NDC Form 10.000			922
NPS Form 10-900 (Oct. 1990)	1		··· OMB No. 10024-0018
United States Department of the Interior National Park Service		RECEIVED	413
National Register of Historic Plac Registration Form	es	JIN 2 8 1995	
This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinat National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Natio by entering the information requested. If an item does not a architectural classification, materials, and areas of significant entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Fo	nal Register Bulletin 16A). Co apply to the property being co nce, enter only categories and	united and reading the second subcategories included and subcategories incl	the appropriate box or licable. For functions, Quace additional
1. Name of Property		······································	·
historic name <u>OATES</u> BUILDING		·····	
other names/site number <u>OATES-CORLEY</u> FU	RNITURE COMPANY	FMSF# 8P003587	
2. Location			
street & number230 South Florida Ave	nue	N∕A_ □ not	for publication
city or townLakeland		N/A 🗌	vicinity
state <u>FLORIDA</u> code <u>FL</u>	county Polk	code <u>105</u> zip c	ode 33801
3. State/Federal Agency Certification		· · ·	
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the of Historic Places and meets the procedural and profes ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register or ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See contin 	sional requirements set forth in iteria. I recommend that this p nuation sheet for additional co Deputy SHPO Date tion Officer, Divis	n 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property be considered significant mments.) 6/21/95 sion of Historical Res	e property ources
Signature of certifying official/Title	Date		
State or Federal agency and bureau			
4 National Barls Complex Contiliantian	A		
4. National Park Service Certification I hereby certify that the property is: I determined eligible for the National Register. I determined not eligible for the National Register. I removed from the National Register. I other, (explain:)	Signature of the New	eper Entered in th National Regi	Date of Action stor-7/28/95

<u>Oates Building</u> Name of Property

Polk, FL County and State

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5. Classification		······································	
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) (Gheck only one box)	Number of Res (Do not include pre	sources within Propert viously listed resources in th	t y ne count.)
⊠ private	Contributing	Noncontributing	
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Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)	Number of cor in the National	tributing resources pr Register	reviously listed
"N/A"	0		
6. Function or Use			
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LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:	foundation <u>STUC</u>	200	
Mediterranean Revival	walls <u>STUC</u>	200	
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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 quali for National Register listing.)

- X A Property is associated with events th a significant contribution to the broad our history.
- **B** Property is associated with the lives significant in our past.
- C C Property embodies the distinctive cha of a type, period, or method of const represents the work of a master, or high artistic values, or represents a s distinguishable entity whose compon individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to y information important in prehistory or

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- □ A owned by a religious institution or us religious purposes.
- **B** removed from its original location.
- **C** a birthplace or grave.
- **D** a cemetery.
- **E** a reconstructed building, object, or s
- **F** a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieve 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

Bibilography

#

(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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

□ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Polk, FT. County and State

	Areas of Significance
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significance	Architect/Builder
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	HOSTOLU, Buwalu C. aloniteet
	Oates, Alvah Y builder

Oates Building	Polk, FL		
Name of Property	County and State		
10. Geographical Data			
Acreage of Propertyless_than_one			
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)			
1 1 7 4 0 5 9 2 0	3 L L L L L L L L		
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 Lisa L. Parks/Robert Jones Historic Si	te Specialist		
organizationBureau of Historic Preservation	dateApril, 1995		
street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough	1 St. telephone 904-487-2333		
city or townTallahassee	state ^{FL} zip code		
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 biack and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner		
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)		
name		
street & number	telephone	
city or town	state	zip code

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

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OATES BUILI POLK CO., I	INTERADENCY RESOURCES DIVISION	

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1024-0018

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SUMMARY

The Oates Building, located at 230 South Florida Avenue, is a good example of Florida boom time architecture, expressed in the Mediterranean Revival style. Built in 1925 by Alvah Y. Oates, the building was designed by noted Lakeland architect Edward C. Hosford for the Oates-Corley Furniture Company. The building has five floors, a flat asphalt roof and heavily textured stucco exterior finish. Segmental arched plate glass windows define the main elevations.

