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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 North Plant City Residential District

other names/site number N/A 8HI 5385

2. Location

street & number Bounded by Herring, Wheeler, Tever & Palmer streets N/A  not for publication

city or town Plant City N/A  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Hillsborough code 057 zip code 33566

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 4/16/93  
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:)

Signature of the Keeper Delores Byrum **Entered in the National Register** Date of Action 5/27/93

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	
74	16	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
74	16	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

Education/School

Religion/Church

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Education/Library

Religion/Church

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style/Wood Frame Vernacular

Bungalow

Colonial Revival

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.
[X] 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

Community Planning & Development

Period of Significance

1898-1942

Significant Dates

1898

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:

- [X] State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
University
Other

Name of repository:

North Plant City Residential District  
Name of Property

Hillsborough, Florida  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 27 approximately

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	389200	3100220
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	17	389540	3100220

3	17	389540	3099540
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	17	389200	3099540

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 April 12, 1993

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 \_\_\_\_\_

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 North Plant City Residential District is an approximately 27 acre residential neighborhood located immediately north of the the Downtown Plant City Commercial District. The neighborhood contains the largest concentration of residential structures in the city dating from the period c. 1898 to 1942. The district also contains a church and one former school building, the latter of which is individually listed in the National Register (1981). There is a variety of architectural styles represented in the neighborhood, including wood frame vernacular, bungalows, and a number of revival and romantic style buildings. The district comprises a total of 90 buildings, of which 74 contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood and 16 are considered noncontributing. Noncontributing buildings include those erected during the period of significance that have been severely altered and those constructed after 1942.

Supporting Narrative

Plant City is located approximately 25 miles east of Tampa, Florida. The community has a population of just under 25,000, its economy is largely dependent upon agricultural activities in the surrounding countryside, particularly the cultivation of strawberries. The city was founded in 1884, with the downtown area developing at the intersection of two rail lines. The residential area also began to grow up at the same time; however, nothing in the residential area remains from this period. The district developed as the most stylish and fashionable area of the city, and the larger houses dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are found in the neighborhood. The district is visually distinct from other areas of the city and is marked by casually landscaped lots that mark brick lined streets. The area has a quiet ambiance that recalls the leisurely pace of the pre-1920s era.

The resources in the district represent a variety of styles and tastes. Even simple structures from the historic period display a quality of craftsmanship. A number of residences exhibit ornamental woodwork and other distinctive details. Furthermore there are individual structures that meet the criteria for listing in the National Register in the area of architecture.

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Description

The two principal streets in the district are Collins and Evers, which connect the neighborhood with the downtown area. Buildings in the district are well-preserved, but some structures in the south end of the district may be threatened by expansion plans of the Plant City First Baptist Church at 304 Collins Street.

Evers Street

Anchoring the southwestern corner of the district are the structures at 507 and 509 Evers Street (Photo 1). The Primitive Baptist Church (Photo 2), constructed circa 1905, is a wood frame vernacular building with Gothic Revival elements. Its summetrical facade features a front gable roof with a centrally located lancet window of stained glass. At the corners of the church are battlement towers with pavilion roofs. A single entry is located at each of the towers. Adjacent to the church is a bungalow (Photo 3). It is a modest residence featuring a front gable roof and full width porch, with wood columns set on brick piers. The building has few decorative features.

Sitting on the west side of the 600 block of Collins Street is the 1914 Plant City High School (Photo 4). The rear elevation faces Evers Street. Both facades of the red brick building feature a colossal Greek Revival style portico.

Elements of the Queen Anne style appear on a number of buildings in the area. The development of the style is attributed to a group of 19th century British architects who borrowed stylistic details from the Medieval precedents of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. The Queen Anne style uses all wall surfaces as primary decorative elements and is usually characterized by steeply pitched roofs, patterned shingles, bay windows, asymmetrical plans, and porches that are often found on more than one elevation.

A variety of simple bungalows are also found in the district. Originating in southern California in the late nineteenth century, the style became popular nationwide before the First World War and continued to be a major housing type in Florida and elsewhere up until the 1930s. This residential type is characterized by shallow-pitched gable roofs and wide porches that are supported by columns set on masonry piers.

