HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD AGENDA

Thursday, July 02, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Town Hall - 307 E Kennedy Blvd

Please note that the HTML versions of the agenda and agenda packet may not reflect changes or amendments made to the agenda.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (Three minutes strictly enforced)

V. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Historic Preservation Board Meeting Minutes - June 4, 2026

VI. BOARD DISCUSSION

2. Review of the Historic Resources Survey and Recommendations with Community Planning Collaborative (via Zoom)

VII. COMMENTS

3. Staff Comments

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The Town of Eatonville is subject to the Public Records Law. Under Florida law, e-mail addresses are public records. If you do not want your e-mail address released in response to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in writing.

****PUBLIC NOTICE****

This is a Public Meeting, and the public is invited to attend. This Agenda is subject to change. Please be advised that one (1) or more Members of any of the Town's Advisory Boards/Committees may attend this Meeting and may participate in discussions. Any person who desires to appeal any decision made at this meeting will need a verbatim record of the proceedings and for this purpose may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based – per Section 286.0105 Florida Statutes. Persons with disabilities needing assistance to participate in any of these proceedings should contact the Town of Eatonville at (407) 623-8910 "at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, a written request by a physically handicapped person to attend the meeting, directed to the chairperson or director of such board, commission, agency, or authority" - per Section 286.26

Meeting Minutes for the Historic Preservation Meeting held June 4, 2026 is Forthcoming

****Will be provided prior/on the day of the meeting**

HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING
JULY 2 AT 6:00 PM
Cover Sheet

***NOTE** Please do not change the formatting of this document (font style, size, paragraph spacing etc.)*

ITEM TITLE: Review of the Historic Resources Survey and Recommendations with Community Planning Collaborative (via Zoom)

BOARD ACTION:

PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS, AND PRESENTATIONS		
CONSENT AGENDA		**Exhibits:** • Draft of Eatonville Historic Resources Survey Report • Historic Resources Survey Recommendations
BOARD DECISION/ DISCUSSION	X	
ADMINISTRATIVE		

REQUEST:

Board Discussion on the Historic Resources Survey report including recommendations

SUMMARY:

CPC consultants will provide an update on the historic survey project recommendations for board review and discussion.

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

FISCAL & EFFICIENCY DATA: N/A

DRAFT

Eatonville Historic Structure Survey
Eatonville, Florida

Prepared for the Town of Eatonville and National Trust for Historic Preservation
by Community Planning Collaborative and Planning 2 Preserve

April 2026

Eatonville Historic Structure Survey
Eatonville, Florida

DRAFT April 2026

Prepared for:
Town of Eatonville
National Trust for Historic Preservation

Prepared by:
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Pensacola, FL 32501

This project has been funded with assistance from the National Trust for Historic Preservation African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund.

Acknowledgements

To the Eatonville Community
Thank you for sharing your knowledge and expertise regarding Eatonville's history. Your interest and enthusiasm for preserving Eatonville's heritage is inspiring. We appreciate your dedication to protecting Eatonville's rich culture and legacy for generations to come.

Town of Eatonville City Council
Ruth "Ruthi" Critton, Mayor
Angela Y. Thomas
LaDwyana Ware-Jordan
Tarus Mack
Angie Gardner, Immediate Past Mayor

Town of Eatonville Historic Preservation Board
Rosa Pickett, Chair
Anne Dawkins-Curtis, Vice Chair
Tiffany Simmons, Board Member
John Beacham, Board Member
Laverne Bellamy Williams, Board Member

Town of Eatonville Staff
Brianna Ross, Planning and Development Coordinator
Marissa Bellenger, Records Coordinator
Tara Salmieri, AICP, Town of Eatonville Consulting Planner | PlanActive Studio

National Trust for Historic Preservation | African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund
Melissa Jest, Senior Manager, Preservation Projects
Tiffany Tolbert, Associate Director
Niya Bates, Senior Manager, Preservation Practice

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- As Identified Throughout Report

Disclaimer on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

At Community Planning Collaborative, we are committed to using innovative tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance our research, analysis, and communication efforts. AI supports our team by assisting with tasks like summarizing documents, drafting content outlines, identifying patterns in data, visualizing concepts, and generating ideas during project development. This report has been prepared with the assistance of AI for some components. Because we prioritize transparency, ethics, and accountability around our use of emerging technologies, please note the following:

- We do not use AI for historic research, oral histories, or community-based research and outreach. That work is done the old-fashioned way, with expertise, time, care, and direct relationships. We believe in honoring lived experiences, local voices, and primary sources through human-centered methods that respect the integrity of our communities.
- All AI-assisted outputs are reviewed and edited by our team for accuracy, cultural relevance, and clarity.
- We do not rely on AI for verifying historic information or data, decision-making, interpretation of community input, or any final deliverables that affect people's lives or histories.
- We do not use AI to replace human relationships, expertise, or lived experience; rather, we use it to support and amplify the meaningful work of our staff and collaborators.

We see AI as one of many tools in our toolbox, used with intention to free up more time for what matters most: listening deeply, building trust, researching history, and doing the work in community.

Table of Contents

Summary

Project Purpose

- Document and evaluate Eatonville's historic resources (focus: post-1940 development)
- Update prior surveys (1987, 1990) and expand understanding of the town's evolution
- Support preservation planning, designations, and future investment

Study Area

- Primary focus: Eatonville east of I-4
- Includes:
    - Existing National Register Historic District
    - Key corridors (Kennedy Boulevard)
    - Civic, residential, and cultural sites
- Select properties outside town limits included for community and historical relevance

Key Findings

Development Patterns

- Major growth in the 1960s (Civil Rights era)
- Transition from early vernacular buildings to mid-century suburban forms
- Evidence of both planned subdivisions and incremental infill development

Architectural Character

- Dominant building types:
    - Frame & masonry vernacular
    - Ranch-style residences
    - Mid-Century Modern (Contemporary)
- Clear shift from wood-frame to concrete block construction

Cultural Landscape

- Kennedy Boulevard functions as the commercial and civic spine
- Important sites include:
    - Hungerford School
    - Original cemetery
    - Eatonville Memorial Gardens
- Landscape reflects community identity, segregation-era patterns, and institutional history

Why It Matters

- Expands understanding beyond Eatonville's early history
- Documents underrepresented mid-20th-century development and lived experience
- Provides a foundation for preservation, planning, and storytelling

Recommendations

Documentation & Designation

- Survey areas west of I-4
- Update and expand National Register district
- Pursue local landmark designations

Funding & Research

- Pursue state and federal preservation grants
- Conduct cemetery research (GPR + archaeology)
- Continue targeted historical research

Planning & Development

- Update local preservation policies and ordinances
- Encourage context-sensitive, culturally responsive design
- Apply tools like Community Benefits Agreements for key sites

Community Engagement

- Expand outreach and education
- Update and extend heritage trail markers
- Continue community-centered preservation planning

Next Steps

- Advance survey and designation efforts
- Secure funding for priority projects
- Integrate findings into local planning and decision-making

Section 1: Introduction

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund provided funding assistance to update Eatonville's historic resource inventory. Eatonville is located approximately six miles north of downtown Orlando to the west of Maitland and Winter Park in Orange County and is bisected by I-4. The National Trust for Historic Preservation contracted with Community Planning Collaborative (CPC) to complete this work in August 2025. CPC partnered with Planning 2 Preserve (P2P) to complete the project.

This survey's essential goals were to record or update 260 historic resources in the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and identify any properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in Eatonville. CPC and P2P conducted the field survey and archival research between September 2025 and April 2026. This report describes the methods and results of the survey.

Historic Resource Inventory	A list or database of buildings, sites, structures, and objects in a community that have been identified as historically significant or potentially significant. It typically includes basic information such as location, age, architectural style, condition, and a brief description of why each resource is significant. It usually includes a photo and map. Communities use inventories to understand what historic assets they have, guide planning and preservation decisions, and identify properties that may be eligible for designation or protection.

The research and methodology utilized for this historical survey complied with the Guidelines for Survey Projects published by the Division of Historical Resources, Chapter 1A-46 Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (PL 89-665), as amended, and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (PL 93-291). Architectural historians meet the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards (48 FR 44716).

Historic Resources Survey Report	The survey report builds on a historic resource inventory but goes a step further by providing deeper analysis and context. While the inventory is primarily a list of properties with basic information, the survey report interprets those findings, explaining patterns of development, architectural trends, historical themes, and the significance of the area as a whole. It often includes a historic context narrative, maps, photographs, and evaluations of which properties may be eligible for local, state, or national designation. The inventory tells you what is there, while the survey report helps explain why it matters and how it fits together.

At the outset of the project, 260 properties east of I-4 were anticipated to be surveyed within Eatonville based on parcel data from the Orange County Property Assessor. Also, Eatonville Memorial Gardens, the town cemetery outside of the city limits, was included. The parcels were selected because the data indicated construction dates of 1980 or earlier, representing buildings 45 years old or older. At the time of the survey, background research indicated that 56 previously recorded historic resources existed within the survey boundary. In total, CPC and P2P surveyed and completed FMSF forms for 278 historic structures and two historic cemeteries.

Project deliverables include the FMSF forms, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data for the resources, and a Final Survey Report summarizing the findings. The Final Survey Report is divided into seven sections:

- Section 1 contains an introduction to the project as well as the scope of work.
- Section 2 discusses the archival and background research conducted along with a list of the prior surveys undertaken in the project area.
- Historic context for Eatonville is provided in Section 3.
- In Section 4, the research design incorporates a discussion of the methodology employed during the survey, the anticipated results, and the criteria for evaluation.
- The survey fieldwork results are explained in Section 5 along with a brief architectural analysis.
- Section 6 presents the survey results and conclusions regarding NRHP eligibility.
- Section 7 provides recommendations for future survey, planning, and preservation actions.
- References consulted are in Section 8.
- The FMSF Survey Log Sheet is in Appendix A.
- A full list of the recorded historic structures is in Appendix B.
- A full list of previously recorded historic structures is in Appendix C.
- Appendix D includes a synopsis of the community engagement efforts.
- Appendix E is an Eatonville Historic Context Timeline.

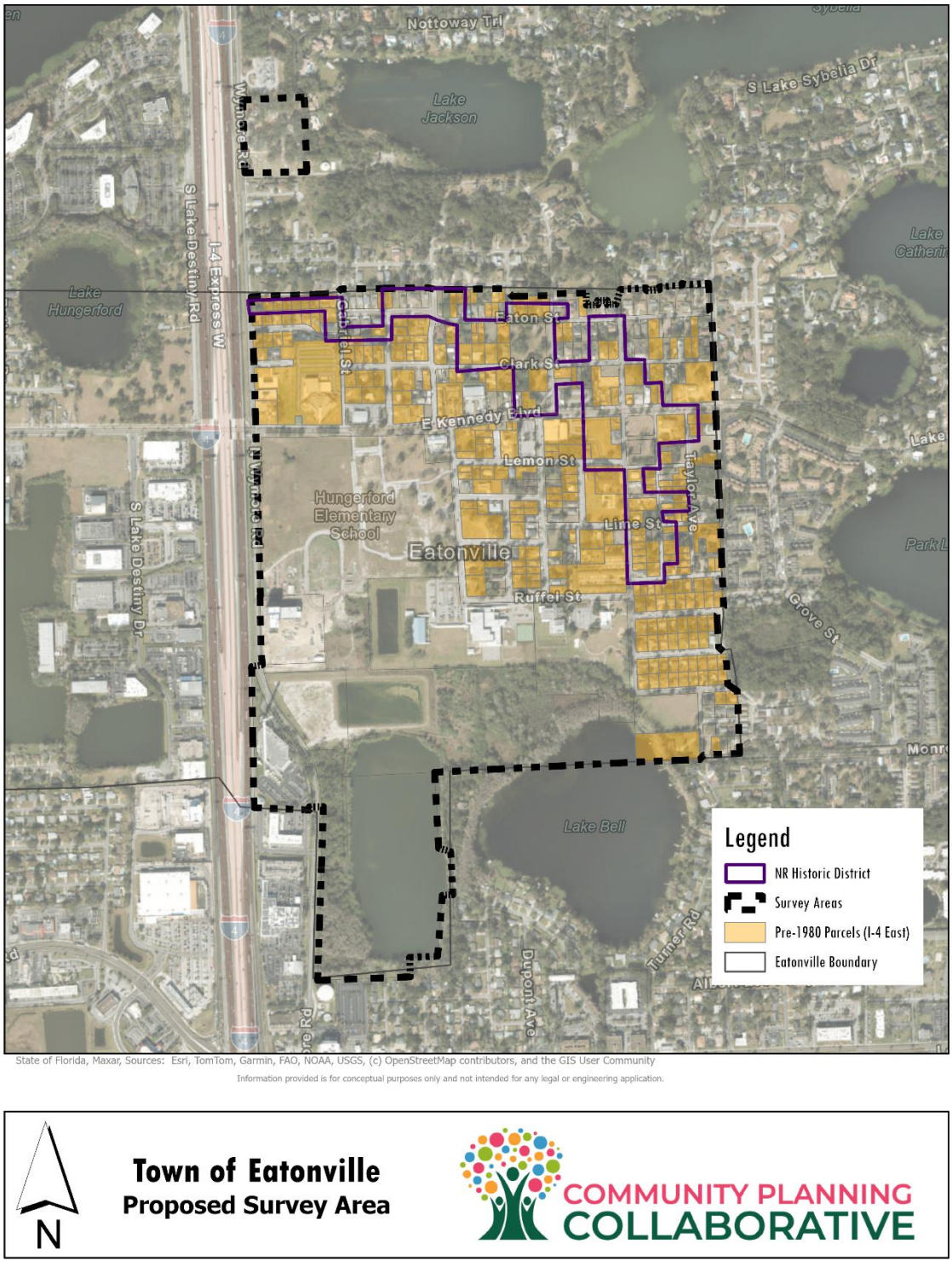


Figure 1. Town of Eatonville Proposed Survey Area, 2025. | Community Planning Collaborative

Section 2: Archival Research

Sources Consulted

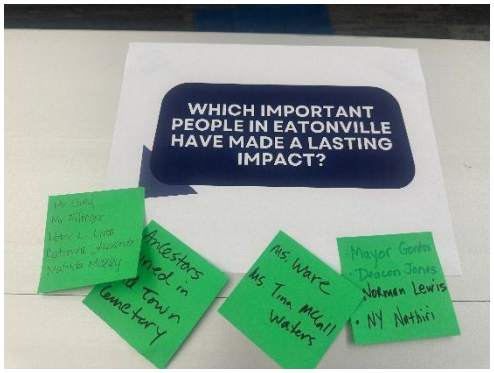
A narrative history of Eatonville was prepared to provide context within which to identify significant events, people, institutions, and organizations associated with the community. To provide context and data to support the project, CPC and P2P conducted archival and background research. Sources of information included:

- Local resident testimony;
- Town of Eatonville records;
- Florida Master Site File (FMSF);
- Orange County Property Appraiser;
- Orange County Clerk of the Circuit Court, Official Records and Plat Maps;
- Orange County Regional History Center;
- Orange County Library, Downtown and Eatonville Branches;
- State of Florida Library and Archives, Florida Photographic Collection;
- University of Florida Digital Collections;
- University of Central Florida Digital Collections;
- Historic aerials, Sanborn Fire Insurance, and United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps;
- ProQuest Black Studies Collection;
- Library of Congress;
- Newspapers.com; and
- Various sources as cited throughout the report.

CPC and P2P used the Orange County Property Appraiser records to generate a list of probable historic properties to be verified during the field survey and to determine probable dates of construction for the identified resources. Research also involved a search for historic photographs of properties in the Florida Photographic Collection of the Florida State Archives and in local archives such as the Orange County Regional History Center. Regional historic newspapers helped to provide background information surrounding events prompting construction of significant buildings and important persons associated with their construction, as well as general history about Eatonville. CPC and P2P coordinated with Town of Eatonville staff to obtain various information related to government administration.

CPC also conducted and/or attended the following outreach during the survey process:

- October 7, 2025 - Community Workshop
- October 7, 2025 – Town Council Meeting
- October 9, 2025 - Community Workshop
- October 16, 2025 - Historic Preservation Board
- October 16, 2025 - Planning & Zoning Board
- April 2, 2026 - Historic Preservation Board



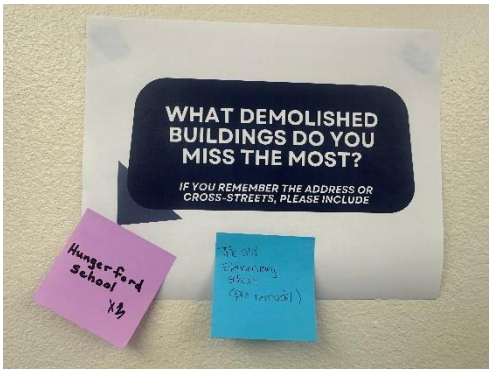


Figure 2. Community Engagement Session: October 7, 2025 | Community Planning Collaborative

Figure 3. Historic Preservation Board Meeting: October 16, 2025 | Community Planning Collaborative

Previous Field Surveys

Prior to the current research, Eatonville has been the subject of multiple architectural and archaeological field investigations, most of which are documented with the Florida Master Site File at the Florida Division of Historical Resources. The most recent preceding study, conducted in 2024 through a Federal Emergency Management Agency Community Assistance program, has not yet been recorded with the Florida Division of Historical Resources. That survey focused specifically on a re-evaluation of the Eatonville Historic District, encompassing 100 properties within or adjacent to the district boundaries. Although it did not cover the entire city limits, much of its findings remain relevant and are referenced in part throughout this report.

Several other architectural and archaeological studies conducted over the years have concentrated on the Interstate-4 corridor, which bisects the Eatonville city limits. Proposed transportation and stormwater improvement projects have repeatedly necessitated evaluation of potential effects on historic properties, including those associated with or in proximity to Eatonville. Table #x below summarizes the previous surveys conducted in and around the study area.

Table 1. Previous Field Surveys.

FMSF Report Number	Author(s)	Year	Title
1815	BJ Smith and Company, Inc.	1987	*Eatonville Historic Resources Survey*

2434	E.L. Fly and Associates, with John W. Griffin	1990	*Historical and Architectural and Archaeological Site Survey for the Town of Eatonville*
2249	Johnston, Sidney	1990	*Historic Properties Survey of the City of Maitland**
5707	Almy, Marion	1999	*Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Interstate 4 Section 2 Project Development and Environment Study from Bee Line Expressway (S.R. 528) to S.R. 472 Interchange Orange, Seminole, and Volusia Counties, Florida*
5985	PanAmerican Consultants	2000	*Town of Eatonville - Design Guidelines*
6783	Janus Research	2000	*Section 106 Effects Determination for the I-4 Interim Improvements from S.R. 423 (John Young Parkway) to S.R. 436 (Semoran Boulevard) Orange and Seminole Counties, Florida*
9354	Lamb, Lisa N. and Kelly Nolte	2003	*An Archaeological and Historical Survey of the Hungerford School Project Area in Orange County, Florida*
14254	Archaeological Consultants, Inc.	2007	*Cultural Resources Assessment Survey Proposed Pond Sites Technical Memorandum I-4 Ultimate Lanes from South of Ivanhoe to North of Kennedy, Orange County, Florida*
20068	Janus Research	2013	*I-4 CRAS Re-evaluation from West of Kirkman Road (SR 435) to North of Sanlando Springs Road (SR 434)*
23107	Dye, Melissa and Angela Matusik	2016	*Technical Memorandum Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment Survey of Proposed 1-4 Pond (Parcel 810), Orange County, Florida*

Not Recorded	Morgan, Kelly N. [FEMA]	2024	*Built Environment Assessment and Eatonville Historic District Re-Evaluation Report*

*Survey situated adjacent to the corporate limits of the Town of Eatonville

Previously Recorded Historic Resources

Of the 64 previously recorded historic resources, 16 have been demolished. Three previously recorded archaeological sites also exist within the area; however, because updating or recording archaeological sites was outside this survey's scope, they are excluded from this section.

The earliest recorded structure is the E.L. Hungerford House (OR00382, ca. 1915), an impressive Prairie-style brick building adjacent to the Hungerford school complex. During this survey, the Eatonville East Water Tower (OR12456, ca. 1956) was recorded; it is characterized by a steel tank with a conical roof and is highly visible within the survey area. The Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery (OR08405), though located in the City of Maitland, is associated with Eatonville's current and pioneer families and was recorded in 1998 as part of a Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) of interstate improvements.

Most remaining historic resources fall within or closely follow the boundary of the National Register Historic District, which includes masonry and frame vernacular residences built during the district's period of significance, 1882–1946.

Plats

Plat	A detailed map that shows how a piece of land is divided into lots, blocks, streets, and other features. It is typically prepared by a surveyor and officially recorded with a local government. Plats are used to establish property boundaries, organize development, and guide how land can be sold, built on, and accessed. In historic contexts, plats are especially useful for understanding how a community was originally laid out and how its physical form has changed over time.

The earliest formalization of Eatonville's landscape began with the filing of the original town plat in 1882, which encompassed approximately 112 acres but initially subdivided only a small portion into a handful of blocks. This early plat established the town's basic spatial framework, including its first streets and development boundaries along what became East and West Streets, as well as the central role of Apopka Road (later Kennedy Boulevard) as the primary east–west corridor. More substantial growth followed in 1886 with the platting of Lewis Lawrence's Eatonville subdivision and Clark's Addition to Lake Maitland, located on opposite sides of Apopka Road. These subdivisions introduced a more consistent residential pattern, with Lawrence's nine-acre subdivision divided into 48 lots (approximately 50 by 150 feet) and Clark's Addition organized into 90 lots across six blocks with slightly smaller parcels. Together, these

early plats established the lot sizes and block patterns that would define much of Eatonville's historic core.

Additional plats continued to expand the town's footprint and reflect changing land use patterns. The Holden Brothers' Addition (surveyed in 1886 and later replatted in 1925 as Calhoun's Subdivision) extended development south of Apopka Road with larger lots, some up to 50 by 200 feet, designed for semi-rural homesteads. Over time, many of these parcels were subdivided into smaller residential lots, signaling a gradual shift toward a denser neighborhood fabric. This evolution accelerated after World War II with a new generation of subdivision plats, including Campusview (c. 1950), Catalina Park (1961), Lake Lovely (1962), Bel Air Homes (1963), and Eaton Estates (1964). These mid-century subdivisions introduced more formalized suburban planning, with standardized lots, improved infrastructure, and modern housing types. By the late 1960s, these successive plats had largely established Eatonville's current street grid and neighborhood structure, demonstrating how waves of subdivision development translated broader economic growth and social change into the town's built environment.

Section 3: Historic Context

Summary

Eatonville's history reflects a continuous interplay between land, people, and power, with its physical landscape evolving alongside the aspirations and actions of the community that built it. Founded in 1887 on approximately 112 acres, the town emerged from the determination of formerly enslaved African Americans seeking autonomy, land ownership, and self-governance in the post–Civil War South. Early residents such as Joseph E. Clarke, Allen Rickett, and other founding families not only secured land but actively shaped the built environment, clearing property, constructing homes, and establishing institutions that anchored daily life. The early landscape was distinctly rural and self-sustaining: modest homes were paired with vegetable gardens, citrus groves, and small livestock, while lakes such as Sybelia and Bell functioned as vital spaces for domestic labor, food gathering, and recreation. Settlement patterns clustered along Apopka Road (now Kennedy Boulevard), where churches, homes, and community institutions formed a compact, walkable core, surrounded by pine forests, wetlands, and agricultural land.

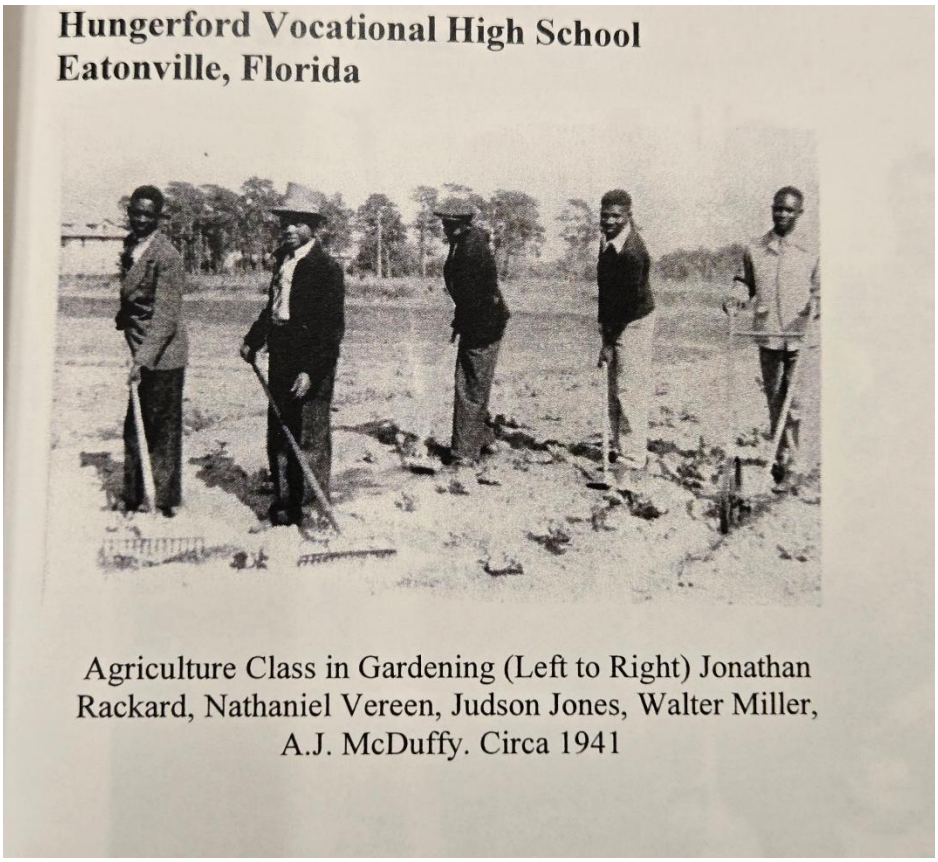


Figure 4. Agricultural class in gardening from left to right: Jonathan Rackard, Nathaniel Vereen, Judson Jones, Walter Miller, A.J. McDuffy circa 1941 | Clyde W. Hall

Through the first half of the twentieth century, Eatonville's physical and social landscapes evolved together, shaped by civic leaders, educators, and residents whose decisions gradually transformed the town from a small rural settlement into a more complex community. The annexation of the Hungerford School campus in 1919 introduced a large institutional landholding that would later play a defining role in reshaping the terrain, while educators and community leaders ensured the campus functioned as both a physical and cultural anchor.

Residential patterns remained relatively low-density, with large lots and unpaved roads reflecting the town's rural character well into the mid-century. At the same time, residents themselves drove incremental change, subdividing land, constructing homes, and building out Apopka Road/Kennedy Boulevard as a commercial spine. By the 1940s through the 1960s, this corridor had evolved from a dirt road into a vibrant center of Black commerce and entertainment, shaped by local entrepreneurs who established businesses, music venues, and gathering spaces that drew visitors from across Central Florida.

Post–World War II subdivision development further reshaped the landscape in Eatonville, as former groves and open land were divided into residential neighborhoods with standardized lots, ranch-style homes, and, eventually, paved streets, though disparities persisted, particularly in lower-lying areas west of Wymore Road where wetlands and limited infrastructure constrained development.

The most dramatic transformation of Eatonville's landscape occurred between the late 1950s and 1960s, when regional infrastructure projects reshaped the town in lasting ways. Land within Eatonville, particularly property associated with the Hungerford School, was used to meet external needs, including the establishment of a landfill serving Winter Park on low-lying, swampy terrain. Shortly thereafter, the construction of Interstate 4 cut directly through the town, fundamentally altering circulation patterns, development pressures, and the physical environment itself.

Figure 5. Recently completed Interstate 4 in the vicinity of Eatonville in 1965. | Orlando Sentinel

Massive earthmoving operations reshaped Eatonville's lands, filled wetlands, and created new water bodies as borrow pits filled with water, including Lake Wilderness and Lake King. Residents and local institutions adapted to these changes, leveraging land sales to fund improvements such as road paving and athletic facilities, even as they navigated the limitations imposed by decisions made outside the town, including the denial of a local interstate interchange. By the late twentieth century, Eatonville evolved into a suburbanized landscape of subdivisions, commercial corridors, and transportation infrastructure. Yet its physical form still bears the imprint of its origins, its lakes, remnant open spaces, and institutional sites, and the enduring influence of the people who shaped, adapted to, and continually redefined the land over time.

The early history of Eatonville, from its founding in the 1880s through the early decades of the twentieth century, has been well documented in existing scholarship and historic records. This context does not seek to replicate that body of work. The town's origins as one of the first incorporated all-Black municipalities in the United States, along with its deep and well-documented association with author and folklorist Zora Neale Hurston, have been extensively studied and interpreted. Rather than revisiting these well-established narratives, this context focuses on expanding the historical record beyond this period, with particular attention to the decades after 1940, when patterns of growth, change, and community development in Eatonville have received comparatively less scholarly attention.

Indigenous Communities

Any historic context in the United States must begin with the recognition that history does not start with colonization and settlement, but with the Indigenous peoples who have lived in relationship with these lands and waters since time immemorial. Long before the establishment of Orlando, Central Florida was home to thriving Native communities whose presence and stewardship shaped the region.

Archaeological evidence indicates continuous habitation by Native groups dating to at least 12,000 years ago, including Paleoindian and Archaic cultures who adapted to changing environmental conditions across the entire Florida peninsula.[1] By the time Europeans arrived in the 16th century, the area that is now Orange County was occupied primarily by Indigenous peoples, whose settlements were organized into complex chiefdoms connected by trade, kinship, and ceremonial practices. Sources indicate Native people in the region were associated with the Tocobaga group; other sources indicate people were a subgroup of the Ais people, the Mayaca-Jororo people.[2] The lands of the Timucua people also extended near central Florida.

[1] Jerald T. Milanich, *Archaeology of Precolumbian Florida* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2018).
[2] Jason Byrne, "Mayaca-Jororo, the native people of Orlando," Florida History, October 13, 2024, https://floridahistoryblog.com/mayaca-jororo-the-native-people-of-orlando; Native Land Digital, "Classic Map," accessed April 23, 2026, https://native-land.ca/maps/native-land; James Sutton, "The St. Johns River: An Archival Project Investigating Interior Occupation of the St. Johns Rivers Region by Native Americans During the Colonial Period" (Master's Thesis, University of Oklahoma, 2021).

These communities relied on a combination of hunting, fishing, and agriculture, cultivating crops such as maize, beans, and squash, and maintaining deep spiritual and cultural relationships with the land and waterways of the region.

