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 Howlett Gulf	
Other names/site number OK Oil; Flat River Oil; Fryman's; Lonnie's; County Oil	
Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A	
2. Location	
Street & number 10 East Main Street	N/A not for publication
	N/A vicinity
	Zip code 63601
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	·
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this <u>X</u> nomination <u>request</u> for determination of eligibility meets the docregistering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and past forth in 36 CFR Part 60.	
In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recorbe considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:	mmend that this property
national statewideX_local	
Applicable National Register Criteria:AB _X CD Signature of certifying official/TitleDate	
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.	
Cionatura of commonting official	
Signature of commenting official Date	
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	ont
	ent
4. National Park Service Certification I hereby certify that this property is:	
Thereby certify that this property is.	
entered in the National Register determined eligible for the Nat	tional Register
determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Re	egister
other (explain:)	
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action	

Howlett Gulf	
Name of Property	_

St. Francois County, MO
County and State

Hamo of Froporty	County and State
5. Classification	

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.) Category of Property (Check only one box.)		Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)		
X private public - Local public - State public - Federal	X building(s) district site structure object	Contributing Noncontributing 2 buildings sites structures 1 4 3 4 Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register		
		N/A		
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)		Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)		
TRANSPORTATION/road-rela	ated	RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum		
		OTHER		
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)		Materials (Enter categories from instructions.)		
Modern Movement		foundation: Concrete		
		walls: Brick		
		roof: Metal		
		other:		

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUTATION PAGES

United States Department of the Interior
NPS Form 10-900

Howlett Gulf	
Name of Property	

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form OMB No. 1024-0018

St. Francois County, MO County and State

8. 9	8. Statement of Significance				
Applicable National Register Criteria			Areas of Significance		
		n one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National sting.)	Architecture		
	Α	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.			
	В	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.			
Х	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	Period of Significance c.1917, 1949		
	D	individual distinction. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates c.1917, 1949		
Cri	tari:	a Considerations			
		in all the boxes that apply.)			
		ty is:	Significant Person		
	A	Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.) N/A		
	В	removed from its original location.	Cultural Affiliation		
	С	a birthplace or grave.	N/A		
	D	a cemetery.	Architect/Builder		
	Е	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	Laird, J.C. (c.1917)		
	F	a commemorative property.	Howlett, Wayne (1949)		
	G	less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.			
Χ	S	TATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUTATION PAGES			
9.	Мај	or Bibliographical References			
		graphy (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in prepa			
Pre	prel requ prev prev desi	iminary determination on file (NPS): iminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been uested) viously listed in the National Register viously determined eligible by the National Register ignated a National Historic Landmark orded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	Primary location of additional data: X State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University Other		
	reco	orded by Historic American Engineering Record #	Name of repository:		
Hie		orded by Historic American Landscape Survey # C Resources Survey Number (if assigned):			

Howlett Gulf				St. Francois County	/, MO
Name of Property		County and State			
10. Geographical D	ata				
Acreage of Property	Less than 1 acre				
Latitude/Longitude Datum if other than V (enter coordinates to	VGS84:				
1 <u>37.848953</u> Latitude:	-90.515832 Longitude:	3	Latitude:	Longitude:	
2 Latitude:	Longitude:	4	Latitude:	Longitude:	
NAD 1927 1	erences on a continuation shee or NAD 19		3		
Zone Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
Zone Easting	Northing		4 Zone	Easting	Northing
Verbal Boundary De	escription (On continuati	on she	et)		
Boundary Justificat	ion (On continuation she	et)			
11. Form Prepared	Ву				
name/title Gene Fri	tsche, owner, and Ambei	K. Co	x, Missouri State	e Historic Preservation	on Office
organization N/A				date June 4, 20	019
street & number 32	Hill Street			telephone 573	-631-3151
city or town Park Hi				state MO	zip code 63601
	ts@yahoo.com				.
	- ,				

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps:
 - o 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
- Owner Name and Contact Information
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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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Photographs

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

Photo Log:

Name of Property:	Howlett Gulf			
City or Vicinity:	Park Hills			
County: St. France	ois	State:	Missouri	
Photographer:	Amber K. Cox			
Date Photographed:	June 1, 2019			

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 01 of 15: Façade/southwest elevation, sign assembly, pumps and light poles. Camera facing NW.
- 02 of 15: Facade/southwest elevation. Camera facing N.
- 03 of 15: Southeast elevation. Camera facing W.
- 04 of 15: Rear/northeast elevation. Camera facing SW.
- 05 of 15: Northwest elevation. Camera facing NE.
- 06 of 15: Interior of original c.1917 building. Camera facing N.
- 07 of 15: Interior of men's restroom within original c.1917 building. Camera facing E.
- 08 of 15: Interior of 1949 addition, from southernmost corner. Camera facing N.
- 09 of 15: Interior of 1949 addition, from easternmost corner. Camera facing W.
- 10 of 15: Interior of 1949 addition, from easternmost corner. Shows SE and NE elevations of original c.
- 1917 building. Camera facing SW.
- 11 of 15: Interior of 1949 addition, from northernmost corner. Shows NW and NE elevations of original c. 1917 building. Camera facing S.
- 12 of 15: Interior of 1949 addition, from westernmost corner. Shows NW elevation of original c. 1917 building. Camera facing E.
- 13 of 15: Interior of 1949 addition, along NW elevation of original c. 1917 building. Camera facing N.
- 14 of 15: 1949 Outbuilding, NW and SW elevations. Camera facing E.
- 15 of 15: 1949 Outbuilding, NE and SE elevations. Camera facing SW.

Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

- Figure 1. Context Map.
- Figure 2. Site Map.
- Figure 3. Floor Plan and Lot Detail.

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Figure 4. This map, created by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, is captioned "The Southeast Missouri Lead Mining District is the largest lead mining district in the entire world." Park Hills is located near the centralized dot in St. Francois County.

Figure 5. This is an image of a free road map taken from Jakle and Sculle: "Here the Gulf disc is portrayed soaring above a 1950s vintage 'oblong box."

Figure 6. "Shine" Fryman, John Degrant, and Cliff Head at Howlett Gulf in 1957.

Figure 7. Howlett Gulf in 1957.

Figure 8. An illustration of gasoline/service station property types from 1910-1990.

Figure 9. An example of a 1953 oblong box type station.

Figure 10. An example of a historic oblong box station. The garage doors are almost an exact match to the doors on Howlett Gulf.

Figure 11. A 1964 photograph of the Standard Service Station at 404 W Main Street. This station was replaced by a modern building or was so altered as to be unrecognizable.

Figure 12. The current building at 404 W Main Street in July 2018.

Figure 13. 606 Taylor currently functions as an auto repair shop.

Figure 14. 228 W Main Street is now a bail bonds office.

Figure 15. 7 E Main Street is now Riverside Grille.

Figure 16. 102 W Main is now a mechanic shop.

