### National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 96001367

**Date Listed:** 12/5/96

Crescent City Historic District Putnam **Property Name** County FLORIDA State

N/A

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

//Signature of the Keeper

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 8

This nomination is amended to delete commerce as an area of significance, since no case is made for the commercial importance of the district.

This change has been discussed with the Florida SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION: National Register property file Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90		RECEIVED 2280	OMB No. 1024-0018
United States Department of the Interior National Park Service		OCT 2 4 1996	
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC	PLACES	NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC I NATIONAL PARK SERVIC	2 ACES
This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinati Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Regis information requested. If any item does not apply to the proper materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processo	ster Bulletin 16A). Inty being documer I subcategories fro	I properties and districts. See Complete each item by markin nted, enter "N/A" for "not application on the instructions. Place addition	instructions in How to Complete the National g "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the ble "For functions, architectural classification.
1. Name of Property			
historic name <u>CRESCENT CITY HISTORIC DIS</u>			
2. Location			*****
street & number various			N/A _ not for publication
city or town Crescent City			N/A vicinity
state FLORIDA codeFL	countv <u>P</u> u	itnamcode_	<u>107</u> zio code <u>32112</u>
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	<u></u>		
Image: Signature of certifying official/Title       Date         Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Diversity       State or Federal agency and bureau         In my opinion, the property       Image: Market Mark	te rision of Histori e National Registe	ical Resources	
Signature of certifying official/Title	Date		
State or Federal agency and bureau		······································	
A. National Park Service Certification     I hereby certify that the property is:     A entered in the National Register     B see continuation sheet     determined eligible for the     National Register	for signature	of the Keeper	Date of Action $12/5/96$
See continuation sheet.     determined not eligible for the     National Register     See continuation sheet.     removed from the National			
Register.			
		*****	

Putnam Co., FL County and State

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0	structure
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Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuations sheets.)

#### 8. Statement of significance

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution road patterns of our history.
- **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☑ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction of represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

#### **Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- **B** removed from its original location.
- **C** a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- **F** a commemorative property.
- **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bib	liog	raphy

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

Primary location of additiona data:

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- ] previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
  #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING/DEVELOPME
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EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

COMMERCE

#### **Period of Significance**

1875-1946

**Significant Dates** 

<u>1875</u>

#### **Significant Person**

N/A

#### **Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Eaton, Leonard

Other Name of Repository

#

University

Putnam	Co.,	FL

County and State

Putnam Co., FL County and State

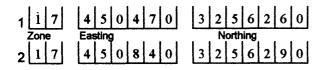
#### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property

approx. 140 acres

#### **UTM References**

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)



#### **Verbal Boundary Description**

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

#### **Boundary Justification**

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

11. Form Prepared By				
name/title Stephen Olausen/Robert O. Jones, Historic Sites Spec	zialist			
organization Bureau of Historic Preservation			date <u>O</u> c	tober 1996
street & number R.A. Grav Building, 500 S. Bronough Street			telephone	4) 487-2333
citv or town Tallahassee	_ state	Florida	zip code	32399-0250
Additional Documentation				······

See continuation sheel

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### **Continuation Sheets**

#### Maps

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

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

#### Photographs

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

#### Additional items

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

Property Owner			
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)			
name <u>City Hall</u>			
street & number 115 North Summit Street	telephone <u>904-698-2525</u>		
citv or town Crescent City	state <u>FL</u> zip code <u>32112</u>		

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement. This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (18 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

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

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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# 6. FUNCTION OR USE HISTORIC

COMMERCE/TRADE: restaurant RELIGION: religious facility SOCIAL: meeting hall EDUCATION: school RECREATION AND CULTURE: theater outdoor recreation FUNERARY: cemetery

#### CURRENT

COMMERCE/TRADE: business RELIGION: religious facility EDUCATION: school RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation FUNERARY: cemetery

#### 7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL

ROMANESQUE COLONIAL REVIVAL CLASSICAL REVIVAL GOTHIC REVIVAL ITALIAN RENAISSANCE CRAFTSMAN PRAIRIE

#### MATERIALS

FOUNDATIONS CONCRETE PIERS WOOD WALLS STUCCO

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#### SUMMARY

The Crescent City Historic District is located in Putnam County on the Fruitland Peninsula, a narrow strip of land between Crescent Lake and Lake Stella. The district is comprised of all or part of forty-four city blocks, encompassing approximately 140 acres of land. A total of 357 elements, of which 214 are contributing and 144 are non-contributing, are located within the boundaries. Of the 214 contributing elements, 169 are primary buildings, forty-three are outbuildings, and two - Eva Lyon Park and Palmetto Cemetery - are sites.

#### SETTING

Crescent City is located approximately thirty miles south of Palatka, the county seat, and fifty miles southwest of St. Augustine. Crescent City is the county's second largest incorporated community, behind Palatka, with a present population of approximately 1,900 residents. The north/south U.S. Highway 17 bisects the city, and is the primary thoroughfare.

The district incorporates most of the city, which is situated on a ridge between two lakes. At its highest point, the ridge, which runs about two miles north to south, rises more than fifty feet above Lake Crescent on the east and then slopes gently toward Lake Stella. Taking its name from its half-moon shape, Lake Crescent is Florida's twelfth largest lake, measuring 15,580 acres. Originally, the area located north of Lake Stella was reserved for citrus cultivation, but much of that land has been platted for residential use. Other portions are used for various agricultural purposes, most notably the growing of ferns.

The district possesses an excellent concentration of historical resources from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It runs for about five or six blocks north and south of Central Avenue, the commercial center of the community. For the most part, streets run at right angles to one another, creating an orthogonal grid pattern. When the town was platted in 1875, each of the blocks was divided into four lots of oneacre each to provide space for residences and small orange groves. While many of those lots, especially those in the commercial area, have been subdivided to create additional

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building space, a large number retain their original configuration. Because of this, there are numerous open spaces that provide significant breaks between the district's residential buildings. For the most part, lots are attractively landscaped with a variety oak, pine, citrus, and palm trees, subtropical plants and flowering bushes.

#### PRESENT PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

#### Historic Sites

Palmetto Cemetery is a one-acre, oak-shaded parcel of land located to the west of the Episcopal Church at the southeast corner of North Main Street and Edgewood Avenue (Photo #1). Established in the 1870s, the cemetery contains approximately 100 neatly-kept grave sites. The headstones and vaults are constructed of a variety of materials, including marble, granite, concrete, and brick. Most are simple rectangular or arched-top markers, but there are also a number of elaborate sculptures and carved obelisks (Photos #2 & 3).

Eva Lyon Park was established in 1918 on a four-acre block of land bounded by Cypress Avenue, South Summit Street, Myrtle Avenue, and South Main Street (Photo #4). The outer edges of the park are lined with green-leaf hedges. Large over-hanging oak trees dot the park and provide shade for several picnic areas. Concrete walks, lined with flowering shrubs, lead from each corner of the park to an octagonal gazebo in the center. A wood frame storage building that was originally constructed as an open-air pavilion is located northwest of the gazebo.

#### Historic Buildings

The contributing buildings of the district possess characteristics that are associated with national and statewide trends during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The superior materials used in their construction and the high level of craftsmanship distinguishes them from the modular, prefabricated buildings that dominated construction in the post-World War II era.

The buildings were constructed to serve a variety of purposes associated with the early development of the city. Of

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the total 169 contributing primary buildings, 135 were built as either single or multi-family dwellings. Nineteen buildings were originally constructed for commercial purposes. Other functions include, eight religious, three social, two educational, and two recreational buildings.

For the most part, buildings in the district have functional vernacular designs. Of the 169 primary buildings, 118 were classified as frame vernacular designs and thirteen as masonry vernacular. The most prevalent architectural style is the Craftsman with fifteen examples, followed by Colonial Revival with five, and Late Gothic Revival with four. Other styles represented by three or fewer examples are Queen Anne, Italianate, Prairie, Classical Revival, Romanesque Revival, and Italian Renaissance.

The materials used in the construction of the contributing buildings are common to Florida's historic communities. Wood shingles, drop siding, clapboard, weatherboard, stucco, and brick are the most common exterior wall fabrics. Windows are usually double-hung sash with 1/1 or 2/2 lights. Foundations most often consist of brick or concrete piers. Porches are a ubiquitous feature on buildings in the residential areas of the district.

#### RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE

The district's fine collection of late nineteenth and early twentieth century residential buildings reflects a wide variety of designs and influences (Photos #5-8). Among those classified as frame vernacular, are numerous building forms that were common during the period, such as the saddlebag house, the I-house, and the L-house. Many exhibit elements of popular contemporary architectural styles, such as ornamental Queen Anne vergeboard, or Craftsman style porch columns. Those that have definable architectural styles are among the most historically and architecturally significant buildings in the city. They were often built as the homes of prominent local residents, and were constructed by local craftsman, probably guided by popular pattern books of the time.

#### Frame Vernacular

Frame Vernacular buildings in Crescent City are present in a

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wide variety of sizes and forms. The <u>Sprague House Inn and</u> <u>Restaurant</u> at 125 Central Avenue (Photo #9) is an example of frame vernacular architecture with Victorian era decoration. Built in 1892, the two and one-half-story building has a side gable roof and a rear gable extension. A tiered verandah with tapered post supports, decorative stick work, and carved brackets wraps around the facade and east side of the building. The facade is symmetrical and features a double-door entrance with arched glass lights. A pair of fixed display windows with wood panel surrounds flank the entrance. Two pairs of French doors lead to the verandah on the second story.

The J.R. Hill House at 20 North Prospect Street (Photo #10) is a version of a vernacular I-house. This type of construction, which is characterized by a main unit that is one room deep and two rooms wide, was introduced to America by the British during the Colonial Period and remained a popular form for vernacular residential buildings into the early twentieth century. The Hill House, which was constructed in 1885, features a low-pitched hip roof and a plain symmetrical facade. Two prominent brick chimneys with corbeled brick caps rise from the ridge of the The exterior walls are clad with clapboard that terminates roof. at corner boards. Fenestration consists of single double-hung sash windows with 2/2 lights. A hip roof porch with turned post supports runs the length of the facade.

An example of a one-story vernacular residence is the Leonard Eaton House at 200 South Summit Street (Photo #11). Eaton, Crescent City's most active builder during the historic period, constructed this house about 1892. It has an L-shaped plan, consisting of a side gable roof main unit and a frontfacing gable extension. The gable ends are surfaced with wood shingles in diamond, staggered, and fish scale patterns. The remainder of the house has clapboard siding. An entrance porch with a shed roof, square column supports and a balustrade is located at the junction of the main unit and cross-gable extension. Windows are paired and single double-hung sash with 1/1 lights.

#### Craftsman Style

The 1912, Frederick and Bessie Bills House at 301 South Prospect Street (Photo #12) is a classic example of a Craftsman

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style bungalow. It has a low-pitched gable roof with decorative eave brackets and a gable entrance porch with paired post and masonry pier supports. Two gable dormers pierce the roof on the north and south slopes. The gable ends are clad with variegated wood shingles. The windows are double-hung, Queen Anne sashes. A brick chimney rises from the east slope of the roof, and the building sits on a continuous brick foundation that houses a basement.

Another impressive example of a Craftsman bungalow is the 1920, <u>Corrie and Walter Cartledge House</u> at 428 North Summit Street (Photo #13). Like the Bills House, the Cartledge House features a front-facing, low-pitched gable roof and a gable entrance porch. A side-gable porte-cochere projects from the northwest corner. Both the porch and porte-cochere roofs are supported by truncated, tapered columns on brick piers. The entrance is centered on the facade and flanked by tri-partite picture windows.

