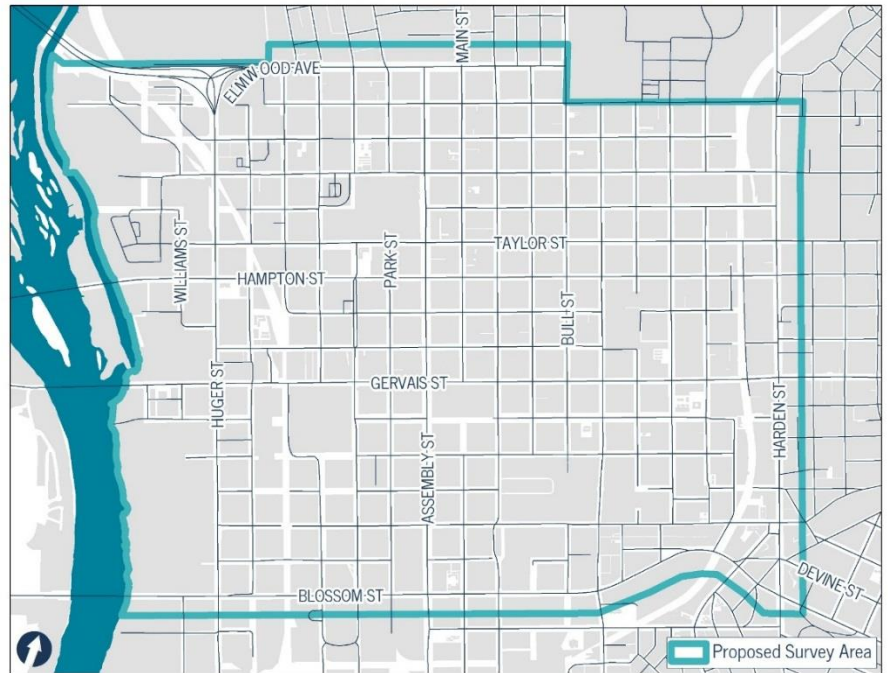


PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

DOWNTOWN COLUMBIA SURVEY

The City of Columbia is happy to announce the completion of the **Downtown Columbia Historic Resource Survey!** This survey, completed by Access Preservation, with matching federal funding through SC Archives and History, filled in the gaps of previous architectural surveys with a focus on Modern resources built from 1945-1975. Read on for a sample of some of the recommendations of the survey!



The following recommendations for local or national listings of buildings or districts are **recommendations only**. Properties will not be listed as historic at the national or local level unless designation is pursued by the property owner.

SURVEY FINDINGS

The survey recorded a total of **721 resources** within the survey boundary, with construction dates **from ca. 1790 through 1975**. Many of the buildings surveyed are examples of **Modern architecture**, with a large number of quality examples of Modern university, government, commercial, and religious buildings. **Most of the buildings in the survey area were commercial**, largely composed of office and retail buildings. There were very **few intact residential blocks left** in the survey area and some of the surviving historic houses have experienced significant exterior changes. Of the **240 historic residential buildings surveyed**, 105 are now used for different purposes than that which they were originally built—the majority of which have been **switched to commercial use**. This adaptive use has allowed these buildings to survive in many now commercial areas such as Elmwood Avenue. There were some surprising **examples of older houses that were updated around the 1930s** with brick veneer, Craftsman windows, and porches while retaining older forms and interior chimneys as clues to their origins. This finding tied into the **trend of updating homes rather than building new to save money** during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS: NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register Individual Structure Recommendations

Survey recommendations included a list of properties that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. These properties must meet certain criteria but also be at least 50 years old and retain most of the seven aspects of integrity used by the Department of the Interior: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Recommended individual listings include 11 commercial buildings, 3 institutional resources, 1 parking structure, 3 residential buildings, and 1 recreational building. Check out the survey for the complete list! Below are a few highlights of the recommendations.

The following are **recommendations only**. Properties will not be listed as historic unless designation is pursued by the property owner.



Standard Oil Company, 300 Gervais St.

Built in 1930 as the district headquarters for Standard Oil Company, this structure is eligible for the National Register as a rare surviving example of a Beaux Arts office building in the survey area. The company built this structure as the largest and most prominent part of a complex that included a garage, a gas station, and a warehouse. This building has a Flemish bond brick exterior with limestone trim that includes an elaborate surround of pilasters, cornice, and a central double door entry. It retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling, but the altered surrounding and adaptive reuse challenges its integrity of association.



M.H. Baxley's Grocery, 1309 Gregg St.

