National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines* for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property			
	les Commercial Historic	District	
other names/site number Lake Wa.	les Historic District		
2. Location			
street & number 224-251 E. Pa	rk Ave. & 140-260 E. Stu	art Ave. n/a	not for publication
city, town Lake Wales		n/a	vicinity
state Florida code	FL county Polk	code 10	5 zip code 33854
3. Classification			
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resour	ces within Property
x private	building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
public-local	X district	16	5 buildings
public-State	🔲 site		sites
public-Federal	structure structure		structures
	🔲 object		objects
		_16	5 Total
Name of related multiple property listing	ng:	Number of contrib	uting resources previously
Lake Wales Multiple Proper	ty Listing		nal Register0
4. State/Federal Agency Certifica			
As the designated authority under the second	mination of eligibility meets the doc and meets the procedural and pro	umentation standards for re ressional requirements set	egistering properties in the forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
Signature of certifying filcial Florida State Historic	Preservation Officer		Date
State or Federal agency and bureau			
In my opinion, the property I mee	ts 🔲 does not meet the National F	legister criteria. 🗌 See co	ntinuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other officia	1		Date
State or Federal agency and bureau			
5. National Park Service Certifica	ation		
I, hereby, certify that this property is:	<u>^</u>		
mentered in the National Register.	11 1		~1.1
See continuation sheet.	any Jeden	m	5/10/90
determined eligible for the National			
Register. See continuation sheet.		,	
determined not eligible for the			

removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)

National Register.

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Fund	ctions (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce/Trade: Speciality Store	<u>Commerce</u>	
: Financial Institution		Financial Institution
LANOITAN		
7. Description		
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (er	nter categories from instructions)
	foundation	Concrete
Other: Masonry Vernacular	walls	Brick
Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals:		Stucco
Mediterranean Revival	roof	Other: Built up
	other	Ceramic tile

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

8. Statement of Significance	<i>t</i> .	
Certifying official has considered the significance of this prop nationally	perty in relation to other properties:	
Applicable National Register Criteria X B C	D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	D E F G	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) Commerce Architecture	Period of Significance 1915-1928	Significant Dates
	Cultural Affiliation	
Significant Person N/A	Architect/Builder Various	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

X See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

PLEASE SEE	CONTINUATION	SHEETS
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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	 See continuation sheet Primary location of additional data: State historic preservation office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Specify repository:
Record #	
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of property Approximately 6 acres	
UTM References A 1 + 7 4 4 + 2 0 + 3 + 0 3 + 0 8 + 6 2 + 3 + 0 Zone Easting Northing C 1 + 7 4 4 + 2 1 + 9 + 0 3 + 0 8 + 6 4 + 3 + 0	B 1 7 4 4 2 1 4 0 3 0 8 6 4 3 0 Zone Easting Northing D 1 7 4 4 2 2 6 0 3 0 8 6 2 3 0
	See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Description The boundary is indicated by a heavy dashed "Lake Wales Historic District".	l line on the accompanying map entitled,
	See continuation sheet
Boundary Justification	
PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHE	ET
	See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title <u>Stephen Olausen/Barbara E. Mattick</u> , Hi organization <u>Bureau of Historic Preservation</u>	date March 1990
street & number R.A. Gray Blg., 500 S. Bronough St	
city or town <u>Tallahassee</u>	state Florida zip code <u>32399-02</u> 50

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

SUMMARY:

The Lake Wales Commercial Historic District is comprised entirely of buildings associated with the development of the Lake Wales business area during its first two periods of major development. It contributes to the Lake Wales Multiple Property Group under associated property type F.1, Commercial Buildings of Lake Wales, 1915-1928. The district boundaries encompass twenty-one buildings located in parts of four blocks in the downtown area of the city. The ratio of contributing to non-contributing buildings is 16:5. Contributing buildings within the district exhibit primarily masonry vernacular designs which were consistent with commercial development in small communities in Florida in the 1910s and 1920s. The historic properties, with the exception of the alteration of several of the commercial storefronts, retain their original appearance to a large degree.

SETTING:

The City of Lake Wales, Florida, is located in Polk County in the central part of the Florida peninsula, at the southern end of the Central Highlands region. The city lies atop a ridge of land that runs approximately seventy-five miles in a north-south direction, forming a peninsular spine. The surrounding landscape consists of low, rolling hills and numerous lakes which are in marked contrast to the monotonously flat coastal plains on the eastern and western sides of the central ridge. The southern limestone soils support pines and oaks in some areas, but grasses, saw palmetto, and sabal palms predominate. Although within the temperate zone, the area's climate is subtropical. Even a light frost in the winter months is rare, and the hard freezes that have historically devastated the citrus crops of northern Florida are a once-ina-century occurrence in this part of the state.

