



Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building (B-5270)

Baltimore City, MD

Name of Property

County and State

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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

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing      | Noncontributing   |            |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
| <u>1</u>          | <u>          </u> | buildings  |
| <u>          </u> | <u>          </u> | sites      |
| <u>          </u> | <u>          </u> | structures |
| <u>          </u> | <u>          </u> | objects    |
| <u>1</u>          | <u>0</u>          | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE – business

INDUSTRY – processing site

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT - Moderne

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Brick, concrete, and limestone

Walls: Brick and limestone

Roof: Asphalt and gravel

### 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.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building (Coca-Cola Building) is located at 2525 Kirk Avenue in the City of Baltimore, Maryland. Completed in 1939, the building bears the hallmarks of the Art Moderne style, which convey the quality of streamlined horizontality: rounded corners, horizontal stone banding, and stylized relief panels with Coca-Cola iconography. Constructed to house both the administrative and industrial activities of the company, the building covers most of its two-and-one-half-acre, trapezoidal site. Clad in variegated red brick laid in a Flemish-bond pattern, it features gridded, aluminum-frame windows and a stone parapet that conceals the flat roof. The principal, northern block of the building—which formerly housed the administrative offices—is three full stories in height, which gradually step down to the south and east to enclose the one- and two-story bottling works. The building is supported on a structural system of steel columns and trusses, which carry concrete slabs.

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## Narrative Description

### Site Description

The Coca-Cola Building, located at 2525 Kirk Avenue, is situated on the southern corner of the intersection of Kirk and Exeter Hall avenues, in the northeastern section of the City of Baltimore, Maryland. It is bounded to the northeast by Exeter Hall Avenue, to the southwest by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad right-of-way, to the southeast by Garrett Avenue, and to the northwest by Kirk Avenue. The grassy lot slopes down to the south, and its trapezoidal shape encompasses two-and-one-half acres. The width of the site tapers as one moves away from the principal, northwestern side. The building covers approximately two thirds of the lot, and its footprint mimics the parcel's shape. A section of the lot immediately east of the building is enclosed by a concrete masonry unit (CMU) wall. The area inside the wall is paved in asphalt, and is at a higher elevation than the rest of the property. A section of the asphalt-paved area is leased by Comcast, and features six satellite dishes surrounded by a chain-link fence. The asphalt-paved area is accessed by a concrete truck ramp, aligned along the eastern side of the north façade of the building. Landscaping is limited to shrubbery planted at the foundation, highlighting the primary entrance on the west façade. A screen of trees and brush lines the south and southeast property boundaries, screening the lot from the railroad right-of way and Garrett Avenue, respectively. Additional entrances to the building are located on the northeast façade, directly off Exeter Hall Avenue. A poured-concrete retaining wall encircles the elevated asphalt-paved area, east of the building.

The neighborhood immediately surrounding the Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building features a variety of uses, including light industrial, residential, and institutional. The proximity to the railroad encouraged the growth of light industrial complexes to the west and south of the Coca-Cola Building. Brick row houses populate the urban residential neighborhoods located northeast of the building, and likely served as worker housing for the industries located along the railroad. Coldstream Park Elementary School is located on the western side of the block that diagonally faces the Coca-Cola Building, across the intersection of Kirk and Exeter Hall avenues.

### Exterior

Constructed in 1939, the Coca-Cola Building was designed in the Art Moderne style by Atlanta, Georgia, architect Jesse Markham Shelton. The main block of the building stands three stories high, and is wrapped by a tiered, two-story warehouse to the south and east. It sits on a solid, concrete foundation, which supports the steel structural system. The building is clad in red brick, laid in a Flemish bond. Wide limestone stringcourses belt the building at the top of the windows on the first story, and at the bottom of the windows at the third story. The third-story stringcourse is fluted. Narrow limestone stringcourses are located at the top and bottom of the windows on the second story, and at the top of the third-story windows. Projecting courses of brickwork extend the lines from the horizontal window division around the third story. The corners of the building

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are rounded, further exemplifying the Art Moderne style. It is crowned by a brick parapet wall, topped by limestone coping. The flat roof is covered in a combination of an asphalt-rolled membrane and crushed gravel. Mechanical equipment and scattered skylights are located on the roof, in addition to a large chimney and freight elevator penthouse. Both are clad in brick; the chimney is further accented by three limestone stringcourses and a concrete cap. Fenestration throughout the building typically consists of large, horizontally oriented, multi-light, fixed windows with brushed-aluminum frames. The fenestration pattern is original to the building, yet a few of the original frames were replaced with glass block in parts of the warehouse.

The primary entrance is located on the northwest (primary) façade in a three-bay-wide, full-height projecting section of the main block. This block is symmetrical, and is flanked on either side by a single, recessed bay. The center projection is comprised of double-leaf, aluminum-and-glass doors with decorative aluminum muntins, topped by paired transom that continue the decorative aluminum detailing from the doors. The entrance is set in a splayed, fluted limestone surround, topped by a fluted limestone lintel. A limestone panel above the entrance is carved with the Coca-Cola logo with its iconic, cursive script. It is accessed by four stone steps with brushed aluminum handrails, which lead to a small landing paved with flagstones. Six-light windows, set in aluminum frames over through-wall vents, flank the entrance to the north and south. Square limestone panels carved with a Coca-Cola bottle motif top each of the windows. The first story of the projecting section is clad in ashlar limestone blocks. The second story features a central twelve-light window, flanked by four-light windows, and the third story contains a central nine-light window, flanked by three-light windows. All openings in the projecting section are set in square-edge, limestone surrounds. Brushed-aluminum, multi-light, industrial windows are centered on each story of the bays to the north and south of the projecting section. The warehouse extends southwest of the main block for four additional bays on the second story, and eight on the first story. Each bay holds a large opening filled with glass block.

