

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 Rowland Main Street Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by the 100 and 200 blocks of West Main Street, the 100 block of East Main Street, and portions of Hickory and East and West Railroad Streets

n/a not for publication

city or town Rowland

n/a vicinity

state North Carolina

code NC

county Robeson

code 155

zip code 28283

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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Jeffrey Crow SHPO

Date

12/13/04

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.

Register.

other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
35	5	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
36	5	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/department store

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse

COMMERCE/TRADE/financial institution

DOMESTIC/hotel

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE/department store

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse

TRANSPORTATION/rail-related

COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE/professional

GOVERNMENT/government office

GOVERNMENT/fire station/correctional facility

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style

Craftsman

Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

WOOD/weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other METAL

CONCRETE

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Commerce, Transportation, Architecture

Period of Significance

1891-1954

Significant Dates

1891

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS).

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:

Rowland Main Street Historic District
Name of Property

Robeson County, NC
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 12 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>656460</u>	<u>3822940</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u>656780</u>	<u>3822840</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>17</u>	<u>656680</u>	<u>3822920</u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u>656720</u>	<u>3822680</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 Jennifer F. Martin
organization Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. date 27 August 2004
street & number P.O. Box 1171 telephone 919/682-2211
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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Rowland Main Street Historic District
Robeson County, NC

DESCRIPTION

The Rowland Main Street Historic District is located in the historic commercial area of the town of Rowland in southwestern Robeson County, North Carolina. Rowland is situated in the southern part of North Carolina's Coastal Plain and about two-and-a-half miles northeast of the South Carolina state line. Interstate 95, the major north-south corridor on the East Coast, is less than one mile to the east of the town limits. Rowland was established on a branch of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad known as the Wilson Shortcut because it provided a more direct route from Florence, South Carolina to Wilson, North Carolina. The North Carolina state legislature incorporated Rowland in 1889.

The district occupies flat, sandy terrain typical of the Coastal Plain. Savannah holly trees set in brick planters and spaced evenly along the sidewalks line both sides of Main Street. The Rowland Depot (NR, 2001) is surrounded on its sides and rear by a grass lawn maintained by the Town. A walk with memorial bricks extends in front of the depot toward Main Street.

Situated in the heart of Rowland, the Rowland Main Street Historic District comprises a little over two blocks of Main Street, which runs northwest to southeast. Once Main Street exits the town limits, it becomes US 501/NC 130 heading northwest toward Laurinburg, the seat of Scotland County. To the southeast, outside the town limits, Main Street turns into NC 130, a state highway that terminates at Holden Beach in Brunswick County. Martin Luther King Street, formerly called Walnut Street, forms the northwest boundary, while US 301 (Bond Street) is the termination for the southeast end of the Rowland Main Street Historic District. Hickory Street, East and West Railroad Streets, and the tracks of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad—the successor to the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad—run perpendicular to Main Street within the district's boundaries. East and West Railroad Streets and the tracks divide Main Street into East and West Main Street. Several ancillary buildings, most related in historic function to the Main Street buildings, stand on these side streets or in the alleys that run behind the Main Street buildings.

The Rowland Main Street Historic District comprises all of the historic commercial area of the town. A mostly residential neighborhood surrounds the district on the north and west. Residential areas and modern commercial buildings border the district to the south. Modern commercial development along US 301 abuts the east end of the district.

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The Rowland Main Street Historic District contains forty buildings and one structure. Buildings in the district stand one or two stories with most constructed of brick. Along Main Street, the buildings border the sidewalk, but on side streets where there are no sidewalks, there is greater setback from the street. Buildings range in date from 1891—the date of construction of the S.L. Adams Grocery and General Store (#27) at 105 West Main Street—to the mid 1980s when the pre-fabricated building that houses Oak Valley Furniture (#25) was built. Of the district's forty-one resources, five are noncontributing. The dates of construction of three fall after the period of significance, and two have been significantly altered.

Most buildings display decorative features such as brick sawtooth-banding, corbelled or bracketed cornices, modillions, quoins, and arched hood windows. Stamped metal fronts manufactured from galvanized sheet iron, all produced by the Chattanooga Roofing and Foundry Company, partially cover the facades of six buildings along Main Street. The building at 116-118 West Main Street (#5), which originally housed the Hedgepath and Chitty Clothing and Shoe Store, dates to 1905 and features stamped metal pilasters outlining one of the street's most intact storefronts. The pilasters rise to meet an overhanging metal cornice that surmounts a horizontal row of brick sawtooth banding. Buildings with bold pilasters outlining their facades and displaying masonry detailing show the influence of the Classical Revival style. Craftsman features, such as wide overhanging eaves and a bracketed cornice, inform the depot that was built in 1925.

INVENTORY

The following inventory of resources in the Rowland Main Street Historic District begins at the westernmost building on the north side of Main Street and proceeds eastward along Main Street. Next, the resources on the south side of Main Street are listed, beginning with the easternmost and proceeding westward. Buildings located in the alleys behind the main blockface are listed as secondary resources to the primary buildings with which they were historically associated. Buildings on streets perpendicular to Main Street are listed from north to south beginning with the westernmost street (Hickory Street) and proceeding eastward to West Railroad Street, then East Railroad Street.

Each building is designated with a historic name, usually the earliest known business or occupant. Following the name, the street address is provided, followed by the date or approximate date of construction and the date or dates of any major alterations or additions. Finally, each resource is classified as contributing or noncontributing. Contributing resources were built within the period of significance and retain enough historic integrity to illustrate significant aspects of their past. Contributing resources must

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retain physical materials, design features, and construction qualities from the historic period. A resource whose date of construction falls outside the period of significance or which has been altered so significantly as to compromise its integrity is classified as noncontributing.

Local histories, Robeson County deeds, and town residents provided information about original or early occupants and dates of construction of buildings in the district. Among the most helpful published sources was *Town of a Thousand Friends* by George Reed Pate and Sanborn maps that date from 1919 and 1925 and which were originally produced for insurance purposes.

