

**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.

**VLR Listed: 4/17/2019
NRHP Listed: 5/3/2019**

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District

Other names/site number: VDHR File #127-6519

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: Primarily along Commerce Road, Gordon Ave., and Dinwiddie Ave

City or town: Richmond State: VA County: Independent City

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title :</p>	<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>11</u>	<u>4</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>11</u>	<u>4</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business, Warehouse

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: Manufacturing Facility

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related, Road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business, Warehouse

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: Manufacturing Facility

TRANSPORTATION: Road-related

VACANT/ NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne, International Style
NO STYLE

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; CONCRETE; METAL

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District is a collection of mixed-use commercial and industrial properties located in the South Richmond vicinity of Richmond, Virginia, an area historically known as Manchester. The district and properties within it reflect the evolution of the motor freight and trucking industry in Richmond, and commercial expansion that came with it in the mid-twentieth century. The district encompasses roughly 50 acres and portions of four urban blocks, and is situated along both sides of Commerce Road, generally between Dinwiddie and Inghram Avenues. Because many of the properties in the historic district were purpose-built to serve the shipping industry, the area is characterized by commercial and industrial buildings, some of which are sizable in order to accommodate large quantities of goods for distribution. Architecturally, the buildings are generally utilitarian in design, with warehouses featuring multiple loading bays and docks and office buildings stylistically derived from the International Style that was ubiquitous after World War II. Many of the buildings are set on large paved or graveled parcels left open to accommodate tractor-trailer circulation, where the trucking fleets could park, load/unload, or be serviced. The district is comprised of eight properties with buildings constructed between 1947 and 1984 and displaying mid-twentieth century commercial and industrial styles, most notably including Moderne and International Style, interspersed with astylistic, utilitarian commercial and industrial resources. The extant buildings generally remain in fair to good condition with a moderate to high retention of historical integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District is located in South Richmond, an area also historically known as Manchester. The mixed-use urban district is bordered primarily by mid- to late- twentieth century commercial and industrial development to the north, east, and south; and by suburban residential

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development to the west. Located several blocks to the north is the Manchester Warehouse and Industrial Historic District (NRHP 2000). Other recognized commercial/industrial properties in the vicinity include the Southern Stove Works Complex (NRHP 2008), Pure Oil Company Complex (NRHP-eligible 2008), and Williams Bridge Building (NRHP-eligible 2018); as well as several tobacco storage warehouse complexes including the Alleghany Warehouse Complex, Chesapeake Warehouses (NRHP 2014), and American Tobacco Company Lucky Strike Storage Warehouse Complex (NRHP-eligible 2009).

All of these properties, as well as those in the Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District, reflect the industrial growth and evolution in the Manchester/South Richmond vicinity of Richmond during the mid-twentieth century. This area originally developed as a commercial and industrial center by the late-eighteenth century because of its proximity to the James River and the readily available water-powered industrial mills along its banks. Manchester experienced additional growth during the nineteenth century, primarily brought about by the railroad. Despite that Richmond was the capital of the Confederacy during the Civil War, the Manchester area escaped the extent of damage seen in the city's downtown and oldest neighborhoods along the river's northern bank. Manchester's twentieth-century development was fueled by the rapid expansion of road networks as automobile and truck transportation proliferated from the 1910s onward. By the mid-twentieth century, the area enjoyed direct connectivity to regional and national transportation corridors such as U.S. Highway 1, the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike, and Interstate-95. As such, the vicinity of the historic district has always had a large-scale commercial and industrial character, in contrast to the more pedestrian-scaled commercial and residential development in Manchester further inland and uphill from the riverfront, as illustrated by the Manchester Residential and Commercial Historic District (NRHP 2002, with a 2006 boundary increase), Springhill Historic District (NRHP 2014), and Blackwell Historic District (NRHP 2019).

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District consists of a loosely L-shaped group of properties bordering Commerce Road between Dinwiddie and Ingraham Avenues and bound by E. 8th and E. 11th streets and characterized by their development and transportation patterns. The urban city blocks in the district generally adhere to the gridded street pattern encountered throughout the Manchester/South Richmond area, although, as in many cases throughout the larger industrial area surrounding the district, some segments of the streets have been closed to through traffic as commercial properties have grown to extend across multiple parcels. This is particularly prevalent with the numbered cross streets, which are smaller, two-lane secondary roads. Meanwhile Dinwiddie, Gordon, and Ingraham avenues, which are wider and marked two-lane roads, extend generally unobstructed through and around the historic district. Commerce Road, a divided four-lane route, is the primary transportation corridor through the district and the larger surrounding industrial area. Commerce Road provides a direct connection to downtown Richmond across the James River via the 9th Street Bridge, as well as a connection to the regional transportation corridors of U.S. 1 and I-95 to the south.

The historic district is also crossed by the remnants of the Seaboard Air Line Railroad network that historically served the area. Although many of the tracks have been removed or paved over, some remain embedded and visible in the pavement. The alignment and corridor of many spurs that served properties in the district can still be seen as grassy or graveled strips interrupting the road pattern, development layout, and building forms. These spurs extended along and down the gridded street pattern as well as along curvilinear alignments through and between building complexes.

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All of the blocks and properties within the district have a generally flat and open urban landscape with low-density development scale. Other than modest landscaping adorning the front of several buildings and small patches of grass or scrub bordering property lines, the district is generally void of vegetation. Most buildings are set adjacent to or near the road with large open parking lot or staging areas to the sides and rear, which is characteristic of their historic uses. Many have multiple driveways or access to secondary streets to allow for open circulation of tractor-trailers. Some of the buildings have an office “headhouse” or commercial area with a facade intended for public view with associated warehouse space to the rear; however, other warehouses are strictly utilitarian and have no formal “front.”

The district consists primarily of one- and two-story buildings with complex footprints and rooflines, mostly constructed of brick or concrete block. Some have wings or additions that are steel frame and clad with corrugated sheet metal. Most of the buildings date from the mid-twentieth century, with only a few additions or new construction that is more recently interspersed throughout. Many of the buildings are utilitarian and astylistic in form and design void of architectural application or embellishment. Others exhibit minimal to moderate stylistic attributes characteristic of typical mid-twentieth century influences of the Modern Movement’s then-prevalent Moderne and International styles.

Architectural Analysis

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District contains eight separate properties, each of which has one or more buildings. The district developed throughout the early- to mid-twentieth century contemporaneous with the rise of Manchester/South Richmond as an industrial and manufacturing center for the region. The City of Manchester was annexed by the City of Richmond in 1910, at which time the area comprising the Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District remained beyond corporate limits (see attached map showing the area’s annexation history). The landscape was characterized by several large landholdings and estates on the fringe of urban and suburban development. It was crossed by the alignment of the Seaboard Air Line Road (present-day CSX) as well as River Road (present-day Commerce Road).

The earliest transportation-related industrial development in the vicinity of the historic district was the Chesapeake Tobacco Warehouses, located immediately to the south. This complex of warehouses was built by the Bright Leaf Storage Company to serve as tobacco storage facilities for the expanding tobacco market in South Richmond. A number of large tobacco corporations had recently opened processing plants in the area following its annexation by the City of Richmond to take advantage of the large and relatively undeveloped space that were suitable for the horizontally-massed processing, warehouse, and distribution complexes then in favor. Companies such as Bright Leaf opened warehouse complexes that could serve multiple tobacco companies via a complex railroad and spur network developed in the area.

Construction of the rail spurs encouraged additional commercial and industrial growth in the vicinity, and in 1947, the three earliest extant buildings in the historic district were constructed. These properties are located at 1003, 1005, and 1011 Commerce Road, all of which are located on the south side of the street on the block bounded by Dinwiddie and Gordon Avenues. The properties were located just north of the Chesapeake

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Warehouse Complex, and therefore were able to connect easily to the railroad via a short spur of the line leading to the tobacco sheds.

Located at 1003 Commerce Road is a rambling warehouse building originally constructed in 1947 by the Acme Fixture Company. The large, one-story brick building is utilitarian in form and fashion with a flat roof, a number of garage bays, and windows mostly limited to glass block panels. The building and property were acquired by Diamond Hill Plywood Company, Inc. in 1952, which subsequently expanded the footprint with the addition of a large, second warehouse of nearly equal size at the rear corner. Further additions of steel-frame and corrugated-metal-clad masses were completed in the 1970s. In 1960, Topcrafters, Inc., another woodworking business, built a small shop just to the rear of the Diamond Hill Plywood Company complex at 906 Dinwiddie Avenue. This irregularly shaped, one-story, concrete block building filled in the space between railroad spurs serving the Chesapeake Warehouses to the south and the plywood company and O.K. Foundry to the north.