Spanish colonization in the 1500s and 1600s brought devastating changes, including disease, forced labor, and missionization, which led to the severe decline and eventual dispersal of Indigenous populations.[3] In the centuries that followed, the region became part of a broader Indigenous landscape shaped by the movement and reconstitution of Native groups, including the ancestors of today's Seminole people, who emerged in Florida during the 18th century from a combination of Muscogee (Creek) migrants and other displaced Indigenous communities.[4] The Seminoles established villages throughout Central Florida, including areas near present-day Orlando, and resisted U.S. expansion during the Seminole Wars of the 19th century.[5] Free people of color and Black people escaping slavery formed what are referred to as "maroon" communities, often in solidarity with or alongside Seminole groups.[6]

Despite forced removal campaigns, Seminole people remained unconquered in Florida. Today the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes of Florida continue to maintain lands in Florida, demonstrating continuing cultural and historical ties to the region. In addition, the state of Florida recognizes other affiliated Tribal nations and groups: the Muscogee Creek Nation, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and the Santa Rosa Band of the Lower Muscogee.[7]

Colonial & Territorial Eras and Early U.S. Statehood

During the colonial era, the area that would later become Orlando remained a sparsely populated frontier shaped by the competing influences of Spanish and later British rule, as well as the enduring presence of Indigenous peoples. Under Spanish control (1565–1763; 1783–1821), central Florida was incorporated into the province of La Florida but saw limited permanent European settlement compared to coastal regions like St. Augustine.[8] Instead, the interior functioned largely as a zone of Indigenous habitation, missionization efforts, and resource extraction, particularly cattle ranching tied to Spanish land grants.[9]

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[3] Kathleen A. Deagan, "The Historical Archaeology of Sixteenth-Century La Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 91, no. 3 (2012): 349-374; John Missall and Mary Lou Missall, *The Seminole Wars: America's Longest Indian Conflict* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2004).
[4] Brent Richards Weisman, *Unconquered People: Florida's Seminole and Miccosukee Indians* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1999).
[5] Missall and Missall, *The Seminole Wars*.
[6] Jane Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Champaign, IL: University of Florida Press, 1999); Damian Alan Pargas, "Southern Maroon Communities," A House Divided Project at Dickinson College, accessed April 23, 2026, https://housedivided.dickinson.edu/sites/ugrr/regional-essays/southern-maroon-communities-pargas/.
[7] Florida Senate, "Bill Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement for HB 675 (2024)," accessed April 23, 2026, https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2024/675/Analyses/h0675a.LFS.PDF.
[8] "La Florida: The Interactive Digital Archive of the Americas, accessed April 23, 2026, https://laflorida.org/
[9] State Library and Archives of Florida, "Spanish Land Grants," *Florida Memory*, accessed April 23, 2026, https://www.floridamemory.com/discover/historical_records/spanishlandgrants/.

Following the British acquisition of Florida (1763–1783), the region became part of East Florida, and although British officials encouraged plantation development and migration, the Orlando area remained largely undeveloped due to its distance from major waterways and coastal trade routes.[10] After Spain regained Florida in 1783, shifting imperial priorities and declining resources meant continued limited oversight of the interior. During this period, the region was largely shaped by the movement of Creek and other Native groups into Florida, laying the groundwork for the emergence of the Seminole people in the late 18th century.

In 1821, Florida became a United States territory, and just a few years later, in 1824, the vast Mosquito County was established, encompassing much of what is now Central and South Florida, including present-day Orange and Seminole counties.[11] During this territorial period, the Seminole Wars shaped the region's landscape, leading to the construction of a network of military forts such as Fort Christmas (1837), Fort Gatlin (1838), and Fort Maitland (1838).[12] These outposts later served as reference points for early settlement and transportation routes.

By the 1840s, civilian settlement began to take hold, including the small village of Jernigan, named for early settler Aaron Jernigan, which would eventually evolve into the city of Orlando.[13] Florida achieved statehood in 1845, the same year Orange County was established, providing a formal governmental structure for the growing population. The earliest General Land Office record located for the area is a survey record from 1846, and the municipal limits of Eatonville fall within section plats 33, 34, 35, and 36.[14]

Prior to the Civil War, more White settlers arrived in Florida, establishing plantations and agricultural operations using enslaved labor. In 1861, there were 61,745 enslaved people in Middle Florida, the area between the Suwannee and Apalachicola rivers. In 1860, Orange County documented 127 enslaved people.[15]

In the decades that followed, towns across the region began to incorporate, reflecting expanding agricultural and economic activity. Orlando was incorporated as a town in 1875 (later becoming a city in 1885), while Maitland emerged as a center of citrus production and incorporated in 1885.[16] Just two years later, in 1887, both Eatonville and Winter Park were incorporated, marking a significant moment in the region's development and setting the stage for Eatonville's emergence as one of the first self-governed Black municipalities in the United States.

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[10] Florida Department of State, *Florida British Heritage Trail* (Tallahassee: Florida Department of State, n.d.), accessed April 23, 2026, https://files.floridados.gov/media/694158/smallflorida_british_heritage_trail_pdf.pdf.
[11] "Orange County 200th Anniversary," Orange County Board of County Commissioners, accessed April 24, 2026, https://www.ocfl.net/boardofcommissioners/mayor/200thanniversary.aspx.
[12] "Orange County 200th Anniversary."
[13] "Orange County 200th Anniversary."
[14] Richard Ott, "Ground Penetrating Radar and Public Archaeology at Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery" (Master's Thesis, University of Central Florida, 2022), 22.
[15] Ott, "Ground Penetrating Radar and Public Archaeology at Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery," 33.
[16] "Orange County 200th Anniversary."

Early Eatonville

Eatonville's early history is rooted in the aspirations of formerly enslaved African Americans seeking autonomy, land ownership, and self-governance in the post–Civil War South. After the Civil War, between 1865-1900, there were approximately 400 Black enclaves, settlements and towns. By 1920, that rose to 800. Most were informally organized; less than 150 were official municipalities. Eatonville was one of those municipalities and as of the National Register of Historic Places nomination, only one of 12 chartered Black towns still surviving.[17]

In the late 1870s, freedmen migrated to Central Florida from across the Southeast, settling initially near Maitland, joining formerly enslaved individuals already in the region, where they found work in agriculture, construction, and railroad development. Despite some cooperation with white residents, Black settlers sought to establish their own independent community. After earlier unsuccessful attempts to purchase land themselves, a turning point came in the early 1880s when White landowners Josiah Eaton (a former Union Army captain) and Lewis Lawrence (a philanthropist and abolitionist) made property available west of Maitland. Lawrence, in particular, played a key role by platting land and supporting early settlement, including donating property for a church and housing.[18] The land was near a lake called St. John's Hole (now Lake Lily) that was used for potable water by Black people working for White people in Maitland.[19]

The community that emerged from these efforts was formally organized in 1887, when a group of 27 Black men gathered to vote for incorporation of Eatonville's 112 acres. Their successful petition created what is widely recognized as the first incorporated all-Black municipality in the United States. The original town was governed entirely by African Americans, with elected officials including a mayor and board of aldermen. Leaders such as Joseph E. Clarke and Allen Ricket, who helped acquire land, recruit settlers, and establish institutions, were central to Eatonville's founding and early governance.[20]

In its early years, Eatonville developed as a self-sustaining community with a strong emphasis on land ownership, religion, and education. Residents supported themselves through a mix of agricultural labor, skilled trades, and small businesses, while women contributed through both wage labor and subsistence activities. Early settlers often bought more than one lot in Eatonville to have room for vegetable growing, citrus and small farm animals.

[17] Tina Bucuvalas, Alice M. Grant, and Carl Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1997.
[18] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."
[19] Ott, "Ground Penetrating Radar and Public Archaeology at Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery," 34.
[20] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."

Figure 6. Joseph E. Clark at his pineapple farm in Eatonville in 1907. | University of Virginia

The early life of the community was primarily rural in nature. Lakes Sybelia and Bell were used for fishing, boating and picnicking as well as domestic use. Lake Bell in particular was a center of domestic labor, irrigation, and a community center for leisure and social gatherings.[21] Oak trees lined each side of the roadway; the last water oak fell in 1957.[22] Zora Neale Hurston wrote of her family's property in Eatonville, "There were plenty of orange, grapefruit, tangerine, guavas and other fruits in our yard. We had a five acre garden…and so we were never hungry. We had chicken on the table often; home-cured meat, and all the eggs we wanted."[23]

Churches such as St. Lawrence A.M.E. and Macedonia Missionary Baptist became key social and spiritual anchors, and the founding of the Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School in 1889 provided critical educational opportunities rooted in both academic and vocational training. Together, these institutions helped stabilize and sustain the town, shaping Eatonville into a rare and enduring example of Black self-determination in the late 19th-century and early 20th century South.[24] Eatonville was maintained successfully as a town during 1900-1940. This era is associated with perhaps the town's most famous resident, writer and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston. Towards the mid-20th century, the rural nature of the community started to change.

[21] Ott, "Ground Penetrating Radar and Public Archaeology at Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery," 36.
[22] "Eatonville Noted Oaks Now in the Past," *Orlando Sentinel*, July 15, 1957, 8.
[23] Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road* (New York: Harper Collins, 2006), 12.
[24] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."

Community Institutions

Following emancipation and throughout the Jim Crow era, institutions such as churches, schools, and cemeteries became foundational to the structure and continuity of African American community life. In the face of segregation and exclusion from white-controlled systems, Black communities built and sustained these spaces as sites of autonomy, care, and cultural expression. Churches served not only as places of worship, but as centers of leadership, organizing, and mutual aid. Schools represented pathways to literacy, empowerment, and future opportunity, often established and maintained through extraordinary community effort. Cemeteries, meanwhile, held deep cultural and spiritual significance, providing sacred spaces to honor the dead, preserve family and community histories, and assert a lasting presence on the land. Together, these institutions reflect a broader tradition of self-determination and resilience, anchoring African American communities across generations.

Churches

Following emancipation, Black churches quickly became some of the most stable and influential institutions within African American communities across the South. More than places of worship, churches served as centers of social, political, and cultural life; spaces where newly freed people could gather, organize, and exercise autonomy in a society that often denied them full participation. Churches hosted schools, mutual aid efforts, political meetings, and civic organizations, and they played a central role in leadership development and community cohesion. In the face of segregation, violence, and systemic exclusion, Black churches offered both spiritual grounding and a tangible infrastructure for collective resilience and self-determination.

This enduring legacy is clearly reflected in Eatonville, where churches have long functioned as foundational community institutions. From the town's earliest years, congregations provided not only religious leadership but also spaces for education, governance, and social connection. Churches in Eatonville have hosted community meetings, supported local schools, and helped sustain traditions of mutual aid and cultural expression. In a town built on the principles of Black self-governance, these institutions reinforced a shared sense of identity and purpose, serving as anchors of continuity, leadership, and care across generations.

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Figure 7. An early 20th century photograph of the St. Lawrence A.M.E. Church. | Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community

The origins of Eatonville's religious landscape can be traced to 1881, when St. Lawrence A.M.E. Church was founded to serve the growing population of formerly enslaved African Americans settling in the area. Initially referred to simply as the "African Methodist Church" to distinguish it from White congregations nearby, the church later adopted the name of Lewis H. Lawrence, one of the White northern benefactors who donated land for Eatonville and the church's establishment. The property was formally transferred to the congregation on April 7, 1882, making St. Lawrence A.M.E. the oldest continuously operating institution in Eatonville.[25]

Early worship services were held in a modest structure donated by Lawrence, reflecting both the limited material resources of the founding congregation and the central importance of faith in community formation. This small structure, constructed circa 1882, was later relocated around 1900 to accommodate the construction of a larger sanctuary on the original site. The relocated building, now situated at 550 Kennedy Boulevard, is one of the few surviving nineteenth-century structures in Eatonville. Over time, it served multiple community functions, including use as a library, before eventually becoming a private residence. Along with the nearby Robert Mosley House (circa 1888), it represents a rare surviving link to the town's earliest built environment. A new sanctuary for St. Lawrence A.M.E. Church was completed in the early 1970s, reflecting both the longevity and continued growth of the congregation.[26]

Closely following the establishment of the Methodist congregation, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church was organized in 1882. In its earliest years, the Baptist congregation shared the

[25] Frank M. Otey, *Eatonville, Florida: A Brief History* (Winter Park, FL: Four-G Publishers, 1989), 9.
[26] Otey, *Eatonville*, 10.

same worship space as St. Lawrence A.M.E., with the two groups holding services on alternating Sundays, a practice that underscores the cooperative spirit of Eatonville's founding community. By 1889, however, the Baptists had acquired a separate house on Eaton Street to accommodate their growing membership. Under the leadership of Reverend John Richardson, the congregation expanded rapidly, and by 1895 constructed a larger church at the corner of Calhoun Avenue and Apopka Road (now Kennedy Boulevard).[27]

By the mid-1890s, these two churches, St. Lawrence A.M.E. and Macedonia Missionary Baptist, stood alongside residences and other institutional buildings along Apopka Road, forming the religious and social core of early Eatonville. Their proximity to one another and to the town's primary thoroughfare highlights the centrality of religious life in shaping the early settlement pattern.

CHURCH CHOIR AT EATONVILLE

Members of the St. Lawrence AME Church Choir in Eatonville posed in front of the church recently for this picture. The choir was organized in 1881 at the same time the church was founded making it one of the oldest in Central Florida. Shown are front row [left to right] Mrs. Catherine Alexander, Mrs. Mildred Grant, Mrs. Ida M. Staggers, Mrs. Ruby Williams, Mrs. Jimmie Lee Harrell and Mrs. Ruby Thomas. Back row [left to right] Miss Martha Miller, Mrs. Matilda Mosley, Miss Julie Staggers, Mrs. Effie Franklin, George Thomas and the Rev. Jesse Brown, pastor. [Mitchell Photo]

Figure 8. Church Choir at St. Lawrence A.M.E. Church. | Orlando Sentinel 5/14/1956

The early twentieth century saw the continued evolution and diversification of Eatonville's religious institutions. Over time, congregations expanded, relocated, or replaced earlier structures with larger facilities, mirroring gradual population growth and changing architectural preferences. A significant moment of institutional change occurred in 1932, when the Open Door Baptist Church was established as a splinter congregation from Macedonia Missionary

[27] Otey, *Eatonville*, 10.

Baptist Church.[28] This division reflects both the growth of the community and the internal dynamics typical of maturing religious institutions.

Following World War II, as Eatonville experienced increased residential development and population growth, its religious landscape expanded accordingly. New congregations were established to serve emerging neighborhoods, particularly in areas developed during the mid-twentieth century suburban expansion. In 1957, Mount Carmel Baptist Church was founded to serve residents in the northwestern portion of town, many of whom lived in newly platted subdivisions. Under the leadership of Reverend J.H. Johnson, the church became an important spiritual center for these developing communities.[29]

The 1960s and 1970s marked a period of significant institutional diversification, as numerous new churches were founded both within Eatonville and in adjacent areas. Among these was the Apostolic Church of Jesus, established in 1963, which later constructed a church building in nearby Maitland in 1971. This congregation initially worshiped out of a school building and then a private home on Clark Street.[30] Similarly, the Redeeming Light Center Church (1967) and the World Wide Revival Center (circa 1970) reflect the proliferation of new denominations and worship styles during this period.[31]

Figure 9. The World Wide Revival Center, located at 130 North College Avenue, was completed in 1970. | Community Planning Collaborative

[28] Otey, *Eatonville*, 38.
[29] Otey, *Eatonville*, 51.
[30] "Old and New...A Dream Realized Through Faith," Orlando Sentinel, Jun. 28, 1971, p.12.
[31] Otey, *Eatonville*, 51.

This era also saw continued investment in existing congregations. A new sanctuary for St. Lawrence A.M.E. Church was completed in August 1972, replacing earlier structures and symbolizing the enduring importance of the congregation.[32] Likewise, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church undertook multiple building campaigns throughout the twentieth century, culminating in the construction of a new sanctuary in 1975 under the leadership of Reverend Peter Lias. These successive building efforts demonstrate both the growth of the congregation and its ongoing role as a cornerstone of the community.[33]

Additional congregations established during this period include Christ Centered Church & Ministries (1971), Fresh Anointing Family Worship Center (mid-1970s), and, slightly later, Christ Gospel Church of Orlando (1985). While some of these institutions were located just outside Eatonville's municipal boundaries, they nonetheless served residents of the town and contributed to its broader religious and cultural landscape.

Education

In the decades following emancipation, education emerged as one of the most urgent and deeply held priorities within Black communities across the South. Newly freed people understood literacy and schooling not only as tools for economic mobility, but as essential foundations for citizenship, self-determination, and collective advancement. Despite pervasive barriers including underfunded systems, racial violence, and political resistance to Black education, African American communities mobilized their own resources to establish schools, often partnering with institutions like the Freedmen's Bureau, northern missionary societies, and Black churches. These early schools were frequently housed in churches or modest community-built structures, reflecting a broader pattern in which education, faith, and civic life were tightly intertwined.

This legacy is clearly reflected in Eatonville. Schools in Eatonville were more than places of instruction; they functioned as vital community institutions that hosted meetings, social events, and civic organizing. Institutions such as the Hungerford School exemplify how educational spaces anchored community life, serving generations of residents while reinforcing values of leadership, self-sufficiency, and racial uplift. In this way, the history of education in Eatonville mirrors broader regional and national patterns, while also highlighting the town's distinctive commitment to building and sustaining Black-led institutions in the face of systemic inequities.

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[32] Otey, *Eatonville*, 50.
[33] Otey, *Eatonville*, 40.

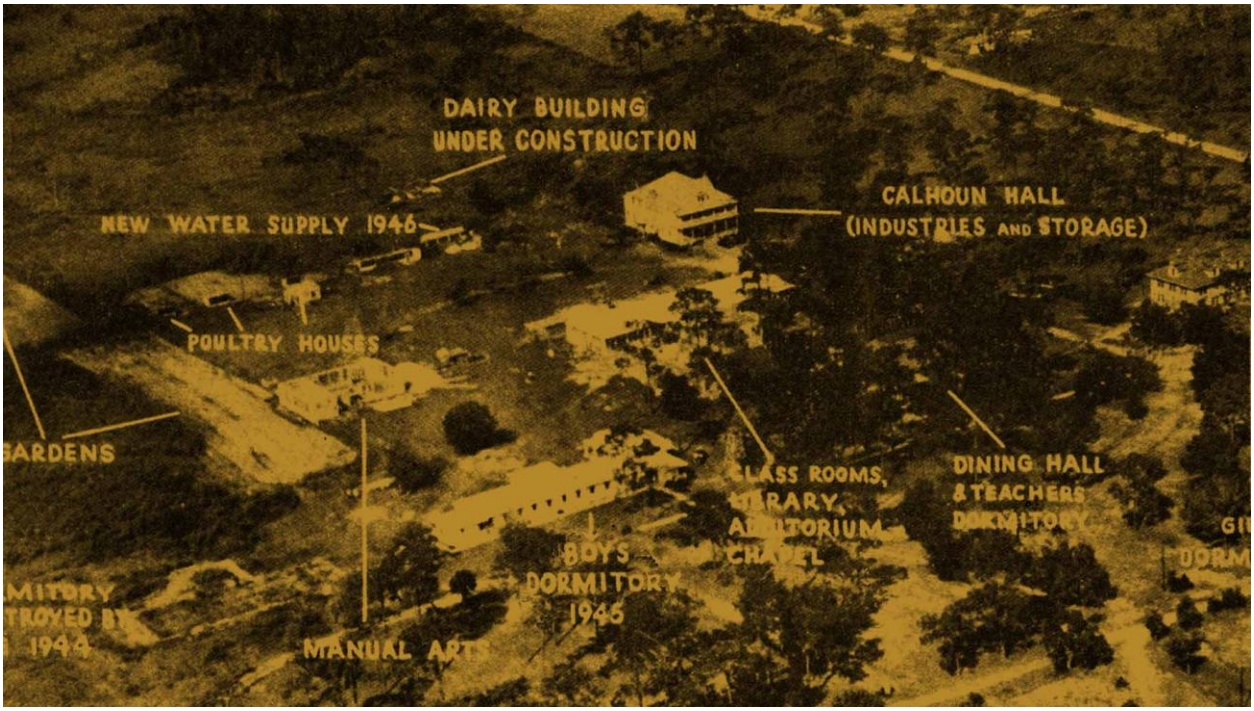

Figure 10. An aerial of the Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School. | Florida Memory

The Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School stands as one of the most significant educational and institutional anchors in Eatonville's history. Founded in 1889, the school quickly grew into a major center for Black education in Central Florida. The land for the school was donated by Edward and Anna Hungerford in memory of their son Robert Hungerford.[34] Hungerford was the first school for Black children in Central Florida and operated as a private school. By the early twentieth century, its campus had expanded to include ten buildings, a sawmill, dairy, and vocational workshops, encompassing more than 300 acres.[35] This scale reflects both the ambition of its founders and the broader model of industrial education for Black students during this era. In 1919, the Hungerford campus was formally annexed into the town of Eatonville, further solidifying the school's central role in the community's physical and civic landscape.[36]

Throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, Hungerford functioned not only as a local school but as a regional institution, drawing Black students from Eatonville, Winter Park, Maitland, Apopka, and surrounding areas. Its curriculum combined academic instruction with vocational training, preparing students for a range of professional and skilled careers. The campus also served as a cultural and social hub, hosting events such as athletic teams visiting for the Orange Blossom Bowl and gatherings like the Orange County Student Interracial

[34] *Town of Eatonville v. Orange County School Board*, Amended Complaint, filed July 2023, https://www.splcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/eatonville-v-orange-county-school-board-amended-complaint.pdf
[35] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."
[36] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."

Conference.[37] Regular Sunday afternoon programs of spirituals were held by the Hungerford Singers at Washington Hall on Hungerford Campus, for the larger community.[38]

Figure 11. Students during a Hungerford May Day event in an undated photo. | Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community

Facilities such as Calhoun Hall and Cluett Hall, which housed student dormitories, underscore the school's role as a boarding institution for students who traveled from across the region. Fires destroyed several of these buildings. Efforts to rebuild, including wartime approvals from the War Production Board and fundraising led by figures such as William P. Pelham, highlight both the vulnerabilities and resilience of the institution over the decades.[39]

A major turning point in Hungerford's history came in 1950, when its trustees transferred the school to the Orange County Public School system.[40] The acquisition was contested through court proceedings by Constance Hungerford Fenske, heir of the original donors of the land.[41] However, the transition from a privately governed institution to a public school was affirmed by a 1952 Florida Supreme Court decision and marked a new phase of expansion and modernization

[37] Ann Turner, "Students Invited to Interracial Conference, *Orlando Evening Star*, Mar. 5, 1943, 10.
[38] "Short Stories," *Orlando Evening Star*, Feb. 13, 1947, 1.
[39] "Negro School Burns in Eatonville," *Orlando Evening Star*, March 9, 1944, 1; "WPB Okehs First Replacement Building for Hungerford School," *Orlando Evening Star*, May 15, 1944, 1; "Leesburg Contractor Submits Lowest Bid of Eatonville School," *Orlando Sentinel*, June 3, 1944, 5.
[40] "County May Expand Hungerford School," *Orlando Evening Star*, Mar. 22, 1950, 1; "County Will Take Over Negro School," *Orlando Evening Star,* May 10, 1950, 2.
[41] *Eatonville v. Orange County School Board*, Amended Complaint.

as Hungerford High School.[42] Under the school board's administration, significant investments were made in facilities, including new classrooms, a gymnasium, music units, and other improvements throughout the early 1950s.[43] An elementary school was constructed at the south end of the school grounds, and the industrial shops were expanded in the early 1960s.[44]

These projects occurred during a time of "equalization" in public schools. Florida did not have a formalized "equalization" program called such by name like other states in the South did after the landmark school desegregation case *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. However, programs like the 1947 Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) were an attempt to address the "separate but equal" issue in Florida and maintain segregation in public schools.[45] Segregation was not the overt reason used to justify legislative support for upgrading schools, however, as it was fact within Florida that African American schools in particular were in overall poor condition and not maintained or supported as well as White schools. The main argument provided for raising educational standards was to upgrade all schools in Florida.

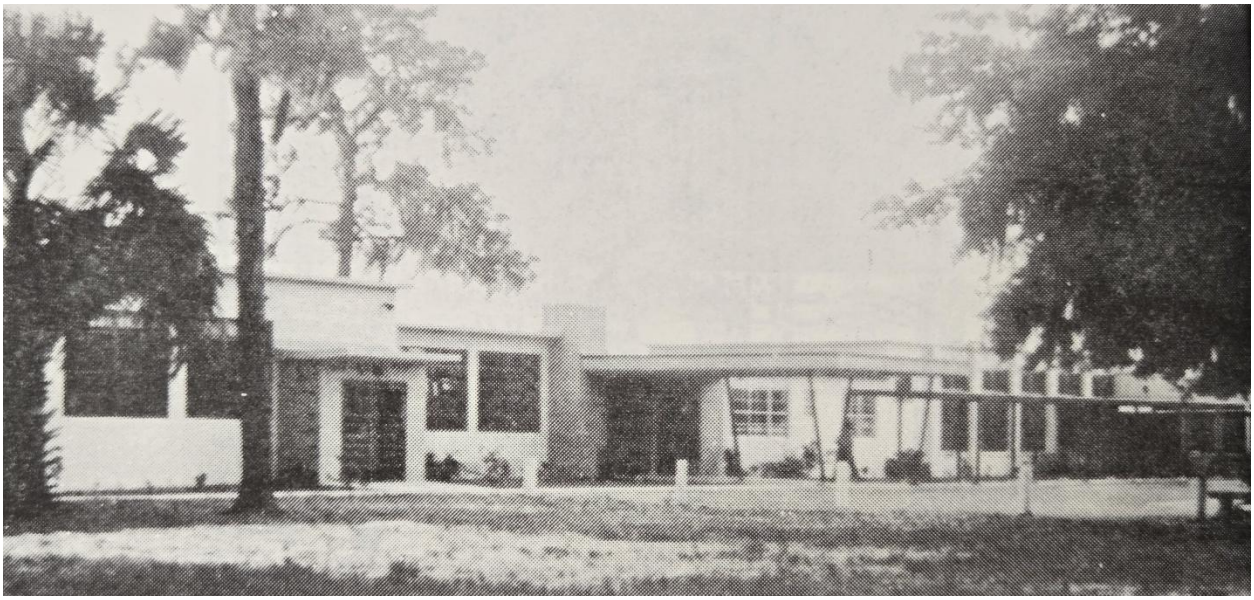

Figure 12. Hungerford High School during the 1950s. | Frank M. Otey

The Minimum Foundation Program as enacted by the state distributed state revenues based on a formula "using automobile license tag sales, value of real estate, railroad and telegraph properties, farm products, and retail sales within a county district." Participation in the MFP required a county school board to publish teachers' salaries, convene school for 180 days, levy at least six mills for schools, and guarantee degree-holding teachers a minimum annual salary

[42] "Negro School Plan Upheld," *Orlando Evening Star*, March 11, 1952, 7; "State Director Takes Stand in Court Here," *Orlando Evening Star*, Feb. 26, 1951, 5.
[43] "Board Awards Contract for School Gym," *Orlando Evening Star*, July 21, 1953, 9; Otey, *Eatonville*, 40-42, 51-53.
[44] Otey, *Eatonville*, 43.
[45] Joseph A. Tomberlin, "Florida and the School Desegregation Issue, 1954-1959: A Summary View," *Journal of Negro Education* 43, no.4 (1972): 457-467.

of $2,550."[46] The MFP also authorized county school boards to issue revenue certificates or bonds to meet the new requirements, and included a provision that guaranteed state financial support relative to certificates or bonds.

Hungerford's identity extended beyond its physical campus through its traditions and student life. School spirit was embodied in elements such as the "Bobcats" mascot and the renowned Marching Lynxes band.[47] At the same time, the school was connected to broader educational and political conversations, including proposals for partnerships with institutions like Bethune-Cookman College, reflecting ongoing efforts to strengthen Black education in Florida.[48] Yet the school's history also intersects with more complicated regional dynamics. For example, in the late 1950s, portions of school board-owned land in Eatonville were considered, and ultimately used, for a landfill serving nearby Winter Park, raising questions about land use decisions and their impact on the town.[49]

By the 1960s, the Parent-Teacher Association of Hungerford advocated to the Orange County School Board to have one-half of proceeds from sale of school board land for I-4 construction returned to Hungerford for improvements. The football field was reconstructed, 500 seat bleachers installed, ticket books, restrooms and modern lighting for field installed. Two tennis courts were built, leveling of wet areas, installing of hardwood floors in the gym, paving College Avenue from elementary school to Kennedy. In 1962, a new library and audio-visual unit were constructed, the cafeteria was enlarged, and six more classrooms were added. [50]

In 1967 during desegregation litigation underway in the county, the Orange County School Board changed the mission and name of the school against resident opposition, dramatically altering the community's relationship to Hungerford after generations.[51] Hungerford no longer would be an academic and vocational school, but would be an alternative school for non-college bound students focusing on vocational training and career education. The school became the Wymore Comprehensive Technical High School. Many local residents chose to send their children to school outside of Eatonville for the first time. Wymore students were bused into Eatonville and left at the end of the day.[52] Most Eatonville residents lost connections with the school.

Any remnants of the historic campus were razed in the 1950s and 60s. The mid-20th century school buildings were demolished in the early 2000s. The School Board closed Wymore in

[46] Sidney Johnston, *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Florida's Historic Black Public Schools* (2003), 46, accessed April 24, 2026 https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm.
[47] "Bobcats Defeat Tigers," *Orlando Sentinel*, Nov. 21, 1960, 5; "Lynxes Start Season Good," *Orlando Sentinel*, Oct. 28, 1957, 8.
[48] "Hungerford School Eyes Bethune College Alliance," *Orlando Sentinel*, Feb. 19, 1950, 7.
[49] "School Board Offers Site for Garbage Dump," *Orlando Sentinel*, Aug. 26, 1958, 2; "2 County Sanitary Landfills Planned," *Orlando Evening Star*, Dec. 16, 1958, 11.
[50] Otey, *Eatonville*, 51-52.
[51] *Eatonville v. Orange County School Board*, Amended Complaint.
[52] Otey, *Eatonville*, 52-53.

1999, but reopened as Hungerford Preparatory High School, which then closed in 2009.[53] Ongoing efforts to redevelop the site are pending. The Orange County School Board attempted transfer of the land to a developer, which fell through in 2023. The Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community sued the school district with the goal of having the land transferred to the Town of Eatonville, but the lawsuit was dismissed in 2025. In early 2026, the School Board sold the land to Dr. Phillips Charities, who intends to build an early learning center, affordable housing, and a museum.[54]

Hungerford's legacy is layered and multifaceted. It represents a long tradition of educational self-determination, regional service, and community pride, while also reflecting broader shifts in public education, resource allocation, and racial dynamics in the mid-twentieth century South. While much has been documented about Hungerford, certain aspects of Hungerford's history, including diverse student experiences, faculty contributions, and the full scope of campus life, remain under documented. Further research drawing on archival records, oral histories, and archaeological investigations would provide a more complete understanding of Hungerford's enduring role in Eatonville's story.

Eatonville Elementary School was created during the tenure of Mayor Augustus Johnson (1928-1932). At that time, Hungerford was for children 10-18 years old and no local school was available for younger children. Eatonville townspeople contributed to the opening of the new elementary school in 1930 at the corner of West and Lime Streets, on land donated by Eatonville resident Matthew Brazell.[55] Felix and Maizie Crosby arrived in 1935 to supervise the elementary school.[56] Early teachers were Pearl Reed and Gertrude Stewart along with nurse Kitty Taylor.[57] Mrs. Marion T. Pope was principal by the early 1950s.[58] Hungerford Elementary School opened in 1956, with a new school building constructed in 1965.[59]

Integration efforts continuing through the 1970s led to the proposed closing of Hungerford Elementary. A significant community effort challenged the closing during the administration of Mayor Nathaniel Vereen. As a result, the school remained open.[60] Today, Hungerford Elementary remains in operation at 230 S. College Avenue in Eatonville.