West Main Street/North Side

1. W.W. Webster Store
214 West Main Street
1894; 1957
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with a parapet and prominent brick corbelling beneath smaller corbelling along the cornice. A row of sawtooth bricks extends along the façade above the intact three-part storefront. Metal pilasters flank each side of the recessed entrance bay. A Purina checkerboard advertisement is painted on the east elevation. A small, one-story, two-bay, flat-roofed, cinder block building whose façade is in alignment with the original building was added to the east elevation in 1957. W.W. Webster operated his grocery here for much of the twentieth century. Now occupied by Rogers Brothers Milling.

2. Town of Rowland Fire and Police Department
208-210 West Main Street
1957; 1966; 1972
Noncontributing Building

One-story, cinderblock building with a brick façade and a flat roof. A large garage bay that holds fire trucks occupies the east half of the façade, while a large hipped-roof awning shelters the east half of the façade. George Kheiralla, who owned the adjacent building, donated land for this building in 1956. It was completed the next year. In 1966, a courtroom was added to the rear and in 1972 the town added a small jail to the courtroom addition.

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3. Kheiralla Brothers Store
202-204 West Main Street
ca. 1920; ca. 1982
Contributing Building

Two-story, brick building with a stepped front parapet whose crown is flanked with masonry volutes. Original bold pilasters with masonry peaked capitals situated between the first and second stories mark the corners of the Main Street elevation. Square and diamond-shaped decorative masonry elements enhance the upper façade. Masonry keystones centered on flat lintels of soldier course brick surmount the paired windows with 6/1 and 1/1 (replacement) sash on the second story. Windows along the side elevations contain original 6/6 sash, although some of the windows are covered with wood. The building's two storefronts were altered in the 1980s by the removal or covering of all original finishes. Modern offices occupy each of the former retail spaces. The interior of the upper story, which originally contained apartments, remains almost completely intact. Lebanese immigrants Alex and George Kheiralla constructed this building to house a furniture store on one side and a grocery on the other. In February 1982, George Kheiralla deeded the building to the Town of Rowland, but reserved the right to use the upstairs apartment until his death, which occurred later that year. The Town converted the building to its offices after Kheiralla's death.

- 3a. Garage
Behind 202-204 West Main Street
ca. 1920
Contributing Building

One-story, brick garage with a flat parapet on its façade shielding a flat roof. An off-center garage bay occupies the west (front) elevation.

Hickory Street Intersects

4. People's Hardware and Furniture
120-122 West Main Street
1908
Contributing Building

Two-story, six-bay, blond brick building with two storefronts and an overhanging metal cornice composed of a continuous band of wide, plain brackets, modillion blocks, and corner curved and fluted brackets with nail-head square panels—all composed of cast

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metal. Cast metal arched hoods with keystones surmount the second floor windows with 2/2 sash, half of which have been boarded up. Windows on the west and rear (north) elevations have segmental arched heads and are covered with wood. On the Main Street elevation, the west storefront has been partially infilled with red brick veneer, but retains its prism glass transom. The east storefront retains its metal pilasters, but the transom has been covered with composite wood. Six corbelled chimneys rise from the building's flat roof. H.K. McCormic served as the president of People's Hardware and Furniture, which originally occupied this building. C.S. Marrow was vice president and A. Baker as secretary and treasurer. People's Hardware also sold farm implements and caskets. Farmer's Hardware Store later owned and occupied the building, but sold it in 1967.

5. Hedgepath and Chitty Clothing and Shoe Store
118 West Main Street
1905
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with two storefronts and an overhanging metal cornice crowning a sawbooth band of bricks and corbelling that is set in a continuous horizontal and recessed panel over the two storefronts. The storefronts are painted contrasting colors giving the appearance of separate buildings. The west storefront is one of the most intact in the district and features cast metal pilasters, and recessed double-leaf doors between projecting storefront windows. Chattanooga Roofing and Foundry Company manufactured the building's cast metal elements. The prism glass transom has been covered with wood on both storefronts. A flat awning shades the eastern storefront's recessed entrance. The rear (north) elevation, which faces a back alley, displays arched-head windows. The Hedgepath and Chitty Store originally occupied the store. Later occupants included a hardware concern and a clothing store.

6. S & S Grocery
114 West Main Street
ca. 1905
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with a corbelled cornice and slender metal Corinthian columns fronting the storefront. Wood covers the prism glass transom extending over the storefront. A flat metal awning shelters the façade. The original entrance has been altered with the addition of new windows so that the only access to the interior is through the building immediately to the east. Arched head windows punctuate the rear elevation.

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Bill Smith and Jim Shepard operated the S&S Grocery in this building in the early to mid-twentieth century. Members of the Smith family owned the building until 1993.

7. Ward's Store
112 West Main Street
ca. 1921
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with three evenly-spaced rusticated concrete block pilasters framing the two storefronts. A flat metal awning shelters the street level. Large display windows are in the western half of the Main Street façade. The eastern storefront retains its recessed entrance and angled display windows. A newer metal panel covers the parapet wall. Arched-head windows are on the rear elevation, which faces the back alley. In a 1920 deed, the Mutual Building and Improvement Company made an agreement with A.B. Watson, who owned the building standing immediately to the west, that allowed the company to insert beams and floor timbers into the side wall of Watson's building. The 1920 deed refers to this property as the "proposed building" (book 7-D, p. 399).

- 7A. Ward's Store Warehouse
located in alley behind and facing rear of 100 block of north side of
West Main Street
ca. 1940
Contributing Building

One-story, gable-front, metal-sheathed building whose front door faces the rear elevation of Ward's Store. The building was constructed for use as a warehouse for the store.

8. Rowland Drug Company
110 West Main Street
1902
Contributing Building

Prominent, two-story building with a buff brick façade and side and rear elevations of red brick. A corbelled cornice surmounts a band of recessed, horizontally-placed panels at the upper level of the storefront. Flat lintels laid in soldier course brick top a row of nine windows—all covered with boards, but retaining their original sash—on the second story enframed by decorative brick stepping. The prism glass transoms remain on the

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building's three storefronts. A centrally-located arched-head entrance with vertical and projecting brick bands contains a single-leaf door with a lunette transom that leads to the second floor. The upper story interior containing professional offices and a large meeting room is abandoned, but remains remarkably intact.