#### Colonial Revival Style

Among the five Colonial Revival style buildings found during the survey are examples of several of the variations that were common throughout the country in the early twentieth century. One such variant is the Dutch Colonial Revival style c.1925, <u>Crandol E. Harris House</u> at 204 Edgewood Avenue (Photo #14). The house has a gambrel roof, the defining feature of the Dutch Colonial Revival style. Two gable wall dormers interrupt the eave lines on the facade. A gable roof portico with square column supports covers an offset main entrance. The portico is flanked on the west by a single double-hung sash window with 6/6 lights and on the east by a group of three double-hung sash with 4/4 and 6/6 lights. A hip roof sun porch extends from the east side and a one-story hip roof extension projects from the west.

One of the few surviving historic masonry residential buildings in the city is the c.1911, <u>Monroe Harris House</u> at 325 North Park Street (Photo #15). This two and one-half-story Colonial Revival style building has a brick structural system and a steeply-pitched, front-facing gable roof. The facade is asymmetrical. The windows of the upper stories are paired, double-hung sash with 2/2 lights. The ground floor of the facade features an offset main entrance with sidelight surrounds, a

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single double-hung sash window, and set of two double-hung sash with a transom. A hip roof end porch with masonry columns and a knee wall extends past the southeast corner of the building.

#### Italianate Style

The c.1882, <u>Charles and Cornelia Lyon House</u> at 209 South Prospect Street (Photo #16) features many of the defining elements of the Italianate style. The main unit of the house is rectangular and is encircled by a tiered veranda with ornate carved brackets and balustrades. A square cupola rises from the center of the hip roof. A two-story hip extension projects from the south side. The main entrance is centered on the facade and is flanked by polygonal extensions that extend the full height of the building.

Another prominent example of Italianate style architecture is the c.1885, <u>Dr. Thomas T. Seelye House</u> at 110 Palmetto Avenue (Photo #17). This building has a low-pitched, hip roof and an hip extension. A prominent brick chimney stack with a corbeled cap rises from the center of the main roof. The eaves of the roof are boxed and supported by decorative paired brackets. A tiered verandah wraps around the facade and both sides of the building. The verandah has turned post supports, carved brackets, and a stick balustrade. The exterior walls are clad with clapboard and fenestration consists of double-hung, sash windows with 2/2 lights.

#### Queen Anne

The district contains two impressive examples of the Queen Anne Style. The most elaborate is the c.1877, <u>Conrad-Close House</u> at 217 North Park Street (Photo #18), which is among the oldest buildings in the city. The building has an irregular plan, consisting of a side, clipped gable, main unit, a cross-clipped gable extension, and a square tower with a mansard roof. A polygonal bay window projects from the first floor of the crossclipped gable extension. The house has two porches - a verandah that wraps around the facade and south side and a hip roof tiered porch that extends from the north side. Double-hung sash windows with 2/2 lights are set in rectangular openings. Those on the second story have decorative gable and clipped gable hoods.

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A one and one-half story example of the Queen Anne style is the c.1911, <u>Julius Grimsley House</u> at 100 North Prospect Street (Photo #19). It has a moderately-pitched, front-facing gable roof with a side cross-gable extension. The gable ends are adorned with fish scale shingles. The lower portion of the house is clad with clapboard. A polygonal bay projects from the northeast corner of the facade and a rounded verandah with a gable entrance bay and Tuscan column supports wraps around the south side.

#### Prairie Style

Three examples of the Prairie style were recorded in the district. The most impressive is the 1911, <u>Charles and Emily</u> <u>Cheatham House</u> at 102 South Main Street (Photo #20). The horizontal emphasis of the style is evident in the building's low-pitched hip roof. Decorative curved brackets support the wide overhanging eaves of the roof. The exterior wall fabric is buff colored brick and fenestration consists of double-hung sash windows with 6/1, 6/6, 8/1, 10/1, and 15/1 lights. A verandah with a hip roof, square brick column supports, and a knee wall wraps around the facade and side of the house.

#### OUTBUILDINGS

All of the contributing outbuildings in the district are associated with the residential development of the city during the historic period. They include garages, sheds, and ancillary living quarters that are usually located behind or to one side of a contributing primary building. Nearly all are simple, rectangular, wood frame buildings.

An example of a combination outbuilding is the 1920, J.H. <u>Ten Eyke Burr Garage Apartment</u> at 20B North Park Street (Photo #21). The one and one-half-story building has a steeply-pitched front gabled roof and two prominent shed dormers. The facade features a pair of double-hung sashes with 2/2, lights in the upper story, a single, 2/2, double-hung sash, and a large garage bay on the ground floor.

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#### COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Although there has been some modern construction in the commercial area, it has retained a high degree of its historic appearance (Photos #22-24). Masonry buildings dating from between about 1890 to 1936 are intermixed with Victorian era wood frame commercial and residential buildings. Crescent City's commercial area began to develop in the early 1880s when several wood frame stores were erected along Central Avenue. A fire destroyed seven of those buildings in 1887, forcing the town council to pass an ordinance restricting the construction of wood frame buildings in the area. Subsequently, commercial buildings were constructed of fireproof masonry materials, although a number of wood frame residences were constructed in the area in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The designs of Crescent City's commercial buildings were consistent with patterns established in small towns throughout the United States during the historic period. Examples of three common commercial types - one-part, two-part, and arcaded blocks - were documented during the survey. Most are masonry vernacular designs, but several feature definable architectural styles, including the Colonial Revival, Romanesque Revival, and Italian Renaissance.

#### One-part Commercial Blocks

#### Masonry Vernacular

An excellent example of one-part, masonry vernacular commercial architecture is the c.1927, <u>Torrey Building</u> at 310-314 Central Avenue (Photo #25). It has a rectangular plan and a flat roof with an encircling parapet. The facade is clad with a red brick veneer and the side walls are finished with smooth stucco. Recessed pierced brick panels are located above each of three store fronts. The store fronts feature large plate glass display windows, brick kick panels, and recessed entrances.

The c.1924, <u>Walter Building</u> at 2-8 South Main Street (Photo #26) is another one-part masonry vernacular design. The otherwise rectangular plan of the building is made irregular by an angled entrance bay at the northeast corner. The parapet is crowned with masonry coping. The store fronts have plate glass display windows and double-door entrances topped by two-light

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transoms. The walls are constructed of hollow clay tile and finished on the exterior with smooth stucco.

The 1909, <u>Bank of Crescent City</u> at 234 Central Avenue (Photo #27) is an excellent example of one-part commercial architecture with a Romanesque Revival design. It has a flat, built-up roof with a parapet. The parapet is encircled by a decorative corbeled brick cornice, and a sawtooth stringcourse runs around the building above the windows. The windows and doors are set in arched openings with decorative brick surrounds. The southwest corner of the building is cutaway and holds the main double door entrance. A marble Doric column supports two arches that lead to the entrance.

#### Two-Part Commercial Blocks

An example of two-part masonry vernacular architecture is the c.1890, <u>C.H. Preston Hardware Store</u> at 518-520 Central Avenue (Photo #28). One of only two surviving examples of nineteenth century, masonry, commercial architecture, the two-story building has a flat, built-up roof and a parapet with pierced brick panels. A decorative molded cornice runs between two columns that rise above the parapet at the corners. The second story windows are set in segmental arch openings and have brick lintels. The original store fronts consisted of double-hung sash windows and wood paneled doors. Prior to 1926, a one-story brick addition was made to the west side. In 1926, new doors, and fixed picture windows were added to the first story, as well as an application of stucco over the original brick facade.

The 1922, <u>Peoples Bank of Crescent City</u> at 336 Central Avenue is another example of a two-part commercial building (Photo #29). It has a Colonial Revival design, featuring window lintels with keystones, and a corner main entrance with a pedimented gable and scroll bracket surround. The building is two stories in height and has red brick walls. Its parapet is surrounded at the base by a plain masonry cornice. Fenestration in the second story consists of single and paired, double-hung sash windows with 9/1 lights. The building has three large triple windows on the ground floor that have been altered to reduce the size of the lights.

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#### Arcaded Commercial Block

Of the two arcaded block, commercial buildings recorded during the survey, the 1926, Warner Apartment Building at 508-510 Central Avenue, is the most elaborate (Photo #30). It is twostories in height and features an elaborate Italian Renaissance style design. The building is rectangular in plan and has a hip roof. The exterior walls are clad with stucco. Fenestration in the second story of the facade consists of 8-light casement windows with masonry lintels and sills. The second story extends to cover a three-bay store front and is supported by a series of repeating arches with brick columns. Other decorative features include masonry quoins at the corners and an elaborate entrance with arched fanlight and sidelight surrounds.

#### RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

Crescent City's churches are among its most significant architectural resources. Most have a Late Gothic Revival style design, which was the most popular choice for religious buildings throughout the United States during the historic period. The Howe Memorial Methodist Church, is an elaborate example of the Classical Revival style.

Crescent City's Late Gothic Revival style religious buildings are vernacular adaptations of the design. Typical of the design, as it was executed in small rural settlements during the late nineteenth century, is the Episcopal Church of the Holy <u>Comforter</u> at 225 North Summit Street (Photo #31). Constructed in 1878, the building has a decidedly vertical emphasis. The main unit has a steeply-pitched roof and vertical board and batten siding. A square tower with a polygonal roof rises from the northeast corner of the building. The second story of the tower has paired lancet arch vents. The windows of the main building and at the base of the tower are non-historic stained glass set in lancet openings. A steeply-pitched, gable portico extends from the center of the facade to cover the main entrance. A historic addition has been made onto the west end of the church, and a current addition has been made onto that addition.

The 1883, <u>First Presbyterian Church</u> at 301 Cypress Avenue (Photo #32) is another vernacular example of the Late Gothic Revival style. It has a steeply-pitched, side gable roof and a

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square steeple tower with a polygonal roof. The exterior walls are clad with stucco. A gable roof portico extends from the base of the tower. Fenestration consists of historic stained glass windows set in rectangular openings. In 1923, the church's wooden exterior was stuccoed.

St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church at 248 South Main Street (Photo #33) is an example of a masonry, Late Gothic Revival style religious building. It was constructed in 1910, and features a steeply-pitch, front-facing gable roof and a truncated hip roof tower. The exterior walls are brick set in common, or American, bond. A round stained glass window is located in the center of the gable end. The main entrance is located at the base of the tower in a lancet arch opening. The stained glass windows have lancet arch brick lintels.

The largest of Crescent City's historic religious buildings is the <u>Howe Memorial Methodist Church</u> at 250 South Summit Street (Photo #34). Erected in 1922, in the Classical Revival style, the building features a side gable roof with simple cornice returns and a prominent, pedimented portico with Doric column supports. The exterior walls are red brick. The windows are stained glass and set in arched and rectangular openings with concrete sills. Originally, the building was accessed by a set of stairs on the front of the portico. In 1951 those stairs were removed to allow for the widening of U.S. Highway 17 and the present side stairs were added.

#### NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

The 143 non-contributing buildings in the district fall into one of two categories: 1) buildings constructed after the period of historic significance; or 2) buildings that have been radically altered from their original appearance by the application of modern building materials, additions, or the removal of significant architectural features. Due to the high level of integrity of the building stock in the district, relatively few buildings fall into the latter category. One is the <u>Edward J. Harper House</u> at 431 Myrtle Avenue (Photo #35). Nearly all of the historic materials of the house have been obscured by vinyl siding. The original windows have been replaced with metal sash windows and the upper story of the tiered porch has been enclosed.

