

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

APR 5 1993

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Bartow Downtown Commercial District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by Davidson & Summerlin streets, Broadway & Florida avenues not for publication

city or town Broadway vicinity

state Florida code FL county Polk code 105 zip code 33830

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 4/1/93
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 5/18/93
Ma J. M. Way Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
22	5	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
22	5	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Architectural Resources of Bartow, Florida

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade

Government/Courthouse

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade

Education/Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style/Masonry Vernacular

Classical Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Composite

other Brick: Decorative Details

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)

Architecture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1885-1935

Significant Dates

1885

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:

Bartow Downtown Commercial District
Name of Property

Polk, Florida
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 7 approximately

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

17	416860	3086000
Zone	Easting	Northing

3

17	417220	3085660
Zone	Easting	Northing

2

17	417220	3086000
Zone	Easting	Northing

4

17	416860	3085660
Zone	Easting	Northing

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 Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date March 29, 1993

street & number 500 South 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.

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Description

Summary

The Bartow Downtown Commercial District is centered around the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue in downtown Bartow. The district measures approximately seven acres and contains twenty-seven buildings, all but five of which were constructed between 1887 and 1935 and contribute to the historic character of the district. The five noncontributing structures were erected after the period of significance. The buildings that compose the district are generally masonry vernacular structures that range in height from one to three stories.

Present And Original Physical Appearance

The district comprises all or part of eight blocks and is roughly bounded by Broadway and Florida avenues and Davidson and Summerlin streets. Broadway Avenue also serves as the corridor of U.S. Highway 98, a major north/south corridor through the community. Main Street, which is also the route of State Road 60, runs through the center of the district. Development along these highways since World War II, has led to the demolition of a number of historic buildings in favor of new construction, especially along Main Street. Nevertheless, the district retains much of its physical integrity.

Roughly assuming the form of a "L," the historic district is bordered on the south by the South Bartow Residential District and by new commercial and government buildings on the other sides. The district is anchored by such individually significant resources as the Polk County Courthouse (listed in the National Register in 1989), the Hotel Stuart, and the Record Building. Development of the present downtown area began in the late 1880s and was largely complete by 1917.

Development of the present district began with the construction of 195 East Main Street in 1887 (Photo 7) and ended with the erection of 300-390 East Main Street (Photo 14) in 1924. Some remodeling of building facades occurred in the mid-1930s. The district developed organically; that is, with no definite plan.

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Description

Architectural Styles

With the notable exception of the Classical Revival Polk County Courthouse (Photo 2 and 5) at 150 East Main Street, the majority of the buildings in the district that were designed as commercial structures are masonry vernacular buildings. The typical contributing building is one to two stories in height and constructed of brick. The facades have been modified in some cases, particularly in the storefront area of the first story, but most buildings retain many of their original details. Most structures have symmetrical facades, a flat roof with surrounding parapet, and wood sash, double hung windows. Decorative touches are provided by corbelled brick cornices and string courses. Original storefronts feature large display windows that flank a recessed entranceway and a canopy that shelters the front of the building. Usually such buildings contained retail shops on the ground floor and offices on the upper floors.

Classical Revival Style

The only truly high style building in the downtown district is the Polk County Courthouse (Photos 2 and 5) at 150 East Main Street. It is also the largest historic building in the commercial district. The courthouse is among the finest Classical Revival government buildings in Polk County. Its most prominent feature is the central dome which dominates the skyline of the downtown area. Modillions, dentils, and a wide frieze embellish the eaves of the main roof and colossal porticos dominate the north and south facades of the courthouse. The classical pediments are supported by Corinthian columns and embellished with applied garlands and vent shields. Limestone veneer is employed on the articulated foundation and quoins that which mark the corners of the building. Double-hung sash windows with 1/1 lights provide natural interior lighting.

The district also contains one building that was constructed as a residence but is now used as a commercial structure. This is the two-story, wood frame vernacular structure at 310 East Davidson Street (Photo 18)

Noncontributing Buildings

All of the Noncontributing buildings were constructed less than fifty years ago and therefore do not contribute to the physical character or historic development of the historic district.

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Description

District Map

Structures are represented by a shaded or unshaded rectangular symbols on the district map rather than the actual "footprints" of the buildings. Budget restrictions, the lack of modern base maps with building footprints, and the unavailability of trained personnel to produce a more visually realistic document made it necessary to use this method of map making. All other features of the map--such as streets and the size and shapes of blocks--are reasonably accurate and to scale.