Two major state highways intersect within the City of Lake Wales. State Road 27, which formed the original highway between Tallahassee and Miami in the 1920s, runs north-south; State Road 60 leads eastward through the city on its route from Tampa to Vero Beach. The nearest metropolitan complexes are Tampa, some sixty miles west of Lake Wales; and Orlando, sixty miles to the northeast. Lake Wales is thirty-five miles south

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page ___ Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

of the Disney World entertainment center. The city's population in 1985 was 8,847. The Atlantic Coastline (ACL) and Seaboard Airline (SAL) rail systems, which both had lines through Polk County, merged to become the Seaboard Coastline (SCL) in 1967. Thirteen years later, that line became part of the CSX System, which still maintains rail service to the city.

PRESENT APPEARANCE:

The buildings of the district are located on parts of four blocks and are primarily situated along Park and Stuart Avenues (Photos 13-17). Buildings located within this area were largely constructed in the 1910s and 1920s. The boundaries of the district have been drawn to encompass the most significant concentration of historic commercial buildings constructed during the periods of significance. There are a total of twenty-one buildings within the district, with a contributing to noncontributing ratio of 16:5 (76%).

Most commercial buildings within the historic district embody Masonry Vernacular, commercial designs commonly found in the United States during the early twentieth century. The designs include: one-, two-, three-part, and arcaded blocks. There is also one example of a two-part block in the Mission style.

The historic commercial buildings within the district were constructed between 1915 and 1928. The extant historic commercial buildings in Lake Wales are red or buff brick or stucco and have flat roofs with parapets. In virtually every instance the buildings have a boxy form and a rectangular plan. Unless they are detached or sited on a corner, they exhibit a single, primary facade where all entrances, windows, and decorative elements are placed. They generally contain fixed display windows on the first floor and 1/1 double-hung sash windows on the second. Other noteworthy features of these buildings are corbelling and dentil or dog's tooth string courses.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number ____7 Page ___3 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

ALTERATIONS:

Although the area has suffered from the intrusion of newer buildings or the extensive remodeling of main facades, there is a concentration of historic buildings which retain enough of their original integrity to contribute to the significance of the district. Alterations to these buildings include the application of paint or stucco over the original brick exteriors, and the replacement of original windows and surrounds in storefronts.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number ____7 Page ____4

Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

INVENTORY OF CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

(MV = Masonry Vernacular)

East Park Avenue

224	Parker Store Blg.	MV	c. 1920
230	Rhodesbilt Arcade	MV	1924
235	T.J. Parker Blg./Standard Travel	MV	1920
240	No name	MV	c. 1920
245	Lake Wales Pharmacy Blg.	MV	1920
246	Lake Wales State Bank	MV	1915
247	Parker-Bohde Blg.	MV	c. 1920
251	Citizens Bank Blg.	MV	1921

East Stuart Avenue

140	Lake Wales News	MV	1926
202	Caldwell-Temple Blg./Drapers	MV	c. 1924
208-216	Gibson-Lily Blg.	MV	c. 1928
219-221	Bullard Insurance	MV	c. 1928
222-224	The Gallery	MV	c. 1928
239-257	Bullard Blg.	MV	1919
254	Scenic Theater	MV	1920
260	Burns Arcade	MV	1917

INVENTORY OF NONCONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

244 East Park Avenue 144-146 East Stuart Avenue 225 East Stuart Avenue 237 East Stuart Avenue 252 East Stuart Avenue

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number ______ Page ____ Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

SUMMARY:

The Lake Wales Historic District is significant under Criteria A and C on the local level in the areas of commerce and architecture. The district derives its primary significance from its association with the development of the downtown commercial area of Lake Wales. Contributing buildings within the district were constructed between 1915 and 1928. These years span the periods of the city's most intensive historical development. The buildings have further significance as good examples of nationwide trends in vernacular commercial architecture, and for their association with prominent local architects. The district contributes to the Lake Wales Multiple Property Group under Associated Contexts: Initial Period of Development, 1911-1918 and Boomtime Development of Lake Wales, 1919-1928, and under Associated Property Type F.1, Commercial Buildings of Lake Wales, 1915-1928.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

During the initial period of Lake Wales' development, commercial architecture was confined mainly to the construction of simple wood frame structures. The creation of a relatively fireproof commercial area utilizing brick as the main building material did not occur until the post-World War I boom era. This was largely due to the added expense of this type of construction and the preoccupation of the citizenry with establishing a basic infrastructure for the community.

