

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Riverside Industrial Historic District
other names/site number Asheville Wholesale District

2. Location

Roughly bounded by Clingman Avenue, Lyman Street,
street & number Roberts Street, and Riverside Drive not for publication N/A
city or town Asheville vicinity N/A
state North Carolina code NC county Buncombe code 021 zip code 28801

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Jeffrey Crow SHPO 6/23/04
Signature of certifying official Date
North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
____ entered in the National Register _____
___ See continuation sheet. _____
___ determined eligible for the _____
National Register _____
___ See continuation sheet. _____
___ determined not eligible for the _____
National Register _____
___ removed from the National Register _____
___ other (explain): _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
27	3	buildings
		sites
1	1	structures
		objects
28	4	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
In the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse
- COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
- COMMERCE/TRADE/department store
- COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant
- INDUSTRY/manufacturing
- INDUSTRY/industrial storage
- (see continuation sheet)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse
- COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store
- INDUSTRY/manufacturing
- INDUSTRY/industrial storage
- TRANSPORTATION/rail related
- TRANSPORTATION/road related
- (see continuation sheet)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Italianate
- Commercial Style
- Late Victorian
- No style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation BRICK (see continuation sheet)
- roof ASPHALT
- walls BRICK
- CONCRETE
- CONCRETE/concrete block
- other

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

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

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Industry

Architecture

Period of Significance

Ca. 1880-1954

Significant Dates

Ca. 1880

1916

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository:

University of North Carolina-Asheville

Pack Memorial Library

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 39 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>357740</u>	<u>3939380</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u>358140</u>	<u>3938560</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>17</u>	<u>358340</u>	<u>3939060</u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u>357860</u>	<u>3938860</u>

____ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Clay Griffith

organization Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. date April 26, 2004

street & number 825-C Merrimon Ave., #345 telephone (828) 281-3852

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28804

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Multiple owners (see attached inventory list)

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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

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

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Riverside Industrial Historic District
Buncombe County, North Carolina

Section 6

Historic Functions

INDUSTRY/energy facility
TRANSPORTATION/rail related

Current Functions

OTHER/artist studio
VACANT/NOT IN USE

Section 7

Materials

Foundation	STONE CONCRETE
Roof	METAL/tin
Walls	CERAMIC TILE METAL/steel METAL/tin ASBESTOS STUCCO WOOD/weatherboards

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Section 7. Physical Description

The Riverside Industrial Historic District is situated to the southwest of downtown Asheville, North Carolina, along the east bank of the French Broad River, downriver from its confluence with the Swannanoa River. The French Broad River forms a natural corridor as it flows from south to north through Asheville, and as a result early transportation routes, including the railroad lines in the 1880s, followed the gentle grade along the river bottomland. Proximity to a water source and the availability of level building sites lured the city's early industry down to the river area. The Southern Railway constructed its passenger and freight depot, along with a roundhouse and maintenance facility, to the south of the nominated district and stimulated the development of the area as Asheville's primary commercial and industrial district. The river district bustled with numerous manufacturing plants, textile mills, coal and lumber yards, wholesale businesses, and warehouses, along with various retail establishments and scattered dwellings.

The French Broad River approaches the city of Asheville from the southwest, meandering through the expansive Biltmore Estate property. At its confluence with the Swannanoa River, the French Broad turns north and separates Asheville from West Asheville, which was once a separate municipality. The east bank of the river corridor includes a wide, flat swath of bottomlands and then gains over one hundred feet in elevation to the general level of the city development. The availability of level building sites helped to attract the city's first large industries to the river area, including the Asheville Milling Company, C. E. Graham & Co., and Hans Rees Tannery. West Haywood Street from the end of Patton Avenue—a principal east-west street in downtown Asheville—passed through the West End neighborhood and crossed the river at Smith's Bridge and continued into West Asheville. Depot Street (present Clingman Avenue) descended along a ridge from Patton Avenue to the Southern Railway's Asheville depot. The hillsides around West Haywood Street and Depot Street were laid out with narrow, curving streets and modest houses were built for employees of the mills and other industries along the river. A number of larger, more elaborate dwellings for managers and business owners were also interspersed within the West End neighborhood, along with a school, club house, several churches, and retail businesses. Roberts Street and Riverside Drive (known as Avery Street until 1925) ran parallel to the railroad tracks on the east and west sides, respectively, linking West Haywood Street with Depot Street.

Around 1910, a new reinforced concrete bridge was constructed from Roberts Street to Craven Street over the French Broad River, providing a modern span between Asheville and West Asheville. In the late 1920s, a short section of Haywood Street was extended from the end of the bridge to the east, passing under a reinforced concrete bridge carrying Park Avenue, and connected with Clingman Avenue. This short connector—sometimes shown as Bridge Street on Sanborn maps—allowed traffic between Asheville and West Asheville to bypass the busy five-point intersection of Clingman Avenue, Depot Street, Lyman Street,

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and Roberts Street. In the latter part of the twentieth century, the connector street was closed, Park Avenue was split into two dead end streets, and a new five-lane section was constructed to the north between Clingman Avenue and the bridge (present West Asheville/Riverlink Bridge). Construction of the present roadway emphasized the automobile traffic across the river and signified the declining position of the depot and industrial areas of the city.

The industrial district of Asheville remains a vital part of the city, though not nearly to the degree that it did in the first half of the twentieth century when passenger and freight rail traffic brought more people to the area. As manufacturing plants have closed or relocated to new locations accessible to the highway, the area has undergone a transformation and the buildings have been rehabilitated for new uses; many of the buildings with large, open interiors have been converted to artist studios. The overall building density of the industrial area has also changed over the past century, especially the number of residential structures in and around the industrial facilities. Roberts Street and Riverside Drive, in particular, were once lined with single- and multi-family dwellings, but houses eventually gave way to expanding manufacturing facilities and commercial development. Reorganization of the street patterns have also claimed or isolated a number of other structures.

In April 1995, a devastating fire caused the most dramatic change to overall character of the industrial area since the Flood of 1916. The fire started in the Earle-Chesterfield Mill and quickly spread to the Asheville Cotton Mill, two of the largest mills along the riverfront. In addition to the Earle-Chesterfield Mill, built ca. 1890 for the Asheville Milling Company, which was totally destroyed, and the severely damaged Asheville Cotton Mill, originally built in 1887, several other smaller buildings were also destroyed or damaged. The fire left a large gap in one of the oldest and busiest sections of Asheville's industrial area.

INVENTORY LIST

The inventory list for the Riverside Industrial Historic District begins with an entry for the Southern Railway tracks, which forms the spine of the district, and thereafter is organized by streets, beginning with the east-west streets from north to south and followed by the north-south streets from west to east. Due to district boundary adjustments five inventory numbers are unassigned: 5, 7, 10, 26 and 27. The inventory entries provide the name, location, date(s) of construction, contributing or non-contributing status, and a brief summary of each resource within the district. The resources are keyed by inventory number to the accompanying district map. Each property is named after its first, longest, or best-known occupant or function during the period of significance. Construction dates have been determined as accurately as possible by correlating information from city directories, Sanborn maps, newspaper articles, and deed research. Resources that date to the period of significance and retain integrity are classified as contributing resources.

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Non-contributing resources are those that were constructed after the period of significance ended or no longer retain sufficient integrity due to alterations to the historic fabric of the buildings. Several non-contributing resources are located on the edges of the district, but these properties are typically associated with other contributing resources or have reversible alterations and are part of the overall industrial landscape of the district.

Classification key:	C-B	Contributing building
	C-S	Contributing structure
	NC-B	Non-contributing building
	NC-S	Non-contributing structure

1. Southern Railway Tracks and Right of Way. Ca. 1880. C-S

A pair of railroad tracks located between and running parallel to Riverside Drive and Roberts Street from Lyman Street north forms the spine of the historic district. South of Lyman Street the number of tracks increases significantly as the lines approached the depot, roundhouse, and maintenance yards. Within the district remnants of several spurs remain evident, most notably a spur line that served the Storage Supply Company and Asheville Cotton Mills. Other spurs served Dave Steel, buildings on the east side of Clingman Avenue, and the coal yards of the Carolina Coal and Ice Company. Norfolk Southern Railroad, current owners of the property, maintains a wide, undeveloped right of way through the district.