Figure 17. 127 N Front Street within the former city boundaries of Elvins, now serves as an office for selling cars.

Figure 18. 201 S Front Street within the former city boundaries of Elvins appears out of use and recently suffered fire damage.

Figure 19. Photo Map.

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Summary

Howlett Gulf is located at 10 East Main Street in Park Hills, St. Francois County, Missouri. Initially constructed in c.1917, the original building was encompassed within a 1949 addition which expanded the footprint of the building and the building's service areas, adding three garage door bays to the façade. After the 1949 construction the building closely resembled the oblong box type gas station. The building is a simple rectangular box in form, clad in brick and painted white, with a flat roof. Most of the features of the building date to the c.1917 or 1949 construction dates, including mostly historic doors and windows. The original signage on the building was lost and has been reproduced, the ladies bathroom has been removed from the interior, and the electrical systems have been updated. Other than these changes the building retains all aspects of integrity and resembles its historic period. There is one contributing outbuilding that was constructed in 1949 for storage and one contributing object (a rotating sign assembly). Two light poles with V-shaped lights are included as two noncontributing objects. Two recently added gas pumps are also noncontributing.

Setting

Howlett Gulf is situated along Main Street, one of the primary thoroughfares of Park Hills (Figure 1). It is located a few blocks southeast of the historic commercial core of what was once the City of Flat River² and half a block from the Flat River (the actual river that runs from the southwest to the northeast through Park Hills). Immediately east of Howlett Gulf are the railroad tracks associated with the Union Pacific line (Figure 2). To the north is a residential neighborhood, and further south are more businesses interspersed with residences. Generally, the historic setting is intact, though some historic properties have been lost along this stretch of Main Street and replaced with more modern buildings.

The immediate setting of the building includes a paved area in front extending to the sidewalk that runs along Main Street and wrapping around the southeastern elevation (Figure 2). Centrally located within the front paved area is where the original 1949 Bowser gas pumps would have been. Gas pumps from the era have been located, restored and installed where the historic pumps were (Photo 1, see Figure 19 for the photo map key). Since the **gas pumps** are nonfunctioning recreations they are counted as **two noncontributing objects**. On either side of the pumps are two light poles with V-shaped lights. These are recent additions but are also reflective of the historic period. Due to their size the **light poles** are also counted as **two noncontributing objects**. The light poles and gas pumps are permanently affixed to a narrow, raised concrete strip. At the southwestern corner of the property is an original rotating sign

¹ John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, *The Gas Station in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 134. Chad Randl, "46: The Preservation and Reuse of Historic Gas Stations," Preservation Briefs, Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service, September 2008, accessed April 24, 2019, https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/46-gas-stations.htm

² The current City of Park Hills was once four separate cities (Flat River, Elvins, Esther, and Rivermines); these cities came together in a city merger in the early 1990s. Howlett Gulf would have been within the city boundaries of Flat River. This is discussed further in Section 8.

³ These were located about six blocks from the nominated building.

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assembly made of metal (also visible in Photo 1). Metal chains hold a restored sign that reads "GULF DEALER." The sign itself is not original to this building but is of the era. The **sign assembly** is historic and is thus included in the resource count as **one contributing object**. The land slopes down on the northwest side of the property; the building appears to be sitting on a hill when approaching from the west. There is a concrete retaining wall along this side of the property, and a new privacy fence along the property line starting at the northernmost corner of the building extending to the northeast and turning to the southeast to meet the rear of the outbuilding. Fencing has also been added at the easternmost corner of the building and extending to the southern corner of the outbuilding (Figure 3). Within the fenced area is graveled.

1949 Contributing Outbuilding

A small storage building sits behind Howlett Gulf. It is a simple, gabled concrete block building also painted white. All of the extant windows are original. Metal siding fills the gable area on both ends of the building. The roof is metal with exposed rafter tails. The elevation that faces southwest contains a single non-historic door reached by a concrete stoop with three stairs (Photo 14). To the west (left) of the door are two small two-light windows; the westernmost window was painted or infilled with a white material. The northwest elevation contains a single small, two-light window (Photo 14). The elevation facing southeast has two bays: a 15-light metal window with a concrete sill and another opening with a functioning historic sliding metal door (Photo 15). Between the two is a non-historic sign that reads "GULF." The rear elevation facing the northeast contains a single two-light window (Photo 15). The interior is largely open but does include a small office area with historic shelving and cabinetry. The only alterations to this building include one replacement door, an infilled or painted window (within the historic opening), and updated wiring and insulation. Because it was constructed for additional storage in association with the 1949 addition to the original c.1917 service station, it is considered a contributing resource.

Exterior

All of the windows and doors on the exterior are associated with the significant 1949 addition, with the exception of one modern door on a side elevation and a single window on the façade that may date to the c.1917 original building. The garage doors likely date to the 1949 addition; if not they are early, and they closely resemble garage doors associated with this type of historic gas station (the oblong box type station, see Photo 2 and Figure 10). Brick is generally laid in running bond with a few exceptions, as discussed below. The parapet rises above the roofline at all elevations except the rear/northeast elevation. The foundation is concrete.

The **façade** of the station faces E. Main Street (Photos 1-2). It is situated at a slight angle, facing southwest, and is painted white. There are five bays. Above each bay is a row of soldier bricks painted blue. From left to right, the first bay holds a large garage door with three columns of six panels; the panels are all clear glass except for the bottom three which are metal and shorter than the other panels. This first bay is labeled "SERVICE" with replacement signage. The

⁴ Fencing is visible in Photos 3, 4, 5, 14, and 15.

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parapet above this bay is higher than at any other bay. It is capped with a row of header brick followed by two rows of running bond brick laid so that they project out slightly from the rest of the brickwork; these projecting rows are painted blue.

The parapet drops at the second bay and then continues evenly at all other bays. At this roofline too, however, is a row of header bricks followed by two rows of slightly projecting bricks painted blue. The second bay houses a garage door with fifteen panels, also all clear glass except for the three smaller metal panels and the uppermost central pane which appears to be a plastic replacement pane. Above this bay replacement signage reads "GULFLEX."

Within the third bay is a 12-light metal window with a rowlock brick sill; this window may date to the c.1917 original building. The forth bay contains a historic metal and glass commercial door. Above these bays is replacement signage reading "Gulf." Immediately above the entry, placed on the soldier bricks, is a reproduction of original signage reading "HOWLETT & SON."

In the fifth bay is a garage door of the same configuration as the second bay door except the upper central pane is not a replacement; the lowest, clear, central pane appears to be replacement plastic rather than glass. This bay is labeled "WASHING" (also replacement signage).

The **southeast elevation** faces a side street – Rapp – and the railroad tracks. It is visible from the public right-of-way. There are four bays (Photo 3). The first three hold 12-light metal windows with rowlock brick sills. The fourth holds a garage door of the same configuration as the door under "WASHING" except that the southernmost bottom pane is clear glass instead of metal.

