

NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
Office of Archives and History
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District

Elizabeth City, Pasquotank County, PK1124, Listed 4/30/2021

Nomination by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, hmwPreservation and Firefly Preservation Consulting

Photographs by Heather Slane, July 2019



509-521 North Water Street – facing north.



410-514 North Poindexter Street – facing northeast.



504 North Water Street – facing north to 705 East Burgess Street.

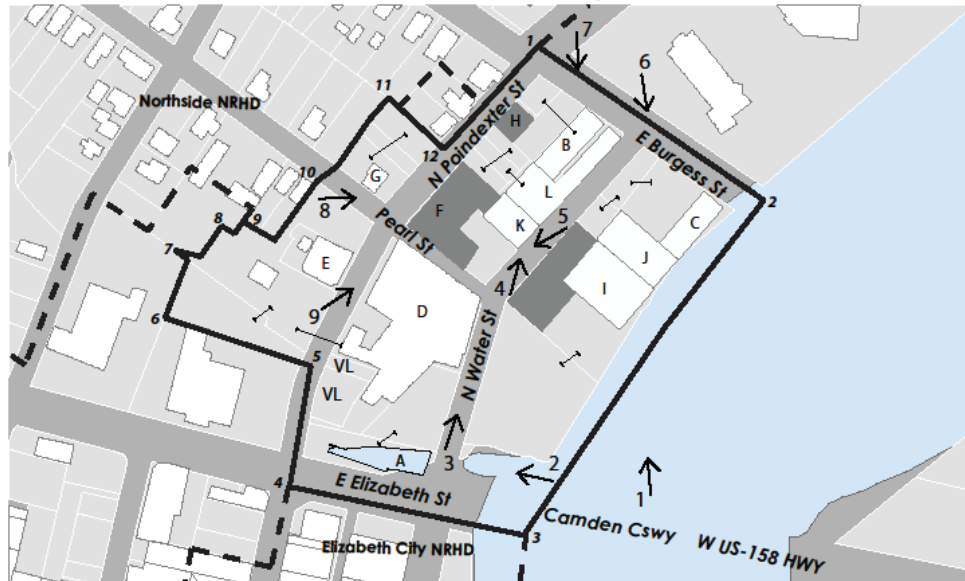
Elizabeth City Industrial National Register Historic District Elizabeth City, Pasquotank County, North Carolina

- Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District Boundary
- Contributing Building
- Non-Contributing Building
- Building Key
- Vacant Lot
- Vacant lot/parking associated with an adjoining lot
- Photo View
- Coordinates



200 100 0 200 Feet

Map prepared by Heather M. Slane, hmwPreservation, December 1, 2020



Lat/Long Coordinates		
1. 36.303420, -76.217936	5. 36.301970, -76.219159	10. 36.302776, -76.219213
2. 36.302767, -76.216724	6. 36.302117, -76.220028	11. 36.303169, -76.218827
3. 36.301310, -76.217722	7. 36.302428, -76.219993	12. 36.302927, -76.218459
4. 36.301462, -76.219293	8. 36.302542, -76.219736	
	9. 36.302573, -76.219612	

Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District Boundary Map

Elizabeth City Industrial
Historic District

Name of Property

Pasquotank County,
North Carolina

County and State

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 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: Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City, North Carolina 1793-1943
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly bounded by East Burgess Street, North Poindexter Street, East Elizabeth Street, and the Pasquotank River

City or town: Elizabeth City

State: NC

County: Pasquotank

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national

 statewide

X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A

 B

 C

 D



, Deputy SHPO

3/12/2021

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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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

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 ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>11</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>13</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry: manufacturing facility
Commerce/Trade: specialty store
Commerce/Trade: department store
Commerce/Trade: warehouse
Agriculture/Subsistence: processing
Agriculture/Subsistence: storage
Landscape: natural feature
Transportation: road related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry: manufacturing facility
Industry: industrial storage
Agriculture/Subsistence: processing
Social: meeting hall
Commerce/Trade: warehouse
Landscape: natural feature
Vacant/Not in Use

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other – 19th & 20th Century Vernacular

Other – Standard Commercial

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Brick

Concrete

Metal: aluminum

Stucco

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District is located just north of the commercial core of Elizabeth City on the west bank of the Pasquotank River. The district is the only remaining concentration of waterfront industrial buildings in Elizabeth City, which historically had a significant industrial presence in the region. The river remains a significant feature of the district with buildings on North Water Street oriented to face the river. An inlet, historically used for oystering, and the associated streams that flow into it extend along the south edge of the district, separating it from the commercial core of Elizabeth City.

The roughly 9.3-acre district encompasses portions of five city blocks. Streets are roughly arranged in a grid pattern with North Water and North Poindexter streets extending parallel to the Pasquotank River, resulting in a grid that is skewed approximately thirty degrees to the northeast. The area has level topography and, in keeping with its industrial use, has paved streets and sidewalks, but no formal or informal landscaping. Instead, paved and gravel parking areas extend adjacent to many of the buildings.

Resources include one- and two-story frame, brick, and concrete industrial buildings dating from c.1896 through c.1965. Generally speaking, the earliest buildings in the district were built on the banks of the Pasquotank River and on North Water Street, with the buildings on North Poindexter Street constructed closer to the mid-twentieth century. However, the district was constantly evolving, with buildings being constructed, demolished, and reconstructed throughout the twentieth century.

The district is bounded by the campus of the Mid-Atlantic Christian University (formerly Roanoke Bible College) on the north and by the Northside National Register Historic District on the northwest. There is commercial development to the southwest, and the Elizabeth City Historic District extends along the south boundary.

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Narrative Description

The Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District includes the only remaining collection of waterfront industrial resources in Elizabeth City. Established in 1793 near the mouth of the Albemarle Sound, the town served as a major port city for northeastern North Carolina. It was designated as the county seat in 1800 and grew further with the completion of the Dismal Swamp Canal in 1805. However, the extant industrial development dates to the railroad era in Elizabeth City. The Norfolk and Elizabeth City Railroad (later Norfolk Southern and now operated by the Chesapeake and Albemarle Railroad) was completed on the northwest side of town in 1881, after which the population grew from 2,315 people in 1880 to approximately 12,000 people in 1915.¹

Elizabeth City is located in east central Pasquotank County on the west bank of the Pasquotank River, which flows into the Albemarle Sound. Located in the largely rural coastal plain of northeast North Carolina, the city is located roughly forty miles south of Norfolk, Virginia, historically its most significant trading partner. The Norfolk Southern Railroad (constructed as the Norfolk and Elizabeth City Railroad) extends across the northwest side of the city linking Elizabeth City to Norfolk, as well as to Edenton, North Carolina, approximately thirty miles to the southwest at the mouth of the Chowan River.

The Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District is located just north of the commercial core of Elizabeth City on the west bank of the Pasquotank River. It includes portions of five city blocks and is bounded on the northwest by the Northside National Register Historic District (a residential district) and on the north by the campus of Mid-Atlantic Christian University. NC-158 (East Elizabeth Street) extends south of the district, separating it from the Elizabeth City National Register Historic District.

The district includes twelve primary industrial and commercial resources, including buildings, building complexes, and one site. The resources date from c.1896 (the date of the earliest part of the Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company Inc. Machine Shop and Foundry) with all of the primary buildings constructed by c.1958. The district is entirely industrial. In total, there are nine primary buildings, one site, two secondary buildings, and one object that were constructed between c.1896 and c.1965 and contribute to the significance of the district. Two primary resources, both buildings, and one secondary structure do not contribute to the district as they were altered or constructed after the period of significance and do not retain sufficient historic integrity. There are two unassociated vacant lots in the district; other vacant lots are owned by adjacent property owners. Eighty-three percent of the total primary resources contribute to the historic significance of the district.

The district is laid out on a grid plan oriented to the Pasquotank River resulting in a grid that is skewed roughly thirty degrees from true north. North Water Street and North Pasquotank Street extend parallel to the river, while East Elizabeth Street (NC-158), Pearl Street, and East Burgess Street run roughly perpendicular to the Pasquotank River. The topography of the district is largely flat and, in keeping with the industrial character of the district, is devoid of most trees, grass, or other vegetation. Exceptions to this are the trees that extend along the pier, on the bank of the Pasquotank River at the southeast corner of the district; small trees and shrubs along the east side of North Water Street, partially screening late-

¹ Tom Butchko, "Elizabeth City Historic District," National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1977, Section 8, 3.

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twentieth-century coolers on the rear of the Crystal Ice and Coal Company building; and a grassy area at the south end of North Water Street, where its intersection with East Elizabeth Street has been closed to traffic but the road bed remains.

The industrial buildings within the district have their setbacks and building size and scale in common. Lot sizes and shapes vary widely due to the ever-evolving industrial character of the district and the subdivision and recombination of lots over time. Despite the range of lot sizes and building ages, building setbacks are relatively consistent with buildings abutting the sidewalk or waterfront and adjoining one another to form a continuous façade.

Manmade elements in the district include the grid pattern of the street, curbs, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, and extant buildings. The streets are all paved with the exception of the east end of East Burgess Street. North Poindexter, North Water, and East Burgess streets are wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic, as well as on-street parking, while Pearl Street is significantly narrower. All streets have concrete curbs and gutters except for those in which the sidewalk itself forms the curb of the street, as is the case on the east side of North Water Street. Sidewalks are concrete with the exception of the center portion of the west side of North Water Street, which has a brick sidewalk. Parking areas are paved or loose gravel, and several are screened with chain link fences. Docks historically lined the buildings on the west bank of the Pasquotank and were reconstructed in the late 1990s, making the waterfront accessible once again.

The architecture of the district, most of which dates from the early-twentieth century, is largely vernacular. The most common forms are the one- and two-story, parapet-roofed, brick industrial buildings that face the Pasquotank River, as well as one-story brick commercial buildings facing North Poindexter, North Water, and East Burgess streets. Most have minimal detailing, though several have vague Colonial Revival- and Romanesque Revival-style details.

While the new construction of primary buildings within the district ceased after c.1958, the extant buildings continued to evolve with alterations made to accommodate changing industrial uses. Additionally, approximately seventeen commercial buildings and four houses have been lost within the district boundary since 1948, resulting in vacant lots used for parking located along North Water and North Poindexter streets. However, these vacant lots are indicative of the changing and do not significantly impact the density of the industrial area, which Sanborn Maps indicate was an ever-evolving landscape.

DISTRICT INVENTORY

The inventory is arranged alphabetically by street name, then ascending numerically by street number along those streets. Where current tax data does not provide a street address for buildings, the historic addresses from city directories were used. For this reason, the buildings were also assigned a letter that corresponds to the building location on the map. Building names and construction dates were derived primarily from Sanborn Maps, city directories, and architectural analysis. Whenever possible, resources are named for their first owner/occupant or for multiple owners/occupants associated with the property over time.

