



**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Pat McCrory
Secretary Susan Kluttz

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

July 21, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mary Pope Furr
Office of Human Environment
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley 
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Historic Structures Survey/Eligibility Evaluation of Burton Street Neighborhood,
I-26 Connector, Asheville, I-2513, Buncombe County, CH 96-0472

Thank you for your recent letter, transmitting the evaluation report for the Burton Street Neighborhood. We have reviewed the report and **concur that the Burton Street Neighborhood (BN6282) is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places** for the reasons outlined.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or environmental.review@ncdcr.gov. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number



PAT McCRORY
Governor

NICHOLAS J. TENNYSON
Secretary

CH 96-0472

Ms. Renee Gledhill-Earley
State Historic Preservation Office
Department of Cultural Resources
4617 MSC
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4617

H Anne 7/4
Not eligible 7/14/16
Due 7/18/16

Dear Renee:

RE: **Eligibility Evaluation of Burton Street Neighborhood**, I-26 Connector in Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina, TIP No. I-2513, FA# MANHF-26-1(53), WBS 34165.1.2

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to build a freeway connecting I-26 southwest of Asheville to US 19-23-70 north of Asheville and improve I-240. The project is subject to compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and implemented by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations for compliance codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

ACME Preservation Services conducted a re-survey of the Burton Street Neighborhood in Spring of 2016 after questions were raised by the some participants in a public hearing in Winter 2016. Numerous properties in the neighborhood were documented in the four previous surveys (1999, 2001, 2006, and 2015) for the project and all resulted in findings of not eligible. The attached survey report recommends the Burton Street Neighborhood is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor are any of the buildings individually eligible.

Please review the report and provide us with your comments. If you have any questions concerning the accompanying documentation, please contact me at (919) 707-6068 or mfurr@ncdot.gov.

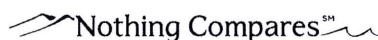
Sincerely,

Mary Pope Furr, Architectural Historian
Human Environment Section, PDEA

Attachments

Cc (w/ electronic attachment):

Michael Wray, PDEA Project Manager, NCDOT



**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT
Intensive Evaluation: Burton Street Neighborhood**

**I-26 Connector in Asheville
Buncombe County
North Carolina Department of Transportation
TIP No. I-2513
WBS No. 34165.1.2
FA No. MANHF-26-1(53)**

**Prepared for:
Human Environment Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1598 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598**

**Prepared by:
Acme Preservation Services, LLC
825C Merrimon Avenue, #345
Asheville, NC 28804
828-281-3852**

June 2016

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT
Intensive Evaluation: Burton Street Neighborhood**

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Buncombe County
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**Prepared by:
Acme Preservation Services, LLC
825C Merrimon Avenue, #345
Asheville, NC 28804
828-281-3852**

June 2016

Clay Griffith, Principal Investigator
Acme Preservation Services, LLC

Date

Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor
Historic Architecture Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation

Date

Historic Architectural Resources Survey for I-26 Connector in Asheville, Buncombe County
North Carolina Department of Transportation
TIP No. I-2513 | WBS No. 34165.1.2 | FA No. MANHF-26-1(53)

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to build a freeway connecting Interstate 26 (I-26) southwest of Asheville to US 19-23-70 north of Asheville. Known as the I-26 Connector, the project would improve Interstate 240 (I-240) between the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange and Patton Avenue and construct a freeway across the French Broad River on new location from Patton Avenue to US 19-23-70 south of Broadway Street (SR 1781). Among the proposed improvements is the widening of existing I-240 from four lanes to eight lanes south of Patton Avenue. Three alternatives are being considered for the new location alignment north of Patton Avenue. The project limits extend approximately five miles.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project generally encompasses the Project Study Area for the proposed widening of I-240 south of Patton Avenue and for the three new alignment alternatives to the north. The full extent of the APE has been intensively surveyed for historic architectural resources by Mattson, Alexander and Associates over the course of three projects dating between 1999 and 2006. In their three survey reports, Mattson, Alexander and Associates documented more than 150 properties over 50 years of age within the APE and identified thirteen properties that are either listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Burton Street neighborhood is a predominantly African American neighborhood situated on the west side of I-240 and north of Haywood Road in West Asheville. The APE for the proposed improvements crosses parts of the neighborhood where it borders the interstate right-of-way. Twenty-six properties in the Burton Street Neighborhood were surveyed by Mattson, Alexander and Associates in 1999 and individually evaluated for potential National Register eligibility. In February 2016, NCDOT contracted with Acme Preservation Services, LLC (APS) to survey and evaluate the neighborhood as a potential historic district. Architectural historian Clay Griffith conducted the field survey in February and March 2016, documenting the general conditions of the neighborhood resources, and authored the summary report.

After an intensive evaluation of the Burton Street Neighborhood, it was determined that there does not appear to be either a potentially eligible historic district or individual resources eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The present Burton Street Neighborhood encompasses several areas that developed along the Burton Street corridor in the early twentieth century, including the area near Haywood Road, Knob Circle (present-day Mardell Circle), and Park View, a residential subdivision platted by community leader E. W. Pearson in 1912. An African American businessman and organizer, Pearson promoted and sold lots in Park View as an African American neighborhood in West Asheville. In addition to his real estate activities, Pearson owned and operated a neighborhood grocery store, employed local residents, organized the Buncombe County District Colored Agricultural Fair, and formed a semi-professional black baseball team. His

leadership was instrumental in forging the tight-knit African American community that formed around Burton Street. Additionally, Pearson sold lots in the 1910s and 1920s for Rutherford P. Hayes, whose property was subdivided for development on Mardell Circle, Bryant Street, and Downing Street. The southern portion of Burton Street near Haywood Road was primarily settled around the same time by white working-class residents and was home to Asheville Knitting Mills.

The Burton Street Neighborhood fell into a period of decline during the last decades of the twentieth century following the construction of Patton Avenue to the north in the 1950s and I-240 to the east in the 1960s. In the past two decades, however, the neighborhood has undergone a significant revitalization that has introduced a considerable amount of rehabilitation work and new construction in the area. An unintended consequence of the revitalization efforts has been a marked change in the historic and architectural character of the neighborhood, which has been negatively impacted by the loss of historic structures and the construction of new infill buildings. Due to extensive changes throughout the neighborhood, including the loss of E. W. Pearson’s house and store, physical alterations to individual resources, and the construction of new buildings, the Burton Street Neighborhood does not appear to possess sufficient historic integrity to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under any criteria.

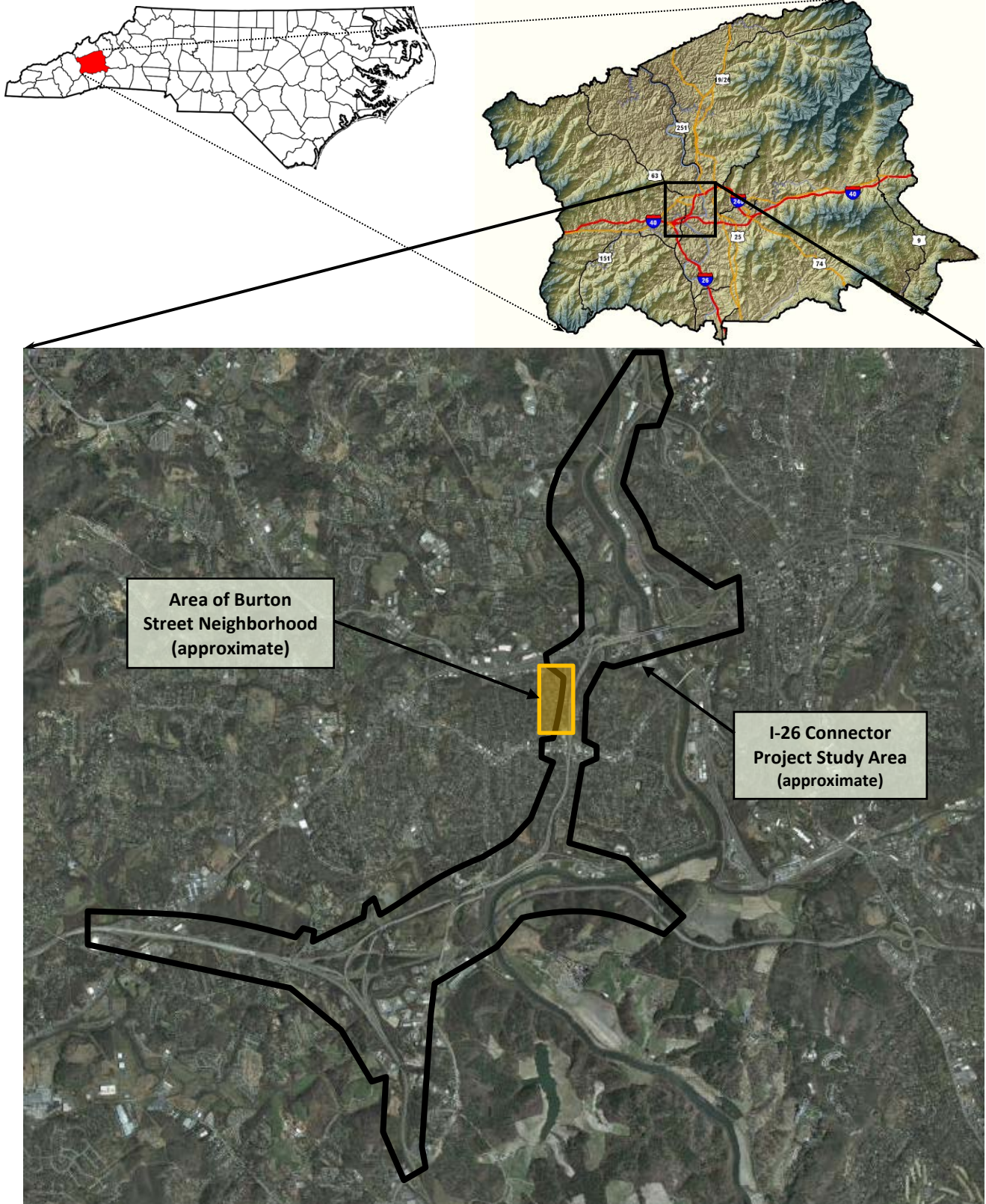
APS conducted the survey and prepared this report in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Technical Advisory T 6640.8A (Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents); the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological and Historic Preservation (48 FR 44716); 36 CFR Part 60; 36 CFR Part 800; the HPO’s *Report Standards for Historic Structure Survey Reports/Determinations of Eligibility/Section 106/110 Compliance Reports in North Carolina*; and NCDOT’s current *Historic Architecture Group Procedures and Work Products*. This property evaluation meets the guidelines of NCDOT and the National Park Service.

