

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Coca-Cola Bottling Plant

Other names/site number DV-24473

Name of related multiple
property listing

N/A

(Remove "N/A" if property is part of a multiple property listing and add name)

2. Location

Street & Number: 1525 Church Street

City or town: Nashville

State: Tennessee

County: Davidson

Not For Publication: ☐ N/A

Vicinity: ☐ N/A

Zip: 37203

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

☐

national

☐

statewide

☐

local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

☐

A

☐

B

☐

C

☐

D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of Commenting Official:

Date

Title:

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal
Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private ☒
Public – Local ☐
Public – State ☐
Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) ☒
District ☐
Site ☐
Structure ☐
Object ☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION:

Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: COMMERCIAL STYLE

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

CONCRETE; BRICK; WOOD

Narrative Description

The building at 1525 Church Street was completed in 1926 to house Nashville's Coca-Cola bottling plant which manufactured and distributed Coca-Cola to the city and surrounding area. The building is located at the southeast corner of Church Street and 16th Avenue, North and its parcel extends one block south to Hayes Street. The building shares a party wall with the adjacent building on Church Street and there is a parking area on the parcel along its east elevation. The building's main façade faces Church Street and was originally five-bays in width and two-stories in height. The building was enlarged in 1940 with an additional four bays fronting Church Street, a reconfiguration of the main entrance, and a one-story garage at the rear. A two-story addition was added to the building on the east elevation ca. 1955. This was built as a production facility with fenestration limited to entrances on the ground floor and three exhaust vent openings on the main façade. The 1926 and 1940 buildings were constructed of brick with fenestration divided by brick pilasters with concrete capitals. The two-story sections have flat roofs of rolled roofing material, and the garage has barrel vault roofs of similar surfaces. The ca. 1955 addition was constructed of brick on the first floor and the second story's north and east walls are of concrete block with a brick veneer exterior. Since the addition of the ca. 1955 section, few alterations have occurred to the property, and it retains its overall exterior and interior architectural integrity. The building's design is a notable industrial example of the

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Commercial Style utilizing tapestry brick and muted Art Deco references. This is expressed through the building's wide variety of colors, textures and patterns of the exterior brick veneer walls and use of cast stone accents. The Coca-Cola company vacated the building in 1976. During the late 20th and early 21st centuries, it was occupied by an automotive repair and service company, and some plastic lettering of this business remains on the exterior of the building. The building is currently vacant and in fair condition and retains its urban setting.

Main Façade (North Elevation)

The Coca-Cola Bottling Plant consists of a two-story office and manufacturing facility and a one-story garage (Figure 1). The building has a frontage of 229' along Church Street, 366' along 16th Avenue North, and 188' along Hayes Street. Altogether the building contains 102,000 square feet. The building's main façade faces Church Street, and the original five bay section was completed in 1926, consisting of three storefront bays, a central pedestrian entrance, and a garage entrance at the southwest corner bay. The building was expanded in 1940, with an additional four bays along Church Street to match the original design. A second addition was completed ca. 1955, facing Church Street and shares a party wall with the adjacent building on the east elevation (Photos 1-3/6-7).

The design of the 1926 building featured a central entrance with double doors set within a concrete surround (Figure 2). Flanking the entrance were storefronts with display windows resting on brick bulkheads, and both arched and rectangular transoms. In the southwest corner was a garage bay entrance. Above the storefront was a concrete belt course which extended the width of the building. The upper floor windows were originally multi-light steel design divided by brick pilasters with concrete capitals. At the roofline was a stepped parapet with concrete coping.

In 1940, the building was expanded with an additional four bays to match the 1926 details as closely as possible. The main entrance was moved from its original location to the central bay and has an aluminum surround with double glass and wood doors, sidelights and transoms (Photo 4). This entrance, along with the storefront windows, are now concealed beneath wood panels. The steel windows on the upper floor were removed and replaced with brick panels to match those in the new addition. The 1926 and 1940 exterior walls are composed of rough textured brick and mortar in a wide variety of colors. The brick is primarily laid in stretcher bond with the pilasters displaying alternating stretcher and header stack bond. In the north and south bays of the main façade are brick spandrels featuring basket weave bond (Photo 5). The ca. 1955 building features ca. 1990 metal doors set within recessed blind wall panels with soldier course lintels (Photo 2). The upper façade lacks fenestration except for three metal exhaust vents. The exterior is of stretcher bond, multi-colored brick. The expansion of the building is shown on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, updated to 1950 (Figure 5).

West Elevation

The west elevation consists of both the two-story, office/production section and the one-story garage (Photos 7-10). The first floor of the office/production section consists of eleven bays. The corner bay has a storefront with a display window and two-light transom resting on a brick bulkhead. There is a loading dock bay covered with wood panels and the remaining bays contain original multi-light steel windows with concrete sills. The first-floor windows are covered with wood panels for security. Dividing each of the first-floor bays are brick pilasters with concrete capitals. The capitals share a concrete belt course which extends the width

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of the building. On the second floor are eleven window bays divided by brick pilasters with concrete capitals. Above the windows is a continuous concrete belt course. The windows are original (1926) eight-over-twelve steel awning design. At the roofline is concrete coping.

The 1940, west garage elevation has eight bays with each bay divided by brick pilasters with concrete capitals. Connecting each capital is a concrete belt course. There is a loading dock bay on this elevation covered with wood panels. The remaining bays contain original multi-light steel windows, most of which are covered with wood panels. At the roofline is concrete coping. There are plastic letters in poor condition on this elevation which spell JIM REED, and WAREHOUSE SHOWROOM, reflecting the last tenant of the building.

South Elevation

The south elevation is the south wall of the 1940 garage addition and faces Hayes Street (Photos 11/13). This one-story building has nine blind window bays divided by brick pilasters with concrete capitals. The pilasters feature multi-colored stack brick, and the window bays have multi-colored stretcher bond brick (Photo 12). The original window openings were enclosed with multi-colored brick ca. 1950. These window bays have concrete sills and soldier course brick lintels. Connecting the pilaster capitals is a continuous concrete belt course. At the roofline is concrete coping. There are plastic letters in poor condition on this elevation which spell JIM REED, and WAREHOUSE SHOWROOM, reflecting the last tenant of the building.

East Elevation

The east elevation consists of a two-story, ca. 1955 building and the 1940 garage addition (Photos 14/16/17). The first floor of the ca. 1955 building appears to incorporate the brick walls of an earlier building on this parcel. These walls are five-course common bond brick while the second story is composed of stretcher bond brick over concrete block at the north and east walls. On the south elevation of the ca. 1955 wing is a large garage bay enclosed with wood panels. A pedestrian entrance is also on this elevation. The second story has several rectangular window openings enclosed with wood panels.

The one-story garage wing has seven bays divided by brick pilasters with concrete capitals. There are three garage bay entrances on this elevation with overhead track doors, now concealed under wood panels. Windows are original multi-light steel and glass design with concrete sills

(Photo 15). At the roofline is concrete coping. There are plastic letters in poor condition on this elevation which spell WAREHOUSE SHOWROOM, reflecting the last tenant of the building.

Interior – Office and Bottling Section, 1926-1940

The Coca-Cola Bottling Plant was constructed to house the offices of the local Coca-Cola franchise, the bottling works, and the trucks which delivered the beverage to stores across the region. The offices and bottling works were located on the first and second floors while a large section of the first floor originally contained a garage. As a Coca-Cola franchise, Nashville received syrup from the parent company in Chattanooga. The syrup was then added to water, carbonated, capped and poured into the company's distinctive glass bottles. The success of the Nashville franchise in the early 20th century led to the expansion of the original building in 1940. A new bottling section was designed with glazed tile floors and walls. Much

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of the original floor plan remains extant but all the bottling equipment was moved to a new facility in 1976. The building was then used as an automobile service and repair shop, but it does not appear that any significant changes occurred to the interior during these years except for updated heating and cooling units and bathroom facilities.

The main entrance on the first floor leads to a lobby decorated with a wrought iron railing and circular newel post added in 1940 (Photos 30-31). A wood staircase with a wrought iron railing connected with offices on the second floor. This staircase has original wood paneling on the walls. After entering the lobby, a visitor could turn right into the company offices or left in the bottling area. The office retains its 1940 character including wood wall paneling, acoustical tile ceilings, and glass and wood doors (Photos 32-33). The perimeter walls of the office are of exposed brick painted white. Over one of the interior doors is an original wall clock (Photo 34). The bottling area consists of open floor space with green tile floors and walls with steel support columns wrapped with green tile (Photos 35-39). Leading from the bottling room to the basement is a wrought iron stair (Photo 40), and on the south wall of this room is a wrought iron stair connecting with the second floor (Photo 41). Below this room and the ca. 1955 addition, is a basement with concrete floors, ceilings and steel support posts (Photo 42).

