

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Charlottesville Downtown Mall Historic District

Other names/site number: DHR ID #104-5994

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: Main Street from Water Street to East 7th Street and pedestrianized sections of 1st Street, East 2nd Street, East 3rd Street, and East 5th Street

City or town: Charlottesville State: VA County: Independent City

Not For Publication:	N/A	Vicinity:	N/A
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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national X statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 X A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Virginia Department of Historic

Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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 ☒

☐

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Site

Structure

☐

Object

☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

buildings

sites

1

1

structures

7

5

objects

8

6

Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

TRANSPORTATION/pedestrian-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LANDSCAPE/plaza

LANDSCAPE/street furniture/object

TRANSPORTATION/pedestrian-related

RECREATION AND CULTURE/work of art

COMMERCE/restaurant

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Post-Modern

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: brick, granite, cast iron, steel, concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Charlottesville Downtown Mall Historic District is an eight block-long, pedestrianized segment of Main Street that follows an east-west course from Water Street to East 7th Street. It also includes later extensions into several of the side streets. The district encompasses the entire public rights of way of the streets within its boundaries, but does not include the adjacent buildings. Covering approximately 4 acres, the resource is located in the center of downtown Charlottesville's commercial district, two blocks south of the Albemarle County Courthouse on historic Court Square. Renowned landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and his firm, Lawrence Halprin & Associates (LHA), designed the original section of the Mall, from Old Preston Avenue on the west to East 6th Street, which was completed in two phases between 1976 and 1980. It reached its current expanse in four additional building campaigns that did not precisely follow the details of the original design but reflect its key concepts. Built and planted features include brick and granite paving, bosques of deciduous trees, fountains, streetlights, planters, seating, bollards, bike racks, signage, and public artworks. These built elements were designed and arranged to present specific opportunities for visitors. The tree bosques are shifted north or south of the center line of the Mall, creating open space that draws visitors from one side to the

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other to create a meandering pathway. Central Place, a large open square with a fountain at East 2nd Street, as well as three additional smaller fountains and groups of benches within the tree bosques, were designed to allow visitors to withdraw from the flow of traffic to socialize or rest.

The historic district contains fourteen resources, eight contributing and six noncontributing. With a small number of exceptions, these resources, which are either structures or objects, constitute groups of similar or identical elements, such as bollards (**DHR ID #104-5994-0008**), planters (**104-5994-0010**), and streetlights (**104-5994-0011**). A significant individual resource is the Central Place fountain (**104-5994-0001**). The Mall also features two public artworks. A series of six steel sculptures by artist James Hagan (**104-5994-0007**), installed in various locations in 1981, contributes to the significance of the Downtown Mall. The Community Chalkboard and Podium (**104-5994-0006**) was constructed after the period of significance (2006) and is noncontributing.

Over time, alterations to original features, including the brick paving, seating, and streetlights, have taken place in order to replace worn out elements, to meet modern code requirements, or to advance contemporary needs. Additions to the Mall have also been carried out that are clearly differentiated from the LHA design. Commercial establishments along the Mall have added impermanent elements such as sandwich board-type signs, small planters, and newspaper boxes, as well as tables, chairs, and post-and-chain or pipe-rail enclosures for permitted outdoor dining areas and vendor tables within the public space. These elements affect both the open character of the original design and the space available for the activities that the design encouraged, while also fostering the primary goal of pedestrianizing this portion of Main Street – bringing people back to downtown Charlottesville. While some details of its design have changed, the primary elements remain. The Charlottesville Downtown Mall therefore retains integrity to its period of significance (1976-1981).

Narrative Description

Setting

Located in Virginia's Northern Piedmont Region, Charlottesville is an independent city of 46,553 people, with a metropolitan population of more than 220,000, according to the 2020 census. Founded in 1762 as the seat of Albemarle County, Charlottesville is home to the University of Virginia, located a mile west of the Downtown Mall. The city's commercial downtown, south of the courthouse square, developed in the early nineteenth century and grew in economic and social vitality until the Great Depression. The segment of Main Street that constitutes the original Downtown Mall slopes upward to the northwest and downward to the southeast, providing views into the surrounding city. The initial five-block section of the Mall opened in 1976 to the designs of Lawrence Halprin & Associates (LHA) and was extended two blocks to the west following the LHA design in 1980. The Mall acts as a focus for entertainment, dining, and boutique shopping in Charlottesville and is especially active in warmer weather, when outdoor seating at restaurants is available and outdoor musical events take place. The Mall is also the location of the Charlottesville City Hall and the Downtown Transit Center on the east

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and the Omni Hotel on the west. Garages at the Omni and on Water Street (south) and Market Street (north) provide nearby public parking. The Downtown Mall is located within Charlottesville and Albemarle County Courthouse Historic District (DHR ID #104-0072), and many of the buildings that line the Mall are contributing resources dating to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Overall Description

Ground Plane: The right-of-way of Main Street within the Downtown Mall measures 66 feet, from building face to building face. In paving this ground plane, Lawrence Halprin & Associates' design consisted of repeated, patterned elements to establish the Mall's framework, creating interconnected outdoor rooms, influencing movement, and providing locations for rest and social interaction. In the area encompassing the two earliest Mall building campaigns in 1976 (from 1st Street to East 6th Street) and 1980 (from 1st Street to Old Preston Avenue), the paving consists of brick laid in a herringbone pattern as a ground, with contrasting granite paving used to highlight specific features. Most of the current brickwork dates to 2009, when the original 11 5/8 by 3 5/8-inch bricks set in gray mortar were replaced by 12 by 4-inch bricks in the same herringbone pattern but set in sand for easier maintenance. The granite elements, planned in the original design but exchanged for concrete to cut costs in the initial construction, also date to 2009. Gray granite "bricks" are also used in the paving to indicate the fire lane. An understanding of the LHA herringbone paving pattern with scored concrete border can still be found in the elevator lobby of the Market Street Garage at the northeast corner of East Main Street and East Fifth Street. LHA drawings indicate that this paving was to follow the Mall design, and it appears to be unchanged since its original installation.

The ground plane of the tree bosques and other open spaces LHA designed for the Mall, of varying lengths and with herringbone-patterned brick infill, are delineated by light gray granite borders. Contrasting paving was used at intersections to differentiate these spaces along the ground plane. With two exceptions, the masonry at intersections consists of a pointed cruciform element in black granite set in a cruciform frame of black granite with a light gray granite border. A light gray granite rectangle surrounds this frame. At each intersection, brick laid in a herringbone pattern fills the space between the pointed cruciform feature and its framing elements. The two exceptions to this approach are the vehicular crossings at West 2nd Street and East 4th Street, where the original cruciform elements were removed in 2009 in favor of a light gray granite rectangle around a plain brick field. These intersections, which are themselves deviations from LHA's pedestrian-only plans, are also crossed on the east and west by textured concrete pavers as a warning to sight-challenged pedestrians that they are approaching a vehicle crossing.

Original, soldier-course bricks set in light-colored mortar can be found along the building faces and in the runnels that help to drain water from the Mall. The drainage bands (**104-5994-0003**), one on each side of the Mall space, mark the historical location of the interface between the sidewalk and roadbed of Main Street prior to the Mall projects. They run parallel to each other in an east-west direction alongside the gray granite rectangles that divide the Mall's space. Surface

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inlets with cast-iron grates, spaced within the drainage runnels and planned in the Mall's original design, direct runoff into the city's underground storm sewer system. Additional, perpendicular runnels at intersections also carry runoff to these inlets. Intersections of the runnels and the brickwork along the building faces feature mitred corners specified in the Halprin drawings.

Organization of Space: In addition to the two-dimensional patterned ground, LHA employed three-dimensional features to add a vertical element to the Mall, to organize space, and to influence pedestrian movement. Extant features include four fountains constructed in the first two building campaigns, bosques of willow oak trees spaced at different intervals along the Mall's course, three sizes of movable planters, two types of lighting, bollards, and trash receptacles. These elements were oriented along, but on either side, of the Mall's center line, encouraging pedestrians to take a meandering course down Main Street. The original construction also included dozens of movable benches and two hexagonal information kiosks, with integrated lighting and drinking fountains. All the aforementioned elements were custom-designed by LHA. In 2009, all of the benches were removed and replaced by chairs (**104-5994-0005**) that generally resemble the LHA design. The chairs, however, are smaller than the earlier benches; they are off-the-shelf models that are bolted into place. Both of the original kiosks have been removed.

Central Place, a plaza at the northeast corner of East Main Street and East 2nd Street, stands halfway along the Mall. It consists of herringbone brick paving; the Mall's largest fountain (**104-5994-0001**), composed of three granite uprights in a depressed brick pool; and a bosque of willow oaks to the north of the fountain. Initially, a row of six red maple trees was located along East 2nd Street with four red maples on the south side of East Main Street. Three of the six 2nd Street trees and all of the Main Street trees are now gone, although their locations in the ground plane can still be identified by tree grates. The only remaining LHA-designed trash receptacle (**104-5994-0014**) is also located at Central Place. The other three fountains of the LHA design (**104-5994-0002**) are located within tree bosques along Main Street. All three consist of a square, stepped, granite pool, with its floor below the level of the Mall paving and a granite base and top. The fountains were designed to tempt visitors to pause in their movement along the Mall, giving the opportunity for social interaction. The gathering space around the three Main Street fountains is currently restricted, however, by dining area enclosures serving restaurants facing the Mall.

The bosques of trees vary in length, containing either three, five, or seven specimens of willow oaks. Some of the trees are fifty or more years old. About a half dozen trees have been cut down to shoulder height while awaiting replacement. Whereas the Mall's brick paving initially surfaced the ground plane immediately around the trees, square metal grates (**104-5994-0004**) have served that purpose since 2009. The trees provide shade in the summertime and create distinct outdoor "rooms," bordered by gray granite, within the Mall's length. Like other features of the LHA design, the bosques are located along the Mall's center line, but weighted to one side or the other to encourage lateral movement. Associated with the trees are what the LHA drawings called "tree lights" (**104-5994-0011**). Altered since their original installation but remaining in the LHA-planned locations, the single-pole fixtures now employ flared, cone-

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shaped shades, aiming light downward instead of both up and down, as the original fixtures did. Many of the bosque areas are now given over to outdoor dining areas for nearby restaurants.

At many of the intersections, original features such as planters, bollards, and streetlights have been clustered, along with trash and recycling cans dating from 2009 and recent three-sided signage **(104-5994-0013)**. Early in the Mall's history, the planters **(104-5994-0010)**, in the shape of flattened spheres, were located in various places – within the tree bosques, near seating and streetlights, and elsewhere. As outdoor dining for restaurants began to occupy some of the Mall's public space, many of the planters were relocated to the intersections. The fluted bollards **(104-5994-0008)** mark the corners of the cruciform granite frame of the intersections. "Pedestrian lights" **(104-5994-0011)**, as they're called in the Halprin drawings, are located in the corners of the rectangular granite frame of the intersections and elsewhere along the Mall. Sometimes called "spider" lights, they consist of a single pole shaft supporting four curved arms, each with single fixture. These lights have also been altered since their original installation; flared shades have been added, and most have a square based resting on the brick paving.

Later extensions of the Mall and side streets: LHA's early planning for the Downtown Mall encompassed the area of Main Street between Water Street on the west and East 7th Street on the east, plus short extensions into some of the side streets. Plazas with fountains, seating, and vegetation were planned on both the east and west ends. As noted above, the two earliest building campaigns in 1976 and 1980 completed the Mall from Old Preston Avenue to East 6th Street. Pedestrianizing Main Street beyond this core and into the side streets was not undertaken immediately, but has been implemented in phases over the nearly fifty-year history of the Mall. The two terminal plazas were never built as LHA intended. Later construction departed from the original design and diverged more substantially as time passed. The area between Water Street and Old Preston Avenue, west of the 1980 expansion, was originally landscaped in association with the construction of a Radisson Hotel in 1985 (now the Omni Hotel). The design did include brick paving in a herringbone pattern, concrete cruciform paving elements, and willow oak trees, but the water features and plantings LHA envisioned were never built. Additional changes were made in this area when the Center of Developing Entrepreneurs (C.O.D.E) was constructed in 2021. This stretch of the Mall now includes sand-set brick in a herringbone pattern, concrete cruciform elements, a group of LHA planters near Water Street, altered LHA-style "spider" light fixtures, willow oak trees on the north side of Main Street, and two raised planting beds with concrete walls, containing rows of young willow oaks. The western end of the Mall is linked with the original construction by an octagonal plaza constructed of sand set, 12 by 4-inch, herringbone-patterned brick within a light gray granite border. The plaza includes typical Mall street furniture, including spider light fixtures, and chairs.

The 600 block of East Main Street was pedestrianized in 1994, then rebuilt and altered in 2006 to accommodate changes at that end of the Mall, including an enlarged concert pavilion and the Downtown Transit Center. This area also includes elements common to the LHA design. The bricks are laid in a herringbone pattern, although they are 8 by 4 inches, rather than the larger bricks used in both the original Mall area and the 2009 replacement project. Two rectangular areas with granite borders establish the ground plane for outdoor rooms similar to those in the

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LHA design, and willow oak trees shade the westernmost space. This space is bisected by the 2006 Community Chalkboard and Podium **(104-5994-0006)**, a public art installation originally undertaken by the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression and known as the Free Speech Wall.

Some of the more recent development on the Downtown Mall has occurred on streets that formerly crossed Main Street. The multidisciplinary design firm Wallace, Roberts, & Todd developed a master plan for the Downtown Mall in 2005 that recommended the location and extent of side street development. Recent work has been undertaken generally according to WRT's recommendations. South of Main Street, short stretches of 1st and East 5th streets have been partially pedestrianized, while traffic has been barred from East 2nd Street between Main Street and Water Street. On the north, short stretches of East 2nd and East 5th streets have been partially pedestrianized, while traffic has been barred on East 3rd Street between Main Street and Market Street. With one exception, 8 by 4-inch brick in a herringbone pattern has been used as paving. The exception is the southern side of East 3rd Street, where concrete pavers, also 8 by 4 inches, in a herringbone pattern are used. Trees (maple and ginkgo) in these side streets vary from their Main Street counterparts, as do light fixtures. The side streets, the rights of way of which are half as wide as Main Street, include non-LHA lighting **(104-5994-0012)** but no planters, seating, or other street furniture. Simple cylindrical bollards **(104-5994-0009)** are employed to mark the boundary between vehicular traffic on the side streets and the pedestrian Mall. The WRT plan included permanent, bent-pipe bike racks in its plans for development, and many such racks have been installed on the side streets.

