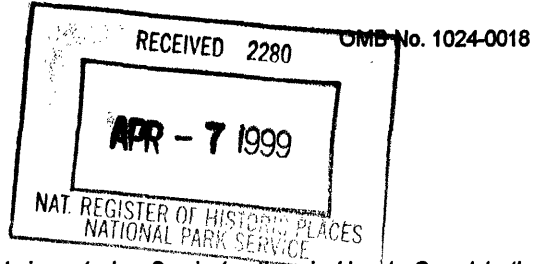


**United States Department of the Interior
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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM**



cover

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

HISTORIC RESOURCES OF LEE COUNTY, 1881-1950

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

- I. EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF LEE COUNTY, 1881-1895
- II. AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION, 1896-1918
- III. FLORIDA LAND BOOM, 1919-1927
- IV. GREAT DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR II, 1928-1945
- V. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM, 1887-1950

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Stephen Olausen/Sherry Piland/Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist


organization Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation date March 1999

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

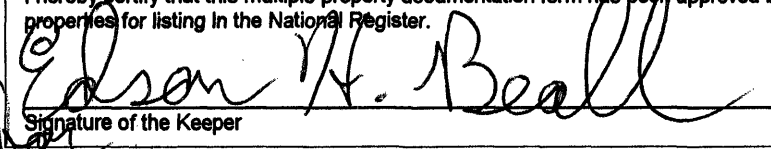
D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

 Date 3/30/99
 Signature and title of certifying official

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
 State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

 Date of Action 5/5/1999
 Signature of the Keeper

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E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

SUMMARY

The Multiple Property submission, Historic Resources of Lee County, fulfills Criteria A, B, and C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The properties have significance for their association with events and persons locally significant in the areas of architecture, agriculture, exploration/settlement, community planning and development, engineering, ethnic heritage, entertainment/recreation, commerce, industry, politics/government, religion, military, social history, transportation, and education. Properties eligible for listing under this cover were constructed between 1881 and 1950, and fall under five contexts: I. Early Development of Lee County, 1881-1895; II. Agricultural and Industrial Expansion, 1896-1918; III. Florida Land Boom, 1919-1927; IV. The Great Depression and World War II, 1928-1945; and V. Historic Development of the Lee County School System, 1887-1950.

I. The Early Development of Lee County, 1881-1895

Although Lee County has a rich legacy of prehistoric Indian occupation that dates to about 6,500 B.C., recorded permanent settlement of the area did not occur until the mid-nineteenth century. Development of the interior of the state during Florida's early statehood period (1845-1860) largely depended on the ability of the government to convey public lands to private ownership in a way that would benefit the state as a whole. In 1850, the federal government ceded nearly 10 million acres of wetlands, primarily in the southern half of the peninsula, to the state of Florida for the purpose of drainage and reclamation. In 1851, the Florida Legislature created the Internal Improvement Board to manage the newly acquired state lands. Three years later the trustees of the Board recommended that the state government offer large parcels of these lands to private corporations, as an incentive for constructing railroads. In 1855, the legislature created the Internal Improvement Fund to financially assist companies undertaking approved railroad and canal building projects. In the case of railroads, the Board might issue bonds up to \$10,000 a mile for the purchase of rails and rolling stock, and for the construction of bridges and trestles, once the railroad grade had been constructed and cross-ties laid. The bonds were a lien on the assets of the companies.

Florida's contributions to the Confederacy during the Civil War threw the fund into debt, and state law declared that no land could be sold until the debt was cleared. Throughout the Reconstruction Era, the IITF trustees sought investors who could help clear the debt in return for

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some of the land the state held. In 1881, Hamilton Disston, a Philadelphia steel magnate and saw manufacturer, negotiated with the IITF for the purchase of 4 million acres of land for \$1 million. Known historically as the Disston Purchase, that transaction included an area that ranged from Tarpon Springs south to Fort Myers and west to Lake Tohopekaliga. In addition to his 4 million acres, Disston was granted a franchise to drain lands in the southern interior of the peninsula, for which he would receive half of the reclaimed land.

The Disston Purchase ushered in a new period of development in the Florida interior. With the IITF debt cleared, the state was able to attract railroad developers by offering large land subsidies in return for track construction. The ensuing three decades marked the golden age of Florida's railroad development. New towns and cities sprang up rapidly along the rail lines, as newcomers came to previously uninhabited portions of the interior with dreams of making fortunes in citrus, vegetable, and cattle production.

By 1880, a cluster of homesteads had been established around Fort Myers, which had been constructed as an outpost during the Second Seminole War (1835-1841). Because of its location near the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River, Fort Myers was chosen as the Gulf coast outlet in Disston's plan to drain the Everglades Swamp and open a navigable waterway to his headquarters at Kissimmee on Lake Tohopekaliga. To do this, canals were to be dug from the head of the Caloosahatchee to Lakes Bonnet, Hicpochee, and Okeechobee. At the same time, a channel connecting Lakes Tohopekaliga, Cypress, and Kissimmee was to be opened to link with the Kissimmee River, which feeds into Lake Okeechobee. Disston envisioned steam ships descending the Mississippi River, then traveling along the Gulf coast, ascending the Caloosahatchee River into Lake Okeechobee, and continuing up the Kissimmee River to the new Kissimmee City "rising like magic in the wilderness of tropical verdure."

A large steam dredge began work on the first stage of the operation in September 1881, and by August 1883, the channel from the Caloosahatchee River to Lake Okeechobee was opened. Disston invited a group of friends, politicians, and newspapermen to Fort Myers for the maiden voyage on the canal, generating a significant amount of favorable publicity for his venture. Motivated by the press articles, curious tourists, adventure seekers, and prospective settlers began arriving at Fort Myers in increasing numbers.

By 1885, Fort Myers was a thriving village of 350 people, making it the largest town on Florida's Gulf coast south of Tampa. Prospects for continued growth were heightened by the arrival of Thomas Alva Edison, Fort Myers' most famous resident. Having spent several

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unusually cold and dreary months in St. Augustine in the winter of 1894-1895, Edison was attracted to Fort Myers' ideal winter climate. He eventually purchased a thirteen acres estate where he erected two houses and a laboratory (NR 1991). His choice of Fort Myers as a winter residence brought prestige to the community and helped spread its fame throughout the country. Other prominent men—including industrialists Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone—also constructed winter residences in the community.

While Fort Myers received most of the new settlers during the 1880s, the interior areas of Lee County, especially along the Caloosahatchee River, were also popular destinations for newcomers. Large plantations were established by farmers who raised a variety of crops, including citrus, coconuts, pineapples, and sugar cane. An experimental agricultural station was established by Dr. L.C. Washburn at East Fort Myers in 1882. The banks of Twelve Mile Creek were lined with the farms of some of the early settlers of Fort Myers who had chosen to leave the village to homestead. A few miles to the east, Dennis O. Hickey established a plantation that raised cabbage, eggplant, and squash along a creek that now bears his name.

In 1883, the town of Alva was established about 20 miles upriver from the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River on a 160 acre homestead owned by Danish immigrant Peter Nelson. The town site platted by Nelson in 1892 had a 100-foot wide main street and several narrower intersecting side streets. Nelson reserved land for schools, churches, and two parks.

Nelson also founded the community of Olga, located on the south bank of the river a few miles east of Alva. Like Alva, its primary industry was citrus production. It experienced its most significant period of historic development during the early twentieth century. Many of the resources that date from the historic period are extant, including several large farmhouses, the Olga School, and several utility buildings.

The community of Buckingham, located on the Orange River south of State Road 80, was founded in 1884 by Edward Marshall Williams. A native of Pennsylvania, Williams established a citrus grove, planted vegetables, and grazed cattle on his homestead before the great freeze of 1894 dampened his enthusiasm for farming, causing him to move to Fort Myers. Other settlers who followed Williams to the area surrounding present-day Buckingham remained to continue farming and raising cattle.

Estero, located fourteen miles south of Fort Myers was the homestead of Gustave Damkohler, who came to Lee County with his wife and children from Missouri in 1882. In 1894,

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Damkohler gave 160 acres of land to Dr. Cyrus Teed, a mystic and visionary who founded the Koreshan Unity religious sect. In addition to the land he received from Damkohler, Teed purchased over 1,000 acres of land on which he established a commune (Koreshan Unity Settlement Historic District, NR 1976). The thirty original buildings, of which twenty still survive, included residences, dormitories, an auditorium, bakery, and other resources jointly owned by the religious community, which went into decline after Teed's death in 1908.