The prominence of the railroad tracks in the district is appropriate because of the significant role of the railroad in the development of the area. Following the earliest rail connection to Asheville in October 1880, the city began growing at a tremendous rate. The Western North Carolina Railroad (WNCRR), which linked Asheville to Salisbury in the east, was later expanded to the north and west. The northern branch was completed through Marshall and Hot Springs to Paint Rock at the Tennessee state line in 1882. The Murphy Branch of the WNCRR was not completed until 1891, but extended as far as Waynesville by 1882, Sylva in 1883, and Bryson City in 1884. A southern line through Hendersonville connected Asheville with Spartanburg, South Carolina in 1886. Asheville became a regional hub for the Southern Railway in the late 1890s, with large passenger and freight depots, roundhouse, and extensive rail yards located just south of the historic district.

Eugene Avenue/Haywood Road

2. West Asheville/Riverlink Bridge. Eugene Avenue/Haywood Road (SR 3548) over French Broad River. 1974. NC-S

Constructed in 1974, the West Asheville/Riverlink Bridge is a multi-span, concrete and steel structure that carries Eugene Avenue/Haywood Road over the Southern Railroad, Riverside Drive, and French Broad

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River beginning at Roberts Street and terminating at Craven Street. The bridge is supported by reinforced concrete piers, several of which are located within the district. The present structure is the third bridge (the first dating back to ca. 1910) to span the river at this location.

The present structure, originally known as the West Asheville/Haywood Road Bridge, was renamed in April 1996 by the North Carolina Board of Transportation as the West Asheville/Riverlink Bridge “to recognize the historic and economic importance of the bridge to the City of Asheville.” (NCDOT Board of Transportation Minutes, April 12, 1996).

Park Avenue, from Roberts Street to end of road

3. Orpheus and Bertha Keener House, 144 Park Avenue, Ca. 1890. C-B

The Keener House is a one-story, frame, L-plan, Late Victorian cottage with a full basement level, which is exposed on the rear and sides of the house. The house is covered with weatherboards and rests on a brick and concrete foundation. The front (west) façade of the house features a front gable bay at the northwest corner with a projecting flat-roof bay window and a front cross-gable. The gable ends, with boxed cornice returns and sawn bargeboards, are covered with flush vertical siding and are pierced by rectangular louvered vents except for the cross gable which contains a diamond shaped vent. A two-story ell projects to the rear. The attached shed-roof porch wraps around the west and south sides of the house and is supported on turned posts with brackets. Square wood posts support the lower level of the porch on the south side. A one-story porch with upper story balcony across the rear (east) elevation is supported on square posts. Windows throughout the house are two-over-two double-hung sash. Two interior brick chimneys covered with stucco rise from the center ridge line of the roof.

In 1920, Orpheus and Bertha Keener moved into the house on Park Avenue, which had been built ca. 1890. Keener worked as a grocer on West Haywood Street near the mills during the 1920s before opening his own grocery around 1929 on East Haywood Street (see #24). His new business was located below his house on the newly opened section of road linking the West Asheville bridge with Clingman Avenue. Keener lived in the house until his death in 1954. Bertha Keener and their son, Orpheus A. Keener, retained the property including the house and store building until the death of the younger Mr. Keener in 1999.

Lyman Street, north side, from Riverside Drive to east of Clingman Avenue

4. American Feed Milling Company, 170 Lyman Street, Ca. 1915. C-B

The American Feed Milling Company Building is a two-story, brick commercial building laid in common bond. The building is five bays wide by nine bays deep with a flat roof behind stepped parapet and has a partially exposed basement at the rear. Window and door openings throughout the building, which includes a blind party wall on its north side, are segmental arches (except as noted). The front façade of the

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building faces east overlooking railroad tracks and the southeast corner is cut at a forty-five degree angle with a plain single-leaf entrance door under a cloth awning. The front façade consists of an irregular arrangement of window and door openings. A double-leaf sliding freight door is flanked by two windows to the south and a window and single-leaf door to the north on the first story. A handicap-accessible ramp extends the full width of the façade to the entrance at the northeast corner. Four one-over-one double-hung windows are spaced across the second story. The south side elevation consists of nine bays with four bays grouped together to the west end of the elevation, four bays in the center, and a single bay toward the corner entrance. With the exception of a double-leaf sliding freight door beneath a single window in the center group, all of the one-over-one sash are aligned on the two stories. The rear (west) elevation is irregularly arranged with a double-leaf garage door partially below grade that opens into the basement at the northwest corner. This door is flanked by three full windows. On the first story a double-leaf freight door, flanked by windows, hovers inaccessible from the exterior. The upper story is lit by five single windows.

The American Feed Milling Company opened ca. 1915 with Olin B. Lotspeich, William C. Brown, and Virgil K. Chambers as officers of the business, which manufactured and distributed feed. The American Feed Milling Company occupied the building through the end of the decade, but continued to be used by other companies as a wholesale feed and grain business through the 1920s and early 1930s. Around 1936, the Ned Wheeler Brokerage Company, a general merchandise distribution firm headed by Edward E. Wheeler, moved its operations from 361 Depot Street to this building. The company, which had been in business in Asheville since 1916, remained at this location until the early 1970s. The building is currently owned by a non-profit organization and leased for artist studios.

5. Unassigned inventory number

Lyman Street, south side, at intersection with Riverside Drive

6. Post Machinery Company Machine Shop. 167 Lyman Street. Ca. 1937. C-B

Presently used for storage, this one-story, concrete block building was built for the Post Machinery Company as an office and machine shop. The building rests on a concrete foundation and is topped by a parapet roof with terra cotta tile coping which steps down along its sides. A single-leaf glazed and paneled door in the northwest corner of the building opens into the office, situated in the front section of the building. A large machine shop occupied the middle section of the building and was accessed by loading bays on both the east and west sides. The rear third of the building has suffered a failure of the roof system and rear wall, both of which have collapsed, exposing an inner wall of structural clay tile. Windows throughout the building are eight-light metal frame sash with brick sills. The windows appear as single units except for four pairs, which are located to either side of the loading bay entrances along the side elevations.

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The Post Machinery Company opened its foundry on Lyman Street ca. 1937 with William F. Post as president of the company. His son, Albert L. Post, served as secretary. After his father's death in 1938, Albert Post assumed control of the company, which he headed through the 1960s. The Post Machinery Company specialized in industrial paint work, foundry work, and gray iron and brass castings.

7. Unassigned inventory number

8. Carolina Coal & Ice Company. 175 Lyman Street. Ca. 1905. C-B

The Carolina Coal & Ice Company is a two-story, rectangular, common-bond brick Italianate structure on a stone foundation. Corbelled parapets at the east and west ends of the building front a low gable roof. The east end parapet is flat with painted signage above a symmetrical eight-bay façade with corner pilasters and brick corbelling. Segmental arch window openings on both levels have been boarded; the second story openings have concrete sills. The west end parapet is stepped above an asymmetrical façade with segmental arch window and garage door openings. The north and south side elevations display irregular patterns of segmental arch window openings. One garage bay is located near the center of the north elevation, while a second garage bay at the southeast corner opens into a loading bay with exposed heavy timber framing.

Formed in 1899, the Carolina Coal & Ice Company was one of the oldest businesses located in Asheville's industrial district. The main building contained an office and ice house in the eastern end of the building according to Sanborn maps. The middle section was used for cold storage and contained the freezing tanks. A fifty-ton ice machine was located at the west end of the building. From ca. 1910 to ca. 1925, the building was occupied by the Champion Chemical Company, manufacturers of scrubbing powder, but later reverted to the Carolina Coal & Ice Company.

9. Scale office (Carolina Coal & Ice Company). 171 Lyman Street. Ca. 1950. C-B

The scale office stands to the east of the Carolina Coal & Ice Company ice plant, across a driveway. The one-story, flat-roof concrete block building faces a concrete pad sheltered by a flat roof canopy supported on steel posts. The concrete pad covers the site of the original truck scale, which was put in place for the coal yard on the south part of the property. The original rectangular plan building has been enlarged to form an L-shape with a projecting stair enclosure occupying the inner corner of the "L". The front (west) elevation consists of a single-leaf entry flanked by a single multi-light metal frame window. The south side elevation contains two square metal-frame windows over a double-leaf service door and a single-leaf entry. The site formerly held an open shed used for storing coal and feed at various times.