Description of Individual Resources

Central Place Fountain (104-5994-0001): Central Place was intended to provide visual and spatial variety from the Mall's otherwise linear arrangement. It opened out north of the Main Street corridor, also providing additional frontage for shops facing the Mall. A key element of the Central Place design was a fountain located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and East 2nd streets. The sound of water flowing into its basin, as well as its upright granite blocks, drew pedestrians' attention to the plaza and to the shops behind it. The size of the fountain differentiates it from the other fountains on the Mall and further serves to distinguish Central Place from its surroundings, as did the red maple trees originally located along 2nd Street NE and along Main Street near the southeast corner of the intersection.

The fountain consists three vertically oriented, gray granite blocks surrounding a circular cast-iron basin set within a gray granite square. All of these elements are set in a shallow, square, brick pool. A cast-iron spout in the south face of the upright granite block on the north pours water into the basin when the fountain is in operation. Four spouts in the basin release water into the pool. The pool itself measures 19 feet on each side and has a herringbone-patterned brick floor. The bricks had paved Main Street sidewalks and were reused in the fountain, per LHA plans. Three brick steps accommodate the change in elevation from the pool floor to plaza level. The step bricks are original 11 5/8 by 3 5/8-inch bricks with mortared joints. The mortar is now light colored rather than the original gray. The vertical granite blocks are 10, 12, and 15 feet tall,

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with the shortest being the location of the water spout. Their faces vary in width between 2 feet, 8 inches and 3 feet, 4 inches. They are wire cut on three sides and split on the fourth. The four granite blocks surrounding the basin are also wire cut. The LHA design employed granite blocks with an angled top on the east side of 2nd Street NE alongside railings leading to the Central Place bosque. One of these blocks is mounted in the steps on the west side of the pool, helping to anchor the pool into the overall Central Place design. All the granite was quarried and cut by the Cold Spring Granite Company in Cold Spring, Minnesota, according to 1975 drawings for the work. Access to the fountain works is gained through a removable metal grate and removable brick pavers in the drainage band south of the fountain. These features appear in the 1975 LHA drawings. The fountain was repaired in 2009, but few changes appear to have been made with the exception of the addition of LHA-designed bollards, connected by lengths of chain, around its perimeter. Two small aluminum drains are located in the floor of the pool, and a cast-iron drain is located on its north side. These elements do not appear in LHA drawings of the fountain and may be part of the 2009 work.

Halprin was known for the abstraction of natural forms in his designs, especially his fountains; the gray granite of the Central Place fountain is an abstract representation of the regional geomorphology of Blue Ridge Mountain springs. The fountain was also intended to activate Central Place as a participatory feature – it was designed to be waded in. (Noe 2009: 8-9) This active element has been negated with the installation of bollards and chains around the feature as a safety measure. That is the only significant alteration to the Central Place fountain.

Main Street Fountains (104-5994-0002): In its initial design for the Downtown Mall, LHA planned three small fountains along Main Street, along with the larger one at Central Place. All three small fountains consist of a square, granite-stepped pool, with its base below the level of the Mall paving, and a granite base and top. Water flows up through the base and spills over the smooth-finished top and down the rock-faced sides into the pool. Two of the fountain tops are round, one is square, and the shape of the bases corresponds to the shape of the tops. The outer dimensions of the granite square around each pool are 8 feet on a side; the lower square, 1 foot below Mall level, is 6 feet square. Originally, herringbone-patterned brick laid in a 4-foot square, 2 feet below Mall level, functioned as the pool floor. Today, a metal floor is located level with the top of the lowest step, meaning that the pool is only 1 foot deep and the original brick floor can no longer be seen. Lamps in each face of the lower granite square are also hidden by the metal plate. Access to the below-grade fountain works is provided by removable granite pavers in the bands that outline the tree bosques.

The fountains are spaced out along the Mall, rather than clustered near Central Place. In the 1976 Mall construction, a round fountain was placed south of the center line in the 200 block of East Main Street and a square fountain located north of the center line in the 400 block of East Main Street. During the 1980 western expansion of the Mall, a circular fountain was built in the 100 block of West Main Street, south of the center line. The small size and simple forms of the fountains differ from signature Halprin designs that abstract natural features in an almost Cubist manner.

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Drainage System (104-5994-0003): In its original design for the Downtown Mall, Lawrence Halprin & Associates developed a drainage system that maintained the original brick ground, using slight grade changes and a specially designed feature to drain rain water from the Mall. Based on a drainage detail observed in the brick sidewalks along Court Square, the LHA design included a concave runnel composed of two parallel rows of soldier course bricks (11 5/8 by 3 5/8 inches) set in gray mortar, creating a drainage band 2 feet wide. As built, two of these drainage bands ran parallel to each other in an east-west direction for the length of the Mall. They were located where the gutters along the Main Street sidewalks had stood and also paralleled the granite rectangles that divided up the Mall's space. The drainage bands drew water away from both the former sidewalk areas and the former roadbed of Main Street, yet did not interrupt the continuous surface paving of the Mall or disrupt the pedestrian experience. Collaborators on utilities, mechanical, and electrical elements of the Mall design were Hazen/Sawyer of New York City and Beamer/Wilkinson Associates of Oakland, California.

LHA drawings specified the type of cast-iron "drop inlet" grates to be used in the drainage bands. Manufactured by the Neenah Foundry Company of Neenah, Wisconsin, the specified grate consisted of three rows of half-inch openings. Like the drainage band, it had a concave profile. Grates closely resembling the LHA drawings can still be found throughout the Downtown Mall. There are two slightly different versions of the grates (varying only in the width of their openings), but neither possesses the half-inch openings specified in the drawings. It is assumed that one of these types is original, the other a later replacement. All were produced by the Neenah Foundry. The runoff system for the Downtown Mall also required the addition of storm drains in some of the side streets beyond the Mall paving.

Near each of the fountains, a metal grate is located among the removable granite pavers that allow access to the fountain works. LHA plans reviewed for the survey did include removable pavers, but did not include grates. These grates seem therefore to have been added after the original construction, perhaps in 2009 when granite replaced the original concrete paving. Pedestrianizing of downtown streets after the periods of significance – in the 600 block of East Main Street, for instance, and in some of the side streets – used the drainage band idea, but did not always use the same bricks or grates.

The linear east-west course of the parallel drainage bands, like the sidewalk gutters they replaced, suggest pedestrian flow along the Mall, providing a sense of tension with the opportunities for pause at fountains or seating and the meandering movement influenced by the tree bosques on either side of the Mall's center line.

Tree Grates-Tree Wells (104-5994-0004): In the LHA design for the Downtown Mall, trees were planted in a below grade, steel-framed box that allowed the brick paving to cantilever over the roots, providing more room for growth. As such, the trees grew out of openings in the herringbone brick with no transitional material that would disrupt the flow of paving. The 2005 Wallace, Roberts, & Todd (WRT) master plan for the Downtown Mall identified an issue with this treatment: the trees had grown too large for the 16 by 16-inch openings in the paving that had been initially provided and efforts to broaden the openings proved unsatisfactory and

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inconsistent. To resolve the issue, WRT recommended enlarging the openings and filling space between the tree trunks and the brick work with “gravel mulch,” level with the pavement to decrease the tripping hazard that would exist otherwise. This recommendation was not implemented.

In the 2009 renovation of the Downtown Mall, after another master plan by MMM Design Group, the tree boxes that LHA had designed were removed. Openings in the brick pavement around the willow oaks on Main Street and the red maples near Central Place were enlarged into squares approximately 8 feet on each side. A frame consisting of a single row of bricks bordered the outer edge of the square and was not integrated into the herringbone pattern of the Mall paving. The space between each brick frame and the tree trunk was covered by a grate consisting of a set of four slotted, metal plates resting on steel beams. As the trees grow larger, the plates can be removed, the openings enlarged, and the plates put back into place. The tree grates appear to be in good condition, although a 2015 assessment of the Mall’s trees identified potential threats of the grates to tree health.

The willow oak trees associated with the Community Chalkboard in the 600 block of East Main Street are surrounded by metal grates set in a square opening with a thin metal frame. These openings are approximately 4 feet on each side, and two slotted plates fill the square. Different treatments are used at the base of the trees on the side street additions to the Mall. On 3rd Street, for instance, the trees grow in turf-covered beds bordered by stone blocks south of Main Street, while they emerge directly from the brickwork on the north. The below-grade supporting structures for the grates could not be inspected during the survey.

Chairs (104-5994-0005): Lawrence Halprin & Associates designed several types of street furniture for the Downtown Mall, including benches. The benches were intended to be movable, providing for flexibility in arranging seating to accommodate Mall users. Three-and-a-half feet wide, the benches’ frames were constructed of ½ by 2-inch galvanized steel bars bent into shape and welded together. They were painted matte black. The slats consisted mostly of 1 5/8-inch square wood members bolted to the frame. While movable, the benches were heavy and therefore not likely to be stolen. LHA drawings indicate that 150 were planned for the Mall. The Wallace, Roberts, & Todd 2005 master plan called for replacing the original benches with a similar (although narrower), off-the-shelf chair manufactured by MWH Object + Design and adding more chairs and benches. A similar model was purchased, thirty were installed during the 2009 rehabilitation of the Mall, and the LHA benches were removed. By this time, much of the space within the tree bosques in the center of the Mall, where LHA had located the benches, had been given over to dining areas available only to customers of adjacent restaurants. The new chairs were therefore relocated, usually outside of the tree bosques, and bolted in place to prevent theft. Thirty-one were observed in preparation for this nomination. At the time of the nomination, there were groups of two to three chairs in three locations, two larger groups of six set in tree bosques, and a row of twelve placed outside the Charlottesville City Hall.

Community Chalkboard and Podium (104-5994-0006): The Community Chalkboard and Podium is a permanent public art installation located in the 600 block of Main Street that was constructed

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in 2005-06 and dedicated in April 2006. It is comprised of two principal elements – a wall, which serves as a double-sided chalkboard, and a podium. The wall is oriented in an east-west direction on the central axis of the Downtown Mall. It measures 7 ½ feet high and is set on a strip of slate paving. The wall, which is divided into a 12-foot section and a 42-foot section by a 12-foot-wide gap, is constructed of slabs of Buckingham slate that are affixed to a concrete block base using custom-designed, stainless-steel anchors. Stainless-steel chalk trays are integrated into the design of both wall sections. The 18-inch-high podium, which is located south of the longer section of wall, measures 6 ½ feet square and is also built of concrete and slate.

Conceived as an interactive and dynamic monument to free expression and a place for the public to exercise their right to free speech, the Community Chalkboard was designed by Peter O'Shea of O'Shea & Wilson Siteworks, a Charlottesville-based landscape architecture firm, in collaboration with architect Robert Winstead. The project was sponsored by the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression, which created the concept for a monument to the First Amendment in 1996. The development process involved public meetings, a design competition, City Council approval, and a multiyear fundraising and outreach effort. Construction began in 2005 and coincided with the redevelopment of the public plaza outside of the Charlottesville City Hall. Since its dedication in April 2006, the artwork has served the community as an active tribute to creative expression and public engagement. In 2021, ownership of the Community Chalkboard was transferred to the Charlottesville-based Bridge Progressive Arts Initiative, which is responsible for its maintenance, repair, and programming.

James Hagan sculptures (104-5994-0007): There are six sculptures by Charlottesville artist James Hagan in various locations on the Downtown Mall between Water Street and East 6th Street. They date to 1981. Each depicts either a single figure or a group of figures in silhouette. One figure, for example, depicts a standing woman holding shopping bags, while another portrays a mother and child walking. The figures are life-sized and fabricated from ¾-inch thick steel with a painted black finish. The sculptures were designed without bases, so that the figures appear to be walking or standing on the Mall. Five of the sculptures are affixed to the granite paving, while one is set on the herringbone brickwork.

The sculptor and digital artist James Hagan (1936-2008) taught at the University of Virginia from 1963 until his retirement in 2001. Hagan began his career as a sculptor working primarily in wood. In the mid-1970s, his work began to attract critical attention at the national level, and he exhibited widely. Hagan's abstract wood sculpture titled "Column IV" was acquired by the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in 1974. Hagan also experimented with different media, including ceramics and metal. In the late 1980s, Hagan adopted computer technology into his art and founded the New Media concentration at UVa's McIntire Department of Art.

In 1981, he was selected by a city jury to create six sculptures for the Downtown Mall. The size, subject matter, and placement of the sculptures encouraged pedestrians to touch and interact with the artwork. The Hagan sculptures were installed a year after the second phase of the Downtown Mall was completed to the LHA design.

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Historic Bollards (104-5994-0008): The original bollards specified by Lawrence Halprin & Associates for the Downtown Mall are custom-designed, cast-iron posts with a painted black finish. The bollards measure 38 inches tall and 12 inches in diameter, and their design features a hemispherical cap with a three tiered, or ringed, base that rests on a fluted column. The bollard columns feature a wide, exaggerated fillet and a narrow flute. The bollards were manufactured by Robinson Iron Works of Alexander City, Alabama – the same firm that cast the custom-designed planters LHA specified for the Mall.

Originally, the bollards were used to mark the locations of intersections, with the exception of Central Place, which was conceived as a public plaza. LHA's 1974 plans for the Downtown Mall show eight bollards each at the intersections of Main Street with West 2nd Street, 1st Street, East 3rd Street, East 4th Street, and East 5th Street. The bollards were arranged in rows of four to demarcate either side of the former rights-of-way of the cross streets. They were placed on the concrete banding used in the design of the intersections rather than on the brick paving.

Initially, only five blocks of the Mall were developed according to the LHA plans, but when the Mall was extended two blocks to the west in 1980, the original bollard design was utilized. As part of the 2009 renovation of the Downtown Mall, the interior bollards (the middle two in each row of four) were removed or relocated. Today, there are four bollards each at the intersections of Main Street with West 2nd Street, 1st Street, East 3rd Street, East 4th Street, and East 5th Street. In addition, six bollards were placed around the fountain at Central Place after the period of significance. These have been modified to accommodate the addition of chains strung between the posts.

Nonhistoric Bollards (104-5994-0009): In the years since the original LHA design was implemented, as portions of side streets were also pedestrianized, additional bollards were installed to help define the areas where vehicles are prohibited. These steel-tube bollards have standard designs meant for impact resistance. While there are various styles of nonhistoric bollards, they all have a painted black finish, and one type features a hemispherical cap with a ringed base that bears a distant resemblance to the design of the original bollards. Bollards that are not original to the design of the Charlottesville Downtown Mall are located on Old Preston Avenue, 1st Street, East 2nd Street, East 3rd Street, East 5th Street, and East 6th Street.

