

**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 any 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 Florence Downtown Historic District
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Portions of West Evans, North Dargan Street, and South Dargan Streets not for publication
city or town Florence vicinity _____
state South Carolina code SC county Florence code 041 zip code 29501

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

Rodger E. Stroup, State Historic Preservation Officer, S.C. Dept. of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C.
State or 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 commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: _____ Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

- 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): _____

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)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>24</u>	<u>6</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>24</u>	<u>6</u>	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 0**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Commerce/Trade Subcategory: Business
Commerce/Trade Financial Institution
Commerce/Trade Specialty Store
Commerce/Trade Department Store
Commerce/Trade

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category: Commerce/Trade Subcategory: Specialty Store
Commerce/Trade Department Store
Commerce/Trade Restaurant
Vacant

7. Description**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Brick
roof Asphalt
other

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.)

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a 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

ca. 1890 - ca. 1940

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

(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:
S.C Department of Archives & History

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.9 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
1 <u>17 613722 3784678</u>	3 <u>17 613690 3784537</u>
2 <u>17 613744 3784560</u>	4 <u>17 613699 3784355</u>

X 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 Kendra Cobbs, Downtown Development Coordinator
 organization City of Florence Urban Planning and Development date May 20, 2008
 street & number 180 North Irby St. AA telephone (843) 665-2047 city or
 town Florence state SC zip code 29501

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple Property Owners (See Continuation Sheets)
 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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

The Florence Downtown Historic District is a collection of thirty (30) commercial buildings in the central business district of Florence, the county seat of Florence, South Carolina. The majority of the district encompasses the 100 block of North Dargan Street, the west side of the 100 block of South Dargan Street, and a portion of the 100 block of West Evans Street. Because lots have been replatted and addresses have changed multiple times since the lots were laid out, it is difficult to determine the history of some of the buildings. Nevertheless, this area contains the majority of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century architecture remaining in the city.

Twenty-four (24) buildings contribute to the historic and architectural character of the district and six (6) buildings do not contribute to the district. Most buildings are two-story brick buildings with embellished cornices. Many are characterized by flat rooflines, decorative brick moldings, and vertical pilasters. While all the properties have been modified to include modern storefronts, the upper facades are largely intact and retain their integrity. These contributing resources are from a time during which Florence enjoyed tremendous growth and prosperity and reflect the development of the city from ca. 1890 to ca. 1940.

Some of the most impressive buildings are those at 155 North Dargan Street, 135 North Dargan Street, 119 North Dargan Street, and 135 South Dargan Street.

155 North Dargan Street was built in 1913 after Joseph Nofal achieved much success with his first department store that was located on East Evans Street. Nofal operated a department store at this location that contained items such as dry goods, clothing, shoes, and hats. According to a 1915 directory, the building was 40x100 feet and stood out, “boldly outshining the common level of the average house on Dargan Street”¹

135 North Dargan Street was built ca. 1914. It is currently in good condition and the façade appears to be fully intact. In 1914 The Sample Shoe Store occupied this space. The business apparently grew quickly as it was described as an establishment “of high merit” and contained one of the greatest shoe collections in the city.²

119 North Dargan Street started as the Commercial and Savings Bank in 1900. Officers of the bank included some of the most notable businessmen of the time. It was described as “one of the soundest institutions in the city” and was “recognized as the largest and strongest State Bank in Eastern Carolina.”³ The building is currently vacant and in fair condition.

135 South Dargan Street was originally used as a furniture store but also contained space for a funeral home. According to record, W.M. Waters built the structure in 1914 and started running his affairs out of it in December 1914. It was said to have been constructed as a four-story building, measuring 75x125 feet.⁴ Kimbrell’s of Florence, a furniture store, now occupies the site.

¹ *Pen and Picture Sketches: City of Florence, South Carolina* (Richmond: Central Publishing Co., Inc., Season 1915-1916), p. 12.

² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

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Florence Downtown Historic District
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Contributing Properties

The following buildings contribute to the character of the historic district, listed as numbered on the Florence Downtown Historic District map:

1) 163 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

A one-story brick commercial building with a flat roofline. The cornice is ornamented with a modest brick corbel. Modern display windows and entry door make up the lower front façade. The building appears to be in good condition.