The Oates Building remained architecturally unaltered through the 1980s, when it became vacant and was damaged by water intrusion and fire. The building was rehabilitated and placed back into service in 1994, with the significant architectural detailing restored.

SETTING

The Oates Building is within a block of downtown Lakeland's locally designated Munn Park Historic District and the Polk Theater (NR 1993). The building is prominently located in the central downtown business area, occupying the northeast corner of Orange Street and Florida Avenue, the city's main north-south thoroughfare (Photo 1).

PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Oates Building has a concrete foundation, steel frame with wood floor joists and wood columns for the upper floor, and masonry walls with a heavily textured stucco exterior finish. The rectangular building has five floors containing approximately 32,000 square feet within the original structure and a service addition.

EXTERIOR FEATURES

A colonnaded walkway runs the length of the building's main (south) facade (Photos 2 & 3). Finished in textured stucco, matching the building's exterior, the colonnade provides a

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rhythm to the building which is repeated by the fenestration at the upper stories.

The canted, inset entrance, facing southwest, is located at the corner of two main thoroughfares. The entry doors are oak, paired, with single lights, and trimmed with brass hardware.

Exterior detailing is dominated by the large plate glass and display windows. The large rectangles of glass on the first floor are aligned with the colonnade openings, seven on the south face and two on the west. (Photo 4). Also aligned are the window openings of the mezzanine (second floor), third and fourth floors on both the south and west facades. Vertical rows of narrower windows mimicking their counterparts on the mezzanine and fourth floor levels are encased with cast spiraling surrounds and used as accents at the corners of the building (Photo 5). The fifth floor windows are pairs of wood double hung sash. This window style is repeated on all floors at the east (alley) face of the building, with the exception of one vertical row of unpaired double hung windows (Photo 6).

Additional detailing includes cast spiraling engaged collonettes and applied cast spiraling surrounds framing the arched windows (Photos 7 & 8). Extending above the arched parapet at the entry corner and indicated on the south face with a rise in the parapet, these spiraling collonettes yield a distinct Mediterranean appearance (Photo 9).

INTERIOR FEATURES

Built as a furniture show room, an atrium opens the first and second levels to each other, visually connecting the first floor with the mezzanine. The area receives natural light from the large panes of glass on the south and west walls of the first floor. The space is characterized by the atrium, large free-standing stairway, ornamental pressed metal ceiling and coves, and original wrought iron balustrade and light fixtures. The mezzanine level retains its original "show room" feel (Photos 10 - 13).

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The fourth and fifth floors contain offices

Portions of the original decorative pressed metal ceiling exists on the first floor and mezzanine (second floor) levels. The ceiling is of a square panel pattern with textured border, cove moldings with "egg" design corners, and curved beams (Photos 14 - 16). Sections of the metal ceiling were lost to fire and water damage and some were missing.

Most of the lighting fixtures throughout the Oates Building, while varying in dimensions and number of individual lights, are a variation of one design. The fixtures are of wrought iron and brass with a leaf design around the socket and metal tassel. The variations include two and four-socket flush mounted ceiling lights on the first and second floor spaces, occurring in the single floor height spaces and in second floor offices (Photos 17 & 18). Suspended in the two-story height in the first and second floor areas are five-socket lights, more ornate and circular with cantilevered lights draped from the center circle (Photos 19 - 20).

ALTERATIONS

In 1994, a service addition was constructed on the north (rear) elevation of the building on a site where an adjacent building was razed. It houses an elevator, ADA complying restrooms and two fire stairs. Recessed 8" from the original building on the west facade, it utilizes a sand finish stucco in contrast to the heavily textured stucco of the original building (Photo 21). The service structure is located on the least significant elevation and is designed to preserve the historic character of the building.

Pressed metal ceiling on the first and second floors were damaged in the fire. All that could be salvaged was restored.

