
FINAL REPORT

Charlotte Comprehensive Architectural Survey, Phase I Charlotte, North Carolina

Prepared for:

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I. Phase I Reconnaissance Survey Methodology

In 2012, the City of Charlotte was awarded a federal grant from the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) to conduct a Phase I (reconnaissance level) architectural survey of Charlotte. The Phase I survey is anticipated to be the first of five (two reconnaissance-level and three intensive-level) investigations of architectural resources within the central city. This project is designed to support future planning efforts as well as local historic landmark and district designations, conservation district designations, and National Register nominations. This initial Phase I survey was limited to the area within the general radius of Route 4, an eighteen-mile, partial ring road around the Charlotte's central business district and surrounding, adjacent neighborhoods. The City of Charlotte contracted with Mattson, Alexander, and Associates, Inc. (MAA), an historic preservation consulting firm based in Charlotte, to conduct the Phase I survey. Frances P. Alexander and Richard L. Mattson were the principal investigators, and Mr. John Howard, Director of the Charlotte Historic District Commission, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department, was the local project coordinator.

The tasks completed under the Phase I scope of work are summarized below:

1) The principal investigators determined the status of existing National Register and/or locally designated resources in the survey database.

- a. For the nine National Register, Study List, and local historic districts, maps provided by the City were coded to indicate resources that have been destroyed or substantially altered since designation. In addition, a brief (one- to two-sentence) statement of the character, significance, and current integrity of the district was added to the summary field of each district record in the State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) survey database. Based on the reconnaissance-level field work, the boundaries and period of significance of each district were evaluated. Any proposed revisions to the National Register boundaries and the periods of significance are discussed in this report. (Note: The Wilmore Historic District, locally designated in 2010, was excluded from this project as data on this district is recent and thorough.)
- b. For the individual National Register and local historic properties (forty-seven National Register resources and 136 local landmarks), a minimum of two photos (more where appropriate) were taken, and existing records in the HPO survey database were completed and updated. For National Register properties, written summaries were updated with brief (one- to two-sentence) statements of character, significance, and current level of integrity that addressed significant alterations (negative or positive) since nomination. For properties that are only locally designated, the special significance statements in the local landmark designation reports were copied into the written summary fields and augmented with discussions of any significant alterations that have occurred since the initial designations.

2) The principal investigators also updated existing HPO survey files on properties that lack any designation (approximately 300 individual properties outside the historic districts and approximately 36 subdivisions/neighborhoods).

- c. For individual properties, a minimum of two photos were taken of each resource, and database records were completed. Existing, typed entries were entered into the written

summary field of the database record and augmented with statements of current integrity to address significant alterations since the original survey.

- d. For subdivisions/neighborhoods, a sufficient number of photographs were taken to convey the overall character of the area, and a district/neighborhood/area database record as well as an individual property record were completed for each. The written summary field of the database record included the approximate number of resources, the resource types, their condition, and an overview of the historic development of the neighborhood.

3) Finally, the principal investigators conducted a reconnaissance-level survey of additional neighborhoods within the Route 4 boundary that predate 1970. These neighborhoods have not been surveyed previously and may merit further documentation in a future phase of the comprehensive survey. The newly investigated neighborhoods were documented with one or two photographs, and cursory information, including a brief written summary, was entered in the HPO survey database for each neighborhood. No paper survey files were produced. The newly surveyed neighborhoods were selected in consultation with the Charlotte Planning Department and the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office.

In total, the principal investigators reinvestigated 423 previously surveyed individual properties and nine historic districts. The principal investigators also recorded at the reconnaissance level twenty-one additional resources not found in the existing survey database. For this new survey, the principal investigators concluded that there were few individual properties of merit within Route 4 that had not been previously examined. Most of those that might warrant investigation were located within existing historic districts. Consequently, the new survey focused on neighborhoods or subdivisions, many of which were historically African American subdivisions located north of the center city. A total of twenty-one neighborhoods/subdivisions were examined.