The northeast (side) elevation is divided between the five-bay main block to the west, a central three-story section, and the warehouse to the east. Each bay of the main block contains a brushed-aluminum, multi-light, industrial window. Windows at the first story have six rows of lights per column, and are topped by fluted lintels. The three central windows are comprised of three columns of lights; the outer windows are comprised of two columns of lights. The second-story windows have four rows of lights, and the third-story windows have three rows of lights. The three-story section is three bays wide, and moving east to west across the first story of the section are an entrance and two four-light windows with limestone sills and jack-arch brick lintels. The entrance is comprised of a metal flush door, set in a two-story, setback, limestone surround. Above the door is a limestone panel that anchors an Art Moderne-style light fixture. The fixture is a frosted-glass cylinder, topped by an aluminum dome, and secured by aluminum bands. Above the light fixture is a column of eight lights that extend to the top of the second story. Two windows are set west of the column of lights on the second story. The third story is a setback brick parapet wall, with decorative brick bands. The warehouse section is marked by two sets of paired, overhead, roll-up, metal garage doors. The foundation level is clad in a row of headers, and the first story is decorated with dark brown brick header stringcourses. A majority of the windows have been filled with stretcher-bond brick. A brushed-aluminum, eight-light,

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industrial window is located on the western side of the first story, and four brushed-aluminum, eight-light, industrial windows are located on the second story. The southeast and south facades are inaccessible from the public right-of-way.

## Interior

The interior of the building has been altered over time to suit changing occupant needs. Access to the upper floors is provided by an elevator located east of the main entrance, and several stairs placed around the perimeter of the building. Stairs have cast-metal framing, and terrazzo-covered treads and landings. Simple metal handrails accompany the stairs, cantilevered from the wall with metal gooseneck brackets. The main block primarily served as administrative areas with rooms arranged around the perimeter of the massing, while the warehouse was typically open with exception to a small area at the northeast section of the building leased to another tenant. The building is currently vacant; however, it has retained its original use throughout most of its history, as a combination office, industrial, and warehouse building.

Concrete slab floors are located throughout the building. In the main block, the concrete is finished with a variety of materials, including low-pile carpet, linoleum tile, ceramic tile, terracotta tile, and terrazzo. Flooring in the warehouse section is typically unfinished concrete. Wall configurations have been changed over time, as evidenced by openings in brick walls filled with CMU blocks, but whose former configurations are clearly readable. Further, offices and rooms in the main block were largely constructed of drywall. Immediately south of the primary entrance on the first story is a curved wall comprised of glass block. Vinyl baseboards from the main block have largely been removed. Drop ceilings compose the ceilings in the main block. There are no finished ceilings in the warehouse sections, which reveal metal roof trusses and wood boards that carry the roofing.

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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.)

Architecture

Commerce

Community Planning and Development

Industry

**Period of Significance**

1938-1957

**Significant Dates**

1938-1939 (construction)

1953-1957 (addition)

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

n/a

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

**Architect/Builder**

Shelton, Jesse Markham (architect)

Cummins Construction Company (general contractor)

**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 Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building is locally significant for its association with broad historical patterns in the physical and economic growth of Baltimore in the 1930s. It portrays physical and economic trends of industrial growth in the city during the mid-twentieth century, and it is tied to the growth of the Coca-Cola Company and its regional bottling markets, which collaborated to expand the marketing presence and manufacturing efficiency of this important American product. Under the categories of Commerce, Community Planning and Development, and Industry, the Coca-Cola Building illustrates the prevailing pattern of commercial and industrial development in the City of Baltimore in the years immediately preceding World War II. It rode the crest of a wave of development—commercial storefronts, light-industrial complexes, and automobile-dependent enterprises—that grew along the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad corridor in the eastern half of the city. This particular portion of Baltimore burgeoned in the interwar years as a principally middle-class residential neighborhood linked to the central city via commercial and transit corridors. The Coca-Cola Building, in addition to the adjacent structures built along East 25th Street and Exeter Hall Avenue, was part

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of a commercial interest that complemented the residential nature of the surrounding area. Collectively these buildings were indicative of urban growth patterns typical in the American interwar period: greater decentralization and dependence upon the automobile, which arose before the large-scale suburbanization following World War II. The Coca-Cola Building is also significant as a representative example of the Art Moderne style. Because the Coca-Cola Company, its associated bottling companies, and many other large corporations chose to adopt this style for their factories and office buildings, this particular structure relates to a greater context of corporate identity and branding as they continued to emerge throughout the twentieth century. Therefore, the building resonates with associations both architectural and cultural, and its high degree of physical integrity allows it to successfully convey those relationships. The building is eligible under Criteria A and C with a period of significance beginning with its construction in 1938, and ending in 1957, at which point it had substantially achieved its historic form and appearance.

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

### **Commerce and Industry: The Coca-Cola Bottling Company**

The Coca-Cola Company was effectively founded in 1888, when Asa Candler purchased the legendary secret formula from its inventor, John Pemberton. After incorporating the company in 1892, Candler aggressively expanded his soft drink business, but its distribution was limited by the fact that Coca-Cola was only sold by the glass, in pharmacies equipped with soda fountains.<sup>1</sup> At this time, the industrial process of bottling and preserving carbonated beverages was in its infancy, and many considered it an unreliable system very likely to produce a defective product. This changed in 1892, when the Crown Cork and Seal Company began production of the crimped, metal bottle cap that would revolutionize the industry.<sup>2</sup> The system was expensive to implement, however, slowing the process by which soft drink manufacturers adopted the bottle cap method.<sup>3</sup> In 1899, two Chattanooga, Tennessee, businessmen approached Candler with the idea of bottling Coca-Cola. Candler was wary of the deal, but granted bottling rights—in perpetuity—to what would become the first Coca-Cola Bottling Company. The second franchise was established in Atlanta in 1900, and similar companies soon proliferated around the country. By 1919, there were 1,000 authorized bottling plants in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

The Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore (Baltimore Bottling Company) was founded circa 1905. While it shared its name with both the Coca-Cola Company and with a number of similar Coca-Cola Bottling Companies nationwide, the Baltimore Bottling Company was an autonomous, regional entity that operated under a franchise agreement with the parent Bottling Company. Bottling companies served two roles: they undertook limited industrial processes

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<sup>1</sup> Constance L. Hays, *The Real Thing* (New York: Random House, 2005), 12.

<sup>2</sup> Incidentally, the “crown cap” was invented in Baltimore.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Pendergrast, *For God, Country and Coca-Cola* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 72-74.

