

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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OMB No. 10024-0018

781

JUN 27 1994

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Fort Meade Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by N. 3rd St., Orange Ave., S. 3rd St., and Sand Mountain Rd. not for publication

city or town Fort Meade vicinity

state Florida code FL county Polk code 105 zip code 33841

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 6/15/94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper Shirley Rapley Entered in the National Register 7/29/94 Date of Action

Fort Meade Historic District
Name of Property

Polk, Florida
County and State

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
151	68	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
151	68	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Commercial/Retail

Religion/Church

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Commercial/Retail

Religion/Church

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style/Wood Frame Vernacular

No Style/Masonry Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood

roof Asphalt

other Wood: Porch

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Commerce
- Community Planning and Development
- Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1889-1940

Significant Dates

1908

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Fort Meade Historic District
Name of Property

Polk, Florida
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 100 apprx.

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 | 17 | 420160 | 3070140
Zone Easting Northing
2 | 17 | 421800 | 3070140

3 | 17 | 421800 | 3069340
Zone Easting Northing
4 | 17 | 420160 | 3069340

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title W. Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date June 6, 1994

street & number 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

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 N/A

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including 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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Fort Meade Historic District
Fort Meade, Polk County
Description

Section number 7 Page 1

Summary Paragraph

The Fort Meade Historic District encompasses the downtown commercial and governmental center of the community and the residential areas immediately surrounding it. The 100 acre district contains 219 buildings, 151 of which contribute to the historic character of the area and 68 of which are considered noncontributing. The contributing buildings are mainly single family dwellings and commercial buildings that reflect the period from the late 19th century to c. 1940, while the noncontributing structures are mainly residences constructed after 1950. The district also contains several historic churches and a school. Few of the buildings in the district exhibit formal architectural styling. Most of the dwellings are bungalows or wood frame vernacular residences, and the commercial buildings are mainly brick vernacular structures. There are a handful of structures in the district that appear to meet the criteria for individual nomination to the National Register; however, only Christ Episcopal Church (listed N.R. 1976), constructed in 1889, is presently listed in the Register.

Supporting Narrative

Fort Meade is a small Central Florida community of approximately 5,000 residents located in southwest Polk County about 10 miles south of Bartow, the county seat. Perhaps the dominant features of the landscape in the vicinity of Fort Meade are the presence of phosphate mines that surround the community and the Peace River that marks the western limits of the city. The land within the city limits is relatively flat and heavily dotted with oaks, pines, and palmettos. There are also numerous citrus trees within the historic district, some of them the remnants of groves that once stood close to the commercial center of town. The irregularly shaped district takes in all or part of 56 city blocks and is roughly bounded on the north by North 3rd Street, on the east by Orange Avenue, on the south by South 3rd Street, and on the west by Sand Mountain Road. The district lies approximately one mile west of the Peace River and is located along the north/south corridor of U.S. Highway 17/98 and the east/west corridor of County Road 630. These traffic arteries divide the district into four main quarters. The three block long downtown commercial area lines both sides of West Broadway between Charleston Avenue and the CSX Railroad right-of-way.

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Fort Meade, Polk County
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The district contains a variety of residential, commercial, religious, governmental, and educational buildings. The streets of Fort Meade are laid out in a regular grid pattern, although there are some minor anomalies in the plan, and not all of the city blocks are of equal size. The greatest variations in block size and shape are found in the vicinity of the commercial core of town. The district was never densely built up and has suffered some loss of historic resources since the end of World War II. Some properties were demolished with the widening of the north/south U.S. Highway 17/98 corridor in the 1970s, but many others were lost through attrition, a process that saw resources fall prey to fire and deterioration. Also, many building lots in the residential areas were never built upon, with the result that there is little continuity of historic properties along the streets in Fort Meade, making the district boundaries quite irregular.

Commercial Buildings

The old commercial area found along West Broadway between Charleston Avenue and the railroad tracks has remained largely intact and provides a central focal point for the historic district. The facades of the commercial buildings display traditional storefronts, consisting of a recessed main entrance, flanking display windows, suspended or cantilevered awnings and architectural details that are restricted to the upper story windows, parapets, and string courses. The buildings cover their lots almost entirely, creating a nearly continuous facade of one and two-story building blocks along both sides of West Broadway (Photos 8, 62, and 64). Party walls define each distinct building in this unified mass, but breaks in the mass come only at street intersections and where an occasional lot has been rendered vacant by the destruction of a building. Some of the historic buildings in the commercial area have undergone restoration work that has reversed the effects of alterations made to the structures over the last thirty years. Historically inspired street lighting, street furniture and plantings have been installed to make the area more attractive.

Most of the commercial buildings along West Broadway were erected after 1908 when the center of town was moved to its present location about two miles west of the Peace River. All but a few of the buildings contribute to the historic character of the district, and even some of the noncontributing structures, such as the Badcock Furniture Store at 202 West Broadway (Photo

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Fort Meade, Polk County
Description

4), are older buildings that have been severely altered rather than modern ones. There are three architecturally notable buildings located along West Broadway. These are the Fort Meade City Hall (Photo 1), built 1927, the Old Fort Meade State Bank (Photo 6), constructed in 1914, and the Old Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Station, completed c. 1914 (Photo 10). Both the city hall and the bank are two-story, yellow brick Classical Revival style buildings that retain much of their original physical integrity. The bank was renovated in 1993, and the city hall is presently (1994) undergoing restoration work. The red brick railroad depot is in good condition but has a large addition on its south elevation. It is presently being used as the offices of the Peace River Packing Company.