All work was completed to HPO standards as described in the survey manual, *North Carolina Historic Preservation Office Survey Manual: Practical Advice for Recording Historic Structures* (2008 edition), to the extent applicable to this project. Instructions for using the HPO's survey database and the HPO's digital photography policy, including guidelines for photo file labeling and printing of photographs, are all posted on the HPO's web site, www.hpo.ncdcr.gov. The principal investigators used the HPOWEB and Mecklenburg County GIS (Polaris) as guides for traveling the streets within the prescribed study area, revisiting previously surveyed resources (individual properties, subdivisions, and historic districts), and surveying additional resources built prior to 1970. All these resources were photographed primarily from the public right-of-way.

The principal investigators classified the current status of each previously surveyed resource into one of five categories: unchanged, altered, deteriorated, demolished, or moved. The types of alterations were described in the database narrative summary field. Altered properties are typically those that display significant loss of original character-defining features, replacement materials, and/or substantial additions. Deteriorated properties are those that have experienced noticeable decay of materials, often because of vacancy. For previously surveyed neighborhoods/subdivisions, the principal investigators also entered data on the number of properties and building types and included an overview of the area's historic development. The updated database survey forms, contact sheets of photographs, and any related research materials gathered during the project information were printed for inclusion in the existing HPO survey files.

The project followed the Time-Product-Payment schedule that was included as part of the contract dated October 22, 2013. At the completion of each of the benchmarks on the schedule, compact discs containing the database and all the photos taken during that portion of the project were submitted to HPO for review. The local coordinator scheduled the public information meeting for September 4, 2014 at which time the principal investigators will discuss the survey and answer any questions. The principal investigators provided the City of Charlotte and the HPO all survey products on CDs or DVDs and the final report in hard copy. The updated paper survey files were returned to the HPO.

II. Charlotte Architectural Surveys: 1970s-2013

Since the 1970s, a series of architectural surveys have been conducted for National Register nominations, local historic landmark and local historic district designations. In addition, thematic surveys sponsored by HPO have been undertaken, and a number of investigations have been conducted in compliance with environmental regulations. All of these architectural surveys, nominations, and reports are on file at the HPO in Raleigh.

In 1987, National Register historic district nominations were completed for three streetcar suburbs in Charlotte. Thomas W. Hanchett authored the nomination for the Myers Park Historic District, which contains 970 individual resources. Virginia Oswald wrote the nomination for the Dilworth Historic District (1,025 resources). Allison Harris Black completed the Elizabeth Historic District nomination (1,058 resources). In 1990, Richard L. Mattson, Suzanne S. Pickens, and Kary Schmidt completed the National Register nomination for the North Charlotte Historic District which contains 438 resources. In contrast to the Myers Park, Dilworth, and Elizabeth historic districts, which are all residential streetcar neighborhoods, the North Charlotte Historic District comprises the city's premier textile mill area that developed in the early twentieth century north of the center city. In 1995, Mary Beth Gatzka completed the Wesley Heights Historic District nomination (372 resources). Wesley Heights took shape in the early twentieth century as a streetcar suburb west of downtown. In 2000, Gatzka also authored a boundary increase nomination for the 1987 Dilworth Historic District, adding twenty-three surveyed resources to the district. Charlotte's latest National Register historic district, Pharrsdale Historic District, was listed in 2002. Including 231 resources, this historic district comprises the Pharrsdale residential subdivision, which was developed at the edge of the Eastover neighborhood between the 1920s and early 1950s.

Since the 1970s, forty-seven individual properties, including houses, churches, schools, and industrial buildings, within the Route 4 study area have also been surveyed for National Register nominations and included in the survey database. Concurrently, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (CMHLC) and the Charlotte Historic District Commission (CMHDC), government entities created in 1973 and 1975, respectively, have sponsored architectural surveys. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, which is responsible for individual landmarks, has designated 136 resources within the study area, all of which are found in the HPO survey database. Many of these properties are also listed in the National Register.

In 2000-2001, the local landmarks commission coordinated two thematic architectural surveys of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Sarah Woodard and Sherry Joines Wyatt completed both projects. The 2000 survey focused on post-World War II architecture and culminated in the survey report, *Motorized Landscape: The Development of Modernism in Charlotte, 1945 – 1965* (2000). The

document contains relevant historic contexts and National Register registration requirements for the city's modernist postwar architecture. The subsequent 2001 Industrial and Institutional survey focused on early-twentieth-century industrial buildings and schools. Woodard and Wyatt's survey report, *Industry, Transportation, and Education: The New South Development of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County* (2001), provided contexts and registration requirements for evaluating early-twentieth-century industrial and scholastic architecture in Charlotte and the surrounding county.

