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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property	
historic name Alois F. Mulach Service Station	
other names/site number Thurman Station (preferred)	
2. Location	<u></u>
street & number 2232 Thurman Avenue n/a not	t for
publicat	tion
city or town St. Louis n/a_vici	inity
state Missouri code MO county St. Louis City code 510 zip code 6311	10
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	······
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,	
I hereby certify that this \underline{x} nomination \underline{x} request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation	ion standards
for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professi requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.	
In my opinion, the property <u>x</u> meets <u>does</u> not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend the considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:	hat this property
nationalstatewide _ <u>x_</u> local	
Mark & Mile MAY 29,2013	
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles, Deputy SHPO Date	
Missouri Department of Natural Resources	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official Date	
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
4. National Park Service Certification	
I hereby certify that this property is:	
entered in the National Register	
determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register	
other (explain:)	
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action	

OMB No. 1024-0018

St. Louis (Ind. City), MO County and State

5. Classification

х

Name of Property

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property (Check only one box.)

Private public – Local public – State public - Federal

Name of related multiple property listing

х	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Noncontributing	_
0	buildings
0	district
0	site
0	structure
0	object
0	Total
	Noncontributing 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement

Materials (Enter categories from instructions.)					
foundation: Concrete					
walls:	Concrete masonry				
	Steel				
roof:	Composite				
other:					

OMB No. 1024-0018

Thurman Station (preferred) Name of Property National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Expires 5/31/2012)

Areas of Significance

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Significant Person

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

1940-1961

1940, 1961

N/A

N/A

ARCHITECTURE

St. Louis (Ind. City), MO County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National

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



в

Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

x	С
---	---

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.



Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparin	
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	Primary location of additional data:
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 #	x State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other Name of repository:
/ /	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):	

OMB No. 1024-0018

Thurman Station (preferred) Name of Property St. Louis (Ind. City), MO County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.123 acres

Latitude/Longitude

Latitude: 38.611006 Longitude: -90.252500

See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Michael R. Allen/Director and Emily Kozlowski/Research Inte	ern		
organization	Preservation Research Office	date F	ebrua	ary 1, 2013
street & num	ber <u>3407 S. Jefferson Avenue #211</u>	telephor	ne [314-920-5680
city or town	St. Louis	state	MO	zip code 63118
e-mail	michael@preservationresearch.com			

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)	
name Thurman Station LLC	
street & number 4166 Flora Place	telephone _314-583-9436
city or town St. Louis	state MO zip code <u>63110</u>

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 18 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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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

Summary

Thurman Station (preferred) at 2232 Thurman Avenue in St. Louis, Missouri is a one-story filling station building built in 1940 and expanded in 1961. The Streamlined Moderne-style building is derived from a standardized prototype developed by Standard Oil Company. Characteristics of the building include porcelain enamel panel siding, a tall streamlined chimney, a rounded corner in which is set a storefront opening and prominent garage bays. The depth of the building is 26' and the length is 52'6". The seamless 1961 addition consists of the the southern service bay, which is 14'8" wide. The station could be classified as an oblong box type (with a rounded corner) or as a functional type with Moderne styling based on various historical surveys of gas station types.

Setting

Thurman Station stands at the southeast corner of the intersection of Thurman and Cleveland avenues in the Shaw neighborhood of St. Louis, which has formally been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as the Shaw Neighborhood Certified Local District (Certified 6/28/1985). Thurman Station is being nominated individually because it was built after the period of significance for the Shaw Neighborhood Certified Local District.

The site is located two blocks north of Tower Grove Park (NR 3/17/1972; NHL 12/20/1989). The Shaw neighborhood is a dense residential suburb typified by rows of two and two-and-a-half story multiple and single dwellings. The neighborhood is laid out on a street grid in which east-west dimensions are much longer than north-south. The grid includes alleys running parallel to the long sides of blocks and sidewalks with tree lawns throughout. Thurman has several corner buildings with storefront retail on the first level and residential flats above, indicating the greater traffic on the street when a streetcar line ran on Thurman Avenue. One such building stands immediately south of Thurman Station.