The first-floor office area is separated from the interior driveway and garage by wood and plaster walls. The office spaces have original six-over-six and eight-over-eight wood sash windows which provide illumination from the garage skylights (Photos 43/45). Beyond the office area is the original 1926 garage with a concrete floor, exposed brick walls and a ceiling supported by steel posts (Photo 44). The garage is composed of open floor space and displays a concrete floor and exposed brick walls. The garage was built with a steel bowstring roof support system and skylights (Photo 47). An automobile ramp connects the 1926 garage with the 1940 garage addition (Photo 46).

The second floor of the building originally housed offices, production facilities, storage rooms and bathrooms. Much of the second floor is composed of open space with wood and concrete floors, wood and acoustical tile ceilings, and steel support columns (Photos 51-52/61-63). There is a hallway along the south wall of the building that connects with several rooms (Photo 53).

One of these is a bathroom which retains a ca. 1960 hand washing fixture (Photo 54). The rooms have wood floors with linoleum surfaces, and walls of plaster and exposed brick (Photo 55). A second hallway divides office rooms along the west wall of the building (Photo 56). In these spaces, the exterior perimeter walls exposed painted brick, while the interior walls are of concrete and plaster. A dividing wall between the largest office space and the hallway features a row of original six-over-six wood sash windows and single-light glass and wood doors (Photos 57-58). A second room along the west wall has a partial-height glazed tile skirt wall and sink (Photo 59). Office spaces in the 1926 section of the building have acoustical tile ceilings, wood and linoleum floors and plaster walls (Photo 60). In the 1940 addition on the second floor, the rooms have various wall and ceiling surfaces including glazed white tile (Photos 64-65).

Interior – Garage, 1940

The garage was designed in two sections separated by a brick interior wall with barrel vault roofs supported by a steel arched truss. The roof has wood decking, skylights and a rolled roofing surface (Photos 18-22). The garage has a concrete floor, exposed brick walls which are painted white, and steel support posts. The steel truss is 95' in length and four skylights provide illumination into the interior (Photo 25). Several non-

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functional heating and cooling units are attached to the steel truss framework. Dividing the two garage sections is a painted brick wall with two automobile ramps and original sliding track wood and steel doors (Photos 23/24). Along the east wall is a small concrete block office with sliding track windows and an original, single-light and two-panel door (Photo 26).

Interior – ca. 1955 Building

A two-story building was added to the east elevation ca. 1955 and was built of concrete block with a brick veneer. An automobile ramp leads to the first-floor level which has a concrete floor, concrete ceiling, exposed brick walls, and steel and concrete support columns (Photo 27). The second floor is accessed by a garage entrance and automobile ramp on the south elevation (Photo 28). The second floor is composed of open floor space with a concrete floor and steel and metal roof. The south wall is brick and the north and east walls are of concrete block with a brick skirt wall along the east wall (Photos 49-50). The addition is set back and secondary to the original building, reading as a later addition.

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Figure 1: Aerial view of the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant and dates of the original building and additions (Nashville, Tennessee GIS).

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Figure 2: Design of the original building featured in the *Nashville Banner*, January 10, 1926.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

N/A

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1926-1955

Significant Dates

1926/1940/ca. 1955

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

1926, Donald Southgate, Architect

1926, Francis B. Warfield, Engineer

1940, George Waller, Architect

1940, Nile E. Yearwood, Builder

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Coca-Cola Bottling Plant, located at 1525 Church Street, is a notable example of an early 20th century Commercial Style manufacturing building, and is of local significance under Criterion C for its architectural design. Completed in 1926, the building combines the overall form of the Commercial Style with masonry ornamentation known as “Tapestry Brick” and muted Art Deco detailing. The building was designed by prominent Nashville architect, Donald Southgate, and included varying colors and textures of brick, decorative cast stone accents, brick pilasters to divide the steel, multi-lite windows, and a traditional storefront with brick bulkheads, large display windows and transoms. The two-story office and bottling section were designed with wood and concrete floors, wood ceilings and walls of exposed brick and plaster. The interior is composed largely of open floor space with steel I-beams supported by round steel columns. The garage was built with a concrete floor and exposed brick walls. The building was enlarged and remodeled in 1940 to match the original design with similar brick, concrete detailing and storefronts. A two-story addition was constructed ca. 1955 to house additional storage facilities and a parking garage. Since the completion of this addition, the building has experienced few major changes, and it possesses a high degree of integrity. The period of significance extends from 1926 to 1955 which is the time from its construction to when the Coca-Cola company built the final addition.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Coca-Cola Bottling Plant remains on the Nashville landscape as a significant architectural resource of the twentieth century. Founded in 1780, Nashville’s location on the Cumberland River made it a center for steamboat traffic and spurred the creation of numerous industries such as iron foundries, flour mills, publishing houses and lumber manufactures. The city’s prominence increased when it became the capital of Tennessee in 1843. On the eve of the Civil War, the city had a population of nearly 14,000 residents and was noted for its prosperity and large number of brick commercial and residential buildings.¹ Nashville was occupied by federal troops early in the war and it escaped significant damage unlike many other cities in the South.

In the late nineteenth century, Nashville emerged as a major rail center with connections to Memphis, Chattanooga, and Louisville. Several important industries were built in the decades after the war including flour mills, machine works, and foundries producing stoves and other ironware. During these years, rafts of logs were floated down the Cumberland River to Nashville from eastern Tennessee and Kentucky and then turned into finished wood products. Companies on the east bank of the river such as the Edgefield & Nashville Manufacturing Company produced desks and other business furniture, while other companies made hardwood flooring, boxes, buckets and carriages.² The Tennessee Manufacturing Company and Phoenix Mills both produced cotton products and employed hundreds of workers. Other textile mills made socks, women’s hose and other clothing.

By 1900, Nashville’s population stood at 80,865 residents and the city boasted a diverse economy. Commercial buildings along Second Avenue and Broadway were occupied by businesses relying on the fading steamboat trade. The shift from steamboat traffic to railroad shipping was underscored in 1900 by the completion of the Louisville & Nashville passenger and freight building and the completion of nearby

¹ Carroll Van West, ed. Tennessee Encyclopedia of History & Culture (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), p. 670.

² Bill Carey, *Fortunes, Fiddles, and Fried Chicken* (Franklin, Tennessee: Hillsboro Press, 2000), p. 13.

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Cummins Station in 1907. When it was completed, the 480,000 square foot Cummins Station was reputed to be the largest reinforced concrete building in the world and housed dozens of prominent businesses.³

While Nashville boasted hundreds of manufacturers in the early twentieth century, the city never developed a dominant industrial base. Nearby cities were known for their specific industries such as Chattanooga and Birmingham (foundries and steel), Knoxville (textiles), Atlanta (textiles and steel), and Memphis (lumber and cottonseed products). Nashville's diverse economy made the city resilient in the twentieth century, providing employment across a wide variety of manufacturers.⁴

The decade of the 1920s was a particularly prosperous era for the city with the population increasing by one-third to almost 154,000 residents. In 1920, the approval of the Volstead Act outlawing alcoholic beverages greatly benefitted soft drink companies, especially the Coca-Cola company. Coca-Cola had its origins in Atlanta when the formula was created by druggist John S. Pemberton of Atlanta in 1886. Pemberton died not long after he patented the beverage and it passed to his business partner, Asa Candler. Candler incorporated the company and trademarked the drink as "Coca-Cola" in 1893.⁵ Originally a soda fountain drink, two Chattanooga lawyers,

Benjamin Thomas and Joseph Whitehead, purchased the rights from Candler to bottle the beverage in 1899. Soon after, bottling plants were built in Atlanta and Chattanooga. Contracts for additional plants were distributed around the country, with the first contract awarded to Nashville.⁶

Acquiring the Nashville contract in 1900, was William Heck Jr. who opened a bottling plant next to his home at 1225 Third Avenue, North.⁷ Heck sold the rights to bottle the drink to John M. Kenny in 1903, who opened a bottling plant at 916 Church Street. The contract was then sold to Julius and Pauline Weil in 1919, and they moved the bottling works to 911 Berryhill Street. Julius B. Weil (1873-1941) was a prominent Nashville businessman, and he purchased the Nashville Coca-Cola bottling franchise as well as similar plants in Lebanon and Springfield and was president of Coca-Cola plants in Columbia and Dickson.

Prohibition led many Americans to search for substitute beverages, and consumption of Coca-Cola and other soft drinks increased substantially in the 1920s. To capture more of the soft drink business, Coca-Cola introduced new company marketing programs in 1923, introducing the slogan "Pause and Refresh" which later evolved into "The Pause that Refreshes." The same year, a six-pack carton was developed which allowed customers to take larger quantities of the beverage home. The standardization of the company's contoured bottle also took place in 1923, making it immediately recognizable to consumers.⁸ By 1924, Nashville's Coca-Cola bottling plant could no longer keep up with customer demand, and the Weil's searched for a site to accommodate a larger building. In July, a lot fronting 100' on the south side of Church

³ Carroll Van West, *Nashville Architecture, A Guide to the City* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2015) p. 46.

