VLR - 6-13-01
NRHP - 5-30-02

**NPS Form 10-900**
**(Rev. 10-90)**

**OMB No. 1024-0018**

**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 Galax Commercial Historic District

other names/site number 113-5001

**2. Location**

street & number The downtown sections of these streets: North Main, South Main, East Center, West Center, East Grayson, West Grayson, Carroll and Oldtown Streets not for publication N/A
city or town Galax vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Grayson code 640 Zip 24333

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

4/12/02

Signature of certifying official Date
**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**
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:
____ entered in the National Register
____ See continuation sheet.
____ determined eligible for the National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain): _____

_____
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action _____

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)
__X_ private
__X_ public-local
___ public-State
_X__ public-Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box)
___ building(s)
_X_ district
___ site
___ structure
___ object

**Number of Resources within Property**

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| __63___ | __0___ | buildings |
| __0___ | __0___ | sites |
| __0___ | __0___ | structures |
| __0___ | __0___ | objects |
| _63____ | __0___ | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _ N/A___

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

_N/A_____

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)
Cat: _Government _____ Sub: __Post Office_____
__Government_____ ____ __Fire Station_____
__Commerce_____ __Financial Institution_____

__Commerce_____ __Department Store_____
__Domestic_____ __Hotel_____
__Recreation_____ __Theater_____
__Health Care_____ __Med. Business/Office_____
__Commerce_____ ___Professional_____

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: __Government_____ Sub: __Post Office_____
___Government_____ __Government Office _____
___Commerce_____ ___Business_____
___Commerce_____ ___Professional_____
___Commerce_____ ___Financial Institution_____
___Commerce _____ ___Specialty Store_____
___Commerce_____ ___Restaurant_____
___Domestic_____ ___Multiple Dwelling_____

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Landscape Natural Feature
Landscape Street Furn./Object

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

_Commercial Style_____
_Classical Revival_____
_Italian Renaissance Revival_____
Colonial Revival
Art Deco
Moderne

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation __Brick _____
roof __Other---Bituminous Built-Up roof_____
walls _Brick
Stone
Stucco

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other ___Metal_____
__Concrete_____

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
Please see 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)

_X_ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

____ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

__X_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

____ 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)
_Community Planning and Development
_Commerce
_Architecture_____

**Period of Significance** _ 1903-1949_____

**Significant Dates** _1906_____
_____
__1949_____

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
___ N/A_____

**Cultural Affiliation** _N/A_____

**Architect/Builder** _____Alderman, C. S._____
_____Brown, J. Henry
_____Simon, Louis_____

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
Please see continuation sheets.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file** (NPS)
___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
___ previously listed in the National Register

___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

_X_ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
_X_ Local government
_X_ University
_X_ Other

Name of repository: Galax –Carroll County Regional Library
J. C. Mathews Memorial Museum, Galax, VA

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** _20 acres____

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

| Zone | Easting | Northing | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 17 | 506600 | 4057220_ | 2 17 | 506780 | 4057300 |
| 3 17 | 506850 | 4056990 | 4 17 | 506690_ | 4056910_ |

___ 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: Paul Hardin Kapp, AIA, Architect

Organization: Kapp & Robbins Architects date 3/20/01

street & number: 107 West Grayson Street telephone (540)-236-7775

city or town Galax state VA zip code 24333

## 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.)
Please see continuation sheet with roster of property names.
name____See attachment_____

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.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**7. Summary Description:**

## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Galax Commercial Historic District was constructed upon undulating meadowlands above and west of the nearby Chestnut Creek in 1903. The town was laid out upon a gridiron plan consisting of twenty-six blocks, each block containing ten to sixteen lots and straddled the Grayson/Carroll County line. A public square was not included in the design since Galax would not function as a county seat. The historic commercial district includes five blocks along the north-to-south Main Street and adjacent blocks on the three east-to-west cross streets. There are sixty-five contributing buildings in the district and no non-contributing buildings. All buildings located within the district maintain a similar setback from the street. All of the buildings in the Galax Commercial Historic District are masonry buildings with shed roofs and commercial storefronts. A few of the buildings are one-story storefronts but a majority of the buildings are two-story commercial buildings with either apartments or offices located on the second floor. The majority of the buildings were built in the 1920's and exhibit a commercial style of simple plane facades with recessed panels in the parapets and simple corbel brick cornices. A few of the buildings were built at the turn of the century and serval buildings were built in the 1930's and 1940's.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The speculative nature of Galax called for the rigid gridiron plan upon which the town was constructed; this plan subsequently allowed for Galax's commercial success. The arrangement served the commercial functions of the town, however, by providing businesses equal street frontage and the opportunity for private competition. Open public spaces were not included in the original design, but fairgrounds were built in 1905 on the perimeter of the town. In addition to emphasizing the commercial nature of the town, the strict gridiron served to designate separate areas for manufacturing and for residential blocks.

The streets now known as Main Street and Center Street were originally considered the most

The old **Fire Station** (VDHR 3113-5001-~~003~~ 0003), located at 105 East Center Street, was built around 1920 and is now utilized as a municipal building. Since its construction, the large openings for fire protection vehicles and the large windows on the second story have been enclosed; the building retains its historic appearance despite these alterations. The Fire Station is three stories high and five bays wide and is built in an abstract Italian Revival style. It is constructed of brick above a concrete foundation with a low water table. Door and window surrounds on all three stories feature stretcher and soldier brick arrangements that meet at stone corner blocks. A soldier course is seen at architrave level on the first story, along with a simple stone cornice or beltcourse. Abstract pilasters of rectangular brick panels project from the facade and extend across the second and third stories. Decorative panels of stretcher, soldier, and rowlock brickwork, accented by stone corner blocks and decorative diamonds, are seen between the large first and second story windows. Another stone beltcourse delineates the third story. The upper cornice features a soldier course and recessed and projecting panels.