Braxton B. Comer purchased a large tract of land near present-day Bonita Springs and constructed fifty cabins to house black workers he brought down from Alabama to work his pineapple, banana, and coconut groves.

One of the earliest settlers of the town of Iona was Donald Bain, a native of Scotland. He named the area after Iona Island in the Inner Hebrides, located off Scotland's west coast. In 1882, he homesteaded a tract of land on the Caloosahatchee River, located about four miles east of the town of Punt Rassa. During the late nineteenth century, the major crop grown in the vicinity of Iona was pineapples.

The coastal islands of Lee County also experienced a significant amount of settlement during the early 1880s. About twenty homesteads were established on Captiva and Sanibel Islands, while the southern tip of Pine Island was purchased by a group of New York investors, who founded the town of "St. James on the Gulf." By 1886, the group had constructed a hotel, a number of houses, and a 600-foot pier at what is now know as St. James City. The initial settlement of Gasparilla Island began in the late 1870s, and the first subdivision on the island was platted in 1897 by Albert Gilchrist, a Punt Gorda politician who later served as governor of Florida.

Useppa Island in Pine Island Sound was the site of one the largest known prehistoric villages of the Calusa Indians and was also the site of a Cuban fishing camp that dates to the 1830s. The island was purchased in the 1890s by John M. Roach, founder of the Chicago Street Railway Company, for the construction of a large winter estate.

The growth of the population of Fort Myers during the 1880s resulted in important political changes for the community and the county. In August 1885, the residents of the settlement voted to incorporate as a town. They elected a mayor and seven councilmen, who were given the power to levy taxes to make improvements to the town. Sentiment was also growing for the creation a new county, separate from Monroe County, that would better serve the

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needs of residents of the Caloosahatchee River region. The seat of Monroe County, a sprawling jurisdiction covering most of southwest Florida, was the distant island city of Key West. The movement for separation gained momentum in 1886, when a plea for a new school house at Fort Myers was unceremoniously declined by Monroe County officials. A group of prominent citizens, led by several powerful cattlemen from Fort Myers, petitioned the Florida Legislature to create a new county to be named in honor of Confederate general Robert E. Lee. Lee County was formally established in May 1887, and included the areas comprising present-day Hendry and Collier Counties.

Settlement of Lee County was dramatically slowed by several events occurring in the late 1880s and early 1890s. A yellow fever epidemic broke out in Key West in the summer of 1887. Ports along the Gulf coast, including those in Lee County, immediately established quarantine regulations that refused entry to ships from Key West and Tampa. Although the quarantine was lifted in November of the same year, the damage to the tourist trade in Lee County was significant. Many visitors who had annually spent their winters in Fort Myers stayed home that year, and some never came again.

Another setback that occurred was the gradual dissipation of the Disston Empire. Beginning in the late 1880s, Disston had trouble convincing state officials that his dredging and canal building operations were progressing satisfactorily. The state asserted that the company's claims to the amount of land supposedly drained were greatly exaggerated. In an 1888 compromise, Disston agreed to resume dredging some areas, a process that was largely completed by the mid-1890s. The work, however, resulted in no appreciable land reclamation, and the waterways he intended to open for navigation were impassable to all but small, shallow-draft vessels. Disston's dream of Fort Myers as a bustling "gateway to the Gulf" was never realized.

During the nation-wide financial crisis known as the Panic of 1893 Disston experienced a severe shortage of funds that ultimately brought his dredging and land reclamation efforts to a halt. In 1894, his heavy investment in Central Florida citrus cultivation was wiped out by the Great Freeze of 1894-1895. The loss of his fortune, and his prospects for the future bleak, Hamilton Disston committed suicide in 1896. The economic depression and devastating freeze marked the end of Lee County's first period of development. The markets for Florida's winter vegetables, citrus, and other agricultural products dried up. The economic situation brought development to a virtual halt. The situation for most of the state even worsened in 1896, when a second devastating freeze again destroyed Florida's crops of vegetables and killed citrus trees. Lee County, however, fared somewhat better. Although the county's winter vegetables were

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ruined by temperatures that dipped below the freezing mark, its citrus trees escaped serious damage. Having learned that the trees had survived the frost, many growers from further north came to the area in search of land on which to establish new groves and ushered in a period of renewed development for Lee County.

II. Agricultural and Industrial Expansion, 1896-1918

Lee County's second period of development was ignited by the expansion of its citrus industry. Before the two statewide freezes, the cultivation of citrus formed only a relatively small part of the county's economic base. The world-wide demand for Florida oranges and grapefruit soon began to outstrip the available supply and prices rose dramatically. The owners of existing groves redoubled their efforts in caring for their trees and planted new ones on any available land. The profitability of citrus growing began to attract outside investment, causing Lee County grove lands to sell at double or triple their pre-freeze value. Citrus production in the Caloosahatchee region increased rapidly through the remainder of the decade. The number of boxes of fruit shipped from the county rose from 15,000 in 1896 to over 75,000 during the winter of 1899-1900. By 1919, the annual income from the county's citrus products was well over one million dollars.

Other agricultural pursuits began to affect the county's economic situation. Farmers on the coastal islands experimented in the growing of tropical fruits, such as mangos, coconuts, and bananas, while truck farming revived on the mainland. Also, the once profitable beef cattle industry—which had been flagging since the 1870s due to competition from the southwestern states—experienced a brief, but highly profitable, resurgence as a result of the Spanish-American War of 1898. After the United States wrested Cuba from Spain, the demand for Florida beef soared. Within a few months after the cessation of hostilities, the price of a steer doubled. Punta Rassa, located south of Fort Myers near the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River, which had been one of the county's major cattle shipping points until the decline experienced in the 1870s, once again began to ship large numbers of Florida cattle. Over 2,700 head were shipped from the port in a single day in 1900. Even after the occupying U.S. military forces withdrew from Cuba, the demand for beef remained strong. Land that had been reclaimed through the dredging project initiated by Hamilton Disston began to attract cattlemen to southern Florida. Further reclamation projects undertaken during Florida's Progressive Era (1900-1916) greatly expanded the amount of range land on which to graze cattle. The income generated by sale of large numbers of beef

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cattle rejuvenated the economy of Lee County sparked a building boom in Fort Myers and contributed greatly to the improvement of the city's infrastructure.

The growth of tourism was also a significant factor in the development of Lee County during the late 1890s and early 1900s. The climate, beaches, and opportunities for sport—particularly fishing—brought an increasing number of visitors to county each year. Game fishing became a major draw after 1885, when an angler staying at Punt Rassa landed the first tarpon ever recorded to be caught with rod and reel. The feat was publicized in nationally circulated sporting magazines. During the 1890s, the number of tourist hotels increased rapidly on the coastal islands and near the beaches on the mainland. In 1898, Hugh O'Neill, a New York department store owner, opened the fifty room Fort Myers Hotel and promoted it by extensive advertising in magazines and newspapers in major cities in the northeast. He also hired a publicist to report on the fishing and hunting exploits of prominent visitors and send news of their successes to their hometown newspapers.

The most persistent obstacle to extensive settlement of Lee County was its lack of adequate transportation facilities. Most settlers and visitors to the area arrived by one of three means. The overland route consisted of a deeply-rutted sand trail that ran from Fort Meade and Fort Winder in Central Florida to the one or more points on the Caloosahatchee River where one could take a paddlewheel steamer to Fort Myers. A person could also travel to Fort Myers by schooner or steamship from New Orleans, Mobile, Pensacola, or Cedar Key. Beginning in 1887, visitors could take a train as far south as Punta Gorda, then the southern terminus of Henry Plant's rail system, and then travel overland or by steamer the remaining distance to the Caloosahatchee region.

Transportation improvements during the first two decades of the twentieth century greatly improved the economic prospects of the county and the city of Fort Myers. Local officials lobbied successfully for the extension of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad (ACL) from Punta Gorda in neighboring Charlotte County to Fort Myers. The first train arrived amid great local ceremony in 1904. The construction of track linking Fort Myers with other communities in Lee County greatly facilitated the shipment of the area's agricultural products to northern markets and made the Caloosahatchee region more accessible to tourists and prospective settlers.

The rail system aided the growth of the timber industry in the county. Beginning about 1906, large stands of pine trees were harvested and made into lumber at nearby sawmills. Some

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of the timber was carried to the mills via temporary railroad spurs constructed into the forested areas of the county and then shipped to the central transportation point in Fort Myers. Lumber was also carried by barge on the Caloosahatchee River to the docks at Fort Myers. Sawmills were set up throughout the county, the most notable ones being located in the communities of Upcohall, Slater, and East Fort Myers.