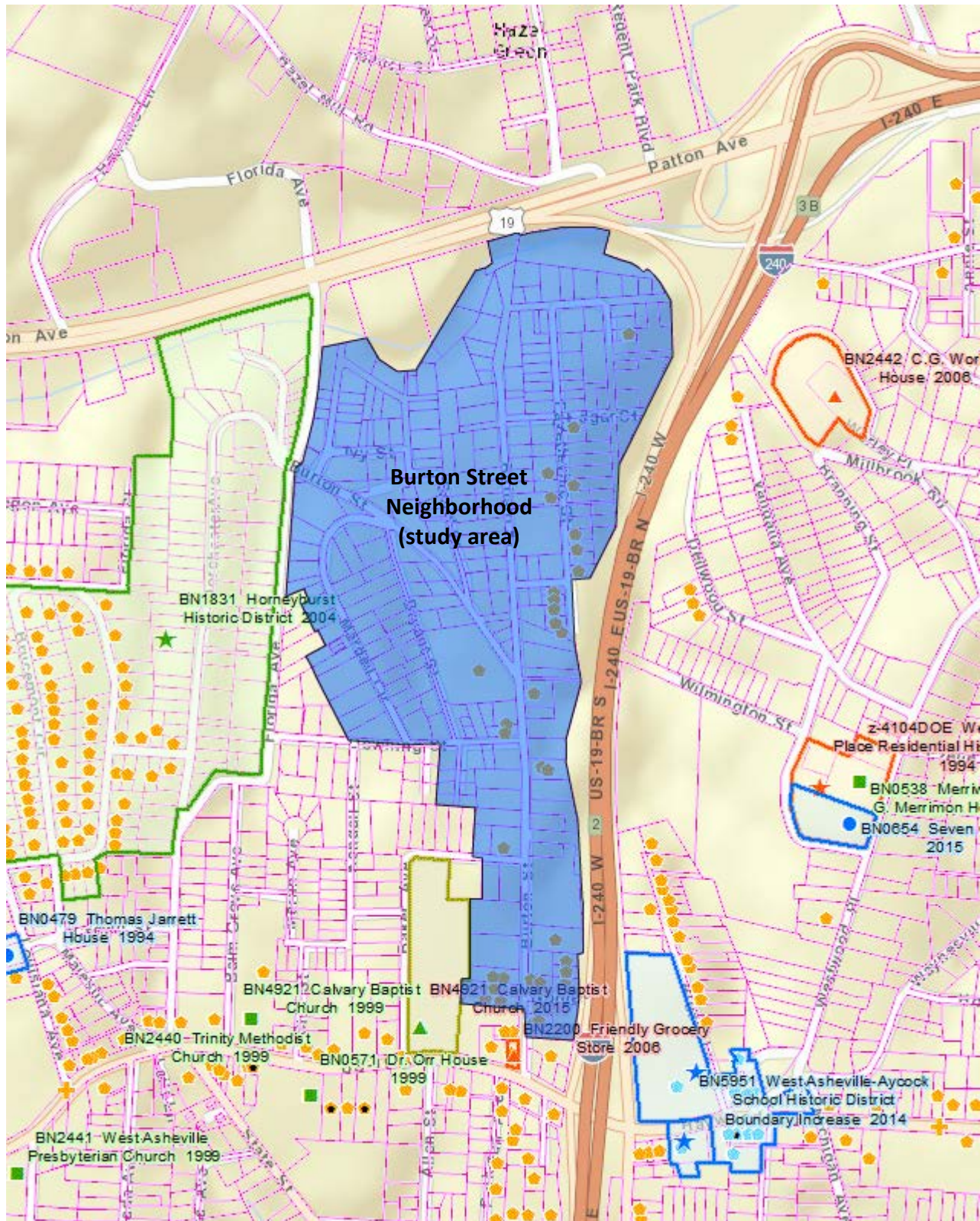
SSN	Property Name	Address	PIN	Eligibility Determination	Criteria
BN6282	Burton Street Neighborhood	Burton, Buffalo, Bryant, Edgar, Ivy, Downing, Fayetteville, and Saratoga streets; Mardell Circle; and Boyd and Atlanta avenues	multiple	Not eligible	A, B, C, D

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I. Project Location Maps





Burton Street Neighborhood (Base map: HPOWeb GIS Service)

II. Introduction

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) proposes to build a freeway connecting Interstate 26 (I-26) southwest of Asheville to US 19-23-70 north of Asheville. Known as the I-26 Connector, the project would improve Interstate 240 (I-240) between the existing I-26/I-40/I-240 interchange and Patton Avenue and construct a freeway on new location across the French Broad River from Patton Avenue to US 19-23-70 south of Broadway Street (SR 1781). Among the proposed improvements is the widening of existing I-240 from four lanes to eight lanes south of Patton Avenue. In the area of the I-26 Connector project between Haywood Road and Patton Avenue the proposed improvements to I-240 may impact the Burton Street neighborhood, which is located on the west side of existing I-240.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project generally encompasses the Project Study Area for the proposed widening of I-240 south of Patton Avenue and for the three new alignment alternatives to the north. The APE is defined by dense residential and commercial development to the south of Patton Avenue, where I-240 cuts through West Asheville. North of Patton Avenue, the APE extends through residential, commercial, and industrial development bordering the French Broad River. The APE intersects with portions of the Burton Street neighborhood including Buffalo, Fayetteville, Edgar, and Saratoga streets, as well as nearly half the length of Burton Street.

The full extent of the APE has been intensively surveyed for historic architectural resources by Mattson, Alexander and Associates over the course of three projects dating between 1999 and 2006. In their three survey reports, Mattson, Alexander and Associates identified thirteen properties within the APE that are either listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The Mattson firm recorded 151 additional resources over fifty years of age that were determined not eligible for the National Register, including twenty-six properties in the Burton Street Neighborhood.

In 2014-2015, NCDOT contracted with Acme Preservation Services, LLC (APS) to update the eligibility of the previously recorded properties listed in or eligible for the National Register. In addition to reviewing the three survey reports prepared by the Mattson firm and the related correspondence of the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO), APS reviewed the properties in the field and re-evaluated their potential National Register of Historic Places eligibility. The thirteen properties identified by Mattson, Alexander and Associates appear to remain eligible for the National Register.

Additionally, APS identified two properties potentially eligible for the National Register within the APE that were not recorded by Mattson, Alexander and Associates. The Southern Railway Bridge (BN5928) over the French Broad River was determined eligible in 2012, and Calvary Baptist Church (BN4921) at 531 Haywood Road was placed on the Study List in 1999. Calvary Baptist Church stands adjacent to the study area for the Burton Street Neighborhood.



I-240, view to north from Haywood Road; Burton Street Neighborhood at left



Burton Street, view southeast to Haywood Road



Burton Street, view south from intersection with Buffalo Street



Burton Street at intersection with Buffalo Street (r), view to north



Fayetteville Street, view south from Saratoga Street



Fayetteville Street, view north from intersection with Texas Street



Mardell Circle, view to northwest from Downing Street



Bryant Street, view to south



Houses, 44, 48 and 52 Boyd Avenue, view to northwest



Burton Street, view to southeast at intersection with Atlanta Avenue and Florida Avenue

III. Methodology

NCDOT contracted with APS in February 2016 to conduct a historic architectural resources survey and National Register evaluation for the Burton Street Neighborhood in West Asheville. Architectural historian Clay Griffith conducted the field survey in February and March 2016, documenting the general conditions of the neighborhood resources, and authored the summary report. In addition to reviewing previous historic architectural resources survey reports and related correspondence of the HPO for the I-2513 project, additional research was conducted through Buncombe County GIS and Register of Deeds online records, an examination of existing survey site files at the Western Office of Archives and History in Asheville, the West Asheville History Project materials, and at Pack Memorial Library in Asheville.

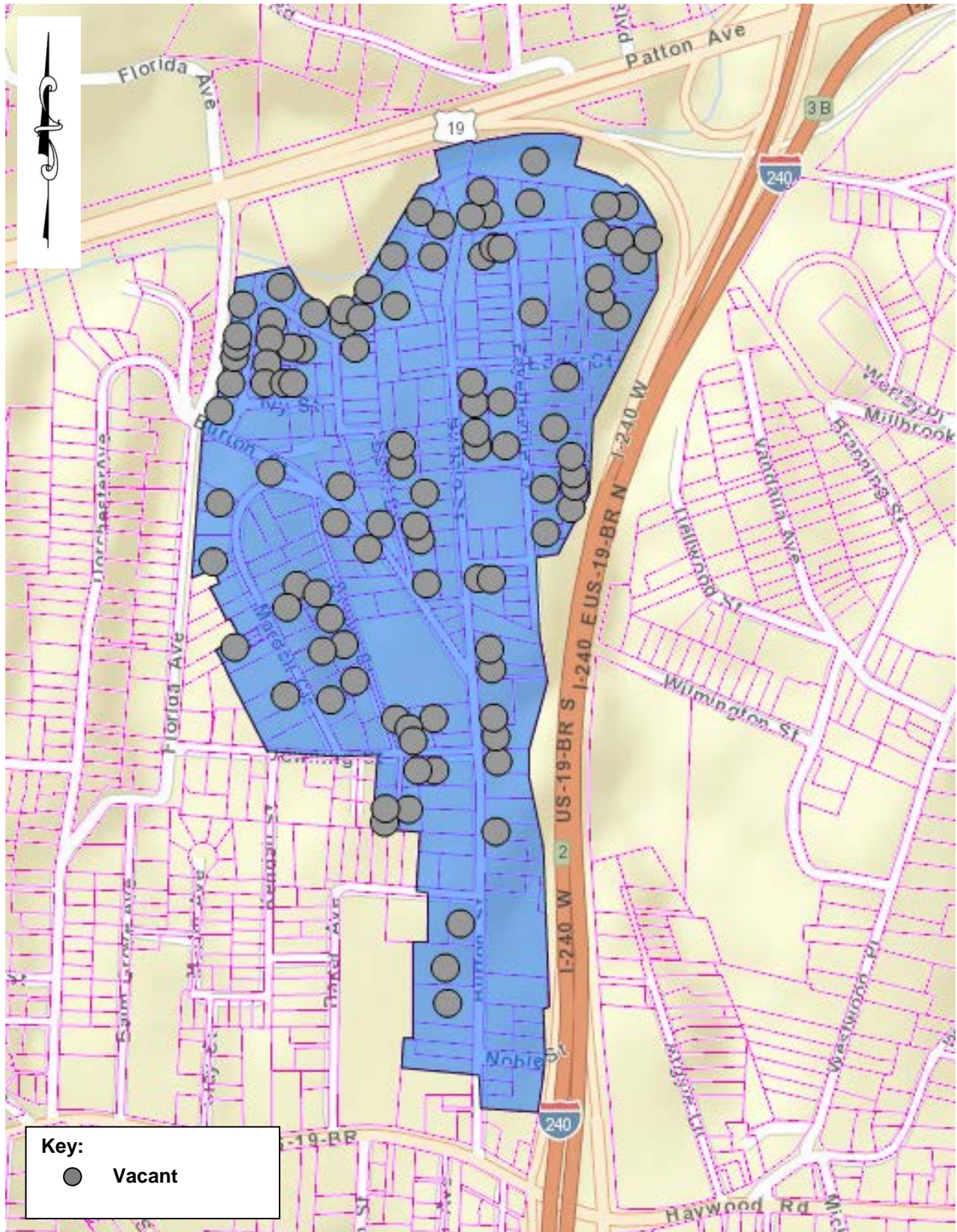
APS initiated the preliminary field work by conducting a search of GIS and tax records for 264 individual parcels within the Burton Street Neighborhood study area to determine the distribution of historic resources and vacant parcels throughout the area. Based on the county tax records, 101 of the 264 parcels in the study area are vacant with one new house under construction at 97 Downing Street. Much of the vacant property in the neighborhood is now located around its perimeter, especially in areas where it abuts the right-of-way for I-240, Patton Avenue, and Florida Avenue.

The remaining 163 resources were grouped by the dates of construction provided in tax records.¹ They were organized as having been built before 1939, 1940 to 1969, 1970 to 1999, and 2000 or later. The survey identified seventy-two primary resources built before 1939, although very few resources were built during the 1930s. Only nineteen resources were erected in the period between 1940 and 1969, with the majority of these resources built in the 1950s and 1960s. Twenty-seven resources were built in the period between 1970 and 1999, and tax records indicate that forty-five resources have been built in the neighborhood since 2000.