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~~are heavily influenced by classical and colonial revival style elements that proclaim their late construction date (1917 and 1918) for houses featuring Queen Anne elements. Both residences have asymmetrical massing, ornate decorative elements, and steeply pitched roofs. 703 Evers features a wrap-around veranda with paired columns on brick piers, a circular attic window at the gable end, and decorative woodwork under the eaves. The house at 707 Evers Street is more expressive of the Queen Anne style, with its overall massing, projecting bay on the second story, juxtaposition of windows of various sizes, and multi-gable roof line.~~

Located at 709 Evers (Photo 7) is a fine example of a Craftsman bungalow, with multi-gabled massing and expressed structural members. The residence features irregular massing, a bay window on the south elevation, and a second story extending over the porte-cochere on the north end. The porch displays decorative wood brackets and tapered columns that rest on a brick parapet wall. Other details include multi-pane windows, detailed rafter ends, and decorative non-structural elements.

The district has only a few noncontributing buildings; however, even these blend into the neighborhood. Two such structures are the residences at 706 Evers (Photo 8) and 803 Evers (Photo 9).

Calhoun Street

Dividing the district in half is Calhoun Street, which runs east to west. Most of the buildings in the neighborhood face either east or west along north-south running streets. Calhoun is one of the few cross streets in the district with residences whose facades are oriented either north or south. One of the most prestigious houses in the neighborhood is the E.T. Roux House at 202 West Calhoun Street (Photo 10). Built for Colonel Edwin T. Roux, this 1904 structure demonstrates a vernacular interpretation of the Greek Revival style. The front gable is treated as a pediment, with tripartite windows at the gable end above a three bay, double tiered gallery. The porch is fully balustraded at the second level. Four square wood columns rise two stories to support the gable roof. The main entrance is classically treated with side lights and a transom.

Adjacent to the Roux House is a large, two-story, wood frame vernacular house at 102 West Calhoun Street (Photo 11). The elongated ground plan of this house stretches north along Collins

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## Description

street. The inset front porch is one story, with wood columns set on masonry piers united by a balustrade. A sleeping porch is found over the front porch at the second story level. As can be seen in the photo, a one-story, noncontributing residence stands across the street at 902 Collins.

At the outer edge of the neighborhood, adjacent to Palmer Street and the railroad tracks, are two small one-story dwellings at 105 and 107 East Calhoun Street (Photo 12). Both are examples of wood frame vernacular structures typical of those constructed in Plant City near the turn of the century. At the opposite end of the street, near the edge of the district, is the Griffin House at 206 West Calhoun (Photo 13). Built in 1905, this basically vernacular residence at the corner of Calhoun and Wheeler streets incorporates some features of both the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. Originally, the front porch extended the width of the house and wrapped around to the west elevation. Today the porch stops at the ell and is screened. Scalloped and pierced vergeboards still survive in the gable ends.

Wheeler Street

Wheeler Street forms the western boundary of the historic district, and contributing structures are found along both sides of the traffic artery in the three blocks between Tomlin and Tever streets. The wood frame house at 900 Wheeler Street (Photo 14) has undergone a number of modifications since it was erected in 1923, but it still retains much of its original character. Surprisingly, the residence at 902 Wheeler was built about four years later, for its characteristics recall construction habits of the houses built in the first years of the twentieth century. The one-story structure features an L-shape plan with wrap around front porch. The front entrance consists of a single door with side lights and a transom. The original porch roof and supports appear to have been replaced at an unknown date in the past with the present wooden posts and arch brackets.

Noncontributing buildings along Wheeler Street include the concrete block ranch style house at 908 Wheeler (Photo 16) and the stuccoed masonry residence at 1006 Wheeler (Photo 17). Also to be seen in photo 17 is the house at 1008 Wheeler, one of the only three Mediterranean Revival style residences in the district. The other two are located at 207 and 209 Tever Street (Photo 18).