Historic Planters (104-5994-0010): The planters specified by Lawrence Halprin & Associates for the Downtown Mall are custom-designed, cast-iron pots manufactured by Robinson Iron Works of Alexander City, Alabama. They have the shape of an oblate spheroid, or a flattened sphere, and were designed to rest directly on the ground, without a base. They have a smooth surface that was originally finished with matte black paint. The planters were cast in three sizes. The smallest planters are 3 feet, 4 inches in diameter at the widest point with a 20-inch opening. The medium-sized planters are 4 feet, 1 inch in diameter with a 28-inch opening. The large planters are 5 feet in diameter with a 38-inch opening. All three types are 2 feet, 1-inch tall with a 1 ¾-inch-tall lip. Construction documents dated 1974 indicate that fifty planters were planned for the five blocks of Main Street covered by the first phase of Downtown Mall construction (1st Street to East 6th Street).

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The street furnishings LHA designed for the Mall were meant to be moveable to reinforce the idea of flexible, dynamic landscape, and a note on the 1974 plans indicates that the original location of street furniture, including the planters, was to be given by the landscape architect on site. Historic photographs indicate that the planters were placed individually or in groups, set alone or placed near other furnishings, such as benches or streetlights, and located under trees within the bosques or in the open near intersections. Over time, as space under the bosques has been privatized for use by nearby restaurants and cafes as dining areas, many of the planters have been relocated. A 2005 study of the Downtown Mall recorded sixty planters in ten locations. At the time of this nomination, there were seventy-one planters within the Mall on Main Street, between Water Street on the west to the 600 block of Main Street on the east, and on the side streets. Seven planters were set in a row at the edge of the Water Street plaza and three along the Water Street sidewalk. There were also seven planters on East 3rd Street – five near the intersection with Main Street and two near the intersection with East Market Street. The more recent additions to the group of planters replicate the original design and were cast by the same foundry in Alabama. Many are arranged with streetlights, trash and recycling receptacles, and bollards at the corners of intersections. Today, the planters are finished with a glossy black paint. They are planted with shrubs, perennials, and annuals on a seasonal basis by the Parks Department.

Historic Streetlights (104-5994-0011): Lawrence Halprin & Associates designed two types of streetlights for the Downtown Mall, designated as “pedestrian lights” and “tree lights.” The pedestrian lights were located at intersections and along Main Street, while the tree lights were located within the bosques of willow oaks. When the pedestrian mall expanded in 1980 and later in 1985 and 1994, new streetlights replicated the design of the originals. The pedestrian lights, which are sometimes referred to as “spider” lights, consist of a single pole shaft supporting four curved arms each with a single fixture. As originally designed, the pole shaft was a 3-inch, schedule 80 steel pipe, which had a 3 ½-inch outside diameter, anchored to a concealed base. The cast-iron base covers sat flush with the level of the brick paving. The enameled steel fixtures had a tapered drum shape and a bottom rim that measured 2 feet in diameter. The 1974 plans indicate that the pedestrian lights were located at the intersections, with one at each corner, and along sections of Main Street where lighting was not provided by the tree lights. As originally designed, the tree lights consisted of a single pole (a 3-inch, schedule 80 steel pipe) supporting a single, cylindrical fixture that measured 23 inches tall and 8 inches in diameter. The design of the pole shaft and base were identical to those used for the pedestrian lights. The tree lights, as the name suggests, were placed within the bosques to signal gathering places under the trees. The fixtures provided lighting for the trees as well as downlighting for pedestrians.

At some point prior to 2005, the original fixtures of both types of streetlights were replaced with flared, cone-shaped shades. For the tree lights, this change eliminated the uplighting of the willow oaks. During a renovation of the Mall in 2009, the pole shafts of the pedestrian lights were replaced with shafts of a similar design, but 4 inches wide, and the lights were raised by 2 feet to allow fire truck access. While some of the original streetlights retain their original base design, others have been modified. Other alterations to the pedestrian lights include the addition

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of horizontal bars for the installation of temporary banner-type signs and the addition of permanent signage that has a dark green finish and a floral design in the lower half. The permanent signs are affixed to pedestrian lights located at the intersections and are used to indicate the names of the side streets and to advertise the names of local businesses.

Nonhistoric Streetlights (104-5994-0012): In the expansions of the Mall after its two initial building campaigns in 1976 and 1980, additional lighting was installed on Main Street and along the side streets that does not replicate the original streetlight designs. One style features a single or double curved arm, which imitates the design of the original pedestrian lights, a tapered shade, and a base that is flush with the brick paving. Another style has a slightly tapered pole shaft, a fixture with a tapered drum shape, and a flared base cover. This style comes with single or paired fixtures. The pole shafts and fixtures of both designs have a painted black finish. While many of the nonhistoric streetlights are located along the side streets, there also is a cluster within the 600 block of East Main Street.

Signage (104-5994-0013): While the LHA plan for the Downtown Mall made recommendations for signs on buildings, it did not incorporate signage for wayfinding or for local business advertising as landscape elements. Instead, the design featured two hexagonal kiosks, each with a bell-shaped, standing-seam metal roof and an integrated drinking fountain and lights. The exterior walls of the kiosks were used for posting signs and posters. At some point between 2005 and 2008, one of the LHA kiosks was removed; the other was removed as part of the 2009 rehabilitation of the Mall.

There is currently one type of permanent, freestanding signage on the Downtown Mall. Probably installed in 2009, the signs are three-sided and consist of thin panels set between steel poles that measure roughly 6 feet high. The poles have a green finish. Each sign has three panels – one displaying a map illustrating the Mall, one with a map of the greater downtown area, and one highlighting nearby destinations. The signs are typically located at intersections near other small-scale elements, such as bollards or trash receptacles. Freestanding wayfinding signage that is not original to the Lawrence Halprin & Associates design of the Downtown Mall is located at the intersections of Main Street with West 2nd Street, East 2nd Street, East 3rd Street, East 4th Street, East 5th Street, and East 6th Street. In addition, banner-type signage is affixed to some of the streetlights on the Mall, often associated with the freestanding signs.

Historic Trash Receptacle (104-5994-0014): The trash receptacles specified by Lawrence Halprin & Associates for the Downtown Mall were sturdy, cylindrical, steel vessels with interior fiberglass trash baskets and galvanized steel covers. Each measured 2 feet, 4 inches tall and 21 inches in diameter. The trash receptacles were finished with a matte black paint. Similar to the planters and chairs, the original locations of the trash cans are not shown on the LHA plans; rather, locations were decided in the field by the landscape architects. With one exception, all of the original LHA-designed trash receptacles were replaced with Petoskey brand, ergonomic cans as part of the 2009 rehabilitation of the Mall. The remaining LHA-designed trash can is located on East 2nd Street.

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Inventory

The inventory below is the result of reconnaissance level survey of the Charlottesville Downtown Mall conducted in January 2022. After consultation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Charlottesville Department of Neighborhood Development Services, a set of fourteen resources were identified to be the focus of the survey. These resources were either structures or objects, and most were groups of similar or identical physical features, such as streetlights or bollards. The survey identified eight resources that contributed to the significance of the Charlottesville Downtown Historic District (1 structure, 2 objects, and 5 groups of objects) and six resources that did not (1 structure and 5 groups of objects).

Each entry in the inventory below identifies the primary and secondary (where applicable) resource, the resource type (building, site, structure, or object), style, approximate construction date, and contributing or noncontributing status organized by address. Resources within the Charlottesville Downtown Mall Historic District are considered contributing if they were constructed during the district's period of significance (1976-1981), are associated with one or more of the district's areas of significance, and retain integrity. Additional information on these resources can be accessed via the Virginia Department of Historic Resources architectural survey archives and/or the Virginia Cultural Resource Information System (V-CRIS). Resources are keyed to the Sketch Map included in the nomination.

Charlottesville Downtown Mall Historic District Inventory of Resources

<u>200 Block East Main Street</u> <i>Primary Resource:</i> Fountain (Object), Post Modern, 1976	104-5994-0001	<i>Other DHR Id#:</i> 104-0072 Contributing Total: 1
<u>Downtown Mall</u> <i>Primary Resource:</i> Fountains (Objects), Post Modern, 1976	104-5994-0002	<i>Other DHR Id#:</i> 104-0072 Contributing Total: 1 group
<u>Downtown Mall</u> <i>Primary Resource:</i> Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Drainage System), Post Modern, 1976	104-5994-0003	<i>Other DHR Id#:</i> 104-0072 Contributing Total: 1 group
<u>Downtown Mall</u> <i>Primary Resource:</i> Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Tree Grates, Tree Wells), no discernible style, 2009	104-5994-0004	<i>Other DHR Id#:</i> 104-0072 Noncontributing Total: 1 group
<u>Downtown Mall</u> <i>Primary Resource:</i> Landscape Feature, Man-Made Other – Chairs), no discernible style, 2009	104-5994-0005	<i>Other DHR Id#:</i> 104-0072 Noncontributing Total: 1 group

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600 Block East Main Street 104-5994-0006

Primary Resource: Work of Art (Other – Community Chalkboard), no discernible style, 2006

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Noncontributing

Total: 1

Main Street 104-5994-0007

Primary Resource: Work of Art (Other – Sculptures), no discernible style, 1981

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Contributing

Total: 1 group

Main Street 104-5994-0008

Primary Resource: Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Bollards), Post Modern, 1976

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Contributing

Total: 1

Downtown Mall 104-5994-0009

Primary Resource: Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Bollards), no discernible style, ca. 2000

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Noncontributing

Total: 1 group

Downtown Mall 104-5994-0010

Primary Resource: Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Planters), Post Modern, 1976

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Contributing

Total: 1

Main Street 104-5994-0011

Primary Resource: Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Streetlights), Post Modern, 1976

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Contributing

Total: 1

Downtown Mall 104-5994-0012

Primary Resource: Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Streetlights), no discernible style, ca. 2000

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Noncontributing

Total: 1

Downtown Mall 104-5994-0013

Primary Resource: Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Signage), no discernible style, ca. 2009

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Noncontributing

Total: 1

100 Block 2nd Street, NE 104-5994-0014

Primary Resource: Landscape Feature, Man-Made (Other – Trash Receptacle), no discernible style, 1976

Other DHR Id#: 104-0072

Contributing

Total: 1

Statement of Integrity

The Downtown Mall Historic District was evaluated under the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Register of Historic Places (location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, association). The landscape continues to fulfill much of its original purpose – offering an attractive public space to bring residents and visitors to the downtown area, providing housing for twenty-four hour use, and spurring the local economy – and does so in its

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original **location** and **setting** along Main Street two blocks south of the Albemarle County Courthouse. Over the course of its nearly five decades of existence, physical changes have taken place to the original design, and additional areas of downtown have been pedestrianized. After much debate, a 2009 rehabilitation of the Mall replaced most of the original brick with brick pavers very close to the size of the original material and laid in the same herringbone pattern, but set in sand rather than mortared. The absence of the original mortar joints altered the intended perception of the Halprin ground plane, although it did not eliminate it. Another replacement material (granite instead of concrete for contrasting paving) fulfilled the initial design, which had been changed in the implementation to cut costs. Several other character-defining elements of the original design (planters, bollards, fountains, willow oak bosques) remain, while others (streetlights, benches) have been altered or replaced but retain some of the character of the original features. The spatial organization that the LHA design devised to influence movement along the Mall also remains, although the current use of public space for private dining areas hinders its original effect. The dining areas and the permanent locations of the chairs also detract from one of the Mall's intended functions – as a public gathering space for rest and social interaction. These alterations negatively affect **materials** and **workmanship**, as well as the **design** of the Downtown Mall, without obscuring the design intent. (It should be noted that the alterations that affect movement and public use are impermanent and reversible.) The **feeling** and **association** of the Mall as a pedestrian-centered location for public gathering, entertainment, and recreation, as intended by the LHA design, therefore remains strong, and the Charlottesville Downtown Mall retains integrity to its period of significance (1976-1981).

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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 grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☒ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development
Landscape Architecture

Period of Significance

1976-1981

Significant Dates

1976

1980

1981

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Lawrence Halprin & Associates

CHNMB Associates

Hagan, James

R.E. Lee Construction Company

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Charlottesville Downtown Mall is significant under National Register Criterion A at the state and local levels in the area of community planning and development as a successful example of a downtown street pedestrianized to stimulate economic vitality. The planning intervention incorporated significant city support over a number of years and appropriate infrastructure, circulation, and landscape strategies. It was spearheaded by business leaders, elected officials, and government planners and made use of current planning strategies and design principles to achieve its ends. The Downtown Mall is also significant under Criterion C at the state and local levels in the area of landscape architecture as an important work of urban design by Lawrence Halprin, one of the most influential landscape architects of the late twentieth century, and his firm, Lawrence Halprin & Associates (LHA). The Charlottesville Downtown Mall is an excellent example of Halprin's approach to public space design as choreography of movement, providing for continuous flow of people while also offering areas for reflection, respite, and social interaction, as well as opportunities for spontaneity and improvisation. The Mall illustrates Halprin's method of eliciting value and usage ideas from the community in his Take Part workshops and incorporating this input into his firm's designs while generating consensus to support the effort. The Mall manifests Halprin's utilization of a simple palette of materials and features based in part on local precedents to create a series of interconnected spaces that act as a stage for public life. Sculptor James Hagan's six steel silhouettes, erected on the Mall in 1981, contribute to the district's significance as additions by a well-regarded local artist that participate in the festive, public spirit of the space. About to enter its forty-seventh year of existence, the Charlottesville Downtown Mall satisfies Criterion Consideration G for properties less than fifty years old as one of the few successful pedestrianized downtowns streets still performing its original function. It is also an outstanding example of Lawrence Halprin & Associates' urban landscapes and the only extant work by the firm in Virginia. It is the only extant pedestrianized Main Street in Virginia that remains faithful to its original design. The period of significance for the Mall has been determined to cover the years from 1976, when the first phase of the Mall opened, to 1981, when James Hagan's steel sculptures were added to the landscape. This period covers the completion dates for the two phases of construction according to the LHA design (1976 and 1980), as well as the installation of the Hagan sculptures.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criteria Justification

Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

The Charlottesville Downtown Mall represents an important step in the city's planning history in the years following World War II (the New Dominion, 1946-1991). The development and implementation of the Mall required vision on the part of city leaders and citizens, an understanding of current planning concepts, the employment of a highly regarded design firm,

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and ongoing support and adaptation. Over time, the construction of the Downtown Mall became a turning point in the commercial fortunes of the city center, revitalized its public use, and helped maintain the significant role that this section of Main Street has played in the city's history for more than two hundred years. The first two phases of construction (completed in 1976 and 1980, respectively) closely followed the design of the renowned landscape architecture firm Lawrence Halprin & Associates. Subsequent downtown pedestrianization expanded the Mall approximately to the area LHA envisioned for Main Street, although the later building campaigns did not adhere closely to the original design. The city and downtown businesses supported the Downtown Mall over many years, adapting to changing commercial interests and backing improvements and maintenance of the space. Two hundred pedestrian malls were created from the 1960s until the 1980s, but only about thirty lasted through the 1990s, many in college towns like Charlottesville. The Charlottesville Downtown Mall is therefore significant under National Register Criterion A at the state and local level in the area of community planning and development as an important effort by elected officials, business leaders, and local citizens to revitalize Charlottesville's downtown through the use of the planning tools available at the time. The pedestrianization of an eight-block section of Main Street is one of a small number of successful applications of this planning approach to downtown revitalization that gained popularity in the United States in the 1960s but lost favor within a quarter of a century.