The establishment of the Eatonville Day Care and Kindergarten reflects the town's long-standing commitment to supporting working families, early childhood education, and community-

[53] *Eatonville v. Orange County School Board*, Amended Complaint.
[54] Danielle Prieur, "Former Hungerford School Property is Sold to Dr. Phillips Charities," *Central Florida Public Media*, January 13, 2026, accessed at https://www.cfpublic.org/education/2026-01-13/former-hungerford-school-property-is-sold-to-dr-phillips-charities.
[55] Otey, *Eatonville*, 29; Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc., *A Walking Tour of Eatonville, Florida*, (Eatonville, FL: PEC Inc., 1999), brochure.
[56] Otey, *Eatonville*, 36.
[57] Otey, *Eatonville*, 36.
[58] "Personals," *Orlando Sentinel*, Nov. 17, 1952, 20.
[59] *Eatonville v. Orange County School Board*, Amended Complaint; "Close Bids Mark School Unit Meet," *Orlando Evening Star*, June 28, 1960, 4.
[60] Otey, *Eatonville*, 55.

based care. Originating in 1954 through the efforts of local women, described in early accounts as the “ladies of Eatonville,” the day nursery was initially housed in the former elementary school building at Hungerford at West and Lime Streets and operated year-round, including during the summer months.[61] In addition to providing daily care, the program incorporated elements of early education, as evidenced by commencement exercises held each May, including ceremonies at Hungerford School.[62] By the mid-twentieth century, the nursery had become an important institution in the town, serving both practical and developmental needs for Eatonville’s youngest residents.

By the 1960s, however, the limitations of the original facility had become increasingly apparent. Reports from 1967 indicate that the building had deteriorated to the point of being condemned, prompting a community-wide effort to secure funding for a new structure. This initiative, known as Project New Hope, mobilized local leadership as well as regional support.[63] Construction on a new Eatonville Day Care and Kindergarten facility began in August 1967 at the corner of West and Lime Streets (140 S. West Street). Groundbreaking ceremonies brought together a range of civic leaders and supporters, including Mayor Nathaniel Vereen, nursery director Mrs. Carrie King, and representatives from neighboring communities such as Mrs. Frank Oliphant of Winter Park, who chaired the nursery’s board. The project also involved architect Donald Hampton, reflecting a level of professional planning and investment in the facility’s design.[64]

The new building was funded through a combination of local contributions and external support, including approximately $4,000 in cash donations and additional in-kind assistance from individuals and businesses in Eatonville, Maitland, and Winter Park. Notably, White women’s organizations in the surrounding region contributed to the project, highlighting a complex dynamic of interracial support within the context of a self-governed Black town.[65] While such contributions were framed as civic partnership, they also point to broader patterns of resource disparities that required Eatonville institutions to seek assistance beyond town boundaries.

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[61] “Women Open Day Nursery,” *Orlando Sentinel*, Oct. 25, 1954, 20.
[62] “Kindergarten to Remain Open,” *Orlando Sentinel*, May 19, 1958, 5.
[63] “Eatonville Nursery Needs Help, *Orlando Evening Star*, May 29, 1967, 16; “Kindergarten Closes Doors, Hopefully Not For Last Time,” *Orlando Evening Star*, June 19, 1967, 28.
[64] "Kindergarten Construction To Begin," *Orlando Evening Star*, August 22, 1967, 24.
[65] “Planning Session For Kindergarten,” *Orlando Evening Star*, August 26, 1963, 13.

Planning Session For Kindergarten

Planning for the Eatonville Kindergarten and Day Nursery, Winter Park, were members of the board with the Orange County consultant for day care, Mrs. E. E. Adams, at the Winter Park Congregational Church. (Left to right, seated) are Mrs. Adams, James Trefry, board president; Mrs. Beulah R. Young, board secretary and teacher at the Hungerford school. Standing, are Mrs. Rosetta Vereen, teacher at Hungerford; Mrs. Delores Rivers, teacher; Mrs. Bernice Johnson, nursery director, and Berry Grant, board member. (Photo by Virginia Loog)

Figure 13. Interracial planning efforts for Eatonville Kindergarten and Day Nursery. | Orlando Evening Star 8/26/1963

More than a childcare facility, the Eatonville Day Care and Kindergarten served as a critical piece of social infrastructure. It provided a safe and structured environment for children of working mothers while also preparing young students for entry into the formal school system. Its location reinforced its connection to Eatonville's broader educational legacy at Hungerford. At the same time, the program's reliance on community initiative underscores the central role of local leadership, particularly women, in identifying needs and creating solutions that sustained family and community life.

Despite its importance, the history of the Eatonville Day Care and Kindergarten remains only partially documented. Existing records highlight key moments such as its founding, expansion, and rebuilding, but provide less detail about daily operations, curriculum, and the experiences of children and families who relied on the program. Further research, including oral histories, institutional records, and photographic archives, would help to more fully capture the impact of this institution within Eatonville's social and educational landscape. Additionally, conflicting information exists about the history of the Eatonville Elementary School, the use of the old school for the Day Care, and the overlap of Eatonville and Hungerford Elementary (or not). More specific study on the timeline of these institutions is warranted.

Cemeteries

The establishment of Eatonville's first cemetery was around 1890 on Eaton Street, near the original location of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church near Eaton and Clark Streets. Land for the cemetery was donated by Sam Moseley, one of Eatonville's pioneers and later mayor, and Mr. Weston, a previous slave holder. Sam Moseley, Joseph Clark, family members of the Bogers, Westons, Lesters, and the Joneses may be buried there. The cemetery was in operation until approximately 1931. Except for one vacant lot, the property has been built upon by contemporary housing.[66] Although neither the cemetery nor the early church structures survive today, their presence reflects the emergence of a fully developed community infrastructure by the end of the nineteenth century. As part of this survey effort, a Florida Master Site File form has been completed and submitted to the Florida Division of Historical Resources for this original cemetery.[67]

Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery is the second cemetery established in the community in the early 1900s. The Eatonville Community Cemetery Association manages the cemetery today. They indicate that while burials took place in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the cemetery was legally established in 1918. The cemetery is located off of Wymore Road just north of Brook Drive, within Maitland city limits, and is about five acres. It is north of Eatonville town limits, in close proximity to I-4 to the west, and is surrounded by development. While some markers remain from the 1920s, the majority of the markers are from the 1960s and after. Headstones vary; vaults, fraternal organizations, professionally made monuments, and vernacular headstones are present. Unmarked burials are also present. The cemetery landscape is typical of vernacular Florida cemeteries, without a formal planting or landscaping scheme present. Vegetation reflects the native Florida landscape of sandy soils and natural flora.[68]

In 2019, a large-scale cleanup and restoration effort occurred at Eatonville Memorial Gardens. This project further demonstrated the presence of unmarked burials, as suspected. As of 2022, there are 2,079 documented grave markers in the cemetery. Because the cemetery is still active and unmarked burials are present, a ground-penetrating radar study was conducted in specific sections of the cemetery. Thirteen potential unmarked graves were identified, and four confirmed gravesites were associated with misplaced markers.[69] An initial Florida Master Site File form was submitted for Eatonville Memorial Gardens in 1998 and included a finding that the site was likely not eligible for National Register nomination. After more research and the GPR study, an updated FMSF was submitted in 2024, but no determination of eligibility for the National Register was made.[70]

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[66] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."
[67] Jenny Wolfe, "OR12445: Old City Cemetery/Eatonville Cemetery," Florida Master Site File form, Florida Division of Historical Resources, Tallahassee, FL, November 13, 2025.
[68] Kimberly Hinder, "OR8405: Eatonville Memorial Gardens," Florida Master Site File, Florida Master Site File form, Florida Division of Historical Resources, Tallahassee, FL, November 2, 1998; Jean Alexander and Caroline Amein, "OR8405: Eatonville Memorial Gardens," Florida Master Site File, Florida Master Site File form, Florida Division of Historical Resources, Tallahassee, FL, November 4, 2024.
[69] Ott, "Ground Penetrating Radar and Public Archaeology at Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery."
[70] Alexander and Amein, "Eatonville Memorial Gardens."

Organizations

In the years following emancipation and throughout the Jim Crow era, civic and social clubs became essential institutions within African American communities, providing spaces for organization, mutual aid, and collective advancement. Excluded from many public and political arenas, Black Americans formed their own networks through fraternal organizations, women's clubs, benevolent societies, and service groups. These organizations supported education, economic development, public health, and civil rights efforts, while also fostering leadership and community cohesion. Particularly through the work of Black women's clubs, these groups advanced a philosophy of racial uplift, emphasizing service, respectability, and self-determination. In this context, civic and social clubs functioned not only as social outlets, but as critical engines of resilience and empowerment in the face of systemic discrimination.

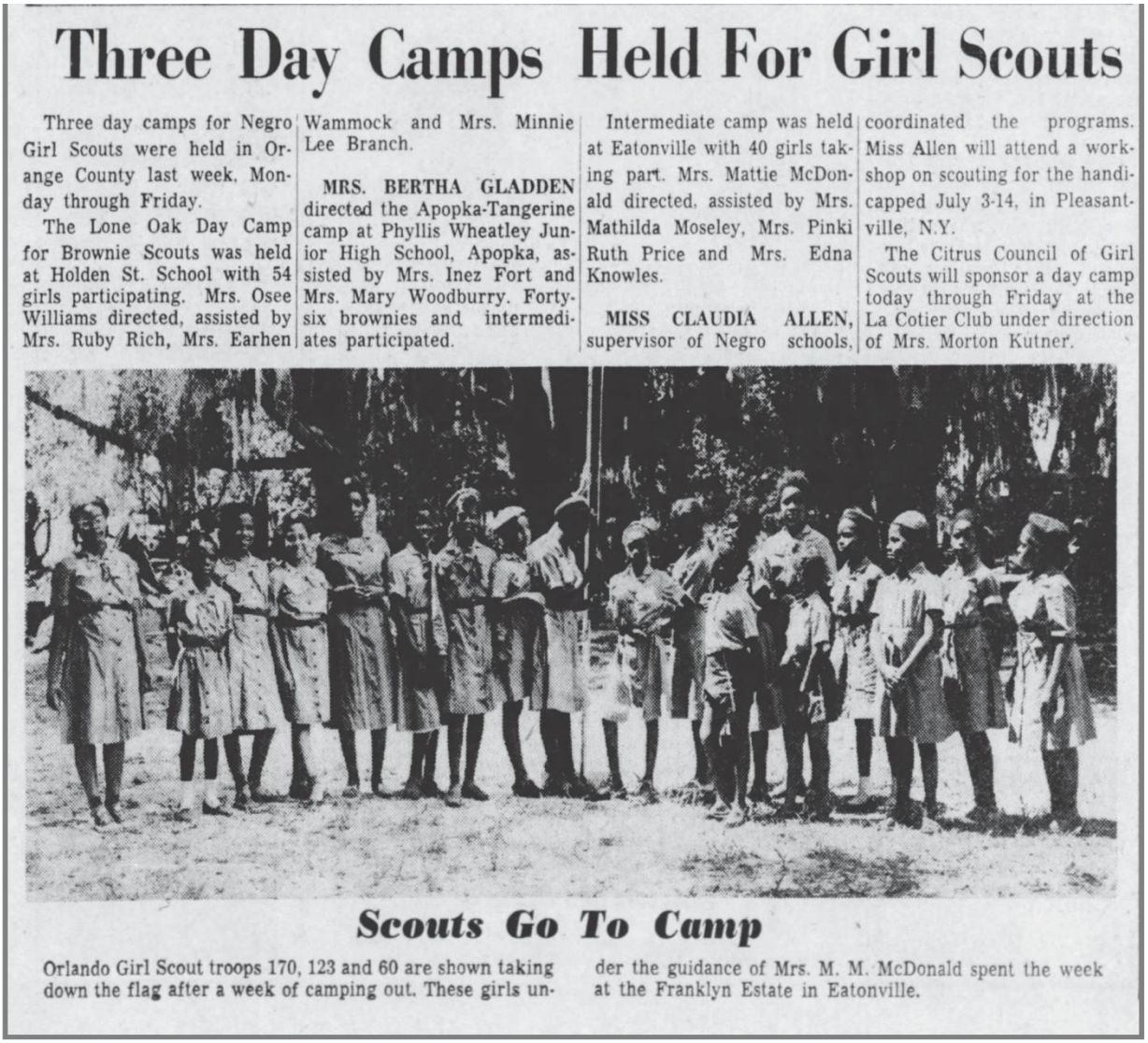
Civic and Social Clubs

Civic and social clubs have long played a vital role in shaping community life in Eatonville, reflecting traditions of mutual aid, leadership development, and collective uplift that were central to Black towns in the early twentieth century. By 1919, Eatonville was already an active participant in regional organizing efforts, hosting a session of the Federation of Women's Clubs of Orange and Seminole Counties. The gathering brought together prominent local and statewide leaders, including Mayor W.B. Braswell, Hungerford Academy president Mrs. R.C. Calhoun, and noted educator and activist Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune. Bethune's address, centered on the theme "Lifting as We Climb," reflected the ethos of Black women's club movements across the South, emphasizing education, service, and collective advancement. The presence of figures such as Mrs. E.J. Colyer of the Order of Calanthe further suggests Eatonville's integration into broader networks of Black fraternal and civic life.[71]

Local club activity continued to expand through the mid-twentieth century, with organizations supporting youth development, recreation, and civic improvement. The Eatonville Woman's Club, located near the south end of Lake Sybelia, provided social space and programming, while youth-focused initiatives such as the Brownie Girl Scout Day Camp, established in 1949 under the leadership of Mrs. Callie Johnson and others, created structured opportunities for young girls.[72] Similarly, Boy Scout camps held on the grounds of Hungerford reinforced the importance of leadership and outdoor education for young men.[73] Civic engagement also extended into everyday life through initiatives like victory gardens, promoted under the leadership of Rev. R.H. Johnson, whose publications, including *The Eatonite*, encouraged

[71] "South Florida Federation," *Jacksonville Journal*, Oct. 2, 1919, 17.
[72] Clyde W. Hall, *An African-American Growing Up on the West Side of Winter Park, Florida 1925-1942* (Savannah, GA: Savannah State University Document Center, 2005), 31; Mary Jane Thomas, "Scout News," *Orlando Evening Star*, September 22, 1949, 15.
[73] "Short Stories," *Orlando Evening Star*, August 3, 1943, 1.

health, home beautification, and responsible citizenship as part of a broader vision for community advancement.[74]



Three Day Camps Held For Girl Scouts

Three day camps for Negro Girl Scouts were held in Orange County last week, Monday through Friday.

The Lone Oak Day Camp for Brownie Scouts was held at Holden St. School with 54 girls participating. Mrs. Osee Williams directed, assisted by Mrs. Ruby Rich, Mrs. Earhen Wammock and Mrs. Minnie Lee Branch.

MRS. BERTHA GLADDEN directed the Apopka-Tangerine camp at Phyllis Wheatley Junior High School, Apopka, assisted by Mrs. Inez Fort and Mrs. Mary Woodburry. Forty-six brownies and intermediates participated.

Intermediate camp was held at Eatonville with 40 girls taking part. Mrs. Mattie McDonald directed, assisted by Mrs. Mathilda Moseley, Mrs. Pinki Ruth Price and Mrs. Edna Knowles.

MISS CLAUDIA ALLEN, supervisor of Negro schools, coordinated the programs. Miss Allen will attend a workshop on scouting for the handicapped July 3-14, in Pleasantville, N.Y.

The Citrus Council of Girl Scouts will sponsor a day camp today through Friday at the La Cotier Club under direction of Mrs. Morton Kutner.

Scouts Go To Camp

Orlando Girl Scout troops 170, 123 and 60 are shown taking down the flag after a week of camping out. These girls under the guidance of Mrs. M. M. McDonald spent the week at the Franklyn Estate in Eatonville.

Figure 14. Girl Scouts at Eatonville. | Orlando Sentinel 6/24/1957

By the 1950s and 1960s, Eatonville's civic culture included both formal organizations and more informal social clubs that reflected changing community needs. A teenage club formed in 1953 points to efforts to create safe social spaces for youth, while the Eatonville Cemetery Association, meeting at St. Lawrence AME Church, illustrates the role of collective stewardship

[74] "Short Stories" *Orlando Evening Star*, Feb. 1, 1944, 1; "Doing a Good Work," *Orlando Evening Star*, November 3, 1943, 4;"Short Stories," *Orlando Evening Star*, November 5, 1943, 10; "Short Stories," *Orlando Evening Star*, November 11, 1942, 2; "Sound Advice," *Orlando Evening Star*, February 7, 1947, 4.

and shared responsibility for community spaces.[75] Groups such as the Better Eatonville Club worked in partnership with municipal leadership, contributing to civic improvements like furnishing new administrative offices.[76] Community traditions also evolved to include celebratory and cultural events, such as the establishment of the Miss Eatonville contest in 1967, which likely served as both a social highlight and a way to reinforce identity in the community.[77]

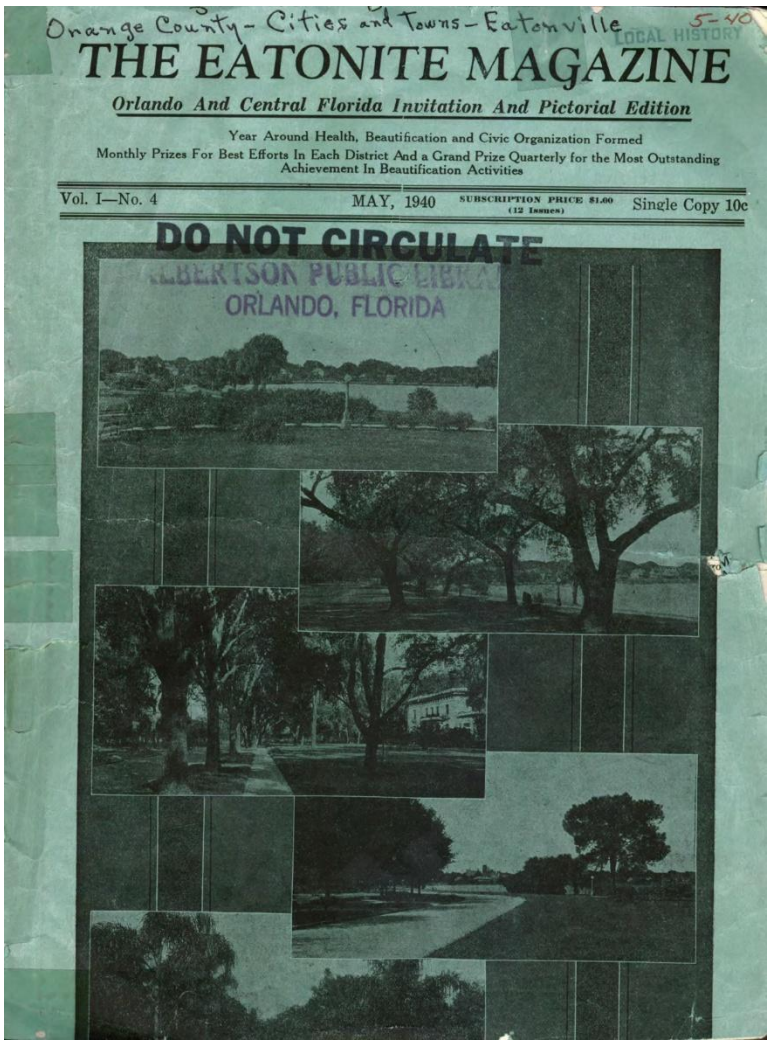


Figure 15. Cover of The Eatonite Magazine, May 1940. | University of Central Florida

While these examples demonstrate the breadth of civic and social life in Eatonville during the 20th century, this history remains incomplete. Many organizations, particularly smaller clubs, informal groups, women's leadership networks, and local activities of the Divine 9 (historically African American fraternities and sororities), are only briefly referenced in available sources. Additional research, including oral histories, church records, newspapers, and personal

[75] "Eatonville News," *Orlando Sentinel*, March 2, 1953, 24; "Eatonville," *Orlando Sentinel*, April 12, 1954, 24.
[76] "Personal Items: Eatonville," *Orlando Sentinel*, Dec. 15, 1952, 20.
[77] "Miss Eatonville Contest Scheduled," *Orlando Evening Star*, June 21, 1967, 39.

archives, is needed to more fully document the scope, impact, and membership of Eatonville's civic and social clubs and to better understand how these groups sustained community life across generations.

As a more recent example of civic organization,the Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community (PEC) was founded in 1987 by a group of dedicated residents and cultural advocates committed to protecting and promoting Eatonville's unique Black heritage. Among its founders were community leaders such as Dr. N. Y. Nathiri, who played a central role in shaping the organization's vision and long-term impact. Established at a time when Eatonville faced increasing development pressures and the risk of cultural erasure, PEC emerged as a grassroots effort to safeguard the town's historic identity, particularly its significance as one of the first self-governing Black municipalities in the United States and as the hometown of writer Zora Neale Hurston. Since its founding, PEC has led a wide range of initiatives, including historic preservation advocacy, cultural programming, and heritage tourism development. Its most visible contribution is the annual Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts and Humanities (ZORA! Festival), which has become a nationally recognized celebration of Black arts, history, and culture. Through its ongoing work, PEC has played a critical role in elevating Eatonville's national profile while reinforcing community pride and continuity.[78]

Fraternal Organizations

Fraternal organizations have long played a vital role in African American community life, functioning as self-selected brotherhoods and sisterhoods that provide mutual aid, uphold shared rituals, and engage in civic and community service. Alongside churches, these groups historically served as dominant institutions within Black communities, particularly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Reconstruction came to an end and Jim Crow segregation intensified, African American fraternal organizations expanded in number and influence, offering critical spaces for support and advancement in the face of systemic exclusion. While some operated as parallel institutions to White fraternal orders that excluded Black members, such as the Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, and Elks, others were uniquely Black-founded and operated.

Across both types, these organizations contributed to community life through public events, educational support, and civic engagement, while also fostering leadership development through structured roles and governance. Importantly, they provided financial, social, and emotional support to members, encouraging entrepreneurship, employing community members, and building substantial economic power; by the early 1920s, African American fraternal organizations collectively counted millions of members and held significant assets in properties such as lodges, banks, hospitals, and social welfare institutions. Fraternal organizations were often divided by gender. Most male fraternal organizations had female auxiliary groups; for

[78] Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc., accessed April 24, 2026, https://preserveeatonville.org/.

example, the Masons had the Order of the Eastern Star and the Elks had the Daughters of Elks.[79]

Early Eatonville history indicates the existence of the Oddfellows Hall, where the original 27 founders met. Additional references mention Prince Hall Masonic Lodge AF & AM and Lake Hall Lodge No. 33 F&AM. Lake Hall, associated with the Prince Hall Masons, is located in Winter Park.[80] Due to Eatonville's small and primarily rural nature for the late 1800s and first half of the 20th century, it is possible that Eatonville residents who joined fraternal organizations attended lodges in nearby Winter Park, Maitland, or Orlando.

While fraternal organizations for men and women clearly played a significant role in African American community life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their specific history and impact within Eatonville remain underdocumented. Existing records suggest the likely presence of lodges and related activities, but there is a need for more focused research to identify which organizations were active, where they met, and how they shaped civic, social, and economic life in the town. Further study drawing on archival materials, oral histories, and local memory could help illuminate the leadership networks, mutual aid systems, and community-building efforts associated with these groups, contributing to a more complete understanding of Eatonville's institutional history.

Civil Rights

The history of civil rights in Eatonville presents a complex and understudied dimension of both local and regional struggles for equality, warranting further research and documentation. As one of the nation's earliest self-governing Black municipalities, Eatonville occupied a unique position during the Civil Rights Movement, operating within a broader system of segregation while maintaining local political autonomy. This distinction shaped how civil rights issues manifested in the town. For example, while Eatonville residents had greater control over municipal governance and public space, key areas such as education remained under the authority of the Orange County School Board, making school desegregation a significant and externally driven issue for the community.

Eatonville's status as a Black-led town complicates traditional civil rights narratives. Archival sources indicate that in the 1970s, the town faced legal challenges from White individuals alleging discrimination, reflecting a reversal of the more typical patterns seen across the South.[81] Yet incidents such as a reported cross burning in July 1964 further underscore that, despite its autonomy, Eatonville was not insulated from the racial tensions and acts of intimidation occurring throughout the region.

[79] Adrienne Burke, *Designation Report: Liberty City Elks Lodge* (Miami-Dade County, FL: Prepared for Miami-Dade County Office of Historic Preservation, 2021).
[80] Most Worshipful Union Grand Lodge of Florida, accessed April 24, 2026, https://mwuglflorida.org/zone2.htm.
[81] Judy Doyle, "Racism Charges Hurled at Eatonville," *Orlando Sentinel*, February 9, 1975, 161.

Eatonville's status as an independent Black municipality also did not fully shield it from external political pressures rooted in White paternalism and control. This dynamic is evident in the controversy surrounding Sunday liquor sales in the 1950s. In 1955, Orange County officials threatened to revoke Eatonville's charter over concerns about alcohol sales, reflecting broader efforts to regulate and exert authority over the town's autonomy.[82] White leaders were mostly concerned about White people going to Eatonville for liquor on Sundays, in particular, young White women, sparking fears about racial mixing among Black men and White women. In response, Eatonville's council initially banned Sunday liquor sales, but within a few months reversed course, allowing taverns to reopen on Sundays with extended hours until 4 a.m.[83] These decisions sparked local tensions, as increased regional traffic brought large crowds into town, creating congestion and disrupting Sunday churchgoing.[84] This episode illustrates the complicated balance Eatonville navigated, asserting self-governance while responding to outside pressure and coercion from White officials and addressing internal community concerns.


The Weather

ORLANDO EVENING STAR

FINAL EDITION

VOL. 79—NO. 269. ORLANDO, FLORIDA, THURSDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 3, 1955 Tele. 3-4411—Classified Only 3-8511 Price: 5 Cts. FORTY-FOUR PAGES

Sunday Liquor Sales Face Eatonville Ban

Figure 16. Headline regarding Eatonville's Sunday liquor sales. | Orlando Evening Star 3/3/1955

Civil rights advocacy in Eatonville was also connected to broader county and regional efforts, as the town appears to have fallen under the jurisdiction of the Orange County branch of the NAACP, chartered in 1942, rather than maintaining its own local chapter.[85] Similarly, later institutions such as the Central Florida Urban League, established in the late 1970s, contributed to advancing civil rights and economic opportunity in the wider region.[86]

Taken together, Eatonville offers a distinctive case for understanding civil rights within the context of Black self-governance, one in which power, resistance, and vulnerability intersected in unique ways. Additional research, particularly drawing on local archives, newspapers, and oral histories, is needed to more fully document how residents navigated civil rights challenges, engaged with regional movements, and defined justice within their own municipal framework.

[82] "Sunday Booze Puts Eatonville In Peril As Corporate Town," *Orlando Sentinel*, February 16, 1955, 1.
[83] "Eatonville Councilmen Ban Sunday Liquor Sales," *Orlando Sentinel*, Mar. 14, 1955, 22; "Eatonville Taverns Sell Sunday Liquor," *Orlando Evening Star*, July 7, 1955, 15.
[84] "A Big Price," *Orlando Evening Star*, September 17, 1954, 6.
[85] Orange County Branch NAACP, accessed April 24, 2026, https://orangecountynaacp.org/about.
[86] Central Florida Urban League, accessed April 24, 2026, https://www.cful.org/about_cful.

Civic Leadership & Infrastructure

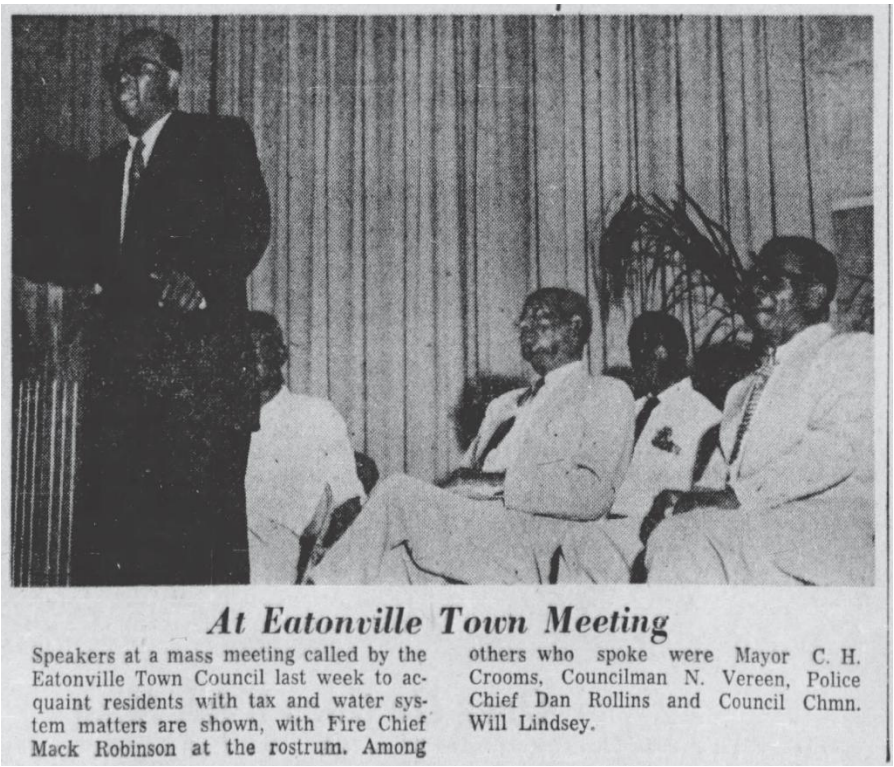
Mayors and Civic Leaders

Leadership in Eatonville has long reflected the town's commitment to self-governance, civic responsibility, and community stewardship. As one of the first incorporated Black municipalities in the United States, Eatonville's early leadership set an important precedent. Columbus H. Boger, recognized as the town's first mayor, helped establish a foundation for local governance that would be carried forward by successive leaders. In the early twentieth century, mayors such as Joseph Clark (1900–1912) and John Hurston (1912–1916) guided the town through periods of growth and transition, followed by leaders including Matthew Brazell, Sam Mosley, and Hirum Lester.[87] Lester, who came to Eatonville as a child in 1891, exemplified the deep civic commitment common among local leaders, serving not only as mayor but also as a trustee and Sunday School superintendent at St. Lawrence AME Church and later as the town's final postmaster.[88]

Throughout the mid-twentieth century, Eatonville's leadership remained closely tied to both governance and community life. Figures such as Howard Miller, who served two nonconsecutive terms, and Augustus Johnson contributed to municipal continuity during the interwar and Depression-era years. The long tenure of Mayor Columbus Crooms, who served from 1938 to 1963 and was a direct descendant of Mayor Boger, reflects both political stability and the importance of family legacy in local leadership.[89] His successor, Nathaniel Vereen (1963–1978), led during a period shaped by the Civil Rights Movement and broader social change.[90] Vereen was followed by Abraham Gordon and B.L. Perry, Sr., whose influence extended beyond local office, as evidenced by regional recognitions such as a building named in Perry's honor at Florida A&M University.

Continued on next page…

[87] Otey, *Eatonville*, 16-17.
[88] "Eatonville Ex-Mayor Dies at 76," *Orlando Sentinel*, November 25, 1957, 3.
[89] "City Readies Water Works," *Orlando Sentinel*, December 5, 1955, 10.
[90] "Six Seeking Offices in Eatonville Election," *Orlando Sentinel*, March 5, 1970, 66.



At Eatonville Town Meeting

Speakers at a mass meeting called by the Eatonville Town Council last week to acquaint residents with tax and water system matters are shown, with Fire Chief Mack Robinson at the rostrum. Among others who spoke were Mayor C. H. Crooms, Councilman N. Vereen, Police Chief Dan Rollins and Council Chmn. Will Lindsey.