Improved rail facilities also fostered the expansion of the county's farming and fishing industries, opening new markets by enabling products to be shipped cheaply and efficiently. Winter vegetable growing in the southern and eastern portions of the county increased rapidly, because farmers no longer had to pay extra freight charges to get their crops to Punta Gorda, which had been the railhead prior to the arrival of the railroad in Fort Myers in 1904. Commercial fishing had been carried on in the coastal waters and bays of southwest Florida since colonial times but before the arrival of the railroad it had had little effect on the economy of Lee County because the fish were not processed locally. By 1911, crates of fish packed in salt or ice were being shipped by rail from Fort Myers on a regular basis.

The steamboat transportation business continued to prosper even after the arrival of the railroad. Steamboats and ferries were the only means of transportation between Fort Myers and the growing number of settlements on the nearby coastal islands and along the banks of the Caloosahatchee River and its tributaries. Water transportation also played an important role in the brief land boom touched off by a land reclamation project, initiated in 1909, that saw the dredging and draining of thousands of acres of state-owned swamp land in the nearby Everglades. The reclaimed land was offered for sale to real estate promoters to pay for the cost of the project. Improvements to existing canals and river channels in the Caloosahatchee River basin provided access to the interior of the county by larger steamboats.

The county's existing roads were improved and new ones were constructed to accommodate the growing amount of automobile traffic. At the urging of the residents in Alva and Olga, a bridge was constructed over the Caloosahatchee River at Olga to provide for a road to connect with the Dixie Highway which was being constructed down the west coast of the state. Between 1912 and 1917, a dirt-surfaced roadway was constructed that linked the Caloosahatchee River region with the DeSoto County town of Arcadia, located about 50 miles to the north. About the same time, construction was completed on an asphalt-surfaced highway that ran from Buckingham through LaBelle (now in Hendry County) to Palm Beach County. It was also at this period that McGregor Boulevard, one of Fort Myers' most important traffic arteries was constructed from the railroad station in Fort Myers to Punta Rassa.

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The most important of the county's historic thoroughfares, Tamiami Trail, was conceived in 1915. The highway was to run south from Tampa along the Gulf coast to present-day Naples and continue east across the Florida peninsula to Miami. In 1915, Lee County voters approved a bond issue to finance construction of that portion of the highway between Fort Myers and Naples. Work on the project was delayed, first while engineers wrestled with the problem of constructing a road through the swampy Everglades and then by the outbreak of World War I, which necessitated postponement of the project until the conflict ended.

As a result of the ongoing improvements in transportation facilities, the county's agricultural and industrial bases continued to expand, sparking a further increase in settlement. Lee County's population grew from 1,906 in 1900 to 9,540 in 1920. The town of Fort Myers accounted for more than a third of this growth, seeing an increase in population from 943 to 3,678 over this twenty year period. Other significant areas of settlement included the river towns of Alva, Olga, and Buckingham located in the eastern section of the county and the communities of Iona and Estero, found south of Fort Myers.

Alva became the county's leading center of citrus production shortly after the beginning of the twentieth century. The Alva Citrus Growers Association was formed in 1910, and Valencia oranges grown in the area in 1915 fetched a record price in New York City. In 1919, one-third of the county's citrus production came from an area within a five mile radius of the Alva community. At its height, during the historic period, the town contained a general store, a hotel, several churches, a library, and a post office. A number of these buildings, plus several early vernacular residences, are still standing.

Iona, located between Fort Myers and Punta Rassa, developed after the beginning of the twentieth century as one of the mainland's most important truck farming centers. Raising vegetables in the area did not become popular until Dr. Franklin Miles purchased several thousand acres southwest of Fort Myers and began to experiment with the raising of various hybrid vegetables. Miles was the founder of Elkhart Laboratories, a nationally important pharmaceutical company, located at Elkhart, Indiana. He became intrigued with the potential that the land around Iona had for raising winter vegetables. He began a series of experiments to determine what crops grew best and how to combat insect pests and plant diseases. The experiments led to better land and crop management practices, making Miles one of the foremost authorities on agriculture in South Florida. He established an agricultural school and taught local farmers how to prepare soil for planting, apply fertilizer, and protect their vegetables from destructive insects and fungi.

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Because of his teaching activities, Iona growers regularly surpassed the vegetable output of farms on nearby Sanibel and Captiva Islands.

The coastal islands of Lee County began to see significant development during the early twentieth century. The town of Boca Grande, on Gasparilla saw little development until it was chosen as the terminus of the Charlotte Harbor and Northern Railroad (CHN). The rail line was constructed by Peter Bradley, whose family owned the Bradley Fertilizer Works at Weymouth, Massachusetts. At the turn of the century, they organized the American Agricultural Chemical Company (AAC) to exploit the vast reserves of phosphate found around the Bartow/Fort Meade area of Central Florida. Originally, the phosphate was transported by barge down the Peace River to the mouth of Charlotte Harbor where it was loaded on ships bound for U.S. and international ports. Rail transportation replaced river barges by the early twentieth century, and in 1909, Peter Bradley decided to extend the rail line to the south end of Gasparilla Island, which provided a better location for the construction of a deep-water port than any point on the mainland. A causeway was constructed linking the north end Gasparilla Island and the mainland via several smaller intervening islands, thereby making it unnecessary for the line to cross large sections of open water. The line then ran south, down the long and narrow spine of the island to the rail yards and phosphate loading dock at the south end. The terminus was completed in 1911.

To oversee real estate development on the island, the Boca Grande Land Company was established as a corporate subsidiary of the AAC, with Albert Gilchrist serving as president. Landscape architect Carl R. Parker was hired to lay out the grounds of the existing Gasparilla Inn hotel and design a plan for tropical plantings along the major streets. In 1912, the company hired Tampa architect Francis J. Kennard to produce plans to enlarge the original inn into a large resort hotel. The company also constructed a school, a railroad depot for passengers and freight, a casino, golf course, and a number of residences. These improvements prompted further real estate development, and the community soon became popular with winter tourists. A number of resources dating from this era still remain, including the Gasparilla Inn, a number of bungalows built by the land development company, and the Charlotte Harbor and Northern Railway Depot (NR 1979).

In 1911, New York City advertising magnate Barron C. Collier purchased Useppa Island for \$100,000 and developed the estate as the Collier Inn. The inn played host to a number of prominent guests, including: former president Theodore Roosevelt, future president Herbert Hoover, author Zane Grey, heavyweight boxing champion Gene Tunney, and Hollywood stars Mae West, Hedy Lamarr, Shirley Temple, and Gloria Swanson.

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The steady growth that characterized Lee County's second period of growth was interrupted in 1917 when the United States entered World War I. With the groundwork laid during the period in the areas of transportation, town building, and agricultural and industrial expansion, the county was well-positioned to participate in the astonishing pace of development that occurred throughout the state of Florida during the 1920s.

III. The Florida Land Boom, 1919-1927

Throughout its history, Florida has experienced cyclical period of boom and bust. Those boom periods primarily centered around the exploitation of natural resources or the potential of raising agricultural products such as cotton, sugar or citrus. Invariably, the booms were countered with busts brought on by the depletion of the resource, hurricanes, yellow fever, war, or financial panic. The mid-1920s boom, however, was a different experience for Florida and ushered in a new era of speculative enterprise in the United States. At no other time prior to the event did the entire nation participate as wholeheartedly in the exploitation of a single state. A combination of post-World War I factors contributed to what became known, among other things, as Florida Fever.

Reforms in labor practices increased vacation time for a broad section of America's middle class. There was an increasing desire to discover new perspectives and break away from the drab urban industrial sectors of the Northeast and Midwest. The introduction of affordable automobiles and extensions of the nation's railroads provided greater mobility to more people than ever before. Promotional literature extolling Florida's healthful climate and affordable land enticed travelers to visit Florida. A speculative real estate boom affected most communities in the state, although Miami and Palm Beach are generally regarded as the sites of the most intense activity. In the fall of 1924, the Florida Legislature lured wealthy investors by the approval of a constitutional amendment prohibiting both income and inheritance taxes. The resulting capital influx accelerated an already well-developed surge in land purchasing.

Lee County's participation in the boom was delayed due to its inadequate road system. The road building programs of the 1910s, left unfinished by the advent of World War I, resumed in the early 1920s. The Tamiami Trail was completed to Punta Gorda in June 1921, but stalled there while supporters lobbied Lee County officials to vote the necessary funds for its extension to Fort Myers. The roadway was finally opened in March 1924, after the completion of the bridge spanning the Caloosahatchee River at East Fort Myers. That improvement, together with the extension of the marl-surfaced Dixie Highway from Olga to Arcadia in 1922, enabled Lee

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County to join the frenzied land speculation activity that was already fully underway in other areas of the state.