Also significant is the **Colonial Theater** (VDHR 3113-5001-0007), constructed in 1930 at 117-A North Main Street. The theater, now used for business space, is two stories high and two bays wide. The storefront features glass display windows and a recessed entrance. A nonhistoric one has replaced the original awning, and a corbeled cornice can be seen above it between the first and second stories. The upper facade is covered in stucco and is embossed with a large "C" in Old English script all of which is done in the Moderne Style. Window openings in the second and third stories are small and unadorned. The cornice is embellished with small projecting rectangular blocks decorated by a slightly raised balustrade.

The old **Waugh Department Store** (VDHR 3113-5001-0013) at 101 East Grayson Street, located on the corner of Main Street and East Grayson Street, was built in 1904 and is the oldest brick building in Galax and is built in the commercial style which became common in the district. Although it still functions as a clothing store, the original corner entrance was removed and reoriented to face East Grayson Street. The building is two stories high, and the facade contains three bays. The first story includes a recessed entrance with transom and glass display windows. The upper facade features a large recessed panel with corbeled brickwork, and windows are paired in the central bay. A low parapet wall extends above the roofline. Brick stringcourses extend along the Main Street elevation.

Also significant is the **Rex Theater** (VDHR #113-5001-0018), located at 113 East Grayson Street and built in 1938. This building retains its historic Art Deco appearance with modern metal frame

features an elaborate entrance surrounded by architrave molding and topped by a classical cornice with exaggerated dentils. Windows flank the entrance, and they are embellished with sills supported by consoles, architrave molding, and cornices. Recessed panels are seen between the first and second stories.

Two significant buildings within the district were extensively altered during the 1940s, and while they do not retain their original appearance, they do exhibit historic architectural styles common at the time of their remodeling. The **City of Galax Municipal Building** ( VDHR 113-5001-~~003~~ 0002) at123 North Main Street was constructed in 1908 on the corner of North Main Street and East Center Street. The building was originally constructed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style; however, in 1945, the facade of the building was removed and replaced with a plain modern facade including metal frame windows and doors. The **Dr. John W. Bolen Office and Drugstore** (VDHR 3113-5001-0013), located on the corner of Main Street and East Grayson Street (101 North Main Street), was constructed in 1904 and extensively remodeled in 1950. This building's facade also exhibited elements of the Richardsonian Romanesque style, which were replaced in the mid-twentieth century. The presently unadorned facade of the Bolen Building shows some evidence of its earlier appearance, which included a corner entrance and storefront transoms.

## CURRENT CONDITION

The general appearance of the Galax Commercial Historic District retains its architectural integrity since relatively few changes have occurred. Several buildings were covered with inappropriate modern facades during the 1960s and 1970s; however, most retain their original facade. One building has been lost within the streetscape. Despite these alterations, the downtown area retains its commercial character and feeling. Positive changes include the recent additions of street trees and compatible street lighting along the sidewalks.

Because Galax was planned and developed as a commercial town with no public square, architecture became an important medium within which business owners could express themselves. Historic buildings that are seen within the Galax commercial district give visitors a sense of place and a sense that time has not eroded the downtown commercial atmosphere that Galax originally possessed.

## SITE INVENTORY

The following inventory lists the [illegible] alax Commercial Historic District. The list includes the hist[illegible] or approximate date of construction, and a brief archi[illegible]

113-5001-0049

113-5001-0063

do not exist !!

FYI

**Carroll St[illegible]**

106 [illegible]
**Gara[illegible]** [illegible]-5001-0021)
This b[illegible] **an-Up** and other commercial space was constr[illegible] the corner of Carroll Street and East Oldtov[illegible] doors topped by transoms. 1925,**C.B.**

**Center Street**

105 East [illegible]
**Old Fire** [illegible] 5001-~~003~~)
This build[illegible] now utilized as a municipal building. Since its construction, the large openings for fire protection vehicles and the large windows on the second story have been enclosed; the building retains its historic appearance despite these alterations. The Fire Station is three stories high and five bays wide. It is constructed of brick above a concrete foundation with a low water table. Door and window surrounds on all three stories feature stretcher and soldier brick arrangements that meet at stone corner blocks. A soldier course is seen at architrave level on the first story, along with a simple stone cornice or beltcourse. Abstract pilasters of rectangular brick panels project from the facade and extend across the second and third stories. Decorative panels of stretcher, soldier, and rowlock brickwork, accented by stone corner blocks and decorative diamonds, are seen between the large first and second story windows. Another stone beltcourse delineates the third story. The upper cornice features a soldier course and recessed and projecting panels. 1920, **C.B.**

103 West Center Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0050)
Currently known as **B & G Paint Store**. This brick building features a recessed entrance with Craftsman-style entrance door and display windows above a brick bulkhead. The upper facade contains a single multi-paned window1925,**C.B.**

105 West Center Street, Galax, VA, 24333

**Old Galax Hospital** (VDHR #113-5001-0051)
Currently in use as apartments, the four-story building features three bays containing paired Craftsman-style windows on either side and Chicago-style windows within the central bay. The building raised above street level upon a plinth, features abstracted pilasters and stringcourses. 1925,**C.B.**

**Grayson Street**

101 East Grayson St., Galax, VA, 24333
**Waugh Department Store** (VDHR #113-5001-0014)
This brick building has original pressed tin ceilings and oak floors. It retains most of its historical features. The building is two stories high, and the facade contains three bays. The first story includes a recessed entrance with transom and glass display windows. The upper facade features a large recessed panel with corbeled brickwork, and windows are paired in the central bay. A low parapet wall extends above the roofline. Brick stringcourses extend along the Main Street elevation. 1904,**C.B.**

103 East Grayson St., Galax, VA, 24333
**The Fashion Shoppe** (VDHR #113-5001-0015)
This building retains all of its historical features except for the storefront, which was altered in the 1960's. 1920,**C.B.**