Properties in the inventory are coded as C (contributing) or NC (non-contributing due to age or alterations) based on their date of construction and level of historic integrity. Vacant lots (VL) are also

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noted to identify their frequency and location. However, only parcels that are not owned by adjacent property owners are marked as vacant lots on the district map. All contributing resources were constructed during the period of significance, c.1895 to c.1965, and retain sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to contribute to the historic character of the district.

Common changes within the Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District include the alteration of commercial storefronts; the replacement of doors and windows; and the infill of door and window openings. These changes most often illustrate the changing industrial use of the buildings over time and thus, when they occur alone or in combination, do not typically render a property non-contributing. A building is contributing if it retains its original form and massing; historic roofline; exterior materials; the visible location of original fenestration; and significant architectural features, specifically upper-level architectural detailing. For example, the c.1938 Gordon Service Station at 501 North Poindexter Street features a replacement door, a replacement overhead garage door, and all of the window openings have been boarded. However, the original window pattern remains visible and thus the building remains contributing to the district. Significant changes or the obscuring of the building form can render a commercial building noncontributing, as is the case with the c.1948 Miles Jennings, Inc., building at 500-506 North Poindexter Street, which was considerably altered between 1971 and 1991 with the installation of metal sheathing that completely conceals the c.1948 portion of the building and its associated additions. Alternately, while large, one-story coolers and freezers are located adjacent to the west elevation of the c.1914 Crystal Ice and Coal Company (504 North Water Street), the coolers and freezers do not immediately abut the building, but are instead connected only via an existing opening in the west wall of the building. Thus, they do not affect the contributing status of that building.

A) Poindexter Creek Inlet - 1890s-1940s, c.2015

Contributing Site

North side of East Elizabeth Street

The mouth (east end) of Poindexter Creek is located in the southeast corner of the district, just north of East Elizabeth Street at its intersection with the Pasquotank River. The inlet, the only part of the creek that remains visible, extends approximately 400 feet from the east side of Poindexter Street east to the Pasquotank River.

While no buildings or docks remain on the inlet, it is significant for its historic association with oyster harvesting in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and the United States Coast Guard in the 1930s and 1940s. The 1896 Sanborn Map shows oyster houses on both the north and south banks of the creek. By 1914, the oyster houses near the mouth of the creek were no longer extant, though several remained near Poindexter Street until at least 1931. The 1914 Sanborn Map also indicates that the area north of the Poindexter Creek had become increasingly industrial and a shipyard had been established south of the creek. The 1931 Sanborn Map shows a new bridge that extended Elizabeth Street across the Pasquotank River, and on the north side of this new bridge is shown a U. S. Coast Guard building and dock, which remained in use by the Coast Guard through at least 1948.

The inlet remained largely unaltered until about 2015 when improvements to Elizabeth Street resulted in the closure of North Water Street between Elizabeth and Pearl streets. The inlet was fitted with three large pumps that control the flow of water from the creek into the Pasquotank River. The pumps are operated by large generators located just north of the inlet and south of Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company, Inc., Machine Shop and Foundry (now Sanders Company Machine Shop and Foundry) on the west side of North Water Street.

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B) Jones Distributing Company – c.1923

Contributing Building

609 East Burgess Street

The deep, front-gabled, frame warehouse has a concrete block façade featuring a stepped parapet with terra cotta coping. The façade is three bays wide with an aluminum overhead door on the right (west) end. On the left (east) end, a vinyl door and a vinyl double-hung window are sheltered by a small, shed-roofed porch with standing-seam metal roofing. The porch is supported by square posts and has a modern wood railing. The building has a metal roof, and the right elevation has vertical metal sheathing. The left elevation faces a narrow alley, through which a spur of the railroad once extended. It has corrugated metal sheathing, and there are three double-hung vinyl windows near the north end of the elevation. A door near the south end of the elevation is sheltered by a shed roof on metal posts.

The building first appears on Sanborn Maps in 1923 as “feed and meal” storage, and the 1923-1924 city directory lists “Aydlett & Owen Feed” at this location. From at least 1936 to 1943, the warehouse was in use by the Works Progress Administration. Beginning in 1942-1943, and overlapping with the WPA occupancy during that initial year, the building was occupied by Jones Distributing Company, beer distributors. The 1948 Sanborn Map shows “beer warehouse” in this location, and city directories confirm that Jones Distributing Company remained in the building through at least 1973. The address was not listed in the 1976 city directory, and the building is currently used by Jennette Brothers (formerly Jennette Fruit and Produce Company) for storage.

C) Woodley Grocery Company – c.1938

Contributing Building

705 East Burgess Street

The two-story, three-bay, brick commercial building is located at the east end of East Burgess Street, adjacent to the Pasquotank River. The building (which faces East Burgess Street to the north) has a six-to-one common bond brick exterior, a modest corbelled brick cornice at the parapet, and metal coping. The second-floor façade retains three two-over-two wood-sash windows with soldier-course brick lintels and rowlock brick sills. Openings at the first-floor level have been modified. A window on the left (west) end has been infilled with brick, and a window opening near the center of the façade has been converted to a door; however, both retain brick lintels. A wide garage bay at the right (west) end of the façade has a soldier-course lintel matching the window openings and appears to be an original opening. Within the opening is a modern metal roll-up door. The east elevation, facing the Pasquotank River, has a single pedestrian entrance that was infilled with brick in the late 1990s. The west elevation has modified brickwork throughout, owing to the fact that this elevation was constructed as the exterior wall of an earlier building that is no longer extant. Two small window openings with wood lintels and wood and brick sills are located at the second-floor level of this elevation. Both were constructed as full-height window openings that opened from the now-demolished two-story building to the west and overlooked the one-story building that stood on this site until about 1938.

According to Branson’s NC business directories William J. Woodley, Sr. began a wholesale grocery business between 1890 and 1896 and likely operated at this location as Sanborn Maps show a wholesale grocery on this site as early as 1908, occupying most of the south side of East Burgess Street between North Water Street and the Pasquotank River. The 1912-1913 city directory confirms Woodley’s presence in this location and Sanborn Maps show Woodley growing his business and improving the buildings throughout the early twentieth century. By 1914, he had constructed a one-story building for “hay and salt” storage on the east end of the complex, on the site of the current building. This one-story building was used for salt storage through at least 1931. In 1938, the city directory lists the Woodley Grocery Company at the location, instead of simply listing Woodley by name, perhaps indicating a restructuring of

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the business. Sanborn Maps indicate that it was during this period, between 1931 and 1948, that the current two-story brick building was constructed. This building, along with two adjacent two-story buildings to the west (no longer extant) served as the Woodley Grocery Company through at least 1956. The significance of the Woodley Grocery Company is evidenced by the fact that the east end of Burgess Street was known locally as Woodley Wharf. By 1958, William J. Woodley Jr., the son of the founder who eventually took over his father's business, had passed away and the Woodley Grocery Company was no longer listed in city directories. The buildings were used as storage by a number of different occupants including Pell Paper Company beginning about 1970. While the other buildings in the complex have been lost (burned in 1977 when owned by the Pell Box Company and/or demolished in 2017), the building at the east end of the original complex remains adjacent to the Pasquotank River. It was acquired by Jennette Fruit & Produce Company in 1993.

310 North Poindexter Street – VACANT

312 North Poindexter Street – VACANT

D) Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company, Inc., Machine Shop and Foundry/Sanders Company Machine Shop and Foundry – c.1896-1948 Contributing Buildings

410 North Poindexter Street

The Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company, Inc., Machine Shop and Foundry occupies the majority of the block bounded by North Poindexter Street, North Water Street, Pearl Street, and Poindexter Creek. The complex was constructed over time with the earliest building appearing on the 1896 Sanborn Map. However significant building periods occurred starting in 1909 when the complex, originally called the North Carolina Iron Works, was owned by the Sanders family and renamed Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company, Inc., Machine Shop and Foundry. Another significant building period occurred about 1948 when the name was changed to Sanders Company Machine Shop and Foundry, the name still used today. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this block contained residences, which by 1914 had been largely replaced with commercial buildings and the enlarged foundry. By mid-century, the foundry had expanded to encompass most of the block and the only remaining commercial buildings were located on the south end of the block adjacent to Poindexter Creek.

The c.1896 North Carolina Iron Works included the two-story, front-gabled, steel-framed machine shop, the earliest extant building in the complex. Located just west of the southwest corner of North Water and Pearl streets, the building has a two-part gabled monitor roof, labeled on the 1896 Sanborn Map as a "lantern roof," with metal roofing. The building has vertical corrugated metal sheathing. A modern overhead garage door is located on the north elevation and is flanked by paired window openings that have been covered with translucent corrugated plastic.

In 1909, the name of the complex changed to Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company, Inc., Machine Shop and Foundry, and the complex was enlarged significantly. A two-story warehouse was constructed at the southwest corner of Pearl and Water streets, adjacent to the east elevation of the c.1896 building and one-story warehouse was constructed on the west elevation of the c.1896 building. Both additions have concrete floors and steel frame construction with vertical corrugated metal exteriors. Original first-floor window openings in both additions have been covered with translucent corrugated plastic. Second-floor window openings in the corner warehouse addition have been fully covered with vertical metal sheathing. A gable-roofed foundry was also constructed between 1908 and 1914. Located south of the machine shop and its additions, the front-gabled, steel-framed building faces Water Street to

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the east. It has a dirt floor, vertical metal sheathing and roofing, and skylights that are covered with corrugated translucent plastic sheathing.

Between 1914 and 1923, the open space between the rear (south) end of the corner warehouse and the north wall of the foundry was enclosed to create an auto bay and storage area, though this space was later incorporated into the foundry building.

The complex was enlarged again between 1923 and 1931 with a single-bay, one-story brick commercial building at the southeast corner of North Poindexter and Pearl streets, facing North Poindexter (410 North Poindexter). The building has an inset storefront with metal-framed display windows on a tiled bulkhead. An inset brick sign panel is located on the parapet, which has metal coping. Vinyl windows near the east end of the north elevation, facing Pearl Street, light the office, which were moved to this building from the c.1914 warehouse addition at the corner of Pearl and Washington streets. Three original fourteen-light windows are located near the west end of the north elevation.

The complex was enlarged significantly between 1931 and 1948, during which time the business became Sanders Company Machine Shop and Foundry. A steel-frame addition to the machine shop was constructed at the rear (south) of the c.1914 west wing of the building. A steel-framed foundry addition was constructed at the rear of the c.1896 building, connecting it to the c.1914 foundry on North Water Street. The east end of this addition, adjacent to the foundry has a two-story roof that originally had clerestory or "cupola" windows. However both parts of this wing now have vertical metal sheathing with no windows.

Also constructed between 1931 and 1948, the commercial building at the southeast corner of North Poindexter and Pearl streets was enlarged with three additional bays to the south. The bays each have an inset sign panel and metal coping at the parapet, matching the c.1931 part of the building. The center of these three bays contains an inset entrance with paired metal doors with one light each. The flanking bays have fixed windows and each of the three bays has four-part transoms over the storefronts. While brick has been applied to the façade, covering these bays, the storefronts remain visible on the interior of the building. A brick wing at the interior of the block, located adjacent to the rear of the three-bay commercial addition, extends beyond the south elevation of the commercial addition.