Figure 17. Town Meeting with Mayor C.H. Crooms, Councilmen Nathaniel Vereen and Will Lindsey, Fire Chief Mack Robinson, and Police Chief Dan Rollins. | Orlando Evening Star 10/1/1956

Eatonville's civic leadership has extended well beyond the mayor's office, encompassing a wide network of individuals who contributed to the town's administration, communication, and community-building efforts. Women in particular played key roles in municipal operations and civic life. Geraldine J. Otey was the first woman to serve on the town council; she was a language teacher and guidance counselor at Hungerford.[91] Catherine Clark Alexander served as both postmaster and town clerk, while Ruby Thomas and Vera King continued this legacy in the 1970s through their work in local government administration. Other civic figures, including Matilda Clark Mosley, James Steel, Sam Weston, and Berry Grant, contributed to Eatonville's social and political fabric in ways that underscore the collaborative nature of leadership in the town.[92] Sunday school leaders like Mrs. Marge Wood among many others were spiritual leaders.[93] Educators like Frank Otey, the Crosby's, and others shaped generations of future leaders.

Organized civic efforts also expanded in the mid-twentieth century, reflecting both local initiative and broader movements for Black economic and political empowerment. The formation of a Negro Chamber of Commerce in 1957 signaled a focus on business development and

[91] Otey, *Eatonville*, 45.
[92] Otey, *Eatonville*, 22, 24, 25, 37.
[93] Otey, *Eatonville*, 15.

community advocacy, later extending into media outreach through a radio program begun in 1967.[94] Groups such as the Eatonville Citywide Civic Club and AMVETS Post #18, established in 1967, provided additional platforms for civic engagement, leadership, and service, particularly among veterans and community advocates.[95]

By the late twentieth century, grassroots leadership and community activism became increasingly visible, particularly through the work of women and youth advocates. The Concerned Parents of Eatonville Youth (CPEY), founded by Mrs. Earlene Watkins, exemplifies this shift.[96] Through educational programming, mentorship, and community organizing, CPEY created critical spaces for youth development and cultural education. In 1972, Watkins also broke new ground politically as the first Black woman to run for mayor in Eatonville since its incorporation.[97] Although she was not elected mayor, her subsequent service as a councilperson reflects the expanding role of women in local governance. Her founding of the Miss Eatonville Scholarship Pageant in 1971 further illustrates how civic leadership often blended cultural celebration with educational opportunity.

Figure 18. Earlene Watkins, right, first woman to run for Eatonville Mayor, with Mike Figueroa and Vernon Johnson at CPEY Headquarters. | Orlando Sentinel 2/2/1972

While this overview highlights key figures and institutions, the history of leadership in Eatonville is not yet fully documented. Many contributors to the town's civic life, particularly women, grassroots organizers, and behind-the-scenes administrators, remain underrepresented in

[94] "Eatonville Forms Negro CofC," *Orlando Sentinel*, July 29, 1957, 3; "Eatonville CofC Now Has Radio Show," *Orlando Evening Star*, March 6, 1967, 23.
[95] "Eatonville Benefit Slated," *Orlando Evening Star*, November 16, 1960, 4; "The Amvets Post #18 of Eatonville, FL," *Orlando Evening Star*, March 2, 1967, 43.
[96] "Establishment-New Breed Political Battle Brews," *Orlando Evening Star*, February 23, 1972, 1.
[97] "She Got Involved –She's Running for Mayor," *Orlando Sentinel*, February 2, 1972, 38.

existing records. Additional research, including archival work, oral histories, and further examination of local newspapers and municipal documents, is needed to more fully understand the breadth and impact of Eatonville's civic leadership across generations.

Civic Infrastructure

The development of civic infrastructure in Eatonville reflects both the opportunities and constraints of a small, self-governed Black municipality navigating the twentieth century. Early town administration laid the groundwork for essential services, though much of Eatonville's infrastructure remained limited well into the mid-20th century.[98] Basic systems such as roads, water, and public safety were gradually developed over time, often requiring significant local advocacy and external support. Apopka Road was a small country lane, sandy footpaths wove among properties, and internal roadways were not paved, reflecting the rural landscape of the area.[99] In 1928, Apopka Road was graveled, and two lanes created with sand shoulders.[100] Prior to the establishment of its own facilities, Eatonville relied on neighboring jurisdictions such as Orange County and Winter Park for services like fire protection, underscoring both the town's rural character and the uneven distribution of resources.

Significant advancements in infrastructure began under the long tenure of Mayor Columbus Crooms (1938–1963), during which the town made strides in installing street lighting and developing a municipal water system.[101] The 1950s marked a turning point in Eatonville taking on its own municipal infrastructure, with the construction of Eatonville's first fire station in 1955 and the groundbreaking of a bond-funded waterworks system the same year.[102] These improvements were accompanied by efforts to modernize the town's physical layout, including street name changes around 1956 and property assessments in the early 1960s aimed at supporting street improvements.[103] Despite these gains, infrastructure gaps remained evident. In 1961, Mayor Crooms publicly raised concerns about the lack of sidewalks, warning that schoolchildren faced unsafe conditions traveling to and from school, particularly as nearby highway projects increased traffic in and around the town.[104]

Continued on next page…

[98] Otey, *Eatonville*, 28-29.
[99] Ott, "Ground Penetrating Radar and Public Archaeology at Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery," 37.
[100] PEC, *A Walking Tour of Eatonville*.
[101] Otey, *Eatonville*, 39.
[102] "City Readies Water Works," *Orlando Sentinel*, December 5, 1955, 10.
[103] "Complaints Heard On Street Names," *Orlando Sentinel*, January 23, 1956, 3; "Notice of Assessments Against Property for Street Improvements," *Orlando Evening Star*, January 25, 1962, 21.
[104] "Hubbard Awarded Contract for New Bridge On 33d St.," *Orlando Evening Star*, June 6, 1961, 6.

Figure 19. The Eatonville Town Hall was located at 332 East Kennedy Boulevard during the 1950s. | Town of Eatonville

Municipal services continued to expand in the postwar period, though often incrementally. Public transit options, for example, remained limited, with only minimal bus service provided by the Orlando Transit Company in the 1940s.[105] By 1969, the town maintained a small but fully staffed municipal workforce, including a police department, water and sanitation employees, and administrative personnel, all of whom were Black, reflecting Eatonville's identity as a self-governed Black community. Efforts to secure federal funding, including applications for HUD support for a sewer system in the late 1960s, illustrate the town's attempts to address longstanding infrastructure needs through new funding streams made available during this era.[106]

The late 1960s and 1970s were a period of administrative growth and planning, as Eatonville adopted a new town charter in 1967 and began pursuing more formalized approaches to development.[107] Under the leadership of Mayor Nathaniel Vereen and staff such as Jim Reed, the town advanced a comprehensive plan, oversaw federally funded sewer improvements, and identified future priorities including a community center, library, and fully paved streets.[108] Civic identity was also reinforced through symbolic and practical measures, such as the adoption of an official town emblem in 1969 and efforts to establish consistent mailing addresses for

[105] Advertisement, "Orlando Transit Company," *Orlando Sentinel*, January 10, 1943, 4.
[106] "Eatonville Seeking U.S. Aid," *Orlando Evening Star*, May 10, 1968, 30.
[107] "Eatonville Charter Adopted," *Orlando Sentinel*, August 13, 1967, 21.
[108] "Jim Reed Molds Eatonville's Awakening," *Orlando Sentinel*, May 21, 1972, 55.

residents, many of whom had previously relied on nearby cities for postal designation.[109] The establishment of a local post office branch in 1959, later relocated to a dedicated building in 1974, was a key step in this process, even as it functioned as a contract station without full carrier service.[110]

Jim Reed Molds Eatonville's Awakening

Eatonville is awakening.

The small basically one-street community is carving itself a new image after years of only being known as all-black, the home of pro football great David "Deacon" Jones and a place where beer is sold on Sunday.

THE MAN shouldering much of the responsibility of molding Eatonville's future is 26-year-old Jim Reed, who was named as administrative assistant to the mayor this past week.

Prior to his new appointment, Reed had been serving the town as

See Editorial Page 2

city planner at no fixed salary with the town council "footing" some of his expenses.

But now at a salary of "about $10,000" yearly, Reed is ready to push Eatonville forward as Mayor Nathaniel Vereen's right-hand man.

UNDER REED'S guidance a $14,000 comprehensive plan has already been approved for the one-square mile community and work has already started on a $442,950.65 completely federally funded sewer project for the entire city.

Future projects include a large community center, a library, recreational facilities including a swimming pool and the paving of all the city's streets.

It's an ambitious program. But Reed is confident it can be achieved.

REED FORMERLY worked for the tri-county planning commission before its merger with the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council and is completely familiar with various federal programs through which Eatonville can get funds.

And federal and state funds is going to be the key to Eatonville's growth.

When Eatonville applied for funding for the comprehensive plan, which will begin in July, it was given number one priority in the state over more than 30 other municipalities by the State Department of Community Affairs.

ALL OF Eatonville's projects are funded through the state agency rather than U. S. Housing and Urban Development since the town has a population less than 25,000.

THE REST OF the sewer work is being done by Derrico Construction Co. of Melbourne.

STREETS DUG UP IN EATONVILLE
... As sewer lines are installed

Reed, who forecasts upcoming growth for his city with the completion of the Interstate-4 and Maitland Boulevard interchange just north of the city limits.

Reed said the city also needs a subdivision ordinance and some guidelines on population density.

BUT REED IS particularly enthusiastic about plans for a community service center, which will be developed in a three phase program.

Reed says the city hopes to get funds for the project through the Legacy of Parks Program and the Neighborhood and Facilities Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The city official is confident federal funds can be obtained for the building if Eatonville can supply the land.

REED SAYS HE is now checking to see if some persons would be interested in donating land for the project.

Part of the community center will hopefully be a library named after black author Zora Neale Hurston who lived in the small community.

JIM REED KEEPS WATCH ON SEWER PROJECT
... Eatonville moving forward into new era

DITCHES READY FOR PIPE
... Over 6,000 feet of sewer lines already in

Zoning Revisions Given Approval

By ROSEMARY SIMMS
Staff Writer

The Maitland Planning and Zoning Commission this past week gave its

structures cropping up in the city.

The council, prior to the joint gathering, had passed an emergency ordinance declaring a 10 day moratorium to prevent permits from

Figure 20. Staff member Jim Reed was instrumental in overseeing town infrastructure projects. | Orlando Sentinel 5/21/1972

At the same time, Eatonville grappled with the challenges of growth and limited capacity. Efforts to establish a Planning and Zoning Board in the 1970s highlight both the town's aspirations and the difficulties of sustaining professional planning infrastructure, particularly in the absence of dedicated staff and ongoing infrastructure needs.[111] As of 1977, all roads in Eatonville were still dirt, with the exception of Kennedy Avenue. With the aid of a federal Economic Development Administration Grant, street paving finally began along with sidewalks and drainage improvements.[112] Basic community facilities were often modest; for example, the town's early

[109] "Eatonville Okays Emblem for City," *Orlando Evening Star*, October 17, 1969, 30; "Non-City Addresses to Cost Eatonville," *Orlando Evening Star*, October 18, 1972, 3.
[110] "Eatonville Gets Post Office," *Orlando Evening Star*, March 19, 1959, 5. "Town Post Office Housed in Building Owned by Mayor," *Orlando Sentinel*, March 14, 1974, 5.
[111] "Planners Welcome in Eatonville," *Orlando Sentinel*, June 22, 1975, 74.
[112] Mary R. Heffron, "Eatonville: Nation's Oldest Black Community Begins 95th Year in Progressive Spirit," *Orlando Sentinel*, August 31, 1977, 130.

library operated out of a small room in the fire station due to a lack of available space.[113] Concerns about housing conditions also emerged during this period, leading to the hiring of a housing counselor and inspector by 1980 to address substandard housing issues.[114] That same year, Eatonville implemented formal address numbering and invested in water treatment and sewer system improvements, signaling continued progress toward modern infrastructure systems.[115]

The history of Eatonville's civic infrastructure remains only partially documented. Existing records tend to emphasize major projects and administrative milestones, while offering less detail on administrators and staff, everyday maintenance, community experiences, and the uneven impacts of infrastructure development. Further research would provide a more complete understanding of how residents experienced and shaped the town's civic infrastructure and built environment over time.

Parks and Recreation

Recreation and leisure have long played an important role in the social and cultural life of Eatonville, reflecting the community's broader commitment to quality of life, youth development, and collective well-being. From approximately 1920-1940, there was the "Old Ball Field" located diagonally across from the Old City Cemetery.[116] In the mid-twentieth century, local leaders formalized recreation planning through the establishment of the Eatonville Recreation Council in 1959, signaling a growing investment in organized recreational programming.[117]

Early recreation initiatives included Little League baseball teams, summer recreation programs, and access to facilities like the Hungerford School gymtorium, which was opened to local children during the summer months.[118] The town also collaborated with the Orange County School Board to support youth programming, including hiring coaches such as Calvin Lang and Nate James to lead summer activities.[119] During this period, recreational opportunities extended beyond structured programs to include community spaces like the Idle-A-While Golf and Country Club, which featured a clubhouse and course in Eatonville.[120] The location of Idle-A-While is not immediately apparent from aerial photographs or city directories, but suspected to be outside the survey area for this project.

[113] "Eatonville Library Growing Too Big For Its Quarters," *Orlando Sentinel*, August 10, 1973, 29.
[114] Advertisement for Housing Counselor and Housing Inspector I, *Orlando Sentinel*, November 17, 1980, 43.
[115] "Numbers Game Gets Confusing in Eatonville," *Orlando Sentinel*, November 23, 1980, 84; "Advertisement for Bids Town of Eatonville," *Orlando Sentinel*, November 14, 1980, 146.
[116] Wolfe, *Old City Cemetery*.
[117] "Eatonville Council's Dream Comes True," *Orlando Sentinel*, July 27, 1959, 4.
[118] "Eatonville News," *Orlando Sentinel*, July 23, 1956, 8; "Eatonville's Little Leaguers," *Orlando Sentinel*, July 27, 1959, 5.
[119] "Fun Program a Good Deed," *Orlando Sentinel*, July 28, 1974, 100.
[120] "Golf Club Launches Membership Drive," *Orlando Sentinel*, January 26, 1959, 3.

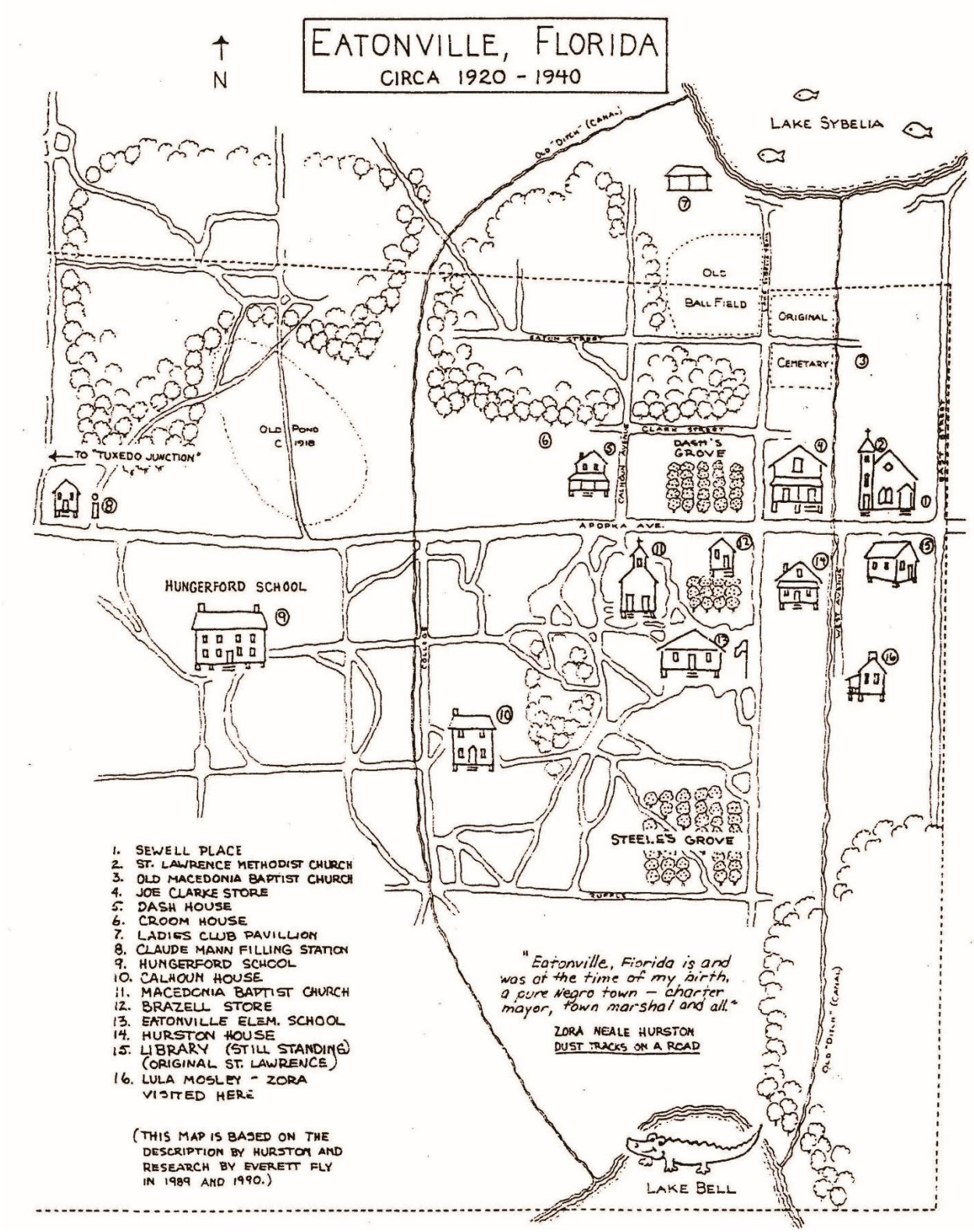


Figure 21. A map based on the circa 1920 to 1940 description of Eatonville by Zora Neale Hurston and research by Everett Fly. | 1998 Eatonville National Register Nomination Report

Natural resources also played a central role in Eatonville's recreational landscape. Lakes such as Sybelia and Bell were not only vital for domestic uses, but also served as important sites for leisure and social gathering. Residents regularly used these waterways for fishing, boating, and picnicking, with nearby Fish Lake providing additional opportunities for outdoor recreation.[121] The Eatonville Woman's Club, located along Lake Sybelia, became a particularly significant site, offering a popular and accessible spot for swimming for African Americans during an era of segregation when such activities were often restricted elsewhere.[122]

Beginning in the 1960s and continuing through the late twentieth century, Eatonville focused its plans for investment in recreational and community facilities. By the 1970s, the construction of tennis courts and community pool further enhanced local recreational offerings, while the development of neighborhood parks, such as Elizabeth Park and later Catalina-Frances Jerry Park, created accessible green spaces for residents.

Denton Johnson, Sr.came to Eatonville from Detroit around 1966 and became a well-respected tennis instructor. At least 21 students he coached received college scholarships for tennis and he was known nationally for his coaching. He was motivated to begin coaching tennis in Eatonville after seeing a lack of formal sports programs and observed that "[a]ll the kids had to do was race up and down the dirt roads for fun."[123] At the time, Eatonville had one tennis court and he started a program with 51 children. Two of Johnson's students, Tina McCall and Shari Ware, as well as his son Robert, were ranked state and national players in the early 1970's.[124] Community members noted during project outreach that Ms. McCall and Ms. Ware themselves later ran a tennis program for children in Eatonville and are important community members.[125]

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[121] Herb Mosher, "Fish Tales," *Orlando Sentinel*, February 9, 1941, 9.
[122] Hall, *Winter Park,* 31.
[123] Ellen Stone, "Johnson, 72, Still Coaching Eatonville's Young Tennis Fans," *Orlando Sentinel*, March 6, 1973, 36.
[124] "Success in Tennis Requires Work," *Orlando Sentinel*, July 11, 1973, 17.
[125] Public comment, Eatonville Community Meeting: Enriching Eatonville's History, Eatonville, FL, October 7, 2025.

Figure 22. Denton Johnson, left, coached students like Tina McCall and Shari Ware, right, to champion-level status in tennis. | Orlando Sentinel 3/6/1973

The community pool on West Street, opened in 1977 with a week of celebratory activities including a sermon by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr., became a focal point for youth and family activities.[126] The community pool and tennis court were located in the general area of the original Eatonville Elementary School.[127] Eatonville's community dedication to recreation was demonstrated as it was estimated almost 80% of Eatonville was involved in fundraising and promotion for the pool; pool craftsmen living in Eatonville and Tropicana Pools donated pro bono assistance.

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[126] Mary R. Heffron, "Community Effort," *Orlando Sentinel*, June 5, 1977, 35.
[127] PEC, *A Walking Tour of Eatonville*.

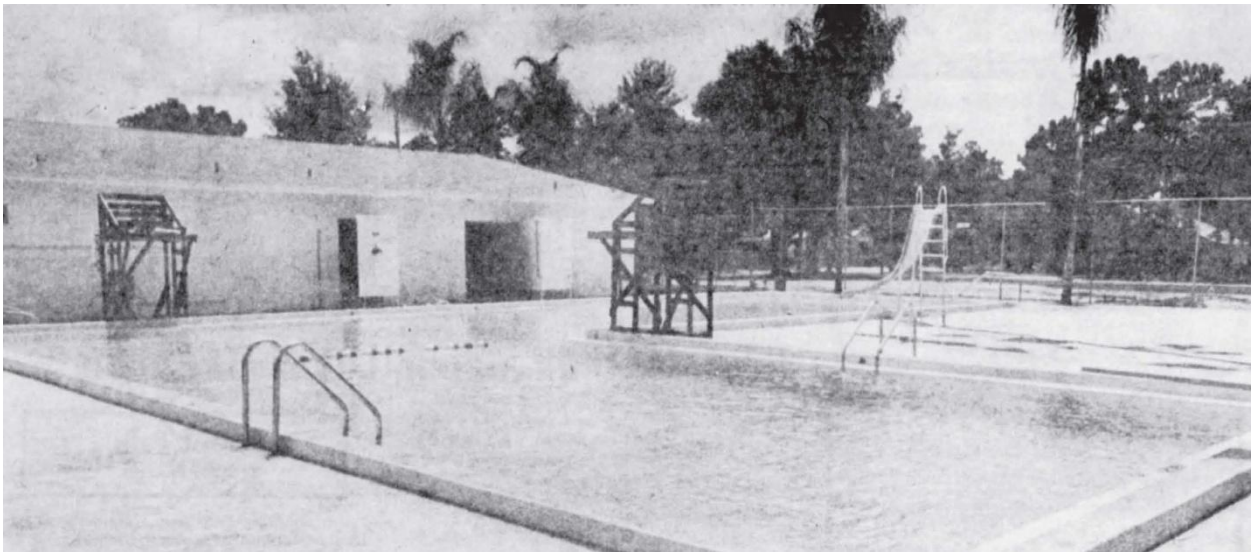


Figure 23. A photograph of the Eatonville Community Pool. | Orlando Sentinel 8/31/1977

A major milestone in the town's recreation facilities came in the early 1980s, when the town acquired approximately 17 acres of land from the Orange County School Board to support the development of expanded recreational facilities. This investment culminated in the construction of the Denton Johnson Community Center in 1984, named in honor of Coach Johnson, who also served as Eatonville's first recreation director. The center provided a dedicated space for cultural events, community gatherings, and recreational programming, reinforcing Eatonville's long-standing tradition of integrating leisure, community service, and civic life. Together, these spaces and programs illustrate how recreation in Eatonville has functioned not only as a source of enjoyment, but as a key component of community identity, intergenerational connection, and local investment.[128]

Construction of I-4

Although not municipal infrastructure initiated or controlled by the Town of Eatonville, mid-20th-century county and state projects had a profound and lasting impact on the community, forever reshaping its physical landscape. By the late 1950s, regional land-use decisions increasingly reflected broader county and municipal priorities, often at Eatonville's expense. In 1958, the Orange County School Board approved the use of up to 40 acres of its land in Eatonville as a sanitary landfill to serve the City of Winter Park. Located in a low-lying, swampy area west of Wymore Road and south of Hungerford School, the site was presented by county officials as a practical solution to waste management challenges.[129] Under health department supervision, refuse would be buried as it was deposited, with the long-term goal of converting the land into usable space for school-related purposes such as playgrounds. While framed as mutually beneficial, the decision reflects a broader pattern in which land within Eatonville, an independent

[128] Jonathan Susskind, "Work finished on Eatonville community center," *Orlando Sentinel*, March 18, 1984, 211.
[129] Sandra Schall, "School Board Offers Site for Garbage Dump," *Orlando Sentinel*, August 26, 1958, 2.

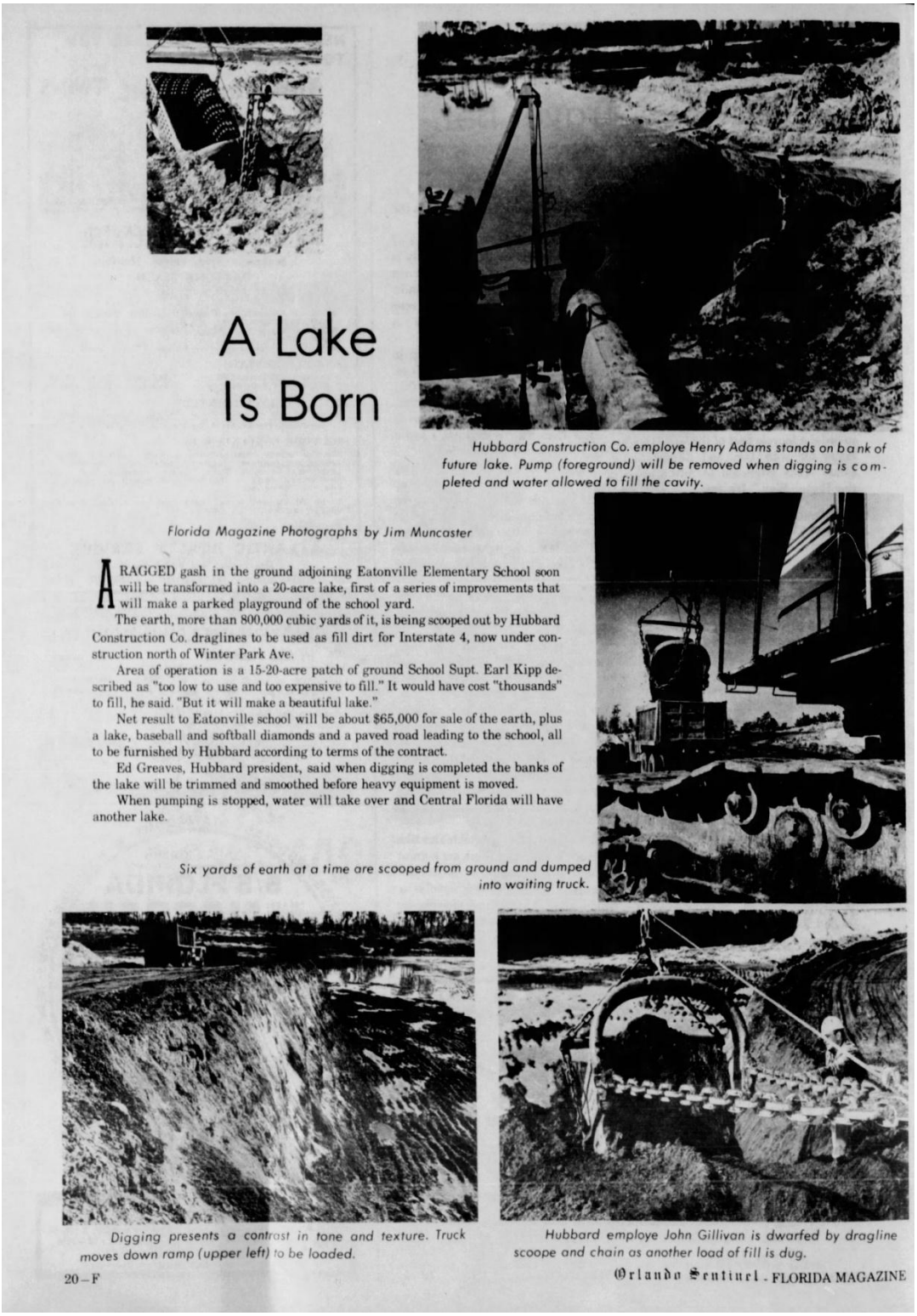
Black municipality, was used to accommodate undesirable infrastructure needs generated by neighboring communities.

The construction of Interstate 4 (I-4) between 1964 and 1965 marked an even more transformative moment. Cutting directly through Eatonville, the highway increased regional visibility and spurred development to the west, while fundamentally altering the town's landscape. The Hungerford School site, which had more than 200 acres of largely undeveloped land, played a significant role in the project. The Orange County School Board sold a 500-foot right-of-way to the State Highway Authority and provided more than 800,000 cubic yards of fill dirt required for highway grading, bridge construction, and ramps. These transactions generated revenue that funded improvements such as the paving of what is now College Avenue. At the same time, extensive excavation dramatically reshaped the terrain. Low-lying and swampy areas were filled and leveled to create athletic fields. Former dirt borrow pits used for interstate construction filled with water, forming lakes such as Lake Wilderness and Lake King. Other nearby ponds created during this period, including those east of Eatonville Memorial Gardens, are also directly tied to the earthmoving activities associated with I-4 construction between roughly 1958 and 1964.[130]

Despite the scale and impact of the project, Eatonville received limited direct transportation benefits. When the full 154-mile length of I-4 from Daytona Beach to St. Petersburg was completed in 1965, local leaders, including Mayor John Vereen, advocated for an interchange at Eatonville Road.[131] However, the request was denied due to the close proximity of interchanges in neighboring Winter Park and Maitland. This decision underscores a recurring dynamic in which major infrastructure projects passed through and utilized Eatonville's land while prioritizing access and connectivity for surrounding, predominantly White communities.

Continued on next page…

[130] Otey, *Eatonville*, 46-47.
[131] "Dedication of I-4 Today," *Orlando Sentinel*, March 8, 1965, 7; "Orlando, Winter Park Agree On Road Plans," *Orlando Sentinel*, October 29, 1965, 10.



A Lake Is Born

Hubbard Construction Co. employe Henry Adams stands on bank of future lake. Pump (foreground) will be removed when digging is completed and water allowed to fill the cavity.

Florida Magazine Photographs by Jim Muncaster

A RAGGED gash in the ground adjoining Eatonville Elementary School soon will be transformed into a 20-acre lake, first of a series of improvements that will make a parked playground of the school yard.

The earth, more than 800,000 cubic yards of it, is being scooped out by Hubbard Construction Co. draglines to be used as fill dirt for Interstate 4, now under construction north of Winter Park Ave.

Area of operation is a 15-20-acre patch of ground School Supt. Earl Kipp described as "too low to use and too expensive to fill." It would have cost "thousands" to fill, he said. "But it will make a beautiful lake."

Net result to Eatonville school will be about $65,000 for sale of the earth, plus a lake, baseball and softball diamonds and a paved road leading to the school, all to be furnished by Hubbard according to terms of the contract.

Ed Greaves, Hubbard president, said when digging is completed the banks of the lake will be trimmed and smoothed before heavy equipment is moved.

When pumping is stopped, water will take over and Central Florida will have another lake.

Six yards of earth at a time are scooped from ground and dumped into waiting truck.

Digging presents a contrast in tone and texture. Truck moves down ramp (upper left) to be loaded.