105 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**H & R Block; James Ward Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0016)
Commercial Building, which now houses **H & R Block** and **Hair Classics**, was constructed in 1920. Like the adjacent building that is now in use by The Fashion Shoppe, the facade features elaborate brickwork, including corbeled patterns and recessed panels. The storefront retains the forms of the transom, recessed entrance, and glass display windows. 1904,**C.B.**

106 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Joe W. Parsons Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0013)
This building, which is currently vacant, was originally constructed in 1910 and was covered with a new facade in 1949. The first story is built of limestone and includes windows and doors topped by transoms. The brick second story features three bays, with the central bay accented by abstracted limestone pilasters and a multi-paned casement window. The flanking bays contain Chicago-style casement windows. 1949,**C.B.**

111 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Heilig-Myers Furniture Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0017)
This building, which is currently being adopted for use as the City of Galax Municipal Building, was constructed in 1945. The lower facade features a series of large glass display windows and a recessed entrance. The upper facade is decorated with brick in various courses to create beltcourses and decorative panels. A large, non-historic awning covers the storefront. 1946,**C.B.**

113 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Rex Theater** (VDHR #113-5001-0018)
This building retains its historic Art Deco appearance with modern metal frame windows and doors. The first story includes the original movie poster cases, display windows, and ticket booth. The original marquee with neon lighting hangs above the entrance. Black glass tiles with white Art Deco details are seen above the display windows between the first and second stories. The upper facade of the theater, which is finished in stucco, features smaller black tiles arranged in a geometric pattern and in short courses surrounding a small round window in the third story. 1948,**C.B.**

115 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0019)
This building which currently houses the office of **Lisa F. Adams, CPA, PC**, was constructed in. The storefront has been altered and covered in stucco and does not retain its historic form. The upper façade of this two-story, two-bay building contains paired windows, decorative brickwork, and a panel for signage. 1935,**C.B.**

117 East Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Lori Apartments** (VDHR #113-5001-0020)
This brick building retains all of its exterior historical features. It is a two-storey brick building with five bays, a metal storefront and recessed brick panels. 1904,**C.B.**

101-103 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Vass-Kapp Hardware Company** (VDHR #113-5001-0044)
This brick storefront building is notable for its second-story-arched windows. It retains all of its historical features except for its modern storefront. 1904,**C.B.**

105-107 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0053)
This building, houses the Kapp Law Offices and the offices of Kapp and Robbins Architects, was constructed in 1925. The building is typical of commercial design in Galax and has retained its architectural integrity. The storefront features a recessed entrance with large glass display windows above the brick bulkhead, and above the entrance is the storefront transom and a corbeled brick cornice. The upper facade features a large recessed panel with corbeled brickwork and four bays containing one-over-one sash windows. 1925, **C.B.**

109 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0054)
This brick building which currently houses **Wheat First Butcher Singer** and the **Law Offices of Vaught & Loftin**, was built in 1925. The lower facade has been covered by a Colonial Revival facade and does not retain its historic appearance. The upper facade, however, contains the typical four bays with one-over-one sash windows, set within a large recessed panel with corbeled brickwork. 1925, **C.B.**

113 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0064)
Now known as **The Trophy Shop**, this brick building was constructed in 1925. The lower facade of this building has also been covered by a wood frame Colonial Revival facade and does not retain its historic recessed entrance. The upper facade contains the typical commercial features seen along the street: the facade contains a large recessed panel with corbeled brickwork, four bays, and one-over-one sash windows. 1925,**C.B.**

115 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0055)
Currently known as **Rainbow's End Health Food Store.** The lower facade has been altered by the addition of a non-historic awning and siding. The storefront with glass display windows and side entrance with transom is still extant. The upper facade contains a recessed panel with four bays and corbeled brickwork. 1925, **C.B.**

117 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Mountain Loan Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0056)
The two-story, four-bay brick building constructed of brick greatly retains its historic integrity. The storefront features large arched openings over the entrance and display

windows. The entrance door is surrounded by a transom and sidelights, and both the entrance and display windows are topped by structural glass. A corbeled cornice is seen beneath the second-story windows. The upper facade is embellished by circular recessed panels, a rectangular recessed panel containing signage, and a second cornice with corbeled brickwork. 1925, **C.B.**

119 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0065)
Adjacent to the Mountain Loan Building and used by Office Plus as extra retail space, this brick building was constructed in 1925. The façade includes the recessed storefront with display windows, a four bay upper façade with recessed panels and corbeled brickwork, and one-over one sash windows. The storefront transom has been covered. 1925, **C.B.**

120 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0060)
Now known as **Grayson Commons** and housing **Edward D. Jones Investments** and **Larrowe, Cardwell & Company, LC**. This brick building was built in 1925. The lower facade features a recessed storefront with replacement display windows and doors. The upper facade includes three bays with large window openings and recessed panels with corbeled brickwork. A non-historic awning has covered the storefront transom. 1925,**C.B.**

121 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0057)
This brick building which currently houses the **Galax Education Center**, was built in 1925. The facade, typical of commercial buildings in Galax, includes a recessed entrance with large display windows. The transom has been covered by signage. The upper facade features four bays containing one-over-one sash windows, recessed panels, and corbeled brickwork. 1925,**C.B.**

122 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0059)
Now known as **Galax Florist**, was completed in 1945. The storefront includes display windows built above a brick bulkhead and a recessed entrance topped by a large transom. The upper facade is unadorned and contains four bays with one-over-one windows. The building is constructed of brick. 1945,**C.B.**

123 West Grayson Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0058)
Now known as **Mid-State Medical Oxygen & Equipment, Inc.** This brick building was built in 1925. The lower facade includes a recessed entrance and large display windows; the storefront transom has been covered. The upper facade features a large recessed panel containing four bays and brick corbeling. 1925,**C.B.**