Exterior

The site is paved in asphalt that extends to the granitoid sidewalks bounding the property. There are two wide curb cuts at Thurman Avenue and one at Cleveland Avenue. The building is one story tall on a reinforced concrete foundation with walls of concrete masonry units (clad on the main faces). The flat roof slopes toward the east, where there is guttering. The main form of the building is the oblong box, essentially a rectangle with service bays and storefront on a long face and a restroom entrance on the short face. The east and north elevations are clad in porcelain enamel panels that are gridded at the base and tall and long at the top of the walls. The panels wrap the east elevation somewhat. The panels have been repainted and currently show remnants of dark blue underpainting at the base, white painting of the main body and a red stripe above the window level. None of these colors is original. There is a steel chimney rising on the east elevation at the storefront. This chimney has rounded corners and a faded white body with paired red stripes at top. These colors are historic.

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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

The northwest corner is rounded and sits behind a raised concrete walk extending between the two door openings to each side of the main storefront entrance. Each door opening has a historic wooden casing and transom bar, boarded transoms and wooden doors with their center pane areas boarded with plywood. The storefront opening consists of a center entrance at the center point of the corner radius flanked by two large panes on each side above bulkhead walls. The entrance retains wooden casing and door, but the transoms and large panes are boarded over. To the south of the entrance adjacent to the storefront is the original vehicle entrance. The low, wide bay has an inset replacement steel roll-up door. To the south of this opening is a taller opening in the building addition; this opening extends up to the top row of metal panels. Inside is a replacement metal roll-up door. All openings are jack arched with exposed undersides of I-beam lintels.

The south and east elevations are largely concealed from view on the site and have exposed concrete masonry unit cladding. The south wall retains two openings containing multi-pane steel sash windows. The east wall retains a tall, narrow opening with a multi-light steel sash window and a wider opening of the same height also with a steel multi-pane window inside.

Interior

The storefront opening faces a retail and office area that has concrete floors, painted concrete masonry unit walls and simple one-part baseboards and door casings (for a floor plan, see figure 1). Wooden doors lead to a restroom and to the service area. The restrooms have plain finishes with tile walls and concrete floors.

The service area has a concrete floor, exposed concrete block walls and exposed wooden rafters and cross-bracing with some rolled insulation inserted between rafters. The wood sheathing of the roof above is exposed. A steel beam rests on concrete block piers where the original end wall once stood. A wooden four-light door at the east leads to a storage room.

Integrity

The service station building retains integrity of materials, workmanship, design, setting, location, feeling and association. Little has changed since construction of the addition in 1961. Plans suggest that the height of the vehicle door in the addition was raised once, and the building has been painted several times. Windows and door lights are boarded, but openings reflect their original dimensions and use.

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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

Summary

Thurman Station (preferred) is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for ARCHITECTURE. Thurman Station is a one-story Streamlined Moderne service station at 2232 Thurman Avenue in St. Louis, Missouri built from the Standard Oil Company prototype introduced in the 1930s and used through the 1960s. The service station building meets the registration requirements for the Property Type: Service Stations established in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) *Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri*. Built by franchisee Alois F. Mulach in 1940, the building exemplifies the standard oblong box, porcelain enamel-clad gas station form that Standard Oil Company developed at the height of Streamlined Moderne gas station design. The building was expanded with a seamless addition in 1961, adding a service bay. The period of significance starts with the date of construction, 1940 and runs through the year in which the addition was completed. The addition date coincides with widespread abandonment of streamlined porcelain enamel panel gas station architecture. The current owner has renamed the building Thurman Station.

Gas Stations in St. Louis

The earliest gasoline stations for automobiles in St. Louis sat street side and consisted of simple hoses connected to pumps. Often these stations were located adjacent to storefronts where there would be offices with sales counters. By the 1910s, both oil companies and independent vendors were building single-use service stations around St. Louis. Early gas station buildings sheltered the pumps under attached canopies. Later, stations added repair services housed in garage bays separated from the attendant's room. Stations often expanded the attendant's room into a retail area offering automotive supplies and later snacks and newspapers. By 1940, most gas stations were housed in complex buildings with service bays attached to an attendant's room or retail area, with pumps in front either sheltered by a canopy or not.