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Typical of the kind of residential buildings added to the district during the post-World War II period is the house at 213 North Park Street (Photo #36). Constructed of concrete block, the one-story building has a low-pitched, side gable roof, stucco siding, and metal sash windows.

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CRESCENT CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT, CRESCENT CITY, PUTNAM CO., FL

#### CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS AND SITES

#### Contributing Sites

Cypress Avenue and South Summit Street Eva Lyon Park 1918 Edgewood Avenue and North Main Street Palmetto Cemetery c.1877.

#### Contributing Buildings

North Cedar	Street	
20	James Bryant House c.1910	Frame Vernacular
37	G.M.O. of O Lodge #2577 c.1888	Frame Vernacular
101	Jethro First Baptist Church c.1874	Frame Vernacular
108	c.1920	Frame Vernacular
110	c.1915	Frame Vernacular
112	c.1920	Frame Vernacular
118	c.1920	Frame Vernacular
200	Union Bethel A.M.E. Church 1880	Late Gothic Revival
214	c.1930	Frame Vernacular
216	c.1910	Frame Vernacular
224	c.1940	Frame Vernacular

Central Ave	nue	
124	T.C. Darby House c.1890	Frame Vernacular
125	Sprague House Inn and Rest. 1892	
133	John M. Klinger House c.1890	
222	American Legion Post 326 c.1924	Frame Vernacular
230	J.R. Hill Store 1885	Frame Vernacular
234	Bank of Crescent City 1909	Romanesque Revival
302		Frame Vernacular
306	E & W Store 1927	Masonry Vernacular
310-14	Torrey Building c.1927	Masonry Vernacular
334	Lucy Hardy House c.1890	
336	People's Bank of Crescent City 1922	
425	Smith-Arnold House c.1894	
429	Paul C. Smith Building c.1894	
430	Via Theater 1915	
508-10	Warner Apartments 1926	Italian Renaissance
517	Peacock Furniture Store c.1910	
518-20	Preston Dry Good/Hardware Store c.1	890 Masonry Vernacular
531	Railway Express & Insurance Of c.18	

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Cumro			
301	ss Avenue First Presbyterian Chur	ah 1002	Late Gothic Revival
303	1st Presbyterian Church		
304	Rufus Hunter Dentist Of		
412	Clayton Frank & Sons Mo	numents c.19	40 Frame Vernacular
Edgewo	ood Avenue		
105	Anna G. Hubbard House	c.1915	Frame Vernacular
204	Second Crandol E. Harri	s House c.19	25 Colonial Revival
	204A Edgewood Avenue		
	204B Edgewood Avenue		
214	Edwin Harris House	c.1925	Frame Vernacular
215	Elizabeth Close House	c.1886	Frame Vernacular
210	215A Edgewood Avenue	C.1000	riame vernacular
222	First Crandol Harris Ho	100 - 0.1000	Craftsman
222		use C.1920	CIALCSMAIL
315	222A Edgewood Avenue	c.1938	Masonry Vernacular
Eucal	yptus Avenue		
116		c.1890	Frame Vernacular
211		c.1890	Frame Vernacular
	211A Eucalyptus Avenue		
300	Alonzo Ingalls House	c.1890	Frame Vernacular
	300A Eucalyptus Avenue		
311	Daniel W. Burton House	c.1887	Frame Vernacular
	311A Eucalyptus Avenue		
508	Old Union Bethel Parson	age c.1920	Frame Vernacular
	da Avenue		
109	Horatio N. Blanding Hou	se c.1890	Frame Vernacular
	109A Florida Avenue		
504		c.1940	Frame Vernacular
508		c.1924	Frame Vernacular
400	Frand Rondo		
408		c.1915	Frame Vernacular
Magnol	lia Avenue		
36	J.H. Campbell House	c.1925	Craftsman
50	36A Magnolia Avenue	C. 1920	CLALCSMAIL
118	Annie Herschauser House	a 1020	Crafterer
128	AINTE REISCHAUSEL HOUSE	c.1920	Craftsman
120		0.1920	Craftsman

Section nu	mber <u>7</u> Pa	ge <u>15</u> cresci	ENT CITY HISTOR ENT CITY, PUTNA	
North	Main Street			
14		Lizzie Westcott House		Frame Vernacular
21			c.1915	Frame Vernacular
27		Marsh Marsh Tarley Mar 20	c.1915	Frame Vernacular
107 109-1	1	New Moon Lodge No. 32	2 c.1908 c.1915	Frame Vernacular Frame Vernacular
109-1	T		c.1915	Frame Vernacular
215			c.1930	Frame Vernacular
223	Miss	ion Methodist Episcopa		Frame Vernacular
	Main Street			
2-8		Walter Building	c.1924	Masonry Vernacular
16		Brinkerhoff Hall	c.1891	Frame Vernacular Frame Vernacular
22 33		John & Emma Austin Ho Sam Neal House c.1	1892	Frame Vernacular Frame Vernacular
34		Joe E. Thomas House		Minimal Traditional
102		Charles & Emily Cheat		
107		Eva Lyon City Park Bu		Frame Vernacular
108		Ernest L. Mathis Hous		Prairie
	108A South Main	Street		
211		John M. Reynolds Hous		Frame Vernacular
212		Sylvester & Jane Sal		
218	218A South Main	John & Betty Reynolds	s House C.1915	Frame Vernacular
227	210A South Main	Bethel House Inn	c.1910	Frame Vernacular
228		Hattie Blanding House		Frame Vernacular
232		Fred & Ethel Reynolds		
233		Lillie E. Holley Hous	se c.1909	Frame Vernacular
239		Lloyd Moose House	c.1890	Frame Vernacular
	239A South Main			
248		St. John the Baptist	R.C. Ch. 1910	Late Gothic Revival
249		Clark Fruit Company (		
317 321		Mrs. W.H. Bement Hous	c.1927	Frame Vernacular Frame Vernacular
321	321A South Main	Street	C.1920	fiame vernacular
South	Lake Street			
23		Sportsman's Club	1930	Frame Vernacular
30		Charles W. King House	e c.1883	Frame Vernacular
	Avenue		1001	
504 508		Mullin Apartments Shirod Mullins House	1891 c.1905	Frame Vernacular Frame Vernacular
500		Shirou Muttins house	0.1900	riame vernacuiat

tion nu		F CITY HISTO F CITY, PUTN	RIC DISTRICT, AM CO., FL
Orang	e Avenue		
408	George & Blannie Neal House	1913	Frame Vernacular
409		2.1940	Frame Vernacular
	409A Orange Avenue		
Palme	tto Avenue		
110	Dr. Thomas T. Seelye House	c.1885	Frame Vernacular
	110A Palmetto Avenue		
210	Wallace J. Pierpont House	c.1894	Frame Vernacular
302	George & Addie Hillman House		Frame Vernacular
312	C.A. Hawks House	c.1920	Craftsman
North	Lake Street		
18	Frank & Isabell Horning House	e c.1930	Frame Vernacular
101	Charles & Agnes Whitcomb Hous		Craftsman
200	Henry L. Tebbetts House	1877	Frame Vernacular
	200A North Lake Street		
219		c.1945	Frame Vernacular
402	Marvel H. White House	1892	Frame Vernacular
South	Lake Street		
11	Crescent City Masonic Lodge	c.1883	Frame Vernacular
14	Norma's Thrift Store	c.1915	Frame Vernacular
	14A South Lake Street		
15	Edward J. Harper House	c.1883	Frame Vernacular
20	George C. Miller House	c.1921	Frame Vernacular
North	Park Street		
10	luik beleee	c.1925	Frame Vernacular
11		c.1940	Frame Vernacular
20	Paul C. Smith House	c.1890	Frame Vernacular
	20B J.H. Ten Eyke Burr Outbuilding	1920	Frame Vernacular
21	Matteen House	c.1925	Craftsman
	21A North Park Street		
25		c.1925	Frame Vernacular
31		c.1920	Frame Vernacular
	31A North Park Street		
	31B North Park Street		
32	Sidney Lee Benham House	1897	Frame Vernacular
100	Kathleen & Rudolph Kinard Hou		Frame Vernacular
104	Ward-Maull-Collier House	c.1890	Frame Vernacular
110	William Schrader House	c.1920	Frame Vernacular
116	Partridge-Edwards House c.	1890	Frame Vernacular

on nur		CITY HISTO CITY, PUTN	RIC DISTRICT, AM CO., FL
North	Park Street		
123	Frank Gautier House	1905	Frame Vernacular
	123A North Park Street		
124	Hubert & Francis Brooks House		Frame Vernacular
217	William Conrad House	c.1877	Queen Anne
220	B.W. Barnes House	c.1920	Craftsman
	220A North Park Street		
325	Monroe Harris House	c.1911	Colonial Revival
South	Park Street		
9	Sophia B. Shaw Millinery Shop	c.1885	Frame Vernacular
11		c.1938	Masonry Vernacula
13	Dr. Josiah Harrison House 13A South Park Street	c.1891	Frame Vernacular
North	Prograd Street		
20	Prospect Street J.R. Hill House	1885	Frame Vernacular
20	20A North Prospect Street	1000	riame vernacular
25	George Crotty House	c.1904	Frame Vernacular
33	Francis Crotty House	c.1895	Frame Vernacular
38	W.J. Bethel House	1891	Frame Vernacular
	38A North Prospect Street	+00+	riume vermeeurur
100	Julius Grimsley House	c.1911	Frame Vernacular
	100A North Prospect Street		
109	O. Mitchell Newbold House	c.1908	Frame Vernacular
110	A.O. Davenport House	c.1910	Frame Vernacular
119	Newbold Garage	c.1930	Masonry Vernacula
209		c.1920	Frame Vernacular
	209A North Prospect Street		
219	E.N & L.B. Gerrisk House	c.1926	Frame Vernacular
	219A North Prospect Street		
309	Robert & Margaret Jones House		Craftsman
408	William & Clara Goldy House	c.1926	Frame Vernacular
410		c.1915	Frame Vernacular
	Prospect Street	101-	
26	Fred Bushnell House	c.1911	Frame Vernacular
10	26A South Prospect Street	1005	
40	Dr. E.W. Ford House	c.1905	Frame Vernacular
121	Miller Intermediate School Gyr		Masonry Vernacula
125	George C. Miller Intermediate		Classical Revival
128 209	Eugene D. Lounds House Charles & Correlia Lyon House	c.1911	Frame Vernacular
209	Charles & Cornelia Lyon House 209A South Prospect Street	C.1002	Italianate

ion nui	mber7		INT CITY, PUI	ORIC DISTRICT, NAM CO., FL
South	Prospect	Street		
228		Coe D. Smith House	1907	Frame Vernacular
		h Prospect Street		
	228B Sout	h Prospect Street		
240		C.E. Cook House	c.1910	Colonial Revival
244		John A. Austin House	c.1907	Frame Vernacular
	244A Sout	h Prospect Street		
301		Frederick & Bessie Bills Ho	ouse 1912	Craftsman
	301A Sout	h Prospect Street		
302		Matthew Read House	1912	Frame Vernacular
	302A Sout	h Prospect Street		
310		Benjamin Tillinghast House	1909	Frame Vernacular
	310A Sout	h Prospect Street	1011	
325		A.J. & Sarah Rinck House	1911	Frame Vernacular
402		Manley Roland Hubbs House	c.1905	Frame Vernacular
North	aummit at	reat		
	Summit St		1005	Mogeners Moura and
10		Scott Building	1925	Masonry Vernacula
12		Happ's Café	1936	Masonry Vernacula
32-36		Fuller Building	1927	Masonry Vernacula
202		F.W. Purrington House	c.1915	Colonial Revival
216		Jonathan Davenport House	c.1919	Frame Vernacular
217		G.M. Braddock House	c.1905	Frame Vernacular
218		William M. Bradley House	c.1938	Frame Vernacular
219		Old Episcopal Church Parson		Frame Vernacular
220		William W. Cary House	c.1911	Frame Vernacular
		h Summit Street		
225	Epi	scopal Church of the Holy Comf		Late Gothic Reviva
230		George & Alice Herrick Hous		Craftsman
402		Henry S. Springer House	c.1919	Frame Vernacular
	402A Nort	h Summit Street		_
403	1000	Capt. John F. Rhoads House	c.1877	Frame Vernacular
400	4U3A Nort	h Summit Street	1000	
428	4000 March	Walter & Corrie Cartledge H	louse 1920	Craftsman
	428A Nort	h Summit Street		
	Summit St		1000	
29		Borson House	c.1926	Craftsman
200		Leonard Eaton House	c.1892	Frame Vernacular
208		Eaton House	1911	Craftsman
220		James Padgett House	c.1891	Frame Vernacular
225		Arthur Letts House	c.1921	Frame Vernacular
231			c.1910	Frame Vernacular
0.4.1	231A Sout	h Summit Street		
241		R.B. Hill House	1928	Frame Vernacular
		h Summit Street		