The **northeast/rear elevation** faces the outbuilding. The brick here is unpainted (Photo 4). There are five bays, the first four of which are separated by three thick, brick pilasters. The first two pilasters extend up roughly three-fourths of the wall surface, whereas the third extends almost to the roofline. To the west (right) of this pilaster the roofline steps up slightly, making the western end of the building taller (this is reflected on the façade via the taller parapet above the western bay). The first three bays hold 15-light operable metal awning windows with rowlock brick sills. The forth bay holds an 18-light operable metal awning window, also with a rowlock brick sill. The fifth bay retains a much smaller window of glass block with a rowlock brick sill and a rowlock brick header. This window was likely filled with glass block historically, as it corresponded to the women's restroom on the interior (that restroom has since been removed due to deterioration, see the interior description below).

The **northwest elevation**'s white paint has faded (Photo 5⁵). This elevation has four bays also separated by three pilasters extending up roughly three-fourths of the wall surface, though these pilasters are narrower than those on the northeast elevation. The first bay holds a non-historic door (the door is visible in Photo 4). There are then three bays of operable 18-light metal awning windows with rowlock brick sills. The parapet is topped with a row of soldier brick.

⁵ Note that this elevation is difficult to photograph in full due to the retaining wall and steep drop at the property line in addition to the privacy fence now encompassing the northernmost bay/entry on this elevation.

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Interior

The interior of Howlett Gulf is generally a large open space with an important exception: the original c.1917 portion of the service station is retained on the interior as the office, with historic doors and windows (see Figure 3, Photos 6, 10, and 11). It is reached by the historic commercial door on the façade; Photo 6 is taken from this doorway looking into the original c.1917 building. The ceiling and walls in this portion of the building are finished plaster. Two interior entry doors to the office are located on its northwestern and southeastern walls. These are historic wood doors with five horizontal lights. At the rear of the office is a still operable 12-light metal window. The northwestern wall of the office holds a smaller window, now altered to be utilized as shelving on the office interior. Both windows have rowlock brick sills. Floors are concrete throughout the building.

There is a bathroom located within the office space's easternmost corner (Photo 7). Plumbing has been modernized but the sink and mirror cabinet were taken from the women's bathroom when it was removed. The women's bathroom was associated with the 1949 addition. Walls in the extant bathroom are partially tiled (bottom third) above which the walls are plastered brick with peeling paint. A one-over-one window in the bathroom has been painted white (Photo 7 and 9).

The rest of the building dates to the 1949 addition. It is largely an open space for driving in and servicing vehicles (Photos 8-13). To the southeast (right) of the c.1917 office space the 1949 addition is one service bay wide (Photo 8). The building is spacious enough that one could potentially drive from this service bay (labeled "WASHING" on the exterior) around the c.1917 office on the interior into the other two service bays northwest of the office (Photo 9). The 1949 original ceiling with exposed beams is retained. Just outside the office door on its northwestern wall, in the "GULFLEX" bay, the original work/storage shelf has been retained (visible in Photos 11 and 12). The shop area retains a historic air compressor and vehicle lifts which are intact and in working order (partially visible in Photos 11 and 13).

The only alterations on the interior involve modern electrical wiring and lighting (new wiring was installed within the original conduit), the utilization of one c.1917 interior window as shelving, and the removal of a small ladies restroom located in the northernmost corner of the building; a new security door was added in this location. Remnants of the restroom are still visible on the interior walls (visible on the right side of Photo 9 around the white modern entry door).

Integrity

Other than the replacement of one entry door, the removal of the women's bathroom, replacement signage, alteration of an interior window opening to shelving, and upgraded electrical systems (along with a modern security system), Howlett Gulf looks largely as it appeared in 1949 when the significant addition was constructed. It retains its original location

⁶ These shelves currently hold items that former customers have returned since the service station has been restored. Others have been acquired over time to complete the inventory. Supplies include the original fuel storage tank measure sticks.

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and setting along Main Street and the Union Pacific Railroad. Original design, materials and workmanship are evident in the original windows and doors, the exposed ceiling, and retained interior features including vehicle lifts. The building continues to clearly express its historic feeling as a 1949 service station and its historic association with the local automobile industry. As discussed further in Section 8, it is reflective of the oblong box service station property type in its simple one story elongated, boxlike form painted white, its garage door bays that provided additional services, and its integrated office space. The exterior and interior clearly embody the historic functions of the property type.

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Summary

Howlett Gulf is a historic filling and service station located at 10 East Main Street in Park Hills, St. Francois County, Missouri. It is locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture due to its property type: the building is emblematic of the oblong box type service stations that first appeared in the early 1930s. Historically, the City of Park Hills was actually four separate cities: Flat River, Esther, Elvins and Rivermines, Howlett Gulf was located in the City of Flat River. First constructed as a small service station in c.1917, a substantial addition in 1949 reflected the evolution of the automobile industry and the building types associated with service/fueling stations of the time. It is this addition that gives the property its current form, reflecting the oblong box type service station of the mid-twentieth century. Howlett Gulf stayed in the same family for close to a century, though the name of the station fluctuated over time, as touched on below. Howlett Gulf is the preferred historic name of the station as it reflects the most influential and well-known owners of the station, Wayne and Ronnie Howlett. The period of significance reflects its two construction dates: c.1917 and 1949. Within both the former city boundaries of Flat River (which reflects the historic city association and context of the station) and the entire city boundaries of what is now Park Hills, it is the only extant station that clearly reflects this property type and it is one of only a handful of historic service stations that remain.

Park Hills History: What was Once Flat River, Esther, Elvins, and Rivermines

The City of Park Hills came into being in 1994 with the merger of four independent cities into one⁸: the cities of Flat River, Esther, Elvins, and Rivermines. The citizens approved the proposed merger in April of 1993 and the cities spent the next several months working on the details of the consolidation, including working to ensure "that no single city dominated the merger." Figure 1, a recent Google Map capture, still shows where the cities of Rivermines, Elvins, and Flat River were located; Esther was located north and east of Flat River. ¹⁰

Thus the contextual history of Park Hills includes the development and history of what was once four separate towns. However, these cities, and other cities nearby including Desloge, Doe Run, Leadwood, and Leadington, all developed for the same reason: the presence of what was considered the "largest lead mining district in the entire world." Part of that district was centered in the Park Hills area; this specific mining area is referred to as the "Old Lead Belt" (the

⁷ Randl, "46: The Preservation and Reuse of Historic Gas Stations."

⁸ Although it took until the 1990s for a merger like this to happen, some local groups were considering "the idea of a unicity incorporation of the neighboring towns and their 23,000 people" as early as the late 1940s. Bob McHenry, editor & photographer, *A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington, Missouri* (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Brothers, 1953), 14.