Another building permitted in 1947 (but not actually constructed until 1949) is located at 1005 Commerce Road and was built by the O.K. Foundry Company, who continue to own and operate the complex. The rambling manufacturing building has a main mass constructed of concrete block knee walls with a steel frame and corrugated-metal-clad structure above. It is covered by a gable roof with a central monitor. A concrete block office extension is attached to the front corner of the building, with a long concrete block warehouse section behind it. The building was expanded throughout the 1950s and 1960s with additional wings built of concrete and steel, as well as a tall concrete stave-silo to the rear.

The third property developed in 1947 is located at 1011 Commerce Road, and was originally owned and developed by W.T. Holt, the president of the Richmond Investment Corporation. The earliest building on the property is a small concrete block warehouse with several garage bays sheltered by a flat-roofed overhang. In 1952, Holt constructed a second, larger brick warehouse on the property facing Gordon Avenue, with numerous garage bays located on loading docks along each side. In 1959, a third, similar warehouse was built in the front corner of the property (this building no longer remains). Exactly how Holt or the Richmond Investment Corporation utilized the properties and buildings is unclear, but they appear to be the earliest representation of the district's evolution into a shipping and transport center.

In 1951, Estes Express Lines, a national trucking and motor freight company, relocated their corporate headquarters from Chase City to Richmond, just a block to the south at 1405 Gordon Avenue. There the company built a fashionable International Style office with a large warehouse featuring rows of loading docks and truck bays to the rear. Estes eventually also acquired the property at 1011 Commerce Road and the three warehouses built there by the Richmond Investment Corporation for additional freight space and truck storage and servicing.

The 1950s brought additional shipping and freight-related development to the district with the construction of the Richmond Container Corporation building at 1125 Commerce Road in 1954. Richmond Container Corporation manufactured rigid paper and cardboard boxes that were marketed to the storage and shipping industries. Their purpose-built factory at 1125 Commerce is a massive, two-story concrete block building of

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utilitarian form and design with a flat roof and minimal embellishment. In keeping with its function, the upper portions of the exterior walls are punctured by regularly-spaced windows to illuminate the interior, and the lower portions of the walls have numerous garage bays and loading docks on multiple sides of the building.

In 1956, the first purpose-built trucking and motor freight resource was constructed at 1111 Commerce Road when the Blue and Grey Transportation Company opened an office and terminal on the property. The building features a two-story brick International Style office or “headhouse” fronting the road with a long warehouse extending from the rear. The warehouse is also brick, with a cantilevered concrete canopy that mimics the embellishment on the office block and shelters the numerous trucking bays that extend down each side of the warehouse. There are ten loading bays for tractor-trailers on each side of the warehouse with three additional ground-level garage bays behind that, and a drive-through service bay at the far end.

Between 1959 and 1964, the district became home to yet another national trucking and motor freight company when Overnite Transportation built an office, terminal, and several warehouses on the north side of Commerce Road at 1100 Commerce. The first building constructed was the office building located at the corner of the intersection with Gordon Avenue. This office was similar to the Blue and Grey Transportation Building located directly across the street, although with a slightly elaborated interpretation of the International Style. The two-story brick building features concrete window banding and a heavy concrete architrave around the wide, central storefront entry.

In 1962, Overnite expanded their building stock within the district with the construction of a large warehouse terminal just to the rear of the office. The building, located at 700 Gordon, has a massive footprint, enclosing 127,642 square feet of warehouse space and an additional 1,568 square feet of office space, making it the largest public warehouse building in Richmond at that time (RTD 2-28-1962). The building’s design draws influence from the nearby office building, with a simplified International Style two-story façade of red brick with concrete banding and a heavy concrete architrave. The rest of the building is utilitarian, with brick walls and fenestration limited to garage bays and loading docks. A series of ten truck bays with a short concrete canopy extends along the front wall of a side wing. The back corner of the building is clipped at an angle to hug a railroad spur that was already present when the building was constructed. Flanking the tracks is a large, covered loading dock area.

In 1964, Overnite built an additional truck terminal and repair shop on the same property as their office building, fronting Commerce Road. This building also matched the office and earlier terminal, with a two-story brick headhouse reflecting the International Style with concrete banding around the windows and a wide concrete entry architrave around the storefront. Attached to the rear is a long truck terminal with 34 loading bays extending down each side and an additional six at the rear end. Set to the side of the terminal building, between it and the office building, is a large, open paved staging area. This pad allows for the circulation and parking of dozens of additional tractor-trailers. Set at the rear of the pad, behind the terminal warehouse is a truck service building, also constructed in 1964. This L-shaped building has a combination of brick and corrugated metal walls with a number of service bays and garage doors on all sides. The building is plain, unornamented, and not easily visible from public right-of-way.

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Also part of the large Overnite complex was an additional warehouse and tractor-trailer staging area across Gordon Avenue and fronting Commerce Road. That property allowed for the parking and storage of as many as 100 tractor-trailers as well as additional freight storage and handling. The buildings once at this location have all been demolished and removed, leaving the property as an open parking lot.

The last and most recent building constructed in the district is located on the 1011 Commerce Road property. In 1984, one of the three older warehouses on the property, situated near the intersection of Commerce and Gordon Avenue, was demolished and replaced by a one-story, brick, astylistic commercial building topped by a corrugated metal pent roof; loading bay and window openings currently are boarded over. Attached to the rear of the commercial block is a taller, gable-covered corrugated metal warehouse.

Since that date, there has been minimal other change to the building stock within the historic district. The extant buildings generally have a moderate to high-degree of historical integrity from their period of construction, and continue to reflect the building and development patterns associated with the evolution of this area into a shipping and freight center of South Richmond during the mid-twentieth century.

Integrity Analysis

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District is architecturally rather nondescript as property owners focused on maximizing utilitarian uses and commercial activity associated with warehousing and shipping of consumer goods. Some industrial manufacturing occurred here too, most notably at the O.K. Foundry and the Richmond Container Corporation. The historic district has no architectural pretenses as often occurred with industrial properties constructed in Richmond during the early twentieth century, when horizontally massed, brick buildings featured large windows, clerestories, and monitor roofs that flooded interiors with natural light. The metal-frame, multiple-pane window sash were operable to improve ventilation in an era that predated central heating and cooling. Pedestrian entries accented with classically-inspired trim such as molded surrounds, pediments, and sidelights reflected the continued street orientation of industrial concerns as automobile and truck transportation were in their infancy. A brick or cast concrete water table, brick corbeling, and concrete coping generally rounded out the architectural embellishments of early-twentieth century industrial buildings.

By the mid-twentieth century, however, standardized construction materials and methods, ever more emphasis on streamlining and efficiency, and the reorientation of buildings away from the street and toward interior loading areas served by tractor trailers had transformed design of industrial buildings. The Modern Movement's eschewing of what was seen as extraneous ornamentation provided further argument for jettisoning the increasingly costly details of hand-built masonry walls. The era's cheap electricity and adoption of central heating and cooling similarly justified removal of the glazed expanses that characterized earlier buildings.

Although the resulting architecture for transportation-related commercial and industrial buildings of the mid-twentieth century often is now seen as uninspired, it is, nevertheless, a character-defining aspect of the Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District. With its intact and largely unaltered collection of mid-twentieth-century properties, the historic district retains integrity of location and setting. The continued

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presence of the railroad network (albeit incomplete and no longer in use), the street grid, and evidence of how both buildings and streets were designed to fit around the pre-existing railroad spurs, contribute to the district's integrity of setting. Integrity of design, workmanship, and materials is evidenced in the buildings that not only have remained generally unchanged since construction but continue to operate according to their original design and purpose. The logistics for designing and constructing distribution centers had generally been established by the mid-twentieth century and, but for scaling up in terms of capacity and changing technology, remains in use today. As such, the historic district's integrity of feeling and association with significant historic trends are very high as well.

Inventory

The following inventory lists the buildings within the historic district. Each inventory entry identifies the property's primary resource, its construction date, architectural style (or lack thereof) and number of stories. Secondary resources also are listed when present. Each property has been assigned a 10-digit DHR inventory number, and properties are keyed to the attached Sketch Map by the last four digits of the inventory number (i.e., -127-6519-**0001**, **-0002**, etc.).

