronts.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, the City of Greenville has shown a renewed interest in its historic urban core. Property owners, the local government and interested citizens have come together to improve the area through various programs and incentives. A historic preservation commission was established in 1988 to protect and promote Greenville's historic resources. As a result the Hassell-James Building and the Municipal Building have been designated local historic landmarks. Federal renovation tax credits have been used to restore the Dail-Hodges Building and Montgomery Ward building. The pedestrian mall was removed from Evans Street in 1999 to restore convenient parking and the historic thoroughfare in front of the stores.

### Architecture Context

The Greenville Commercial Historic District was a regional center for government and commerce during the period of significance, circa 1860-1952. The district contains a relatively intact collection of one and two-story brick commercial buildings dating from the first half of the twentieth century, as

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well as civic buildings, and two residences, including a rare surviving antebellum townhouse. Buildings are rendered in the Greek Revival, Classical Revival, Florentine Renaissance Revival, Queen Anne, Commercial Style, Art Deco, and Art Moderne styles.

The Greek Revival style was nationally popular between 1820 and 1860. The style was a physical manifestation of the nation's desire to emulate the ancient societies of Greek and Rome. Elements of the style included symmetrical facades, pediments, side-gabled or hipped roofs, columned porticoes and porches, the use Doric or Ionic orders, and bold ornamentation simplified from its Federal antecedents. The district's only surviving Greek Revival building is the Charles Greene House (c. 1860, # 69). The two-story, symmetrical, frame house has a hipped roof, and a turn-of-the-twentieth century, full height portico. A wide, plain, wood frieze is located under the projecting eaves. Its I-house form and limited ornamentation identify it as a local interpretation of the Greek Revival style. The dwelling is significant as the district's sole surviving example of the style and as one of two remaining dwellings that date from a time when the historic district was used for both commercial and residential purposes. By 1896, Sanborn maps show that government, commercial and residential uses were established along Evans Street north of Fifth Street. Additional residences were east and west of Evans Street. Development of the Forbestown area on Evans Street, south of Fifth Street in the 1880s was the beginning of residential expansion away from the city's historic core. Urban renewal programs of the 1960s and 1970s destroyed housing stock adjacent to the district.

The 1895 Robert Lee Humber House (# 44) combines elements of the Queen Anne style, which was on its way out of fashion, with elements of the Colonial Revival style, which, as a result of the 1893 World's Colombian Exposition became a nationally popular style for residential architecture. The 1893 Colombian World Exposition was the flash point for the American City Beautiful and Beaux Arts Movements. Rooted in nostalgia for the past, the movement embraced classically inspired architectural forms in favor of the fussy eclectic styles of the late nineteenth century. Constructed in 1895, the Robert Lee Humber House was originally a two-and-a-half story, dwelling with returns in the gable ends and a wraparound porch with Victorian sawnwork and turned posts.<sup>25</sup> In 1916 Robert Lee Humber, Sr. added a two-story side addition, which gave the house its present T-form. Victorian porch finishes were removed and replaced with Ionic columns and a pedimented entry. The returns in the gable ends were connected to create a pedimented façade. Other Victorian features such as two-over-two windows, eave brackets and decorative vents were also removed. The replacement of Victorian features with classical ones illustrates the impact that the Colonial Revival style had on domestic architecture at the turn of the twentieth century.

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<sup>25</sup> See documentary photo in "The Robert Lee Humber House" pamphlet published by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History in survey file.

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Buildings constructed to house government functions are the second most common use. The district's three civic structures are the Classical Revival Pitt County Courthouse (# 1), the Art Deco Greenville Municipal Building (# 39), and the Florentine Renaissance Revival United States Post Office (# 2). The classical designs of courthouse and post office, begun in 1911 and 1913, respectively, illustrate the national preference for classical styles in public buildings that was promulgated by the 1893 World's Colombian Exposition. The Classical Revival style was nationally popular for domestic and public architecture from the end of the Victorian era through the 1930s. Like the earlier Greek Revival style, the Classical Revival style uses elements from ancient architecture such as columns, pilasters, pediments and elaborate cornices. Its traditional vocabulary bestowed dignity upon schools, libraries, courthouses, city halls, and numerous other public buildings across the nation. The Pitt County Courthouse constructed in 1910-1911 to house judicial and administrative services, embodies the style. The courthouse is a three-story, hipped-roof, blonde brick building with a pedimented Doric portico and topped with a cupola. It was designed by the Washington D. C. architectural firm of Milburn and Heister. Professional architects were in short supply in eastern North Carolina prior to 1950. Thus, the engagement of firms from larger metropolitan areas was very common.