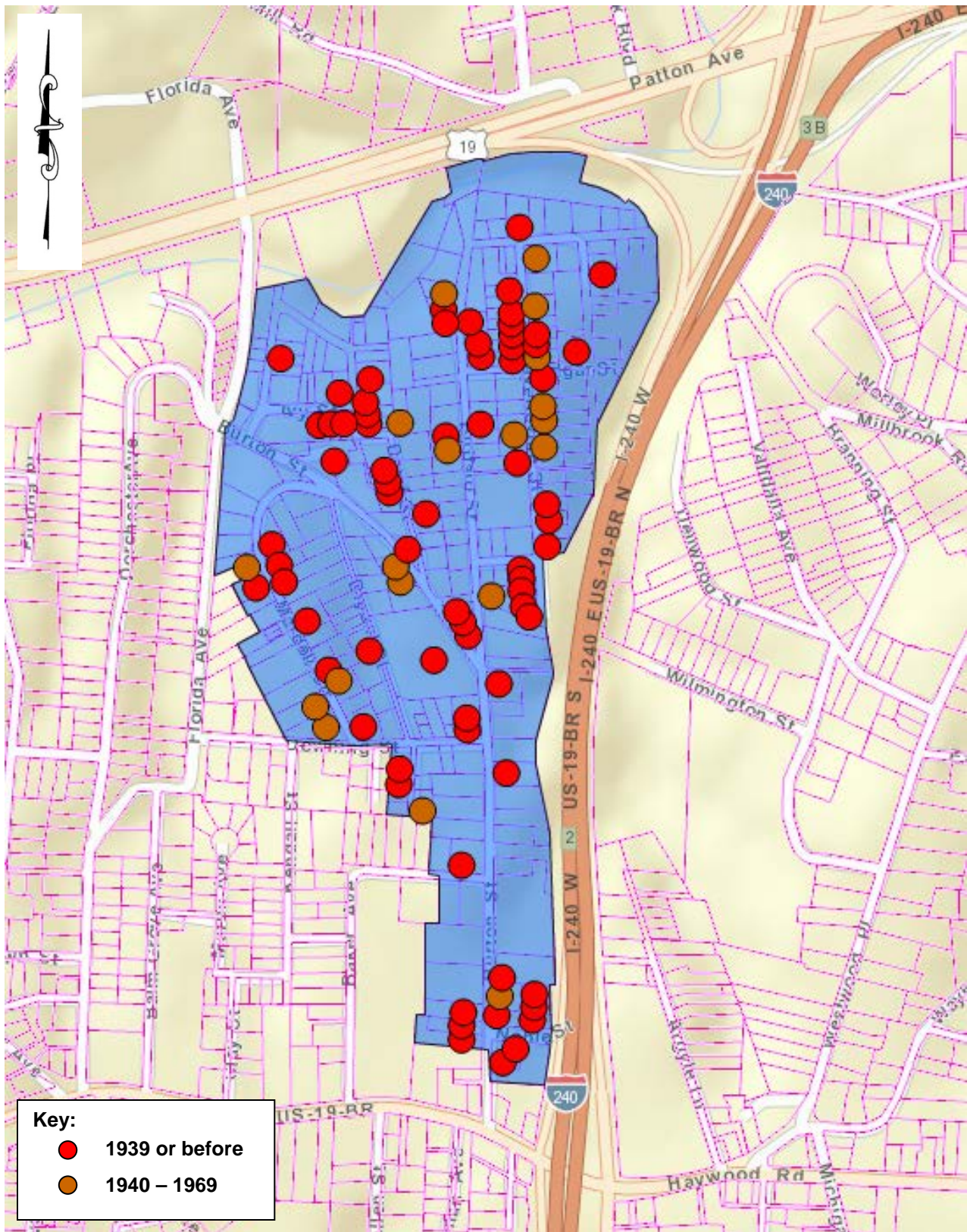
This report documents the current conditions of the neighborhood and its potential National Register eligibility, as well as the current conditions of the previously recorded Burton Street School (BN4790) and Wilson Chapel M.E. Church (BN5512). The church and school are the only individually surveyed properties within the neighborhood. Both properties were most recently documented during the Asheville Survey Update conducted 2008-2011. A small number of properties have been previously recorded during various city surveys and recorded as a multiple structures file with the HPO, including a number of the twenty-six properties documented by Mattson, Alexander and Associates in 1999.²

¹ The construction dates provided in Buncombe County tax records should not be relied upon as completely accurate, but on the whole they can be considered reasonably accurate. The dates of a few properties have been adjusted based on the field survey or other research to reflect more specific physical or historical data.

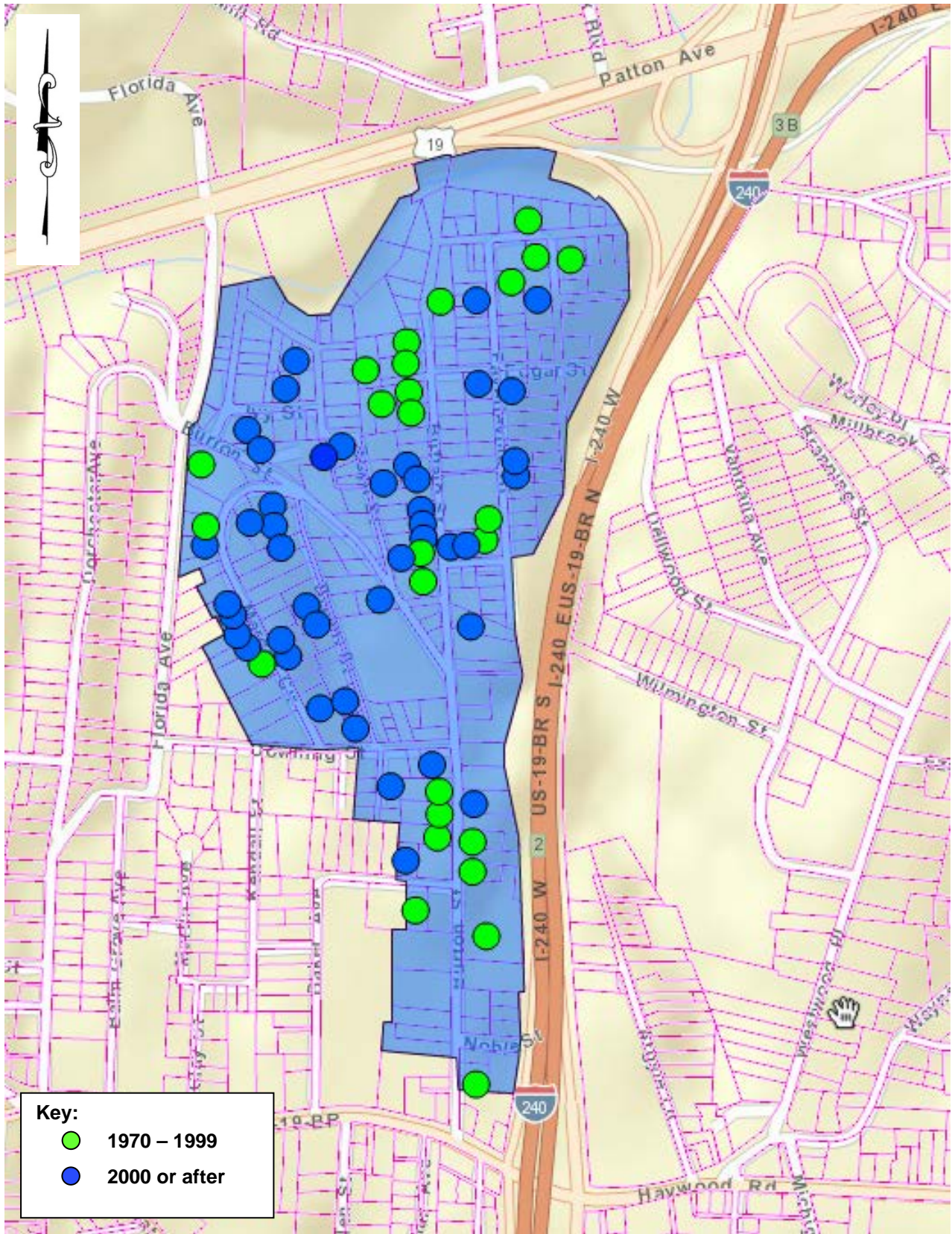
² Recorded in the HPO survey file "Houses, Burton Street" (BN1396). Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc., *Phase II Intensive Historic Architectural Survey and Report, New I-26 Route, Asheville Connector, Buncombe County, TIP No. I-2513* (Prepared for TGS Engineers and North Carolina Department of Transportation, Raleigh, NC, 1999).



Burton Street Neighborhood – vacant parcels



Burton Street Neighborhood – properties by date (built before 1969)



Burton Street Neighborhood – properties by date (built after 1970)

In addition to the properties identified by Mattson, Alexander and Associates in the neighborhood, two additional resources adjacent to the Burton Street Neighborhood have been determined to be potentially eligible for the National Register. The two resources—Baker Building (BN2200) and Calvary Baptist Church (BN4921)—are located on Haywood Road at the south end of the neighborhood but are not part of the Burton Street study area. The potential eligibility of both properties was recently updated by APS in 2015.³

Additional significant properties are located on the east side of I-240 opposite the Burton Street neighborhood. The West Asheville-Aycock School Historic District (BN1839) and Boundary Increase (BN5951) were listed in the National Register in 2006 and 2014, respectively. The district consists of the 1960s Aycock School campus and commercial buildings situated on both sides of Haywood Road from the I-240 interchange to Michigan Avenue. Two National Register-listed nineteenth-century brick residences, the Reynolds House (BN0176) and Seven Oaks (BN0654), are located on Westwood Place. The William Worley House (BN2442) at 1 Worley Place was determined eligible for the National Register in 1999 by Mattson, Alexander and Associates as part of the work conducted for I-2513.

³ Clay Griffith, *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Update Report, I-26 Connector in Asheville, Buncombe County, Tip No. I-2513* (Prepared for North Carolina Department of Transportation, Raleigh, NC, 2015).



Baker Building (BN2200), 503-505 Haywood Road, view to northwest at intersection with Burton Street. Photo by author, 2015.



Calvary Baptist Church (BN4921), 531 Haywood Road, view to north. Photo by author, 2015.