Hubbard employe John Gillivan is dwarfed by dragline scoope and chain as another load of fill is dug.

20—F

Orlando Sentinel - FLORIDA MAGAZINE

Figure 24. Lake King was created on the campus of Eatonville Elementary School. | Orlando Sentinel 3/1/1964

Black Professionals and Entrepreneurs

From its earliest years, Eatonville fostered a community of Black professionals and entrepreneurs whose work was central to the town's stability and growth. Eatonville's status as a self-governing municipality created space for residents to develop businesses, institutions, and professional practices that directly served the needs of the town. Early residents, many of whom were formerly enslaved, transitioned from agricultural labor into skilled trades and small business ownership, establishing a local economy rooted in mutual support. General stores (such as that established by Joseph E. Clark, second mayor of Eatonville), boarding houses, and service-based enterprises emerged alongside citrus cultivation and subsistence farming, allowing residents to build both economic independence and community infrastructure.

By the early to mid-twentieth century, this foundation supported a growing class of Black professionals, including educators, clergy, and civic leaders, many of whom were connected to institutions such as the Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School. Teachers, principals, and administrators like Russell and Mary Calhoun, and the Oteys and Crosbys not only shaped educational opportunities but also played key roles in civic life, reinforcing Eatonville's identity as a center of Black intellectual and cultural leadership in Central Florida.[132]

Religious leaders, such as Reverend Hurston (Zora Neale Hurston's father), likewise contributed to both spiritual and economic life, with churches often functioning as hubs for organizing, resource-sharing, and small-scale economic activity.[133] Rev. Hurston also served as mayor and was responsible for developing some of Eatonville's first municipal laws.[134] In another example, Rev. John Dash also ran a small store from the front portion of his home at the northeast corner of Calhoun Street and Eatonville Road.[135] These overlapping roles blurred the line between professional work, entrepreneurship, and community leadership, strengthening social cohesion in a town that remained relatively small in population.

Women had opportunities to explore work and leadership opportunities. or Mrs. Marge Woods was a well known Sunday school leader at St. Lawrence AME Church, and provided entertainment for young people on Saturday evenings at "penny parties" that helped raise funds for Sunday school. "Aunt" Judy Davis was a midwife in the early 20th century that delivered most of the babies born in Eatonville.[136] Women served as teachers at Hungerford, or ran beauty salons as entrepreneurs. These opportunities moved into civic leadership post-WWII, with women serving as elected officials in Eatonville.

The post–World War II period brought new opportunities and challenges for Black professionals and entrepreneurs in Eatonville. As subdivision development expanded and homeownership became more accessible through FHA and VA financing, a growing Black middle class found opportunities within the town's evolving residential landscape. Local entrepreneurs participated

[132] Otey, *Eatonville*, 20.
[133] Otey, *Eatonville*, 15.
[134] Otey, *Eatonville*, 17.
[135] Otey, *Eatonville*, 21.
[136] Otey, Eatonville, 15-16.

in this growth by operating construction businesses, retail establishments, and service industries that supported new neighborhoods such as Eaton Estates, Catalina Park, and Bel Air Homes. At the same time, professionals such as public officials, including figures like Police Chief Roosevelt King, exemplified the continued importance of Black leadership within municipal governance and public service.

This period also underscores the role of local entrepreneurs in shaping Eatonville's built environment. Individuals such as Ben and Broxie Smith exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit that sustained the corridor during a time of broader social transformation. Their investments, along with those of other small business owners, contributed to the development of Kennedy Boulevard as the economic heart of Eatonville, even as the nature of its commercial activity evolved.

Despite these gains, the experiences of Black professionals and entrepreneurs in Eatonville were shaped by broader patterns of segregation and economic exclusion in Central Florida. The history of Black professionals and entrepreneurship in Eatonville remains only partially documented. Existing records tend to highlight prominent institutions, well-known figures, and broad patterns of economic development, while offering less detail on individual business owners, skilled tradespeople, service providers, and the day-to-day operations of the local economy. The contributions of educators, builders, shopkeepers, and other professionals, particularly women, and those whose work sustained the town's social and economic life, are often underrepresented in the historical record.

Further research would provide a more complete understanding of how Black professionals and entrepreneurs shaped Eatonville's development, built environment, and community networks over time. Expanded documentation of individual careers, business districts, and informal economies would help illuminate the full scope of economic self-determination in the town, as well as the ways residents navigated opportunity and constraint within a segregated regional context.

Residential Eatonville

Eatonville's earliest residential landscape emerged following the filing of the original town plat on August 5, 1882, at the Orange County courthouse. This plat encompassed approximately 112 acres, though only a portion, roughly 40 acres, was quickly subdivided for residential use. The initial plat was modest in scope, consisting of just three blocks, only two of which were subdivided into lots. Streets surrounding these early blocks, including those later known as East and West Streets, defined the initial boundaries of settlement, with East and West Streets serving as the town's eastern and western edges for several years. Apopka Road (later Kennedy Boulevard) functioned as the primary east–west corridor and organized the spine of early development.[137]

[137] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."

Residential expansion accelerated in the mid-1880s with the platting of the town's first subdivisions. In 1886, Lewis Lawrence's Eatonville subdivision and Clark's Addition to Lake Maitland were established on opposite sides of Apopka Road in a roughly symmetrical pattern. Lawrence's subdivision encompassed approximately nine acres divided into 48 lots, each measuring about 50 by 150 feet, while Clark's Addition included 90 lots across six blocks, with slightly smaller parcels measuring 50 by 100 feet. These early subdivisions established the prevailing lot sizes and residential patterns that would characterize much of Eatonville's historic core.[138]

The first residents of Eatonville, including Tony Taylor and Allen Rickett, settled on land provided by Lawrence, occupying modest cottages that reflected the limited resources but strong communal aspirations of the town's founders.[139] These settlers were formerly enslaved individuals who migrated from across the southeastern United States, including Mississippi, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama, in search of economic opportunity and autonomy. They contributed significantly to the early built environment, clearing land, cultivating crops and citrus groves, and constructing homes and community infrastructure.[140]

In 1893, the Holden Brothers' Addition, surveyed earlier in 1886, expanded the town south of Apopka Road. This subdivision, later replatted in 1925 by Mary Calhoun as Calhoun's Subdivision, introduced additional residential blocks with lot sizes up to 50 by 200 feet. Over time, many of these larger parcels were subdivided into the more typical 50-by-100-foot lots, reflecting a gradual transition from semi-rural homestead patterns to a denser residential fabric. Early property ownership patterns reinforced this evolution, as settlers often purchased multiple adjacent lots, available for as little as thirty-five dollars per homestead parcel or five to ten dollars per acre, to support subsistence agriculture, including vegetable gardens, citrus cultivation, and small livestock. These larger tracts persisted into the early twentieth century before being incrementally subdivided.[141]

Despite these early developments, Eatonville experienced relatively slow growth during the first half of the twentieth century. The town's geographic context, surrounded by lakes, citrus groves, and pine forests, combined with its small initial population, contributed to limited expansion. However, in 1919, the town did increase in land area when the municipality annexed the property of the Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School.[142] Between 1900 and 1930[143], the population increased only slightly, from 125 to 136 residents, and much of the land remained in agricultural or undeveloped use.[144]

[138] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."
[139] Otey, *Eatonville*, 7.
[140] Otey, *Eatonville*, 1.
[141] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."
[142] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."
[143] U.S. Census, *1900: Population*, 125.
[144] U.S. Census, *1930: Population*, 136.

A significant transformation in residential development occurred following World War II. Broader economic changes, coupled with regional growth in Central Florida, prompted many property owners to subdivide their larger holdings, leading to a wave of new residential construction between the 1940s and 1960s. This period marked a shift toward more formalized suburban subdivision development. Campusview, initiated around 1950, was among the first of these postwar subdivisions.[145]

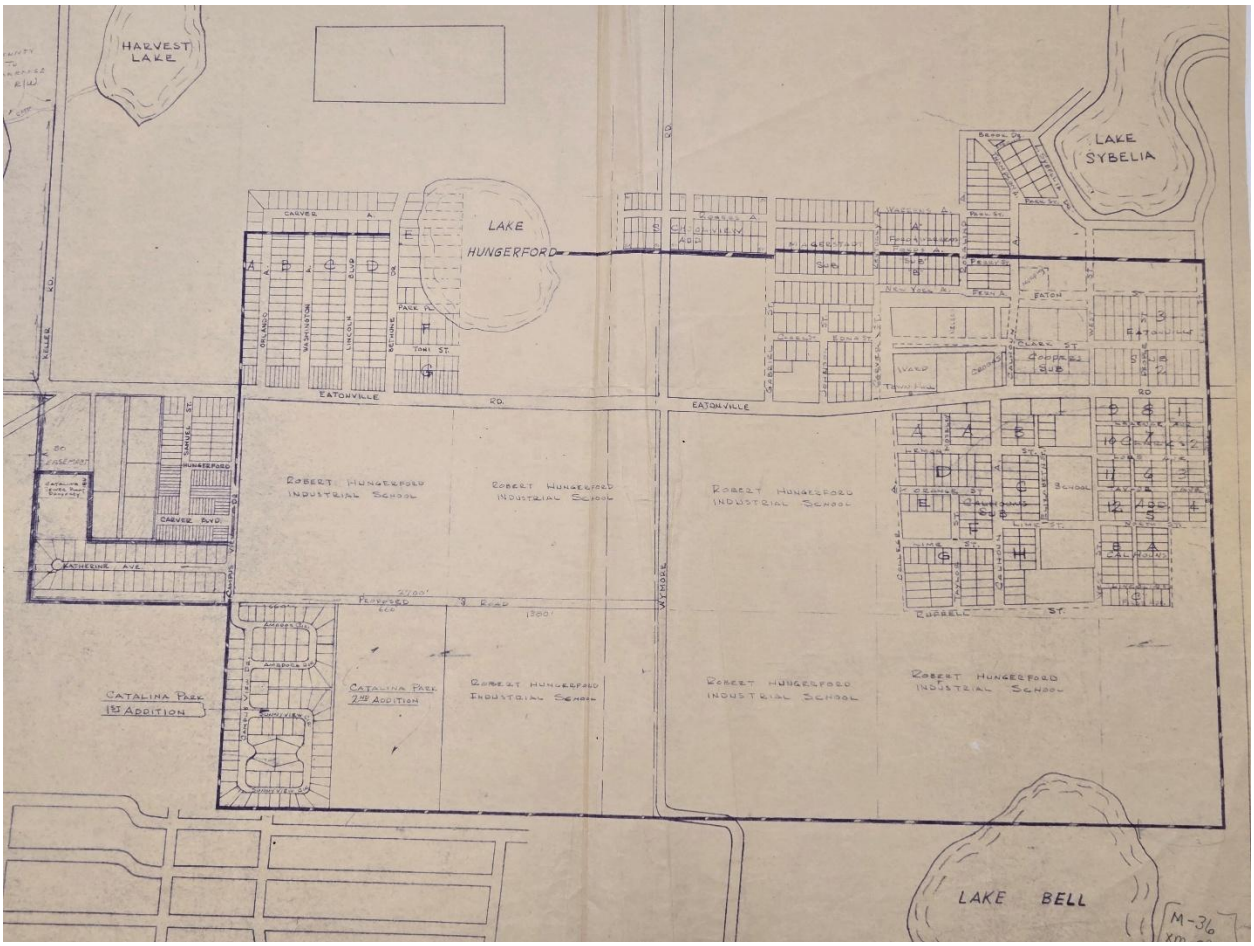


Figure 25. A 1961 plat map of the Town of Eatonville. | Orlando County Regional Archives

By 1956, Eatonville's municipal boundaries had expanded to include areas bounded by East Street to the east, Audubon Way to the north, Campusview Drive to the west, and Monroe Avenue to the south, with Kennedy Boulevard and Wymore Road forming a central intersection. Infrastructure improvements accompanied this expansion, particularly in the historic core east of Wymore Road, where many streets had been paved. However, disparities remained: areas west of Wymore Road, especially those characterized by low-lying wetlands owned by the Hungerford School, remained less developed, with unpaved streets and limited residential

[145] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."

construction. Citrus groves continued to dominate portions of the landscape, particularly south of Ruffel Street and in areas north of Kennedy Boulevard.[146]

The 1960s represented a period of rapid residential growth and demographic expansion. Eatonville's population more than doubled during this decade, increasing from 857 residents in 1960 to over 2,000 by 1970.[147] This growth was influenced by regional infrastructure improvements, including the construction of Interstate 4, as well as increased investment in local civic development.[148]

New subdivisions proliferated during this period, reshaping the town's residential landscape. The Catalina Park subdivision, developed in 1961 on former Hungerford School property at the western edge of town, exemplified both the opportunities and tensions associated with this growth. As a residential development intended for Black residents adjacent to predominantly White subdivisions in neighboring areas, Catalina Park became the focus of significant opposition.This development highlights broader patterns of racial segregation and conflict in mid-twentieth-century suburban development. Developed by Sulpher Investments, Inc. and built by H&M Construction Company, Catalina Park was opposed by Brailey Odham, developer of Kingswood Manor, which adjoined the proposed subdivision. Despite legal challenges and public controversy, the subdivision was ultimately constructed, contributing to Eatonville's westward expansion.[149]

Additional subdivisions followed in quick succession, including Lake Lovely (1962), Bel Air Homes (1963), and Eaton Estates (1964).[150] These developments introduced more modern housing types, particularly ranch-style homes with standardized amenities such as carports, screened porches, and landscaped lots. featured homes designed with contemporary conveniences and financed through FHA and VA programs, making homeownership more accessible to a growing middle-class population within Eatonville.

For example, the Eaton Estates subdivision was developed on West Street, just south of Ruffle Street. Designed and built by Lloyds of Orlando, the development featured deluxe 3-bedroom, 1.5 bath ranch-style homes, built in the midst of an orange grove. Homes included double carports with concrete driveways, large screened porches and spacious kitchens with provincial cabinet doors, built-in stoves and double sinks. Lots were landscaped with 70 feet of frontage and streets included lights and sidewalks. With VA and FHA financing available, homes were priced between $11,850 and $15,300. Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt King was one of the first residents to move into Eaton Estates. At the time in 1965, Roosevelt King was the Chief of Police of Eatonville.[151]

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[146] United States Geological Survey (USGS), Orlando West Quadrangle, Florida, 7.5-minute series, 1:24,000 (Washington, DC: USGS, 1956).
[147] U.S. Census, *1970: Population*, 2,000.
[148] Otey, *Eatonville*, 46.
[149] Todd Persons, "Negro Home Development Given Okay," *Orlando Sentinel*, October 27, 1961.
[150] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."
[151] "Crowds View Homes In Eaton Estates," *Orlando Sentinel*, February 1, 1965, 9.

Figure 26. A Lloyd's of Orlando advertisement for the Eaton Estates subdivision. | Orlando Sentinel 2/1/1965

By the late 1960s, most of the town's current street grid had been established, particularly through infill development north of Kennedy Boulevard between Wymore Road and Calhoun Avenue. Multifamily housing also began to appear, reflecting increasing residential density. The largest multifamily development was a 42-unit apartment complex built at the intersection of West and Ruffel Streets in 1967. This $110,000 project was designed by architect Allen Arthur and developed by L.F. Lloyd, the developer of Eaton Estates subdivision.[152]

At the same time, patterns of racial and spatial separation were physically reinforced in the built environment. Developments such as the Windgrove subdivision (approved in 1967) and the Park Lake Townhouses (developed in 1971) were constructed adjacent to Eatonville but incorporated concrete walls along their boundaries, creating physical barriers between the historically Black town and neighboring predominantly White communities along East Street between the Black Town of Eatonville and White subdivisions within the City of Maitland's municipal limits. These features illustrate the continued persistence of segregation-era planning practices even as residential growth accelerated in the era after civil rights legislation.[153] [154]

By 1980, Eatonville's population had reached 2,185 residents, reflecting the cumulative effects of postwar expansion and subdivision development.[155] In the early 1980s, federally-supported housing initiatives further shaped the residential landscape, including the construction of the Kennedy Apartments between 1981 and 1982 to address low-income housing needs.[156]

Overall, Eatonville's residential development evolved from a modest, semi-rural settlement of small platted subdivisions and agricultural homesteads into a more fully developed suburban community by the late twentieth century. This evolution was marked by phases of slow early growth, postwar expansion, and mid-century subdivision development, all shaped by broader economic trends, infrastructure investments, and the social realities of race and segregation in Central Florida.

Commercial Eatonville

The commercial development of Kennedy Boulevard, historically known as Apopka Road or Eatonville Road, reflects the transformation of the Town of Eatonville from a small, rural settlement into a vibrant center of Black commerce and entertainment during the mid-twentieth century. This evolution was closely tied to the rise of the "Chitlin' Circuit" and the broader phenomenon of "the stroll," through which African American communities across the United States established their own commercial and cultural districts during the era of segregation.[157]

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[152] "Eatonville On Go" Area Construction Slated," *Orlando Evening Star*, May 29, 1967, 30.
[153] "Committee Ratifies Land Use Permit For Church," *Orlando Sentinel*, November 19, 1967, 49.
[154] "Huskey Realty advertisement," *Orlando Sentinel*, September 26, 1971, 47.
[155] U.S. Census, *1980: Population*, 2,185.
[156] Otey, *Eatonville*, 56.
[157] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project* (Prepared for Florida Chitlin' Circuit Group, 2023), accessed at https://www.flchitlincircuitgrp.org/.

Apopka Road predated the founding of Eatonville, appearing as early as 1846 on federal township maps as a rudimentary road through largely undeveloped land. By the 1860s, it had become the principal route connecting Fort Maitland and Apopka, though it remained a narrow wagon trail. By the 1890s, historic photographs depict the road as an unpaved dirt thoroughfare, lined with trees and only wide enough for two vehicles to pass. Despite its modest character, the road functioned as the primary spine of Eatonville, bisecting the town and concentrating its earliest institutional and commercial development.[158]

One of the earliest known commercial establishments along this corridor was Clark's Store, at the northeast corner of present day intersection of Kennedy Boulevard and West Street, which predated 1890 and served multiple roles as a general store, post office, and town hall. Like many early structures in Eatonville, it was small in scale and multifunctional. Commercial development during this period remained sparse, with most businesses operating out of private homes and catering to local needs.[159]

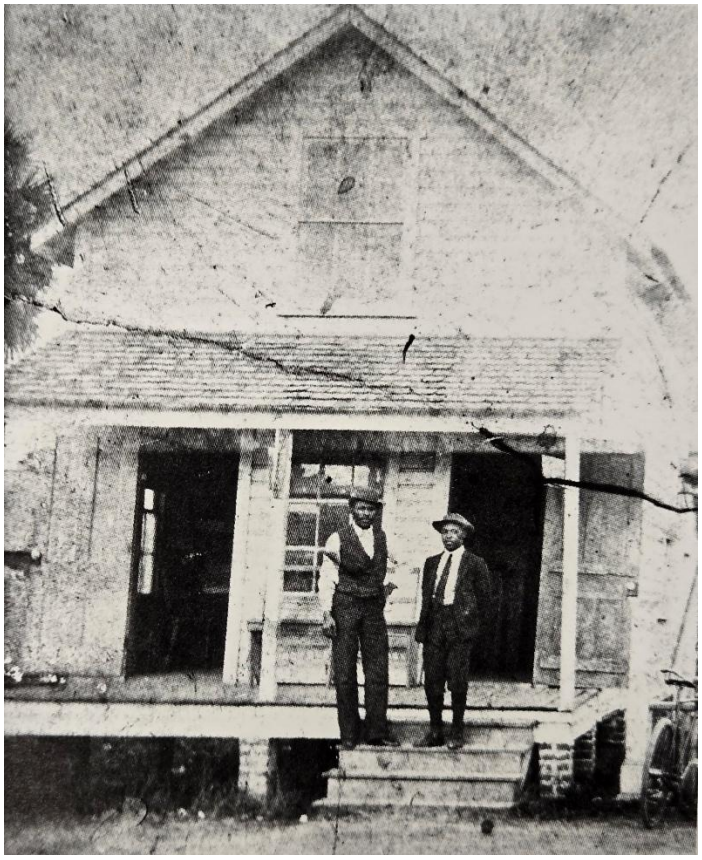


Figure 27. Joe Clark, Eatonville's second mayor, and a customer stand on the porch of Joe Clark's general store. | Frank M. Otey

[158] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."
[159] Bucuvalas, Grant, and Shiver, "Eatonville Historic District."

The early twentieth century brought gradual improvements to the corridor. In 1928, Apopka Road was paved as a two-lane roadway, marking a significant infrastructural upgrade that facilitated greater mobility and connectivity. In 1964, the road was renamed Kennedy Boulevard in honor of President John F. Kennedy followed his November 28, 1963 assassination, symbolizing its growing importance within the town's civic and commercial identity.[160]

The most transformative period in the development of Kennedy Boulevard occurred between the 1940s and 1960s, coinciding with broader national economic growth following World War II. During this time, the corridor emerged as Eatonville's primary commercial district and its local manifestation of "the stroll." This term was coined by musician Walter Barnes in the 1930s to describe vibrant Black business and entertainment corridors. While Eatonville's stroll was smaller and less densely developed than those in larger cities, such as nearby Parramore or Altamonte Springs, Kennedy Boulevard nonetheless became the heart of the town's economic and social life.[161]

Commercial activity during this period diversified significantly. In addition to traditional neighborhood businesses such as grocery stores, barber shops, and beauty salons, the corridor became known for its nightlife and entertainment venues. These establishments formed part of the Chitlin' Circuit, a network of Black-owned and operated venues that provided safe spaces for African American performers and patrons during segregation.[162]

Among the most prominent of these venues was Club Eaton at 426 East Kennedy Boulevard, which was completed in 1946 and quickly became the centerpiece of Eatonville's entertainment scene. Larger and more ambitious than earlier establishments, Club Eaton drew visitors from throughout Central Florida and was considered "big time" by local standards. Under the ownership of figures such as Condor Merritt and the management of Billy Bozeman, the club hosted nationally recognized performers, including James Brown, Tina Turner, The Drifters, The Ink Spots, and Bobby Blue Bland. Between major acts, the venue supported local musicians and house bands, reinforcing its role as both a regional attraction and a community gathering place.[163] The Club Eaton building later became Mr. B's and then Heroes, noted by community members as a more recent part of Eatonville's history.[164]

[160] "Eatonville Sets Open House," *Orlando Sentinel*, January 13, 1964, 8.
[161] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*
[162] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*
[163] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*
[164] Public comment, Eatonville Community Meeting.

Figure 28. Club Eaton, located at 426 East Kennedy Boulevard. | Eatonville CRA

Other establishments along Kennedy Boulevard contributed to the corridor's dynamic character. The Green Lantern Tavern at 501 East Kennedy Boulevard, constructed in 1935 by James Steele, was one of the earliest purpose-built entertainment venues in Eatonville. Originally conceived as a modest but respectable establishment, it evolved over time, operating under different names and eventually transitioning into the Blue Lantern Restaurant owned by Jeffery Cunningham until 1980 when it became a grocery store.[165] Similarly, the Rainbow Club at 500 West Kennedy Boulevard, opened in 1945 by Bubba Bing as the Tuxedo Junction. After Bing's death, the Rainbow was operated by Plant City educator Elijah L. Bing as a combined bar, grill, and entertainment complex that drew a large clientele.[166]

By the mid-twentieth century, Kennedy Boulevard also supported a range of complementary commercial uses. Businesses such as Mack's Auto Repair & Gas (established in 1946) and the Hezekiah Reed Grocery Store (opened in 1952) served the needs of residents, while venues like the Big Joy Beer Parlor and Delaney's Pool Room, housed in a 1958 building at 308 East Kennedy Boulevard, contributed to the corridor's nightlife economy.[167] Mack's was also an afterschool gathering place for Hungerford students to purchase snacks and sodas.[168] These establishments, along with smaller "beer and wine parlors" and informal "back room" venues like

[165] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*.
[166] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*
[167] Otey, *Eatonville*, 34.
[168] PEC, *A Walking Tour of Eatonville*.

the Big Oak Beer Garden and Bubba's Bar created Eatonville's entertainment scene.[169] Often, these establishments also had connections to the underground bolita trade, illegal gambling popular in Florida at the time.[170] Later, Mack's Auto Repair and Gas became the headquarters of the Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community and the Zora Neale Hurston Museum.[171]

The growing popularity of Eatonville's commercial corridor during the 1950s also brought increased scrutiny and tension. The town gained regional attention in 1955 when nearby military installation, Pinecastle Air Force Base, declared Eatonville off-limits to servicemen following incidents near Club Eaton.[172] Concerns centered on the concentration of nightlife venues and the town's permissive policies regarding Sunday liquor sales, unique within Orange County at the time. Reports of heavy traffic congestion and the large number of visitors from surrounding communities, including White patrons, highlighted both the economic vitality of Kennedy Boulevard and the tensions generated during segregation. Efforts by local and county officials to restrict or regulate these activities, including temporary bans on Sunday liquor sales and threats to revoke the town's charter, underscore the broader social and racial dynamics influencing Eatonville's development.[173]

Figure 29. Mack's Auto Repair and Gas, located at the corner of Kennedy Boulevard and College Street. | Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc.

[169] Milton C. Thomas, "Even if Tis De Trooth Beware Glitter in Magistrate's Eye," *Orlando Sentinel*, December 19, 1940, 2; Jerry Smothers, "Three Nabbed in Gambling Raid,"*Orlando Sentinel*, November 12, 1950, 1; "Jury Convicts Negro in Army Food Thefts," *Orlando Evening Star*, February 8, 1944, 3.
[170] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*
[171] PEC, *A Walking Tour of Eatonville*.
[172] "Air Force Slaps Ban On Eatonville," *Orlando Evening Star*, March 5, 1955, 1.
[173] Bill Kettinger, "Sunday Liquor Sales Face Eatonville Ban," *Orlando Evening Star,* March 3,1955, 1.

Despite these challenges, the period from the 1940s through the 1960s represented the height of Kennedy Boulevard's significance as a commercial and cultural hub. Even as a small, primarily residential community, Eatonville sustained a vibrant commercial and entertainment district that attracted visitors from miles around and connected the town to a larger network of Black cultural exchange across the South.[174]

Physically, however, relatively few of the original commercial structures from this era remain. Among the surviving buildings is a two-story masonry grocery store constructed around 1945 at 501 Kennedy Boulevard, occupying the site of the Green Lantern Tavern. In addition, a few additional former entertainment venues, including the buildings that once housed Club Eaton and the Big Joy Beer Parlor, remain standing, though many have been altered or are no longer in active use.[175]

Despite the increasingly commercial nature of Kennedy Boulevard, agriculture remained a viable commercial enterprise in Eatonville through the 1950s, reflecting a waning time for agricultural practices before subdivisions largely took over farmland and orange groves. In 1946, the *Orlando Evening Star* highlighted Eatonville turnip farmer Benny Jones and his 11.5 pound turnip.[176] Eatonville residents also continued working in migratory agriculture, reflecting the agricultural nature of Eatonville before World War II. In 1955, S.T. Thomas left Eatonville with a crew of 100 migratory workers to work on vegetable farms in upper New York state.[177]

In sum, the evolution of Kennedy Boulevard from a rural wagon road into Eatonville's principal commercial corridor illustrates the town's broader historic trajectory. During the mid-twentieth century, the corridor became a regional destination of Black entrepreneurship, entertainment, and social life, embodying the spirit of the Chitlin' Circuit and the resilience of African American communities during segregation. Although diminished in scale today, Kennedy Boulevard remains a significant cultural landscape, reflecting the legacy of Eatonville's commercial and cultural vitality during one of the most dynamic periods in its history.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Kennedy Boulevard in the Town of Eatonville continued to evolve as the community's primary commercial corridor, reflecting both the maturation of earlier mid-century development and the shifting economic and social dynamics of the post–Civil Rights era. While the intensity of the Chitlin' Circuit period began to wane, the corridor remained a center of local enterprise, increasingly characterized by service-oriented businesses and small-scale commercial investment that catered to the everyday needs of residents.

This period of development built upon the commercial foundation established in the preceding decades, but with a notable shift toward more permanent, diversified, and locally driven

[174] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*
[175] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*
[176] "Short Stories," *Orlando Evening Star*, January 11, 1946, 1.
[177] "S.T. Thomas Leaves for Job in New York," *Orlando Sentinel*, June 27, 1955, 21.

enterprises. In 1962, the opening of the Tiger Gas Station at the southwest corner of Kennedy Boulevard and Calhoun Avenue marked the continued importance of automobile-oriented services along the corridor. As vehicular travel increased throughout Central Florida, such businesses became essential components of the local economy, reinforcing Kennedy Boulevard's role as both a commercial spine and a connector to surrounding communities.[178]

Figure 30. Smith's Eatonville Motel, located at 429 East Kennedy Boulevard. | Community Planning Collaborative

One of the most significant commercial developments of the era was the establishment of Smith's Eatonville Motel and its associated restaurant at 429 East Kennedy Boulevard. The restaurant, opened in 1964 by Ben and Broxie Smith, predated the construction of the motel itself and represented an entrepreneurial effort to expand Eatonville's commercial offerings. The Smiths, drawing on prior experience in the hospitality and food service industries, envisioned their business as a catalyst for economic activity in what they perceived as a "sleepy" town. Their investment reflected a broader optimism about Eatonville's growth potential during the 1960s.[179]

In 1967, the Smiths expanded their enterprise with the construction of Smith's Eatonville Motel, a 17-unit lodging facility designed to accommodate travelers and visitors to the area. Designed by Allen Edgar Arthur, an Orlando-based architect and former Army Corps of Engineers officer, the motel represented a significant capital investment of approximately $85,000. The building

[178] Otey, *Eatonville*, 47.
[179] "Smith's Motel: Place to Rest, Enjoy Food," *Orlando Evening Star*, May 19, 1971, 15.

featured modern amenities for the time, including wall-to-wall carpeting, color television, and a visually distinctive exterior characterized by bright colors and decorative rockwork. The aesthetic choices, guided in part by Broxie Smith, reflected an intentional effort to create an inviting and uplifting environment for guests.[180]

Together, the motel and the B&B Barbecue Inn formed a unique hospitality complex along Kennedy Boulevard, serving both local residents and visitors traveling through the region. From 1966 to 1975, the Smiths operated both establishments, contributing to the corridor's economic vitality during a period of transition. In subsequent decades, the property changed ownership, including a period in the 1980s when it was operated by members of the Bing family, long associated with Eatonville's commercial and entertainment history. Today, the former motel has been adapted for residential use, while the restaurant building remains vacant.[181]

Additional commercial development during this period further diversified the types of businesses located along Kennedy Boulevard. In 1968, the opening of the Serenity Chapel funeral home at 307 East Kennedy Boulevard and adjacent commercial building introduced community services, reflecting the needs of a growing population. By the early 1970s, smaller, specialized enterprises continued to emerge, including Sim's Plant Nursery (established in 1972) and Johnson's Lawnmower Repair Shop (opened in 1975). These businesses illustrate a shift toward locally-oriented services that supported homeownership, landscaping, and property maintenance, activities associated with the suburbanization of Eatonville in the postwar period.[182]

Overall, the commercial development of Kennedy Boulevard during the 1960s and 1970s demonstrates a transition from an entertainment-focused corridor associated with the Chitlin' Circuit to a more service-based commercial environment. While entertainment venues continued to operate, the increasing presence of gas stations, lodging facilities, repair shops, and neighborhood services reflects the corridor's adaptation to changing economic conditions and community needs.

