



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Purpose of Evaluation

Please use the following space to explain briefly why you are seeking an evaluation of this property.

Are you interested in applying for State and/or Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Are you interested in receiving more information about DHR's easement program? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

1. General Information

District name(s): Bacova Historic District

Main Streets and/or Routes: Jackson River Turnpike, Longview Drive, Lake View Drive, Riners Lane, Purkey Lane, Tidewater Lane, Post Office Drive

City or Town: Village of Bacova

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Bath

DHR File No.: 008-0014

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: \_\_\_\_\_

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban \_\_\_ Suburban \_\_\_ Town \_\_\_ Village [X] Hamlet \_\_\_ Rural \_\_\_

Briefly describe the district's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

The Bacova Historic District is located in western Bath County, approximately 4 miles west of West Warm Springs. The small village is accessed via the Jackson River Turnpike(Route 687) which is off of Route 39, Mountain Valley Road. The village is located in a valley along the Jackson River with the Allegheny Mountains to the west. The layout of the village conforms to the topography of the area with the Jackson River Turnpike acting as the main spine of the village. Off of Route 39, the Jackson River Turnpike winds south and as you approach the village the landscape opens up and features an open field before you enter the village proper. The village is mainly residential with approximately 42 one-story homes on small parcels, densely placed along several streets running primarily north to south.

### 3. Architectural/Physical Description

Architectural Style(s): \_\_\_\_\_

If any individual properties within the district were designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here:

\_\_\_\_\_ Unknown \_\_\_\_\_

If any builders or developers are known, please list here:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of construction (can be approximate): \_\_\_\_\_ 1921,1925 \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any known threats to this district? \_\_\_\_\_ None \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Narrative Description:**

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire historic district, such as building patterns, types, features, and the general architectural quality of the proposed district. Include prominent materials and noteworthy building details within the district, as well as typical updates, additions, remodelings, or other alterations that characterize the district.

The proposed Bacova Historic District is in western Bath County, west of Warm Springs and encompasses most of the village laid out and constructed in 1920-21 by the Tidewater Hardwood Company as a model company town. Primarily residential and vernacular in character, the historic district also contains a church, the former company office building (now the post office), commissary and part of their original mill building. A small park is located in the center of the district and just to the south and east of the village, currently outside the proposed HD boundaries, is Lake Bacova.

Tidewater Hardwood constructed the homes for their employees and most of them are uniform in appearance, lot size and setback. The residences are concentrated along Jackson River Turnpike, Longview Drive, Lake View Drive, Riners Lane, Purkey Lane and Tidewater Lane. The majority of the homes are detached one-story units, have hipped roofs and partial front-porches and are situated on concrete block foundations. There are a few two-story residential buildings, with either hipped or side gable roofs which were also constructed with concrete block foundations. Most of the houses retain their historic form and massing, but most have been covered in vinyl siding or some other alternative siding material.

The church, Bacova Chapel, was constructed circa 1925, and is located on the north edge of the residential area, on a slight knoll along Jackson River turnpike. The gable front church features an octagonal domed cupola centered along its roofline, tall rounded multi-pane windows and a centered entry with sidelights and a large fanlight. The frame building was originally covered in weatherboard but has been covered with vinyl replacement siding.

As you enter the district from the north along Jackson River Turnpike, the first noticeable building associated with the district is a brick industrial structure located south in an open field. The building has two brick sections that mirror each other in appearance, both with end stepped parapet gables capped with concrete. Both sections feature tall metal, triple hung windows on the side elevations. All the windows are topped with concrete lintels. The building was constructed ca. 1921 by the Tidewater Hardwood Company as part of their mill operations.

Other notable buildings include the post office and former commissary building, both of which are located on the northern edge of the villa near the industrial building. The now post office originally functioned as the company office building. It is a one-story, five-bay Colonial Revival building with a hipped roof and two interior chimneys. The front elevation features a centered front entry with an elaborate pedimented surround.

The former commissary, which also functioned as a school and post office. is a larger two-story, hipped roof building with a large two-story pedimented two-story portico. It is also located at the north end of the village, at the corner of Jackson River Turnpike and Lake View Drive.

Discuss the district's general setting and/or streetscapes, including current property uses (and historic uses if different), such as industrial, residential, commercial, religious, etc. For rural historic districts, please include a description of land uses.