**Main Street**

100 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**First National Bank** (VDHR #113-5001-0045)
This two-story high and three-bay wide brick, Neoclassical in style, it has a grand entrance and a metal classical entablature and colossal brick pilasters. 1922,**C.B.**

101 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Dr. John W. Bolen Office and Drugstore** (VDHR #113-5001-0012)
Noted for its corner entrance and storefront transoms, this building once featured Romanesque details, but many were removed in a mid-twentieth century alteration. Currently the first floor is unoccupied and the second floor has been converted into apartments. 1904,**C.B.**

102 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0061)
This brick building which was formerly Jones Furniture Company was built in 1922. It is a two-storey building with four bays of windows. Each window has been filled in with concrete block. The brick exterior has been painted to match the adjacent bank. In 1975, First National Bank purchased the building and closed the entrance and expanded its operations into the first floor of this building. The façade has recessed panels and a corbeled brick cornice. 1922,**C.B.**

103-107 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Ward Brothers Store** (VDHR #113-5001-0011)
One of the oldest extant buildings in Galax, this three-story building includes three recessed storefront entrances. The upper facade features ten bays, which contain one-over-one windows shaded by metal awnings, and recessed panels. The commercial space is currently vacant and the upper floors are used for apartments. 1908,**C.B.**

104 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0046)
Used by **Twin County United Way**, the facade features a recessed entrance above brick bulkhead, second-story windows with wood molding heads. The building has deeply recessed panels in the upper facade. 1910,**C.B.**

106 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0047)
Now known as the **Modernette Salon,** this brick building includes a recessed double-leaf entrance with transom, large storefront windows, and recessed panels on the upper facade. 1925,**C.B.**

109 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0062)
Currently used for retail space, the building features a recessed storefront with a non-historic awning, and the original transom has been covered. The upper facade contains two bays with one-over-one sash windows. 1920,**C.B.**

110 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0048)
Now known as **Hampton Realty, Ltd.**, the one-story brick building features a parapet on the upper facade and recessed panels. 1920,**C.B.**

111 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0008)
Now used by **Vaughan's Shoe Store**, the facade features a recessed entrance with large storefront windows and a recessed panel in the upper portion. 1925, **C.B.**

113 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building,** (VDHR #113-5001-0009)
Known now as the **Blue Ridge Grill**, the lower facade includes a recessed entrance with storefront windows. The original transom has been covered, and the upper facade includes a recessed panel. In the interior, the original pressed tin ceilings remain. 1925, **C.B.**

115 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-~~010~~ 0010)
Now known as **Lemons' Jewelry**, the facade has been extensively altered; however, the form of the recessed entrance remains. The upper facade has been completely covered in non-historic metal siding. 1925,**C.B.**

117 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0007)
Now known as **Innovative Systems**, the facade includes a recessed entrance, storefront windows, and a non-historic awning. The upper facade is unadorned and includes a recessed panel. 1925, **C.B.**

117A North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Colonial Theater** (VDHR #113-5001-0006)
No longer used as a theater, this commercial space is two stories high and two bays wide and has recessed entrance and display windows. The typology of the theater can be recognized by the stucco facade and corbeled cornice. 1930, **C.B.**

119 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0005)
Now known as **Adams-Heath Engineering**, the building has a recessed entrance and storefront windows, recessed panels, and corbeled brickwork. 1925, **C.B.**

121 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0004)
Now known as **The Framer's Daughter**, the building features a recessed entrance and storefront windows, recessed panels, and corbeled brickwork. 1925, **C.B.**

123 North Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**City of Galax Old Municipal Building** (VDHR #113-5001-~~002~~ 0002)
Soon to be the Social Services Office, this building was extensively remodeled in the 1940's and exhibits the character of building of that decade. 1942, **C.B.**

201 North Main Street, Galax, VA 24333
**United States Post Office** (VDHR #113-5001-0001)
This freestanding Colonial Revival Post Office is five bays wide, 1 ½ stories high and

constructed of brick. The only exterior facade alterations are the removal of the original main door. 1937, **C.B.**

105 South Main Street
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0022)
Currently known as **Barr's Fiddle Shop**, this one-story building features a recessed entrance with transom and a brick bulkhead. The upper portion of the facade is adorned with a wood cornice. c. 1920,**C.B.**

106 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Old Post Office/Bus Station** (VDHR #113-5001-0043)
Now known as **Roy's Diamond Center**, the facade has been extensively altered; however, the entrance is still somewhat recessed. The lower facade has been covered in enameled panels and the upper facade in metal siding. Beneath the enameled panels, the building has a large brick Roman arch with a leaded glass transom. c. 1920,**C.B.**

107 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0023)
Now known as **Wilson Athletics, Ltd.**, this one-story building retains much of its historic integrity and features large storefront windows, entrance door with molding, and corbeled brick along the upper facade. c. 1910,**C.B.**

109 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0024)
Currently known as **Custom Craft Floor Tile**, the lower facade has been covered in noncompatible wood siding; however, the glass storefront remains. The upper façade features two bays with one-over-one windows, recessed panels, and corbeled brickwork. 1925,**C.B.**

110 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0042)
Currently in use as the **Oddfellows Hall**, Although the original storefront has been covered with non-historic glass panel material, the glass transom remains intact. The upper facade features segmental-arched windows, recessed panels, and corbeled brick. 1925,**C.B.**

111 S. Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0038)
Now known as **Carol's Consignments**, the facade includes a recessed storefront with double-leaf door and transom, one-over-one sash windows, recessed panels, and corbeled brick. 1925,**C.B.**

112 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0041)
Currently known as **Long & Short Tales Bookstore**, the building features a recessed storefront with large glass display windows, segmental-arched windows on the second story, and recessed panels. The transom remains intact but is shaded by a large awning. The pressed tin ceiling in the first-floor commercial space remains intact. 1925,**C.B.**