From the late 1970s through the present, the commercial development of Kennedy Boulevard in the Town of Eatonville has been shaped by a combination of local entrepreneurship, regional economic expansion, and transportation-related planning initiatives. During this period, the corridor transitioned from a primarily small-scale, locally oriented commercial strip into a more complex cultural landscape influenced by proximity to Interstate 4 and broader patterns of suburban growth in Central Florida.

By 1980, Kennedy Boulevard continued to support locally-owned, service-oriented businesses that reflected the needs of the community. The opening of Ellis' Welding and Metal Shop that year exemplifies development of small industrial and repair-oriented enterprises that remained

[180] "Eatonville On Go: Area Construction Slated," *Orlando Evening Star*, May 29, 1967, 30.
[181] Community Planning Collaborative, *Florida Chitlin' Circuit Historic Research and Documentation Project.*
[182] Otey, *Eatonville*, 47.

integral to the corridor's economic base. These businesses provided essential services to residents and nearby commercial operations, reinforcing Kennedy Boulevard's role as a space for everyday economic activity.[183]

A major event in the corridor's development occurred in 1982, when the Orange County School Board sold approximately 113 acres of land west of Interstate 4 for $1.1 million. This transaction catalyzed a new phase of commercial and light industrial development in areas adjacent to Kennedy Boulevard, particularly west of the interstate. The resulting development significantly expanded Eatonville's tax base and marked a shift toward larger-scale, revenue-generating land uses that extended beyond the traditional small business model of the historic corridor.[184]

This trend was further solidified with the completion of the 100-acre Interstate Park in 1985, located just west of Interstate 4 and south of Kennedy Boulevard along South Lake Destiny Drive. Designed as a business park to attract regional employers, Interstate Park represented a strategic effort to capitalize on the visibility and accessibility provided by the nearby interstate. One of its early tenants, Parker Boats, a firm founded in 1939, relocated to the site in 1985 after decades of operation in Orlando. The move was motivated in part by the exposure to tens of thousands of daily drivers along Interstate 4, illustrating the increasing importance of regional transportation networks in shaping local economic development. By 1987, tenants within Interstate Park accounted for a significant portion of Eatonville's municipal revenue, contributing approximately 27 percent of the town's property tax base.[185]

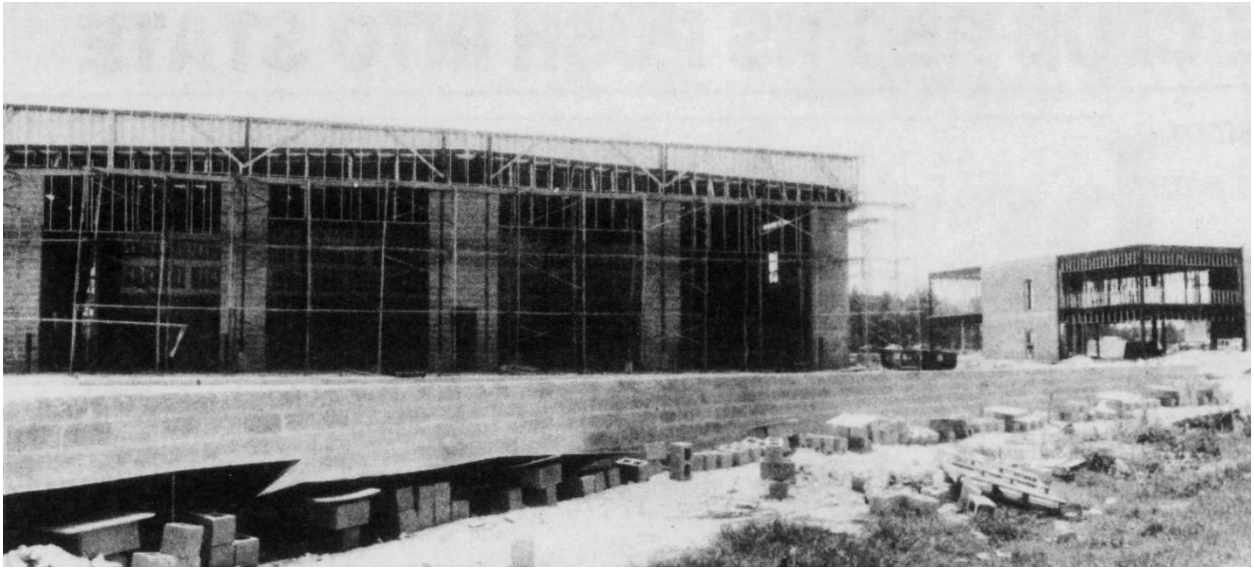


Figure 31. The Interstate Park project under construction. | Orlando Sentinel 1985

[183] Otey, *Eatonville*, 47.
[184] Christopher Sherman, "Town to ask schools to share, develop land," *Orlando Sentinel*, June 26,2005, B1.
[185] Jonathan Susskind, "Big plans for small town," *Orlando Sentinel*, Jun. 3, 1985, p.45.

At the same time, Kennedy Boulevard itself became the focus of substantial transportation planning and infrastructure debates. Beginning in the mid-1980s, Orange County initiated plans to widen the roadway to accommodate increasing traffic volumes associated with regional growth. Initial proposals called for expanding the existing two-lane road into a four-lane arterial between U.S. Highway 17-92 and Forest City Road. However, these plans were met with strong opposition from local stakeholders, including Eatonville officials and community advocacy groups such as the Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community.[186]

Concerns centered on the potential impacts of roadway expansion on the town's historic character, pedestrian-friendly context, and community cohesion. In 1988, after the Town of Eatonville threatened legal action, negotiations between local officials and Orange County resulted in a revised plan for a four-lane roadway with a landscaped median, representing a compromise between traffic efficiency and community preservation. Concurrently, legal challenges were filed by both Eatonville advocates and neighboring jurisdictions, including the City of Maitland, to halt or modify the project.[187]

By 1990, community sentiment had shifted even further toward minimizing the scale of roadway expansion, with local leaders advocating for a three-lane configuration through the town center. These debates underscore the tension between accommodating regional transportation demands and preserving the historic character and built fabric of Kennedy Boulevard as Eatonville's commercial corridor.[188]

Efforts to improve connectivity also extended to proposals for direct interstate access. In 1980, Eatonville officials sought the construction of an interchange at Kennedy Boulevard and Interstate 4 to enhance economic opportunities along the corridor. However, the Florida Department of Transportation rejected the proposal, citing concerns about traffic congestion between existing interchanges at Lee Road and Maitland Boulevard. This decision limited the extent to which Kennedy Boulevard could directly capitalize on interstate traffic, reinforcing its status as a neighborhood-focused corridor.

[186] Debbie Salamone, "Road widening splits town," *Orlando Sentinel*, September 11, 1988, 148.
[187] Salamone, "Road widening splits town."
[188] Ines Davis Parrish, "Maitland may settle with Orange on widening road," *Orlando Sentinel*, July 8, 1990, 21.

Research Design

Objectives

The primary objectives of this survey were to document, evaluate, and contextualize Eatonville's historic resources with the goal of supporting future preservation planning efforts.

- Document and evaluate Eatonville's historic resources (1980 or earlier), building on prior research and updating past surveys
- Assess National Register eligibility and consider updates to the 1997 historic district boundaries and period of significance
- Support preservation planning, designations, and funding strategies through a practical, community-informed resource

This survey was undertaken to provide a current and documented analysis of Eatonville's historic, cultural, archaeological, and architectural resources, drawing on both previous and current research. The objectives were to identify, document, and evaluate historic properties within the Town of Eatonville developed in 1980 or earlier, as well as potential historic properties associated with the town's development outside its corporate limits; limited to the area situated east of Interstate-4. The survey also aimed to update the 1987 and 1990 historic resource surveys recorded with the Florida Master Site File, accounting for properties not previously documented, those that have since been demolished, and other properties deemed significant through community engagement.

Additional objectives included assessing the eligibility of surveyed properties for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places or as contributing resources within a historic district, and evaluating the boundaries and period of significance of the 1997 Eatonville Historic District National Register of Historic Places nomination to determine whether revisions could be warranted. Finally, the survey was intended to produce a practical resource for the Town of Eatonville that supports historic preservation planning, local regulations, future designations, and grant opportunities. A public engagement component was incorporated into the survey to build community support and foster dialogue among local stakeholders.

Methodology

A comprehensive methodology incorporating field survey, geospatial data analysis, and archival research was used to document and evaluate Eatonville's historic resources.

- Conducted a geographic and architectural survey within Eatonville east of I-4, with select adjacent properties included due to strong historical and community associations
- Completed fieldwork to document, photograph, and verify properties (1980 or earlier) and existing conditions

- Defined historic resources as those eligible for the National Register, using a 1980 cutoff to allow a planning buffer beyond the typical 50-year threshold
- Focused on the east side of I-4 due to its concentration of historic assets, including the existing National Register District, civic institutions, and consistent development patterns
- Compiled and verified property data using GIS, property appraiser records, field observations, and Florida Master Site File documentation, with corrections made as needed
- Conducted supplemental research using archival and digital sources to support documentation and historical context
- Identified the need for future survey work west of I-4 to provide a more complete understanding of Eatonville's later development patterns

A geographic survey was conducted within Eatonville's corporate limits east of Interstate-4. Two areas outside of the corporate limits were also included: Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery at 600 Wymore Road and three properties on the north border of Eatonville platted in the Ford and Warren Subdivision of Maitland. The additional properties have a direct association with the Eatonville community based on current use and historical research. An initial reconnaissance visit was performed in August 2025 consisting of a windshield tour of the survey area which confirmed that some address numbers had changed and several properties had been demolished. Fieldwork for the architectural survey was performed during the week of October 13, 2025 that included a pedestrian tour within the survey area, limited to public rights-of-way, to take photographs of each building with an estimated construction date of 1980 or earlier, verify property addresses, identify demolished buildings, and identify physical features, objects, or other resources that should be included in the survey. Desktop research and site file data entry were performed between October 2025 and April 2026.

For purposes of this survey, a historic property, or resource, refers to any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places as maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. Such properties are generally at least 50 years old; however, rather than applying a strict 1975 cutoff, the survey used 1980 as its threshold to provide a five-year buffer between the report and any immediate actions that may follow from its findings.

Given the Town's expressed interest in potentially updating the National Register Historic District, and in light of available resources, the survey team concentrated its efforts on the east side of I-4 which includes the existing historic district, central thoroughfare, original and current cemeteries, essential services, and places of religious practice amongst historic and contemporary residences. The surveyed area includes the established National Register Historic District, the 1919 and current Town of Eatonville boundary. Development patterns on the east section retain similar attributes including residential lot sizes and building setbacks, a predominance of single story residences spanning the vernacular building tradition to contemporary residential styles, and the commercial and institutional growth along Kennedy Boulevard. Future survey work is proposed for the corporate limits west of I-4 to capture a fuller

picture of the town's more recent history that can result in a comprehensive analysis of the city's suburban development patterns.

Data from the Orange County Property Appraiser (OCPA) was used through the ArcGIS Pro platform to develop a preliminary Excel spreadsheet of properties in the survey area with an actual build date of 1980 or earlier. The list was generated in November 2025 and there were discrepancies in some cases between the property address and the build date. As the site file forms were filled out during the desktop research and photographic analysis, corrections were made based on physical addresses, building characteristics, and previously recorded Florida Master Site Files with more extensive historical information. For example, the OCPA build date for the Mosely House at 550 E Kennedy Boulevard is 1901 and the previously recorded site file notes a build date of 1881 so 1881 was used. If there were buildings that appeared to meet the age criteria that were not on the spreadsheet, they were photographed and researched before determining whether or not to record the property on the Florida Master Site File form.

The site file forms were completed from a desktop computer using photographs from the fieldwork, a range of dates available in Google Streetview, and information from the Orange County Property Appraiser. Where additional research was warranted, the survey team used digital resources including Newspapers.com, USDA aerial images, Polk City Directories, plat maps, and manuscripts from the Florida Division of Historical Resources/Florida Master Site File. This was particularly helpful to establish the importance of Eatonville's water plant.

Florida Master Site File Forms

In total, the survey recorded 280 historic properties, including updated [n=56] and newly documented resources [n=233] as well as properties that have been demolished [n=19]. For each extant property, the surveyor documented the location, physical attributes, and an assessment of eligibility for designation under the National Register of Historic Places criteria for significance and historic integrity. This information was captured using a Florida Master Site File form developed by the Florida Division of Historical Resources and completed in Adobe PDF format, consistent with statewide practice. Each form is accompanied by a photograph and a map, prepared in accordance with the protocols established under Florida Statute 1A-46, Archaeological and Historical Report Standards and Guidelines. It should be noted that inclusion in the Florida Master Site File represents a statewide inventory of historic properties and does not apply any state regulatory requirements or confer any landmark designation.

Expected Results

Prior to initiating fieldwork and analysis, the survey team identified several anticipated findings based on existing research, known gaps, and community context.

- Previous surveys and the 1997 National Register nomination primarily document resources from 1882–1946, leaving later development underrepresented
- The current survey identifies significant gaps in documenting post–World War II suburban development, Civil Rights-era conditions, and evolving community patterns

- Changes since 1997 including demolitions, infill development, altered properties, and inaccurate or outdated records indicate the need to update the historic district documentation
- The survey highlights important themes and resources reflecting Eatonville's continued growth, including mid-century architecture, infrastructure improvements, housing evolution, and cultural landscapes
- Individually significant sites, such as Hungerford School, the original cemetery, the municipal water plant, and the East Street wall, will illustrate key aspects of education, memory, infrastructure, and segregation
- Archaeological potential, historic plats, and community knowledge offer additional opportunities to deepen understanding of Eatonville's development and lived experience

Previous reports and surveys include the 1987 and 1990 historic and archaeological surveys and the 1997 Historic District nomination. A study of 100 structures was performed in 2024 but the information is not incorporated into the state's official inventory, the Florida Master Site File. Therefore, the data from the earliest surveys is all that is currently available meaning that most records will only include resources that were developed before 1946. Indeed, the National Register designation and many narratives citing Eatonville's significance attribute the historic period as 1882 - 1946. The Eatonville National Register Historic District spans 23 acres with 86 buildings.

The current survey identified that historic contexts from the post-WWII suburban development era and the housing and educational inequities leading up to and after the Civil Rights Movement are not captured in previous studies. Concentrated areas of suburban development typical of the post-WWII era include Ranch style buildings with similar repetitive characteristics as well as unique Mid-Century Modern architecture. Other results that were anticipated include the redevelopment of grove lots into housing, improved infrastructure such as water utilities and government buildings, the advancement of multi-family housing, and representation of travel and entertainment trends extending from food and culture ways documented in the Chitlin' Circuit historic context.

In the 2024 FEMA report titled "Task 1 Eatonville Historic Structures Report," the assessment provided clues for this 2025-2026 survey effort. With credit given to Morgan and Price, the survey team concurs with the following assessment regarding the 1997 National Register nomination for Eatonville:

- The nomination was prepared nearly 30 years ago and no longer reflects current conditions within the historic district.
- Demolitions, alterations, and infill development have changed the character of contributing resources since the nomination was filed.
- Orange groves documented in the original nomination have been removed.
- Street numbers for many resources have changed since the nomination was prepared
- Non-contributing resource counts are incorrect, as resources outside the 1882–1946 period of significance were excluded from totals.

- Contributing resource counts are inconsistent: Section 5 identifies 51 contributing resources, but only 50 are inventoried elsewhere in the form.
- Site Number 8OR12046 at 429 East Kennedy Boulevard (ca. 1938) is within the district boundaries and period of significance but is not inventoried.

As part of the current survey effort, individually significant sites were also anticipated from the storied and celebrated past of Eatonville's educators, writers, and community members:

- The Robert Hungerford Preparatory High School, founded in 1889 by Russell and Mary Calhoun and modeled after the Tuskegee Institute, served as a cornerstone of education for Black youth in Eatonville. The school offered a broad curriculum emphasizing practical life skills and technical subjects. Operating as a private institution until 1950, when it was transferred to Orange County as a public trust, Hungerford remained central to the community until its closure in 2009. The site was recorded as an archaeological site in 2003 (OR5884 and OR5885) and the school buildings are no longer extant.

Figure 32. Cluett Hall at Hungerford, c.1910. | Florida Memory

- The Original Eatonville Cemetery was established in approximately 1890 nearly contemporaneous with the city's incorporation in 1887 and used until approximately 1931. It had not been previously recorded on the Florida Master Site File but archival and oral history records indicate its presence near Eaton and Clark streets. Land for the cemetery was donated by Sam Moseley, one of Eatonville's pioneers and later mayor,

and Mr. Weston, a previous slave holder. Sam Moseley, Joseph Clark, family members of the Bogers, Westons, Lesters, and the Joneses may be buried there. Except for one vacant lot, the property has been built upon by contemporary housing.

Figure 33. Old City Cemetery site, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

- Eatonville's first municipal water plant was built in 1955 behind the town hall on the south side of Kennedy Boulevard (p.k.a. Apopka Drive) which was another benchmark in the independent success of the all-Black town. The water tower and tank are visible landmarks of the town, built under Mayor Columbus Crooms by M.G. Aldrich Co., of Macon, Georgia, supervised by Brailey, Wilds and Associates of Daytona Beach. Benefitting from this improvement were approximately 900 properties that were connected to the system and FHA approved financing of an additional 300-500 new homes. The town also purchased a fire truck and were installing eight fire hydrants.[189]

Continued on next page…

[189] "Water Works Job Starts," *Orlando Evening Star*, December 12, 1955, 2.

Water Works Job Starts

EATONVILLE WATER WORKS PROJ ECT STARTS

Jones High P-TA Meetings Attract Record Attendance

Figure 34. Article detailing start of Eatonville water works project. | Orlando Sentinel 12/12/1955

- East Street Wall: The Windgrove development was built on property north of Lake Avenue and east of East Street. As a part of its construction, developer Clayton Realty Company erected a concrete block wall along East Street ca. 1967, between Lake Avenue and Lake Sybelia Drive, to serve as a continuous wall between the Black Town of Eatonville and the White subdivision within the City of Maitland's municipal limits.[190] A later development continued this practice around 1971 with Park Lake Townhouses that were developed and marketed by Huskey Realty. Located on Lake Avenue east of East Street and immediately south of the Windgrove subdivision, the townhome development is also built with a concrete wall as physical separation between the project and the All-Black Town of Eatonville. This wall was built from Lake Avenue/Kennedy Boulevard on the north four blocks south to Wigman Drive.[191]

Continued on next page…

[190] "Committee Ratifies Land Use Permit For Church," *Orlando Sentinel*, November 19, 1967, 49.
[191] "Huskey Realty Advertisement," *Orlando Sentinel*, September 26, 1971, 47.

Figure 35. Article illustrating community wall, late 1970s/early 1980s. | Orange County Regional Archives

Figure 36: East Street Wall, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

- Potential for archaeological sites at demolished properties recorded as contributing on the National Register nomination
- Original and subsequent town plats that explain the development patterns of Eatonville as it expanded
- Utilize collected information from community engagement sessions to explore additional research and continue efforts to engage community around history and spaces important to residents

Criteria for Evaluation

The survey uses the criteria for placement of historic properties in the National Register of Historic Places as the basis for site evaluations. The survey process aligns with the National Register Criteria and the professional requirements of the Florida Master Site File program. Accordingly, the resulting documentation serves as a reference resource for agencies obligated to meet state and federal historic preservation requirements. The Criteria for Evaluation described below are published by the United States Department of the Interior for assessing properties for potential inclusion in the National Register.

Districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects may be considered to have significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and/or culture if they possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

> A) are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; and/or
>
> B) are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; and/or
>
> C) embody the distinctive characteristics of type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and/or
>
> D) have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures; properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes; structures that have been moved from their original locations; reconstructed historic buildings; properties primarily commemorative in nature; and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

> A) a religious property deriving its primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or

B) a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or

C) a birthplace or grave of an historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life; or

D) a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, distinctive design features, or association with historic events; or

E) a reconstructed building, when it is accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or a property primarily commemorative in intent, if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or

F) a property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or

G) a property achieving significance within the past 50 years, if it is of exceptional importance.

National Register of Historic Places

National Register of Historic Places	This is a list maintained by the National Park Service. Properties are included by an application process. Being on the National Register does not protect sites from change or demolition (unless perhaps a property owner is applying for federal tax credits).

Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The national program is intended to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect the country's historic and archeological resources. In addition to offering guidance on evaluating, documenting, and listing different types of historic places, the program also helps qualified historic properties receive preservation benefits and incentives.

Table 2. National Register of Historic Places Overview

What the National Register Does	What the National Register Does NOT Do
• Recognizes properties as historically significant at the local, state, or national level	• Does **not** restrict private property owners from altering, demolishing, or selling their property (unless other regulations apply)

- Raises awareness of a property's historical, architectural, or cultural importance
- Makes properties eligible for certain financial incentives (e.g., federal historic rehabilitation tax credits)
- Provides a level of consideration in federally funded or permitted projects through Section 106 review
- Encourages preservation through recognition and planning tools
- Can support heritage tourism and community identity
- Serves as an important planning and documentation tool for communities
- May qualify properties for additional state or local preservation programs

- Does **not** automatically create a local historic district or impose local design review
- Does **not** guarantee funding or grants
- Does **not** prevent projects from moving forward, even if they impact a listed property
- Does **not** require property owners to maintain or restore a property
- Does **not** open private property to the public
- Does **not** regulate land use, zoning, or building codes
- Does **not** automatically protect properties from demolition or neglect

Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1998, the Eatonville Historic District (#97001214) is nationally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage (Black) and Community Planning and Development, as the oldest Black incorporated municipality in the United States. It is also significant under Criterion B, as the hometown and subject of study of Zora Neale Hurston, an internationally acclaimed African American anthropologist, folklorist, and novelist.

One objective of the survey was to evaluate the current boundary and period of significance of the Eatonville Historic District and identify potentially eligible properties that are currently not included as a part of the current National Register Historic District. As a result of this historic research and survey project, **13 properties not currently considered contributing structures within the existing Eatonville National Register Historic District could potentially meet the current minimum criteria for historic district designation.**

Table 3. Potentially Contributing Structures within Existing National Register District.

FMSF	St. No.	Street	Type	C/NC	Meets NR District Now
OR12204	130	Calhoun	Avenue	NC	yes
OR12234	307	Clark	Street	NC	yes
OR12253	10	Eaton	Street	NC	yes
OR12254	16	Eaton	Street	NC	yes
OR12257	255	Eaton	Street	NC	yes
OR12259	320	Eaton	Street	NC	yes
OR12262	346	Eaton	Street	NC	yes
OR12284	312	Fords	Avenue	NC	yes
OR12289	212	Gabriel	Avenue	NC	yes

OR12308	523	Kennedy	Boulevard	NC	yes
OR12319	515	Lemon	Street	NC	yes
OR12351	148	People	Street	NC	yes
OR12395	157	West	Street	NC	yes

Historic Preservation Regulatory Framework

Historic preservation is addressed at the federal, state, and local levels of government, through intertwined legislation and practices.

- Historic preservation operates across federal, state, and local levels, with each playing a distinct but interconnected role
- The National Historic Preservation Act (1966) establishes the core federal framework, including the National Register, Section 106 review, and roles like the State Historic Preservation Officer
- Federal standards (Secretary of the Interior's Standards) and financial incentives like tax credits guide preservation practices and support rehabilitation projects
- At the state level, Florida administers preservation programs through the Division of Historical Resources, with enabling legislation and limited financial incentives (primarily local tax exemptions)
- Local governments have the greatest regulatory authority, primarily through preservation ordinances that govern designation, design review, and protection of historic resources
- Eatonville participates as a Certified Local Government (CLG), demonstrating a formal commitment to preservation and eligibility for technical assistance and funding
- Design guidelines and preservation boards help manage change, ensuring that alterations and new development are compatible with historic character

Federal

Historic preservation and cultural resource protection is addressed at the federal level through such legislation as the National Historic Preservation Act, the Antiquities Act of 1906, the National Environmental Policy Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and the Abandoned Shipwreck Act.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) is the most foundational federal legislation for the modern preservation framework we know today. The NHPA created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs), the Certified Local Government Program, the Section 106 review process for federal undertakings, and Section 110 for responsibilities of federal agencies related to historic preservation.

Through the NHPA-created National Register of Historic Places process, two important criteria for determining what resources to protect were established:

- Significance – Buildings, sites and districts can be significant at the national, regional or local level. Places are significant if they are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, or a place that has yielded or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

- Integrity – Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. There are seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. To assess integrity, a building must have visible essential physical features that represent its significance. These features are also often called “character-defining” features that make a building or site significant.

The federal government through the National Park Service has also created the Secretary of the Interior Standards (SOIS), which are a set of best practices for historic preservation. The Standards are utilized throughout the United States to establish a baseline of evaluation of historic preservation projects, and form the basis for review at the state and local levels. There are four sets of SOIS: Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing. The most commonly utilized are the Rehabilitation standards.

Secretary of the Interior Standards	The Standards are federal guidance on the treatment of historic properties. The Secretary of the Interior is the Cabinet secretary that oversees the Department of the Interior, where the National Park Service is housed. Many local governments adopt these standards into preservation ordinances. They are guidelines, intended to be flexible.

Tax credits and exemptions for historic preservation are an economic incentive that can also have a tremendous economic impact for projects and communities. At the federal level, there are tax credits available for qualifying historic properties that are income-producing or in non-residential use. Federal tax benefits are also associated with donation of historic preservation easements.

State

The Florida State Historic Preservation Office, housed in the Florida Division of Historical Resources, administers the state-level historic preservation program. And cultural resources are protected through Ch.267, Florida Statutes.

State Historic Preservation Officer	The “SHPO” is the person responsible for managing processes that are an interaction between the federal and local governments, such as the National Register or Certified Local Government programs. They may also have other duties as outlined by state legislation.

The state legislature previously recognized the necessity of planning for historic resources through the Florida Statutes regarding comprehensive plans, which specifically allowed for an optional historic and scenic preservation element setting out plans and programs for those structures or lands in the area having historical, archaeological, architectural, scenic, or similar significance. Although this section of Florida statute was repealed in 2011, local governments can still adopt a historic preservation element as an optional section of their comprehensive plan.

Because Florida does not have state income tax, there are not currently any state-level tax credits available for historic preservation. However, the state does authorize two types of local ad valorem tax exemptions for historic preservation, found in Florida Statutes 196.1961 and 196.1997-1998.

Local

The best illustration of where all three layers of government interact is through the Certified Local Government program, which is enacted through the federal National Historic Preservation Act, and administered at the state level. A local government designated under this program illustrates historic preservation is an important public policy through passage of a local historic preservation ordinance, which designates a local board to oversee preservation functions in the community. Eatonville became a Certified Local Government in 1997.

Certified Local Government	A “CLG” is a local government that has made historic preservation a policy priority. It is an application process managed by state preservation offices. CLG’s may be eligible for grants or technical assistance.

Local preservation ordinances are the backbone of the historic preservation framework, where preservation regulations have the most impact and effect. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places, while important and significant for a resource, has no legal protections associated with the listing. Local historic preservation ordinances are where historic resources are protected from alteration and demolition. Ordinances vary from place to place, largely depending on state law. In Florida, a home rule state, there is flexibility in what a community may choose to include in their preservation ordinance. The ordinance establishes the parameters of what a community will regulate, and is important to keep up to date. Preservation regulation has been upheld as a valid use of a community’s police power, as established in *Penn Central Transportation Company v. City of New York*, 438 U.S. 104 (1978).

Preservation Ordinance	This is a code of regulations adopted by a local government that guides the historic preservation program. It is where preservation has “teeth” to protect historic sites.

Ordinances in Florida may include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing districts or local landmarks
- How to establish districts/landmarks
- Creating historic resource or design review Board
- Listing Board processes and procedures
- Enumerating criteria for Board decision-making
- Explaining Board application procedures/requirements
- Setting out guidelines for design review or incorporating by reference
- Regulating signage
- Regulating archaeological resources
- Determining demolition by neglect standards and penalties
- Requiring specific information for demolition or relocation applications
- Setting economic hardship provisions
- Creating process for emergency actions
- Laying out appeals process and enforcement/penalties/injunctive relief provisions
- Explaining any tax incentives or exemptions
- Severability clauses

Preservation Board	A preservation board or commission is an appointed body of people who are authorized by the preservation ordinance to review and make decisions on changes to historic properties. They may have other responsibilities around preservation as defined in the ordinance.

Local historic design guidelines are tools used by communities to help manage change in designated historic areas. They provide clear, illustrated guidance on how to repair, alter, or construct buildings in ways that are compatible with the historic character of a place. Rather than requiring exact replication of historic styles, design guidelines typically focus on key elements such as building form, materials, scale, setbacks, and architectural details. Property owners, architects, and contractors use these guidelines when planning projects, while local preservation boards or commissions rely on them to evaluate proposed changes. In this way, design guidelines help ensure that new development and rehabilitation efforts respect the historic context, while still allowing for thoughtful evolution over time.

Design Guidelines	Design guidelines are a document or documents that a local government may adopt that guides review of changes to historic properties. They are intended to be flexible and usually used with the Secretary of the Interior Standards as additional information.

Local Regulations

The Town of Eatonville maintains an active historic preservation program grounded in both its comprehensive plan and land development code. Together, these documents establish the regulatory and policy foundation for identifying, protecting, and celebrating the town's historic resources.

Comprehensive Plan Policies

The 2018 Comprehensive Plan, which carries a planning horizon through 2038, integrates historic preservation throughout its goals, objectives, and policies. The Eatonville Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is formally incorporated into the Future Land Use Map, and its design guidelines are applied to new development and redevelopment reviews. The overarching plan goal is to encourage all development to reflect the town's historical character. The 1997 Historical Survey Map is referenced as a tool for identifying and evaluating historic resources.

Additional objectives to achieve preservation include maintaining an official listing and map of historic structures, pursuing grants to inventory historically significant properties, coordinating with state and federal agencies on preservation of historic housing, and supporting community initiatives that promote Eatonville's history and culture. The Land Development Code puts these measures into effect.

Regulatory Framework

Chapter 48 of the Land Development Code establishes Eatonville's historic preservation ordinance, creating the Local Register of Historic Places, a Historic Preservation Board, and a formal designation and review process. Properties listed on the Local Register, whether as individual historic properties, historic districts, or archaeological sites, are subject to regulatory oversight of demolition, exterior alteration, relocation, new construction, archaeological disturbance, and lot division.

Regulated work requires a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), issued either administratively by the planning director for work restoring original appearance, or by the Historic Preservation Board following a public hearing. COA decisions are guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and an approved COA is a prerequisite for any municipal permit. The ordinance also addresses demolition by neglect through coordination with code enforcement and provides an appeal path to the town council. The town's goal of maintaining Certified Local Government status provides an additional layer of accountability.

Historical Fieldwork

Architectural & Historical Analysis
The architectural and historical analysis reveals a built environment that reflects Eatonville's unique origins, mid-century growth, and evolving social and cultural landscape.