While the CMHLC concentrates on individual landmarks, the CMHDC is responsible for six local historic districts within the Route 4 study area. These districts are: Wesley Heights, Dilworth, Hermitage Place, Wilmore, Plaza-Midwood, and Fourth Ward. Wesley Heights and Dilworth are also National Register districts (the National Register boundaries vary slightly from the local historic district boundaries), and Hermitage Place is within the much larger Myers Park National Register district. However, the other four neighborhoods are strictly local historic districts. Fourth Ward, designated in 1976, was the city's first local historic district. Comprising all or portions of twenty-seven blocks in the historic Fourth Ward of downtown Charlotte, this local district holds the city's greatest concentration of Queen Anne-inspired residences from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Wilmore neighborhood was developed primarily as streetcar suburb southwest of downtown Charlotte (and west of Dilworth). Designated a local historic district in 2010, Wilmore contains approximately 600 surveyed resources. (As noted previously in this report, the Wilmore Historic District was not addressed in this project as data on this district is recent.) Plaza-Midwood was designated in 1992 following an inventory of its approximately 200 resources. The neighborhood comprises a mix of early-twentieth-century Colonial Revival, Queen Anne, and Craftsman-style dwellings east of the center city.

Finally, in recent years a number of architectural surveys of individual properties and districts have been completed within the study area in compliance with Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, as amended, and other environmental regulations. These surveys and subsequent determinations of eligibility have been undertaken specifically for North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) highway and rail projects and for the construction of the Charlotte Area Transit System light rail system. Most recently, the study for the NCDOT project, *Conversion of High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes to High Occupancy Toll Lanes on I-77, Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, ER-12-0125* (18 December 2012), was conducted by Marvin Brown of URS Corporation. The study included a survey and evaluation of a collection of early-to-mid-twentieth neighborhoods, commercial buildings, and religious properties located north of downtown. Based on this 2012 report, the HPO determined that the Dalebrook Historic District, Oak Lawn Park Historic District, McCrorey Heights Historic District, and the Sears Roebuck and Company Department Store were eligible for the National Register.

A number of other environmental compliance reports, conducted by Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc., have included intensive-level architectural surveys. Specifically, two phases of the NCDOT project, *Charlotte Railroad Improvement and Safety Program (CRISP)—the CSX/NS Mainline Grade Separation, P-5002* (2009) and *the Norfolk Southern Mainline Track Improvements Project, P-3800* (2011)—identified numerous early-to-mid-twentieth-century factories, warehouses, railroad bridges, and working-class neighborhoods historically oriented to the Southern Railway corridor and Wilkinson Boulevard. Architectural survey reports were also prepared for Charlotte Area Transit System projects—*North Corridor Commuter Rail Project* (2006), *Southeast Corridor Rapid Transit and Highway Project* (2006); *West Corridor Rapid Transit Project* (2006), *the South Corridor Light Rail Project* (2001), and *the LYNX Blue Line Extension, Northeast Corridor Light Rail Project* (2008). Several of these projects were located in neighborhoods east and south of downtown that

encompassed portions of streetcar suburbs and postwar subdivisions, as well as twentieth-century commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings.

III. Charlotte Since the 1970s: Summary of Survey Findings

Introduction

Charlotte's Route 4 radius—the study area for this reconnaissance-level architectural survey—roughly encompasses the city's historic center, its surrounding streetcar suburbs, and the adjacent subdivisions that had emerged by the mid-twentieth century. In common with the entire Charlotte metropolitan area, these sections have witnessed dramatic change since the beginning of HPO architectural surveys in the 1970s. By then, Charlotte, like many cities in the Southern Piedmont, was struggling with the sharp decline of the textile industry. However, since the 1970s, the city has been transformed into the second largest banking center in the United States, behind only New York City. The population of Charlotte has more than doubled, from 315,474 in 1980 to 775,202 in 2013. Since 2000, approximately 30,000 newcomers have arrived in Charlotte annually. By the early twenty-first century, through mergers and acquisitions, Charlotte-based Bank of America and Wachovia (acquired by Wells Fargo in 2008) were the city's major employers and engines for economic expansion. Other sectors of the local economy also boomed in these years. Duke Energy, with headquarters in Charlotte, is the nation's largest electric holding company, and Charlotte-Douglas International Airport was ranked the fastest growing airport in the country in 2007. Seven Fortune 500 companies now have headquarters in Charlotte.