⁹ Park Hills, Missouri. "Park Hills Missouri History." Accessed April 8, 2019. https://parkhillsmo.net/welcome/history/

¹⁰ Resources associated with Esther, such as the Esther Baptist Church at 412 7th Street, are still extant here.

¹¹ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. "Natural Resource Damage Assessment Southeast Missouri Lead Mining District." Accessed April 18, 2019. https://www.fws.gov/Midwest/es/ec/nrda/SEMONRDA/index.html

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purple area in Figure 4). ¹² It is also referred to as the "Mineral Area" ¹³ which may be a more apt name as zinc was also heavily mined here, and other prominent minerals within the area include cadmium, nickel, and copper. ¹⁴ The presence of these valuable minerals directly resulted in the creation of these towns, not only in terms of their growth, but also in regards to why they developed as separate cities despite their close proximity.

As early as the 1720s the French were mining shallow pits in the area. ¹⁵ Auger mining ¹⁶ and shaft digging had begun by 1830 and the St. Joseph Lead Company began their operations in 1864. In May 1891 "the first deep mining shafts were dug" and

...numerous settlements and towns sprang up near the shafts, often in very close proximity to each other. These separate towns were governed either by their inhabitants or by the different mining companies that owned, or more precisely, dominated them. This early diversity of control set the pattern for the fragmented governmental situation that continued for over a century.¹⁷

The mining companies bought and sold the land around their mining operations, often with caveats concerning how the land might be used (no selling of liquor or storing of dynamite, for example). They also donated land for schools and churches. Other mining companies operated in the area for a time, such as ASARCO, St. Louis Smelting and Refining (which became National Lead), Flat River Lead Company, Doe Run Lead Company, Desloge Consolidated Lead Company, Leadington Lead Company, Central Lead Company, Columbia Lead Company, and Federal Lead Company. However, by the middle of the 1930s all operations were owned by the St. Joseph Company which dominated the mining industry in the Park Hills area until 1972 when the mines around Park Hills were considered depleted and closed.

Today, south of the city proper but still part of Park Hills, is St. Joe State Park. Included within the park, and still visible from downtown Park Hills, is the Missouri Mines State Historic

¹² Ibid. Missouri Department of Natural Resources. "Missouri Lead Mining History by County." Accessed April 18, 2019. https://dnr.mo.gov/env/hwp/sfund/lead-mo-history-more.htm

¹³ Park Hills, Missouri. "Park Hills Missouri History."

¹⁴ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, "Natural Resource Damage Assessment Southeast Missouri Lead Mining District."; T. H. Kiilsgaard and W. C. Hayes, "Metallic Mineral Resources," in *Mineral and Water Resources of Missouri: Volume XLIII Second Series*, State of Missouri Division of Geological Survey and Water Resources, 1967, 47. https://share.mo.gov/nr/mgs/MGSData/Books/Volumes/Mineral%20and%20Water%20Resources%20of%20Missouri/V-043.pdf

¹⁵ Park Hills, Missouri, "Park Hills Missouri History."

¹⁶ Auger mining is a low cost mining technique generally "limited to horizontal or slightly pitched seams that have been exposed by geologic erosion." See Encyclopædia Britannica, "Auger mining," accessed April 25, 2019. https://www.britannica.com/technology/auger-mining

¹⁷ Park Hills, Missouri, "Park Hills Missouri History."

¹⁸ McHenry, A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington, Missouri, 12.

¹⁹ Ibid., 12. Missouri Department of Natural Resources, "Missouri Lead Mining History by County."

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Site, which is the processing plant of the former St. Joseph Lead Company. ²⁰ The former powerhouse is currently utilized as a museum for the local lead mining history. As Benjamin Hoste wrote in 2016, "Lead mining in southeast Missouri is more than just an industry. It is an ingrained and defining aspect of the environment and community." ²¹ It is within this context that the cities of Flat River, Elvins, Esther, Rivermines, and others, grew and expanded over the decades.

Despite their growth from the 1820s on – the "first actual settlers" arriving in the area in 1821^{22} – the cities were not incorporated until much later. Incorporation of Flat River as a municipality was first discussed in March of 1917 and a petition presented to the County Court, but it was opposed by some citizens along with the St. Louis Smelting and Refining Company. Thus the issue was subsequently dropped. However, Flat River continued to grow "by leaps and bounds" and was referred to as "the largest unincorporated town in the United States." It was not until April 1934 that the village of Flat River was finally incorporated as a city.

The History of Howlett Gulf & the Automobile Industry

The land that would house Howlett Gulf was purchased in 1913 by J.C. Laird. He constructed his small service station – one of the first in what was then the unincorporated village of Flat River – around 1917. At that time it was referred to as OK Oil and fueling was the only service it offered. Laird's daughter Lucille married Wayne Howlett in 1931. Wayne bought the station from his father-in-law and expanded the business. In 1949 he added onto the building, giving it the form and appearance it has today. At that time it became a full service and filling station with full time mechanics. ²⁴ It was referred to as Flat River Oil and as Howlett Gulf over the years. Others have known it as Fryman's or Lonnie's, referring to well-known managers or lessees of the station. Wayne expanded his business with distribution centers in Bonne Terre and Rivermines and another station in Desloge. Wayne's son, Ronnie, worked in the station until 1955 when he joined the Navy, hence references to "HOWLETT & SON." Shine Fryman managed the station until Ronnie's return in 1957. Lonnie Strickland was a lessee and manager of the station from 1969-1972. It remained in operation until 1991 when it closed. ²⁵ First established fairly early in the burgeoning automobile industry, Howlett Gulf developed and expanded with the industry, taking on a recognizable brand and form by 1949. This expansion

²⁰ Missouri State Parks, "Missouri Mines State Historic Site," accessed April 25, 2019. https://mostateparks.com/park/missouri-mines-state-historic-site

²¹ Benjamin Hoste, "Good Earth: Exploring the Old Lead Belt," Anthropology Now, July 12, 2016, accessed April 26, 2019. http://anthronow.com/print/good-earth-exploring-the-old-lead-belt

²² McHenry, *A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington, Missouri,* 10. This specifically refers to the City of Flat River but is likely applicable to general settlement patterns of the area as a whole.

²⁴ "Howlett Gulf Eligibility Assessment Form," EASF021A, on file at the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, March 21, 2019.

²⁵ Unless otherwise noted, the information in this paragraph comes from personal communication current owner Gene Fritsche had with the Howlett family: Ronnie Howlett, Connie Howlett, and Vicky Howlett Pannett, personal communication, August 2015-2018.

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and growth, coupled with Howlett Gulf's location, likely contributed to the station's success as other local stations vanished or were repurposed over time.