The first brick commercial building, built in 1913, no longer exists. It was one of three buildings constructed in the downtown commercial area by Thomas J. Parker. Parker was born in 1864 in Bartow, Florida. He went to Washington and Lee University in Virginia, and graduated in 1884. He subsequently returned to Florida where he took up ranching near Kissimmee. In 1900 Parker purchased a large tract of land at Enterprise, and remained there until 1912 when he moved to Lake Wales. He built and operated the first bank in Lake Wales, T.J. Parker and Co. Bankers, in 1914. In 1915 the bank was purchased by the newly chartered Lake Wales State Bank, and the offices were moved to the building located at 250 East Park Avenue. In

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page ____ Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

1921, Parker established the Citizens Bank at 251 East Park Avenue.

The most impressive building constructed during the initial period was the <u>Lake Wales State Bank Building</u>, located at 246 East Park Avenue (Photo 1). The bank was chartered and constructed in 1915, and its officers were among the community's most influential people. E.C. Stuart and G.V. Tillman, president and vice president of the Lake Wales Land Company, took those same positions in the administration of the bank. The directors were town founders C.L. Johnson and B.K. Bullard, and citrus growers A.C. Thullbery and Col. T.W. Wilson. Architect F.J. Kennard of Tampa was hired to draw the plans for the two-story building which was constructed by local contractor J.F. Townsend.

The Lake Wales State Bank opened for business on December 15, 1915. Banking offices were located on the first floor, while the second floor was used for office space. The State Bank provided Lake Wales with the sound economic backing it needed as a developing town. During the Great Depression, when many banks failed, the State Bank remained open. After the moratorium placed on banking during Franklin Roosevelt's first year in office, the Lake Wales State Bank was one of only ninety-two licensed Florida banks to resume business. The bank remained in operation at the Park Avenue building until 1953 when its offices were moved to the building at the northwest Corner of Stuart Avenue and Market Street. The old building was sold to the Gulf Life Insurance Company in 1955.

Construction during the initial period of development in Lake Wales was limited to the addition of two small brick commercial block buildings. Both of these buildings have undergone significant alteration, and are, therefore, not included in the district. Due to the lull in construction caused by the United States' entrance into World War I, significant development in the district did not resume until 1919.

When construction did resume it was impressive. The first project undertaken was the <u>Bullard Building</u> (Photo 2), constructed in 1919 by Bernice Kennedy Bullard. A native of Savannah, Georgia, Bullard was sent to Florida by his father,

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number ____8 Page __3 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

B.F. Bullard, to develop the turpentine industry there. From 1908 to 1911 he was secretary-treasurer of Flynn, Harris, Bullard Naval Stores Company in Jacksonville, Florida. In 1911, he was one of the four founders of Lake Wales, and acted as director of the newly established Lake Wales Land Company. From 1915 to 1919, Bullard served as the first president of the Lake Wales Board of Trade/Chamber of Commerce, and from 1917 to 1922 was chairman of the town council. From 1922 to 1932, he served in the Florida House of Representatives.

Although Bullard built several commercial buildings in downtown Lake Wales, his Bullard Building is the best known. Built at a cost of \$70,000, the building was hailed as "the architectural gem of Lake Wales." Before the Florida Land Boom, it was the commercial center of Lake Wales. During that period, the tenants were as follows, east to west: 'Doc' Anderson's Drug Store, Sanford Brothers Barber Shop, U.S. Post Office, Rinaldi's Dry Goods, Rinaldi's Grocery and Meat Market, and Eberti's Hardware. The upstairs area contained City Hall, and at one time a bowling alley for duck pins.

During the following three years, five more commercial block buildings were constructed within the district. They included the <u>Scenic Theater</u> at 254 East Stuart Avenue (Photo 3), the <u>T.J. Parker Building</u> which housed a men's store at 235 East Park Avenue (Photo 4), and a general store at 224 East Park Avenue. The most impressive addition, however, was the <u>Citizen Bank Building</u> at 251 Park Avenue which was completed in 1921 (Photo 5). Parker served as president of the bank until 1924.