Another Classical Revival public building in the district is the United States Post Office (# 2). The post office is one of only two Florentine Renaissance Revival buildings in eastern North Carolina. The other is the Morehead City Municipal Building in Carteret County. Greenville's Post Office was designed by Oscar J. Wenderoth, an architect for the Federal government. As agencies of the federal government, post office design was standardized by region. Greenville's post office is an example of a local post office based on plans provided by the federal government. Its arched loggia, stuccoed exterior and terra cotta tile roof make it a fully expressed example of Florentine Renaissance Revival architecture.

Design of public buildings, such as courthouses, city halls, banks and post offices, was, and still is, predicated on function. These types of buildings require large, public spaces and receiving spaces, such as entry foyers, to accommodate groups of people. Offices for public officials and workers were also needed. Thus, the interior design of public buildings is generally standard throughout the nation regardless of the architectural style in which the building is rendered. Spaces are organized into highly decorated formal public areas and more modest office or record keeping spaces. Often, public buildings were set back on the lot to create a lawn area for important statuary and decorative plantings. These garden areas serve to create a transitional space between the street and the building.

Despite the presence of two dwellings a small collection of government and civic buildings, commercial buildings are the most common, making up approximately ninety percent of the district's building stock. By the early years of the twentieth century, brick had replaced wood as the preferred building material for commercial structures across North Carolina. Brick was more resistant to fire than

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wood, and presented a more durable and permanent image to the public. Brick was a readily available in Greenville by 1884 with the opening of Suggs and Ellis Brick Works and the Dail Brick Works opened in 1907.<sup>26</sup> An 1899 advertisement for brick placed by B. E. Moyer in the *King's Weekly* newspaper stated "20,000 on hand, and making more everyday."<sup>27</sup> Due to the numerous fires that ravaged the city in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, most of the surviving buildings are made of brick or other fire resistant materials such as stone. Greenville's 1899 fire resulted in the prohibition of wood buildings in the commercial area.<sup>28</sup>

A few commercial buildings in the district date from the first decade of the twentieth century. A cluster of them remain at the southeast corner of Evans and East Fourth streets. These buildings are distinguished only from later buildings by the use of restrained late Victorian era patterned brickwork. The brick Frank Wilson Store (c. 1900, # 26) has a corner entrance bay delineated from the front façade by knuckled corners. Brick checkerboard panels sit below a large composite cornice. The building's arched window openings have been infilled with brick. 106 East Fourth Street is a circa 1900, diminutive, one-story brick building adjacent to the rear of the Frank Wilson Store. The building is reputed to have housed a tailor shop that serviced the attached clothier. The two-bay building has a arched door and window openings set off from the wall surface by a brick header course, and corbelled droplet cornice. 403 South Evans Street (# 27), a two-story brick building constructed circa 1901, retains arched window openings and a brick droplet cornice.

The overwhelming majority commercial buildings in the Greenville Commercial Historic District fall into the category of early-twentieth century standard commercial design. Most of the detailing is achieved through the use of decorative brickwork, although glass, cast concrete and terra cotta design elements are also found. Characteristics of Greenville's standard commercial design includes: parapet rooflines, corbelled cornices, recessed upper level panels created by raised pilasters and horizontal bands, window keystones, arched window openings and tiled entries. This nationally popular style developed in the early 1900s as a reaction to the elaborate Victorian styles of the previous era. The style proliferated due to its adaptability to various building forms. Examples of the style exist in commercial centers throughout eastern North Carolina and are found in the Pitt County communities of Ayden, Farmville and Winterville. Greenville's collection of standard commercial buildings compares favorably with those in other Pitt County towns in quality and integrity. Greenville also retains the largest number of buildings.

<sup>26</sup> City directories state that W.H. Dail, Jr.'s headquarters were at 218 Fifth Street. Sanborn maps suggest that this was building located on the northwest corner of East Fifth and Reade Streets, where the Stop-n-Shop convenience store is today.

