

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The thirty-one buildings which comprise the Winnsboro Commercial Historic District represent the historic commercial center of the large rural parish of Franklin. The district consists of a double row of more or less intact one and two story brick commercial buildings which date mainly from the first three decades of the twentieth century and which extend almost perpendicularly from the railroad corridor.

The buildings are separated by party walls. As a result, they mass closely together along the street, and there are few gaps between the structures. This cohesiveness is enhanced by the fact that most of the intrusions conform to the historic buildings in terms of scale, shape, and construction materials.

The buildings in the district are simple, flat-roofed structures with conservative decorative detailing. The most common features are corbel tables, molded brick architrave across parapets, recessed brick panels, and bands of windows above shopfronts. Also in evidence are storefronts with plate glass display windows and recessed entrances with glass-paneled doors. In contrast to this unusually uniform group of buildings are the Snyder Hotel, with its exceptional brickwork; the Whatley Buick Building, which dates from 1918; and the simple brick Missouri-Pacific train depot.

Contributing and Non-contributing Elements

Contributing Elements:

Since this is an early twentieth century commercial district, contributing buildings should be regarded as commercial structures of that era. All of the district's commercial buildings which date prior to c.1932 and have not been excessively renovated should be considered contributing elements. Most of these buildings are associated with Franklin Parish's c.1900-c.1920 prosperity (see Item 87). Of course, the four buildings which date, from 1921-c.1932 contribute to the district's architectural character.

A number of the historic buildings that contribute to the character of the district have been renovated within the past twenty years. Some of these alterations consisted of simply attaching sheets of metal (which can be removed) to the facades of the buildings. Some shopfronts have been modernized, but very few / have been completely replaced.

These changes, however, should be regarded as minor. In most cases the basic shape and fenestration pattern of the shopfront remains. Consequently the structures still convey the idea of old commercial buildings to the average person. Of course, the metal facades represent a change which is easily reversible.

Non-contributing Elements:

There are eleven intrusions, or non-contributing buildings, in the district. These include two historic buildings that have undergone such extensive modern renovation that their facades read entirely as modern buildings. The other 3 date from 1930's and 1940's and, except for the 1936 post office, which shows a strong Georgian Revival influence, these buildings reflect the style of the older structures and are virtually indistinguishable from them.

Breakdown of Buildings by Date:

c.1900 - c.1910	2 buildings	7%	
1911 - c.1920	14 buildings	45%	
1921 - c.1932	4 buildings	13%	
non-contributing	<u>11 buildings</u>	35%	
	31 buildings		

Boundary Justification

The boundaries were drawn to encompass the concentration of historic commercial buildings which form the historic central business district of Winnsboro. East of the district commercial buildings become detached and are interspersed with residences. South of the district are residences. West of the district and across the railroad tracks and Hwy. 15 is a less densely concentrated collection of commercial buildings sprinkled with parking lots. North of the district are large parking lots and then a small collection of architecturally inferior and more recent commercial structures.

WINNSBORO COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT INVENTORY

1. 600-604 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with decorative brickwork on frieze and two shopfronts (one of which has recessed entrance.)
2. 608 Prairie. 1911. Contributing element. Two-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring parapet with brick dentils, 2/2 windows with lintels, shopfront with recessed entrance, two additional entrances with glass-paneled doors, and stone plaque reading "W.O.W. 1911."
3. 610 Prairie. Built c.1905 and significantly remodeled c.1955. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed commercial building with modern brick facade.
4. 612-614 Prairie. c.1945. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring decorative brickwork with contrasting colors of brick; two shopfronts, one of which retains recessed entrance with glass-paneled doors; and bands of windows above shopfronts.
5. 616 Prairie. c.1925. Contributing element, One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with parapet, decorative brickwork, shopfront with recessed entrance and glass-paneled doors.
6. 618 Prairie. c.1915. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a brick architrave and central recessed entrance with glass-paneled door. Contributing element.
7. 702 Prairie. c.1915 Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a parapet with architrave and two recessed entrances. Sheet metal covering over much of the parapet is easily removable.
8. 704-708 Prairie. c.1915 Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with one recessed entrance. Metal false front is removable.
9. 710 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with brick architrave and recessed brick panels.

