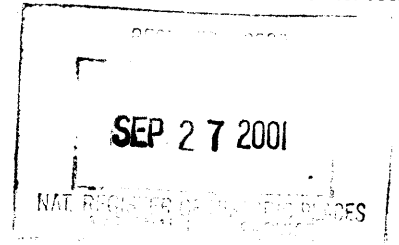


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1213



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 South Central Avenue Historic District (B-5058)

other names N/A

2. Location

street & number Approx. 8 blocks centering on Central Ave. bet. Pratt & Fleet Sts. (see map) not for publication

city or town Baltimore vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Baltimore City code 510 zip code 21202 212 1

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).


Signature of certifying official/Title

9-25-01
Date

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 certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper
Entered in the
National Register

Date of Action
11.11.01

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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	
105	15	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
105	15	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

1 (Bagby Furniture Company Building)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry (manufacturing facility, industrial storage)

Transportation (rail-related, road-related)

Domestic (single dwelling)

Commerce/Trade (corner/neighborhood store)

Education (school)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry (manufacturing facility, industrial storage)

Transportation (road-related)

Domestic (single dwelling)

Commerce/Trade (business, corner/neighborhood store)

Education (college)

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19th CENTURY

LATE VICTORIAN

LATE 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick, concrete, stone

walls Brick, formstone, concrete, stucco, metal, stone

roof Asphalt, metal

other Storefronts: glass, metal, wood, ceramic tile

Cornices: metal, wood

Narrative Description

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

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Description Summary:

The South Central Avenue Historic District encompasses an approximately eight-block area situated along South Central Avenue between Fleet and Pratt Streets at the eastern end of the Little Italy neighborhood and immediately west of the Fells Point Historic District. The historic district meets National Register Criterion A because it embodies the evolution of ancillary industries against the urban backdrop that made their existence possible. Its central location within Baltimore City and its proximity to the City Dock at the south end of South Central Avenue, railroad and streetcar lines, and arterials leading to Philadelphia fueled its continued use as a light industrial precinct. Because of the linear nature of this district, boundaries have been drawn to encompass surviving commercial and industrial fabric relating to the historic character of the district. With few exceptions, the district boundaries have excluded non-contributing and intrusive buildings. The residential housing stock characterizing Little Italy has also been excluded.

Comprised of brick two and three story industrial and residential buildings, the historic district's variegated streetscapes reflect over 150 years of utilitarian adaptation of buildings and space. As a center of ancillary industry, the district is characterized by relatively small-scale, vernacular industrial buildings that display additive massing and traces of incremental change. Land use patterns that characterized 19th and early 20th century American cities prior to the introduction of zoning laws survive here. Early 19th century rowhouses, late 19th century and early 20th century manufacturing and warehouse buildings, gas stations, stables, car barns, commercial/residential buildings, and corner stores are all interspersed within this dense historic district. Several larger buildings like the Bagby Furniture Building (4 stories), the Strauss Malt House (5 stories), and the Alameda School contrast with the smaller industrial concerns whose compound, low-scale massing often follows historic lot lines. While the district is urban in character with buildings constructed up to the property line, there are vacant lots serving storage and loading functions.

Alterations provide a physical record of the evolution and change that characterized this area. The transformation of existing building stock in this singular precinct testifies both to the importance of this location, the scale and lack of capital often characterizing new or smaller businesses, and the need for continuous operations that result in incremental change to existing buildings. Chapels became foundries, schools became warehouses, rowhouses accommodated small manufacturers and suppliers. Typical changes include new ground floor openings (including inserted storefronts), infilled window openings, replacement windows, and additions. Many rowhouses have been covered with formstone, a typical Baltimore alteration that signals continued owner occupancy. None of these changes impair the overall integrity of the historic district's buildings. The obvious character of these alterations provides a clear record of utilitarian change and aesthetic preferences that mark the evolution of this historic district. Because of continued occupancy, most of the buildings in the historic district are in fair to good condition; some vacant dwellings are in poor condition.

General Description:

The South Central Avenue Historic District tells the story of industrial change, both in its physical fabric and in its history. The district is an approximately eight-block area located between downtown, Fells Point, and the harbor in Baltimore, Maryland. It includes residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, and transportation-related buildings that range in size from a tiny two-story rowhouse to a massive four-story warehouse. It contains both purpose-built buildings that continue to be used for their original function and buildings that have evolved into different uses.

The South Central Avenue corridor, the spine of the district, developed into its current form in response to the enclosure of Harford Run, the stream that historically separated Baltimore Town and Jonestown on the west from Fells Point on the east. In the late-eighteenth century, the area around South Central Avenue consisted primarily of swampland surrounding Harford Run. Largely in response to repeated yellow fever outbreaks, the swamp was gradually drained, filled, and converted to city blocks during the early part of the nineteenth century. Harford Run itself was canalized between Baltimore Street and Eastern Avenue beginning in 1799 and ran down the middle of what became known as South Central Avenue. The canal was covered in the 1870s, but South Central Avenue

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remained a wide, busy thoroughfare that led from the Baltimore Street corridor on the north to the City Dock on the south. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, freight and streetcar rail lines traveled up and down South Central Avenue and surrounding streets, carrying workers to and from their jobs and products to and from the City Dock and nearby industrial sites. Wagon traffic in the nineteenth century and truck traffic in the twentieth also shared the streets. The area remained a busy, vital corridor through the mid-twentieth century.

The South Central Avenue Historic District today is generally bounded on the northwest by the Jonestown neighborhood and the Flag House high-rise public housing complex (currently being demolished), on the northeast by the Washington Hill Historic District, on the east by the garden apartments of the Clarence Perkins public housing complex and the Fells Point Historic District, on the south by Fleet Street (now the site of the Inner Harbor East development), and on the west by the Little Italy neighborhood. The primary north-south route through the district is South Central Avenue, and the primary east-west routes are Pratt Street, Eastern Avenue, and Fleet Street.

South Central Avenue itself stretches from Baltimore Street on the north to Lancaster Street on the south. To the west of South Central Avenue are the narrow, angled streets of Little Italy. Little Italy is a residential neighborhood of tightly-packed, late-nineteenth century rowhouses. While the commercial and industrial enterprises of South Central Avenue have traditionally been considered part of Little Italy, they are completely different in character from the residential part of the neighborhood. To the west of South Central Avenue is the regular grid of streets that characterizes Fells Point. The Fells Point Historic District ends on the east side of South Caroline Street; the South Central Avenue Historic District begins on the west side of South Caroline Street. The Fells Point Historic District is characterized by a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential buildings but differs from the South Central Avenue Historic District. Historically, Fells Point was the center of a settlement rather than the industrial seam between two settlements. Architecturally, it possesses more cohesive and tightly-packed streetscapes.

The South Central Avenue Historic District is urban in character with mostly two- and three-story brick buildings built right up to the sidewalk. Many of the industrial buildings have loading docks or other staging areas on adjacent vacant lots, and the activities they support frequently spill over onto the sidewalks and streets. Residential buildings have tiny, fenced backyards that lead to narrow alleys. While most of the streets in the district have modern pavement, portions of the pavement have worn away to reveal cobblestone streets with granite curbs. Remnants of railroad tracks are also visible in many places. Harford Run still flows under South Central Avenue but is only visible during repairs to the street. The few trees in the district are located along the predominantly residential South Eden Street. The district contains a range of building types. Industrial buildings and complexes dominate the district. They frequently incorporate both historic and modern components and line South Central Avenue as well as some side streets. Transportation-related buildings, constructed to support industrial activities, are scattered throughout the district. Brick rowhouses dating from ca. 1820 to ca. 1880 line Eden Street and are interspersed along the other streets. Two schools were built for the children who lived in these rowhouses. Commercial properties, primarily consisting of corner stores, are located at major intersections and along the east-west streets.

One major trend that characterizes the development of the district is the continual alteration of existing buildings, particularly industrial buildings, in order to accommodate changing uses. Another trend is the additive nature of the industrial complexes in the district. In additive complexes, small- to moderate-sized buildings were strung together over time. Changes dating from different periods of history can be seen on nearly all of the buildings and complexes. Rather than detract from the integrity of the district, these changes are part of the district's story and contribute to its significance.

The boundaries of the district were drawn to exclude major non-contributing buildings and elements that are out of character with the district. The Clarence Perkins public housing complex is a series of low-rise garden apartments that were built in 1941. The complex is completely different from the surrounding area in that the buildings face the interiors of the blocks and do not address the street. Therefore, it was excluded from the district. The high-rise Flag House apartments to the north, a public housing project constructed in 1954 and currently being demolished, was also excluded. Other excluded non-contributing buildings include the Sylvan Learning

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Center building at 506 South Central Avenue, the large vacant warehouse at 511 South Central Avenue, the Little Italy public parking garage at 400 South Central Avenue, and the H&S Bakery Distribution Center at 1414 Eastern Avenue. Large parcels of vacant land at the edges of the district were also excluded, such as the Bohagers parking lot on the south side of Eastern Avenue.

Some non-contributing buildings could not be excluded from the district boundaries because of their location. Most of these, though constructed after the period of significance for the district, still contribute to its industrial character in that they are used for industrial purposes. They include warehouses at 300 South Central Avenue and 238-242 South Eden Street, Alexander's Used Cars at 500 South Central Avenue, and automobile repair shops at 1212-1214 Bank Street and 1320 Eastern Avenue.

Industrial Buildings

Industrial buildings dominate the South Central Avenue Historic District. They generally fall into four categories: purpose-built industrial buildings that were used by a single industry over time; purpose-built industrial buildings that were adapted for use by different industries over time; additive industrial complexes that were enlarged as industries changed; and buildings constructed for other functions then adapted for industrial purposes.

All of the purpose-built industrial buildings and complexes within the district have a utilitarian appearance. Most of the buildings have rectangular shapes, although a few follow irregular and angled lot lines. The buildings are usually constructed of brick and range from one to three stories in height with flat roofs. Window and door openings are generally large to allow for light, air, and the movement of goods and vehicles. Many of the buildings feature applied ornamentation such as pressed-metal cornices and brick corbelling, pendants, and pilasters.

Due to the changing nature of industry within the district, purpose-built industrial buildings that have been used by a single industry are rare. In fact only one, the Bagby Furniture Company Building at 503-517 Exeter Street, remains. The Bagby Furniture Company Building, constructed from 1902 to 1907, is a four-story, 20-bay, rectangular brick building with a shallow side-gable roof. Brick architectural detailing includes pilasters, jack arches above windows, a corbelled water table, and a corbelled cornice. The building was occupied by the Bagby Furniture Company from the time of its construction until 1990. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998 and was recently renovated as an office building.

Purpose-built industrial buildings that have been adapted for use by different industries are more common in the district. Among the more outstanding examples are the Solomon Strauss Malt House at 302 South Central Avenue and the Gordon Sleeprite Mattress Corporation Building at 1007 East Pratt Street.