Criterion C: Landscape Architecture

The Charlottesville Downtown Mall is also significant under Criterion C at the state and local level in the area of landscape architecture as an important work of urban landscape design by Lawrence Halprin, one of the most influential landscape architects of the late twentieth century, and his firm, Lawrence Halprin & Associates. The Downtown Mall is an excellent example of Halprin's approach to public space design as choreography of movement, providing for continuous flow of people, while also offering areas for reflection, respite, and social interaction, as well as improvisation and spontaneity. University of Virginia Landscape Architecture Professor Elizabeth Meyer has stated that, in the absence of Halprin's signature fountains, the Mall "is really a rare example of a project that Halprin designed that is all about movement and not about figure." (Jost 2008:63) The Mall illustrates Halprin's method of eliciting value and usage ideas from the community in his Take Part workshops and incorporating this input into his firm's designs while generating consensus to support the effort. The Mall also manifests Halprin's utilization of a simple palette of materials and features based in part on local precedents to create a series of interconnected spaces that act as a stage for public life. The Charlottesville Downtown Mall is Halprin's only extant work in Virginia, his 1975 sculpture garden at the Virginia Museum of Fine Art having been demolished in 2010. The period of significance for the Mall has been determined to start in 1976, when the first phase of the LHA design was completed, and end in 1981, the date of the installation of six steel sculptures by University of Virginia artist James Hagan. The sculptures follow the festive spirit of the Halprin design and were the last significant additions to the Mall landscape. The period of significance also includes the completion of the second phase of the Downtown Mall, to Halprin's design, which took place in 1980.

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Criterion Consideration G

The earliest drawings of the Charlottesville Downtown Mall by Lawrence Halprin & Associates discovered in research for the National Register nomination date to 1974, and the first phase of construction was completed in 1976. The second phase was completed in 1980. The Downtown Mall therefore exists near the edge of National Register age requirements for listing without demonstrating exceptional importance. The Downtown Mall does, however, possess exceptional importance, both as an important exercise in community planning and development and as an outstanding design by Lawrence Halprin & Associates. Two hundred downtown streets were pedestrianized across the United States between the 1960s and the 1980s, but only about thirty remained pedestrian-only by the end of the 1990s. Through significant city support, adaptation to changing commercial circumstances, and popular support, the Charlottesville Downtown Mall was one of those thirty to find continued success. In Virginia, three attempts were made to pedestrianize downtown streets during the heyday of this concept – Main Street in Charlottesville, Granby Street in Norfolk, and Loudoun Street in Winchester. Granby Street reopened to traffic in 1986, after ten years as a pedestrian-only mall. The Loudoun Street Pedestrian Mall continues its original function, but in 2013, the city substantially altered its materials and appearance. The Loudoun Street Pedestrian Mall therefore lacks integrity to its original design. The Charlottesville Downtown Mall is therefore an exceptional example of a successful downtown planning effort. The Mall is also the only extant work of Lawrence Halprin & Associates in Virginia and manifests several significant aspects of his urban designs. These include the use of “Take Part” workshops to gather community input on the goals of the design, as well as to foster consensus and support. Halprin’s career-spanning emphasis on designing for movement through space, on civic spaces as stages for public life and social interaction, on the use of fountains as focal points, and on adapting local materials and precedents to modern expression are all present in the Downtown Mall, making the Mall an outstanding representation of the Halprin firm’s urban design principles.

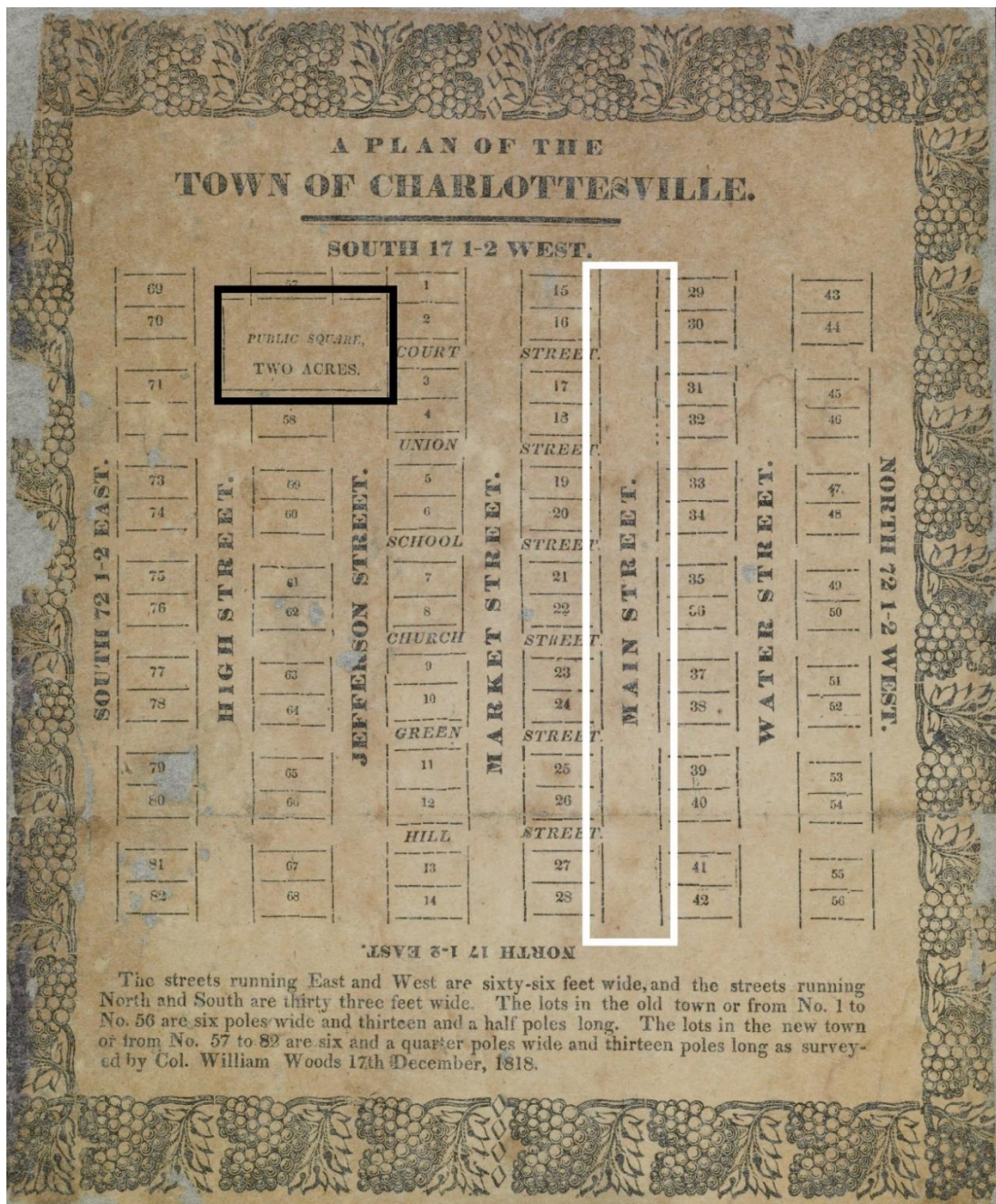
Historical Background

The Evolution of Downtown Charlottesville

The General Assembly of the colony of Virginia established a seat of government in Albemarle County on December 23, 1762. It was to be named “Charlottesville” after Queen Charlotte Sophia of Mecklenberg-Strelitz, wife of King George III of Great Britain. A thousand acres were purchased for the town, with fifty set aside to be laid off into streets and lots south of the courthouse, which was located on the site’s high ground. (Moore 1976:29-30) The five original east-west streets, including Main Street, measured 66 feet across with the six north-south streets half that width. The courthouse became Charlottesville’s first center of population and commerce, with dense construction on the streets that faced the two-acre courthouse square. Increased building activity came to what is now Main Street and the Downtown Mall beginning in the early nineteenth century. (Historical Figure 1) The street was a segment of Three-Notched Road, a vital transportation corridor between the state capital in Richmond and western Virginia.

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Historical Figure 1. Plan of Charlottesville from 1818, with the courthouse square (black box) two blocks north of Main Street (white box). (Visual History Collection, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library)

Construction on Main Street differed from central Virginia's tradition of detached buildings. "The pervasive presence of party walls . . . distinguished Charlottesville from its surroundings," according to architectural historian Daniel Bluestone. (*More than a Mall* 2010:1) This pattern of urban construction and the relationship between the buildings and Main Street continues to the present day and helps to reinforce downtown's sense of place.

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Historical Figure 2. Streetcars pulled by mules in downtown Charlottesville, late 1880s. (Visual History Collection, Special Collections, University of Virginia Library)

Unlike the previous county seat at Scott's Landing (now Scottsville) on the James River, Charlottesville did not have a direct water connection to Richmond. It therefore developed slowly until the arrival of the railroad in 1850. By 1855, Charlottesville's downtown boasted a Greek Revival town hall, four churches, two banks, and four newspapers. Citizens voted to macadamize Main Street in 1859. Rapid growth began in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In 1888, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia incorporated Charlottesville as a city, separating its government from that of Albemarle County. A year earlier, the state legislature had chartered a street railway between downtown and the University of Virginia a mile to the west. (Historical Figure 2) Horses or mules initially pulled cars on tracks running along Main Street, but by 1894 the system had been electrified. (Moore 1976:165, 188, 276-277) The street cars allowed for denser development outside of downtown, and the city's population grew, from 1,676 in 1880 to 10,688 by 1920. The population numbered 15,245 ten years later. The red-brick, Victorian architecture from this period can still be found throughout downtown Charlottesville. (Charlottesville and Albemarle County Courthouse Historic District NR Nomination 1982:8:3-6)

Throughout this period, residents visited downtown Charlottesville to conduct business, purchase everyday necessities, attend church, and seek entertainment at performance and, in the early

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twentieth century, movie theaters. Beginning with the Great Depression of the 1930s, however, downtown Charlottesville entered a period of slow decline. After World War II, that decline accelerated, driven in part by a tremendous increase in the use of automobiles, which crowded downtown streets. Cities across the country shared the same fate. Able to live farther from their places of employment thanks to the automobile and improved roads, city dwellers began to seek suburban residences and an escape from the congestion and pollution of American cities. The growth of suburbs spawned the development of shopping centers with abundant free parking located along highways. Barracks Road Shopping Center opened in 1959 along U.S. Highway 29 on land in what was then still Albemarle County. The strip shopping center lay within easy reach of downtown Charlottesville, the University of Virginia, and other suburban development, heralding the movement of many residents and businesses away from Main Street. Additional suburban construction, as well as the completion of Interstate 64 south of the city, which enabled those passing through the area by automobile to bypass downtown completely, continued to drain traffic and potential customers away from the traditional business district through the 1970s. (Herman 2010: 79-80)

Planning for a Revitalized Downtown

Changes in the city government in the twentieth century helped prepare Charlottesville to address the economic decline. Although the city had a planning commission by 1934, made up of business leaders from the community, it did not hire its first professional planning engineer until 1951. A few years later, Charlottesville commissioned the professional planning firm Harland Bartholomew & Associates (HBA) to create a master plan to address multiple issues that concerned city residents, including increasing automobile traffic and declining economic activity within city limits. Bartholomew had worked on one of the first comprehensive city master plans in the United States, for Newark, New Jersey, in 1913, and formed his own planning firm in 1919. The company pioneered the strategy of single-use zoning – separating residential, commercial, and industrial uses into distinct areas. It also built city plans with automobile travel in mind and advocated for the clearance of parts of cities seen as deteriorated in order to achieve zoning goals. This practice became known as “urban renewal” and has been much discredited in recent years for its demolition of minority communities, division of neighborhoods, and primacy given to automobile travel. By 1956, however, HBA had become one of the largest planning firms in the country by following this strategy, and Bartholomew himself had been appointed chairman of the National Capital Planning Commission in Washington, D.C., by President Dwight Eisenhower. (Herman 2010:82-83)

HBA was involved in Charlottesville planning for more than a decade, and the city implemented several of its recommendations, including some designed to accommodate the increase in automobile traffic by razing neighborhoods viewed as “blighted.” With regard to downtown, the most important of these implemented recommendations included broadening connector streets such as Ridge Street, McIntire Road, and Preston Avenue, which came at the expense of demolishing existing buildings. After a proposal to raze the predominantly African American neighborhood of Vinegar Hill, at the west end of what is now the Downtown Mall, passed by a narrow margin on June 14, 1960, neighborhood buildings were torn down, displacing

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approximately 600 people and affecting nearly thirty businesses. (Saunders and Schackelford, 3-4) The demolition allowed for the construction of Ridge-McIntire Road, now the western boundary of downtown Charlottesville. Another urban renewal project, along Garrett Street south of Main Street, displaced more African American families. Taking place in the early 1960s at the same time as the state campaign known as “Massive Resistance” to desegregation in public schools, the planning and implementation of urban renewal at Vinegar Hill and Garrett Street increased racial tensions in Charlottesville. (Herman 2010: 84-85; Foley 2010:112; Tarter 2020: 385-386)

HBA’s plans for downtown included making it pedestrian friendly, while not banning cars completely, and widening South Street (a block south of Water Street) to 80 feet. The firm proposed parking garages the size of two city blocks in which to store the automobiles for those visiting downtown. The plans narrowed Main Street and created mega-blocks by closing parts of city streets. In addition, Bartholomew & Associates planned a three-acre commercial building in the razed area of Vinegar Hill, between what are now Ridge-McIntire Road and the Downtown Mall. By the end of the 1960s, however, resistance to these plans began to grow and reached the city government. Charlottesville expanded its official planning efforts to include a planning department in 1968. The city planner at that time, Thomas Conger, criticized a 1970 HBA master plan revision, taking issue with its widening of city streets, limitations on pedestrian and bicycle accommodation, and additional demolition. By 1971, Charlottesville also had a new city manager in Cole Hendrix and an all-Democratic and progressive city council, led by Mayor Francis Fife. The city’s governing body included the first African American and the first female councilors, Charles Barbour and Jill Rinehart, respectively. Barbour would later become Charlottesville’s first Black mayor.