At one time, large brick warehouses stood along Tecumseh Avenue next to a rail siding that paralleled the present CSX railroad track between West Broadway and North 3rd Street. These structures, which served mainly as citrus packing houses, were demolished in the 1970s. Formerly two rail spurs fed into the west side of the present railroad line in the vicinity of the old depot. These tracks were principally used to bring rail cars carrying phosphate to the main line where they were coupled with trains that would carry the raw mineral to processing factories or seaports where it would be loaded onto ships traveling to all parts of the world. The spurs were abandoned and the tracks were removed several years ago, but the old rail bed of the southern spur is still visible south of West Broadway.

Residential Buildings

The housing stock of Fort Meade is characterized by a dominance of single family dwellings, with a marked minority of multi-family units. Less than one-third of the approximately 1,500 residential structures presently found within the corporate limits of the city were constructed before 1940, and the majority of those that have escaped serious alteration are located within the boundaries of the historic district. Only a handful of residences could be described as having fully identifiable architectural styles, the most stylistically distinguished structures in the district being the churches. The majority of the single family dwellings are one-story wood frame vernacular houses or bungalows. Although a number of the residences do exhibit some features of the romantic and revival styles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, only one or two

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Fort Meade, Polk County
DescriptionSection number 7 Page 4

houses in the district could be classified as Mediterranean Revival (Photo 75) or Classical Revival (Photo 80).

The residential sections of Fort Meade form four fairly distinct areas. Two of these lie immediately north and south of the downtown commercial district, while the other two are separated from downtown by the Charleston Avenue traffic corridor on the east and the CSX railroad track on the west. The area immediately north of downtown is composed mainly of small wood frame vernacular houses, such as the one found at 226 Cherry Avenue (Photo 31), and bungalows, such as the one at 100 1st Street, N.W. (Photo 32). This small residential area is bounded by Tecumseh Avenue on the west, 3rd Street on the north, Charleston Avenue on the east, and the downtown commercial district along West Broadway on the South. This small pocket of houses was once part of a larger residential neighborhood that stretched for approximately eight blocks from Tecumseh Avenue on the west to Cleveland Avenue on the east. The area was broken into two sections when Charleston Avenue was widened to four lanes in the 1970s.

The residential area found immediately south of the business district is similar to the one described above, being marked mainly by bungalows like the ones at 39 and 100 South Seminole Avenue (Photos 24 and 33) and frame vernacular structures such as the ones found at 36 South French Street (Photo 34) and 200 South Seminole Avenue. Much of the area south of South 2nd Street comprises a large traditionally African-American neighborhood. Although there are a number of residential structures over fifty years old in this part of Fort Meade, those that retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for inclusion in the district are too dispersed to be included in the district boundaries.

The area bounded roughly by Charleston Avenue, North 3rd Street, Orange Avenue, and South 3rd Street contains some of the largest and most architecturally notable residences in the Fort Meade Historic District. This part of the district also includes a number of historically important nonresidential buildings, including a school and several churches. Among the more impressive houses in this part of the district is the Colonial Revival Style structure at 401 East Broadway (Photo 16). Although basically just a simple two-story wood frame building, this residence is rendered elegant by the slender Tuscan columns

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Fort Meade, Polk County
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that support the veranda that embraces three sides of the ground story and the one-bay gallery above the entrance bay.

Anchoring the northeast corner of the district is the two-story Classical Revival style house (Photo 80) at 300 3rd Street, N.E. Probably built in the late 1930s, this residence is notable for its colossal five-bay portico, supported by Doric columns. A set of French doors open onto a balcony located over the main entrance, which is marked by a multi-light transom and paneled sidelights. A porte-cochere, also supported by Doric columns, stands at the west elevation of the residence.

The only Mediterranean Revival style residence of note in the district is the "Mission" style house (Photo 75) at 100 South Lanier Avenue which was erected c. 1927. This one-story house has textured stucco exterior walls, square piers that rise above the shaped parapet of the main roof, a two-bay integrated porch on the main facade, and a porte-cochere on the south elevation of the building. Despite its plainness, this is the most elaborate expression of 1920s "boom period" residential architecture in the district.

An example of a turn of the century vernacular residence that employs millwork decoration on its porch is the one at 528 East Broadway (Photo 19). The decorative scheme is restricted to the veranda and includes a "lantern" pattern balustrade that connect the turned posts that support the veranda roof. The posts are flanked by fan brackets, drops, and a sawtooth band. A dignified bungalow of substantial size is found at 200 North Pine Street. This one-story house embodies many of the characteristics of the "Craftsman" bungalow type, displaying the end porch, varied exterior fabric, and low, horizontal profile that characterize this house type.

The area west of the CSX Railroad right-of-way is a mixed black and white neighborhood containing more small bungalows and wood frame vernacular residences. Typical of the houses over fifty years old in this part of town is the bungalow at 505 Myrtle Street (Photo 50) and the small vernacular residence at 38 North Palmetto Avenue (Photo 51). Many of the buildings in this area are less than fifty years old, or like the residence at 412 West Broadway (Photo 68), have been severely altered.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 6Fort Meade Historic District
Fort Meade, Polk County
DescriptionReligious and Educational Buildings

The district contains a handful of churches and educational buildings of historical and architectural significance, all of which are located east of Charleston Avenue. The most significant of these is undoubtedly the Christ Episcopal Church (Photo 14) at 333 East Broadway. This wood frame Gothic Revival style building was erected in 1895 and features pointed arch windows, a bell tower and ornamental brackets that support steeply pitched entry porches. The main roof is steeply pitched and is clad in metal. The building is an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style employing wood frame construction.