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Collins Street

At the south end of the district stands the Old Plant City High School (Photo 20) at 605 North Collins Street. The Plant City High School, constructed in 1914, is the focal point of the neighborhood. Dominating the city block between Collins and Evers streets south of Gilchrist Street, the impressive, monumentally scaled brick structure serves as a contrasting element to the multitude of wood frame dwellings that dominate the district. Except for its monumental classical porticos, the school is basically a brick vernacular building, similar in appearance to commercial structures and warehouses constructed during the same period. The red brick facade features yellow brick detailing. Windows are topped by segmental brick arches, and there is a yellow brick coping along the top of the roof parapet. The former school now serves as a community service center and was formally listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981.

Two Georgian Revival style homes are found at 803 and 705 North Collins (Photos 20 and 21). Georgian was the prevailing house style among the more wealthy residents of the English colonists in America in the decades just prior to the American Revolution. With an emphasis on classical details, the style grew out of the Italian Renaissance. Houses of this type are often boxy, red brick structures, characterized by a paneled front door, centered in the structure and framed by a one-story classical portico. The doorway itself may be crowned by a classical pediment and is often set in a surrounds of side lights and a transom or fanlight.

Both 705 and 803 Collins are red brick structures with symmetrical facades, with the main decorative interest centered at the main entrance. The house at 803 Collins, constructed circa 1924, features a slightly projecting portico sheltering the main entrance which is framed by side lights and a fanlight. The house at 705 Collins was constructed in 1929. The symmetrical facade features a central pedimented entrance and paired double hung sash windows on two sides of the solarium found at the north elevation of the house. A triangular pediment supported by pilasters surmounts the single paneled door and fanlight. The facades of both residences are covered with English ivy.

The Sparkman House at 703 North Collins (Photo 24) is a quaint, wood frame cottage with Queen Anne features. The house has an L-shaped ground plan and features a projecting bay with a

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gable roof on the main facade. Constructed circa 1905, it was the residence of John G. Sparkman, a Plant City merchant and first Texaco Oil agent in the community. Set on a corner lot, the house presents two main facades. It has a wrap around veranda.

The adjacent structures at 707 (Photo 23) and 711 Collins (Photos 24 and 25) are wood frame houses exhibiting an eclectic mixture of Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and bungalow features. The house at 707 Collins combines the irregular massing and architectural details of Queen Anne with the horizontal massing and porch details of a bungalow. This large residence was constructed circa 1900. Its large wrap around veranda is supported by slender columns set on brick piers spanned by a balustrade. The front entrance consists of a single door flanked by side lights and crowned with a transom. Windows are double hung sashes with louvered blinds. The Chapman House at 711 Collins was constructed circa 1904 and also features a wrap around veranda supported by columns atop brick piers and an entrance arrangement similar to the house at 707 Collins. The main windows, however, consist of latticed sashes over single lights.

Along the east side of Collins Street are several wood frame vernacular structures. The residences at 702, 706 (Photo 26), and 710 Collins (Photo 27) were constructed between 1900 and 1914. These houses exhibit simple architectural designs with little decoration. The two-story bungalow at 712 Collins (Photo 27) was built circa 1920 and reflects the architectural movement readily adopted more than a decade earlier.

One of the later historic structures in the neighborhood is the L.E. Black House at 802 North Collins (Photo 28). This Colonial Revival residence was constructed in 1942 and features a two-story porch supported by slender wooden columns. The window arrangement of the facade, and the use of narrow non-function louvered blinds, demonstrates how diluted traditional Colonial Revival forms had become in residential architecture by the 1940s. The residence at 805 North Collins (Photo 29) is a noncontributing resource, as a result of extensive modification recently made to the building.

As initially platted, Collins and Evers streets ended at Calhoun Street. This is still true of Evers; however, Collins Street now continues north to Tever Street. This extension,

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which is almost as narrow as an alley, contains several contributing buildings (Photo 30).

Roux Street

The buildings along Roux Street reflect the character of the rest of the district. The residences at 918 and 920 Roux (Photo 31) are wood frame vernacular structures with a few bungalow touches. Farther down the street at 908 and 910 (Photo 32) are somewhat larger houses, still vernacular in appearance. On the west side of Roux at number 913 (Photo 33) is a large, two-story Colonial Revival style residence constructed in 1915. The house features a two-story semicircular portico with attenuated columns that rise unbroken by a gallery or balcony to the entablature of the portico deck. Other features include a symmetrical facade, 12/12 light double hung sash windows, and a classical entrance consisting of a paneled door with a surrounds composed of side lights and a fanlight. There is also a 1 1/2-story wing on the north elevation of the house.