113 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0025)
This brick building is a typical four-bay storefront building. It retains most of its historical features. 1925,**C.B.**

114-116 S. Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Buildings** (VDHR #113-5001-0040)
The facades of the current **Canton Restaurant** includes recessed entrances with display windows, one-over-one windows in the upper facade, recessed panels, and elaborate brickwork patterns. Incompatible siding, a Chinese Style awning, and a large sign have been placed over the transom areas of both buildings. 1925,**C.B.**

115 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0026)
Now known as **The Men's Shop**, was built in 1925. The building includes a recessed side entrance door with transom, large display windows, recessed panels in the upper facade, and corbeled brickwork. The building's transom has been covered with metal siding. 1925,**C.B.**

117-121 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Globman's Department Store** (VDHR #113-5001-0027)
This building, now known as Antique Apple, was constructed in 1920. Most recently used as a department store, the building has been covered by a noncompatible concrete panel facade. However, brick details can be seen along the side elevation, which include a soldier-

course beltcourse and a corbeled brick cornice. This building actually includes three historic buildings: 117, 119, and 121 South Main Street. 1920, **C.B.**

118 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0039)
Currently known as **The Antique Apple**. Although the historic transom has been covered, the facade remains intact including the recessed entrance with double-leaf door and display windows, one-over-one windows, recessed panels, and elaborate brickwork patterns. 1925,**C.B.**

201 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**The Alderman Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0028)
This structure was built on the corner of South Main Street and East Oldtown Street. The large two-story building is constructed of square-cut ashlar masonry and features three bays along Main Street and thirteen bays along Oldtown Street. While the entrance has been surrounded by inappropriate siding and has been covered by a nonhistoric awning, it remains oriented towards the street corner and is flanked by display windows. Small windows in the first story contain ornamental glass and all windows within the first and second story feature stone lintels and sills. 1947,**C.B.**

203 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0029)
This building which now houses **Roberts Gift Gallery** was completed in 1930. The upper facade has been completely covered by metal siding; however, the lower storefront remains intact. The storefront features a recessed entrance, glass display windows above the brick bulkhead, and the original door with transom. 1930, **C.B.**

205 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0030)
Now known as **L & H Antiques**. The one-story building features recessed side entrance and glass display windows. The upper facade includes a decorative pressed metal cornice. 1910,**C.B.**

209 South Main Street. Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0031)
Currently vacant. The recessed storefront retains its large glass display windows and

transom. A large non-historic, non-compatible awning has covered the upper facade; however, evidence is still visible of a large recessed panel in the facade. 1940,**C.B.**

211 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0032)
Currently known as **J.C. Matthews & Co. Hardware**. The lower façade includes a recessed storefront with original double-leaf doors. The upper facade features a large recessed panel with corbeled brickwork, one-over-one windows, and soldier courses. The original storefront transom has been covered. 1925,**C.B.**

213-215 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Porter Furniture Company** (VDHR #113-5001-0033)
This building exhibits elements of the Art Moderne style. It is two stories high and six bays wide, and the storefront features a recessed entrance and large glass display windows. Above the first story is a cantilevered roof, constructed of metal, which is rounded on the corners and supports original signage. Enameled tiles are seen on the facade just above the roof. The upper facade is covered stucco and painted with five bays. 1945,**C.B.**

217-219 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0034)
Now known as **Charlene's Outlet.** The buildings include a central recessed entrance, one-over-one windows, and a recessed panel with brick corbeling. The transom area has been covered with metal siding. 1920,**C.B.**

221 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0035)
This building currently houses the **Galax Trading Company**. The façade includes two recessed storefronts with display windows built above brick bulkheads, recessed panels with corbeled brickwork, and segmental-arched windows. Storefront transoms above both entrances have been covered. 1925,**C.B.**

225 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0036)
Now known as **Creations Hair Academy**, the building retains its original door and display windows within the recessed entrance; however, the storefront transom has been covered. The upper facade includes recessed panels and corbeled brickwork. c. 1920,**C.B.**

227 South Main Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**A & Z Apparel Building** (VDHR #113-5001-0037)
Now known as **Teddy Bear Day Care**, the building exhibits styles common in the mid-twentieth century including an unadorned facade, structural metal beltcourses, and a large metal awning. Metal siding has covered a portion of the upper facade. The lower facade includes recessed entrances and large display windows. 1945,**C.B.**

**Oldtown Street**

106-110 East Oldtown Street, Galax, VA, 24333
**Commercial Buildings** (VDHR #113-5001-0052)
Now in use as **The Cambridge Apartments**, these brick buildings were constructed in 1925. The storefronts of all three buildings have been altered by the addition of Colonial Revival facades. Upper facades remain intact, with jack arched double windows. The facades include large recessed panels and corbeled brickwork. 106 East Oldtown Street includes four bays with one-over-one windows and recessed panels underneath. The upper facade of 108 East Oldtown features three bays and six-over-six windows beneath segmental arches. 110 East Oldtown features four bays containing six-over-six windows and segmental arches. Storefront transoms have been covered on all three buildings. 1925,**C.B.**

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Summary Statement of Significance and Justification of Criteria

The Downtown Commercial District of Galax is significant and unique in that it was designed for and built upon the American dream of free enterprise during the early decades of the twentieth century. It was developed by a group of self-made men who recognized the importance of translating the ideals of equality through private enterprise into the built environment. The Galax Commercial Historic District qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its significance in the area of Commerce. This is due to its very specific nature as a planned commercial city. It is also eligible under Criterion C, for its significance in the area of Community Planning and Development, due to its development across a rigid, gridiron plan that would insure equal competition in private enterprise and that would allow businessmen to express themselves through the architecture of their buildings. The district's period of significance ranges from 1903, when the current street gridiron was developed, to 1949, the date of the most recent significant building within the downtown area.