Riverside Drive, west side from West Asheville/Riverlink Bridge to Lyman Street

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10. Unassigned inventory number

11. **Storage Warehouse.** West side Riverside Drive, 0.1 mile north of intersection with Lyman Street. Ca. 1930. **C-B**

The one-story, gable-roof, rectangular, common-bond brick building stands on an open reinforced concrete post-and-beam substructure over a small creek. The roof is covered with corrugated metal sheathing. The peaked parapets at the gable ends are capped with a concrete coping, while corner pilasters are topped by cast concrete finials and accented with rectangular and diamond-shaped medallions. The end walls are corbelled between the pilasters. All window openings have been bricked up although the concrete sills remain visible. The building is entered on the north side, where a reinforced concrete platform provides access to a single-leaf entry and double-leaf loading bay.

The storage warehouse, originally built as a shop for the Asheville Gas Company, stands on the site of the Asheville Power and Light Company's gasworks, which was erected around 1910. An electric plant and substation were located on the opposite side of the street. Carolina Power and Light Company managed the gasworks from 1927 to 1929, and the Asheville Gas Company assumed operation of the plant in 1930. The Public Service Company of North Carolina, present owner of the site, purchased the Asheville Gas Company and acquired the coal plant in 1943, but abandoned it on April 4, 1954, for natural gas production. Natural gas was not available in the area until 1951, and the high price of coal following World War II further shaped the conversion to natural gas power. The plant was the last coal-fired gasworks to operate in North Carolina, with only two others surviving it nationwide.¹

Riverside Drive, east side, from West Haywood Street to Lyman Street

12. **Asheville Cotton Mill Cloth Warehouse,** 122 Riverside Drive. Ca. 1900. **C-B**

Built as a cloth warehouse for the Asheville Cotton Mill around the turn of the twentieth century, the surviving structure is a two-story, flat-roof, common-bond brick building seventeen bays long by two bays deep. The plain exterior of the building is lit by rows of metal-frame industrial sash with awning windows on the east and west sides. Evidence of narrower arched window openings is visible at the north end of the west elevation, suggesting that the building was either enlarged or partially rebuilt at some point. Brick platforms with concrete decks are located at the north and south corners of the west elevation; a handicap accessible ramp rises to the central single-leaf entrance. Wooden exterior stairs rise along the west elevation to landings and doorways at the north and south ends of the building. The two openings in the north end of the building (with replacement windows and doors) are topped by segmental brick arches with three header courses. The roof overhangs on the east side and is supported by exposed heavy timber rafters.

¹ *Asheville Citizen* (April 19, 1954; December 7, 1961).

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Constructed in 1887 by the C. E. Graham Manufacturing Company, the Asheville Cotton Mill was one of the city's earliest and largest industries. The Cone family of Greensboro acquired the mill in 1893 and continuously operated the facility until 1953, when production ceased. The plant, which employed over 300 people, consisted of 122,000 square feet of manufacturing space under one roof, 4,200 square feet of office space, and 15,000 square feet of warehouse space with railroad siding. In 1955, William B. Dillard purchased the mill from the Cone Mills Corporation to subdivide and lease to smaller industries. A devastating fire in April 1995 largely destroyed the Asheville Cotton Mill along with the Earle-Chesterfield Mill, which stood on the opposite side of the railroad tracks, and several smaller buildings. With the exception of two ruinous remnants and square brick chimney, the cloth warehouse is the only intact building at the Asheville Cotton Mill to survive the fire.

12a. Shed, 122 Riverside Drive. Ca. 1990. NC

A modern, gable-roof metal shed is located at the northeast corner of the Asheville Cotton Mill Cloth Warehouse. The building rests on a concrete slab foundation and is accessed through double-leaf metal doors in the north end of the building. The structure is used for storage.

13. Leemon Distributing Company Warehouse, 110 Riverside Drive. Ca. 1954. C-B

Built as a warehouse for a wholesale food distributor, the one-story concrete-block warehouse building with projecting loading bays at the southwest corner and at the rear is located adjacent to an old railroad siding. Capped by a low gable roof, the building is strictly utilitarian with six-light metal frame windows set at the top of the walls over concrete sills. Fans with louvered vents are located in the gable ends of the building. An office is situated in the northeast corner of the building and is accessed by a single-leaf glazed and paneled door and lit by a large metal-frame casement window. The loading bay at the southwest corner consists of a platform and metal roll-up door flanking a single-leaf entrance atop a short run of concrete steps. At the rear two additional loading bays project in a staggered fashion. Platforms and metal roll-up doors are sheltered by shed roof canopies supported by simple brackets.

Although first used for a wholesale food distributor, the warehouse was owned by the Leemon Distributing Company from 1956 until the late 1970s. The company operated as a wholesale distributor for bedding.

14. Storage Supply Company. 90 Riverside Drive. 1906; 1923. C-B

The Storage Supply Company building reflects the rapid growth and expansion of the business during the early twentieth century with its numerous additions and wings. Originally a two-story brick building with a stone basement, the main section has been raised another story with a reinforced concrete addition. An elevator shaft rises above the roof line on the front (west) side of the building and a second elevator tower is located at the rear, adjacent to the railroad tracks. A three-story reinforced concrete post-and-beam addition

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was made to the north side in 1923, probably at the same time the building was raised. A convoluted arrangement of one and two story additions on the south end appears to have been added piecemeal. A cylindrical brick chimney stack rises at the south end of the building and a concrete loading platform extends beyond the building to the south. A reinforced concrete platform with wood decking also extends across the front (west) elevation and provides access to two large loading doors. The building is largely devoid of window openings, but those located on the west elevation at the second floor have been covered.

Organized in 1906 with \$75,000 capital stock, the Storage Supply Company provided refrigeration for perishable goods and manufactured ice for wholesale distribution. The company produced seventy-five tons of ice daily that was sold to retail dealers and large consumers within a one hundred mile radius of Asheville. Fred Kent, who also served as secretary, managed the company, and other officers included D. C. Waddell Jr., president; Horace A. Miller, vice-president; and Clarence Sawyer, treasurer. Miller was also president of the Carolina Coal and Ice Company (see #8). In 1927, the Storage Supply Company changed its name to Asheville Ice and Storage Company, which continues to own the building.

Vacant (PIN No. 9638.12-97-6045)

The Carolina Power and Light Company (now Progress Energy) owns this vacant parcel, which is approximately three quarters of an acre (0.73) in size. The Asheville Power and Light Company's Avery Street substation was located on this site in the first half of the twentieth century, but no above ground remnants of the electric plant remain.

15. Standard Oil Company. 6-12 Riverside Drive. Ca. 1916.

The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey maintained a fuel warehouse and storage facility at this location beginning around 1901.² The company occupied the site until the mid-1940s, and with the exception of occasional use as an auto repair facility, the buildings remained vacant until the 1980s when they were converted to artist studios. The complex consists of five one and two-story brick buildings situated around and facing a central paved parking area.

Founded in 1882, the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey was one of the major components of the Standard Oil Trust headed by John D. Rockefeller. The Trust controlled much of the production, refining, marketing, and transport of petroleum products in the United States, and although originally providing kerosene for home lighting, it was the increasing demand for gasoline brought about by the rise of the automobile that made the Trust an industrial giant. Government regulation dissolved the Trust in 1911, but

² The section of present Riverside Drive from Haywood Street south to Lyman Street was originally called Avery Street. Riverside Drive only referred to the section that extended north from Haywood Street until 1925, when Avery Street was renamed as Riverside Drive south to Lyman Street.

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the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey survived the breakup and was known as “Standard” or “Esso” until the company was renamed Exxon in 1972.

15a. Standard Oil Company office. Ca. 1916. C-B

The office is a one-story, square, flat-roof building with brick walls around a reinforced concrete structural system, corbelled cornice, and concrete coping. The front (north) elevation of the building contains a single-leaf door with transom flanked by a single window opening with replacement sash. All window and door openings are topped by flat concrete lintels. The side elevations are divided into two wall panels by raised pilasters with a single six-over-six double-hung window centered within each panel. A modern connector covered with stucco spans the small gap between the southeast corner of the office and the adjacent garage building.

15b. Standard Oil Company garage. Ca. 1918. C-B

The garage is a one-story, rectangular, flat-roof brick building with two large bays on the front (north) elevation. The bays, which are spanned by large concrete lintels, have been enclosed with blank stucco walls; a modern double-leaf entrance with sidelights and transom is located in the western bay wall. The building features a corbelled cornice and concrete coping. The east wall of the building contains two large multi-light metal-frame industrial windows with concrete lintels and sills. A small one-room rear addition projects from the southeast corner of the building. Although the garage building does not appear on the 1917 Sanborn maps, the garage building appears to have been built soon after the other structures in the complex due to the similar form and stylistic elements.