Each building was evaluated based on its direct association with the district's significance in the areas of Transportation and Commerce during the district's period of significance, 1947-1962. and on each resource's ability to convey its historic association(s) through integrity of location, design, workmanship, and materials. Retention of original form, massing, rooflines, and scale were considered the baseline for a building to be classified as contributing. Spatial relationships to the unused rail network, as well as adjacent streets and roads, also were necessary aspects. Presence of loading bays and circulation networks within each property to accommodate tractor trailers were another key feature for warehouse and shipping facilities. The manufacturing facilities, especially the O.K. Foundry, is an exception due to the nature of its industrial activity. The influence of modern building codes that address fire safety is rarely anachronistic, as the district's buildings date to an era when such codes were well established. Some limited alterations to improve physical accessibility, such as width of doors and installation of a ramp to access entries, may be present without detracting from a building's integrity of design.

Commerce Road

1003 Commerce Road **127-6519-0003** *Other DHR Id#:*
Primary Resource: Warehouse (Building), Stories 1, Style: Vernacular, 1947
Contributing *Total: 1*

1005 Commerce Road **127-6519-0005** *Other DHR Id#:*
Primary Resource: Foundry (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1949
Contributing *Total: 1*
Secondary Resource: Warehouse (Building)
Non-contributing *Total: 3*

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1011 Commerce Road **127-6519-0006** *Other DHR Id#:*
Primary Resource: Office/Office Building (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 1984
Non-contributing *Total: 1*
Secondary Resource: Warehouse (Building)
Contributing *Total: 2*

1100 Commerce Road **127-6921** *Other DHR Id#: 127-6519-0002*
Primary Resource: Commercial Building (Building), Stories 3, Style: International Style, 1959
Contributing *Total: 1*
Secondary Resource: Commercial Building (Building)
Contributing *Total: 1*
Secondary Resource: Warehouse (Building)
Contributing *Total: 1*

1111 Commerce Road **127-6519-0007** *Other DHR Id#:*
Primary Resource: Office/Office Building (Building), Stories 2, Style: International Style, 1956
Contributing *Total: 1*

1125 Commerce Road **127-6519-0008** *Other DHR Id#:*
Primary Resource: Factory (Building), Stories 2, Style: No discernible style, 1954
Contributing *Total: 1*

Dinwiddie Ave

906 Dinwiddie Ave **127-6519-0004** *Other DHR Id#:*
Primary Resource: Warehouse (Building), Stories 1, Style: No discernible style, 1960
Contributing *Total: 1*

Gordon Avenue

700 Gordon Avenue **127-6920** *Other DHR Id#: 127-6519-0001*
Primary Resource: Commercial Building (Building), Stories 2, Style: International Style, 1962
Contributing *Total: 1*

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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.)

COMMERCE

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1947-1962

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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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 Manchester Trucking and Commercial District is a distinct collection of properties and buildings located along Commerce Road in South Richmond that represent a concentration of the growth and evolution of the shipping and motor freight industry in Richmond during the mid-twentieth century. South Richmond, formerly called Manchester, along the James River became a center of commerce and industry during the late-eighteenth century and continued to expand and develop as such through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, initially due to the river's proximity and later as railroads and road networks were constructed. As transportation and distribution needs shifted from the river to railroads and later from railroads to highways, a number of trucking and associated industries opened in the historic district, due in part to its easy connection to rail and road networks of regional scope along the east coast. The earliest development in the district consisted of more traditional manufacturing and wholesale businesses tied to railroad spurs, but by the 1950s, several regional and national trucking companies had established offices and terminals in the district. With them came additional support businesses such as cardboard box manufacturers and large-scale storage warehouses. The district retains a high degree of historical integrity from that period. Most buildings continue to reflect their form and character as built and remain set on large parcels with tractor-trailer circulation and storage pads. Many of the properties continue to operate as national trucking terminals serving the same trucking businesses that were there historically. The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Transportation for its representation of these important historic development trends in Richmond's commercial and trucking and motor freight shipping during the mid-twentieth century, and the district retains the buildings, infrastructure, and spatial relationships that convey the area's predominant function as a trucking and distribution center. The district's period of significance, 1947-1962, begins with the construction of the Acme Fixture factory, the earliest contributing resource in the district, and ends in 1962 with construction of Overnite Transportation's massive warehouse, the scale of which exemplifies the importance of transportation and commerce in the district.

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

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District conveys its significance in the areas of Commerce and Transportation through the eight properties within it, with all containing resources that are contributing to the district's areas of significance and date to its period of significance; just one primary resource, a 1984 office building, is noncontributing. The respective histories of the commercial and industrial enterprises on these properties are facets of the district's collective illustration of the rise of the trucking industry in South

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Richmond/Manchester. That history continues to be evident today, as several of the trucking companies that have maintained a presence in the historic district had their beginnings in Richmond as small, local companies but later grew into corporations with national reach. In order to place these companies and properties within the historic context of Richmond's commercial and transportation history, the following historical background is provided below, followed by summaries of each company's activity within the district.

Historical Background

Context: Manchester Commerce and Industry

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District is located in the Manchester neighborhood of the City of Richmond, Virginia. As described in the nomination form for the Manchester Industrial Historic District (NRHP 2000; VDHR #127-0457), historically the area had long been recognized for its commercial potential, and European development there began soon after it was settled. The easy access to a deep river port, raw materials, immigrant workers, markets, and, later, railroad depots and highways led to steady industrial development within Manchester (Kraus and Harnesberger 1999:16). The Town of Manchester was incorporated in 1769, and it competed with the City of Richmond until the early twentieth century, when much of the area was first annexed by Richmond in 1910 (see attached map showing annexation history in Manchester).

Transportation innovations aided in the growth of Manchester as industries took advantage of new methods of getting products to markets. Given the limited mobility of colonists, this began with water transportation and the use of ports east of the fall line of the James River. When a canal was constructed on the north side of the river to avoid the falls, access was granted west of the fall line. Economic growth continued in Richmond and Manchester through the nineteenth century, and the first railroad entered Manchester during the 1830s with the construction of rail lines between Manchester Wharf and Midlothian and between Richmond and Petersburg. According to Kraus and Harnesberger, this "helped to make Manchester one of the most important commercial and industrial centers of Virginia" (Kraus and Harnesberger 1999:17). Some of the largest industries in Manchester at that time were flour, cotton and woolen mills, as well as a wealth of tobacco processing facilities.

After the Civil War, when limited new development occurred here, Manchester experienced a period of unparalleled growth and success. Economic growth and expansion led to Manchester being made the county seat of Chesterfield in 1871, and in 1874, it was incorporated as an independent city (Valentine 2011). However, because of its unique relationship and interdependence, Manchester was also considered a city ward of neighboring Richmond at that time (Weisiger III 1993:17-20). The large labor force required by local industries led to dense development and solidified Manchester's identity as a working-class community with

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manufacturing facilities within easy reach. The two most prevalent industries in Manchester during this period were tobacco processing facilities and lumber and wood yards.

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, commercial and industrial development of Manchester remained focused on the James River. As property was developed, activity spread south as far as Maury Street by the late nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century, industry was flourishing throughout Manchester, and Richmond officials began urging the annexation of adjacent municipalities in order to increase the City's overall prosperity. Annexations took place in 1906, 1910, and 1914, with portions of Manchester merged in 1910 and the Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District part of the 1914 annexation. With these three enlargements, Richmond quadrupled in size (Kraus and Harnsberger 1999:19). Suburban housing developed to the west of the Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District, between the Richmond and Petersburg Turnpike (Jefferson Davis Highway, U.S. Route 1) and E. 15th Street, while the area between the turnpike and the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad continued to develop as an industrial area. Unlike the growth to the west, land to the east remained largely vacant in comparison.

World War I brought new levels of prosperity to Manchester, increasing growth and industrialization as companies adopted new technologies (Kraus and Harnsberger 1999:20). With this success, new land was opened for development. In 1922, "a large section of South Richmond, hitherto considered a practical waste" was "opened for homes and businesses" ("To Redeem Waste Land" 1922). The president of Acme Land Company went before Richmond's Finance Committee stating "that he had several propositions from manufacturing concerns" and was able to get Ninth Street Road (now Commerce Road) extended ("Would Extend Street" 1923). With ample housing to the west and easy access to transportation corridors, the area that comprises the historic district would prove to be an ideal location for warehouses, manufacturers, and later, trucking companies.