The increasing evidence that Southwest Florida was about to experience unprecedented growth led to a movement by residents in the southern part of Lee County to call for the creation of a new county. The primary force behind the breakaway movement was Barron Collier, who had acquired about a million acres of land in the south of the county. Collier's promise to personally fund construction of the Tamiami Trail through his property was a key element in persuading the Florida Legislature to approve the creation of Collier and Hendry Counties from portions of Lee County in July 1923.

Despite the loss of the 3,200 square miles of land that formed the two new counties, Lee County's economy and population continued to grow during the mid-1920s. With its scenic attractions, warm climate, miles of sand beaches, and large areas of attractive undeveloped land, the county became a natural target for speculative investment. Fort Myers was the center of real estate activity, but all of the established communities in the county experienced at least some new development.

In Fort Myers, the boom was characterized by wild speculation and real estate development, and by the city's efforts to upgrade the infrastructure and municipal services. A \$72,000 bond issue in 1919 funded expanded water and sewer services, and paid for the paving of some downtown streets. Municipal spending increased dramatically during the boom years, as the city attempted to keep pace with the rapid growth of private investment in building construction and the ever-increasing rise in the population. In 1923 and 1924, bonds totaling close to \$4,000,000 were issued, so the city could provide expanded water, sewer, and street paving services to the community. Improvements were also made to the city's electrical system, and funds were disbursed to build a gas plant, a new city hall, several schools, and recreational facilities.

Real estate speculation was fueled by a tremendous influx of new residents and capital. Between 1920 and 1926, the population ballooned from 3,678 to an estimated 20,000. Bank deposits rose from \$1,175,414 to \$5,697,442. The commercial downtown area of Fort Myers saw the construction of a number of new buildings, and new residential subdivisions were platted with increasing frequency after 1923. Constant pressure exerted by developers to have utility services provided for their new subdivisions prompted the city government to expand the city

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limits. In 1925, the total area of the municipality was increased nearly eight-fold, from 1,900 to 15,000 acres.

Estero Island was among the first areas in the county outside Fort Myers to receive significant development as a result of the boom. A flurry of land purchasing and subdivision platting activity was prompted by the announcement in 1920 of the construction of a bridge to connect the island with McGregor Boulevard, a major thoroughfare linking Fort Myers with Punta Rassa. Thomas H. Phillips, a wealthy investor from Maryland, became one of the most active land developers in Lee County during the 1920s and 1930s. He constructed a casino and amusement pier on the island and platted the Crescent Park and Eucalyptus Park Subdivisions. Captain Jack Delysle, a British immigrant, developed the Seminole Sands Subdivision, where he built a cafe, dance pavilion, and the fifty room Casino Hotel. The bridge and connecting road to McGregor Boulevard were completed in 1921. The island community, then known as Crescent Beach, and later Fort Myers Beach, soon became a popular resort area. By June 1923, over 200 cars a day were passing over the toll bridge to the island.

Phillips expanded his activities by platting the "San Carlos on the Gulf Subdivision" on neighboring San Carlos Island in 1924. His plans included massive arched entrance gates, 100-foot wide streets, and a 200 room hotel. The pace of development on Estero Island quickened in 1925, with the platting of the Miramar, Gulf Heights, and Gulf View subdivisions, all of which were sold out in a month. That same year, Thomas Phillips sold his remaining interests in San Carlos on the Gulf Subdivision to a New York investment firm for \$1,820,000.

The barrier islands were also touched by the boom. In 1921, a hurricane damaged the commercial vegetable and citrus industries that had been the basis for the original settlement of Captiva and Sanibel Islands in the 1890s. Investors readily capitalized on purchasing the grove and farm lands for creating new subdivisions located on the attractive Gulf beaches. Daily ferry service between Punta Rassa and the island began in early 1925 to carry potential buyers to view available building lots. A number of subdivisions, including Sanibel Center, Sanibel Gardens, and Sunniland del Mar were platted and received some development. A number of hotels catered to the hundreds of tourists who descended on the islands during the winter season.

During the land boom, the rural mainland village of Bonita Springs (originally named Survey) grew into a thriving small town. Located in southwestern Lee County on the banks of the Imperial River, the community was the site of several substantial citrus groves. In 1912, much of the land was purchased by a group of investors led by J. Henry Ragsdale. Ragsdale renamed

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the village after his daughter "Bonita" and the freshwater spring located there. Intensive settlement of the town was followed by the arrival of the Fort Myers Southern Railroad in 1923. Bonita Springs became popular as a health resort in 1924 after the development of the Shangri-La Spa (formerly the Bonita Villa Hotel). Another popular boom time resort facility was Imperial Court, a hotel complex that featured a number of tourist cabins located along the banks of the Imperial River. Bonita Spring's growth was also aided by being located along that section of the Tamiami Trail between Fort Myers and the city of Naples. By the end of the boom, the town of Bonita Springs had a year-round population of 315.

Florida's speculative land bubble began to deflate in 1925. Bank deposits in the state had risen between 1922 and 1925 from \$180 million to \$875 million, but began to decline in the late months of 1925. In August 1925, the Florida East Coast Railway announced an embargo on freight shipments to South Florida, where the seaport and rail terminal were clogged with still undelivered building materials. Bankers and businessmen throughout the nation began to complain about transfers of money to Florida. Newspapers insinuated the existence of fraud and misrepresentation in land sales, and by 1926 many investors began to withdraw their money from Florida banks or refuse payment for real estate purchases. The end of the land boom, starting in South Florida, came when a devastating hurricane struck Miami on September 17-18, 1926, killing hundreds of people and doing millions of dollars worth of property damage.

The hurricane also caused damage in Lee County, particularly to coastal and island communities. Nearly all of the buildings at Punta Rassa were swept away by flood waters. High tides and seventy-five mile an hour winds wrecked the bridge to Fort Myers Beach, the Thomas Casino, and many of the homes on Estero Island. The inundating salt water ruined the remaining agricultural land on Captiva and Sanibel Islands which had already been damaged by the 1921 hurricane.

Despite an intensive and costly advertising campaign in northern newspapers by area boosters in the winter of 1926-1927 to reassure tourists and investors that Lee County was still an attractive vacation destination and that the economic future looked bright, tourism and investment in real estate declined dramatically. Many existing investors could not find buyers for properties that they had purchased at highly inflated prices during the boom. By 1927, development throughout the county had nearly ground to a halt. Hundreds of craftsmen and laborers employed in the building trades were left without work.

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For the remainder of the 1920s, most Floridians viewed the declining economic conditions as temporary and expected the boom to be rekindled. What seemed to be a promising development was the construction of the Seaboard Air Line Railway (SAL) to Fort Myers, LaBelle, and Naples in 1927.

IV. The Great Depression and World War II, 1928-1945

In 1928, the Tamiami Trail from Tampa to Miami was finally completed. That year the Fort Myers Beach Bridge, which had been destroyed by the hurricane in 1926, was replaced with a new concrete span, opening the area to automobile traffic once again. These events raised expectations that Lee County would once again see a large influx of tourists and settlers, but the resurgence of visitors and commercial activity never materialized. The county and the city of Fort Myers were faced with enormous debts, as a result of the vast sums of money the governments had borrowed to finance improvements. The exodus of residents following the damage left by the hurricane and the downturn in the economy seriously decreased the tax base, and many of the people that remained were unable or unwilling to pay assessments on their property or other debts. Most of the government building projects initiated during the early day of the boom were completed by 1927, but no others could be approved until all outstanding debts had been cleared.

Events involving Matlacha, a community on Pine Island located on a narrow strip of State Road 78, exemplifies the type of sporadic development that occurred in Lee County during the late 1920s and early 1930s. The development of the area began with the boom time project of building an earthen causeway and wooden bridge to link Pine Island with the mainland. The work was barely complete when the 1926 hurricane destroyed the bridge. Before the bridge was rebuilt in 1927, squatters began to build cabins on the causeway, a public right-of-way. The bridge became a public fishing spot, and a number of small businesses, including a bait shop, boat rental service, and several fish houses were constructed along the length of the causeway. The properties were eventually transferred to private ownership, and the area was finally designated the "Pine Island Fill Subdivision" in 1946.