<sup>4</sup> Mike Cheatham, *Your Friendly Neighbor* (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1999), 3-4.

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(mixture of syrup concentrate with carbonated water, bottling of the beverage, and delivery of the product to vendors) and formed local administrative centers to support complex supply and distribution patterns. The central corporation and regional bottlers shared a symbiotic relationship, with each enterprise dependent on the other for its success.

The parent organization provided monetary and promotional support, while bottlers reaped the substantial financial benefit of creating and selling such an enormously popular and successful product. Once regional supply boundaries were established, they were jealously guarded, essentially creating localized monopolies for the bottlers endorsed by Coca-Cola. The benefit of this system was that bottling companies were local ventures: profits were reinvested in local economies, workers were hired locally, and individual proprietors were often counted among an area's leading citizens. Not only did these franchises create economic activity and jobs for the cities in which they were located, but they also acted as representatives of the prominent national corporations they served, both as physical advertisements for these companies, as well as showplaces of commercial progress and industrial modernity.<sup>5</sup>

The first known bottling works of the Baltimore Bottling Company was located on 408-412 North Calvert Street, very near the urban core of the city.<sup>6</sup> In 1924, the company expanded to a new plant northeast of its former one, at the intersection of South Front and Plowman streets. This site enjoyed a location near the Fallsway, one of Baltimore's major industrial routes before the advent of freeways. The Fallsway was built atop Jones Falls, which was one of the city's major early power sources for its industrial mills, and which was canalized in 1912.<sup>7</sup> The building was commercial in function, with brick cladding and generous fenestration. Its two-story steel structure was engineered to allow for two additional stories to be added in the future.<sup>8</sup>

During the 1910s and 1920s, the Coca-Cola Company, in recognition of the predominance of bottles over soda fountains (by 1928, bottled Coke sales had surpassed soda fountain sales in annual revenue), became gradually more invested in the operations of its bottling companies.<sup>9</sup> The distinctive green hourglass bottle was chosen by the company in 1916, and within three years every distributor in the country had adopted it. Robert Woodruff, president of the company between 1923 and 1954, implemented training programs and best practice guides, which set standards for the taste, color, and carbonation of the beverage, as well as for hygienic plant conditions. Considering the autonomy of the bottling companies, Coca-Cola had no guaranteed method to enforce change, yet it was able to incentivize the adoption of its standards through, among other methods, increased promotional revenue for cooperative bottlers.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Constance L. Hays, *The Real Thing* (New York: Random House, 2005), 22-25.

<sup>6</sup> The appearance of this building is unknown; it was later demolished in conjunction with the construction of the Orleans Avenue viaduct.

<sup>7</sup> Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 253.

<sup>8</sup> "Real Estate Deals and Building News," *Baltimore Sun*, November 25, 1923, Proquest Historical Newspapers. This feature—a two-story building constructed with the capacity to add additional floors—was also found on the Baltimore Coca-Cola syrup factory, built in 1921.

<sup>9</sup> Constance L. Hays, *The Real Thing* (New York: Random House, 2005), 25.

<sup>10</sup> Mark Pendergrast, *For God, Country and Coca-Cola* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 164-166.

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It is no coincidence, then, that throughout the 1930s bottling companies nationwide invested in new, modern bottling facilities. Coca-Cola was one of the rare American companies that continued to thrive throughout the Great Depression, its success partially aided by Prohibition-era restrictions on alcoholic beverages. Bottlers had the means, therefore, to invest in physical plant improvements.<sup>11</sup> These plants generally combined administrative offices with bottling works. Dozens of bottling buildings were constructed nationwide between 1936 and 1941; the overwhelming majority of these were built in the Art Moderne style. Not only did the style signify the streamlined, industrial processes occurring within, but it also offered a flexibility and adaptability that suited these autonomous bottling enterprises.

### **Community Planning/Development and Architecture: The Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building**

In May of 1938, the Baltimore Bottling Company purchased a large, trapezoidal site at the southern corner of the intersection of Kirk and Exeter Hall avenues.<sup>12</sup> Set flush against the southern border of the site were the tracks of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, which connected the northeastern portion of the city with the central downtown, before connecting with a larger network of tracks that flowed north and east. Plans for a building “commensurate with the area of the site” were drawn by Atlanta-based architect Jesse Markham Shelton, vice president of Robert & Company Associates, Inc., then one of the Southeast’s largest architectural and engineering services firms.<sup>13</sup> A contract for the 100,000-square-foot building was awarded to the Cummins Construction Company in September of that year.<sup>14</sup>

The Coca-Cola Building was located in East Baltimore, at the southwestern extreme of the Coldstream-Homestead-Montebello neighborhood. Components of this neighborhood were platted and developed as early as the 1910s, but many of the modest single-family row houses near the Coca-Cola Building did not appear until the 1930s-1940s, their development having been slowed by the Great Depression. Running parallel to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad line, East 25<sup>th</sup> Street developed into an automobile-centric commercial strip, supporting gas stations, car dealerships, commercial storefronts, and light-industrial complexes. Clustered around the Coca-Cola Building were similar factories owned by the John Deere Plow and International Harvester companies. Essential to this pattern of development was the automobile, which provided a convenient and flexible method of transportation and distribution. While the early suburbs grew along—and promoted the extension of—streetcar lines, cars and buses gradually became the predominant method of transportation. East 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Exeter Hall Avenue survived as commercial corridors in an otherwise homogenous, semi-urban neighborhood.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 174-176.

<sup>12</sup> Deed of sale, Flynn & Emrich Co. of Baltimore City to Coca-Cola Bottling Co. of Baltimore City, May 21, 1938.

<sup>13</sup> W. N. Watmough, “Building Activity Promised,” *Baltimore Sun*, July 31, 1938, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

<sup>14</sup> “Project is Slated by Coast Guard,” *Baltimore Sun*, September 11, 1938, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

<sup>15</sup> Eric L. Holcomb, *The City as Suburb* (Chicago: The Center for American Places, 2008), 123-126.