- The survey area is predominantly residential, with a central civic and commercial corridor along East Kennedy Boulevard that anchors community life
- Development patterns highlight a major growth period in the 1960s, reflecting Civil Rights-era dynamics, population growth, and new subdivisions
- Earlier buildings (pre-WWII) are primarily wood-frame vernacular structures, while postwar development features CMU construction and Ranch/Mid-Century Modern styles
- The built environment illustrates a clear transition from traditional Southern building forms to modern construction methods and suburban patterns
- Commercial and institutional buildings along Kennedy Boulevard reflect an evolving neighborhood-scale business district
- Key community features, including cemeteries, schools, and civic spaces, demonstrate the town's ongoing cultural, educational, and social significance

The Eatonville survey area encompasses a compact but historically rich townscape whose built environment reflects the community's unique origins, evolving social fabric, and the broader arc of African American history in Florida. The land uses within the survey area are predominantly residential in character, ranging from single-family dwellings to a small number of multi-family structures distributed throughout the town's interior blocks. A central non-residential corridor, East Kennedy Boulevard, forms the civic and commercial spine of the community, concentrating the town's commercial and retail and service establishments, municipal buildings, religious institutions, offices. A motel and museum are also sited along this corridor.

Outside the town limits lies the Eatonville Memorial Gardens Cemetery, the contemporary cemetery used once the original town cemetery inside the town was no longer active. The cemetery is within the jurisdiction of the adjacent City of Maitland, though it retains its historical and cultural significance to the Eatonville community. In the southwestern quadrant of the survey area, modern academic and recreational facilities represent later phases of civic investment, reflecting the community's ongoing commitment to education and public life.

The developmental chronology of Eatonville's built environment is a direct reflection of the social and political conditions experienced by African Americans in Central Florida throughout the twentieth century. Of the buildings constructed by 1980 that were recorded during the survey, nearly half date to the decade of the 1960s, a period of profound national significance coinciding with the Civil Rights Movement. This concentration of mid-century construction suggests that the 1960s represented a developmental apex for Eatonville, driven both by organic population growth within the established community and by the town's appeal to Black families relocating from elsewhere in the state and region. To this end, new subdivisions such as Eaton Estates,

were platted at the southeastern end in what was once a mix of orange groves and forested area.

Growth continued into the 1970s, though at a measurably reduced pace, and construction activity had slowed considerably by the close of that decade. This arc of development, a surge in the 1960s followed by gradual tapering, is consistent with broader patterns of mid-century urbanization in Florida and may also reflect the complex socioeconomic pressures that accompanied desegregation, including increased residential mobility for Black families who now had access to previously restricted housing markets in surrounding municipalities.

The older residential stock, particularly buildings predating World War II, is composed primarily of wood-frame construction executed in vernacular interpretations of the Folk Victorian style. These buildings are modest in scale and ornamentation but reflect the craft traditions and available materials of their time. Their pitched roofs, simple decorative millwork, and front porch configurations are consistent with rural and small-town residential forms common across the rural South and in Florida's interior communities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In contrast, the post-World War II and mid-century residential buildings exhibit the construction conventions and aesthetics associated with the Contemporary or Mid-century Modern styles, as well as Ranch forms. These structures are typically of concrete block or concrete masonry unit (CMU) construction, a building method that gained widespread adoption in Florida during the postwar period owing to its low cost, durability in the subtropical climate, and the regional availability of materials. Their flat or low-pitched roofs, horizontal massing, and utilitarian detailing stand in marked formal contrast to the earlier wood-frame buildings, yet together the two traditions collectively narrate the community's evolution across a century of construction.

The buildings along the East Kennedy corridor are varied in their building form, access, and setbacks in relation to the street front. What they do have in common is they are predominantly one-to two-story masonry structures with storefront configurations. The minimal number of two-part commercial buildings present within the survey area are characterized by a functional ground-floor commercial zone that is distinguished from an upper zone through fenestration and cornice details. Taken together, the commercial fabric of Kennedy Boulevard reflects the scale and character of a neighborhood business district that has evolved over time.

Architectural Styles & Forms in the Survey Area

Table 4. Architectural Styles & Associated Numbers in the Survey Area.

Style	**Number of Buildings**
Bungalow	8
Commercial	1
Frame Vernacular	25

Industrial Vernacular	1
Mansard	1
Masonry Vernacular	29
Mid-Century Modern	46
Minimal Traditional	5
Other	2
Ranch	141
TOTAL	259

The numbers do not add up to total survey counts due to surveyed resources that do not have a style (e.g. cemetery) or were demolished.

Folk Victorian

- Simple, vernacular house forms enhanced with modest Victorian decorative details
- Typically small-scale, wood-frame structures rather than elaborate high-style Victorian buildings
- Characterized by decorative porch elements (turned columns, balusters, trim, brackets)
- Built using pattern-book or catalog millwork made widely available by railroad expansion
- Designed for climate with raised foundations, large windows, and cross-ventilation
- Common forms include front gable, pyramid roof, and L-shaped (gable-and-wing) layouts

Folk Victorian buildings represent the earliest recognizable building tradition in Eatonville, combining the practical logic of regional vernacular construction with the decorative influence of nationally popular Victorian-era styles. These are modest, small-scale structures (not the imposing multi-story Victorian buildings with complex roof forms and elaborate cladding associated with high-style examples), but rather simple vernacular houses given more detail through the application of decorative trim. Like other vernacular building types, they could be constructed without formal drawings or complex engineering, and they incorporated regional adaptations that reflected local climate, materials, and building practice.

The expansion of railroad infrastructure in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the transforming factor in the development of this building type. Rail lines brought mass-manufactured lumber and millwork into communities that previously had limited access to such materials, making decorative elements widely affordable for the first time. Turned porch columns and balusters, decorative bargeboards at gable ends, and eave brackets could be selected from catalogs and applied by local builders, elevating a plain vernacular house.

The underlying house form, however, remained rooted in the same climate-responsive strategies common to all of Eatonville's vernacular building stock. Pier foundations elevated the floor above grade to promote air circulation and reduce moisture intrusion beneath the structure. Windows were large and simply detailed, aligned across opposing walls to maximize cross-ventilation. Narrow rectangular footprints ensured that most rooms had direct access to window openings on more than one side, improving airflow throughout the interior.

Examples of Folk Victorian housing surviving in Eatonville include the front gable form, the square-plan pyramid roof form, and the gable-and-wing configuration in an L-plan, in which a primary gable mass intersects with a secondary wing to create a more complex footprint while retaining the essential simplicity of vernacular construction. In each case, the Victorian character of the building is carried primarily by the decorative treatment of the porch rather than by complexity of form or massing.

Changes to these buildings through time often means the loss of the more decorative elements due to weathering and deterioration. Like other national patterns, synthetic siding materials often were applied over the original materials to provide a new or refreshed appearance. If not maintained, windows and doors fall into disrepair making replacement options much more affordable at the time.

Figure 37. Folk Victorian style at 11 Taylor Avenue, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

Frame Vernacular

- Simple, rectangular wood-frame houses built without formal architectural design
- Designed for climate with raised pier foundations, large windows, and cross-ventilation
- Feature broad overhanging eaves to provide shade and reduce heat gain
- Typically include front porches, symmetrical facades, and horizontal wood siding
- Common forms include front gable, side gable, and L-shaped (ell-plan) layouts
- Built using locally available materials with minimal decorative detailing

Frame vernacular buildings are a prominent building typology in the South, characterized by passive cooling methods that made indoor spaces as comfortable as possible in hot and humid climates. Lumber for siding, trim, and windows was locally abundant and could be milled nearby, allowing builders to repeat proven forms from one structure to the next while incorporating stylistic details at their discretion. These were simple forms, generally a rectangular plan beneath a single roof, that could be constructed without a formal design, which is precisely what gives them their vernacular character.

Since mechanical cooling was unavailable when these homes were built, and later retrofits could be costly, maximizing natural ventilation was essential. A raised foundation, typically brick or concrete block piers, elevates the structure above grade, allowing air and water to circulate freely beneath the floor, reducing moisture intrusion, and ventilating the underside of the building. Broad, overhanging eaves extend well beyond the exterior walls, casting deep shadows that shade wall surfaces and windows from direct sun and limiting heat gain. Fenestration is carefully arranged so that windows and doors align across opposing walls, creating cross-ventilation pathways that draw prevailing breezes through the interior.

Numerous examples of frame vernacular housing survive in Eatonville dating from the early to mid-twentieth century. The most common forms are the front gable and side gable types, distinguished by the orientation of the roof ridge relative to the street facade. A smaller number take an ell-plan form, in which a front gable and side gable intersect to create an L-shaped footprint. Regardless of form, these buildings share a consistent set of features: a front porch spanning some or all of the facade, symmetrically arranged window and door openings, horizontal wood siding, wood windows, and simple trim details at window and door surrounds and building corners.

Over time, many of these buildings have been altered through routine maintenance or updating. Original wood windows may have been replaced with aluminum single-pane units or two-over-two sash with horizontal muntins, and wood siding is sometimes concealed beneath vinyl or aluminum cladding that mimics the original horizontal pattern. More substantial changes include porch enclosures and later additions to the structure. Garages are uncommon among these properties, and where they do exist, they were built as detached structures.

Figure 38: Frame vernacular style at 131 N. Wymore Road, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

Masonry Vernacular

- Simple, rectangular buildings constructed of brick or concrete block rather than wood
- Share vernacular design principles with frame buildings, using passive cooling strategies (cross-ventilation, shaded porches, overhanging eaves)
- Benefit from durable, fire-resistant materials with thermal mass that helps regulate interior temperatures
- Built without formal plans, reflecting local craftsmanship and practical construction methods
- Commonly include front porches, regular window patterns, and minimal decorative detailing
- Often used for residential, civic, and commercial buildings, typically dating from the 1930s–1960s

Masonry vernacular buildings represent a parallel tradition to their wood frame counterparts, sharing the same regional building culture and passive cooling strategies while substituting locally available masonry materials for lumber. In Florida and much of the Gulf Coast region, this commonly meant brick or concrete block construction, both of which offered practical advantages in terms of durability, fire resistance, and thermal mass. The thick masonry walls absorbed heat slowly during the day and released it at night, moderating interior temperatures in ways that complemented the ventilation strategies common to the broader vernacular tradition.

Like frame vernacular buildings, masonry vernacular structures were built without formal architectural drawings, relying instead on the accumulated knowledge of local craftsmen and the

practical logic of tried and tested forms. Plans were similarly simple, typically rectangular with straightforward roof forms, and details were applied at the builder's discretion, resulting in modest but sometimes expressive variations from one building to the next.

The same passive cooling principles governed the design of these structures. Raised foundations, broad overhanging eaves, and aligned fenestration for cross-ventilation were all common features, though the foundation treatment could differ; masonry buildings were sometimes set on continuous perimeter walls or reinforced block piers rather than the isolated brick piers typical of wood frame construction. Front porches remained a defining feature, providing shaded transitional space between the exterior and interior.

Where masonry vernacular buildings in Eatonville survive, they generally date between 1930s-1960, reflecting the wider availability of brick and concrete block as an affordable and locally produced building material during that period. While most frame vernacular buildings are residential, masonry was used for churches, commercial buildings, and municipal structures amassing a larger footprint and steeper roof or use of flat roofs. They are mostly rectangular in form and have regular window openings.

Over time, alterations to masonry vernacular buildings have tended to follow similar patterns as their frame counterparts. Windows and doors may have been replaced with aluminum or vinyl units, and later additions or porch enclosures are not uncommon. Because masonry construction is more resistant to some forms of deterioration, the primary fabric of these buildings has in many cases survived better than wood frame examples.

Figure 39. Masonry vernacular style at 177 S. West Street, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

Bungalow

- Simple, front-gabled, rectangular wood-frame houses with compact footprints
- Defined by low-pitched roofs and a horizontal, ground-hugging appearance
- Feature front porches integrated into the main roof or with a secondary porch roof
- Typically include wood-frame construction, pier foundations, and multi-pane wood windows
- Influenced by the Craftsman style, sometimes incorporating modest decorative trim and detailing
- Designed for climate with overhanging eaves, shaded porches, and cross-ventilation

Bungalows, in their true form, can be characterized as frame vernacular and therefore they share many characteristics. The distinction is that Bungalows are prominently a simple, front gabled, rectangular plan with offset or secondary porch roof. Otherwise, they feature wood frame construction, piers, regular rectangular window openings with wood sashes and multiple panes of glass. At the turn of the 20th century, the Craftsman style was popularized from California and more detailed Bungalows emerged with varying trim and finish details.

The defining features of these buildings are a low-pitched roof, a front porch integrated into the overall massing of the structure, and a compact footprint that keeps the form simple and economical. The low roofline gives these houses a horizontal, ground-hugging appearance that distinguishes them from the more vertical gable forms typical of other frame vernacular buildings in the area. Porches are typically covered by an extension of the main roof or a subsidiary roof of the same pitch, reinforcing the low, sheltering character of the design. As with other vernacular building types in Eatonville, construction relied on locally available lumber and the practical knowledge of builders working without formal drawings.

Passive cooling remained a practical priority in these structures as in all of Eatonville's vernacular housing. The broad, overhanging eaves characteristic of the bungalow form served double duty, lending the building its distinctive profile and open eave design, while shading walls and windows from direct sun. Front porches provided shaded outdoor living space and helped moderate heat gain at the front facade. Fenestration patterns were arranged to encourage cross-ventilation, consistent with the climate-responsive strategies common across the vernacular building stock.

Continued on next page…

Figure 40. Bungalow style at 307 Lemon Street, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

Commercial

- Typically one- to two-story masonry buildings (concrete block, brick, or stucco)
- Located primarily along East Kennedy Boulevard with minimal setbacks from the street
- Simple, rectangular forms oriented toward the street with flat roofs and parapets
- Feature storefront-style ground floors with large windows and prominent entries
- Designed for flexibility, often accommodating multiple businesses and evolving uses over time
- Characterized by modest decorative detailing, such as parapet banding, stucco textures, or masonry accents
- Frequently altered over time with updated storefronts, materials, and configurations

Commercial buildings in Eatonville reflect the town's growth over time in their design and location. Like the vernacular residential buildings that make up the majority of the historic built environment, these structures were built practically and economically, without formal architectural design, and were adapted over time to meet changing commercial needs. They are mostly located along East Kennedy Boulevard, with some on cross streets within one block of Kennedy.

The typical commercial buildings in Eatonville built prior to 1946 are one or two-story masonry structures of simple rectangular plan, oriented directly toward the street with little or no setback from the sidewalk. Concrete block was the dominant construction material for commercial

buildings and sometimes this was exposed, more often it was covered with brick veneer or stucco, offering affordable, fire-resistant construction that could be built without specialized labor. Earlier examples may have been of wood frame construction, consistent with the material traditions of the town's oldest residential buildings, however these no longer exist in their original form.

The primary street-facing facade is typically organized into symmetrical or asymmetrical bays of windows and entry features; several commercial buildings held more than one business. There are typically storefront level windows or at least larger windows on the ground floor, if there is a second floor, and a covering over the entry. Most roofs are flat with a short parapet that gives the building a more substantial appearance from the ground view. Details in masonry construction or finish includes banding at the parapet, protruding concrete sills, textured stucco surface, and in one case corner embellishments creating quoins. Otherwise, commercial buildings in this category, have modest detailing and it is applied rather than integral to the construction.

As with vernacular residential buildings, incremental alteration over time is a defining characteristic of historic commercial buildings in Eatonville. Storefronts were periodically updated to reflect changing retail practices or ownership, with original windows and entries sometimes replaced, reconfigured, or infilled. Exterior surfaces may have been painted or re-clad in later materials.

Figure 41. Commercial style at 429 E. Kennedy Boulevard, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

Duplex

- Residential buildings containing two separate dwelling units within one structure
- Typically side-by-side configurations under a single roof (often side gable)
- Commonly constructed of masonry on continuous foundations
- Each unit has its own entrance and independent living facilities
- Modest, vernacular forms with minimal stylistic detailing
- Reflect increased housing density and affordability, especially post–World War II
- Represent a shift from predominantly single-family development to small-scale multi-family housing

A duplex is a residential building containing two independent dwelling units within a single structure. They were intentionally designed this way, while other residential structures may have been converted to a duplex or multi-family unit. In Eatonville, there are a few duplexes and they are characterized as a side-by-side under a side gable roof, most often with masonry construction on a continuous foundation. Each unit has its own entrance and living facilities, and sometimes extended porch element. These are modest, vernacular forms that reflect incremental increases in residential density and affordability rather than an architectural style.

In Eatonville, residential development at the time of the town's founding in 1887 consisted almost entirely of small, single-family, wood-frame houses on individual lots. Purpose-built multi-family housing was not a primary feature of the early built environment. Instead, multi-family living emerged gradually in the early to mid-20th century through informal adaptations, including the addition of rental units, internal subdivisions of existing homes, and side-by-side dwelling forms. More clearly defined duplexes and small-scale multi-family buildings became more common after World War II, reflecting broader regional trends toward increased housing density and changing economic conditions.

Continued on next page…

Figure 42. Duplex at 251 Clark Street, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

Contemporary (Mid-Century Modern)

- Defined by low-slung rooflines (front gable, flat, or combinations) with horizontal emphasis
- Typically feature asymmetrical façades with prominent picture windows
- Constructed of masonry, stucco, or stone veneer, reflecting mid-century materials
- Often include carports integrated into the overall design
- Characterized by aluminum windows, including awning and horizontal sash configurations
- Incorporate minimal but stylized decorative elements, such as shutters or textured surfaces
- Represent a mid-20th-century phase of development, with both residential and select civic/commercial examples

In Eatonville, Contemporary (Mid-Century Modern as classified in the Florida Master Site File) architecture is readily identifiable and represents a distinct phase of mid-20th-century development. While a few high-style examples stand out, most buildings follow a consistent residential pattern characterized by low-slung front-gable roofs, often with an offset flat or gable roof that visually links the primary entrance to an attached open carport.

These buildings typically feature asymmetrical façades, commonly anchored by a large picture window, and are constructed of masonry or stucco, sometimes enhanced with stone-textured stucco or stone veneer. Windows are most often aluminum, including awning types, while sash windows frequently appear as two-over-two configurations with horizontal muntins, reinforcing

the horizontal emphasis of the style. Decorative shutters are also present, either as applied elements or suggested through patterns formed in stucco or brick veneer.

In addition to residential examples, the style is expressed in select non-residential buildings, including a mid-century motel and a contemporary church, which serve as notable, more architecturally expressive representations of the period in Eatonville.

Figure 43. Mid-Century Modern style at 133 Clark Street, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

Ranch

- One-story houses with low-pitched roofs and strong horizontal emphasis
- Typically rectangular in form with simple, low-profile massing
- Commonly constructed of masonry (concrete block) with minimal ornamentation
- Often include attached carports, sometimes later enclosed
- Feature simple façades with elements like decorative shutters
- Found in clustered developments reflecting postwar suburban growth patterns
- Roof types include side-gable and front-facing variations, maintaining a consistent low-slung appearance

Ranch-style buildings in Eatonville share a consistent set of mid-20th-century design characteristics that reflect both regional building practices and postwar suburban development

patterns. These one-story residences are typically defined by low-pitched rooflines, simple rectangular massing, and an emphasis on horizontal form.

Common features include exposed masonry construction, often concrete block, paired with minimal ornamentation, as well as attached carports that may be open or later enclosed. Many retain decorative shutters, which add modest visual detail to otherwise restrained façades. In some streetscapes, particularly in the southwestern portion of the town, a distinctive feature is the presence of uniform mailbox posts or masonry columns, reinforcing a cohesive neighborhood identity.

These buildings are often clustered in dense groupings, suggesting coordinated periods of development, though examples are also scattered throughout the broader survey area. Two primary roof typologies are evident: (1) a traditional side-gable form, and (2) a compact front-facing roof form, both of which maintain the low-profile, horizontally oriented aesthetic typical of ranch-style architecture.

Figure 44. Ranch style at 148 People Street, 2025. | Planning 2 Preserve

Local Variants

Beyond the broad architectural styles represented in the survey area, several distinctive building details reflect the ingenuity of local craftsmen and the community's creative responses to prevailing aesthetic trends, available materials, and economic circumstances. These local adaptations are not merely superficial departures from convention; they reveal a layered story of resourcefulness, civic pride, and the transmission of design ideas within a tight-knit community.

One of the more striking documented examples involves the Town Hall and Post Office, whose originally smooth exterior face was completely refaced with a stucco finish applied in a rubble-stone pattern. This treatment fundamentally transformed the appearance of the building, lending it a more textured and substantial character without altering its underlying structure. The work was carried out by local young men contracted through a federal grant administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity's summer work program.[192] The project is notable not only as an architectural intervention but also as a reflection of the federal employment initiatives of the late 1960s and their tangible impact on the built environment of Eatonville. This rubble-stone stucco finish did not remain confined to the Town Hall; it was subsequently repeated on a number of residential structures identified within the survey area, suggesting that the technique was adopted more broadly by local builders and homeowners who admired or were inspired by the civic building's refaced appearance.

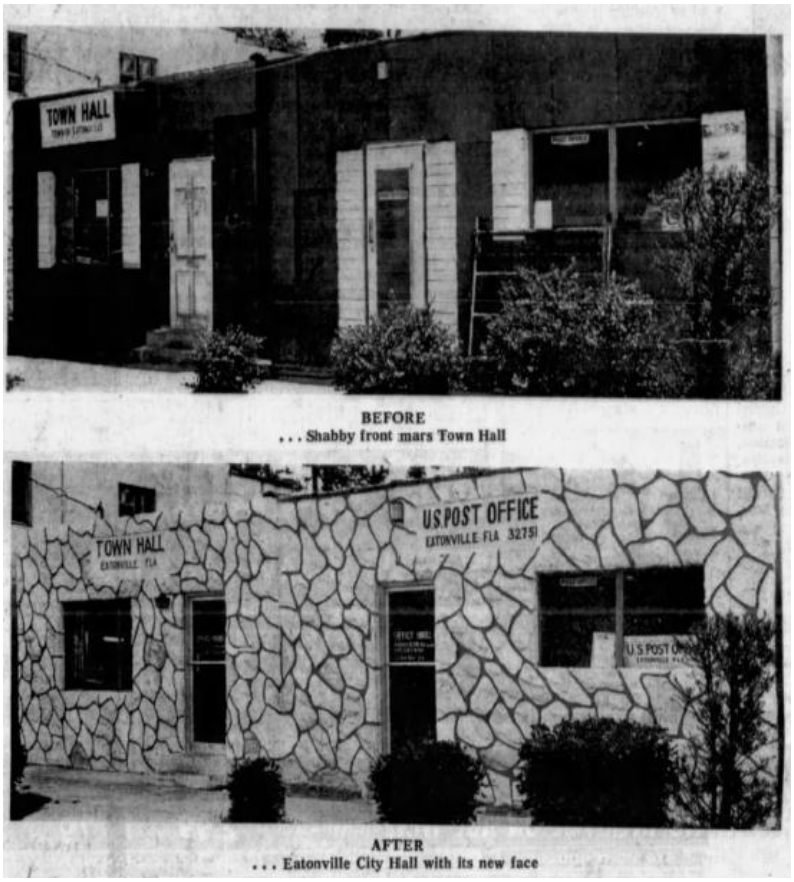


Figure 45. Exterior renovation of Town Hall. | Orlando Evening Star 10/14/1969

A related but distinct masonry treatment can be observed at the Smith's Eatonville Motel, which was designed by architect Allen Edgar Arthur (1932–2022) and constructed by builder A.B. Williams. Unlike the stucco-applied rubble-stone pattern used on the Town Hall, the motel was

[192] "Upgrading of Town Hall Sets Example for Eatonville Homes," *Orlando Evening Star*, October 14, 1969, 28.

finished with a true stone veneer, actual stone material applied to the exterior surface rather than a stucco simulation. This genuine stone veneer treatment was not isolated to the motel alone; it also appears on Contemporary and Ranch-style buildings constructed during the same period in Eatonville, pointing to the influence that prominent local commissions could have on the surrounding residential and commercial fabric.

Figure 46. 408 Eaton Street, left, and 200 People Street, right. | Planning 2 Preserve

Another variation of decorative stucco work found in the survey area is the use of ashlar stone facing, in which the stucco is worked and scored to replicate the appearance of precisely cut and regularly coursed stone masonry. This finish conveyed a sense of formality and permanence, evoking associations with more monumental building traditions.

Figure 47. 32 Elizabeth Street with ashlar stone facing. | Planning 2 Preserve

A further masonry and stucco embellishment observed in Eatonville is the introduction of quoins, square or rectangular blocks applied at the exterior corners of buildings to create the visual impression of a structural column or pilaster. Quoins have a long history in formal and high-style architectural traditions, where they were used to emphasize the solidity and craftsmanship of a building's construction. In the Eatonville context, however, they were creatively adapted and applied to more modest structures as a means of elevating the building's exterior presentation and lending it a degree of architectural distinction that might otherwise be associated with grander designs.

Figure 48. 175 Johnson Street with quoins at exterior corner. | Planning 2 Preserve

Figure 49. 549 E. Kennedy Blvd. with quoins at exterior corners. | Planning 2 Preserve

Finally, another inventive application of stucco involved its use to simulate the appearance of traditional shutters. Rather than functional or even decorative wooden shutters attached to the building, stucco was applied and shaped directly onto the wall surface in a manner that reproduces the form of shutters in relief. This technique represents a purely aesthetic gesture, one that references a familiar architectural element while translating it into an entirely different material, demonstrating the flexibility and imaginative range of the local craftsmen working within this community.

Figure 50. 10 Moseley Avenue with embedded shutters. | Planning 2 Preserve

Figure 51. 15 E. Kennedy Blvd. with embedded shutters. | Planning 2 Preserve

Results and Conclusions

Conclusions

For this survey, the project area was selected in consultation with the Town of Eatonville and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. As a result of the survey, the period of significance could be expanded to 1975 that would include the continuous growth of churches and mid-century housing developments. Buildings up to 1980 were recorded, however, the 1970s marked a notable decline in the concentration of historic buildings. There were 122 buildings constructed during the 1960s, 40 in the 1970s, and only 7 in 1980. Only a few buildings constructed between 1975 and 1980 were determined to potentially meet the National Register criteria as part of a district, so including these buildings would not add or detract from the overall integrity of a district.

Historic structure forms and digital photographs for this project are housed at the Florida Master Site File office in Tallahassee along with copies of this report. Field notes, photographic logs, maps, and other paperwork generated in the course of this project are stored with the CPC team.

This section includes a brief discussion of notable resources within the survey boundaries.

National Register of Historic Places

One of the purposes of this survey was to identify properties or districts that may be eligible for nomination to the NRHP.

In completing the FMSF forms, each building was evaluated in the field as contributing or noncontributing as if there was a district present. The contributing buildings were present during the period of significance, possess integrity, and relate to the significance of the property. Noncontributing resources are typically historic buildings which have been altered to the point they have lost integrity or have a construction date outside of the area's period of significance.

Contributing Resource	Buildings, structures, sites, or objects that add to the historical significance of a place. They were typically built during the area's period of significance and still retain enough of their original character to help tell the story of that place. In other words, they "contribute" to why the area is historically important.
Non-Contributing Resource	Buildings, structures, sites, or objects that do not add to that historical significance. This could be because they were built after the period of significance, or because they've been altered so much that they no longer reflect their historic appearance. They may still be useful or meaningful, but they don't help convey the historic character of the area in the same way.

After the fieldwork, the locations of the potentially contributing buildings were mapped to determine if a district could be formed.

Potentially Eligible Individual Resources

11 properties identified as potentially eligible during this survey would be considered individually eligible:

Table 5. Brief Description and Assessment of Each Potentially Individually Eligible Resources.

FMSF No.	Name/Address	Year Built	Style	NRHP Eligibility
OR12301	Catherine W. Clark Alexander Community Post Office / 332 E Kennedy Blvd	1959	Masonry Vernacular	Potentially Eligible
OR08405	Eatonville Memorial Gardens / Wymore Rd, Maitland, FL 32751	1917	N/A	Potentially Eligible
OR11960	Eatonville Town Hall / Serenity Chapel Funeral Home / 307 E Kennedy Blvd	1971	Mid-Century Commercial Mansard Style	Potentially Eligible
OR12456	Eatonville Water Tower / 321 Lemon St	1956	Industrial Vernacular	Potentially Eligible
OR09086	Moseley House / 11 Taylor St	1888	Frame Vernacular	Potentially Eligible
OR12204	Open Door Baptist Church / 130 N Calhoun Ave, Maitland, FL 32751	1931	Masonry Vernacular	Potentially Eligible
OR12310	St. Lawrence AME Church / 549 E Kennedy Blvd	1972	Masonry Vernacular	Potentially Eligible

OR12306	Smith's Eatonville Motel / 427 E Kennedy Blvd	1967	Mid-Century Modern	Potentially Eligible
OR12311	Thomas House / 550 E Kennedy Blvd	1881	Frame Vernacular	Potentially Eligible
OR12302	344 East Kennedy Boulevard	1963	Masonry Vernacular	Potentially Eligible
OR12243	World Wide Revival Center Church / 130 N College Ave	1970	Mid-Century Modern	Potentially Eligible

Catherine W. Clark Alexander Community Post Office

The Catherine W. Clark Alexander Community Post Office, located at 332 E Kennedy Blvd (OR12301; Figure 52) holds significant historical value. One of the oldest surviving public buildings on Kennedy Boulevard, the structure was built to serve as the Eatonville Town Hall in 1959. In addition, it is the facility where a rural station for Eatonville, under the Maitland post office, also opened in 1959. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage.

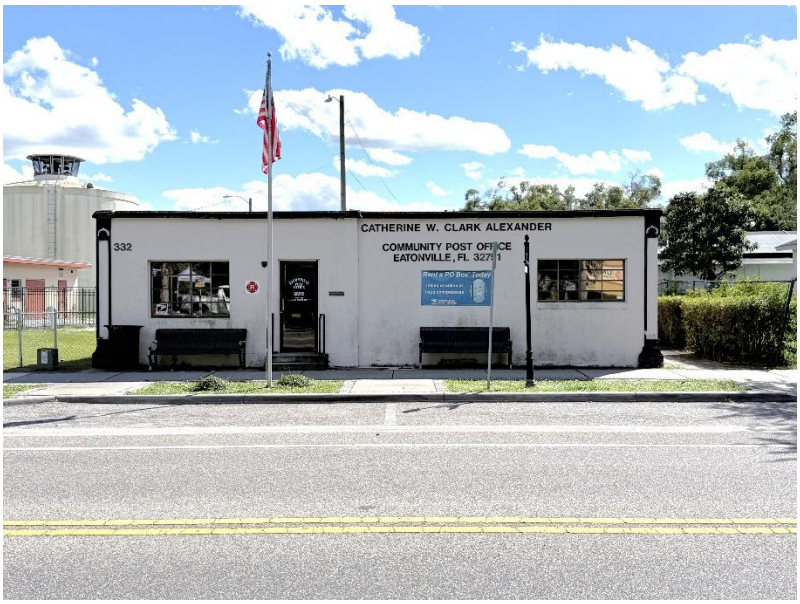


Figure 52. Community Post Office, 332 East Kennedy Boulevard. | Planning 2 Preserve

Eatonville Memorial Gardens

Eatonville Memorial Gardens (OR08405; Figure 53) is located just north of the Town of Eatonville along Wymore Road. It lies within the city limits of Maitland. This cemetery includes the graves of persons important to the development of the Town of Eatonville and is significant on the local level for its association with the town's founding members and families. The cemetery is recommended eligible under Criteria A for its association with Black Ethnic Heritage and may also be eligible under Criteria Consideration D as the cemetery is associated with the development of the community that was segregated at the time of its development.

Figure 53. Eatonville Memorial Gardens, 600 Wymore Road. | Planning 2 Preserve

Eatonville Town Hall / Serenity Chapel Funeral Home

Eatonville Town Hall, located at 307 E Kennedy Blvd (OR11960; Figure 54) opened as the Serenity Chapel Funeral Home in 1971. Prior to becoming the Eatonville Town Hall, Serenity Chapel also made the building available to clubs, organizations, fraternities and individuals throughout Central Florida. With the seating capacity of 150, it was used for anniversaries, weddings and additional gatherings. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage. It may also qualify under Criterion C for its architectural merit.