An obstacle in developing the area for manufacturers was the inadequacy of connections between Ninth Street Road and existing roads in Manchester, as had been identified in Richmond's 1946 Master City Plan (RCPC 1946:146). Despite these concerns, among the earliest companies and industries to emerge in the vicinity of the historic district was the U.S. Shipping Bureau Emergency Fleet Corporation factory, constructed in 1919 to build ship boilers and later known as the Williams Bridge Company Building (VDHR#127-6245). In addition, the Southern Stove Works Plant (VDHR #127-6193) was erected south of Dinwiddie Avenue at E. 4th Street in 1920, with warehouses constructed to its west by 1934 (USGS 1934), while the Gulf Refinery Company Complex was built in 1928 and expanded as the TransMontaigne Complex in 1936 (VDHR# 127-6248). These properties were all larger complexes with open spaces in between. It appears that denser early development occurred more on the west side of Ninth Street Road and was largely centered – at least initially – on the tobacco industry. Philip Morris constructed the Chesapeake Warehouses (VDHR #127-6720) south of Dinwiddie Avenue circa 1929. Between 1936 and 1960, the Alleghany Tobacco Warehouse Complex (VDHR #127-6977) was constructed between Gordon and Ingram avenues, and after 1941, the American

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Tobacco Company built the Lucky Strike Storage complex (VDHR #127-6179) south of Ingram Avenue. Short railroad branches were present on both sides of Commerce Road, which connected existing tobacco warehouses to the Seaboard Air Line to the east (USGS 1956).

Following World War II, Richmond's population had grown to 304,541 – an increase that necessitated the construction of thousands of new homes during this period (Sanford 1975:185). Richmond had become an “industrially independent” city with more than 300 industries (Sanford 1975:185; RCPC 1946:32). Included among the diversified manufacturers in the city were tobacco products, paper and printing, iron and machinery, and a wide variety of other products (RCPC 1946:55). Beginning in the late 1940s, diverse manufacturers and trucking companies in search of new space to establish themselves within the city of Richmond began to populate the area comprising the Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District. With the increasing prevalence of automobiles during the 1920s, a new type of industry had emerged – freight trucking. Just as the ascendancy of the railroad had led to the eventual demise of the river-based canal system as the dominant channel for transporting goods, the automobile – specifically the truck –began to rapidly replace the railroad as the preferred method for shipping goods to markets in the postwar era.

Context: Trucking and Transportation

Throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century, rapid improvements were made to automobiles and trucks that allowed for faster and more comfortable travel. Starting in 1910, the development of a gasoline-powered internal combustion engine, gear-based transmission, and the tractor/semi-trailer combination allowed for the rise of trucking. In 1913, the first weight limits were introduced to regulate the burgeoning truck industry.

With World War I and the economic stimulus it brought, the trucking industry began to reach maturity. Railroads across the country were overcrowded with shipments for the war, which delayed shipping for domestic goods. Industrialist Roy D. Chapin, working in conjunction with the military as chair of the government Highways Transport Committee, was the first to suggest utilizing long-haul trucking as a means of alleviating nationwide freight rail congestion (“Truck Committee” 1918). Pneumatic tires were developed around this time to allow for faster transportation speeds and, within a year of the war ending, there were already over a million trucks on the road. After 1920, rural roads were steadily improved, and both diesel engines and fifth wheel couplings were introduced, which continued to improve the industry.

When the Great Depression began in 1929, the country was in the midst of completing its first system of federally-aided highways. These early highways provided two lanes but were often circuitous; however, this did not stop the growth of the trucking industry in the United States. As other industries throughout the nation struggled during the Great Depression, the transportation industry worked on gaining a major foothold. The market became flooded with small trucking companies, leading the federal government to pass the Motor Carrier Act of 1935.

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The primary purpose of the act was to give full authority to the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to regulate the industry, which consisted of both transport trucks and buses. The act also introduced the idea of “just and reasonable” prices, and companies were required to file notice of their tariffs, which could be reviewed by competing trucking companies. Another purpose of the act was to regulate new trucking companies. Currently operating companies were grandfathered into the new regulations, but obtaining clearance to operate a new company was nearly impossible, as applications could be opposed by rival companies. The only way for a new company to break into the business was to buy a route or area of routes, as certain companies were only allowed to operate in certain areas. Nonetheless, trucking companies continued to overtake railroad commerce by expanding within their respective territories.

With the continual increase of trucking traffic on American roads, a larger, interstate system of roads was needed. The Federal Highway Act of 1944 introduced the idea of this national highway system, but no funding was allocated initially. In 1954, President Eisenhower reintroduced the idea, though there was much bickering between trucking, railroad, oil, tire, and farm groups over who would fund the system. Finally, in 1956, the Federal Aid Highway Act authorized the construction of the Interstate Highway System.

The interstate system solidified the dominance of truck transportation, opening formerly rural and inaccessible regions of the country to cheap and efficient distribution and movement of goods. By 1964, the trucking industry employed 8 million Americans, and by the end of the decade, there were 18 million commercial trucks on the road. With this growth, the 1970s became the industry’s heyday (Steinberg 2017). The 1930s-era Federal regulations that continued to limit truck commerce began to unravel when the Motor Carrier Act of 1980 deregulated interstate trucking. Further measures to clean up and deregulate the industry took place in 1995, which allowed for additional growth and expansion. Gradually, under increased pressure from shippers, the states also amended their laws in the 1980s and 1990s to deregulate intrastate trucking.

In the early twenty-first century, trucking has remained a major component of the nation’s economy and vital to commerce and industry. In 2017, trucks moved 10.77 billion tons of freight, accounting for over 70% of all domestic freight tonnage. The industry generated over \$700 billion in annual revenue. Approximately 7.7 million people are employed in jobs related to trucking activity.

Context: Richmond Trucking Industry

Richmond’s role in the growth and evolution of trucking began in the early-twentieth century. Although there were trucks and motor freight companies operating earlier, it was during the decade of the 1930s that numerous trucking companies were established throughout the Richmond area. Just some of the trucking companies based in the Richmond area during the 1930s included Barnwell Brothers, Inc., Bristow Brothers Freight Lines, Capital Motor Lines, Inc., Dillard Cartage Co., East Coast Freight Lines, Inc. Estes Express Lines, Hazelwood S.T.

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Motor Lines, Miller Motor Lines, Inc., Old Dominion Freight Line, Overnite Transportation Co., Rutherford Freight Lines, Inc., Transport Corp. of Virginia, and Wilson Trucking Corp (RTD 15 June 1939).

Many of these companies opened prior to the regulations of the Motor Carrier Act of 1935 and further state authority claimed by the State Corporation Commission (SCC), which greatly limited the establishment of new trucking companies. In Virginia, the SCC limited the trucking industry to a greater extent than the federal regulations, dictating that even if a trucking company stayed within Virginia state lines, the SCC could control its territory (*A Legacy of Service* n.d.).

Despite these limitations, Richmond continued to flourish as an early center of truck transportation. Much of the growth of the trucking industry in Richmond was because of its central location to regional highways and the intersection of two major trucking routes – the north-south U.S. 1 and east-west Highway 460.

After World War II, the trucking industry expanded throughout Richmond and the nation as a whole. Shipping companies, which had relied so heavily on railroad service, began to use trucking in an effort to lower rail rates; however, with the wider range of service that trucking companies could offer, their use steadily increased (*Overnite Corporation* n.d.). It was during this period that several of the Richmond trucking companies grew from local shippers to regional and national carriers with multiple hubs or terminals.

One company that began locally and grew was Overnite Transportation Company, which was originally based in a small shared facility in Richmond's Shockoe Bottom before moving to Manchester. The company grew dramatically during World War II through securing government and tobacco contracts; eventually the company "became the biggest cigarette hauler in the industry" (Jackson 1989:22). This was undoubtedly aided by the company's location in the tobacco city of Richmond. With this growth, Overnite constructed a garage on Mayo's Island in 1945 that allowed for larger tractor-trailer storage, loading, and servicing facilities.

Another local company, Estes Express Lines, was founded in the 1930s, but grew substantially in the years after World War II. In 1946, Estes Express Lines moved their headquarters from Chase City to Richmond, occupying a warehouse on Bainbridge Street in Manchester. In 1948, they relocated once more, to a larger and purpose-built headquarters space on Gordon Avenue in the vicinity of the historic district.

In the 1940s, the trucking industry was becoming more visible in Richmond and becoming an issue to be addressed by city planners. At that time, most trucking companies in Richmond were based in the major manufacturing neighborhoods of Scott's Addition, Manchester, and to a smaller extent, Shockoe Bottom. There was also a small number of companies scattered throughout the city. Those companies in Manchester were centered at Hull, Stockton, and Bainbridge streets (City Directory 1940).