The Solomon Strauss Malt House building was constructed in 1866. The three-story building is four bays wide and 16 bays deep with an irregular shape and a flat roof. It features a deep, corbelled and dentilated brick cornice and two-story windows with segmental arches. The recessed main entry is flanked by Corinthian columns with simple entablatures within a brick and stone round arch surround. An arched, coffered ceiling is found within the vestibule. An early-twentieth century brick and concrete block addition wraps the south and west sides of the first story. The Solomon Strauss Malt House was altered several times over the years to accommodate a chair factory, a can company, and loft space. Most of the changes took place on the interior.

The current façade of the Gordon Sleeprite Mattress Corporation dates to ca. 1940. The three-story, six-bay main block has a brick veneer façade with a stepped parapet wall concealing a flat roof. The building's large, square steel-sash windows with translucent glazing typify industrial architecture of the mid-twentieth century. Originally constructed as three brick rowhouses, the building has been continually adapted and reworked, and has served as a cigar factory, a coat pad factory, and a mattress factory.

The most common industrial buildings within the district are the additive industrial complexes. Rather than a single massive building, these complexes are made up of small to moderate sized buildings that have been strung together over time as industries changed.

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Among the more outstanding additive complexes are the Startzman Tannery at 227-241 South Central Avenue, the Holland Manufacturing Company at 1300 Bank Street, and the George Plitt Iron Foundry at 413-421 South Central Avenue.

The Startzman Tannery is made up of a series of three buildings dating from ca. 1860 to ca. 1960. The older two buildings, constructed at approximately the same time, are one-story tall with stone foundations, brick walls and flat roofs. They feature elaborate, pressed-metal, dentilated cornices above a corbelled brick entablature punctuated by corbelled brackets. The steel-beam lintels over the loading bays are embellished with rosettes. A series of filled, punched, and enlarged windows at the north end of the complex illustrates how the buildings have been repeatedly adapted and reused. A simple, ca. 1960 brick garage sits at the south end of the complex. The Startzman Tannery complex has been used as a tannery, bottling plant, and scrap metal warehouse.

Local lore holds that the Holland Manufacturing Company complex was first constructed as a hospital during the Civil War. The main building in the complex is three stories tall, nine bays wide, and 14 bays deep with a flat roof. The building originally had an L-shape, although the resulting rear courtyard has been gradually enclosed. The building has a deep, corbelled brick, paneled entablature. A close examination of the first story reveals that the original loading bays have been reduced to the size of standard doors. The Holland Manufacturing Company added a warehouse building to its north during the early-twentieth century and a larger factory/office building to its east during the 1960s.

The George Plitt Iron Foundry (now Fallsway Spring Company), constructed beginning ca. 1860, has some of the most outstanding brick ornamentation in the district. The original foundry, the center building, is four-bays wide and one-story tall with a side-gable roof. The building has a brick cornice with two rows of dentils. The cornice originally extended into a series of seven brick pilasters, between which were six tall windows with dentilated segmental arches. The original openings were replaced with a series of three garage bays in the early twentieth century. To the south of the original foundry is a ca. 1910, two-story, two-bay brick warehouse building with a flat roof. The warehouse building also has an elaborate brick entablature featuring corbelled modillion blocks. The building also received a large loading bay during the early twentieth century. To the north of the original foundry is a one-story, two-bay, ca. 1940 brick garage building. The garage building has an elaborate, shaped parapet wall around the roof. A simple, brick ca. 1960 garage stands north of the ca. 1940 garage. The George Plitt Iron Foundry has been used as a foundry, building materials storage facility, and motor freight depot.

The final category of industrial buildings encompasses those constructed for another use then adapted for industrial use. The most outstanding of these is the Wesleyan Home Mission Society complex at 1400 Eastern Avenue. The main building in this complex is the 1881 chapel building, which is two stories tall and three bays wide with a front-gable roof facing Eden Street. The chapel has a pressed-metal cornice with modillions over stepped corbelling that extends into brick pilasters. A corbelled cornice and pilasters continue under the eaves of the south elevation. The windows are large, industrial steel sash, and the center bay is occupied by a loading bay (now filled). Traces of the original openings are visible in the remaining jack arches and repointed areas of brick. East of the chapel building is the ca. 1900 Sunday School building. The Sunday School building is three bays wide and two stories tall with a front-gable roof facing Eastern Avenue. The high parapet wall has a moulded, pressed-metal cornice over a row of brick corbelling. Traces of pointed-arch windows remain over the current industrial steel sash windows. North of the chapel and Sunday School building is a ca. 1940 warehouse. The warehouse is four bays wide and two stories tall with a flat roof. It has industrial steel sash windows and a plain, boxy appearance. Finally, a ca. 1950 shop and warehouse building stands at the east end of the complex. This large, plain, corrugated-metal building has two loading bays opening onto Eastern Avenue. While this complex was originally constructed as a religious facility, it now has the appearance of an industrial complex. It has served as a mission, a steel company, and a warehouse.

By the very nature of their use, industrial buildings have to change to accommodate new technologies, processes, and functions. The industrial buildings in the South Central Avenue Historic District have been continually adapted since the time of their construction. Typical changes include: the enlargement of doors or wagon bays to accommodate modern vehicles; the replacement of doors and windows; the covering or filling of window and door openings; and the addition of modern structures to complexes.

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Transportation-Related Buildings

Crucial to the development of the industries within the district was the presence of transportation infrastructure. The city dock, the canal, major roads, and the streetcar system all facilitated the movement of goods and people into and out of the district. The transportation-related buildings within the district are related to the use of roads and rails.

The most outstanding transportation-related building in the district is the Baltimore Traction Company powerhouse located at 1142 East Pratt Street. This ca. 1890, five-bay brick building extends through the entire city block and has facades on both Pratt and Granby Streets. The Romanesque Revival main façade, which faces Pratt Street, is two stories tall and has an elaborate, stepped parapet wall with stone coping, a central pediment, and stone finials. A series of stone and corbelled brick belt courses emphasizes the width of the building. The main entry occupies the center bay. Although the original door has been replaced with a modern garage bay, the brick and stone round arch surround remains. The round arch is echoed in the transom over a paired window (now boarded over) above the entry. Aside from the boarding of doors and windows, this building remains relatively intact. A 1-story, simple brick garage was constructed to its east ca. 1950.

The earliest transportation-related building in the district is a stable located at 228 South Eden Street. The stable was constructed ca. 1900 by the Bartholomay Brewing Company, which opened a bottling plant in the old Startzman Tannery in 1883. Three stories tall and three bays wide, the stable is a simple brick building with a flat roof and a stepped parapet wall. Below the moulded, pressed-metal cornice are several rows of brick corbelling supported by corbelled brackets. The center bay of the first story contains an original wagon bay with a steel-beam lintel. Although some windows have been filled, and a garage door fills the wagon bay, the building retains its original shape and form.

The advent of the trucking industry in the early twentieth century led to the opening of motor freight depots within the district. One was located in the George Plitt Iron Foundry at 413-421 South Central Avenue, resulting in the addition of garage bays to that building. Another opened at 1220 Bank Street following the adaptation of a rowhouse. The rowhouse, constructed between ca. 1850 and ca. 1880, is two bays wide and three stories tall with a flat roof. The brick and concrete-block depot facility is a one story, shed-roof structure that wraps the east and north elevations of the rowhouse. Large loading bays open onto a vacant lot where a coal yard once located.

A multitude of other small, automobile-related businesses sprang up during the mid-twentieth century. A ca. 1930 filling station stands at the corner of Eastern and South Central Avenues. The filling station has a brick water table, stucco walls with pilasters, and a hipped roof that extends over the pumps. The original storefront windows remain intact and consist of large plate-glass windows with multi-pane transoms. A simple, brick, ca. 1960 repair shop wraps the north and west elevations. An early automobile repair shop stands at 122-124 South Central Avenue. The ca. 1940 repair shop is a three-bay, one-story, brick building with a shaped parapet wall above a row of brick laid in a decorative basketweave bond. The repair shop was later enlarged to the south with a concrete-block addition. Another automobile repair shop stands at 1200 Bank Street. This simple, brick, ca. 1940 building is one story tall with six garage bays. It conforms to the angled lot on which it stands and features brick laid in various decorative bonds around the garage bays. The garage bays are now filled, as the building has been converted to a contractor's supply house.

With the exception of the conversion of 1200 Bank Street, the transportation-related buildings in the district have not undergone as much change as other types. The most common alteration is the replacement of doors in garage and wagon bays.

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Rowhouses

The rowhouse is the quintessential Baltimore building type, constructed throughout the city's history for rich and poor alike. The brick rowhouses in the South Central Avenue Historic District exhibit the range of types constructed for working and middle class people from the late-eighteenth century through the late-nineteenth century.

The earliest rowhouses in the district, constructed ca. 1820 to ca. 1840, are two-and-one-half stories tall, two or three bays wide, and one or two rooms deep. These houses are based on the Federal style, but are much more simple than high-style examples. They are constructed of brick, frequently laid in Flemish bond, and have steeply-pitched, side-gable roofs with boxed cornices, single dormer windows, and tall brick interior end chimneys. While fire codes would have required the original roofs be slate, all those visible have been replaced with asphalt. Nearly all of the original, graduated, 6/6 double-hung windows have also been replaced. Approximately 15 rowhouses of this type are located within the district. One of the better examples is located at 407 South Eden Street. This early, two-bay, two-and-one-half-story rowhouse is only one room deep with an original ell. It is constructed of brick with a Flemish bond façade and jack arches over the windows and door. The steeply-pitched side-gable roof is covered in asphalt and has a very simple boxed cornice. Tall, brick interior end chimneys stand in the south gable and the ell. All of the windows and doors are modern. Other examples of this type are located at 407 South Eden Street, 310-314 South Eden Street, and 305-321 South Central Avenue.

The most common type of rowhouse in the district, constructed during the 1840s and 1850s, is the two-story-and-attic type. This type is recognizable by its narrow frieze band of windows at attic level, which was based on the more formal frieze found on Greek Revival-style houses of the same period. The houses are two or three bays wide and two rooms deep beneath a shallow side-gable roof. Occasionally, a builder would construct only the front room of a house, with the intention of adding the back room at a later time. These houses with only one-half of a gable roof became known as "half-houses". A row them still stands at 1302-1310 Gough Street. All of the two-story-and-attic type houses are constructed of brick; a few have either Flemish bond or pressed brick facades. As with the earlier houses, most of the original roofing materials, windows and doors have been replaced. A good example of a two-story-and-attic house is 418 South Eden Street. Set in the midst of the row from 400 to 432 South Eden Street, this particular example retains its original pressed-brick façade. The two-bay house rests on a slightly raised basement. The door has a plain transom, and the window surrounds are unornamented. The side-gable roof has been covered in asphalt and has a shallow, boxed cornice and a squat brick chimney. Like many of the rows in Baltimore, this row has an arched passage to the alley shared by paired houses. Other examples of this type include 415 Eden Street, 251-253 South Central Avenue, 401-405 South Central Avenue, 1309-1313 East Pratt Street, and 1405-1411 Bank Street.

Variations on the two-story-and-attic type include houses with only two stories, as found at 209-211 South Central Avenue, and houses with three full stories, as found at 1216 and 1413-1417 Bank Street.