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Originally, Hosford had designed a fourth floor for the building. This intent was substantiated by Milton Oates, brother of the owner/builder, and by the presence of existing connection plates on the building's columns. It was not until the 1994 rehabilitation, however, that the additional floor was installed. The fifth floor's open space has been partitioned into office spaces.

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Section number <u>8</u> Page <u>1</u> OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK CO., FL

SUMMARY

The Oates Building is significant under Criterion A in the area of Commerce and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The Oates Building is a good example of Florida boom architecture as expressed in the Mediterranean Revival style. As a reflection of the rapid growth in local commerce during the early 1920s, the Oates-Corley Furniture Company had outgrown three previous locations between 1921 and 1925. The Oates Building was its fourth and most grand retail establishment and was designed in keeping with the predominant architectural theme of the early 1920s in Lakeland and much of Florida. It stands as one of Lakeland's earliest mercantile structures exceeding three stories, and is a recognized landmark along the major northsouth route through the city. It was built by Alvah Y. Oates, a well-known local developer and prolific builder and owner of the furniture company. The building was designed by prominent local architect E. C. Hosford who was responsible for numerous civic buildings.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Following the Civil War, Florida faced numerous obstacles, including the need to develop new economic bases. By the latter 1880s, the mining of phosphate, the cultivation of oranges, and the development of tourism filled this economic need. These developments paralleled the growth of Lakeland, an inland city. Located in Polk County, the state's fourth largest county, Lakeland began in 1881 when Abraham G. Munn, a wealthy manufacturer from Louisville, Kentucky, purchased several thousand acres of Florida acreage. One of his sons, Samuel G. Munn, surveyed and platted an eighty acre tract among the many central county lakes which was to become the City of Lakeland. As the surveying was accomplished, a Lakeland Improvement Company began laying out streets and lots, encouraging land sales. Growth was rapid, and Lakeland became incorporated within one year on January 1, 1885.

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OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK CO., FL

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At the same time, development in Florida was accelerated by renewed expansion of the railroads. Between 1881 and 1891 there were 2,566 miles of railroad placed into operation in the state. The Seaboard Air Line, traversing more than half of northern Florida, began to join the Atlantic Coast Line (Plant System). Lakeland received its sought after share when Abraham Munn granted concessions to the railroad to ensure a train stop was brought to the city. A station, roughly one mile west of downtown, was opened to the public in early 1884. By 1893, Lakeland had become an important shipping yard with twenty trains leaving each day.

Roadway expansion in the early twentieth century was also a great impetus to development, and from 1914 through 1920, Polk County led the nation in road construction. In 1925 the American Automobile Association stated that Polk was the only county in the United States with hard paved roads connecting every town. Connections to the national highway system garnered Polk County recognition and provided easy access to motorists.

Lakeland provided its residents various services, including electric lights (1891), a telephone exchange (1901), school improvements, water distribution systems, fire department extensions and the construction of a hospital (1914). That same year Lakeland played host to statewide conventions, including the Florida Banker's Association, Twentieth Annual Session of Women's Clubs, and the Florida Educational Association. Lakeland established a tourist headquarters in 1916.

THE BOOM TIMES

Florida was growing faster than any other part of the United States, and building was the state's largest industry. Encouraging this growth was the promotional industry that appealed to tourists and investors in manufacturing. Further contributing to the allure of Florida cities was the state prohibition to inheritance taxes which resulted in an influx of funds into Florida's banks. In 1924 statistics for Lakeland show that the same kind of growth occurred

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OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK CO., FL

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there. Lakeland bank clearings reached \$88,011,566.97. In 1900, Lakeland had 1,180 permanent residents; by 1920 there were more than 7,000, and by 1925 there were 17,064.

Florida was promoted to the rest of the world by organized business interests within the State who advertised aggressively. Florida Statutes allowed local governments the unusual privilege of levying taxes for publicity. No other state had such an organized system of Chambers of Commerce; Lakeland had the second largest in the country.