The increasing use of the automobile in the twentieth century – which really began taking off in 1908 with the founding of General Motors and the development of the Model T Ford²⁶ – spurred the growth of the automobile industry and the need for fueling and service stations. By 1921 close to 10.5 million vehicles (over 8 million automobiles) were registered, and that number reached 26.5 million (23 million private cars) by 1931.²⁷ In 1921 almost "4 million gallons of motor fuel were being consumed in private use…and nearly four times as much by 1930."²⁸ Gulf Oil is one of several petroleum companies that became a widely marketed and recognized brand during this time. Its traditional orange emblem is still around today and the current incarnation of the company claims 116 years of brand history.²⁹

These recognizable emblems coupled with intense marketing became a key component of the industry. As early as the 1910s "petroleum corporations...adopted trademarks and brand names and established chains of look-alike gasoline stations... Services were standardized over space and time – the anxieties of roadside consumption thereby reduced in standardized formats offering easily anticipated satisfactions." It became increasingly important throughout the twentieth century for roadside services including gas stations, motels, and restaurants, to "affiliate with an established network of consumer expectation" that was being "forcefully marketed." When it came to small business owners and entrepreneurs, it was important that their business resemble the buildings and businesses consumers might find anywhere else in the country, making it a recognizable resource. Howlett Gulf achieved this by affiliating with and selling Gulf Oil and taking on a recognizable building form (discussed further below).

By 1949, this forceful marketing was in full swing for service stations. Certain brands were known and easily recognized. Though privately owned and operated, Howlett Gulf's association with Gulf Oil would have made it a recognizable and perhaps therefore "trusted" business even to those just passing through Flat River. Seeing the Gulf emblem, drivers would know this is a trusted place for fueling and service (i.e. "Stop at the sign of the orange disc": see Figure 5).

Though the Gulf association would have been a component to Howlett Gulf's success and appeal, the station is characteristic of a typical gas station of the era associated with a small entrepreneur rather than a major corporation. These entrepreneurs "presented themselves as local producers and as neighbors, and marketed product and service reliability accordingly... [They] seem to have built their business styles more around local civic duties, thus to engender local support in the face of intensive competition from large chains." Howlett Gulf remains a

²⁶ Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 49.

²⁷ Ibid., 51.

²⁸ Ibid., 51.

²⁹ Gulf, "About Us: Company Overview," accessed April 29, 2019. https://www.gulfoil.com/company-overview

³⁰ Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 18-19.

³¹ Ibid., 19.

³² Ibid., 183-184.

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prominent figure in community memory, largely because it did operate as a neighbor with civic duties.

Stories related to this abound, and several members of the community have stopped at the restored station or written to current owner Gene Fritsche in recent years to express their appreciation of this locally run service station.³³ Mel Aubuchon, who worked at Howlett Gulf for a time, wrote to share the significant influence "the Gulf Station" had on his life and shared historic photos of a few of the workers at Howlett Gulf (see Figures 6 and 7).³⁴

Within the local context, Howlett Gulf is situated directly next to the Union Pacific and thus likely had direct ties to the railroad. There is still evidence that a loading dock once stood between Rapp Street and the railroad. Railroad shipping invoices were found in the office of Howlett Gulf's storage building. The station's location along Main Street – a major local thoroughfare – and the railroad, coupled with its association with a recognizable brand, its addition in 1949 that expanded its services (and gave it a recognizable mid-century service station form, as discussed below), and its small town relatability likely contributed to its success over the decades. It operated continuously from c.1917-1991 in an evolving and expanding autorelated industry as many other stations closed or were repurposed. After closing in 1991 Howlett Gulf became a tire shop and then a Zippy Lube before falling vacant. It was purchased by Gene and Annette Fritsche in 2015 and they began restoring the property with repairs as needed, upgrades to the electrical systems, reproduced signage, and even the restoration of historic Gulf gas pumps.

Architectural Significance

As touched on above, over time there was an increasing need for roadside architecture to conform to certain standards to make it recognizable and competitive. This led to several identifiable property types associated with these types of businesses. Gas stations – also referred to as filling stations or service stations "are roadside facilities specially designed to sell gasoline and other closely related products, such as lubricants, tires, and batteries, for the automobile. Many gasoline stations also offer minor repair services, such as motor tuning and tire alignment." This is different from the gas station as we think of it today, i.e. the convenience stores that populate most roadsides. There are fewer than 100,000 of these traditional gasoline stations nationwide (that number was approximately 236,000 in 1969). 37

³³ Personal Communication with Gene Fritsche, documented in the Eligibility Assessment submitted for this property, on file at the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, EASF021. James M. mentioned how Wayne Howlett gave him his credit card in the early 1960s to go on a vacation to Disneyland, California. Cindy M. referred to the time she stopped in when she was in college and short on cash and Ronnie told her to "just write down what you owe and pay me when you can."

³⁴ Gene Fritsche Private Collection, letter and photograph donated by Mel AuBuchon.

³⁵ The station may also be eligible under Criterion A for Commerce. However, as there were so many other gas stations in this area at one time, it would take much more research to develop such an argument. Further, there are very limited records available that would speak to a Criterion A justification for significance.

³⁶ Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 131.

³⁷ Ibid., 131.

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Gas stations from 1910-1990 have been categorized into nine property types (Figure 8).³⁸ Authors of *The Gas Station in America*, John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle, developed these types via a systematic sampling of illustrations in the journal *National Petroleum News*, founded in 1909.³⁹ These property types are also discussed in the National Park Service's Preservation Brief on historic gas stations. 40 Howlett Gulf fits the oblong box type. The box station first appeared in the early 1930s and "reflected the increasing importance petroleum companies placed on standardization and predictability."41 It also reflected a need to expand services due to declining gasoline sales during the Great Depression. These stations added service bays and larger sales areas to expand the services provided. Oblong box stations are of a simple rectangular form with "flat-roofs and unadorned exteriors" typically "of stucco, terra cotta, porcelain enamel steel, or structural glass panels" with "glossy white exteriors and scientifically-designed lighting schemes."42 Office space was integrated with service bays.43 Generally reflective of mid-century modern architecture, these buildings were easy to replicate, low maintenance, and reflected modern ideals of "efficiency, cleanliness, and professionalism" along with "speed, modernity, and progress."⁴⁵ It is estimated that roughly 10,000 of these stations were constructed.

Howlett Gulf is representative of the oblong box type station. The 1949 addition incorporated the original c.1917 building as the office and added expanded service bays in an oblong box type form. The building is simple in design and was historically painted white (as it is today). It resembles other oblong box stations of the era (see Figures 5, 9, and 10). Its garage doors are almost an exact match to an example given in Jakle and Sculle (Figure 10). 46

It diverges from the typical oblong box station primarily in its raised parapet and its cladding: the building is constructed of brick and was never clad in porcelain enamel or terra cotta. This was likely a more accessible building material for the local owner and would have fit with the original c.1917 building. However, the station is still an excellent local example of the oblong box service station. Like other stations of its era it has the one story elongated form, a simple white façade, and incorporates additional services such as repair as indicated by the multiple garage bays. Its service bays and incorporated office space embody the interior functions of the property type. Small variations on this form were not uncommon, often, but not always, in relation to a specific brand. For example Mid-Continent D-X stations of the 1930s raised the roofline at the office portion of the building while Texaco stations of the late 1940s set the office portion of the façade out from the other bays. 47 Howlett Gulf's variations from the property type - primarily in its brick cladding and raised parapet - do not appear to be associated with a

³⁸ Ibid., 134.