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South Summit Street

247	Cities Service Station	1934	Masonry Vernacular
250	Howell Memorial M.E. Church	1922	Classical Revival
352	Dixie Service Station	1931	Frame Vernacular

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NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

37A North Cedar Street 101A North Cedar Street 112A North Cedar Street 120 North Cedar Street 132 North Cedar Street 200A North Cedar Street 222 North Cedar Street 105 Central Avenue 105A Central Avenue 122 Central Avenue 124A Central Avenue 202 Central Avenue 204 Central Avenue 301 Central Avenue 331 Central Avenue 410 Central Avenue 412 Central Avenue 427 Central Avenue 515 Central Avenue 301A Cypress Avenue 304A Cypress Avenue 410 Cypress Avenue 105A Edgewood Avenue 214A Edgewood Avenue 114 Eucalyptus Avenue 212 Eucalyptus Avenue 306 Eucalyptus Avenue 312 Eucalyptus Avenue 504 Eucalyptus Avenue 206 Florida Avenue 416 Florida Avenue 418 Florida Avenue 419 Florida Avenue

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501 North Lake Street 13 South Lake Street 20A South Lake Street

415 North Lake Street

411 Lemon Avenue

15 North Main Street 15A North Main Street 16 North Main Street 21A North Main Street 27A North Main Street 101 North Main Street 117A North Main Street 123 North Main Street 125 North Main Street 217 North Main Street

34A South Main Street 102A South Main Street 202 South Main Street 202A South Main Street 234 South Main Street 315 South Main Street

315 Myrtle Avenue 417 Myrtle Avenue 417A Myrtle Avenue

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CRESCENT CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT, CRESCENT CITY, PUTNAM CO., FL

431 Myrtle Avenue

2 North Park Street 10A North Park Street 20A North Park Street 25A North Park Street 105 North Park Street 110A North Park Street 213 North Park Street 215 North Park Street 319 North Park Street 412 North Park Street 443 North Park Street

19 North Prospect Street 25A North Prospect Street 28 North Prospect Street 33A North Prospect Street 101 North Prospect Street 105 North Prospect Street 105A North Prospect Street 107 North Prospect Street 107A North Prospect Street 110A North Prospect Street 123 North Prospect Street 137 North Prospect Street 200 North Prospect Street 204 North Prospect Street 217 North Prospect Street 220 North Prospect Street 310 North Prospect Street 210 South Prospect Street

210A South Prospect Street 210B South Prospect Street 210C South Prospect Street 210D South Prospect Street 216 South Prospect Street 216A South Prospect Street 304 South Prospect Street

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304A South Prospect Street 201A Palmetto Avenue 212 Palmetto Avenue 1 North Summit Street 19 North Summit Street 42 North Summit Street 101-05 North Summit Street 111 North Summit Street 113 North Summit Street 115 North Summit Street 118 North Summit Street 121 North Summit Street 128 North Summit Street 201 North Summit Street 216A North Summit Street 217A North Summit Street 225A North Summit Street 230A North Summit Street 410 North Summit Street 410A North Summit Street 2 South Summit Street 22 South Summit Street 115 South Summit Street 115A South Summit Street 201 South Summit Street 203 South Summit Street 211 South Summit Street 213 South Summit Street 213A South Summit Street

213B South Summit Street 228 South Summit Street 230-32 South Summit Street 234 South Summit Street 235 South Summit Street 236 South Summit Street 250A South Summit Street 301 South Summit Street

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CRESCENT CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT, CRESCENT CITY, PUTNAM CO., FL

#### SUMMARY

The Crescent City Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Community Planning, Commerce, and Early Settlement. The boundaries of the district encompass 357 properties, including 212 contributing buildings, two contributing sites, and 143 non-contributing buildings. The period of significance for the district extends from 1875, when Crescent City was founded, to 1946. Many of the contributing buildings in the district have associations with prominent people and events in Crescent City's past. In addition, the buildings embody a wide range of styles and forms that are reflective of late nineteenth and early twentieth century architectural trends.

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Crescent City has a history of human occupation that dates to the Middle Archaic Period (5,000-2,000 B.C.), when nomadic aboriginal tribes of the North Central Highlands region began making yearly hunting and gathering expeditions to the St. Johns River region. During Florida's Colonial Period (1565-1820), the Fruitland Peninsula was the site of several land grants. There is some evidence to suggest that a coffee plantation was begun in or near the Crescent City area by a man named Dunn during the British Colonial Period (1763-1784). During the period between 1821, when the United States formally acquired Florida from Spain, and the end of the Civil War, the area was settled by a few homesteaders who left no lasting imprint on the land.

#### Founding and Early Development of Crescent City, 1875-1895

Immediately following the Civil War, the pace of settlement on the Fruitland Peninsula quickened. By the early 1870s, a small community called Ellington had been established in the general area of what became Crescent City. In 1875, Charles R. Griffing of New York purchased a large tract of land between lakes Crescent and Stella that included the Ellington settlement. He had the area surveyed and platted and, at the suggestion of his wife, renamed it Crescent City. The townsite was laid out by

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civil engineer Major E.G. Dike, who divided the land into an orthogonal grid pattern. The town center, which contained sixtythree four-acre blocks, was located in the narrow stretch of land between lakes Crescent and Stella. Each of the blocks was divided into four one-acre lots, which were meant for building purposes. An additional 172 grove lots, adjoining the townsite on the north, were included in the plat. Three blocks - two on Crescent Lake and one among the grove lots - were designated as parks, and several lots were set aside for schools and churches.

Together with his two partners, William Case and J.W. Gardiner, Griffing formed a real estate company and undertook an advertising campaign to promote the new town in the major cities of the Northeast and Midwest. The company's vision for Crescent City was "not so much to make it a cheap place as it is to make it a delightful one, where people of wealth will feel like spending money to ornament and beautify their homes." Recognizing that the most pressing need of the new community was the establishment of a viable means of transportation to the area, Griffing contracted with the owner of the steamship *Euphemia* to make three round trips per week from her home port at Jacksonville. He also formed the Griffing Lumber Company to provide materials for building construction.

Within a year, a total of twelve families, mostly from the northeastern and mid-western states, had settled in Crescent City, and about eight homes had been constructed. The first school was established in a log cabin about two miles from the center of town. The following year, steamboat service to the community was augmented by the addition of the Hampton and Floral, which made daily runs between Jacksonville and Lake Crescent. For a time, Crescent City served as a debarkation point for all of the developing areas of the Fruitland Peninsula and fledgling communities, including Ormond Beach, in upper Volusia County. Agriculture and stock raising were the dominant early industries of Crescent City. Citrus, introduced to the area in the late 1860s, was the leading cash crop. The availability of grove lots to prospective settlers encouraged the creation of a thriving citrus industry. As visitation to the community increased, tourism became a vital component of the local economy.

The prospect of establishing a comfortable winter residence in Florida in a grove of potentially profitable orange trees

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proved an irresistible draw for many wealthy northerners between about 1875 and 1895. Improvements in Florida's transportation routes opened new areas for development and sparked a rush for prime real estate. It became fashionable among the wealthy to tour Florida by steamer, rail, and foot in search of the perfect spot to erect a grand winter resort home. Much of the early activity was centered in the northern half of the state, but by the beginning of the 1890s, most of the historic towns and cities of the southern peninsula had been founded. Crescent City was founded at a propitious time and place. Its natural beauty and location on the St. Johns River commanded the attention of migratory visitors passing through the community on their tours.

Some decided they had found what they were looking for and decided to settle in Crescent City. Homes constructed by such winter residents during that early period of development are among the most significant extant historic resources in Crescent City.

By 1880, the population of Crescent City and the surrounding area had grown to 554. The rapid growth experienced by the community prompted local residents to seek corporate status that would establish local law and provide taxing authority for improvements. On June 5, 1883, a meeting was held at Sprague's Hall to adopt a corporate name and elect the first town officials. The town was formally validated by an act of the Florida Legislature on February 22, 1885.

By the time the legislature passed the act to recognize the incorporation of the town, Crescent City had developed into a thriving small community. The beginnings of a commercial district rose along Central Avenue in the early 1880s. In 1887, the area boasted four general stores, two drug stores, two meat markets, a newspaper office, and a saloon. The community also possessed two large hotels, several boarding houses, four churches, and a number of impressive homes constructed by wealthy winter residents.

An event that served to quicken the pace of development in Crescent City occurred in 1886, when the tracks of the Jacksonville, Tampa & Key West Railroad (JT&KW) reached the community. Initial protests by local residents against having the railroad come through the center of town forced the officials of the JT&KW to alter the course of the tracks to skirt the western shore of Lake Stella. Perhaps in retaliation to the

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protests, the official name of the station constructed along the tracks was "Crescent City Junction," a slight that implied the stop was little more than a crossroads. Despite the unfortunate appellation given the station, the railroad provided a more efficient mode of transportation for imported goods and locally produced citrus and vegetable exports. Due to the allure of the beautiful trip up the St. Johns River, steamboats continued for a while to be the dominant mode of travel to the community for tourists. However, the rapid transit offered first by the train and later the automobile, ultimately led to the demise of the steamboat industry in Crescent City.

The end of the first period of development in Crescent City came abruptly during the winter of 1894-95. The "Great Freeze," as it came to be known, effectively ended prospects for commercial citrus production in northern Florida. On December 29, 1894, a blast of unusually cold air swept into the state, causing severe damage to groves as far south as Vero Beach. Affected trees were denuded of leaves, but most survived. A period of warm weather followed, and it appeared that at good portion of the citrus crop would be saved. The hopes of local grove owners, however, were dashed when a second, much harder freeze occurred February 7. Rising sap in the trees was frozen solid, expanding to the point where the bark ruptured and killed the trees. The devastation in groves throughout north and central Florida was complete. The state, which had shipped more than 5 million boxes of fruit in 1894, managed only 88,355 in 1895, and a meager 150,000 boxes the following year. The population of the town, which stood at 554 at the beginning of the decade, dipped to 352 at the turn of the century. Many of those who had come to the town to establish groves abandoned their holdings and either returned to their homes in the north or sought warmer climates to the south. The citrus industry would not recover until well into the first decade of the twentieth century.