In 1925, Polk was the wealthiest county in the country with an economy based on citrus cultivation, phosphate mining, and truck farming bolstered by the construction boom which included a bond issue for "some of the most beautiful municipal buildings to be found anywhere in the state." Florida Southern College relocated in 1922 to the north side of Lake Hollingsworth, and the Cleveland Heights subdivision, with a lake side clubhouse and golf course developed on the south side of the lake.

The building boom slowed in late 1925, however, and by 1926, it was evident that speculative buying was over. Contributors to the decline included a breakdown in transportation services which led to an embargo and the slowing of building supply shipments. Rumored tax changes during 1925 further impacted property transactions, and when a hurricane struck Miami in 1926, the hopes of reviving the "boom times" ended. Lakeland suffered the decline as well, but continued its civic improvements which had been previously bonded. By 1928, when the improvements were completed, Lakeland had all the current amenities. Designed in the Mediterranean Revival style were the city hall, auditorium, public library, fire/police station, public hospital and the Lake Mirror Promenade (NR 1983). Also dedicated that year was the National Home of the United Carpenters and Joiners of America, designed in the Spanish Mission style.

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OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK CO., FL

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Oates Building was built in 1925 at the height of Lakeland's economic boom. It was against this perception of unbridled growth that the Oates-Corley Furniture Company built its finest store. The furniture company was begun in 1921 by Alvah Y. Oates with a business interest by R.C. Corley whose interest was bought out after the 1926 economic downturn. The company had expanded three times within the downtown area, increasing its size each time before the decision was made to build the five-story Oates Building. When the furniture company began, it provided a moderate fare, including the sale of household goods such as stoves. In January 1923, A.Y. Oates, while on his first buying trip to Grand Rapids, Michigan, "decided to make the Oates Company one of the outstanding stores of the south." This change in business philosophy was accompanied by further growth, and in that year the business moved into a larger The demand for quality merchandise became so building. great that the decision was made to construct their own The anticipated growth of the company was building. reflected in the foundation, poured to accommodate a sixstory building. The company remained in business at the Oates Building until 1967.

During its time, it was said of the company: "Over 60,000 homes have been dabbed with the Oates touch since 1921 when Milton (Oates) and his brother A. Y., opened their first Lakeland furniture store." Milton Oates, who was appointed by his brother to manage the store at age 21, became known across the country for his abilities in decorating homes. The Oates Building location was said to be the "hub of high style furniture for 46 years." Over the years, the store maintained an active contract department for hotels, hospitals, and apartment buildings. It also had a cabinet shop for the restoration of antiques, a finishing room where custom made touches were put on furnishings, and a complete drapery, slipcover, and upholstery department.

The owner, builder and financier of the Oates Building was Alvah Y. Oates. Born in 1888 in Kentucky, Oates made his

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OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK CO., FL

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fortune when he formed and sold his Standard Drug Company, a drug manufacturing company operating out of Spartanburg, South Carolina, and Greenville, Mississippi. When he came to Florida, he attempted a development project in the Miami area, but the sentiment against outsiders persuaded him to venture into the less developed interior of the state. Oates settled in Lakeland because of the large citrus and phosphate industry. Upon his arrival, he became acquainted with F. Pickard, and began his local development business. As a developer, Oates was said to have built over 1,000 homes, including developments in the Cleveland Heights subdivision and the area around Lake Hollingsworth.

A prominent local architect, Edward Columbus Hosford, was commissioned to design the Oates Building. Born April 24, 1883 in Cochran (Bleckley County) Georgia, Hosford attended Gordon Military School at Barnesville, Georgia, and the Georgia School of Technology. After serving as a draftsman in the Atlanta area, Hosford practiced in Eastman, Georgia. From his Eastman location Hosford was responsible for the design of Georgia courthouses in Dodge County (1908), Harris County (1908), and Wheeler County (1913). He also received commissions in Florida, including the courthouses in Polk (1909: NR 1989), Jefferson (1909: NR 1977), Hendry (1927: NR 1990), and LaFayette Counties (1908). After his travels throughout Florida, Hosford relocated to Lakeland in 1920. His local works, in addition to the Polk County Courthouse and the Oates Building, include Lakeland High School (NR 1926), Hartzell Building, Smith-Harding Building and Success Furniture Company building. Hosford died January 2, 1939 at the age of 56.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The exposure to Spanish Colonial Revival architecture was greatly increased with the Panama-California Exposition at San Diego in 1915. The chief architect of the exhibition was Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue who was selected in part due to his authorship of a book on Spanish colonial architecture in Mexico. By the 1920s, Spanish architecture had become a craze. Randolph Sexton's 1927 book on Spanish influence in