The Village of Bacova is a rural company town situated near the Jackson River Valley and has a small core area, made up mainly of residences, with a few buildings on its northern edge that were public buildings and one extant building associated with the early timber operations. Most of the streets that run through the Village run north to south, with the Jackson River Turnpike as the main artery. The houses are very uniform in their plan, form and massing, vernacular, with very little stylistic detailing. They are sometimes referred to as company cottages or bungalows. There are a few larger two-story residences, most likely constructed for officers with the Tidewater Hardwood Company. All of the residences are of frame construction and were likely originally covered in weatherboard. Today, most are covered in vinyl siding. The largest and likely the oldest building in the district is the George Mayse House, constructed ca. 1830, which the Tidewater Hardwood Company utilized as a post office, store and school for its employees. The Bacova Chapel, constructed ca. 1925, also retains its original form and massing, but was also recovered in vinyl siding. Today it is used as a community center for the village. What is today the post office was originally the Tidewater Hardwood Company's main office.

#### 4. District's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the district, such as when it was established, how it developed over time, and significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.) Normally, only information contained on this form is forwarded to the State Review Board.

If the district is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

The Village of Bacova was established by the Tidewater Hardwood Company (Tidewater Oil Company) as a company town between 1920 and 1922, when they began developing 40,000 acres of timber land in the region. According to a 1921 article in the Rockbridge County News, the company laid out the town, constructing homes for their employees, along with a school, hospital and a church. They also provided power and water to the area. They built a power plant and disposal system for the town so that each house could have running water and electricity. The name Bacova was thought up by Clarence E. Hudson, an executive for the Tidewater Oil Company (parent company of Tidewater Hardwood) and it is a compound abbreviation for the BAth COunty VA. A narrow-gauge railroad was established to bring the logs to the mill in Bacova. The company paid workers in scrip, which was redeemable for rent, medical attention and to buy supplies at the company store. Mostly due to the economic conditions brought on by the Great Depression, the company pulled all their operations out of Bacova by 1937 and many of the employees moved on to find other jobs.

In 1957, many years after Tidewater left the area, Malcom Hirsh, purchased Bacova for \$125,000. Malcom had spent vacations on his father's farm located nearby. His hope was to lure another industry to the town that would bring new life into the small village. When that proved unsuccessful, he started his own company in 1965, Bacova Guild Ltd, a small textile and home décor company. He spent money modernizing the village, updating the plumbing, repairing the houses and would end up renting them for \$9 a month. He would eventually sell the homes to individual owners. The guild's specialty included a variety of laminated fiberglass products, from mailbox covers to ice buckets. He made the old commissary building headquarters for his new business.

The Bacova HD is potentially eligible under Criteria A, Industry and Community Planning and Development. Under A, Bacova is significant as a planned industrial "company town" unique for this region of Virginia. Tidewater Hardwood set out and accomplished what they believed was a model town for its employees, one that provided comfortable housing and an array of other amenities and services that would promote loyalty and productivity. The significance of the district continues with Malcom Hirsch's purchase of Bacova as he continued to utilize the village and its residents for his company, Bacova Ltd. It became known as a community where industry and artistry combined to revitalize this small village in a rural and remote area of Western Virginia.

The period of significance begins in 1920, with the establishment and construction of the village by the Tidewater Hardwood Company and ends in 1973, the traditional 50 year cutoff date and because Bacova Ltd, continued to function and provided jobs for village residents, while utilizing several of the contributing buildings for its operations.

#### 5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private:  Public\Local  Public\State  Public\Federal

**6. Applicant/Sponsor** (Individual and/or organization sponsoring preparation of the PIF, with contact information. For more than one sponsor, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Preservation Bath  
organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town: \_\_\_\_\_ state: \_\_\_\_\_ zip code: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••*

In the event of organization sponsorship, you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form if other than applicant/sponsor listed above)