⁴ Carey, *Fortunes, Fiddles and Fried Chicken*, p.18.

⁵ Charles Reagan Wilson and William Ferris, ed. *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1989, p.737.

⁶ Coca-Cola: 75 in Nashville, *Nashville Tennessean*, May 4, 1975, p. 114.

⁷ www.historytools.org. *Coca-Cola's Triumph: How the Soft Drink Giant Thrived During Prohibition* - History Tools

⁸ Ibid.

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Street was purchased for \$12,000 by the “Coca-Cola Bottling Works of Nashville” with the intent of building “one of the most commodious plants in the South.”⁹

Construction of the building began in 1925 with plans provided by Nashville architect Donald W. Southgate (1887-1953). Southgate received his architectural training at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and began his practice in Nashville in 1914.¹⁰ His early career focused on residences and apartment buildings but by the 1920s, his work included commercial buildings, churches and schools. Southgate is best known for buildings such as West End United Methodist Church (1927-1950), West End Middle School (1937), and St. George’s Episcopal Church (1949).¹¹ He also designed many notable residences throughout Nashville and the suburb of Belle Meade.¹² At least seven houses are known to have been designed by Southgate in Belle

Meade in the 1920s.¹³ Southgate was a founding member of the Nashville chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1922. Southgate practiced architecture until the early 1950s and died in 1953. The engineer who designed the building’s operations and bottling facilities was Francis B. Warfield (1891-1975). Warfield was an associate of Southgate from 1923 until 1929 when he partnered with Edwin Keeble to form the architectural firm of Warfield and Keeble.¹⁴

Southgate’s design for the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant was featured in the *Nashville Banner* newspaper on January 10, 1926.¹⁵ Under the headline “NEW COCA-COLA NASHVILLE BOTTLING PLANT” was a drawing of the building and an article stating that it will be “one of the most complete and modern establishments of the sort in the entire country” (Figure 2). The plant was built at a cost of \$50,000 with machinery producing nearly 8,000 bottles of Coca-Cola per hour. The building was designed with five bays fronting Church Street with a central entrance containing double doors and a concrete surround. The entrance was flanked by window bays resting on brick bulkheads with transoms above. The west bay of the building featured a garage entrance for the company’s delivery trucks. On the second floor were multi-light steel windows separated by brick pilasters with concrete accents.

The interior of the building was designed in two sections; the two-story office and bottling area, and the one-story garage for shipping and receiving. The first floor of the main section contained the production staff and sales personnel behind which were the bottling machines. On the second floor were storage rooms, syrup rooms, and other bottling production lines. The garage was built to accommodate trucks delivering the company’s syrup and carbonation chemicals as well as the trucks used to deliver Coca-Cola throughout the city.

⁹ *Nashville Tennessean*, July 18, 1924, p. 18.

¹⁰ Frank Orr, Elbridge White and Charles W. Waterfield Jr. *Notable Nashville Architecture, 1930-1980* (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1989), p. 77

¹¹ Carroll Van West, *Nashville Architecture, A Guide to the City*, p. 149.

¹² Joseph L. Herndon, “Architects in Tennessee Until 1930, A Dictionary.” M.A. Thesis, Columbia University, New York, 1975, p. 173.

¹³ Oscar Cromwell Tidwell, Jr, *Belle Meade Park* (Nashville, Tennessee: Private Printing, 1983), p. 43-66.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 192.

¹⁵ *Nashville Banner*, January 10, 1926, p. 27.

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The bottling plant followed typical designs and plans of industrial buildings of the early 20th century. Brick of three courses or wythes were used for the exterior walls to provide for strength and fire resistance. Projecting from the wall plane of the building were brick pilasters which supported the load bearing walls and roof structure.¹⁶ Windows were of multi-light steel design with opaque glass. This exterior design was carried over from the 1926 building to the 1940 building. The interiors of both phases were comprised largely of open floor space for the bottling machinery. Materials utilized on the interior included steel I-beams supported by steel columns, wood and concrete floors (1926 section), and tile and concrete floors (1940 section). Some storage rooms and office areas were designed with plastered walls while other areas had the brick exposed. Wood ceilings remain extant in some spaces of the second floor while other areas have added dropped acoustical tile panels. The 1940 garage wing is distinguished by its arched steel truss roofs with skylights for illumination.

The Commercial Style was prominent in American communities from ca. 1900 to ca. 1930. The style was a reaction to the more ornate Victorian commercial buildings which often reflected Italianate and Romanesque influences. Instead, the Commercial Style was simpler in form with ornamentation usually consisting of patterned brick in the upper façade known as “Tapestry Brick” or “Brick Front” which was widely used for one-to three-story commercial buildings across the country.¹⁷

The building’s overall design reflects the Commercial Style of the early 20th century. While the Commercial Style is often associated with the high-rise buildings influenced by architect constructed in Chicago and other urban centers, the term is also applied to smaller scale commercial buildings of the period. It was characterized by its focus on functionality, and its use of efficient, standardized forms and materials. The style was often associated with large-scale corporate office buildings, as well as industrial and warehouse complexes. However, it was also applied to smaller buildings such as banks, department stores, and limited scale manufacturing buildings. The form of the building is a “Two-Part Commercial Block” which has a separate storefront and upper facade.¹⁸

Southgate’s exterior detailing for the building relies on varied brick and concrete surfaces and textures. These types of buildings are often referred to as “Brick Front” or Tapestry Brick” with the upper façade featuring architectural detailing such as belt courses, patterned brick, cornices and pilasters.¹⁹ “Tapestry Brick” references the early 20th century advances in brick production utilizing varying textures and colors to create decorative and varied exterior wall surfaces. The bricks were often combined with colored and textured masonry joints. Patterned brick such as stacked bond, basket weave and other angled designs was often applied to industrial buildings since they provided inexpensive and attractive decoration beyond plain brickwork.²⁰

¹⁶ Betsy Hunter Bradley, *The Works-The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) p. 136.

¹⁷ The “Brick Front” form is described in *American Vernacular Architecture*, by Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings. This vernacular form is a two-part commercial block with decorative brickwork in the upper façade. Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1985, p. 240.

¹⁸ Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street*, (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1987), p. 24.

¹⁹ Gottfried and Jennings, *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940*, p. 240.

²⁰ Bradley, *The Works-The Industrial Architecture of the United States*. p. 234.

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The most prominent firm during this period associated with tapestry brick and its application for various types of buildings was Fiske & Company in New York and Boston. This company produced numerous catalogs from the 1910s to the 1930s promoting their brick designs for all types of buildings. Publications such as “Bonds and Mortar Joints, Their Influence on Brickwork” (1912), and “Tapestry Brickwork” (1913) were widely promoted and the use of tapestry brick spread across the country²¹ (Figure 3). The Coca-Cola Bottling Plant exterior wall surfaces reflect this type of building form in its texture and colored brick and mortar, stacked bond in the brick pilasters, basket weave bond panels and concrete accents (Figure 4).



Figure 3: Example of textured and colored brick and mortar from the Fiske & Company “Tapestry Brickwork” catalog, 1913.



Figure 4: Exterior wall on the west elevation of the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant.

The Coca-Cola building also provides muted inferences toward the Art Deco style that was popular for many Coca-Cola buildings throughout the south. While it is the traditional two-part commercial block form, the design contains references the modernity of the day with modest geometric and vertical detailing in the cut stone and brick pilasters, above the arched transoms, and the simple cornice.

²¹ “Tapestry Brickwork, Fiske & Company, New York, 1913.

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Expansion

Sales of Coca-Cola soared from 19 million gallons in 1919 to 98 million gallons in 1929.²² Despite the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, and the economic decline during the Depression, the 1930s continued to be a period of rapid growth for the company. The management of Coca-Cola invested heavily in new advertising and sales of its syrup doubled between 1933 and 1937.²³ As sales rose, many new bottling plants were built by Coca-Cola across the country. Most of these cost over \$500,000 to build and were designed in the Art Deco and International styles of the period.²⁴

As product demand increased in Nashville, the Weil's decided to expand their existing plant rather than build a completely new facility. In 1940, adjacent property to the east was acquired and the building was extended an additional 100' along Church Street, and 200' along 16th Avenue, North to Hayes Street.²⁵ The expanded plant was designed to double the company's production capacity and provide additional space for its delivery trucks. In the 1940 remodeling of the building, the Church Street façade's second story steel windows were removed and the openings enclosed with brick. This was to provide standardized climate control and refrigeration for the bottling process in the building. Temperature control for the carbonization process through air conditioning was essential to keep the syrup stable during mixing and sealing.²⁶ The brick used to enclose the windows were in colors and textures in keeping with the 1926 tapestry brick exterior.