The building was constructed in 1902, the same year the Rowland Drug Company was organized with W.B. Townsend as president, Dr. George Pate as vice president, and George McNeill as secretary, treasurer, and general manager. In its history, the building has housed a barber shop, dry cleaners, drug store, grocery store, and post office. Several physicians, including Dr. Howard Reedy, Dr. William Ernest Evans, and Dr. John McNeill Smith, kept offices in the second floor, and a large room at the rear of the space was used for lodge meetings.

9. Merchants and Farmers Bank
108 West Main Street
1911
Contributing Building

Two-story, brick, modified vault-form Classical Revival building exhibiting a heavy visor roof with a row of block modillions just below a flat cornice with masonry coping. The visor roof crowns a flat fascia that is supported by a heavily molded capital that crowns the upper level. The façade's first and second levels are recessed between projecting blocks dressed with quoins and poised on a continuous masonry base. A large lunette window with a keystone and radiating voussoirs surmounts the first store entrance, which is composed of a single-leaf door, flanking display windows, and a transom. Original 1/1 windows remain intact and arched-head windows occupy the side and rear elevations. The building was constructed the same year the bank was chartered. After the bank folded in 1925, several concerns occupied the building including a post office and Doares Barber Shop.

10. A&P Grocery
106 West Main Street
ca. 1927
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with a stepped cornice crowning the façade. The storefront remains intact with a double-leaf door recessed between display windows. Windows on rear elevation are covered with wood. Charlie Bethea operated an A&P Store here in the late 1920s. At one time this building contained a pool hall.

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11. Merchants Hotel
102 West Main Street
1892
Contributing Building

Two-story, brick building with bold brick pilasters that frame the façade and its two storefronts and continue along the east façade, which faces the railroad tracks. Originally, a two-tier, full-length piazza extended along the building's façade. The plain building has a flat roof with a simple cornice composed of soldier-course bricks topped with a row of overhanging bricks. A flat lintel tops most windows, which have been covered with wood on the each elevation. The exception is a two-over-two double-hung sash adjacent to a door on the east elevation. Windows on the western elevation have arched heads. The eastern storefront remains somewhat intact with a recessed entrance between flanking display windows. The storefront to the west has been compromised with the addition of siding, windows, and a door, all fabricated in vinyl. The second floor containing guest rooms for the hotel retains its plaster walls, original woodwork, wood floors, and window sash (which are covered on the outside with wood). The building was constructed for the Merchants Hotel and later housed Blum's Department Store, which opened here in 1931.

- 11a. Quonset Hut
located behind 102 West Main Street and facing Railroad Street
ca. 1950
Contributing Building

Small, arched-body building constructed of unpainted galvanized steel sheets and set on a high brick foundation. Originally used for storage for businesses located in the Merchants Hotel building.

West Railroad Street Intersects

12. Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Right-of-Way
1892; ca. 1950
Contributing Structure

The former Atlantic Coast Line Railroad runs perpendicular to Main Street in a northeast to southwest direction. Beginning in the early 1940s, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad replaced all of the rails in its system. This work was completed by 1952.

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East Railroad Street Intersects

East Main Street/North Side

13. Leinwand's New Store Building
101 East Main Street
ca. 1920, 1937.
Contributing Building

Two-story, Classical Revival-influenced brick building with bold brick pilasters with masonry detailing on their capitals framing the façade and extending along the west elevation, which faces the railroad tracks. Capitals with masonry detailing crown the pilasters. Phillip Leinwand constructed the building for his "new store," a name that is referenced in later deeds for the property. Later, the building contained a Ford automobile dealership. In 1937 the Occidental Life Insurance Company, which acquired the building after Leinwand went bankrupt, sold it to S.L. Adams Jr., who converted it to a motion picture theater. At that time, the windows on second-floor façade were partially infilled and smaller moderne-influenced windows were installed. When converted to a theater, the original entrance bays were removed and replaced with a central recessed entrance containing a ticket office on one side. This front portion of the building is sheathed in stucco.

14. Shooter's Tailor Shop
103 East Main Street
ca. 1900
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with brick corbelling at its cornice. Sawtooth banding is set in a large recessed and horizontal brick panel below the cornice. Wood covers the original prism glass transom. The new storefront retains the arrangement of the original, but contains metal and glass double-leaf doors and metal-framed display windows. E.M. Hines, who sold the building in 1905 to D.F. McCormick, likely constructed the building. Jim Shooter operated a tailor shop in this building in the early twentieth century. Later, Bond's mens' store was located here.

15. Building
105 East Main Street
1905

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Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with squared brick corbelling at the cornice. Sawtooth banding is set in a large recessed and horizontal brick panel below the cornice. The façade is similar to the building at 103 East Main except for the shape of the corbelling. Wood covers the prism glass transom. Contains two modern storefronts with metal framing, although the open, glazed façade is similar to the original configuration.

Vacant lot (building that stood here was destroyed after 1989)

16. McCormic, Smith, and Company
109 East Main Street
1905
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with brick parapet centered atop a corbelled brick cornice that surmounts a series of stepped brick projections. A row of small recessed square panels set in a recessed horizontal panel is positioned above a later metal awning that shields the storefront. Stamped metal pilasters manufactured by the Chattanooga Roofing and Foundry Company frame the recessed double-leaf entrance containing replacement metal doors. The display windows are metal-framed replacements, but are similar in size to the original. Although Rowland Supply Company, which occupied it for most of the twentieth century, is most closely associated with the building, the original occupant was McCormic, Smith and Company, which went bankrupt in 1908. A quick succession of firms occupied the building before Rowland Supply took over including George Campbell and Son, the McArn Company, and McLaurin Brothers. The building retains the Rowland Supply Company sign that is fastened above the storefront, and a mural advertisement for Coca-Cola that is painted on the east (side) elevation.

- 16A. Rowland Supply Warehouse
in alley behind 109 East Main Street
ca. 1920
Contributing Building

One-story, metal-clad, gable-roofed warehouse on brick foundation piers. An open flat-roofed addition on round wooden poles occupies the north end. Large doors built of diagonal wood are positioned in the middle of the west elevation. Single-leaf doors occupy each elevation. This warehouse stored building supplies and hardware.