15c. Standard Oil Company pump building. Ca. 1916. C-B

The diminutive pump building is a one-story, square, flat-roof building situated in the southeast corner of the property. The front (north) elevation contains a wooden sliding door topped by a multi-light transom, while the other three sides of the building each contain a single twelve-light metal-frame industrial window with a concrete lintel and sill. The structure also has a corbelled cornice and concrete coping.

15d. Standard Oil Company oil warehouse. Ca. 1916. C-B

The oil warehouse is the central building of the complex, facing onto Riverside Drive. A two-story building with brick walls around a reinforced concrete structural system, it is also the largest building of the group. The front and rear elevations of the building are divided into three wall panels by raised pilasters. The central entrance bay has been fitted with a modern double-leaf door, sidelights, and transom. The south bay of the front façade contains a roll-up garage door. Window openings throughout are twelve-light metal-frame industrial windows with concrete lintels and sills, save two openings with modern replacement sash. In

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keeping with the other buildings of the complex, the oil warehouse also has a corbelled cornice and concrete coping.

15e. Standard Oil Company storage building. Ca. 1916. **C-B**

Located at the northwest corner of the property, the storage building is a two-story, rectangular, flat-roof brick building. The front (south) and rear elevations are divided into two panels by raised concrete pilasters. Each panel on the front façade contains a replacement entrance and half window beneath metal-frame windows on the second story. The rear elevation features four full windows over four half windows and all window openings have concrete lintels and sills. The side elevations are divided into three panels by raised pilasters. On the east side of the building a metal fire stair rises to a central second-story entrance. The west elevation includes a large central doorway with transom beneath a boarded center window.

Roberts Street, west side, 0.1 mile north of Eugene Avenue/Haywood Road to Lyman Street

16. Kent Building. 95-97 Roberts Street. 1923, 1925. **C-B**

The Kent Building is a two-story brick building with a trapezoidal plan and three additional stories exposed at the rear below the grade of Roberts Street. Nine bays wide by ten bays deep, the building contains two separate storefronts, both heavily altered, that are topped by cast concrete panels with the business names and dates inscribed above the respective storefront. The south section is inscribed with "Ebbs Bros & Co.", a wholesale grocer, and the north section is labeled "Kent", for the building owner. Kent was also the secretary and treasurer of the Biltmore Wheathearts Co., a tenant of the building. Large window openings on the first floor have been filled with concrete block and the doors are modern replacements. The metal frame industrial windows located on the second floor and across the rear of the building remain largely intact. The south side elevation contains similar windows, although half the height. The north elevation of the building is an exposed concrete party wall that abutted an adjacent building that no longer stands, except for a one-story section only accessible from the rear. The prominent rear elevation of the building is marked by large metal frame windows and fading painted advertisements. A concrete loading platform extends across the rear elevation at the lowest level.

Built in 1923, the building was named for enterprising businessman Fred Kent, who in addition to owning commercial real estate held positions with a number of prominent businesses. Kent served as secretary and treasurer of the Biltmore Wheathearts Company, a primary tenant of the Kent Building. He also acted as vice president of the Carolina Creamery and as secretary of J. Q. McGuire and Company, a wholesale druggist. Kent also successfully managed the Storage Supply Company (see #14), located immediately west of the Kent Building on the opposite side of the railroad, and served as secretary on the board of directors. Ebbs Bros and Company, a wholesale grocery business, was the other major tenant in the Kent Building. Brothers Cauley and Plato Ebbs, originally of Madison County, formed their business around

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1910 in Madison County and moved to Asheville around 1920. Both men were active in civic affairs and sold the company in 1945. The Kent Building was significantly damaged by fire in 1925, but it was quickly rebuilt.

17. Pearce-Young-Angel Company. 109 Roberts Street. Ca. 1928. **C-B**

The Pearce-Young-Angel Company building is a two-story, six-by-eight-bay, brick commercial building with two additional stories exposed at the rear below the grade of Roberts Street. The front (east) façade is divided symmetrically with two garage bays topped by sixteen-light metal frame industrial windows. The north bay has been filled in with brick and is pierced only by a modern single-leaf door. The south bay retains its roll-up door, which opens into a shallow truck well and loading dock surrounded by partitioned office spaces. The side elevations are pierced by smaller eight-light metal frame windows, but the rear, which contains only five bays, is lit by sixteen-light windows. A stair enclosure rises above the roof parapet at the northwest corner. A concrete platform extends across the rear of the building at the lowest level with a central loading bay and metal roll-up door. A one-story shed-roof addition is located on the south side of the building and is only accessible from the rear.

The Pearce-Young-Angel Company of Spartanburg, South Carolina, grew out of C. C. Pearce and Company, a fresh fruit and vegetable distributor, to become one of the largest companies in South Carolina. The Pearce-Young-Angel Company entered the institutional food distribution business through military contracts in World War II. A merger with Consolidated Foods Corporation's Monarch Institutional Foods formed PYA/Monarch, one of the country's largest institutional food distributors. PYA occupied the building through the 1970s.

18. S. Sternberg and Company. 111-119 Roberts Street. 1916. **C-B**

The S. Sternberg and Company building is a one and two-story, common bond brick commercial building consisting of three distinct sections with a basement level exposed on the rear below the grade of Roberts Street. The trapezoid shaped building has a reinforced concrete structural system, flat roof behind a low parapet, corbelled cornices, and partial-height, corbelled pilasters on the two end sections. The center and southern sections contain double-leaf glazed and paneled doors flanked by shop windows and topped by multi-light transoms. The storefront on the northern section has been redesigned with modern replacement doors and windows. Windows on the second story of the southern part are six-over-six double-hung sash with six-light transoms. A cast concrete plaque on the center section reads "S. Sternberg & Co., 1916." The rear (west) elevation has banks of windows across the upper levels of the building and roll-up metal garage doors open into the basement from a concrete loading platform that extends across the rear of the building.

The S. Sternberg and Company building was under construction at time of the floods in July 1916 that destroyed much of the riverfront area. The Sternberg Company was headed by Siegfried Sternberg and his partner Gustav Lichtenfels and dealt in numerous businesses including hides and furs, structural steel

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manufacturing, and general merchandise. The building on Roberts Street appears to have been a speculative venture since the building was occupied by the Hayes-McCormack Company, wholesale grocers, and the Harris-Davis Company, merchandise brokers, after completion. The main offices of the Sternberg Company were located on Depot Street closer to the rail depot. The adjacent building to the south was completed around 1920, and Hayes-McCormack and Harris-Davis, along with other wholesale concerns, remained tenants until 1927, when the Farmers Federation took over the building.

19. Farmers Federation Building. 123-129 Roberts Street. Ca. 1920. **C-B**

The Farmers Federation Building is a two-story, wedge-shaped, common bond brick building with a basement level exposed on the rear below the grade of Roberts Street. The building abuts the south wall of the S. Sternberg and Company (#18) and tapers to the south. The front (east) façade is divided into panels by raised pilasters and corbelled cornices. Window and door openings are irregularly spaced across the façade and contain single and paired double-hung sash with transoms and single and double-leaf entries. The rear elevation also consists of panels defined by raised pilasters. A concrete platform extends the full length of the building at the rear and provides access to metal roll-up doors at the basement level.

The building, which abuts the S. Sternberg and Company to the north, was completed around 1920. Several wholesale businesses, including the Pearce-Young-Angel Company, which later erected its own building on Roberts Street (#17), occupied the building until 1927, when the Farmers Federation moved into the building. James G. K. McClure of Fairview formed the Farmers Federation in 1920 as a cooperative to benefit Buncombe County farmers. The organization grew rapidly to include a broader region and also promoted progressive farming techniques through its newsletter, *Farmers Federation News*, which had its offices in the building on Roberts Street. Portions of the building were also used as warehouses for poultry, eggs, seed, and other farm products. The Farmers Federation occupied at least part of the building through the 1960s.

Vacant (PIN No. 9648.09-06-0961)

The Dave Steel Company owns this vacant parcel, which is 0.37 acre in size. Along with an adjacent vacant parcel, the gravel lot is used for parking.

Vacant (PIN No. 9648.09-06-1735)

The Dave Steel Company owns this vacant parcel, which is 0.09 acre in size. Along with an adjacent vacant parcel, the gravel lot is used for parking.