The Great Depression swept over the nation in the aftermath of the crash of the New York Stock Exchange on Thursday, October 27, 1929, and Lee County's prospects for economic recovery worsened. Between 1929 and 1933, 149 Florida banks failed. Deposits and investments fell dramatically, and annual per capita income for Florida citizens declined by one-half. All of Lee County's banks either closed permanently or were reorganized under new management. Depositors saw their assets disappear or become frozen, and many received only a fraction of

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their holdings after reorganization. Tax collections in Fort Myers dropped so low that the city was unable to meet its financial obligations and hovered on the edge of bankruptcy. Demand and prices for locally-grown vegetables and citrus plunged in the early 1930s to the point where many growers simply let their crops rot in the fields. By 1933, approximately one-fourth of all Floridians was receiving some type of public assistance.

The unemployment situation in Lee County was eased somewhat by two large construction projects undertaken during the early 1930s. One was the construction of the Edison Bridge over the Caloosahatchee River (today's U.S. 41) linking Fort Myers with North Fort Myers. The \$700,000 concrete structure was officially opened in February 1931. The other project was the federally funded post office, completed in 1933 at a cost of \$200,000.

A number of federal relief programs, designed to provide assistance and put people to work on public projects, were instituted during the 1930s and played a leading role in sustaining the population of Lee County during the Great Depression. The Civil Works Administration (CWA), Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), Works Progress Administration (WPA), and the Public Works Administration (PWA) sponsored numerous improvement projects in the county. Projects in Lee County included the construction of sidewalks in East Fort Myers, the repair of school buildings in the area, the reconstruction of McGregor Boulevard, the construction of Lee Memorial Hospital, the concrete paving of the runways at Lee County Airport (Page Field), the development of a waterfront park and yacht basin at Fort Myers.

Like the rest of the nation, Lee County emerged from the Depression via the growing World War II defense industries. The flat terrain of the county made it the ideal location for constructing military installations. The improvement of Page Field during the WPA era proved to be an important factor in the decision of the U.S. Army Air Corps to take it over as a training facility for bomber and fighter pilots. Beginning in January 1942, the Air Corps extended the runways and constructed barracks, hangars, administrative offices, classroom buildings, and storage depots. During the peak of activity in 1942-1944, over 4,000 servicemen were stationed at Page Field.

The rural community of Buckingham was also chosen as the site for the establishment of an air gunnery school. The Army Air Corps acquired 75,000 acres and by March 1942, an advance detail of 650 men had set about constructing runways, hangars, and barracks. To quarter civilian workers on the base, a 160 unit housing project was undertaken at a cost of \$275,000. Over the course of the war, approximately 16,000 Air Corps personnel were trained at the base.

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The construction of the two bases and the services and products required by the large number of servicemen stationed there brought new prosperity to Lee County. The large payrolls for personnel boosted the local economy, as soldiers frequented local nightspots and took part in a host of recreational activities offered in the county. In 1943, the U.S. Army made arrangements to erect a social center for soldiers at Waterfront Park.

The military bases were deactivated shortly after the war ended. The barracks at Buckingham were used briefly as the site of Edison College, which closed in 1948. Some of the buildings at both fields were sold to veterans for use as homes or purchased by commercial interests that moved the buildings to new locations. Others still remain in their original locations and are significant for their association with one of the most important periods in the nation's history.

V. Historic Development of the Lee County School System, 1887-1950

Concern for the educational needs of their children provided part of the impetus for the residents of today's Lee County to request separation from sprawling Monroe County in 1887. The first public county school in Fort Myers was the wood frame Fort Myers Academy erected in 1878. The school was destroyed by fire in 1886, and when the local representatives of Fort Myers petitioned the Monroe County Board of Education for funds to erect a new schoolhouse, their request was denied. Already angered by the seeming lack of interest by county officials in the development of Fort Myers, local citizens pleaded with the State Legislature for the creation of new county. Lee County was formally established on May 9, 1887.

The Lee County Board of Public Instruction held its first official meeting on August 27, 1887. The six existing school districts had been established while Lee County had been a part of Monroe County. New districts would be added in the ensuing years, as the population of the county grew. During the remainder of the nineteenth century, the board struggled to provide adequate facilities and staffing for the county, which had an area of approximately 4,000 square miles and had numerous isolated settlements. Over forty schools were established in the county during this period. Some of these were operated out of private homes, but most were located in one and two-story wood frame buildings that were built by funds allocated by the Board of Public Instruction. Fort Myers, the largest population center in Lee County, had the largest school building, a two-story, wood frame structure erected in 1887 to replace the building that had burned in 1886. Known as the Fort Myers School, this facility was later replaced by the Gwynne

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Institute, the county's first masonry school building. The only school building in Lee County surviving from the nineteenth century is the Buckingham School (N.R. 1988), constructed in 1895.

The county also provided funds for the education of African-American children in 1887. The school was located in a Methodist church in Fort Myers. Later, instruction was provided in private homes. The black population of Fort Myers grew substantially during the 1890s and the early 1900s, and the school board was repeatedly asked by the leaders of the African-American community to erect a permanent school for their children. In 1911, the wood frame building that had been erected for white children in 1887 was moved to what is today the corner of Cranford and Orange Streets in Fort Myers to be used as a schoolhouse for black children; however the building was destroyed by fire the following year.

The first permanent school for black children in the county was Williams Academy, which was constructed in 1913 to replace the former school building for white children that burned in 1912. This wood frame schoolhouse remained the primary facility for African-American children until 1927, when the Paul Laurence Dunbar School was opened. In the 1930s, the Williams Academy was renamed the Williams Primary School and was relocated to the campus of the Dunbar School. An addition was constructed onto the wood frame building in 1942. The original, 1887 portion of the school was subsequently demolished, leaving only the 1942 addition. In 1995, the Lee County Historical Society relocated the 1942 addition to Clemente Park, two blocks east of the Dunbar School. The only other documented school for blacks constructed during this period was the South Boca Grande Colored School, established in 1915. The school was located in a building provided by the black residents of the community and later operated out of locations rented from local churches and the Seaboard Air Line Railroad.

The Lee County school system continued to expand during the first decades of the twentieth century. The 1900 census recorded a total of 855 school age children, including 791 whites, 32 blacks, and 32 Native Americans in the county. Hampered by inadequate means of transporting students to centrally located schools, the school board continued to construct facilities in the many far-flung rural settlements under its jurisdiction. More than forty new schools, most of them small, wood frame buildings were constructed around the turn of the century.

Among the notable schools constructed in Lee County during the first decades of the twentieth century were the Gwynne Institute, Fort Myers High School, and Alva High School.

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The Gwynne Institute, constructed in 1911, was the first masonry school erected in the county. Constructed to serve as both an elementary and high school, the 10-room building is located on the property of the Fort Myers School that had been moved for use by the African-American community. The building quickly became inadequate to serve the growing number of school age white children in Fort Myers and the Fort Myers High School, a three-story brick building was erected near the Gwynne Institute and opened in 1914. The building was superseded by a larger high school constructed in the 1920s, and it became Central Grammar School. The building was demolished in 1976, and the old Gwynne Institute building now serves as an administrative annex for the Lee County School Board, and is a contributing resource in the Fort Myers Downtown Commercial District (N.R. 1990).

Other areas of the county were also experiencing significant growth, and residents began to appear before the school board to ask for funds to construct large permanent schools. The board, however, had little money available for new construction. Instead, in 1913, the board established a new system of school districts and gave each the power to levy taxes within their jurisdictions for the construction of new schools. The properties on which the schools were constructed and the buildings themselves would be deeded to the school board, which in turn, would provide teachers and pay for the maintenance of the buildings and grounds. The first school to be erected under this procedure was Alva High School, a two-story brick building constructed in 1914 in the unincorporated community of Alva.

New school construction was halted in Lee County during the years the United States was involved in World War I. After the war, the county and the rest of Florida began to experience the effects of the land boom that would last until the middle of the decade of the 1920s. The boom brought thousands of new residents to the county and seriously strained the existing school facilities. In 1923, Collier and Hendry Counties were created out of the southern and western portions of Lee County, relieving the school board of the burden of maintaining school properties in those areas of what had been remote sections of its jurisdiction.

Several schools were constructed in Lee County following World War I. Among the most notable of these were the high schools in Bonita Springs and Fort Myers. Bonita Springs had petitioned the school board for a new building in 1917, but work on the facility was delayed until 1921. The new Fort Myers High School was also completed in 1921. It was constructed to relieve overcrowding in the existing high school, constructed in 1914, and the former Gwynne Institute, constructed 1911, which operated as an elementary school. The former high school was

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converted into a junior high school. It closed in 1950 and was used as a Masonic lodge before being demolished to make way for the present Lee County Constitutional Office complex.