<sup>27</sup> *King's Weekly*, May, 19, 1899.

<sup>28</sup> Cotter, 28.

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Standard commercial design buildings are almost exclusively brick and can be one or more stories in height. The style's symmetrical buildings feature flat and stepped parapets and patterned brickwork. Greenville city directories reveal that first stories were most often used as retail space. Thus the presence of large, glass display windows on the district's ground level facades. In many towns and cities it was common for upper floors to serve as living space. However, in Greenville the pattern was for upper stories to be used for office functions with the exception of the Dail-Hodges Building (# 61) where the upper stories were residential.<sup>29</sup> Because many of the first stories and lower storefronts have been remodeled over the years, the style is most evident in the cornices, panels and parapets of the upper façades. Good, although somewhat altered, one-story versions of the standard Commercial Style can be seen at 314-318 South Evans Street (# 7), 422 South Evans Street (# 24), 109 East Fifth Street (# 46) and 214 East Fifth Street (# 62). Two-story examples are the Dail-Hodges Building (# 61), and 410 and 403 South Evans Street (# 19 and # 27).

A few commercial buildings in the district were constructed specifically for use as professional offices. A collection of three office buildings is located on the south side of West Third Street, across from the courthouse. These buildings are similar in form to the commercial buildings yet they lack the first story glass storefronts favored by retail businesses. 105-107, the Hassell-James Building (# 72), was built circa 1915 for the offices of the James and Speight law firm. 111-115 West Third Street (c. 1924, # 71) and the Blount Building (c. 1915, # 70) at 109 West Third Street were occupied by professionals such as doctors and lawyers.

In addition to standard Commercial Style buildings, the district also retains examples of the Art Deco style nationally popular in the 1930s. In aesthetically conservative eastern North Carolina the style was used on commercial and public buildings, and is seen rarely on residences. Art Deco buildings utilized smooth, technologically advanced materials such as glass, stainless steel, and terra cotta. The style emphasized geometric forms and highly stylized design motifs based on international movements in art-- the Art Nouveau, Cubism and Futurism.<sup>30</sup>

The Greenville Municipal Building (# 39), constructed in 1938-40 and designed by Frank W. Benton of Benton and Benton Architects in Wilson, North Carolina, is an excellent example of an Art Deco public building. Benton designed a similar municipal building in Wilson. The Greenville Municipal Building was constructed with aid from the federal government as part of a depression-era recovery program. The five-bay façade elevation is faced with smooth Indiana limestone. Cast iron spandrels,

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<sup>29</sup> Greenville City Directories, 1900-1950.

<sup>30</sup> Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, 411.

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stone grilles, glass blocks, stainless steel and decorative cast stone convey the Art Deco style. Another sophisticated example of the Art Deco style, this time applied to the commercial form, is the Montgomery-Ward Building (# 52). The three-story building's three-bay, terra cotta façade features raised colored terra cotta tiles. Above the central window bay on the third story is a large tile featuring a female figure—the trademark of Montgomery-Ward department store chain.

By the 1950s, the Art Deco style simplified into the Art Moderne. Art Moderne abandoned the use of sculptural ornament in favor of a bolder more industrial aesthetic. The Smith Electric Company (# 31) and 116 West Fifth Street (# 41) are both simple one-story commercial buildings with carrara glass facades. These buildings represent the transition between the Art Deco and Art Moderne. The district's only fully expressed Art Moderne building is Bissette's Drug Store. The building is faced with large, square terra cotta panels and retains its original neon signage. Art Moderne is the last style represented within the district's period of significance.

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National Park Service

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### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

#### UTM References—Continued

5	18	284890	3943180	6	18	284890	3943220
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

#### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Greenville Commercial Historic District is shown in the heavy black line on the accompanying 1" = 200' tax map.

#### Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Greenville Commercial Historic District has been drawn to include the substantially intact commercial, governmental and residential buildings in the commercial center of Greenville erected during the district's period of significance c. 1860 through 1952. These buildings contribute to the district's historic and architectural character. The boundary has been drawn to exclude buildings constructed after the district's period of significance, buildings that have been substantially altered and vacant lots.