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American architecture spoke of its perceived appropriateness for semi-tropical climates and the rooting of Spanish architecture in the fundamental principle of architecture, that form arises from structure and that decoration is the means of lending interest to that form. Among the prominent architectural features of the Spanish influenced designs is the "element of contrast." The application of ornament, frequently of intricate design, bearing evidence of the Moorish inheritance of the Spanish, is characterized by a This often takes the form in the more careful restraint. elaborate clay product, terra cotta. The ornamentation is often centered on a prominent element of the architecture, such as door or window surrounds, and used to add interest to the design by accentuating the lines and proportions. The use of arcade walls and textured or coarse wall surfaces Iron fixtures, grills and railings are is common. frequently decorative features.

Given Florida's Spanish roots and a climate similar to Spain, a Spanish/Mediterranean architecture found a home in Florida. What came to be known in the 1920s as "Spanish boom," which incorporated elements of Moorish, Spanish Colonial, Mission and Italianate styles, is generally called the Mediterranean Revival. Among its salient elements are the arch, stuccoed walls, and wrought iron. Psychologically and economically, the Mediterranean Revival style suited the time and Florida. Its opulence complemented the 1920s prosperity and sense of well being, and the buildings could be constructed in an economical fashion, avoiding the extensive use of lumber which had become difficult to obtain.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Oates Building was driven by the rapid growth in population and commerce brought along by Florida's real estate boom of the early 1920s. Designed in the Mediterranean Revival style, which was popular in boom time areas of the state and particularly in Lakeland, the Oates Building exemplified the feeling of prosperity and anticipated growth. The foundation was constructed to

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support a six story building, and the columns included connecting plates to accommodate a fourth floor to allow for expansion in the future.

The Oates Building is a prominent community landmark. As the City of Lakeland rapidly expanded, it grew generally in a north-south direction, a pattern which holds true today. The Oates Building's presence has contributed to the identity of the city. The building remains one of the oldest commercial buildings exceeding three stories in height. Today there is a height limitation within the adjacent Munn Park Historic District and the building retains its stature within the downtown skyline. Its prominence along two major thoroughfares was amplified by the architect's use of a corner entrance.

Reflective of the building's Mediterranean Revival style are its curvilinear parapet; use of arched windows; cast spiraling surrounds and collonettes; heavily textured stuccoed exterior walls; wrought iron chandeliers, light fixtures and decorative railing; and colonnaded walkway. Built as a furniture show room, the building was designed to appeal to and draw the public inside. Its grand presence as a boom-period monument to commerce is maintained today. The interior of the public space of the first floor atrium and mezzanine levels has been restored, and the architectural integrity of the space maintained.

Edward Columbus Hosford, the architect of the Oates Building was well known both for his public and private buildings, several of which are listed in the National Register. The builder Alvah Y. Oates, was a prominent local builder, known to have constructed over 1,000 homes in the Lakeland area.

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OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK COUNTY, FL

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Section number _____ Page ____2

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OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK COUNTY, FL

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MISCELLANEOUS

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OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK COUNTY, FL

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The South 1/2 of Lot C, Block 20 Munns Survey as recorded in Deed Book G, page 392.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary encloses the historic structure and the attached service addition constructed to house the required code complying elements in order to maintain the integrity of the original building.