During the Florida Boom, the county embarked on a concentrated effort to consolidate the school system. In 1925, the county was divided into thirteen school districts. Over the next four years, sixteen schools were opened in the county, most of them located in new masonry buildings designed by professional architects. A concerted funding program for school construction was undertaken in 1926 when the school board issued bonds for \$983,000 to pay for construction of the new county schools. Fort Myers was to receive the bulk of the money. All of the new buildings were to be constructed in the "Spanish" style and feature large, well lit classrooms, auditoriums, and the most up-to-date educational equipment. The extensive improvements to the county's school facilities proved to be timely investments. As Lee County began to feel the effects of the collapse of the land boom and the beginnings of the Great Depression, it was clear that funds for further school construction would no longer be available. Fortunately, the expansion program was largely complete and had already been paid for. It would not be until after World War II, that the county would again have sufficient funds to construct new schools.

During the period immediately after World War II, the county school system once again faced the problem of overcrowding as Lee County entered another period of significant population growth. In 1947, construction began on the first permanent school building erected since 1929. Two schools were erected in the county in the years between 1947 and 1950. In the last fifty years, Lee County has experienced tremendous growth. The school system has kept pace with the expanding population by erecting new and larger schools. During the 1950s seven new schools were constructed. An addition seventeen schools were erected during the 1960s. The 1970s saw an end to racial segregation in the school system and the construction of thirteen new schools. Presently the school system comprises thirty-six elementary, twelve middle, and nine high schools. There are also nine special schools, two vocational schools, and three alternative educational programs that are housed in their own facilities or make some use of the already mentioned facilities. A testament to the lasting quality of the investment made in school construction in Lee County during the 1920s is that nine of the buildings erected during the 1910s and 1920s continue to serve as schools today. Several others function as community centers or have been successfully adapted to other uses.

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

Property Type: F.1

1. Name of Property Type: Residential Buildings

2. Description: Single family residences comprise the majority of historic buildings found in Lee County. Examples from each of the county's periods of historic development, as defined in Section E, can be found in many of the established communities. These residences represent an eclectic collection of forms and styles that reflect national trends in architecture during the periods when they were constructed. The houses range in scale from modest two-room vernacular structures to rambling two-story Mediterranean Revival style estates. Houses located in the rural agricultural communities are generally simple vernacular types or display Craftsman bungalow influences. Most of the high style houses, e.g., Mediterranean and Colonial Revival, are found in the more populous communities and tourist destinations, such as Fort Myers, Bonita Springs, and Boca Grande.

Vernacular Dwellings

Most of the residential architecture in Lee County would be classified as vernacular, referring to the standard construction techniques employed by lay or self-taught builders. The Industrial Revolution permitted standardization of building materials and exerted a pervasive influence over house design. Popular magazines helped to make architectural trends universal throughout the United States. The railroad provided cheap and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, individual builders had access to a wide variety of finished architectural products from which to create their own designs. Vernacular buildings often reflect a local adaptation to landscape, climate, and cultural patterns. Primary consideration was given to providing functional and comfortable living spaces. Decorative features, when applied, often exhibit stylistic references without constituting a style of architecture.

Lee County's historic vernacular dwellings range from one to two and one-half stories in height. Most of the buildings are wood frame construction and utilize material produced by sawmills that operated in the county. Horizontal drop siding is the most common exterior wall surface material. The earliest residences often exhibit elaborate mill work on their gable ends and porches. Most residences rest on brick or concrete pier foundations. The ground plan is usually

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irregular, consisting mainly of a rectangular central core with projecting room units and porches. Gable or hip main roofs have steep pitches, which accommodate an attic space that may be used for living quarters or storage. Standing seam or V-crimp metal sheets were the most common types of roof surfacing material, but many houses had asphalt roll or shingle covering. Porches are common and often extend the width of the main facade of the house. The most common original window type is double hung, wood sash with multi-pane glazing. Doors located at the main entrance are often wood paneled, or a combination of wood and glass panel.

Bungalow/Craftsman Houses

The Craftsman style was popularized by the work of brothers Charles and Henry Greene, architects who began their practice in Pasadena, California, in 1893. Their work was influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement, which came to prominence in the 1880s, and by Oriental architecture, particularly that of Japan. In the two decades after they set up business, they designed a number of large and elaborate prototypes of the style. Their innovative designs, which became known as the Craftsman style, received wide-spread publicity in national magazines, such as House Beautiful, Good Housekeeping, and Ladies Home Journal. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the style had been adapted to smaller homes, now commonly referred to bungalow, whatever their outwardly applied style. The term "bungalow" is now used to describe a wide variety of small, cottage-like dwellings that are informal in plan, elevation, and detail.

The Bungalow/Craftsman style was the most popular design for small residences throughout the nation for the first three decades of the twentieth century, and the type became a ubiquitous feature of Florida residential neighborhoods during the early twentieth century.

Most of the bungalows in Lee County are one or one and a half stories in height and have a low-pitched gable roof. The broad eaves usually exhibit structural components such as rafter ends, beams, and brackets. The porch is often the most dominant architectural feature, being either full or partial width. The porch roof is often supported by battered columns sitting atop masonry piers. Windows are usually double-hung, wood sashes, with several vertical lights in the upper sash and a light in the lower sash.

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Colonial Revival Houses

The Colonial Revival was the dominant style for American residential architecture during the first half of the twentieth century. The interest in America's colonial past can be traced to the restoration of George Washington's home, Mt. Vernon, in 1866. This patriotic, nostalgic architectural interest was further strengthened by buildings erected for the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876. The designs of Colonial Revival houses in the U.S. are rarely historically correct. They are often based on a variety of forms drawn not only from the colonial era but also the early years of the republic. Features of the Georgian and Federal styles often intermingle with the Dutch Colonial and Greek Revival styles. Elements are drawn even from the Medieval residential architecture characteristic of the New England colonies in the late seventeenth century; therefore, a great variety of architecture falls into the broad category of the Colonial Revival style.

The typical Colonial Revival house in Lee County is an eclectic mixture of Colonial precedents, rather than a copy of a prototype. The variants utilize elements of other styles, such as Queen Anne and Craftsman/Bungalow. Most of the county's Colonial Revival residences are one or two stories in height and have either hip or gable roofs with boxed eaves. There are also examples of Dutch Colonial Revival which have gambrel roofs. The main facade is usually symmetrical, with a central doorway set in a classical surrounds. Porch types vary from one-bay pedimented porticos to large sweeping verandas. The most common window types are double hung sashes with 1/1, 6/1, and 6/6 lights.

Mediterranean Revival Style Houses

The Mediterranean Revival style comprises a variety of architectural elements taken from countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, but are derived mainly from Italy and Spain. The use of Mediterranean architectural motifs was introduced by architect Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue at the 1915 Panamanian-California Exposition in San Diego. Mediterranean Revival architecture is also closely identified with Florida Land Boom of the 1920s. The style was used extensively in the design of houses and also found expression in hotels, commercial buildings, and public buildings.

Most of examples of the Mediterranean Revival style in Lee County date from the 1920s and are typical of other buildings of the type erected throughout Florida during the same period. Mediterranean Revival houses tend to have irregular ground plans, stuccoed exterior walls, and flat or hip roofs covered with clay tile. Entrance porches are often flat and have arched openings

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supported by square piers or decorative columns. The fenestration can consist of either casement or double hung windows with a variety of window pane types and numbers. Applied decorative elements often consist of glazed terra-cotta or art stone executed in low and high relief.

3. Significance: The historic residential buildings of Lee County may be significant under criteria A, B, and C. The areas of significance may include exploration and settlement, community planning and development, architecture, or any other area that may be sufficiently explained in the nomination proposal. Architectural significance should reflect local stylistic trends in architecture consistent with those found in Florida during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, or be tied to special circumstances of design or use of materials found solely in Lee County. Properties may gain significance through association with persons of historical importance, either as the only resource remaining to be associated with the person or through a significant activity (e.g., the writing of literature), other than residential use, exercised by the person on the property.

4. Registration Requirements: For buildings to be eligible for listing under this multiple property cover they must be located in Lee County and have been constructed between 1881 and 1950. They should reflect specific characteristics of a style or type or be associated with important historical events. They may also be tied to the cultural or professional life of persons of significance who have made a significant contribution to history, particularly that of Lee County. Districts nominated under this property type should possess a noticeable concentration of relatively well-preserved historic resources. Buildings nominated under criterion C must sufficiently retain their architectural integrity. A building that has been altered by the construction of intrusive additions, or by the application of materials inconsistent with the historical period of the resource, or which have seen the removal of defining architectural features will not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Further, a building removed from its original location after 1950 will be excluded from N.R. listing, unless the move can be justified under circumstances essential to its preservation.