One of the largest churches in the district, and a good example of a Classical Revival religious structure in Fort Meade, is the First United Methodist Church (Photo 12) at 135 East Broadway built in 1912. The "Roman" classicism of the brick building is expressed in the large, three-bay portico supported by Tuscan columns, and by the extremely large round arched stained glass window located on the main facade and side elevations. A much more sedate religious structure is the Old First Baptist Church (Photo 13), which was constructed shortly after the beginning of the 20th century. This rusticated concrete block building is now a rear wing of the present church (Photo 70) at 307 East Broadway that was constructed in 1956.

There are only two notable educational buildings in the district. These are the Lewis Elementary School (Photo 74) at 115 South Oak Avenue and the nearby Gymnasium (Photo 71) at 15 South Pine Avenue. The school is a simple, one-story, brick vernacular structure erected c. 1922. The roof of the structure, with its wide eaves, exposed rafters, brackets, and eyebrow dormers, gives the building the appearance of a large bungalow. The original school is now accompanied by five other structures that include classrooms, a cafeteria, and assembly hall. The concrete block gymnasium, on the other hand, draws upon a few Moderne details for its architectural character. This is seen mainly in the use of rounded corners, glass brick windows in the clerestory, and the use of Deco style lettering to spell the word gymnasium. The building was erected in 1938.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7Fort Meade Historic District
Fort Meade, Polk County
DescriptionArchaeology

The survey of Fort Meade did not involve any professional archaeological investigation of the corporate limits of the community. A surface scan of the two fort sites failed to reveal any visual findings, nor were any aboriginal artifact samples or fragments evident anywhere within the boundaries of the historic district. The topography of the district is relatively flat, and there are no streams, springs, lakes, or other natural water sources west of the Peace River that might have encouraged habitation or temporary camp sites. There is probably great potential archaeological information in the vicinity of the two fort sites and at the original fording area of the Peace River, but this data will have to be assembled in the future.

District Map

The map of the historic district included with this nomination proposal shows a substantial area of Fort Meade south of the boundaries of the historic district. This area was included to demonstrate that a number of locally significant resources are found between South 3rd Street and South 7th Street. Although none of these buildings appears to be individually eligible for listing in the National Register and could not be included in the district boundaries, they still form part of the historic fabric of the city. Sand Mountain Road represents the western boundary of the historic district and no historic resources of any kind are found west of this point on State Road 630. Occasional examples of buildings, primarily residences, over fifty years old can be found north of North 3rd Street, but the majority of these lie between 3rd and 4th streets, as shown on the map. None of these properties appears to meet the criteria for individual nomination to the National Register. Orange Avenue represents the eastern limits of the historic area; however, there are a handful of sites near the Peace River that may date from the last decade of the nineteenth century or the first decade of the twentieth century. One or more of these buildings, once again residences, may be individually eligible for nomination to the Register.

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Fort Meade Historic District
Fort Meade, Polk County
Photographs

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List of Photographs

1. 8 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. South Facade & West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 1 of 81

1. 102 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 2 of 81

1. 36-116 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade & West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 3 of 81

1. 202 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 4 of 81

1. 123 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 5 of 81

1. 214 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade & West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 6 of 81

1. 26 S. Seminole Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 7 of 81

1. 201-211 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North Facade & East Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 8 of 81

1. 222 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. South Facade & West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 9 of 81

1. 330 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North & East Elevations, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 10 of 81

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**National Register of Historic Places
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**Fort Meade Historic District
Fort Meade, Polk County
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Section number 7 Page 9

1. 100 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade & West Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 11 of 81

1. 135 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade & East Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 12 of 81

1. 307 (Rear) E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. West & North Elevations, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 13 of 81

1. 333 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 14 of 81

1. 402 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade & West Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 15 of 81

1. 401 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade & West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 16 of 81

1. 433 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade & East Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 17 of 81

1. 330 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade & East Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 18 of 81

1. 528 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 19 of 81

1. 29 N. Oak Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 20 of 81

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Fort Meade, Polk County
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1. 24 N Cleveland Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. West Facade, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 21 of 81

1. 15 S. Cleveland Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 22 of 81

1. 19 S. Cleveland Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 23 of 81

1. 39 S. Seminole Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. West Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 24 of 81

1. 21 1st St., NW, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 25 of 81

1. 29 1st St., NW, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 26 of 81

1. 15 N. Cleveland Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 27 of 81

1. 115 N. Pine Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 28 of 81

1. 101 S. Cleveland Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. West Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 29 of 81

1. 102 S. Pine Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 30 of 81

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1. 226 Cherry Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. West Facade & North Elevation
7. Photo No. 31 of 81

1. 100 1st St., NW, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 32 of 81

1. 100 S. Seminole Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 33 of 81

1. 36 S. French Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 34 of 81

1. 127 S. French Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. West Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 35 of 81

1. 127 1st St., NE, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade & East Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 36 of 81

1. 106 2nd St., NE, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 37 of 81

1. 101 2nd St., NE, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 38 of 81

1. 315 1st St., NE, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 39 of 81

1. 317 1st St., NE, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 40 of 81

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1. 201 N. Pine Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 41 of 81

1. 200 N. Pine St., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. West Facade & South Elevation
7. Photo No. 42 of 81

1. 217 3rd St., NE, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1992
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 43 of 81

1. 217 N. Lanier Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 44 of 81

1. 207 N. Lanier St., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 45 of 81

1. 200 1st St., NW, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade & West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 46 of 81