Many of the center city's major buildings, among them Bank of American Stadium, Bank of America Corporate Center, and the Duke Energy Center, have arisen in the last twenty years. The light rail line that runs from downtown to the city's southern subdivisions opened in 2007 and has been an unqualified success. This rail line has spurred adjacent, high-density, residential and commercial investment through the historic Dilworth neighborhood and other blocks farther south of downtown. Simultaneously, modern sprawling suburban-style growth and large retail malls at certain highway exits have replaced former farmland on all sides of the center city. Today, amidst Charlotte's unprecedented growth, the center city and surrounding neighborhoods included in this Phase I Reconnaissance Survey are experiencing both development pressure and historic preservation efforts. All the existing National Register and local historic districts are facing the challenges of gentrification. Also significantly, historically important neighborhoods without historic designations, such as Lockwood along North Graham Street, and the African American communities of Cherry, Washington Heights, and Biddleville, are threatened by demolitions and new construction.

Phase I Reconnaissance Survey Update Results

Within the Route 4 corridor study area, changes to previously surveyed historic resources have varied, reflecting the social, cultural, and economic geographies of the neighborhoods. The principal investigators updated the existing survey database for 432 previously surveyed resources, including individual buildings and historic district and neighborhoods/subdivisions. The principal investigators also completed reconnaissance-level surveys for twenty-four additional resources newly identified for survey. Twenty-one of the newly identified resources are primarily neighborhoods or subdivisions built prior to 1970.

The most significant results from the reconnaissance survey of individual properties are as follows:

1. Previously surveyed properties that have been demolished: 101
2. Previously surveyed properties that have deteriorated or have been altered significantly: 56
3. Previously surveyed properties that have remained unchanged or were improved: 266

The data also show that previously surveyed, individually designated historic resources have changed little since the original surveys. The reasons appear to be clear. These resources mostly include either National Register properties, which typically benefit from owner and public support as well as from preservation tax credits for renovations, or they are local historic landmarks which also benefit private and public support as well as formal design review. Moreover, other previously surveyed individual properties have been inventoried in recent years and have thus not changed significantly since being surveyed. Similarly, the recently surveyed neighborhood/subdivisions have also changed little.

By contrast, many of the city's nine historic districts have undergone significant alterations since their listings in the National Register or designations as local historic districts. However, it should be noted that all but one (Wilmore) were inventoried more than twenty years ago. The major changes to each historic district are summarized below. Fields maps and written summaries noting these and other changes are included in the HPO survey files:

1. Fourth Ward Historic District (Locally Designated 1976) has changed dramatically in recent decades. Located in the center city, Fourth Ward developed after the Civil War as a premier residential neighborhood in proximity to workplaces and stores. The area was revitalized in the 1970s and became the city's first historic district in 1976. Since the 1980s, the area's convenient downtown location has attracted waves of new, high-rise commercial and residential developments. Of the approximately twenty-seven blocks within the boundaries of the historic district, only a core of four residential blocks appear to have sufficient architectural integrity to warrant local historic district designation. This area includes the 500 and 600 blocks of North Pine Street, the 300 block of West Ninth Street, the 300 block of West Eighth Street, and a portion of the 400 block of North Poplar Street.

2. Myers Park Historic District (National Register 1987) developed as the city's finest, planned streetcar suburb of the early twentieth century. The expansive neighborhood is characterized by winding, embowered streets lined with grand, revival-style residences on broad lots. Since its 1987 National Register listing, Myers Park has attracted much new residential and commercial construction. Throughout the district, large houses as well as apartment buildings and condominium complexes have appeared on formerly vacant parcels or have replaced smaller dwellings. This is especially evident around the northern and southern boundaries of the district. On the north side, along the 200 block of South Colonial Avenue and the 200-300 blocks of Lillington Avenue, apartment buildings and office buildings have replaced dwellings that were contributing resources. Around the southern boundary, large-scale, multiple-family construction has transformed the west side of the 2200-2400 blocks of Selwyn Avenue and the east side of the 2200-2300 blocks of Roswell Avenue. Both of these areas originally included blocks of dwellings that were contributing resources. Therefore, the principal investigators recommend a reevaluation of the National Register boundaries in these northern and southern sections.