³⁹ Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 133-135.

⁴⁰ Randl, "46: The Preservation and Reuse of Historic Gas Stations."

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 144.

⁴⁴ Randl, "46: The Preservation and Reuse of Historic Gas Stations."

⁴⁵ Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 146.

⁴⁶ Ibid.. 145.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 146.

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particular brand, but are more likely associated with the preferences of the local owner. Thus, despite some variations, the form and features of the building are retained and reflective of the mid-century oblong box type service station.

Comparable Properties

As discussed above, historically Howlett Gulf was located in the former City of Flat River; thus the most logical local historical context and reference point for comparable properties would be the former city boundaries of Flat River. The vast majority of historic service stations – and auto related resources more generally – in the Park Hills area (even beyond the former boundaries of Flat River as touched on further below) have been demolished or heavily altered. For example, in 1937 the City of Flat River alone had 24 filling stations. By 1953 there were only eight. 48

Federal Auto Parts, which once sat on what is referred to locally as Federal Hill in the former city of Flat River, was operated by Alvin Bequette and J. B. Lucas. ⁴⁹ It sold parts and likely offered services but not gasoline. The Phillips 66 Service Station that was at 115 E Main Street ⁵⁰ was a typical house-type station. ⁵¹ The corner of Coffman Street and Taylor Avenue once housed a filling station with a large canopy that extended out from the building to shelter motorists and attendants as gas was pumped. These are no longer extant.

There were at least three buildings which combined grocery stores and service stations (perhaps among the precursors to the convenience stores of today): the Guy Eaton I.G.A. Grocery Store and Gas Station was located at 201 E Main Street, the Kingsway Grocery Store and Gas Station was at 510 Lewis Street, and the Midway Grocery Store and Service Station was at 516 Taylor Avenue. 52 These are also no longer extant.

All addresses listed in the 1937 and 1953 Bell Telephone Directories as service stations in Flat River were visited in 2019. Only five stations that were operating in the middle of the 20th century are extant, including Howlett Gulf.

The current building at 404 W Main Street may be new construction or it may be the historic building that was once the Standard Service Station; if so it has been heavily altered with new cladding, an altered roofline, reconfiguration of the openings, and an expanded footprint. Historically it would have been an exemplary example of the oblong box station type (see Figures 11 and 12 for historic and current images). 53

606 Taylor Avenue (Figure 13) still has its original brick canopy, which would have sheltered vehicles when fueling, and its brick façade under the canopy is retained. The rest of the building has been reclad in vertical wood siding. Windows and doors – including the garage

⁴⁸ "Howlett Gulf Eligibility Assessment Form," EASF021A, on file at the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office, March 21, 2019.

⁴⁹ Dave Darnell, *St. Francois County, Looking Back Volume III* (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Company, 1999), 12.

⁵⁰ Ibid.. 17.

⁵¹ Randl, "46: The Preservation and Reuse of Historic Gas Stations." Also see Figure 8.

⁵² Darnell, St. Francois County, Looking Back Volume III, 14-15.

⁵³ Ibid., 25.

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doors – have been replaced and the roof line likely altered. There has also been at least one addition to the property at the north end. It does retain an auto related function, though it provides different services (auto repair only).

228 W Main Street (Figure 14) was a gas station and the Deluxe Taxi Stand, located in the heart of what was downtown Flat River.⁵⁴ It is still recognizable to its historic period, but is of a different gas station type than Howlett Gulf: it is emblematic of the house with canopy type (see Figure 8).⁵⁵

7 E Main Street is located almost directly across the street from Howlett Gulf, though it is a little further west and closer to the Flat River (Figure 15). This is a gable front building that has seen some alterations since construction, including a partial recladding and a change in use (it is now Riverside Grill). It does not clearly resemble any of the recognized historic gas station types.

102 W Main Street is also close to Howlett Gulf; it is further west and on the other side of the river, closer to what was downtown Flat River. This building may have been one of the most applicable comparable resources to Howlett Gulf at one time (Figure 16). The building's original form appears to reflect the oblong box type station. However, the doors are modern and the roofline has been considerably altered.

All of the above mentioned properties were in the former City of Flat River. Since the former cities of Flat River, Elvins, Esther, and Rivermines were so close together, comparisons have also been considered within the current city boundaries of Park Hills as a whole. Elvins, Esther and Rivermines likely had fewer auto-related resources historically than did Flat River, which was a larger town, but there were some. ⁵⁶ Today the only known comparable properties extant in the former areas of Rivermines, Elvins, or Esther are within the former city boundaries of Elvins.⁵⁷

The station at 127 N Front Street retains its overall form, which is reflective of the house with canopy station property type (Figure 17). The station at 201 S Front Street may have once resembled the oblong box type form, but its roof and openings have been altered and it has recently suffered fire damage (Figure 18).

Though the Park Hills area was once home to a variety of historic auto-related properties, including a diversity of service stations, Howlett Gulf is the only remaining service station that resembles the oblong box type station once common during its era.

Conclusion

Howlett Gulf is a historic service station located in the current City of Park Hills in St. François County, an area that grew and developed as a direct result of the mining industry.

⁵⁴ Dave Darnell, St. Francois County, Looking Back Volume II (Marceline, MO: Walsworth Publishing Company, 1993), 9.

⁵⁵ Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 134.

⁵⁶ See historic photos and research included in Darnell's St. Francois County, Looking Back Volume II, Darnell's St. Francois County, Looking Back Volume III and McHenry's A Living History of Flat River, Elvins, Desloge, Farmington, Missouri.

⁵⁷ This was determined via Google Maps exploration and a windshield survey for historic gas stations completed June 1, 2019 by Amber Cox, with assistance from Gene Fritsche.

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Locally significant under Criterion C for Architecture, it is the only extant example of the oblong box type service station in the Park Hills area that retains historic integrity. Both on its exterior and interior Howlett Gulf clearly reflects its historic use. It also reflects the evolution of the service station industry: the original c.1917 station – with historic windows and doors – is retained on the interior while the 1949 addition takes on the form of a typical mid-century oblong box type service station. It remains a recognizable, well known, and appreciated resource in the local community.

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Verbal Boundary Description

See Figure 2.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries reflect current and historic parcel lines and include all resources historically and currently associated with Howlett Gulf.