Figure 54. Eatonville Town Hall, 307 East Kennedy Boulevard. | Planning 2 Preserve

East Eatonville Water Tower, located at 21 Moseley Avenue (OR12456; Figure 55), is a cone-top water tower that has since become a landmark to the community and a symbol of the town's identity as one of the first self-governing Black municipalities. Common from the late 1890s through about 1940, the tank design itself is cylindrical with a conical or slightly domed bottom/top, which is typical of early to mid-20th-century steel tanks. These were widely used for municipal systems and industrial sites because they were relatively simple to fabricate and maintain. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage. It may also qualify under Criterion C for its architectural merit.

Figure 55. Eatonville Water Tower, 21 Moseley Avenue. | Planning 2 Preserve

Moseley House

Moseley House, located at 11 Taylor Avenue (OR09086; Figure 56) is a strong example of its residential Frame Vernacular architectural type and holds significant historical value. Constructed in 1888, it is the second oldest structure in the town. The house was owned by Jim and Matilda Clark Moseley, Matilda was the niece of Eatonville's founder and first mayor. Author Zora Neale Hurston was a friend of Matilda and often visited the house. The house was restored and opened as a museum in 2000. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage. It may also qualify under Criterion C for its architectural merit.

Figure 56. Moseley House, 11 Taylor Avenue. | Planning 2 Preserve

Open Door Missionary Baptist Church

Open Door Missionary Baptist Church, located at 130 N Calhoun Avenue (OR12204; Figure 57), is a strong example of its Frame Vernacular architectural type and holds significant historical value. The congregation was established in 1931 when it splintered from the Macedonia Baptist Church. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage. It may also qualify under Criterion C for its architectural merit.

Continued on next page…

Figure 57. Open Door Missionary Baptist Church, 130 N. Calhoun Avenue. | Planning 2 Preserve

St. Lawrence AME Church

St. Lawrence AME Church, located at 549 E Kennedy Blvd (OR12310; Figure 58), is a strong example of its architectural type and holds significant historical value. The church has played a vital role in the social history and development of the Town of Eatonville. It is the oldest institution in the Town of Eatonville.

Originally organized in 1881, the congregation first held worship services in a small building donated by Lewis H. Lawrence. The present St. Lawrence A.M.E. Church was dedicated on August 17, 1972. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage. It may also qualify under Criterion C for its architectural merit.

Figure 58. St. Lawrence AME Church, 549 E. Kennedy Boulevard. | Planning 2 Preserve

Smith's Eatonville Motel

Smith's Eatonville Motel, located at 427 E Kennedy Blvd (OF12306; Figure 59), appears to have retained its integrity and is recommended eligible under Criteria A for its significance to the Social History and association with Black Ethnic Heritage. Ben and Broxie Smith opened the motel in March 1967. The 17-unit motel was designed by Allen Edgar Arthur (1932-2022) and built by A.B. Williams for $85,000. It appears to have retained its integrity and is a good example of the Mid-Century Modern style and may also be eligible under Criteria C for Architecture.

Figure 59. Smith's Eatonville Motel, 427 E. Kennedy Boulevard. | Planning 2 Preserve

Thomas House

Thomas House, located 550 E Kennedy Blvd (OR12311; Figure 60) holds significant historical value. Built in 1881, the structure served as a place of worship for the St. Lawrence A.M.E. Church. Through the use of alternating worship times, it was also utilized by the Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. It later served as the town's first library and as a "juke joint." In 1946, it was purchased by Stenson Thomas for residential use. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage.

Continued on next page…

Figure 60. Thomas House, 550 E. Kennedy Boulevard. | Planning 2 Preserve

344 East Kennedy Boulevard

Zora Neale Hurston National Museum, located at 344 E Kennedy Blvd (OR12311; Figure 61) is a two-story masonry vernacular mixed-use building that was constructed in 1963. It contains two commercial units on the first floor and residential units on the second floor. For many years, the first floor was occupied by Boswell & Son Tavern. Today, it is the location of the Zora Neale Hurston National Museum. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage.

Figure 61. Zora Neale Hurston Museum, 344 E. Kennedy Boulevard. | Planning 2 Preserve

World Wide Revival Center Church

World Wide Revival Center Church, located at 130 N College Ave (OR12243; Figure 62), is a strong example of its architectural type and holds significant historical value. The sanctuary was erected in 1970. It is recommended that the building be considered NRHP eligible for listing under Criterion A for its significant associations with Social History and Black Ethnic Heritage. It may also qualify under Criterion C for its architectural merit.

Figure 62. World Wide Revival Center Church, 130 N. College Avenue. | Planning 2 Preserve

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:
FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE
SURVEY LOG SHEET

Forthcoming

APPENDIX B:
TABLE OF INVENTORIED PROPERTIES

site_id	street_number	street_name	street_type	construction_year	style
OR12197	13	Bel Air	Street	1964	Mid-Century Modern
OR12198	14	Bel Air	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12199	19	Bel Air	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12200	20	Bel Air	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12201	25	Bel Air	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12202	31	Bel Air	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12203	37	Bel Air	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12195	7	Bel Air	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12196	8	Bel Air	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12208	106	Calhoun	Avenue	1976	Ranch
OR12209	107	Calhoun	Avenue	1969	Ranch
OR12210	112	Calhoun	Avenue	1910	Frame Vernacular
OR12211	113	Calhoun	Avenue	1970	Ranch
OR12204	130	Calhoun	Avenue	1931	Masonry Vernacular
OR12212	149	Calhoun	Avenue	1935	Bungalow
OR12205	19	Calhoun	Avenue	1968	Masonry Vernacular
OR12213	200	Calhoun	Avenue	1970	Ranch
OR12214	206	Calhoun	Avenue	1967	Ranch
OR12215	208	Calhoun	Avenue	1946	Minimal Traditional
OR12216	212	Calhoun	Avenue	1965	Ranch
OR12217	213	Calhoun	Avenue	1950	Ranch
OR09030	215	Calhoun	Avenue		
OR09053	24	Calhoun	Avenue		
OR12206	25	Calhoun	Avenue	1948	Masonry Vernacular
OR09054	30	Calhoun	Avenue	1927	Frame Vernacular
OR09055	37	Calhoun	Avenue	1927	Frame Vernacular
OR12207	49	Calhoun	Avenue	1965	Bungalow
OR12218	133	Clark	Street	1963	Mid-Century Modern
OR12219	134	Clark	Street	1964	Mid-Century Modern
OR12220	139	Clark	Street	1961	Mid-Century Modern
OR12221	141	Clark	Street	1964	Mid-Century Modern
OR12222	142	Clark	Street	1968	Ranch
OR12223	200	Clark	Street	1955	Mid-Century Modern
OR12224	201	Clark	Street	1955	Ranch
OR12225	213	Clark	Street	1962	Ranch
OR12226	219	Clark	Street	1959	Ranch
OR12227	224	Clark	Street	1971	Industrial Vernacular
OR12228	239	Clark	Street	1971	Ranch
OR12229	251	Clark	Street	1948	Minimal Traditional
OR12230	252	Clark	Street	1927	Frame Vernacular
OR12231	254	Clark	Street	1955	Ranch
OR12232	301	Clark	Street	1964	Mid-Century Modern
OR12233	306	Clark	Street	1963	Ranch

site_id	street_number	street_name	street_type	construction_year	style
OR12234	307	Clark	Street	1963	Ranch
OR12235	310	Clark	Street	1977	Ranch
OR12236	314	Clark	Street	1956	Ranch
OR12237	337	Clark	Street	1935	Bungalow
OR09051	339	Clark	Street		
OR09057	416	Clark	Street	1945	Frame Vernacular
OR09062	494	Clark	Street	1945	Masonry Vernacular
OR09059	498	Clark	Street	1945	Masonry Vernacular
OR12237	513	Clark	Street	1961	Ranch
OR09068	526	Clark	Street		
OR12238	532	Clark	Street	1964	Mid-Century Modern
OR12239	539	Clark	Street	1951	Ranch
OR12240	551	Clark	Street	1956	Ranch
OR12241	557	Clark	Street	1953	Ranch
OR12242	104	College	Avenue	1967	Mid-Century Modern
OR12243	130	College	Avenue	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12247	143	College	Avenue	1960	Ranch
OR12246	143	College	Avenue	1960	Ranch
OR12248	157	College	Avenue	1974	Ranch
OR12244	21	College	Avenue	1950	Ranch
OR12249	257	College	Avenue	1972	Ranch
OR12250	275	College	Avenue	1947	Ranch
OR12251	327	College	Avenue	1958	Ranch
OR00382	335	College	Avenue		
OR12245	39	College	Avenue	1962	Ranch
OR12252	40	East	Street	1965	Mid-Century Modern
OR12253	10	Eaton	Street	1967	Ranch
OR09025	131	Eaton	Street	1928	Frame Vernacular
OR09024	137	Eaton	Street	1928	Frame Vernacular
OR12254	16	Eaton	Street	1970	Ranch
OR12255	18	Eaton	Street	1964	Ranch
OR12256	248	Eaton	Street	1964	Ranch
OR09027	254	Eaton	Street		
OR12257	255	Eaton	Street	1962	Ranch
OR12258	318	Eaton	Street	1950	Ranch
OR12259	320	Eaton	Street	1945	Minimal Traditional
OR12260	325	Eaton	Street	1956	Ranch
OR12261	327	Eaton	Street	1956	Ranch
OR09029	345	Eaton	Street	1935	Frame Vernacular
OR12262	346	Eaton	Street	1950	Ranch
OR09028	360	Eaton	Street	1935	Frame Vernacular
OR12263	400	Eaton	Street	1980	Ranch
OR12264	408	Eaton	Street	1980	Ranch

site_id	street_number	street_name	street_type	construction_year	style
OR12265	411	Eaton	Street	1957	Ranch
OR09058	428	Eaton	Street		
OR09019	48	Eaton	Street	1925	Frame Vernacular
OR09017	50	Eaton	Street	1930	Frame Vernacular
OR12266	534	Eaton	Street	1965	Mid-Century Modern
OR12267	558	Eaton	Street	1965	Mid-Century Modern
OR09059	6	Eaton	Street	1940	Frame Vernacular
OR09018	70	Eaton	Street	1935	Frame Vernacular
OR12270	100	Elizabeth	Street	1968	Mid-Century Modern
OR12271	106	Elizabeth	Street	1968	Mid-Century Modern
OR12272	130	Elizabeth	Street	1956	Ranch
OR12268	32	Elizabeth	Street	1968	Mid-Century Modern
OR12273	362	Elizabeth	Street	1977	Ranch
OR12269	42	Elizabeth	Street	1967	Mid-Century Modern
OR12274	501	Fitzgerald	Drive	1967	Ranch
OR12275	507	Fitzgerald	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12276	513	Fitzgerald	Drive	1967	Ranch
OR12277	519	Fitzgerald	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12278	525	Fitzgerald	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12279	540	Fitzgerald	Drive	1980	Ranch
OR12280	550	Fitzgerald	Drive	1980	Ranch
OR11962	575	Fitzgerald	Drive	1967	Ranch
OR12281	601	Fitzgerald	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12281	607	Fitzgerald	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12283	613	Fitzgerald	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12284	312	Fords	Avenue	1956	Ranch
OR09026	316	Fords	Avenue	1928	Frame Vernacular
OR12285	324	Fords	Avenue	1953	Bungalow
OR12286	326	Fords	Avenue	1953	Bungalow
OR09022	106	Gabriel	Avenue		
OR09021	122	Gabriel	Avenue	1935	Masonry Vernacular
OR09020	124	Gabriel	Avenue	1935	Frame Vernacular
OR12288	151	Gabriel	Avenue	1963	Ranch
OR12289	212	Gabriel	Avenue	1957	Ranch
OR12287	25	Gabriel	Avenue	1969	Ranch
OR12292	100	Johnson	Street	1962	Ranch
OR12293	152	Johnson	Street	1965	Ranch
OR12294	175	Johnson	Street	1966	Mid-Century Modern
OR09023	200	Johnson	Street	1939	Masonry Vernacular
OR12295	219	Johnson	Street	1980	Ranch
OR12296	225	Johnson	Street	1980	Ranch
OR12290	30	Johnson	Street	1947	Minimal Traditional
OR12291	36	Johnson	Street	1957	Mid-Century Modern

site_id	street_number	street_name	street_type	construction_year	style
OR05886	100	Kennedy	Boulevard		
OR10214	15	Kennedy	Boulevard	1955	Ranch
OR12298	209	Kennedy	Boulevard	1975	Masonry Vernacular
OR11960	307	Kennedy	Boulevard	1971	Mansard
OR11961	308	Kennedy	Boulevard	1958	Masonry Vernacular
OR12299	322	Kennedy	Boulevard	1946	Masonry Vernacular
OR12299	322	Kennedy	Boulevard	1946	Ranch
OR12301	332	Kennedy	Boulevard	1960	Masonry Vernacular
OR12302	344	Kennedy	Boulevard	1963	Masonry Vernacular
OR09052	355	Kennedy	Boulevard	1937	Frame Vernacular
OR12303	370	Kennedy	Boulevard	1955	Masonry Vernacular
OR12305	412	Kennedy	Boulevard	1977	Masonry Vernacular
OR12304	412	Kennedy	Boulevard	1994	Other
OR09087	418	Kennedy	Boulevard		
OR12306	421	Kennedy	Boulevard	1967	Mid-Century Modern
OR09833	426	Kennedy	Boulevard	1938	Masonry Vernacular
OR12307	429	Kennedy	Boulevard	1938	Commercial
OR09069	501	Kennedy	Boulevard	1938	Masonry Vernacular
OR12308	523	Kennedy	Boulevard	1955	Masonry Vernacular
OR12309	525	Kennedy	Boulevard	1925	Bungalow
OR12310	549	Kennedy	Boulevard	1972	Masonry Vernacular
OR09084	550	Kennedy	Boulevard	1881	Frame Vernacular
OR12311	558	Kennedy	Boulevard	1970	Masonry Vernacular
OR12297	63	Kennedy	Boulevard	1973	Other
OR12312	280	Lemon	Street	1962	Ranch
OR12313	300	Lemon	Street	1967	Mid-Century Modern
OR12314	306	Lemon	Street	1961	Ranch
OR12315	307	Lemon	Street	1926	Bungalow
OR12316	324	Lemon	Street	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12317	336	Lemon	Street	1965	Ranch
OR12318	405	Lemon	Street	1957	Ranch
OR09188	429	Lemon	Street		
OR09189	433	Lemon	Street		
OR09190	437	Lemon	Street		
OR12319	515	Lemon	Street	1966	Ranch
OR12320	314	Lime	Street	1976	Ranch
OR12321	335	Lime	Street	1947	Ranch
OR12322	347	Lime	Street	1971	Ranch
OR12323	350	Lime	Street	1965	Masonry Vernacular
OR12324	374	Lime	Street	1954	Ranch
OR12325	416	Lime	Street	1952	Ranch
OR12326	430	Lime	Street	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12327	531	Lime	Street	1958	Frame Vernacular

site_id	street_number	street_name	street_type	construction_year	style
OR12328	532	Lime	Street	1957	Minimal Traditional
OR12329	533	Lime	Street	1956	Frame Vernacular
OR12330	537	Lime	Street	1956	Masonry Vernacular
OR12331	676	Lime	Street	1980	Ranch
OR12332	520	Monroe	Avenue	1956	Ranch
OR12333	551	Monroe	Avenue	1970	Ranch
OR12334	575	Monroe	Avenue	1975	Ranch
OR12336	10	Moseley	Avenue	1950	Mid-Century Modern
OR12337	101	Moseley	Avenue	1976	Ranch
OR12338	107	Moseley	Avenue	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12339	113	Moseley	Avenue	1948	Ranch
OR12340	200	Moseley	Avenue	1955	Frame Vernacular
OR12341	201	Moseley	Avenue	1967	Mid-Century Modern
OR12342	207	Moseley	Avenue	1967	Mid-Century Modern
OR12343	219	Moseley	Avenue	1965	Ranch
OR12335	4	Moseley	Avenue	1963	Ranch
OR12344	116	Mulberry	Street	1966	Ranch
OR12345	303	Orange	Street	1966	Ranch
OR12346	312	Orange	Street	1974	Ranch
OR12349	106	People	Street	1979	Ranch
OR12350	119	People	Street	1972	Mid-Century Modern
OR09193	139	People	Street		
OR12351	148	People	Street	1961	Ranch
OR09194	155	People	Street	1951	Masonry Vernacular
OR09195	192	People	Street	1948	Masonry Vernacular
OR12352	200	People	Street	1966	Mid-Century Modern
OR12353	240	People	Street	1966	Mid-Century Modern
OR12354	260	People	Street	1966	Mid-Century Modern
OR12347	37	People	Street	1950	Ranch
OR12355	500	People	Street	1965	Mid-Century Modern
OR12348	57	People	Street	1960	Mid-Century Modern
OR12356	464	Ruffel	Street	1962	Ranch
OR12357	506	Ruffel	Street	1969	Mid-Century Modern
OR09196	509	Ruffel	Street	1952	Frame Vernacular
OR12358	512	Ruffel	Street	1969	Ranch
OR12359	518	Ruffel	Street	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12360	520	Ruffel	Street	1966	Mid-Century Modern
OR12361	524	Ruffel	Street	1966	Ranch
OR12362	530	Ruffel	Street	1966	Mid-Century Modern
OR12363	548	Ruffel	Street	1970	Ranch
OR12364	551	Ruffel	Street	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12365	552	Ruffel	Street	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12366	555	Ruffel	Street	1970	Mid-Century Modern

site_id	street_number	street_name	street_type	construction_year	style
OR09086	11	Taylor	Avenue	1888	Frame Vernacular
OR12370	112	Taylor	Avenue	1950	Ranch
OR09191	116	Taylor	Avenue	1935	Masonry Vernacular
OR12371	116	Taylor	Avenue	1945	Bungalow
OR09192	124	Taylor	Avenue	1935	Masonry Vernacular
OR12372	206	Taylor	Avenue	1970	Ranch
OR12373	240	Taylor	Avenue	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12367	25	Taylor	Avenue	1965	Mid-Century Modern
OR12374	250	Taylor	Avenue	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12375	290	Taylor	Avenue	1970	Mid-Century Modern
OR12368	50	Taylor	Avenue	1967	Ranch
OR12369	64	Taylor	Avenue	1979	Ranch
OR12376	500	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12377	503	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12378	506	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12379	509	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12380	512	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12381	515	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12382	518	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12383	521	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12384	524	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12385	527	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12386	530	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12387	533	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12388	536	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12389	542	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12390	545	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12391	614	Vereen	Drive	1966	Ranch
OR12392	119	West	Street		
OR09202	125	West	Street	1926	Frame Vernacular
OR09201	137	West	Street	1940	Frame Vernacular
OR12393	140	West	Street	1968	Mid-Century Modern
OR12394	142	West	Street	1977	Masonry Vernacular
OR09198	143	West	Street	1959	Masonry Vernacular
OR09200	147	West	Street	1945	Masonry Vernacular
OR09199	149	West	Street	1956	Masonry Vernacular
OR12395	157	West	Street	1959	Ranch
OR09197	177	West	Street	1945	Masonry Vernacular
OR12396	200	West	Street	1967	Ranch
OR12397	500	West	Street	1969	Ranch
OR09067	7	West	Street		
OR12398	500	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12399	501	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch

site_id	street_number	street_name	street_type	construction_year	style
OR12400	506	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12401	507	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12402	512	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12403	513	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12404	514	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12405	519	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12406	524	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12407	525	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12407	530	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12409	531	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12410	537	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12411	600	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12412	606	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12413	607	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12414	613	Wigman	Drive	1965	Ranch
OR12416	103	Wymore	Road	1968	Ranch
OR10215	105	Wymore	Road	1964	Ranch
OR12417	121	Wymore	Road	1964	Ranch
OR08538	131	Wymore	Road	1946	Frame Vernacular
OR12415	15	Wymore	Road	1973	Mid-Century Modern
OR08537	175	Wymore	Road		
OR12445				1890	

APPENDIX C:
PREVIOUSLY RECORDED RESOURCES

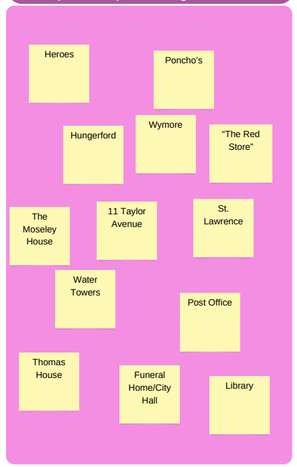
FMSF	Demolished	SITUS
OR09053	Y	24 N CALHOUN AVE
OR09054		30 N CALHOUN AVE
OR09055		37 N CALHOUN AVE
OR09030	Y	215 N CALHOUN AVE
OR09051	Y	339 CLARK ST
OR09057		416 CLARK ST
OR09062		494 CLARK ST
OR09059		498 CLARK ST
OR09068	Y	526 CLARK ST
OR00382	Y	S COLLEGE AVE
OR08539		6 EATON ST
OR09019		48 EATON ST
OR09017		50 EATON ST
OR09018		70 EATON ST
OR09025		131 EATON ST
OR09024		137 EATON ST
OR09027	Y	254 EATON ST
OR09029		345 EATON ST
OR09028		360 EATON ST
OR09058	Y	428 EATON ST
OR11962		575 FITZGERALD DR
OR09026		316 FORDS AVE
OR09022	Y	106 GABRIEL AVE
OR09021		122 GABRIEL AVE
OR09020		124 GABRIEL AVE
OR09023		200 JOHNSON ST
OR10214		15 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR05886	Y	100 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR11960		307 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR11961		308 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR09052		355 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR09087	Y	418 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR09833		426 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR09069		501 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR09084		550 E KENNEDY BLVD
OR09188	Y	429 LEMON ST
OR09189	Y	433 LEMON ST
OR09190	Y	437 LEMON ST
OR09193	Y	139 PEOPLE ST
OR09194		155 PEOPLE ST
OR09195		192 PEOPLE ST
OR09196		509 RUFFEL ST
OR09086		11 TAYLOR AVE

FMSF	Demolished	SITUS
OR09191		102 TAYLOR AVE
OR09192		124 TAYLOR AVE
OR09067	Y	7 N WEST ST
OR09202		125 S WEST ST
OR09201		137 S WEST ST
OR09200		147 S WEST ST
OR09199		149 S WEST ST
OR09198		155 S WEST ST
OR09197		177 S WEST ST
OR10215		105 N WYMORE RD
OR08538		111 N WYMORE RD
OR08537	Y	175 N WYMORE RD
OR08405		

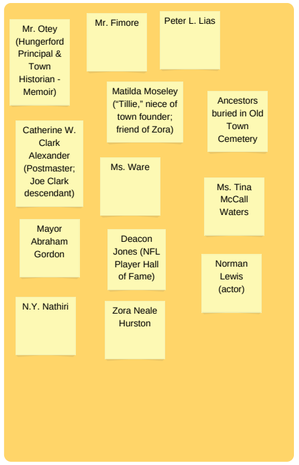
APPENDIX D:
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

Eatonville Historic Resource Survey
Community Meeting Feedback
October 7, 2025 (in-person) | October 9, 2025 (zoom)

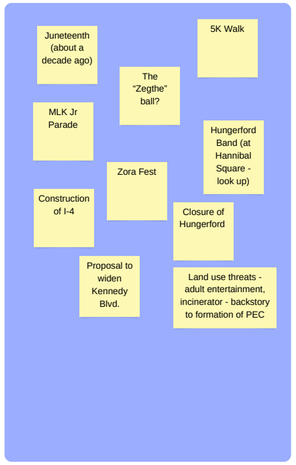
What historic buildings or sites stand out to you as representing Eatonville?



What important people in Eatonville have made a lasting impact?

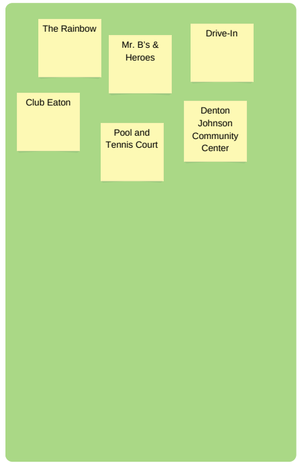


What important events in Eatonville have made a lasting impact?

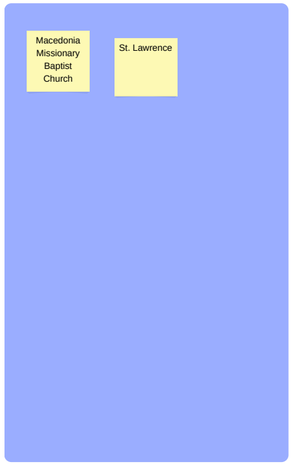


Where did you go to shop and eat in Eatonville?

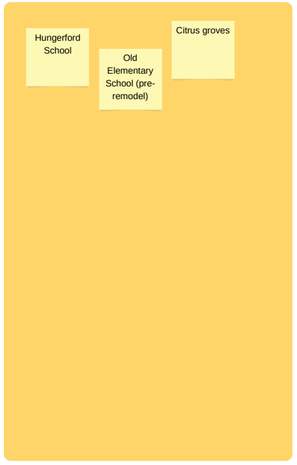
What entertainment venues did you visit in Eatonville?



What church did you go to in Eatonville?



What demolished buildings do you miss the most?



Is there anything else you'd like to share about Eatonville's history?

Adrienne Burke
adrienne@planningcollab.com

Ennis Davis
ennis@planningcollab.com

904-577-0255

APPENDIX E:
EATONVILLE HISTORIC CONTEXT TIMELINE

Note: Low-res version here to be replaced in final version

EATONVILLE HISTORY TIMELINE

A Chronological Overview of Key Events in Eatonville's History

This timeline highlights significant events in Eatonville's history from Indigenous presence through the town's founding, growth, and continued legacy as one of the first self-governing Black municipalities in the United States.

INDIGENOUS & EARLY HISTORY Pre-1821

Pre–1500s
Indigenous peoples, including ancestors of the Seminole and related groups, inhabit Central Florida for thousands of years.

1500s–1700s
Spanish explorers arrive, followed by British rule. Missionization, disease, and displacement impact Indigenous communities.

1821
Florida becomes a U.S. territory.

1824
Mosquito County established, including much of Central Florida.

1837–1838
Forts Christmas, Gatlin, and Maitland established during the Seminole Wars.

1845
Florida becomes a state; Orange County is established.

1875–1885
Orlando incorporated as a town (1875); Maitland incorporated (1885), spurring regional growth.

FOUNDING EATONVILLE 1880s–1910s

1881–1882
- St. Lawrence A.M.E. Church (1881) and Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church (1882) are established.

1882
Original Eatonville land plat is recorded.

1887
Eatonville is incorporated as one of the first self-governing Black municipalities in the United States.

1889
Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School is founded.

c. 1890
The original Eatonville cemetery is established.

1900s
Eatonville remains a rural community with agriculture, large residential lots, and growing institutions.

1918–1919
- Eatonville Memorial Gardens legally established (1918)
- Hungerford School annexed into town; Eatonville hosts regional Black civic organizations (1919).

GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT 1920s–1960s

1928
Apopka Road (later Kennedy Boulevard) is graveled and improved.

1930
Eatonville Elementary School is established.

1930s–1940s
Eatonville remains rural but develops institutions and civic leadership; associated with Zora Neale Hurston era.

1940s–1960s
Kennedy Boulevard emerges as a major Black commercial and entertainment corridor (Chitlin' Circuit era).

1946
Club Eaton is constructed as a major entertainment venue.

1950s
- Hungerford School transferred to Orange County Public Schools (1950)
- Day Care and Kindergarten established (1954)

1955–1959
- First fire station built (1955)
- Municipal water system initiated (1955)
- Post office established (1959)

1960s
Population more than doubles; subdivisions developed; I-4 construction reshapes the community.

MODERN ERA & ONGOING LEGACY 1970s–1980s and Beyond

1961–1965
- New subdivisions: Catalina Park (1961), Lake Lovely (1962), Bel Air Homes (1963), Eaton Estates (1964)
- Interstate 4 constructed (1964–1965)

1966–1969
- New town charter adopted (1967)
- Windgrove wall constructed (1967)
- Wymore Technical School established (1967)

1970s
- Park Lake Townhouses built with physical separation walls (1971–1975)
- Expansion of churches and civic organizations continues

1977
Community pool constructed; recreation investments expand.

1980s
- Population reaches 2,185 by 1980
- Kennedy Apartments constructed (1981–82)
- Denton Johnson Community Center completed (1984)

1985–1987
- Interstate Park business development expands tax base (1985)
- Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community (PEC) founded (1987)

Legacy Continues
Eatonville's history of self-determination, civic pride, and cultural heritage continues to shape its future.

Source: Eatonville Historic Structure Survey (2026); additional historical sources as cited.

Eatonville Historic Resources — Recommendations Summary

June 2026 | Priority action chart with assigned roles and timeframes

Focus Area	Key Recommendation	Priority	Lead Role(s)	Timeframe
Architectural & Landscape	Promote context-sensitive development referencing historic forms, materials, and landscape patterns; encourage adaptive reuse over demolition.	**High**	Planning & Permitting Staff/Consultant, Town Council	Ongoing / policy cycle
Survey & Documentation	Survey areas west of I-4; expand National Register nomination; document underrepresented post-WWII histories (Hungerford, Day Care, civic orgs, Black professionals).	**High**	Historic Preservation Board, Town Staff, Nonprofit Partners	1–3 years
National Register & Funding	Leverage NR designation for historic tax credits and grants; pursue DHR Small Matching Grants, National Park Service and/or NTAACHAF funding for survey and restoration.	**High**	Town CAO & Staff, Planning & Permitting Staff/Consultant	Near-term (0–2 yrs)
Archaeological & Cemetery	Fund GPR and archaeological investigation of Town Cemetery; pursue NR nomination for Eatonville Memorial Gardens; update Hungerford site boundary survey.	**High**	Town Council & Staff, City of Maitland (coord.)	1–3 years
Planning & Policy	Update city ordinances, Comprehensive Plan policies, and local preservation regulations to support equitable, community-centered preservation.	**Medium**	Town Council, Historic Preservation Board, Planning & Permitting Staff/Consultant, Legal Counsel	1–2 years
Hungerford Site	Advance culturally informed planning for Hungerford; incorporate community input; explore Community Benefits Agreement (CBA); consider interpretive signage reflecting historic structures.	**High**	Town Council, Developer Partners, Community Stakeholders	Near-term (active)
Interpretation & Heritage Tourism	Update and expand heritage trail markers to reflect expanded period of significance; strengthen connections between physical sites, community narratives, and regional history.	**Ongoing**	Town Staff, Historic Preservation Board, Cultural Partners	Continuous
Local Designation	Pursue local landmark designations for at-risk and underrecognized sites; coordinate with survey work, NR updates, and CRA programs.	**Ongoing**	Historic Preservation Officer, Town Council, Historic Preservation Board, Planning & Permitting Staff/Consultant	Continuous
Community Outreach & Education	Implement ongoing engagement strategy; support workshops, intergenerational knowledge sharing, digital archives, and partnerships with schools and regional organizations.	**Ongoing**	Town Staff, Historic Preservation Board, Cultural Partners, Schools	Continuous

Priority Key: High — critical or time-sensitive Medium — important, planned horizon Ongoing — continuous effort