10. 714 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring parapet with brick architrave and decorative, recessed brick panels.

11. 720 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. Two-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building. Parapet with brick architrave; decorative, recessed brick panels; original shopfront with glass-paneled doors and display windows. Similar to 714 Prairie.

12. 802 Prairie. Built c. 1925; remodeled in 1980 with side wing added. Listed as a non-contributing element because despite the resurfacing of most of the exterior in marble, the building retains its grand parapet, its full modillion entablature, its egg and dart capitals, most of its pilasters, as well as its basic form. It retains an impressive presence on Prairie Street.

13. 503-505 Prairie. c. 1930. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a parapet with decorative brick panels and bands of windows above two shopfronts (both of which have recessed entrances.)

14. 507-509 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, glazed brick commercial building. Constructed as a car dealership with large, wood paneled display windows recessed behind elliptical arches.

15. 513 Prairie. c.1936. Non-contributing element. Brick, Colonial Revival, New Deal era post office with tripped roof, brick quoins, stone door surround, and entablature.

16. 605 Prairie. Built c.1915 and extensively remodeled c.1955 Non-contributing element. Two-story brick commercial building with one story wing. Modern alterations hide any historic exterior features.

17. 607 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a parapet with decorative brickwork and two shopfronts.

18. 611 Prairie. c.1915. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial with brick architrave. Modern aluminum front is reversible

19. 613 Prairie. c.1905. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring brick architrave, simple decorative brickwork, and band of windows across storefront, which has been altered.

20. 617-621 Prairie. c.1945. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring simple decorative brickwork and three shopfronts with recessed entrances.

21. 625 Prairie. c.1905. Contributing element. Two-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a parapet, corner pilasters with recessed brick panels, and decorative brickwork of contrasting brick.

22. 701-703 Prairie. c.1915. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed brick commercial building with brick architrave. Modern aluminum covering on facade is removable.

23. 705 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. Two-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a brick cornice and architrave and two shopfronts with recessed entrances covered with Carrara glass.

24. 709 Prairie. c.1915 Contributing element One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a parapet with a brick architrave and a large shopfront with two entrances. Large metal sign across facade is reversible

25. 713-717 Prairie. c.1915 Contributing element. Three-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building. Double central windows flanked by single windows on second and third story; first story divided into two sections; first has band of boarded up windows across shopfront; second has three arched entrances

26. 719-721 Prairie c.1915. Contributing element One-story, flat-roofed, commercial building with shaped stuccoed parapet. Band of windows above two shopfronts is sealed.

27. 801-803 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed commercial building with shaped stuccoed parapet. Band of windows above shopfront is sealed.

28. 805 Prairie. c.1915. Non-contributing element One-story, flat-roofed commercial building. Corrugated tin facade is a reversible alteration.

29. 807 Prairie. c.1925. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a brick architrave and a horizontal, recessed brick panel. Band of windows above altered shopfront is sealed. Contributing element.

30. 809-815 Prairie. c.1915. Contributing element. Two-story, flat-roofed brick commercial building featuring corbelling, brick pilasters and other decorative brickwork, and bands of windows above an unaltered shopfront.

31. Missouri-Pacific Railroad Depot. c.1925. Contributing element. One-story brick building with gables roof, central chimney, 4/4 windows, and numerous doors.

Specific dates c.1900-c.1932
Builder/Architect N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)
Criteria A and C

The Winnsboro Commercial Historic District is locally significant in the areas of architecture and commerce. It is important architecturally because it is the best concentration of historic commercial buildings in Franklin Parish. It is significant in the area of commerce because it is historically the commercial center of a large active agricultural area.