2) 155 North Dargan Street, 1913

A two-story brick building with a flat roofline and a cornice decorated with corbelled brick in a dentil pattern. A sign protrudes from the roofline that reads "Jos. Nofal & Bro. 1913." Below the roofline are brick pilasters that extend downward from the cornice and brick moldings with granite keystones that surround three rounded second-floor windows. The windows are currently boarded up. Modern display windows and entry doors complete the ground floor façade. Joseph Nofal was such a successful business man that he operated two large department stores, one at 49 East Evans St. and this one at 155 North Dargan Street. This location was opened in 1913. At the time it was said to stand out, "boldly outshining the common level of the average house on Dargan Street."⁵ Currently the building is occupied by two commercial tenants.

5) 137 North Dargan Street, 1905

A one-story brick building with a castellated roofline and a cornice decorated with a corbelled brick course. The original ironwork beneath the metal awning remains in a cast iron pole above the display windows.

6) 135 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

A two-story brick building with a flat roofline and columns that rise up across the front façade. Extensive brick corbelling embellishes the cornice; this distinct architectural feature repeats midway between the cornice and the tops of the second floor windows. Four upper story windows are partially boarded up. The ground floor has glass modern display windows, entry doors, and a roof that overhangs the sidewalk. The building is currently occupied by a small clothing store, New York High Fashion.

7) 127 West Evans Street, ca. 1903

This three-story brick building has a flat roofline with some of its original ironwork. The cornice is outlined with bricks laid in a decorative pattern. Third floor windows are arched and decorated with brick moldings. Second-floor windows are rectangular and defined by brick courses above. The ground

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

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floor features modern display windows and an entry door. This building is adjacent to the site where the city hall built in 1900 once stood. The 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows that this building was used as a grocery and dry goods store. It is currently occupied and used as a beauty supply shop.

8) 121 West Evans Street, ca. 1925

This is a two-story brick building with a flat roofline and wooden cornice. A pair of decorative wooden pilasters extend from the cornice. A rounded second-floor window is centered on the front façade and is surrounded by brick molding ornamented with three granite blocks at the top and on both sides of the molding.

9) 117 West Evans Street, ca. 1916

This is a three-story commercial building that has a stepped roofline and restrained cornice with the name "Kress" displayed in glazed white and colored terra cotta. Each of the upper floors has a range of windows. All except one of the third floor windows is boarded and one of the windows on the second floor is boarded. While the upper floors are unused, the ground floor is currently occupied by a Maxway Store. The ground floor of the building also extends south to include an additional entrance on North Dargan Street. Both wings appear to have been completed in the 1930s as they have similar facades. It is believed that during this time the store was renovated to receive its L shape that still exists today.

10) 119 North Dargan Street, 1900

This is a two-story masonry building with a Greek revival granite façade. Ionic columns frame the modern entry door and single window above. The center of the pediment bears the date "1910," the year the building was remodeled. The March 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map shows the Commercial & Savings Bank occupying this site at that time. John Kuker, one of Florence's earliest settlers and a prominent businessman started the bank with other prominent businessmen and served as its president.⁶ In 1910, the Commercial and Savings Bank hired local architect William J. Wilkins to remodel the facility and this building is the end result.

11) 101 West Evans Street, ca. 1920

A two-story brick building with a stepped roofline and modestly ornamented cornice. The building has been modified some since it was originally built: the original round-topped windows that had decorative brick moldings have been replaced with modern windows and some earlier ornamentation has been removed. However, restoring the building to its original glory would largely be a cosmetic fix considering the overall building footprint and placement of the windows have not been compromised. Zeigler's Drug Store occupied the space from the 1920s on.

⁶ G. Wayne King, *Rise Up So Early: A History of Florence County, South Carolina* (Spartanburg, S.C.: The Reprint Company, 1981), p. 284.

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12) 122 West Evans Street, ca. 1900

This is a two-story brick building constructed of buff bricks. There are two large rounded windows on the second floor outlined with decorative brick moldings. Egg and dart molding runs along the cornice line as well as across the façade under the windows. It appears that the original metal shutters remain on the second-floor windows when viewed from the west side of the building. The 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map lists the Bank of Florence as occupying this site at the time and city directories show the bank in operation at this location in 1911.