#### Photographs

Photo B of the former United States Post Office dates to 1982. The building has not changed in appearance in the past twenty years and the photo accurately depicts the resource.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

	E	N
A	285020	3943520
B	285200	3943460
C	285190	3943200

	E	N
D	285190	3943100
E	284890	3943180
F	284890	3943220

5555 III NW  
(GREENVILLE NW)

5555 III NW  
(GREENVILLE)

77°22'30"  
35°37'30"

286000mE

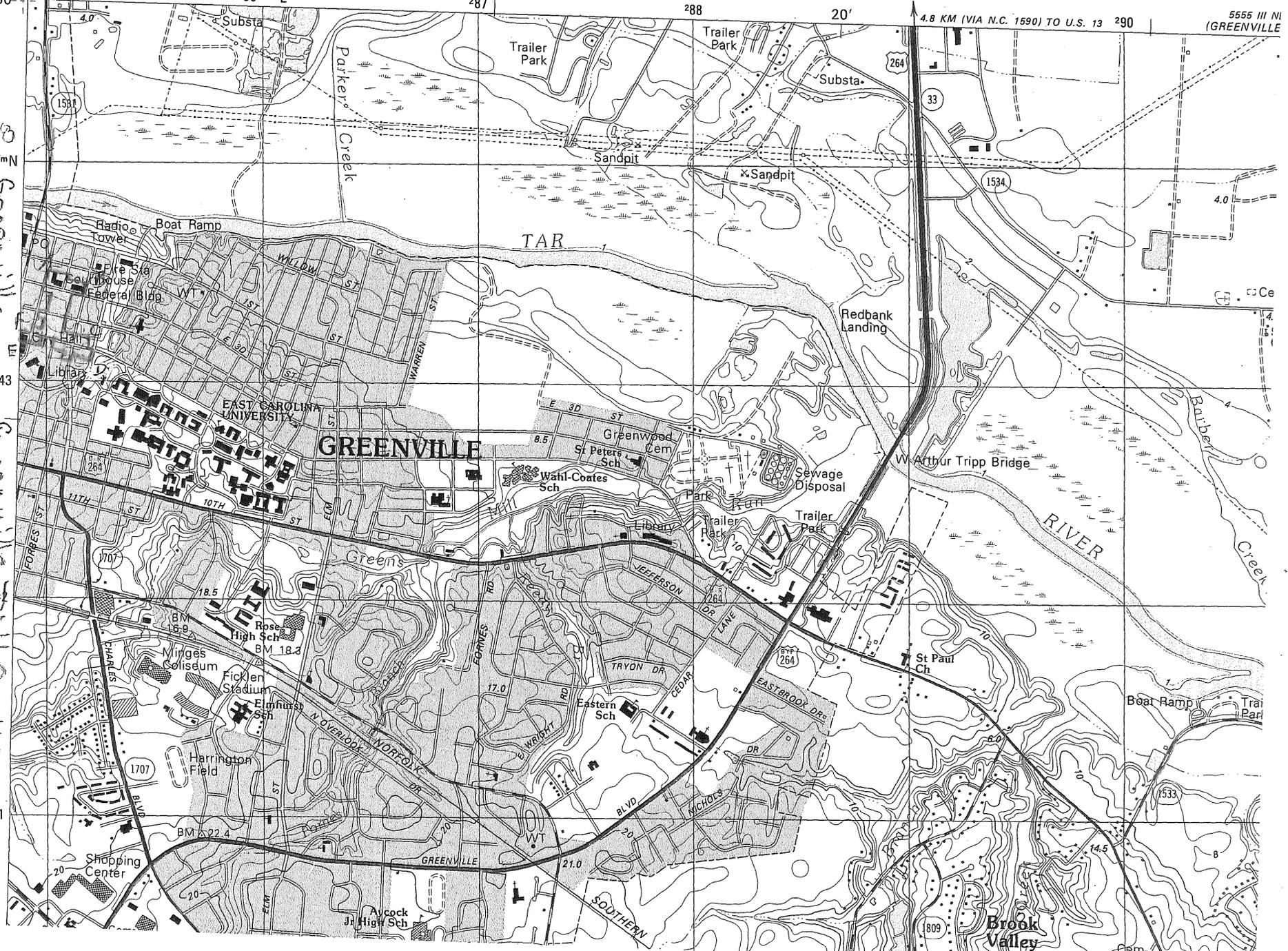
287

288

20'