IV. Property Description

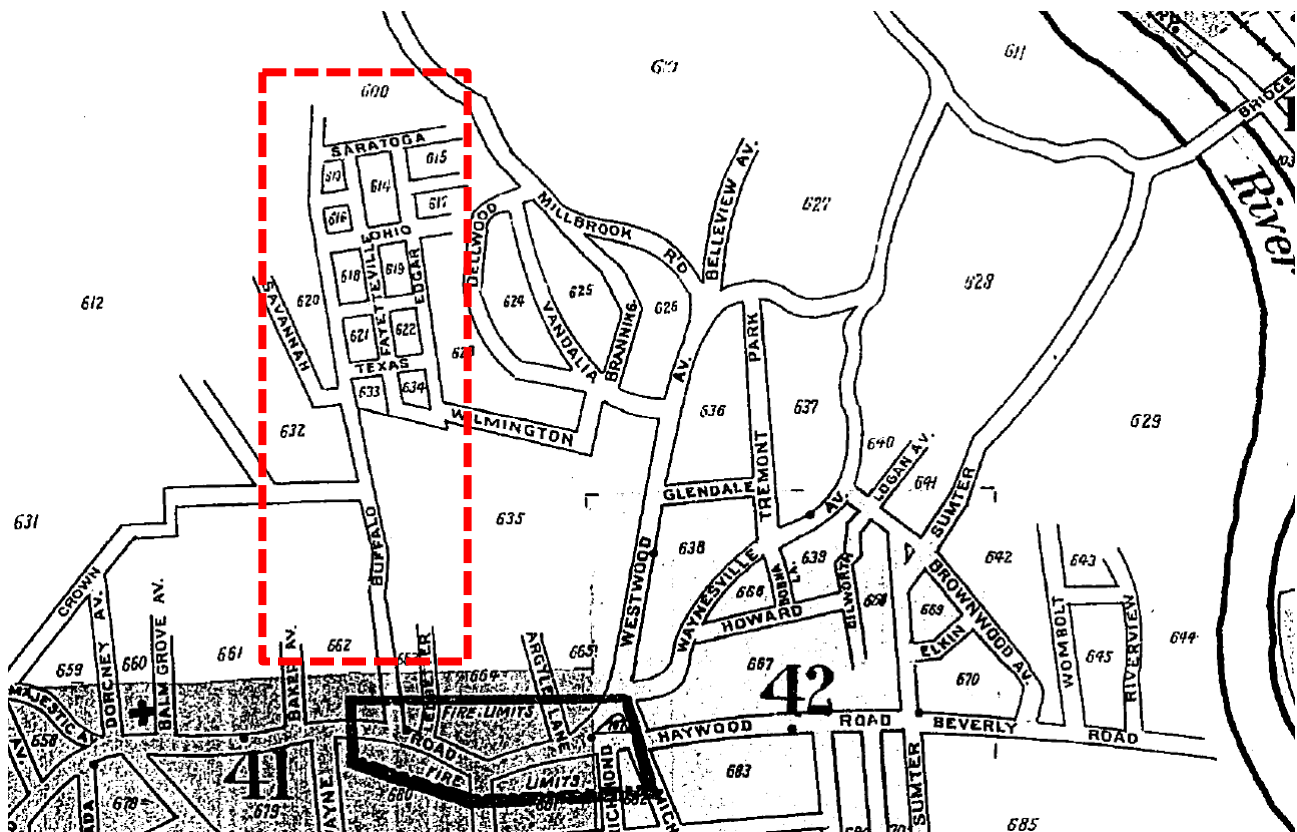
Resource Name	Burton Street Neighborhood
HPO Survey Site Number	BN 6282
Location	Burton, Buffalo, Bryant, Edgar, Ivy, Downing, Fayetteville, and Saratoga streets; Mardell Circle; and Atlanta and Boyd avenues
PIN	Multiple
Date(s) of Construction	ca. 1912 – 2016
Recommendation	Not eligible (Criteria A, B, C, D)



E. W. Pearson Grocery and Blue Note Casino, 3 Buffalo Street, Asheville
 (Image source: North Carolina Collection, ID L925-DS, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC)

The Burton Street Neighborhood is identified as an African American community settled in the 1910s. Located in West Asheville, the present neighborhood is generally bounded by Patton Avenue on the north, I-240 to the east, and Haywood Road to the south. The western limits of the neighborhood typically follow the back property lines of parcels on the west side of Burton Street from Haywood Street to Downing Street, back property lines of parcels on the south side of Downing Street, back property lines of parcels on the west side of Mardell Circle, and the east side of Florida Avenue from Burton Street north to Patton Avenue.

The Burton Street Neighborhood began to develop in the 1910s when Edward W. Pearson (1872-1946), an African American community leader, began selling lots on Buffalo and Fayetteville streets for an exclusively colored community known as Park View. He also served as an agent for Rutherford P. Hayes (1858-1927), third son of Rutherford B. Hayes, nineteenth president of the United States, selling lots on Knob Circle (present-day Mardell Circle). R. P. Hayes moved to Asheville from Chicago in the late 1890s, purchased the Falconhurst Farm, and acquired a substantial amount of land in West Asheville, particularly on the north side of Haywood Road. In addition to the Knob Circle lots, portions of Hayes' holdings were subdivided for Horneyhurst (BN1831), a residential development situated north of Haywood Road between Florida Avenue and Louisiana Avenue, and the Falconhurst neighborhood, a residential development located between Louisiana Avenue and Mitchell Avenue.

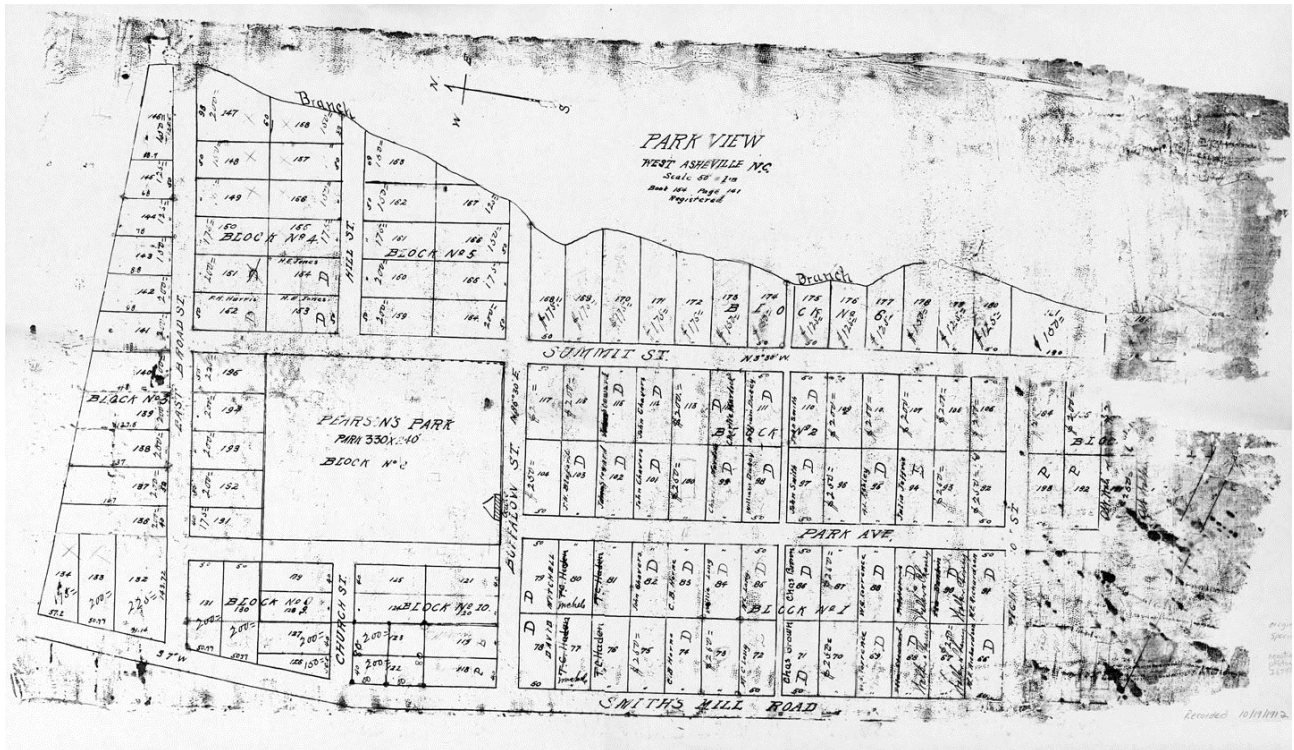


Sanborn Map - Asheville, N.C., 1917, sheet 1 (detail), early street patterns

The Burton Street Neighborhood stood somewhat insulated from other residential and commercial development in West Asheville through the mid-twentieth century. Buffalo Street connected the community with Haywood Road to the south, while a small creek meandered along the east side of the subdivision, separating it from the former route of the Western Turnpike (present-day Westwood Place). Judge J. G. Merrimon owned a large tract of land extending from Westwood Place to the creek adjoining Park View. Wilmington Street linked into the network of streets extending northwest from Westwood Place to the city limits. When I-240 was constructed through West Asheville in the 1960s, the route of the highway roughly followed the creek that

divided the two areas and severed the street connections between Park View and Westwood Place.

Pearson's Park View subdivision attracted a range of African American families to West Asheville including Dr. William G. Torrence, an African American physician; Henry E. Jones, proprietor of the YMI Drugstore; Rev. T. C. Haddon; and numerous other individuals who worked as cooks, laborers, embalmers, and waiters. Pearson, who had previously lived on Short Street in the Montford neighborhood and in rooms above his office on Eagle Street, moved to Park View around 1918. He erected a two-story concrete block commercial building at 3 Buffalo Street to house his grocery store and offices and a one-story hip-roof frame house for his family at the rear. Pearson set aside a large central block of Park View for a park known as Pearson's Park.



Park View, West Asheville, N.C., 1912, Buncombe County Plat Book 154, page 141

(Image source: West Asheville History Project, ID 1679-N, North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC)

As the neighborhood dates to the 1910s, the houses are typically one- and two-story frame dwellings common for the time, including numerous examples of Craftsman bungalows and a few examples of earlier hip-roof houses. There are very few early twentieth-century brick houses in the neighborhood, but a small number of houses are constructed of panel-faced concrete block. E. W. Pearson's store (no longer standing) featured a concrete block exterior enlivened with brick and tile accents displaying his initials and the symbols of various fraternal organizations. The two other prominent civic buildings in the neighborhood—the 1928 Burton Street School and the 1925 Wilson Chapel M. E. Church—are both constructed of brick.

The residents of the southern portion of Buffalo Street near Haywood Road (present-day Burton Street) were typically working-class white families. The change from predominantly white families to predominantly black families, as reflected in city directory listings, occurred just north of Baker Street. The houses on the southern portion were typical of the period with hip-roof frame dwellings, Craftsman bungalows, and several two-story residences. Of the two-story houses only the pyramidal-roof American foursquare at the corner of Burton and Baker streets (95 Baker Street) remains in the southern section. The house, which was identified as substantially altered in 1999, is currently undergoing further renovation. It has vinyl siding and replacement one-over-one windows.⁴

The neighborhood thrived during the 1920s with the influx of new residents. Pearson, an ambitious community activist, organized the Buncombe County District Colored Agricultural Fair, first held in the fall 1914 in Pearson Park. As the fair grew in popularity it was moved to other, larger accommodations and ran continuously until 1947. In the mid-1910s, Pearson organized Asheville's first black semi-professional baseball team, the Royal Giants. The team played other colored-league teams from cities in the surrounding states. Games were held first at Pearson Park and later at Oates Park in the Southside community. In addition to Pearson's store, the neighborhood contained numerous residences, several churches, and the Burton Street School. A new brick building replaced the two-room frame school in 1928.

The southern portion of Buffalo Street, extending from the school to Haywood Road, was renamed Burton Street in 1922 for city founder John Burton.⁵ From the school, Buffalo Street continued north into Pearson's Park View subdivision, while Burton Street turned to the northwest and extended to Florida Avenue on the edge of the Horneyhurst development. The newly formed Burtons Street, which ran the full length of the neighborhood, became the primary through-street. Trustees for Wilson Chapel M.E. Church purchased a lot on the east side of Burton Street in 1925 and began erecting a new brick church building, relocating the congregation from its Haywood Road location. Owners of the Asheville Knitting Mill erected a new plant at 53 Burton Street around 1923, relocating from the company's building on Haywood Road.

Development and construction in the Burton Street Neighborhood stalled during the Depression of the 1930s and in the war years that followed. Construction in the neighborhood began to resume slowly in the 1950s and 1960s, with new, small Ranch houses built in the Burton Street area. More significant physical changes occurred in the late 1950s with the extension of Patton Avenue across the French Broad River and along Smith's Mill Creek at the north end of the neighborhood. The construction of a new highway (present I-240) through West Asheville in the 1960s cut a wide swath along the east side of the neighborhood. Highway construction claimed fields and a creek, severed connecting streets, displaced residents, and forced the relocation of several houses to new lots within the neighborhood.

⁴ Mattson.

⁵ *Asheville Citizen* (October 13, 1922).