13) 104-120 West Evans Street, ca. 1915

The configuration of this two-story brick building has entrances off Evans and Dargan Streets which meet at a diagonal wall at the corner of the two streets. The cornice is decorated with modest bands of brick just below the roofline and the second floor windows. Various types of businesses have occupied the site over the years, including doctor and dentist offices and a department store. Currently, the ground floor is subdivided into six separate commercial spaces.

14) 113 South Dargan Street, ca. 1920

A two-story white brick building with a flat roofline ornamented with a cornice of what may be glazed white terra cotta. The upper corners of the building are decorated with glazed terra cotta medallions. A long terra cotta plaque of what would normally contain information about the building is outlined between the medallions; however, the plaque is blank. The second-story windows have been boarded and the ground floor lacks windows although there is an entry door. City directories list Hines Candy Factory operating there in the first decade of the twentieth century. The 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map also shows a candy factory at this location. The building is currently vacant.

16) 123 South Dargan Street, ca. 1920

This is a two-story building with a painted stucco façade. It has a flat roofline and is of brick construction. The two second-story windows are filled with glass brick.

17) 129 South Dargan Street, ca. 1925

This is a two-story brick building with a flat roofline decorated with a band of granite. The façade is flanked with two tall pilasters near the edges of the building. Prior to the theatre the site was a barn. In the late 1920s, the O'Dowd Theatre was built here, which later became the Carolina Theatre. The building is currently unoccupied.

18) 135 South Dargan Street, 1914

This is a three-story brick building with a flat roofline and an extremely decorated brick, tile, and granite cornice. A total of twelve windows make up the upper floors. All the windows except one have been boarded up, filled with glass brick. Local architect Walter D. Harper designed the building for W.M. Waters so Waters could house his furniture business and work as a funeral director and embalmer. Currently the building is occupied by Kimbrell's Furniture Store.

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19) 116 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

Two-story brick building with corbelled cornice. The pair of six rounded windows on the second floor is decorated with brick moldings and granite sills. Brick pilasters run down the corners of the building and between the sets of windows from the roofline. The ground floor has been divided into two commercial spaces, therefore there are two addresses for each space, 116 and 118 North Dargan Street.

20) 118 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

Two-story brick building with corbelled cornice. The pair of six rounded windows on the second floor is decorated with brick moldings and granite sills. Brick pilasters run down the corners of the building and between the sets of windows from the roofline. The ground floor has been divided into two commercial spaces, therefore there are two addresses for each space, 116 and 118 North Dargan Street.

21) 124 North Dargan Street, ca. 1890 - 1913

One-story building with brick upper façade and flat roofline. There is a slightly corbelled cornice. The lower portion of the façade is primarily glass including display windows and an entry door. In 1915, this location is listed as a pawn shop owned by Louis Finkelstein.⁷ The 1918 Sanborn Map shows ownership at some time changed hands and became a bowling alley.

22) 126 North Dargan Street, ca. 1935

One-story stuccoed brick building. The façade has been is ornamented with black Carrara glass. There are modern display windows and entry door. The building is currently used and appears to be in good condition.

23) 130 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

Two-story brick building. It has a flat roofline and a corbelled cornice. The cornice has also been decorated with a deep band of bricks. Rectangular windows are accented with brick moldings and a brick pattern connects them in a line across the top. Each window features a granite sill that is an inset pattern of six vertical bricks. The ground floor has modern display windows and entry door.

25) 142 North Dargan Street, 1939

Three-story brick building with a stepped roofline. The cornice contains two granite or concrete panels; one bears the date "1939" the other showcases the name "I.S. Rainwater." Two upper floors have sets of casement windows. The third-floor set still exists, but only one survives on the second floor. The other windows that had casement fittings have been filled with glass brick. There are also floral medallions in the space between the second and third floors.

⁷ *Pen and Picture Sketches*, p. 3.

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27) 158 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

One-story brick building with flat roofline; the end sections of the roof are slightly curved. The cornice is decorated with brick patterns, some vertical others horizontal with brick filling. The building has been painted blue and dons a metal awning that partially blocks the ground-floor windows.