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Roberts Street, east side, Park Avenue to Lyman Street

20. Ball Concrete Block Plant, 140A Roberts Street, Ca. 1924. C-B

This building, which occupies the narrow space between Roberts Street and Park Avenue, is a two-story flat-roof building constructed with bevel-edged concrete block. The one-story Park Avenue facade is slightly curved and contains two single-leaf entrances flanked by two-over-two and four-over-one double-hung windows. The four-over-one sash are replacements within the larger openings of the original two-over-two sash. The two-story Roberts Street elevation contains single two-over-two double-hung sash on the upper level, while the lower level has two single-leaf entrances and six-over-one sash. Window and door openings are topped by large concrete lintels.

Anthony Ball opened a concrete block plant in this building around 1924, and likely used the building as a showcase for his products. The lot to the south was the storage and supply yard for the block plant. The business succeeded for only a short time after which the lot to the south was filled with a warehouse. The Farmers Federation, which occupied the building on the west side of Roberts Street opposite this site, began utilizing the space as an office in 1942. In 1950, the Farmers Federation operated a training school in the upper portion of the building.

21. Asheville Grocery Company Warehouse, 140B-C Roberts Street, Ca. 1928. C-B

A one-story, common bond brick warehouse was constructed around 1928 and extends to the south of the concrete block plant (see #20). The building has a flat roof behind a low parapet and the roof line is below the level of Park Avenue to the rear. Both parts contain single and double-leaf entrances and garage bays with metal roll-up doors. The south end section also contains a large multi-light metal-frame industrial window and a tall brick flue rising from the southwest corner of the building. Physical evidence suggests that the two sections of the building were constructed at separate times, but the documentary evidence is not as clear.

First used as a warehouse by the Asheville Grocery Company, the building continued to be used as a warehouse by various businesses until the Farmers Federation acquired the building in the 1940s. The Farmers Federation maintained a garage and warehouse in the building for a time, but after 1950 it was used as a hatchery.

22. Garage, 140D Roberts Street, Ca. 1955. NC-B

A one-story, square, concrete block garage has a metal roll-up door on its front (west) elevation and three metal-frame industrial windows along the south side. According to Sanborn maps a one-bay garage constructed of concrete and associated with a house at 176 Park Avenue (no longer standing) was located on this site since at least 1925. Physical evidence, however, suggests that the garage was rebuilt sometime in the late 1950s.

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23. Dave Steel Company. Corner of Roberts Street and Clingman Avenue. 1929. **C-B**

The Dave Steel Company is a sprawling complex of large enclosed spaces to accommodate the process of fabricating steel. The building primarily consists of three long rectangular structures that run parallel to Clingman Avenue and are constructed with a steel frame on a concrete foundation. The one-story, flat-roof fabricating plant adjacent to the street is faced with asbestos shingle siding and large metal-frame windows on the exterior walls. Due to the change in elevation, the one-story exterior masks a substantially larger interior space, which is below street level. A two-story addition to the south end of the building is steel frame and covered with corrugated metal siding. A second long, gable-roof structure to the west with a two-story modern office block added to the south end abuts the fabricating plant. The third building—for cutting and storage—stands a short distance to the west of other two blocks and a railroad siding originally passed between two sections of the complex. The space has been enclosed with a low one-story, flat-roof connector. The cutting and storage building is a two-story, gable-roof, metal frame structure with broad overhanging eaves and a tall monitor roof. A truck entrance is located in the south end of the building and the west side is accessed through a segmented sliding door.

Joseph Dave, a Lithuanian immigrant, founded the Dave Steel Company in 1929, after moving to Asheville in 1923 and working as a structural engineer for S. Sternberg and Company. Dave Steel specialized in custom steel fabrication and was recognized for its wartime production in 1944. The company, which began with only two employees, was one of the largest regional steel fabricators by mid century and employed 125 people. In 1950, the company acquired the Oregonia Bridge Company of Ohio and Joseph Dave relocated to open an office in Cincinnati, leaving the Asheville plant under the direction of his brother, Hyman Dave, who began with the company in 1935 and retired in 1976. Dave Steel Company continues to provide fabricated steel for educational institutions, churches, hospitals, commercial buildings, and industrial facilities.

23a. Dave Steel Company Office, East side of Roberts Street, 0.1 mile northwest of intersection with Clingman Avenue. Ca. 1960. **NC-B**

The freestanding one-story, rectangular, brick office building is located at the western edge of the Dave Steel complex and is linked to the main buildings by an overhead canopy. The plain building is laid in running bond and has a flat roof behind a low parapet with a terra cotta tile coping. Two single-leaf entrances pierce the front (east) elevation and are sheltered by a flat metal canopy that extends the full width of the façade. Signage on the main entrance indicates that the building served as the “Shipping, Receiving, Small Sales Production” office.

Clingman Avenue, west side, at intersection with Old Haywood Road (closed)

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24. Keener Grocery. West side Clingman Avenue, 0.1 mile north of Lyman Street. Ca. 1929. **C-B**

The Keener Grocery building is a one-story, flat-roof, trapezoidal plan building constructed of plain and bevel edge concrete block. A flat parapet across the front steps down along the sides and is capped with a brick coping. The front (south) façade contains a single-leaf replacement door flanked by storefront windows; both window openings, which have brick lintels and sills, are boarded over and the east window was later enlarged for a garage bay. The long east side elevation is pierced by a double-leaf door topped by a wooden lintel. A shed-roof concrete block addition is located at the northeast corner of the building. Shed roof additions on the north and west sides are covered with corrugated metal siding and standing seam metal roofs.

Orpheus Keener opened a retail grocery on East Haywood Road in 1929, after closing his business on West Haywood Road in 1926. Keener lived with his wife Bertha in the house on the hill (144 Park Avenue, #3) behind the store until his death in 1954. The store was leased to J. D. Rickman beginning in 1945 and converted to an automobile repair shop. Bertha Keener and her son, Orpheus A. Keener, retained the property including the house and store building until the death of the younger Mr. Keener in 1999.

25. Filling Station. West side Clingman Avenue, 0.1 mile north of Lyman Street. Ca. 1938. **C-B**

The diminutive one-story, brick filling station building sits against the slope of the hill behind it and is capped by a prominent hip roof with broad eaves and molded metal shingles. The eaves are covered with beaded boards. Two single-leaf doors and a large square window opening on the front (south) façade are covered with boards, as is a smaller window opening in the narrow east end of the building.

First listed in city directories as the Paul J. Taylor Filling Station in 1938, the building appears to have been poorly situated as ownership changes were frequent and the building often stood vacant for extended periods of time. In 1940, the station was operated as the Royal Service Station and then remained vacant from late 1940s through the 1950s.

Clingman Avenue, east side, from opposite intersection with Old Haywood Road (closed) to Lyman Street

26. Unassigned inventory number

27. Unassigned inventory number

28. Feed Seed Supply Company. 236 Clingman Ave. Ca. 1948. **C-B**

This one-story commercial building—the northern end section of a block of four contiguous buildings—was completed around 1948, with a brick façade pierced by three paired ten-light metal frame industrial windows. The side and rear walls are concrete block with concrete lintels and brick sills framing metal frame windows on the exterior walls. A single-leaf entrance provides access from the alley along the

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north side and the northeast corner is cut forty-five degrees. A metal shed on wood posts shelters a kiln area along the north wall of the building. The open interior retains its concrete slab floor, wood frame roof and steel I-beam posts.

The building was constructed in 1948 for the Feed-Seed Supply Company, another wholesale supplier. The National Biscuit Company (238 Clingman Avenue) later expanded their warehouse (see #29) into this adjacent building. The Feed Seed Supply Company building was the last structure in a block of commercial buildings at 236-242 Clingman Avenue that did not begin developing until the late 1930s.

29. National Biscuit Company Warehouse. 238 Clingman Ave. Ca. 1944. C-B

Built ca. 1944, the National Biscuit Company Warehouse is a one-story, flat roof brick building and is the largest structure in a block of four contiguous commercial buildings. The façade consists of separate pedestrian and truck entrances. A single-leaf entrance door is flanked by five replacement one-over-one windows on both sides, two pairs and a single to each side of the door. Truck wells to the north are marked by a narrow wood panel roll-up door and a replacement metal roll-up door. The largest truck well was originally formed by an open recessed space between to the two northern parts of the building, but an added façade wall with a large wood panel roll-up door has created a continuous building front. The interior of the center section consists of a large open space behind partitioned offices along the front wall of the building. Square wood posts with wood block capitals support the wood frame roof and decking. Original wood floors remain intact, and a sliding freight door at the rear opens onto a small loading platform.