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Richmond's 1946 master plan for the city determined that heavy truck traffic was "injurious to residential areas" and recommended the establishment of truck terminals be constrained to a limited number of roads, as well as the improvement of major streets. These new planning strategies aimed to shape development so that "eventually the terminals of all companies should be so located that movements through the central business district and through residential areas will become unnecessary" (RCPC 1946:180). The difficulty of this endeavor prior to World War II was alleviated by the development of "interregional highways." In the mid-1950s, the main north to south thoroughfare through Manchester, 9th Street, was widened and renamed Commerce Road to connect the burgeoning industrial area and provide improved transit for trucks in the area.

As other improvements were made to transportation and packaging, the trucking industry took over a larger market. The Interstate Highway System, which was expanded in the 1950s, allowed for easier transportation of merchandise. In 1955, the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike Authority was established to build a turnpike between the two cities. It opened in 1958, soon after which it became Interstate 95 (Kozel 1997). In the vicinity of the district, the interstate paralleled the railroad line to the east. Fast delivery depended on good roads so the presence of I-95 led to the expansion of trucking companies and relocation closer to the highway (Jackson 1989:36). This was the case in the historic district, which would soon become a central core of the trucking industry in Richmond, when several of the largest local truck companies in the city – including Overnite Transportation, Estes Express Lines, and Blue and Grey Transport – opened terminals there.

As a prime location for the distribution of goods with an accessible network of highway and rail connections, Richmond became known as the "Gateway to the South," easily connecting the densely populated northeast, the agricultural and rapidly growing south, and the coalfields, rich resources, and industrial centers of the west. The city was in "Official Freight Classification Territory," and the rate line followed the Norfolk and Western Railroad through Virginia, allowing for lower shipping rates in Richmond than from cities to the south (Richmond City Directory 1947:24). This would prove especially advantageous given the availability of other modes of transportation in and around the city (rail, air, and water), leading Richmond to become an important regional transfer point. With the rise of commercial trucking, it "became possible to move people and cargoes faster, in greater volumes, over longer distances and more conveniently" (Rodrigue et al. 2017:49).

The first trucking company to establish a presence in proximity to the historic district was Estes Express, which opened an office and terminal on nearby Gordon Avenue in 1951. Throughout the 1950s, Estes Express expanded their operations in the area with the construction and acquisition of additional warehouse and terminal space within the district. In 1954, the Richmond Container Company opened a manufacturing center in the district. While not a trucking company themselves, their business relied heavily upon manufacturing cardboard and boxes for use by local trucking companies. In 1956, the first purpose-built trucking and motor freight terminal opened in the district when the Blue and Gray Transportation Company opened

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an office and warehouse on Commerce Road, next to the Richmond Container Company. In 1958, the interstate trucking company Boss-Linco also built an office and warehouse in the district, which Estes later acquired ("Auction" 1983).

The largest expansion of the trucking industry within the historic district occurred in 1959, when Overnite Transportation Company established its presence with the construction of an office and trucking terminal shortly after the company went public in 1957, ten years after its initial incorporation. This facility joined their previous operations on Hull Street and Mayo Island to make Overnite the largest trucking company in the area. Over the following five years, Overnite would continue to expand their operations in the district with the construction of a massive warehouse behind the office under the guise of a subsidiary, Foremost Warehouse, as well as a large additional trucking terminal, tractor-trailer service building, warehouse, and storage yard in 1964. During this time, Overnite grew to have 3,000 miles of routes in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee along with 34 terminals, four of which were company-owned, including the buildings within the Manchester historic district (*Overnite Corporation History* n.d.).

Overnite continued to grow as a national carrier and, in 1976, moved to a new headquarters on Semmes Avenue in Manchester. In 1984, they sold their complex on Commerce Road within the historic district to Estes Express Lines. At that time, Estes vacated and sold their Gordon Avenue office, as well as smaller terminals and warehouses across Commerce Road in the district to consolidate into the larger former Overnite complex, where they continue to operate a regional hub. Blue and Gray appeared to have moved out of their Manchester terminal building in the 1980s, at which time Ward Trucking of Altoona, Pennsylvania, acquired the property. Ward continues to operate a regional hub there.

In addition to the larger firms that made their home in Manchester, smaller trucking entities also occupied buildings within the district at various times, including Boss-Linco Lines, Inc., O'Boyle Truck Lines, Jimmy's Transfer, Mercury Trucking, and Farsco Trucking (CRPAR S-388-1; CRPAR S-388-2).

Property-Specific Histories

1003 Commerce Road (DHR ID #127-6519-0003)

In 1947, the Acme Fixture Company constructed this warehouse for \$40,614.36 (CRDPS Permit #28384). At that time, the property was formally identified as being located at 900 Dinwiddie Avenue. Though it was identified only as a warehouse, newspaper articles refer to it as an office building, and it may have also served as factory ("1947 Listed As Largest Building Year" 1948). The company made and installed fixtures for commercial establishments including stores, department stores, restaurants, taverns, and banks. In 1952, Diamond Hill Plywood Company, Inc. had a warehouse constructed next to the Acme warehouse at a cost of \$69,819.71 (CRDPS Permit #32861). This property was located at 1003 Commerce Road. This was the Richmond branch of the larger Diamond Hill Plywood Company that began in South Carolina in 1945

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(DHP n.d.). The company began with the vision of a “wholesale distribution network that could meet the needs of the industrial and retail customers” (DHP n.d.). In 1970, the two properties were joined under a single owner, and the two buildings were connected with a metal addition between them. Today, the building is owned by 1003 Commerce Road, LLC and used as general warehouse space.

1005 Commerce Road (DHR ID #127-6519-0005)

In 1948, the O.K. Foundry relocated from their establishment at 17th and Hull Street, where the company began in 1912, to their new foundry at 1005 Commerce Road (“O.K. Foundry” n.d.). The construction of the new foundry mirrored development patterns elsewhere in Manchester during the twentieth century, when tobacco manufacturers relocated to the area for additional space. This new plant was six times larger than their existing foundry (Kappatos 2016). The foundry manufactured machine castings for the tobacco, paper, and agricultural industries (Kappatos 2016). Though the plant began as strictly local, over time it expanded its business throughout Virginia and into New York, North Carolina, and South Carolina, no doubt made possible by Richmond and the foundry’s location near major transportation corridors (Kappatos 2016). The property is still owned and operated by O.K. Foundry.

1011 Commerce Road (DHR ID #127-6519-0006)

In 1947, Ivon E. Fowler spent \$10,000 for the construction of “a one-story shop at this property to be used in the repair and storage of highway repair equipment” (“To Build Repair Shop” 1946). Fowler was a local excavating contractor (“Ivon E. Fowler” 1948). After his death the following year, the property was occupied by several companies, including the International Wood Products Company and the Richmond Terminal Garage, whose truck drivers joined the American Federation of Labor union (Advertisement 1950; “Local Truck Drivers” 1954). The property was owned, however, by Richmond Investment Corporation, which had a warehouse constructed in 1952 and an office and warehouse built in 1958 (CRDPS Permit #32590; CRDPS Permit #36043). It was also later used by the interstate trucking companies of Boss Linco and Estes Express (“Auction” 1983). In 1984, Estes sold the property, at which time the office on the property was demolished and replaced by the still-extant commercial building that now operates as an electric supply warehouse.

1100 Commerce Road (DHR ID #127-6921, 127-6519-0002)

The buildings on this property were originally constructed by Overnite Transportation Company as an office and warehouse for a trucking terminal. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Overnite expanded its terminal base to allow for additional highway access throughout the southeast (Jackson 1989:37). In 1959, Overnite constructed the office at 1100 Commerce Road when the company had 35 drivers working out of Richmond, among approximately 600 drivers in total (CRDPS Permit #36519 1959; “Trucking Firm” 1959). This building was followed by a truck terminal and service building in 1964 (CRDPS Permit #38593). The new terminal also had sleeping facilities that company founder J. Harwood Cochrane called “good as any motel” (Jackson 1989:38). Unlike many other trucking companies, Overnite Transportation was never unionized, which allowed drivers to take on other duties as necessary and to avoid being laid off

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during slow times, conditions that created a strong loyalty to the company (*Overnite Corporation History* n.d.). Overnite's headquarters moved to Semmes Avenue in 1976 (Jackson 1989:38). In 1984, Overnite sold its property on Commerce Road to Estes Express for its continued use in the trucking industry ("Overnite Transportation Co." 1984). The complex continues to be owned and operated by Estes Express Lines.