# Town Improvements and the Recovery of the Citrus Industry (1896-1919)

Little in the way of new construction occurred in the city during the last half of the 1890s. The Town Council wrestled with a number of matters dealing with improvements and extension

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of services during the first decades of the twentieth century. Until that point, Crescent City retained its rural appearance. Its streets were little more than sand trails, which quickly turned to mud during rain storms. There were few curbs or sidewalks, and those that existed were constructed of wood. Few houses had running water or indoor plumbing. There was no electricity or telephone service. To send a telegram, one had to make the two-mile trip to the train station.

As early as 1897, the council began hearing proposals for the installation telephones and an electric light plant. The Pierpont Manufacturing Company, an orange crate manufacturing and lumber concern owned by Wallace Pierpont, petitioned the council for an electric light franchise in September 1898. A twenty-year franchise was granted at the following meeting with the provision that the town be able to purchase the generator plant at any time after ten years at fair market value. In March 1901, S.A. Baker of Sisco, Florida, was granted a thirty-year franchise to erect telephone poles and run wires through the streets of the town. Edwin Gilbert was given permission to establish a gas works on South Park Street. Of those early actions by the council to provide services, only the Gilbert gas plant was erected. In February 1904, Gilbert donated the gas plant to the city, and in June the first gas lamps were installed along Prospect Street and Central Avenue. Another early town-sponsored improvement was the construction of a waterworks in 1904. Previously, water was supplied by a tank owned by Miller & Cash, but after that tank collapsed on January 8, 1904, the company's franchise was revoked. Despite that fact, Miller & Cash continued to supply some residents with water well into the 1920s.

The city's involvement in improving services to local residents increased during the decade of the 1910s. In 1913, a telephone exchange was constructed and a franchise let to James Padgett to construct poles and wires in the streets. A number of streets, including Central Avenue and Summit Street, were paved with clay surfacing. Evidence of the increase in auto traffic to the city was the council's decision in January 1914, to install three speed limit signs within the town limits. In May 1917, the council voted to purchase the community's first chemical fire engine and establish a firehouse on the south side of Central Avenue between Prospect and Summit streets. In May of the following year, the council floated its first major bond issue of

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\$12,500 for the construction of an electric plant to light streets and provide electricity for home and business use.

The Village Improvement Association (VIA) was responsible for proposing the construction of the electric plant and initiated many other improvements during the first half of the twentieth century. Organized in 1890, by a group of fifteen local women, the VIA is the second oldest woman's club in Florida. It initially met in the town's library before building its own clubhouse (demolished) about 1893, on the north side of Central Avenue between Main and Summit streets. Among the club's early activities were beautification efforts, management of the town's library, and the sponsorship of local social events. It pushed hard for improvements such as paved streets, sidewalks, parks, clean water service, and proper sewerage and drainage.

The citrus industry had recovered much of its previous In 1909, local growers banded together to form losses by 1905. the Crescent City Citrus Growers Association, a charter member of the Florida Citrus Exchange formed that same year to help regulate freight rates and sales of citrus. An observer of the prospects for citrus development in Crescent City wrote in 1912 that the "highways in all directions are lined with vigorous and prosperous groves." He surmised that the annual crop would soon reach 200,000 boxes, and noted that there were four large, well equipped packing houses opened to growers, and many smaller ones constructed for private use. By 1915, there were some ninety growers shipping fruit from the city. The most extensive groves were owned by the firm of McCormick and Hubbs, who shipped 15,000 boxes from its eighty acre grove. The firm also operated the largest packing house in Crescent City.

As was the case with most communities in the country, Crescent City's development slackened during the years of the United States' involvement in World War I. The significant strides the community made to improve the local infrastructure and the recovery of the citrus industry during the previous two decades, however, placed the town in a good position to capitalize on the phenomenal growth that visited the state during the Great Florida Land Boom of the 1920s.

#### Boom and Bust (1920-1945)

In the 1920s, the nation entered a period of enthusiastic

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economic expansion. In Florida, a land boom began almost immediately after World War I. Miami and Palm Beach are generally regarded as the scenes of most frenzied activity, but few communities in the state failed to experience a fever for real estate. In early 1925, some twenty-five passenger trains arrived daily at Jacksonville, whose Chamber of Commerce also reported that 150,000 automobiles from out-of-state passed through the city that season. The Florida Legislature issued an open invitation to wealthy investors with its approval of a constitutional amendment prohibiting income and inheritance taxes. The resulting capital influx accelerated real estate development.

America's love affair with the automobile began in earnest during the 1920s, and tourist-hungry municipalities in Florida endeavored to meet the demand for good roads. The Florida State Automobile Association, which had been organized in Orlando in 1917, sponsored the development of an improved highway system throughout the state. The State Road Department, which had completed only 748 miles of paved roads by 1924, graded and hardsurfaced some 840 miles during the following four years. Part of that expansion was the construction of State Road No.3, which entered Florida near the coast by Fernandina and meandered through the state to its termination in Orlando. In November 1923, the Crescent City Town Council approved the State Road Department's plans for the location of the road. The hard-paved road was completed through the community the following year.

The prospect of the advantages the road might bring in terms of auto traffic to the town added to an already well developed surge of construction and improvements. In October 1921, the council voted another issue of \$27,500 in bonds for the creation of a waterworks and the expansion of electrical service. An increasing number of visitors to the community during the winter of 1923 prompted the council to approve the creation of a tourist camp in the park next to the electric light plant. On February 13, 1924, the Crescent City Fire Department was formally organized, with George C. Miller serving as the first fire chief. The following September the council announced plans to pave streets in the downtown area. About twenty sections of roads in the town were slated for paving under a \$98,000 bond issue.

At the height of the land boom in 1926, the commercial district contained twenty-eight stores, two banks, a motion

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picture theater, several office buildings, the woman's club, three auto garages, a filling station, and a hotel. The residential base of Crescent City expanded rapidly in response to the city's growing population. New subdivisions created hundreds of building lots on property that was formerly reserved for citrus cultivation. Most, including Crescent City Heights, developed by Evelyn and C.H. Barnes; Argentina, owned by the American Fruit Growers Association of Orlando; Plaza Del Norte, a subdivision of grove lots 47 and 49; and Highway Terrace were platted in 1925. The following year, Hubbard Park, a planned subdivision located on Lake Crescent north of the original city, was platted. It was laid out by the A.D. Taylor Company, a prominent landscape architecture firm with offices in Orlando and Cleveland, Ohio. Emulating other successful boomtime developments throughout the state, Hubbard Park featured curved streets, large lots, a divided boulevard, and extensive landscaping.

At about the same time the Taylor Company was completing its work on Hubbard Park, the Florida Land Boom collapsed. Evidence of the impending crisis began to surface during the summer of 1925, when the Florida East Coast Railway, with its ports and terminals clogged with unused building materials, announced an embargo on freight shipments to south Florida. Bankers and businessmen throughout the nation began to complain about the huge transfers of money to Florida. Newspapers ran derogatory columns that suggested fraud in land sales and encouraged their readers to vacation elsewhere. In 1926, forty Florida banks went bankrupt due to unwise and illegal investments in land schemes. Over the next two years real estate assessments throughout the state plunged by \$182 million. A final blow was dealt the boom in September 1926, when a devastating hurricane hit southeast Florida, leaving millions of dollars in damage and killing thousands of people.

The immediate effects of the real estate bust were moderated somewhat in Crescent City by the community's continued reliance on citrus production as the primary industry. Still, by the end of 1927, building construction slowed considerably. Then, in 1928, area groves were infested by Mediterranean fruit flies, which damaged ripening fruit and resulted in few shipments that year. Citrus growers had to rely on their savings to meet their mortgage obligations, resulting in large withdrawals from the

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city's banks. Ultimately, both the Bank of Crescent City and the Peoples Bank were forced to close, although the latter bank was allowed to reopen after the national banking holiday in 1933. The rate of tourism in the city dropped precipitously and real estate assessments declined. The population fell from an estimated boom time high of 1,200 to 955 in 1930.

In some ways, Crescent City was more fortunate than many other Florida communities. Although the city had incurred significant financial obligations through the bond issues of the 1920s, a considerable amount of the debt had been retired through the sale of the electric plant to the Florida Power and Light Company in 1925. Otherwise, however, the city's plight was similar to small towns throughout the nation during the first few years of the Depression. The council restricted its actions to passing ordinances and laws, rather than supplying funds for improvements. Salaries of city employees were slashed. To ensure the safety of the local treasury, the council withdrew city funds from the struggling Peoples Bank of Crescent City and deposited them in the financially sound Barnett National Bank in Jacksonville. In August 1932, the council sponsored the creation of the Welfare Committee of Crescent City to handle severe cases of deprivation among local citizens.

In 1933, the council began to search for money for building projects made available through federal and state relief agencies. An attempt was made to secure funds for the erection of a new \$50,000 waterworks and sewerage plant and a \$10,000 city hall. While that first application was denied, efforts continued, and in 1936, the city received a federal grant for the erection of a gymnasium for Crescent City High School. The project produced much needed work for a number of the city's laborers. Full economic recovery from the effects of the Great Depression, however, did not come to Crescent City until after World War II.

Unlike the rapid growth experienced by many of the state's cities in the post-war period, Crescent City developed at a moderate pace. Although there have been some considerable losses, the city's historic building fabric has remained remarkably intact with relatively few obvious intrusions. In the Spring of 1995, Crescent City undertook a survey to document its extant historic resources. The Crescent City Historic District is a result of that survey and is a vital component in the city's

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future plans for the preservation of its historic downtown area and adjacent residential neighborhoods.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXTS

Residential Architecture

#### Vernacular Architecture

Frame Vernacular, the most common style of historic residential architecture in Florida, refers to the common wood frame construction technique employed by lay or self-taught builders. After the Civil War the Industrial Revolution permitted standardization of building materials and parts, which exerted a pervasive influence over vernacular house design. Popular magazines helped to disseminate information about architectural trends throughout the country. The railroad provided affordable and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, individual builders had access to a myriad of finished architectural products from which to create their own designs.

#### Craftsman Style

The Craftsman style was the most popular design for small residential buildings built throughout the country in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Influenced by the English Arts and Crafts Movement, Oriental, and Indian architecture, the style reached its artistic apogee in the work of two brothers, Charles S. and Henry M. Greene. The Greene's began practicing architecture in Pasadena, California, in 1893, and in the ensuing two decades designed a number of large, elaborate prototypes of the style. Their innovative designs received a significant amount of publicity in national magazines such as Western Architect, The Architect, House Beautiful, Good Housekeeping, and Ladies' Home Journal.

By the turn of the century, the design had been adapted to smaller homes, commonly referred to as bungalows. The Craftsman bungalow is typically a one- or one and one-half-story building with a low-pitched gable (occasionally hipped) roof. The eaves are wide and open, exhibiting structural components such as

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rafter ends, beams, and brackets. The porch is often the most dominant architectural feature of the Craftsman bungalow. They are generally either full or partial width, with the roof supported by tapered square columns that either extend to ground level or sit on brick piers. Windows are usually double-hung sash with vertical lights in the upper sash.