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East Main Street/South Side

17. Ward's Pharmacy
118 East Main Street
1905
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with brick parapet centered atop a corbelled brick cornice that surmounts a series of stepped brick projections. A row of recessed square panels set in a recessed horizontal panel is positioned above a later metal awning that shields the storefront. The current storefront configuration closely resembles the original. Dr. Homer Ward established his pharmacy here in 1905. He held patents for "all Healing Antiseptic" and fever and chill medications. Later occupants of the space include Barker Drug, Wall's People Drug, and Curtis Drug Company.

18. Rowland Bargain House
116 East Main Street
1911
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with tile coping surmounting a corbelled cornice. The entrance and flanking windows—all with semi-elliptical transoms—are set in recessed bays topped with sawtooth banding. A fully-glazed door with one sidelight and metal framing replaced the original entrance. Windows on each side of the entrance are metal-framed replacements. Phil Leinwand built this building to house his Rowland Bargain House, a general merchandise store.

19. Rowland Hardware and Supply Company
114 East Main Street
1889
Contributing Building

Two-story, brick building with a cast metal cornice and pilasters manufactured by the Chattanooga Roofing and Foundry Company. Arrangement of door and windows on the storefront is original and includes a double-leaf door and plain transoms over the windows and door. The pediments over the second floor windows are modern additions. The rear elevation serves as a secondary façade and displays segmental arched windows. Later occupants of the building included Rowland Hardware Company (which

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took over Rowland Hardware and Supply in 1923), a Piggly Wiggly grocery, and Park's Food Land.

20. Ward-McArthur Building
112 East Main Street
ca. 1905, ca. 1920
Contributing Building

Two-story, brick building with pilasters with masonry elements at their caps framing the façade. Masonry keystones set in a flat arch surmount the paired 1/1 sash on the second story. The original storefront has been altered by the covering of windows with wood. The rear section of this building is an addition dating to circa 1920 that faces the back alley. It features 2/2 segmental arched windows and a secondary façade composed of a recessed storefront with metal pilasters exhibiting a floral motif at their bases. The windows have been covered with fiberboard. Ward and McArthur operated a store here in the early twentieth century, and John W. Ward owned the building until 1949.

21. Bank of Rowland
110 East Main Street
ca. 1904; ca. 1945; ca. 1965
Noncontributing Building

Two-story, brick building sheathed in stucco. In the 1930s, the façade reflected the influence of the Mediterranean style, most notable in the pent tile roof and ceramic tile decorative elements. Around 1965 the façade was stuccoed and a row of second floor windows was covered. The original large plate glass windows that flanked the entrance were enclosed and covered with tile panels. Metal frames the door and windows at the entrance. Four original bold pilasters that extend from street level to the cornice remain the most prominent remnant of the original façade. A small red brick, flat roofed addition dating from circa 1945 is located on the building's rear. The Southern National Bank took over the building around 1965 and made the changes to the building at that time.

22. J.W. Edgerton Store
108 East Main Street
ca. 1900
Noncontributing Building

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One-story, brick building sheathed in stucco. Bold pilasters similar to those on the former Bank of Rowland frame the façade. The original large plate glass windows that flanked the entrance were enclosed and covered with tile panels. Metal frames the door and windows at the entrance.

23. Oak Valley Furniture Outlet
102 East Main Street
1985
Noncontributing Building

One-story, prefabricated corrugated metal and brick building.

East Railroad Street Intersects

24. Atlantic Coast Line Passenger and Freight Depot (NR, 2001)
West Main Street at West Railroad Street
1925
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with a hipped roof surmounting the passenger area on the north end and a gable roof capping the freight area on the south end. Craftsman-style triangular wooden brackets support the wide, overhanging roof. The 6/6 sash windows have masonry sills and lintels and molded surrounds. In the early 1980s when the Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line railroads merged to form the Seaboard Coast Line system, plans were underway to demolish the depot. A successful effort to transfer ownership to the town led to its preservation and use as a local historic museum.

West Railroad Street Intersects

25. S.L. Adams Grocery and General Store
103 West Main Street
1891
Contributing Building

Two-story, brick building with sawtooth banding beneath the cornice, and eight brick flues protruding from the flat roof on the east elevation. The recessed storefront with its prism glass transom remains largely intact although the display windows have been slightly decreased in size. The 9/1 sash on the upper façade remain intact. Windows on the side elevation have been covered with plywood. A secondary rear façade features

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sawtooth banding below the cornice and partially boarded 1/1 windows. The interior of the second story, which contains rooms for travelers, retains all of its original finishes.

26. Ward-McLaurin Building
105 West Main Street
1925
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with a corbelled cornice and a horizontal recessed panel surmounting the storefront. The original storefront has been partially covered with composite wood and the door and windows are metal-framed replacements. Service bays on the rear elevation have been partially infilled and the center bay fitted with a single-leaf door. Phillip Linewand constructed this building for the Ward-McLaurin Company.

Vacant Lot

27. Building
113 West Main Street
ca. 1970
Noncontributing Building

One-story, brick building with corrugated metal above storefronts with metal-framed windows and doors.

28. H.H. Straughn Building
115 West Main Street
ca. 1922
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with stepped brick cornice. Composite wood covers the upper crown of the building and surrounds the replacement storefront. The façade retains its original configuration of large glazed display windows occupying a majority of the building's front. Henry Straughn owned this property from 1922 to 1939 and used the front of the building as a store and the rear as a grist mill. Later site of Wilson's Five and Ten Cent Store and Wood's Nickel and Dime Store.

29. A.L. Bullock Department Store
117 West Main Street

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Contributing Building

Substantial two-story, brick building with brick corbelling along the cornice and projecting, stepped brick window hoods on the second floor. A band of sawtooth bricks runs horizontally between the first and second floors. The façade is divided into three storefronts by brick pilasters. Windows on the upper story and the east elevation have been bricked in. A.L. Bullock purchased the lots in 1908 and 1909, and constructed the store soon thereafter. In 1934, Ira Lee "Red" Johnson acquired the building and opened the Rowland Motor Company here. Later housed L.H. Martin's car dealership.

