



**Town of Davidson
Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting
Town Hall & Community Center Council Chamber – 251 South Street
Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 6:00 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS / PROCLAMATIONS

- a. Recognition of Retiring K9 Police Officer Bajouk**
- b. Domestic Violence Awareness Month**
- c. National Community Planning Month**
- d. Indigenous Peoples Day**
- e. Red Ribbon Week**
- f. World Polio Day**

III. CHANGES / ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

IV. PRESENTATIONS

- a. NC League of Municipalities Law Enforcement Risk Review of the Davidson Police Department**

Presenter: Philip Geiger, Police Chief, Chet Effler, Public Safety Risk Consultant

Summary: The Town of Davidson Police Department has once again reached a remarkable milestone in its ongoing pursuit of operational excellence, community trust, and service integrity by completing the North Carolina League of Municipalities Risk Review process for the second time. This significant accomplishment attests to the department's exceptional leadership and steadfast commitment to the highest law enforcement standards.

By diligently addressing and meeting over 40 rigorous standards, the department has proactively identified and mitigated high-risk areas while implementing best practices that enhance officer safety and community engagement. This comprehensive review reflects a deep commitment to continuous improvement and a deliberate effort to reduce operational risks and liabilities across all aspects of the agency.

Completing this demanding process reaffirms the department's accountability and operational integrity culture. By prioritizing risk management, officer training, and best practices, the agency has strengthened internal operations and public trust. This achievement reflects the department's unwavering commitment to exceeding expectations, setting a standard for law enforcement excellence, and serving as a model for risk-conscious, community-focused policing.

V. PUBLIC HEARING

a. **Historic Landmark Designation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel (307 Armour Street, Armour Street Theatre)**

Presenter: Lindsay Laird, Senior Planner, Stewart Gray, Director of the Mecklenburg County Historic Landmarks

Summary: The Davidson Baptist Chapel is significant as an extant representation of the "town and gown" class divide which once characterized the town. Davidson was divided by the railroad both physically and socioeconomically. The eastern section was connected with Davidson College and home to the town's upper- and middle-class residents as well as the business district. The western section developed in the early twentieth century around cotton mills and the associated mill villages. Generally self-contained, western Davidson remained working class well into the twentieth century. With the 1960's construction of Lake Norman, which flooded the portion of Mecklenburg County west of the town, increased development and adaptive reuse of the mill properties from the 1980's onward have resulted in the loss of many of the buildings that represent this important aspect of Davidson's history.

VI. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. **Consider Adoption of Ordinance 2025-12 Historic Landmark Designation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel (307 Armour Street, Armour Street Theatre)**

Presenter: Lindsay Laird, Senior Planner

Summary: The Davidson Baptist Chapel is significant as an extant representation of the "town and gown" class divide which once characterized the town. Davidson was divided by the railroad both physically and socioeconomically. The eastern section was connected with Davidson College and home to the town's upper- and middle-class residents as well as the business district. The western section developed in the early twentieth century around cotton mills and the associated mill villages. Generally self-contained, western Davidson remained working class well into the twentieth century. With the 1960's construction of Lake Norman, which flooded the portion of Mecklenburg County west of the town, increased development and adaptive reuse of the mill properties from the 1980's onward have resulted in the loss of many of the buildings that represent this important aspect of Davidson's history.

Action/Proposed Motion: Motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-12 designating as a

historic landmark the property known as the “Davidson Baptist Chapel,” including the exterior of the building and the land listed under Tax Parcel Numbers 00327565, 00327507, and 00327511 in the Mecklenburg County Tax Office. Said property is owned by the Town of Davidson, and is located at 307 Armour St, Davidson, NC.

b. Discuss Fiscal Year 2026 Non-Profit Grant Recommendations

Presenter: Gina Carmon, Recreation Operations Manager, Anne Bontempo, Vice Chair of the Livability Board

Summary: The Board of Commissioners has appropriated \$50,000 for non-profit grants as part of the annual budget process. Non-profits serving Davidson residents may apply for funding to support activities that meet a public purpose that the Town government does not directly provide but could if facilities and staffing were available. Successful applicants must serve Davidson residents. Funding recommendations from the Livability Board will align with the Town’s Core Values and the Board of Commissioners’ Strategic Plan. Anne Bontempo, Vice-Chair of the Livability Board, will discuss their recommendations on how the Fiscal Year 2026 Non-Profit Grant funds should be allocated.

Action/Proposed Motion: This item is for discussion only. The Board of Commissioners will be asked to approve a budget amendment at the October 28 meeting on the consent agenda.

c. Discuss Fire Station 1 Designs Services Contract and Financial Update

Presenter: Ryan Monteith, Fire Chief, Pieter Swart, Finance Director

Summary: At the April 8, 2025, Board of Commissioners Meeting, the Town Board approved town staff issuing a Request for Qualifications related to design services for Fire Station 1. Town staff, along with Storey Program Management, selected Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects to serve as the architect of record for Fire Station 1. Fire Chief Ryan Monteith will provide an overview of the design services proposal from Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects. Finance Director Piet Swart will also provide an update on the financial schedule for the Fire Station project as well as the new pumper apparatus purchase.

Action/Proposed Motion: The board will be asked to consider approving the design services contract for Fire Station 1 at the October 28, 2025, Board of Commissioners Meeting.

d. Discuss Christmas in Davidson One-Time Investments

Presenter: Kim Fleming, Economic Development Director

Summary: The Town’s largest signature event, Christmas in Davidson, attracts over 25,000 people annually to the Town of Davidson. This event is an economic driver for our businesses, a fundraising opportunity for our non-profits, and a community gathering opportunity for our residents. The annual budget for Christmas in Davidson is funded through the occupancy tax and prepared food tax that Davidson receives. The operating budget funds safety items such as lights, barricades, traffic control and trolleys, as well as attractions for the event such as Santa, a music and light show, and a carousel to name a few. Some of the

decorations for this event have been donated by legacy businesses and are no longer viable. This proposal is for one-time expenditures that would add to the ambiance of the event and some that would be visible for the entire holiday season. The public has commented that they would like more holiday decorations, including a better lit Christmas tree in the downtown area.

Action/Proposed Motion: This item is for discussion only. The Board of Commissioners will be asked to approve a budget amendment at the October 28 meeting on the consent agenda.

VII. SUMMARIZE MEETING ACTION ITEMS

Town Manager will summarize items where the board has requested action items for the staff.

VIII. ADJOURN



PROCLAMATION

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

WHEREAS, domestic violence, which can include physical, mental, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse, is a means of intimidation and violence to influence and control a partner involved in an intimate relationship; and

WHEREAS, domestic violence is a pervasive issue that devastates the lives of people of all ages, genders, and backgrounds; and it is a public health crisis and a violation of human rights; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 41 percent of women and 26 percent of men have experienced sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime and reported a related impact; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 theme for Domestic Violence Awareness Month is "**With Survivors, Always**," which emphasizes partnership, solidarity, and support for survivors of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, historically underserved populations such as LGBT individuals, people of low socioeconomic status, immigrants, people with disabilities, people from racial and ethnic minorities, people with limited English proficiency, and people living in rural locations are disproportionately affected by domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, Purple is the color used throughout October to commemorate Domestic Violence Awareness Month. We encourage you to wear purple on Thursday, October 16, 2025, in unity with others across the country to support, pay tribute, and honor friends, family, and community members who have experienced domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, by working together, we can build a culture where intimate partner violence is not tolerated and where we support survivors, hold abusers accountable, and work together to create communities where safety, respect, and justice prevail for everyone.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, I, Mayor Rusty Knox of the Town of Davidson, do hereby proclaim October 2025, as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Davidson, North Carolina, and encourage all citizens to commitment to stand with survivors and a call to action to advocate for their safety, support, and rights.

Proclaimed this 14th day of October 2025.

Rusty Knox
Mayor



**A PROCLAMATION
National Community Planning Month
October 2025**

WHEREAS, Change is constant and affects all cities, towns, suburbs, counties, boroughs, townships, rural areas, and other places; and

WHEREAS, Planners can help navigate this change with data-driven insights and expertise that provide better choices for how people work and live; and

WHEREAS, Community planning provides an opportunity for all residents to be meaningfully involved in making choices that determine the future of their community; and

WHEREAS, The full benefits of planning require public elected and appointed officials who understand, support, and demand excellence in planning and plan implementation; and

WHEREAS, The month of October is designated as National Community Planning Month throughout the United States of America and its territories, and

WHEREAS, The American Planning Association endorses National Community Planning Month as an opportunity to highlight how planning is essential to every community, and how planners are uniquely positioned to identify solutions to communities' most difficult housing, transportation, and land use questions, and

WHEREAS, The celebration of National Community Planning Month gives us the opportunity to publicly recognize the participation and dedication of appointed Planning Board members who have contributed their time and expertise to the improvement of the Town of Davidson; and

WHEREAS, We recognize the many valuable contributions made by the professional community and regional planners of the Town of Davidson and extend our heartfelt thanks for the continued commitment to public service by these professionals.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rusty Knox, Mayor of the Town of Davidson, do hereby proclaim the month of October 2025 as Community Planning Month in the Town of Davidson.

Proclaimed this 14th day of October 2025.

Rusty Knox, Mayor



PROCLAMATION Indigenous Peoples' Day

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples' Day was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native Nations to the United Nations during an international conference on discrimination against Indigenous populations in the Americas; and

WHEREAS, The North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs was created in 1971 by the North Carolina General Assembly to advocate for state, local, regional, and national American Indian concerns; and

WHEREAS, on Indigenous Peoples' Day, we honor the perseverance and courage of Indigenous people and express gratitude for the contributions this population has made to our state and nation; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Davidson Mission Statement says our sense of community is rooted in citizens who respect each other; in racial and socioeconomic diversity; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Davidson Core Values states that citizens are the heart of Davidson, so town government will treat all people fairly, with courtesy and respect; and

WHEREAS, a Strategic Plan Goal of Affordable Living and Inclusion states we work together to foster a culture of belonging, inclusion, and provide, create, and support opportunities for all. Treat everyone with respect, dignity, and recognize every voice; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Davidson encourages all residents to acknowledge the historic sacrifices of Indigenous peoples, and recognize the contributions of this population to the state and nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rusty Knox, Mayor of Town of Davidson, do hereby recognize October 13, 2025, as "**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY**" in the Town of Davidson, and commend its observance to all citizens.

Proclaimed this 14th day of October 2025.

Rusty Knox, Mayor



PROCLAMATION Red Ribbon Week

WHEREAS, The National Family Partnership started the Red Ribbon Campaign in 1988 to educate the people of the United States and encourage participation in drug prevention activities; and

WHEREAS, Red Ribbon Week® preserves the memory of Special Agent Enrique “Kiki” Camarena of the Drug Enforcement Administration who served for 11 years and was murdered in the line of duty in 1985, while engaged in the battle against illicit drugs; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Red Ribbon serves as a catalyst to mobilize communities to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention activities; and

WHEREAS, Red Ribbon Week® will be celebrated in communities across the nation on October 23-31 with the theme of *Life Is A Puzzle, Solve It Drug Free*; and

WHEREAS, businesses, government, law enforcement, media, health care providers, religious institutions, schools, and other community-based organizations will demonstrate their commitment to healthy, drug-free lifestyles by wearing red ribbons and participating in drug prevention activities; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Davidson further commits its resources to ensure the success of Red Ribbon Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rusty Knox, Mayor of the Town of Davidson, hereby proclaim October 23-31, 2025, as **RED RIBBON WEEK®** and encourage citizens of the Town of Davidson to participate in drug prevention education activities, not only during Red Ribbon Week, but also throughout the year, making a visible statement that we are strongly committed to a drug-free lifestyle.

Proclaimed this 14th day of October 2025.

Rusty Knox, Mayor



PROCLAMATION

Rotary International World Polio Day

WHEREAS, Rotary is a global network of 1.2 million neighbors, friends, leaders, and problem-solvers who unite and take action to create lasting change in communities across the globe; and

WHEREAS, the Rotary motto, Service Above Self, inspires members to provide humanitarian service, follow high ethical standards, and promote goodwill and peace in the world; and

WHEREAS, Rotary in 1985 launched PolioPlus and in 1988 helped establish the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which today includes the World Health Organization, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF, the Gates Foundation and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, to immunize the children of the world against polio; and

WHEREAS, polio cases have dropped by 99.9 percent since 1988 and the world stands on the threshold of eradicating the disease; and

WHEREAS, to date, Rotary has contributed more than \$2.9 billion and countless volunteer hours to protecting more than 3 billion children in 122 countries; and

WHEREAS, Rotary is working to raise an additional \$50 million per year, which would be leveraged for maximum impact by an additional \$100 million annually from the Gates Foundation; and

WHEREAS, these efforts are providing much-needed operational support, medical staff, laboratory equipment, and educational materials for health workers and parents; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Rotary has played a major role in decisions by donor governments to contribute more than \$11 billion to the effort; and

WHEREAS, continued political and financial commitment is essential to overcome the final hurdles, strengthen health systems, and ensure that no child anywhere suffers from polio ever again; and

WHEREAS, World Polio Day, observed on October 24, serves as a moment to honor the progress made, recognize the dedication of health workers and volunteers, and renew our collective resolve to finish the job.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, I, Mayor Rusty Knox of the Town of Davidson, do hereby proclaim October 24, 2025, as World Polio Day in Davidson, North Carolina, and encourage all citizens to join me and Rotary International in the fight for a polio-free world.