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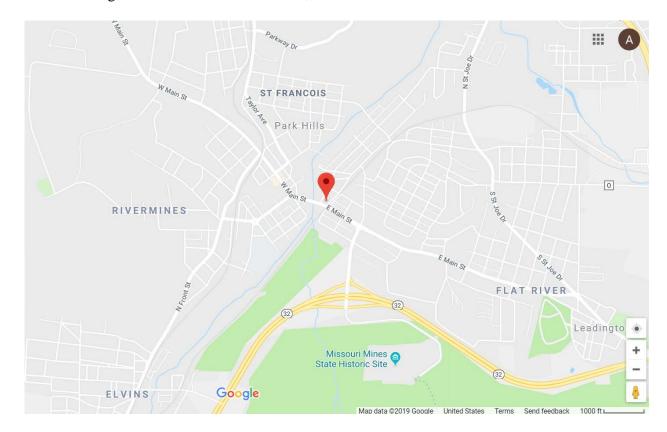
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Figure 1. Context Map. Source: Google Maps 2019.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 37.848953, -90.515832



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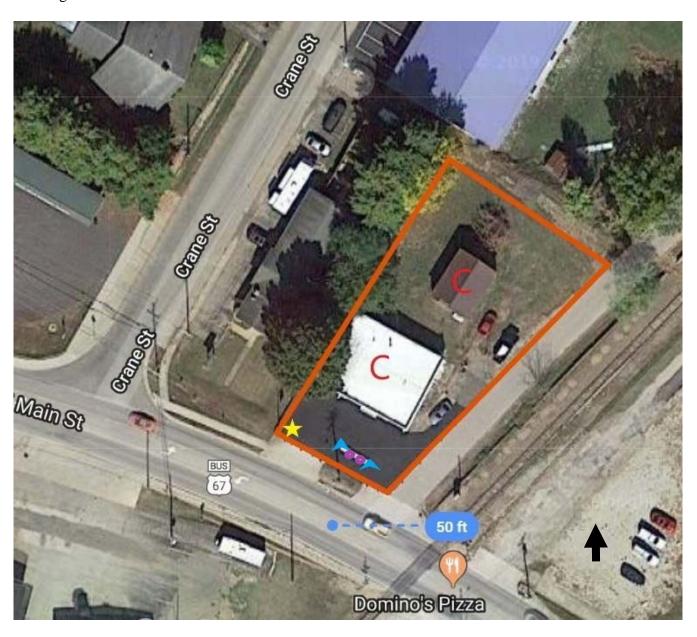
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Figure 2. Site Map. Source: Google Maps 2019.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 37.848953, -90.515832

The yellow star marks the location of the historic sign assembly: 1 contributing object. The two blue triangles mark the location of the two light poles: 2 noncontributing objects. The two purple circles denote the location of the two gas pumps: 2 noncontributing objects. The white roofed building is the service station. The building behind it is the contributing storage building constructed in 1949.

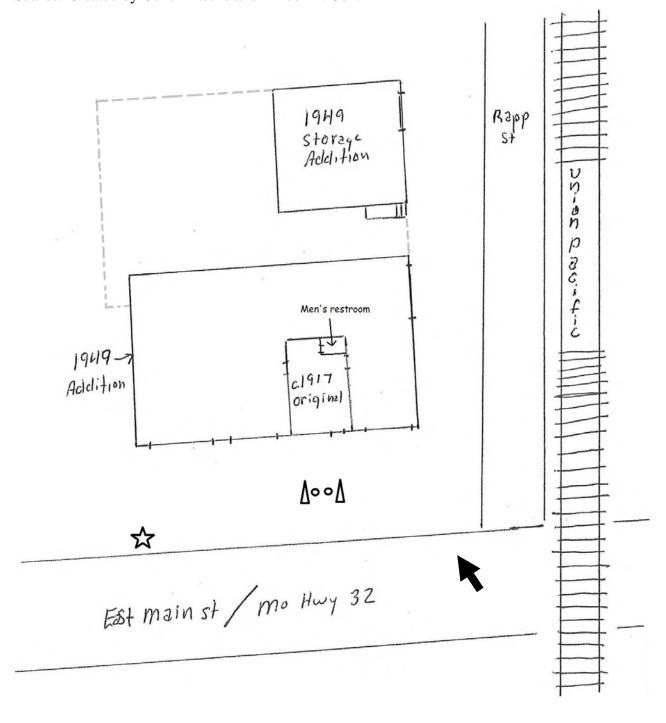


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Figure 3. Floor Plan and Lot Detail. The star reflects the location of the contributing sign assembly, the triangles represent the noncontributing light poles, and the circles the recreated noncontributing gas pumps. The dotted gray line reflects the recently added privacy fence. *Source:* Created by Gene Fritsche and Amber K. Cox.



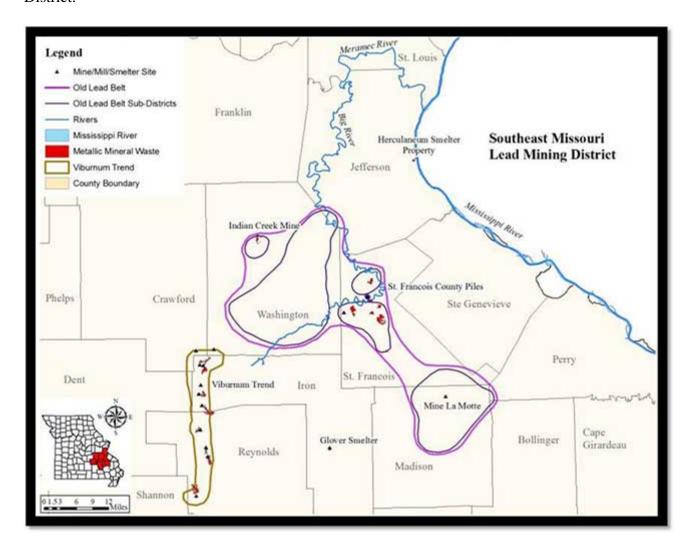
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Figure 4. This map, created by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, is captioned "The Southeast Missouri Lead Mining District is the largest lead mining district in the entire world." Park Hills is located near the centralized dot in St. Francois County. *Source*: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. "Natural Resource Damage Assessment Southeast Missouri Lead Mining District."



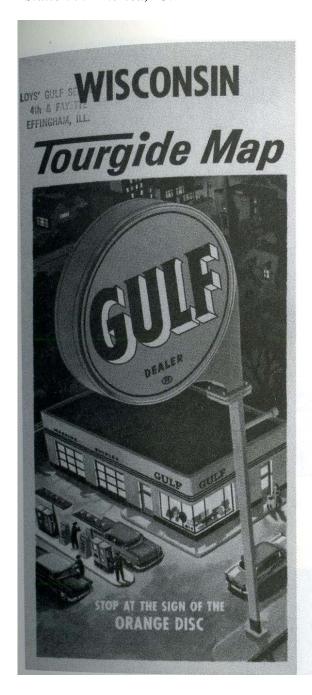
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Figure 5. This is an image of a free road map taken from Jakle and Sculle: "Here the Gulf disc is portrayed soaring above a 1950s vintage 'oblong box." *Source*: Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 43.