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The Coca-Cola Building was completed in 1939. Upon completion, the building's three stories of offices anchored the northern corner of the site, with some additional office space that flowed into the flanking two-story wings. From here, large unbroken spaces extended to the south and east. These open-plan rooms—supported by steel columns and trusses and finished with painted-concrete walls and floors—contained the bottling, warehousing, and sorting operations of the plant. Raw supplies, as well as the finished crates of bottled Coke, were loaded and unloaded from large delivery bays facing Exeter Hall Avenue. These spaces were lit by perimeter fenestration, as well as by skylights that dotted the flat roof.

In 1940, the building and its architect, Jesse Markham Shelton, were honored by the Baltimore Association of Commerce; it received an award for architectural distinction in the factory division. The John Deere Plow Company Building, which faced the Coca-Cola Building across Kirk Avenue, received honorable mention.<sup>16</sup> Between 1953 and 1957, an addition was constructed at the western corner of the site, facing Kirk Avenue, which filled the square gap left in the building's original footprint. One story in height, the addition continued the downward progression of building heights established by the original wings; it also extended the horizontal limestone stringcourses and gridded fenestration pattern.

#### *Other Baltimore Bottling Company Buildings*

In May of 1941, the Baltimore Bottling Company acquired a three-acre site at the intersection of Ostend and West Hamburg streets, in the industrial district of southwest Baltimore.<sup>17</sup> The following year, they constructed a combination administrative and bottling works facility there. This plain, one-story brick building expanded the processing capacity of—and relieved a portion of the administrative activity from—the Kirk Avenue building. However, its utilitarian design, which was typical for the period during which it was erected, did not compete with the architectural distinction of the earlier structure.

The Baltimore Bottling Company retained its headquarters in the Kirk Avenue building until 1975. In that year, the maintenance, sales, and warehousing divisions were relocated to an industrial site in Lansdowne, Maryland, although the production works remained in the Kirk Avenue location.<sup>18</sup> The Baltimore Bottling Company retained ownership of the former headquarters until 1980, when it was sold to the Mid-Atlantic Bottling Company. In 1982, the building was refurbished to house a paint manufacturer.<sup>19</sup>

#### *Jesse Markham Shelton, Architect*

The Coca-Cola Bottling Company building was designed by Jesse Markham Shelton, an Atlanta-based architect. Shelton graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology in 1916 and soon became a draftsman for Robert & Company Associates, Inc., a combined architecture and

<sup>16</sup> "Confers Awards in Architecture," *Baltimore Sun*, July 23, 1940, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

<sup>17</sup> Deed of sale, Industrial Sales Co., Inc. to Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore, May 2, 1941.

<sup>18</sup> Carleton Jones, "Coke plant refreshed," *Baltimore Sun*, May 18, 1975, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

<sup>19</sup> Sandy Banisky, "Trustees back paint firm, housing," *Baltimore Sun*, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

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engineering firm and one of the largest of its type in the Southeast. By 1935 at least, Shelton had become vice president and treasurer of the company.<sup>20</sup> Robert & Company, which had designed the 1935 addition to the Coca-Cola Company Baltimore Branch building (1215 East Fort Avenue), and which listed the Coca-Cola Company among their primary corporate clients, would have understood how the Art Moderne aesthetic was appropriate to the Baltimore Bottling Company's own building, and how it could be best employed to achieve maximum architectural presence and efficiency.

During the 1930s and 1940s, Shelton designed a number of Coca-Cola Bottling Company buildings in cities throughout the United States, including Pittsburgh, Seattle, Atlanta, Louisville, Boston, and New Orleans. Shelton's buildings exhibited a regularity of form and harmony of style and material palette. Inherent to the design of each building was a central administrative block, flanked by subordinate manufacturing wings. His earlier designs were standard examples of Art Moderne-style architecture, which evolved aesthetically to include elements of the International Style.

From the 1950s onward, Shelton became associated with the Washington, D.C.-based joint venture of DeWitt, Poor, and Shelton, which accepted a number of commissions from the Architect of the Capitol. Shelton himself was involved with the construction of parking facilities for the Rayburn House Office Building and with the Restoration of the old Senate and Supreme Court chambers.<sup>21</sup>

### *Art Moderne Architecture*

The Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building is an excellent representative of the Art Moderne style, which became popular after the Great Depression as a more economical alternative to the Art Deco style. While Art Deco's focus was on verticality and angularity, Moderne employed streamlined curves and horizontality. Sweeping, unbroken horizontal lines were emphasized by continuous belt courses and ribbon windows. Buildings often featured rounded corner walls, flat roofs, smooth walls (of stone, brick, or plaster) with limited surficial ornamentation, and industrial-age building materials (aluminum, steel, concrete, interior wood veneers, plate glass, and translucent glass block). Where ornamentation did occur, it often took the form of shallow bas relief panels fashioned from stone, metal, or concrete. These were often placed near the focal points of the building: around doors and windows, on projecting piers, or along friezes.

The Art Moderne style reached its apogee in the United States during two international expositions, the first held in Chicago (A Century of Progress International Exposition, 1933-1934) and the second in New York (New York World's Fair, 1939-1940). Both made extensive use of its streamlined aesthetic to enhance the futuristic quality of its exhibits and pavilions.

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<sup>20</sup> 1935 Atlanta Directory, accessed through U.S. City Directories, 1821-1989, online database, <http://www.ancestry.com/>

<sup>21</sup> William C. Allen, *History of the United States Capitol* (Washington: 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2d Session, Senate 106-29, 2001), 420-422.

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These expositions were hugely influential for architects and industrial designers, who evolved the style beyond esoteric design and into the lexicon of everyday American objects. Therefore, the Coca-Cola Bottling Company building was built during a pivotal period in the existence of Art Moderne, when it had reached the height of its popularity and diversity.<sup>22</sup>

The Coca-Cola Bottling Company building included many of Art Moderne's formal and decorative hallmarks in its design: rounded corners, a flat roof concealed behind a stone parapet, repeated bands of stone belt courses (some with vertical fluting), ample fenestration, brushed aluminum window frames and fixtures, and subtle relief detailing. Also included in the building's design were features particular to Coca-Cola-affiliated structures of the period. Above the main entry door and garage bay lintels, stone bas relief roundels contained figurative versions of the celebrated Coca-Cola bottle. Between these was a central panel that prominently read "Coca-Cola," in its characteristic cursive script.