1. 617 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 47 of 81

1. 409 Myrtle St., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade & West Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 48 of 81

1. 425 Myrtle St., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 49 of 81

1. 505 Myrtle St., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 50 of 81

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- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. 38 N. Palmetto Ave., Fort Meade Historic District | 1. 409 S. Seminole Ave., Fort Meade Historic District |
| 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL | 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL |
| 3. Gladys Cook | 3. Gladys Cook |
| 4. 1993 | 4. 1993 |
| 5. Gladys Cook | 5. Gladys Cook |
| 6. West Facade, Looking East | 6. West Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southeast |
| 7. Photo No. 51 of 81 | 7. Photo No. 56 of 81 |
| | |
| 1. 200 S. Seminole Ave., Fort Meade Historic District | 1. 504 S. Seminole Ave., Fort Meade Historic District |
| 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL | 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL |
| 3. Gladys Cook | 3. Gladys Cook |
| 4. 1993 | 4. 1993 |
| 5. Gladys Cook | 5. Gladys Cook |
| 6. East Facade & North Elevation | 6. East Facade & South Elevation |
| 7. Photo No. 52 of 81 | 7. Photo No. 57 of 81 |
| | |
| 1. 416-420 S. French Ave., Fort Meade Historic District | 1. 508 S. Seminole Ave., Fort Meade Historic District |
| 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL | 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL |
| 3. Gladys Cook | 3. Gladys Cook |
| 4. 1993 | 4. 1993 |
| 5. Gladys Cook | 5. Gladys Cook |
| 6. West Facades & North Elevations, Looking Southeast | 6. East Facade & South Elevation |
| 7. Photo No. 53 of 81 | 7. Photo No. 58 of 81 |
| | |
| 1. 205-209 4th St., SW, Fort Meade Historic District | 1. 413 Railroad Ave., Fort Meade Historic District |
| 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL | 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL |
| 3. Gladys Cook | 3. Gladys Cook |
| 4. 1993 | 4. 1993 |
| 5. Gladys Cook | 5. Gladys Cook |
| 6. North Facades & West Elevations, Looking Southeast | 6. West Facade, Looking East |
| 7. Photo No. 54 of 81 | 7. Photo No. 59 of 81 |
| | |
| 1. 109-115 4th St., SW, Fort Meade Historic District | 1. 510 S. Charleston Ave., Fort Meade Historic District |
| 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL | 2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL |
| 3. Gladys Cook | 3. Gladys Cook |
| 4. 1993 | 4. 1993 |
| 5. Gladys Cook | 5. Gladys Cook |
| 6. North Facades & West Elevations, Looking Southeast | 6. East Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northwest |
| 7. Photo No. 55 of 81 | 7. Photo No. 60 of 81 |

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1. 100 5th St., SW, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Gladys Cook
4. 1993
5. Gladys Cook
6. South Facade & East Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 61 of 81

1. 11-25 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
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6. North Facades, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 62 of 81

1. 27 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 63 of 81

1. 105-131 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North Facades, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 64 of 81

1. 121 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 65 of 81

1. 211-227 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North Facades, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 66 of 81

1. 2 S. Brown Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. East Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 67 of 81

1. 412-416 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. South Facades & East Elevations, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 68 of 81

1. 417 W. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North Facade & East Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 69 of 81

1. 307 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. South Facade & West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 70 of 81

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1. 15-B S. Pine Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. West Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 71 of 81

1. 15-A S. Pine Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. West Facade & South Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 72 of 81

1. 112-114 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North Facade, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 73 of 81

1. 115 S. Oak Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. West Facade, Looking Southeast
7. Photo No. 74 of 81

1. 100 S. Lanier Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. East Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 75 of 81

1. 20 S. Lanier Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. East Facade, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 76 of 81

1. 205 E. Broadway, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. South Facade & West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 77 of 81

1. 129 N. Oak Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. East Facade, Looking Northwest
7. Photo No. 78 of 81

1. 203 N. Oak Ave., Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. East Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 79 of 81

1. 300 3rd St., NE, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. North Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 80 of 81

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1. Heritage Park, Fort Meade Historic District
2. Fort Meade (Polk County). FL
3. Carl Shiver
4. 1994
5. Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation
6. Looking Northeast at 3rd St., NE
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Contributing Buildings

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List of Contributing Buildings

1st Street, N.E.

113
127
315
317

1st Street, N.W.

21
29
100
108
114
200
201
205
209
214

1st Street, S.E.

100
109

1st Street, S.W.

9
17

2nd Street, N.E.

17
22
101
104
106
111
114
120
211
309

2nd Street, S.E.

124
400

2nd Street, S.W.

129
219

3rd Street, N.E.

12
215
217
300

Albritton Avenue

25

East Broadway

112-114
135
138
205
306
307 Rear
333
401
414
430
506
528

West Broadway

8
27
40
105
107

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W. Broadway (cont.)