Overseeing this expansion was the well-known Nashville architect George D. Waller (1883-1971). Waller opened his architectural practice in 1912, and designed various churches, schools, courthouses and residences throughout Tennessee. For the expansion, Waller largely matched Southgate's original design with similar exterior brick, storefront design and windows providing a cohesive feeling overall.

The main entrance was shifted two bays to the east with new doors, transoms and sidelights. The upper floor windows on the main façade were removed and patterned brick panels were added to the window openings. The addition featured a new bottling room with glazed tile walls and floors. A large one-story garage was added to the building on the south elevation. The expansion resulted in an additional four bays on Church Street and moving the main entrance to the central bay of the façade. This new entrance featured glass and wood double doors, sidelights, and a three-light transom set within an aluminum surround. The upper façade brickwork and parapet detailing were designed to match the 1926 building. The remodeling also included the removal of many of the original steel windows and their replacement with tapestry brick panels. On the interior, a new bottling area with glazed green tile walls and floors on the first floor of this addition. The expansion of the building is shown on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, updated to 1950 (Figure 5).

A two-story addition was added to the building on the east elevation ca. 1955. This was built as a production facility with fenestration limited to entrances on the ground floor and three exhaust vent openings on the

²² Coca-Cola Company "Coca-Cola A Short History," www.coca-colacompany.com/coca-cola-a-short-history-125-years-booklet.pdf [Accessed 08/28/26].

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ *Nashville Banner*, December 10, 1940, p. 2.

²⁶ "The Martin Guide to Coca-Cola Memorabilia," www.earlycoke.com. [Accessed 08/28/26].

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main façade. The final addition is in keeping with the simple clean lines of the original style but represents the utilitarian nature of additional warehouse space and design of the 1950s. While adding to the massing of the building, it remains secondary to the original and does not detract overall from the original design.

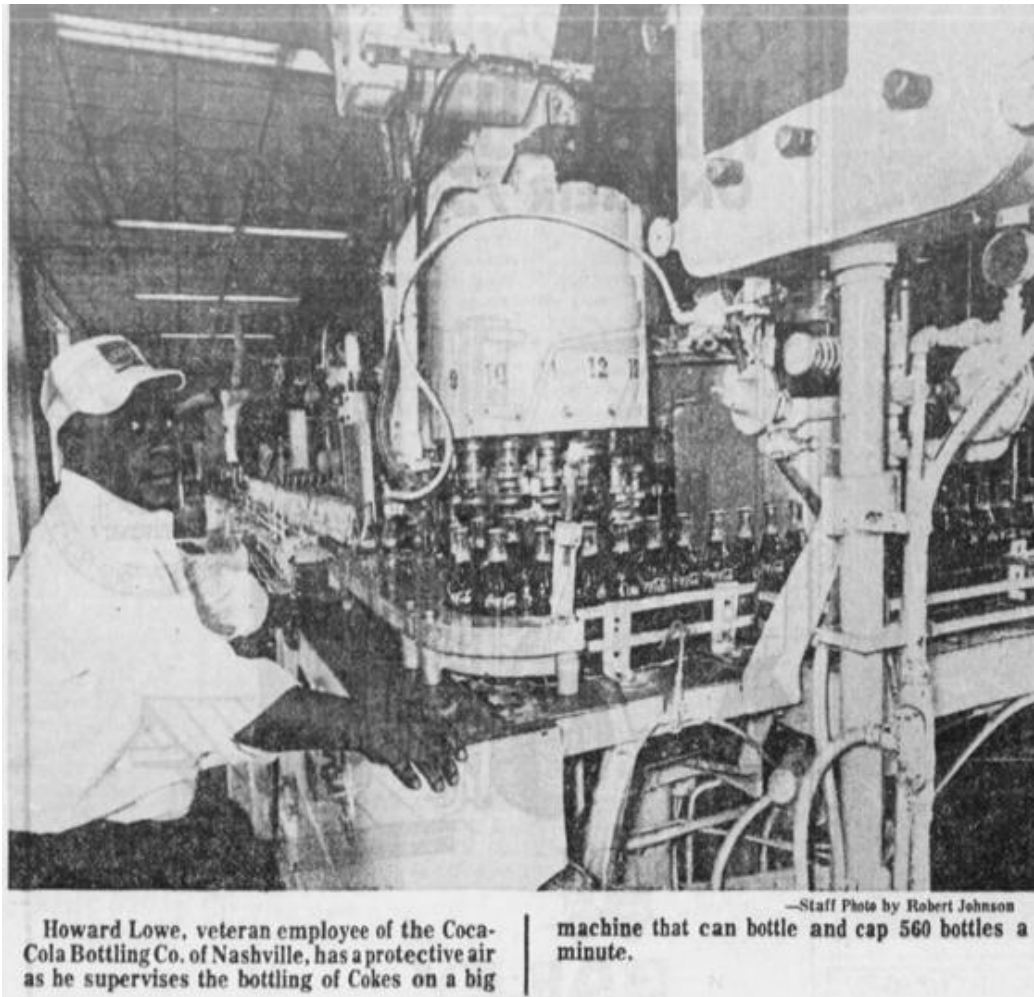


Figure 6: The Coca-Cola commemorative issue included a photograph of this bottling machine at the Church Street plant, May 4, 1975.

Julius Weil died in 1941, and his wife Pauline assumed the presidency of the company until 1963 when it was sold to Wometco Enterprises of Miami. Following the acquisition of the bottling plant by Wometco, the company determined the Church Street facility was outdated and began searching for the location of a new plant. In 1967, the company announced its plans to build a 125,000 square foot facility at a cost of one million dollars in south Nashville.²⁷ The Church Street plant remained in operation until 1976 when it moved to its present location at 407 Craighead Street. In May of 1975, one year before the move, the *Nashville*

²⁷ *Nashville Tennessean*, November 7, 1967, page 1.

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Tennessean newspaper published a special commemorative insert celebrating Coca-Cola's 75th anniversary of its operations in the city. Written by historian Hugh Walker, the commemorative issue provides an overview of the Coca-Cola Company and its history in Nashville (Figure 6). After 1976, the Church Street building was used as the Jim Reed automotive showroom and service, and some signage of this company remains on the exterior. The building continued to be used by this company until recent years, and it is currently vacant.

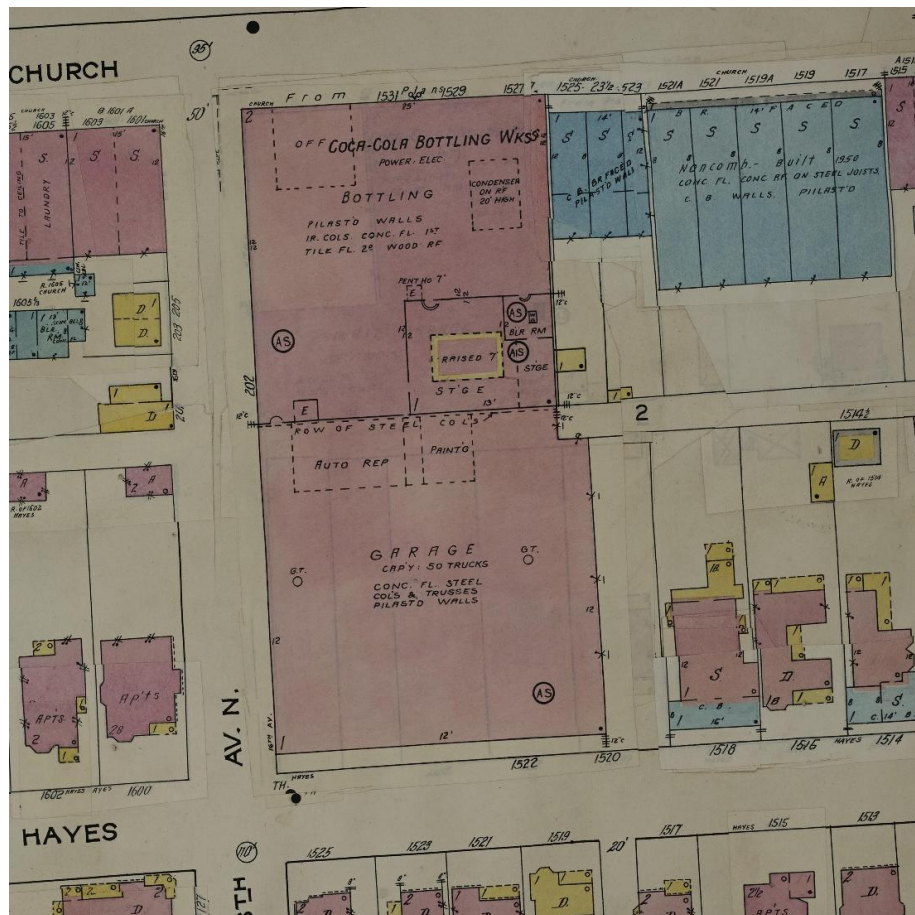


Figure 5: *Nashville Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* of 1917, updated to 1950, page 20.