Also in place by 1948 was a "pipe shed" adjacent to the south elevation of the brick commercial wing. This wood-framed addition has vertical metal sheathing on the west elevation (facing North Poindexter Street) and the south elevation. It abuts the perpendicular brick wing at the rear of the commercial addition. A wood- and steel-framed open shed-roofed bay at the rear of the foundry addition contained blacksmith and storage space, though is now used exclusively for storage. To the rear of the open bay is an L-shaped, wood-framed "Pattern and Carpentry Shop," angled to fit around a former (unrelated) commercial building on the adjacent site to the southwest.

A one-story, shed-roofed, building at the south end of the complex, east of the pattern and carpentry building was constructed after 1948. Unfortunately, the interior of the block is largely obscured by vertical metal sheathing that extends as an opaque fence along North Poindexter Street and North Water Street.

The North Carolina Iron Works opened in 1896 and was incorporated in 1899 by George M. Scott, J.B. Blades, E.S. Willey, and J.T. Blythe. Renamed the Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company Inc. Machine Shop and Foundry, it was operated by the Sanders family beginning in 1909.² The early business

² *On the Shores of the Pasquotank* and "Sanders Makes Big Contribution to Navy," *The Daily Advance*, June 8, 1945, newspaper clipping provided to author by Sanders Company, Inc.; The 1912-1913 City Directory lists the following: J. F. Sanders (pres); Brad Sanders (v-pres & genl mngr); Andrew Sanders (treas); and H. W. Sanders (sec).

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was focused on parts for lumber companies, shipbuilding and repairs (utilizing its strategic location on Poindexter Creek), and plumbing fixtures. By 1923, the company also operated a shipyard on Riverside Avenue in Elizabeth City. The two locations operated as a single business until sometime between 1936 and 1942 when city directories list both the Elizabeth City Iron Works & Supply Co. on Riverside Avenue and the Sanders Company (mill supplies) at 321 North Water Street. The Sanders family operated both businesses through at least 1950, after which the shipyard changed names from Elizabeth City Iron Works & Supply Co. to Elizabeth City Shipyard, Inc., though Ernest Sanders remained listed as “chairman of the board.”

Sanders Company, Inc., remains in operation, operated by the sixth generation of Sanders family members, and produces predominantly gears and machine parts for lumber mills in the region. Earlier products included manhole covers for New York City, as well as several within this district and around Elizabeth City.

Garage – c.1965

Contributing Building

Located on the west side of North Poindexter Street, opposite the Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company Inc. Machine Shop and Foundry, is a one-story, front-gabled, frame garage. The garage has a concrete foundation, corrugated metal sheathing and roof, and a sliding door on the façade that is also sheathed with corrugated metal. The history of the building is unknown, but it is currently owned and used by the Sanders Company Machine Shop and Foundry.

E) Commercial Building – c.1948

Contributing Building

407 North Poindexter Street

The one-story, two-bay, concrete block commercial building, constructed between 1943 and 1948, illustrates the mid-twentieth-century commercial development of this area, the majority of early-twentieth century commercial buildings constructed north of Poindexter Creek having been demolished by this time. The north bay of the building is slightly deeper than the south bay. It retains a storefront with original paired one-light doors, jalousie windows in lieu of original display windows, and a boarded transom. It has blocked-in windows on the five-bay north elevation and metal coping at the parapet. The south bay has been covered with stucco and has metal coping at the parapet. The south storefront has six, fixed aluminum-framed display windows below a boarded transom. A corner entrance on the southeast corner of the building has a single one-light metal door with a boarded transom. Four six-light, steel-sash windows remain on the south elevation, the westernmost window altered to accommodate a louvered vent. At the west end of the south elevation is a modern overhead roll-up door. A shed-roofed bay spans the rear (west) elevation of this part of the building. An open, shed-roofed bay supported by wood posts projects from the west of the shed-roofed bay.

The building is absent from the 1931 Sanborn Map and the 1944-1945 city directory. The 1948 Sanborn Map shows the two-bay building as housing “stores.” The 1949-1950 city directory lists the occupants as the Reel Food Center (south bay) and Wash-O-Mat dry cleaners (north bay), indicating that the building originally housed businesses more closely oriented toward the residential neighborhoods to the north and west than the industrial area to its east. However, as early as 1955, the south bay was occupied by Penny-Jones Motor Company, Inc., and by 1958, the south bay housed Electric Motor Rewinding, which remained in the building through at least 1976. The Wash-O-Mat remained in the north bay through 1973, after which the bay was used for storage by Jennings-Miles Inc. located to the northeast.

Garage – c.1965

Contributing Building

Located west of the commercial building, within a fenced enclosure, is a front-gabled, frame garage. The building has corrugated metal sheathing and roof. A sliding door on the south gable end is also sheathed with corrugated metal.

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F) Miles Jennings, Inc., – c.1948, c.1958, c.1980

Non-contributing Building

500-506 North Poindexter Street

The earliest part of the four-part building, located at the northwest corner of North Poindexter and Pearl streets, was constructed about 1948 as a one-story, parapet-roofed, concrete-block building. The building was expanded to the northeast with a flat-roofed addition, likely in the mid-twentieth century. The building at 506 North Poindexter dates to 1958 when the city directory lists “Jennings Miles Inc.” at 500-508 North Poindexter, the first time the 508 North Poindexter address appears in the directory (though it was renumbered as 506 North Poindexter by 1964). The four-bay building has a running-bond brick veneer on the façade with projecting brick pilasters at each end of the façade. There is vertical metal sheathing on the exposed north elevation. A wide, overhead door is centered on the façade and flanked by four-light steel-sash windows with two-light operable sashes. A pedestrian door on the right (south) end of the façade is a one-light, hollow-core metal door. The gabled metal roof is partially supported by angled braces in the front gable, which is sheathed with vertical metal sheathing. A wing at the rear (east) of the building has a lower-pitched, gabled metal roof and connects to the rear of the warehouse at 509 North Water Street.

By 1971, a one-story, gabled building was constructed between the concrete-block and metal-framed buildings at 500 and 506 North Poindexter.³ A similar, gable-roofed, metal-framed building was constructed on the north side of Pearl Street, adjacent to the rear of 500 North Poindexter between 1971 and 1991. During this same time, vertical metal sheathing was added to the façade and south elevation of the concrete-block building at 500 North Poindexter. The only opening in the continuous vertical metal façade is a single, recessed entrance that appears to open to the flat-roofed addition on the north side of the concrete-block building at 500 North Poindexter.

According to an advertisement in the 1955-56 city directory, Miles Jennings, Inc., was established in 1896. The 1908 Sanborn Map shows a two-story “Machine Shop & Woodworking” building with an attached one-story blacksmith building on the south side of Pearl Street, just west of the Elizabeth City Iron Works & Supply Company Inc. Miles Jennings is listed on the map as the proprietor. Jennings remained in this location through at least 1914. By 1923, Jennings had moved his operation across the street to the northwest corner of Pearl and Water streets, east of the current buildings. The 1923-24 city directory lists Jennings as a “junk machinist” at 201 North Water Street, and the 1923 Sanborn Map confirms the presence of a “general machine shop” and blacksmith at this location. Jennings retained a shop on North Water Street through at least 1963.

Miles Jennings, Inc., is listed in the city directories at the location on North Poindexter Street from at least 1949-1973. Constructed prior to 1948, the one-story building at the northeast corner of North Poindexter and Pearl streets is labeled on the 1948 Sanborn Map as a “store” and it is listed in the 1949-50 city directory as Jennings-Miles Mill Superintendent, “Wholesale and Retail Mill and Logging supplies, Machine and Welding Shop.” The 1948 Sanborn Map labels the land between the earlier machine shop at Pearl and Water streets and c.1948 concrete-block building at Pearl and Poindexter streets as “junk yard.” City directories indicate that the brick-front building at 506 North Poindexter was constructed between 1956 and 1958. The metal-framed metal warehouse between 500 and 506 North Poindexter, as well as the warehouse to the east of 500 North Poindexter were constructed in the late twentieth century, likely when the metal façade was added to the Poindexter and Pearl street elevations. The buildings are currently used by Jennette Brothers (formerly Jennette Fruit & Produce Company).

³ NCDOT Historic Aerial Imagery from January 1971, shows a continuous span of roof from the 500 through 506 North Poindexter.

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**G) Gordon Service Station – c.1938
501 North Poindexter Street**

Contributing Building

Located at the northwest corner of North Poindexter and Pearl streets, this two-part, side-gabled commercial building was constructed about 1938. The building has a running-bond brick exterior, soldier-course brick watertable, and brick lintels and sills. There is an interior brick chimney and flush eaves typical of Depression-era and post-World War II construction. A near-full-width opening on the left (south) bay of the building has been largely infilled with plywood and a modern door, though the original opening remains visible. A wide garage bay on the right (north) end of the façade has a modern, overhead aluminum door. Windows on the side and rear elevations, including a single window in each gable, have been boarded, though remain extant. A shed-roofed, frame wing projects from the right rear (northwest) elevation, covered with plywood sheathing.

The building is first listed in the 1938-1939 city directory as Gordon Service Station, remaining in use as a service station through at least 1943. From at least 1949 to 1963 the building was occupied by Colonial Upholstering Shop. The building was occupied by O & E Quick Lunch from at least 1970 to 1976 and was known most recently as Mamie's Quick Lunch for the restaurant that occupied it.

Sign Post – c.1938

Contributing Object

Located at the southeast corner of the property, near the intersection of North Poindexter and Pearl streets, the metal sign post has a tapered vertical metal post with finial that is set within a cylindrical base. A horizontal bar projects to the east, toward North Poindexter Street, and is supported by scrolled metal brackets. No hanging sign remains.

**H) T. W. Williams Dry Goods Store – 1911, c.1958
514 North Poindexter Street**

Non-contributing Building

This two-story, brick commercial building is illustrative of the scale of commercial buildings constructed on Poindexter Street north of Poindexter Creek in the first two decades of the twentieth century, though has been substantially altered in the mid- and late-twentieth centuries. The full-width storefront has been infilled with brick, leaving only a single, deeply inset entrance with a solid door with single diamond-shaped light. A band of vertical plywood extends above the storefront at the transom level. The second floor is four bays wide with segmental-arch window openings with brick sills. All of the windows have been bricked in, though the openings remain visible. The parapet features two narrow sign panels beneath a corbelled brick parapet. An original stone in the parapet reads "T. W. Williams 1911." A later gabled roof projects above the original parapet and features vinyl siding and a single vent in the gable. The right (south) elevation has a single pedestrian entrance near the rear (east) of the first floor and three bricked-in window openings at the second floor, all with segmental arches and brick sills. The left (north) elevation is largely obscured by a full-depth, one-story, shed-roofed brick wing. The wing has two entrances on the façade, each a solid wood or metal door. A small, shed-roofed, frame wing at the second floor is located near the front of the elevation leaving a single, original segmental-arch window opening visible near the rear of the second floor (though the opening itself has been bricked in). Second-floor windows on the rear (east) elevation of the building, the only elevation that retains unpainted brick, have also been bricked in but retain segmental arches and concrete sills.