The lingering popularity of the Classical Revival styles stifled the growth of the modernistic styles, Art Deco and Art Moderne, in Baltimore. Only a handful of Art Deco-style buildings were erected before 1930, the most prominent being the Baltimore Trust Company Building, a thirty-seven-story skyscraper completed in 1929. The Art Moderne style, more suited to small building typologies, proved more popular. The style was most often manifested in small office buildings, storefronts, and theaters, although its use spread to residential and institutional applications as well. Use of the style was concentrated in the mid-1930s, although some outlying examples were constructed after World War II. Significant, extant examples include Kresge's Department Store on West Lexington Street (1937), the Greyhound Bus Terminal at Howard and Centre streets (1941), and Patterson Park High School at East Lombard Street and South Elwood Avenue (1933).<sup>23</sup>

### **Integrity**

The Coca-Cola Building retains a high degree of physical integrity, which allows it to convey its significance as a mid-twentieth-century industrial building. The immediate surroundings of the property—commercial corridors bordering on expanses of row house development—have remained largely unchanged since the building's completion. The historic character of the area may still be ascertained through a visual survey of the property and its environs; therefore, the resource retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association.

Retaining many of its original architectural features, form, and decorative elements, the resource also has preserved its integrity of design, workmanship, and materials. Additionally, the retention of the stone Coca-Cola details highlights the building's historic association with the Coca-Cola Bottling companies. Certain modifications have been undertaken over time. Some of those, like the warehouse addition which occurred between 1953 and 1957, were completed by the bottling company during the property's period of significance and do not detract from its integrity. Rather, they reflect the evolving needs and processes of the Baltimore Bottling

<sup>22</sup> Martin Greif, *Depression Modern* (New York: Universe Books, 1975), 33-39.

<sup>23</sup> Sheryl, Cucchiella, *Baltimore Deco* (Baltimore: Maclay & Associates, Inc., 1994), multiple.

Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building (B-5270)

Baltimore City, MD

Name of Property

County and State

Company. Other changes, such as the filling in of original window openings with glass block or masonry, are evident and reversible, and do not excessively detract from the building's overall integrity. More extensive site modifications, like enclosure of the rear lawn, have a similarly negligible impact on the building's overall integrity. More extensive alterations have been conducted on the building's interior. In general, the historic character of the original spaces was defined by open-plan, utilitarian spaces with exposed structural components. The temporary partitions and changes in material finishes still allow an understanding of the building's original layout and use.

Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building (B-5270)  
Name of Property

Baltimore City, MD  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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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: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** n/a

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** 2.5 acres

**UTM Coordinates**

Baltimore East, MD quad

18-362056-4353395

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

The Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building is situated on Lot 001, Block 4114D, Ward 9 of Baltimore City. The property has 317 feet of frontage on Kirk Avenue to the northwest and 514 feet of frontage on Exeter Hall Avenue to the northeast. The depth of the site tapers as one approaches its southeastern border at Garrett Avenue, to a width of 110 feet. The rear boundary of the property directly abuts the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad right-of-way. The total area of the property is two-and-one-half acres.

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**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the full extent of the property purchased by the Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore in 1938, as recorded in the land records of Baltimore City (Liber MLP 5825, Folio 101-102).

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: William Marzella, Historic Preservation Planner  
organization: EHT Tracerics, Inc.  
street & number: 1121 5<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
city or town: Washington state: D.C. zip code: 20001  
e-mail: bill.marzella@tracerics.com  
telephone: (202) 393-1199  
date: December 2012

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

**Photograph Log**

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Name of Property:                   | Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building        |
| City or Vicinity:                   | City of Baltimore                                       |
| County:                             | Baltimore City  |
| State:                              | MD  |
| Photographer:                       | EHT Tracerics, Inc.                                     |
| Date Photographed:                  | September 2012  |
| Location of Original Digital Files: | 1121 5 <sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001 |
| Number of Photographs               | 10  |

Coca-Cola Bottling Company of Baltimore Building (B-5270)

Baltimore City, MD

Name of Property

County and State

Photo #0001: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0001.tif  
Exterior; northeast elevation, camera facing northwest

Photo #0002: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0002.tif  
Exterior; western portion of northeast elevation, camera facing northwest

Photo #0003: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0003.tif  
Exterior; northeast (left) and northwest (right) elevation, camera facing south

Photo #0004: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0004.tif  
Exterior; eastern portion of northwest elevation, camera facing southeast

Photo #0005: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0005.tif  
Exterior; detail of northwest elevation, camera facing southeast

Photo #0006: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0006.tif  
Exterior; northwest elevation, camera facing southeast

Photo #0007: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0007.tif  
Exterior; western portion of northwest elevation, camera facing southeast