Hickory Street/ East Side

30. Garage
East side of Hickory Street, one half block north of West Main Street
ca. 1950, ca. 1970
Contributing Building

One-story, cinderblock building with a front gable roof and double garage doors centered on the façade. A small cinderblock addition dates to ca. 1970 and is located on the building's southeast corner. L. H. Martin, the owner of a car dealership that was located at 117 West Main Street (#29), built this garage to store cars.

31. Garage
East side of Hickory Street, just south of West Main Street
ca. 1947
Contributing Building

One-story, brick building with metal sash windows. Tile coping along flat cornice. Two large garage doors on the front (west elevation). Likely built by Red Johnson as a garage for his car dealership.

32. Former Fire Station
East side of Hickory Street, just south of West Main Street
ca. 1948
Contributing Building

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One-and-half-story, cinder block, side-gabled building with two large bays on the façade, metal frame windows. Used as the town fire station before current station was built in 1957.

West Railroad Street/West Side

33. Rogers Cotton Grading and Buying Station
West side of West Railroad Street, just south of West Main Street
1927
Contributing Building

One-story, blond brick building with a canopy of large arched openings, front parapet, and a flat roof. Built by Tom Rogers and later used as an insurance office.

34. Rolling Milling Company
West side of West Railroad Street, just south of West Main Street
ca. 1940
Contributing Building

One-story, cinderblock building with a gable roof with rafter tails. Windows are partially covered with boards.

- 34A. Storage Building
ca. 1940
Contributing Building

Small, one-story, gable-roofed building sheathed in asphalt siding and standing immediately north of the milling company. Used for storage.

East Railroad Street/ East Side

35. Auto Repair Sales and Storage
East Side of East Railroad Street, just north of East Main Street
Ca. 1910; ca. 1920
Contributing Building

One-story, three-section, brick building. The two northern portions date to ca. 1920, the original section to the south was built around 1910. The center projecting section features a corbelled cornice and three blind round arched bays on its façade. Segmental

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arched doors and windows with flat lintels occupy the rear (east elevation). The northern portion has a central arched-head door. A large garage bay is located on the rear elevation. The southern section appears to be the oldest part and features a large garage bay that has been covered over and boarded windows on the southern elevation. The eastern elevation of this section features a tall flat parapet and a garage bay centered between two boarded-up windows. This building was used to store cars for the Ford dealership that was located at 101 East Main Street. It was later used as a Pepsi-Cola bottling plant.

36. Oliver and Company Warehouse
East Side of East Railroad Street, one half block south of East Main Street
Ca. 1901
Contributing Building

One-story, weatherboard building with a gable front roof. A double-leaf door occupies the center of the façade. Windows on each elevation have been boarded up. A.W. McQueen built the warehouse as storage for his business, D.N. Oliver and Company, which was established on Main Street in 1901 at the site of Oak Valley Furniture (#23). In 1904 John Ward Sr. moved his general mercantile business from Echo to Rowland and into this building. John Ward sold the building in 1949.

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Summary

The Rowland Main Street Historic District in the town of Rowland in Robeson County contains forty buildings and one structure meets National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce, Transportation, and Architecture. Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century brick commercial buildings, small brick and frame warehouses, and a brick depot (NR, 2001) built by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad in 1925 comprise the Rowland Main Street Historic District. The nearly three-block-long district has served as the principal commercial and trade center for this town chartered in 1889 on the Wilson Shortcut Railroad, a branch of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad completed in 1892 that created a direct line from Florence, South Carolina, to the town of Wilson, and bypassed Wilmington. Buildings in the district represent the predominant architectural types and styles executed in small railroad towns in North Carolina's Coastal Plain in the decades just before and after the turn of the twentieth century. The period of significance for the locally significant Rowland Main Street Historic District begins in 1891, the date of construction of the S.L. Adams Grocery at 103 West Main Street and ends in 1954. Although Rowland's businesses continued to operate after 1954, this period is not of exceptional significance, and therefore the period of significance ends with the fifty-year cut-off date for Criterion A. With five of its forty-one resources categorized as noncontributing, the Rowland Main Street Historic District maintains a high degree of integrity.

Historic Background and Transportation and Commerce Context

The late nineteenth century was a period of great building and expansion for railroads in eastern North Carolina. Although lines like the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad had been established before the Civil War, it was not until 1886 that the growing railroad companies improved their ever-expanding networks by converting rails to a standard gauge so that trains could run uninterrupted along the eastern seaboard. New routes intended to connect prime agricultural land with markets gave rise to settlements along their routes that grew into towns brimming and bustling with activity centered on the railroad corridor. Rowland, founded in the heart of the cotton-growing Coastal Plain, clearly illustrates the pattern of town building as a result of railroad expansion.

The town of Rowland was established on the Wilson Shortcut, a line built by the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad to connect Florence, South Carolina, and Wilson, North Carolina. The Wilson Shortcut was built in segments to the north and south of Rowland. A seventy-mile-long portion from Contentnea, a community in Greene County located just south of Wilson, to Fayetteville was built in 1885 and 1886 and placed in operation in October of the latter year. Construction began on a three-mile-long section of the line that stretched from the South Carolina state border to what is now Rowland in 1887. One year later, on October 24, 1888, the first train from the south steamed into southern Robeson County. Construction of the forty-three-mile portion of

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the Wilson Shortcut from Fayetteville to Rowland began in 1890 and the first train from the north rolled into Rowland on October 23, 1892. Once completed, the Wilson Shortcut allowed trains traveling north and south along the eastern seaboard to save sixty miles of travel by bypassing Wilmington much to the disappointment of many of that city's residents and business people who had enjoyed the prosperity the rail line had brought to the port.¹

When the railroad arrived in Robeson County in October of 1888, an auction of town lots took place bringing about the establishment of the town of Rowland. Some time earlier Arch McQueen and a Mr. Edgerton had formed the Southern Land and Improvement Company and purchased eighty acres at the point where the first segment of the Wilson Shortcut terminated—the present-day location of Rowland. R.S. Bond assisted McQueen and Edgerton in clearing trees and laying out the lots, which they auctioned for an average of one hundred dollars each.²