Located in a formerly dense residential neighborhood with a mix of white and African American residents, this store was built by black grocer Manny Baxley in 1941. Baxley first opened a grocery store on this site in the mid-1920s and ran it until the 1970s. This small commercial store in a residential area offered convenience for residents without vehicles and was an alternative to white-owned establishments that did not serve black patrons. The building retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling, but the loss of residential character nearby and the vacancy of the building diminish its integrity of setting and association.



US Post Office, 1601 Assembly St.

This 1966 post office is an excellent example of the International Style and the federal government's commitment to Modernism. The \$5 million project received the SC AIA's Honor Award in 1968, the highest commendation presented by the organization. The jury recognized it as "a handsome and distinguished civic structure" and praised its "clear and well-articulated expression of complex functions." The building maintains a high level of integrity in its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS: NATIONAL REGISTER, CONT.

National Register Individual Structure Recommendations, cont.



SC State Archives, 1430 Senate St.

G. Thomas Harmon and William J. Keenan designed this Stripped Classical building, one of the first institutional structures constructed on the formerly residential Senate Street in the early 1960s. The building replaced the World War Memorial Building (built 1935, 920 Sumter Street) as the home for the state's historical records and commission. Its restrained style and stone sheathing harken to the Classical Revival War Memorial and the John C. Calhoun and Wade Hampton State Office Buildings just blocks west along Senate Street.



Parsonage for Sidney Park M.E. Church, 1108 Blanding St.

This is the last surviving residence adjacent to the central business district on Main Street. Historically, the fringes of the blocks that backed up against Main Street's commercial corridor featured quite a few houses. They were sometimes the homes of the owners of businesses on Main Street. Most were wood-sided. The house at 1108 Blanding Street is unusual in its brick exterior and in its surviving two-story porch (although the columns were replaced with iron ca. 1960s). It was built around 1903 as the parsonage for the black Sidney Park M.E. Church (1893), and it served in that capacity at least until the late 1920s. It retains a fair degree of integrity of location, setting, design, and feeling.



Young Men's Christian Association, 1420 Sumter St.

Built in 1911, the YMCA was designed by Shand and Lafaye of Columbia. The seven story brick building featured a pool and gymnasium as well as dormitory space. The building was for white men and represents a period of segregation among recreational and social services. It was still in use as the YMCA until the 2010s, distinguishing it as the longest operating recreational/social building within the survey area. The building retains integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and feeling. The integrity of materials and association is diminished.



SC State Library, 1500 Senate St.

Designed by William N. Geiger Jr. of Geiger-Califf-Player Architects in 1969, this building is an outstanding example of Brutalism: its bold concrete frame stands proud of the recessed, floating curtain walls of the building's public spaces. This building and the State Archives are also both included as contributing resources to the recommended Senate Street National Register Historic District

SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS: NATIONAL REGISTER, CONT.

National Register Historic District Recommendations

The survey also recommended four districts for listing in the National Register: The Hampton Street Medical Corridor Historic District, The Harden Street Black Commercial Historic District, UofSC New Campus Historic District, and UofSC East Campus Historic District. A historic district is a collection of sites and buildings that share commonalities such as period of construction or architectural style and derive importance from the interrelation of resources.* Check out the survey for the full explanation of district recommendations. The following is a **recommendation only**. Properties will not be listed as historic unless designation is pursued by the property owner.



Harden Street Black Commercial Historic District

Located on the west side of Harden Street's 1500 block, this small district consists of only five (5) buildings but represents a fairly intact grouping of what existed here by the late 1960s. This includes an octagonal ca. 1962 former Victory Savings Bank at 1505 Harden Street, the 1940s Carver Theater (already listed in the NRHP), a former house turned into a store, and a motel with a rear building that reportedly served as the headquarters for the *Lighthouse and Informer*, a local black newspaper in the early 1950s.

This small district served the black community to the west and to the east (the Waverly neighborhood), as well as Allen University and Benedict College, which are across Harden Street. It was built as a segregated black business and entertainment district, with a store, restaurant, motel, and theater all operating well into the late 1960s and early 1970s. This is an example of duplicative businesses for blacks who were segregated from white establishments. It is also an example of black business ownership and the type of small commercial developments that served local neighborhoods. Carver Theater had live entertainment as well as movies, making this a fairly diverse grouping for such a small district

Integration likely played a role in the loss of customers for this district. It fell into disrepair and has been essentially vacant for several decades. An older brick commercial building that faced south onto Hampton Street was demolished in the early 2000s, but otherwise the surviving buildings are a good representation of the area as it appeared during the segregated business practices under Jim Crow in the late 1960s.