Proclaimed this 14th day of October 2025.

Rusty Knox
Mayor

Landmark Designation Report for the



Davidson Baptist Chapel 307 Armour Street Davidson, North Carolina

Prepared by:
Susan V. Mayer, Principal
Nick Linville, Consulting Historian
July 2025

SVM
**HISTORICAL
CONSULTING**

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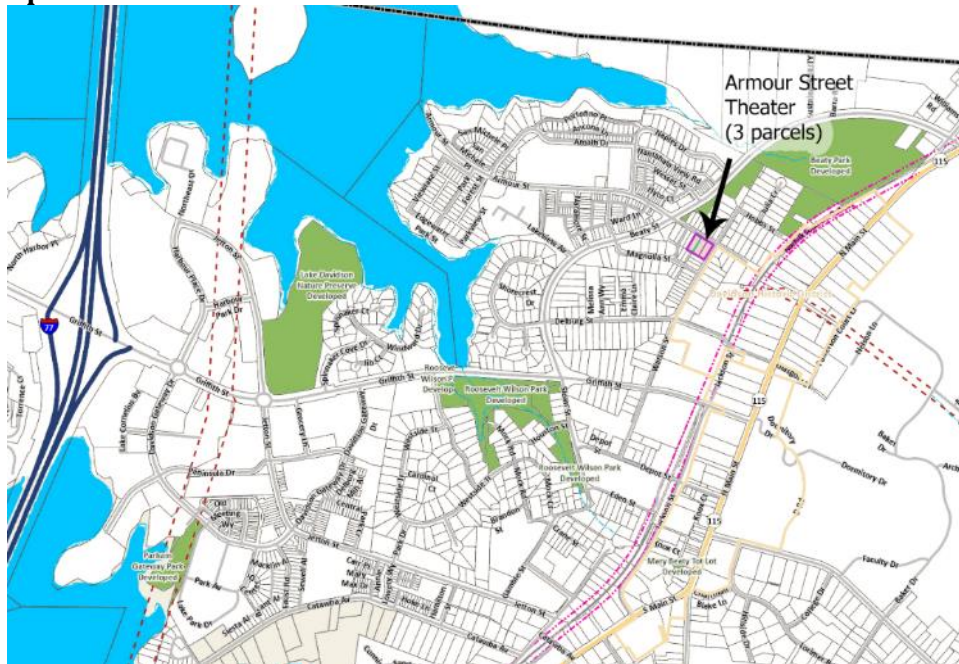
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General Information

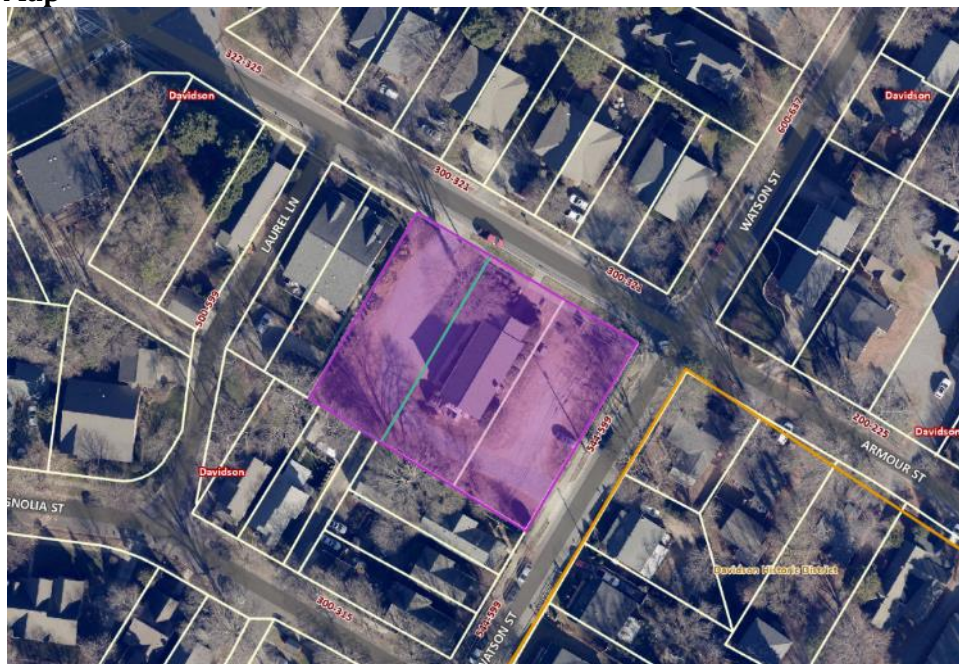
Historic Names of Property:	Davidson Baptist Chapel
Address of Property:	307 Armour Street, Davidson, North Carolina 28036
PIN:	00327507, 00327565, 00327511
Deed Book & Page:	Mecklenburg County Deed Book 23276, Page 743
Amount of Land/Acreage to be Designated:	0.618 acres
Ad Valorem Tax Value:	The 2025 Real Estate Assessed Value of parcels 00327507, 00327565, 00327511 which include the Davidson Baptist Chapel is \$813,300.
Recommendation for Designation:	Exterior designation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel and all the property within Mecklenburg County parcels 00327507, 00327565, and 00327511.
Name/Address of Current Property Owner:	Town of Davidson 216 South Main Street Davidson, NC 28036

Maps

Location Map



Boundary Map



Not to Scale
Source: Polaris, Mecklenburg County GIS (2025)

Abstract

Statement of Significance

The Davidson Baptist Chapel is significant as an extant representation of the “town and gown” class divide which once characterized the town. Davidson was divided by the railroad both physically and socioeconomically. The eastern section was connected with Davidson College and home to the town’s upper- and middle-class residents as well as the business district. The western section developed in the early twentieth century around cotton mills and the associated mill villages. Generally self-contained, western Davidson remained working class well into the twentieth century. With the 1960s construction of Lake Norman, which flooded the portion of Mecklenburg County west of the town, increased development and adaptive reuse of the mill properties from the 1980s onward have resulted in the loss of many of the buildings that represent this important aspect of Davidson’s history.

Integrity Statement

Location	High	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has a high integrity of location. Its location at the corner of Armour Street and Watson Street is the original site of construction.
Design	High	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has a high integrity of design. The building retains its original mass of sanctuary and entry bay. Only the rear/south elevation has had changes with the installation of an HVAC system with exterior ductwork and infill of windows with brick.
Setting	Medium	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has medium integrity of setting. It is located at the north edge of the former Delburg Mill village. The neighborhood has undergone much infill construction in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first century, which detracts from its integrity, but the building and site retain its residential character.
Materials	Medium	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has medium integrity of materials. Original twelve-over-sixteen wood sash windows in the former sanctuary are extant. While aluminum wraps many of the wood materials on the exterior, wood German siding remains extant on the sanctuary gable. Doors have been replaced as have windows at the basement.
Workmanship	Medium	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has medium integrity of workmanship.

Feeling	High	The Davidson Baptist Chapel retains a medium degree of integrity of feeling, as it is readily identifiable as a building which housed a church.
Association	Medium-Low	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has medium-low integrity of association. It served as the Baptist mission, later church, to the to the white residents of Davidson during and after segregation. Located in the western side of town, which was home to cotton mills and other industry, Davidson Baptist Chapel stood in contrast to the upper- and middle-class congregants of the dominant Presbyterian church and its connection to Davidson College.

Chain of Title

Grantor	Grantee	Date	Deed Book/ Page	Notes
Davidson Community Players, a North Carolina non profit corporation	Town of Davidson, a North Carolina municipal corporation	January 15, 2008	23276 /743	Parcels 00327507, 00327511, 00327565, and 00327566
GROVECO, L.L.C., a North Carolina limited liability corporation	Davidson Community Players, a North Carolina non profit corporation	January 15, 2008	23276 /738	Parcels 00327507, 00327511, 00327565, and 00327566
Heritage Church of Davidson, Inc., a North Carolina non-profit corporation	GROVECO, L.L.C., a North Carolina limited liability corporation	February 27, 2006	20066 /980	Parcels 00327507 and 00327511
Baptist Metropolina Ministries Board, a North Carolina non-profit corporation	Heritage Church of Davidson, Inc., a North Carolina non-profit corporation	May 30, 2002	13675 /87	Parcel 00327507
Trustees of First Baptist Church of Davidson	Baptist Metropolina Ministries Board, a N.C. non-profit corporation	April 15, 2002	13494 /440	Parcel 00327507
Mecklenburg Baptist Association Board, Inc.	Trustees of First Baptist Church of Davidson	November 22, 1977	4009/134	Tracts 1 and 2
Ada Rogers and husband, George R. Rogers, et. al.	Mecklenburg Baptist Association Board, Inc.	April 5, 1947	1256/523	Tracts 1 (Lot 3, Block B of Armour Heights) and 2 (Lots 1-2, Block B of Armour Heights)
R. M. Armour (unmarried)	Robt. H. Rafferty	June 30, 1911	290/6	Lots 1 and 2, Block B of Armour Heights (Map Book 230, Page 52)
Source: Mecklenburg County Registrar of Deeds				

Historical Background

Written by Nick Linville and Susan V. Mayer

The Davidson Baptist Chapel is representative of the historic divide between “town and gown”—the eastern section of Davidson connected with Davidson College, and the western portion which developed in the early twentieth century around cotton mills—which was extant well past the construction of the building from 1957 to 1960. The distinctions between these two sections of Davidson have all but disappeared from the modern town as development pressure on the western section has steadily mounted.

Baptists in Mecklenburg County

Historically settled by Scotch-Irish immigrants, Mecklenburg County was largely Presbyterian in its religious leanings. In June 1833 efforts began to form a Baptist congregation in Charlotte with short-lived success. A second effort in 1855 resulted in the founding of Beulah Baptist Church, later First Baptist Church. The church joined the Brown Creek Baptist Association, whose churches were largely in Anson and Union counties.¹ In north Mecklenburg, Baptists assembled in the Hopewell community southeast of Davidson to form Hopewell Baptist Church in 1879. However, much like early efforts in Charlotte, the church disbanded in the 1890s but reformed in 1914.²

As Davidson College, a historically Presbyterian institution, formed the historical core of the town, many of its residents were Presbyterian. In the decades after Emancipation, Black residents established their own congregations, Davidson Presbyterian Church (1870s) and Reeves Temple A.M.E. Zion Church (1897). Gethsemane Baptist Church was established in 1905 by Black Baptists and held its first service in a house on Depot Street. They soon built a new church on Potts Street on land donated by Jimmie Lee Sloan. As churches were typically segregated, white Baptists in Davidson traveled three miles into rural Mecklenburg to attend Hopewell Baptist.³ The mill villages around Delburg and Linden Mills were served by a non-denominational church founded in 1890 by mill operator Dr. J. P. Munroe. A rotation of pastors of various denominations as well as students at Davidson College conducted Sunday School classes and worship services through 1950.⁴

Class in Davidson

The Norfolk Southern railroad tracks quite literally divide the town of Davidson into two historically distinct sections—the eastern portion containing Davidson College, the business district, and large, stately homes along North Main Street and Concord Road, and the western portion with the blue-collar Delburg and Linden mill villages and Black community of Mock Hill. This divide is evident in

¹ Rev. T. J. Taylor, “Early Baptist Efforts in Charlotte,” *North Carolina Baptist Historical Papers*, July 1899 (Henderson, NC: North Carolina Baptist Society), 169-181; 15.

² *Hopewell Baptist Church, 1879-1979: A Centennial History* (Davidson, NC: Hopewell Baptist Church, 1979), 5-6.

³ Jan Blodgett and Ralph B. Levering, *One Town, Many Voices: A History of Davidson, North Carolina* (Davidson: Historical Society, 2012), 70-74, 102-103; “Our History,” Gethsemane Baptist Church of Lake Norman, https://www.gbclakenorman.org/site/page.asp?id=32&t=our_history, accessed May 16, 2025.

⁴ Stewart Gray, Survey and Research Report on the Unity Church Cabin/Lingle Hut (1932), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (2007).

Mary D. Beaty's seminal 1979 history of the town, which focuses on the College, the Main Street corridor, and east side of the railroad tracks. A successor book by Jan Blodgett and Ralph B. Levering brings western Davidson into the historical discussion, centering its context within the "town-gown" divide between working-class Davidsonians and those more affluent or affiliated with the college.

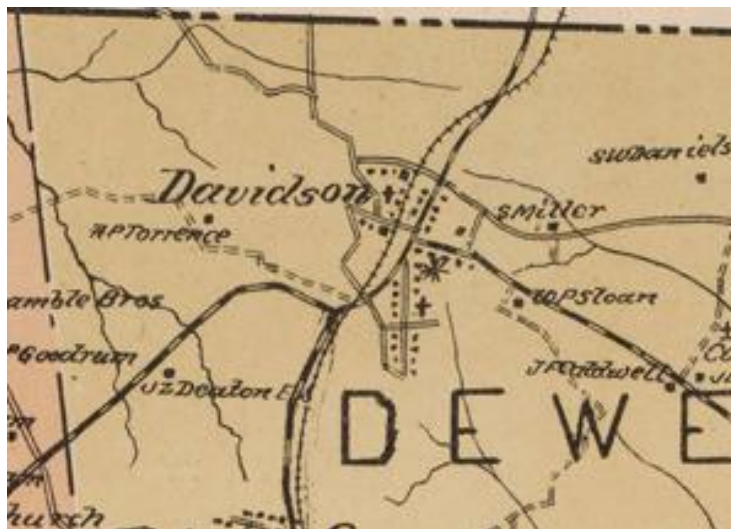


Figure 1 The 1911 map of Mecklenburg County shows the lack of roads heading west from Davidson, indicative of the slow development of the western section of the town.