Seeking a change from the HBA approach but attracted to a pedestrian-friendly downtown, city officials sought guidance on the possibilities of banning or limiting downtown automobile traffic. Joe Bosserman, dean of the architecture school at the University of Virginia, recommended contacting Lawrence Halprin & Associates (LHA). In 1972, the city planning department sent a plan it had prepared to the firm for review. It resembled a design Halprin had implemented for the Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis, Minnesota, a city facing problems similar to those in Charlottesville. After continuing contact with the Halprin firm and discussing Nicollet Mall with Minneapolis officials, Charlottesville hired LHA in 1972 to complete a plan for the central business district (CBD), rather than a comprehensive city plan. (Herman 2010:89-92) The CBD was bounded on the east and west by 9th Street and McIntire Road, respectively, and on the north and south by High Street and South Street.

Lawrence Halprin & Associates

Lawrence Halprin (1916-2009) grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and, after graduating from high school in 1933, spent several years on a kibbutz in Israel. (Historical Figure 3) He studied plant sciences and played varsity baseball at Cornell, graduating in 1939, and then pursued graduate study at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, from which he received a master’s degree in horticulture in 1941. It was while at Wisconsin, where he met and married dance student Anna

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Schuman, that Halprin visited Taliesin, Frank Lloyd Wright's home and studio about thirty miles west of Madison. The visit inspired Halprin to take up the study of architecture with a focus on landscape design. He then enrolled in the Graduate School of Design at Harvard in 1942, where he studied with landscape theorist Christopher Tunnard, architects Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer, and educator László Moholy-Nagy. The last three had all been associated with the Bauhaus, the influential Modernist design school in Germany. Before graduating, however, Halprin joined the U.S. Navy and served two years in the Pacific during World War II. He began his career as a landscape architect after the war with Thomas Dolliver Church in San Francisco, collaborating with Church and architect George Rockrise on the influential Dewey Donnell Garden in Sonoma, California. He worked for Church for four years before starting his own firm in 1949. During the 1950s, his firm designed the kind of projects that were available in the post-war years – residential gardens, campus master plans, suburban shopping centers, and housing projects (with Bay Area architects). (Meyer 2009:124-125; Walker and Simo 2002:148-150)



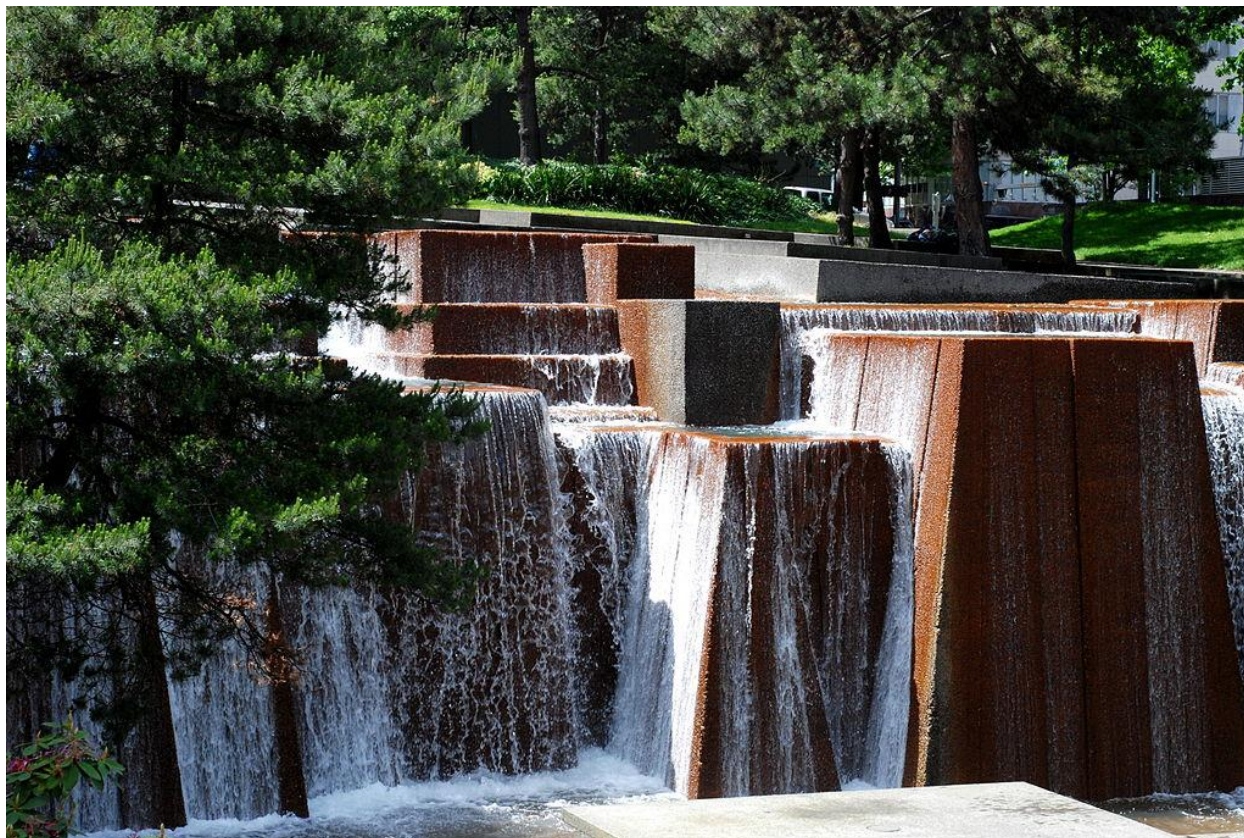
Historical Figure 3. Lawrence Halprin in the 1970s. (The Cultural Landscape Foundation)

By the 1960s, however, Halprin's firm had begun concentrating on urban areas. Halprin was not alone in this refocus on city centers or on the concept of banning automobiles from downtown streets that formed one of its primary principles. The concept had been introduced in northern Europe in the 1960s, where the attractive, substantial building stock of old cities, their narrow streets often dating from the medieval period, efficient mass transit, and a cultural history firmly associated with walking and bicycle travel made pedestrianized downtown areas more attractive than the accommodation of large numbers of automobiles on city freeways, as was practiced in the United States. Cities throughout Europe adopted pedestrianized streets before the approach caught on in the United States. Once introduced, however, many American cities sought to reverse downtown decline through the development of what became known as pedestrian malls. In part, this designation derived from the suburban shopping mall and its total focus on commerce in an attractive setting; many early pedestrianized streets sought only to recreate the shopping mall experience, without intentionally seeking to incorporate communal, residential, or other purposes. These dimensions of traditional downtown experience were subsequently included in some pedestrianized areas of downtowns as the practice spread. As many as 200 pedestrianized streets were created in cities across the United States from the 1960s until the 1980s. (Pojani 2010: 174-175)

Lawrence Halprin & Associates looked beyond the commercial purpose of the practice to an interest in its potential social and communal aspects. This was true throughout LHA's portfolio

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Historical Figure 4. Keller Fountain, part of the Portland Open Space Sequence, 2010. (Wikimedia Commons)

of urban designs, including pedestrian-oriented landscapes at Ghirardelli Square (1962-1968) and Embarcadero Plaza (1962-1972) in San Francisco, Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis (1962-1967), several projects in Portland, Oregon (beginning in 1965), and Freeway Plaza in Seattle, Washington (1970-1974). The fountains that were often the focal points of these projects – interactive, abstracted from natural forms, constructed of rough stone blocks and incorporating rushing water – became signature elements of the firm’s designs. (Historical Figure 4) They were, however, incorporated into a broader design that attempted to maintain the multiple purposes that had always been clustered in downtown areas – social, communal, political, and residential as well as commercial. They were places to gather for entertainment, to meet with friends and colleagues, and to discuss the issues of the day. The Halprin firm emphasized mixed use development instead of the strict separation of uses that had characterized the Harland Bartholomew form of city planning as a means to give downtowns twenty-four-hour usage. Such continuous use was seen as a way to strengthen economic activity, increase safety, and maintain the physical environment. An additional Halprin emphasis focused on movement through space, “choreographed” or “scored” like dance. To accomplish this purpose, Halprin assembled and located landscape features (fountains, lighting, seating, plantings, etc.) to create rhythmic movement through space while also providing choice and allowing for improvisation. In these projects, Halprin and his firm “asserted the landscape architect’s role in regenerating the American city” and “made vital social and pedestrian spaces out of formerly marginal sites,”

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according to University of Virginia Landscape Architecture Professor Elizabeth K. Meyer. “In so doing, they reimagined a public realm for American cities that had been cleared by federal urban renewal programs and abandoned for new suburban developments.” (Meyer 2009:125-126)

In addition to Church and his Harvard mentors, a wide range of individuals and fields of study influenced Halprin’s design process and his landscape architecture, from musician John Cage to psychologists Carl Jung and Paul Baum and anthropologist Joseph L. Henderson. The importance of these people for Halprin lay in his recognition of the significance of the creative process to landscape design and urban planning. (Walker and Simo 2002: 154-155) Especially important was the work of Halprin’s wife Anna, who became “one of the pioneers of (post-) modern dance and performance art in the USA, re-envisioning the spatialities of performance, and taking dance and performance out of the theatre and into a range of public spaces,” according to Peter Merriman. (Merriman 2010: 432) In the 1950s and 1960s, Anna conducted interactive dance events, in which situations and loose actions were proposed, but the ultimate performance was left open for the participants to complete. Her work on dance in public spaces in the 1950s and the relationship between dance and the environment influenced her husband’s conception of “scoring” or “choreographing” movement through the landscapes he designed, while giving visitors flexibility in determining direction and pace. (Merriman 2010: 433-435; Hirsch 2011:127)

By the time Halprin’s firm received the Charlottesville commission, he had become a nationally known expert on the redesign of urban spaces. He had been awarded the Medal for Allied Professions by the American Institute of Architects in 1964 and became a fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 1969. He had served on the White House Council on Natural Beauty and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. (Meyer 2010:126-127) He received a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for a study of six urban renewal projects in New York City that resulted in the book *New York, New York* in March 1968. (Hirsch 2014:177) He was considered, as Peter Walker and Melanie Simo later called him, “a towering figure.” (Walker and Simo 2002:145) Alison Hirsch has written that the creative process employed by Halprin and his firm “represents an overlooked antecedent to today’s approach to landscape in urban design, which emphasizes infrastructural networks, ecological processes, multidisciplinary collaboration, as well as public participation.” (Hirsch 2011:127)

The Charlottesville Downtown Mall, 1973-1980

A year after it was commissioned, Halprin’s team led a three-day workshop in Charlottesville in which selected community members engaged in a series of exercises designed to foster an appreciation of downtown, elicit ideas for its revitalization, and create a consensus on development that would garner local support. LHA associate Jim Burns led the March 1973 workshop, with Halprin, who had visited Charlottesville on several occasions prior to the workshop, becoming involved on the last day when the group formed its recommendations. Public participation had become a significant part of the Halprin firm’s approach to urban design and was adapted from the “temporal-situational guidelines” of Anna’s performance events. Known as “Take Part” workshops, the Halprin participatory process involved a series of what the

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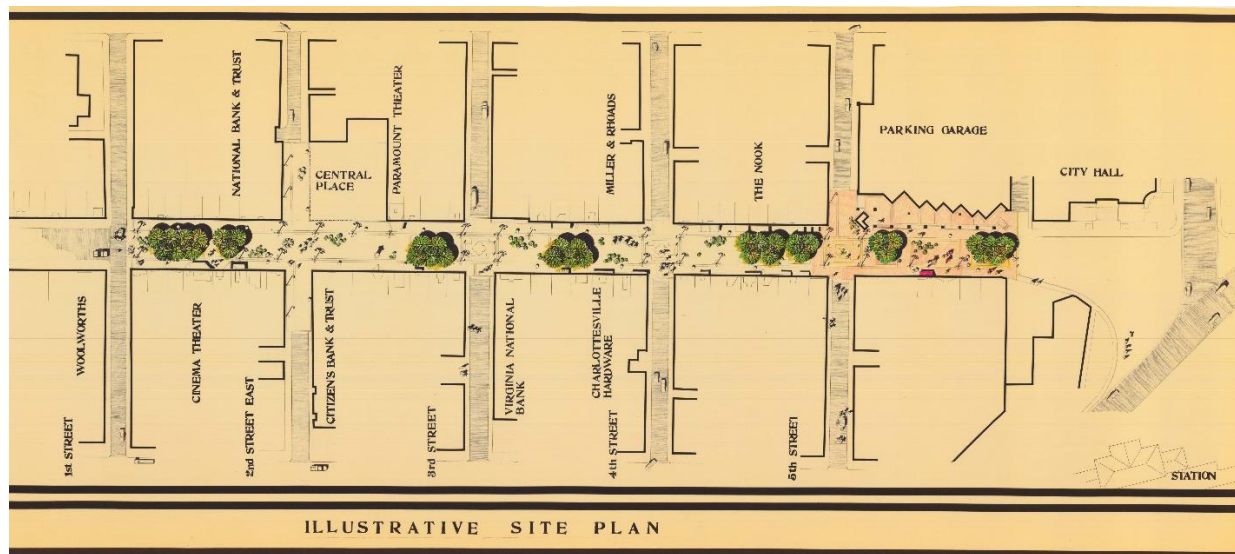
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landscape architect called “scores,” in which participants were encouraged to view the areas to be redesigned with fresh eyes. In Charlottesville, participants, drawn from the city’s government and business leaders, but also including a hospital technician, a housewife, a retiree, and students, were given a walking score and a driving score, with stops assigned along the way and questions or activities specified. The participants followed their scores, which functioned as “awareness activities,” individually, then shared their responses to the environment when they reconvened after the exercise. While the walking scores kept the participants in the area that would be redesigned, the driving scores took them farther afield – to the University of Virginia, Barracks Road Shopping Center, residential neighborhoods, and elsewhere. On the third day, the group worked together to plan the redesign. Hirsch has written that the goal of the workshops was not to generate innovative solutions to urban situations. Rather, they were designed to involve the community in a transparent process that would enable the implementation of a plan generated together. In Charlottesville, that goal seems to have been achieved, with Halprin stating that the ideas generated by the process represented “a remarkable consensus” among participants. (Hirsch 2011:133-138)

Based on these ideas, Lawrence Halprin & Associates developed a master plan for Charlottesville’s commercial district. In addition to the downtown area, the plan also included Vinegar Hill and Garrett Street, the two predominantly African American neighborhoods that had been razed as urban renewal projects in the 1960s. Although the master plan aimed to link those areas to Main Street, only the Downtown Mall was constructed according to the master plan intentions. (Historical Figure 5) Dean Abbott acted as LHA’s Mall project designer and Norm Kondy as urban designer, with Halprin exercising oversight and final approval of the design. Kondy described the Charlottesville Take Part workshop as “the first time he (Halprin) was able fully to implement his innovative notions of a choreographed community design process into a built detailed design and an adopted master plan,” in the words of Sarita Herman. (Herman 2010: 91-93).