Physical integrity requirements for buildings that are significant in areas other than architecture may be applied less stringently; however, buildings that have been radically altered to the point that they bear little resemblance to their appearance during the period of significance will not be eligible for nomination to the Register. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the enclosure of porches are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

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Property Type F.2

1. Name of Property Type: Commercial Buildings

2. Description: Typical historic commercial buildings in Lee County are masonry or wood frame vernacular structures that range in height from one to four stories. Most are rectangular in plan, and common exterior wall treatments include brick or stucco. Decorative details include brick corbelling, recessed panels, relief details, and applied ornamentation. Roofs are generally flat, covered with tar and gravel, and hidden by flat or stepped parapets. Poured concrete is a common foundation material. Some buildings have horizontal divisions, signifying dual or multiple uses for the separate floors. The ground level is normally used for commercial retail purposes, whereas the upper floors may contain professional offices, residential apartments, or storage space. Except for buildings located at the corners of street intersections, most commercial buildings have one principal facade, with the first story having plate glass display windows and the upper stories being marked by double hung, wood sash windows.

3. Significance: The historic commercial buildings of Lee County are usually significant under criteria A and C in the areas of commerce, community planning and development, and architecture. The architecturally significant buildings reflect architectural trends throughout Florida during the period of significance and retain a high degree of architectural integrity.

4. Registration Requirements: For buildings to be eligible for listing under this property type, they must have been constructed for use as a commercial building or served an important commercial function during one of the historic periods covered in Section E. Districts nominated under this building type should possess a concentration of relatively well-preserved historic resources. Eligibility for individual nomination is restricted to buildings that reflect a definite architectural type and to those that have a central role in the commercial life of the community or were important in the physical development of the community. Buildings nominated for their architectural significance should retain their historical appearance to a high degree. Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

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Property Type: F.3

1. Name of Property Type Educational Buildings

2. Description: This property type comprises buildings constructed between 1887 and 1950 that are associated with the development of Lee County educational system. The majority of the schools were constructed in the 1920s and exhibit characteristics of the Mediterranean Revival style. Wood frame schools were constructed mainly prior to the 1920s in small communities in rural parts of the county. These structures often contain one or two classrooms. The buildings rested on masonry pier foundations and had a gable roof covered with sheet metal. The original windows were double hung, wood sashes with a variety of light patterns.

Schools constructed during the 1920s were located in the larger population centers of the county, particularly Fort Myers, and, by their size and layout, reflected the county's goal of consolidating and centralizing education for children of school age in grades one through twelve. The larger schools were constructed of brick or had stuccoed masonry exterior walls. The schools featured large, well-lit classrooms and incorporated such facilities as libraries, auditoriums, cafeterias, and administrative offices into the buildings' designs. Schools were usually sited on properties large enough to allow for playgrounds and sports activities. Schools at times consisted of a complex of more than one building to allow for specialized instruction or activities.

3. Significance: The historic educational buildings of Lee County may be significant under criteria A and C in the areas of education, community planning and development, and architecture. Under criterion A, the schools are associated with the establishment of a consolidated school system in Lee County to better provide a comprehensive system of instruction to the majority of the county's school age children. The schools were located in neighborhoods and communities that reflected and influenced population growth in the county. The design of school buildings for the consolidated system reflected the latest views nationwide on proper schooling techniques, incorporating specialized use areas, in addition to classrooms, within a large building format. The buildings also reflected a new interest in the aesthetics of design as an element of community pride, resulting in the hiring of professional architects to design buildings using not only the latest construction techniques but also up-to-date stylistic features.

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4. Registration Requirements: For buildings to be eligible for listing under this property type, they must have been constructed for use as an educational building or served an important educational function during one of the historic periods covered in Section E. Districts nominated under this building type should possess a concentration of relatively well-preserved historic resources. Eligibility for individual nomination is restricted to buildings that reflect a definite architectural type and to those that have played an important role in the educational life of the community or were important in the physical development of the community. Buildings nominated for their architectural significance should retain their historical appearance to a high degree. Buildings nominated for their significance in the area of Education should embody design features that represent the most current views on the way educational facilities should be constructed to advance local or national educational aims. Buildings can also be significant in the area of Education where advances and innovative approaches were undertaken in the presentation of curricula. This can include school consolidation, as well as changes in media presentation. Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F. 4

1. Name of Property Type: Government and Public Resources

2. Description: This property type comprises a variety of resources that were constructed or acquired with public or private funds to serve a public function. Such resources include town and city governmental buildings, county governmental buildings, community centers, fire stations, public libraries, post offices, social service clubs, parks and their associated buildings and resources, and any other resources (excluding school and religious buildings) that provide services or enhance the welfare of the community as a whole.

The public buildings of Lee County represent a variety of styles and forms. They often occupy prominent locations within the community and often exhibit physical and stylistic characteristics that set them apart from the surrounding commercial and residential structures. Most of the resources have either wood frame or masonry structural systems. Roof types may vary according to construction material or stylistic considerations. Window types may vary

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according to the building's function, structural system, or style. This property type may also include landscape features such as plazas, patios, public squares, parks, and recreational facilities.

3. Significance: Lee County's governmental buildings and public resources may be significant under criteria A and C in the areas of politics and government, community planning and development, recreation and entertainment, architecture, or any other area of significance that may be appropriate to the particular resource nominated. Although such resources account for only a small percentage of the total historic properties in the county, they are often among the most significant in the communities in which they are located. Public buildings nominated under criterion C should exhibit a high degree of craftsmanship and retain a high degree of physical integrity. Landscape features may also be eligible for nomination to the Register under criteria A and C for their association with important historical events or for their design.

4. Registration Requirements: For buildings and other resources to be eligible for listing under this property type, they must have been constructed for use as a governmental or public resource during one of the historic periods covered in Section E. Such buildings or resources may be included as contributing elements of historic district if they retain a sufficient degree of physical integrity to reflect their historic period of development. Buildings nominated for their architectural significance should retain their historical appearance to a high degree. Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Landscape resources, such as public parks, must largely retain their original spatial relationship and physical characteristics, such as the location and types of vegetation, walkways, fountains, buildings, and monuments in order to be considered for individual listing in the Register.

Property Type: F. 5

1. Name of Property Type: Religious Buildings

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2. Description: The historic religious buildings of Lee County include churches and church related properties. The majority of such resources are churches reflecting the Gothic Revival and Mediterranean Revival styles. The churches include buildings of wood frame and masonry construction and may be simple or elaborate in plan and decoration, depending on location and the size and economic circumstances of the congregation.

Gothic Revival Churches

The Gothic Revival churches reflect church types that began to appear in England in the mid to late nineteenth century as an outgrowth of the Romantic Movement and a revolt against the restraints imposed by the forms of classical architecture. The style was promoted in the United States by the pattern books of architect Andrew Jackson Davis and landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing. Both men were influenced by England's principal Gothic theorists John Ruskin and Augustus Pugin. Characteristics of the style include steep gable roofs, use of the pointed arch, crenellations, towers, elaborate millwork, and leaded stained glass.

Mediterranean Revival Churches

Mediterranean Revival churches make use of the round-arched window and door opening, stuccoed walls, clay tile, and applied relief decoration typical of Mediterranean Revival residences discussed earlier. Some churches in this category make more use of Roman classicism and of elements of the Byzantine Revival style, which emphasizes shallow domes, narrower arches, and a kind of broad horizontality in overall building design.

3. Significance: The historic churches of Lee County are generally significant under criterion C in the area of architecture for their association with national trends in the style of religious architecture during the period of significance. The majority of the styled churches are found in the city of Fort Myers and were designed by local architects. They are noted for their stylistic features and high degree of craftsmanship.

4. Registration Requirements: For churches and other church related resources to be eligible for listing under this property type, they must have been constructed for use as a church or some other religious function during one of the historic periods covered in Section E. Such buildings or resources may be included as contributing elements of historic district if they retain a sufficient degree of physical integrity to reflect their historic period of development. Buildings nominated for their architectural significance should retain their historical appearance to a high degree.

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Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F. 6

1. Name of Property Type: Military Buildings and Structures

2. Description: This property type applies to buildings, structures, objects, and sites associated with the military build-up that occurred in Lee County during World War II. Resources may include airplane runways, hangars, control towers, administrative offices, classroom buildings, barracks, storage depots, and training sites associated primarily with the development of Page and Buckingham Fields during the period from 1942 to 1945. Most of the buildings associated with these Army Air Corps installations were utilitarian wood frame vernacular structures designed to meet the immediate need for the training of Air Corps personnel during the 1940s. The majority of the buildings were one-story in height and rectangular in plan. The exterior walls were sheathed in weatherboard or drop siding and the gable roofs were covered with sheet metal. Windows were usually 1/1-light, double hung, wood sashes or four-light pivot windows. Most of the buildings were constructed on concrete pier foundations.