### Historical Background

The historical significance of the Galax Commercial Historic District lies in its unique development within a planned manufacturing and commercial town during the early decades of the twentieth century. Through the efforts of several prominent citizens in the area, the town of Galax was designed and built by the merchant class for the merchant class. The town is characterized by its development on a rational, gridiron plan with rectangular blocks anchored by the town's most important institutions: religious and commercial.

During the late eighteenth century, a small trading village was settled in Grayson County, near the present site of Galax, which became known as Blair. The village prospered throughout the 1800s, and by the turn of the twentieth century, it had become serviced by the Norfolk and Western Railroad. In 1903, a shrewd businessman from Grayson County named James P. Carico envisioned the development of a mercantile town founded on the growing village of Blair. However, the terrain surrounding Blair inhibited expansion. Carico recruited several prominent citizens such as Captain John Waugh and Thomas L. Felts of the area to invest in a real estate company to develop a new

town. Together they purchased three hundred seventy-five acres of land located south of the village and situated directly on the Grayson-Carroll County line.[1]

The Development Company hired a civil engineer, C.L. DeMott, from Lynchburg, Virginia, to design the new town. The design included a gridiron of twenty-six blocks, with each block consisting of ten to sixteen lots; a public square was not included in the plan because the town would not serve as a county seat (see Exhibit B). In the fall of 1903, the Norfolk and Western Railroad assured the real estate company that a depot would be constructed in the new town,[2] which was then called Cairo, and on December 17, 1903, a public sale was held for the town lots. Businesses from the earlier village moved immediately to the new town along with other merchants and farmers who wished to take advantage of the railroad access. In 1906, the General Assembly of Virginia accepted the charter of the new town, which was renamed "Galax" to honor the Galax leaves that in the nearby mountainous region.[3]

The first building erected was the Land Office, managed by J.P. Carico, in December of 1903. Many other buildings were constructed from the 1900s to the 1920s, including the drug store and doctor's office of Dr. John W. Bolen; the Galax Hardware Company; the Blair Grocery Company; Waugh's Department Store, which was the first brick structure in the town; and the Waugh Hotel. Several other hotels and two banks were erected, as well as several churches representing the dominant denominations. Throughout these development years of Galax, the building of the district was the result of the investment of the Blair and Old Town, Virginia merchants who viewed Galax as better location to increase their business.

The timber buildings located on East Main Street were destroyed by a fire in 1907, but by 1914, Galax was established as a well-defined town with a population of 775, two solid banking institutions, a prosperous train depot, and several churches to promote "solid Christian values" to the aspiring merchant class. At this time the developers had sold all of the available lots in the new town and closed down the Land Office.[4]

The current state of the Galax Commercial Historic District was built during the period of 1922 to 1937. The most notable building built in the 1920's was the First National Bank, located on the corner of West Grayson Street and South Main Street. This grand two-storey brick structure, built in the Neoclassical style of the American Renaissance was built primarily under the guidance of State Senator T.L. Felts.

Department stores built large buildings in the district during this period as well. Globman's

Department Store, Inc. of Martinsville, Virginia constructed a large one-storey brick department store with a full size basement on the corner of Oldtown Street and South Main Street. Ward Brothers Department Store, a three-storey brick building was built between Center Street and Grayson Street on North Main Street. Several furniture stores were built during this period of extensive expansion of the Commercial District of Galax. R. E. Jones and Co., a furniture and casket retail dealer originally built a wood frame commercial structure on North main Street in 1904. He later built a brick structure in the same location in 1925. Pless Furniture Co. built an extensive two-storey, five-bay furniture store at 111 East Grayson Street. The most elaborate furniture and appliance store built in the district is the R. E. Porter Furniture Company at 213-215 South Main Street. Art Moderne in style, its façade is stucco finish, painted off white and has a Moderne aluminum awning with the company's name in distinctive moderne styling letters.[5]

Due to the commercial district's twentieth-century origins, movie theaters have played a significant role in the history of the district. In the early part of the twentieth century, the commercial district had the first nickelodeon house in the Twin County region. It was located in a wood frame structure built on North Main Street. This building was burned down in the fire of 1907. The Colonial Theater, located on North Main Street was built in 1927 and is the oldest surviving theater building in the district. It was converted to a commercial retail building in the 1960's. The Rex Theater is the only surviving movie theater in the district. Built in 1947, with its flamboyant Art Deco glass and stucco façade and elaborate marquee, it is the prototypical small town movie theater. The theater was used to show movies until 1982 and was purchased by the Galax Downtown Association in 1993. Currently, the local radio station, WBRF, uses it as a performance hall for the Bluegrass Backroads Radio Show. All of the original seating fixtures and equipment still exist at the Rex Theater including the 1947 Carbon-Arc movie projectors.[6]

Doctor John Caldwell built the first hospital in the Twin County region in 1925 on Center Street. Galax Hospital was a three-storey brick structure with a large entry porch and a sleeping porch on the top floor used by patients. In 1937, the United States Post Office relocated from its original commercial space in the Vass-Kapp hardware Store building, which it had occupied since 1906 to a new Colonial Revival building built through the depression era WPA program.

The last significant building built in the commercial district was the Alderman Building. Built in 1947, it is the only stone veneer building in the district. John Alderman, a local pharmacist, built the building as a drug store. It was used as a drug store until 1972. Currently, it is a hair salon.

In 1954, Galax revised its original Town Charter and became a city second class. This move

coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Galax. The late fifties were a period of great optimism for both the city and the district.[7]

Many projections and predictions stated great expansion for both the city and the district in the future decades to come. However, the construction of nearby Interstate 77 and the four-lane expansion of US 58 led many businesses to relocate from the district to nearby shopping centers.