29) 164 and 166 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

One-story brick building. The roofline is flat, but the end sections are slightly curved. Brick patterns ornament the cornice and a brick course of decorative corbelling also complements the facade halfway between the cornice and the top of display windows. Black Carrara glass has been installed on the ground floor exterior. The building has been recorded on one tax parcel, but divided into two spaces with two addresses, 164 and 166 North Dargan Street.

30) 170 North Dargan Street, ca. 1900

One-story brick building with flat roofline embellished along staggered edges with brick. Upper half of building has been painted white while the bottom half has been stuccoed around the display windows and entry door. The façade features a brick pattern above the stucco and the sign naming the business.

Noncontributing Properties

The following properties do not contribute to the historic character of the district:

3) 151 North Dargan Street, ca. 1915

Part of a two-story brick building with a flat roof. The entire front façade has been stuccoed. There are thirteen windows on the second floor, nine of which have been filled with glass brick. A metal awning also characterizes the façade. Two commercial tenants occupy the building and have been given two separate addresses, 141 and 151 North Dargan Street.

4) 141 North Dargan Street, ca. 1915

Part of a two-story brick building with a flat roof. The entire façade has been stuccoed. There are thirteen windows on the second floor, nine of which have been filled with glass brick. A metal awning also characterizes the façade.

15) 117-119 South Dargan Street, ca. 1905

Two-story brick building with flat roofline. Second story windows have been filled with brick. Commercial spaces on ground floor include insets of rectangular glass brick above entry doors. There are remnants of Carrara glass on the ground floor. The building sits on one tax parcel but has been divided into two spaces with two addresses, 117 and 119 South Dargan Street.

24) Vacant Lot

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26) 150 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

Two-story, brick building with flat roofline. The façade has been stuccoed. There is a modern entry door and a row of display windows on the ground floor. The second floor features six rectangular windows that have been filled with glass brick.

28) 160 North Dargan Street, ca. 1920

One story commercial building with brick façade and brick course that surrounds the display windows. A metal awning also accents the front as it partially covers the display windows. Building appears to be modern in-fill development.

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The Florence Downtown Historic District is significant under National Register Criterion A for its association with Florence's commercial development since the city's founding, as well as Criterion C for its examples of commercial architecture dating from the period ca. 1890-ca. 1940. The district reflects the city's growth as the nucleus of a successful regional railroad network and as a thriving commercial center for the entire Pee Dee region.

Florence, named for the daughter of William Henning Harlee, the first president of the Wilmington and Manchester Railroad, began as a railroad terminal when a station was established just east of Church Street in the early 1850s. The station was used as a transfer point to stages bound for places like Darlington, Society Hill, and Cheraw. Subsequently, in 1854, the North Eastern Rail Road purchased 577.6 acres of land near the junction of the tracks. A surveyor, S.J. Solomons was then hired to lay out streets and lots of what now constitute the core of Downtown Florence. Seven streets shown on the plat dated 1858 and 1860 are as follows: Evans, Dargan, and Cheves named for judges; Coit, Irby and McQueen named for notable citizens chiefly from the upper Pee Dee; and, Front Street, which was changed to N.B. Baroody, for its location.⁸

Florence experienced continued growth after the Civil War, in large part because of its status as a major regional railroad junction. The railroad shops there attracted mechanics and craftsmen looking for skilled labor.⁹ Many of those who came from all over the country to work decided to stay permanently. An increasing population can also be attributed to refugees who fled to Florence from Charleston during the war and stayed after Reconstruction.

Within nine years of Florence becoming an incorporated town, the population more than doubled reaching approximately 1,900 by 1880. While the railroad remained the most important economic factor in town, the 1880s represented a shift in mercantile history as the center of trade began to move toward the intersection of Dargan and Evans Streets.¹⁰

With 600 square miles subdivided out of Darlington, Williamsburg, Marion, and Clarendon counties, Florence County was formed in 1888. In 1890 the town of Florence became an incorporated city. During the decade of the 1890s the city suffered four devastating fires. For this reason, many of the buildings on Evans and Dargan Streets were built after the last major fire in 1899.