700 Gordon Avenue (DHR ID #127-6920, 127-6519-0001)

Increased success in the 1950s allowed Overnite Transportation Company to expand their office and trucking terminal complex on Commerce Road and to build this warehouse, located at 700 Gordon Avenue, in 1962. They built the warehouse through a fully-owned subsidiary called Foremost Warehouse Corporation (Jackson 1989:39). With 127,642 square-feet of storage space, this would be the largest public warehouse in the city (Weekley 1962). Diversification into the general public warehousing business was desirable for the trucking company and aimed to "blend well with its present motor carrier operations," as the company's staff frequently encountered opportunities for public warehousing contracts (quoted in Weekley 1962). The property was sold by Overnite in 1984 and continues to be operated as a general warehouse.

1111 Commerce Road (DHR ID #127-6519-0007)

Blue & Grey Transportation Co. constructed this building as an office and terminal in 1956 at a cost of \$566,656.00 (CRDPS Permit #35350). The trucking company specialized in transporting paper and plastics and began hauling between Richmond and Norfolk before eventually expanding to encompass the entire East Coast and into the Midwest (Slayton 2008). This was an ideal location for the company to be based given its proximity to paper, box, and plastic manufacturers. The property was sold in 1974 and continues to be operated as a trucking terminal by Ward Transport.

1125 Commerce Road (DHR ID #127-6519-0008)

Given this lot's proximity to multiple trucking companies and manufacturers, the 1954 construction of the Richmond Container Corporation building at 1125 Commerce Road was a logical step. Ninth & Ingram Corp. built the factory for the cost of \$190,543.75 (CRDPS Permit #34065). An offshoot of the Fibre Board Container Corporation, the Richmond Container Corporation was chartered in that same year to "manufacture and sell boxes and cartons" (Zimmerman 1954; "Container Company Is Chartered Here" 1954). In August 1959, the Albemarle Paper Company purchased the Richmond Container Corporation along with the Albemarle Container Corporation in Baltimore, MD, thereby forming the Albemarle Container Division of the Albemarle Paper Company (Gottwald 1962:17; "Container Company" 1966; Hogge 1961:4). This division manufactured corrugated boxes and shipping containers (Gottwald 1962:17). In that same year, they purchased nearby Randolph Paper Box, manufacturers of folding boxes for packaging use in many industries such as food and tobacco (Hogge 1961:4). The property was sold in 1978 and is now occupied by CARITAS.

906 Dinwiddie Avenue (1000 Dinwiddie – DHR ID #127-6519-0004)

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Founded in 1953, Topcrafters of Virginia, Inc. constructed the building at 906 Dinwiddie Avenue in 1960 for the cost of \$28,498.15, adding one more manufacturing facility to Manchester (CRDPS Permit #37120). Though the building permit and real estate assessment listed the building as a wood workshop and warehouse (the company did make cabinets), the 1965 City Directory identifies the company as a plastic manufacturer. The building is still owned and operated by Topcrafters.

Area of Significance: Commerce

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District holds local significance in the area of Commerce. The district is centered on Commerce Road, which was historically, and continues to be, a primary commercial artery through the Manchester/South Richmond area. The district includes 11 contributing buildings on 8 properties, all of which historically and currently function commercially. The earliest businesses in the district were representative of the larger commercial development patterns in Manchester during the early-twentieth century when the railroad continued to dominate commerce, and most manufacturing and transit were intrinsically connected to it. One of the first companies to move to the district was the O.K. Foundry, which continues to operate from their building located at 1005 Commerce Road. The foundry was started by James O'Neill in 1912 to provide steel rails to railroad companies. They opened the foundry on Commerce Road in 1948 after moving from their original location within the Manchester Industrial Historic District on 17th Street. The original foundry was demolished after the new one on Commerce was completed. Other businesses historically operating in and around the district were affiliated with the two most prevalent industries in Manchester; tobacco processing facilities and lumber and wood yards. Located adjacent to the district are two large and already NRHP-listed tobacco storage complexes, the Alleghany Warehouse Group and the Chesapeake Warehouses. Within the district are two properties that were historically related to the wood and lumber businesses, including Topcrafters and the Diamond Hill Plywood Company. All of these early businesses located in the district due to availability of land and ready access to railroad networks, which allowed for broad distribution of their goods.

The majority of commercial development in the district, however, is representative of the local transition in commerce from the railroad to the trucking industry. The vast majority of properties in the district are, or were, associated with the trucking and motor freight industry that grew to prominence in Richmond during the mid-twentieth century. In addition to the trucking companies themselves, associated commercial endeavors, including cardboard box manufacturers and general purposes wholesale storage warehouses opened as well.

The first two trucking companies to open facilities in the district were Blue and Grey Transit and Overnite Transportation Company. Estes Express Lines opened their main office and Richmond terminal several blocks away from the district and added several warehouses and support buildings within the district. They later moved into the Overnite Transportation Company complex after Overnite opened a large new headquarters on Semmes Avenue. Blue and Grey

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Transit moved out of their property in the district in the 1980s, at which time another trucking company, Ward Trucking, moved in to that complex.

Two of these trucking companies grew from local shippers to nationally known carriers while operating hubs in the district. Overnite Transportation Company was already the largest carrier in Richmond when they built an office, terminal, and warehouse in the district between 1959 and 1964 and later became one of the largest in the state and nation. Overnite moved out of the district in 1984 and was acquired by Union Pacific Corporation in 1986 for \$1.2 billion (Reisken 2016). In 2005, UPS Freight purchased Overnite from Union Pacific for \$1.25 billion and renamed it UPS Ground Freight, Inc., which remains based in Richmond. Estes Express Lines was also still a local carrier when it first moved into the district in the 1950s, but within the decade was operating four terminals throughout Virginia. By 1965, they had expanded to interstate service with additional terminals in North Carolina. In 1984, when Estes moved into Overnite's former complex in the district, they were operating in all states east of the Mississippi River (Estes Company History n.d.). Estes Express Lines is now an international company, and continues to be headquartered in Richmond, with their facility in the district operating as a regional hub.

The two other trucking companies that have operated within the district are not as large or prominent as Overnite or Estes, but are locally important to the history of trucking and its ties to the historic district. Blue and Grey was founded in Richmond as a local carrier, making runs only between Richmond and Norfolk, but expanded to include the entire East Coast and Midwest. They were later acquired by Patriot Logistics from Houston, Texas, and continue to operate throughout the nation. Ward Trucking was originally founded in Pennsylvania in the 1930s and remained a regional carrier in the northeast until 1980. They opened a terminal in the district in 1984, at which point they were able to expand their service area into the Southeast.

Besides the trucking companies and facilities themselves, their presence also led to the growth and development of a number of associated businesses in the district that were integral to the motor freight industry and the significance of the district as a center of commerce. The increase in truck-based transportation in the 1950s resulted in the need for cheaper and more readily available packaging materials, which was provided by several paper and cardboard box manufacturers in the area, including the Richmond Container Corporation, one of the largest in the city and located within the district.

The Richmond Container Corporation was chartered in 1954 with L.N. Donati as president. The Donati family had previous experience in the container business as the long-time owners of the Fibre Board Container Company, which started operating near Shockoe Bottom in 1916. Many of their clients were affiliated with the tobacco industry in Richmond. The company constructed their new building within the district in 1954. According to a May 19, 1960, Richmond Times-Dispatch newspaper article, the company was acquired by Albemarle Paper Company in 1959 in an effort to diversify their product holdings. Albemarle had a rich history in the paper business. Originally a conglomerate of paper mills, the company began diversifying in the mid-twentieth

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century with the acquisition of Richmond Container, Randolph Paper Box Company, and Consolidated Paper and Box Company. Though a part of the Albemarle Group, Richmond Container kept their name and continued to do business at the property until 1978.

Also inherently related to the trucking industry in the district is the Foremost Warehouse building. This massive warehouse was constructed in 1962, by Foremost Warehouse, Corp., a fully-owned subsidiary of Overnite Transportation Company. The building was to serve as a public warehouse and provide for storage and transfer of goods and shipments coming through Overnite's trucking terminal. When built, the Richmond Times-Dispatch heralded the building as the largest warehouse in Richmond and possibly Virginia.

Together, the buildings and properties within the historic district represent a significant aspect of Richmond's commercial history. The companies and businesses that operated in the district throughout the period of significance reflect important trends and patterns in local commercial development, as well as the growth and evolution of the trucking and motor freight industry in Richmond during the mid-twentieth century.