Buildings not Included in the Count

Garages and other secondary structures associated with the primary buildings recorded in the building list or shown on the map have not been included in the count or represented on the district map. Although some of the residences in the neighborhood do have small garages or sheds, there are no recorded examples of substantial secondary structures such as garage apartments, guest houses, workshops, greenhouses, or other such structures that would contribute to or alter the basic character of the district. Furthermore, the lack of access to individual properties and the existence of trees and landscape plants made it impossible for the persons conducting the survey of the neighborhood to adequately record secondary structures in the district.

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Photographs

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List of Photographs

1. 505-507 N. Evers St., North Plant City Residential District
2. Plant City (Hillsborough County), Florida
3. Lori L. Thompson
4. 1992
5. Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board
6. East Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 1 of 33

The name of the district and items 2-5 are the same for all the following entries.

1. 509 N. Evers St.
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 2 of 33

1. 507 N. Evers St.
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 3 of 33

1. 605 N. Collins St.
6. West Facade & South Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 4 of 33

1. 703 N. Evers St.
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 5 of 33

1. 705-707 N. Evers St.
6. East Facades, Looking West
7. Photo No. 6 of 33

1. 709 N. Evers St.
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 7 of 33

1. 706 N. Evers St.
6. West Facade, Looking East
7. Photo No. 8 of 33

1. 803 N. Evers St.
6. East Facade, Looking West
7. Photo No. 9 of 33

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Photographs

- 
1. 202 W. Calhoun St.
  6. South Facade, Looking North
  7. Photo No. 10 of 33
  
  1. 102 W. Calhoun St.
  6. South Facade, Looking Northeast
  7. Photo No. 11 of 33
  
  1. 105-107 E. Calhoun St.
  6. North Facades, Looking Southeast
  7. Photo No. 12 of 33
  
  1. 206 W. Calhoun St.
  6. South Facade, Looking North
  7. Photo No. 13 of 33
  
  1. 900 Wheeler St.
  6. West Facade, Looking Northeast
  7. Photo No. 14 of 33
  
  1. 902 Wheeler St.
  6. West Facade, Looking Northeast
  7. Photo No. 15 of 33
  
  1. 908 Wheeler St.
  6. West Facade, Looking East
  7. Photo No. 16 of 33
  
  1. 1006-1008 N. Wheeler St.
  6. West Facades, Looking East
  7. Photo No. 17 of 33
  
  1. 207-209 Tever St.
  6. North Facades, Looking Southwest
  7. Photo No. 18 of 33
  
  1. 605 N. Collins St.
  6. East Facade, Looking West
  7. Photo No. 19 of 33
  
  1. 803 N. Collins St.
  6. East Facade, Looking West
  7. Photo No. 20 of 33

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Photographs

- 
1. 705 N. Collins St.
  6. East Facade, Looking Southwest
  7. Photo No. 21 of 33
  
  1. 703 N. Collins St.
  6. East Facade, Looking West
  7. Photo No. 22 of 33
  
  1. 707 N. Collins St.
  6. East Facade, Looking West
  7. Photo No. 23 of 33
  
  1. 711 N. Collins St.
  6. East Facade, Looking West
  7. Photo No. 24 of 33
  
  1. 711 N. Collins St.
  6. East Facade & North Elevation, Looking Southwest
  7. Photo No. 25 of 33
  
  1. 702-706 N. Collins St.
  6. West Facades, Looking Southwest
  7. Photo No. 26 of 33
  
  1. 710-712 N. Collins St.
  6. West Facades, Looking Southeast
  7. Photo No. 27 of 33
  
  1. 802 N. Collins St.
  6. West Facade, Looking East
  7. Photo No. 28 of 33
  
  1. 805 N. Collins St.
  6. East Facade, Looking West
  7. Photo No. 29 of 33
  
  1. 906-908 N. Collins St.
  6. West Facades, Looking Northeast
  7. Photo No. 30 of 33
  
