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NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 8-86)

ted States Department of the Interior ional Park Service NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM 1. Name of Property ▋▋▋▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖▖。。。 historic name: Argenta Historic District other name/site number: N/A 2. Location street & number: Commercial district: roughly bounded by Broadway, West 6th Streets, and the unnamed alleyways that run behind each of the commercial blocks; Residential district: roughly bounded by Melrose Circle, North Broadway, West 4th Street and Orange Street not for publication: N/A vicinity: N/A city/town: North Little Rock `te: AR county: Pulaski code: AR 119 zip code: 72114 3. Classification Ownership of Property: Private Category of Property: District Number of Resources within Property: Contributing Noncontributing <u>77</u> buildings 89 \_\_\_\_ sites \_\_\_\_ structures \_ objects 89 77 Total Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: <u>6</u> Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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7. Description
Architectural Classification:
galow/Craftsman
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/
Commercial Style
Other Description: <u>N/A</u>
Materials: foundation <u>Brick</u> roof <u>Asphalt</u> walls <u>WOOD/Weatherboard</u> other <u>N/A</u>
Describe present and historic physical appearance. <u>X</u> See continuation sheet.
8. Statement of Significance
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: <u>Locally</u> .
Applicable National Register Criteria: <u>C</u>
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): <u>N/A</u>
eas of Significance: <u>COMMUNITY_PLANNING_AND</u>
DEVELOPMENT
COMMERCE
Period(s) of Significance: <u>c. 1890-1940</u>
Significant Dates: <u>N/A</u>
Significant Person(s): <u>N/A</u>
Cultural Affiliation: <u>N/A</u>
Architect/Builder: <u>Unknown</u>

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. X See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References ⋍⋷⋵⋒ڬڬऄぢ⋻⋻⋻⋼⋼⋼⋕⋭⋤⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋍⋼⋷⋳⋧⋷⋍⋍⋍⋼⋒⋳⋹⋳⋨⋇⋹⋹⋹≘⋵⋵⋍⋍⋍∊⋾⋼⋼⋼⋏⋧≚ See continuation sheet. Previous documentation on file (NPS): preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. \_ previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # Primary Location of Additional Data: X State historic preservation office Other state agency Federal agency X Local government University Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Geographical Data -reage of Property: <u>33 (residential: 22; commercial: 11)</u> ... M References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing A 15 566540 3846690 B 15 566800 3846740 
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 566560 3846170 <u>15 567110 3846360</u> G 15 567100 3846010 H 15 566960 3846010 See continuation sheet. Verbal Boundary Description: \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet. The boundaries for both of the discontiguous districts that together form the Argenta Historic District are shown as the dotted lines on the accompanying

sketch map entitled "Argenta Historic District, North Little Rock, Arkansas, 1992."

Boundary Justification: \_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes all the property associated with the history of downtown Argenta that retain sufficient architectural integrity.

 11. Form Prepared By

 :e/Title: Sandra Taylor Smith, Historical Consultant/AHPP Staff

 .janization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
 Date: 01/21/93

 Street & Number: 323 Center Street, Suite 1500
 Telephone: (501) 324-9880

 City or Town: Little Rock
 State: AR
 Zip: 72201

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### Boundaries

Boundary determinations of the Argenta Historic District are based upon information contained in a comprehensive survey of all buildings (277) in an area of downtown North Little Rock roughly defined on the east by the alley east of the 300 block of Main Street, W. Ninth St. on the north, Melrose Place Addition on the northwest corner of the area, N. Broadway on the west and W. Fourth St. on the south. The survey and subsequent district National Register nomination was produced by the North Little Rock History Commission in compliance and within the guidelines of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program requirements.

A Determination of Eligibility review of each property in the surveyed area led to the definition of National Register District boundaries. The area of downtown North Little Rock hence referred to as the "Argenta Historic District" is composed of 172 buildings within two discontiguous districts. A commercial district encompasses the 300, 400 and 500 blocks of Main Street. A residential district on the westernmost streets of the surveyed area is bounded by W. Fourth St. on the south, N. Broadway and the alley west of Willow St. on the west, Melrose Place Addition on the northwest, the 300 block of W. Eighth St. on the north and Orange St. on the east.