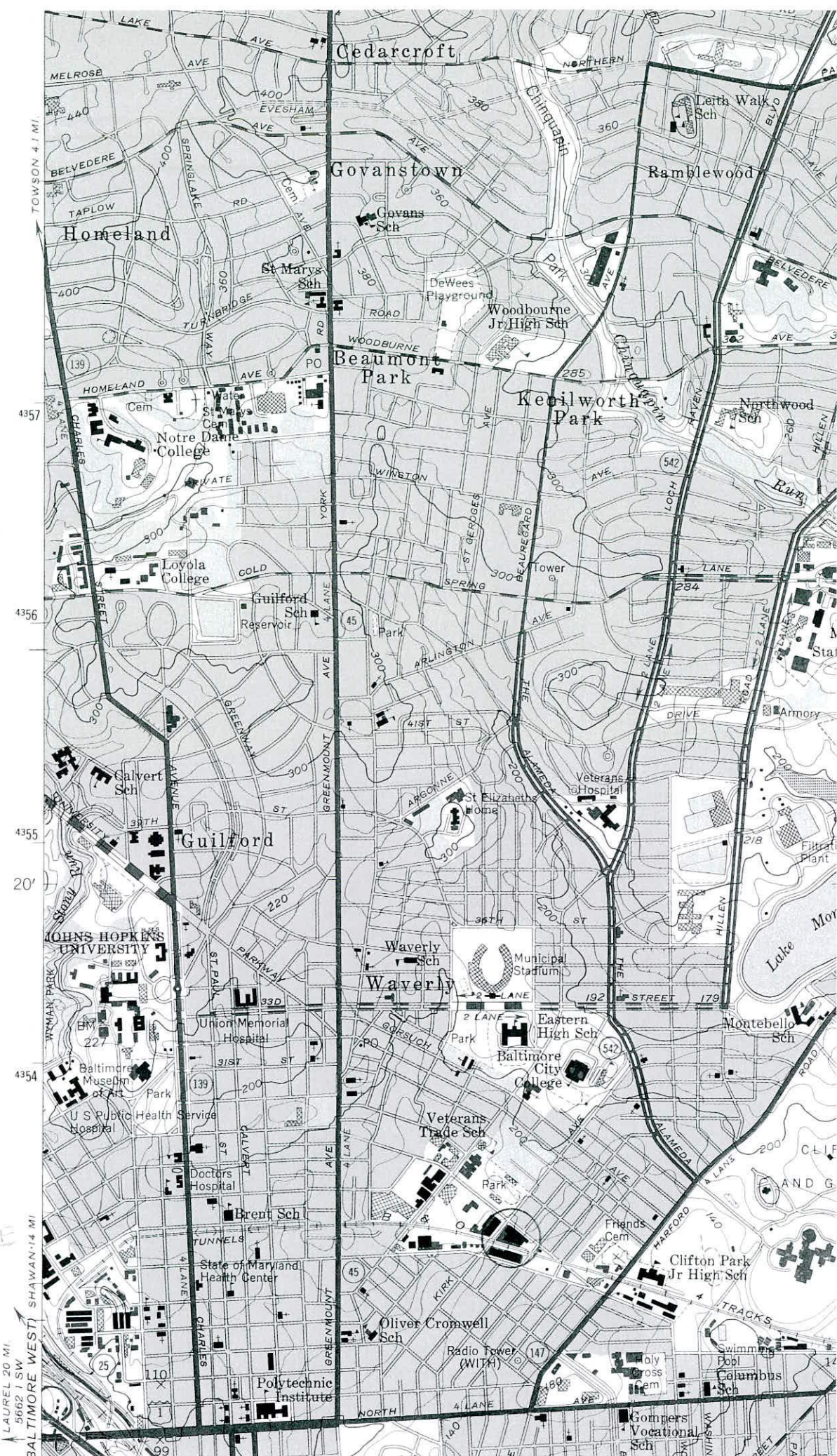
Photo #0008: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0008.tif  
Interior; First-floor warehouse, camera facing northwest

Photo #0009: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0009.tif  
Interior; second-floor warehouse, camera facing southwest

Photo #0010: MD\_Baltimore City\_Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg\_0010.tif  
Interior; first-floor warehouse, camera facing south

**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.



B-5270  
 COCA-COLA  
 BOTTLING CO.  
 2F. BALTIMORE  
 BUILDING  
 18-362056-  
 4353395  
 BALTIMORE

LAUREL 20 MI.  
 5662 I SW  
 BALTIMORE WEST SHAWAN 14 MI

TOWSON 4.1 MI.

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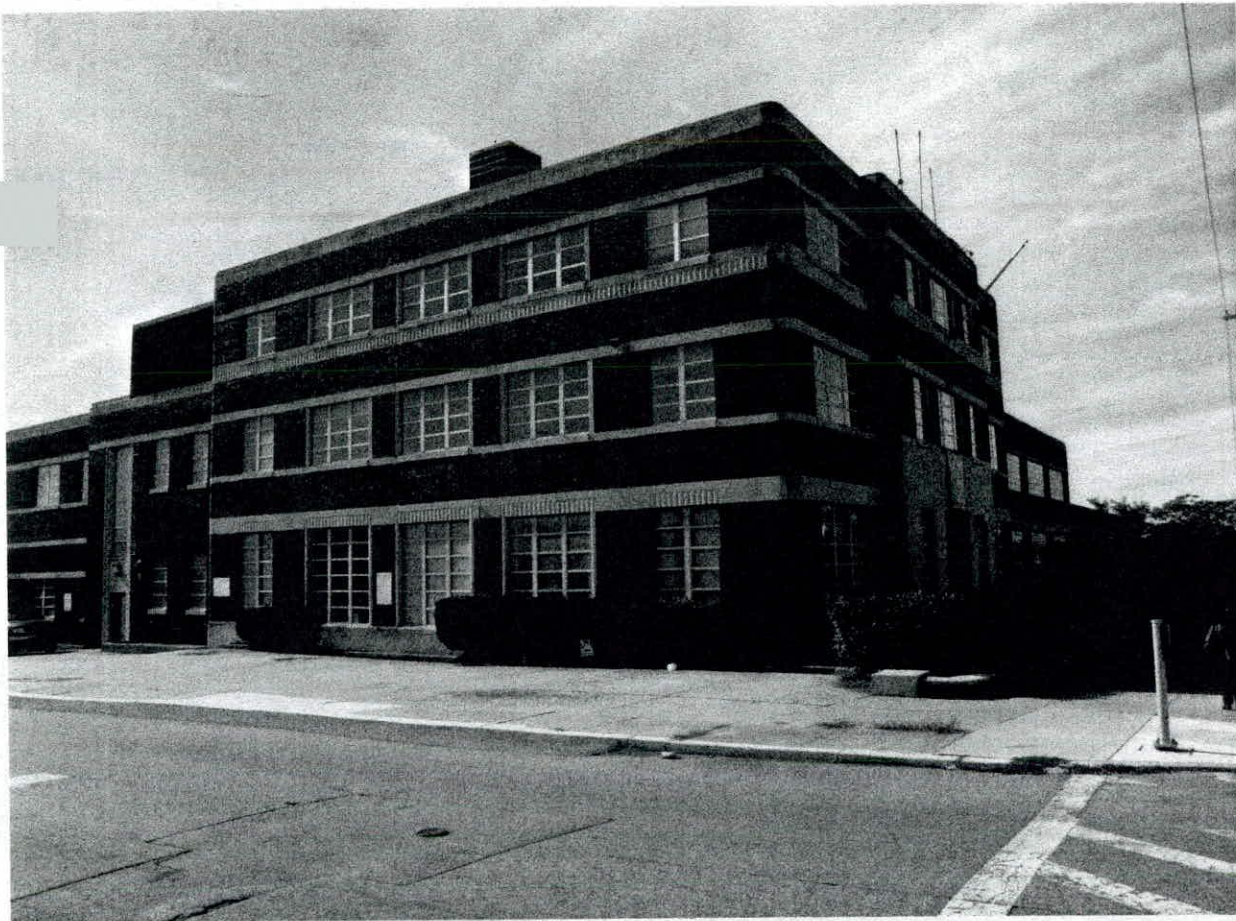
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MD - Baltimore City - Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg - 0001