V. Historical Background

By the opening of the twentieth century, Asheville was a bustling town situated on an intermountain plateau near the convergence of the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers. The North Carolina General Assembly officially formed Buncombe County in 1792, and the small village of Asheville, its county seat, was incorporated in 1797. Situated on a plateau on the east side of the French Broad River, Asheville remained a small settlement at the crossroads of old Cherokee trading paths until the completion of the Buncombe Turnpike in 1827, which improved communication and trade through the area. Increased access helped the reputation of Asheville's scenic beauty and healing mountain air spread quickly. The completion of railroad connections to Asheville in the 1880s brought a great influx of new residents, visitors, businesses, institutions, and organizations.⁶

Prior to Asheville's late nineteenth-century growth spurt, African Americans comprised nearly half of the city's population. In the years following the railroad connection, tourism-related jobs and railroad employment helped stimulate a substantial African American community in Asheville, although it was largely self-contained and separate from the white community. In 1892 George Vanderbilt sponsored the construction of the Young Men's Institute, or YMI, a recreation center for the numerous black craftsmen who had been working to build Biltmore House. Located at the corner of South Market and Eagle streets just south of Pack Square in downtown, the YMI served as the cultural center of the black community and the anchor of the African American business district, known as The Block.⁷

Through the latter part of the nineteenth century, settlements began to develop around the periphery of Asheville. The Western Turnpike, which had been completed in 1855 as a thoroughfare connecting Salisbury, North Carolina, to the Georgia border, was the primary vein of settlement on the west side of the French Broad River. Extending through Haywood County to the west, the Western Turnpike was later known as Haywood Road in Asheville. The town of West Asheville, originally called Silver Springs and located along the western bank of the French Broad River, was officially incorporated in 1889.⁸

Recognizing the potential for growth in the area, lumber baron Edwin Carrier began buying acreage on the west side of the French Broad River, including the land that contained Sulphur

⁶ Douglas Swaim, *Cabins & Castles: The History and Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina* (Asheville, NC: City of Asheville, County of Buncombe, and North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1981), 9-13; Ora Blackmun, *Western North Carolina and Its People to 1880* (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1977), 203; and Clay Griffith, "West Asheville-Aycock School Historic District" National Register of Historic Places Nomination (2006).

⁷ Nan K. Chase, *Asheville: A History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2007), 136 and 139-143.

⁸ For reasons that are unclear, West Asheville's original incorporation charter was repealed on March 8, 1897. F.A. Sondley, *Asheville and Buncombe County* (Asheville, NC: The Citizen Company, 1922) 164; Phyllis Lang, *The History of West Asheville* (Asheville, NC: The West Asheville History Project, 2004), 1; and Clay Griffith, "Seven Oaks" National Register of Historic Places Nomination (2015).

Springs. Carrier began laying out streets and subdividing the land along Haywood Road for development. Edwin Carrier and his business partners incorporated in the late 1880s under the name the “West Asheville Improvement Company,” which heavily influenced the evolution of West Asheville. Additionally, Carrier improved municipal services by constructing a dam along Hominy Creek to bring electricity to the newly incorporated town of West Asheville in 1889. The hydroelectric facility powered the Sulphur Springs Hotel and an electric streetcar, which ran from the hotel across the French Broad River to Asheville.⁹

The population of West Asheville, which was incorporated for a second time in 1913, totaled nearly 4,000 people in 1914. That same year residents elected H. L. Bright as the first mayor and Haywood Road was paved for the first time. Haywood Road extended for more than a mile west and southwest of the French Broad River, with two churches and a mission, a bank, and a fire station. The variety of stores and businesses located along Haywood Road included the West Asheville Pharmacy, Randall’s Shoe Repair, grocers R. L. Pitillo and A. M. Young, a photographer, and a barber shop.¹⁰

The city of Asheville formally annexed West Asheville on June 9, 1917, nearly doubling the size of the city. Although West Asheville was well established before its consolidation with the city of Asheville, the area experienced a period of growth and development during the late 1910s and 1920s that greatly affected the appearance of Haywood Road. Settlement remained sparse in the first decade of the twentieth century, but during the second period of incorporation, from 1913 to 1917, concentrations of civic and commercial buildings were erected at the intersections of Haywood Road with present-day Westwood Place and farther west with Brevard Road.

The development of West Asheville was not limited to the commercial corridor along Haywood Road, although the commercial activities and streetcar line clearly made Haywood Road the primary thoroughfare. To some degree the streetcar line allowed West Asheville to develop as a suburb of Asheville by providing easy access across the river and into downtown, but the residential neighborhoods that developed on the north and south sides of Haywood Road were also home to the many small business owners and employees living and working in West Asheville or in the industries located along the river. Architects, surveyors, real estate agents, automobile dealers, garages, barbers, bankers, physicians, building suppliers, grocers, restaurants, dressmakers, cleaners, photographers, and bakers were among the many types of businesses, professions, and services that lined Haywood Road. The distinct character of West Asheville is attributable to the close physical relationship of work and home found in the commercial areas of Haywood Road and the neighborhoods that lie adjacent to them.¹¹

Residential development spread slowly out from the Haywood Road corridor. The road that became Burton Street and Buffalo Street was originally an old unpaved county road, most

⁹ Lang, 6-11, 15-17.

¹⁰ West Asheville History Project, “The Story of Haywood Road,” Vol. 1, Issue 1 (Winter 2001), 1-2, and Lang, 3-7.

¹¹ Griffith 2006.

frequently referred to as Patterson's Mill Road. The road extended beyond the city limits through rural and agricultural land, across Smith Mill Creek, and out into the Emma community.¹²

Among the many new residential developments in West Asheville that were subdivided from large land parcels and farm tracts, the Park View development, a small residential area sold to African American families, was offered by E. W. Pearson, a prominent black businessman and community leader. Pearson also served as an agent for Rutherford P. Hayes, son of President Rutherford B. Hayes, and sold lots on Hayes' Knob Circle property (present-day Mardell Circle). Hayes had moved to Asheville in the late 1890s and purchased the Falconhurst Farm, which he later enlarged to include nearly 1,200 acres. When Hayes moved to Florida in 1922, portions of his property were platted and sold by developer J. T. Horney as the Horneyhurst and Falconhurst subdivisions. West Asheville resident Dr. J. G. Anderson, a physician and vice-president of the Bank of West Asheville, lived in the 800-block of Haywood Road at the south end of Burton Street and actively participated in commercial and residential development of the area. He partnered with local businessman J. S. Mardis to erect the Mardis Building at 444 Haywood Road in 1925 and sold residential building lots on Michigan Avenue.¹³



E. W. Pearson, Sr. (North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC)

Edward W. Pearson Sr. (1872-1946) contributed greatly to the growth of an African American community in West Asheville and development of the Burton Street Neighborhood. Born in Burke County to a farming family, Pearson set off for the coal mines of Tennessee in 1892 in pursuit of new opportunities. He enlisted in the Army and served with the "Buffalo Soldiers" (9th Cavalry Division) during the Spanish-American War. Decorated and honorably discharged, Pearson lived briefly in Chicago, where he studied law, insurance, real estate, merchandizing, and fraternal Masonic organizations. He moved to Asheville in 1906, where he organized the Mountain City Mutual Life Insurance Company, a local arm of the Royal Benefit Society, and ran a mail order business (Piedmont Shoe Company). Pearson had an office on Eagle Street, in the heart of "the Block," the historically African American business district in downtown Asheville. He resided in the Montford neighborhood with his wife Clementine, who he divorced in 1914.¹⁴

¹² Johnnie Grant, "I-26 and What's Next for the Burton Street Community," *The Urban News* (December 14, 2015).

¹³ Clay Griffith, "West Asheville-Aycock School Historic District Boundary Increase" National Register of Historic Places Nomination (2014), and "Rutherford Platt Hayes," Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center website (<http://www.rbhayes.org/hayes/mssfind/274/hayesrp.htm>; accessed May 8, 2016).

¹⁴ Kevan D. Frazier, *Legendary Locals of Asheville, North Carolina* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 22; *Asheville Gazette-News* (December 17, 1914 and January 26, 1915); E. W. Pearson obituary, *Asheville Citizen* (July 5,



Pearson's Store, 1924, interior (North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC)

By 1918, Pearson married Annis Bradshaw and moved to Park View, the residential subdivision he was developing for African American families in West Asheville. Platted in 1912, Park View occupied a ridge at the north end of Smith's Mill Road (or Patterson's Mill Road), later known as Buffalo Street. The subdivision was laid out around a central open space, known as Pearson's Park, measuring 300 feet by 240 feet. Pearson erected a two-story concrete block building at the south end of neighborhood for a grocery store and office; his home stood at the rear (east) of the store. He organized North Carolina's first NAACP chapter in 1933, and was involved in a number of fraternal organizations, including the Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Grand Order of Calantians, and the Order of the Eastern Star. Symbols of some of his fraternal associations adorned the

1946); and "Renaissance Man: Edward W. Pearson," *The Urban News* (February 13, 2014) (<http://theurbannews.com/lifestyles/2014/renaissance-man-edward-w-pearson/>; accessed May 6, 2016).

façade of his store. Edward and Annis Pearson raised three children: Iola Pearson Byers, Edward W. Pearson, Jr., and Annette Pearson Cotton.¹⁵

Beginning in 1914, perhaps through his association with Rutherford P. Hayes, Pearson organized the Buncombe County District Colored Agricultural Fair, which was first held at Pearson Park. Hayes, an active promoter of the Western North Carolina Fair held in Asheville, practiced scientific farming on his Falconhurst property and frequently entered his farm products in competitions. Pearson's fair offered prizes in a variety of categories including agricultural products, canned fruits and vegetables, baking, sewing and handicrafts, and flowers. Farmers and exhibitors came from throughout the region, and attendance eventually grew to more than 10,000 individuals. By the 1920s, due to its popularity, the fair moved from Pearson Park to larger grounds in Asheville, but Pearson continued to manage the fair until his death in 1946. His son, E. W. Pearson, Jr., managed the fair in 1947, the last year it operated.¹⁶



Asheville Royal Giants, ca. 1918 (North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC)

In addition to the fair, Pearson organized a semi-professional black baseball team in 1916 so that he and his fellow African Americans could attend baseball games. The team, the Asheville Royal Giants, played their first games at Pearson Park in the Burton Street Neighborhood. In 1921,

¹⁵ Frazier, 22; "Renaissance Man: Edward W. Pearson;" and Betsy Murray, "A Valentine for E. W. Pearson, Sr.," HeardTell: Pack Library NC Room, February 27, 2014 (<https://packlibraryncroom.wordpress.com/tag/park-view-subdivision/>; accessed May 6, 2016).

¹⁶ "The Buncombe County and District Agricultural Fair Premium List, September 15-20, 1947," North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC.

Pearson established and became president of the Blue Ridge Colored Baseball League, comprised of teams from Charlotte, Gastonia, Concord, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina, as well as Rock Hill, Spartanburg, and Anderson, South Carolina. The team later played its games Oates Park on Southside Avenue and established rivalries with teams from Atlanta, Georgia, and Greenville, South Carolina.¹⁷

By 1930, West Asheville's population had more than tripled to 15,000 people, echoing the tremendous growth experience across the city. In 1928, sixty percent of all building permits issued in the city were for development in West Asheville.¹⁸ Growth came to a halt, however, as the city plunged into debt following the market crash leading up to the Depression. Saddled with the enormous debt of municipal bonds used to fund civic projects in the late 1920s, Asheville entered a long period of stagnation that saw little new development until after World War II. Streetcar service ended in 1934, and was followed by a rise in automobile ownership and use that led to the changing character of West Asheville in the second half of the twentieth century.