In 1889, the general assembly incorporated Rowland and named Milton Lytch, Giles Robertson, J.W. Webster, D.M.C. Alford, and S.A. Alford as commissioners. In turn, the commissioners elected Lytch as the first mayor. The legislature set the corporate limits at one square mile with Main Street as the center of town.³ Rowland was named in honor of Col. Alfred Rowland II of Lumberton, a Confederate veteran, attorney, and member of the state legislature.⁴

Soon after the arrival of the iron horse, the commercial district began to grow up along the railroad right-of-way. Sometime in the late 1880s a small frame store housing R.S. Bond's general mercantile was built and was the first building in town. It sat on the north side of Main Street, just east of the train tracks. Around 1920, a more substantial—and fireproof—brick building (#13) replaced Bond's store. Giles P. Robertson's frame store on the north side of Main Street and west of Hickory Street—the current site of the Webster Store (#1)—was the second building in town. In 1888-1889 Milton Lytch built the town's third structure—a two-story, frame building housing a retail store on its first level and Lytch's residence above. In 1889, Vernon Pleasants and Dan Cox opened a hardware store (#19) on the south side of Main Street where they sold caskets, hardware, and plants. The business frequently changed ownership, and in 1908 it became Rowland Hardware and Supply Company. Also in 1889, the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad built a board-and-batten freight and passenger depot.⁵

¹ Eugene Musselwhite, "The Iron Horse Comes to Robeson," typescript in the North Carolina State Archives, 1968, 16-17; S. David Carriker, *Railroading in the Carolina Sandhills: Volume 1: The Nineteenth Century (1825-1900)* (Matthews, North Carolina: Heritage Publishing Company, 1985), 102.

² George Reed Pate, *Town of a Thousand Friends* (Bamberg, South Carolina: Kilgus Printing Company, 1989), 3.

³ *Private and Public Laws of North Carolina, 1889*, Chapter 266, p. 1032.

⁴ Pate, 3.

⁵ Pate, 7-8; 45.

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Rowland experienced a period of growth in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In the ten year period from 1890 to 1900, the population went from seventy-two to 357.⁶ During that decade several businesses opened in Rowland to accommodate the families and individuals moving to town. S.L. Adams Sr. opened his grocery and general store (#25) in 1891 in a building just west of the depot. By 1910, the census indicates that he had expanded his business to include "hay and grain."⁷ Adams rented the upstairs rooms in his building to travelers. In 1892 L.L. Ivey opened the Merchants Hotel (#11). A double-tier piazza no longer in place extended along the first and second levels of the hotel's façade.⁸ By 1896, Rowland boasted numerous businesses including eleven general merchandise stores, a drug store, and P.K. and D.H. McDonald's turpentine distillery. W.B. Norment was the town physician.⁹

On May 1, 1900, the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad—including the Wilson Shortcut—became part of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. The consolidation of several southern rail companies created a network of 1,600 miles of main line track that stretched from Richmond and Norfolk in Virginia to Charleston, South Carolina.¹⁰ The absorption of the regional line into one of the nation's most important railroad companies attracted new businesses to Rowland. In 1901, A&W McQueen moved its mercantile from nearby Plainview to Rowland, renamed it D.N. Oliver and Company, and settled into a building on Main Street and just east of the tracks. The building he constructed is no longer standing, but a warehouse (#36) he used for storage stands perpendicular to Main Street and facing the depot.¹¹

Several carpenters and other craftsmen lived in Rowland during this period and may have been responsible for framing and laying the brick for many of the town's commercial buildings. During the first decade of the century, six carpenters—including Luther Taylor, James Cooper, and George Little—lived in Rowland. Maston McNeill and Sidney Dorgan, both African Americans, worked as brick masons. Johnson McNeill made roof shingles.¹²

⁶ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910, Abstract of the Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 582.

⁷ Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Population Schedule (microfilm), North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh.

⁸ Pate, 45-46.

⁹ Levi Branson, A.M., ed. *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1896* (Raleigh: Levi Branson, 1896), 525-528.

¹⁰ Musselwhite, 14; William E. Griffin Jr., *Atlantic Coast Line: Standard Railroad of the South* (Lynchburg, Virginia: TLC Publishing, Inc., 2001), 6.

¹¹ Pate, 47

¹² Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910: Population Schedule (microfilm), State Archives, Raleigh.

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By 1910, the town's population had grown to 787.¹³ In 1912, Rowland's place as a regionally important rail town was somewhat elevated for a time when a section of the Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherfordton Railroad known as the Alma and Little Rock Railroad was extended into town. The line was planned as a means of transporting farm and wood products, but was never completed to Little Rock and eventually folded. The Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad became the Central Carolina Railway before that line was absorbed into the expansive Seaboard Airline Railway network in 1916.¹⁴

The period from 1920 to the beginning of World War II was one of moderate growth in Rowland. The population went from 767 at the beginning of this period to 999 by 1940.¹⁵ The widespread popularity of the automobile led to the opening of at least one gas station by 1920—a Standard Oil franchise that was located at the corner of Main Street and Bond Street (present-day U.S. 301). Around the same time, a Ford dealer was established in Rowland selling automobiles that were delivered by railroad boxcar. Additional businesses opened in the one- and two-story buildings along Main and adjacent streets. In 1923, Wiley Rowland McKellar, Angus McKellar, Frank McKellar, and V.G. Pleasants of the Rowland Hardware Company bought out two other hardware concerns in town and located their new business on East Main Street (#19). C.H. Meyers opened a popular meat market in 1923. During the first half of the 1920s, Phillip Lineward built a commercial building (#26) on West Main Street that housed the Ward-McLaurin Company, a general merchandise store. In 1934, Ira Lee "Red" Johnson opened a Chevrolet dealership in the building (#29) on West Main Street that had been constructed by A.L. Bullock around 1909. Johnson became one of the most successful car dealers in the region. Around 1927, Charlie Bethea established a small A&P Grocery in a building (#10) on West Main Street. In 1931 Adolph Blum started the Blum Department Store in the building that had been constructed in 1892 as the Merchants Hotel (#11). The store remained in the Blum family for several decades. Despite the economic devastation of the Great Depression, the Bank of Rowland opened in 1932 with Dr. George Pate as president. S.L. Adams opened the Rowland Theater in 1937 in a building (#13) constructed about 1920 by Phillip Lineward.¹⁶

Well before the construction of Interstate 95 in the early 1960s, Rowland benefited from its location on a major north-south running highway that extended from Delaware to Florida. By 1933 when U.S. 301 was completed through Rowland, it brought the motoring public through

¹³ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census*, 582.