A few rowhouses in the district, constructed from ca. 1850 to ca. 1880, are loosely based on the Italianate style. These rowhouses typically are two or three stories tall, two or three bays wide, and two or three rooms deep with flat roofs and pressed-metal bracketed cornices. The houses are usually constructed of pressed brick and feature tall, narrow, standardized windows and doors with segmental arches. A particularly good example is located at 421 South Eden Street. This two-bay, three-story house is constructed of buff brick with belt courses between each story and jack arches above the windows and doors. The 1/1 windows are modern but fill the tall, narrow openings. The door has a simple transom above. This house features an elaborate pressed-metal cornice with dentils and brackets. Other examples of this type include 423-427 South Eden Street, 249 South Central Avenue, 1218 Bank Street, and 1220 Bank Street.

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Changes made to the rowhouses within the South Central Avenue Historic District are typical of changes made to rowhouses throughout Baltimore. Changes include: the addition of formstone to the front facade, the replacement of doors and windows, the replacement of roof materials, and the rebuilding and remodeling of rear ells. As is typical for this area, many of the rowhouses were also adapted for non-residential use at some time. Despite these changes, the basic form, massing, fenestration pattern, and typology of the rowhouses is clearly evident. Alterations made to accommodate shifting functions are a vital part of the evolution embodied in the South Central Avenue Historic District. The addition of formstone, a characteristic Baltimore alteration, does not change the basic reading of the building and is, in most cases, reversible. In the context of the historic district, it serves as a marker for the persistence of home ownership in an increasingly industrialized area through the mid-20th century.

Schools

The district contains two intact examples of school buildings: Public School No. 2 on South Central Avenue and Public School No. 25 on Caroline Street.

Public School No. 2, also known as the Alameda School, is one of the outstanding buildings of the district. Constructed in 1910, the building replaced the earlier Primary School No. 2 which stood in the same block. Public School No. 2 is a three-story, rectangular-shaped brick building that rests on a raised basement and is topped with a flat roof. The symmetrical building has a central entry and end pavilions that project slightly from the main block of the 15-bay facade. Loosely derived from the Jacobethan Revival style, but with the strong Germanic influence common in Baltimore schools, the building features extensive stone detail. A wide stone water table separates the raised brick basement from the first story. Another stone belt course below several rows of brick corbelling separates the second and third stories. A final stone belt course forms the base of the cornice below the parapet wall. The shaped parapet wall, with its stone coping, features arches over the end pavilions and a stepped triangular pediment over the center bay. Also notable is the diamond-pattern stone inlay that can be found framing the carved stone door surround, in the recessed spandrel panels below the second story windows of the end pavilions, and centered in the arches of the parapet walls over the end pavilions. Finally, an elaborate, carved stone datestone rests in the pediment of the parapet wall over the center bay. Aside from a modern addition attached by a hyphen on the rear (north), this building is virtually unchanged and is still used for educational purposes.

Public School No. 25, constructed ca. 1870, began as school for white children, but became an African-American school beginning in the late 1890s. This simple brick building is two-stories tall and four bays wide. It has a front-gable roof with a slight parapet and a narrow, corbelled brick cornice. The large window openings have some original 16/16 sashes on the side elevations. Some of the other window openings have been filled with brick, others have modern sashes or glass block. A ca. 1960, two-part brick garage building extends to the north. Still, the institutional shape and form of the school building are clearly legible, and the original window and door openings can all be discerned. The building's size, massing, and level of exterior finish survive as a telling contrast to the Alameda School, illustrating the racial discrepancy in educational facilities in the early-twentieth century.

Commercial Buildings

Commercial buildings within the district generally housed small, local retail establishments. The buildings fall into two types: two-part commercial block buildings that were constructed specifically for commercial use, and dwellings to which storefronts have been added.

The two-part commercial block building consists of a retail first story and a residential second story. Those within this district appear to date to the 1850-1880 time period. Constructed of brick, they generally are two or three stories tall and two to four bays wide with flat roofs and pressed-metal bracketed cornices. A good example is 250 South Eden Street, a ca. 1880 corner store. This two-story, three-bay brick building has a flat roof with a deep, moulded, pressed-metal cornice. At the storefront level, the entry is chamfered to face the street corner. The door is modern, but the vestibule retains its original ceramic-tile floor. The modern storefront windows on

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either side rest on brick bases. A modern aluminum sign covers the original transom over the storefront windows and entry. Above the transom is a shallow, moulded cornice. North of the storefront is an elaborate entry that leads to apartments on the second and third stories. Other examples of two-part commercial blocks include 207 South Central Avenue, 300 South Eden Street, 401 South Eden Street, 1300 Gough Street, 1403 Bank Street, 1419-1421 Bank Street, and 1305-1309 Eastern Avenue.

Many buildings in the district that began as rowhouses were converted to stores. A storefront, much like those found on two-part commercial blocks, could easily be added to an existing rowhouse, while family living space could be preserved in the rear ell and on the upper floors. A good example of this is found at 1307 East Pratt Street. The storefront on this ca. 1840-ca. 1860 rowhouse remains nearly intact, although in poor condition. The original building was a two-bay, three-story, brick rowhouse with a shallow, side-gable roof. The late-nineteenth century storefront consists of a centered storefront window with a brick base and a four-light transom. To the east of the storefront window is the half-glass door leading to the store; to the west is a solid door leading to the upper floors. A moulded and dentilated pressed-metal cornice stretches across the first story. Other examples of rowhouses that were converted to stores include: 1309-1313 East Pratt Street, 1218 Bank Street, and 1001-1003 East Pratt Street.

Commercial storefronts are among the most frequently altered building features, as they change to accommodate shifting retail demands. Typical changes to the storefront buildings within the district include: replacement of doors and windows, reducing the size of or covering of windows at the street level, and replacement of signage.

Conclusion

The physical fabric of the South Central Avenue Historic District tells the story of change. Through the rich variety of resource types and the evidence of constant adaptation that is visible on the buildings, the evolution of industries in the district can be read. Changes to windows and wagon bays, additions of warehouses, and other alterations all reflect adaptations to new processes and even whole new industries. It is this constant change that defines this district and its ancillary industries.

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 pattern of our history.
- B** Property 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 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry
 Commerce
 Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

Ca. 1820-1950

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

multiple unknown

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 files (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:

Baltimore Museum of Industry Research Center

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Summary Statement of Significance:

The South Central Avenue Historic District exemplifies the texture and scale of industrial development that sustained Baltimore's growth during the 19th century and first half of the 20th century. Comprised of industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential buildings, the district records the evolution of ancillary industries against the backdrop of the urban infrastructure that made their existence possible. The South Central Avenue Historic District meets National Register Criterion A because it illustrates the evolution of ancillary industries supporting Baltimore's diversified manufacturing economy. In a fashion often characteristic of 19th century urban land use, industrial development congregated in less desirable areas along the margins of thriving urban settlements. Central Avenue, formerly Harford Run, served as the spine running through an area situated between Fells Point and Jones Town. Fueled by access to transportation and the labor of successive waves of immigrants, this ethnically and racially diverse working class area was a locus of ancillary industrial production servicing Baltimore's textile, brewing, canning, and construction industries. Marked by transitions in ethnic and racial groups, businesses, and the neighborhood's place vis-a-vis the city at large, the South Central Avenue Historic District survives to exemplify the commonplace, small-scale industry coexisting with residential settlement that supported Baltimore's growth during the 19th century through the first half of the 20th century.

Resource History and Historic Context:

With Central Avenue as its main corridor, the South Central Avenue Historic District has been an ideal location for small businesses and industries. It offered easy access to major transportation routes, from the Old Philadelphia Road in the 1790s to the City Dock of the 1810s to the railroad freight lines of the 1840s. Its location equidistant between Fells Point and downtown Baltimore made it possible for small businesses to serve both areas. With thickly settled residential areas on either side of the district, it also offered employers a large population of potential workers. Thus, the fact that the area stood at the margins of denser neighborhoods worked in its favor, permitting business owners to provide services to those neighborhoods as well as to larger Baltimore manufacturers outside the area. Originally a marshy land that was known for fostering yellow fever, the Central Avenue corridor was created by filling in the marsh and containing Jones Falls and Harford Run. The area's location between the margins of Fells Point and Jones Town coupled with perennial odor problems created by the sewage and waste dumped in the stream under Central Avenue, cemented its identification as an industrial precinct. Yet that identification helped local businesses. "This area was so stable," remembers Bob Holland, who recently retired after nearly fifty years of running the family-owned Holland Manufacturing Company at the corner of Central and Bank Street.¹ Holland confirms that it was the neighborhood's combination of access to transportation lines and the harbor, proximity to both Fells Point and downtown Baltimore that made it uniquely attractive to light industry and small manufacturers.

The South Central Avenue Historic District was a fertile ground for new businesses to serve the local economy as ancillary industries — that is, industries that performed important segments of the work required to produce materials for export. Lacking zoning laws and centralized economic planning, the District permitted small industries and light manufacturers to adapt to changes in the larger import-export market. Jane Jacobs, the noted urban theorist, calls this a local, internal economic system. She argues that cities possess two economies: an import-export economy and a local economy, each of which is fundamental to the other. Cities grow, she explains, as new kinds of work spin off from existing work or are added onto existing industries. Thus, the economic health of cities depends on the ease with which small concerns can "multiply, find financing, and add new work to old."² Indeed, one of the qualities that makes the area so important and unique is its central location within the city of Baltimore despite its "secondary" location

¹Bob Holland, interview by Carolyn Eastman, 18 Jan. 2001, Baltimore.

²Jane Jacobs, *The Economy of Cities*, 79.

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between the densely residential areas of Fells Point and downtown Baltimore. The cycles of change in manufacturing described below reflect the particular ability of local businesses to adapt to changes in Baltimore's larger industries.

The history of the South Central Avenue District is important to the larger history of Baltimore for two reasons. First, the area's ideal location between denser residential and business districts made it the oldest and best-situated locale for diversified industry and ancillary industrial manufacture. For these reasons, the neighborhood constitutes a unique historic district inhabited with a concentration of small businesses that often re-invented themselves in order to survive. Second, the area is representative, on a small scale, of Baltimore's unusually diversified manufacturing base. Unlike many other cities in the Northeast, Baltimore's manufacturing sector never produced a single industry or firm that dominated the local economy or gave the city a national identity.³ But if it lacked a capstone industry, the city's diversified manufacturing base provided long-term economic stability, as is reflected in the South Central Avenue District. In sum, throughout its history the South Central Avenue area supported and was known for the ancillary industries that undergirded the growth of the city's manufacturing sector.

Because the unregulated nature and nominally "undesirable" character of the Central Avenue area promoted the evolution of Baltimore's diverse ancillary industries, it is necessary to understand how the area evolved in relationship to the city both before and during the Central Avenue Historic District's period of significance, which begins ca. 1820. Surviving buildings continue to represent the ancillary industries, population, and land use patterns that once covered a broader area.

Early History: Harford Run and Transportation Routes

South Central Avenue covers a water source known as Harford Run that originally separated Jones Town⁴ from Fells Point, much as the larger Jones Falls River was also a barrier between areas of town. The construction of bridges across Harford Run and the Jones Falls went a long way toward linking settlements together. Fells Point and Jones Town were incorporated into the Town of Baltimore in 1773 and were connected by the Dulaney Street bridge (now Baltimore Street) and the Wilks Street causeway (now Eastern Avenue), which originally skirted the harbor.