MD - Baltimore City - Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg - 0002



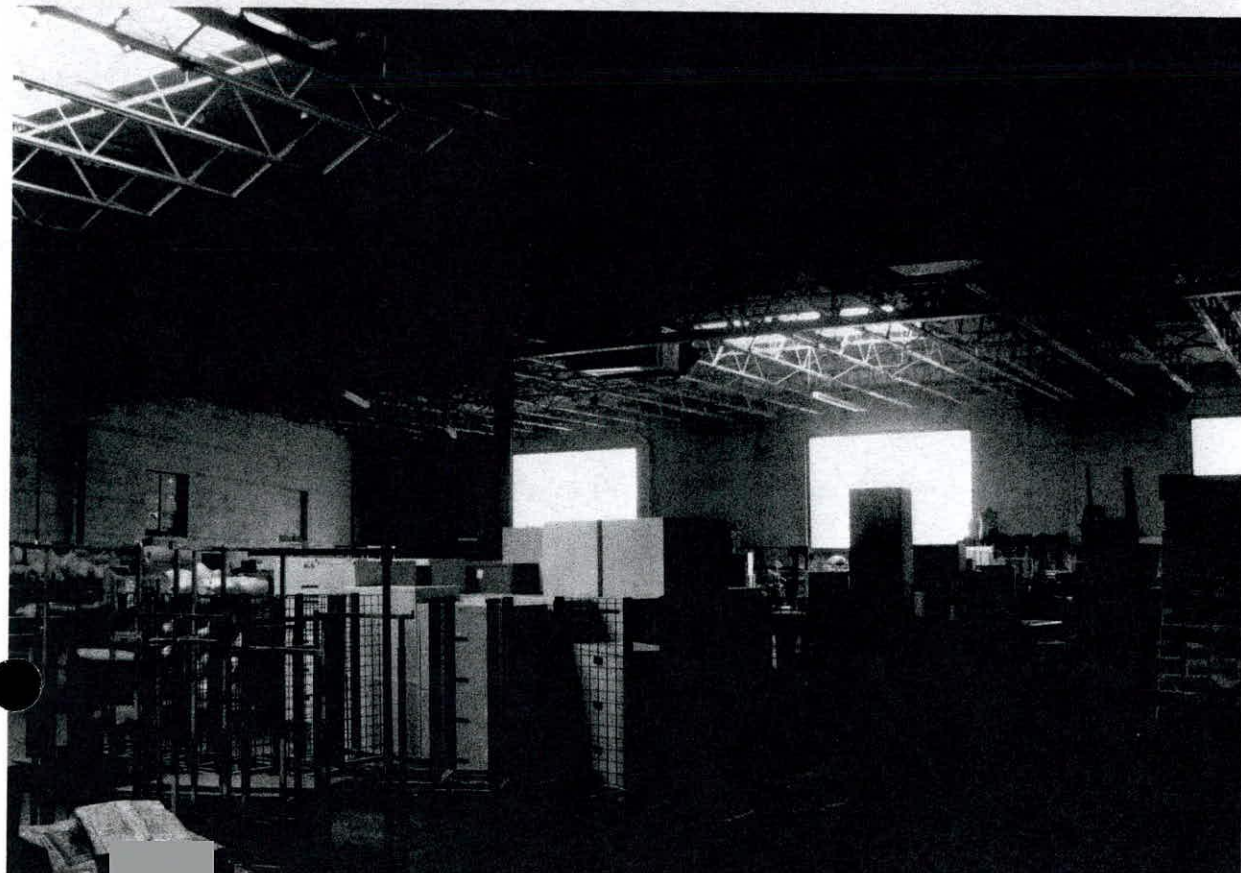
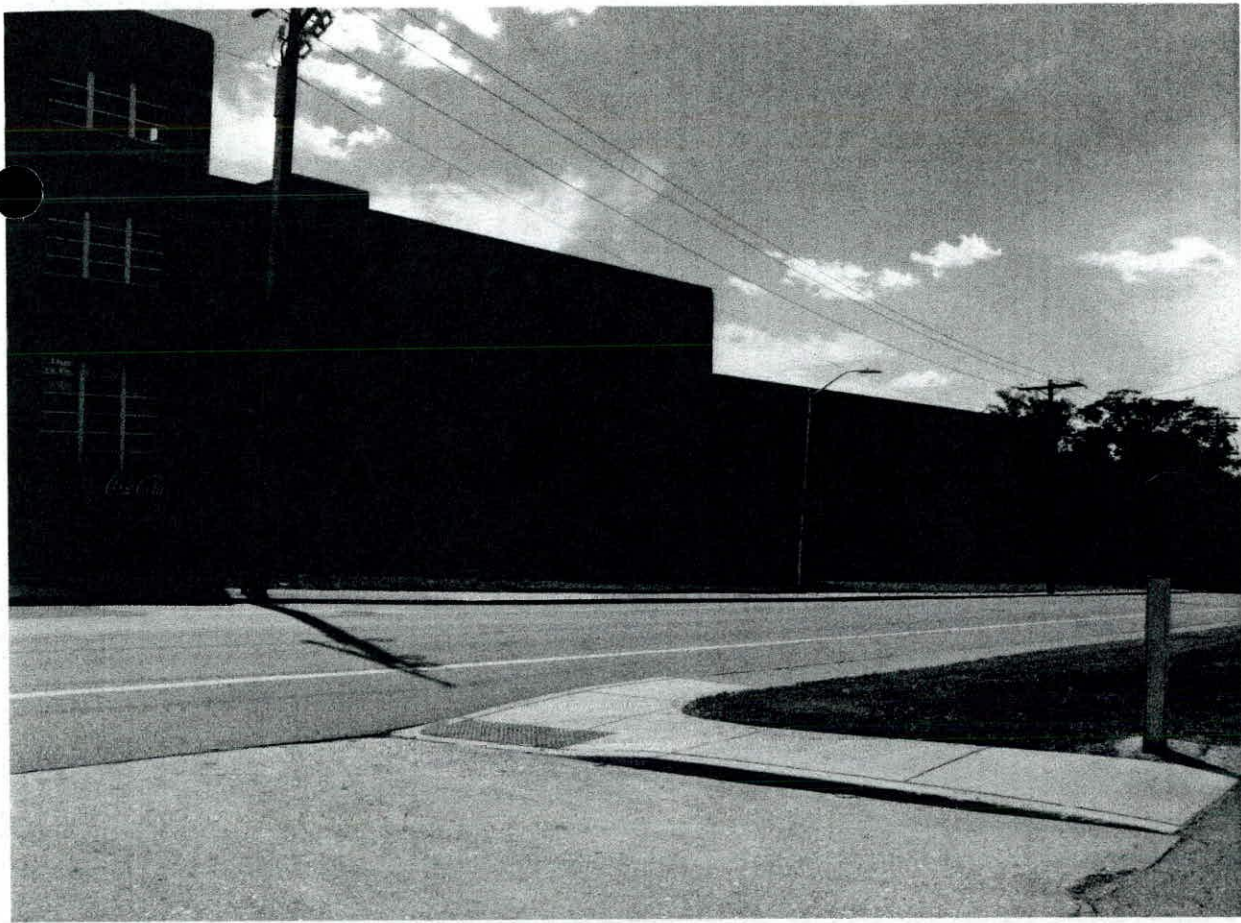
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MD - Baltimore City - Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg - 0004