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Photographs

List of Photographs

1. 150 South Broadway Avenue, Bartow Commercial District
2. Bartow (Polk County), Florida
3. Sidney Johnston
4. 1991
5. Historic Property Associates
6. Main (West) Facade, Facing East
7. Photo No. 1 of 22

Numbers 2-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

1. 150 East Main Street
6. Main (South) Facade and West Elevation, Looking Northeast
7. Photo No. 2 of 22

1. 105 North Broadway Avenue
6. Main (East) Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 3 of 22

1. 125-165 East Main Street
6. Main (North) Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 4 of 22

1. 150 East Main Street
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 5 of 22

1. 175 East Main Street
6. Main (North) Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 6 of 22

1. 195 East Main Street
6. Main (North) Facade, Looking South
7. Photo No. 7 of 22

1. 120 East Davidson Street
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 8 of 22

1. 150 East Davidson Street
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 9 of 22

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Photographs

1. 190-192 North Central Avenue
6. Main (West) Facade, Looking East
7. Photo No. 10 of 22

1. East Main Street
6. 100 Block East Main Street, Looking Southwest
from Central Avenue
7. Photo No. 11 of 22

1. 212 East Main Street
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 12 of 22

1. 260-270 East Main Street
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 13 of 22

1. East Main Street
6. 300 Block East Main Street Looking Northeast from
The Intersection of Wilson Avenue.
7. Photo No. 14 of 22

1. 310-318 East Main Street,
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 15 of 22

1. 320-326 East Main Street,
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 16 of 22

1. 330-390 East Main Street,
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 17 of 22

1. 310 East Davidson Street
6. Main (South) Facade, Looking North
7. Photo No. 18 of 22

1. 125-135 South Central Avenue,
6. Main (East) Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 19 of 22

1. 145-195 South Central Avenue,
6. Main (East) Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 20 of 22

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Photographs

1. 205-225 South Central Avenue,
6. Main (East) Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 21 of 22

1. South Central Avenue
6. Streetscape Looking Northwest from 125 Central Avenue
7. Photo No. 22 of 22

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List of Contributing Buildings

Downtown Commercial District
List of Contributing Buildings

<u>Address</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>North Broadway Avenue</u>		
105	Masonry Vernacular	1902
125-147	Masonry Vernacular	1913
165	Masonry Vernacular	c. 1915
<u>South Broadway Avenue</u>		
150 South Broadway Avenue	Masonry Vernacular	1888
160 South Broadway Avenue	Masonry Vernacular	c. 1915
<u>North Central Avenue</u>		
190-192	Masonry Vernacular	c. 1913
<u>South Central Avenue</u>		
125-135	Masonry Vernacular	1911
145-195	Masonry Vernacular	1914
205-225	Masonry Vernacular	1922
<u>East Davidson Street</u>		
120	Masonry Vernacular	1917
150	Masonry Vernacular	c. 1911
310	Frame Vernacular	1885
<u>East Main Street</u>		
105-115	Masonry Vernacular	1888
125-165	Masonry Vernacular	1888
150	Classical Revival	1909
175	Masonry Vernacular	1888
195	Masonry Vernacular	1887
260-270	Masonry Vernacular	1906
310-318	Masonry Vernacular	1907
320-326	Masonry Vernacular	1909
330-390	Masonry Vernacular	c. 1924
410-420	Masonry Vernacular	c. 1915

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List of Noncontributing Buildings

List of Noncontributing Buildings

South Broadway Avenue

170

East Main Street

212

220

East Summerlin Street

156-158

North Wilson Avenue

120

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Statement of Significance

Summary

The Bartow Downtown Commercial District is significant under criteria A and C in the areas of Commerce and Architecture. The buildings comprise the historic commercial area of downtown Bartow and reflect the period of development from 1885 to 1935. The district contains buildings that housed important commercial businesses and Polk County administrative and judicial offices. The buildings in the district reflect trends in architectural taste typical of those found in many American cities during the period from the late nineteenth century to the early decades of the twentieth century. The district contributes to the Historic Architectural Resources of Bartow Multiple Property nomination under all historic associated contexts. F. 2 and F. 4 property types contribute to the district.

Historical Significance

Initial construction in the historic commercial district followed on the heels of the incorporation of Bartow and the introduction of the railroad. The oldest structure in the district is the J.N. Smith House (Photo 18) at 310 East Davidson Street which was built in 1885. Smith, a physician, maintained his doctor's office and residence in the building for several decades. Since then the structure has served a variety of commercial purposes. A fire destroyed much of the original downtown area in 1886, and subsequent development replaced wood frame construction with masonry buildings. Probably the oldest masonry building in the district is the B.F. Jackson Building (Photo 7) at 195 East Main Street which was completed in 1887. B.F. Jackson was a local merchant who also served as the mayor of Bartow during the 1890s.

Six buildings in the downtown commercial district survive from the late nineteenth century, all of them constructed during the 1880s. One of these was the Reed & Bros. Building (Photo 6) at 175 East Main Street which was erected in 1888. The building was built for C.E. Reed, a merchant who operated the Bartow Tube Well Works and served as a city councilman during the 1880s. This masonry vernacular structure, like others in the district, was constructed of locally manufactured brick. The small commercial building at 150 South Broadway Avenue (Photo 1) was also built in 1888. Its construction was financed by James Hooker, who served as a county commissioner and city councilman.