The primary reason for this divide between east and west was infrastructure. When trustees established Davidson College in 1835, they chose donated land along the Great Road between Charlotte and Statesville. From this point, the Concord Road ran east to Rocky River and Cabarrus County, and it was along these thruways that homes and businesses grew. The railroad came to the village by 1861, though the tracks were destroyed during the Civil War and not rebuilt until 1871. The railroad tracks impeded development on the west side of town as most growth occurred around the college and the north-south road

between Charlotte and Statesville. When the Linden and Delburg cotton mills were built around the turn of the twentieth century, they were sited on the rural land west of the railroad tracks. Local resident R. M. Armour platted a single-family subdivision north of the mills in 1909, though Delburg Cotton Mill purchased most lots to expand its mill village in 1910.⁵

Until the opening of the cotton mills, white residents of Davidson lived adjacent regardless of class and occupation. But as the mill villages took shape, these social divisions increased. Recreation programs and schools were separate, as the town did not have a public school until 1911. Davidson College expanded its water and sewer lines to serve Main Street and nearby residences in the early 1900s. However, the mill villages and Mock Hill did not receive utility services until much later. Mill houses were connected to the electric grid starting in 1931. Black barber Ralph Johnson petitioned the town commissioners to install a water line and fire hydrant in the area in 1935, but the motion was tabled for a year. As noted in the *Gazette* in 1950, when the former Delburg mill houses were being sold to individual owners, "Plans are to connect these homes with water and sewer lines and to install a kitchen sink and additional facilities in each home."⁶

⁵ Mary D. Beaty, *Davidson: A History of the Town from 1835 until 1937* (Davidson: Briarpatch Press, 1979), 20; Susan V. Mayer, "Landmark Designation Report: Armour Street Mill House, 225 Armour Street, Davidson, North Carolina," Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (September 2024), 10–14.

⁶ "Houses Bought for Improvement, Resale," *Gazette*, November 16, 1950, in Blodgett and Levering, 160.

Religion also had a tinge of class distinction in Davidson. The Unity Church was established as a interdenominational ministry to the mill village in 1932, a reorganization of the chapel which had served western Davidson since 1890. The church also drew congregants from local residents who had no ties to Davidson College. While many attended Davidson College Presbyterian Church, they found class divides still existed on Sunday mornings. Aileen Cantrell, who managed the local Western Auto store with her husband, noted that “nobody” would speak to her at the college church because of her lack of connection to the institution.⁷ As Blodgett and Levering noted, white churches in Davidson tended to reflect the social and economic standing of its congregates—upper-class and college connections at the Presbyterian church, merchants and business owners at the Methodist church, middle class at the Episcopal church, and working class at the west Davidson churches.⁸



Figure 2 In 1951, the only road heading west from Davidson was Armour Street which curved north into Iredell County. Griffith Street was opened in 1956 to access the new US-21 bypass. The location of Davidson Baptist Chapel is marked by the green star. Mecklenburg County Time Machine, Mecklenburg County GIS, <https://timemachine.mcmap.org/#35.50600054851916/-80.84890097379686/19/1686413485000>, accessed July 1, 2025.

Davidson Baptist Chapel

As the Baptist faith grew along with the general population of Mecklenburg County in the postwar years, the Association initiated missions in underserved communities with the hope that they would

⁷ Blodgett and Levering, 166.

⁸ Blodgett and Levering, 168.

become fully organized churches. Davidson, where the Presbyterian church had been strong since the antebellum period, was an area ripe for spreading the Baptist faith, particularly as the population of the town expanded.⁹ The Mecklenburg Baptist Association purchased the parcel in 1947 against the backdrop of an expanding Baptist Church. The Baptist faith has had a representation in Mecklenburg County since the eighteenth century. In 1826 the Baptist congregations of Mecklenburg and neighboring counties formed the Catawba River Association. By the late nineteenth century, the association, part of the broader Southern Baptist Convention, consolidated to the Mecklenburg and Cabarrus Association until it became the Mecklenburg Baptist Association in the first half of the twentieth century. The Association represented all of the Baptist churches, old and new, in the county and also supported leadership, community programs, and development.



Figure 3 Rev. Clyde H. Jackson was the first pastor of Davidson Baptist Chapel. From larryham_1, <https://www.ancestry.com>.

The Association purchased two lots (the Davidson Baptist Chapel parcel) as well as other lots in Armour Heights via the 1947 deed, perhaps in order to have options for a future site. One of the properties included a house which hosted the mission until a new chapel was built later.¹⁰ This house may be one of the buildings (non-extant) visible in the 1951 aerial photograph to the east of the future site of the chapel. Cornelius Baptist Church sponsored the initial Davidson mission, known as the Davidson Baptist Chapel.¹¹ By 1954, Huntersville Baptist Church sponsored the mission. That summer, Clyde Henry Jackson, a recently ordained graduate of Wingate College and Wake Forest University as well as a World War II veteran, became pastor.¹²

Annual minutes of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association Board from the late 1950s mention an effort to raise a new building for the Davidson mission. The minutes from the 1958 meeting note that the Association and the Baptists in Davidson, who were under the leadership of Rev. Edward Wells, were actively working toward a new chapel because “it was absolutely necessary that they [i.e. the Davidson mission] get out of an old frame building that was a discredit to the Baptist work.” The Association contributed \$2,238 to the construction of a new building. Minutes from the following year noted, “We are not through at

⁹ Gethsemane Baptist Church, founded in the early 1900s, was perhaps the largest Baptist congregation in Davidson in the mid-twentieth century.

¹⁰ Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Sixty-Second Annual Session*, October 23–24, 1947, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 20.

¹¹ Historic aerial photographs available from 1948 and 1950 do not show a building on the parcel. Similarly, historic newspapers and Association minutes do not specify the exact location of the initial Davidson mission.

¹² “Clyde Jackson to be Ordained,” *The Charlotte Observer* June 19, 1954, 26; Obituary of Clyde Henry Jackson, *The Charlotte Observer* June 18, 1997, 59.

Davidson,” as the building’s electrical and heating reached completion.¹³ The minutes from 1960 are the last to mention the building effort, and thus it appears the new chapel reached completion and opened that year.¹⁴



Figure 4 This 1961 USGS aerial photograph of the Davidson Baptist Chapel shows its location at the northern edge of Davidson. There would be little development in this section until the 1990s.

The brick chapel stood prominently at the corner of Armour Street and Watson Street, an area that was on the outskirts of downtown Davidson at the time. The chapel was the first and largest of only three buildings on Armour Street as one turned west from Watson. Most of the land to the north and the west was undeveloped.¹⁵

As Davidson continued to grow in the 1960s, the mission attracted new congregants. Rev. George Frank Vinson (1928–2010), who went by Frank, was a fixture at the mission and in the later history of the site.¹⁶ A native of Lancaster, South Carolina, he received degrees from North Greenville Junior College, Wingate College, and Southwestern Theological Seminary in Texas. Rev. Vinson worked in many churches in South Carolina before becoming pastor at the Davidson Baptist Chapel in 1966. Under Vinson’s pastorate, the mission evolved to the point that, in 1970, the Association recognized it as a church, and it became known as First Baptist Church of Davidson.¹⁷

Through the last quarter of the twentieth century, First Baptist Church remained under the pastorate of Rev. Vinson. In 1977 the Mecklenburg Baptist Association deeded the parcel to a group of church trustees. The church continued to serve its community as a place for weddings, funerals, worship, and other activities, as is evidenced in historical newspaper articles. While the building remained its same size through the years, the church and its members enhanced the interior in 1982 when the Jarman family commissioned a mural of the River Jordan entitled *River of Descension*. The artist was

¹³ Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Seventy-Fourth Annual Session*, October 22–23, 1959, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 28; Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Seventy-Fourth Annual Session*, October 22–23, 1959, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 32.

¹⁴ Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Seventy-Fifth Annual Session*, October 20–21, 1960, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 45–48.

¹⁵ Information on the ca.1960 setting is derived from the 1961 USGS aerial photograph.

¹⁶ Vinson replaced Rev. Wells who resigned in 1961.

¹⁷ Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Eighty-Fifth Session*, October 22–23, 1970, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 24.

Alice Mae Favro of Matthews, who had completed similar murals across the state.¹⁸ Through the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s, small churches like First Baptist Church struggled to survive as church attendance and affiliation across the American religious landscape declined, and also as larger, regional churches offered more programs and modern facilities. First Baptist appears to have closed its doors in the early 2000s.

Armour Street Theater

Amidst changes in the Baptist church, the Trustees of First Baptist Church of Davidson transferred ownership of the Armour Street building and parcel to the Association, which had rebranded as Baptist Metrolina Ministries, in 2002. Several months later, an entity called Heritage Church of Davidson purchased the property. About four years later, usage of the building as a church appears to have ended as real estate investment entity Groveco LLC purchased the property.

In 2008 the Davidson Community Players (DCP), working with the Town of Davidson, acquired the former First Baptist Church property. Drama teacher, director, and actor Constance Welsh founded the organization in 1965. In its early years, DCP performed two plays a year at Davidson College that featured students and town residents. DCP achieved non-profit status in the 1980s, enabling them to expand their activities through the 1990s when they produced 23 different plays. As of recent years, DCP stages several adult productions each year, including both plays and musicals, and maintains a strong lineup of performances featuring teens and children. The organization is widely regarded for its theater education efforts in the region, offering programs at venues such as the Armour Street Theatre, Cain Center for the Arts, and the Duke Family Performance Hall.¹⁹ Through its continued use by Davidson residents, the history of the building continues.

¹⁸ Pat Johnson, "Mural a Real 'Labor of Love,'" *The Mecklenburg Gazette* January 13, 1983, A37. North Carolina Baptist Church and Association Files. Special Collections and Archives, Wake Forest University.

¹⁹ "History," Davidson Community Players webpage, electronic document, <https://www.davidsoncommunityplayers.org/history>, accessed May 12, 2025.

Architectural Description

Written by Susan V. Mayer, Principal



The Davidson Baptist Chapel is located on three parcels at the southwest corner of Armour Street and Watson Street. A gravel parking lot wraps the building on the east, south, and west sides. The building, which faces north and is sited near Armour Street, is in the middle parcel. The east parcel is grassy with the gravel parking lot near the building and curb cut at Watson Street. The west parcel has the gravel parking lot with curb cut at Armour Street. The site slopes from east to west, allowing for a walkout basement at the rear portion of the building. A concrete sidewalk runs along Watson Street and Armour Street.



A concrete walkway with curb cut leads from Armour Street to the sidewalk. A brick walkway leads from the sidewalk to the steps, and east of the walkway has pavers. A mature oak tree is northwest of the building immediately adjacent to the accessible ramp.



Built in 1957-1960 as a Baptist chapel, the building is a common front-gabled church with Colonial Revival detailing. It is one-story-on-basement in height. The former sanctuary comprises the primary mass of the building. An entry bay slightly narrower than the primary mass comprises the façade.



The Davidson Baptist Chapel is sheathed in running bond brick veneer with common bond at the basement level on all elevations. It has a front-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. Typical wood sash windows at the main level are twelve-over-sixteen wood sash and appear to be original. At the basement level typical windows are horizontal sliding vinyl replacement windows with four lites on each side. Eaves and cornice boards have aluminum siding wrap. Aerial imagery dating to 1960 shows no evidence of a steeple on the building.



Figure 5 Aerial photographs of the Davidson Baptist Chapel ca. 2007. Meck Scope,
<http://maps.co.mecklenburg.nc.us/meckscope/?lat=35.5061&lon=-80.8488>, accessed May 11, 2025.

Since moving into the building in 2007-2008, the Davidson Community Players have made minimal changes to the exterior. The wood ramp at the entrance was added for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Mechanical systems at rear were installed, with window openings filled with ducts and brick. The two-lite wood door at basement level was replaced with the extant six-panel door. Windows at basement level are vinyl replacement, indicating that they were likely added at or after this time. Brick above the entry shows evidence of alteration. But as Google Street View images from July 2008 show that the façade appeared the same, it is likely that any changes were made earlier.²⁰

²⁰ 307 Armour Street, Google Street View, July 2008, <https://maps.app.goo.gl/XGTBPUwy6m5YGafM6>, accessed May 12, 2025.



The façade of the Davidson Baptist Chapel is comprised of the front-gabled entry, which is one bay wide and one bay deep. The gable has a continuous eave and aluminum siding with louvered vent in the peak. It has brick steps with wrought iron railing and a winding wood ramp approaching the entrance.