Area of Significance: Transportation

The Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District also holds local significance in the area of Transportation. The buildings and properties reflect the shift from railroads to long haul trucking and how it manifested itself in the built landscape of South Richmond in the mid-twentieth century. The district illustrates changes made in the urban development pattern of manufacturing properties and related companies tied to transport of finished goods during transition from railroad systems to trucking and highway systems through their design, layout, and configuration. Many of the properties in the district contain large parcels with buildings occupying a small footprint of the lot in order to accommodate tractor-trailer circulation, as well as multiple buildings characterized by numerous loading docks and truck bays and ancillary storage warehouses. These characteristics make properties in the district distinct from other commercial concerns nearby that came before the mid-twentieth century or were established in more recent years.

The district retains vestiges of the area's early reliance on the railroad with a complex network of spurs spread throughout. For most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, transportation of goods relied heavily on railroads for distribution or delivery to port cities for overseas shipping. Manchester boasted many transport hubs for railroads beginning in 1836 when the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad Bridge was constructed, connecting Manchester to the City of Richmond. The Richmond and Danville Railroad had a major hub in the area, as did the Seaboard Air Line. By 1950, the City had six different railroad carriers including the Atlantic Coast Line, Seaboard Air Line, Southern Rail, and the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac lines, and in 1955, Seaboard Air Line chose Richmond for its corporate headquarters.

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The Seaboard Air Line Railroad extends north-south to the east of the district, and the earliest buildings in the district were manufacturing properties placed adjacent to rail spurs off the mainline. Remnants of the spur network remain evident and continue to convey the scale of the rail network that was present historically. The spurs can be seen through the retention of actual tracks in some locations and cleared grassy rights-of-way in others. The buildings that were built immediately adjacent to these spurs convey their original connectivity through their irregular form that conformed to the pre-existing corridors, as well as with integral loading docks bordering the right-of-way.

The transition from railroad to trucking in the mid-twentieth century led to changes in the transportation network, as well as the individual buildings and properties served by it. Many of these physical characteristics manifest themselves in the district and are conveyed through the road network and properties located within it. The trucking industry began to occupy the district and the surrounding areas in the early 1950s as a result of the widening and reconfiguration of Commerce Road, the primary artery through Manchester and the district at that time. Commerce Road extends along and serves much of the commercial and industrial development of Manchester, and upon the opening of the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike (I-95), provided a direct and easy connection for these endeavors to the highway. Flanking both sides of Commerce Road in the historic district are several large properties that became the site of trucking terminals in the late 1950s and early 1960s. These properties reflect the design and configuration of trucking terminals as they were developed at that time. Each of the terminals and warehouses feature rows of truck bays and loading docks. Surrounding the buildings are wide graveled or paved staging areas to facilitate navigation of large tractor-trailers through the property and to these bays. Most of the properties have multiple driveways or access points to allow for constant truck circulation and minimize congestion. The properties also feature massive parking areas where tractor-trailers not in use could be lined up and stored without inhibiting circulation patterns. Interestingly, the continued relevance of the railroad and multi-modal transportation can also be observed through the massive Foremost Warehouse (Overnite Transportation), which also features a long railroad loading dock in addition to its numerous trucking bays.

Together, the buildings and properties within the Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District physically convey the evolution of commercial transportation in Richmond as the trucking industry took the railroad's place as the primary means of freight shipping and distribution. The properties reflect the transition in layout and configuration, as well as building design and spatial relationships, to accommodate this new form of transportation. The multiple trucking terminals, offices, and warehouses present also reflect the most intact and representative concentration of mid-twentieth century trucking-related resources in the City of Richmond.

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Manchester Trucking and Commercial

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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

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA; City of Richmond, VA

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): VDHR File #127-6519

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ~50

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: + 37.517206 | Longitude: - 77.435002 |
| 2. Latitude: + 37.514749 | Longitude: - 77.432507 |
| 3. Latitude: + 37.515609 | Longitude: - 77.431191 |
| 4. Latitude: + 37.513792 | Longitude: - 77.429295 |
| 5. Latitude: + 37.511750 | Longitude: - 77.433416 |
| 6. Latitude: + 37.515438 | Longitude: - 77.437355 |

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

The boundaries of the historic district generally includes properties bordering both sides of Commerce Road, between Dinwiddie Avenue and Ingraham Avenue in Richmond, Virginia. The northwest corner of the district is at the intersection of Dinwiddie Avenue and E. 8th

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Street. From there, it extends southeasterly along the former alignment of E. 8th Street which is no longer present, but continues to be the property line between a large parcel bordering Commerce Road and those bordering E. 7th Street. At Gordon Avenue, the boundary turns northeast and extends to a railroad spur that extends along the former alignment of E 6th Street. It then turns southeast and extends along the railroad spur to the east corner of the property at 1100 Commerce Road. It then follows the border of this property southwesterly to Commerce Road where it doglegs slightly to the northwest before continuing southwesterly along Ingraham Avenue. At E. 11th Street it turns to the northwest and extends across Gordon Avenue in a straight line along the road's former alignment which is now only a property line along the rear of parcels facing Commerce Road. At Dinwiddie Avenue, it turns to the northeast and extends to the point of beginning.

This boundary includes roughly 50 acres of land and the following tax parcels as recorded by the City of Richmond: S0000387003, S0000632001, S0000632010, S0000633001, S0000633002, S0000388001, S0000388003, S0000388008, S0000388004, S0000388006. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached Location Map and Sketch Map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the historic district are drawn to include the most cohesive and intact collection of resources that date to the period of significance and are associated with the district's commercial and transportation-related areas of significance. This includes early manufacturing and commercial properties set on and affiliated with the railroad spur network in the area, as well as regional trucking hubs and offices set on large tractor-trailer circulation pads. It excludes areas where demolition and new construction have obscured the historic development patterns.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Robert J. Taylor, Jr.- Senior Architectural Historian

organization: Dutton & Associates, LLC

street & number: 1115 Crowder Drive

city or town: Midlothian state: Virginia zip code: 23113

telephone: 804-897-1960

date: September 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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- **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.)

Photograph Log

Name of Property: Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District

City or Vicinity: Richmond

County: Independent City

State: Virginia

Photographer: Kiernan Ziletti

Photographs taken September 2018

Photo 1 of 14: View of Estes Express Lines Building, formerly Overnite Transportation Company Office
1100 Commerce Road, Facing East

Photo 2 of 14: View of Estes Express Lines Truck Terminal and Service Warehouse
1100 Commerce Road, Facing Northeast

Photo 3 of 14: View of Ward Trucking Building, formerly Blue and Grey Transport Office
1111 Commerce Road, Facing South

Photo 4 of 14: View of Ward Trucking Terminal
1111 Commerce Road, Facing Southeast

Photo 5 of 14: View of vacant truck warehouse, formerly Boss Linco and Estes Express Lines Warehouse
1011 Commerce Road, Facing Northwest

Photo 6 of 14: View of public warehouse, formerly Foremost Warehouse (Overnite Transportation Company subsidiary)
700 Gordon Avenue, Facing Southeast

Photo 7 of 14: View of manufacturing warehouse, formerly Richmond Container Company
1125 Commerce Road, Facing Southwest

Photo 8 of 14: View of O.K. Foundry complex
1005 Commerce Road, Facing Southwest

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Photo 9 of 14: Representative Streetscape of Commerce Road

From intersection of Commerce Road and Ingraham Avenue, Facing Northwest

Photo 10 of 14: Representative Streetscape of Dinwiddie Avenue and former rail spur

Dinwiddie Avenue at Commerce Road, Facing Southwest

Photo 11 of 14: Bird's-eye view of former Foremost Warehouse

700 Gordon Avenue, Facing East

Photo 12 of 14: Bird's-eye view of Estes Express (former Overnite) complex and Richmond
Container Company

1100 block of Commerce Road, Facing Southeast

Photo 13 of 14: Bird's-eye view of trucking terminals

Gordon Avenue at Commerce Road, Facing Southwest

Photo 14 of 14: Bird's-eye view of former Acme Fixture Warehouse and trucking terminals

Dinwiddie Avenue at Commerce Road, Facing Northeast

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

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

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Historic Photograph



Historic Photo 1: Estes Express Lines Truck at Richmond Terminal, 1949
Source: [Estes Express Lines Website: History Page](#)