The block of commercial buildings at 236-242 Clingman Avenue did not begin developing until the late 1930s. A warehouse was built around 1944 for the National Biscuit Company, who occupied the building through the 1970s. The business later expanded into the adjacent building to the north (see #28).

30. Davis Building. 240 Clingman Ave. Ca. 1938. C-B

Erected ca. 1938, the one-story, flat-roof, brick, L-shaped section contains a central garage entrance with wood paneled roll-up door and a pedestrian entrance to the north. The pedestrian entrance consists of a single-leaf glazed and paneled door under a transom flanked by a six-light fixed window with a transom and a fixed glazed and paneled door.

The block of commercial buildings at 236-242 Clingman Avenue did not begin developing until C. L. Davis, who owned a coal yard at the intersection of Clingman Avenue and Lyman Street, erected the first buildings around 1938. He rented the larger structure (240 Clingman Avenue) to the C. D. Kenny Company, a wholesale distributor of coffee and tea, while his own business occupied the smaller adjacent building (see #31). The Kenny Company moved into a new building in the early 1940s that was also built and leased by Davis. Beginning in 1943, Food Brokers Incorporated moved their wholesale warehouse into the building on Clingman Avenue and occupied the building through the late 1950s.

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31. Davis Coal Company. 242 Clingman Ave. Ca. 1938. C-B

The square, one-story, flat-roof, brick building occupies the inner corner of the L-shaped adjacent building (see #30). Laid in common bond, the plain building has a single-leaf replacement door with transom and paired one-over-one replacement sash on the front (west) elevation. The side (south) elevation also contains replacement windows and doors.

The block of commercial buildings at 236-242 Clingman Avenue did not begin developing until C. L. Davis, who owned a coal yard at the intersection of Clingman Avenue and Lyman Street, erected the first buildings around 1938. He rented the larger structure (see #30) while his own business, the Davis Coal Company, occupied the smaller space. Davis established the White House Ice Cream Company in 1940 and ran his manufacturing operations from the building. The White House Ice Cream Company served six "branches", or ice cream shops, around the city, and in the early 1950s the building on Clingman Avenue was converted to one of the company's shops. The Owl Café occupied the building from 1960 through the 1970s.

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Section 8. Statement of Significance

The Riverside Industrial Historic District represents the intact collection of industrial and commercial buildings located in the industrial area that developed near the French Broad River and Southern Railroad tracks in Asheville beginning in the late nineteenth century. With the arrival of the railroad to Asheville in 1880, the city began a fifty year period of remarkable growth as an economic center of the western North Carolina region. The availability of level, open building lots situated near the river and the railroad, attracted numerous manufacturing and wholesale businesses to the area west of downtown Asheville. Many buildings and businesses in the area were destroyed in the floods of 1916, resulting in a new cycle of development during the 1920s and 30s. The Riverside Industrial Historic District is locally significant under Criteria A and C in the areas commerce, industry, and architecture. The buildings within the district and the businesses associated with them substantially contributed to the growth and development of Asheville and the surrounding region during the period of significance. The local industries both supplied and supported the growth of the city's economy and served as a regional hub not only for transportation but also for business. The architecture of the buildings within the district is also representative of the styles, materials, and methods of construction typical of industrial and commercial structures. The period of significance for the district begins ca. 1880 with the construction of the first railroad line into Asheville and ends in 1954. The post-1954 period is not of exceptional significance, and therefore the fifty year cut off is the end of the period of significance.

Historical Background and Industrial and Commercial Contexts

The North Carolina General Assembly officially formed Buncombe County in 1792 and carved it out of land from Burke and Rutherford Counties. The great nation of the Cherokee occupied the region long before European settlement began following the Revolutionary War. Following the war, in which the Cherokee had sided with the British, the state opened the new territory for settlement and agreed to compensate Revolutionary soldiers with land grants since currency was scarce. The early settlers established themselves along the numerous river and creek valleys—Swannanoa, Bee Tree, Hominy, Reems, and Beaverdam—that fed into the French Broad River.³

The State of Buncombe, as it was often called, encompassed the area of twelve present-day counties for an estimated population of 1,000, excluding the remaining Cherokee. In December 1792, the state legislature charged a commission with fixing the center of the new county and locating a site for the

³ John Ager, "Buncombe County: A Brief History," in *Cabins & Castles: the History & Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina*, Ed. Douglas Swaim (Asheville, NC: City of Asheville, County of Buncombe, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1981), 9-13.

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courthouse, jail, and stocks. The commissioners chose a site on a plateau where two Cherokee trading paths intersected and a few settlers had already erected log structures for residence and commerce; the location is now a portion of Pack Square. Initially referred to as Buncombe Courthouse, the county seat was called Morristown before the name Asheville became official in 1797, when the village was incorporated.

The completion of the Buncombe Turnpike in 1827 “was to be a major factor in the life and progress of Western North Carolina for many years and was, for some time, the finest road in North Carolina.” The turnpike linked Greeneville, Tennessee, with Greenville, South Carolina, and provided access southward to Augusta, Savannah, and Charleston. Most of the turnpike’s seventy-five miles were located within North Carolina, following the French Broad River from Paint Rock at the Tennessee line through Asheville, where the road pulled away from the river, and continuing south to Saluda Gap at the South Carolina line. In the fall of each year the turnpike became a scene of massive stock drives as cattle, hogs, and turkeys were driven south to ready markets. As many as 140,000 to 160,000 hogs passed through Asheville in a season. The road had the effect of not only allowing the stock raisers of the north a route to markets in the South, but also opening the mountain region as a summer retreat for Low Country residents.⁴

The Western North Carolina Railroad (WNCRR), the earliest rail line into Asheville, was completed in October 1880, and directly linked the region to Salisbury in the east. The WNCRR later expanded from Asheville to the north and west. The northern branch was completed through Marshall and Hot Springs to Paint Rock at the Tennessee state line in 1882. The Murphy Branch of the WNCRR was not completed until 1891, but extended as far west as Waynesville by 1882, Sylva in 1883, and Bryson City in 1884. A second railroad through Hendersonville connected Asheville with Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1886, and together with the northern branch of the WNCRR to Tennessee, superceded the turnpike as the principal north-south route through Asheville and Buncombe County. Asheville became a regional hub for the Southern Railway in the late 1890s, with large passenger and freight depots, roundhouse, and extensive rail yards located in the floodplains where the Swannanoa and French Broad Rivers converge.

The arrival of the railroad in 1880 marked the beginning of an era of prosperity in Asheville and Buncombe County that continued nearly unabated for the next fifty years. The population of Asheville skyrocketed from 2,690 in 1880 to 10,235 in 1890 and topped 50,000 by 1930. Although travelers had been braving the journey to Buncombe County throughout the middle decades of the nineteenth century, particularly for the region’s sanatoria, the railroad made the area more accessible and by 1890 Asheville boasted 50,000 visitors annually. In 1916 Asheville claimed fifty-one hotels and boarding houses and by 1920 the number of annual visitors had risen to 250,000. With the exception of a slowdown in the 1890s and during World War I, building continued throughout the city, which began expanding into the rural areas.

⁴ Ora Blackmun, *Western North Carolina, Its Mountains and Its People to 1880* (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1977), 203. Catherine W. Bishir, Michael T. Southern, and Jennifer F. Martin, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 25-7.

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The commercial fervor of Asheville in the 1920s, the peak of the city's boom years, was generated by a vigorous real estate market, growing industrial base, and the continuing strength of tourism. The real estate market in Asheville erupted in the 1920s as the Florida boom was waning and developers and promoters descended upon the growing mountain city. Manufacturers and various industries established themselves near the depot and rail yards along the river and in the county, most notably American Enka, a Dutch textile subsidiary, which built a large rayon plant with an accompanying residential community in Candler to the west of Asheville. Throughout the peak of Asheville's boom years tourism remained a cornerstone of the local economy, and the opening of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 1930 attracted an even broader range of visitors to the region and Asheville.