The narrow pair of wood six-panel doors have an unusual surround. The pilasters and crosshead have a simple base with decorative trim and moulding applied. The pilasters are narrow with inset panels. The crosshead features wide trim with dentil moulding above. The crosshead base widens from its base, and two ogee broken pediments are at top. Lantern sconces flank the doorway. Brick above the entry shows signs of alterations to the entry. The surround components are wrapped in aluminum except for the dentil moulding and pediments which appear to be wood or wood composite. The trim around the double doors is wood.

The side elevations of the entry have an off-center typical window. A basement window covered with plywood was visible on the west elevation.



The original wood German siding of the gable is visible through missing trim.



The east elevation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel is six bays wide from façade to rear. Six bays have typical wood sash windows at the main level. The brick chimney is located between the fourth and fifth bays. It interrupts the eave and extends slightly above the roof plane. Vegetation obscures the view of basement fenestration from the streetscape. However, windows generally align with the bays above. The first through fourth bays have typical vinyl replacement windows. The sixth bay has a fixed vinyl replacement window. The seventh bay has no fenestration but has electrical boxes and panels. Window sills at the basement have brick headers rather than the typical rowlocks found throughout the building.



The rear elevation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel has the most alterations of the building with the ca. 2008 installation of a heating and cooling system. It is two bays wide. The original windows at the main level have been removed, and the ductwork with brick fill below utilizes the west opening. The east window has also been filled with brick. While Google Street View imagery is low quality, it appears that these windows may have been original nine-over-nine wood sash. Ductwork extends up the face to a new opening under the louvered vent in the gable peak. The HVAC system sits on a concrete pad, and the units and ductwork obscure at basement level a typical vinyl replacement window. The six-panel door replaced the likely original two-lite wood door.



The west elevation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel is six bays wide. The main level has typical wood sash windows. The fenestration at basement level generally lines up with the bays above with some exceptions as noted. The first, second, and third bays have typical vinyl replacement windows. The fourth bay, which is located off-center from the bays above, has a six-panel wood door with two sets brick steps to a concrete landing below grade. The north brick steps with low retaining wall and concrete landing appear original. An original retaining wall at south was partially removed for installation of the south brick steps, low brick retaining wall, and new concrete landing with square drain. Tube steel railing is on the original brick retaining walls.



The fifth bay of the west elevation has a six-over-six vinyl replacement window. The seventh bay has a wide six-panel steel door. A concrete sidewalk extends along the elevation to provide access from the Armour Street sidewalk and ramp to the two entrances.



Typical twelve-over-sixteen wood sash window



Two non-historic resources are located on the site. A prefabricated shed is located at the southwest corner of the building. A lighted acrylic sign with metal frame and brick base is located northeast of the building on Armour Street.



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RECORD OF THE VOTE OF THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION ON THE

DAVIDSON BAPTIST CHAPEL

August 11, 2025

COMMISSIONER CARROLL PRESENTED A MOTION SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DUNN THAT THE HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION PROCESS THE DAVIDSON BAPTIST CHAPEL, 307 ARMOUR STREET, DAVIDSON, N.C., FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION, INCLUDING THE EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING AND THE ASSOCIATED TAX PARCELS.

Favor

Christina Benton, Lesley Carroll, Andrew Dunn, Andra Eaves, John Kincheloe, Charlie Miller, Melanie Reddick

Oppose

None

Abstain

None

Absent

Brian Clarke, Victoria Grey/County, Emily Makas



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

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Josh Stein
Secretary Pamela Brewington Cashwell

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Darin J. Waters, Ph.D.

September 11, 2025

Stewart Gray
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission
2100 Randolph Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28207-1522

Email: Stewart.Gray@mecklenburgcountync.gov

RE: Proposed Designation for the Davidson Baptist Chapel, 307 Armour St., Davidson, Mecklenburg County.

Dear Mr. Gray:

Thank you for submitting the local landmark report for the Davidson Baptist Chapel, 307 Armour St., Davidson, Mecklenburg County. We have reviewed the information in the report and offer the following comments in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 160D-946.

We have shared some suggested edits with staff. With these edits, we feel the report will provide the landmark commission and local governing board with sufficient information to determine whether the Davidson Baptist Chapel, 307 Armour St., Davidson, Mecklenburg County possesses the requisite special local significance and integrity for local historic landmark designation.

Local landmark designation means the community recognizes the property is worthy of preservation because of its special significance to the local community. If designated, any substantial changes in design, materials, and appearance of the property would be subject to the design review procedures of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this report. Please note, our comments are advisory only and therefore, non-binding. Once the governing board has received a recommendation from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, it should proceed in the same manner as would otherwise be required for an amendment to the zoning ordinance. Once the decision has been made, please notify our office and if designated, share a copy of the ordinance.

This letter serves as our comments on the proposed designation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel, 307 Armour St., Davidson, Mecklenburg County.

Please contact me at or Kristi.brantley@dncr.nc.gov (preferred) or 919-814-6576 should you have any questions about our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristi Brantley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Kristi Brantley
Local Preservation Commissions/CLG Coordinator

CC: Commission Chair

Enclosure

Davidson Baptist Chapel

307 Armour St., Davidson











ARMOUR STREET THEATER - PROPOSED ADDITION



NICOLE PERRI
ARCHITECTURE



~~heavy elevation~~
MASSING SKETCH
WITH EXISTING TREE.





AGENDA MEMO

To: Davidson Board of Commissioners

From: Lindsay Laird, Senior Planner

Date: October 14, 2025

Re: Consider Adoption of Ordinance 2025-12 Historic Landmark Designation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel (307 Armour Street, Armour Street Theatre)

ITEM SUMMARY/OVERVIEW

The Davidson Baptist Chapel is significant as an extant representation of the “town and gown” class divide which once characterized the town. Davidson was divided by the railroad both physically and socioeconomically. The eastern section was connected with Davidson College and home to the town’s upper- and middle-class residents as well as the business district. The western section developed in the early twentieth century around cotton mills and the associated mill villages. Generally self-contained, western Davidson remained working class well into the twentieth century. With the 1960's construction of Lake Norman, which flooded the portion of Mecklenburg County west of the town, increased development and adaptive reuse of the mill properties from the 1980's onward have resulted in the loss of many of the buildings that represent this important aspect of Davidson’s history.

ACTION/PROPOSED MOTION

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-12 designating as a historic landmark the property known as the “Davidson Baptist Chapel,” including the exterior of the building and the land listed under Tax Parcel Numbers 00327565, 00327507, and 00327511 in the Mecklenburg County Tax Office. Said property is owned by the Town of Davidson, and is located at 307 Armour St, Davidson, NC.

RELATED TOWN GOALS

Strategic Plan Alignment

Historic Preservation – Preserve our historic properties that contribute to our vibrant and unique community and honor the history of the lived experiences of our residents.

Operational Excellence – Provide efficient and high-quality public services and facilities through thoughtful and proactive planning, reasonable stewardship of town resources and a professional and committed workforce.

Core Values

Open communication is essential to an engaged citizenry, so town government will seek and provide accurate, timely information and promote public discussion of important issues.

Davidson's traditional character is that of a small, historic college town, so land planning will reflect its historic patterns of village-centered growth including connection of neighborhoods, preservation of our historic resources, conservation of rural area, and provision of public spaces.

Davidson exists in proximity to and is interdependent with other jurisdictions, so we strive for local, regional, state and federal cooperation.

NEXT STEPS

The Board of Commissioners will consider adoption of Ordinance 2025-12 designating the Davidson Baptist Chapel (307 Armour Street) as a historic landmark.

Landmark Designation Report for the



Davidson Baptist Chapel 307 Armour Street Davidson, North Carolina

Prepared by:
Susan V. Mayer, Principal
Nick Linville, Consulting Historian
July 2025

SVM
**HISTORICAL
CONSULTING**

Charlotte, North Carolina
<https://www.svmhistorical.com>
susan@svmhistorical.com

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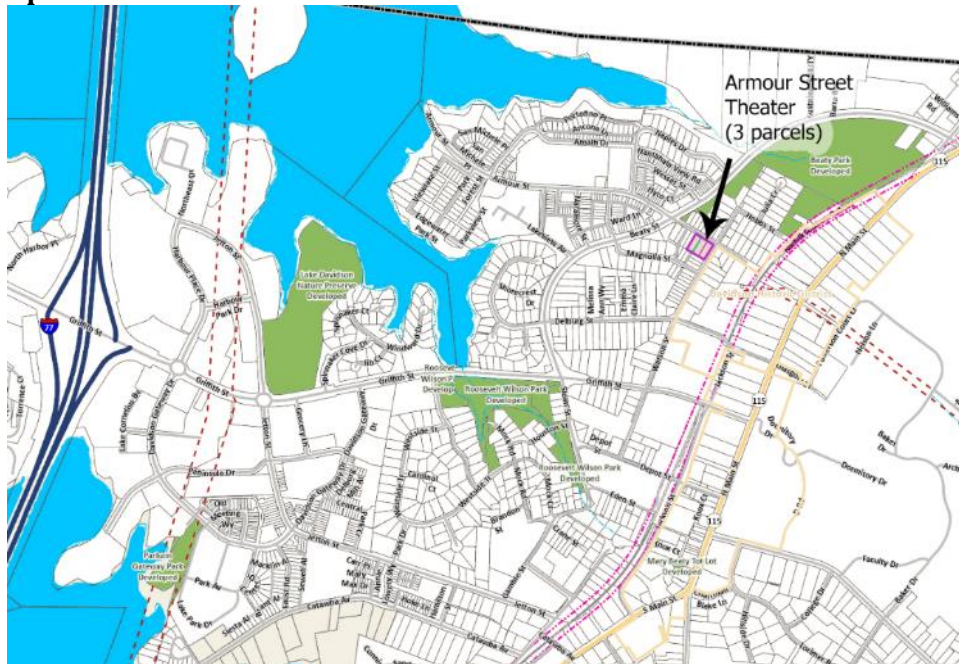
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General Information

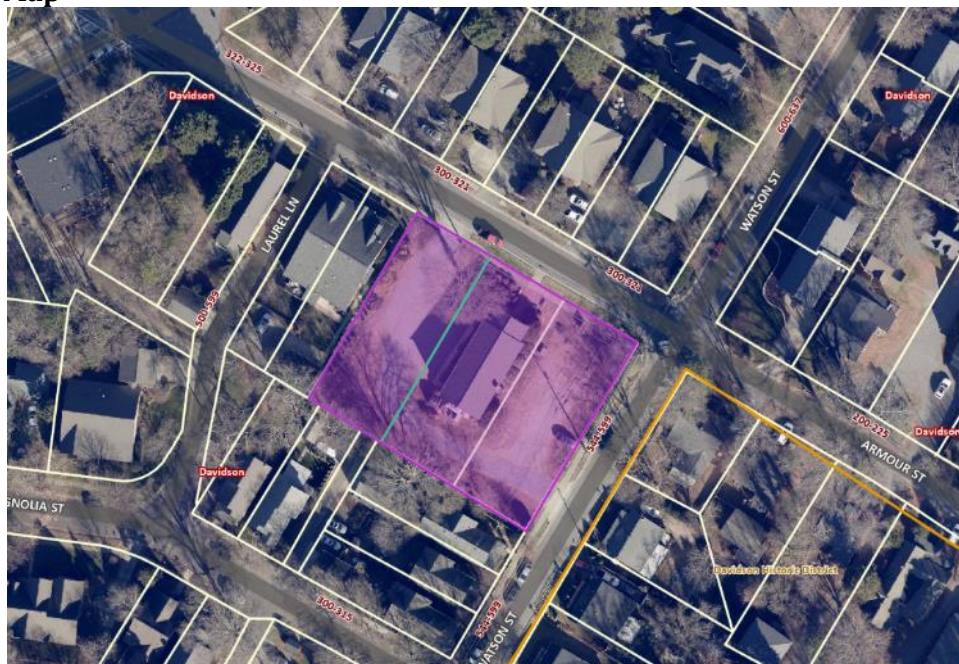
Historic Names of Property:	Davidson Baptist Chapel
Address of Property:	307 Armour Street, Davidson, North Carolina 28036
PIN:	00327507, 00327565, 00327511
Deed Book & Page:	Mecklenburg County Deed Book 23276, Page 743
Amount of Land/Acreage to be Designated:	0.618 acres
Ad Valorem Tax Value:	The 2025 Real Estate Assessed Value of parcels 00327507, 00327565, 00327511 which include the Davidson Baptist Chapel is \$813,300.
Recommendation for Designation:	Exterior designation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel and all the property within Mecklenburg County parcels 00327507, 00327565, and 00327511.
Name/Address of Current Property Owner:	Town of Davidson 216 South Main Street Davidson, NC 28036

Maps

Location Map



Boundary Map



Not to Scale
Source: Polaris, Mecklenburg County GIS (2025)

Abstract

Statement of Significance

The Davidson Baptist Chapel is significant as an extant representation of the “town and gown” class divide which once characterized the town. Davidson was divided by the railroad both physically and socioeconomically. The eastern section was connected with Davidson College and home to the town’s upper- and middle-class residents as well as the business district. The western section developed in the early twentieth century around cotton mills and the associated mill villages. Generally self-contained, western Davidson remained working class well into the twentieth century. With the 1960s construction of Lake Norman, which flooded the portion of Mecklenburg County west of the town, increased development and adaptive reuse of the mill properties from the 1980s onward have resulted in the loss of many of the buildings that represent this important aspect of Davidson’s history.