The building appears on the 1914 Sanborn Map as "dry goods" and through at least 1924 was operated as T. W. Williams & Son (dry goods). During this time, two members of the Williams family occupied houses immediately north of the store on North Poindexter Street. The building was occupied by a number of different merchants from at least the mid-1930s through the mid-1950s. Beginning about 1958, the building was owned and occupied by Independent Order of Odd Fellows – Achoree Lodge #14. The

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Odd Fellows were responsible for the replacement roof and the bricking in of the storefront and window openings.

D) Crystal Ice and Coal Company – c.1914

Contributing Building

504 North Water Street

The one-story, steel-framed building is oriented to face south, toward a parking lot on the south side of the building. The building has buttresses on the north and south elevations (noted on the 1914 Sanborn Map) and parapeted gables on the east and west elevations. The asymmetrical gabled roof that is located behind the parapet was installed after a 1975 fire destroyed the original monitor roof. The east elevation, facing the Pasquotank River, is blind and faced with painted brick. The north elevation is adjacent to the Globe Fish Company Building. The south elevation has been covered with stucco, and three garage bays with overhead doors have been installed near the center of the elevation, between existing buttresses. A metal door with a single light is located east of the garage bays. It is sheltered by a metal shed roof on metal posts that rest on a concrete “porch.” A single vinyl window to the east of the entrance has a fabric awning. The west elevation and southwest corner of the building, while they face North Water Street, were historically a side/rear elevation of the building, which was oriented toward the River. These areas are obscured by freestanding, flat-roofed coolers and freezers installed in 1978, 1980, 1995, and 1996. The Crystal Ice and Coal Company appears on Sanborn Maps in this location, on the west bank of the Pasquotank River just north of Pearl Street, as early as 1896, with W. E. Dunstan noted as the general manager in the 1912-1913 city directory. The company arose as a response to the seafood export market, with the company supplying ice to inland fishing vessels and local produce dealers. It became one of the largest ice plants in Eastern North Carolina, producing eighty tons of ice per day. The current building dates to c.1914 with the 1914 Sanborn Map noting pilasters on the south wall at fifteen feet on center and an open porch along the south elevation that projected outward in an L shape at the southwest corner of the building (where the coolers and freezers currently stand). An office and coal yard were located south of the building. The Sanborn Map shows interior features including cold storage along the river and freezing tanks near the center of the building. An original extension of the building to the west spanned a railroad spur that bisected the block and held furnaces. This part of the building was used by other occupant as early as 1931 and is no longer extant.

The 1923-1924 city directory lists W. G. Gaither as president and E. C. Conger as secretary/treasurer. By 1936, Conger is listed as president of the company and remained in that position until 1960. During his tenure, the company was listed as Coal, Ice and Commercial Cold Storage, adding oil and fuel products to their offerings beginning in 1955. The building remained largely unchanged through the 1960s with the exception of repeated alterations and reconfigurations of the porch and office on the south elevation of the building. By 1964, Crystal Ice and Coal Company was no longer listed in city directories and in 1969, the building was purchased by Jennette Fruit and Produce Company.

The company began operation in Elizabeth City in 1907, selling farm implements and supplies. In the 1930s, the company was renamed Jennette Fruit and Seed, then Jennette Fruit and Produce Company, operating out of a building on North Water Street, south of the district, from the 1930s through 1970. They purchased the Crystal Ice and Coal Company building in 1969 and remain in operation at this location, having expanded into the adjacent Globe Fish Company in 1978 and Woodley Grocery in 1993.⁴ It changed its name to Jennette Brothers Company in 1996.

Cooler/Freezer – 1978, 1980, 1995, 1996

Non-contributing Structure

⁴ Jennette Brothers, “Company History,” *Jennette Brothers Foodservice Distributors*, www.jennettebrothers.com/company-history (accessed May 2020).

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Modular, flat-roofed coolers and freezers are located along the rear (west) elevation and southwest corner of the building. The units, which are located about two-and-a-half feet from the east wall of the building, are constructed of prefabricated, insulated panels on a metal frame and concrete pad. There is metal coping at the roof and metal scuppers that drain to metal downspouts are located regularly along all elevations. Exterior coolant lines are located on the north elevation. There are no exterior windows or doors; instead the units, which are connected on their interiors, are accessed via a small hyphen that connects to an original door opening in the west wall of the Crystal Ice and Coal Company building. The first cooler was installed in 1978 with additions constructed in 1980, 1995, and 1996.

**J) Globe Fish Company – c.1923
506 North Water Street**

Contributing Building

Constructed about 1923, the two-part Globe Fish Company building faces the Pasquotank River to the east and features a four-bay section on the south and a two-bay section on the north (the north section was rented from the adjacent Woodley Grocery Company). The building features a painted brick exterior and paired batten doors at the first-floor level that open to the wood dock. The doors feature boards laid in a diagonal pattern. The second floor housed the company's offices and retains original two-over-two wood-sash windows, shaded by fabric awnings. The south section has ten windows and a steel pedestrian door accessed by a wood stair from the dock. The narrower north section is six bays wide at the second-floor level. This section originally extended all the way to North Water Street, spanning a railroad spur that bisected this block. However, the west section of the building is no longer extant. A one-story addition on the south elevation of the building was constructed by 1931 and included a series of one-story, cold storage rooms that opened to a shallow porch, nearly abutting the adjacent Crystal Ice and Coal Company Building. The one-story rooms were more fully enclosed and their east elevations, facing the water, have been covered with stucco, likely when the building became occupied by Jennette Fruit & Produce in the late 1970s. The rear (west) and north elevations that remain exposed are without fenestration, with the exception of the loading bay on the west elevation.

City directories list the Globe Fish Company at this location as early as 1912-1913 and the 1914 Sanborn Map confirms their presence. The company originally occupied buildings constructed in 1902 for the W. D. Lathrop Shingle Mill. The 1923 Sanborn Map illustrates the current two-story building "from plans." Historically, a railroad spur bisected this block from north to south, and the west wing of the 1923 building spanned the railroad spur and included a three-story building with storefront that faced North Water Street. By 1931, a one-story addition on the south elevation was constructed, adjacent to the Crystal Ice & Coal Company buildings.

The Globe Fish Company was established by members of the Daniels family (including E. R. Daniels, Arthur S. Daniels, J. P. Daniels, Robert P. Daniels, and Royden E. Daniels), in 1911 and remained in the Daniels family until its closure in 1978. Globe Fish Company was a major exporter of fish and local seafood, harvested from local waters with its location along the river allowing for boats to dock and unload their product directly into the building, which, according to Sanborn Maps, had "fish storage" on the east end of the building adjacent to the Pasquotank River. The company also owned a fleet of boats that operated from the dock. The Globe Fish Company and adjacent Crystal Ice Company buildings were connected on the interior, and a number of exterior openings were blocked in by Jennette Fruit & Produce Company when they acquired the Globe Fish Company building in 1978.

**K) Warehouse – c.1923
509 North Water Street**

Contributing Building

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Known locally as the “Water Street Warehouse,” the one-story, brick building has a six-to-one common-bond brick exterior with corbeled brick cornice (on the façade only) that matches that of the adjacent warehouse at 521 North Water Street. The building is five bays wide with a loading bay on the north end, three windows in the center, and a pedestrian door on the south end, all with segmental-arch lintels. The loading bay features paired replacement metal doors. Windows have been replaced with fixed one-light sashes, and a modern nine-light-over-two-panel door is located on the south end of the façade. The south elevation is blind, and the rear (west) elevation is obscured by the c.1958 part of the Miles Jennings, Inc., complex.

Constructed c.1923 for G. W. Parsons & Son, who also occupied the adjacent building at 521 North Water, this building was used by Parsons for cotton storage, though only through the mid-1930s. From at least 1936 to 1939, city directories list the occupant as D. M. Jones Company, a hardware company, who used the building as a warehouse for their business near the intersection of Poindexter and Colonial streets, south of the district. The 1948 Sanborn Map shows “auto repair” in this location, and the 1949-1950 city directory lists Armstrong Motor Company “Studebaker Cars and Trucks, Sales and Service” in this location. However, by 1955 the Armstrong Motor Company had moved to South Road Street and the building was once again vacant. The building is listed either as “storage” or not at all in city directories from 1958 to 1966. Pell Paper Box Company, Inc., utilized the building for storage from at least 1970 to 1976 and sold the building to Jennette Fruit & Produce in 1993.

L) G. W. Parsons & Son Warehouse – c.1923

Contributing Building

521 N. Water (southwest corner of North Water and East Burgess streets)

Located at the southwest corner of North Water and East Burgess streets, this L-shaped building features a narrow north elevation, a long elevation facing North Water Street to the east, and a wing on the southwest end of the building that projects into the interior of the block creating the L shape. The brick building has a six-to-one common-bond exterior with a corbelled brick cornice. The north elevation, facing East Burgess Street, is two bays wide with two-over-two wood-sash windows with soldier-course lintels and rowlock sills. Two matching windows are located at the north end of the east elevation along with a four-panel door with six-light transom. The southern three-quarters of the east elevation has nine six-light wood-sash windows, each in a segmental-arch opening. The windows are located near the top of the elevation. Below the windows are two loading bays. The southern bay has a modern overhead metal door with a soldier-course lintel. The northern bay, located roughly in the middle of the façade, has paired batten doors with the boards laid at a diagonal. These doors are located above grade with a concrete loading bay below. Windows on the west elevation, facing the railroad spur, have metal-covered shutters. G. W. Parsons & Son are listed in the city directory as early as 1912-1913 as merchandise brokers, operating a business at 11-13 North Water Street. They erected the brick warehouses at 509 and 521 North Water Street between 1914 and 1923, moving their business several blocks north, perhaps to take advantage of the proximity to the railroad freight yard just across East Burgess Street. The 1923 Sanborn Map shows “potato and feed storage” in the south part of the building and “flour and feed storage” in the north part of the building. G. W. Parsons & Son remained in the buildings through at least 1943, though were listed as “bag manufacturers” in city directories beginning in 1936. By 1948, Pell Paper Box Company, Inc., which occupied buildings on the opposite side of North Water Street (none of which are still extant) was using the building for printing (south end) and paper storage (north end). Pell Paper Box Company, Inc., remained in the buildings through at least 1976 and sold the building to Jennette Fruit & Produce in 1993.