Historical Figure 5. August 1974 site plan of the first phase of the Downtown Mall’s construction, detail. (City of Charlottesville, Neighborhood Development Services)



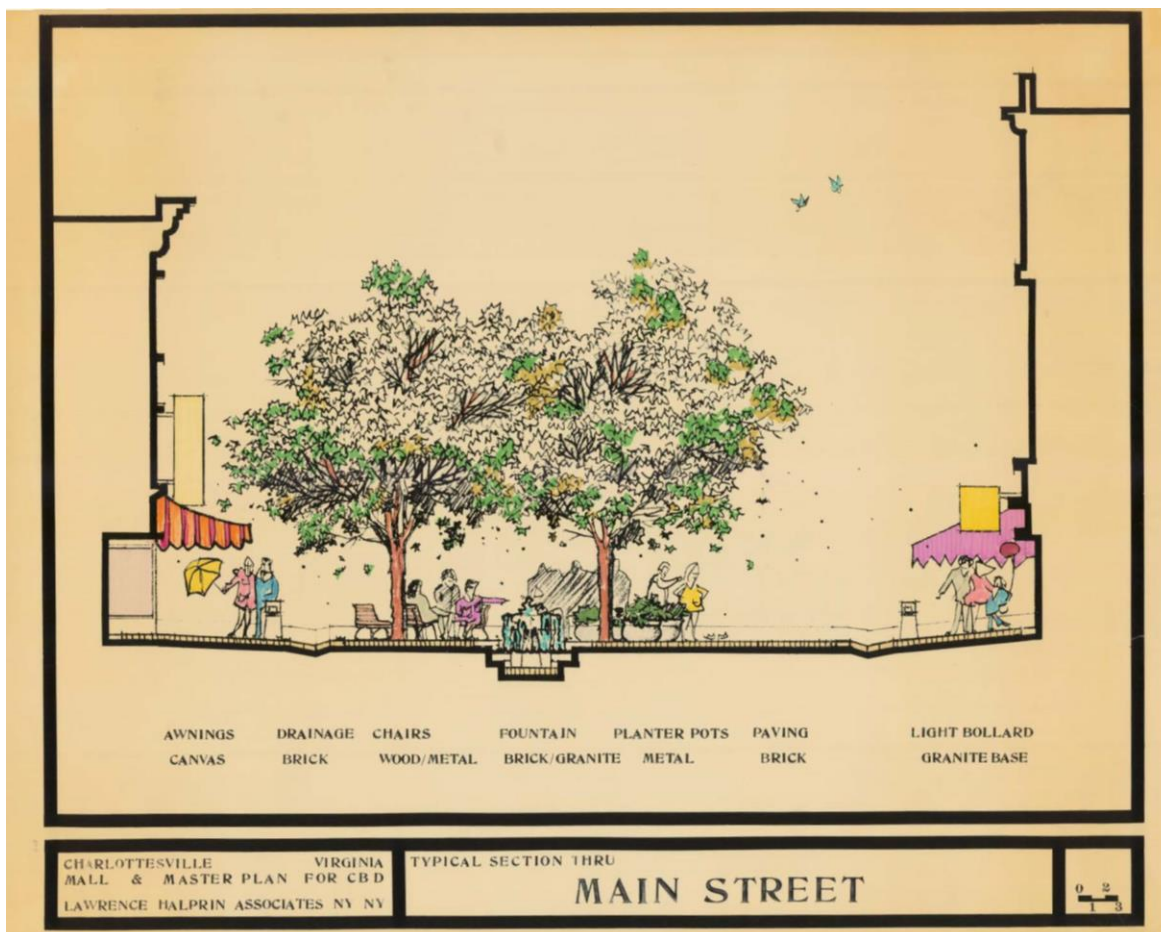
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Historical Figure 7. Off-center tree bosques created more open space on one side of the Downtown Mall. (City of Charlottesville, Neighborhood Development Services)

space, creating a meandering path. (Historical Figure 7) The plan interspersed four small fountains among the bosques and a larger one in Central Place, to provide occasions for visitors to pause in their journeys and gather with others. The movable seating offered flexible locations for lengthier withdrawal from the flow of movement by individuals or groups. (Noe 2009: 6-11)

The first phase of Mall construction, from 1st Street to East 6th Street began in 1975, and the grand opening of the pedestrian mall took place on July 3, 1976. Two years later, the Charlottesville City Council authorized an extension of the Mall two blocks to the west, from 1st Street to Old Preston Avenue. The work began in 1979 and was completed in 1980. (City Council Resolution: May 15, 1978; *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, February 2, 1979, January 7, 1981) The extension was mostly funded by federal urban renewal money left over from the Vinegar Hill project. Some parts of the Vinegar Hill property created when the neighborhood was demolished had been developed – Ridge-McIntire Road, a shopping area to the west, a federal courthouse at the intersection of Ridge-McIntire, Main Street, and Water Street, for instance – but no buyers had emerged for the remaining land. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which administered the federal funding, wished to close out the

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project, in which case the remainder of the appropriation (approximately \$515,000) reverted to the city. A report produced by the city planning department outlined two options: 1) placing the funds in the existing Central Business District development coffers to support future improvements across the city or 2) using the funding to extend the Downtown Mall to Old Preston Avenue and creating a nonprofit corporation to guide the development of the remaining Vinegar Hill property. The city chose the second option, which, in addition to completing two additional blocks of the Downtown Mall, ultimately resulted in the development of what is now the Omni Hotel and its parking garage. (Charlottesville City Council Meeting Minutes: February 21, April 3 and 17, 1978)

The resolution providing for the extension of the Downtown Mall – unanimously adopted after two hearings before the city council – authorized the city manager “to secure such additional architectural and engineering services as may be necessary to render the designs and specifications previously prepared for such improvements by Lawrence Halprin and Associates ready for bidding.” (Charlottesville City Council Meeting Minutes: May 21, 1978, 377) The city then hired CHNMB (Carter, Hull, Nishita, McCulley, Baxter & Associates) for the job. The firm was composed of five former principals of Lawrence Halprin & Associates, who purchased the business from Halprin in 1976. Two of the principals, Don Carter and Satoru Nishita, had worked with Halprin in Thomas Church’s firm and then joined Lawrence Halprin & Associates upon its formation in 1949. Carter, Nishita, and Byron McCulley worked on several of Halprin’s significant urban landscapes, including Ghirardelli Square, Nicollet Mall, and the Portland, Oregon, projects. CHNMB completed several LHA projects in addition to the Charlottesville Downtown Mall, including the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial in Washington, D.C. (Helphand 2017:49)

While CHNMB’s job was to implement the LHA design for the Mall, some issues arose that required resolution by the city before the designers could complete their work. One involved improvement of lighting on the Mall and its side streets. Complaints had been received that the lighting was inadequate, as it had been based on the assumption that business owners would keep their buildings lit and contribute to the lighting levels on the Mall, an assumption that proved to be in error. The issue arose in the spring of 1979 and needed to be resolved before the construction drawings for the extension of the Mall could be issued. City council approved an appropriation of \$37,500 on April 2, 1979, to improve lighting on the Phase I section of the Mall and to maintain that level of lighting in Phase II. (City Council Minutes, March 19 and April 2, 1979) The nature of the improvements was not described in the city council records, but neither do the records mention any alteration of or additions to the existing light fixtures. It is therefore assumed that the changes involved the amount or intensity of the light emitted rather than changes to the streetlights themselves.

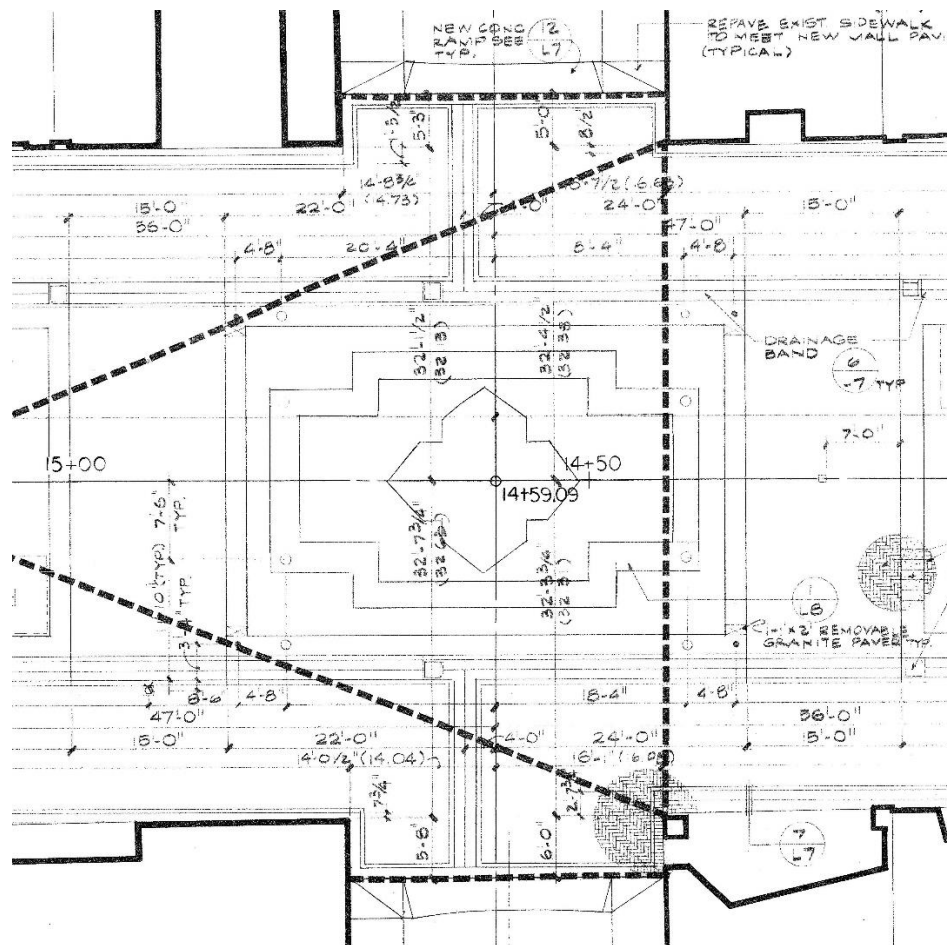
A second issue that arose involved an interpretation of the original LHA intentions for the Mall. A public hearing was held on September 2, 1980, on whether to open 1st Street across the Mall to vehicular traffic. City Manager Cole Hendrix “stated that the original design of the downtown mall called for 1st Street to be open to vehicular traffic when the mall was complete.” (City

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Historical Figure 8. 1974 Lawrence Halprin & Associates drawing for the 1st Street intersection. Other intersections are depicted in the same manner, indicating no difference between the intersections as regards vehicular access. (Lawrence Halprin Papers: June 28, 1974, courtesy Elizabeth K. Meyer)

Council Meeting Minutes: September 2, 1980, 313) The source of Hendrix's statement is unclear. The 1974 drawing of the first phase of the Mall (Historical Figure 4) does show 1st Street open to traffic, but that drawing does not include Phase II construction. Main Street west of the Mall is also open to traffic in the 1974 drawing, and that area was, of course, later pedestrianized. Drawings reviewed for the National Register nomination depict all the intersections of side streets with the pedestrianized area, from Old Preston Avenue to East 6th Street, in the same manner. Since none of the other side streets were intended to provide for vehicles crossing the Mall, it does not appear that 1st Street was an exception. (Historical Figure 8) Drawings reviewed include those from both LHA and CHNMB. Further, LHA's June 1974 "Master Plan: Design, Philosophy, Concepts" for the Downtown Mall states that "all automobile traffic will be excluded from this area," except for service and emergency vehicles. (Lawrence Halprin & Associates: June 1974, 18). Based on the documents reviewed for the nomination, then, it appears that LHA intended 1st Street to be closed to traffic. In any event, Hendrix reported that the city planning staff recommended keeping vehicles from crossing the Mall for safety reasons. After receiving additional information on pedestrian malls in Winchester and

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Norfolk, which concluded that neither saw evidence of serious accidents involving automobiles and pedestrians, council postponed a decision on opening 1st Street to traffic until a Charlottesville traffic study could be completed. (Charlottesville City Council Meeting Minutes: September 15, 1980, 325) No additional information on opening 1st Street to traffic was found in council records for the remaining months of 1980 or in 1981, and the Downtown Mall remained a pedestrian-only zone until 1996, when vehicles were allowed to cross West 2nd Street.