Commercial Style Buildings in Nashville

The Coca-Cola Bottling Plant building is a locally significant under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an industrial example of the Commercial Style. The city's main arteries of Church Street, Broadway, Charlotte Pike, Gallatin Road and other primary transportation corridors once displayed more of these buildings, but most have been razed or significantly altered in recent decades. Like the Kern's Bread plant in Knoxville (NR 05/05/2016), the Coca-Cola building represents the development of industrial architecture and the shift from dense urban settings, situating buildings in locations that were designed to be public images for companies, and displaying qualities that were

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less industrial and more civic in nature. By having their bottling plant appear like any other place that residents would shop for groceries or clothes, the Coca-Cola building continued the same marketing that Coca-Cola was a safe, wholesome beverage for the whole family. Figure 7 is an advertisement from the Nashville Banner, from the same year as the Coca-Cola bottling plant opened, that shows a taste for Coca-Cola was promoted as a healthy way to satisfy thirst.



Figure 7: March 1, 1926 Coca-Cola Advertisement Nashville Banner.

While not an industrial building, one of the more notable surviving examples of the Commercial Style in the city is the Berger Building at 162 Rosa Parks Boulevard built in 1926 (Figure 8). It features an exterior of tapestry brick along with inset terra cotta panels and wall pilasters. The building was listed in the National Register in 1984 for its architectural design. The Metro Nashville Historic Architectural Survey has surveyed thousands of properties with 38 identified as 20th century commercial style and each appears to be of the scale of the Berger Building or post-WWII commercial/industrial development.

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Figure 8: Berger Building at 162 Rosa Parks Boulevard built in 1926.

Industrial Buildings in Nashville

In Nashville, this building represents the move of industry and warehousing focused on the river and railroads in the downtown and Gulch areas in the heart of the city into the outlying parts of the city that took advantage of highways to move goods from Nashville into smaller rural communities. Due to a smaller overall population and less industrial development overall Nashville has less building stock that represents the early twentieth century industrial buildings from this period than its urban counterparts in Memphis and Chattanooga. In Metro Nashville Davidson County, there are 208 entries in the National Register with only the Marathon Motor Works (NR 06/04/1996) and the Tennessee Manufacturing Company (NR 06/25/1999) listed as industrial properties. Constructed and used for various manufacturing endeavors from starting in 1881 and 1871 respectively, both the listings are important early historic industrial complexes focused on milling and listed under Criterion A.

Other than the two National Register listed industrial complexes, other prominent industrial buildings from the late 19th and early 20th century in Nashville have been lost or recently chose rehabilitation without pursuing historic tax credits. Near the Cola-Cola building, similar age industrial buildings demolished on Church Street include the Purity Dairy Company in the 1400 block and the Meadow Gold Dairy in the 1700 block. The Wedgewood Village development in south Nashville reimaged the May Hosiery Mills and Nashville Warehouse Company complex with large new buildings in place of the historic warehouse and to additions to the mill building.²⁸ The former Se-Ling Hosiery Mill, west of the Coca-Cola plant at 3820 Charlotte Pike was identified as eligible for the National Register as a part of a Section 106 evaluation has been rehabilitated into a food hall known as the L&L Market. Showing the rarity and importance in

²⁸“Historic Nashville Inc. Announces 2021 Nashville Nine,” Nashville Scene, https://www.nashvillescene.com/news/pithinthewind/historic-nashville-inc-announces-2021-nashville-nine/article_dc89a176-5840-11ec-afb9-a756af7b688b.html [accessed 08/28/2026].

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Nashville, the Coca-Cola building was listed on the 2014 and 2021 Historic Nashville Inc. Nashville Nine list of endangered properties. In 2021, Historic Nashville described the building as “an excellent example of ornate industrial architecture from the early twentieth century and perhaps Nashville’s last remaining historic soft drink bottling plant.”

Other Coca-Cola Buildings in Tennessee

Outside of Nashville, Coca-Cola Bottling Plant appears to be company’s oldest remaining bottling plant retaining integrity in Tennessee. The only other identified Coca-Cola bottling plant from this period is in Johnson City, which was located at 226 E. Market Street and constructed in 1925. The building was used by the Coca-Cola Company until 1972, when a new facility was built and it has since been significantly altered for retail space. Other early 20th century Coca-Cola bottling plants include the Art Deco style buildings in Chattanooga (1931), Clarksville (1938), Springfield (1940), Elizabethton (1940), and Tullahoma (1941). The majority of these were designed by the Atlanta architectural firm of Pringle and Smith for Coca-Cola, and this company used standardized plans including concrete sign panels at entrances inscribed with the company’s logo.²⁹ Most of the operating Coca-Cola bottling plants in Tennessee were constructed after 1960.

Conclusion

The Nashville Coca-Cola Bottling Plant is significant locally for its architectural design and as an industrial interpretation of the Commercial Style. The building is distinguished by its tapestry brick exterior and detailing. The building retains integrity from its 1940 and 1955 expansions, and the interior continues to be composed of original offices, production spaces, and garages. It reflects the materials and aesthetic of early twentieth century manufacturing buildings with its open floor plan design and structural composition. The building served as the city’s Coca-Cola bottling plant from 1926 to 1976 and retains sufficient integrity to meet National Register criteria under Criterion A as an early twentieth century industrial example of the Commercial Style.

²⁹One of the most notable Coca-Cola bottling plants in Tennessee is the Covington plant built in 1941. It is a notable example of the Art Moderne style, and features curved concrete walls, steel and structural glass block windows and a cylindrical sign tower on the main façade. It was designed by Memphis architect Everett Woods and listed in the National Register in 1997 for its architectural design. In Jellico, is an International Style-influenced Coca-Cola bottling plant which was rebuilt in 1955 following a fire.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

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www.historytools.org. Coca-Cola's Triumph: How the Soft Drink Giant Thrived During Prohibition - History Tools

Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
☐	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	☒	State Historic Preservation Office
☐	previously listed in the National Register	☐	Other State agency
☐	previously determined eligible by the National Register	☐	Federal agency
☐	designated a National Historic Landmark	☐	Local government
☐	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	☐	University
☐	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	☐	Other
☐	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DV-24473			

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.75 USGS Quadrangle Nashville West 308-NE

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (These coordinates should correspond to the corners of the property boundary. Add additional coordinates if necessary. Enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Datum if other than WGS84:
NA

1. Latitude: 36.0923	Longitude: -86.4739
2. Latitude: 36.0924	Longitude: -86.4737
3. Latitude: 36.0920	Longitude: -86.4737
4. Latitude: 36.0921	Longitude: -86.4735
5. Latitude: 36.0923	Longitude: -86.4736
6. Latitude: 36.0923	Longitude: -86.4736

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

The boundary of the property includes all of Metro Nashville Tax Assessor Parcel 09212053200. This parcel is bounded on the north by Church Street, on the east by adjacent property lines, on the west by 16th Avenue, North and on the south by Hayes Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary of the Coca-Cola Bottling Plant includes all property historically associated with the building and its operations from 1926 to 1976. Within the boundary is one building.

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USGS Topographic Map (Insert a cropped USGS Map showing the property's location. For properties less than 10 acres, the property's location should be indicated with a circle. For properties more than 10 acres, exact boundaries must be depicted).