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Integrity Statement

The Elizabeth City Historic District retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The district retains its original street patterns and building orientation and setbacks. The district also retains a collective density, despite the loss of several buildings in the late 1970s, that is reflective of an ever-evolving landscape as illustrated by early twentieth century Sanborn Maps. The buildings retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. While many buildings within the boundary have experienced material alterations (including bricked in storefronts and windows), these changes illustrate their continued industrial use and, in some cases, were made by mid-twentieth-century industries that are themselves significant to Elizabeth City. While late-twentieth century coolers/freezers obscure the rear of the Crystal Ice and Coal Building, they are set apart from the building itself, and have not materially altered the west elevation, which is itself the rear of the building. Together the elements of the district retain sufficient integrity of design, materials, and workmanship to convey the industrial significance of twentieth century Elizabeth City and collectively make up the best remaining intact waterfront industrial area in Elizabeth City.

Statement of Archaeological Potential

The Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District is closely related to the surrounding environment and landscape. Terrestrial and submerged archaeological deposits and remnant landscape features such as road beds and paths, infrastructural remains related to the management of water, waste, and energy, filled-in privies and wells, shipwrecks and remnants of docking facilities, debris that accumulated in the district from industrial and domestic activities, and structural remains which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the district. Structural remains that may be present in the Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District include those of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century enterprises including cotton seed storage and processing facilities, oyster and fish houses, ice and coal factories, lumber mills, machine shops and iron works, brewing and bottling plants, and a cigar factory, as well as those associated with worker residences in portions of the district later converted to industrial use. Information concerning industrial development and engineering in Elizabeth City, worker health, nutrition, and quality of life, environmental transformations during industrial development, and the effects of technological change on work culture and daily life, as well as details of construction and the operation of industrial facilities can be obtained from the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the property. At this time no investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and these potential remains should be considered in any future development of the property.

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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.)

- ☐ 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry

Period of Significance

c.1896-c.1965

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District is significant at the local level under Criterion A for Industry as the only remaining concentration of early- to mid-twentieth-century industrial buildings in the city. Although Elizabeth City was once a center of industry for northeastern North Carolina, little remains of its industrial landscape. The city's early industrial development was fueled by the completion of the Dismal Swamp Canal in 1805, with its peak after the arrival of the Elizabeth City and Norfolk Railroad (now operated by the Chesapeake and Albemarle Railroad) in 1881. The availability of land combined with access to river and railroad transportation resulted in the establishment of industrial complexes that formed a ring around the city: along the railroad tracks to the north and west, along Poindexter and Knobbs creeks to the north, along the Pasquotank River on the city's eastern border, and clustered at the mouth of Charles Creek to the south. As transportation routes expanded and changed during the twentieth century, so too did the industrial landscape. Companies frequently rebuilt or expanded their facilities, changed locations, bought out other businesses, or closed their operations. As the railroads gave way to automobiles, many of the industries along the railroad tracks closed and were demolished to make way for expanding residential neighborhoods. As regional timber resources were depleted, lumbering operations began to close. And as shipbuilding waned in the city, many of the industries adjacent to the Pasquotank River were demolished for public parks, pleasure boat access, and riverfront housing. Although a small number of industrial buildings from the early twentieth century remain extant throughout Elizabeth City, the historic district represents the only remaining grouping of industrial buildings from this period, and the only remaining industrial district that retains its early- to mid-twentieth-century industrial character. The period of significance for the historic district begins in c.1896 with the construction of the oldest extant building within the Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company, Inc., complex, and extends to c.1965, by which time the remaining extant above-ground resources within the historic district had been constructed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Background and Industrial and Commercial Contexts⁵

Early Development of Industry: 1793 to 1895

Elizabeth City is the county seat of Pasquotank County in the northeastern Coastal Plain of North Carolina. The county was established in 1681 and named for the Pasquotank Native Americans, and it was known at that time as the Pasquotank Precinct of Albemarle County. Much of the eastern border of the county is formed by the Pasquotank River, while most of the western border is the Little River, both of which flow southeast into the Albemarle Sound. There is some agriculture in Pasquotank County,

⁵ This context relies heavily on the available city directories and Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps for Elizabeth City. City directories are available online via DigitalNC, www.digitalnc.org, for the years 1912-1913, 1923-1924, 1936-1937, 1938-1939, 1942-1943, 1948-1949, 1955-1956, 1958-1959, 1960-1961, and 1962-1963. City directories are available at the Pasquotank Regional Library in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, for the years 1944-1945, 1964, 1966, 1970, 1973, and 1976. Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps are available online via NC Live, www.nclive.org, for the years 1885, 1891, 1896, 1902, 1908, 1914, 1923, 1931, and 1948. To improve clarity, these footnotes have been simplified to "City Directories" or "Sanborn Maps," and full citations for these materials may be found in the Bibliography.

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producing potatoes, corn, soybeans, wheat, cabbage, and broccoli, however, shipbuilding and lumbering have historically been the county's most important industries.⁶

Elizabeth City began in the eighteenth century as a small port on the west bank of the Pasquotank River narrows with a ferry, gristmill, trade goods inspection station, and a small number of houses. Charles Creek, Poindexter Creek, and Knobbs Creek also contributed to the formation of a town in this location. In 1793, this budding community was chosen as the southern terminus of the Dismal Swamp Canal, which connected the Albemarle Sound with the markets in Norfolk, Virginia, and remains the oldest operating artificial waterway in the country. Elizabeth City was incorporated that year and laid out on fifty acres of land purchased from Adam and Elizabeth Tooley's "Narrows Plantation," with streets laid out in a grid pattern following the riverfront. The town was first known as Reding (also frequently spelled Redding), but the name was changed to Elizabethtown in 1794. Since there were already two other towns in North Carolina with the same name, it was changed again to Elizabeth City in 1801. The name is believed to have been selected in honor of Elizabeth Tooley, who had inherited "Narrows Plantation" from her father. In 1799, Elizabeth City was designated the Pasquotank County Seat, and a courthouse, prison, and stocks were constructed.⁷

The completion of the Dismal Swamp Canal in 1805 and the completion of the Pasquotank County Courthouse the following year resulted in the establishment of Elizabeth City as a key commercial and industrial center in northeastern North Carolina. The addition of a steamboat line by 1817 and a stage coach line in 1818 made Elizabeth City a transportation hub, moving people and goods up and down the North Carolina and Virginia coastlines. General stores and hotels soon opened the town to provided services to travelers and the steadily growing population. Improvements to the Dismal Swamp Canal in the 1820s and again in the 1840s increased the traffic through Elizabeth City. The city's early growth was also fueled by the establishment of a customs house in 1827. Roads in and out of Elizabeth City were improving during the early nineteenth century as well, which made the town more accessible to farmers throughout the region who needed markets to sell their agricultural products, stores from which to purchase items they were unable to make themselves, and the services of blacksmiths, doctors, lawyers, and other professionals. During the early decades of the nineteenth century, these transportation lines caused a stronger connection between Elizabeth City and Virginia than North Carolina.⁸

The Portsmouth and Weldon Railroad, which bypassed Elizabeth City, was constructed in the 1830s, followed by the Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal in the 1850s, which was a shorter route from Norfolk to the Albemarle Sound than the Dismal Swamp Canal. Although both drew commerce away from Elizabeth City, the antebellum years brought significant industrial development to the town. The primary industry, shipbuilding, expanded dramatically, and additional industries included brick and lime manufacturing,

⁶ Jay Mazzocchi, "Pasquotank County," *NCpedia*, www.ncpedia.org/geography/pasquotank (accessed May 2020).

⁷ Tom Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, 1793-1943," Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Register of Historic Places nomination, 1993, Section E, 1-3; Thomas R. Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank: The Architectural Heritage of Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County, North Carolina* (Elizabeth City, NC: Museum of the Albemarle, 1989), 133; Mazzocchi, "Pasquotank County"; Martha Navy, "The Tooleys Sold Land for Site of Elizabeth City," *Yearbook, 1954-1955* (Elizabeth City, NC: Pasquotank Historical Society, 1954-1955), 50-51; "Fred P. Markham, III, "Barmaid or Aristocrat?" *Yearbook, 1954-1955* (Elizabeth City, NC: Pasquotank Historical Society, 1954-1955), 52-53.

⁸ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 3-6; John Elliot Wood, "Brief Sketch of Pasquotank County," *Yearbook, 1954-1955* (Elizabeth City, NC: Pasquotank Historical Society, 1954-1955), 24.

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agricultural machinery, harness and saddle shops, carriage factories, gristmills, furniture makers, and herring and shad fishing.⁹

The Civil War brought growth in Elizabeth City to a halt and caused the town to reinvent itself after the war ended. Although the canals initially remained open in spite of the Union blockade on the Virginia and North Carolina coasts, in 1862, Union forces took control of both Elizabeth City and Norfolk. The canal remained undamaged during the war, but fell into disuse in the immediate post-war years, causing severe economic depression in Elizabeth City.¹⁰ The town instead looked to the railroad as the primary transportation system to support its trade-dependent economy, and in 1870, the Elizabeth City and Norfolk Railroad was chartered. Construction finally began in 1880, with laborers offered seventy-five cents per day, and the line from Norfolk to Edenton was completed in 1881. To better reflect its regional access, and to the dismay of Elizabeth City residents, the railroad was renamed the Norfolk Southern Railroad in 1883. It was renamed several more times over the next few decades, becoming the Norfolk and Southern Railroad in 1891, then the Norfolk Southern Railroad Company in 1910, followed by the Norfolk Southern Railway in 1942.¹¹ Industries were located along the Pasquotank River from Charles Creek at the southern end of the city to Knobbs Creek at the north end, and they included many of the city's earlier industries: shipbuilding, agricultural machinery, gristmills and sawmills, carriage and wagon shops, brickmaking, saddle and harness shops, a blacksmith, and cabinet makers.¹² None of these buildings remain extant.

The main line of the railroad was constructed around the western edge of Elizabeth City, but in 1885, a spur was built along the city's northern boundary, curving south along the riverside to the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue (now North Poindexter Street) with Pearl Street, providing direct access between the railroad, steamship companies, and the adjacent industries. Norfolk Southern operated a freight and passenger depot on this spur, just north of Pleasant (now East Burgess) Street adjacent to the historic district, with sidings extending south from the depot to the industries located within the historic district.¹³

The connectivity of this transportation system had an immediate effect on the town's industries. In the 1880s and 1890s, growth of the industrial district was concentrated adjacent to the Pasquotank River, the city's eastern boundary, and by 1891 included saw and planing mills, grist mills, a net and twine factory, a cottonseed oil mill, cotton gins, oyster packing plants, shipyards and shipbuilders, and a coal yard. Lumber mills quickly dominated the landscape north of the historic district near Knobbs Creek. The Kramer Brothers Company was the largest lumber company in Elizabeth City, with multiple facilities

⁹ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 7-9.

¹⁰ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 13-14.

¹¹ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 14, 19; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 155-156; J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Elizabeth City & Norfolk Railroad," *Carolana*, www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_elizabeth_city_norfolk.html (accessed May 2020); J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Norfolk Southern Railroad," *Carolana*, https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_norfolk_southern.html (accessed May 2020); J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Norfolk & Southern Railway," *Carolana*, https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_norfolk_southern_railway.html (accessed May 2020); J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Norfolk Southern Railroad #2," *Carolana*, https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_norfolk_southern_2.html (accessed May 2020); Wood, "Brief Sketch of Pasquotank County," 24-25.