Whereas the need for a large water supply influenced the construction of industry along the French Broad River corridor in Asheville during the late nineteenth century, reliable rail service and available level building sites held more appeal in the early twentieth century and directly influenced the location of manufacturing plants, wholesale concerns, and distribution warehouses near the railroad yards. The C. E. Graham Manufacturing Company opened a cotton mill alongside the railroad in the 1880s, and sold the plant to the Cone family of Greensboro in 1893. Renamed Asheville Cotton Mill, the plant was one of the earliest textile mills in the Cone family enterprises. Cone Mills Corporation operated and continuously expanded the facility until 1949, when the company's holdings in Asheville were dissolved. The mill, which employed more than 300 people, also included a community of worker housing situated on the hillside to the east of Roberts Street. The Asheville Milling Company erected a large flour mill near the Asheville Cotton Mill in 1890, and the building was later incorporated into the Earle-Chesterfield Mill. The Hans Rees Tannery, a complex of two-story brick buildings to the south along Lyman Street, was built ca. 1900. The tannery was reportedly among the largest tanneries in the country and operated until the 1940s. In addition to the major industries, a number of other businesses vital to the daily operations of a growing city were established around the turn of the twentieth century including sawmills and lumber yards, coal yards, an ice factory, foundries and machine shops, and a bottling plant. The city claimed forty-seven hotels and boarding houses in 1890 with three additional hotels under construction at a cost of \$1,500,000 and over 400 houses under construction.⁵

For most of the nineteenth century the most basic form of business found in Asheville and Buncombe County, indeed throughout the entire mountain region, was the general store. Supplies for these stores had come from wholesalers, many of whom were retailers as well. Wagons were dispatched to the nearest large towns to sell and trade stock for the stores. After 1880, the population growth in Asheville supported an increasing number of specialty stores, and the central location of the city, along with its rail connections, made it hub for wholesale businesses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Records for the

⁵ Talmage Powell, "Asheville: An Historical Sketch," in Swaim, 38-40, 64.

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Board of Trade show that general mercantile business in Asheville increased from approximately \$500,000 in 1880 to \$6,000,000 by 1890.⁶

One area of the economy in particular that rose in prominence was the grocery business. The number of retail grocers grew from approximately thirty in 1890 to over seventy in 1902, and they were served by an increasing number of wholesalers. One newspaper account succinctly described the evolving business: "During the last decade [1900-1910] the wholesale business of Asheville has had a phenomenal development and this is especially true of the grocery trade which has during that time become one of the principal enterprises of this, the metropolis of Western North Carolina."⁷ The Asheville Grocery Company, which opened in 1902, maintained 18,000 square feet of warehouse space and employed five salesmen to serve stores within a 160-mile radius of Asheville. Though its main warehouses were located on Depot Street, the Asheville Grocery Company utilized a small warehouse (#21) on Roberts Street beginning in the late 1920s. Many of the city's various wholesale groceries went through a period of consolidation with larger regional firms in the mid-twentieth century. The Pearce-Young-Angel Company of Spartanburg, South Carolina, was founded by C. C. Pearce as a distributor of fresh fruits and vegetables. The company expanded aggressively to become of the region's largest food distributors, eventually making its mark in institutional food distribution. After leasing space in the Farmers Federation Building (#19) for several years, the Pearce-Young-Angel Company (#17) erected a separate building on Roberts Street around 1928.

The rapid growth of Asheville's population and subsequent suburban development during the 1910s and 1920s also spurred the tremendous growth of retail groceries. Though many retail groceries were located in downtown Asheville and along the prominent commercial streets, a number of other community grocers served the many developing neighborhoods. Orpheus Keener began his career as a clerk and later, during the 1920s, worked as a grocer on West Haywood Street in the busy West End section that developed around the Asheville Cotton Mill and mill village. Keener and his wife, Bertha, moved from downtown to a house on Park Avenue (#3) in 1921, and by 1929, he had established a new retail grocery (#24) near his house on East Haywood Street, a new road linking the West Asheville bridge with Clingman Avenue. Keener's business would have served the residential areas on Clingman Avenue, Park Avenue, and Jefferson Street, as well as employees of the numerous businesses.

James G. K. McClure of Fairview in southeastern Buncombe County formed the Farmers Federation in 1920 to address the difficult market conditions facing local farmers. Formed as a cooperative and modeled after Clarence Poe's Farmers Alliance, the Farmers Federation began with the construction of a rail siding and warehouse in Fairview, but grew quickly throughout the region. Other warehouse facilities were established in other small communities, Hendersonville, and Asheville. McClure actively promoted the ideals of the new organization through its newsletter, *Farmers Federation News*, which had its offices on

⁶ Swaim, 30-40.

⁷ *Asheville Citizen* (September 9, 1912).

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Roberts Street. A fire in 1925 destroyed the Federation's six-story central warehouse, but the organization acquired new warehouse space (#19) soon thereafter. Around the same time the Federation bought out the Hayes-McCormack Company, a wholesale produce business, and took the company's former warehouse (#18).⁸

As Asheville grew so did the need for improved municipal infrastructure. A water system, telephone system, electric street car lines, and two electric light systems were all established in the late nineteenth century. The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, an important component of John D. Rockefeller's Standard Trust, was originally formed in 1882 to supply kerosene for home lighting systems, but evolved into a huge corporation producing and distributing gasoline along the eastern seaboard between New Jersey and North Carolina. The Standard Oil Company fuel storage facility (#15) was located on Avery Street (present Riverside Drive) as early as 1901, although the facility was rebuilt after the reserve tank floated away in the Flood of 1916. Asheville Power & Light Company maintained an electric plant and substation adjacent to the Standard Oil Company facility on Avery Street. A coal-fired gasworks (see #11) was located across the street and produced manufactured gas for the city's gas lamps. The plant was sold to the Asheville Gas Company in 1930 and sold again to the Public Service Company of North Carolina (PSNC) in 1943. PSNC worked to obtain an allotment of natural gas for the region in the late 1940s, as coal became more expensive, and construct a delivery system for Asheville. Natural gas was first available in Asheville in 1951, and in 1954, PSNC closed the plant near the river. At the time of its closing, the plant was the last coal-fired gasworks in North Carolina, and one of only three remaining nationwide.⁹

The production of ice was a vital function in the life of Asheville in the early twentieth century. In addition to normal cold storage and household use, great quantities of ice were needed to serve the throngs of summer tourists visiting the city. The Carolina Coal and Ice Company (#8) was organized in 1899, and erected its facility at the intersection of Lyman Street and Riverside Drive. The Storage Supply Company (#14) was organized in 1906 not only to provide and distribute manufactured ice for the various retail ice companies that served the city, but also to offer cold storage and refrigeration for the food service industry. The company erected a plant beside the railroad to the south of the Asheville Cotton Mill capable of producing seventy-five tons of ice per day. The plant was expanded several times and production increased to over 100 tons a day in 1923 to keep up with demand.

The industrial area of Asheville also attracted a few heavy industries and numerous automobile-related businesses, including fuel warehouses, filling stations, and repair shops, as well as transfer companies and truck maintenance facilities. The Post Machinery Company (#7) machine shop was located near the rail line and other related construction materials businesses. Anthony Ball operated a concrete block plant (#20)

⁸ John C. Ager, *We Plow God's Fields: The Life of James G. K. McClure* (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1991), 247-69.

⁹ *Asheville Citizen* (October 21, 1943; April 19, 1954; and December 7, 1961).

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on Roberts Street for a short time. One of the largest companies located within Asheville's industrial district was the Dave Steel Company (#23), formed in 1929 by Joseph Dave, a Lithuanian immigrant. Joseph Dave, a structural engineer by training, arrived in Asheville in 1923 and worked for S. Sternberg and Company. Dave left Sternberg to form Dave Steel with just two employees. The company established its plant on the north side of the intersection Clingman Avenue and Roberts Street, the old site of the Southern Steel and Cement Company. The firm grew quickly, providing fabricated steel and custom orders throughout the South. Dave Steel received the coveted "E" recognition from the United States Army and Navy in 1944 for excellence in wartime production. The company, which employed 125 people by 1950, later acquired an Ohio-based bridge manufacturing company and opened an office in Cincinnati. The Dave Steel Company continues to be one of the active manufacturing companies located in Asheville's industrial district.¹⁰

Although the fortunes of the city largely evaporated with the failure of the Citizens Bank & Trust Company in November 1930 and the ensuing national economic depression, the industrial sector of Asheville fared relatively well. During the 1930s and early 1940s most new construction in the industrial district was food distribution warehouses including a block of buildings at 236-242 Clingman Avenue (#28-31) built between 1938 and 1944. Following World War II, however, a number of larger manufacturing firms including the Asheville Cotton Mill and Hans Rees Tannery closed shop and the industrial area began a period of slow deterioration. Decreasing rail traffic also contributed to the decline as businesses moved to new locations easily accessible from the highways and interstate. Since the 1980s, the area has seen an increase in adaptive reuse projects for the old abandoned buildings. In particular artists are drawn to the sturdy construction and large open interior spaces of the industrial buildings and warehouses for studio space.