*See National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation: https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf

SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS: LOCAL LEVEL

While anything recommended for the NRHP would also be considered for inclusion as a local landmark or local historic districts, there are a few resources that are recommended only at the local level. This includes recommendations for 13 Individual Landmarks and 3 local historic districts. The following are **recommendations only**. Properties will not be listed as historic unless designation is pursued by the property owner.

Local Landmark Recommendations

Recommendations are for the three levels of local landmark designation (type I, II, and III) and involve evaluation of a resource's 1. distinctiveness of architectural design; 2. association with architects, families, or genres of buildings; or 3. representation of a particular building type or site associated with person of distinction. Type I landmarks "strongly contribute to the City's visual and cultural history," Type II landmarks "significantly contribute," and Type III landmarks "generally contribute. Below are a few recommended local landmark buildings.

New South Life Insurance Company, 1900 Assembly St. (Group II Landmark)

Built in 1964 for New South Life Insurance this building appears to be the city's oldest surviving example of a drive-through teller canopy for vehicles, which dates to ca. 1970 when it became First Palmetto State Bank. As Columbia transformed its downtown to accommodate suburban workers and the heavy traffic and parking needs of the 1960s, architects also found creative ways to cater to the driver.

This is also a rare example of the arcaded front in Columbia. The building's white brick arcade contrasts with the tinted windows and dark spandrel glass in the recessed façade. It also features a small, built-in planter along the front of the building, typical for the era. Unlike many banks in the survey area that were renovated, reroofed, and stuccoed over in the 1980s and 1990s, this building retains a high degree of integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling as well as location and setting. It is currently still a bank. It is recommended as a Group II Landmark for its unique and outstanding architecture.



Clock, near 1339 Main St. (Group I Landmark)

Likely a Seth Thomas tower clock from 1908, this street clock sits on the sidewalk with four faces, each with a large round glass clock. The overall shape is round with a finial on top, filigree atop the clock faces, and lion heads and ornate molding below. It rests on a fluted column on a metal pedestal with a granite plinth. It has a twin just one block north on the northeast corner of Main and Hampton Streets, which is already listed as contributing to the NRHP Columbia Commercial Historic District. Seth Thomas produced clocks as early as 1813 and his company is the longest established clock company in the United States. Distinctive tower clock like this one is what helped build the company's excellent reputation. This clock retains a high degree of integrity in its location, setting, design, materials, craftsmanship, feeling, and association. This is recommended as a Group I Landmark because of its rare design, which strongly contributes to Columbia's visual history

SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS: LOCAL LEVEL

Local Landmark Recommendations, cont.



Little Red Schoolhouse, near 1700 Gist (Group II Landmark)

Likely built in 1883, this one-room schoolhouse is the last surviving private school building remaining within the survey boundaries. Originally located in the 1400 block of Blanding Street, this was the school of Ellen Janney. Janney operated a school for white children from at least 1883 to 1915, when she retired. This building was moved in the 1980s to Riverfront Park and eventually branded as the "Little Red Schoolhouse." Although moved away from its original setting and context, this building is the only surviving example of its kind. It retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Its move and vacancy have eliminated its integrity of location, setting, and association. It is recommended as a Group II Landmark as a good example of a type of building which is in danger of becoming extinct locally and for being associated with local education efforts.



Stier Supply Company, 2021 Blanding Street (Group I Landmark)

Stier Supply Company's building at 2021 Blanding Street is the best example of the Modern style, office/storefront-on-warehouse combination that survives in the survey area. Modernism influenced Columbia's retail buildings and warehouses as well as its office buildings. The loss of the Southern Railway yards in the northeast quadrant of the survey area, as well as the demolition of nearby housing through urban renewal, opened up land for redevelopment in the area in the 1960s. This area retained some of its industrial character through the construction of a number of new wholesale warehouses, most of which had offices or showrooms at the front of the buildings. Almost all have been heavily altered, while some were built with minimal ornamentation. Built in 1953 by General Construction Company (architect currently unknown), the brick façade of the Stier Supply building has a recessed glass wall with slender, metal colossal posts up to a stucco soffit; the glass extends atop the brick in left bay and blind, recessed blocks form a geometric pattern in the right bay. The name "Stier Supply" is painted on the east elevation, and a small sign is affixed to the façade. This building retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. Now vacant, its integrity of association is diminished. It is recommended as a Group I Landmark for its outstanding architectural design.