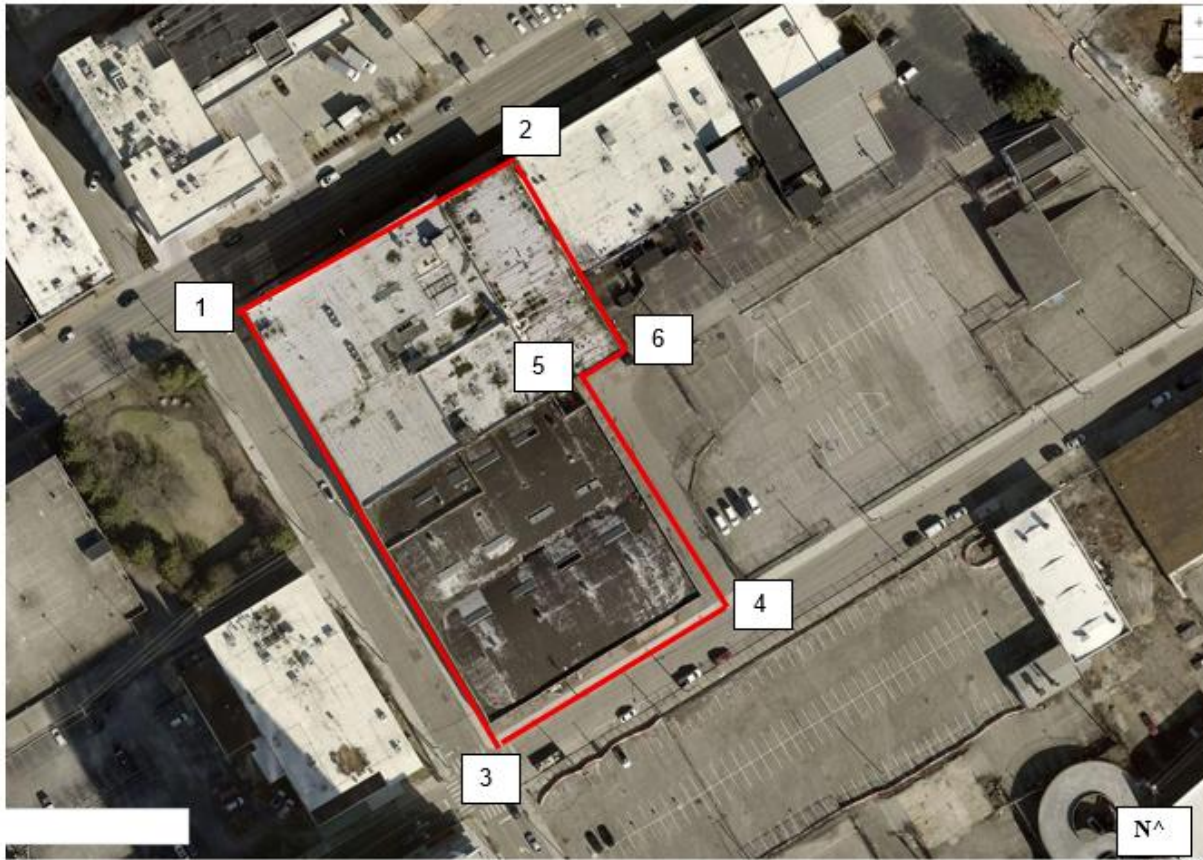


Property location on the Nashville West USGS Quadrangle, 2022.

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Boundary Map (Insert a Boundary Map showing the property's exact National Register boundaries. Use an aerial background if possible.)



The shaded area shows the nominated property on the Metro Nashville Tax Assessor's Parcel Map, parcel # 09212053200. The numbers correspond to the Latitude and Longitude coordinates.

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11. Form Prepared By

Name	Philip Thomason		
Organization	Thomason & Associates		
Street & Number	P.O. Box 121225	Date	08/18/2026
City or Town	Nashville	Telephone	615-385-4960
E-mail	thomason@bellsouth.net	State	TN Zip Code 37212

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints. Photos should be submitted separately in a JPEG or TIFF format. Do not embed these photographs into the form)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. can be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps. They can also be embedded in the Section 7 or 8 narratives)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Photo Log

Name of Property: Coca-Cola Bottling Plant, 1525 Church Street

City or Vicinity: Nashville

County: Davidson

State: Tennessee

Photographer: Phil Thomason

Date Photographed: June 24, 2026

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 65: Church Street façade, view SW.

2 of 65: Church Street façade, view S.

3 of 65: Church Street façade, view SW.

4 of 65: Church Street façade, main entrance, view SE.

5 of 65: Church Street façade, garage bay and brick detailing, view SE.

6 of 65: Church Street façade, view SE.

7 of 65: Church Street façade and west (16th Ave. N.) elevation, view SE.

8 of 65: West (16th Ave. N. elevation, view SE.

9 of 65: West (16th Ave. N. elevation, view NE.

10 of 65: South (Hayes Street) elevation, view NE.

11 of 65: South (Hayes Street) elevation, view NE.

12 of 65: South (Hayes Street) elevation, enclosed window detail, view NW.

13 of 65: South (Hayes Street) elevation, view NW.

14 of 65: South (Hayes Street) elevation, view NW.

15 of 65: East elevation, window detail, view W.

16 of 65: East elevation, view S.

17 of 65: South elevation of ca. 1955 building, view NW.

18 of 65: Interior of 1940 garage, view SW.

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- 19 of 65: Interior of 1940 garage, view SW.
- 20 of 65: Interior of 1940 garage view E.
- 21 of 65: Interior of 1940 garage, view E.
- 22 of 65: Interior of 1940 garage, view SW.
- 23 of 65: Ramp and sliding track door, 1940 garage, view SE.
- 24 of 65: Sliding track door in 1940 garage, view SE.
- 25 of 65: View of bowstring truss, 1940 garage, view E.
- 26 of 65: Small office and ramp to basement in 1940 garage, view N.
- 27 of 65: Basement of ca. 1955 building, view NE.
- 28 of 65: Automobile ramp into ca. 1955 building, view N.
- 29 of 65: Interior of 1940 garage, view SE.
- 30 of 65: Lobby and staircase off main entrance, view N.
- 31 of 65: Main entrance into lobby, view N.
- 32 of 65: First floor main office, view SW.
- 33 of 65: First floor main office, view NE.
- 34 of 65: Main office detail of wood paneling, door and clock, view S.
- 35 of 65: First floor bottling area, view NE.
- 36 of 65: First floor bottling area, detail of tile wall, view NE.
- 37 of 65: First floor bottling area, detail of tile columns, view S.
- 38 of 65: First floor bottling area, view E.
- 39 of 65: First floor bottling area, view SW.
- 40 of 65: First floor bottling area, stair to basement, view S.
- 41 of 65: First floor bottling area, stairs to second floor, view S.

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- 42 of 65: First floor of ca. 1955 building, view NE.
- 43 of 65: First floor driveway from main façade entrance to the 1926 garage, view S.
- 44 of 65: First floor, view of 1926 garage, view SE.
- 45 of 66: First floor, detail of office windows facing driveway, view E.
- 46 of 65: First floor, automobile ramp connecting 1926 and 1940 garages, view SE.
- 47 of 65: First floor, 1926 garage, view SE.
- 48 of 65: First floor, detail of pedestrian door and elevator in 1926 garage, view SE.
- 49 of 65: Second floor, ca. 1955 building, view SE.
- 50 of 65: Second floor, ca. 1955 building, view N.
- 51 of 65: Second floor, view of production area, view N.
- 52 of 65: Second floor, view of production area, view NW.
- 53 of 65: Second floor, view of hallway along south wall, view W.
- 54 of 65: Second floor bathroom, view N.
- 55 of 65: Second floor storage room, view S.
- 56 of 65: Second floor hallway along west wall, view N.
- 57 of 65: Second floor office, view N.
- 58 of 65: Second floor office and windows, view NE.
- 59 of 65: Second floor production room, view SW.
- 60 of 65: Second floor production room, view NW.
- 61 of 65: Second floor, production room, view SE.
- 62 of 65: Second floor, column detail in production room, view S.
- 63 of 65: Second floor production room, view NE.
- 64 of 65: Second floor room with tile walls, view NW.