In 1969, the establishment of Twin County Regional Hospital led to the closing of the Galax Hospital as well as the nearby Waddell Hospital. In 1987, local merchants from the district and civic leaders formed the Galax Downtown Association and Galax was named a Virginia Main Street Town. Improvements to the streetscape as well as several businesses occurred during this period. Today, the Galax Commercial Historic District shows the same commercial vitality it has shown since its beginning. Although the large commercial retail businesses have long since moved or closed down, the district enjoys its role as a specialty retail district and professional center. The district has clothing stores, antique stores and specialty food stores as local merchants have responded to the changing times in retail shopping.

NOTES

1. Pless Interview, 14 October 1991, Galax, Virginia.

2. Cox, Golden Anniversary of Galax, p.10.

3. Committee for the Bicentennial Celebration, The Bicentennial Celebration, p.7.

4. Roberts, Forward to Galax, Largest Ten Year Old Town, n.p.

5. Cox, Golden Anniversary of Galax, p. 12

6. Committee for the Bicentennial Celebration, The Bicentennial Celebration, p. 10

7. Galax City Charter 1954.

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## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Galax Commercial Historic District is shown as the red and/or bold line on the accompanying map entitled "Proposed Galax Commercial Historic District (see Exhibit A)."

### Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Galax Commercial Historic District encompass contiguous areas of the historic commercial and governmental center of Galax which reflect the historic character that was established during the period of significance and that have retained sufficient integrity of form and materials. The district includes the most of the commercial area from the 1903 city gridiron, except in areas where modern alterations and intrusions have disturbed the character of the streetscape.

**Photographs:** All photographs are of Galax Commercial Historic District (113-5001). Galax, Virginia. All negatives are stored with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

1/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Municipal Building** (113-5001-0002)
1942. 123 North Main Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

2/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Old Ward Brothers Store** (113-5001-0011)
1908. 103-107 North Main Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

3/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Waugh Department Store** (113-5001-0014)
1904. 101 East Grayson Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

4/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Heilig-Myers Furniture Building** (113-5001-0017)
1937. 111 East Grayson Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

5/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Commercial Buildings,** South Main St. (113-5001-0024 to 113-5001-0027)
1937. 201 North Main Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

6/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Cambridge Apartments** (113-5001-0052)
1925. 106-110 East Oldtown Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

7/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Commercial Buildings** (113-5001-0031, 113-5001-0032, 113-5001-0033)
1925. 201 North Main Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

8/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Commercial Buildings** (113-5001-0036 & 113-5001-0037)
1920, 1945. 225-227 South Main Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

9/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Commercial Buildings** (113-5001-0038 to 113-5001-0043)
1925. South Main Street looking northeast
DHR Negative No. 16625

10/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Commercial Buildings** (113-5001-0041 to 113-5001-0043)
1937. 201 North Main Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

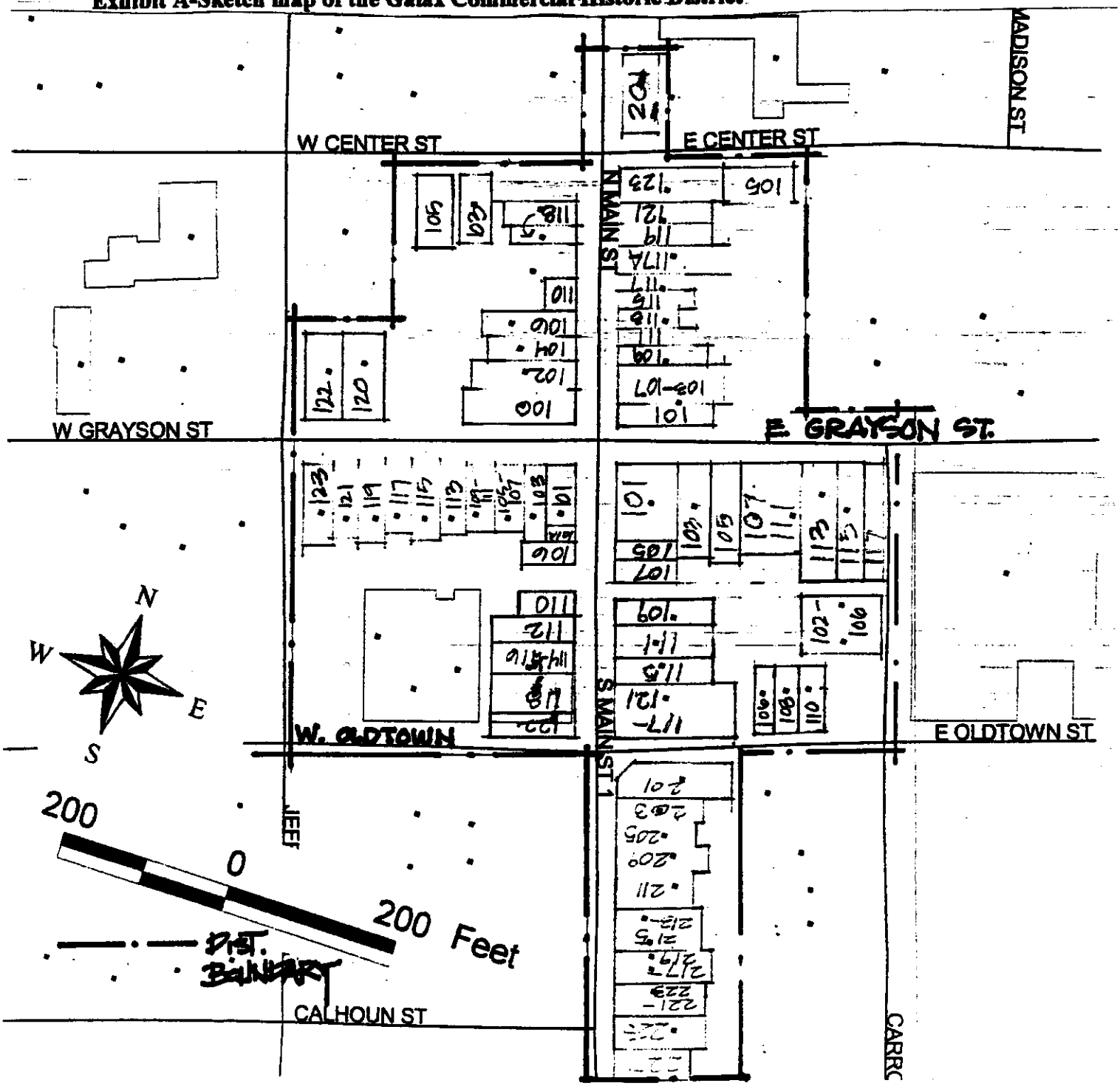
11/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Vass-Kapp Hardware** (113-5001-0044)
1904. 101 West Grayson Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