¹² Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 16-17.

¹³ Sanborn Maps; Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 20-22.

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throughout the city, and was of substantial reputation to have sold lumber to the Wright Brothers in the early 1900s as they passed through Elizabeth City on their way to Kitty Hawk. The Foreman-Blades Lumber Company was also an important local lumbering company, which operated in Elizabeth City for nearly one hundred years. A shingle mill and several small sawmills also operated near the confluence of Knobbs Creek with the Pasquotank River.¹⁴ None of these facilities remain extant.

Meanwhile, within the historic district, the W.D. Lathrop & Co. Cottonseed Warehouse was established on the Pasquotank River, just south of Pleasant (now East Burgess) Street, and the complex straddled the railroad siding that ran through the middle of that block.¹⁵ By 1891, Lathrop & Co. was known as Elizabeth City Oil Mills, and the facility had expanded the existing warehouse and constructed two new storage buildings. Elizabeth City Crystal Ice & Coal Company opened a facility adjacent to the river just south of the oil mill, and oyster houses were constructed where Poindexter Creek meets the Pasquotank River.¹⁶ Fisherman often moored their fishing boats here as well, the most famous of which was the *Hattie Creef*. Built in 1889 by George Washington Creef, Jr., of Manteo, and named for his daughter, the boat served as a fishing and oystering vessel until about 1890, then became the primary passenger transportation vessel from Elizabeth City to the Outer Banks. It is most remembered for carrying the Wright Brothers to Kitty Hawk in 1900.¹⁷ None of these buildings, or vessels, remain extant.

Elizabeth City's Industrial Prime: 1895-1960

Further change to Elizabeth City's transportation network around the turn of the twentieth century brought further change to the city's industries as well. In 1892, Lake Drummond Canal and Water Company purchased the Dismal Swamp Canal and began significant improvements. The canal was deepened, widened, and straightened, and new locks were built. The canal re-opened in 1899 and reached its peak success over the following decade. The Federal government purchased the Albemarle-Chesapeake Canal, making it an addition to the toll-free Intracoastal Waterway. The Dismal Swamp Canal, which relied on tolls to operate, was unable to compete. Although it too was purchased by the government and became toll-free in the late 1920s, it never recovered its former importance in the transportation of commercial goods.¹⁸

Other aspects of Elizabeth City's transportation network also saw significant change in the early 1900s. In 1904, a spur of the Suffolk and Carolina Railroad was constructed along Grice Street to North Water Street and the riverfront, south of the historic district, bringing easier rail access to the adjacent businesses. The Suffolk and Carolina Railroad was acquired by Norfolk and Southern Railroad in 1906. Modern brick roads were constructed in 1919 and 1920 on the southern end of the city. U.S. Highway 158, which runs with Elizabeth Street at the south end of the historic district, was built in 1925 to connect

¹⁴ Sanborn Maps; Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 20-22; Marjorie Ann Berry, *Legendary Locals of Elizabeth City* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 48, 55.

¹⁵ Sanborn Maps; Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 20-21.

¹⁶ Sanborn Maps; Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 21-22.

¹⁷ Davyd F. Hood and Joe Mobley, "George Washington Creef House," Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1980, Section 8, Page 2.

¹⁸ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 21, 28-29.

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Elizabeth City north to Gates County. Reliance on automobiles led to the construction of the Wright Memorial Bridge across the Currituck Sound in 1930.¹⁹

As river, rail, and road transportation networks expanded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Elizabeth City's industrial district, which was still concentrated on the riverfront, expanded as well. Shipbuilding dominated the riverfront south of the historic district, including the E.S. Willey Ship Builder and Marine Railway, T.B. Hayman Boat Builders, and the Elizabeth City Shipyard and Boat Line, as well as several smaller operations, all of which were established between 1895 and 1923. By 1915, at least forty-three freight boats were doing regular business in Elizabeth City, and there was regular passenger service from the city to points south, including Hyde, Tyrrell, Dare, and Currituck counties. The shipyards continued to thrive until water travel was replaced by private automobiles, and by the 1950s, most of the shipyards had been demolished in favor of riverfront parks and housing. The Coast Guard also took advantage of the waterfront access and constructed a carpenter shop and dock across Poindexter Creek from the historic district by 1931. In 1939, several miles southeast of the city, the Coast Guard constructed an air station to serve as a headquarters for marine search and rescue operations on the North Carolina coast. The carpenter shop is no longer extant, but the air station remains in operation.²⁰

Several lumber companies formed along the river south of the historic district as well. Kramer Brothers, T.A. Commander, W.W. Griffin, R.B. Cotter, and Lambert Brothers all operated sawmills, planing mills, or lumber yards in this part of the city in the early twentieth century. Although more than one thousand workers were employed by lumber companies in 1915, the lumber industry was hit hard by the Great Depression, and most of the lumbering operations south of the historic district closed. In the 1920s, Kramer Brothers had consolidated its operations to a single plant north of the city on Knobbs Creek, which produced flooring, siding, doors, sash, blinds, moldings, scrollwork, church pews, and more, and was able to weather the Depression by reducing wages.²¹ Of these, only the T.A. Commander building on South Water Street remains extant, although significantly altered.²²

North of the city limits, land was abundant, inexpensive, and well-connected to waterways and railroads. As a result, many new industries were established along Knobbs Creek in the early twentieth century, primarily related to Elizabeth City's lumber market. Kramer Brothers Company established a facility on the creek in the 1920s, then relocated its facilities from other areas of the city to this location. Foreman-Blades Lumber Company, Dare Lumber Company, Foreman-Derrickson Veneer Company, Chesson Manufacturing Company, and a shingle mill (which changed ownership every few years) operated facilities on Knobbs Creek from around 1900 through the mid-twentieth century. In addition to these large operations, smaller companies including Pasquotank Lumber Company, Elizabeth City Box Company, North Carolina Tray and Basket Company, Elizabeth City Manufacturing, Elizabeth City Lumber

¹⁹ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 29-30; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 156; J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Suffolk & Carolina Railway," www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_suffolk_carolina.html (accessed May 2020).

²⁰ Sanborn Maps; Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 31-32, 37; C.E. Weaver, comp., *Elizabeth City: Rich in Natural Beauty, Unsurpassed in Location, Unlimited in Resources: Manufacturing, Lumbering, Trucking, and Fishing Center* (Richmond, VA: Central Publishing Company, 1915), 1, Pasquotank Regional Library, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

²¹ Sanborn Maps; Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 31-32; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 154; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 16.

²² Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 177.

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Company, and National Box Company each operated plants in this area for short periods of time.²³ Although some scattered industry remains in operation on Knobbs Creek today, none of these historic industrial complexes are extant.

Industry also began to expand away from the waterways during the first decades of the twentieth century, following the Norfolk and Southern Railroad tracks along the north and west boundaries of the city. Textiles dominated this part of town, with the Elizabeth City Cotton Mill established in 1895, followed by the Elizabeth City Knitting Mill (later known as Elizabeth City Hosiery Company) in 1902. Pasquotank Hosiery Company, Peoples (later known as Eastern) Oil and Ginning Company, and Produce and Ginners Company also established facilities adjacent to the railroad tracks. Brick-making was also important in this area of the city, with both the F.G. Thompson Brick Works and Elizabeth City Brick Works established by 1902. As automobiles became increasingly popular, Standard Oil Company of New Jersey and Gulf Refining Company both opened plants near the railroad tracks. Other industries in this area included Southern Roller, Stave, and Heading Company, C.M. Whitley and Company Pork Packers, and Griggs-Forbes Furniture Company. Of these, only the Elizabeth City Brick Works remains in operation, and the Elizabeth City Cotton Mill remains extant, although vacant since 2008.²⁴

Meanwhile, within the historic district, change remained the only constant during the first decades of the twentieth century. The E.S. Willey Wagon & Machine Shop opened on North Poindexter Street at the south end of the district by 1896, then was demolished by 1902 and a new cigar factory was built in its place, which in turn was demolished by 1914.²⁵ The Robert Portner Brewing Company Bottling Works also opened on North Poindexter Street by 1896, then moved to North Water Street by 1902. By 1912, Coca-Cola Bottling Works occupied the building, but around 1917, Coca-Cola relocated to a new facility south of the historic district. By 1923, the bottling works was demolished to make way for a railroad siding through middle of the block.²⁶ On the riverfront, W.D. Lathrop Oil Mill, which had opened by the 1880s, shifted to the lumber industry and became W.D. Lathrop Shingle Mill by 1896. By 1902, the shingle mill had become Strahl Barrel Factory, which then closed by 1908.²⁷ Fish houses were built on East Burgess Street near the riverfront in the 1890s, but were demolished by 1908.²⁸ The oyster houses built near the confluence of Poindexter Creek and the Pasquotank River in the 1880s were demolished by 1902 and replaced by new oyster houses, which then closed and were demolished by 1914. A series of warehouses replaced them, which were demolished in the 1950s after a devastating fire.²⁹ Another oyster house opened on North Poindexter Street adjacent to Poindexter Creek by 1908, but it too had been closed and demolished by 1931.³⁰ Ideal Hosiery Company opened on North Poindexter Street by 1923, but the facility was closed and demolished by 1931.³¹ Pell Paper Box Company, Inc., opened a box

²³ Sanborn Maps; Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 31-32; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 20.

²⁴ Sanborn Maps; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 153; Berry, *Legendary Locals*, 54; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 5, 22.

²⁵ Sanborn Maps.

²⁶ Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 15; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 177.

²⁷ Sanborn Maps.

²⁸ Sanborn Maps.

²⁹ Sanborn Maps; Jennette Brothers, "Company History," *Jennette Brothers Foodservice Distributors*, www.jennettebrothers.com/company-history (accessed May 2020).

³⁰ Sanborn Maps.

³¹ Sanborn Maps; City Directories.

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manufacturing and commercial printing facility on East Burgess Street at North Water Street by 1931 and remained in operation there until around 1980 when the company moved to its current location south of Elizabeth City.³² None of these buildings remain extant within the historic district.