The Burton Street Neighborhood, like the larger West Asheville community, with its close relationship of residential neighborhoods and businesses, weathered the lean years of the Depression without extensive alteration to the physical character. The Burton Street Neighborhood retained a sense of rural life with large family gardens, some small farmsteads, and children playing in the surrounding woods and creeks. Local businesses extended credit or bartered with their regular customers. The neighborhood, particularly the northern portions, continued to exist in the mid-twentieth century as close-knit community of primarily African American families. School participation was strong. Burton Street was the only paved street in the neighborhood.

Automobiles and auto-related tourism helped reinvigorate Asheville's tourism economy after World War II, but changes to the landscape and transportation patterns necessitated by automobile traffic ultimately led to significant impacts for West Asheville. In the mid-1950s the Smokey Park Bridge was built high above the French Broad River and allowed Patton Avenue to be extended west from downtown Asheville. Westgate Shopping Center, the area's first strip mall with a large parking lot, was built at the west end of the bridge. Patton Avenue, which ran roughly parallel to Haywood Road one mile to the north, as it reached into West Asheville became the new auto-oriented commercial strip. Construction of Patton Avenue took land from the north end of the Burton Street neighborhood and culverted sections of Smith's Mill Creek. The construction of I-240 in the 1960s further cut into the fabric of West Asheville, including a north-south swath along Hanover Street and roughly following the creek that formed the eastern edge of the Burton Street neighborhood. The expressway joined Patton Avenue to north, crossed the Smokey Park Bridge, and continued through downtown Asheville. While the new roads allowed a faster

¹⁷ "Renaissance Man: Edward W. Pearson," and Bill Ballew, *Baseball in Asheville*. Images of Baseball Series. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2001), n.p.

¹⁸ Lang, 1-3.

connection between West Asheville and downtown, they also served to divert traffic from Haywood Road, diminishing its significance as a principal thoroughfare.¹⁹

In the period following the construction of Patton Avenue and I-240, the school closed and some of the older families passed away or left the area. As properties were abandoned, sold, or rented, the turnover in residents resulted in a loss of community cohesion and overall decline in neighborhood character. Patton Avenue construction divided the Burton Street Neighborhood from the African American cemetery, Violet Hill, on the north side of the new thoroughfare. The highway project severed street connections and forced the displacement of families and relocation of houses to new lots within the neighborhood to escape demolition. Beginning around 2000, community members launched several initiatives to revitalize the neighborhood, including renovations to the school, now owned by the city and operated as the Burton Street Community Center, and improvements to its grounds. The affordability of West Asheville's historic properties has presented attractive opportunities for rehabilitation and redevelopment in recent years. Revitalization efforts in not only the Burton Street Neighborhood but also throughout West Asheville during the past two decades have helped to shift West Asheville into a new era of progress.²⁰

¹⁹ Griffith 2006.

²⁰ Asheville Design Center and Western North Carolina Alliance, *Burton Street Community Plan* (2010), 11-12.

VI. Architectural Context

The Burton Street Neighborhood covers two small ridges extending north from Haywood Road and originally bordered to the north and east by creeks. The construction of Patton Avenue to the north and I-240 to the east has superseded the original geographic boundaries as the modern limits of the neighborhood. The majority of the neighborhood was platted in 1912 as Park View (Plat 154/141) with a grid street system and central park, known as Pearson Park. Although the recorded plats provide a useful starting point, the first few years of the subdivision are bit unclear due to the fact that it was located just beyond the city limits and, therefore, not included in city directories and that several street names appear to have changed over time. In addition to the Park View subdivision, Burton Street Neighborhood encompasses the Knob Circle section platted by Rutherford P. Hayes in 1920 (Plat 2/29), the Rueben Jones property platted in 1925 (Plat 6/82), Knollview, platted in 1925 (Plat 9/44), the property of L. W. and T. S. Elias (Plat 11/7), the Perry and Putnam property (Plat 11/98), and the Rufus Wills property (Plat 17/5).

It is unclear if there was any appreciable settlement of the area prior to the early plats. The Burton Street School (BN0490), however, occupies a tract that dates to 1884, when E. Morgan transferred a half-acre parcel to the Buncombe County Public School Committee, District No. 3, for a colored school (Deed 45/450). The land adjoined property owned by W. H. Jones and D. F. Gudger, who was a member of the Public School Committee. At the time, approximately half of Asheville's population of 4,651 was African American.²¹

The early Burton Street School was a two-teacher frame structure. The frame school was replaced in 1928 with the present one-story brick building. The school features a low hip roof, exposed rafter tails, an interior brick chimney, and recessed central entrance bay framed by a front-gable surround with brick pilasters and a segmental-arch opening. The two side elevations have a central, single-leaf door topped by a segmental-arched transom. The windows, which are replacement four-over-four sash, appear in groups of four on the façade and rear elevation. At the rear of the building, wide concrete steps descend a grassy slope to an athletic field. The school became a community recreation center in 1977, with Lola Byers, daughter of E. W. Pearson, as director. The center underwent an extensive rehabilitation in 2009 to replace the kitchen, windows, doors, floors, and ceilings.²²

²¹ Buncombe County Register of Deeds, and *Asheville City Directory* (1887), 4.

²² Jason Sandford, "Burton Street Neighborhood Celebrates Reopening of Community Center," *Mountain Xpress* (January 12, 2009) (https://mountainx.com/news/community-news/burton_street_neighborhood_celebrates_re_opening_of_community_center/; accessed May 6, 2016).



Burton Street School, ca. 1925 (l) and June 1951 (r). (Sources: North Carolina Collection, B259-5, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville, NC; and *E. M. Ball Photographic Collection (1918-1969)*, D. H. Ramsey Library, Special Collections, University of North Carolina at Asheville)

With the exception of the original Burton Street School the earliest buildings in the neighborhood appear to be houses dating from the 1910s and 1920s. The Rufus Wills House at 87 Downing Street is a one-and-a-half-story hip-roof frame dwelling located at the corner of Downing Street and Mardell Circle. The altered dwelling, which is clad with plywood sheathing and vinyl siding, features an interior brick chimney, gabled dormers on the front and side roof slopes, replacement doors and windows, and attached wraparound wood deck. Rufus Wills (1861-1944) ran a general store in West Asheville around the turn of the twentieth century, the only one owned by an African American at the time.²³



Rufus Wills House (ca. 1915), 87 Downing Street (l) and Monroe C. Long House (ca. 1910), 186 Fayetteville Street (r)

Monroe C. Long built a two-story single-pile frame house at 186 Fayetteville Street around 1910. Resting on a stone foundation, the house features two interior brick chimneys, a central single-leaf entrance, a one-story hip-roof rear ell with an exterior brick chimney, and a one-story shed-roof addition at the rear. The hip-roof dwelling is clad with vinyl siding and has replacement two-over-

²³ Levi Branson, ed., *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory 1896*, Vol. VIII (Raleigh, NC: Levi Branson, 1896), 126.

two double-hung windows with horizontal muntins. The attached one-story hip-roof porch is carried on square wood posts and shelters a replacement entry door. Monroe Long worked at the Hans Rees Tannery down on the French Broad River.

The James and Cora Young House at 114 Burton Street, dating from around 1910, stands at the corner of Burton and Downing streets on land that the Youngs acquired from Rutherford P. Hayes (Deed 168/583). The original T-plan house features a front-gable wing, cornice returns in the gable ends, German siding, and an attached hip-roof porch. The porch has been altered with replacement metal posts, brick balustrade, and attached aluminum awnings. The original rear ell and attached porch have been enlarged with a substantial gable-roof wing across the rear of the house. James Young worked as a fireman for Southern Railway.



James W. and Cora Young House (ca. 1910), 114 Burton Street (l) and Rueben Jones House (ca. 1915), 125 Burton Street (r)

Around 1915, Rueben Jones appears to have erected the one-story hip-roof frame house at 125 Burton Street. Now covered with aluminum siding, the house has a hip-roof front wing, replacement windows, a stuccoed interior chimney, and an enclosed front porch. Like many of the African American residents in the neighborhood, Jones' occupation was listed simply as "laborer" in city directories of the 1910s and 1920s.

Other early residences are located at the south end of Burton Street near its intersection with Haywood Street, although the southern portion of the street was historically inhabited by white residents. The one-story hip-roof dwelling at 15 Burton Street has been substantially altered with a variety of exterior sheathing materials and replacement windows, but the attached partial-width shed-roof porch shelters a central single-leaf entry door composed of two vertical lights over three horizontal panels. A similar one-story hip-roof house at 27 Burton Street has been extensively altered with a stuccoed exterior, replacement porch elements, and a side-gable addition at the rear. These small dwellings were built on land subdivided by Zachary T. Ledbetter in 1914 (Plat 154/197). Ledbetter, a farmer and notary, owned a sizeable tract on Haywood Road.



Houses (ca. 1915), 15 Burton Street (l) and 27 Burton Street (r)



Houses (ca. 1915), 22 Burton Street (l) and 24 Burton Street (r)

On the opposite (west) side of Burton Street stand three Craftsman-influenced houses built in the first decades of the twentieth century. The houses stand at 22, 24, and 30 Burton Street and all share a tall hip-roof form with a decorative front gable. According to tax records, however, 24 and 30 Burton Street were built around 1905, while the house at 22 Burton Street was not erected until 1926. Based on city directories and Sanborn maps, it appears that all three residences were in place by 1920 and more likely to date from the earlier period. The house at 22 Burton Street is the most significantly altered with a stuccoed exterior, replacement windows, replacement wood siding under the porch, and a brick porch addition with arched openings and a solid balustrade. The houses at 24 and 30 Burton Street retain their concrete block exteriors and engaged full-width porches carried by wood posts on block piers. Both houses have been altered with replacement windows and doors, and it appears that the window openings at 24 Burton Street have been reduced in size.

Several other houses utilizing concrete block exteriors are located in the Park View section of the neighborhood 171, 173, and 205 Fayetteville Street, as well as a two-story store and residence at 212 Fayetteville Street. The one-story front-gable house at 205 Fayetteville Street appears to have been built around 1920 and exhibits an exterior of ashlar-face concrete block with smooth-faced

block forming quoins. An attached front-gable porch has wood shingles in the gable ends, triangular eave brackets, and square wood posts supported on block piers. The windows are primarily three-over-one double-hung sash. The two houses at 171 and 173 Fayetteville Street are mirror images of each other with ashlar-face concrete block exteriors, hip roofs, decorative belt courses, and projecting partial-width hip-roof porches. The house at 171 Fayetteville Street has replacement metal porch posts, exposed rafter tails, and some original four-over-one double-hung windows. The house at 173 Fayetteville Street retains its wooden porch, two stuccoed interior chimneys, and four-over-one windows. A two-story hip-roof addition projects to the rear.



Houses (ca. 1925), 173 Fayetteville Street (l) and 171 Fayetteville Street (r)



Grocery Store (ca. 1925), 212 Fayetteville Street (l) and Craftsman houses, 146-160 Fayetteville Street (r)

A two-story grocery store and residence located at the northwest corner of Fayetteville Street and Ohio Street dates to around 1925. It was operated by E. L. and Elizabeth Gregory, a white couple, who occupied the building and rented a room to Luther Mitchell and his wife Hattie. Mitchell worked as a car washer for Ashlin Motor Company. The first story of the building is constructed with ashlar-face concrete block, while the second story is clad with vinyl siding. The overhanging second story is supported on replacement metal posts. The store has some original four-over-one double-hung sash windows, but many of the windows are replacements. An attached shed-roof side entrance porch is partially screened and covered with plywood sheathing. A one-story shed-

roof addition at the rear is covered with plywood and a shed-roof extension on the north side elevation is clad with asbestos shingles.