  1. 918-920 N. Collins St.
  6. West Facades, Looking Southeast
  7. Photo No. 31 of 33

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Photographs

- 
1. 908-910 N. Roux St.
  6. West Facades, Looking Southeast
  7. Photo No. 32 of 33

1. 913 Roux St.
6. East Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo No. 33 of 33

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List of contributing Buildings

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List of Contributing Buildings

<u>Address</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>East Calhoun Street</u>	
105	1908
107	1908
108	c. 1914
<u>West Calhoun Street</u>	
102	1909
202	1904
206	1910
<u>Collins Street</u>	
605	c. 1914
702	1901
703	c. 1905
705	1929
706	c. 1914
707	c. 1900
708	1905
710	c. 1914
711	1908
712	c. 1920
802	c. 1942
803	c. 1924
804	1923
806	c. 1920
906	1925
910	1920
914	1917
<u>East Damon Street</u>	
108	1929



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List of Contributing Buildings

North Evers Street

507	c. 1918
509	1917
701	1909
701 1/2	1909
702	1913
703	c. 1911
705	c. 1912
707	c. 1910
709	1916
710	1938
805	1910
807	1910

North Palmer Street

911	c. 1910
1001	c. 1910

North Roux Street

905	c. 1910
906	c. 1905
908	c. 1915
909	c. 1898
910	1910
912	c. 1915
913	1914
914	c. 1910
915	c. 1910
916	c. 1915
917	c. 1912
918	c. 1912
920	c. 1915
1000	c. 1910
1001	c. 1915

Tever Street

201	c. 1919
205	c. 1919
207	1925
209	1925

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List of Contributing & Noncontributing Buildings

North Wheeler Street

702	1910
715	c. 1920
801	c. 1920
802	c. 1914
805	c. 1920
807	c. 1920
813	c. 1920
900	1923
901	c. 1920
902	1927
903	c. 1920
906	1937
907	c. 1920
1001	c. 1920
1005	c. 1920
1007	c. 1920
1008	1925

List of Noncontributing Buildings

West Calhoun Street

204  
105

North Collins Street

805  
902  
908

North Evers Street

609  
706  
711  
803

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List of Noncontributing Buildings

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West Saunders Street

204  
205

North Wheeler Street

804  
904  
908  
1002  
1006

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Significance

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Summary Paragraph

The North Plant City Residential District is significant under criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Community Planning and Development. The district is the oldest and largest historic residential neighborhood in Plant City and contains houses and other structures dating from the period c. 1898 to 1942. Although the majority of the buildings are residences, the district also contains a historic church and a former school, latter of which was listed in the National Register in 1981. Tied closely to the early development of Plant City, the district contains buildings that served as private residences for important community leaders. A number of architectural styles are evident in the district. These designs are consistent with national and statewide trends in architecture during the period of significance.

Supporting Narrative

The community of Plant City was founded shortly after railroad building and land developer Henry B. Plant extended the South Florida Railroad from Jacksonville to the city of Tampa, where he established the rail terminus and steamship port of Port Tampa at the mouth of the Hillsborough River on Tampa Bay. Plant City was one of a number of small towns that grew up along the rail routes constructed in Central Florida in the late nineteenth century. Construction of the railroad made possible the establishment of the citrus industry and extensive truck farming in the fertile farmland of eastern Hillsborough County. The discovery of commercial grade phosphate in the area promoted the development of widespread mining operations that were wholly dependent on the railroad and shipping operations founded by Henry Plant.

The 1880s became a turning point for the settlement of Hillsborough County, which had been only sparsely settled before the coming of the railroad. In 1883, as the rail network grew to extend service to other areas of central and south Florida, Henry L. Mitchell of Tampa purchased 40 acres of land in what is now the heart of Plant City from Thomas Wheeler. Mitchell soon acquired additional tracts of property and, allied with other business associates, formed the "Tampa Syndicate" to develop real estate in the vicinity of the point where the South Florida Railroad and Tropical Florida Railroad lines were to intersect.