¹⁴ Pate, 3.

¹⁵ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population, Volume I, Number and Distribution of Inhabitants* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1931), 795; United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population, Volume I, Number of Inhabitants* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1942), 779.

¹⁶ Pate, 63-73

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the heart of the town. Merchants and others were quick to capitalize on the influx of travelers. The Hotel Henry, which stood on the north side of East Main Street facing U.S. 301, welcomed tourists and business travelers and advertised "chicken dinner every day." In the early 1940s, merchants encouraged tourists to stay in Rowland by offering such incentives as two-for-one tickets at the Rowland Theater and a twenty-percent discount at the local dry cleaner. Motorists who stayed at the Henry Hotel received a ten-percent discount at the town's garages and free towing within a twenty-mile radius of Rowland.¹⁷

Three hundred and seventy-six men and women from Rowland served in World War II. On the home front, war bonds were sold in town and residents set out victory gardens and participated in food and gasoline rationing. Improvements were made all over town during this period. In the 1940s, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad undertook a rehabilitation and modernization of its rail lines, including the replacement of tracks with a heavier-grade rail. This work was completed along the east coast by 1952.¹⁸ Around 1948, the Town of Rowland built a fire station in a concrete block building (#32) located on Hickory Street, just off Main Street. In 1957, the fire station relocated to a building on West Main Street (#2). Increased traffic along U.S. 301 after World War II led to the opening of additional businesses to cater to travelers. Thad McCormick and Preston McArthur opened the M&M Motel on U.S. 301 in the late 1940s. L.H. Martin established a Texaco station on the highway in 1949.¹⁹ By 1950, Rowland's population stood at 1,293.²⁰

In 1960, 1,408 people lived in Rowland.²¹ In 1962, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad removed one set of the double railroad tracks that ran through town. On July 1, 1967, two former rival railroad companies, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad and the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, merged to form the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad.²²

Architecture Context

Rowland, like numerous towns across North Carolina, owes its existence to the railroad. Before the completion of the first segment of the Wilson Shortcut, a part of the Wilmington and Weldon

¹⁷ Carl Goerch, "Robeson County," *The State* 9 (September 27, 1941): 4

¹⁸ Griffin, 12.

¹⁹ Pate, 145.

²⁰ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population, General Population Characteristics, North Carolina* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 33/17.

²¹ United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Population, 1960, North Carolina: General Population Characteristics* (Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 35/69.

²² Musselwhite, 14; Griffin, 23.

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Railroad, the nearest communities to what is now Rowland were Plainview and Alfordsville, both situated to the west. When the first train from Florence, South Carolina, completed its journey on the initial segment of the Wilson Shortcut in October 1888, lots at the line's terminus were surveyed and auctioned and a town was born. By the time the northern link was completed from Fayetteville in 1890, development in Rowland was underway.

The first commercial buildings constructed in Rowland were one- and two-story, frame, wood-sided stores erected in the late 1880s on Main Street and in close proximity to the depot, a combination freight and passenger station built in 1889. The earliest buildings were simple, utilitarian edifices erected quickly in order to take advantage of the business generated by the new rail line. Only one wooden building from Rowland's early history remains. The Oliver and Company Warehouse (#36), built circa 1901, is a one-story, weatherboard building with a gable front roof. A double-leaf door occupies the center of the façade. The warehouse was built as storage for D.N. Oliver and Company, which established a store on Main Street in 1901 at the current site of Oak Valley Furniture. In 1904 John Ward Sr. moved his general mercantile business from Echo to Rowland and into this building, which he owned until 1949.

Like the first commercial buildings, the depot was built of readily available wood, which for this prominent building had been fashioned into board-and-batten siding. It featured twin waiting rooms, offices, and storage areas, all under a broad overhanging roof supported with flaring cornice brackets.²³

Rowland's wooden buildings became inadequate by the end of the century as the threat of fire loomed. Although a few wooden buildings, such as D.N. Oliver & Company, went up on Main Street in the last decade of the century, gleaming, new brick buildings came to symbolize Rowland's promise for the future. Leading town figures like L.L. Ivey, who built the Merchants Hotel (#11) of brick in 1892, championed the use of brick for commercial buildings for its fireproof qualities, but also as an outward display of the town's optimism just before the turn of the century. Small towns like Rowland looked to larger cities like Lumberton and Fayetteville with their gleaming downtown districts containing brick buildings standing shoulder to shoulder and saw the progress the railroad could bring.

Brick buildings in Rowland from the last decade of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century are typically one- or two-stories in height, almost always displaying a corbelled cornice and sawtooth banding, and frequently exhibiting segmental arched windows. The S.L. Adams Grocery and General Store (#25) dating to 1891 typifies the earliest brick buildings in town. The two-story building displays two facades—one facing Main Street and the other on the

²³ Edward F. Turberg, Rowland Depot National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, 2001.

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rear elevation where farmers loaded feed and seed into their wagons. Both facades feature sawtooth banding beneath their cornices. Projecting brick belt courses above and below the second floor windows extend along each elevation. Like many of the earliest buildings in Rowland, the second story contains rooms for travelers and other short-term occupants.

The most decorative buildings in Rowland from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries display metal storefronts. As small towns began to grow, merchants believed that impressive buildings would attract customers. But few storeowners could afford to construct the types of buildings that were going up in cities like Raleigh or Wilmington where wealthier urban businessmen could afford cast iron fronts with which to create an elaborate setting for their concerns. Small town shopkeepers like those in Rowland turned to a less costly version—stamped metal fronts manufactured from galvanized sheet iron. These stamped metal fronts achieved their greatest popularity across the country between 1880 and 1910 when a merchant could cloak his store with intricate designs simulating carved stone and wood for only a few hundred dollars. The Chattanooga Roofing and Foundry Company, like the more well-known Mesker Brothers of St. Louis, distributed catalogs offering inexpensive, fireproof ready-to-assemble store fronts. Once the merchant had chosen the desired style, he typically sent the company a plan of his building including dimensions of height and width, window openings, and door position. Shipped by railroad freight car, the manufactured fronts arrived at their destinations accompanied by complete instructions for assembling and applying the pieces to the building.