The principal investigators also propose that the end of the period of significance for the historic district be extended to from the listed end date of 1943 to 1964 (the current fifty-year cut-off date). The historic district contains numerous, well-preserved houses erected between 1944 and 1964 that could contribute to the historic district. They include two-story, Colonial Revival residences as well as some ranch-style and modernist dwellings. Many of these houses stand along Queens Road West and nearby Wellesley, Bucknell, Princeton, Hastings, and Radcliffe streets. These resources are now non-contributing resources solely because they were built after the period of significance specified in the National Register nomination.

3. Hermitage Court Historic District (Locally Designated 2006) is located within the Myers Parks National Register Historic District. Three blocks long, this residential street features original stone gateways. The principal investigators found little change to Hermitage Court since its 2006 designation and do not recommend any boundary modifications.

4. Dilworth Historic District (Locally Designated 1983; National Register 1987) began in the 1890s as the city's first streetcar suburb. The district is marked by a variety of bungalows, historic revival dwellings, and 1920s quadraplexes. Dilworth remains largely intact although the boundaries of the historic district have been compromised in certain areas by new construction. Particularly near South Boulevard, the higher density zoning associated with the light rail has led to the replacement of a number of single-family houses with high-density multiple-family complexes. The northwest side of Euclid Avenue, southwest of Tremont, now contains a new multiple-family development. In addition, most of the northwest boundary of the district could be revised eastward to follow Cleveland Avenue. A second multiple-family complex, Dilworth Crescent, is found on the former Temple Israel site, in the block defined by Dilworth Road West, Mount Vernon Avenue, Morehead Avenue, and Lexington Avenue. Here, the boundary could be revised to exclude most of this block.

Dispersed throughout the district are also new, often large, single-family houses that have replaced smaller, single and multiple-family housing as land values in Dilworth have risen in the past few decades. Some of these replace noncontributing houses that were built after World War II, but the scale and size of the new construction alters the character of the historic district. Commercial businesses and professional offices are found along East Boulevard, occupying contributing houses and apartment buildings or low-scale commercial buildings. Some of these were extant at the time of the nomination, but others have been built in recent years. Despite these changes, the historic district retains, at present, its overall integrity. However, if the current pattern and pace of new construction and major additions continue, then the status of Dilworth Historic District will be in jeopardy, and the district's present boundaries will require major modifications.

The principal investigators propose that the end of the period of significance for the historic district be extended to from the listed date of 1941 to 1964. The historic district contains numerous, well-preserved houses erected between 1941 and 1964, including two-story Colonial Revival residences as well as some ranch-style and modernist dwellings. Most are interspersed in the district, and many of these resources are now non-contributing only because they were built after the period of significance stated in the National Register nomination. The local historic district boundary encompasses areas where postwar houses are concentrated, such as Belgrave Place, the east and west ends of Berkeley Avenue, the west ends of Mount Vernon and Templeton avenues, as well as a section of Charlotte Drive. Thus, the

National Register boundary could be revised to correspond to the local boundary if the period of significance were brought up to 1964.

5. Elizabeth Historic District (National Register 1987) was Charlotte's second streetcar suburb and incorporates five separate subdivisions. As with Dilworth, the large neighborhood includes a blend of popular early-twentieth-century residential styles and types, including Colonial Revival; Craftsman style; and boxy quadraplexes with simple classical elements.

The Elizabeth Historic District remains largely intact although in certain locations the boundaries of the historic district have been compromised by new construction. Independence Boulevard was constructed through the neighborhood in the 1950s, and at the time of the National Register listing, Independence was an at-grade route that cut the historic district into two unequal portions. The smaller section of the district lies north of Independence. More recently, Independence has been made a grade-separated expressway with limited access between the two sections of the historic district.

In the northern section, the blocks between Hawthorne Lane and Lamar Avenue have been redeveloped with multiple-story apartment complexes, and a smaller, modern multi-family complex sits on the west side of Hawthorne at Independence. It is recommended that the boundary in this area be moved west to Hawthorne Lane to exclude the redeveloped blocks. Otherwise, the historic district boundary in the northern section appears intact.