Architecture

The early twentieth century commercial zone of Winnsboro represents a characteristic type of commercial development found throughout Louisiana during the period from 1895 to 1930. It consists of small, brick, false fronted, commercial buildings of one or two stories. Single story buildings typically have broad and open shopfronts (containing plate glass windows and transoms) surmounted by modestly ornamental brick parapets, some of which have shaped tops. Two story buildings have this treatment plus a second story facade with several sash mounted plate glass windows and additional ornamental brickwork. As a rule, buildings are set right up against the sidewalk and are separated from each other by party walls. This makes for a distinctive streetscape.

Architecturally these structures are usually seen as rural, builder-vernacular descendants of pretentious Victorian commercial buildings. In most Louisiana rural communities brick commercial buildings of this type began to replace older frame commercial buildings in about 1895. They were fashionable because they were more like urban commercial buildings, and, more importantly, they were fireproof. Often entire central business districts were rebuilt during this period. In fact, commercial areas of the type found in Winnsboro occur so often that today they are rightly regarded as a distinct phase of Louisiana commercial architecture.

As a rule, commercial zones of this type are evaluated according to the following factors:

- (1) the elaborateness of the brickwork,
- (2) the size of the district,
- (3) the extent to which the district has been intruded upon both in terms of missing or replaced buildings and altered shopfronts,
- (4) the number and quality of any local landmark structures, and
- (5) the overall scale of the district.

Winnsboro far surpasses all of the other commercial centers of Franklin Parish with respect to these factors. Of the seven commercial crossroads centers in Franklin Parish, Winnsboro is one of only three which have more than just a non-contiguous scattering of old and recent commercial buildings. Only Mangham, Wisner, and Winnsboro have a more or less contiguous grouping of old commercial buildings. Unlike Winnsboro, Mangham has many intrusions, and the surviving old buildings feature little ornamentation. Moreover, Mangham has an unbroken single story scale, and there are no local landmarks such as the Snyder Hotel and the Whatley Buick Building. Wisner has a contiguous grouping of 50 year old commercial buildings along one side of the street for about a block. This grouping, however, is much smaller than the one in Winnsboro, the buildings are less ornamented, and, again, there are no landmarks. Finally, the old commercial buildings of both Mangham and Wisner have undergone numerous shopfront alterations. Therefore, they cannot be said to stand above Winnsboro in terms of architectural integrity. Taking all this into account, there can be no doubt that, viewed as an architectural entity, the Winnsboro Commercial Historic District is far and away the finest example of an early twentieth century commercial area in Franklin Parish.

Commerce

The district is significant in the area of commerce because it is the material evidence of the early twentieth century commercial development of Winnsboro around the Missouri-Pacific Railroad.* It was to these buildings that people came to do their business. Present were banks, general stores, drugstores, hotels, and a boarding house, a doctor's office, a barbershop, the post office, the train depot, and a car dealership. Built during a time of prosperity, they reveal the achievement and solidity of Winnsboro as a trading center to a sparsely populated but thriving agricultural community.

More specifically, twenty-one of the district's twenty-six pre-1932 structures date from the first and second decades of the twentieth century. This represented a rebuilding of the town which reflected the prosperity in the Franklin Parish cotton trade generated by successive good cotton crops and later by the demands of World War I. Cotton production had been depressed in the late nineteenth century, but recovered in Winnsboro in the early twentieth century and particularly thrived as a result of the war. In the 1920's prosperity declined and cotton production was again depressed. It should be noted that cotton was the only money crop in the parish. Taken as a whole, the

commercial zone of Winnsboro represents the only economic boom Franklin Parish experienced between the late nineteenth century and World War II.