According to the MPDF, later gas stations "after World War II" often used porcelain enamel panels and streamlined designs, making the nominated station a relatively early example.¹ The MPDF also states that: "most pre-1955 gasoline stations have closed and many have been demolished or adapted to new uses, sometimes associated with an automotive repair business, but often neglected or under-utilized."² Surviving examples that retain integrity are few. According to the MPDF historic gas stations may be eligible for listing under Criterion C as examples of architecture used to market products and brands.³ The MPDF states that "[i]n

¹ Ruth Keenoy and Karen Bode Baxter, *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 2005), p. F-41. ² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

some cases, these buildings were specifically designed for the oil companies to help brand their product."⁴

Service Station Design Nationwide, 1930-1940

Between 1930 and 1950, modernist design strongly influenced American gas station architecture. The economic depression of the 1930s resulted in deteriorating gasoline sales. Feeling troubled by this downward turn, many companies across the U.S. began to expand their presence by building new stations that were larger so that they could house more services (like repair service and tire changing) and allow sales of more goods (like tires).⁵ The changes increased services and products kept stations competitive. This business tactic brought about the idea of the "common" gas station – always near and usually in close proximity to another station. It also resulted in a new building style. Into the 1930s the traditional gas station had a hip or gable roof, but businesses decided to give the new stations a completely flat roof to stand out from the rest. The new gas stations used more glass plate and took away nearly all exterior decoration. Walls were built with brick or stucco and were painted with color schemes that matched their company's logo design. With a clean and bare look, the new gas stations stood apart from any former designs previously used. This particular design became simply known as "the oblong box". This architecture was built for function and purpose.

Streamlined industrial design influenced car manufacturers, and it was only logical that service stations also embody the traits of modern car culture. At the same time, stations were adding repair services which required larger buildings with programmatic variants like service bays. Designer Walter Dorwin Teague developed an early and influential "streamlined" design for The Texas Company (Texaco) in 1934.⁶ Teague's prototype had curved corners and eye-catching, simple green and red details. Soon other national companies instructed designers to follow suit. Socony-Vacuum Company (now Mobil Oil) hired prominent industrial designer Norman Bel Geddes to develop streamlined buildings. Bel Geddes's streamlined design of 1934 met resistance within the company, and they hired Frederick G. Frost to supervise less stylistically bold designs. Still, the Frost model included a flat roof, minimal details, the use of porcelain metal panels and a rounded corner with inset office and retail area.⁷

Porcelain enamel metal tiles were a good match for service station architecture. Besides conjuring a modern feeling, the material was durable, impervious to most damage, easily cleaned through simple washing and as shiny as a new automobile. Use of porcelain enamel cladding continued into the 1950s. Porcelain enamel service stations rarely had canopies over the pumping islands in front.⁸ By the end of the 1950s, however, porcelain enamel service stations began to be remodeled. A common alteration was the removal of the tiles and

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *The Gas Station in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), p. 144-6.

⁶ R. Dwayne Jones, *A Field Guide to Gas Stations in Texas* (Prepared for the Texas Department of Transportation, 2003), p. 47.

⁷ Jones, p. 54.

⁸ John Margolies, *Pump and Circumstance: Glory Days of the Gas Station* (Boston: Bulfinch Press, 1993), p. 99.

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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

transformative remodeling based on popular ranch-style designs popular in suburban residential design.⁹

Alois F. Mulach Service Station, 1939 - 1961

City directories list a Standard Oil Company service station at the site (listed as 2232 or 2236 Thurman Avenue and 4066 Cleveland Avenue) starting in 1928. The City of St. Louis lost its inactive building permits for the block that includes the site, but the later permit application for the service bay addition has a date of 1926 reported for the building on the site. Given that the nominated building clearly fits the Standard Oil Company prototype design that appeared after 1935, that date does not correspond to its construction. Likely that date corresponds to the year in which the city issued a building permit for the first Standard Oil Company station on the site.