Integrity Statement

Location	High	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has a high integrity of location. Its location at the corner of Armour Street and Watson Street is the original site of construction.
Design	High	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has a high integrity of design. The building retains its original mass of sanctuary and entry bay. Only the rear/south elevation has had changes with the installation of an HVAC system with exterior ductwork and infill of windows with brick.
Setting	Medium	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has medium integrity of setting. It is located at the north edge of the former Delburg Mill village. The neighborhood has undergone much infill construction in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first century, which detracts from its integrity, but the building and site retain its residential character.
Materials	Medium	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has medium integrity of materials. Original twelve-over-sixteen wood sash windows in the former sanctuary are extant. While aluminum wraps many of the wood materials on the exterior, wood German siding remains extant on the sanctuary gable. Doors have been replaced as have windows at the basement.
Workmanship	Medium	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has medium integrity of workmanship.

Feeling	High	The Davidson Baptist Chapel retains a medium degree of integrity of feeling, as it is readily identifiable as a building which housed a church.
Association	Medium-Low	The Davidson Baptist Chapel has medium-low integrity of association. It served as the Baptist mission, later church, to the to the white residents of Davidson during and after segregation. Located in the western side of town, which was home to cotton mills and other industry, Davidson Baptist Chapel stood in contrast to the upper- and middle-class congregants of the dominant Presbyterian church and its connection to Davidson College.

Chain of Title

Grantor	Grantee	Date	Deed Book/ Page	Notes
Davidson Community Players, a North Carolina non profit corporation	Town of Davidson, a North Carolina municipal corporation	January 15, 2008	23276 /743	Parcels 00327507, 00327511, 00327565, and 00327566
GROVECO, L.L.C., a North Carolina limited liability corporation	Davidson Community Players, a North Carolina non profit corporation	January 15, 2008	23276 /738	Parcels 00327507, 00327511, 00327565, and 00327566
Heritage Church of Davidson, Inc., a North Carolina non-profit corporation	GROVECO, L.L.C., a North Carolina limited liability corporation	February 27, 2006	20066 /980	Parcels 00327507 and 00327511
Baptist Metrolina Ministries Board, a North Carolina non-profit corporation	Heritage Church of Davidson, Inc., a North Carolina non-profit corporation	May 30, 2002	13675 /87	Parcel 00327507
Trustees of First Baptist Church of Davidson	Baptist Metrolina Ministries Board, a N.C. non-profit corporation	April 15, 2002	13494 /440	Parcel 00327507
Mecklenburg Baptist Association Board, Inc.	Trustees of First Baptist Church of Davidson	November 22, 1977	4009/ 134	Tracts 1 and 2
Ada Rogers and husband, George R. Rogers, et. al.	Mecklenburg Baptist Association Board, Inc.	April 5, 1947	1256/ 523	Tracts 1 (Lot 3, Block B of Armour Heights) and 2 (Lots 1-2, Block B of Armour Heights)
R. M. Armour (unmarried)	Robt. H. Rafferty	June 30, 1911	290/6	Lots 1 and 2, Block B of Armour Heights (Map Book 230, Page 52)
Source: Mecklenburg County Registrar of Deeds				

Historical Background

Written by Nick Linville and Susan V. Mayer

The Davidson Baptist Chapel is representative of the historic divide between “town and gown”—the eastern section of Davidson connected with Davidson College, and the western portion which developed in the early twentieth century around cotton mills—which was extant well past the construction of the building from 1957 to 1960. The distinctions between these two sections of Davidson have all but disappeared from the modern town as development pressure on the western section has steadily mounted.

Baptists in Mecklenburg County

Historically settled by Scotch-Irish immigrants, Mecklenburg County was largely Presbyterian in its religious leanings. In June 1833 efforts began to form a Baptist congregation in Charlotte with short-lived success. A second effort in 1855 resulted in the founding of Beulah Baptist Church, later First Baptist Church. The church joined the Brown Creek Baptist Association, whose churches were largely in Anson and Union counties.¹ In north Mecklenburg, Baptists assembled in the Hopewell community southeast of Davidson to form Hopewell Baptist Church in 1879. However, much like early efforts in Charlotte, the church disbanded in the 1890s but reformed in 1914.²

As Davidson College, a historically Presbyterian institution, formed the historical core of the town, many of its residents were Presbyterian. In the decades after Emancipation, Black residents established their own congregations, Davidson Presbyterian Church (1870s) and Reeves Temple A.M.E. Zion Church (1897). Gethsemane Baptist Church was established in 1905 by Black Baptists and held its first service in a house on Depot Street. They soon built a new church on Potts Street on land donated by Jimmie Lee Sloan. As churches were typically segregated, white Baptists in Davidson traveled three miles into rural Mecklenburg to attend Hopewell Baptist.³ The mill villages around Delburg and Linden Mills were served by a non-denominational church founded in 1890 by mill operator Dr. J. P. Munroe. A rotation of pastors of various denominations as well as students at Davidson College conducted Sunday School classes and worship services through 1950.⁴

Class in Davidson

The Norfolk Southern railroad tracks quite literally divide the town of Davidson into two historically distinct sections—the eastern portion containing Davidson College, the business district, and large, stately homes along North Main Street and Concord Road, and the western portion with the blue-collar Delburg and Linden mill villages and Black community of Mock Hill. This divide is evident in

¹ Rev. T. J. Taylor, “Early Baptist Efforts in Charlotte,” *North Carolina Baptist Historical Papers*, July 1899 (Henderson, NC: North Carolina Baptist Society), 169-181; 15.

² *Hopewell Baptist Church, 1879-1979: A Centennial History* (Davidson, NC: Hopewell Baptist Church, 1979), 5-6.

³ Jan Blodgett and Ralph B. Levering, *One Town, Many Voices: A History of Davidson, North Carolina* (Davidson: Historical Society, 2012), 70-74, 102-103; “Our History,” Gethsemane Baptist Church of Lake Norman, https://www.gbclakenorman.org/site/page.asp?id=32&t=our_history, accessed May 16, 2025.

⁴ Stewart Gray, Survey and Research Report on the Unity Church Cabin/Lingle Hut (1932), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (2007).

Mary D. Beaty's seminal 1979 history of the town, which focuses on the College, the Main Street corridor, and east side of the railroad tracks. A successor book by Jan Blodgett and Ralph B. Levering brings western Davidson into the historical discussion, centering its context within the "town-gown" divide between working-class Davidsonians and those more affluent or affiliated with the college.

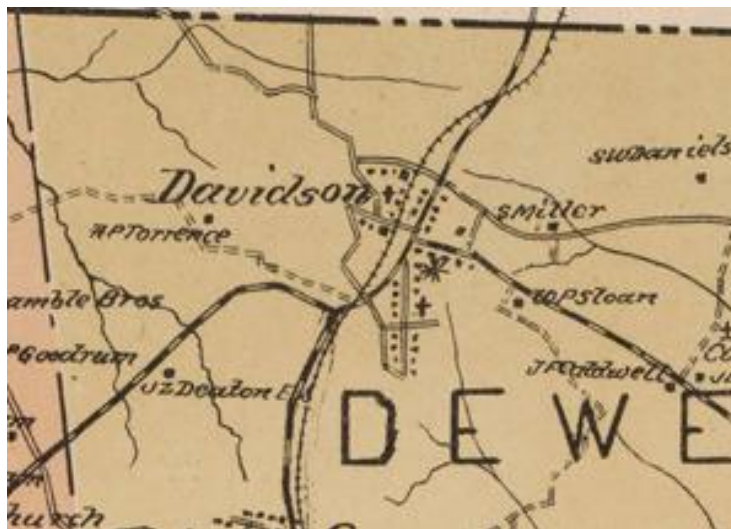


Figure 1 The 1911 map of Mecklenburg County shows the lack of roads heading west from Davidson, indicative of the slow development of the western section of the town.

The primary reason for this divide between east and west was infrastructure. When trustees established Davidson College in 1835, they chose donated land along the Great Road between Charlotte and Statesville. From this point, the Concord Road ran east to Rocky River and Cabarrus County, and it was along these thruways that homes and businesses grew. The railroad came to the village by 1861, though the tracks were destroyed during the Civil War and not rebuilt until 1871. The railroad tracks impeded development on the west side of town as most growth occurred around the college and the north-south road

between Charlotte and Statesville. When the Linden and Delburg cotton mills were built around the turn of the twentieth century, they were sited on the rural land west of the railroad tracks. Local resident R. M. Armour platted a single-family subdivision north of the mills in 1909, though Delburg Cotton Mill purchased most lots to expand its mill village in 1910.⁵

Until the opening of the cotton mills, white residents of Davidson lived adjacent regardless of class and occupation. But as the mill villages took shape, these social divisions increased. Recreation programs and schools were separate, as the town did not have a public school until 1911. Davidson College expanded its water and sewer lines to serve Main Street and nearby residences in the early 1900s. However, the mill villages and Mock Hill did not receive utility services until much later. Mill houses were connected to the electric grid starting in 1931. Black barber Ralph Johnson petitioned the town commissioners to install a water line and fire hydrant in the area in 1935, but the motion was tabled for a year. As noted in the *Gazette* in 1950, when the former Delburg mill houses were being sold to individual owners, "Plans are to connect these homes with water and sewer lines and to install a kitchen sink and additional facilities in each home."⁶

⁵ Mary D. Beaty, *Davidson: A History of the Town from 1835 until 1937* (Davidson: Briarpatch Press, 1979), 20; Susan V. Mayer, "Landmark Designation Report: Armour Street Mill House, 225 Armour Street, Davidson, North Carolina," Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (September 2024), 10–14.

⁶ "Houses Bought for Improvement, Resale," *Gazette*, November 16, 1950, in Blodgett and Levering, 160.

Religion also had a tinge of class distinction in Davidson. The Unity Church was established as a interdenominational ministry to the mill village in 1932, a reorganization of the chapel which had served western Davidson since 1890. The church also drew congregants from local residents who had no ties to Davidson College. While many attended Davidson College Presbyterian Church, they found class divides still existed on Sunday mornings. Aileen Cantrell, who managed the local Western Auto store with her husband, noted that “nobody” would speak to her at the college church because of her lack of connection to the institution.⁷ As Blodgett and Levering noted, white churches in Davidson tended to reflect the social and economic standing of its congregates—upper-class and college connections at the Presbyterian church, merchants and business owners at the Methodist church, middle class at the Episcopal church, and working class at the west Davidson churches.⁸



Figure 2 In 1951, the only road heading west from Davidson was Armour Street which curved north into Iredell County. Griffith Street was opened in 1956 to access the new US-21 bypass. The location of Davidson Baptist Chapel is marked by the green star. Mecklenburg County Time Machine, Mecklenburg County GIS, <https://timemachine.mcmap.org/#35.50600054851916/-80.84890097379686/19/1686413485000>, accessed July 1, 2025.

Davidson Baptist Chapel

As the Baptist faith grew along with the general population of Mecklenburg County in the postwar years, the Association initiated missions in underserved communities with the hope that they would

⁷ Blodgett and Levering, 166.

⁸ Blodgett and Levering, 168.

become fully organized churches. Davidson, where the Presbyterian church had been strong since the antebellum period, was an area ripe for spreading the Baptist faith, particularly as the population of the town expanded.⁹ The Mecklenburg Baptist Association purchased the parcel in 1947 against the backdrop of an expanding Baptist Church. The Baptist faith has had a representation in Mecklenburg County since the eighteenth century. In 1826 the Baptist congregations of Mecklenburg and neighboring counties formed the Catawba River Association. By the late nineteenth century, the association, part of the broader Southern Baptist Convention, consolidated to the Mecklenburg and Cabarrus Association until it became the Mecklenburg Baptist Association in the first half of the twentieth century. The Association represented all of the Baptist churches, old and new, in the county and also supported leadership, community programs, and development.



Figure 3 Rev. Clyde H. Jackson was the first pastor of Davidson Baptist Chapel. From larryham_1, <https://www.ancestry.com>.

The Association purchased two lots (the Davidson Baptist Chapel parcel) as well as other lots in Armour Heights via the 1947 deed, perhaps in order to have options for a future site. One of the properties included a house which hosted the mission until a new chapel was built later.¹⁰ This house may be one of the buildings (non-extant) visible in the 1951 aerial photograph to the east of the future site of the chapel. Cornelius Baptist Church sponsored the initial Davidson mission, known as the Davidson Baptist Chapel.¹¹ By 1954, Huntersville Baptist Church sponsored the mission. That summer, Clyde Henry Jackson, a recently ordained graduate of Wingate College and Wake Forest University as well as a World War II veteran, became pastor.¹²

Annual minutes of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association Board from the late 1950s mention an effort to raise a new building for the Davidson mission. The minutes from the 1958 meeting note that the Association and the Baptists in Davidson, who were under the leadership of Rev. Edward Wells, were actively working toward a new chapel because “it was absolutely necessary that they [i.e. the Davidson mission] get out of an old frame building that was a discredit to the Baptist work.” The Association contributed \$2,238 to the construction of a new building. Minutes from the following year noted, “We are not through at

⁹ Gethsemane Baptist Church, founded in the early 1900s, was perhaps the largest Baptist congregation in Davidson in the mid-twentieth century.

¹⁰ Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Sixty-Second Annual Session*, October 23–24, 1947, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 20.