The southern section also contains a small, multiple-family development built in the 1990s between Hawthorne Lane and Oakland Avenue along the border with Independence. Other losses have occurred across from Presbyterian Hospital on East Fifth Street where office buildings have been erected as part of the hospital expansion. The boundaries could be reduced in this area along East Fifth. Seventh Street, which forms a spine through the southern portion of the district, had become largely a commercial strip by the time the nomination was prepared with offices and retail operations occupying the houses that lined the street. A few of these houses have been lost, notably in the block between Clement and Pecan avenues. Otherwise, the boundaries remain intact even though new houses are now interspersed through the district as larger replacements for earlier dwellings. In addition to new construction, a number of bungalows have had large additions and alterations. Nevertheless, the historic district overall retains sufficient integrity for National Register eligibility.

6. Plaza-Midwood Historic District (Locally Designated 1992) contains several early subdivisions that were platted and developed in the 1910s and 1920s. The main corridor is the Plaza, a tree-shaded boulevard lined primarily with a variety of one- and two-story, Craftsman-style and Colonial Revival dwellings. The principal investigators found that the historic district is substantially intact with architecturally sensitive remodeling and infill resulting from the formal design review process required for local historic districts. The principal investigators suggest that an expansion of the district's southern boundary be explored in a later, intensive-level phase of the Charlotte survey to include the neighborhood's small, one-block commercial core along Central Avenue, between Pecan and Thomas avenues. This area was determined eligible as the Central Avenue Commercial District in 2006, and the rest of the area was placed on the Study List in 1998.

Other possible boundary expansions could include a post-World War II superblock residential complex at the junction of Pecan Avenue and Kensington Drive, the inclusion of the north sides

of the 1700 and 1800 blocks of Belvedere Avenue (east of the Plaza), and the entire length of Nassau Street just east of the Plaza. Though interspersed with modern construction and some extensively altered dwellings, Nassau Street includes a variety of early-twentieth-century bungalows and historical revival-style dwellings that may warrant inclusion in the local historic district. However, the expansive Plaza-Midwood Study List Historic District, which extends eastward to Club Road and northward to Midwood Neighborhood Park, has been heavily altered with modern residential construction in the last decade and no longer retains its integrity.

7. Wesley Heights Historic District (National Register 1995; Locally Designated 1995) developed primarily in the 1920s and is characterized by the popular architectural designs of the post-World War I period, notably varieties of frame and red-brick bungalows. The principal investigators found that the historic district is substantially intact with architecturally sensitive renovations and infill resulting from the design review process of the Charlotte Historic District Commission.

8. North Charlotte Historic District (National Register 1990) comprises the city's major textile-mill district which boomed in the early decades of the twentieth century. The district includes rail-oriented cotton mills as well as associated mill villages and a commercial core on North Davidson Street. Now popularly known as "NoDa" (for North Davidson Street), much of the historic district has witnessed extensive new construction and remodeling. The principal investigators recommend that the National Register boundaries be reduced to reflect the demolition of contributing resources and new construction along North Davidson Street. A proposed reduced historic district would focus on the Highland Park No. 3 mill and its adjacent mill village oriented to North Davidson Street around the southern side of the current historic district.

9. Pharrsdale Historic District (National Register 2002) developed between the 1920s and early 1960s as a residential subdivision on the southern edge of the Eastover neighborhood. Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival dwellings characterize the district. The historic district has not changed significantly since the 2002 listing, and no changes to the boundaries are proposed. However, it is recommended that the end of the period of significance be extended to from the listed date of 1951 to 1964 (the current fifty-year cut-off date). The historic district contains approximately twenty well-preserved, primarily Colonial Revival residences along Biltmore Drive, Providence Road, and Scotland Avenue erected between 1952 and 1964. These resources are now non-contributing resources purely because they were built after the period of significance.

Phase I Reconnaissance Survey Results for New Survey

The examination of resources which were not previously in the survey database consisted of the reconnaissance-level inventory of twenty-one neighborhoods/subdivisions. They are listed below.