*Winnsboro has been the focal community of Franklin Parish since the parish was formed in 1843. Originally the town was concentrated around the 1845 courthouse, which was to the east of the present central business district. (The old courthouse has been replaced by a modern one.) None of the nineteenth century commercial area remains. When the railroad was opened in 1890, commercial activities began to gravitate westward to meet the line. That trend was reinforced by a fire in the older section of town in 1919, and Prairie Street became the commercial center of town.

Bibliography

Sanborn Insurance Map, 1924.

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Winnsboro Commercial Historic District Additional Documentation

Period of significance: c.1900-1952

The purpose of this submission is to update the period of significance for the Winnsboro Commercial Historic District to the current fifty year cutoff (1952) and to update the now twenty year old inventory. The boundaries are not being changed. (See original submission for boundary delineation.) The existing National Register form documents local significance under architecture and commerce. This submission will expand the period of significance to 1952 under commerce, which is warranted because downtown Winnsboro continued to be the major focus of commerce for Franklin Parish until supplanted by strip development and shopping centers in the 1960s. The update is being undertaken at the request of the City of Winnsboro, which recently acquired the former post office, which was classified as non-contributing in the original nomination.

At the time the district was listed (1982), buildings constructed after 1932 were considered non-historic. Three such buildings (# 4, # 15, and # 20) now qualify for inclusion as contributing elements because, in addition to their age, they contributed to the downtown's role as the most important commercial center within Franklin Parish during the historic period. Three buildings coded as non-contributing in the original nomination because they were covered by metal panels (# 7, # 18 and #22) have been uncovered, revealing historic facades which also reinforce the character and significance of the downtown as a commercial center. Other already contributing buildings have been restored and hence now have a stronger historic appearance. One building (# 14) has suffered a serious loss of integrity and should now be classified as non-contributing. Four buildings (# 28, #29, #30 and #31 in the original nomination), all located at the western edge of the district, have been lost. Numbers 29, 30 and 31 were contributing, while #28 was a severely altered historic

building classified as non-contributing. A new brick structure stands on the site of building #28. The land where 29-31 stood is vacant.

As part of the fieldwork for this addendum, the LA SHPO re-examined each of the district's buildings to provide an up-to-date contributing/non-contributing count. As detailed above, after twenty years the district had experienced various renovation projects and a few losses. The changes in contributing/non-contributing status give the district a current non-contributing rate of only 21 percent. (The non-contributing rate in the original listing was 35 percent.)

BREAKDOWN OF BUILDINGS BY DATE

c. 1900 - c. 1910	2
1911 - c. 1920	15
1921 - 1930	2
1931 - 1940	1
1941 - 1952	2
non-contributing	6
TOTAL	28

INVENTORY

1. 600-604 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with decorative brickwork on frieze, twin recessed brick panels, metal canopy, and two shopfronts (one of which has recessed entrance).
2. 608 Prairie. 1911. Contributing element. Two-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring parapet with brick dentils, decorative pilasters rising higher than the parapet, recessed brick panels, two-over-two windows with lintels, and stone plaque reading "W.O.W. 1911." Lower story now boarded up, although shopfront shape is clear.
3. 610 Prairie. Built c. 1905 and significantly remodeled c. 1955. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed commercial building with modern brick façade.
4. 612-614 Prairie. C. 1945. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring decorative brickwork with contrasting colors of brick outlining panels on the façade; two shopfronts, one of which retains recessed entrance with glass-paneled doors; transom windows above shopfronts; and a metal canopy.
5. 616 Prairie. C. 1925. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with parapet, decorative brickwork, shopfront with recessed entrance and glass-paneled doors. Transom windows covered; metal canopy is modern.
6. 618 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a brick architrave, twin recessed brick panels, and central recessed entrance with glass-paneled door. Canopy is modern.
7. 702 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a slightly shaped parapet with molded cap, two recessed entrances and metal canopy. Transom windows have been covered.
8. 704-708 Prairie. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, historic brick commercial building with facade covered by modern metal panels.