Building in the downtown area reached its highest level of activity during the mid-1920s, as Lake Wales began to feel the effects of the statewide land boom. During these years the last of the buildings that make up the Lake Wales historic district were constructed. The most distinctive building erected during this period was the <u>Rhodesbilt Arcade</u> at 230 East Park Avenue (Photos 6-10). The Arcade was built in two stages by Jesse T. Rhodes, a Lake Wales contractor and real estate agent. The first part of the building was constructed in 1924 and faces Park Avenue (Photo 6). Rhodes hired H.D. Mendenhall, a Lakeland architect, to design the two-story structure, and J.J. Johnson of Bartow, who also constructed the

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number ___8 Page __4 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

Kingsbury Building in Babson Park, was engaged to execute the plans. The second stage of construction, finished in January 1926, fronts on Stuart Avenue (Photo 7). It was designed by a New York architect, John B. Thomas, and Rhodes acted as his own contractor. Rhodes had begun work in Lake Wales in 1913 as a contractor. He built a number of the community's early residences and earned the nickname "Good" for the quality of his buildings. Other commercial structures he built included the two-story Rhodes Building (1920) on Park Avenue and the old Post Office building (1927).

Another large building added during this period was the Caldwell-Temple Building at 202 East Stuart Avenue (Photo 11). It was constructed by the Caldwell-Temple Improvement Company. Partners in the company included H.F. Caldwell, a native of Chattanooga, who had moved to Tampa, and Morris and Walter Temple of Highland Park, Florida. The contract for the building was let to the local construction firm of Kirch and Pendleton. When it was completed, it was the largest building in Lake Wales. A second two-story building was constructed by the improvement company the following year. Soon after it was finished, Jay Burns, a local developer, purchased the threestory building from the Caldwell-Temple Improvement Company. The upper story served for a time as the rooms for the local Masonic Lodge. The first occupant of the first floor storeroom was the Draper Furniture Company which located there in 1923. Henry Draper purchased the building in 1943, and the store he founded is still operated out of it today.

Jay Burns was also responsible for the conversion of the old Scenic Highlands Garage into the <u>Burns Arcade</u> (Photo 12). Burns purchased the garage in 1925 at the height of the Florida Land Boom. Burns planned to incorporate the existing building in a Mediterranean Revival style arcade. He hired architect John B. Thomas to draw the plans for the addition to the building. Thomas, a native of New York who had recently relocated in Lake Wales, was also responsible for the plans for the Scenic Highlands Hospital. His design called for the addition of a second story and an arcaded facade for the building. The remodeled structure had space for seventeen storerooms on the ground floor and twenty-one offices in the upper story.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

The collapse of the Florida Land Boom brought development in the Lake Wales commercial district to a halt. Building did not resume again until the mid-1930s, and then only sporadically. During the years since World War II, alterations to existing buildings and modern infill construction have served to make it necessary to exclude a number of buildings that might otherwise have been eligible for inclusion in the district. Fortunately, a significant number of resources retain a large degree of their integrity and serve as valuable evidence of the development of the commercial area during the city's nascent periods of development.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

The two-part storefronts of Lake Wales are consistent with the design and materials of historic storefront architecture throughout the United States. They are characterized by such features as flat parapet roofs, belt courses, decorative brick work, and date and name panels. The most striking two-part commercial building in Lake Wales is the <u>Rhodesbilt Arcade</u> (Photo 6-10), located at 230 East Park Avenue. Built in two stages between 1924 and 1926, the Rhodesbilt is not an arcaded block in the traditional sense because it has only one central arch, rather than a series of arches. Its other notable architectural features include a flat roof with a curvilinear parapet, full-height brick pilasters with corbelled caps, shedroof overhang supported by paired brackets at the second story level, brick exterior wall fabric, and 9/1 double hung sash windows in the second story. The main arched entrance on the first floor is flanked by fixed plate glass display windows.

Another example of a two-part commercial building in Lake Wales is the <u>B.K. Bullard Building</u> (Photo 2), located at 239-257 East Stuart Avenue. Built in 1919, it is a masonry vernacular structure with a flat, built-up roof and brick exterior wall fabric. The upper facade features symmetrical fenestration and a horizontal panel decorated with swags, the name of its original owner, Bullard, and the building's construction date. The first story contains a series of shops and exhibits large plate glass display windows and a recessed entrance. Other two-part commercial buildings in the downtown area are the <u>Lake Wales State Bank Building</u> (Photo 1), located

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

at 246 East Park Avenue, and the <u>Citizens Bank Building</u> (Photo 5) at 251 East Park Avenue.

The most ornate example of a one-part, masonry vernacular design is the <u>T.J. Parker Building</u> (Photo 4), located at 235 East Park Avenue. Notable architectural features include a flat roof with a curvilinear parapet and a decorative pent roof supported by brackets. The storefront features large fixed plate glass display windows and a recessed entrance.