As was common throughout Asheville in the 1920s, one-story Craftsman bungalows were the prevalent house type throughout the Burton Street Neighborhood prior to World War II. A number of individual Craftsman-influenced houses remain in the neighborhood, including several small clusters on Fayetteville Street, Burton Street, Boyd Avenue, and Mardell Circle. A group of four front-gable frame bungalows on Fayetteville Street south of Texas Street retain a fair degree of integrity with attached and engaged front-gable porch carried on tapered wood posts, interior and exterior brick chimneys, and decorative eave brackets. Another group of four houses on Fayetteville Street north of Ohio Street (#214-220) are typically front-gable frame dwellings with inset porches and have been covered with vinyl or synthetic siding.

Another cluster of Craftsman style houses is located on Boyd Avenue and Ivy Street. This includes the houses at 25, 44, 48, 52, and 57 Boyd Avenue, which all have synthetic siding and attached porches. The group consisting of 73, 77, 81, and 83 Boyd Avenue, as well as 15, 17, 19, and 24 Ivy Street present a cohesive collection of Craftsman bungalows with German siding, wood shingled gable ends, brick and ashlar-face concrete block foundations, and attached hip and front-gable porches. They also display alterations such as enclosed porches, synthetic siding, and replacement windows.



House (ca. 1920), 25 Boyd Avenue (l) and Houses, 73, 77 and 81 Boyd Avenue(r)

The older houses on Mardell Circle are interspersed with a number of new residences. The newer houses frequently imitate the forms or Craftsman-style elements of the earlier dwellings. Two one-story front-gable Craftsman bungalows at 54 and 57 Mardell Circle were built around 1927 and incorporate ashlar-face concrete block in the foundations and exterior walls. The full-width engaged porch at 54 Mardell Circle has wood shingles in the gable end, vinyl siding in the soffits, replacement turned wood posts, and an enclosed end bay. The house at 57 Mardell Circle rests on a block foundation and is covered with German siding. It retains original four-over-one windows but the porch elements have been replaced. A ca. 1928 two-story Colonial Revival-style frame

house stands at 65 Mardell Circle and has been altered with vinyl siding, replacement windows, and replacement porch elements.



House (ca. 1927), 33 Mardell Circle (l) and House (ca. 1927), 53 Mardell Circle (r)

The two best examples of brick residences in the neighborhood are located at 33 and 53 Mardell Circle. The one-story side-gable Craftsman-influenced dwelling at 33 Mardell Circle features an attached front-gable porch carried by tapered wood posts on brick piers, wood shingles in the gable ends, exposed rafter tails, and three-over-one double-hung sash windows. Resting on an ashlar-face concrete block foundation, the house at 53 Mardell Circle has a side-gable roof with an exterior brick chimney, gable-roof rear wing, and an attached front-gable porch. It displays wood shingles in the gable ends, a projecting hip-roof side bay, attached rear shed-roof porch, and three- and four-over-one double-hung sash windows. Tapered wood posts on brick piers support the porch, which shelters a group of four façade windows. The porch is accessed by low steps constructed of river rock.

Dating from ca. 1927, Wilson Chapel M.E. Church (BN5512) at 103 Burton Street is a one-story gable-front brick church with a square corner tower. The congregation organized in 1890 and met first in a building located on Haywood Road at its intersection with Virginia Avenue. Trustees for the church purchased this lot in 1925 from Wallace and Laura Kelly (Deed 297/294), and a new building was erected. A large Gothic arch window with replacement sash, tracery, and glazing dominates the façade and is flanked on the south by a single-leaf replacement entry door within a segmental-arch opening. A small cornerstone is located at the southeast corner of the building. The square tower at the northeast corner has a replacement single-leaf entry door beneath a Gothic arch window and vinyl siding covered the belfry openings below the pyramidal roof. The corner pilasters have recessed panels with stacked stretcher-course bricks. Circular windows are positioned in the upper portion of the tower on its north and east faces. The sanctuary is six bays deep and the exterior exhibits exposed rafter tails, a soldier-course brick belt course, and pointed-arch windows with replacement one-over-one double-hung sash. The arched window and door openings are articulated with double rowlock courses of brick. A brick chimney on the south elevation has been removed and replaced with metal flue. A one-bay, shed-roof addition on the south elevation has a concrete block foundation and plywood sheathing.



Wilson Chapel M.E. Church (BN5512), 103 Burton Street, view to east

To the south, at 53 Burton Street, Asheville Knitting Mills erected a new facility around 1923, moving from its original building on Haywood Road. The surviving portion of the ca. 1923 building appears to have been the finishing room, a one-story side-gable structure with a parapet end wall constructed of ashlar-face concrete block. The façade is covered with weatherboards and has central double-leaf glazed entry doors. A wing to the east with brick and wood siding appears to be a later remodeling of the original building. A large, flat-roof rear wing constructed of concrete block extends to the south. This wing appears to have been added in the late 1950s or 1960s. The building is now used as the office of a storage facility and three metal-clad storage buildings have been erected to the north.

The neighborhood saw little new construction during the period of the 1930s through the 1950s. One of the largest projects of the period was the construction of the New Hope Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in the late 1930s. Located at 26 Mardell Circle, the original building was replaced with a new gable-front concrete block sanctuary in the 1970s. A modest one-story, multi-unit apartment building was constructed at 12 Mardell Circle around 1951, and later enlarged with a second wing to form a U-shape. Resting on a concrete block foundation, the building has a front-gable roof, plywood sheathing, and replacement six-over-six windows.



Apartments (ca. 1951), 12 Mardell Circle (l) and House (ca. 1964), 160 Burton Street (r)

New construction picked up again, albeit slowly, in the 1960s and a small number of modest one-story side-gable and hip-roof Ranch houses are scattered throughout the neighborhood. The one-story hip-roof frame dwelling at 160 Burton Street, built around 1964, is typical for the period. Covered with German siding and resting on a concrete block foundation, the house features a decorative front gable, façade picture window, front-gable entry porch, concrete block chimney, and two-over-two double-hung sash windows with horizontal muntins. A similar residence, built around 1963, is located at 31 Mardell Circle. The ca. 1963 house at 235 Fayetteville Street displays a stucco finish, inset porch, exterior brick chimney, walk-out basement, and vertical wood siding in the gable ends.



House (ca. 1963), 31 Mardell Circle (l) and House (ca. 1963), 235 Fayetteville Street (r)

In the period following the construction of I-240 on the east side of the neighborhood, the school closed and some of the older families passed away or left the area. Displacement from the highway project forced the relocation of several houses to new lots within the neighborhood to escape demolition. As properties were abandoned, sold, or rented, the turnover in residents resulted in a loss of community cohesion and overall decline in neighborhood character. Beginning around 2000, community members launched several initiatives to revitalize the neighborhood, including renovations to the school, now owned by the city and operated as the Burton Street Community Center, and improvements to its grounds. Programs to reduce crime proved to be effective and the neighborhood’s affordability and historic properties have been ripe for rehabilitation and redevelopment in recent years. As a result forty-five new houses have been built in the neighborhood since 2000, with one new house under construction. Some of the infill construction incorporates traditional forms and materials, but many of the new buildings exhibit contemporary design concepts and modern materials.²⁴



Houses, 12 Mardell Circle (l) and House (2014), 191 Burton Street (r)



House (2009), 74 Boyd Avenue (l) and Houses (ca. 2012), 22-40 Buffalo Street (r)

²⁴ Asheville Design Center and Western North Carolina Alliance, *Burton Street Community Plan* (2010), 11-12.

VII. Evaluation

For purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the Burton Street Neighborhood (BN6282) is **not eligible** for the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. The predominantly African American Burton Street Neighborhood encompasses a range of early twentieth century residential buildings, a church, and a school located in West Asheville. A large number of vacant parcels and new infill construction accompanies the surviving historic resources. The loss of significant resources associated with community organizer E. W. Pearson further compromises the historic integrity and potential National Register eligibility of the neighborhood. Properties within the Burton Street Neighborhood retain basic integrity of location, setting, and association, but their integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling have been substantially compromised by the loss of significant historic resources, new construction, material changes, and rehabilitation of individual properties.

The Burton Street Neighborhood is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion A (event). *To be eligible under Criterion A, a property must retain integrity and must be associated with a specific event marking an important moment in American pre-history or history or a pattern of events or historic trend that made a significant contribution to the development of a community, a state, or the nation. Furthermore, a property must have existed at the time and be documented to be associated with the events. Finally, a property's specific association must be important as well.* Dating from the 1910s, the Burton Street Neighborhood was developed and promoted, in part, as a residential neighborhood for African Americans in the West Asheville suburb of Asheville. At the same time, the south end of present-day Burton Street was settled by white families. Businessman and community leader E. W. Pearson platted the Park View section of the neighborhood and sold lots to black families, he ran a neighborhood grocery, and organized social and recreation activities for neighborhood, including a baseball team and agricultural fair. The Burton Street Neighborhood was one of several predominantly African American neighborhoods in early-twentieth century Asheville along with East End, Southside, Hill Street, and Stumptown.

Despite its close associations with the African American community in Asheville, the Burton Street Neighborhood does not appear to meet Criterion A in the area of community development. The neighborhood suffers from a lack of integrity due to the loss of significant resources associated with prominent businessman and community organizer E. W. Pearson, including his home, his neighborhood store, and Pearson Park, which was a significant component of his original plat for the neighborhood. In addition several other small neighborhood businesses and churches no longer stand. The substantial number of newly constructed buildings in the neighborhood has eroded the historic character of the area. While the neighborhood retains significant historical associations, it does not appear to be eligible due to an overall loss of integrity.

The Burton Street Neighborhood is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion B (person). *For a property to be eligible for significance under Criterion B, it must retain integrity and 1) be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, i.e. individuals whose activities are demonstrably important within a local, state or national historic context; 2) be normally associated*

with a person's productive life, reflecting the time period when he/she achieved significance, and 3) should be compared to other associated properties to identify those that best represent the person's historic contributions. Furthermore, a property is not eligible if its only justification for significance is that it was owned or used by a person who is or was a member of an identifiable profession, class, or social or ethnic group. The neighborhood is closely associated with the productive life of E. W. Pearson, a successful businessman, real estate developer, and community organizer. Pearson platted the Park View neighborhood as an African American community in West Asheville, sold real estate and insurance, owned a grocery store, formed the first semi-professional black baseball team in Asheville, and organized the Buncombe County District Colored Agricultural Fair. The fair and baseball games were originally held at Pearson Park in the Burton Street Neighborhood until their popularity required larger venues. The resources most closely associated with Pearson's productive life, however, no longer stand. Pearson Park was subdivided for building lots by the 1930s, and the grocery store and his house on Buffalo Street stood until the early 2000s. The absence of resources associated with E. W. Pearson diminishes the historic integrity of the neighborhood.

While the Burton Street Neighborhood was home to many of Asheville black families, none of the other property owners attained the level of prominence and significance required for National Register listing under Criterion B.

The Burton Street Neighborhood is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion C (design/construction). *For a property to be eligible under this criterion, it must retain integrity and either 1) embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; 2) represent the work of a master; 3) possess high artistic value; or 4) represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.* Beginning in the 1910s, the present Burton Street neighborhood was developed from plats for Park View and Knob Circle. Originally a relatively insulated African American neighborhood, the community experienced a period of decline in the last three decades of the twentieth century. The construction of I-240 in the 1960s encroached upon the eastern portion of the neighborhood, which severed some street connections and necessitated the relocation of several residences. In the past two decades, the neighborhood has undergone a significant resurgence with many new residents and widespread new construction. This substantial transformation has been beneficial to the social aspects of the neighborhood, but diminished its historic integrity through building rehabilitations and infill construction.