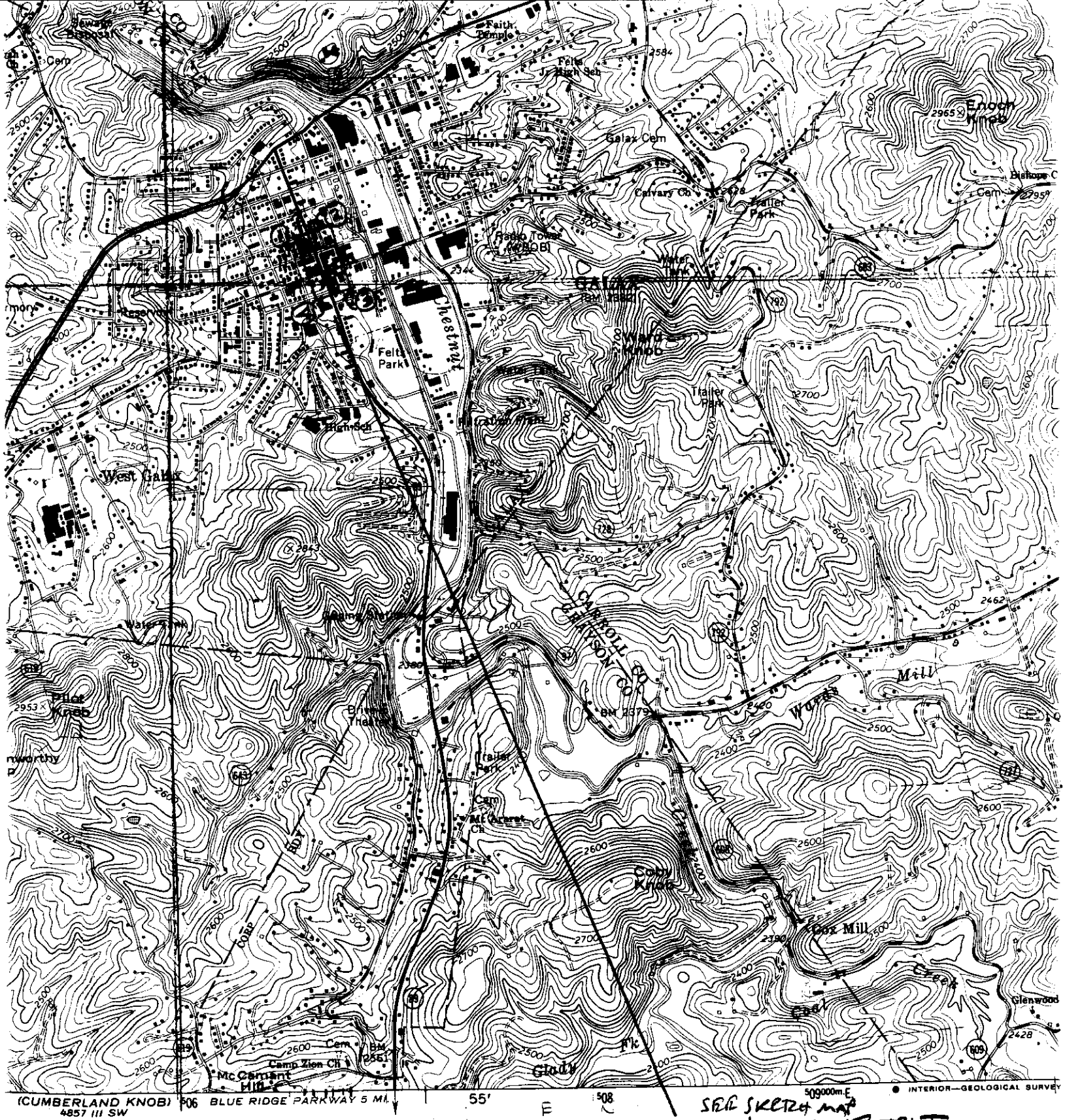
12/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **West Grayson Street** (113-5001-0044, 113-5001-0053 to 113-5001-0057)
1925, 103-119 West Grayson Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

13/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Commercial Buildings** (113-5001-0060 & 113-5001-0059)
1925, 1945. 120-122 West Grayson Street
DHR Negative No. 16625

14/14 CREDIT: Susan C. Galyen DATE: August 24, 1997
VIEW OF: **Commercial Building** (113-5001-0046)
1910. 104 North Main Street
DHR Negative No. 16626

**Exhibit A-Sketch map of the Galax Commercial Historic District**






SCALE 1:24 000

1 MILE

2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET

1 KILOMETER

NTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
L GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

S WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
MINERAL RESOURCES, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903
MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

SEE SKETCH MAP

GALAX COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

① 17/506000/4057200
② 17/506780/4057300
③ 17/506880/4056990
④ 17/506670/4056910

ROAD CLAS

Heavy-duty

Medium-duty

U. S. Route

VIRGINIA

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken 1982 and other sources. This information not field checked