9. 710 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with brick architrave and twin recessed brick recessed panels. Transom windows have been covered. Metal canopy is modern.
10. 714 Prairie. Princess Theater. C. 1915. Contributing element. Since the district was listed, this building has been restored based on an old photo. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building. High brick parapet features architrave and recessed brick panel. Decorative molded pilasters rise higher than the parapet. Arched motif across lower portion of façade containing entrance and display windows for movie posters. Canopy above entrance.
11. 720 Prairie. C. 1915. Princess Room. Contributing element. Restored one-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building. High parapet features architrave and recessed brick panels. Decorative molded pilasters rise higher than the parapet. Original shopfront has recessed glass-paneled doors and display windows. Four exposed transom windows surmount the shopfront. Canopy above the entrance. Similar to 714 Prairie, except that storefront and decorative upper portion of structure wrap around this corner building.
12. 802 Prairie. Built c. 1925; remodeled in 1980 with side wings added. Non-contributing element. Large, two-story commercial building with grand parapet, full modillion entablature, egg and dart capitals, and pilasters. However, the majority of the exterior has been covered by marble and the wings are large.
13. 503-505 Prairie. 1920s. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a parapet with twin brick panels and transom windows above two glazed shopfronts (both of which have recessed glazed entrances). Brick has been painted, obscuring decorative work within the panels.
14. 507-509 Prairie. Whatley Building. C. 1915. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, glazed brick commercial building constructed as a car dealership with large, wood-paneled display windows recessed behind two elliptical arches. Parapet contains twin recessed panels. Since the district was listed, half of the building (behind one arch) has been demolished (leaving only the arch), and the façade of the surviving half (behind the second arch) has been altered.
15. 513 Prairie. Post Office. 1936. Contributing element. One-story, brick, Colonial Revival, New Deal era post office with hipped roof, brick quoins, stone door surround with ear molds and entablature with denticular band.
16. 605 Prairie. Built c. 1915; extensively remodeled c. 1955. Non-contributing element. Two-story brick commercial building with one-story wing. Modern alterations hide any historic exterior features.
17. 607 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with two shopfronts and tall false front. Parapet features decorative brickwork, including twin panels. Pilasters rise above the parapet. Shopfront replaced.
18. 611 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with brick architrave.
19. 613 Prairie. C. 1905. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building with simple decorative brickwork (including an architrave) and band of tall transom windows across storefront. The latter has been altered.

20. 617-621 Prairie. C. 1945. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring simple decorative brickwork, metal canopy and three shopfronts with very geometrical recessed entrances.
21. 625 Prairie. C. 1905. Contributing element. Two-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring parapet, corner pilasters with recessed brick panels, decorative brickwork of contrasting brick, and arched entrance.
22. 701-703 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed brick commercial building with brick architrave and four recessed panels. The two shopfronts have been altered. Canopies are modern.
23. 705 Prairie. Franklin Parish Public Library. C. 1915. Contributing element. Restored two-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building featuring a brick cornice and architrave. Pilaster-like elements rise higher than parapet. Modern canvas awnings.
24. Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat roofed, brick commercial building featuring a parapet with a brick architrave and a large shopfront with two entrances. Transom windows are boarded over; canopy is modern.
25. 713-717 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. Three-story, flat-roofed, brick commercial building. Parapet features architrave with recessed panels below. Pilasters rise above parapet. Double central windows flanked by single windows on second and third story (all boarded over); shopfront level altered, although important elements remain, including cast-iron pilasters and three arches.
26. 719-721 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed, commercial building with shaped stuccoed parapet and metal canopy. Band of windows above shopfront is sealed.
27. 801-803 Prairie. C. 1915. Contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed commercial building with pointed stuccoed parapet and metal canopy. Transom windows above shopfront are sealed. Similar to 719-721 Prairie.
28. 805 Prairie. Non-contributing element. One-story, flat-roofed modern brick commercial building. Façade composed of speckled brick.