- 109
- 110
- 112
- 114
- 116
- 117
- 119
- 121
- 123
- 125
- 127
- 129
- 131
- 208
- 201-207
- 214
- 217
- 222
- 225
- 330
- 430
- 434
- 503
- 510
- 516
- 605
- 612
- 615
- 617

S. Brown Avenue

- 2

S. Charleston Avenue

- 109
- 115
- 120

S. Cherokee Avenue

S. Cherry Avenue

- 200
- 214
- 219
- 221
- 226
- 227

N. Cleveland Avenue

- 15
- 16
- 24

S. Cleveland Avenue

- 103
- 109

N. French Avenue

- 21
- 27
- 32
- 108
- 109

S. French Avenue

- 18
- 36
- 101
- 117
- 123
- 127

N. Lanier Avenue

- 16
- 20
- 115

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S. Lanier Avenue

100
105
116
126

Langford Street

216

Myrtle Street

409
425
505

N. Oak Avenue

28
29
129
202

S. Oak Avenue

100
115
128
200
225

N. Palmetto Avenue

12
17
28
33
38

221
225

S. Palmetto Avenue

15
20

N. Pine Avenue

200
206

S. Pine Avenue

15 A
102
109
113
119

N. Seminole Avenue

21

S. Seminole Avenue

39
100
101
109
115

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Fort Meade, Polk County
Noncontributing Buildings

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List of NonContributing Buildings

1st Street, N.E.

122
201
202
219

1st Street, S.E.

101
108
208

2nd Street, N.E.

212

2nd Street, S.E.

109
200
316
328

2nd Street, S.W.

22
24
205

3rd Street, N.E.

16

East Broadway

100
135B
307
312
319
330

East Broadway (cont.)

402

West Broadway

11-25
36
102
200
202
211
213
403
417
435
602

S. Charleston Avenue

107

S. Cleveland Avenue

107

S. French Avenue

115

S. Lanier Avenue

113
117
123
130

Langford Street

10
40
111

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Fort Meade, Polk County
Noncontributing Buildings

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N. Oak Avenue

203

S. Oak Avenue

115B
115C
115D
115E
115F

N. Palmetto Avenue

11
30
32
202
214

S. Palmetto Avenue

12

N. Pine Avenue

15
115
201

S. Pine Avenue

15B
15C
101

N. Seminole Avenue

21
25

S. Seminole Avenue

11
15
26

S. Seminole Avenue (cont.)

113
121

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Fort Meade, Polk County
Significance

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Summary Paragraph

The Fort Meade Historic District is significant at the local level under criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce, Architecture, and Community Planning and Development. The district comprises the historic downtown commercial area and the immediately surrounding residential neighborhoods and reflects the period of development from c. 1889 to 1940. The buildings represent a variety of styles and types of structures typical of the historic period of development. The historic buildings of Fort Meade were erected during an era that saw the community evolve from a small agricultural settlement to a town that flourished for several decades as the result of the founding of the phosphate mining industry in Central Florida. The district contains a number of structures that are individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Context

The town of Fort Meade is named for a Seminole War era fortification founded by the U.S. Army on December 13, 1849. The defense facility was constructed at an "old Indian ford" on the Peace River, located about one and a third miles east of what is today downtown Fort Meade. In the summer of 1850, the garrison was struck by malaria, and the post was temporarily moved to a ridge approximately a mile from the river. The site of this second fort is now occupied by Heritage Park, located at the intersection of 3rd Street North and Cleveland Avenue in a residential section of Fort Meade.

The buildings of the fort located at the river crossing were sold by the army in 1854 to John I. Hooker and formed the basis of the settlement of the first town of Fort Meade, eventually known as Old Fort Meade. The community survived for the next two decades mainly as a trading post surrounded by a handful of stores and residences. In 1861 Polk County was created from eastern Hillsborough County and small portions of two others. During the Civil War the major activity that took place in the Peace River Valley was the grazing of cattle herds used for the provision of Union troops. The vast savannahs lying between the Peace and Kissimmee Rivers were excellent range for the herds. The old fort was reactivated during the conflict and used for the protection and management of the cattle herds. After the Civil War, the harvesting of the vast timber resources in the area spurred the economy and brought settlers into the area. However,

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Fort Meade, Polk County
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there were few opportunities for extensive exploitation of the natural resources in the vicinity of Fort Meade until the arrival of the railroad.

Despite its transportation difficulties, Fort Meade was the largest town in Polk County and the Peace River Valley in 1880. The town itself had about 200 inhabitants, and the population of nearby farms swelled the number of residents in the area to about 500. The Peace River could be navigated by small steamboat and eventually reached the Gulf of Mexico at Punta Gorda nearly 60 miles to the south. Most of the supplies and goods required by the inhabitants of the frontier community, however, were brought from Tampa 44 miles away, carried by wagon trains drawn by oxen over the old military road. Industry and employment were based on agricultural activities and exploitation of natural resources. One source of income was the trapping of alligators and other animals for their hides. The town merchants also provided supplies to the cattle and citrus industries.

The Florida Southern Railroad was constructed the length of the Peace River Valley in 1885-1886, linking with Tampa via the South Florida Railroad at the town of Acton on the north and terminating at Punta Gorda on Charlotte Harbor on the south. The line ran along the west side of the Peace River, thereby assuring the continued survival of the Polk towns of Bartow (the county seat) and Fort Meade. In expectation of the arrival of the railroad, the Town of Fort Meade was incorporated on January 10, 1885. An almost equally critical decision used by the railroad to gain property concessions from communities along the route was where the depots would be placed. Fort Meade thought it had solved the matter by donating right-of-way and promising \$10,000 in cash to run the line through the community and construct a depot there. However, a group of businessmen laid out a new "Town of Fort Meade" about two miles southwest in January 1886 and outbid the city for construction of the right-of-way.

Railroad workmen arrived one morning and tore up the town's already constructed side track and announced that the depot would be constructed in the new town. Offers by city officials of another \$1,000 in cash and 400 acres of land failed to persuade railroad officials to change their plans. The leading citizens of Fort Meade counter attacked by organizing their own railway company and by January 1887, had built a street railway running from the new depot into downtown Fort Meade. Although the railroad depot was moved closer to town in 1891, the Fort Meade

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Fort Meade, Polk County
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Street Railroad Company operated its mule-drawn railway into the first years of the twentieth century.