The first outdoor café on the Downtown Mall was located at the Nook Restaurant in 1976. Noe 2009: 27) Requests for such cafes, which were depicted in LHA's 1975 elevation drawings, were apparently infrequent enough that no formal process for requesting permits was in place until 1980. At its meeting on May 19 of that year, city council approved a resolution to grant George and Richard Cason of the Muse Restaurant in the 100 block of West Main Street a permit to operate an outdoor café and also approved an ordinance to govern future requests. The permit, which expired November 30, 1982, provided for outdoor seating at the Muse between March and November and authorized the owners to limit access to the seating area (to be marked off by chains, planters, and barriers to paying customers). The permit required the Muse to avoid restricting pedestrian traffic or endanger public safety in locating the outdoor café, and it also necessitated the removal of all furniture and equipment by November 30 of each year. In granting the permit, the council resolution stated that "Council finds that the proposed outdoor café is in keeping with the intent of the pedestrian mall." (City Council Meeting Minutes: May 19, 1980, 271-272) On July 7, 1980, council approved a resolution granting the Hardware Store Restaurant permission "to operate an outdoor stand for sale of food" on the Mall at the intersection of Main and East Second streets. (City Council Meeting Minutes: July 7, 1980)

LHA's master plan document for the Downtown Mall, "Design, Philosophy, and Concepts," recorded sixteen "Consensus Items" agreed upon in the Take Part workshops conducted in 1973. These items were intended to guide the design of the pedestrian mall. One of them stated: "The downtown should have many cultural and recreational activities: art, sculpture, music, theatre, etc." (Lawrence Halprin & Associates: June 1974, 5) City council passed a resolution to help fulfill that direction less than a year after the second phase of Mall construction was completed when it appropriated \$6,000 for the installation of sculpture on the pedestrianized street on April 6, 1981. The appropriation was dependent on funding from a private donor and from the Virginia Commission on the Arts and Humanities that would match the city's appropriation. At the same meeting, the council approved the recommendation of the Mall Sculpture Jury that the city accept the proposal of University of Virginia artist James Hagan (1936-2008) for the project, which consisted of six steel silhouettes of individuals and small groups of people installed in different locations along the Mall. (City Council Meeting Minutes: April 6, 1981, 422-423)

James Garrison Hagan (1936-2008), a sculptor and digital artist, graduated from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. He worked in advertising, personnel, and labor relations in the Chicago area before returning to Manhattan to devote himself to art full time. Hagan taught at the University of Virginia from 1963 until his retirement in 2001, establishing a home and studio in Neve Hall, an early twentieth-century former Episcopal chapel and rectory in Albemarle County. He began his career working primarily in wood. In the mid-1970s, his work began to

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attract critical attention at the national level, and he exhibited widely, with solo shows at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in 1974 and at the Zabriskie Gallery in New York the following year. Hilton Kramer of the *New York Times* called his one-man show in New York (his first in the city) “a solid and splendid accomplishment.” Kramer noted that Hagan worked in the sculptural tradition of carving, a practice much neglected at the time, and praised his ability to “wrest from this tradition a sculptural style so confident and assertive.” (Kramer 1975: 23). Hagan’s abstract wood sculpture titled *Column IV* was acquired by the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in 1974. Hagan’s work was also exhibited at Princeton University in 1977, alongside twentieth-century masters such as Frank Stella and Marcel Duchamp, and at the International Symposium of Electronic Art in Montreal in 1995. As is evident in the last exhibit, Hagan also experimented with different media, including ceramics, metal, and digital art. Hagan had adopted computer technology into his art in the late 1980s and founded the New Media concentration at UVA’s McIntire Department of Art. (Craig July 2009: 154; *C-ville* November 13, 2019; Kramer 1975: 23; McIntire Department of Art News: Fall-Winter 2001, Fall 2008-Winter 2009)

Mall Expansion

The Downtown Mall did not immediately become successful. Along with strip shopping centers, indoor shopping malls continued to draw people away from downtown in the 1970s and 1980s. Fashion Square Mall, in Albemarle County north of Charlottesville, opened in 1980, and downtown department stores, such as Miller & Rhoads, decamped to the indoor mall. Typical Main Street businesses – hardware stores, dry cleaners, doctors and dentists, grocery stores – continued to move to be closer to where their customers lived. The type of businesses on the Downtown Mall therefore changed, adjusting to the possibilities the Mall presented. By the 1990s, the commercial focus of downtown had evolved from everyday products and services to entertainment, dining, and specialty shops. The small scale of the buildings downtown made it feasible for small businesses to invest in their rehabilitation and re-use as restaurants or boutiques. The second and third floors of these buildings began to be rehabilitated as apartments. The success of the city’s Fridays After Five outdoor musical events, held in warmer weather at what was first known as the Charlottesville Pavilion at the eastern end of the Mall, led to the restoration of two movie palaces, the Paramount Theater and the Jefferson Theater, as performance venues. (Jost 2008:63-64) The city adjusted, too, returning Water Street to two-way traffic in 1994 and providing two vehicular crossings and additional parking to better accommodate visitors arriving by automobile. (McNair 2018:6-7)

Most other jurisdictions around the country could not find ways to maintain their pedestrianized downtowns when they failed to reverse economic losses quickly. Of the approximately two hundred streets pedestrianized in the United States from the 1960s to the 1980s, only about thirty remained automobile free by the 1990s. (Pojani 2010:173) In Virginia, Winchester and Norfolk each pedestrianized part of a downtown street in the 1970s. Winchester’s Loudoun Street Pedestrian Mall, opened in 1974, remains in use. In 2013, however, the city removed the original running bond brick and poured concrete paving of the mall and replaced it with square stone pavers irregularly placed among brick laid in a herringbone pattern. Archways were also added

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at each end, and the plantings were altered. (Winchester Historic District Additional Documentation 2014:7) In Norfolk, the Granby Street Mall reopened to traffic in 1986, after ten years as a pedestrian-only street. (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*, November 24, 1986) The development of Reston in Fairfax County included a pedestrianized “Town Center” in its 1970s planning documents. As built in 1988, the Town Center was a brick-surfaced pedestrian plaza between two high-rise office buildings, a hotel, and a high-rise residential complex. The project was built from scratch on formerly open farm land; the plaza therefore was not a pedestrianized existing street. An evaluation of potential historic resources in Reston completed in 2021 did not include the Town Center in its recommendations for further analysis. (Hanbury Preservation Consulting 2021: 28-29)

In addition to its business community adapting commercially to the opportunities the Charlottesville Downtown Mall offered, city officials also continued to make improvements and adjust their approach. As alluded to previously, the city used urban renewal funding, as well as its own money to develop a large luxury hotel and parking garage on Vinegar Hill when it failed to attract the investment for the multi-use environment that LHA had envisioned (including hotel accommodations) The hotel opened in 1985 under Radisson management. When the developer, Lawler-Wood, Inc. (under the name of Charlottesville Properties, Ltd.), declined to add \$1 million to the project at that point, the city exercised its option to take back the property and sold it to new owners, Court Square Associates. Under the new owners, it was managed as an Omni Hotel. (City Council Meeting Minutes, “The Charlottesville Omni Hotel”: 1986) West Main Street in the area of the hotel was pedestrianized at the time, although not in the manner the Halprin team had planned, which included water features, outdoor seating, and shade trees. The 1985 work and the extension of the Mall to the east in 1994 to accommodate the outdoor amphitheater did respect the original paving, use of willow oaks, and street furniture. The two vehicular crossings on Main Street, at West 2nd Street (1996) and East 4th Street (2006), ultimately resulted in removal of LHA-designed features from those intersections, including the concrete cruciform element at their centers. Opening these intersections to traffic also resulted in the addition of crossing signage, textured paving, and other changes. Over time, vehicular traffic has damaged the paving, especially the contrasting granite elements, and the added safety features obscure aspects of the original design. In 2005, a new pavilion and amphitheater opened at the eastern terminus of the Mall, and, the following year, the paving in the 600 block of East Main Street was rebuilt to accommodate the pavilion and the Downtown Transit Center, which opened in early 2007. The work included a new plaza in front of the Charlottesville City Hall.

A large cluster of physical changes to the Downtown Mall took place in 2009. Following a 2005 master plan by Wallace, Roberts, & Todd (WRT), a multidisciplinary design firm with offices in Philadelphia and San Francisco, and a later master plan prepared by MMM Design Group from Norfolk building on WRT’s proposals, a number of alterations were implemented that shape the Mall’s current appearance. After some debate, the city voted to alter the most basic element of the Downtown Mall, its brick paving, replacing LHA’s 11 5/8 by 3 5/8-inch bricks set in gray-tinted mortar, with sand-set, 12 by 4-inch bricks in the same herringbone pattern. While the size of the new bricks was intended to allow the new paving to emulate the pattern of the original brickwork, in practice the new pavers could not replicate the precise geometry of the LHA

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design, resulting in areas where bricks needed to be cut in irregular sizes to fit. Two shades of gray granite replaced the concrete paving details of the earlier construction, following the unfulfilled original LHA plans. The brick runnels that drained rain water from the Mall and the band of soldier course bricks at the building faces were not replaced and remained set in what was by then a light-colored mortar. Grates were installed in square openings around the trees, whereas the LHA design brought the brick paving right up to the tree trunks. New trash and recycling cans and new chairs replaced the LHA versions of those items and new signage was added. The 2009 work also included repair of the fountains and the addition of bike racks, and the city followed WRT/MMM recommendations for extending the Mall into selected side streets. Prior to the WRT plan, the four-lamp pedestrian lights received new lamp shades, and cone-shaped shades replaced the simple cylindrical lights on the poles within the bosques. The pedestrian lights were refurbished in 2009. (Wallace, Roberts, & Todd 2005: 16-30; Werner 2022)

With the success of the Mall's entertainment venues, shops, and restaurants beginning in the 1990s, outdoor dining has also increased in popularity. While only one café with outdoor seating existed in 1976, twenty percent of the Mall's open space was given over to outdoor dining and vendors by 2008. Permits for outdoor café spaces averaged less than two a year between 1981 and 1992 but jumped to eight per year from 1993 to 1999. (City Council Appropriations/Resolutions: 1981-1999). The city has organized permitted seating areas mainly in the center of the Mall, often within the bosques of trees, near restaurants. Post-and-chain and pipe fencing around the restaurant seating negates the original public purpose of these spaces, which were intended to accommodate the flow of people along the Mall and provide opportunities for respite and socializing. The fencing also isolates and obscures original features of the LHA design, such as the fountains and the contrasting paving. (Noe 2009: 26-33)

Charlottesville Downtown Mall
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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 # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☒ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, City of Charlottesville Neighborhood Development Services, Lawrence Halprin Papers, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

Charlottesville Downtown Mall
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 4

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: -78.480545 | Longitude: 38.030629 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Charlottesville Downtown Mall includes the right of way of Main Street between Water Street and East 7th Street and rights of way of the pedestrianized sections of 1st Street, East 2nd Street, East 3rd Street, and East 5th Street.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Charlottesville Downtown Mall is a pedestrianized section of Main Street and portions of streets that intersect with Main Street. The boundaries for the historic district were chosen to encompass the rights of way of the pedestrianized streets while excluding the privately owned and publicly owned buildings that line these streets. The property's historic setting and all known associated historic resources have been included within the historic boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Timothy Kerr and Daria Gasparini, principals
organization: Judith H. Robinson & Associates, Inc.
street & number: 4505 Wisconsin Avenue NW, P.O. Box 9454
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20016
e-mail admin@robinson-inc.com
telephone: (202) 234-2333
date: March 1, 2023

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property:	Charlottesville Downtown Mall Historic District		
City or Vicinity:	Charlottesville		
County:	Independent City	State:	Virginia
Date Photographed:	February 2023		
Photographer:	Tim Kerr		
Photo 1 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0001		
View:	100 block West Main Street, looking west		
Photo 2 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0002		
View:	Detail of brick paving with granite fire lane marker		
Photo 3 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0003		
View:	Detail of original brick paving with scored concrete border, Market Street Garage, looking south		
Photo 4 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0004		
View:	400 block East Main Street, tree bosque with granite border, looking southwest		
Photo 5 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0005		
View:	Intersection of East Main and East 5 th Streets, looking southwest		
Photo 6 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0006		
View:	Intersection of East Main and East 4 th Streets, looking northwest		
Photo 7 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0007		
View:	Detail of original brick at building face abutting 2009 brick, looking north		
Photo 8 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0008		
View:	400 Block East Main Street, drainage runnel defining border between historical sidewalk and street, looking west		
Photo 9 of 29:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0009		

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View: 100 Block East Main Street, tree bosque weighted north of center line, looking west

Photo 10 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0010
View: 200 Block East Main Street, Central Place, looking northwest

Photo 11 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0011
View: Intersection of Main and East 4th Streets, cluster of street furnishings, looking northwest

Photo 12 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0012
View: 200 Block West Main Street, 2009 (foreground) and 1985 paving, looking northeast

Photo 13 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0013
View: 600 Block East Main Street, 2006 mall renovation, looking east

Photo 14 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0014
View: 100 Block 3rd Street NE, looking north

Photo 15 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0015
View: 200 Block East Main Street, Central Place Fountain (DHR ID #104-5994-0001), looking southwest

Photo 16 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0016
View: 400 Block East Main Street, Main Street Fountain (DHR ID #104-5994-0002), looking northwest

Photo 17 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0017
View: 300 Block East Main Street, drainage runnel (DHR ID #104-5994-0003), looking west

Photo 18 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0018
View: 300 Block East Main Street, tree grate (DHR ID #104-5994-0004), looking south

Photo 19 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0019
View: 300 Block East Main Street, chairs (DHR ID #104-5994-0005), looking southwest

Photo 20 of 29: VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0020
View: 600 Block East Main Street, Community Chalkboard (DHR ID #104-5994-0006), looking northwest

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Photo 21 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0021 200 Block West Main Street, sculpture (DHR ID #104-5994-0007), looking west
Photo 22 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0022 400 Block East Main Street, contributing bollard (DHR ID #104-5994-0008), looking east
Photo 23 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0023 100 Block 5 th Street NE, noncontributing bollard (DHR ID #104-5994-0009), looking southwest
Photo 24 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0024 Intersection of Main and East 5 th Street, planters (DHR ID #104-5994-0010), looking north
Photo 25 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0025 500 Block East Main Street, pedestrian streetlight (DHR ID #104-5994-0011), looking southwest
Photo 26 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0026 500 Block East Main Street, tree streetlight (DHR ID #104-5994-0011), looking southwest
Photo 27 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0027 100 Block 5 th Street NE, noncontributing streetlight (DHR ID #104-5994-0012), looking southwest
Photo 28 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0028 400 Block East Main Street, signage (DHR ID #104-5994-0013), looking southeast
Photo 29 of 29: View:	VA_Charlottesville_CharlottesvilleDowntownMallHistoricDistrict_0029 100 Block 2nd Street NE, contributing trash receptacle (DHR ID #104-5994-0014), looking northwest