3. Significance: The military buildings of Lee County are significant under criterion A in the area of military history for their association with the period of America's involvement in World War II. The military bases played an important role in training pilots and gunnery crews for fighting overseas.

4. Registration Requirements: For military buildings and related resources to be eligible for listing under this property type, they must have been constructed for use by the U.S. Army Air Corps or some other branch of the U.S. military services for the training of combat or support personnel during World War II, as covered in Section E. Such buildings or resources may be included as contributing elements of historic district if they retain a sufficient degree of physical integrity to reflect their historic period of development. Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in

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themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F. 7

1. Name of Property Type: Industrial and Utility Facilities

2. Description: Industrial buildings were constructed for the manufacture or processing of products, including agricultural products, in Lee County. This building type exists in a profusion of styles, shapes, and construction materials. The buildings were usually designed to house machinery to be operated by workers given the task of manufacturing products or of processing agricultural materials for shipment. Such buildings tend to be functional and have little attention given to decorative details. Most buildings are one story in height and consist of a large work area and an office. The most common construction materials are wood, concrete, and metal. In industrial buildings the provision of adequate lighting was of great importance. A wide variety of windows admitting natural lighting was used. Large sash windows, pivot windows, and skylights were common. Many industrial buildings were constructed along railroad tracks and often featured platforms from which to load products directly into railroad cars.

Lee County saw little manufacture of complex products made directly from raw materials or partially finished goods. Most industrial buildings were used as agricultural packing houses and commercial fishing processing centers. These were generally simple wood or metal frame structures with large open spaces and a modest amount of machinery, such as washers, dryers, and conveyor belts. Rooms may be partitioned off for offices, storage, and ice-generating equipment. Sawmills may contain a large building with a conveyor belt and power saw for the production of lumber from raw timber. There may also be a separate planing mill, a plant for the production of novelty millwork, and lumber storage buildings. Sawmills may also have rail sidings for loading lumber onto railroad cars.

Utility buildings are those employed in providing such services as potable water, electricity, sewage control to the general public, usually by local governments. Most of these buildings date from the early years of the twentieth century when such services were first offered to the residents of the county.

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3. Significance: The Industrial and Utility buildings of Lee County are significant under criterion A in the areas of industry, agriculture, and community planning and development for their association with the development of Lee County's agricultural, fishing, and mineral resources and for the development of the infrastructure of populated sections of the county.

4. Registration Requirements: For buildings and related resources to be eligible for listing under this property type, they must have been constructed for use in the manufacture or processing of local resources in Lee County or have been constructed to improve the living conditions of residents of the county by providing electrical power, drinking water, or some other generally recognized public service, as covered in Section E. Such buildings or resources may be included as contributing elements of historic district if they retain a sufficient degree of physical integrity to reflect their historic period of development. Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F. 8

1. Name of Property Type: Tourist Lodging Facilities

2. Description: Buildings and structures eligible for listing under this property type include hotels, motels, fishing and hunting lodges, and any other type of hostelry providing short-term sleeping or living accommodations primarily to tourists, sportsmen, or travelers. Resources cover a wide range of construction materials and styles, from small wood frame tourist cabins to multi-story hotels with integrated lobby, restaurant, and shopping areas. In some cases the design of the facility was intentionally rustic to promote an atmosphere that was conducive to sport fishing and hunting. Larger hotels constructed during the 1920s often reflect Mediterranean Revival styling. Arched windows, fanciful columns, towers, domes and spires were among the characteristics of the style.

3. Significance: The Historic Tourist Lodging Facilities of Lee County are significant under criteria A and C in the areas tourism, commerce, recreation and entertainment, and architecture. The resources reflect the vital role that tourism played in the development of the local economy, particularly during the Florida Boom years of the 1920s. Sport fishing and hunting were very

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popular among winter visitors, and the large hotels were erected in close proximity to beaches where tourists could sunbathe, swim, and enjoy nearby attractions and recreational activities such as tennis, golf, and ballroom dancing. The larger hotels were often among the largest and architecturally significant buildings in the communities in which they were constructed.

4. Registration Requirements: To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this property type, the building must have been constructed for use as a hotel or some other kind of hostelry during one of the historic periods covered in Section E. Such buildings or resources may be included as contributing elements of historic district if they retain a sufficient degree of physical integrity to reflect their historic period of development. Buildings nominated for their architectural significance should retain their historical appearance to a high degree. Buildings that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabric or decorative details can not be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Such changes as the replacement of windows with non-historic types or the covering of defining details are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

Property Type: F. 9

1. Name of Property Type: Transportation Facilities

2. Description: This property type comprises a wide range of resources including railroad depots, bus depots, vehicle repair shops, bridges, docks, roadways, railways, and any other resources associated with the transportation of people and goods from one place to another. The eligible resources include mainly buildings and engineering structures that are functional in purpose and design. Since the property types are so varied, it is not possible to describe in this space physical characteristics that would be shared by all property types.

3. Significance: The Historic Transportation Facilities of Lee County are significant under criteria A and C in the areas transportation, engineering, and architecture. The construction of these resources played a vital role in the development of Lee County, particularly during the Florida Boom of the 1920s. The building of railroad and highway facilities was paramount in making the area accessible to winter visitors and new residents. The construction of bridges linking the coastal islands to the mainland prompted the rapid development of these areas for the enjoyment of tourists and winter residents. The construction of bridges across the

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Caloosahatchee River prompted the building of new roadways and allowed for the wider development of the city of Fort Myers.

4. Registration Requirements: To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this property type, the resources must be associated with the transportation of people and goods from one place to another during one of the historic periods covered in Section E. Buildings or engineering resources may be included as contributing elements of historic districts if they retain a sufficient degree of physical integrity to reflect their historic period of development. Buildings nominated for their architectural significance should retain their historical appearance to a high degree. Likewise, bridges or other engineering resources must largely retain their historic appearance and materials used in their construction. Draw, lift, or turn span bridges must retain their operable machinery and tenders' houses. Roadways must retain a high degree of their original appearance, including paving material, curbing, and significant historic landscaping. Buildings and engineering resources that have lost their historic character through the irreversible alteration or removal of original fabrics can not be considered eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Minor alterations, however, are not, in themselves, sufficient to prevent nomination to the Register if the original configuration of such elements is still visible and the changes are reversible.

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G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The geographical area covered by this Multiple Property Submission is the boundaries of Lee County, Florida.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

In 1986, a comprehensive survey was initiated to determine the nature and extent of historic properties in Lee County, Florida. An update of that survey was completed in 1990. The survey encompassed nearly 700 miles of land and focused on the historic unincorporated communities of the county. Further examination was done to identify resources in the incorporated sections of the county, particularly the city of Fort Myers. The surveyors identified over 800 buildings and structures dating from before World War II and prepared a Florida Master Site File form for each property that included a wide range of site specific locational, architectural, and historical information.

The report produced for the survey served as the basis for the preparation of this multiple property cover. It aided in defining areas of the county with significant historical legacies and provided an analysis of extant cultural resources. Additional research in primary and secondary bibliographical sources was undertaken to incorporate preservation-related findings and historical information that have come to light since the original survey was performed.

The properties identified in this and later survey activities were constructed between 1881 and 1950, a period that witnessed five distinct eras and areas of development in Lee County: **Early Development of Lee County, 1881-1895; Agricultural and Industrial Expansion, 1896-1918; The Florida Land Boom, 1919-1927; The Great Depression and World War II, 1928-1945; and Historic Development of the Lee County School System, 1887-1950.** Each period and area is defined by specific events that influenced the county's development. Associated property types are organized by building function and their association with significant trends in the county's history.

Integrity requirements were derived from knowledge of the state of existing properties within the county and their condition relative to buildings of similar types in communities throughout Florida. Many of the resources eligible for listing are located in rural agricultural communities that have declined since the historic period. Others have been impacted by the intensive growth the county has experienced since the end of World War II. It is therefore

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necessary to have less stringent integrity criteria in instances where a resource represents a rare and historically significant property type.

Buildings in concentrated residential areas were subject to more scrutiny in terms of their integrity. Those that are radically altered by the use of non-historic materials and additions to the point where they exhibit little of their original fabric are excluded from consideration for listing in the National Register under this cover.

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