¹¹ Historic aerial photographs available from 1948 and 1950 do not show a building on the parcel. Similarly, historic newspapers and Association minutes do not specify the exact location of the initial Davidson mission.

¹² “Clyde Jackson to be Ordained,” *The Charlotte Observer* June 19, 1954, 26; Obituary of Clyde Henry Jackson, *The Charlotte Observer* June 18, 1997, 59.

Davidson,” as the building’s electrical and heating reached completion.¹³ The minutes from 1960 are the last to mention the building effort, and thus it appears the new chapel reached completion and opened that year.¹⁴



Figure 4 This 1961 USGS aerial photograph of the Davidson Baptist Chapel shows its location at the northern edge of Davidson. There would be little development in this section until the 1990s.

The brick chapel stood prominently at the corner of Armour Street and Watson Street, an area that was on the outskirts of downtown Davidson at the time. The chapel was the first and largest of only three buildings on Armour Street as one turned west from Watson. Most of the land to the north and the west was undeveloped.¹⁵

As Davidson continued to grow in the 1960s, the mission attracted new congregants. Rev. George Frank Vinson (1928–2010), who went by Frank, was a fixture at the mission and in the later history of the site.¹⁶ A native of Lancaster, South Carolina, he received degrees from North Greenville Junior College, Wingate College, and Southwestern Theological Seminary in Texas. Rev. Vinson worked in many churches in South Carolina before becoming pastor at the Davidson Baptist Chapel in 1966. Under Vinson’s pastorate, the mission evolved to the point that, in 1970, the Association recognized it as a church, and it became known as First Baptist Church of Davidson.¹⁷

Through the last quarter of the twentieth century, First Baptist Church remained under the pastorate of Rev. Vinson. In 1977 the Mecklenburg Baptist Association deeded the parcel to a group of church trustees. The church continued to serve its community as a place for weddings, funerals, worship, and other activities, as is evidenced in historical newspaper articles. While the building remained its same size through the years, the church and its members enhanced the interior in 1982 when the Jarman family commissioned a mural of the River Jordan entitled *River of Descension*. The artist was

¹³ Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Seventy-Fourth Annual Session*, October 22–23, 1959, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 28; Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Seventy-Fourth Annual Session*, October 22–23, 1959, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 32.

¹⁴ Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Seventy-Fifth Annual Session*, October 20–21, 1960, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 45–48.

¹⁵ Information on the ca.1960 setting is derived from the 1961 USGS aerial photograph.

¹⁶ Vinson replaced Rev. Wells who resigned in 1961.

¹⁷ Mecklenburg Baptist Association, *Eighty-Fifth Session*, October 22–23, 1970, Mecklenburg Baptist Association, North Carolina, 24.

Alice Mae Favro of Matthews, who had completed similar murals across the state.¹⁸ Through the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s, small churches like First Baptist Church struggled to survive as church attendance and affiliation across the American religious landscape declined, and also as larger, regional churches offered more programs and modern facilities. First Baptist appears to have closed its doors in the early 2000s.

Armour Street Theater

Amidst changes in the Baptist church, the Trustees of First Baptist Church of Davidson transferred ownership of the Armour Street building and parcel to the Association, which had rebranded as Baptist Metrolina Ministries, in 2002. Several months later, an entity called Heritage Church of Davidson purchased the property. About four years later, usage of the building as a church appears to have ended as real estate investment entity Grovoco LLC purchased the property.

In 2008 the Davidson Community Players (DCP), working with the Town of Davidson, acquired the former First Baptist Church property. Drama teacher, director, and actor Constance Welsh founded the organization in 1965. In its early years, DCP performed two plays a year at Davidson College that featured students and town residents. DCP achieved non-profit status in the 1980s, enabling them to expand their activities through the 1990s when they produced 23 different plays. As of recent years, DCP stages several adult productions each year, including both plays and musicals, and maintains a strong lineup of performances featuring teens and children. The organization is widely regarded for its theater education efforts in the region, offering programs at venues such as the Armour Street Theatre, Cain Center for the Arts, and the Duke Family Performance Hall.¹⁹ Through its continued use by Davidson residents, the history of the building continues.

¹⁸ Pat Johnson, "Mural a Real 'Labor of Love,'" *The Mecklenburg Gazette* January 13, 1983, A37. North Carolina Baptist Church and Association Files. Special Collections and Archives, Wake Forest University.

¹⁹ "History," Davidson Community Players webpage, electronic document, <https://www.davidsoncommunityplayers.org/history>, accessed May 12, 2025.

Architectural Description

Written by Susan V. Mayer, Principal



The Davidson Baptist Chapel is located on three parcels at the southwest corner of Armour Street and Watson Street. A gravel parking lot wraps the building on the east, south, and west sides. The building, which faces north and is sited near Armour Street, is in the middle parcel. The east parcel is grassy with the gravel parking lot near the building and curb cut at Watson Street. The west parcel has the gravel parking lot with curb cut at Armour Street. The site slopes from east to west, allowing for a walkout basement at the rear portion of the building. A concrete sidewalk runs along Watson Street and Armour Street.



A concrete walkway with curb cut leads from Armour Street to the sidewalk. A brick walkway leads from the sidewalk to the steps, and east of the walkway has pavers. A mature oak tree is northwest of the building immediately adjacent to the accessible ramp.



Built in 1957-1960 as a Baptist chapel, the building is a common front-gabled church with Colonial Revival detailing. It is one-story-on-basement in height. The former sanctuary comprises the primary mass of the building. An entry bay slightly narrower than the primary mass comprises the façade.



The Davidson Baptist Chapel is sheathed in running bond brick veneer with common bond at the basement level on all elevations. It has a front-gabled roof with asphalt shingles. Typical wood sash windows at the main level are twelve-over-sixteen wood sash and appear to be original. At the basement level typical windows are horizontal sliding vinyl replacement windows with four lites on each side. Eaves and cornice boards have aluminum siding wrap. Aerial imagery dating to 1960 shows no evidence of a steeple on the building.



Figure 5 Aerial photographs of the Davidson Baptist Chapel ca. 2007. Meck Scope,
<http://maps.co.mecklenburg.nc.us/meckscope/?lat=35.5061&lon=-80.8488>, accessed May 11, 2025.

Since moving into the building in 2007-2008, the Davidson Community Players have made minimal changes to the exterior. The wood ramp at the entrance was added for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Mechanical systems at rear were installed, with window openings filled with ducts and brick. The two-lite wood door at basement level was replaced with the extant six-panel door. Windows at basement level are vinyl replacement, indicating that they were likely added at or after this time. Brick above the entry shows evidence of alteration. But as Google Street View images from July 2008 show that the façade appeared the same, it is likely that any changes were made earlier.²⁰

²⁰ 307 Armour Street, Google Street View, July 2008, <https://maps.app.goo.gl/XGTBPUwy6m5YGafM6>, accessed May 12, 2025.



The façade of the Davidson Baptist Chapel is comprised of the front-gabled entry, which is one bay wide and one bay deep. The gable has a continuous eave and aluminum siding with louvered vent in the peak. It has brick steps with wrought iron railing and a winding wood ramp approaching the entrance.

The narrow pair of wood six-panel doors have an unusual surround. The pilasters and crosshead have a simple base with decorative trim and moulding applied. The pilasters are narrow with inset panels. The crosshead features wide trim with dentil moulding above. The crosshead base widens from its base, and two ogee broken pediments are at top. Lantern sconces flank the doorway. Brick above the entry shows signs of alterations to the entry. The surround components are wrapped in aluminum except for the dentil moulding and pediments which appear to be wood or wood composite. The trim around the double doors is wood.

The side elevations of the entry have an off-center typical window. A basement window covered with plywood was visible on the west elevation.



The original wood German siding of the gable is visible through missing trim.



The east elevation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel is six bays wide from façade to rear. Six bays have typical wood sash windows at the main level. The brick chimney is located between the fourth and fifth bays. It interrupts the eave and extends slightly above the roof plane. Vegetation obscures the view of basement fenestration from the streetscape. However, windows generally align with the bays above. The first through fourth bays have typical vinyl replacement windows. The sixth bay has a fixed vinyl replacement window. The seventh bay has no fenestration but has electrical boxes and panels. Window sills at the basement have brick headers rather than the typical rowlocks found throughout the building.



The rear elevation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel has the most alterations of the building with the ca. 2008 installation of a heating and cooling system. It is two bays wide. The original windows at the main level have been removed, and the ductwork with brick fill below utilizes the west opening. The east window has also been filled with brick. While Google Street View imagery is low quality, it appears that these windows may have been original nine-over-nine wood sash. Ductwork extends up the face to a new opening under the louvered vent in the gable peak. The HVAC system sits on a concrete pad, and the units and ductwork obscure at basement level a typical vinyl replacement window. The six-panel door replaced the likely original two-lite wood door.



The west elevation of the Davidson Baptist Chapel is six bays wide. The main level has typical wood sash windows. The fenestration at basement level generally lines up with the bays above with some exceptions as noted. The first, second, and third bays have typical vinyl replacement windows. The fourth bay, which is located off-center from the bays above, has a six-panel wood door with two sets brick steps to a concrete landing below grade. The north brick steps with low retaining wall and concrete landing appear original. An original retaining wall at south was partially removed for installation of the south brick steps, low brick retaining wall, and new concrete landing with square drain. Tube steel railing is on the original brick retaining walls.



The fifth bay of the west elevation has a six-over-six vinyl replacement window. The seventh bay has a wide six-panel steel door. A concrete sidewalk extends along the elevation to provide access from the Armour Street sidewalk and ramp to the two entrances.



Typical twelve-over-sixteen wood sash window



Two non-historic resources are located on the site. A prefabricated shed is located at the southwest corner of the building. A lighted acrylic sign with metal frame and brick base is located northeast of the building on Armour Street.



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TOWN OF DAVIDSON BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS (the “Town Board”) adopts the following ordinance designating as a Historic Landmark a property known as the “Davidson Baptist Chapel” (listed under Tax Parcel Numbers 00327565, 00327507, and 00327511 and including the exterior of the building and the land listed under Tax Parcel Numbers 00327565, 00327507, and 00327511 in the Mecklenburg County Tax Office, Charlotte, North Carolina as of October 1, 2025). The property is located at 307 Armour Street in Davidson, North Carolina, and is owned by the Town of Davidson.

WHEREAS, all of the prerequisites to the adoption of this ordinance prescribed in Chapter 160D, Article 9, as amended, of the General Statutes of North Carolina have been met; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Town Board of Davidson, North Carolina, have taken into full consideration all statements and information presented at a public hearing held on the 14th day of October, 2025, on the question of designating a property known as the Davidson Baptist Chapel as a historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission have taken into full consideration all statements and information presented at a public hearing held on the 13th day of October, 2025, on the question of designating a property known as the Davidson Baptist Chapel as a historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the Davidson Baptist Chapel, later the First Baptist Church of Davidson, is significant as an extant representation of the “town and gown” class divide which once characterized the town. Davidson was divided by the railroad both physically and socioeconomically. The eastern section of the town was associated with Davidson College, the town’s upper- and middle-class residents, and the business district. While the west side developed in the early twentieth century around cotton mills and the associated mill villages; and

WHEREAS, the west side of Davidson, especially around the Delburg Mill Village, has experienced significant re-development and continues to face significant development pressures; and

WHEREAS, western Davidson remained working class well into the twentieth century, and the Davidson Baptist Chapel is an important non-residential element of the history of that section of Davidson; and

WHEREAS, The Davidson Baptist Chapel is an important element in understanding the development and evolution of houses of worship in Davidson. In 1947 the Mecklenburg Baptist Association purchased the church property. Cornelius Baptist Church sponsored the initial Davidson mission, known as the Davidson Baptist Chapel, with Huntersville Baptist Church assuming the sponsorship of the mission in 1954; and

WHEREAS, the Davidson Baptist Chapel building has retained a good degrees of integrity as to its exterior design, and feeling; and

WHEREAS, the associated property upon which the Davidson Baptist Chapel is situated appropriately reflects and preserves the historic location and setting of the

structure, and therefore possesses its own special historical significance independent of the structure; and

WHEREAS, based on the additional information detailed in the *Landmark Designation Report for the Davidson Baptist Chapel* (July 2025), all of which is incorporated herein by reference, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission has demonstrated that the Davidson Baptist Chapel possesses special significance in terms of its history, architecture, and/or cultural importance; and

WHEREAS, the property known as the Davidson Baptist Chapel is owned by the Town of Davidson.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the members of the Town Board of Davidson, North Carolina:

1. That the property known as the “Davidson Baptist Chapel” (listed under Tax Parcel Numbers 00327565, 00327507, and 00327511 and including the exterior of the building and the land listed under Tax Parcel Numbers 00327565, 00327507, and 00327511 in the Mecklenburg County Tax Office, Charlotte, North Carolina as of October 1, 2025) is hereby designated as a historic landmark pursuant to Chapter 160D, Article 9, as amended, of the General Statutes of North Carolina. The location of said landmark is noted as being situated at 307 Armour Street in Davidson, North Carolina. Exterior features are more completely described in the *Landmark Designation Report for the Davidson Baptist Chapel* (July 2025).