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

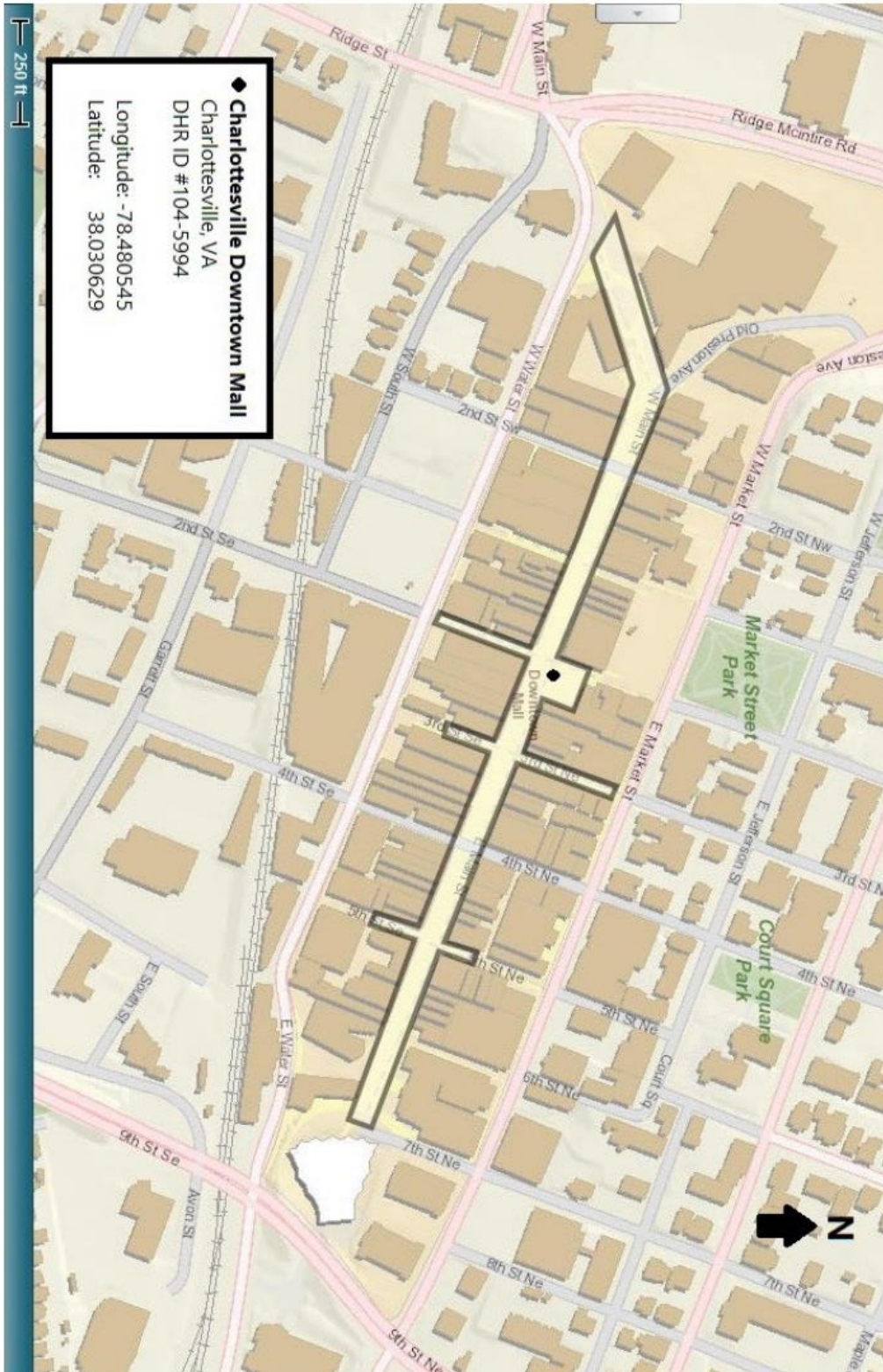
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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Base map produced with Charlottesville GIS Viewer



Location Map – Charlottesville Downtown Mall Historic District, DHR ID #104-5994

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Name of Property

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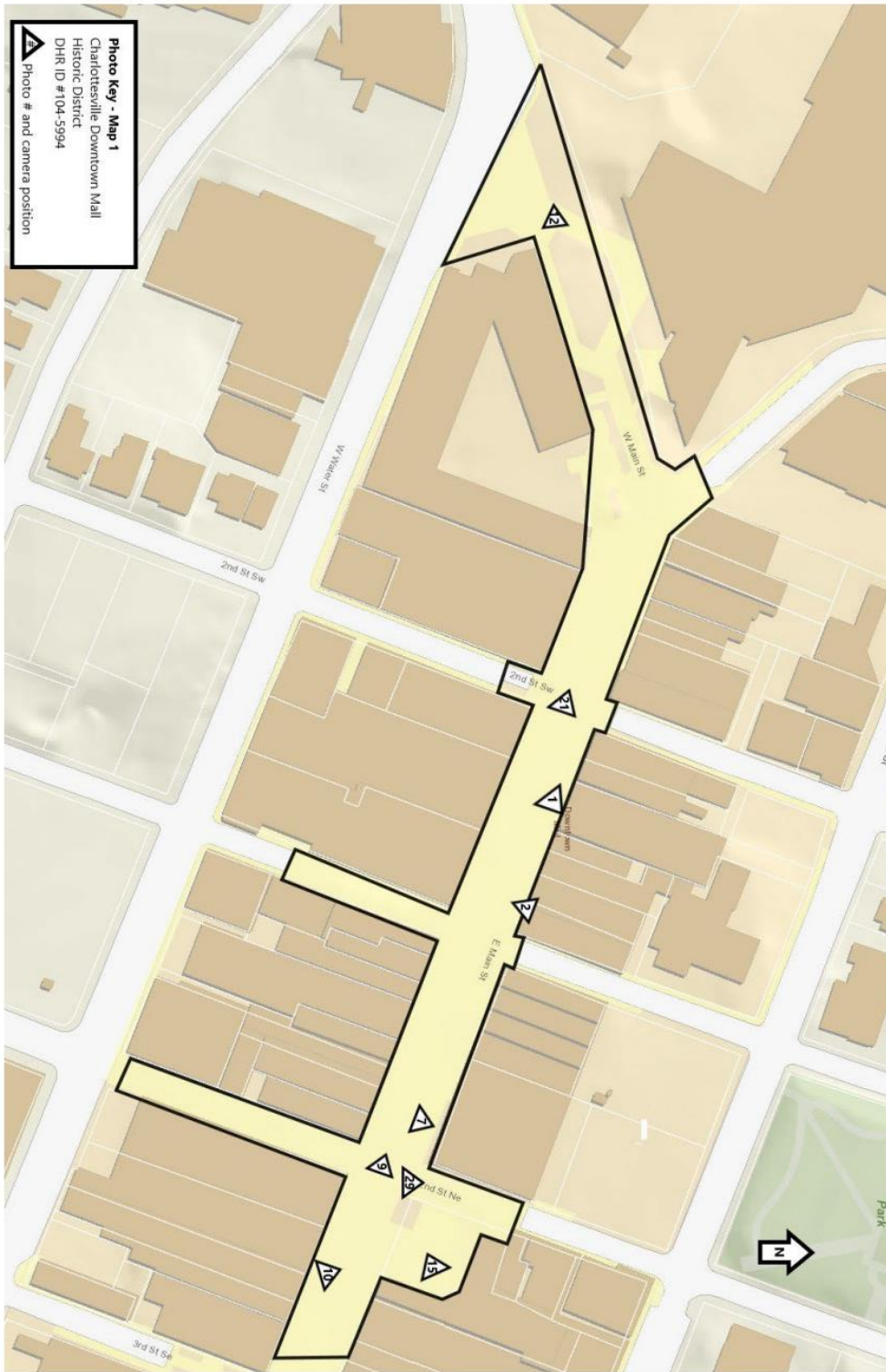


Photo Key - Map 1

Charlottesville Downtown Mall
Name of Property

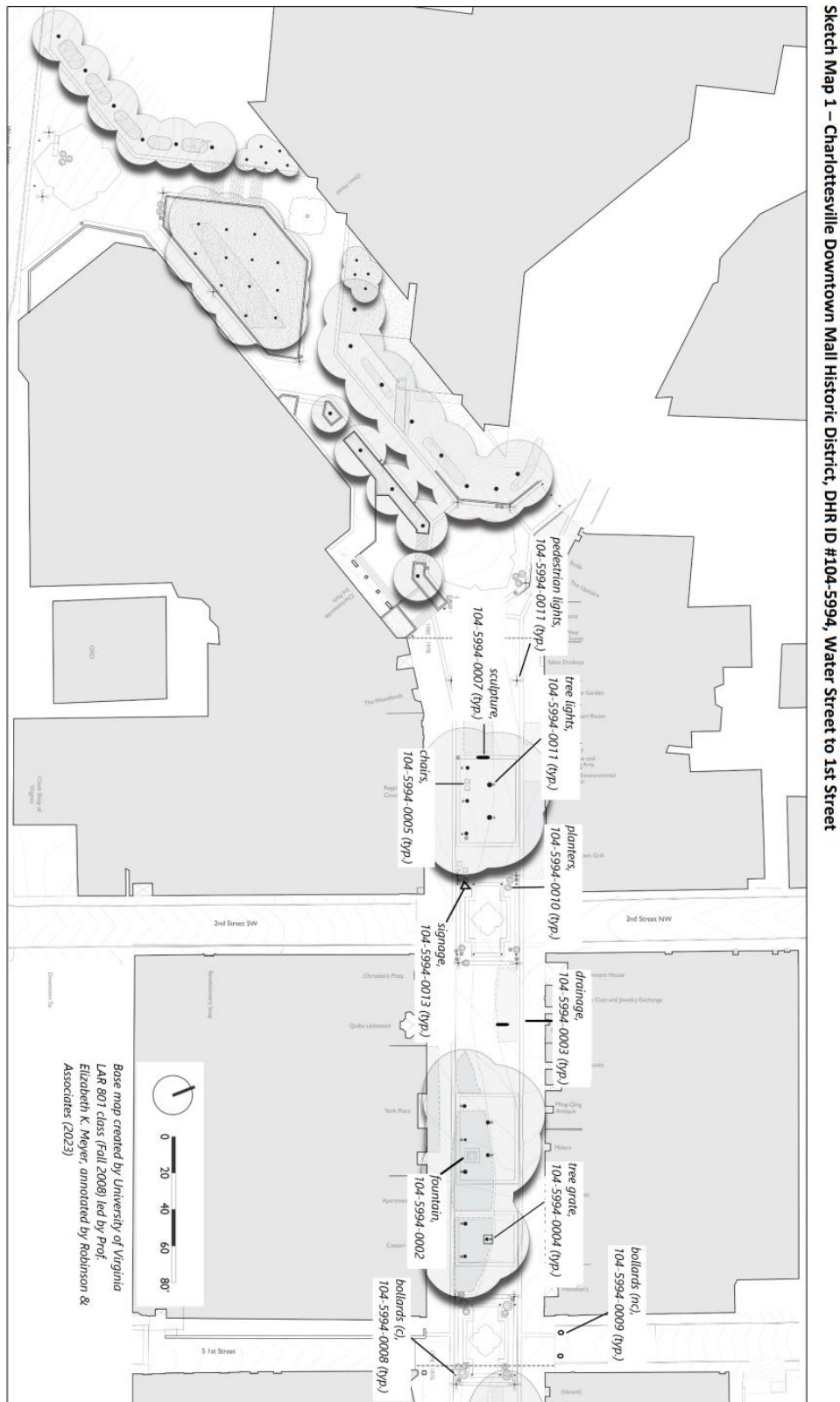
Charlottesville, Virginia
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Photo Key - Map 2

Charlottesville Downtown Mall
Name of Property

Charlottesville, Virginia
County and State

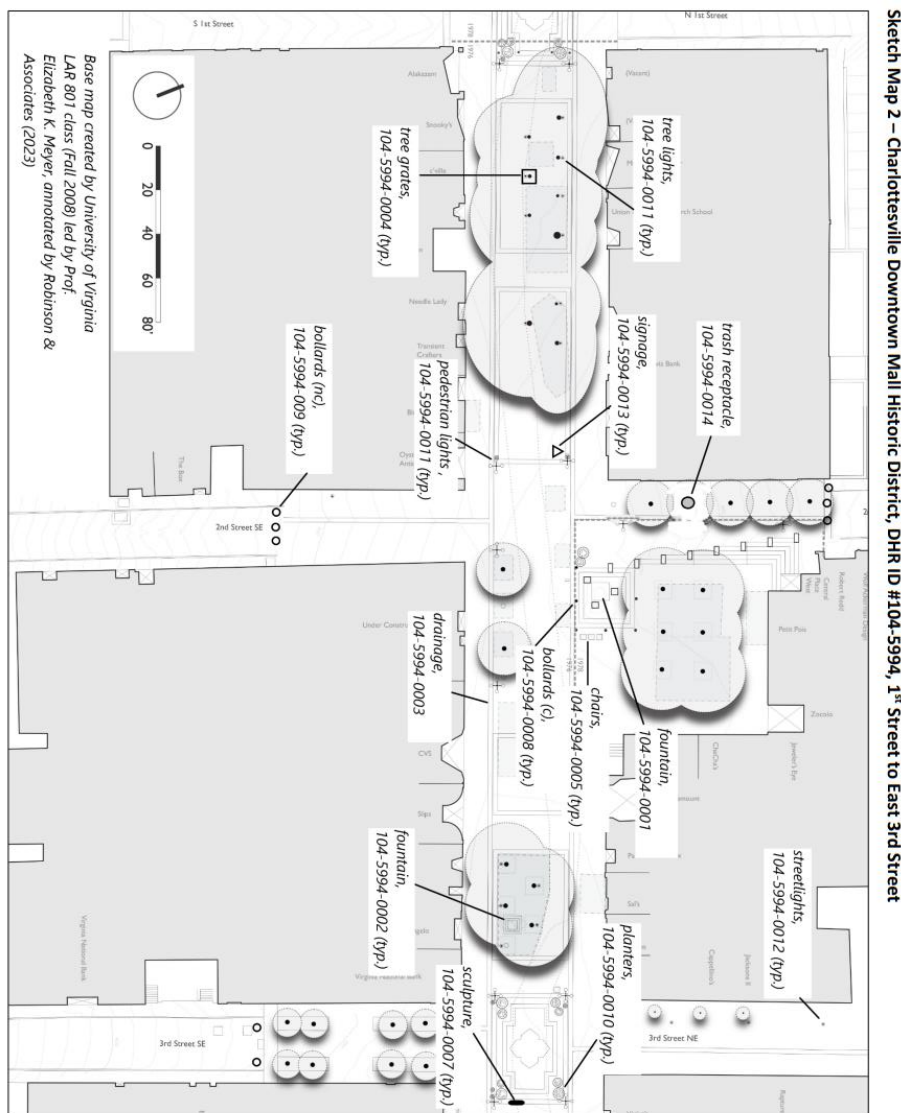


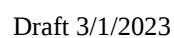
Charlottesville Downtown Mall

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Name of Property

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County and State

Sketch Map 4 – Charlottesville Downtown Mall Historic District, DHR ID #104-5994, East 5th Street to East 7th Street