Several industries within the historic district found more permanence in their operations, although their facilities evolved continuously through the early and mid-twentieth century. One of the oldest buildings in the historic district was constructed for Crystal Ice and Coal on North Water Street adjacent to the Pasquotank River. The company was formed in the early 1890s to provide ice for the local seafood market, then added coal to its services by 1902. By 1914, a new, larger facility had been constructed on the same site, a portion of which remains extant. It was one of the largest ice plants in eastern North Carolina at that time and produced eighty tons of ice daily in 1915. From the 1930s to the 1960s, Crystal Ice and Coal not only produced ice and coal, but also offered commercial cold storage services. With the growing popularity of personal automobiles, the company added oil and fuel products in 1955, but then closed its doors in the 1960s.³³ In 1969, Jennette Fruit and Produce Company purchased the facility. Founded in 1907, Jennette Brothers Company initially sold fertilizer, wagons, and farm implements from a store located south of the historic district on South Water Street. When the Great Depression caused crop prices to fall, Jennette Brothers downsized, no longer selling farm supplies and renaming the company Jennette Fruit and Seed. In 1938, the company was renamed Jennette Fruit and Produce Company. It served as a wholesale grocery that supplied the numerous small grocery stores throughout Elizabeth City, which in turn were supplied by the abundant farms in the region producing corn, potatoes, cabbage, beans, beats, peas, peanuts, berries, and grain. By the 1960s, most of the family-owned stores had gone out of business, so Jennette shifted from supplying retail grocers to serving as a distributor for foodservice companies. To accommodate this new business model, the company required a larger facility and moved to the former Crystal Ice and Coal plant, which they expanded with exterior, freestanding freezers and coolers in 1978, 1980, 1995, and 1996. In 1996, the company was again renamed, and Jennette Brothers remains in operation in the c.1914 facility on North Water Street.³⁴

The North Carolina Iron Works machine shop and foundry also opened by 1896, located at the corner of Pearl and North Water streets. The company was incorporated three years later by George M. Scott, J.B. Blades, E.S. Willey, and J.T. Blythe, but was acquired in 1909 by the Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company. This company was established by Joseph Foster Sanders, who relocated his blacksmith and buggy shop from its location south of the historic district to the former North Carolina Iron Works plant. He expanded the complex to include a new foundry building and two new warehouse additions to the machine shop. The complex also included the adjacent machine shop, which was constructed by 1902 as the Elizabeth City Plow Company and known as Miles Jennings' machine shop by 1908. This shop was demolished by 1923, and a commercial building was added to the complex in its place. By the 1920s, as lumber companies and shipyards began to dominate the Elizabeth City economy, the company produced parts for lumber mills, steam and motor boats, automobiles, and plumbing fixtures, and the Sanders family also operated a shipyard south of the historic district on the Pasquotank River. During World War II, the company was an important contractor for the United States Navy, producing approximately 250 parts including airplane cables for aircraft carriers and cam-shafts for submarines. As a result, it was a major employer in Elizabeth City with about one hundred workers. In 1942, the company

³² Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Jennette Brothers, "Company History."

³³ Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 11.

³⁴ City Directories; Jennette Brothers, "Company History"; Berry, *Legendary Locals*, 71; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 1.

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was renamed Sanders Company, Inc., and by 1948 had expanded significantly with the construction of a pipe shed and a pattern and carpentry shop, as well as additions to the foundry and the commercial building. The company produced manhole covers and water system castings primarily for the New York City Water Works, though many also remain extant in Elizabeth City and the historic district. Sanders Company, Inc., remains in operation, producing primarily sprockets and replacement parts for lumbering machinery, and much of the historic complex remains extant, including the c.1896 machine shop that is the oldest building in the historic district.³⁵

Meanwhile, Miles Jennings' machine shop moved across Pearl Street between 1914 and 1923, and the former location was encompassed into the adjacent Elizabeth City Iron Works and Supply Company, Inc., complex. Jennings operated at the corner of Pearl and North Water streets until the late 1940s, then expanded to a commercial building at the corner of Pearl and North Poindexter streets. Additional warehouses were constructed on North Poindexter Street in the mid- to late-twentieth century. The company operated the machine and welding shop until the 1970s, producing mill and logging supplies. Although the machine shop at the corner of Pearl and North Water streets is no longer extant, the remainder of the complex on North Poindexter Street remains.³⁶

William J. Woodley, Sr. established a wholesale grocery business in the early 1890s, and by 1908 had constructed a complex on East Burgess Street at the riverfront where a series of fish houses once had been. The complex included warehouses for hay and feed storage east and west of the main building. By 1914, a warehouse for salt storage was added at the east end of the complex near the river, which was replaced by a larger, two-story building around 1938. A three-story building with a basement was also constructed at the corner of North Water and East Burgess streets by 1914, and the following year it was rented to Newbern Produce Company, which specialized in wholesale fruit and produce. Woodley Grocery Company closed by the late 1950s. The complex was used for storage by the 1970s, and only the easternmost building adjacent to the river remains extant.³⁷

The Globe Fish Company opened on the waterfront in 1911. The company was operated by the Daniels family and exported local fish and seafood. It originally occupied buildings built for the W.D. Lathrop Shingle Mill, which were rented from the Woodley Grocery located adjacent to the north. By 1915, Elizabeth City boasted one of the largest fish markets in the south, and Globe Fish Company employed over one hundred fishermen. A new facility was constructed on this location in the 1920s, which spanned the railroad spur bisecting the block. It included a retail wing on North Water Street and a storage wing facing the Pasquotank River, which allowed fishing vessels docked on the river to unload their catch

³⁵ Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Personal Interview with Mike Askew (current employee at Sanders Company, Inc.) by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, February 8, 2020, Sanders Company facility, Elizabeth City, North Carolina; "Sanders Co.: New Generation Business Since 1880s," *The Daily Advance*, c.1990s, newspaper clipping provided to author by Sanders Company, Inc.; "Sanders Makes Big Contribution to Navy," *The Daily Advance*, June 8, 1945, newspaper clipping provided to author by Sanders Company, Inc.; "Men of Iron," *The Daily Advance*, January 19, 1992, newspaper clipping provided to author by Sanders Company, Inc.; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 5; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 313.

³⁶ Sanborn Maps; City Directories.

³⁷ Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Levi Branson, *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1890* (Raleigh, NC: Levi Branson, 1889), www.digitalnc.org (accessed May 2020) (hereafter referred to as "Branson's 1890 Business Directory"); Levi Branson, *Branson's North Carolina Business Directory, 1896* (Raleigh, NC: Levi Branson, 1896), www.books.google.com (accessed May 2020) (hereafter referred to as "Branson's 1896 Business Directory"); Jennette Brothers, "Company History"; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 11.

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directly into the facility's cold storage. The company closed in 1978 when owners Royden and Buck Daniels retired, and the facility was purchased by Jennette Fruit and Produce Company. The east wing of the building remains extant.³⁸

The lots between these large industrial complexes were occupied by storefronts and houses, which were constructed steadily until about 1920. These residents often worked in the historic district, including Bradley Sanders, who lived on North Poindexter Street near East Burgess Street, just outside the historic district boundary, and served as the Vice-President, and later President, of Elizabeth City Iron Works. T.W. Williams built a home on North Poindexter Street around 1910, in between two storefronts that contained the grocery and dry goods operations he ran with his son, who built a home around the corner on East Burgess Street. The store he built south of his home in 1911 remains extant, although his c.1910 home and the c.1907 store at the corner of North Poindexter and East Burgess streets have been demolished. The surviving building housed a number of retail operations through the mid-1950s, and since 1958 it has been occupied by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows – Achoree Lodge #14. Other businesses lining both sides of North Poindexter Street in the historic district included grocers, dry goods, tailors, barbers, pool halls, hotels, and clothing stores, none of which remain extant.³⁹

Most houses and commercial buildings in the historic district were demolished in the 1920s and 1930s, including two houses on East Burgess Street, one belonging to T.W. Williams, Jr., that were removed in the early 1920s to make way for a new railroad siding through the middle of the block. This expanded connectivity brought new industries to this block of North Water Street, and by 1923, a warehouse was constructed on East Burgess Street west of the railroad spur, which was first owned by Aydlett & Owen Feed for feed and meal storage. The building was occupied by the Works Progress Administration from 1936 to 1943, then used by Jones Distributing Company as a beer warehouse until 1973. G.W. Parsons & Son built additional warehouses on this block to store cotton, potatoes, flour, and feed, which supplied their merchandise broker business located north of the historic district on North Water Street. The cotton warehouse was used in the 1930s for hardware storage by D.M. Jones Company, which operated a retail store south of the historic district, and in the 1940s by Armstrong Motor Company. Meanwhile the potato, flour, and feed warehouse remained in use by Parsons until the 1940s. Pell Paper Box Company, Inc., purchased the warehouses from Parsons, then sold them to Jennette Fruit and Produce Company in 1993.⁴⁰

Although many storefronts in the historic district were torn down, some new commercial buildings were added to the historic district as well. The rising popularity of personal automobiles is reflected in the historic district with the construction of Gordon Service Station in 1938 at the corner of Pearl and North Poindexter streets. The service station closed around 1943 and was replaced by Colonial Upholstering Shop until 1963, which in turn was replaced by O&E Quick Lunch in 1970. This building, now known as Mamie's Quick Lunch, remains extant although vacant.⁴¹ The commercial building constructed near the corner of North Poindexter and Pearl streets also remains extant. Constructed in the 1940s, it housed a

³⁸ City Directories; Jennette Brothers, "Company History"; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 19.

³⁹ Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Weaver, *Elizabeth City*, 12.

⁴⁰ Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Jennette Brothers, "Company History."

⁴¹ Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Personal Interview with Cully Jennette by Heather Slane and Cheri Szcodronski, February 8, 2020, Jennette Brothers facility, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

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variety of businesses that served the adjacent residential neighborhoods, including groceries, dry cleaners, and a motor rewinding company.⁴²

Decline of Industry: 1950-Present

Change came swiftly to Elizabeth City with the decline of railroads and waterways for transportation and the dominance of trucking and personal automobiles to move goods and people. In 1930, the Wright Memorial Bridge was constructed across the Currituck Sound, which made travel to the Outer Banks possible by private vehicle, but resulted in fewer people taking the train to Elizabeth City to board passenger ships. Most of the city's shipyards south of the historic district closed by the 1950s and were demolished in favor of public parks, pleasure boat docks, and riverfront housing. Although rail travel related to World War II helped to keep the passenger station active for a time, it too had closed by the 1950s. The depot, which had been constructed west of town in 1914, remains extant although no longer owned by the railroad. In the 1970s, Norfolk Southern Railway sold its freight station on the Pasquotank River north of the historic district to Roanoke Bible College and built a new freight station along the tracks on the northern boundary of the city. In 1974, Norfolk Southern Railway was acquired by Southern Railway, which merged with Norfolk and Western Railway in 1982 to form Norfolk Southern Railway. In the 1980s, Norfolk Southern Railway began renting short lines in eastern North Carolina to smaller railroad companies. As part of this program, the Chesapeake and Albemarle Railroad was established in 1990 to lease the original Elizabeth City and Norfolk Railroad line, and the railroad still operates the freight line today.⁴³

Many of Elizabeth City's lumber mills had folded during the Great Depression, and the region's lumber resources had been significantly depleted by the 1950s causing the remaining lumber mills to close as well.⁴⁴ Chesson Manufacturing Company, Inc., which had advertised "everything in lumber for the complete house," closed in the late 1950s.⁴⁵ Foreman-Blades Lumber Company had closed in 1942, but the Foreman family continued in the local lumber business as L.R. Foreman and Sons, which then purchased the Kramer Brothers business in 1961. L.R. Foreman and Sons dissolved in 1966, and two of the sons formed Foreman Brothers Lumber Company the following year, which was then sold in 1980.⁴⁶ Dare Lumber Company remained in operation until the late twentieth century when the plant burned, and the Elizabeth City Wastewater Treatment Plant is now located on the site.⁴⁷

⁴² Sanborn Maps; City Directories.