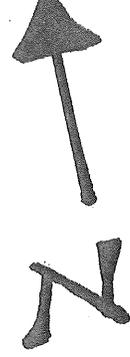
4.8 KM (VIA N.C. 1590) TO U.S. 13 290

ZONE 18  
3944000mN  
Greenville  
Commercial  
Historia District  
Greenville SE Quad



**WILMINGTON COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
 Pitt County, North Carolina  
 Scale: 1" = 200'

— = district boundary  
 C = contributing resource  
 NC = non-contributing resource  
 V = vacant parcel  
 A → photo views



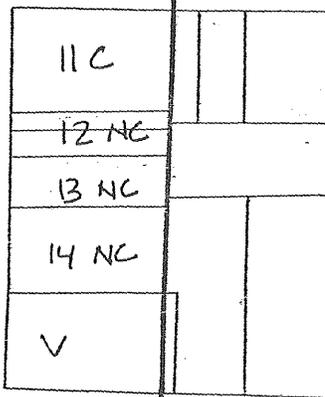
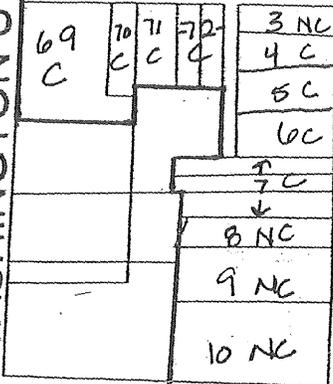
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WASHINGTON ST

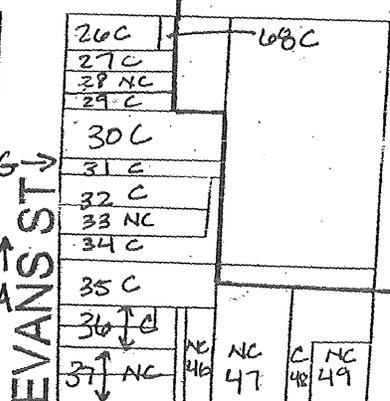
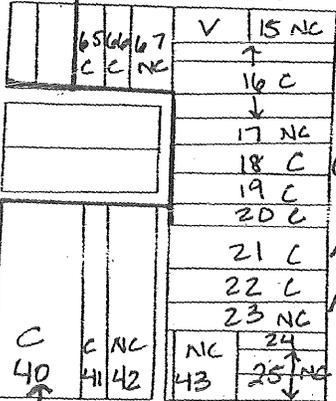
EVANS ST

COTANCHE ST

THIRD ST



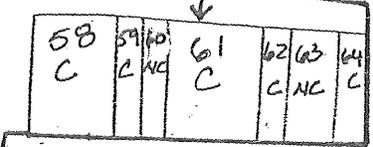
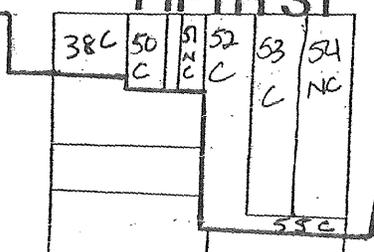
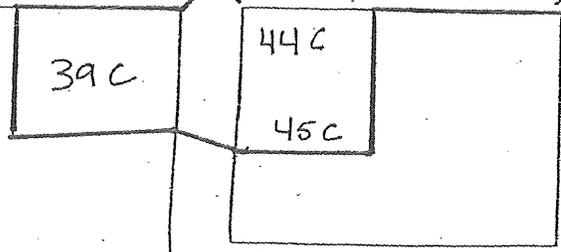
FOURTH ST



EVANS ST

(MARTIN L. KING ST)

FIFTH ST



SIXTH ST



**NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**  
**Office of Archives and History**  
**Department of Cultural Resources**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**Greenville Commercial Historic District Additional Documentation**

Greenville, Pitt County, PT1420, Listed 9/16/2009

Nomination by Druscilla York

Photographs by Druscilla York, September 2008 and March 2009



Blount-Harvey Department Store, façade view



White's Theater, façade view

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Greenville Commercial Historic District –  
Additional Documentation

Pitt County, North Carolina

Section number 1, 3, 4 Page 1

[Note: Only amended items and the required NPS certification are included below.]