These bridges across Harford Run encouraged development in the South Central Avenue Historic District and were the foundation for successive modes of transportation through the area. Both Dulaney and Wilks Streets were vital connectors between downtown Baltimore and eastern areas of town. Moreover, Dulaney Street linked directly to the Old Philadelphia Road, a major thoroughfare and longstanding overland postal route. Wilks Street became equally important with the rapid development and increasing economic importance of Fells Point.⁵ The increased use of these two avenues played an important role in spurring engineering efforts to contain Harford Run and develop the surrounding neighborhoods.

The South Central Avenue Historic District was created by massive infill and engineering projects undertaken by the City of Baltimore in the 1790s and early 1800s. These projects were undertaken to allay concerns about disease, especially yellow fever, as well as to encourage waterfront growth and the maximum utilization of waterfront lands. City leaders believed that the nine acres of marshy areas surrounding Harford Run and the Jones Falls River fostered yellow fever outbreaks in the 1790s; the disease had

³Alan Anderson, *Origin and Resolution of an Urban Crisis*, 19.

⁴Jones Town was also known as Jonas Town and sometimes included in the larger area of Oldtown. "Oldtown" later came to refer exclusively to an area north of Fayette Street and largely oriented around Gay Street.

⁵In 1811 the Old Philadelphia Road was leveled, and in 1817 it was paved. This and the preceding information comes from handwritten text files at CHAP.

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decimated the urban centers of Philadelphia and New York and killed 344 Baltimoreans in 1794.⁶ Equally important was the desire by city leaders to increase access to waterfront commerce, a key aspect of its developing economy in the early nineteenth century. Engineers created an enormous new land mass bounded by the newly-straightened Jones Falls River, the harbor, Wilks Street, and the southernmost edge of Fells Point. This infill allowed them to extend Fleet, Aliceanna, and Lancaster Streets westward from Fells Point to the Jones Falls — adding, in total, approximately twelve large new city blocks. At the end of this infill project, developers created a City Dock that encircled the easternmost docks in central Baltimore, the Jones Falls outlet, the Harford Run outlet, and the westernmost docks in Fells Point, creating a large area with enormous trade potential given its proximity to shipping lines. The Central Avenue canal served as a corridor for goods and services down to the harbor.

The District's access to the harbor was crucial to the success of its businesses, which relied on seagoing trade and transport throughout its history. City leaders did even more to encourage development in the area when they channeled Harford Run into a 15-foot-wide canal running down the center of the newly-created Harford Street (re-named Canal Street by the 1820s, and Central Avenue in the 1840s) as far south as Wilks Street, at which point it was widened before it let into the City Dock.⁷ By the early 1820s, bridges crossed the Harford Canal at Dulaney (Baltimore Ave.), Water (Lombard St.), Pratt, and Wilks Streets; each of these streets crossed the Jones Falls as well. This development "soldered together" Oldtown and Fells Point, making the entire eastern section of the city more easily accessible from the central business district.⁸

The containment of Harford Run and the South Central Avenue neighborhood's new direct access to the City Dock at the foot of Central Avenue immediately drew businesses and residents to the area. Residential development occurred by 1813 with the construction of Mechanics Row at 1011-1025 Eastern Ave. (now gone), which was best known for the residence of a young Edgar Allan Poe, who worked at a local brickyard.⁹ These rowhouses were constructed by a group of mechanics and craftsmen between 1810 and 1813. Some rowhouses in the neighborhood, such as those at 305-321 South Central Ave., also date from the period before 1830.¹⁰

The Eastern City Spring, which lay immediately northeast of the South Central Avenue Historic District, was an important part of the neighborhood's appeal to these new residents. The lack of potable drinking water had long been a major problem in the city. The city provided drinking water via shallow wells, provided that local residents paid for the labor of installing them. Not only did these wells

⁶Clayton Colman Hall, *Baltimore: Its History and Its People*, vol. 1, 53.

⁷CHAP files; 1823 Poppleton plat map.

⁸Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore*, 204-08. Further, an 1817 city ordinance directed that the canal would be covered over completely from Wilks Street northward, though this was not completed until the 1870s (handwritten notes in the CHAP Washington Hill file). The canal redevelopment was not without its problems. As early as the 1820s it suffered from flooding problems. Though parts of the northern reaches of Harford Run were re-directed southeast near Ann and Washington Streets, the small amount of water that still flowed under Central Avenue caused serious dilapidation. Because much of the Run was also used for sewage in the early period, the canal developed a pervasive stench. The Central Avenue canal was covered over in the 1870s, but structural problems remained. The city constructed a sanitary sewer system between 1906 and 1915 to replace the cesspools and private drains that had long contaminated water supplies. Anderson, *Origin and Resolution of an Urban Crisis*, 66.

⁹Mary Markey and Dean Krimmel, "Poe's Mystery House: The Search for Mechanics Row," *MHM* 86 (1991): 387-395. This row of houses survived until 1906, when it was demolished by the Bagby Furniture Company in order to make room for a lumberyard.

¹⁰Their footprints also appear on early maps, such as the Poppleton plat map of 1823.

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frequently fail, but they were often contaminated by surface drainage and illegal sewers.¹¹ City leaders hired John Davis, well-known for his work with the Philadelphia waterworks, to supervise the construction of the Baltimore works and to protect and develop several springs in the city. Stennett's Spring, near the corner of Eden and Pratt Streets and immediately northeast of the South Central Avenue Historic District, was purchased by the city for \$15,000 in 1818 and developed it into what became known as the Eastern City Spring.¹² Davis built a fountain for the water, a spring house with Ionic columns surrounding the fountain, and an ornamental square taking up a sizeable part of the area. During the 1830s, the city purchased more land around the spring and developed a city block-size park with trees and walkways that ultimately encompassed 1.3 acres on the city block between Eden, Pratt, Spring and Lombard Streets. It was one of the first parks in the city.¹³ It remained in existence until the 1950s, when the city used the land to build a grammar school.

Transportation

The development of the railroad depot just south of the South Central Avenue Historic District also ensured new business and residential development, as had the construction of the City Dock and the promise of good drinking water. In 1831 the Baltimore city council elected to buttress the newly-enlarged neighborhood with a branch of the Baltimore & Port Deposit Railroad (henceforth, Pennsylvania Railroad).¹⁴ While this branch had passenger service, it was most heavily used as a freight depot to serve the numerous businesses and manufacturers in the area. The railroad ran connecting lines up Central Avenue and east along Fleet Street to Canton and thence to Wilmington. The railroad station easily superceded the earlier use of the Harford Run canal for transport and quickly became, with the City Dock, a crucial means of transporting goods.¹⁵

Horsecar and streetcar lines also had a large impact on the South Central Avenue Historic District. Horsecar lines originated in the District during the 1870s with lines that ran along Baltimore Street connecting downtown and Fells Point. The horsecar system was followed in the 1890s by a rapid succession of new streetcar lines that crisscrossed the neighborhood, including those of the Baltimore Traction Cable Company and the City & Suburban Railway lines.¹⁶ In 1890 Baltimore Traction constructed a massive powerhouse on Pratt Street just west of Central Avenue for its ill-fated foray into cable cars. This grand Romanesque building survives as a relic of the epic political struggle among competing transit franchises. Because transit companies functioned as public utilities dependent on political support for their operations, their late 19th century buildings share characteristics with buildings associated with Baltimore's public works. Utilitarian, industrial buildings were treated with the same attention as buildings housing nobler uses. Both streetcars and structures went beyond functional requirements to make a distinctive statement about the power and stability of a company and its place within civic culture.¹⁷ Baltimore Traction and its rival City Passenger both achieved a distinctive architectural image in their

¹¹By 1816, 59 of the city's 290 pumps had fallen into disrepair. Olson, *Baltimore*, 49.

¹²Handwritten text files at CHAP, Olson, *Baltimore*, 49.

¹³The park was sometimes called Eastern Spring Garden, Spring Garden City Square, or City Spring Square.

¹⁴The Baltimore & Port Deposit Railroad was purchased by the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore Railroad, which in turn became one aspect of the Pennsylvania Railroad holdings. Olson, *Baltimore*, 76, 82, 154-60.

¹⁵Olson, *Baltimore*, 154-60.

¹⁶David B. Dittman and Bernard J. Sachs, *The Architecture of the Baltimore Streetcar System*, 14; Michael R. Farrell, *The History of Baltimore's Streetcars*, 23, 28, 62, 82.

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Romanesque revival structures associated with cable traction. Baltimore Traction favored a robust, highly textured version of the style that combined contrasting granite and red brick employed in a manner reminiscent of Frank Furness. Their buildings feature three-dimensional elements like towers, turrets, dormers, and projecting bases that create a sculpted mass clearly meant to convey the aggressive vigor of the upstart company that pioneered mechanical power. By the mid-1890s cable traction had been superceded by electric railways; the Pratt Street Powerhouse closed in 1896.¹⁸ It was purchased by the United Railways & Electric Railway Company, who sold it in 1914 to the city for use by the Department of Street Cleaning.¹⁹

Ancillary Businesses and Manufacturers

The rise and growth of small industries within the South Central Avenue Historic District — businesses that were ancillary to larger ones elsewhere in the city or nation — reflected the District's pivotal location and access to means of transportation. The District's industrial character also invited small manufacturers that required loud machines or noxious materials that were unwanted or prohibited in denser residential neighborhoods. The Startzman Tannery building at 227 S. Central, for example, was constructed in the 1860s near the Central Avenue canal to flush its foul-smelling residues at the end of the process of removing hair from the skins and curing the leather hides.²⁰ Startzman left Central Avenue after the canal was covered in the 1870s. In 1883 the building was sold to the Bartholomay Brewing Company for a bottling works, a less foul-smelling business. Bartholomay utilized the building's extensive back-yard grounds to stable the numerous horses they required to deliver beer within the Baltimore area.

Importantly, the District offered small businesses numerous commercial and industrial buildings for use. Restricted by financial constraints and competitive markets, businesses in the South Central Avenue Historic District usually re-used and adapted these existing buildings, as in the case of the Startzman Tannery and, as we shall see, in the case of the Strauss Malt House building which, between 1860 and 1950, was used as a malt house producer, a can maker, a chair manufacturer, a metal jobber, and a metal products company, among others. In short, existing buildings provided flexible spaces for a variety of industries who constantly adapted them for new uses.

The South Central Avenue Historic District's easy access to the City Dock and railroad transportation attracted a variety of businesses dependent on bulk supplies. Lumber yards were among the first to take advantage of transportation opportunities. While these concerns no longer survive, their existence and the existence of related businesses, now also gone, are important to understanding the character and evolution of the historic district. Because these businesses occupied larger lots that could be easily redeveloped, little trace of them remains today.

Lumber, Millwork, and Furniture-making

Among the earliest lumber dealers was Thomas Matthews & Son, arriving in the District by 1815. They established a 200-by-300-foot lumber yard on Fleet Street between Albemarle and Exeter and rapidly expanded eastward inside the District on Fleet between Exeter and Central Avenues. Matthews specialized in "heavy timbers and dressed lumber cypress and Southern pine" which it

¹⁷David B. Dittman and Bernard J. Sachs, *The Architecture of Baltimore's Streetcar System*, p. 1.