⁴³ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 29-32; Butchko, *on the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 206; J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Southern Railway," *Carolana*, https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_southern_railway.html (accessed May 2020); J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Norfolk Southern Railway," *Carolana*, https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_norfolk_southern_railway_2.html (accessed May 2020); J.D. Lewis, "North Carolina Railroads – Chesapeake & Albemarle Railroad," *Carolana*, https://www.carolana.com/NC/Transportation/railroads/nc_rrs_chesapeake_albemarle.html (accessed May 2020); Adam Burns, "Chesapeake and Albemarle," *American Rails*, <https://www.american-rails.com/ca.html> (accessed May 2020).

⁴⁴ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 38-39; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 206.

⁴⁵ City Directories.

⁴⁶ Sanborn Maps; City Directories; Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 31-32; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 154; Berry, *Legendary Locals*, 55.

⁴⁷ Personal interview with Charles Gordon (long-time resident) by Cheri Szcudronski, via telephone, May 15, 2020.

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As industry declined in Elizabeth City, many looked for opportunities in Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, and Chesapeake, Virginia, as they had during the World War II labor shortages.⁴⁸ However, a small number of Elizabeth City's early-twentieth-century industries remain active. West of the historic district, the Elizabeth City Brick Works, now the Elizabeth City Brick Company, remains in operation on Hughes Boulevard adjacent to the railroad tracks, and south of the historic district, the Elizabeth City Shipyard remains in operation on Riverside Avenue. The only remaining concentration of industrial activity is located within the historic district, where Jennette Brothers operates on the riverfront from the former Crystal Ice and Coal Company, Globe Fish Company, and Woodley Grocery buildings, while Sanders Company foundry operates in its original location on North Poindexter Street. Meanwhile, lumber is again one of the city's most important industries, with new lumbering companies including Vulcan Materials, Universal Forest Products, and J.W. Jones Chip Mill operating along Knobbs Creek where they, like their predecessors, benefit from proximity to the river and the railroad.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Butchko, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Elizabeth City," Section E, 38-39; Butchko, *On the Shores of the Pasquotank*, 206.

⁴⁹ Personal interview with Charles Gordon.

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Elizabeth City Industrial
Historic District

Name of Property

Pasquotank County,
North Carolina

County and State

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Elizabeth City Industrial
Historic District

Name of Property

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Elizabeth City Industrial
Historic District
Name of Property

Pasquotank County,
North Carolina
County and State

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): PK1124

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 9.3 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 36.303420	Longitude: -76.217936
2. Latitude: 36.302767	Longitude: -76.216724
3. Latitude: 36.301310	Longitude: -76.217722
4. Latitude: 36.301462	Longitude: -76.219293
5. Latitude: 36.301970	Longitude: -76.219159
6. Latitude: 36.302117	Longitude: -76.220028
7. Latitude: 36.302428	Longitude: -76.219993
8. Latitude: 36.302542	Longitude: -76.219736
9. Latitude: 36.302573	Longitude: -76.219612
10. Latitude: 36.302776	Longitude: -76.219213
11. Latitude: 36.303169	Longitude: -76.218827
12. Latitude: 36.302927	Longitude: -76.218459

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

The Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District boundaries are shown by a solid black line on the accompanying district map.

Elizabeth City Industrial
Historic District

Name of Property

Pasquotank County,
North Carolina

County and State

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District were determined according to the density of contributing structures built between c.1895 and c.1965, after which no new construction took place within the district. The district includes early to mid-twentieth-century industrial buildings representing the continuous architectural evolution of an active industrial area. The district is bounded on the northwest by the Northside National Register Historic District (a residential district). It is bounded on the north by the campus of Roanoke Bible College and on the east by the Pasquotank River. The district is bounded on the south by NC-158 (East Elizabeth Street), south of which is the commercial core of Elizabeth City and the Elizabeth City National Register Historic District. Properties to the southwest are office buildings, out of character with the industrial district.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Heather Slane, Architectural Historian
name/title: Cheri Szcodronski, Architectural Historian
organization: hmvPreservation
street & number: P. O. Box 355
city or town: Durham state: NC zip code: 27702 e-mail: heather@hmvpreservation.com
telephone: 336-207-1502
date: December 1, 2020

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Elizabeth City Industrial
Historic District

Name of Property

Pasquotank County,
North Carolina

County and State

Name of Property: Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District

City or Vicinity: Elizabeth City

County: Pasquotank

State: NC

Photographer: Heather Slane

Date Photographed: July 2019

Photo #0001:

504 North Water Street – facing north to 705 East Burgess Street

1 of 9

Photo #0002:

Poindexter Creek Inlet – facing west

2 of 9

Photo #0003:

North Water Street – facing north

3 of 9

Photo #0004:

509-521 North Water Street – facing north

4 of 9

Photo #0005:

Southwest corner of Water and Pearl Streets – facing southwest

5 of 9

Photo #0006:

705 East Burgess and 506 North Water streets – facing southeast

6 of 9

Photo #0007:

609 East Burgess and 521 North Water streets – facing southeast

7 of 9

Photo #0008:

500-514 North Poindexter Street – facing northeast

8 of 9

Photo #0009:

410-514 North Poindexter Street – facing northeast

9 of 9

Elizabeth City Industrial
Historic District

Name of Property

Pasquotank County,
North Carolina

County and State

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.



National Register of Historic Places Nomination

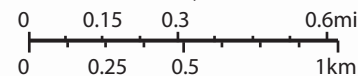
Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District

Elizabeth City, Pasquotank County, North Carolina

National Register Location Map

— Elizabeth City Industrial
Historic District Boundary

1 : 24,000



Map prepared by Heather M. Slane,
hmvPreservation, December 1, 2020
Source: USGS 7.5 minute Topographic map,
Elizabeth City Quadrangle (NC) 1997

Lat/Long Coordinates






1. 36.303420, -76.217936
2. 36.302767, -76.216724
3. 36.301310, -76.217722
4. 36.301462, -76.219293

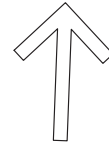
5. 36.301970, -76.219159
6. 36.302117, -76.220028
7. 36.302428, -76.219993
8. 36.302542, -76.219736
9. 36.302573, -76.219612

10. 36.302776, -76.219213
11. 36.303169, -76.218827
12. 36.302927, -76.218459

Elizabeth City Industrial National Register Historic District

Elizabeth City, Pasquotank County, North Carolina

-  Elizabeth City Industrial Historic District Boundary
-  Contributing Building
-  Non-Contributing Building
- A Building Key
- VL Vacant Lot
-  Vacant lot/parking associated with an adjoining lot
-  Photo View
- 1 Coordinates

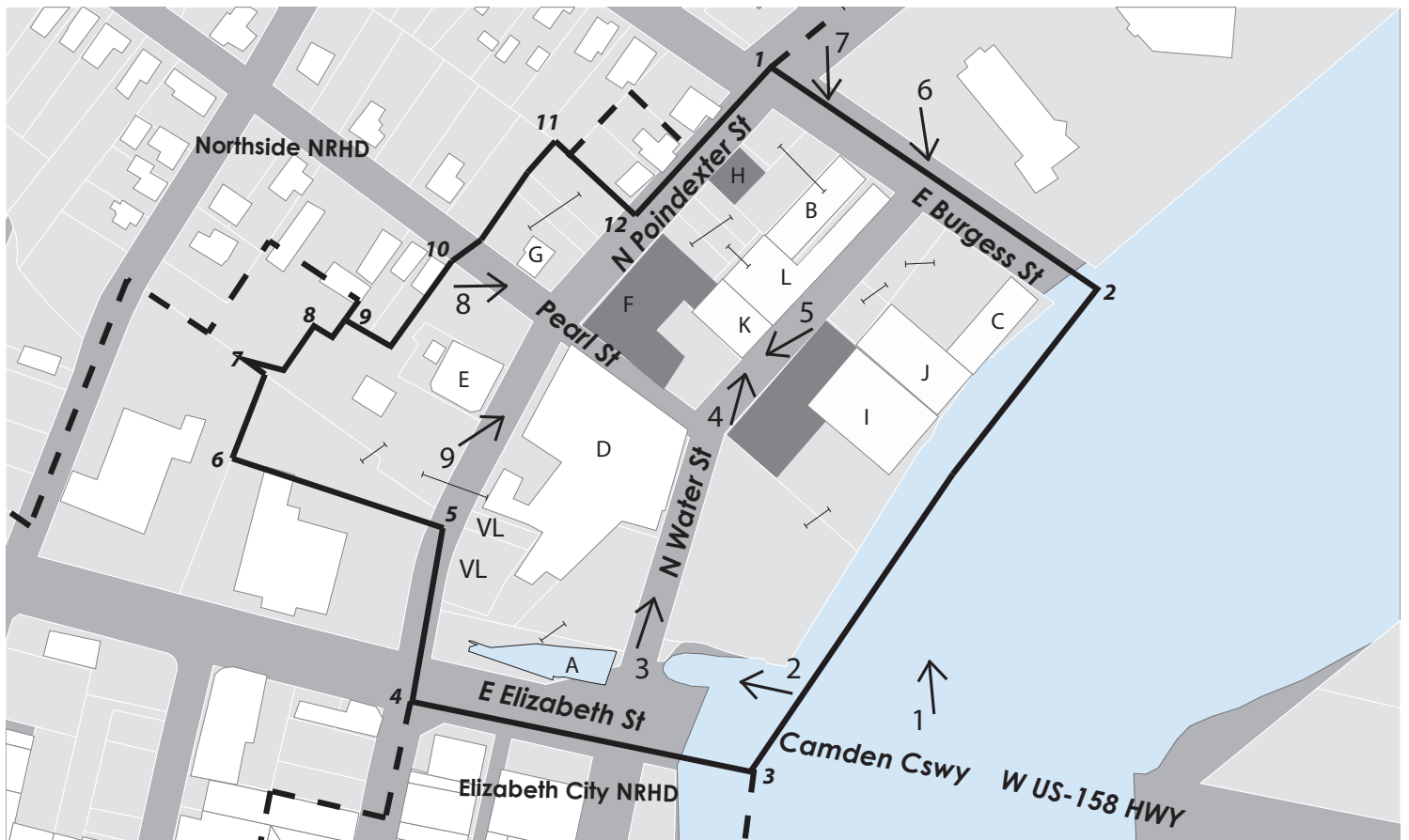


North

200 100 0 200 Feet



Map prepared by Heather M. Slane, hmwPreservation, December 1, 2020



Lat/Long Coordinates

1. 36.303420, -76.217936
 2. 36.302767, -76.216724
 3. 36.301310, -76.217722
 4. 36.301462, -76.219293

5. 36.301970, -76.219159
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