**1. Name of Property:** Greenville Commercial Historic District – Additional Documentation

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification:** As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant locally.

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

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

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:)

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE / theater

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT / NOT IN USE

7. Narrative Description

Over the last four years, the integrity of two pivotal buildings constructed within the historic district's period of significance, namely White's Theatre (1914) and the Blount-Harvey Department Store (1923), has dramatically improved with the removal in both cases of false facades. Each was documented as non-contributing in the original historic district nomination. Restoration of the Blount-Harvey Department Store was completed in 2007 using Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. Another commercial gem was revealed in 2007 when the original façade of White's Theatre was exposed following the removal of a massive aluminum facade and a blond brick veneer. Plans for its restoration are now underway by its new owner, the City of Greenville. Both properties are now contributing buildings within the Greenville Commercial Historic District.

**300 Block South Evans Street, West Side**

10 330 South Evans Street Blount-Harvey Department Store contributing 1923

The Blount-Harvey Department Store, completed in 1923, embodies the early use in small towns of self-supporting metal frames in the construction of large public, commercial, and industrial buildings during the early twentieth century. Completed in 2007, the restoration of its exterior facades using federal tax credits physically renewed the building's connection with its historic contribution in the growth of Greenville's downtown. The interior was modernized, however, maintaining its structural form. The Blount-Harvey Department Store was initially the town's largest retail store and the first built as a modern department store. (Exhibit 1) As designed, a steel skeletal pier and-spandrel system supports this fireproof brick building, which soon thereafter included the modern addition of an elevator.

Facing east, this two-story building with mezzanine features a standard commercial brick façade that is symmetrically ordered in a progressive manner utilizing distinctive cast stone accents. Its form features three bays extending across the Evans Street façade and nine-bays along the 4<sup>th</sup> Street façade. A reproduction central marquee protects the recessed central entrance. It features a pressed tin apron with scalloped edge and acorn-shaped finials. The main entry has a double-leaf doorway flanked by large paned sidelights and diagonally-placed display windows. These built-in displays are the only exterior elements retained from the 1958 modernization. (Exhibit 2) The 4<sup>th</sup> Street façade includes a smaller store front in the western two bays and next to it a secondary entrance into the main building.

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Each facade is identical in detail but not definition. Both are separated into three levels: ground floor, second floor, and parapet. Most brickwork is laid in basic common bond. Piers encased in brick simulate buttresses that feature two offsets. Each helps accent the verticality of the street façades. At the southeast corner, two join to form a distinctive angle buttress. At the parapet, a tall one-piece stone offset provides a dramatic crowning accent. These offsets also tie in horizontally with the simple stone sills beneath each transom window, the decorative stone cornice beneath the parapet, and the simple stone parapet cap. Each cornice block has a plain drip slope and a coved underside highlighted by a central circular gear motif. Small crenels or embrasures with stone drip moldings further define the parapet line. A stone eight-pointed star with quatrefoil inset is centrally placed within each brick parapet segment. A planar stone shield also accents each ground-floor buttress beneath each offset. In addition, a plain stone base which rises in height at each buttress extends along the street façades. Only at the small store entrance does this base convert to wood and contain replicas of the star design. Other masonry detailing includes a horizontal chain of rectilinear patterned brickwork in each bay between the transom windows and the second floor windows. Within each Evans Street bay, a chain of four defines this area; however, on 4<sup>th</sup> Street there are three. Each mirrors the fenestration pattern of the second floor.

Along the street façades, the fenestration pattern of each bay varies only slightly. The principal façade facing Evans Street contains ground-floor display window units featuring three large panes, multi-paned transoms with over translucent 500 lights, and window groupings that contain four double-hung sash with one-over-one lights. Proportionately, the side façade is slightly different. Here each bay is narrower, so display window units contain two large panes, transoms have fewer lights, and windows are grouped in units of three with a standard center one flanked by narrower sash. At street level, the eastern two bays are display windows, the next three bays are in filled with brick and contain business lettering, the next two bays are for display and a side entrance, and the last two bays are the entrance and display window for a separate small shop. Above the shop, side entrance and display window are differing types of transom windows that provide additional internal light. Simple fabric awnings protect each display window from direct sunlight.