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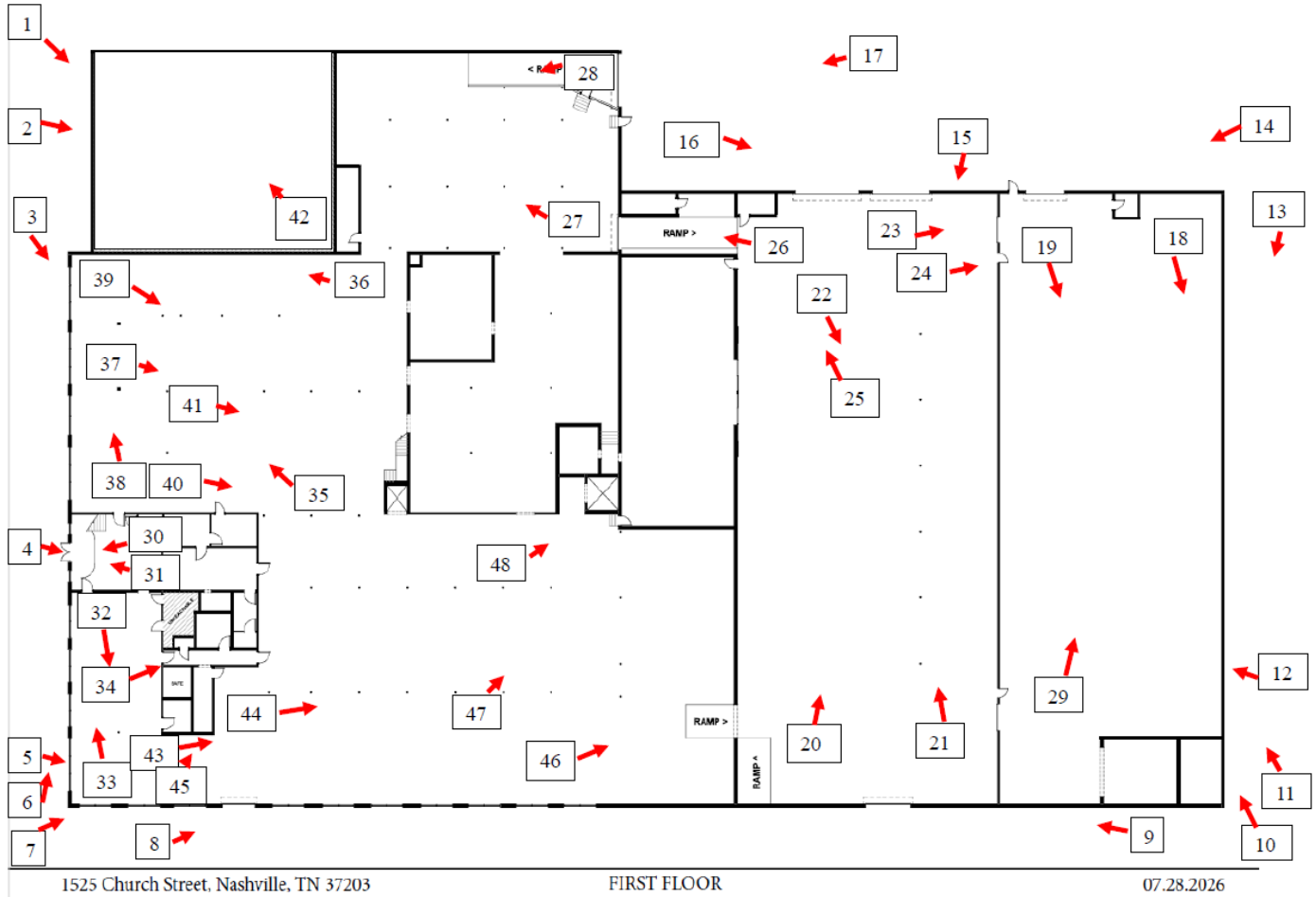
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65 of 65: Second floor room with tile walls and windows, view NW.

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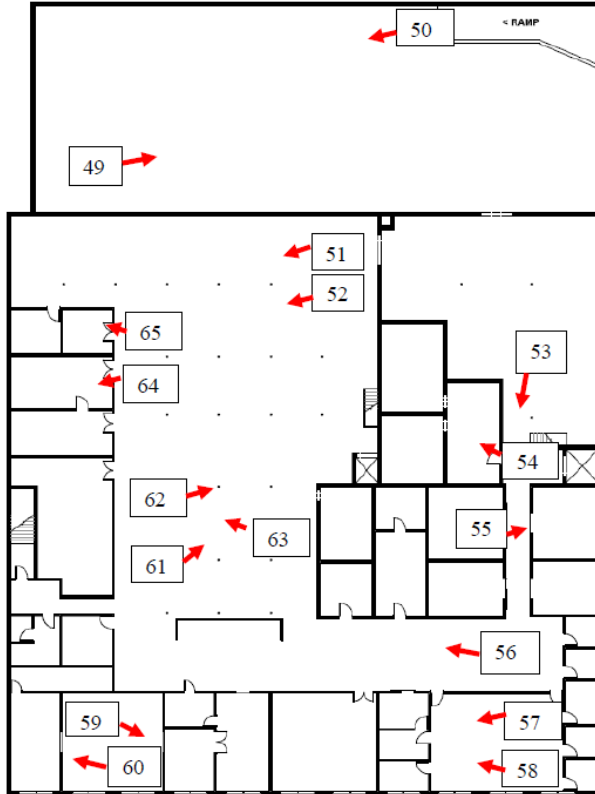
Site and First Floor Plan



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Second Floor Plan



1525 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37203

SECOND FLOOR

07.28.2026

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Coca-Cola Bottling Plant

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N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ____ Page 34

The N.R. Continuation Sheet should be used for additional supporting documentation such as historic photographs, maps, and addendum documentation. You may also embed supporting documentation and/or images within the text of Sections 7 and 8.

Property Owner(s):

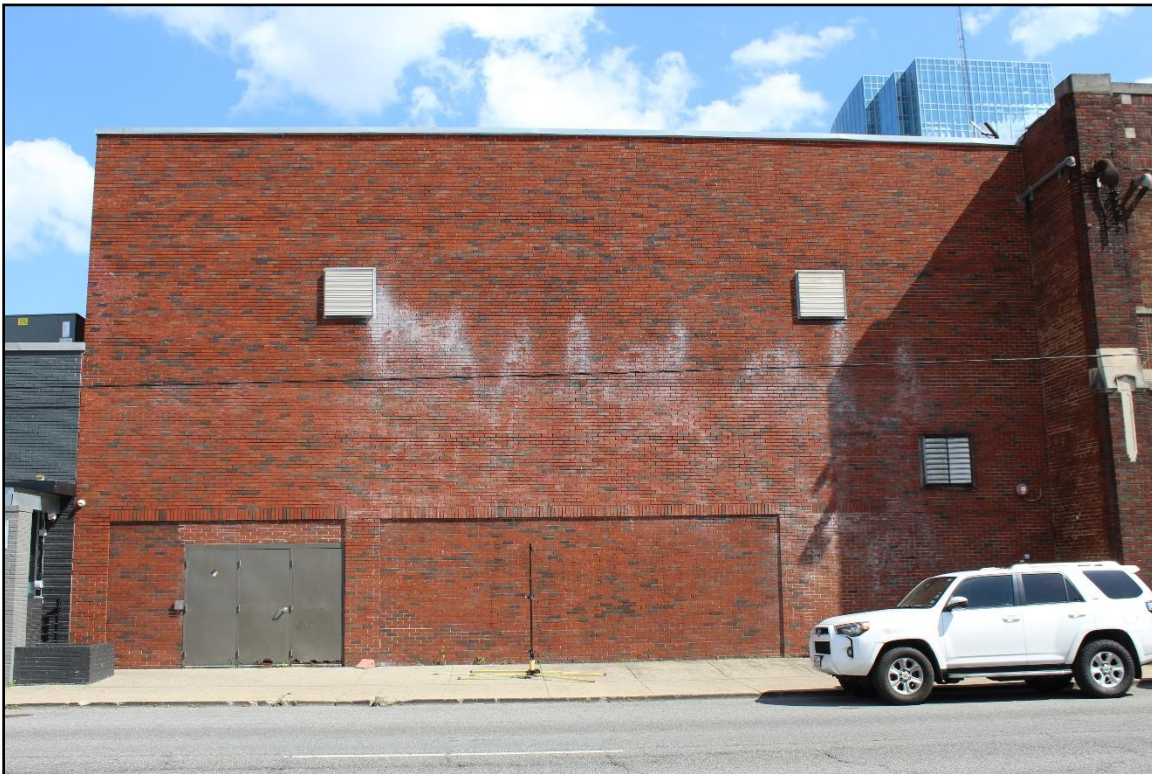
(This information will not be submitted to the National Park Service, but will remain on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission)

Name	Vikram Mehra Hines (Reed District Landco Partners, LLC)		
Street & Number	383 17 th Street, Suite 100	Telephone	770-206-5303
City or Town	Atlanta	State/Zip	GA, 30363

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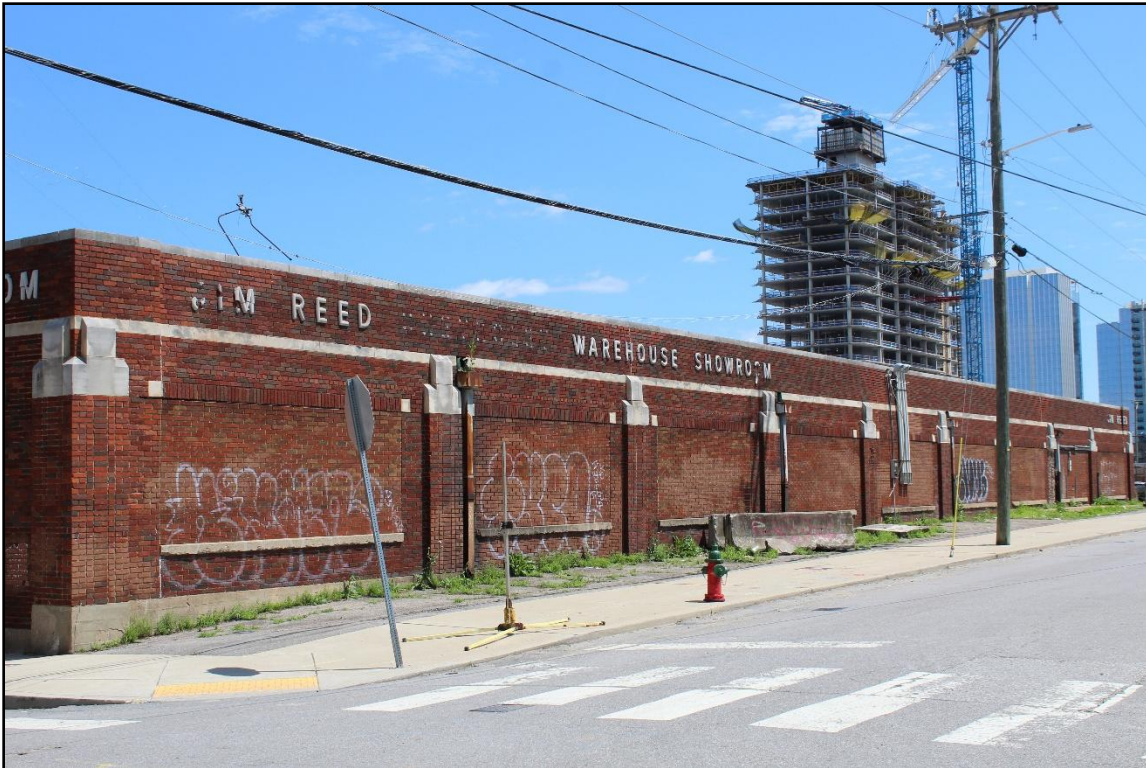