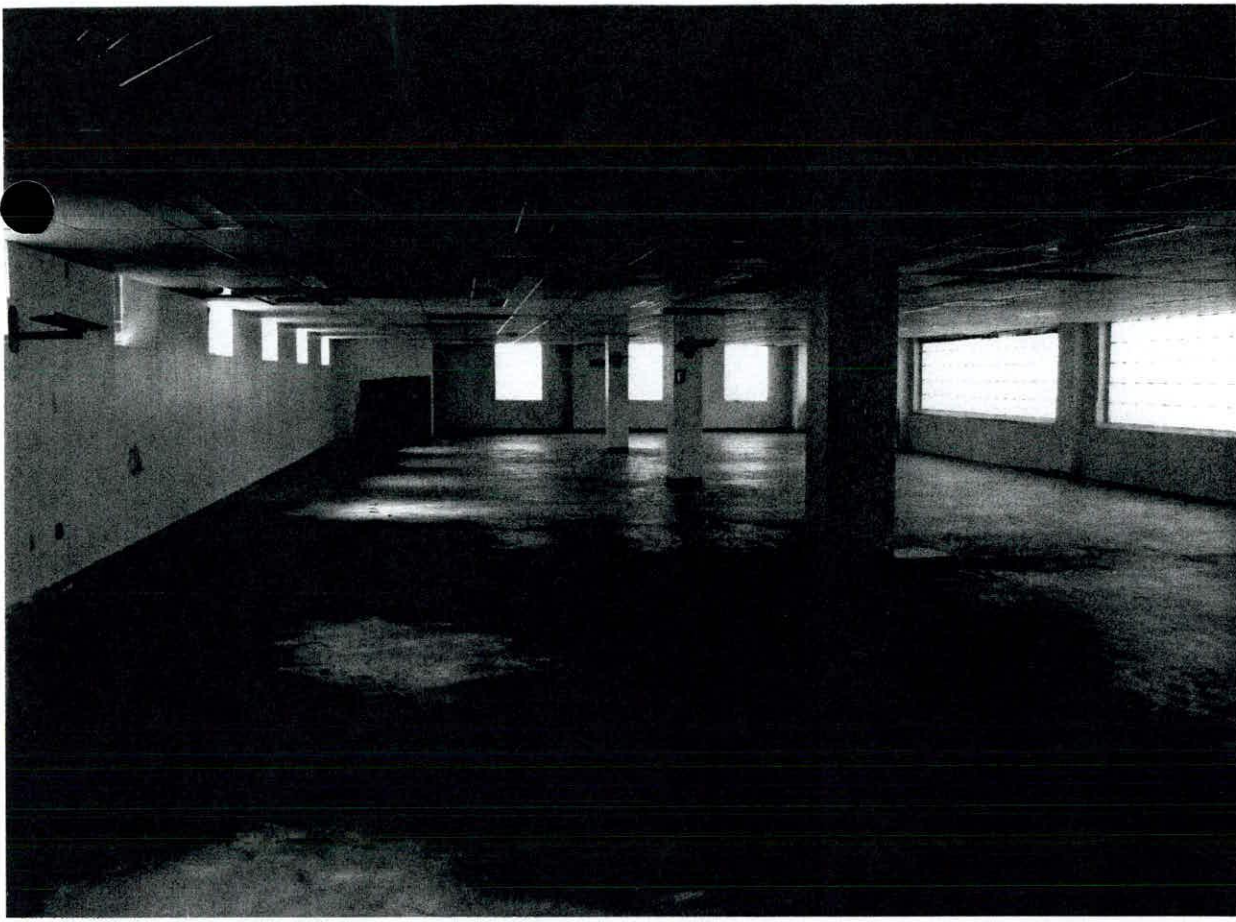
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MD - Baltimore City - Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg - 0006



MD - Baltimore City - Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Bldg - 0007

MD - Baltimore City - Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg - 0008



MD - Baltimore City - Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg - 0009

MD - Baltimore City - Coca-Cola Bottling Co Bldg - 0010