**100 Block of West Fifth Street, North Side**

42	110 West Fifth Street	White's Theatre	contributing	1914
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(property was incorrectly listed as 114 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street in original nomination)

Until 2007, an applied façade obscured the original architectural character of White's Theatre, which was built in 1914 by local builder Burwell Riddick for Samuel T. White. With plans to re-open the theatre for stage, music, theatre, and cinema productions, the City of Greenville's Redevelopment Commission purchased the structure in 2008. A key component of the project is the restoration of its monumental façade with distinctive Dutch Colonial Revival-style details such as its curvilinear parapet and handsome doors with graceful fanlights that flank the central entrance.

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In the design of early twentieth-century theatres, an oversized central entrance bay dominated the façade in scale and detail and was flanked by secondary entrances. The symmetrically fenestrated façade of White's Theatre's, originally featured a large central bay that projected slightly forward, a raised parapet with a handsome central arch, a run of frieze windows beneath a deep modillion cornice, and a large recessed central entrance that was flanked by two additional street entrances with delicate fanlights. Originally, a dramatic, broad flight of steps extended into the open recessed entry. Here patrons once gained admittance by purchasing a ticket and then entering the lobby through paired double-leaf doors. A tall perpendicular electric sign that flashed "White's Theatre" rose above the entrance.(Exhibit 3) By 1916, a handsome marquee protected the central entrance. (Exhibit 4) The interior included seating for 680, a large stage, orchestra pit, and balcony.

Brick corbelling highlights and complements the façade's major design elements. Above each entrance, this brickwork is used to create outlines of various geometric shapes in a linear arrangement. Originally, the horizontal strength of the modillion block cornice was paired with rectangular forms while the curvilinear shape of the Dutch Colonial Revival-style parapet was paired with a balanced combination of rectangles, triangles and a central circle. Simple brick pilasters flank each secondary entrance, which also features a semi-circular arch outlined by corbelled brick. By 1958, these secondary entries were fully enclosed, and the infilled areas used as billboards to display posters advertizing current and coming attractions.

Nearly forty years ago in 1971 the theatre was renamed the Park after undergoing extensive remodelling and moderizations. Its new front façade had "buff brick to the marquee level, with aluminum facer from the marquee to the top of the building."<sup>1</sup> This remodelling also required removal of the recessed entrance and steps as well as the modillion cornice. By 2008 after being vacant for years, the theatre has become a key element component of Greenville's downtown revitalization, and its original façade was revealed following the removal of most of the 1971 façade additions. Today the entrance is boarded up and the theatre awaits preservation.

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<sup>1</sup> "Park Theatre Opens Tomorrow," *Daily Reflector*, March 24, 1971.

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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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1914-1952

Significant Dates

1914, 1923

Architect/Builder

Riddick, Burwell , builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

White's Theatre embodies the design features and popular use of newly constructed theatres during the 1910s and 1920s as vaudeville playhouses as well as moving picture theatres, and it is locally significant under Criterion A for entertainment/recreation. As the national obsession for movies exploded during the 1910s, theatres in small municipalities across the country were built for this dual purpose. Completed in 1914 and constructed by local builder Burwell Riddick, White's Theatre clearly illustrates this national theatre trend, serving continuously as a theatre throughout a period of significance from 1914-1952. With the advent of talking pictures in 1927, many theatres were refurbished for the sole purpose of showing movies. White's Theatre underwent a similar transformation in 1930 and was renamed the State Theatre. Today, it stands as a contributing building within the Greenville Commercial Historic District and as the only early twentieth-century theatre in Greenville.

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**Entertainment/Recreation Context**

Completed in 1914 by local builder Burwell Riddick for Samuel T. White, White's Theatre embodies an increasingly popular transition in the entertainment business during the first half of the twentieth century from traveling vaudeville acts and theatrical productions toward feature films—the movies. Its opening on June 22, 1914, marked the beginning of this theatre's longstanding contribution throughout the twentieth century to entertainment in Greenville.<sup>2</sup> Today its history and current preservation plan reflect this important era in American entertainment.