#### Colonial Revival

Colonial Revival was the dominant style for American residential architecture during the first half of the twentieth century. The style was characterized by rectangular footprints, side gabled roofs, symmetrically arranged elevations, multi-light window sashes, and an emphasis on centrally located main doors often accented with gabled porticos. In Florida, however, the popularity of the style was eclipsed by the Craftsman and Spanish Revival styles. The term "Colonial Revival" refers to a rebirth of interest in the early English and Dutch houses of the Atlantic Seaboard. The Georgian and Adam styles were the backbone of the Revival, which also drew upon Post-medieval English and Dutch Colonial architecture for references.

The Colonial Revival style was introduced at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876. The centennial of the Declaration of Independence sparked renewed interest in the architecture of the colonial period. Many of the buildings designed for the Exposition were based on historically significant colonial designs. Publicity on the Exposition occurred simultaneously with efforts made by several national organizations to preserve Old South Church in Boston and Mount Vernon. About the same time a series of articles focusing on eighteenth century American architecture appeared in the American Architect and Harpers. The publicity the Colonial Revival style received helped to make it popular throughout the country.

#### Italianate

The Italianate style, along with the Gothic Revival, began in England as part of the Picturesque movement, a reaction to the formal classical ideals in art and architecture that had been fashionable for about two hundred years. The movement emphasized rambling, informal Italian farmhouses, with their characteristic

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square towers, as models for Italian-style villa architecture. Italianate houses built in the United States generally followed the informal rural models of the Picturesque movement. In America these Old World prototypes were variously modified, adapted, and embellished into an indigenous style with only hints of its Latin origin. The style is characterized by low hipped roofs with broad eaves and brackets. Narrow arched windows have elaborate crowns. Square cupolas and towers are common.

The first Italianate houses in the United States were built in the late 1830s; the style was popularized by the influential pattern books of Andrew Jackson Downing published in the 1840s and 1850s. By the 1860s, the style had completely overshadowed its earlier companion, the Gothic Revival. Most surviving examples date from the period 1855-80; earlier examples are rare. The decline of the Italianate style, along with that of the closely related Second Empire style, began with the financial panic of 1873, and the subsequent depression.

#### Queen Anne

Queen Anne was a popular residential building style in the United States from 1880 through the first decade of the 20th century. The name of the style is misleading. It actually draws most heavily upon earlier Jacobean and Elizabethan precedents rather than the more restrained Renaissance architecture of the reign of Queen Anne (1702-1714). English architect Richard Norman Shaw is most often credited for developing the style in his designs for grand manor houses during the mid-nineteenth century. Americans dramatically altered the style from its reserved, formal English character, to an elaborate, asymmetrical form. Characteristics of the style are irregular footprints, complex, steep hip roofs with a prominent front gable. Elevations are irregular, often containing a bay, and are richly textured by the use of various materials. Prominent one-story porches on the main facade often wrap to one side. Spindles, and scroll sawn brackets are common details. A varient of multi-pane, wooden sashes, having colored glass squares around a main clear light became so popular as to become known as Queen Anne sash.

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#### Prairie

The Prairie style, one of only a few indigenous American architectural forms, was developed by a creative association of Chicago architects in the 1890s. The leading proponent of the style was Frank Lloyd Wright, whose Winslow Homer Residence, constructed in 1893, was perhaps the first residence designed in the style. The style is characterized by two-story buildings with low, hipped roofs with broad eaves. Cornices, and detailing emphasizing a horizontal appearance were prominent. Dominant one-story porches had hip roofs supported by massive square columns. The heaviest concentrations of Prairie style buildings are located in the Midwest, although pattern books helped to distribute vernacular forms of the style throughout the country. The style was popular during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

In Florida, Prairie style houses are generally confined to residential areas of larger cities that were developed in the 1910s and early 1920s. Perhaps the largest collection Prairie buildings in the state is located in Jacksonville, where architect Henry John Klutho, Florida's foremost practitioner of the style, applied the design after a devastating fire there in 1901.

#### Commercial Architecture

#### Masonry Vernacular Commercial Blocks

Masonry Vernacular traditions were disseminated in much the same way as the frame vernacular. In Florida, where there is little in the way of natural stone and brick was more expensive than wood, masonry buildings were generally confined to commercial areas where the threat of fire mandated the use of fireproof materials. Most pre-1920 Masonry Vernacular buildings in the state were brick, but a number of older examples feature the rough-faced cast concrete block popularized by Henry Hobson Richardson in his Romanesque buildings of the late 19th century. The Masonry Vernacular designs of the 1920s and 1930s were often influenced by popular Spanish designs of the period and were often constructed using hollow clay tile. Since World War II concrete block construction has been widely used in Florida's

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residential suburbs.

Masonry Vernacular commercial buildings of the historic period took on similar characteristics that enable a further classification into building types. The two-part block was the most common commercial design used in small cities and towns in the United States between 1850 and 1950. Generally limited to between two and four-story buildings, it is characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones. The two zones are separated by the use of the interior space of the building. The lower zone is usually reserved for retail space and often contains large plate glass display windows, while the upper part contains space for offices or apartments. The exterior design of the building is usually homogeneous, but in some cases different building materials and exterior fabrics are used visually to divide the two zones.

The one-part block is a one-story, free-standing building that was a popular commercial design in small cities and towns during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was adapted from the lower part of the more numerous two-part commercial block during the Victorian period. The one-part block is a simple rectangular building often with an ornate facade. It is most often utilized for retail or office space.

#### Romanesque Revival

Romanesque designs were first imported to the United States from Europe during the mid-nineteenth century. The style was predominantly applied to public and commercial buildings until the 1870s, when architect H.H. Richardson adapted it for residential purposes. The hallmarks of the style are its roughfaced stone exteriors and large round arch window and door openings. Because the use of masonry products made the design more expensive to construct than frame buildings, it was never constructed in large numbers. A sympathetic monograph about Richardson was written shortly after his premature death in 1886, and caused a revival of interest in what became known as the Richardsonian Romanesque style. Due to its relatively late development, Florida has very few high-style examples of the Romanesque Revival style.

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#### Italian Renaissance Style Arcaded Commercial Block

The Arcaded Block type of commercial building is based on a style derived from loggias - great arcaded porches - built in Italian cities during the Renaissance. Designed primarily for banks and large retail stores, most buildings of this type date from the first three decades of the 20th century. Generally two or three stories high, the Arcaded Block building is characterized by a series of tall, evenly spaced, round-arched openings extending across a wide facade, with no separate bracketing elements at the ends.

#### **Religious Architecture**

#### Late Gothic Revival Style

The Late Gothic Revival style was an extension of the Gothic Revival, which found its widest popularity in the United States between 1840 and 1870. Andrew Jackson Downing is said to have built the first example of the Gothic Revival style in America in 1832. Downing produced several pattern books in which he showed the suitability of adapting the style to modest domestic designs. His ability to produce romantic architectural renderings of the design helped popularized the style. The Gothic Revival in church architecture was advocated by the Episcopal Church, and the leading American advocate for the style, architect Richard Upjohn. Upjohn also produced a pattern book which was the most influential for Carpenter Gothic churches.

Due to Florida's relatively late period of development there are a number of frame vernacular Gothic adaptations that are often termed Late Gothic Revival. Identifying features of this style includes steeply pitched gable roofs, often with one or more intersecting cross-gables; decorative vergeboard work in the gables; open eaves; wood siding, often board and batten; one story entrance or end porch; and varied window treatments, including lancet, oriels, and double-hung sash windows, often with diamond pane glazing.

#### Classical Revival

The "White City," a collection of buildings designed by some

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of the nation's most prominent architects at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, sparked a renewed interest in the classical models of ancient Greek and Roman architecture. Examples featured were varied, and ranged from monumental copies of Greek temples to smaller models, which drew heavily from designs of Adam, Georgian, and early Classical Revival residences built in the United States in the eighteenth century. The style is characterized by front gable buildings with rectangular footprints. The elevations are symmetrical, and the main facade is an full width arcade of classical columns supporting a pediment. The Classical Revival style became a favored design for early twentieth century American, commercial, government, and religious buildings. During the 1910s and 1920s, the style was frequently chosen for large scale residences.

#### Crescent City Architect, Leonard Eaton

Leonard Eaton was born in Annapolis, Nova Scotia, in 1852, and spent time in Boston before coming to Crescent City in 1880. He married Mary Lillian Harp, eldest daughter of pioneer residents John H. and Mary E. Harp, in 1885. Eaton designed and built numerous houses in the city for wealthy winter residents and was responsible for many of the early commercial buildings along Central Avenue. He was primarily a builder, taking his designs from readily available pattern books. The eclectic nature of his work is seen in such houses as the Italianate style Charles and Cornelia Lyon House at 209 South Park Street (Photo #16), the frame vernacular J.R. Hill House at 20 North Prospect Street (Photo #10), and the Craftsman bungalow of Frederick and Bessie Bill at 301 South Prospect Street (Photo #12). Eaton lived at a residence in the district at 200 South Summit Street (Photo #11) with his wife, Mary, until his death in July, 1935.

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### Historic Sites

Palmetto Cemetery is the oldest cemetery within the original town limits of Crescent City (Photos #1-3). It was established in the mid 1870s, on a one-acre lot at the corner of North Main Street and Edgewood Avenue. It served as the town's primary

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cemetery until the mid 1890s, when Eden Cemetery, located north of the town, was established. Palmetto Cemetery is an important visual landscape feature in the district and contributes to the area's historic appearance. It has significance for containing the oldest burials in the city and for the high degree of craftsmanship evident in many of its hand carved stones and sculptured monuments.

Eva Lyon Park is the oldest surviving intact park in Crescent City (Photo #4). The land for the park was donated to the City by Cornelia Lyon, a prominent winter resident, on November 16, 1918. The park was named for Lyon's daughter who apparently died at a young age. It was officially dedicated in 1922, and became the center for outdoor social activities in Crescent City.

#### Residential Buildings

The district's collection of residential buildings are significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Architecture, Community Development, and Early Settlement. Examples are found from all three of the district's historic periods. They reflect styles and trends in residential architecture throughout the nation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On a local level, many of the buildings possess significant associations with people important to the city's past.

Many of the most significant architectural resources dating from the district's first period of development were erected as homes for wealthy winter residents. Victorian styles, such as the Queen Anne and Italianate, and functional vernacular designs dominated construction. Among the most significant high-style buildings erected in the city during the period were the c.1877, <u>Conrad-Close House</u> at 217 North Park Street (Photo #18), the c.1882, <u>Charles and Cornelia Lyon House</u> at 209 South Prospect Street (Photo #16), and the c.1885, <u>Dr. Thomas T. Seelye House</u> at 110 Palmetto Avenue (Photo #17). All three houses have important historical associations and are significant for their architectural designs.

The impressive Queen Anne style <u>Conrad-Close House</u> was constructed soon after the property on which it sits was purchased by winter resident William Conrad from William Case in

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1877. During the 1880s, the house changed hands several times before it was acquired by James A. and Elizabeth Close in 1886. The Closes did much to improve the appearance of the property by planting a variety of plants and flowers. It became one of the showplaces of Crescent City. A 1895 newspaper article said of the property:

> The entire grounds bear evidence of painstaking care and an eye to the beautiful in home surroundings that is not as common as one could wish in a state so widely known as the "land of flowers." The News hopes that the example of Mr. and Mrs. Close will be generally emulated. In that event Crescent City would inded (sic) be a veritable paradise so far as looks are concerned.