Starting in 1939, city directories include the name of Czechoslovakian-born Alois F. Mulach as owner in listings for the Standard Oil Company station at 2232 Thurman Avenue. The city's active building permits for the block start in late 1940 and record a permit issued to Standard Oil Company on October 28, 1940 for installation of three tanks. This permit suggests a major upgrade of the service station at Cleveland and Thurman, and follows the start of Standard Oil Company's use of a round-corner oblong box standardized plan. The building follows the plan very closely.

Standardized service station plans for national brands were common by 1940. In his book *Gas Stations Coast to Coast*, Michael Karl Witzel writes about the national gasoline companies' standardized service station models:

Most important, gas stations operating under the umbrella of one large company had to be unified when it came to architecture. With uniformity established, each station appeared to be a stable link in the chain. The marketing rationale was that if the design of the building was just right, and the signage correct, each of the "links" bolstered the image of the entire chain.¹⁰

Standard Oil Company of Indiana developed the Modern standard plan in the middle 1930s, and sent the plans to franchisees like Mulach.¹¹ Documentation does not exist to show who designed the Mulach station, but research into other stations shows that Standard provided plans and signage standards but allowed variety in execution and material. For instance, in Milwaukee a Standard Oil Company franchisee known as Copeland's Service Station followed a nearly identical plan as Mulach.¹² Completed in 1937, the station's plans included the names of local architects U.F. Peacock and A.C Runzler, who adapted the plan with their own ideas for

⁹ Margolies, p. 97.

¹⁰ Michael Karl Witzel, *Gas Stations Coast to Coast* (Osceola, Wisconsin: MBI Publishing Company, 2000), p. 116.

¹¹ Tim Russell, *Fill 'Er Up: The Great American Gas Station* (Minneapolis: Voyageur Press, 2007), p. 1937.

¹² Historic Preservation Study Report: Copeland's Service Station (City of Milwaukee, 1995), p. 2.

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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

exterior finish applied. The exterior metal panels were all the same height, unlike on Mulach's building, and include horizontal ribs at each interval (see figure 2). However, in fenestration, placement of entrances and vehicle doors, floor plan and location of chimney, the Copeland and Mulach stations are identical. The Copeland station was built with two service bays, however, while the Mulach station would later be expanded from its original single-bay plan.

The early Standard stations could be built with one or two service bays, and in the 1930s many gas stations did not yet offer extensive repair or wash services. Mulach must have been growing his business at the end of the 1950s. On March 14, 1958 the city issued Standard Oil Company a permit to erect an addition to the Alois F. Mulach Service Station, with costs reported as \$8,000. However, data engineering cards that record drawings for the project show that the addition was built later. Drawings from Standard Oil Company for a generic one-bay addition (a Normal, Illinois address is scratched out by hand on the top sheet, dated April 15, 1954) are dated January 10, 1961. A handwritten date at the top of the set reports March 16, 1961. The drawings correspond to what was built, with some difference in drawn and built fenestration on the side and rear elevations. One sheet has the signage "WASHING" over the new door, so perhaps Mulach added a bay to offer car wash services.

Given the dates on the drawings, it is unlikely that the addition was completed before 1961. That date puts the seamless expansion of the station utilizing Standard's 1930s Streamlined Moderne motif at the end of the company's investment in that image. Soon after, the company stopped using that model.

Property Type: Service Station Registration Requirements

To be eligible for listing in the National Register as an example of the property type of "Service Station" under the *Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri*, the building "must be a good example of this building type and still be easily identifiable as a service station."¹³ The Thurman Station is a strong example that is easily identifiable. Furthermore, the building retains original cladding, visible locations of original windows, doors and vehicle doors, and a largely intact interior. Any grease pit or hydraulic lifts that once were inside are gone, but the registration requirements make an allowance for such removal. The Thurman Station meets the registration requirements and is eligible for listing in the National Register under the MPDF.