The exhibition of a projected motion picture as a commercial venture was first introduced to a paying public in Paris on December 28, 1895. Earlier in September at the Atlanta Cotton States Exposition, however, demonstrations had been given of an improved projection device for films on a screen. As innovations quickly progressed, viewing films became an integral component of most entertainment venues across the United States. The earliest movie theatres, nickelodeons, were converted dance halls or storefront theatres that charged a nickel as an entrance fee to view films, also called flickers. Harry Davis's nickelodeon, which opened in 1905 in Pittsburgh, is recognized as one of the first free-standing nickelodeons constructed. The 200-seat Electric Theatre in Los Angeles, built in 1902, is thought to be the first permanent free-standing movie theatre built in the United States to exhibit solely movies. By 1912, the growing popularity for grander, more modern movie theatres or palaces had initiated the demise of nickelodeons.<sup>3</sup>

In North Carolina, the popularity of film as a new form of entertainment played out primarily in established opera houses in towns and cities across the state. Most were located on the second floor of a principal building, ranging from Masonic halls to livery stables. By 1906, however, early movie theatres or nickelodeons began cropping up in stores or small commercial buildings. Over the next ten years, with the rapid development of feature films, nickelodeons were replaced by larger theatres. In many communities, films and other forms of performing arts were inextricably mixed, and the showing of silent films was dramatized by musical accompaniment. In such eastern North Carolina towns as New Bern, Greenville, and Washington, theatres constructed in the 1910s continued to maintain formal stages for vaudeville and one-night stand acts, but movies were becoming increasingly important. Large towns often supported several theatres, while in smaller towns, such as Williamston in 1913, people simply patronized offerings at the opera house. In New Bern, architect H. W. Simpson designed the "Athens," an impressive 700-seat Classical Revival style vaudeville theatre that opened April 13, 1911.<sup>4</sup>

The earliest theatrical productions in Greenville jointly shared buildings with other businesses or meeting halls in the downtown area. The town's first theatre, Skinner's Opera House, opened on May 9, 1883. Col. Harry

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<sup>2</sup> Kammerer, "White's Theatre," *Greenville Times*, August 11-24, 1999, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Dirks, "Film History Before 1920," *The History of Film*, [www.filmsite.org](http://www.filmsite.org), 2:2-3,6. January 15, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> "Going to the Show," Documenting the American South digital collection, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/gtts>. April 14, 2009.

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Skinner had this two-story brick structure constructed near the courthouse with the theatre on the second floor and business offices below. Fire destroyed this building in 1896 and two later opera houses in 1910. By 1905 one of these, the Masonic Hall/Opera House, had introduced the public to moving-picture travel films in combination with vaudeville shows. Within the next five years, entrepreneurs began investing in small moving picture theatres or nickelodeons, such as the Pastime, Electric, Gem, and Amuzu Theatres. Management of these theatres changed frequently, as did their names.<sup>5</sup>

White's Theatre embodies the merger of vaudeville productions with the evolution of the film industry through the first half of the twentieth century. At its opening on June 22, 1914, a tall perpendicular electric sign flashed White's Theatre, and within two years a handsome marquee was installed to protect the central entrance. Contemporary letterhead for the theatre, advertised its seating capacity as 680 and the promotion of "One-Night Stands. High Class Vaudeville and Good Pictures."<sup>6</sup> The introduction of talking pictures in 1927 prompted the theatre's conversion to a movie theatre in 1930. It was refurbished and named the State Theatre after Publix-Saenger negotiated a forty-year lease for the property. At this time, a bronze finish was applied to its front façade and brass hand rails were installed as well as a new electric sign and canopy at the front entrance. The secondary entrance on the right led into a ladies' parlor, and the entrance on the left opened into an office.<sup>7</sup> Known as State Theatre until 1970, it stands today as the only early twentieth-century theatre remaining in Greenville.

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<sup>5</sup> Kammerer, "Entertainment in Greenville's Past," *Greenville Times*, April 17-30, 1985, 13.

<sup>6</sup> Kammerer, "White's Theatre," *Greenville Times*, August 11-24, 1999, 5; Junius D. Grimes Collection, 571.55e, Special Collections, J. Y. Joyner Library, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, U.S.A.

<sup>7</sup> "New Theatre Reopens in Greenville Tomorrow," *Daily Reflector*, July 28, 1930, 2.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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