The Riverside Industrial Historic District is one of several industrial areas located along the French Broad and Swannanoa Rivers, and represents one of the most cohesive groupings of historic industrial buildings in Asheville. The Depot Street section of Asheville, located around the old Southern Railway passenger and freight depot, lies to the south of the historic district, but the once bustling, densely developed area has become largely desolate and deteriorated. Many significant buildings, including the depot, no longer stand, while others like the surviving Glen Rock Hotel, which was rebuilt in the 1930s, are mostly vacant. The Southern Railway Roundhouse remains active, and the surviving sections of the Hans Rees Tannery complex are leased to smaller businesses and artists. The Southern Railway freight yard to the south and east of the roundhouse along the Swannanoa River is also largely vacant or occupied by newer construction materials facilities. Two other large industrial plants located on the Swannanoa River have been destroyed in the past year: Beacon Manufacturing Company plant burned in a major fire during the summer of 2003, and Sayles Bleachery was lost to commercial development in early 2004.

¹⁰ *Asheville Citizen-Times* (December 3, 1944; May 1, 1949; February 17, 1983; and January 31, 1988).

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Architectural Context

Much of the early architecture of Asheville, specifically structures dating from before 1880, has been lost in the intervening decades of prosperity and expansion. Developers and contractors built the city over more than once during Asheville's boom years. Whereas the earliest buildings were log structures, including the courthouse and jail, the frontier settlement of Asheville evolved into a small village of brick and frame structures by the 1820s. The increasing number of wealthy visitors from the low country of South Carolina and Georgia in the mid-nineteenth century brought about a gradual refinement of Asheville's architecture, and by century's end the railroad had opened the city to a constant flow of outside influences.¹¹

The industrial district in Asheville developed near the railroad, which was situated in the floodplains at the confluence of the Swannanoa and French Broad Rivers. Where the Southern Railway established their large passenger and freight depots, twenty-five car roundhouse, and extensive rail yards became the center of the city's bustling industrial district in the late nineteenth century. The area was home to manufacturing plants, mills, warehouses, wholesale dealers, and lumber and coal yards. Most of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrial and commercial buildings were constructed of wood or brick. The few surviving examples are brick construction. The Asheville Cotton Mill, built in 1887 by the C. E. Graham Manufacturing Company, the Hans Rees Tannery (ca. 1900), and the Carolina Coal & Ice Company (ca. 1905; #8) were constructed of brick in the Italianate style common to industrial buildings. The Italianate style, a Victorian era adaptation of forms derived from Romanesque and Renaissance buildings of northern Italy, combined brickwork motifs to ornament commercial buildings in the late nineteenth century. Italianate industrial buildings are generally distinguished by ornate corbelled or bracketed cornices, round or segmental arched window openings, and often a square tower. The ice plant featured arched window openings, stepped end parapets, and corbelled cornices.

The industrial area was severely damaged during the floods in July 1916. Although Asheville received less than three inches of rain in the city, the run off from the denuded watershed caused the French Broad River to rise rapidly. Lying in the floodplain, rising waters and debris swept through the industrial district destroying buildings, washing out bridges, and covering the railroad tracks with twelve inches of silt. Clean up began several days later and a new wave of development occurred within the industrial area.¹²

Much of the construction that took place after the floods was executed in brick and concrete. The few buildings that survived the floods were constructed of brick including the Carolina Coal & Ice Company, Storage Supply Company (1906; #14), and the American Feed Milling Company (ca. 1915; #4). The S.

¹¹ Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 412. David R. Black, *Historic Architectural Resources of Downtown Asheville, North Carolina* (Asheville, NC: City of Asheville and North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1979), 7-16; and Swaim, 51-2.

¹² *The Floods of July, 1916, how the Southern Railway organization met an emergency*, Reprint 1917 (Johnson City, TN: Overmountain Press, 1995), 29-30.

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Sternberg and Company building (#18) on Roberts Street was under construction at the time of the floods. Among the brick buildings that were erected in the wake of the flooding, most are executed in a relatively plain Commercial Style, which utilized simple and often structural details to enliven otherwise utilitarian buildings. Commercial Style buildings are typically rectangular plan brick buildings with flat roofs behind low or stepped parapets. Brick patterning or corbelling is used to enliven the typically flat facades, especially around the cornice and pilasters. The Standard Oil Company buildings (ca. 1916-18; #15a-e) incorporate brick corbelling to create wall panels and give some depth to the elevations. Pearce-Young-Angel Company (ca. 1928; #17) is a plain brick structure with a decorative brick soldier and sawtooth courses in the parapet. The Kent Building (1923; #16) and Asheville Gas Company storage warehouse (ca. 1930; #11) employ cast concrete plaques and medallions to enliven the façade. Due to its diminutive size, the freestanding filling station on Clingman Avenue (#25) is given a prominent hip roof with molded metal shingles and broad eaves, which affords the building more of a Craftsman or Mission Revival style appearance.

Reinforced concrete was used for the additions to the Storage Supply Company constructed in 1923. The building was heightened and extended to the north with a concrete post-and-beam frame. The curtain walls are brick on the upper stories of the building and poured concrete in the addition. Few other structures within the district were large enough to warrant using a reinforced concrete frame except for the Dave Steel plant (#23). As a steel fabricating company, though, the building is constructed with steel posts, I-beams, and open trusses.

Concrete block became more prevalent in the 1920s and 30s, replacing time and labor intensive poured concrete walls. While concrete block is most often used not as a facing material but in areas typically out view, early promoters of the building material utilized a variety of face textures to broaden its appeal as a finish material. A number of distinct buildings were erected utilized the block as an exterior material, but it failed to gain widespread use. Anthony Ball opened a concrete block plant (#20) on Roberts Street around 1924, and the business was housed in a building constructed of bevel edged concrete block. The Keener Grocery (ca. 1929; #24), which was constructed with bevel edged block, is one of three surviving groceries in Asheville that were built with the material. Advances in the manufacture of concrete blocks also included the introduction of new aggregates that resulted in lighter weight blocks, such as cinder block. Several later types of concrete block were incorporated in the Asheville Grocery Company warehouse (ca. 1928; #21), Post Machinery Company machine shop (ca. 1937, #6), and Leemon Distributing Company Warehouse (ca. 1954; #13), and although used as an exterior material, the utilitarian function of the buildings dictates a lack of exterior ornamentation. The Feed-Seed Supply Company (ca. 1948; #28) also employs concrete block for structural support, but the façade is covered with brick veneer that allows the building to fit harmoniously within a block face of other Commercial Style buildings (see #29-31).¹³

¹³ Thomas C. Jester, ed., *Twentieth-Century Building Materials: History and Conservation* (N.p.: The McGraw-Hill Companies, 1995), 80-3.

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Section 10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Riverside Industrial Historic District is shown by the heavy line on the accompanying Buncombe County tax maps, including portions of map 9638.08, 9638.12, and 9648.09, at a scale of one inch equals two hundred feet.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the Riverside Industrial Historic District encompasses the concentration of historic resources in the industrial area of Asheville located along the east side of the French Broad River. The district includes properties located on both sides of the Southern Railroad tracks, which run north-south through the district, along Clingman Avenue, Lyman Street, Riverside Drive, and Roberts Street. The boundary generally follows the legal property lines of the contributing resources. The boundary also includes part of the West Asheville/Riverlink Bridge, which carries Eugene Avenue/Haywood Road (SR 3548) over the Southern Railroad, Riverside Drive, and French Broad River; one end support and two concrete piers are anchored within the boundary. Beyond the boundaries of the district a marked loss of integrity occurs, often the result of demolition or new construction. During the period of significance the district was more densely developed, but the loss of significant buildings—including the Southern Railway Depot, Asheville Cotton Mill, and Earle-Chesterfield Mill—and modern development have compromised the integrity of surrounding areas.

RIVERSIDE INDUSTRIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT ASHEVILLE, BUNCOMBE CO., NC

BOUNDARY MAP

SCALE: 1" = 200'

- ① INVENTORY NUMBER *
- Ⓢ CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE
- Ⓝ NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCE

* Nos 5, 7, 10, 26 + 27 unassigned

NOTE: BUILDING FOOTPRINTS ARE REPRESENTATIVE ONLY AND NOT TO SCALE