¹⁸Olson, *Baltimore*, 209-211; Dennis Zembala, ed., *Baltimore: Industrial Gateway on the Chesapeake*, 35.

¹⁹The Department of Street Cleaning was renamed the Department of Streets and, finally, the Department of Sanitation. Dittman and Sachs, *Architecture of the Baltimore Streetcar System*, 29.

²⁰Zembala, *Baltimore: Industrial Gateway on the Chesapeake*, 34.

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imported via the Dock.²¹ With railroad lines running directly along his two blocks of Fleet St. frontage, Matthews was ideally situated to act as a lumber wholesaler in the local Baltimore market, as well as to markets in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York.²² Matthews' lumber business was purchased by W. D. McGill by 1890, who sold it in 1893 to the Eisenhauer-MacLea Company. Each of these owners followed Matthews' lead in serving as wholesalers of southern pine lumber.²³ Matthews and his successors, as well as numerous other lumber companies just south and east of the District, together occupied 11 square city blocks near the harbor between Fells Point and the Jones Falls. Baltimore wholesale lumber dealers played a central role in distributing massive quantities of southern pine lumber throughout the United States.²⁴

Numerous locally-based businesses in the South Central Avenue Historic District took advantage of the area's unique access to wholesale lumber yards by manufacturing wood products for the local economy. In 1890, for example, coopers, wheelwrights, and carpenters maintained businesses in the District.²⁵ The Maryland Chair Company occupied half of the Solomon Strauss Malt House building at 302 S. Central Ave. beginning in the 1890s. Other small companies survived through the mid-20th century in the triangular sliver bounded by Gough, Fawn, and Central Avenues immediately north of the Malt House. The three-story Solomon Strauss Malt Storage Building at 1022-24 Fawn Street (1207-1209 Gough Street) at the center of the block housed the A. Tuerk & Company trunk manufacturers in 1901 and the Barker-Burgan Lumber Company in 1914. By 1951, lumber wholesalers occupied the Malt Storage building and the flatiron apartment building on the corner of the block. A three-story tenement adjacent to the flatiron building along with three rowhouses were demolished to construct a ca. 1920 two-story building for millwork. (In a land use pattern typical of the South Central Avenue Historic District, a lone owner-occupied rowhouse at 1211 Gough Street remained at the center of this lumber and millwork complex.)

The most notable business relying on lumber supplies was the Bagby Furniture Company, a wholesale furniture manufacturer. The company constructed a new furniture manufacturing plant at 503-517 Exeter in 1902. The building, which is individually listed on the National Register, tripled to its present dimensions by 1914. By 1907, the Bagby Furniture Company also constructed the six story building at the corner of Exeter and Eastern, which was later sold to the American Oil Company. The Bagby Company's location took advantage of the ready availability of raw materials, the ease of product distribution by rail and water, and the proximity to long-distance passenger terminals serving retailers' representatives. After the company outsourced much of its furniture production to North Carolina, it also began marketing products directly to the public. Most of the building became retail showrooms although the company continued to assemble small pieces from components milled elsewhere.²⁶

²¹George W. Engelhardt, *Baltimore City, Maryland*, 121.

²²Engelhardt, *Baltimore City, Maryland*, 121.

²³Eisenhauer-MacLea was renamed the MacLea Lumber Company in the 1920s. MacLea Lumber Company, *Hewing to the Line*, 15-30.

²⁴Hopkins Atlas of Baltimore, 1876; Bromley Atlas of Baltimore, 1896; Bagby Furniture Company NR form, 8.1.

²⁵Larger concerns for which no extant resources survive included Kimball, Tyler & Co., the oldest and largest barrel manufacturer in the city at 501 block of S. Central Avenue and John Lentz's barrel warehouse on the 400 block of S. Central Avenue between Bank and Eastern (Engelhardt, *Baltimore City, Maryland*, 154-55; Sanborn Maps; 1928 City Directory).

²⁶"Bagby Furniture Company," advertisement in Blum, *Jews of Baltimore*, 206; Bagby Furniture Company National Register Nomination.

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The Brewing Industry

Within the South Central Avenue Historic District were several businesses ancillary to Baltimore's large and prosperous brewing industry. The Baltimore beer industry was a major producer and distributor of beer in the Chesapeake and the South.²⁷ The Bartholomay Brewing Company Bottling Works, for example, took advantage of the Pennsylvania Railroad lines as well as the District's central location in the city of Baltimore when they opened a Baltimore branch of their Rochester, New York-based company in 1883 at 227-239 S. Central Avenue in the former Startzman Tannery building.²⁸ With railroad lines that ran directly into their building from the Central Avenue corridor, Bartholomay was able to receive barreled beer from Rochester by rail for bottling and distribution in the local market. The company's large number of stables at the same address allowed them to maintain numerous wagons for the local distribution. Another business serving nearby brewers was Solomon Strauss Malt Company, which constructed its malt house at 302 S. Central Avenue in 1866. The Strausses were a prominent German brewing family whose business produced malt for several of the city's breweries. The business remained in that location until the 1890s.²⁹ Finally, the Joseph Kavanaugh Coppersmith Company moved its business to the neighborhood in 1905 in part to take advantage of local brewers' needs for pipes and copper kettles. Kavanaugh established a complex at 301-305 S. Central Ave. and eventually added warehouse space at 207 S. Central and 202 S. Eden, directly behind their Central Avenue building, to serve the plumbing and brewing-related businesses nearby.³⁰

The Clothing Industry

The ready-made clothing industry was Baltimore's largest industry. During and after the Civil War, the market for ready-made clothes exploded with the urgent need for soldiers' uniforms. Between 1860 and 1930 the Baltimore clothing industry employed some one-third of the labor force (over half of whom were women). In fact, clothing was the one industry in which Baltimore manufacturers succeeded in gaining a significant share of the national market, ranking fourth by the turn of the century.³¹

Clothing manufacturers in the South Central Avenue Historic District specialized in producing components of finished items of clothing for larger wholesale clothing factories. The American Coat Pad Company, for example, found that they could serve a niche of the larger clothing manufacturing market by serving one part of the ready-made clothing production line. The Company was established at 220 S. Eden (now gone) in 1901 to produce padding for men's and women's clothes as well as "non-breakable concave

²⁷Everett and Janice Ford, *Pre-Prohibition Beer Bottles and Breweries of Baltimore, Maryland*, 44-48; 1951 Sanborn map.

²⁸Engelhardt, *Baltimore City, Maryland*, 102.

²⁹Ford, *Pre-Prohibition Beer Bottles and Brewing*, 99; Zembala, *Baltimore: Industrial Gateway on the Chesapeake*, 35.

³⁰1875 Baltimore city directory; 1914 and 1951 Sanborn maps; *Half-Century's Progress of the City of Baltimore*, 215. Kavanaugh made his name during the 1870s by manufacturing "self-charging mineral water apparatus and pump chambers" for home and restaurant use.

³¹Edward K. Muller and Paul A. Groves, "The Changing Location of the Clothing Industry: A Link to the Social Geography of Baltimore in the Nineteenth Century," *MHM* 71 (1976): 404, 411; JoAnn E. Argersinger, "The City That Tries to Suit Everybody: Baltimore's Clothing Industry," *The Baltimore Book*, 81-101.

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coat fronts.”³² Its founders, Louis Bouchat and George Schleunes, moved the business to 1007-1011 E. Pratt by 1904. By 1910, American Coat Pad had become the largest manufacturer of coat pads in the country and had established sales offices in fifteen of the largest clothing manufacturing cities in the country.³³

The South Central Avenue Historic District also became known for its sweatshops that similarly produced items for larger clothing factories. By 1902, over half of the city’s sweatshops lay south of Baltimore Street and on either side of the Central Avenue corridor.³⁴ By 1909, some 86 sweatshop licensees had been issued to businesses directly within the South Central Avenue Historic District. Sweatshops often required only a single room for employees, and therefore they frequently occupied a room in a rowhouse, a manufacturing business, or a corner store. These include 217-219 S. Central in a room upstairs from a tailor; 1216, 1401, 1405, and 1417 Bank; 404 and 421 S. Eden; 1005 E. Pratt; and 1143 and 1145 Granby.³⁵

Sweatshop licensees contracted with large-scale clothing factories to sew and finish garments in small-scale buildings or rooms. They were known for being particularly exploitative of their workers. Because of the increasingly competitive market, licensees were often required to make up for low bids on work by “sweating” the maximum work out of their laborers.³⁶ Two-thirds of the employees of these establishments were female; child employees between the ages of 12 and 16 were two to three times as likely to be girls. According to the Maryland Bureau of Industrial Statistics, these girls and women were “universally underpaid and overworked . . . buried out of sight in the privacy of the working people’s homes.”³⁷ The emphasis on female and child employees was a sign of the owners’ desire to keep costs low; they typically earned less than half the annual wages of their male counterparts, just over \$200 per year during the 1890s for women and \$110 for child workers.³⁸ Sweatshops in the South Central Avenue Historic District were dominated by eastern Europeans — both as owners and as employees — who took advantage of the increasing concentration of immigrants in the District. As much as 60% of the Jewish population that lived in the area between 1895 and 1914 worked in various aspects of the garment industry.³⁹

The Metal Trades

Even more than other businesses in the area, the various metal trade businesses in the South Central Avenue Historic District expanded and diversified during the first half of the twentieth century in response to the needs of the defense and machine-based manufacturing businesses. Numerous blacksmiths had long located their businesses within a block of the Central Avenue corridor and

³²American Coat Pad company advertisement, Blum, *Jews of Baltimore*, 440.

³³Philip Kahn, Jr., *Stitch in Time*, 90.

³⁴Muller and Groves, “The Changing Location of the Clothing Industry,” 403-420.

³⁵Bureau of Industrial Statistics, *Tenth Annual Report, 1901*, 215-225; and Bureau of Statistics and Information, *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1909*, table 1.

³⁶Argersinger, “The City That Tries to Suit Everybody,” 83.

³⁷Maryland Bureau of Industrial Statistics report of 1889 cited in Olson, *Baltimore*, 202; Bureau of Statistics and Information, *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1909*, 81.

³⁸Argersinger, “The City That Tries to Suit Everybody,” 84.

³⁹Lauraine Levy Kartman, “Jewish Occupational Roots in Baltimore at the Turn of the Century,” *MHM* 74 (1978): 57.

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at least six still existed in 1890, including one at 323 S. Central, a building now incorporated into the Holland Manufacturing Company complex.⁴⁰ As the number of blacksmiths dwindled, a variety of other metal work businesses expanded, especially for the wartime defense industries during the two World Wars. The Central Iron Foundry occupied the building at 442 S. Central Ave. near the corner of Eastern from the 1880s through approximately 1910. The Glendenning Bros. Metal Jobbers Company occupied the Strauss Malt House building at 302 S. Central Ave. between 1910 and 1920; it was succeeded in the same building by the Chandlee Metal Products Company by the 1920s.⁴¹ Just north of the District, the American Alloy Foundry opened at 112 S. Eden in 1929 to produce castings and other subcontracted parts. During wartime American Alloy expanded its employee base to as many as forty due to the increased need for metal parts.⁴² These metal businesses frequently originated and expanded rapidly during the first half of the twentieth century in response to increased manufacturing needs.