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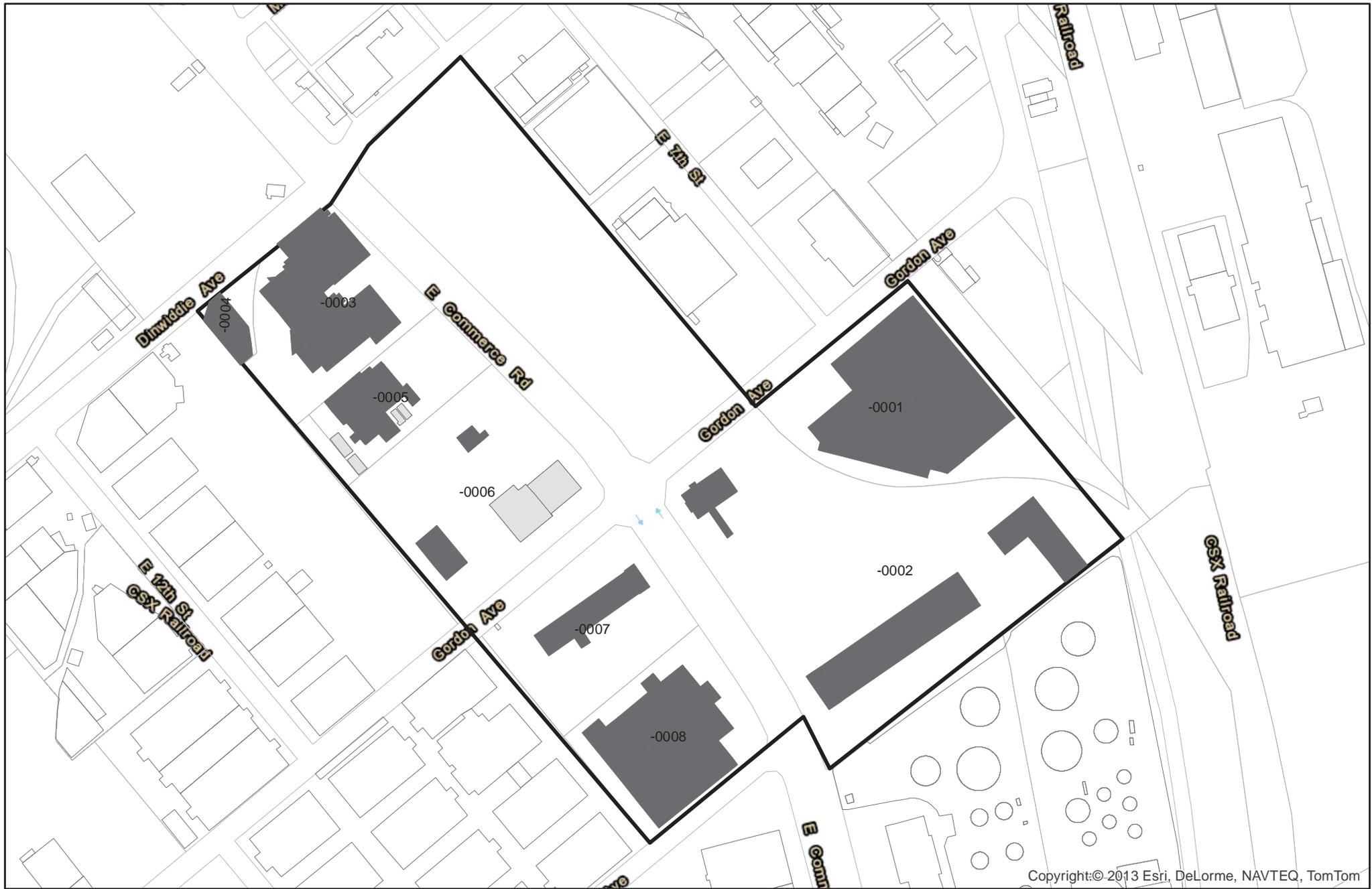
Historic Photo 2: Estes Express Lines Truck on road in South Richmond, Circa 1960s
Source: [Estes Express Lined Website: History Page](#)



**Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District
City of Richmond, VA; DHR No. 127-6519
LOCATION MAP**

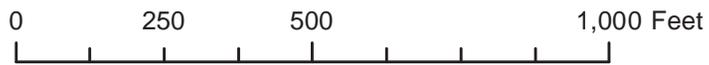
 Historic District Boundary





Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District City of Richmond, VA; VDHR # 127-6519
SKETCH MAP

-  Historic District Boundary
-  Contributing
-  Noncontributing



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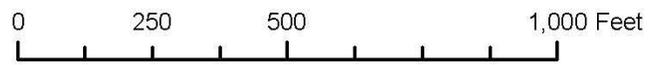


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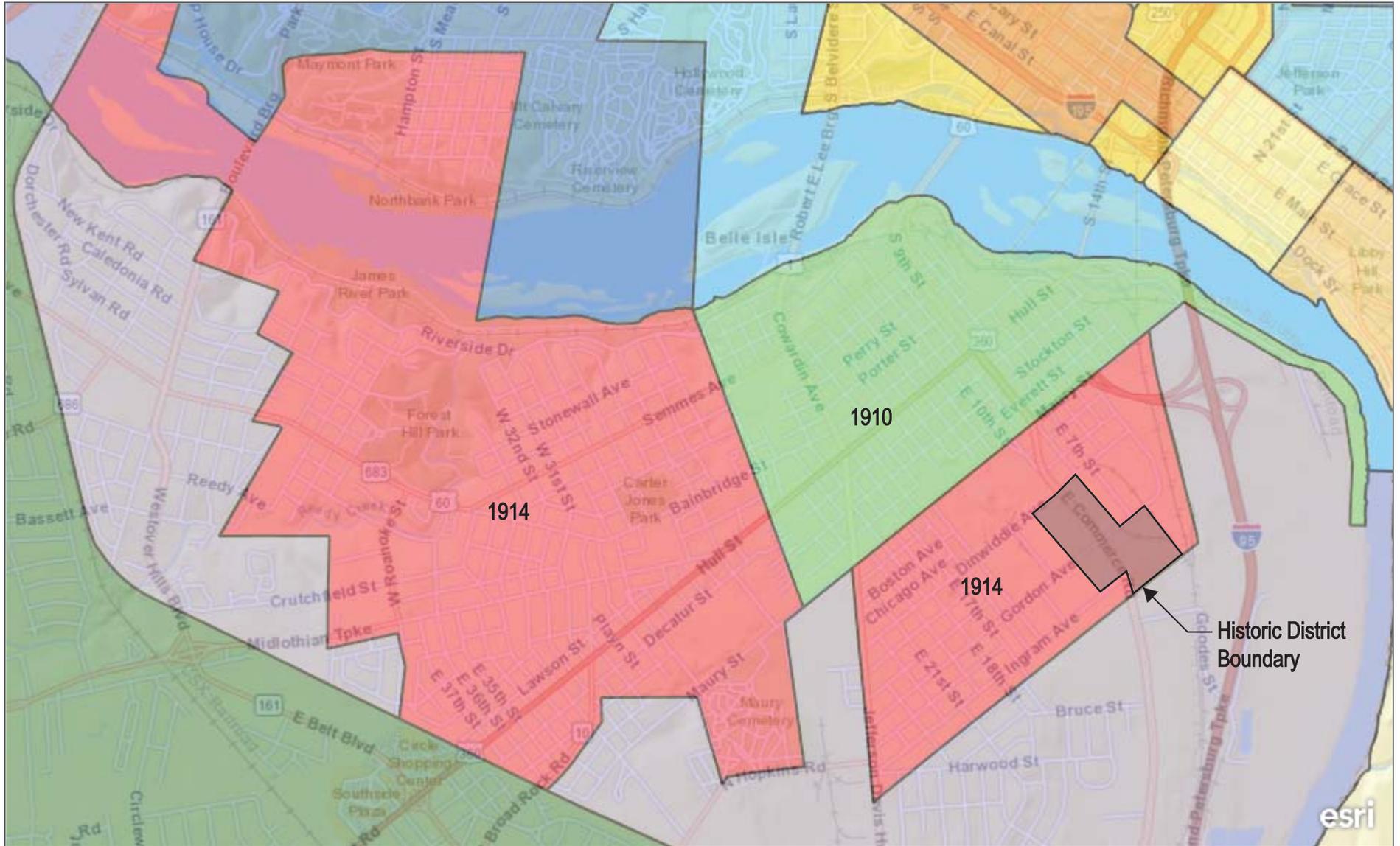
- 1 Bird's-eye View
- 1 Street Level View

Historic District Boundary

Manchester Trucking and Commercial Historic District
City of Richmond, VA; VDHR #127-6519
PHOTO KEY



Additional Documentation: Annexation History Map



This map shows the annexation/growth history of the south side of the City of Richmond, VA.
 County of Henrico, VITA, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, NGA, USGS

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VDHR No. 127-6519

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