1. Biddleville (MK3325)
2. Clanton Park (MK3326)
3. Scotland Hills (Revolution Park) (MK3327)
4. West Boulevard Subdivision (Revolution Park) (MK3328)
5. Washington Heights (MK3329)
6. Lockwood (MK3330)

7. Barringer Woods (MK3331)
8. Edgebrook (MK3332)
9. Rollingwood (MK3333)
10. Marsh Estates (MK3334)
11. Regal Heights (MK3335)
12. Dixie Manor (MK3336)
13. Country Club Heights (MK3337)
14. Belmont-Villa Heights (MK3328)
15. Brookfield (MK3339)
16. Westmont (MK3340)
17. Country Club Hills (MK3341)
18. Commonwealth Park (MK3342)
19. Oakhurst Heights (MK3343)
20. Plaza Hills (MK3344)
21. Plaza Acres (MK3345)

Most of these neighborhoods/subdivisions were recommended for new survey by John Howard, Director of the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission and local coordinator for this project. They were proposed for survey because they include some of the most intact and representative postwar subdivisions within the Route 4 study area. Many are subdivisions that illustrate suburban growth around the entire periphery of the city after World War II as well as several neighborhoods that took shape during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Both historically African American and white neighborhoods are represented as well as neighborhoods that illustrate various socio-economic classes. The principal investigators surveyed all the historically black communities, but because of the volume of postwar residential construction within the Route 4 study area, the surveyed subdivisions represent only a sampling of the total number. The survey of these subdivisions required online research into deeds and plat maps to identify the major developers as well as the original names and boundaries of postwar neighborhoods. The narrative summaries for these subdivisions in the survey database addressed both historical and architectural contexts. The field work and research for the neighborhoods/subdivisions exceeded the level of effort required for the new survey of individual properties and thus limited the total number of resources inventoried.

Several of the newly surveyed postwar neighborhoods are notable, including Country Club Heights, a postwar subdivision that contains well-preserved and fine examples of ranch-style and Modernist dwellings in a planned, landscaped setting. Barringer Woods, Edgebrook, Rollingwood, Commonwealth Park/Oakhurst, Plaza Acres, Regal Heights, and Country Club Hills also contain versions of the popular postwar styles along tree-shaded curvilinear streets. University Park, a previously surveyed subdivision, stands out as an African American neighborhood that developed around West Charlotte High School.

Recommendations for Further Study

The Route 4 study area still contains numerous other postwar subdivisions that have not been surveyed to date. Reflecting Charlotte's dramatic population growth and suburban expansion on the west, east, and south sides between the late 1940s and early 1960s, these neighborhoods are located mainly west of Clanton Road and north of West Boulevard (west), along the Plaza, Central Avenue, and Monroe Road near Eastway Drive (east), and around East Woodlawn and Scaleybark roads (south). As with the surveyed postwar subdivisions, these areas are filled with ranch houses,

Minimal Traditional dwellings, and smaller numbers of Modernist-inspired residence. These subdivisions were probably developed by the city's major postwar developers—John Crosland, Charles Ervin, Lex Marsh, Jr., and C.D. Spengler. Some are contiguous developments, erected about the same time and by the same builder with similar house designs and plats. Several are African American subdivisions, including University Park. Because of the number and similarity of these postwar subdivisions, the principal investigators recommend strongly the development of a historic context for postwar suburban development in Charlotte. This context would help direct a systematic field survey of postwar neighborhoods as well as provide a comparative framework for assessing the significance of the various subdivisions.

In addition to a survey of postwar suburban development within Route 4, the principal investigators recommend the following early-twentieth-century neighborhoods for further investigation and possible Study List designation: Lockwood; Biddleville; Washington Heights; and Belmont-Villa Heights. Both Biddleville and Washington Heights were historically African American communities while Belmont-Villa Heights was Charlotte's largest, early-twentieth-century, working-class neighborhood. Lockwood was also a working-class neighborhood for whites that was developed north of downtown between the 1920s and 1950s.