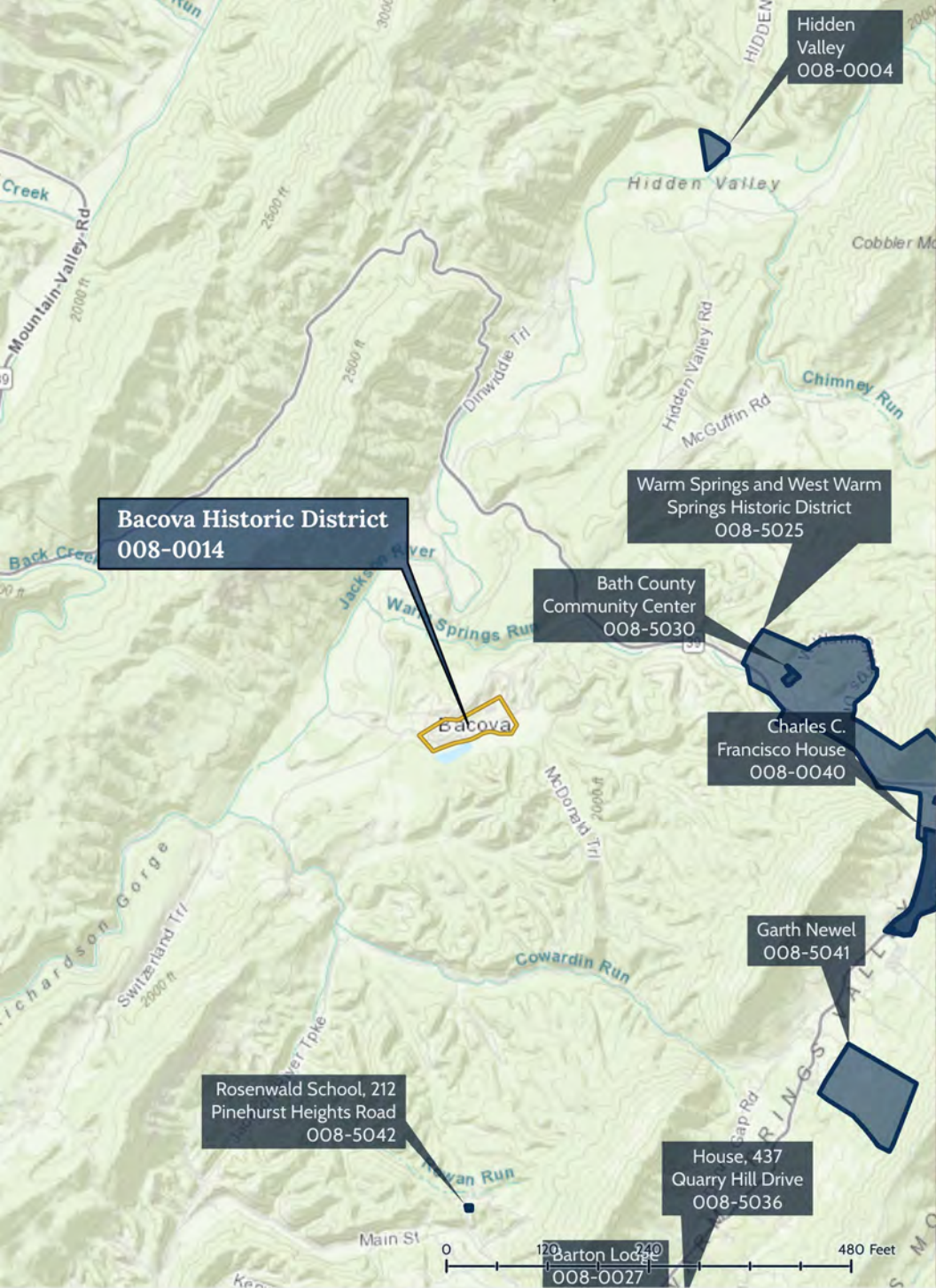
name/title: Aubrey Von Lindern, Architectural Historian  
organization: VDHR  
street & number: \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town: \_\_\_\_\_ state: \_\_\_\_\_ zip code: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: aubrey.vonlindern@dhr.virginia.gov telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Notification**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator, City Manager, and/or Town Manager.

name/title: \_\_\_\_\_  
locality: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town: \_\_\_\_\_ state: \_\_\_\_\_ zip code: \_\_\_\_\_  
telephone: \_\_\_\_\_