The arrival of the railroad in the mid-1880s brought thousands of new settlers, higher land values, and the promise of increasing prosperity to the Peace River Valley. Within a few years tremendous deposits of phosphates were discovered creating an economic boom that ended in the 1890s with economic depression, crippling freezes, and lost fortunes. The history of the phosphate boom dates from 1881 when the U.S. Army Corps of engineers undertook a survey to determine the feasibility of creating a navigable waterway for steamboats from the St. Johns River to Charlotte Harbor. The proposed waterway proved impractical because of the expense of constructing numerous canals and locks. However, the survey did discover substantial deposits of "pebble phosphate" in the riverbeds of Central Florida, including the Peace River. It was not until almost a decade later that investors began to take an interest in exploiting this source of commercial fertilizer.

By 1890, steam dredges and barges were removing large deposits of pebble phosphate from the Peace River. Numerous areas of "hard rock" phosphate were also discovered near Fort Meade, causing land prices to soar. Two fertilizer factories were built near the town, making the economic future of the community seem secure. The phosphate boom, however, collapsed after 1890, when low cotton prices severely reduced the demand for commercial fertilizer. Many small mining companies were driven out of business, although some of the larger firms survived. A severe coastal storm that damaged South Carolina's phosphate mining industry did help bolster business in Florida in 1893, but these gains were soon offset by the nationwide economic crisis known as the Panic of 1893 and by competition from hard rock and land pebble mines.

Phosphate production also suffered from the Great Freezes of the winter of 1894-1895 that destroyed many thousands of citrus trees throughout Central Florida. More than a decade would pass before the citrus industry would fully recover from this disaster. The bringing to an end of extracting pebble phosphate from the Peace River, however, did not mean an end to phosphate mining in the area. The significant land deposits of pebble phosphate in Polk County continued to be exploited well into the twentieth century.

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At the height of the boom, the old and new communities of Fort Meade and the surrounding vicinity had about 1,200 residents. The decline in phosphate production ushered in a general exodus of the population, made worse by a fire that destroyed much of the downtown business district in 1894. The community rebounded after 1895 with the establishment of tobacco production in the area. By 1897, Fort Meade had an estimated population of 500 within the city limits, as compared to approximately half that only a few years earlier. The departure of Cuban tobacco workers following the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898 was a disaster for the town. While about 1,600 residents remained in the Fort Meade area in 1900, only 261 of these were found in the city limits of what was steadily becoming Old Fort Meade. The population has slowly begun to relocate to West Fort Meade, near the rail line. The population shift became so severe by 1903 that the Florida legislature abolished Fort Meade as an incorporated municipality.

West Fort Meade was incorporated as the new Town of Fort Meade in 1909. The population of the new town grew quickly as workers for the reviving phosphate mines flooded into the town. The new residents needed a wide variety of goods and services, prompting the establishment of many new businesses that formed the core of downtown commercial area. Fresh residential subdivisions began to grow up around the downtown area as workers, merchants, mine officials, and professional businessmen began to construct new homes. The 1910 federal census recorded Fort Meade as having a population of 1,165. Significant municipal improvements were made in Fort Meade as the First World War broke out in Europe. A 1914 bond issue provided for many town improvements including brick street paving, and upgrading the waterworks and sewer system. A new brick train station was completed in 1914, and the State Bank of Fort Meade built a handsome two story brick building on Broadway. A 1915 bond issue was used to build a municipal electric power plant. A fire in 1921 caused some damage to the central business district.

Phosphate mining continued into the 1920s, but played a smaller role in the economy of Fort Meade than it had previously, and the community returned to a largely agricultural economy. The growing of citrus, vegetables, strawberries and watermelons became common in the area as did dairy and poultry production. The existence of the railroad, however, meant that these enterprises could be organized as productive businesses, employing numerous workers, thereby offsetting the effects of the

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closing of the phosphate mines. The post World War I era brought a new prosperity to much of Florida, prompted in part by a land boom that saw the rapid growth of many of the coastal communities where the lure of the new tourist industry attracted many new residents. Even many of the small, sleepy towns of the interior of the state were affected by these speculative land purchases, largely aimed at further citrus development, truck farming, and cattle raising.

The boom period brought additional economic activity to Fort Meade and stimulated the construction of more homes and businesses. In 1922 a new brick school was constructed, and in 1927 a new City Hall was erected at a cost of \$41,903. The fine Classical Revival style building still serves as the town hall. The Great Depression did not greatly affect Fort Meade. The First State Bank failed in 1929 but was quickly refinanced and opened again. Local economic difficulties were also offset by the undertaking of several Public Works Administration Program projects during the 1930s. By 1945, the population of Fort Meade was 2,029.

Architectural Context

The architecture of the district reflects national trends in commercial and residential architectural design during the period from the late nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth centuries. The majority of the buildings are vernacular structures that often have a minimum of decorative stylistic details. There are, however, individual commercial and residential buildings in the district that have a more fully developed stylistic character. Some of these appear to meet the criteria for individual listing in the National Register in the area of architectural significance. The downtown business district mainly reflects the period of development from 1908 to 1940, or the era after the town was officially moved from its original site near Heritage Park. There are several excellent examples of largely intact business blocks that today reflect and maintain their commercial function.

