

**APPENDIX 1. Statement of Significance for the Davidson National Register
Historic District**

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Davidson Historic District

Davidson, Mecklenburg County, MK2442, Listed June 1, 2009
Nomination by Mattson, Alexander and Associates, Inc.
Photographs by Mattson, Alexander and Associates, November 2008



400 Block of Concord Road



100 Block of South Main Street

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of property

historic name Davidson Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by North Main and Beaty streets; Catawba Avenue; Mock and Concord roads;
Pat Stough and Dogwood lanes; and Davidson College Campus not for publication N/A

city or town Davidson vicinity N/A

state North Carolina code NC county Mecklenburg code 119 zip code 28036

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

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

_____ entered in the National Register _____
_____ See continuation sheet. _____

_____ determined eligible for the National Register _____
_____ See continuation sheet. _____

_____ determined not eligible for the National Register _____
_____ removed from the National Register _____

_____ other (explain): _____

Davidson Historic District
Name of Property

Mecklenburg Co., N.C.
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>394</u>	<u>145</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>398</u>	<u>146</u>	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
3

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling
DOMESTIC multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC garage
DOMESTIC hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE business
COMMERCE/TRADE specialty store
COMMERCE/TRADE restaurant
COMMERCE/TRADE financial institution

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC Sub: single dwelling
DOMESTIC multiple dwelling
DOMESTIC garage
RELIGION church
COMMERCE/TRADE business
COMMERCE/TRADE specialty store
COMMERCE/TRADE restaurant
COMMERCE/TRADE financial institution

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival
Gothic; Italianate; Queen Anne
Colonial Revival; Tudor Revival; Classical Revival; Late Gothic; Bungalow/Craftsman
Modern Movement; Commercial Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
roof slate
walls weatherboard
brick
other stone
concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Davidson Historic District
Name of Property

Mecklenburg Co., N.C.
County and State

8. Statement of Significance**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

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

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

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Commerce

Education

Industry

Period of Significance

1837-1959

Significant Dates

1837

1848-1850

ca. 1860

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Dinkins, Lewis, builder

Lemly, Samuel, builder

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Davidson Historic District
Name of Property

Mecklenburg Co., N.C.
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 310__

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

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 513840 3929200
2 17 514400 3929200

Zone Easting Northing
3 17 513900 3928140
4 17 515280 3927620

X See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard L. Mattson and Frances P. Alexander

organization Mattson, Alexander and Assoc., Inc. date 1 December 2008

street & number 2228 Winter Street telephone 704-358-0985

city or town Charlotte state NC zip code 28205

12. Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name More than 50 owners

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 99

Davidson Historic District
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

Architect/Builder, continued

Asbury, Louis, H., architect
Boyer Jr. Martin, architect
Cooler, Harold, architect
Hibbs, Henry C., architect
McDowell, Marshall, architect
Rogers, Willard G., architect

Alexander, Daniel, builder
Britain, W. A., builder
Deal, B. C., builder
Potts, Will, builder

Significant Dates, continued

1890
1908

Statement of Significance

The Davidson Historic District clearly illustrates the development of Davidson as a small college town and Piedmont railroad community between the antebellum period and mid-twentieth century. The historic district meets Criterion A in the areas of commerce, industry, and education, and Criterion C for architecture. The historic district also meets Criterion Consideration A for its association with Davidson College. The college was founded by the Presbyterian Church and has significance as an educational institution and for its impressive collection of important architectural resources.

Davidson took shape as a college town, and Davidson College, which opened in 1837, distinguishes Davidson from the other small railroad communities in the county. The historic district includes a portion of the college campus and associated boarding houses that provided housing and meals for students. The historic district also contains two public schools: the 1937 Davidson Colored School (later Ada Jenkins School) and the 1946 Davidson Public School. Davidson College arose as one of the region's significant institutions of higher education, while the local public schools provided vital educational and other cultural opportunities to the residents of the town.

The district's well-preserved commercial core oriented to both the railroad and the Davidson College campus contains a wide range of businesses that served surrounding landowners, businessmen, and mill workers, as well as college students and faculty. Dry goods stores, banks, drugstores (with soda fountains), jewelry and tailor shops, and hotels all occupied existing commercial buildings on Main Street. The historic district also contains notable industrial architecture and cotton-mill housing that clearly reflect the region's textile manufacturing boom in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 100

Davidson Historic District
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

In this period, railroad towns throughout the Piedmont grew not only as marshalling points for agricultural products but also as small textile-mill centers. The expansion of railroads drew cotton mills to the region at an unprecedented rate. By World War I, over 300 mills dotted rail lines within a 100-mile radius of Charlotte in Mecklenburg County. The county's railroad towns vied for cotton mills that promised prosperity, and by 1910, Davidson, Pineville, Cornelius, and Huntersville all boasted textile mills and mill villages alongside their railroad corridors.

Architecturally, the Davidson Historic District contains a well-preserved array of houses, mills, stores, churches, and civic buildings that neatly illustrate nationally popular styles as well as traditional house forms from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. The historic district features especially fine examples of the Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Craftsman, and modernist styles. The district's collection of Greek Revival and other mid-nineteenth century architecture is unique among the county's small towns and reflects Davidson's long association with the college. Many of Davidson's notable residences in the historic district were erected for college faculty, who formed a sizable professional class for this small town. As the twentieth century progressed, the college drew professors from across the nation who often opted for the latest, progressive architectural modes. In the 1950s, a coterie of newly-hired faculty commissioned sleek, modernist residences along Hillside Street in the historic district that contrasted sharply with the conservative, mostly Colonial Revival houses along the surrounding streets.

The period of significance begins in 1837 when Davidson College was established. Two of the eight buildings that formed the original college campus remain, and these two dormitories, Elm Row and Oak Row, are the oldest properties within the Davidson Historic District. The period of significance extends to 1959, the fifty-year guideline for National Register eligibility. The historic district does not possess the exceptional significance needed to extend the period of significance beyond 1959.

Historical Background Essay Historic Contexts for Commerce, Industry, and Education

The history of the town of Davidson is inextricably linked to Davidson College which predated the surrounding community and influenced its development. Although Davidson's growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries clearly typified small railroad towns throughout the Piedmont, the presence of the college created a distinctive place. The tree shaded campus filled with classically inspired scholastic architecture distinguished Davidson from other communities. The sway of the school also extended beyond the campus to the entire town, influencing commerce, culture, and the character of its architecture.

In 1835, the Concord (North Carolina) Presbytery established a site for a Presbyterian men's college on a high ridge in northern Mecklenburg County between the Catawba and Yadkin rivers. The rural Piedmont setting was considered to be salubrious and "at a distance from all haunts of dissipation." The presbytery acquired 469 acres from local Presbyterian planter, William Lee Davidson II, who also donated funds for the college. Because of Davidson's bequests, the college was named for his father, local Revolutionary

NOTE: The full National Register nomination is available at:
<https://files.nc.gov/ncdcr/nr/MK2442.pdf>.