During the early 1900s, the Conrad-Close property was again exchanged by a series of owners. In 1913, Jane E. and S.G. Salls, winter residents from Vermont, acquired it and remained there until 1927, when Dr. A.B. Harbison purchased the house. Harbison graduated from medical school in Philadelphia in 1878, and moved to Kansas City, Missouri. Later, he relocated to Trinidad, Colorado, where he served four years in the Colorado Legislature and was a member of the Colorado State Board of Health. He retired from practice in 1908, and returned to Pennsylvania. Harbison operated a mill in Pennsylvania for about ten years before deciding to come to Florida. He acquired a significant amount of real estate in and around Crescent City. In 1922, he helped organize the Peoples Bank of Crescent City and served as its first president. Later, he established an insurance business and developed and managed citrus groves.

The Lyon House is among the most important historic architectural resources in Crescent City. It was constructed in 1882 by Leonard Eaton, Crescent City's most prominent architect and builder during the historic period, for winter residents Charles and Cornelia Lyon. The first owner of the property was Dr. Reuben B. Garnett of St. Louis, Missouri, who first came to Crescent City in 1876. The Lyons, who came from Grosse Isle, Michigan, purchased the property from Garnett in 1882, and hired Eaton to design and construct the house. It features a number of characteristics that are common to the Italianate style,

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including a low-pitched hip roof, a square cupola with a widow's walk, a tiered verandah, and elaborate carved brackets and ornate balustrades.

Cornelia Lyon continued to spend winters at the house until her death in 1927. She was a town benefactor and donated the block of land that became Eva Lyon Park to the City in 1918. During the Great Depression the house was abandoned and became property of People's Bank of Crescent City. In 1948, it was purchased by Loe and Helen Knotts.

The <u>Seelye House</u> was constructed about 1885 for Dr. Thomas T. and Finette S. Seelye. The Seelyes came to Crescent City from Cleveland, Ohio, in the early 1880s, and decided to construct a winter residence. They purchased the property from William Bettsworth in March 1885, and hired Eaton to design and construct the house. After Thomas Seelye's death, Finette sold the property in 1894. R.C. Middleton bought the house in 1922. Middleton managed the local groves of the Gentile Brothers citrus firm for twenty years. He was also active in civic affairs, serving as a Crescent City alderman (1915-17, 1925-27, 1929-33) and mayor (1923-1925). He was elected as a Putnam County representative to the Florida Legislature in 1933. The Middleton family lived in the house until 1945, when Mr. and Mrs. Philip Sargent acquired the property.

Residential construction during Crescent City's second period of development was characterized by the introduction of new architectural styles, including the Craftsman and Colonial Revival. The two most significant Craftsman style houses erected in the community during the period were the 1912, <u>Frederick and Bessie Bills House</u> at 301 South Prospect Street (Photo #12) and the 1-0-, <u>Benjamin F. Tillinghast House</u> at 310 South Prospect Street (Photo #37).

The <u>Bills House</u> was another building erected by Leonard Eaton. A was a classic example of a Craftsman style bungalow, with its low-pitched gable roof, gable roof entrance porch, open eaves, triangular brackets, and varied exterior wall fabrics. Frederick Bills was born in England in the 1850s. He came to the United States as a young man and settled first in Chicago, where he became a house painter. He later moved to Davenport, Iowa, and established a successful rose growing business. Bills first visited Crescent City while on a tour of Florida in 1912. Impressed with the beauty of Lake Crescent, he decided to

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purchase a lot and construct this residence. While living at the house, Bills served as a city alderman from 1913-1914, and was a very active member of the local Masonic Lodge. After the death of his first wife, Bessie, Bills married Florence Johnson, a winter resident of Crescent City from Illinois. The couple sold the house on Prospect Street to Kirk M. White and moved to Pasadena, California, in 1924. The house remained in the White family until 1985, when John and Grace Thomas, both school teachers, purchased the property.

Born in East Greenwich, Rhode Island, in 1849, Benjamin Franklin Tillinghast moved as a young man to Moline, Illinois, where he edited the local newspaper. He then moved to Davenport, Iowa, and was a member of the editorial staff of the Davenport *Gazette* and later served as managing editor for the Davenport *Democrat*. While working as a newsman, Tillinghast became active in Davenport chapter of the Red Cross. President Theodore Roosevelt recognized him for his outstanding work in organizing relief aid to Russia during a famine there in the early twentieth century, and appointed him secretary of a delegation to St. Petersburg headed by Clara Barton.

After retiring from the newspaper business in 1909, Tillinghast and his wife, Nellie, decided to make Crescent City their permanent home. He had acquired the property for this house from James R. Howe in 1906, and hired Leonard Eaton to construct the residence. While in Crescent City, Tillinghast served on the board of trustees for local schools, was president of the chamber of commerce, and helped organize the Peoples Bank of Crescent City in 1922. The Tillinghast family continued to own the house throughout the remainder of the historic period.

An example of Colonial Revival style architecture dating from 1911 is the <u>Monroe Harris House</u> at 325 North Park Street (Photo #15). Harris, a winter resident of Crescent City, purchased the lot for the house from George F. Morse in 1910. The two and one-half-story brick house was built by Harris, who was a mason in his native Connecticut. Significant architectural features include a steeply-pitched front-facing gable roof, asymmetrical facade, an offset main entrance with sidelight surrounds, and a prominent hip roof end porch. The Harris family continued to own the house until 1993. It is significant as one of only a few historic masonry residential buildings in Crescent City.

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The most significant residential building constructed during the district's final period of development was the c.1930, Frank and Isabell Horning House at 18 North Lake Street (Photo #38). Soon after coming to the area in the late 1920s, the Hornings purchased the Orange Inn, a large two-story hostelry located across the street from the house. At the same time the house was constructed, Frank Horning opened a large hardware, lumber, and feed store on the lot to the south and became one of Crescent City's most prominent businessmen. The Horning's lived in the house throughout the remainder of the historic period. It is significant for its unique architecture, including an unusual full basement, and as an example of residential architecture in Crescent City during the years of the Great Depression.

#### Commercial Buildings

The oldest documented commercial building in Crescent City is the Lee Benham General Store at 10 South Lake Avenue (Photo #39). Benham constructed the store building about 1883, near the city's steamboat landing. He offered a wide variety of goods from stock imported from Jacksonville. In 1907, the store was purchased and operated by William Miller, of the Miller and Cash steamship line. The local chapter of Masons acquired the building in 1920, for use as a lodge hall. In the mid 1930s, the Federal Emergency Relief Agency operated a canning plant out of the ground floor. The Masonic Lodge underwent a complete renovation in 1939. An original tiered verandah was removed and the interior spaces were modified to create large open areas for meetings and events on the first and second floors. A kitchen and fireplace were also added. The building continued to serve as a Masonic Lodge until 1994.

Another extant commercial building dating from the early 1880s, is the <u>J.R. Hill Mercantile Store</u>, which was constructed in 1885 by Leonard Eaton. Located at 230 Central Avenue (Photo #40), the building was used by Hill and, later, Thomas Darby as a mercantile store. About 1945, it was converted by T.L. and Eva O'Quinn for use as a dry cleaning establishment. The building has undergone some historic alterations. The metal awning is contemporary.

The <u>Carlos H. Preston Hardware Store</u> at 518-520 Central Avenue (Photo #28) is the oldest extant masonry building in

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Crescent City. It was probably built soon after Preston moved to Crescent City in 1888. Upon his arrival, Preston, who had been an insurance agent in Illinois, decided to go into the mercantile business. He constructed the two-story brick edifice to peddle a variety of products, including groceries, furniture, and hardware. The building originally featured a brick facade with arched brick lintels above the doors and windows. Alterations were made to the first story in 1926.

The Sprague House Inn and Restaurant at 125 Central Avenue (Photo #9) was constructed as a winter residence for James Morrow in 1892, and converted into a hotel in 1902 by the wife of prominent early resident and first Crescent City mayor, Dr. Guilford Sprague. The frame vernacular building shows elements of Victorian woodwork in its stick, spindle, and carved bracket verandah treatments. Once one of five prominent tourist hotels in the city, the Sprague House Inn is the only surviving vestige of Crescent City's golden age of tourism.

The most significant extant building associated with commercial development in the town during the first two decades of the twentieth century is the <u>Bank of Crescent City</u> at 234 Central Avenue (Photo #27). Constructed in 1909, it was the first financial institution erected in the city and provided local residents, most of whom previously did their banking in Palatka, a convenient place to deposit their money. The bank failed during the Great Depression and was taken over by the city for use as a city hall and fire department. The building has additional significance for its Romanesque Revival style architectural design. It is a one-story building with arched windows and doors, elaborate corbeled cornice, and a marble corner column.

The commercial area experienced its most intensive development during the land boom years of the mid 1920s, when a number of masonry buildings were erected. The two most significant buildings dating from that period were the 1922, <u>Peoples Bank of Crescent City Building</u> at 336 Central Avenue (Photo #29), and the 1926, <u>Warner Apartments</u> at 508-510 Central Avenue (Photo #30). The Peoples Bank was organized by A.B. Harbison and W.A. Warner. The original bank offices were kept in a two-story, wood frame building located next door at 334 Central Avenue while this impressive two-story, masonry building was being built. After the building was completed, the bank occupied

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the ground floor and the upper story was rented out to various businesses, including the Deacon Insurance Agency and the Crescent City Telephone Company. A Western Union office was located in the rear of the building. The bank was forced to close as a result of the Great Depression in the early 1930s. It was later reorganized and was among the first banks in Florida to open after the national banking holiday of 1933. The bank continued to operate out of the building until a larger and more modern facility was constructed across the street in 1952. The Warner Apartment Building was constructed in 1926 by Carlos H. Preston, next to his hardware store. The arcaded block, Italian Renaissance building was built as a combination store and apartments. It served as home to a number of businesses during the historic period, including the Oswald and Inman clothing stores, Preston Hardware, and the Thomas Drug Store. The upper story contained five apartments. In 1934, the building was purchased by Stanley Warner and the present hip roof was added. Between 1940 and 1964, the Crescent City Post Office

#### Religious Buildings

was located there.

Due to the important role that religion played in the lives of the early settlers of Crescent City, several substantial churches were erected during the early years of the settlement. Two of the oldest of the city's surviving religious buildings are Jethro First Baptist Church at 101 North Cedar Street (Photo #41), and Union Bethel A.M.E. Church at 200 North Cedar Street (Photo #42). Jethro First Baptist Church was originally constructed on what is now Huntington Road in 1874 to house a small prayer group. In the plat of Crescent City, a number of lots in the northwest section of town were set aside for black residents. As the number of black settlers grew in the area that became known as "Whitesville," there was a demand for a more centrally located house of worship. In 1877, the small one-room building was floated across Lake Stella and positioned at its present site at 101 North Cedar Street. The Jethro First Baptist congregation was formally organized in 1880. The church was enlarged and remodeled in the early twentieth century.

The Union Bethel A.M.E. Church congregation traces its roots to the early 1880s. The church was originally located on the

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corner of Main Street and Florida Avenue, but was later moved to the southeast corner of Cedar and Eucalyptus streets. In the early 1900s, the church was moved its present location at 200 North Cedar Street. At the time of its final move, the church was enlarged and an elaborate metal ceiling was installed. Despite the extensive alterations that both buildings have undergone over the years, they are the most significant surviving buildings associated with the long history of Crescent City's black community.