2. That said exterior is more specifically defined as the historic and structural fabric of the property, especially including all original exterior architectural features and the contours of landscaping, and that those elements are integral to its historical,

architectural, or prehistorical value, as described in the *Landmark Designation Report for the Davidson Baptist Chapel* (July 2025).

3. That said designated historic landmark may be materially altered, restored, moved, or demolished only following issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness authorizing the demolition of said landmark may not be denied, except if such landmark is judged to be of State-wide significance by duly authorized officials of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History. However, the effective date of such Certificate may be delayed and the waiting period before demolition must be observed in accordance with Chapter 160D, Article 9, of the General Statutes of North Carolina as amended.

4. Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prevent or delay ordinary maintenance or repair of any architectural feature in or on said landmark that does not involve a change in design, material, or outer appearance thereof, nor to prevent or delay the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, demolition, or removal of any such feature when a building inspector or similar official certifies to the Commission that such action is required for the public safety because of an unsafe condition. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent the owner of the historic landmark from making any use of the historic landmark not prohibited by other statutes, ordinances, or regulations. Owners of locally designated historic landmarks are expected to be familiar with and to follow the *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission's Standards for Rehabilitation*, the guidelines used by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission to evaluate proposed alterations or additions.

5. That a suitable sign may be posted indicating that said property has been designated as a historic landmark and containing any other appropriate information. If the owner consents, the sign may be placed on said historic landmark.

6. That the owner of the historic landmark known as the Davidson Baptist Chapel be given notice of this ordinance as required by applicable law and that copies of this ordinance be filed and indexed in the offices of the Town Clerk, Building Standards Department, Mecklenburg County Register of Deeds, and the Tax Supervisor, as required by applicable law.

7. That which is designated as a historic landmark shall be subject to Chapter 160D, Article 9, of the General Statutes of North Carolina as amended, and any amendments to it and any amendments hereinafter adopted.

Adopted the 14th day of October, 2025, by the members of the Town Board of Davidson, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

Town Clerk

Approved as to form:

Town Attorney

Proposed Motion:

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-12 designating as a historic landmark the property known as the “Davidson Baptist Chapel,” including the exterior of the building and the land listed under Tax Parcel Numbers 00327565, 00327507, and 00327511 in the Mecklenburg County Tax Office. Said property is owned by the Town of Davidson, and is located at 307 Armour St, Davidson, NC.





AGENDA MEMO

To: Davidson Board of Commissioners

From: Gina Carmon, Recreation Operations Manager

Date: October 14, 2025

Re: Discuss Fiscal Year 2026 Non-Profit Grant Recommendations

ITEM SUMMARY/OVERVIEW

The Board of Commissioners has appropriated \$50,000 for non-profit grants as part of the annual budget process. Non-profits serving Davidson residents may apply for funding to support activities that meet a public purpose that the Town government does not directly provide but could if facilities and staffing were available. Successful applicants must serve Davidson residents. Funding recommendations from the Livability Board will align with the Town's Core Values and the Board of Commissioners' Strategic Plan. Anne Bontempo, Vice-Chair of the Livability Board, will discuss their recommendations on how the Fiscal Year 2026 Non-Profit Grant funds should be allocated.

ACTION/PROPOSED MOTION

This item is for discussion only. The Board of Commissioners will be asked to approve a budget amendment at the October 28 meeting on the consent agenda.

RELATED TOWN GOALS

Strategic Plan Alignment

Healthy, Livable, & Vibrant Community - Promote collaborative efforts to create livable spaces and healthy places to enhance quality of life for all residents.

Sustainability and Natural Assets - Preserve Davidson's natural assets and develop, implement, and actively encourage innovative solutions to environmental, energy, and climate-based challenges.

Operational Excellence - Provide efficient and high-quality public services and facilities through thoughtful and proactive planning, responsible stewardship of Town resources and a professional and committed workforce.

Core Values

Citizens are the heart of Davidson, so town government will treat all people fairly, with courtesy and respect.

Open communication is essential to an engaged citizenry, so town government will seek and provide accurate, timely information and promote public discussion of important issues.

Citizens entrust town government with the stewardship of public funds, so government will provide high quality services at a reasonable cost.

The physical, social, and intellectual well-being of Davidson citizens is fundamental to our community, so town government will provide and encourage enjoyable, safe, and affordable recreational and cultural lifelong learning opportunities.

NEXT STEPS

The Board of Commissioners will be asked to approve the 2025 Non-Profit Grants grant awards on the consent agenda at the October 28, 2025 meeting.

- 210 Collective
 - Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Provides vocational opportunities to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
 - Serves 8-12 Davidson residents with IDD and 16 volunteers
- Ada Jenkins Center
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion
 - Funding for Financial Assistance Program
- Bags of Hope
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion
 - 25 Davidson Elementary Students (funding will serve 5 students for the school year)
 - Provides weekend food bags to students
- Bridge of Hearts
 - Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Provides Birthday Bags to students at Davidson Elementary & CSD, along with hygiene kits and snacks
- Brownicity
 - Looking to partner with Unity in the Community North Meck to provide programming (Intercultural Development Inventory, What LIES Between Us Course, and The American Dream Game.
 - Anticipates an impact to 75-100 Davidson Residents
 - Funding not awarded as Town will offer in-kind support to host their event in community spaces
- Cats of Davidson
 - Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community & Sustainability and Natural Assets
 - Funding to stabilize and care for the feral cat population in Davidson

- Cornelius Arts Community Center Inc (DBA: Cain Center for the Arts)
 - Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Funds will be used to host Read Across America event with Ada Jenkins. To cover Ticket cost (performance at Cain Center), Pete the Cat books, and Activity books
 - Funding is not recommended due to nature of request, could provide comped tickets
- Cornelius Youth Orchestra (North Carolina Youth Orchestra)
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion – Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Reports that 12% of their participants are Davidson Residents
 - Continue Annual Carolina Youth Orchestra Summer Festival
- Davidson Cornelius Child Development Center
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion – Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - 20% of Children served fall at or under low income
 - Enhance Preschool Environment
- Davidson Elementary PTO
 - Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Walking Track around Soccer Field.
 - Funding is not recommended as staff are currently working on Joint Use Agreement with CMS and will look to provide in-kind support as apart of this agreement
- Davidson Housing Coalition
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion and Healthy, Livable, & Vibrant Community
 - Seeking funds to continue work on 2025 request “Martha’s Corner”
- Davidson Lands Conservancy
 - Sustainability and Natural Assets
 - Beaty Park Signage Project
 - Funding is not recommended as town will provide in-kind support.
- FeedNC
 - Reports to serve 80 Davidson residents
 - Funding for program costs related food access

- HealthReach Community Clinic
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion – Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - 30 Davidson residents
 - Funding to support and cover \$200 worth of services per Davidson resident served
- La Escuelita Bilingual Preschool
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion – Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Up to 9 Davidson residents out of 30 students
 - Seeking funds to provide Afternoon program
- North Carolina Baroque Orchestra
 - Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Davidson Bach Festival
 - Funding is not recommended due to nature of service provided
- Senior Community Connections (formerly Davidson Village Network)
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion – Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Approximately 50 residents served
 - Looking to upgrade their volunteer request system
- Temple Kol Tikvah
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion – Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Seeking funds to enhance HAL (Healthy Active Living) Program for Seniors
- The Pines
 - Affordable Living, Equity & Inclusion – Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Seeking funds to support their Resident Support Fund.
 - Funding is not recommended as it would contribute to an existing fund
- Trout Unlimited-Rocky River Chapter
 - Sustainability and Natural Assets – Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community
 - Seeking funds to enhance their “Trout in the Classroom” program that includes students releasing trout at Lake Norman State Park
 - Funding is not recommended due to not showing direct impact to the Davidson community



Non-Profit Grant Recommendations

Gina Carmon, Staff Liaison Livability Board
Anne Bontempo, Livability Board Vice-Chair
Board of Commissioners
October 14, 2025

www.townofdavidson.org

Non-Profit Grants

- The Board of Commissioners has appropriated \$50,000 for grants.
- Non-profits that serve Davidson residents may apply for funding to support activities that meet a public purpose that the Town government does not directly provide but could if facilities and staffing were available.
- Funding recommendations from the Livability Board align with the Town's Core Values and the Board of Commissioners' Strategic Plan.

Non-Profit Grant Process

- Applications opened August 1, 2025, and closed on September 5, 2025.
- Final recommendations made and approved by the Livability Board at their September 16 board meeting.
- Livability Board is recommending allocating \$50,000 to 13 non-profits (20 total applicants).
 - **This year's application cycle only allowed organizations to apply for either \$2,500 or \$5,000.**

Livability Board (LB) Recommendations

Organization	FY 25 Award	Applicant Request	FY26 Recommendation
210 Collective*	\$0	\$5,000	\$2,500
Ada Jenkins	\$5,250	\$5,000	\$5,000
Bags of Hope	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Bridge of Hearts*	\$0	\$2,500	\$2,500
Brownicity*	\$0	\$5,000	\$0
Cats of Davidson	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Cornelius Arts Community Center Inc.*	\$0	\$5,000	\$0
NC (Cornelius) Youth Orchestra	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$2,500
Davidson Cornelius Child Development	\$1,500	\$5,000	\$5,000
Davidson Elementary PTO	\$0	\$5,000	\$0
Davidson Housing Coalition	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Davidson Lands Conservancy	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$0
FeedNC	\$0	\$5,000	\$2,500
HealthReach Community Clinic	\$3,000	\$2,500	\$2,500
La Escuelita Bilingual Preschool	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
NC Baroque Orchestra*	\$0	\$2,500	\$0
Senior Community Connections	\$3,200	\$5,000	\$5,000
Temple Kol Tikvah	\$1,500	\$5,000	\$2,500
The Pines*	\$0	\$5,000	\$0
Trout Unlimited- Rocky River Chapter	\$1,000	\$2,500	\$0
Totals	\$33,950	\$85,000	\$50,000

Next Steps:

The Town Board will be asked to approve the grant awards on the consent agenda at the October 28 board meeting.



Questions?





AGENDA MEMO

To: Davidson Board of Commissioners

From: Ryan Monteith, Fire Chief

Date: October 14, 2025

Re: Discuss Fire Station 1 Designs Services Contract and Financial Update

ITEM SUMMARY/OVERVIEW

At the April 8, 2025, Board of Commissioners Meeting, the Town Board approved town staff issuing a Request for Qualifications related to design services for Fire Station 1. Town staff, along with Storey Program Management, selected Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects to serve as the architect of record for Fire Station 1. Fire Chief Ryan Monteith will provide an overview of the design services proposal from Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects. Finance Director Piet Swart will also provide an update on the financial schedule for the Fire Station project as well as the new pumper apparatus purchase.

ACTION/PROPOSED MOTION

The board will be asked to consider approving the design services contract for Fire Station 1 at the October 28, 2025, Board of Commissioners Meeting.

RELATED TOWN GOALS

Strategic Plan Alignment

Healthy, Livable, & Vibrant Community - Promote collaborative efforts to create livable spaces and healthy places to enhance quality of life for all residents.

Sustainability and Natural Assets - Preserve Davidson's natural assets and develop, implement, and actively encourage innovative solutions to environmental, energy, and climate-based challenges.

Operational Excellence - Provide efficient and high-quality public services and facilities through thoughtful and proactive planning, responsible stewardship of Town resources and a professional and committed workforce.

Core Values

Davidson must be a safe place to live, work, and raise a family, so the town will work in partnership with the community to prevent crime and protect lives, property, and the public realm.

Citizens entrust town government with the stewardship of public funds, so government will provide high quality services at a reasonable cost.

NEXT STEPS

The board will be asked to consider approving the design services contract for Fire Station 1 at the October 28, 2025, Board of Commissioners Meeting.



Fire Station 1 Design Services and Construction Manager at Risk

J. Ryan Monteith, Fire Chief
Piet Swart, Finance Director
Board of Commissioners Meeting
October 14, 2025

www.townofdavidson.org

Plans Alignment

Core Values

- **Safety and Well-being:** The town prioritizes creating a safe environment for residents, emphasizing crime prevention and protecting lives, property, and the public realm.
- **Effective and Efficient Public Services:** Davidson aims to provide efficient and effective public services, including protecting health, safety, and welfare, ensuring equal access, and fostering innovation.