Individual properties recommended for intensive-level survey, and possible Study List designation, represent a range of architectural styles and building types reflecting Charlotte's development through the first half of the twentieth century. These resources include Neoclassical Revival downtown commercial buildings, roadside drive-in restaurants and gas stations, African American churches, modernist commercial development and churches, postwar apartments, sophisticated revival-style residences and churches, and expansive industrial buildings. They are listed below:

MK0038	Court Arcade
MK0052	St. Peter's Catholic Church Parsonage
MK0163	Pure Oil Station**
MK0167	Joseph Gullick House
MK0176	Myers Chapel AME Zion Church
MK1701	Dairy Queen Building
MK1777	Bar-B-Que King Drive-In
MK1781	South 21 Drive-In**
MK1802	Barnhardt Manufacturing Building
MK2110	Scotland Colony Apartments
MK2127	Western Electric Building
MK2142	Park Terrace Theater
MK2144	Kimberlee Apartments**
MK2146	Radio Center Apartments and Offices
MK2160	Mouzon Methodist Church
MK2163	Double Oaks Elementary School**
MK2167	Selwyn Elementary School
MK2188	J. N. Pease Associates Building**
MK2198	Plaza Terrace Apartments

** These properties are already on the Study List, but should be examined further for possible nomination to the National Register.

There are seven historic districts within Route 4 that were determined eligible for the National Register through environmental compliance projects. Listed below, they are also recommended for intensive-level survey to ascertain whether they should be added to the Study List:

MK3209	West Morehead Street Industrial Historic District (DOE 2006)
MK3220	Oaklawn Park Historic District (DOE 2012)
MK3221	McCrorey Heights (DOE 2012)
MK3222	Double Oaks/Genesis Park Historic District (DOE 2012)
MK3270	Griffith Street Industrial Historic District (DOE 2001)
MK3268	North Graham Street Industrial Historic District (DOE 2006)

Additional Recommendations

In addition to revisiting previously surveyed resources and conducting new surveys of selected neighborhoods/subdivisions, this Phase I study also revealed areas within the Route 4 study area that have received little attention in previous architectural inventories of Charlotte. Of note is west Charlotte around Rozelle Ferry Road, Tuckasegee Road, and Freedom Drive. This area is partially located within the Route 4 radius, but also extends westward, past I-85. In contrast to the northern, southern, and eastern outskirts of the city, which developed after World War II, portions of this western area took shape during the early twentieth century. Served by historic roadways (Rozelle Ferry and Tuckasegee roads), as well as both the Southern and the Piedmont and Northern railways, this area grew up as an industrial area with textile mills, houses for mill workers, and a variety of factories and warehouses. The principal investigators recommend that, in consultation with the HPO staff and John Howard of the Charlotte Historic Districts Commission, this area be examined during the Phase II architectural survey.

Finally, two properties stand out for their significance, and the principal investigators recommend that the Charlotte Auditorium and Coliseum (MK1779), a Study List property and local landmark, and the Ford Motor Company (MK2206) be examined further to determine whether they possess statewide significance.

Designed by Odell & Associates, the Charlotte Coliseum was the largest free-span dome in the world at the time it was built in 1955. The coliseum was a remarkable engineering and architectural feat, and despite renovation ca. 1990, the resource remains largely intact and in good condition.

The 1925 Ford assembly plant has an exceptional history. The facility was the largest Ford factory in the South and was constructed as part of Henry Ford's short-lived scheme to decentralize automobile production in the U.S. The complex is also significant as the work of nationally renowned architect, Albert Kahn, whose Detroit-based office undertook numerous commissions for the automobile manufacturers. For Ford, Kahn designed both Ford's revolutionary Highland Park plant (1909), where assembly line production was perfected, and the vast River Rouge Complex (1917-1928), the largest manufacturing complex in the United States when constructed. By the late 1930s, Kahn's architectural firm was responsible for 20 percent of all architect-designed factories in the United States. Along with Ford's other regional assembly plants, the Statesville Avenue plant in Charlotte was closed in the early 1930s.

In addition to its significance as the work of Albert Kahn, the plant has military importance. During World War II, the complex was used as the Quartermaster Depot by the US Army and played an important role in the war effort by processing and distributing supplies and repatriating war dead.

More importantly, the complex was also one of two plants in the United States that manufactured missiles for the Nike Program and the only one making the Nike Hercules. The Charlotte Army Missile Plant and its local civilian employees played a major role in the national defense of this country during the Cold War. The property is one of the most architecturally and historically important industrial complexes remaining in Mecklenburg County.

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