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Statement of Significance

He was also a founder and president of the State Bank of Bartow, and served as a director for the Polk County National Bank.

No buildings survive from the 1890s in the commercial district, perhaps because local and national economic difficulties retarded the development of downtown Bartow during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Building construction in the early part of the twentieth century still focused on the courthouse square, along Broadway Avenue, Main Street, and other nearby streets. Fourteen of the contributing buildings in the district were constructed between 1902 and 1917. The first of these was the Polk County National Bank Building (Photo 3) at 105 North Broadway Avenue. In addition to serving as a bank, the building contained offices of the Dominion Phosphate Company, which was organized in the 1890s. The Stuart Block at 260-270 East Main Street (Photo 13) was built in 1906. Its construction was financed by E.C. Stuart, who served as mayor in the 1890s and became one of Polk County's prominent businessmen and real estate investors. The Law Building (Photo 15) at 310-318 East Main Street was constructed in 1907 and served as the Knights of Pythias Hall, as well as containing commercial offices.

Undoubtedly, the most significant building erected in downtown Bartow during the first decade of the twentieth century was the Polk County Courthouse (Photos 2 and 5) at 150 East Main Street, which was completed in 1909. The large Classical Revival style building was designed by E.C. Hosford, an architect from Eastlake, Georgia, who is responsible for designing a number of other courthouses, schools and other important buildings in Florida, some of which are listed in the National Register. Hosford moved in 1920 to Lakeland, Florida, where he became one of the most prominent architects in Polk County. The structure was enlarged in 1926. The design of those extensions was handled by Francis Kennard, another significant Florida architect from the city of Tampa. The building currently houses the Polk County Historical and Genealogical Library and Museum and Bartow Main Street, Inc.; the courthouse was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

Nine buildings in the district date from the 1910s. Among these is the structure at 150 East Davidson Street (Photo 9), which was constructed in 1911. The building served as the offices of the law firm Wilson and Swearingen until 1917. The building at 145-195 South Central Avenue (Photo 20) was constructed as a hotel in 1914 at a cost of \$40,000. Nile Stewart, who later operated the posh Wales Hotel in Lake Wales,

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Statement of Significance

rented the building, from which he operated the Stewart Hotel and Restaurant. The building at 410-420 East Main Street (Photo 23) was constructed in 1915 and had the distinction of housing a cigar factory on the second floor and a department store below.

Only three buildings, all Masonry Vernacular designs, were built in the district during the 1920s. One of these was the Record Building (Photo 21) at 205-225 South Central Avenue, which was erected in 1922 at a cost of \$25,000 to house the local newspaper, Polk County Record, established in 1911. The Ford Sales and Service Building (330-390 East Main Street) was completed about 1924 (Photo 17), and was among the last commercial buildings constructed in Bartow before the land boom collapsed in 1926. Although no construction occurred in the district during the Great Depression of the 1930s, several buildings were remodeled. Originally constructed as two buildings, the building at 125-165 East Main Street was remodeled about 1935 following a fire. Renovation included resurfacing the brick facade with stucco, the construction of a new cornice, and installation of new windows.

Architectural Significance

The architecture character of the Bartow Downtown Commercial District reflects the development of American architectural taste and commercial habits typical of small American cities during the period from approximately 1880 to 1930. Standard storefront elements featuring display windows, recessed entrances, a sheltering canopy, and a minimum of architectural details restricted to the upper stories of the main facade were endemic to many communities across the United States. Stylistic details were restricted largely to veneers applied to windows, cornices, pilasters, and belt courses and ran the gamut of styles from Romanesque Revival to Classical Revival, plus a variety of novelty "commercial" variations. The sole "high style" structure in the district is the Polk County Courthouse, which exhibits well-developed features of the Classical Revival style in planning and decoration.

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Bibliography

Bibliography

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Beede, G., comp. Directory of Polk County. Mulberry, 1913.

City of Bartow, Florida. Minutes, Ordinances, Resolutions.

Frisbie, Louise. Yesterday's Polk County. Miami, 1976.

Hetherington, M.F. History of Polk County, Florida. Lakeland, 1928; facsimilie edition, Chuluota, 1971.

McNeely, Ed. Century in the Sun: A History of Polk County, Florida. Bartow, 1961.

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Polk, R.L., comp. Lakeland and Polk County Directory. Jacksonville, 1921.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

Boundary Description & Justification

Verbal Boundary Description

The official boundaries of the Downtown Bartow Commercial District are the same as those shown on the district map.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the district encompass the most significant concentration of the historic commercial resources in the city of Bartow.