The Holland Manufacturing Company complex reflects the company's adaptation over time. Like the Bagby Furniture Company, Holland competed successfully by means of its easy access to transportation lines and to sources of raw materials. The building's Central Avenue entrance opened directly on railroad lines that were only two blocks from the freight depot at the foot of South Central Avenue. It gleaned its raw materials from larger manufacturers in Baltimore, including the Maryland Steel Company (purchased ca. 1914-15 by Bethlehem Steel) and Cabot Wire.⁴³ Founded in 1897 to manufacture tacks and nails for upholstery and other uses, the Holland Company moved its plant in 1901 to 1300-1306 E. Bank Street. This building, which had previously served as a Federal prison hospital during the Civil War and was constructed around a central courtyard (believed to grant patients fresh air), had afterwards been adapted for use by the shop of the Baltimore Steam Quilt Company and then the Baltimore Hinge Company before the Holland Company moved in.⁴⁴

The Holland Manufacturing Company managed to expand its business despite a shrinking market by flexibly changing its manufacturing strategies. Competition was steep in tack and nail manufacturing from the beginning. By 1911, Holland faced a market that boasted no fewer than 62 similar manufacturers nationwide.⁴⁵ To undergird their company, the Hollands utilized their tight-knit family to assume ownership of their competition. While one Holland brother assumed responsibility for the Baltimore plant during the 1930s and 1940s, the other brother moved to Connecticut where he consolidated several competing businesses. By mid-century, when the number of competing businesses had diminished from 62 to approximately 12, they closed the Connecticut plants and transferred all tack-making to Baltimore.

The increase in business led to their decision to double the plant's size, replacing a row of houses on Eden Street in the 1960s with a new building. At the height of their company's manufacturing output in the 1940s and 1950s, they utilized over 130 tack- and nail-making machines. Despite their success in consolidating domestic tack and nail manufacture, they also faced a gradual reduction of market need for their products due to increasingly stiff competition from overseas manufacturers in both price and scale. Since the

⁴⁰1890 and 1901 Sanborn maps.

⁴¹1901, 1914, and 1951 Sanborn maps; 1928 Baltimore city directory.

⁴²Zembala, *Baltimore: Industrial Gateway*, 36.

⁴³Interview with Bob Holland, 18 Jan. 2001.

⁴⁴1901 Sanborn map; interview with Bob and Randy Holland, 18 Jan. 2001.

⁴⁵Interview with Bob and Randy Holland, 18 Jan. 2001; Randy Holland cited a 1911 publication by the Nail and Tack Manufacturers Association of America for this statistic.

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mid-twentieth century, they have turned away from the production of tacks and nails toward the more lucrative market of packaging items imported from elsewhere. The Holland Company is now one of only two companies nationwide that produces tacks and nails.

The can-making industry was also represented in the District. The J. H. C. Thirlkel can manufacturing business at 1109 E. Pratt (now gone) was established in the 1840s and survived at that location through 1928 to produce cans for use by oyster, paint, fruit, lard, and oil companies, as well as by druggists. By the 1890s, Thirlkel employed fifty hands to produce approximately 20,000 cans daily.⁴⁶ Thirlkel was joined in the late 1890s by Consumers Can Company at 302 S. Central Ave. in the former Strauss Malt House building where it remained until 1910.⁴⁷

Metal work companies in the South Central Avenue Historic District were also supported by scrap metal warehouses, iron foundries, ironworks, and sheet metal works that emerged in the district. These included a scrap metal warehouse at 228-230 S. Eden, the Baltimore Steel Company at 1400 Eastern, an iron works at 221-225 S. Central, and a sheet metal workshop at 401 S. Central.

The rise and growth of small industries that supported larger ones reflected the South Central Avenue District's growing dedication of property to business and light industry rather than to residential use, especially directly along the Central Avenue corridor. Nevertheless, many residences remained interspersed between small businesses, sometimes on a building-by-building basis. Overall, however, the neighborhood was increasingly known for its industrial character rather than for a balanced mix of residences and industry. Whereas areas to the east and west — namely, Little Italy and Eden and Spring Streets — remained heavily residential, Central Avenue and its major cross streets (most notably Eastern and Pratt) became dense with industries and manufacturers that slowly replaced earlier rowhouses with industrial buildings or adapted rowhouses to other uses.

Residents

The South Central Avenue Historic District was always well known for its high percentages of immigrants and recent migrants to the city. In a 1935 article entitled "Rambles in the Old Town," a *Baltimore Evening Sun* reporter wrote that "South of Baltimore street is an international settlement."⁴⁸ That comment reflected the enormous numbers of immigrants that moved into this relatively inexpensive neighborhood and found work there. Irish, Italian, Russian, Polish, and African American residents flooded into the area. Many of these worked as laborers and mechanics in Central Avenue-area businesses or on the docks along the water.

Residence in the District often served as a stepping-stone for the upwardly-mobile, who moved elsewhere when their fortunes permitted them to do so. Wealthy Germans and German Jews, who were some of the area's earliest residents, began to leave in the mid-19th century for more attractive residential neighborhoods to the north. At the same time, poorer migrants began to arrive in the neighborhood from eastern Europe, Italy, Ireland, and the American South to take advantage of the ready work and low rents. The immigrants had earned enough to follow their forebears northward. The out-migration of middling and wealthy residents helped to give the neighborhood an increasingly strong working-class identity.⁴⁹

⁴⁶Engelhardt, *Baltimore City, Maryland*, 137.

⁴⁷1901 Sanborn map.

⁴⁸R. P. Harriss, "Rambles in the Old Town II: East of the Fallsway," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, 10 May 1935.

⁴⁹Even these residential transitions promoted the transformation of buildings. In response to its members moving out of the South Central Avenue area, for example, the German-dominated Baltimore Hebrew Congregation sold its synagogue building on Lloyd St., just north of the South Central Avenue Historic District, to the Russian-dominated Shomrei Mishneres in 1889. It was followed in 1895 by the similar transfer of the nearby Chizuk Emunah synagogue building to the Russian-led B'nei Israel (Olson,

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Public School No. 2, or the Alameda School, illustrates the city's attempt to accommodate public institutions to the neighborhood's citizens. Constructed on the site of a tiny white elementary school at 1100 Stiles Street, just west of Central Avenue, Alameda School also required the demolition of all the rowhouses on the block. The large three-story brick building and grounds occupied the entire 1100 block of Stiles St.⁵⁰ It remains today one of the outstanding buildings in the District. At first, however, the building suffered from insufficient funding by the city. By 1921, for example, this new building had yet to be equipped with electric lighting fixtures. A survey of the Baltimore public school system by examiners from the Columbia University Teachers College complained in 1921 that the School Commission had invested enormous funds in the wiring system only then to turn pennypincher to save "the small expenditure needed in order to make these rooms satisfactory on dark days."⁵¹ This complaint was compounded by the problem that the natural light in classrooms was also below standard.

The "colored" school at 410-420 S. Caroline St. suffered from far more serious neglect by the Baltimore School Commission. Though it originally served as a primary school for white boys and girls, the Caroline Street School had been re-designated a "colored" school in the late 1890s as part of the state's response to *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the 1896 "separate but equal" ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court. Whereas the city replaced the tiny "white" Stiles Street school, it deemed this equally old building adequate for African American students. The Columbia University Teachers College surveyors that had lamented the conditions of the brand-new Alameda School had even more grim comments for the Caroline Street Colored School in 1921.

The complete lack of corridors, the unsatisfactory nature of the fire-escapes and the poor toilet provisions are such as to require that this building be given immediate attention. There are structural faults in this building which should be remedied at once if this building is to remain in use. The coal stoves with their stove pipes running through wooden partitions are unsafe and objectionable features. The building has very few desirable features.⁵²

But remedies were not forthcoming, and annual reports by the Baltimore Department of Education were far rosier than that of the Columbia University examiners. As late as their 1941 report, the Department recommended only that the school building "should be placed in an adequate state of repair."⁵³ The city finally closed the school during the late 1940s and, in a transformation paralleling that of industrial buildings in the district, used the school for Department of Education storage.

The area experienced a more dramatic residential shift beginning in the late 1910s. For the first time, few new migrants replaced the ones who had left. According to 1920 census data, African Americans left the neighborhood at a slightly higher rate than whites.⁵⁴ The gradual decrease in residents is reflected in the 1928 Baltimore criss-cross directory, which displays numerous vacant properties,

Baltimore, 179, 231; Earl Price, *Synagogues, Temples and Congregations of Maryland*, 13-35).

⁵⁰1901, 1914, 1951 Sanborn maps.

⁵¹*Report of the Survey of the Public School System of Baltimore, Maryland*, 145.

⁵²*Report of the Survey of the Public School System*, 182. Surprisingly, despite the examiners' pessimism about the school, it was not on their list of the 13 elementary school buildings for black children that they recommended be replaced immediately. *Op. Cit.*, 302. Though the examiners recommended that 58 city schools be demolished, demolition had occurred in only 23 cases by 1953.

⁵³*Report of the Survey of the Public School System*, 215, 217.

⁵⁴*Report of the Survey of the Public School System*, 245, 249-50.

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especially along Eden, Spring, and Caroline Streets.⁵⁵ Rents remained very inexpensive in the area; approximately 65% of the houses rented for less than \$15 per month.⁵⁶

This accelerated out-migration made the area especially attractive to the U. S. Housing Authority for the construction of a massive public housing project in 1941. Just northeast of the District, the Clarence Perkins Project occupied the blocks east of Eden St. and north of Bank and was one of the first public housing project for low-income residents in the nation.⁵⁷ The projects ultimately helped to identify the eastern side of the South Central Avenue neighborhood with working and poor residents.

Transformation of Building Fabric

The residential and commercial transitions that characterized the South Central Avenue Historic District can be read in its buildings, which stand as a physical record of evolution and change within this corridor. In a pattern characteristic of cities prior to the advent of zoning, residential, commercial, and industrial uses coexisted. The fluid character of land use within the South Central Avenue Historic District provided opportunity for an extraordinary range of adaptive reuse of existing building stock.

Open plan buildings originally constructed for industrial or manufacturing uses were particularly well suited to house a variety of functions. The 1866 Solomon Strauss Malt House at 302 South Central Avenue housed numerous small manufacturers after it ceased to function as a malt house. Originally encompassing the six stories necessary for malting production, the interior was reconfigured to hold three stories after a 1904 fire. The six-story building at the corner of Eastern and Exeter was originally constructed as part of the Bagby Furniture Company Complex. After the Bagby Company outsourced much of their furniture production to North Carolina, the building was sold the American Oil Company, who used it for offices.