**Bacova Historic District**  
**Bath County, Warm Springs Quad**  
**DHR ID: 008-0014**

The Homestead  
Homestead Dr  
008-0025







Legend:  
 Listed Resources  
 008-0014

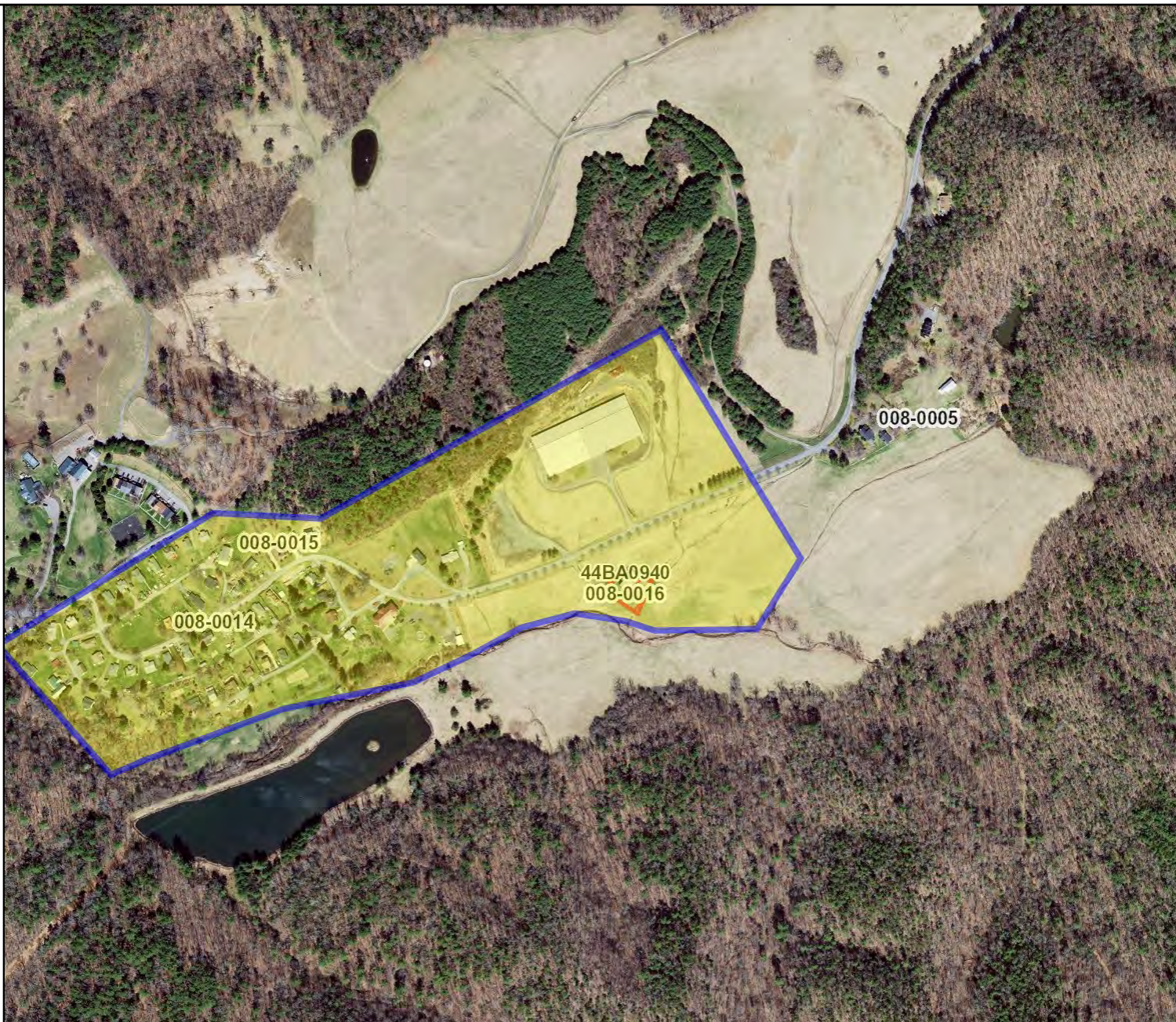
Created By: D. Bascone 5/15/2023  
 Sources: VDHR 2023, ESRI 2023, VDOT 2023, VGIN 2023  
 Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years and the representation depicted is based on the field observation date and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general illustration purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. The map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". Contact DHR for the most recent information as data is updated continually.



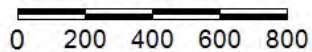


## Legend

-  Architecture Labels
-  Individual Historic District Properties
-  Archaeological Resources
-  Archaeology Labels
-  DHR Easements
-  County Boundaries



Feet



1:9,028 / 1"=752 Feet

**Title: Bacova Historic District, 008-0014 - 2023 PIF proposed boundary**

**Date: 4/30/2023**

*DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.*

*Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.*







Tax Parcel Map

Bacova HD, Bath County, DHR No. 008-0014







008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_2-Story\_Company\_Housing





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_Bacova\_Presbyterian\_Church





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_Company\_Housing\_Streetscape





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_Looking\_NE\_Former\_Commissary\_Bldg





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_Looking\_SW\_Chapel\_Streetscape





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_Mill\_Building





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_Mill\_Building\_NW\_Elevation





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_Mill\_Building\_SW\_Elevation





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_North\_Entry\_Jackson\_River\_Turnpike





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_One\_Story\_Company\_Cottage





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_One\_Story\_Cottage\_Example\_2





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_Post\_Office\_Looking\_NE





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_streetview (1)





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_streetview (2)





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_streetview (3)





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_streetview (5)





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_streetview (6)





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_streetview (7)





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_streetview (8)





008-0014\_Bacova\_HD\_2023\_PIF\_streetview (9)