The historic residential resources in the district are mainly modest houses lacking individual distinction, but which contribute to the overall historic fabric of the community. Some of these date from a period earlier than the structures found in the downtown business section of Fort Meade. While exhibiting a variety of architectural styles, the resources retain a sense of

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cohesiveness through scale and the proximity of buildings. Two-story houses built at the turn of the century blend well with the one-story vernacular cottages and later bungalows, largely because the residences share similar construction techniques and building materials. The majority of the historic structures in the district are in good condition. Regular maintenance has precluded the need for major remodeling or rehabilitation. Some homes and businesses have been restored.

Noncontributing Buildings

Noncontributing buildings include those erected during the period of significance that have been severely altered or in an advanced state of deterioration and those that are less than 50 years old. The district boundaries contain a large--but not excessive--number of noncontributing buildings. These are found mainly in the residential areas and are mostly relatively modern houses dating from the 1950s to the present that have been erected on previously vacant lots.

Archaeological Resources

The area comprising the site of the old military fort and its immediate surroundings is likely to contain significant historical archaeological remains. These have not yet been professionally examined or interpreted and, therefore, the site and potential resources are not included among the contributing elements of this National Register nomination proposal. The fort site is now occupied by a city park containing modern structures. None of the other sections of the proposed district have yet been examined to identify potential historic or prehistoric resources.

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Fort Meade Historic District
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Fort Meade Historic District
Fort Meade, Polk County
Boundary Description and
Justification

Section number 10 Page 1

Boundary Description

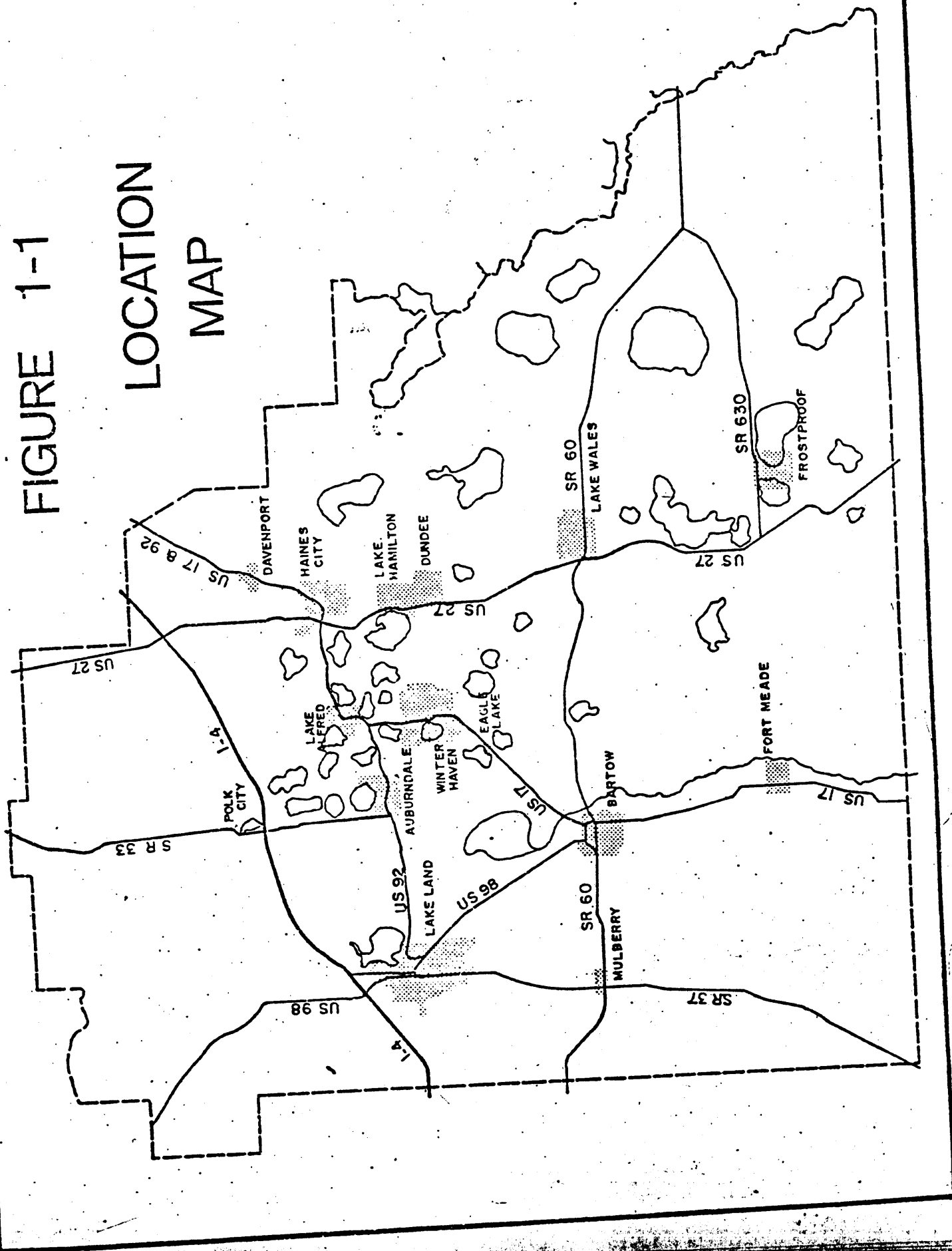
The boundaries of the Fort Meade Historic District are those shown on the map of the district included with this nomination proposal.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Fort Meade Historic District were drawn to encompass the greatest concentration of buildings reflecting the development of Fort Meade from the earliest settlement to approximately 1940. Areas of the city not included within the boundaries had only scattered historic resources and lacked geographical proximity to the district as represented on the map accompanying the nomination proposal. With the exception of the first and second military fort sites, no known major historical or architectural resources are located outside the district boundaries.