The 1890s also saw the emergence of a prominent business community. The *Florence Weekly Times* printed a notice in May 1895 of a meeting at city hall "to perfect the Florence Board of Trade," a precursor of the Chamber of Commerce. Every man seventeen years of age or older was expected to attend the meeting as the constitution and bylaws were adopted and future progress of the city was discussed. The group took the reigns for promoting and marketing Florence to the outside world.¹¹

⁸ King, pp. 37-44; Eugene N. Zeigler, *Florence: A Renaissance Spirit* (Montgomery: Community Communications, 1996).

⁹ *Pen and Picture Sketches*, p. 1.

¹⁰ Hunter Interests, Inc., *City of Florence Downtown Revitalization Strategy: Phase I Report* (Baltimore: Hunter Interests, Inc., 2004).

¹¹ King, pp. 166-67.

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Evans Street became the main commercial thoroughfare in Florence by the 1890s. Peter C. Coggeshall constructed a commercial building at the northwest corner of Evans and Dargan Streets in 1866. In 1878, the same corner was purchased by Dr. J.W. King and Dr. F.U. Lake in order to establish a two-story building with a drug store on the ground floor and a meeting space above. The drugstore remained at this location for over fifty years and the corner affectionately earned the name “Lake’s Corner.” In addition to commerce, the tobacco market also flourished during this decade. Market averages were good mainly because the growing season for tobacco was longer than in competing markets like North Carolina or Virginia, and normally the quality was superior.¹²

West Evans Street increased in importance when the new Florence City Hall was constructed at 214 West Evans Street in 1900. Three of the City’s five banks were built in this block during that time. By 1929 four national chains were represented in the 100 block of West Evans: S. H. Kress and Company, the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company (A&P), Piggly Wiggly, and F.W. Woolworth and Company.¹³

The first quarter of the twentieth century proved to be a dynamic time for the city. It was during this period, referred to as the Progressive Era, that the population grew from 3,395 people in 1900 to 7,657 in 1910 to 10,968 in 1920. The steady rise in population can mostly be attributed to the popularity of the railroad. Mergers of small lines started in the late 1890s, culminated in the early 1900s. From December 1, 1907 to May 1, 1908, Florence was the headquarters of one of four administrative divisions of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad (ACL). Even after this division closed, Florence continued to be the headquarters of the Columbia District of the ACL.¹⁴

The business community also continued to thrive as the term “Boosterism” was coined as an expression of commercial expansionism or in other words the same ideas that were good for business were also good for community. A person who was called a “Booster” could also be described as a “go-getter.” Following the 1899 fire, the first block of West Evans Street “attained a position of the highest importance in the business life of the growing city.” It was in this block that the new city hall, three of the five banks in the city, and most of the principle stores stood. Two of the most important buildings in the City were constructed during the Progressive Era: in 1902 the City orchestrated the purchase and sale of the northwest corner of Irby and Evans Street to build the post office and Federal Court; and, due to the leadership real estate entrepreneur, Marion D. Lucas, Sr., a seven-story office building was completed in 1919 opposite the post office. One of the country’s first skyscrapers, the structure was expanded and named the Florence Trust Building in 1927.¹⁵

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 170, 182-83.

¹³ Hunter Interests, p. 94.

¹⁴ King, pp. 256, 271, 272.

¹⁵ King, pp. 278-280.

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By 1915, Florence's good fortune had continued to increase. For instance, Florence had a total bank capital of \$625,000, total bank resources of \$2,000,000, property valued at \$14,658,240, and annual railroad passenger traffic of more than 500,000.¹⁶ Dubbed the "Gate City" of the Carolinas, Florence was characterized as commercially, politically, and geographically rich as any city in the country. A few of the city amenities included annual railroad passenger traffic in excess of 500,000; seven strong banks; one of the largest ice factories in the state; and all the major agricultural staples like cotton, corn, oats, wheat, and potatoes.¹⁷

The decade following World War I proved to be steady for area growth. The increasing number of paved roads throughout the county and building the first bridge that connected Marion and Florence counties, had a huge economic impact on Florence merchants. Weeks after the bridge was built, merchants boasted of increased sales and traffic in their stores. Another effect of road construction in the area was the declining importance of the railroad. Despite the noticeable decline, the railroad still managed to remain at the center of people's lives in Florence.¹⁸