Although the boundaries of the commercial and the residential historic districts are discontiguous, they are historically linked in their development. As defined for the purposes of National Register, the Argenta Historic District contains three blocks of North Little Rock's oldest commercial vein -Main Street- and its most intact and contiguous historic downtown residential neighborhood.

The areas of the original survey not included in either of the nominated districts are centered around Maple Street, which has historically and continues to be a major traffic thoroughfare, and has suffered a significant amount of decay, alteration, demolition and non-historic construction.

Urban Renewal projects in the 1960's virtually eliminated all of the historic buildings south of the Argenta Historic District. Currently this area contains large expanses of green space, modern office complexes, and a few multi-story office buildings. A park and picturesque Riverfront Drive and park have been constructed along the river.

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Located within the city limits of North Little Rock, Arkansas, the Argenta Historic District is actually composed of two discontiguous districts: a residential district running along Willow Street between 4th Street and the historic Melrose Place addition, and a commercial district running along both sides of Main Street between Broadway and 6th Street. Both sections are composed of contributing structures the construction dates of which range roughly from 1890 to 1942. The residential district, though largely vernacular in nature, reflects the influence of the principal architectural styles in vogue during the early twentieth century: the Craftsman, the English Revival, and the Colonial Revival. The commercial district, though also vernacular, tends to reflect the simple, panel brick commercial style that was popular throughout the country for such construction during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as such other influences as the Colonial Revival, the Classical Revival, and the Spanish Revival.

The two discontiguous districts which comprise the Argenta Historic District lie three blocks north of the Arkansas River. Downtown Little Rock is directly across the river and the two cities' downtowns are linked by a Main Street bridge, Broadway Street bridge and an Interstate-30 bridge.

The downtown of North Little Rock is laid out in a grid pattern. (with the exception of the Melrose Place Addition, which is curvilinear.) Although there are eight buildings dating from the 1890's in the Argenta Historic District, the majority of the development occurred between 1900 and 1940. Sixty-seven percent of the buildings in both districts were constructed in the 1920's. Located within the two discontiguous districts are a total of 172 buildings.

The commercial district includes the 300 through 600 blocks of Main Street. A total of 32 buildings are located within this district. The number of historically contributing buildings in this district is 18 (56%). Of the 18 contributing buildings, 6 have previously been individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Fourteen non-contributing buildings are located in this district (seven of the non-contributing are less than 50 years old).

The residential district contains 140 buildings, of which 77 (55%) are contributing historic buildings, 60 are non-contributing historic buildings, and 3 are non-contributing buildings less than 50 years old. Seventy-five percent of the buildings in the residential district were constructed between 1920 and 1930.

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### Elaboration

The Argenta Historic District consists of two discontiguous districts, a commercial district and a residential district. Since the 1960's the area has been in transition. With the massive changes in the southern blocks of downtown North Little Rock including demolition of many historic buildings, the perimeters of the downtown area have taken on a different appearance. New traffic patterns designed to alleviate congestion exposed areas of the residential section to high traffic accompanied by deterioration of the historic streetscape. Between 1950 and 1960, as the city of North Little Rock grew northward and more businesses, residences and churches were built, the downtown began to decline.

There are 26 original commercial buildings, two public buildings and four residential buildings in the historic commercial district. Although most of the commercial district buildings are vernacular adaptations of a national style, there are several outstanding examples of architectural design.

North Little Rock City Hall at 300 Main St. (PU0001), listed on the National Register 8-6-75, is a visual anchor in the commercial district. The Neo-Classical Revival design of this outstanding building has been maintained with pride by the city and continues to function in its original capacity as the center of North Little Rock city government. One other public building, the two story Colonial Revival North Little Rock Post Office located at 420 Main (PU0012) is listed on the National Register within the Charles L. Thompson Thematic Group. The site was a city park until construction of the post office in 1931.