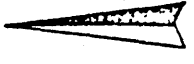
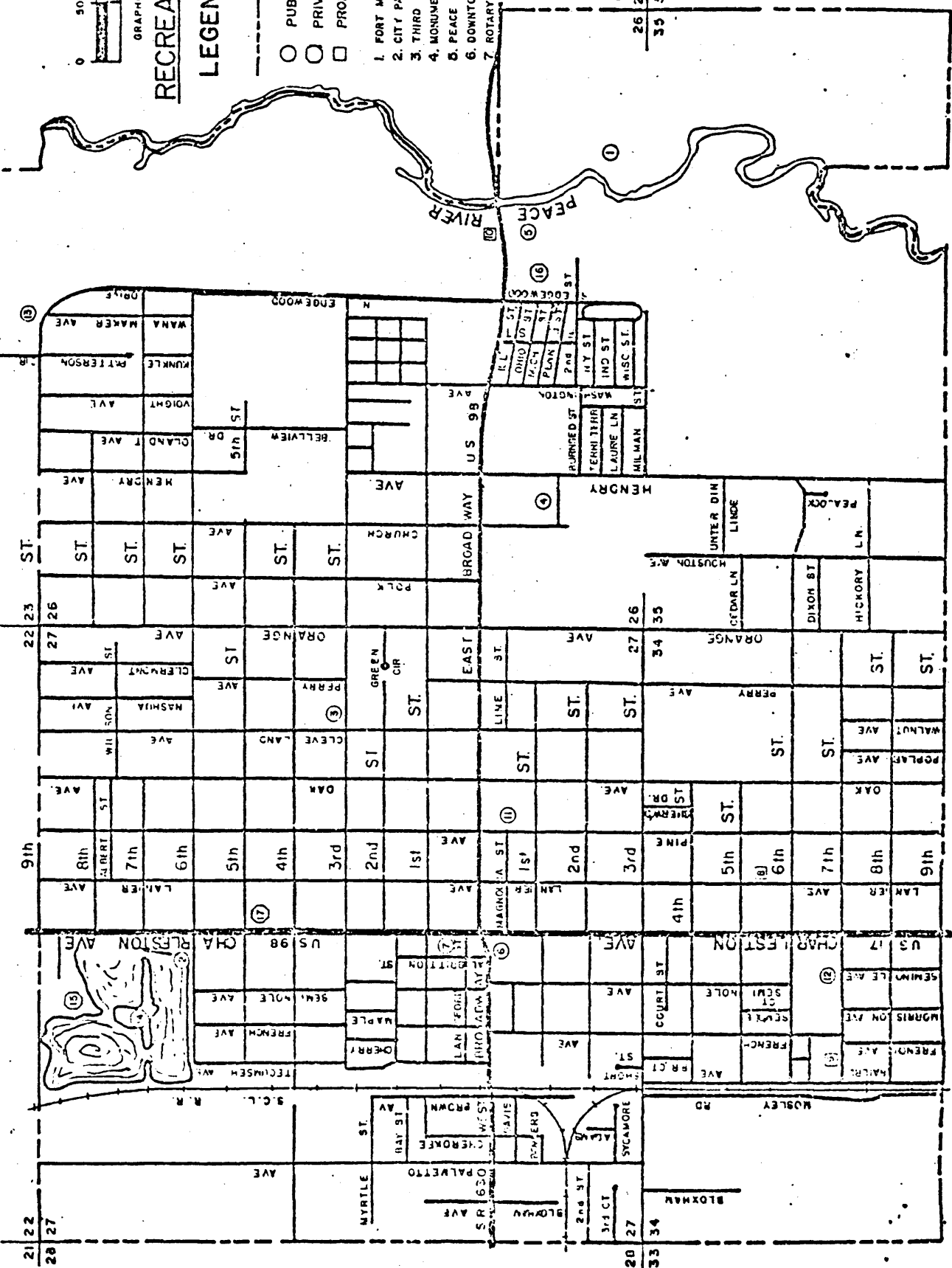
FIGURE 1-1

LOCATION
MAP



"PREPARED BY THE CITY OF FORT MEADE UNDER CONTRACT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS. THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCIALLY AIDED THROUGH A GRANT FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA, UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ACT ASSISTANCE FUND AUTHORIZED BY LAWS OF FLORIDA."

CITY OF FORT MEADE



NORTH

0 500 1000 2000



GRAPHIC SCALE IN FEET

RECREATION FACILITIES

LEGEND

- CORPORATE BOUNDARY
- PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES
- PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES
- PROPOSED RECREATION FACILITIES

1. FORT MEADE OUTDOOR RECREATION AREA
2. CITY PARK
3. THIRD STREET PLAY PARK
4. MONUMENT PARK
5. PEACE RIVER CANOE LAUNCH
6. DOWNTOWN PARK
7. ROTARY PICNIC SHELTER
8. A. L. P. TOT LOT
9. SOUTHWEST PARK
10. PEDESTRIAN/BIKE TRAIL
11. LEWIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
12. FORT MEADE MIDDLE SCHOOL
13. FORT MEADE HIGH SCHOOL
14. BOY SCOUT HUT
- 25 15. AMERICAN LEGION HALL
- 35 16. FORT MEADE GOLF COURSE
- 36 17. WOMEN'S CLUB BUILDING

PREPARED BY THE DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION - PLANNING DEPT.

FIGURE 5-1