The 1000 block of East Pratt Street illustrates another form of the gradual industrial metamorphosis that characterizes the district. Constructed as a row of nine two- and three-story rowhouses, today the block stands as a non-descript mid-20th century commercial building, a handsome early 20th century factory, and three early 19th century rowhouses. By 1901 all of the rowhouses in the block housed tenements, stores, and repair shops. As early as 1890, the Baron & Co. Cigar Manufactory occupied both 1007 and 1009 East Pratt at the center of the block, punching through the shared party wall between the two buildings and extending the rowhouses through to the alley. During the first decade of the twentieth century, the American Coat Pad Company removed the wall altogether, replacing it with wood posts. The company also added a new façade uniting the two buildings. The American Coat Pad Company then expanded further to the west into 1011, 1013, and 1015 East Pratt, before declaring bankruptcy in the late 1930s. About 1940, the Gordon Sleeprite Mattress Corporation again replaced the facade of 1007-1011 East Pratt with the present handsome brick and industrial steel sash wall. Steel posts and massive steel beams supported the structure within the increasingly reworked rowhouses. Toward the east end of the block, 1013 and 1015 East Pratt were later united into a single building behind the two-story brick building at the east end of the block. Sections of original brick party wall, however, remain on the interior this more recent shell. 1017 East Pratt was demolished by 1951. While the rowhouses on the western end of the block retain their historic form, from the 1890s they also housed commercial uses including stores, sweatshops, and repair shops.

The 1200 block of Bank Street exemplifies the texture and flexibility of land use and building adaptation in the district. At the west end of the block, a contractor's supply house occupies a mid-20th century one-story brick building constructed for automobile repair.

⁵⁵1928 Baltimore criss-cross directory.

⁵⁶Report of the Survey of the Public School System, 245, 249-50.

⁵⁷Interview with Bob Holland, 18 Jan. 2001.

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Next to the one-story building is a mid-20th century two-story brick building, constructed on the site of two rowhouses, that housed a contractor's warehouse in 1951. At the center of the block, a large, two-story non-contributing garage continues a pattern of functional evolution on that site from its use as a wagon shop in 1914. The three-story brick dwelling at 1216 Bank Street is the only building on the block that continues in its original function. The present form of 1218 Bank, which has now returned to its original use as a dwelling, reflects its mid-20th century use as a store. Also used for junk (1890) and rags (1914), the history of this building's uses embodies the flexibility that characterizes building use in the historic district. The three-story formstone-covered rowhouse at 1222 Bank Street presently anchors the motor freight complex occupying the southeast corner of the block at Bank and Central Avenue. 1222 Bank Street was the last building on the block facing Bank Street; rowhouses (now gone) occupying the southeast corner faced onto Central Avenue. By 1914, the rowhouses facing Central Avenue had been demolished, making way for the present motor freight use, which has stood on the site since the mid-20th century. Idiosyncratic changes made to these buildings – the overscaled formstone pattern of the motor freight rowhouse at 1222 Bank Street, the decorative brick and tile insets at the present contractor's warehouse at the end of the block, the store returned to its residential origins, and the formstone defiantly applied to the only building in continuous residential use all show how users claim buildings as their own.

Conclusion

The South Central Avenue Historic District was an ideal location for small industries and businesses. It had easy access to transportation routes, most notably the City Dock at the foot of Central Avenue and the Pennsylvania Railroad freight depot on Fleet Street. The District's location equidistant between Fells Point and downtown Baltimore permitted its businesses to serve both areas. Importantly, the District's lack of restraints on businesses, such as zoning laws or high rents, made it especially attractive to light industry and small businesses that sprang up during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to provide new work within Baltimore's local economy.

The architectural fabric of the District became increasingly dedicated to industry as small businesses gradually re-oriented residential buildings for their uses or replaced them with commercial or industrial buildings. Rowhouses were eliminated in favor of a lumber yard (in the case of Mechanics Row on Eastern Avenue), the expansion of an existing business (in the case of the Holland Company's expansion to Eden Street), or the construction of a larger grammar school (in the case of the Alameda School on Stiles Street), among other examples.

It is the size and diversity of these manufacturers, however, that distinguishes the South Central Avenue area. Most companies in the area found early on that larger manufacturing outside the neighborhood served as their best market. Thus, the tin can makers and bottlers serviced larger food and beverage manufacturers; the Kavanaugh Coppersmiths Company provided equipment to plumbers and brewers; and dozens of sweatshops worked for Baltimore's large clothing manufacturers in west Baltimore. As a result of their ancillary roles, all of these businesses have remained small concerns uniquely positioned, like the Holland Company, to re-invent themselves when necessary or to take advantage of opportunities offered by larger industries' changing needs. The neighborhood's building fabric illustrates the industrial, commercial, institutional, and ethnic diversity that make it representative of larger patterns in Baltimore's history. But the intense co-existence of those businesses and peoples in a small area and the evolution of the District's ancillary industries make it a unique neighborhood that exemplifies the small-scale work — the local economy — vital to a large city and its expansive export market.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 21 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 8	3 6 2 1 8 0	4 3 4 9 9 3 0	3	1 8	3 6 1 9 6 0	4 3 4 9 2 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 8	3 6 2 3 0 0	4 3 4 9 5 0 0	4	1 8	3 6 1 8 0 0	4 3 4 9 8 0 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

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 Betty Bird, Julie Darsie, Carolyn Eastman
 Organization Betty Bird & Associates date January, 2001
 street & number 2607 24th St. NW, Suite 3 telephone 202-588-9033
 city or town Washington, D.C. state N/A zip code 20008

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 SHPO or FPO)

name Multiple Ownership (more than 50)
 street & number _____ telephone _____
 city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The irregular boundary of the South Central Avenue Historic District encompasses an approximately eight block area to either side of South Central Avenue. This historic district is roughly bounded by Fleet Street on the south and Granby Avenue on the north. On the east, the district is roughly bounded by Eden and Caroline Streets; on the west roughly by Exeter, Lloyd, and Mince Alley. (See attached map.)

Boundary Justification:

The boundary for the South Central Avenue Historic District encompasses resources to either side of the Central Avenue spine that were associated with the themes comprising the historic district. Its irregular outline excludes recent construction that does not contribute to the district. Because the South Central Avenue Historic District sits between the Little Italy neighborhood on the west and the Fells Point Historic District on the east, the eastern and western boundaries also reflect the distinction between these three distinct entities. Fleet Street, a major east-west arterial street, forms the southern boundary because large-scale new construction south of Fleet Street has obliterated historic resources between Fleet Street and the former City Dock. Demolition and alteration have so altered blocks north and east of Granby Street that Granby forms the northern boundary.

On the west side of Central Avenue, the southern boundary along Fleet Street extends to Exeter Street to encompass the Bagby Furniture Company Building, a visible manifestation of the vanished lumber trade. The western boundary extends one block up to Eastern Avenue to include a ca. 1913 building once associated with the Bagby Furniture Company. With the exception of an historic gas station at the corner of Central and Eastern Avenue, the block north of the Bagby Building is characterized by new construction and older rowhouses clearly associated with the Little Italy neighborhood to the west of the South Central Avenue Historic District. Consequently, the western boundary moves in toward Central Avenue to include the gas station and to exclude non-contributing buildings and rowhouses associated with the residential character of Little Italy. The western boundary proceeds north along Central Avenue to Bank Street, excluding recent construction. It then jogs west along Bank Street to Exeter to encompass the 1200 block of Bank Street, a mixed-use block embodying the character of the historic district, and the Strauss Malt House. The western boundary then moves east along Lloyd Street excluding residential blocks in Little Italy to encompass the Alameda School and the flat iron building at the corner of Fawn and Central Avenue. It moves west again to include the 1000 block of East Pratt Street with the Gordon Sleep Rite Mattress Company (formerly American Coat Pad Factory) and rowhouses converted to industrial and commercial use. The western boundary then moves east along East Pratt to encompass the industrial structures south of Granby and east of the Flag House housing project, including the Baltimore Traction powerhouse. The intersection of Granby Street and South Central Avenue forms the northern boundary of the district.

While the western boundary of the district has been drawn to encompass significant buildings and industrial sites, integrity considerations have directed the Central Avenue Historic District's eastern boundary. The housing project east of Eden and north of Bank Street forms an obvious eastern division. While some interesting buildings remain in the block west of Central and north of Granby and in the block east of Central and north of Pratt, demolition and recent alterations have isolated the historic structures from their historic context. Many fine buildings, however, form a cohesive streetscape occupying most of the block between Pratt and Gough east of Central Avenue. The eastern boundary proceeds south along Eden to Bank Street where it moves east to Caroline Street, the western boundary of the Fells Point Historic District. The west side of Caroline Street contrasts with the residential character of Fells Point and reflects the impact of the functional evolution characteristic of the Central Avenue Historic District. The eastern boundary then extends down Caroline Street to include the former African American School, P.S. No. 25, and jogs around a

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post-1950s building to Eastern Avenue. It then moves west and south across Eastern to include a mid-twentieth century warehouse and garage buildings as well as a cobblestone street with railroad tracks. The southern boundary of the historic is drawn to include the Bagby Building and the row of early commercial storefronts in the 1300 block of Eastern Avenue (Enterprise Rent-A-Car). It excludes the recently refaced ColdKist Warehouse and the recent building on the site of the MacLea Lumber Co. at the intersection of Central and Fleet.

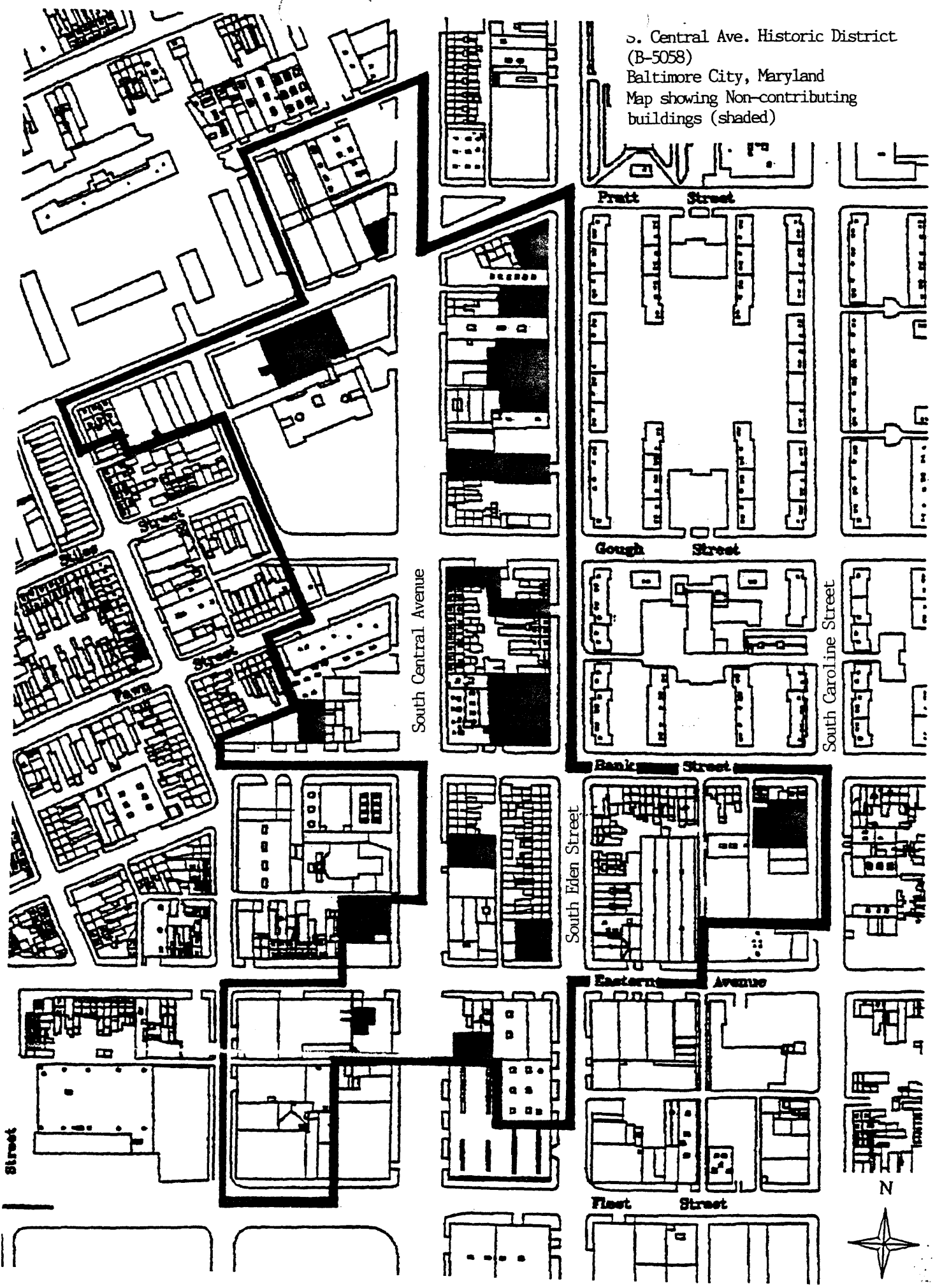
SOUTH CENTRAL AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT
 List of Property Addresses, Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