The Episcopal Church of the Holy Comforter and the First Presbyterian Church were the two earliest churches constructed in the city associated with the white community. The Carpenter Gothic style Holy Comforter Church is located at 225 North Summit Street (Photo #31). The Episcopal Mission of the Holy Comforter was founded in 1876, but groups of local Episcopal worshippers had held regular services in various homes prior to that date. Charles S. Williams, father of the aforementioned Bessie Williams, and former rector of St. Matthew's Church in Brooklyn, New York, was assigned to the congregation as a missionary. Upon his arrival in 1876, services were held first at the Capwell House and then at Williams's home at the corner of Edgewood Avenue and Summit Street. Due to an increasing number of permanent and winter residents in the community, the congregation deemed it necessary to erect a separate church building. Work was begun in the fall of 1877, and was completed early in 1878. The first service in the new church was held on February 10.

The First Presbyterian congregation began services in December 1878, in a one-room school house on the north end of town. In 1882, the lot for the present church, which is located at 301 Cypress Avenue (Photo #32), was purchased by the Reverend S.T. Wilson of Palatka, who held periodic services in the town throughout the remainder of the year. That winter, the Reverend J.K. Wright of North River, New York, came to Crescent City and began holding regular services in the schoolhouse. The congregation was formally organized on March 24, 1883, with eleven charter members. The parishioners began work on the church building the following summer, but funds were short and construction was halted several times in order to raise money for The first services were held in January 1884, but the materials. church was not completely finished until 1888. Exceptional stained glass memorials were placed in 1923, executed by C.E.

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Langley, and in 1945, by Willet Studios, of Philadelphia. An additional chapel building located at 303 Cypress Avenue was constructed on the church property in 1910, and contributes to the historic district.

Two additional churches were added to the district during the early twentieth century. The St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church, located at 248 South Main Street (Photo #33), was the first masonry religious building constructed in the community. The congregation was formed in 1906, initially holding services at the home of J.W. Mathis. Before that, there were only a few Catholic families in the town. The general population increase that Crescent City experienced after 1905, however, brought more Catholics, and by 1910, the congregation was deemed sufficient to erect a permanent church. The church was constructed under the direction of Father Patrick Barry, who later became Bishop of St. Augustine, at a cost of approximately \$2,000. Mass was held once a month by a priest from St. Monica's in Palatka. It was not until 1932 that the congregation held regular services each Sunday. In 1938, the stained glass windows, which were donated by members of the congregation and produced by the Southern Art Glass Company of Jacksonville, were installed and dedicated. The church continues to be used by the St. Johns congregation as a chapel. The main church is located south of town on U.S. Highway 17.

The last and largest of Crescent City's historic religious buildings, Howe Memorial Methodist Church at 250 South Summit Street (Photo #34), was constructed during the land boom. The congregation had its start in 1868, when services were held in a log cabin north of the present city limits. Services were later held in the Grovesdale School and then in a wood frame church erected in that community in 1891. When the Rev. W.A. Lowder became pastor in 1908, he recognized that Crescent City was a better location for the church. Over strenuous objections by some in the congregation, he had the church building dismantled and reassembled on Summit Street in Crescent City. The lot for the church was donated by James R. Howe of Brooklyn, New York, in whose honor the present church was named. When the congregation outgrew the small building, it was sold to church member Wallace Mullins, who moved it one and one-half blocks to the west and converted it into an apartment building. The cornerstone for the new brick church was laid on July 28, 1922. The building was

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completed by local builders Robert Hall and Noel V. Nihoul that fall at an estimated cost of \$17,000. It was officially dedicated in 1932. The only significant alteration to the original appearance of the church occurred in 1951, when the widening of U.S. Highway 17 (Summit Street) required that the front steps be removed and new steps be erected on either side of the entrance portico.

#### Education Buildings

The general population increase that the city experienced during the land boom resulted in overcrowding in its schools. In response, the Crescent City High School (now George C. Miller Intermediate School) at 125 South Prospect Street (Photo #43) was constructed in 1927. It replaced a "temporary" wood frame schoolhouse that had been used for nearly a decade after the Gilbert Institute burned in 1918. The building was designed by the prominent Jacksonville architectural firm Mark & Sheftal and constructed by contractor A.E. Itner. The partnership of Leeroy Mark and Victor Earl Sheftal began in 1911, when both were apprentices of Henry J. Klutho, Jacksonville's most significant architect of the early twentieth century. After establishing their own firm, the two gained an excellent reputation for Prairie style residential construction. Their school designs also won praise, and they ultimately drew plans for more than fifty schools throughout the state.

The first classes at the high school were held on September 12, 1927. The enrollment that year was 144, the largest that the high school ever experienced. In its original configuration, the \$165,000 building was two stories in height with a full basement. It had eighteen large classrooms with banks of double-hung sash windows that provided light and ventilation, and a 700-seat auditorium with a stage and balcony. There were also rooms for a library, teacher's lounge, principal's office, cafeteria, and a laboratory. A writer for the *Courier-Journal* noted that the building was "so constructed that it is almost impossible for fire to do any damage."

Despite that claim, the school suffered extensive damage in a fire in 1951. Initial estimates of the damage indicated the entire remaining structure would have to be razed and replaced, however, the building was reconstructed using the walls of the

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original school. Despite extensive repairs, the school possesses its historical character, feeling, and significance as the only remaining historic school. It continues to serve the function for which it was constructed.

The Crescent City High School Gymnasium at 121 South Prospect Street (Photo #44) was the most significant building project undertaken in the city during the Great Depression. It was constructed after protracted negotiations between a committee of local citizens, headed by prominent businessmen David M. Gautier, J.W. Warner, and E.A. Loving, and the Works Progress Administration, one of numerous relief organizations established by the Federal government to spur local economic development. Funds totaling \$23,171 were approved by the WPA for the project in August 1935, and ground was broken the following October. The plans were drawn by an architect by the name of Hale, and local contractors Robert E. Hall and Noel V. Nihoul were in charge of The plans called for the erection of a one-story construction. building, measuring 62 by 100 feet. There was room for a regulation basketball court and additional seating. The building had modern lighting and heating equipment and dressing rooms complete with showers. It was completed in August 1936.

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CRESCENT CITY HISTORIC DISTRICT, CRESCENT CITY, PUTNAM CO., FL

#### BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Begin at a point at the northeast corner of lot 6, block 63 of the Crescent City Blocks Subdivision and proceed as follows:

- west to the east side of North Park Street
- south to the northwest corner of lot 3, block 59
- west to the northwest corner of lot 2, block 53
- north to the south side of Magnolia Avenue
- west to the northwest corner of Magnolia Avenue and North Summit Street
- south to the northwest corner of lot 3, block 53
- west to the northwest corner of lot 2, block 50
- south to the north side of Palmetto Avenue
- east to the northeast corner of Palmetto Avenue and North Prospect Street
- south to the northwest corner of lot 3, block 55
- west to the northwest corner of lot 2, block 54
- south to the south side of Edgewood Avenue
- west to the northwest corner of Edgewood Avenue and North Cedar Street
- south to the northwest corner of lot 2, block 38
- west to the east side of East Grand Rondo
- south along the east side of East Grand Rondo to the southwest corner of the property at 37 North Cedar Street
- east to the east side of Cedar Street
- south to the south side of Central Avenue
- west to the eastern shore line of Lake Stella
- south along the shore line to the northwest corner of lot 6, block I of the Mathis Subdivision
- south to the north side of Lemon Avenue
- east to the northeast corner of Lemon Avenue and South Main Street
- south to the northeast corner of Orange Avenue and South Main Street
- east to the southwest corner of lot 1, block E
- south to the southwest corner of lot 7, block D
- east to the west side of South Summit Street
- north to the northwest corner of Orange Avenue and South Summit Street
- east to the southwest corner of lot 1, block B
- south to the southwest corner of lot 7, block A
- east to the west side of South Prospect Street
- north to the northwest corner of Orange Avenue and South Prospect Street
- west to a point at the southeast corner of the property at 325 South Prospect Street
- north to the northeast corner of the property at 301 South Prospect Street
- west to the southwest corner of Lemon Avenue and South Prospect Street
- north to a point opposite the southeast corner of the property at 209 South Prospect Street
- east to a point on the south line of 209 South Prospect Street
- north to the northeast corner of the property at 121 South Prospect Street
- west to the southwest corner of Cypress Avenue and South Prospect Street

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- north to the northwest corner of Central Avenue and North Prospect Street
- east to the northeast corner of Central Avenue and North Park Street
- south to the northeast corner of Cypress Avenue and South Park Street
- east to the northwest corner of Cypress Avenue and South Lake Street - north to a point opposite the northwest corner of lot 3, block 18 of the Crescent City Blocks Subdivision
- east to the southeast corner of the house at 23 South Lake Street
- north to the northeast corner of said house
- west to the western shore line of Lake Crescent
- north along the shore line to the northeast corner of lot 3, block 19
- west to the northwest corner of lot 2, block 12 north to a point on the south line of the property at 109 Florida Avenue
- east to the southeast corner of said property
- north to the north side of Florida Avenue
- east to the northwest corner of Florida Avenue and North Lake Street
- north to the northwest corner of Eucalyptus Avenue and North Lake Street
- east to the southeast corner of lot 3, block 22
- north to the northeast corner of said lot
- west to the west side of North Lake Street
- north to the southwest corner of Edgewood Ave. and North Lake St.
- west to the southwest corner of Edgewood Ave. and North Park St.
- north to the northwest corner of Palmetto Ave. and North Park St.
- east to the southeast corner of the property at 402 North Lake St.
- north to the northeast corner of said property
- west to the west side of North Lake St.
- north to the northwest corner of Magnolia Avenue and North Lake Street
- east to the southeast corner of lot 6, block 63
- north to the point of beginning

#### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary was drawn to encompass the most significant and cohesive collection of historic resources in Crescent City. Contributing buildings within the boundaries share a common period of historic development, while those left outside the boundaries were, for the most part, constructed in the post-World War II era or altered to the point where they no longer reflect their historic character.

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#### PHOTOGRAPHS

1) Palmetto Cemetery, corner of North Main Street and Edgewood Avenue, Crescent City Historic District 2) Crescent City, Putnam County, Florida 3) Stephen Olausen 4) September 1994 5) Historic Property Associates, Inc., St. Augustine, FL 6) View of cemetery from Edgewood Avenue, facing northwest 7) 1 of 44 Items 2-5 are the same for the remaining photographs 1) Mary D. Gautier Headstone, Palmetto Cemetery, Crescent City Historic District 6) View of headstone, facing east 7) 2 of 44 1) John H. Harp, Palmetto Cemetery, Crescent City Historic District 6) View of headstone, facing east 7) 3 of 44 1) Eva Lyon Park, South Main Street and Cypress Avenue, Crescent City Historic District 6) View of park, facing southwest from Cypress Avenue 7) 4 of 44 1) 212, 214, 222 Edgewood Avenue, Crescent City Historic District 6) Streetscape of north side of 200 block of Edgewood Avenue, facing northwest from North Park Street 7) 5 of 44 1) 33, 25 North Prospect Street, Crescent City Historic District 6) Streetscape of west side of 00 block of North Prospect Street, facing southwest from Florida Avenue 7) 6 of 44 1) 302, 244, 240 South Prospect Street, Crescent City Historic District 6) Streetscape of west side of 300 and 200 block of South Prospect Street, facing northwest 7) 7 of 44 1) 202, 216, 228, 230 North Summit Street, Crescent City Historic District 6) Streetscape of east side of 200 block of North Summit Street, facing northeast from Eucalyptus Avenue

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- George C. Miller Intermediate School, 124 South Prospect Street, Crescent City Historic District
- 6) View of facade (west elevation), facing east
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- Crescent City High School Gymnasium, 121 South Prospect Street, Crescent City Historic District
- 6) View of facade (south elevation), facing north
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