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OATES BUILDING, LAKELAND, POLK COUNTY, FL

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Photographs

PHOTOGRAPHS

- 1. Oates Building
- 230 South Florida Avenue
- 2. Lakeland, Polk County, Florida
- 3. L.L. Parks
- 4. 1994
- 5. Jerry Herring (owner)
- 6. View of corner entry, east and south elevation of the building, camera facing northeast.
- 7. photo 1 of 21

Items 1 through 5 above pertain to all photographs listed below, unless otherwise indicated.

- View of south elevation, camera facing north
 photo 2 of 21
- View of colonnaded walkway, camera facing west
 photo 3 of 21
- View of west elevation, camera facing east
 photo 4 of 21
- Detail of south elevation, camera facing north
 photo 5 of 21
- View of east elevation, camera facing northwest
 photo 6 of 21
- Detail of west elevation, camera facing east
 photo 7 of 21
- Detail of south elevation, camera facing north
 photo 8 of 21
- Detail of south elevation, camera facing north
 photo 9 of 21
- View of atrium and mezzanine, camera facing east
 photo 10 of 21

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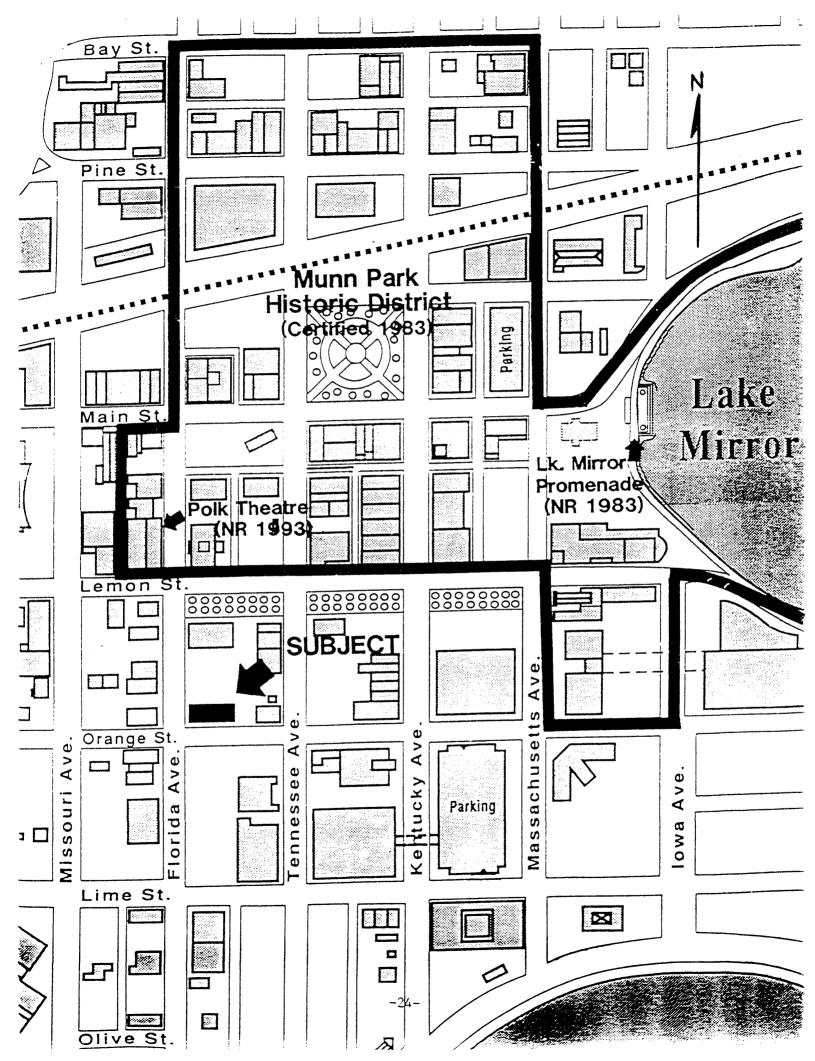
United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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OATES BUILDING, 230 S. Florida Avenue Lakeland, Polk County, FL

FLORIDA AVE