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Figure 6. "Shine" Fryman, John Degrant, and Cliff Head, at Howlett Gulf in 1957. *Source*: Gene Fritsche Private Collection, donated by Mel AuBuchon.



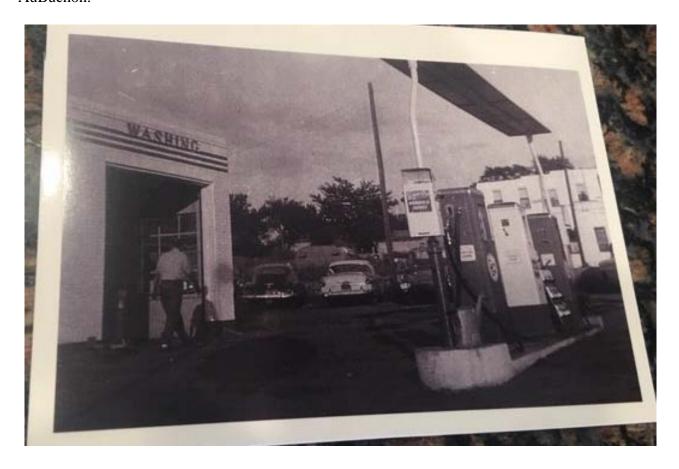
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Figure 7. Howlett Gulf in 1957. Source: Gene Fritsche Private Collection, donated by Mel AuBuchon.



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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 8. An illustration of gasoline/service station property types from 1910-1990. Source: Jakle and Sculle, The Gas Station in America, 134.

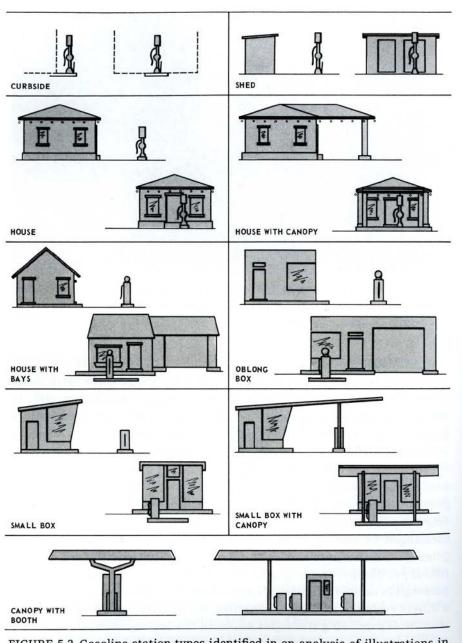


FIGURE 5.3 Gasoline station types identified in an analysis of illustrations in National Petroleum News, 1910 through 1990.

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Howlett Gulf
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N/A
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Figure 9. An example of a 1953 oblong box type station. *Source*: Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 3.



National Park Service

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Howlett Gulf
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County and State
N/A
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Figure 10. An example of a historic oblong box station. The garage doors are almost an exact match to the doors on Howlett Gulf. No specific name or location was provided for this station in the source. *Source*: Jakle and Sculle, *The Gas Station in America*, 145.



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Name of Property
St. Francois County, MO
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N/A
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Figure 11. A 1964 photograph of the Standard Service Station at 404 W Main Street. This station was replaced by a modern building or was so altered as to be unrecognizable. *Source*: Darnell, *St. Francois County Looking Back Volume III*, 25.



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Howlett Gulf	
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County and State	
N/A	
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)	

Figure 12. The current building at 404 W Main Street in July 2018. Source: Google Maps 2019.



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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 13. 606 Taylor currently functions as an auto repair shop. Photographed by Gene Fritsche, February 2019.

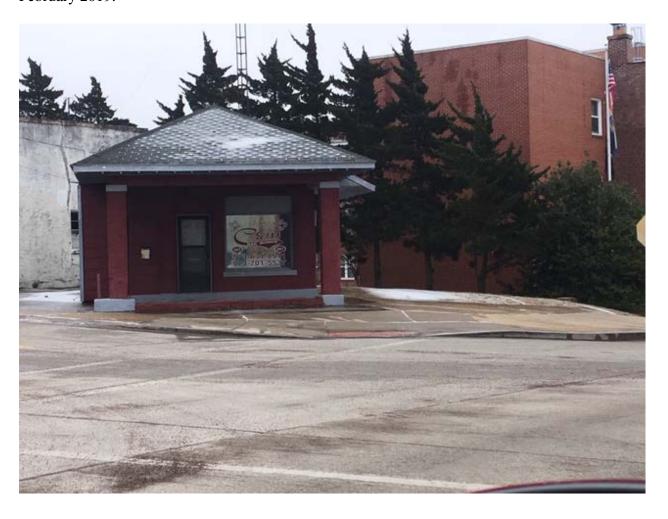


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Howlett Gulf
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Figure 14. 228 W Main Street is now a bail bonds office. Photographed by Gene Fritsche, February 2019.



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Howlett Gulf
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N/A
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Figure 15. 7 E Main Street is now Riverside Grille. Photographed by Gene Fritsche, February 2019.



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Howlett Gulf
Name of Property
St. Francois County, MO
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N/A
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Figure 16. 102 W Main is now a mechanic shop. Photographed by Gene Fritsche, February 2019.

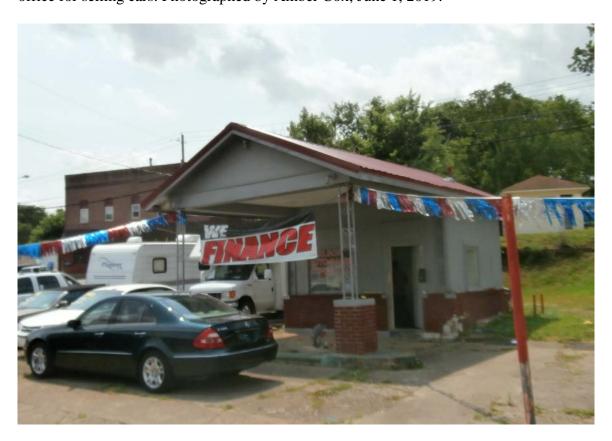


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	St. Francois County, MO
	County and State
	N/A
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ı	-

Figure 17. 127 N Front Street within the former city boundaries of Elvins, now serves as an office for selling cars. Photographed by Amber Cox, June 1, 2019.



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	N/A
	Name of multiple listing (if applicable)
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Figure 18. 201 S Front Street within the former city boundaries of Elvins appears out of use and recently suffered fire damage. Photographed by Amber Cox, June 1, 2019.



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Howlett Gulf
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 19. Photo Map. Created by Gene Fritsche and Amber K. Cox.