One of the most intact metal front buildings in Rowland is People's Hardware and Furniture (#4). Built in 1908, the two-story, blond brick building exhibits an overhanging metal cornice composed of a continuous band of wide, plain brackets, modillion blocks, and corner curved and fluted brackets with nail-head square panels—all composed of sheet metal. Cast metal arched hoods with keystones surmount the second floor windows. On the Main Street elevation, the west storefront has been partially infilled with red brick veneer, but retains its prism glass transom. The east storefront retains its metal pilasters, but the transom has been covered with composite wood.

Builders also used color and decorative brickwork to distinguish their buildings. Constructed in 1902, the Rowland Drug Company (#8) is a prominent, two-story edifice with a buff brick façade and side and rear elevations of red brick. A corbelled cornice surmounts a band of recessed, horizontal panels at the upper level of the storefront. Flat lintels laid in soldier course brick top a row of nine windows—all covered with boards, but retaining their original sash—that extends along the second story just beneath and above decorative brick stepping. Most notable is a centrally-located arched-head entrance with voussoirs and vertical and projecting brick bands. A single-leaf door with a lunette transom leads to the second floor where professionals once kept offices. Brick round arched bays, which have been enclosed, and corbelling distinguish the Auto

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Repair Sales and Storage building (#35) on East Railroad Street. Used to store cars for a nearby Ford dealership, the building was later converted for use as a Pepsi-Cola bottling plant.

Most downtown buildings of the early twentieth century generally followed a standard Commercial Style in North Carolina. One exception in many small towns was banks, which adopted the classical vault form in order to project an image of strength and stability to customers and potential depositors. The entrance to the 1911 Merchants and Farmers Bank (#9) is situated between a pair of two-story projections with heavy quoins that support capitals and a flat fascia. A prominent cornice with a row of oversized block modillions surmounts the bank's facade.

Into the 1920s, buildings located in small downtown business districts reflected the influence of many styles, most notably the classical revival. The Leinwand Building (#13), built around 1920, is a two-story, brick building with bold brick pilasters with masonry detailing on their capitals framing the facade and extending along the west elevation, which faces the railroad tracks. The circa 1920 Kheiralla Brothers Store (#3) also exhibits bold pilasters at its front corners, but is enhanced with diamond-shaped masonry decorative elements at the upper facade. Further distinguishing the two-story, red brick building is its stepped front parapet whose crown is flanked with masonry volutes. In 1927 Tom Rogers built a small blond brick building on West Railroad Street, which he used as a cotton grading and buying station (#33). Facing the depot where cotton could be loaded onto rail cars, the station features a canopy with large arched openings and a flat roof.

During World War I, when the country's railroads, including the Atlantic Coast Line, were put under government control, few improvements were made to their infrastructure. The end of the war signaled a period of intensive upgrading. The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad installed double tracks along its system from Jacksonville to Richmond and in Rowland, the company built a new brick depot (#24) in 1925 as part of a network-wide construction campaign.²⁴ While commercial buildings in downtown followed the classical idiom, Rowland's new depot took on elements of the popular Craftsman style. A hipped roof surmounts the passenger area on the north side of the one-story, brick building, while a gable roof caps the freight area on the south end. Craftsman-style triangular wood brackets support the wide, overhanging roof.

Little building took place along Main Street during the mid-twentieth century, although a few auxiliary buildings sprung up in the service alleys and on secondary streets in the commercial area. Around 1950 L.H. Martin, who owned a car dealership on Main Street, built a garage (#30) to store cars. The one-story, cinderblock building features a front gable roof and double garage doors centered on the facade.

²⁴ Griffin, 10.

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Rowland's Main Street Historic District remains one of the most intact, railroad-centered commercial areas in southeastern North Carolina. Comparable historic districts in the region include the Maxton Historic District (NR, 1999) in the town of Maxton, also located in Robeson County. The district contains a mix of commercial, residential, institutional, and rail-related resources dating from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1940s. Maxton owes its origins to the Wilmington, Charlotte, and Rutherford Railroad, which came through in 1862.

Red Springs, also in Robeson County, grew up along the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad. Incorporated in 1896, the town contains a small commercial district of one-and two-story brick buildings surrounded by historic residential neighborhoods.

Tabor City, in nearby Columbus County, was settled in the mid-nineteenth century. Saw mills, turpentine concerns, and merchandise stores operated during the period. The community received a boost when, in 1886, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad arrived. By the early twentieth century, tobacco was driving the local economy, accompanied by truck farming. Sweet potatoes, or yams, were a major product in the 1930s, leading Tabor City to earn the title "Yam Capital of the World." Tabor City's development centered on the railroad for much of the twentieth century. Along Main, Railroad, and surrounding streets, a few two-story brick buildings were constructed among the mostly one-story brick shops. Upper facades of the two-story buildings have been altered, while the one-story buildings feature metal awnings.

In Duplin County, where several towns grew up along the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad, Wallace (NR, 1995) retains the most extensive collection of railroad-related buildings including a circa 1920 depot, a frame building with a distinctive bellcast roof. Located in southern Duplin County, Wallace's Main Street features rows of handsome, brick commercial buildings primarily from the early twentieth century. Typical elements include low parapet or flat roofs, belt courses, and design elements cast in masonry.

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Geographical Data

UTM References (continued)

5	Zone	17
	Easting	656550
	Northing	3822720

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary for the Rowland Main Street Historic District is shown as the bold, dark line on the accompanying Robeson County tax map that is drawn at a scale of 1"=100'.

Boundary Justification

The boundary for the Rowland Main Street Historic District includes the significant concentration of historic commercial resources in the town of Rowland.

**Rowland Main Street
Historic District
Rowland, Robeson County, NC**

-  Contributing Resources
-  Noncontributing Resources
-  Vacant Lot

north
↑

Photograph directions are keyed to map
Map created from Robeson County Tax Maps

1 inch = 100 feet