1439 Cherokee St. (Group III Landmark)

1430 Cherokee Street is a Queen Anne style house built around 1906 on the southeast corner of Hampton and Cherokee Streets. Local druggist and soda water entrepreneur Dr. O. E. Thomas developed the midblock street in 1905, petitioning the city to open the street especially for new residential development. This house is the finest surviving example for the street and was likely built as an anchor before the construction of other homes to attract investment. It has had some alterations but retains important features such as its octagonal tower and turret, 2/2-wood windows, and wrap-around porch. It retains integrity of setting, location, design, feeling, and association. With some alteration to the porch and the rear additions, the integrity of materials and workmanship is diminished. It is recommended as a Group III Landmark for its distinctive architecture that is in danger of becoming extinct locally.

SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS: LOCAL LEVEL

Local Historic District Recommendations

Local historic districts may be designated in one of four categories: Landmark Districts, Historic Commercial Districts, Architectural Conservation Districts, or Protection Areas. The district recommendations in this survey are for 2 Architectural Conservation Districts and 1 Protection Area. Architectural Conservation Districts tend to maintain a high level of architectural integrity while Protection Areas generally have undergone more change with loss of historic material and historic buildings. Below is a sample of the recommended local historic districts.

Hampton Street Historic District (Architectural Conservation District)

As a good collection of a variety of building types and styles, the recommended Hampton Street Historic District shows the changing building uses and introduction of the small office in the mid-1900s as the City removed many of its residential buildings. This is the only recommended district associated with the impact of the streetcar on Columbia's built environment within the survey area. The surviving residential buildings are generally intact with integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The loss of residential use for conversion to commercial use for many of the buildings has diminished its integrity of association. The purpose-built commercial offices from the 1950s through the 1970s interrupted the historically residential neighborhood and together these various resources show the evolution of Columbia's building stock from the late 1800s through the 1970s in one geographic location.



Hampton Street Historic District with boundaries of proposed NRHP Hampton Street Medical Corridor Historic District (red), residential buildings to add to a local district (blue and yellow).



Wayne Street Historic District (Protection Area)

The Wayne Street Historic District includes thirteen (13) buildings with only one (1) non-contributing in a period of significance from ca. 1870 through ca. 1940. One building, the Harriett Cornwell Tourist Home at 1713 Wayne Street, is already listed in the NRHP. It lies within the Arsenal Hill Neighborhood, which has previously been determined not eligible for the NRHP by the SCDAAH. The boundary for that evaluation was much larger than what is being suggested here. This potential district is concentrated in only the 1700 block of Wayne Street and two lots adjacent to Wayne Street in either direction on Blanding Street. This represents the densest collection of historic buildings in what had been a fairly well-populated residential area throughout the early 1900s. It is an area that experienced the changing demographics of the early 1900s as African Americans remained downtown while many whites fled to the growing (and racially restricted) suburbs. Like many neighborhoods in Columbia, it began as a racially mixed neighborhood around the turn of the century and slowly became more densely populated by black residents over a few decades. It was home to a majority African American population in the 1930s and the major historic architectural changes in the area appear to date to that era, leaving ca. 1940 as an end date for the period of significance.

WHAT'S NEXT

While this survey is complete, it is by no means completely comprehensive. By its nature it captures only a fleeting glimpse of a large body of buildings. Many efforts have been made to research buildings that appeared significant, but not every building has been researched. There is still a lot of undiscovered history among these structures and throughout Columbia.

Recommended Future Research And Surveys

Neighborhoods- The city's boundaries stretch out into a wide ring of suburbs to the north, east, and southeast. Each area has a distinct character in terms of its building types, commercial and residential uses, and architectural styles. These are part of the social history of Columbia and warrant further research and potential surveys.

Corridors- Commercial corridors such as North Main Street, Two Notch Road, and Devine Street have a number of historic and mid-century resources, some of which are under development pressure. These are highly visible material records of Columbia's expansion beyond the downtown and would be important to record.

Interiors- Although surveying the interiors of historic resources is generally not practical or typical, there are some interior treatments in Modern resources in Columbia that warrant documentation and preservation. It would be worthwhile to determine if any important interior treatments survive from the Modern buildings and to encourage both their appreciation and preservation.

Signs- Historic signs are rare within the survey area. The City is encouraged to pursue survey and documentation of historic signage within its purview and to find ways to encourage its preservation.

African American Resources- Associations with African American history have been noted for some of the resources in the survey but this is not a comprehensive review of all black resources in the survey area. The City should continue to investigate historic resources associated with black Columbians.

Jewish Resources- There was a significant Jewish population in Columbia, whose history is still being researched and shared by Historic Columbia. Its residential patterns and influences on the city are important to document.



For the full list of recommendations be sure to check out the survey online at <https://planninganddevelopment.columbiasc.gov/city-plans/>