Agriculture continued to be the most dominant enterprise in the county. By 1924 there were 17,000 acres of tobacco, which was more than any other county in South Carolina. That crop yielded \$1,567,000 or more than one-fourth of the county's agricultural income.¹⁹

Boosterism remained an important theme throughout the 1920s. In 1923, the Rotary Club sponsored a series of talks entitled "Why Florence is the Best Town in the State to Live In." The following year, the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Florence began a campaign in support of building a new hotel that in turn would symbolize thriving and progressive city life. A pamphlet published by the Chamber in the late 1920s emphasized Florence's advantages; namely the fact that it was the junction point of three main coastal highways, and the ACL and SAL railroads provided over fifty passenger trains and over fifty-five freight trains daily.²⁰

Despite the Great Depression that devastated most of the country, the City of Florence appeared to prosper in the 1930s. The 1930 population increased from 14,774 to 18,581 in 1938. The citizenry is described as being exceptional, bubbling with civic pride. Half of the 3,800 families owned their own homes and in a 1938 pamphlet published by the Board of Trade, the Magic City, as it was so affectionately called, was described as the fastest growing city in the state. The pamphlet painted a picture of Utopia as it claimed that Florence residents enjoyed great weather, a fair tax rate, acceptable gas and electricity costs, three beautiful hotels, two modern theaters, and a "populous with a higher per capita income than any other section in the state."²¹

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

¹⁷ *Pen and Picture Sketches*, p. 2.

¹⁸ King, pp. 305-07.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 311-12.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 322-24.

²¹ King, p. 341.

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Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

Boosterism was a prevailing theme as professional leaders kept the City on a steady course. An editor of the leading county newspaper reported in July 1932 that even though the nation's unemployment rate reached nearly twenty-five percent, he found new hope in Florence. Incredibly optimistic, he wrote that Florence had "weathered the storm of depression better than most towns in South Carolina." Although everyone didn't share this editor's optimism, a tobacco market did open that same year, which suggests that agriculture in the area remained strong. This sentiment is further supported by a publication in 1936 that described Florence as the gateway to the Pee Dee region, overflowing with tobacco, cotton, vegetables, fruit, peanuts, pecans, and anything that would grow in America. The publication went on to say that Florence had the largest furniture factory in the state with daily sales of 150 complete bedroom suites, the second largest complex of machine shops in the ACL railroad system, and the largest bakery in North and South Carolina.²²

The downtown area was not exempt from growth either. By 1940, it had blossomed into a business district comprised of more than eight blocks of exclusive dress shops, sizeable department stores, and a host of other various businesses. The post office volume increased so dramatically that the federal government built a \$165,000 addition to the structure. Likewise, Dr. F. H. McLeod transformed his initial small two-room office into a block of hospital buildings.²³

²² King, p. 340.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

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Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

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Section number 10 Page 17

Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the district is shown as the black line on the accompanying Florence Downtown Historic District Map, drawn at a scale of 1" = 100'.

Boundary Justification

The nominated district includes 24 contributing properties and 6 noncontributing properties along North and South Dargan Streets and West Evans Street. These are commercial buildings within the Central Business District and include the majority of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century architecture remaining in the city.

UTM References (Continued)

Zone / Easting / Northing

5:	17	613612	3784355
6:	17	613601	3784600
7:	17	613677	3784613
8:	17	613677	3784673

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Section number Owners Page 18

Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

1) **163 North Dargan Street**

Ruth B. Greenberg, City Homes, Inc.
PO BOX 6604
Florence, SC 29502

2) **155 North Dargan Street**

Don & Jo Pattillo
627 Ansley Street
Florence, SC 29505

3) **151 North Dargan Street**

Chinho M. Choe
528 Oakbrook Dr.
Columbia, SC 29223

4) **141 North Dargan Street**

Louis B. Small, Jr.
141 N Dargan Street
Florence, SC 29506

5) **137 North Dargan Street**

Earl Conklin, Jr. Estate
3126 Willow Creek Road
Florence, SC 29505

6) **135 North Dargan Street**

Stuart A. Greenberg
1343 Lazar PL
Florence, SC 29501

7) **127 West Evans Street**

Phillip A Nofal, Jr. ETAL
P.O. Box 628
Florence, SC 29503

8) **121 West Evans Street**

Park Sang In
1659 Westview Dr.
Florence, SC 29501

9) **117 West Evans Street**

117 West Evans Street, LLC
C/O Inman Park Properties
P.O. Box 11987
Atlanta, GA 30355

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Section number Owners Page 19

Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

10) **119 North Dargan Street**

Barbara A. Gibbs
4257 Monterey Dr.
Florence, SC 29501

11) **101-107 West Evans Street**

Citizens & Southern Trust Co.
P.O. Box 4446
Atlanta, GA 30302
Attn: Georgia N. Jones

12) **122-126 West Evans Street**

Cho Un Haeng & Yun H
P. O. Box 13564
Florence, SC 29504

13) **104-120 West Evans Street**

Corner Properties, Inc.
P.O. Box 3439
Florence, SC 29502

14) **113 South Dargan Street**

James C. McLeod, Jr. ETAL
1108 Cherokee Road
Florence, SC 29501

15) **117-119 South Dargan Street**

City of Florence
180 North Irby Street AA
Florence, SC 29501

16) **123 South Dargan Street**

Raymond F. Humphries
136 Oak Street
Darlington, SC 29532

17) **129 South Dargan Street**

City of Florence
180 North Irby Street AA
Florence, SC 29501

18) **135 South Dargan Street**

Kimbrells Investment Co.
P.O. Box 11117
Charlotte, NC 28220

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Section number Owners Page 20

Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

19) 116 North Dargan Street

Lonnie McCants
4047 Bannockburn Road
Florence, SC 29505

20) 118 North Dargan Street

Lonnie McCants
4047 Bannockburn Road
Florence, SC 29505

21) 124 North Dargan Street

E R Dewitt
535 Oleander Drive
Florence, SC 29501

22) 126 North Dargan Street

Lonnie McCants, Jr.
112 N Dargan St.
Florence, SC 29506

23) 128 North Dargan Street

Kenneth Alvin Davis
2107 Kincaid Street
Florence, SC 29505

24) 138 North Dargan Street

Dorothy J. Lyerly
2348 Claussen Road
Florence, SC 29505

25) 142 North Dargan Street

Donald K Pattillo
627 Ansley Street
Florence, SC 29505

26) 150 North Dargan Street

Kenneth Alvin Davis
2107 Kincaid Street
Florence, SC 29505

27) 158 North Dargan Street

Barbara S. Wise
2104 Wise Ln
Pamplico, SC 29583

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Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

28) **160 North Dargan Street**

Macie S. Childers
809 Eleanor Dr
Florence, SC 29505

29) **164-166 North Dargan Street**

Dorothy J. Lyerly
2348 Claussen Road
Florence, SC 29505

Marie H. Matney
1958 Horlbeck Street
Florence, SC 29505

30) **170 North Dargan Street**

Dorothy J. Lyerly
2348 Claussen Road
Florence, SC 29505

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Section number Photographs Page 22

Florence Downtown Historic District
Name of Property
Florence County, South Carolina
County and State

The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property:	Florence Downtown Historic District
Location of Property:	Florence, Florence County, South Carolina
Name of Photographer:	Kendra Cobbs
Date of Photographs:	November 2007
Location of Original Negatives:	South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, SC

1. 163 North Dargan Street
2. 155 North Dargan Street
3. 137 North Dargan Street
4. 135 North Dargan Street
5. 127 West Evans Street
6. 121 West Evans Street
7. 117 West Evans Street
8. 119 North Dargan Street
9. 101 West Evans Street
10. 122-126 West Evans Street
11. 104-120 West Evans Street
12. 104-120 West Evans Street
13. 104-120 West Evans Street
14. 113 South Dargan Street
15. 117-119 South Dargan Street
16. 123 South Dargan Street
17. 129 South Dargan Street
18. 135 South Dargan Street
19. 118 North Dargan Street
20. 124 North Dargan Street
21. 126 North Dargan Street
22. 130 North Dargan Street
23. 142 North Dargan Street
24. 142 North Dargan Street
25. 158 North Dargan Street
26. 164 & 166 North Dargan Street
27. 170 North Dargan Street
28. 160 North Dargan Street (Noncontributing)