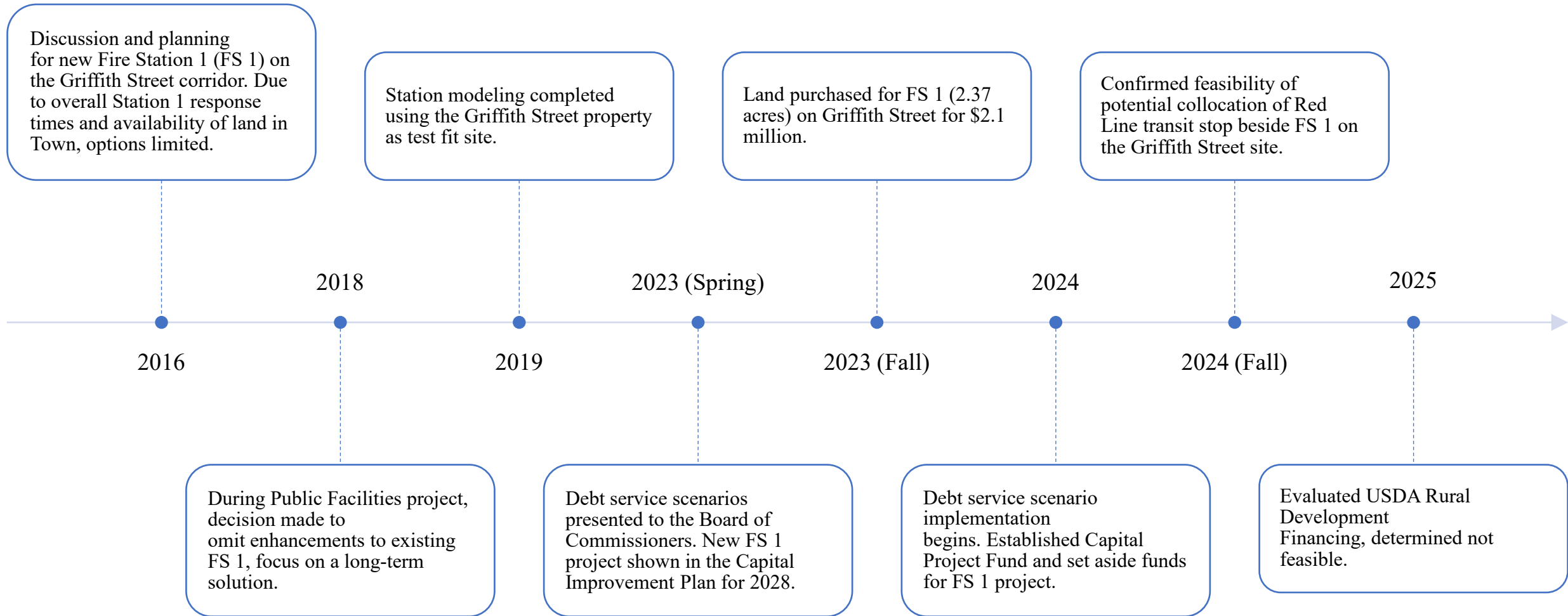
Comprehensive Plan

- **Efficient and High-Quality Public Services:** The town will provide efficient and high-quality public services and facilities that meet the community's needs and promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all community members.

Strategic Plan

- **Healthy, Livable, and Vibrant Community:** Provide a safe and secure community utilizing best practices and standards.
- **Operational Excellence:** Provide efficient and high-quality public services and facilities through thoughtful and proactive planning, responsible stewardship of Town resources and professional and committed workforce.

History



Background on Design Services

- The Town Board approved the process for Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Fire Station 1 design services at the April 8, 2025 meeting.
- The Town contracted with Storey Program Management (Storey) to serve as Project Manager (PM) during the design process.
- Storey developed the RFQ for design services and facilitated the architect interview and selection process.
- Town staff and Storey reviewed proposals and interviewed two architectural firms for design services.

Who is the Architect?

- Stewart-Cooper-Newell (SCN) Architects selected for design services for Fire Station 1.
- Local firm, based in Gastonia, NC.
- Well known in the industry with a lengthy and distinguished record of designing fire stations both locally and nationally.
- Known for their ability to design fire stations that meet the needs of departments and the communities they serve.
 - Examples of local projects underway include new Pineville fire station and a new fire station at Charlotte Douglas International Airport.

Construction Manager at Risk – (CMAR)

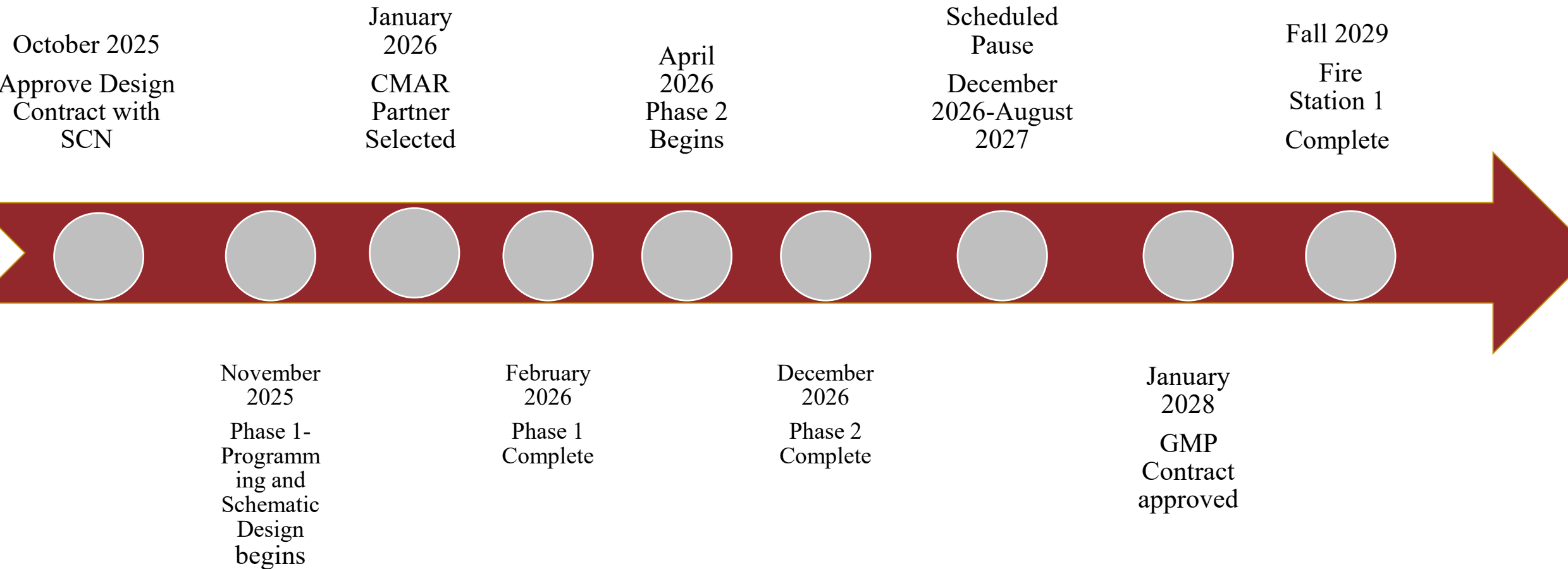
- Collectively, Town staff, Storey, and SCN determined that CMAR is the preferred construction delivery method for Fire Station 1 over Design-Build or Design-Bid-Build.
- Next steps include selecting a CMAR representative for pre-construction and construction services.
- Securing the CMAR now allows the Town to be better positioned with the project before construction begins.
- Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for CMAR services will be issued after the approval of the design contract.
- Selection of CMAR will allow for three construction estimates during phases 1 and 2 of the design process.
- Construction estimates from CMAR will more closely align with Guaranteed Maximum Pricing (GMP) during Phase 3 before construction begins.

Design Proposal

- Design Services divided into three phases:
 - Phase 1: Programming and Schematic Design Development
 - Phase 2: Construction Documents
 - Phase 3: Construction phase
- Board of Commissioners asked to approve contract for Phase 1 now and contract for Phase 2 later in the design process
- Design service fees are in line with project budget

Phase	Cost	Notes
Phase 1: Programming & Schematic Design	\$288,420	
Phase 2: Design Development & Construction Documents	\$838,180	Cost is approximate. Phase 1 will inform. Potential factors that can impact cost include square footage, traffic improvements, sustainability.
Total	\$1,126,600	Proposed total cost for Phases 1 and 2 including design to LEED Silver certification standards.

Fire Station 1 Design and Construction Timeline



Project Funding Plan

- To date, \$1.15 million set aside for the project.
- By end of FY2028*, there will be \$2.5 million in funds set aside for future debt service.
- Funding plan includes:
 - Proposed 1 penny increase to the Ad Valorem Tax rate in 2028, during the revaluation year.
 - Issuance of debt planned in FY2028.
- Preliminary estimate of construction cost is \$18 million in 2027.
- This funding plan also includes debt service on purchase of replacement fire pumper truck (\$1,400,000 projected cost).
 - Board will consider approval of contract in Spring 2026 – Currently over 2 years lead time on fire truck orders.

**Bond Rating evaluators commented on the responsible debt planning by the Town.*

Project Funding Plan

Current Funds Available			
August 2024		\$ 140,000	Establish Capital Project Fund (CPF)
August 2024		\$ 400,000	Funds Allocated from Fund Balance (FB)
July 2025		\$ 375,000	Funds Allocated from Fund Balance (FB)
FY2026		\$ 200,000	FY2026 budgeted expenditures
		\$ 1,115,000	Total available as of October 2025
Projected Funds		Cumulative Funds Available	
FY2026	\$ 175,000	\$ 1,290,000	Funds moved from FB July 2026
FY2027	\$ 400,000	\$ 1,690,000	Funds from budgeted expenditures
FY2028	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 2,690,000	Tax Increase and Previous Budgeted

Projected Design Expenditures Budget

Project Management	\$ 122,220
Design Services:	
Phase 1	\$ 288,420
Phase 2	\$ 838,180
CMAR Design Phase	\$ 50,000
Total Projected Design Costs	\$ 1,298,820

Next Steps

- Board of Commissioners asked to consider approval of the Design Contract for Phase 1 services with Stewart-Cooper-Newell at the October 28th Board of Commissioners Meeting.
- If approved, Design Services scheduled to begin the first week of November.
- Town will solicit Request for Qualifications for Construction Manager at Risk services during the early phases of design services.

DISCUSSION





AGENDA MEMO

To: Davidson Board of Commissioners

From: Kim Fleming, Economic Development Director

Date: October 14, 2025

Re: Discuss Christmas in Davidson One-Time Investments

ITEM SUMMARY/OVERVIEW

The Town's largest signature event, Christmas in Davidson, attracts over 25,000 people annually to the Town of Davidson. This event is an economic driver for our businesses, a fundraising opportunity for our non-profits, and a community gathering opportunity for our residents. The annual budget for Christmas in Davidson is funded through the occupancy tax and prepared food tax that Davidson receives. The operating budget funds safety items such as lights, barricades, traffic control and trolleys, as well as attractions for the event such as Santa, a music and light show, and a carousel to name a few. Some of the decorations for this event have been donated by legacy businesses and are no longer viable. This proposal is for one-time expenditures that would add to the ambiance of the event and some that would be visible for the entire holiday season. The public has commented that they would like more holiday decorations, including a better lit Christmas tree in the downtown area.

ACTION/PROPOSED MOTION

This item is for discussion only. The Board of Commissioners will be asked to approve a budget amendment at the October 28 meeting on the consent agenda.

RELATED TOWN GOALS

Strategic Plan Alignment

Healthy, Livable, & Vibrant Community - Promote collaborative efforts to create livable spaces and healthy places to enhance quality of life for all residents.

Economic Development - Attract diverse commercial development contributing to Davidson's unique economy and support new initiatives to create local jobs and add to the vibrancy of the community.

Operational Excellence - Provide efficient and high-quality public services and facilities through thoughtful and proactive planning, responsible stewardship of Town resources and a professional and committed workforce.

Sustainability and Natural Assets - Preserve Davidson's natural assets and develop, implement, and actively encourage innovative solutions to environmental, energy, and climate-based

challenges.

Core Values

Citizens are the heart of Davidson, so town government will treat all people fairly, with courtesy and respect.

Davidson's traditional character is that of a small, historic college town, so land planning will reflect its historic patterns of village-centered growth including connection of neighborhoods, preservation of our historic resources, conservation of rural area, and provision of public spaces.

The physical, social, and intellectual well-being of Davidson citizens is fundamental to our community, so town government will provide and encourage enjoyable, safe, and affordable recreational and cultural lifelong learning opportunities.

NEXT STEPS

The Board of Commissioners will be asked to approve a budget amendment at the October 28 meeting on the consent agenda.



Christmas in Davidson

Proposed One-Time Investments

Kim Fleming
Economic Development Director
Town Board Meeting
October 14, 2025

www.townofdavidson.org

Christmas in Davidson

- Signature Town event since 1988 that attracts over 25,000 people annually to Davidson.
- Economic driver for our businesses.
- Fundraising opportunity for our non-profits.
- Opportunity for connection for our residents.

Christmas in Davidson Proposed One-Time Investments

- Annual budget is used for safety and attractions (Occupancy tax & Prepared food tax, sponsorship dollars).
- Many of the decorative items have been legacy donations that are no longer viable.
- Response to public feedback for improved beautification during holiday time.

Christmas in Davidson Decorative Investments



GINGERBREAD HOUSE

Info Booth Design

V1 9/23/25 | by Caleb Sigmon

SIGMON
THEATRICAL



BIERGARTEN ARCHWAYS

Themed Entryway Design

V1 9/23/25 | by Caleb Sigmon

SIGMON
THEATRICAL



SANTA'S GATEWAY

Themed Entryway Design

V1 9/23/25 | by Caleb Sigmon

SIGMON
THEATRICAL

Christmas in Davidson Decorative Investments



Christmas in Davidson Proposed One-Time Investments

- Sustainable, reusable options (10+ years usage)
- Local supplier for themed decorations
- Resource allocation
- Downtown beautification
- Opportunity for future sponsorships to recoup investment

Christmas in Davidson Proposed One-Time Investments

Consider budget amendment of \$65,000 from unassigned fund balance on consent agenda at Oct. 28 Board Meeting.

Questions