¹³ Keenoy and Baxter, p. F-42.

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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

Bibliography

City Directories.

- City of St. Louis Building Permit Records. St. Louis: City Hall, Records Retention Division, Office of the Comptroller.
- City of St. Louis Data Engineering Cards. St. Louis: City Hall, Records Retention Division, Office of the Comptroller.

Historic Preservation Study Report: Copeland's Service Station. City of Milwaukee, 1995.

- Jakle, John A. and Keith A. Sculle. *The Gas Station in America*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.
- Jones, R. Dwayne. *A Field Guide to Gas Stations in Texas*. Prepared for the Texas Department of Transportation, 2003.
- Keenoy, Ruth and Karen Bode Baxter. *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri.* Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 2005.
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- Witzel, Michael Karl. *Gas Stations Coast to Coast.* Osceola, Wisconsin: MBI Publishing Company, 2000.
- Vieyra, Daniel I. "*Fill 'er Up": An Architectural History of America's Gas Stations*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1979.

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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

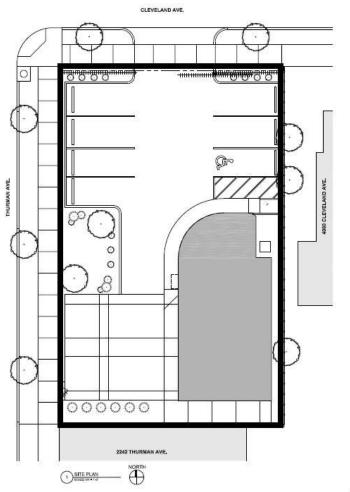
Boundary Description

The nominated property is located at 2232 Thurman Avenue in the Shaw Neighborhood Certified Local District in St. Louis, Missouri. The building stands on City Block 4922. The property is legally identified by the Assessor's Office as parcel number 492200010. The nominated property is indicated by a heavy line on the accompanying map.

Boundary Justification

The nominated parcel includes the service station site owned by Al Mulach.

Thurman Station Boundary Map. Source: Resitect LLC.



SITE PLAN

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Thurman Station (preferred) Historic Auto-Related Resources of St. Louis, Missouri St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

Photographs

The following is true for all photographs submitted with this nomination:

Thurman Station 2232 Thurman Avenue St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri, 63101 Photographer: Craig Shields Digital source files in the collection of the Preservation Research Office.

The date that the photographs were taken: February 29, 2012

Descriptions of views:

- 1. View of Thurman Station site, looking southeast.
- 2. View of Thurman Station building, looking southeast.
- 3. View of garage bays, looking east.
- 4. Intact steel window sash on the south elevation, looking northeast.
- 5. View toward east elevation, looking south.
- 6. View inside of store and office, looking southwest.
- 7. View inside of service bay, looking southwest.

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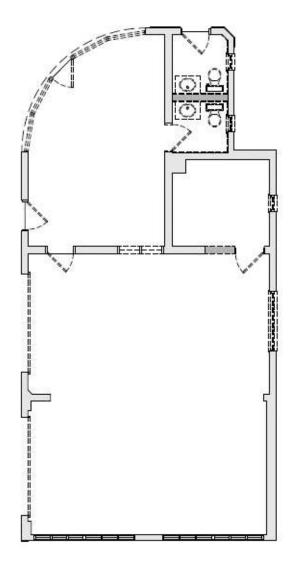
Index of Figures

1. Floor plan of Thurman Station.

2. Copeland's Service Station at 4924 W. Roosevelt Drive in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which was completed in 1938.

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				St. Louis (Independent City), Missouri

Figure 1: Floor plan of Thurman Station. Source: Resitect LLC.



1 FLOOR PLAN DEMO

FLOOR PLAN DEMO

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Figure 2: Copeland's Service Station at 4924 W. Roosevelt Drive in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which was completed in 1938. Source: Sherman Perk Facebook Page.



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Thurman Station 2232 Thurman Avenue St. Louis (Independent City), MO Latitude: 38.611006 Longitude: -90.252500