The majority of individual buildings over fifty years of age have undergone a substantial amount of remodeling and alteration. Pearson's concrete block grocery store and the open ground of Pearson Park no longer remain. The majority of houses exhibit synthetic siding, replacement windows, or enclosed porches, while a few still display original German siding or ashlar-face concrete block exteriors. It does not appear the Burton Street Neighborhood possesses any special architectural distinction or sufficient integrity to be considered eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a historic district.

The Burton Street Neighborhood is **not eligible** for the National Register under Criterion D (potential to yield information). *For a property to be eligible under Criterion D, it must meet two requirements: 1) the property must have, or have had, information to contribute to our*

understanding of human history or pre-history, and 2) the information must be considered important. Development of the neighborhood, which began in the 1910s, has continued throughout the twentieth century, and recent decades have seen a new phase of redevelopment in the community. As a result, the neighborhood is unlikely to contribute significant information pertaining to building technology or historical documentation not otherwise accessible from other extant resources and written records.

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----- "West Asheville-Aycock School Historic District" National Register of Historic Places Nomination. North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Office of Archives and History, State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, NC. 2006.

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Asheville, NC.

----- "The Story of Haywood Road," Volume 1, Issue 1 (Winter 2001).

Appendix A

Professional Qualifications

CLAY GRIFFITH

President/Architectural Historian

ACME PRESERVATION SERVICES, LLC

825C Merrimon Ave, #345

Asheville, NC 28804

Tel 828 281 3852

cgriffith.acme@gmail.com

EDUCATION

- Master of Architectural History (1993)
University of Virginia
- Bachelor of Science, Architecture (1990)
Georgia Institute of Technology
- Introduction to Federal Projects and Historic Preservation Law (1994)

EXPERIENCE

- **Acme Preservation Services, LLC, Asheville, NC**
November 2007 – present

Formed independent firm to provide historic preservation consulting services. Services provided include preparing National Register of Historic Places nominations, local landmark designation reports, rehabilitation tax credit applications, municipal historic architectural resources surveys, Section 106 compliance reports, and historical research.

- **Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc., Asheville, NC**
January 2002 – October 2007

Served as Senior Architectural Historian in Asheville office of private consulting firm. Responsibilities included preparing National Register of Historic Places nominations, local landmark designation reports, rehabilitation tax credit applications, municipal historic architectural resources surveys, Section 106 compliance reports, and historical research.

- **North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Western Office, Asheville, NC**
July 1998 – January 2002

Preservation Specialist serving the 25-county western region of North Carolina. Administered State Historic Preservation Office programs including statewide inventory of historic properties, survey and planning grant supervision, National Register of Historic Places nominations, environmental review, technical assistance, and public education.

- **North Carolina Department of Transportation, Raleigh, NC**
June 1993 – June 1998

Preservation Specialist with Historic Architectural Resources Section. Responsible for conducting and preparing documentation in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, and other state and federal environmental laws and regulations. Duties included conducting field work, identifying and documenting historic resources, evaluating National Register eligibility, and assessing effects to minimize impacts of NCDOT undertakings.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

- *Historic Architectural Resources Building Inventory, Replace Bridge No. 628 on SR 1306 over Lake Lure Dam and Broad River, TIP No. B-5871 (for NC Department of Transportation), Lake Lure, Rutherford County, North Carolina*
- *McKinney Mill Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 88 on SR 1793 over West Fork Sandy Run Creek, TIP No. B-5415 (for NC Department of Transportation), Rutherford County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Building Inventory, US 19-23 (Future I-26) Improvements from Exit 25 to Exit 13, TIP No. A-0010A (for NC Department of Transportation), Buncombe County, North Carolina*
- *Hickory Survey Update (for City of Hickory), Hickory, Catawba County, North Carolina*
- *Downtown Tryon Historic District National Register Nomination, Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report for Replace Bridge No. 436 on SR 1943 (Brewer Mill Road) over East Prong Roaring River, TIP No. B-5525 (for NC Department of Transportation), Traphill vic., Wilkes County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Survey for Widen and Pave SR 1750 (Luker Branch Road) (for NC Department of Transportation), Jackson County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report for Replace Bridge Nos. 155 and 158 on US 23-74 over Richland Creek, TIP No. B-3186 (for NC Department of Transportation), Lake Junaluska, Haywood County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Survey for Replace Bridge No. 159 on SR 1326 (Joe Brown Highway) over Hanging Dog Creek, TIP No. B-4069 (for NC Department of Transportation), Cherokee County, North Carolina*
- *Seven Oaks National Register Nomination, Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Update Report, I-26 Connector in Asheville, TIP No. I-2513 (for NC Department of Transportation), Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Survey for Replace Bridge No. 291 on SR 1348 (Old NC 90) over Middle Little River, TIP No. B-4980 (for NC Department of Transportation), Taylorsville vic., Alexander County, North Carolina*
- *Stone Hedge National Register Nomination, Tryon vic., Polk County, North Carolina*
- *Dillard B. and Georgia Sewell House National Register Nomination, Penrose vic., Henderson County, North Carolina*
- *Giles W. Pearson Sr. House Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 4 on SR 1102 over Fork Creek, TIP No. B-4792 (for NC Department of Transportation), Saluda vic., Polk County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey for Screven County Industrial Park GRAD Certification (for Parker Engineering), Sylvania, Screven County, Georgia*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Intensive Evaluation, Widen and Pave SR 1601 (Payne Road) (for NC Department of Transportation), Forsyth County, North Carolina*

- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Intensive Evaluation, Improve NC 175 from the Georgia State Line to south of SR 1155, TIP No. W-5119 (for NC Department of Transportation), Clay County, North Carolina*
- *Flat Rock Historic District Boundary Increase, Boundary Decrease and Additional Documentation National Register Nomination, Flat Rock, Henderson County, North Carolina*
- *Bruce Bristol House Intensive Evaluation Report, Spot Safety Improvement Project, SR 1388 (Bristol Avenue), TIP No. W-51240 (for NCDOT), Andrews, Cherokee County, North Carolina*
- *Enterprise Building National Register Nomination, High Point, Guilford County, North Carolina*
- *West-Asheville-Aycock School Historic District Boundary Increase National Register Nomination, Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina*
- *Rhoney-Sain House Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 34 on SR 1907 over Rock Creek (for NCDOT), Burke County, North Carolina*
- *Mt. Helen Estates Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 184 on SR 1102 over Winter Star Branch (for NCDOT), Yancey County, North Carolina*
- *Riley Wall House Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 261 on SR 1597 over Hickory Creek (for NCDOT), Henderson County, North Carolina*
- *West House Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 87 on SR 1140 over Hyatt Mill Creek (for NCDOT), Clay County, North Carolina*
- *Phillips & Son Texaco Station Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 293 on SR 1411 over Bald Mountain Creek (for NCDOT), Yancey County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report , Intensive Evaluation, for Replace Bridge No. 11 on NC 143B over Long Creek (for NCDOT), Graham County, North Carolina*
- *Boxed House Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 121 on SR 1103 over Silvermine Creek, (for NCDOT), Swain County, North Carolina*
- *Murrell House Intensive Evaluation Report, Replace Bridge No. 23 on SR 1152 over Burlingame Creek, (for NCDOT), Transylvania County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Inventory Presentation and Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Intensive Evaluation, for Widening NC 294 from SR 1130 to SR 1312-A, TIP No. R-3622B (for NCDOT), Cherokee County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Survey for Replace Bridge No. 112 on SR 1124 over Indian Creek (for NCDOT), Yancey County, North Carolina*
- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report , Intensive Evaluation, for Replace Bridge No. 217 on SR 1358 over Guilders Creek (for NCDOT), Yancey County, North Carolina*
- *Francis Grist Mill National Register Nomination (co-author), Waymesville vic., Haywood County, North Carolina*

- Historic Architectural Resources Inventory Presentation and *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Intensive Evaluation, for Improve Intersection NC 225/SR 1164/SR 1779, TIP No. U-5105 (for NCDOT)*, Henderson County, North Carolina
- *Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Survey for Replace Bridge No. 244 on SR 1137 over Clarks Creek (for NCDOT)*, Watauga County, North Carolina
- Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Surveys for Division 14 Bridge Replacement Projects (for NCDOT), Cherokee, Clay, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, and Polk Counties, North Carolina
- Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Surveys for Division 13 Bridge Replacement Projects (for NCDOT), McDowell, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties, North Carolina
- *Tryon Country Club National Register Nomination*, Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina
- *Dr. Samuel Stringfield House and Dr. Thomas Stringfield House Local Landmark Designation Reports*, Waynesville, Haywood County, North Carolina
- Historic Architectural Resources Inventory Presentation for SR 1419 (Old Fanning Bridge Road) Improvements and new access road, TIP No. 5524 (for NCDOT), Buncombe and Henderson Counties, North Carolina
- Historic Architectural Resources Inventory Presentation and *Chapman House Intensive Evaluation Report, US 64 Improvements, TIP No. R-2409D (for NCDOT)*, Transylvania County, North Carolina
- *Historic Architectural Resources Survey Report, Intensive Evaluation, for Replace Bridge No. 115 on SR 1908 over Dan River (for NCDOT)*, Stokes County, North Carolina
- *Johnson House and Store Intensive Evaluation Report (for NCDOT)*, Wilkes County, North Carolina
- *Downtown Newton Historic District National Register Nomination*, Newton, Catawba County, North Carolina
- *Adams-Millis Corporation Plant No. 8 National Register Nomination and Part 1 Tax Credit Application*, Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina
- *Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Surveys for Division 11 Bridge Replacement Projects (for NCDOT)*, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga and Wilkes Counties, North Carolina
- *Historic Architectural Reconnaissance Surveys for Division 14 Bridge Replacement Projects (for NCDOT)*, Graham, Henderson, Swain and Transylvania Counties, North Carolina
- *Downtown Asheville Historic District Boundary Increase III, Boundary Decrease and Additional Documentation*, Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina
- *Sunnydale National Register Nomination and Tax Credit Application* Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina
- *Asheville Supply & Foundry Company Part 1 Tax Credit Application*, Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina
- *Asheville Survey Update*, Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina

- *Spread Out Historic District National Register Nomination*, Waynesville, Haywood County, North Carolina
- *Dougherty Heights Historic District National Register Nomination*, Black Mountain, Buncombe County, North Carolina
- *Wayah Bald Lookout Tower Documentation (for USDA Forest Service)*, Nantahala National Forest, Macon County, North Carolina
- *Lynncote National Register Nomination*, Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina
- *South Montreat Road Historic District National Register Nomination*, Black Mountain, Buncombe County, North Carolina
- *Pink Beds Picnic Shelters and Wayah Bald Lookout Tower Documentation and National Register of Historic Places Evaluation (for USDA Forest Service)*, Pisgah National Forest, North Carolina
- *Biltmore High School National Register Nomination*, Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina
- *Claremont High School Historic District Boundary Increase and Additional Documentation National Register Nomination*, Hickory, Catawba County, North Carolina
- *East Main Street Historic District National Register Nomination*, Brevard, Transylvania County, North Carolina
- *Mill Farm Inn National Register Nomination*, Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina
- *Richard Sharp Smith House Local Designation Report and National Register Nomination*, Asheville, Buncombe County, North Carolina
- *Broyhill Conover Plant Redevelopment Determination of Eligibility and Recordation (for City of Conover)*, Conover, Catawba County, North Carolina
- *Tryon Downtown Survey and Trade Street Commercial Historic District Study List Application*, Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina
- *Monte Vista Hotel National Register Nomination and Local Landmark Designation Report*, Black Mountain, Buncombe County, North Carolina
- *Bank of Tryon National Register Nomination*, Tryon, Polk County, North Carolina

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