The only example of an arcaded block is the <u>Burns Arcade</u> (Photo 12), located at 260 East Stuart Avenue. The Burns Arcade, originally built as a two-story brick building and remodeled to an arcaded block in 1925, features a curvilinear parapet roof with barrel tile surfacing and a six-bay arcade running the length of each side of the building.

The building which most strongly displays the influence of the Mediterranean Revival style popular in the 1920s is the <u>Scenic Theater</u> (Photo 3), at 254 East Stuart Street. The two story building has three bays. The central bay has a Baroque parapet and fixed, rectangular windows. The flanking bays have pent eaves with decorative brackets and clay tile coverings, and fixed windows with fanlights.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number <u>9</u> Page 1 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Books

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- Blumenson, John. Identifying American Architecture, A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945. Nashville, 1977.
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Polk, R.L. and Co. Florida Gazetteer. Jacksonville, 1925.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number ____9 Page ___2 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

Sanborn Map Company, Fire Insurance Map of Lake Wales, Polk County, Florida, New York, 1920, 1924, 1928.

"The Florida Guide and Program," Statistical Magazine of Florida. 1926.

<u>Newspapers</u>

Daily Highlander (Lake Wales)

Lake Wales Highlander

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page ____ Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary encompasses the most significant concentration of historic commercial properties in Lake Wales. Buildings in the areas immediately surrounding the district post-date the periods of significance or have been so radically altered as to preclude their consideration for nomination. Other commercial buildings eligible for nomination are far removed from the boundaries, and t heir inclusion would introduce an inordinate amount of noncontributing buildings to the district.

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United Statea Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section num		tographs 1 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District
	1	1) Taba Walay Ghaha Davis 046 E. Davis Juna - Taba Walay
	1	 Lake Wales State Bank, 246 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		2) Lake Wales, Polk Co., Florida
		3) Stephen Olausen
		4) 1989 5) Historic Property Associates, St. Augustine, FL
		6) N facade & E elevation, camera facing SW
		7) 1 of 20
	Items	2-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.
	2	1) B.K. Bullard Building, 239-257 E. Stuart Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		6) S facade, camera facing NW
		7) 2 of 20
	3	1) Scenic Theater, 254 E. Stuart Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		6) N facade, camera facing S
		7) 3 of 20
	4	1) T.J. Parker Building, 235 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		6) S facade, camera facing N
		7) 4 of 20
	5	1) Citizens Bank of Lake Wales, 251 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		6) S facade, camera facing N
		7) 5 of 20
	6	1) Rhodesbilt Arcade, 230 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales
		Historic District 6) Park Avenue (N) facade, camera facing S
		7) 6 of 20
	7	1) Phodoshilt Arcade 230 F Dark Ave Take Wales
	7	 Rhodesbilt Arcade, 230 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		6) Stuart Avenue (S) facade, camera facing NE
		7) 7 of 20

4

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Photographs	2	Lake Wales Commercial Historic District
Section number	Page	

8	1)	Rhodesbilt Arcade, 230 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		Interior of S end of central arcade, camera facing S 8 of 20
9	1)	Rhodesbilt Arcade, 230 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		Interior of N end of central arcade, camera facing N 9 of 20
10	1)	Rhodesbilt Arcade, 230 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
	6)	Interior of 2nd story offices in N end of central arcade, camera facing N
	7)	10 of 20
11	1)	Caldwell-Temple/Draper's Building, 202 E. Stuart Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		N facade & W elevation, camera facing SE 11 of 20
12	1)	Burns Arcade, 260 E. Stuart Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		N & E elevations, camera facing SW 12 of 20
13	1)	Streetscape, N side of E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		Camera facing NE 13 of 20
14	1)	Streetscape of S side of E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
		Camera facing SW 14 of 20
15	1)	Streetscape of S side of E. Stuart Ave., Lake Wales Historic District
	٤)	Comerce facing CW

6) Camera facing SW7) 15 of 20

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Photographs 3 Lake Wales Commercial Historic District

Section number _____ Page _____

16	 Streetscape of S side of E. Stuart Ave., Lake Wales Historic District Camera facing SE 16 of 20
17	 Streetscape of N side of E. Stuart Ave., Lake Wales Historic District Camera facing NE 17 of 20
18	 Noncontributing, 244 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District N facade, camera facing S 18 of 20
19	 Noncontributing, 225 E. Stuart Ave., Lake Wales Historic District S facade, camera facing N 19 of 20
20	 Noncontributing, 252 E. Park Ave., Lake Wales Historic District N facade, camera facing S

7) 20 of 20