Address	Date of Construction	Type	# Contributing Resources	# Non-Contributing Resources
503-521 S. Exeter	c. 1900	industrial	2	0
413-421 S. Central	c. 1880 - c. 1960	industrial	3	1
405 S. Central	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
403 S. Central	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
401 S. Central	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential/commercial	1	0
302 S. Central	1866/1904	industrial	1	0
300 S. Central	c.1900	industrial/residential	1	0
321 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential/commercial	1	0
319 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential/commercial	1	0
317 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
315 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
313 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
311 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
309 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
307 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
305 S. Central	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
301 S. Central	Post-1951	industrial	0	1
210 S. Central	1910	education	1	1
253 S. Central	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
251 S. Central	c. 1840-c. 1860	residential	1	0
249 S. Central	c. 1850 - c. 1880	residential	1	0
227-241 S. Central	c. 1860-c. 1960	industrial	2	1
225 S. Central	c. 1920	industrial	1	0
217 S. Central	c. 1880	industrial	1	0
213 S. Central	c. 1920	industrial	1	0
211 S. Central	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
209 S. Central	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
207 S. Central	c. 1850-c. 1880	residential/commercial/ industrial	1	0
201 S. Central	c. 1910	industrial	1	0
124 S. Central	c. 1940	transportation	1	1
510 S. Eden	c. 1900	industrial	1	0
432 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
430 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
428 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
426 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
424 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
422 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
420 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
418 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
416 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
414 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
412 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
410 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
408 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0

Address	Date of Construction	Type	# Contributing Resources	# Non-Contributing Resources
406 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
404 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
402 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
400 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
427 S. Eden	c. 1850 - c. 1880	residential	1	0
425 S. Eden	c. 1850 - c. 1880	residential	1	0
423 S. Eden	c. 1850 - c. 1880	residential	1	0
421 S. Eden	c. 1850 - c. 1880	residential	1	0
417 S. Eden	c. 1940	industrial	1	0
415 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
407 S. Eden	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
405 S. Eden	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
403 S. Eden	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
401 S. Eden	c. 1850 - c. 1880	commercial/residential	1	0
318 S. Eden	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
316 S. Eden	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
314 S. Eden	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
312 S. Eden	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
310 S. Eden	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential	1	0
306 S. Eden	Post-1951	industrial	0	1
300 S. Eden	c. 1850 - c. 1880	commercial/residential	1	0
250 S. Eden	c. 1850 - c. 1880	commercial/residential	1	0
238 S. Eden	Post-1951	industrial	0	1
228 S. Eden	c. 1900	transportation	1	0
222 S. Eden	Post-1951	industrial	0	2
206 S. Eden	Post-1951	industrial	0	1
409 S. Spring	c. 1940	industrial	1	0
402 S. Caroline	c. 1860 - c. 1960	education/industrial	1	2
1025 Eastern	Post-1951	transportation	0	1
1305 Eastern	c. 1850 - c. 1880, c. 1950	commercial/ transportation	4	0
1325 Eastern	c. 1850 - c. 1880	industrial	1	0
1030 Eastern	c. 1940	transportation	1	1
1312 Eastern	c. 1850 - c. 1880	industrial	1	0
1320 Eastern	Post - 1951	transportation	0	1
1400 Eastern	1881 - ca. 1940	industrial	4	0
1200 Bank	c. 1940	transportation	1	0
1208 Bank	c. 1940	industrial	1	0
1212 Bank	Post-1951	industrial	0	1
1216 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential/industrial	1	0
1218 Bank	c. 1850-c. 1880	industrial/commercial	1	0
1220 Bank	c. 1850 - c. 1880	residential/ transportation	1	0
1300 Bank	c. 1860 - c. 1960	industrial	2	1
1403 Bank	c. 1850 - c. 1880	commercial/residential	1	0
1405 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1407 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1409 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1411 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0

Address	Date of Construction	Type	# Contributing Resources	# Non-Contributing Resources
1413 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1415 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1417 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1419 Bank	c. 1850 - c. 1880	commercial/residential	2	0
1425 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1427 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1429 Bank	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1022 Fawn	c. 1870	industrial	1	0
1211 Gough	c. 1850 - c. 1880	residential	1	0
1300 Gough	c. 1850-c. 1880	commercial/residential	1	0
1302 Gough	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1304 Gough	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1306 Gough	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1308 Gough	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1310 Gough	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	0
1001 E. Pratt	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential/commercial	1	0
1005 E. Pratt	c. 1820 - c. 1840	residential/commercial	1	0
1007 E. Pratt	c. 1940	industrial	1	1
1015 E. Pratt	c. 1950	industrial	1	0
1142-1136 E. Pratt	c. 1890, c. 1950	transportation	2	
1307 E. Pratt	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential/commercial	1	
1309 E. Pratt	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential/commercial	1	
1311 E. Pratt	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	
1313 E. Pratt	c. 1840 - c. 1860	residential	1	
1315 E. Pratt	post-1951	industrial	0	
1139-1145 Granby	1928	industrial	1	

S. Central Ave. Historic District
(B-5058)
Baltimore City, Maryland
Map showing Non-contributing
buildings (shaded)



South Central Avenue

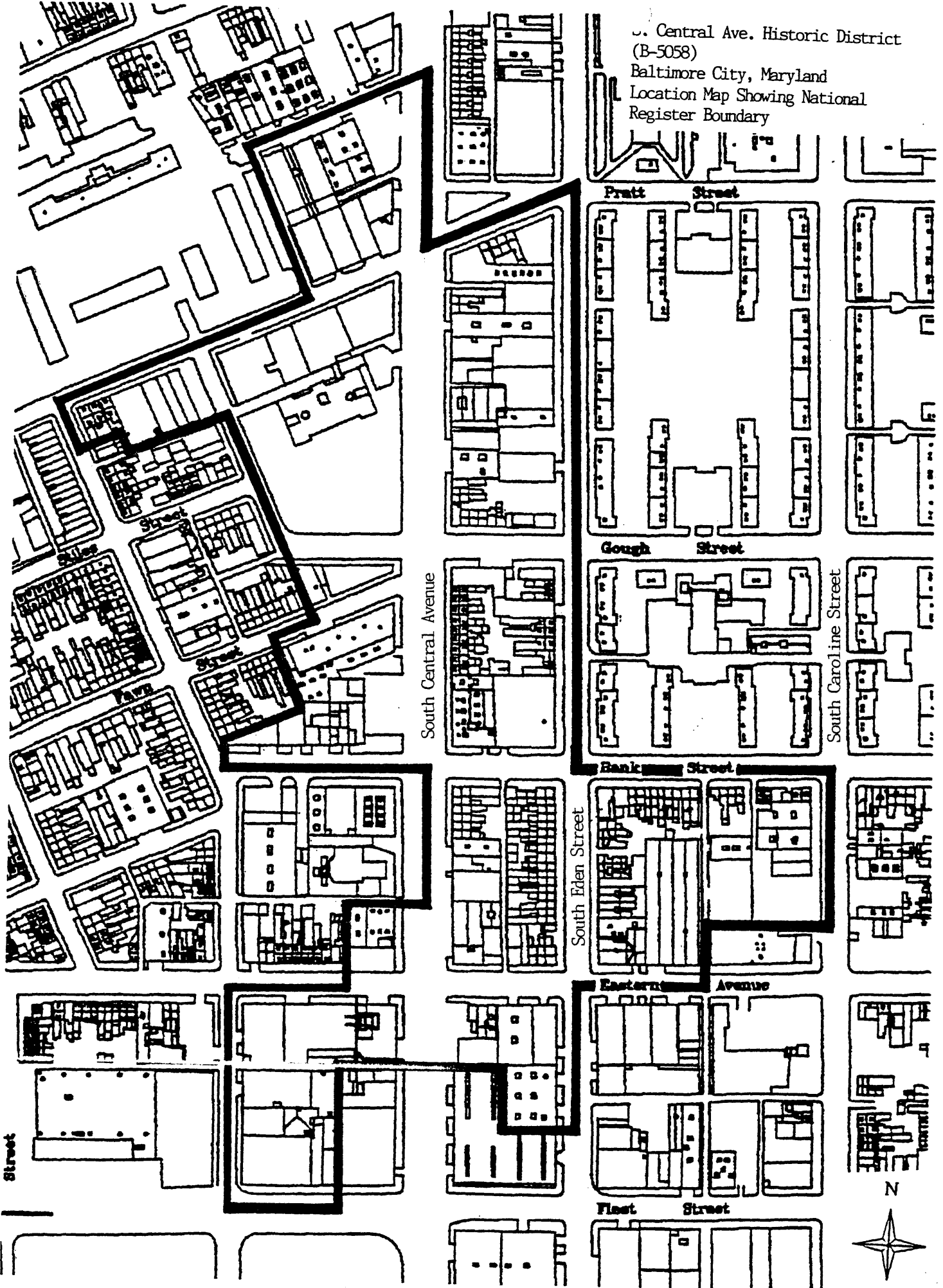
South Edin Street

South Caroline Street

Street



U. Central Ave. Historic District
(B-5058)
Baltimore City, Maryland
Location Map Showing National
Register Boundary



South Central Avenue

Pratt Street

Gough Street

South Carolina Street

Banking Street

South Eden Street

Eastern Avenue

Fleet Street

Street

N