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It was at this intersection point that the community that became Plant City began to grow.

By the end of 1883, the South Florida Railroad was making four trips daily between Tampa and the small settlement established by Mitchell and his associates. The property was subdivided into building lots, and new residents were arriving daily to take advantage of the economic activities made possible by the existence of the two rail lines. The community was incorporated on January 10, 1885 and officially named--not for Mitchell--but for the railroad magnate who had made the founding of the settlement possible. Plant City already had 300 residents when it was incorporated. The combination of strategic location, fertile soil, and the railroad helped Plant City to become an important agricultural center. Strawberries, one of the community's major industries, earned Plant City the title of "Winter Strawberry Capital of the World."

The delightful fruit has been grown in the agricultural lands around Plant City for more than a hundred years. The first berries were shipped from the area in 1892. Berry production actually increased after the "Great Freeze" of the winter of 1895 which destroyed much of the local citrus industry, for many farmers turned to the cultivation of strawberries while their citrus groves recovered. The cultivation and harvesting of the crop was very much a family affair, for many of the farms were small enterprises. Schools regulated their schedules to allow children to help harvest the berries. The participating "Strawberry Schools" continued this practice until 1957. By 1920, approximately 6,000 acres of land surrounding Plant City were producing strawberries.

The Warnell Lumber and Veneering Company also gave the small town of Plant City one of its first industries after locating there in 1898. The company took advantage of the vast timber resources in Central Florida, acquiring 25,000 acres of forest land in Hillsborough, Polk, and DeSoto counties. By 1901, the company employed approximately 350 workers to manufacture baskets and crates for shipping the strawberries, citrus, and vegetables grown in Hillsborough County.

The Roux Lumber Company also acquired timber interests for the development of sawmill operations in Plant City. Starting as a small business in 1903, the company grew within a few years to occupy a five acre site just south of the commercial core of Plant City. Equipped with a modern planing mill and novelty

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works, the mill supplied rough and dressed lumber to all parts of Florida.

Other industries instrumental in the development of Plant City during the early part of the twentieth century included the processing and shipping of citrus, cattle and poultry raising, and the manufacture and rental of small, transportable refrigeration units (called "pony" refrigerators) to keep strawberries from spoiling while awaiting shipment. Economic growth prompted the establishment of the city's first bank--the Hillsboro State Bank--in 1902. The population of Plant City in 1902 stood at 2,800 and continued to grow steadily in the first three decades of the century, reaching 7,000 by 1930. Plant City was the second largest railroad junction and distribution point in Florida, ranking only behind Jacksonville in the volume of rail traffic.

The economic success enjoyed by Plant City prompted its early residents to build many fine residences near the business core of the city. The development of the residential neighborhood just north of downtown began almost immediately after the incorporation of the city in 1885. Another residential area was established immediately west of the commercial core, but the majority of Plant City's prominent citizens preferred the North Plant City Neighborhood. As would be expected of the most fashionable residential area of the city, the homes tended to be large and stylish, reflecting the architectural tastes current in the United States. The economic and visual character of Plant City had been largely established before World War I. Growth of the community, however, continued slowly up until the onset of the Great Depression, which afflicted not only the economy of Plant City but the rest of Florida and the nation as well.

Architectural Significance

The residential, public, and religious buildings of the historic district embody a broad range of formal styles. Frame and Masonry vernacular buildings from several periods of development and exhibiting varying degrees of craftsmanship can be found in the district. Late Victorian designs, including the Gothic Revival and Queen Anne styles, represent a small but important part of the district's appearance. More commonly found are revivals of the early twentieth century, represented by the Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, and Mediterranean Revival styles. Other architectural forms, such as bungalows and other

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structures influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement of the turn of the century, are also scattered throughout the district. Collectively, the buildings in the district represent a wide variety of architectural forms and styles popular throughout the nation during the historic period of the district.

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Boundary Description & Justification

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Boundary Description

The official boundaries of the North Plant City Residential District are those represented on the district map accompanying the nomination proposal.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the North Plant City Residential District include, as far as possible, all of the surviving resources associated with the development of the residential neighborhood between c. 1890 and 1942.