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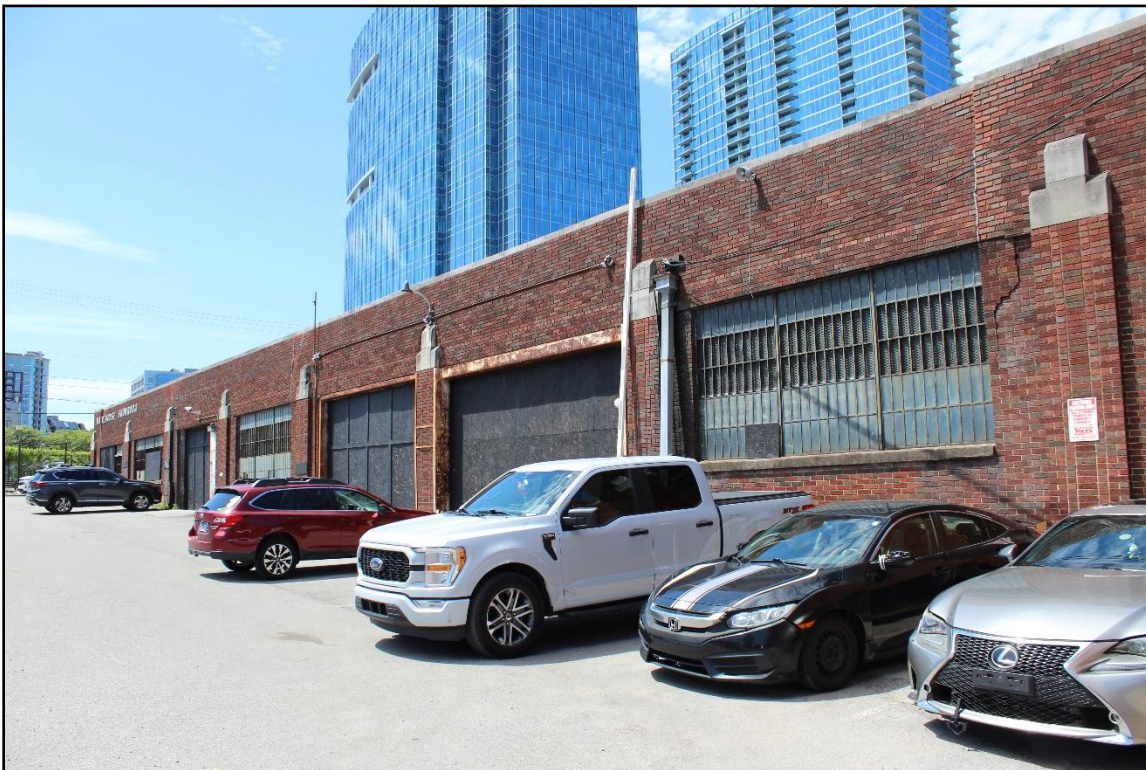


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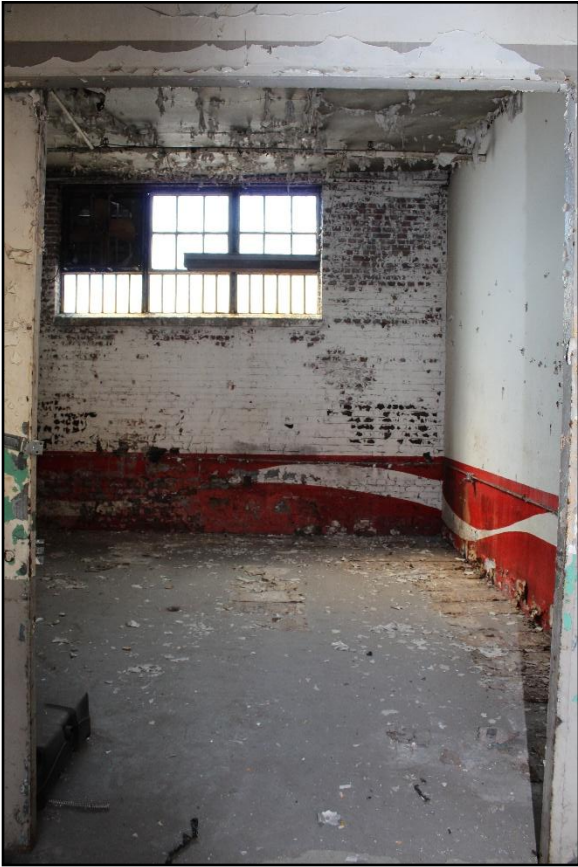


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**COCA-COLA BOTTLING PLANT
NASHVILLE, DAVIDSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**



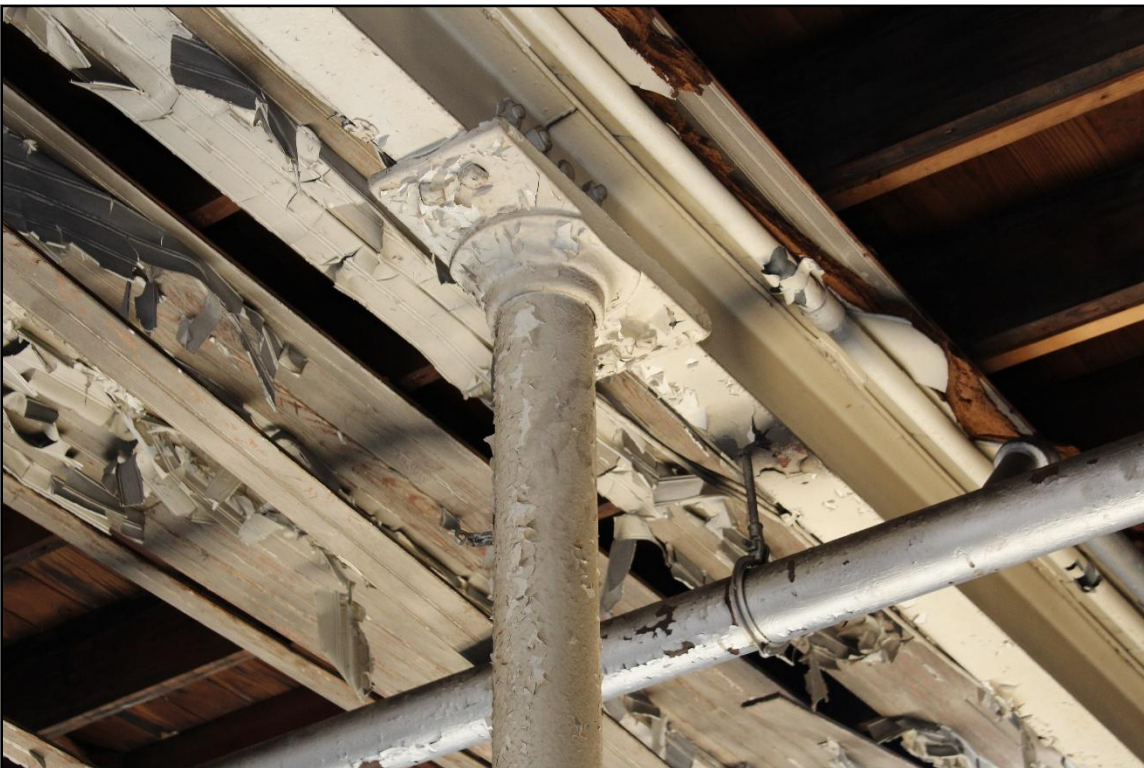
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