The Faucette Building at 400 Main (PU0011) and the Old Central Fire Station at 506 Main (PU0021) are both individually listed on the National Register based on their historic significance to the city of North Little Rock. Both buildings reflect vernacular commercial design in their construction. The Faucette Building has been restored to near original exterior appearance. Currently the Old Central Fire Station remains abandoned and in poor condition.

The other two previously listed National Register properties within the commercial district boundaries are the Baker House at 109 W. 5th (PU3227) and the Barth Hempfling House at 507 Main (PU0022). Located on the same block, these residential buildings are a striking contrast. The c.1899 brick Baker House is one of the few remaining Queen Anne style residences in North Little Rock and features a three-story round turret and decorative spindlework. The 1886 Hempfling House represents an earlier and more common vernacular design with folk Victorian detailing and is more representative of the type of

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residence indigenous to the area.

Two other residences are included in the commercial district boundaries. The c. 1920 Dornell House at 115 W. Broadway (PU 3913) is a good example of the influence of English "period" revival popular in the 1920's. Three pronounced gables mark the facade (south) of this house which is basically unaltered on the exterior. The c. 1920 J.A. Martin House at 416 Maple (PU 3918) is a basic brick bungalow with front facing gable. Both the Dornell House and the J.A. Martin House have been used for commercial purposes for over forty years.

Other buildings in the commercial district that are contributing include the two story c.1900 building at 314 Main (PU0004) with its arched second story windows, 316-318 Main (PU0005), a one story, virtually unaltered, small two storefront building with classical columns flanking each entry, the Argenta Drug Co. building at 320-324 Main (PU0007) and the Argenta Drug Co. Annex at 104-110 E. 4th (PU0006).

Small vernacular examples of contributing commercial buildings include the Malnik (PU0015), and McPherson (PU0014) buildings in the 400 block of Main Street. The building at 413-415 Main (PU0016), constructed c. 1929 features some modest Art Deco detailing.

Italianate influence is seen in the 1885 Street Building at 417-419 Main (PU0018). Here a projecting cornice with paired brackets, decorative brickwork and windows with crowns remain. Although similar in style and age, the building next door at 421-425 Main (PU0019) has a drastically altered first floor, and upper story details, although present, are obscured.

The lone example of Spanish Revival style in either of the districts is the 1928 Owens Funeral Home Building at 500 Main (PU0020). Textured stucco walls, balconets, wrought iron details and red tile roof characterize this architecturally significant building.

There are seven non-contributing historic buildings in the commercial district. All have been altered significantly with the placement of aluminum panels on facades as seen in the J.C. Penney Department Store Building at 304 Main (PU0002), the E.O. Manees Building at 313-315 Main (PU0008) and the building at 405-07 Main (PU0013). Although historic, major alterations have been made on 312 Main (PU0003), 421-425 Main (PU0019) and 508-510 Main (PU3894).

A particularly historically significant commercial building in the district, The Vogel Grocery

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Building at 321-323 Main (PU0010) has been stuccoed over brick, windows enclosed, storefront windows replaced and a large wooden storefront awning erected.

Seven of the non-contributing buildings in the commercial district are non-historic. Of these 401 Main (PU3893), 514 Main (PU3897), 515 Main (PU3898), 521 Main (PU3899) and 512 Main (PU3895) were constructed in the 1940's. The Otasco Building at 301 Main (PU3892) was constructed c. 1972 and the now-abandoned gas station at 524 Main (PU3896) was constructed c. 1950.

Similarly, the residential historic district significantly expresses a solid working class neighborhood. The tree-lined streets are laid out in a grid pattern. The exception to the grid is Melrose Place Addition which is circular with a dividing street in the center. Scattered about the neighborhood are a few "grand" homes, but the majority of residences are, like the commercial district, vernacular expressions of a particular style.

Located within the residential district are 140 buildings of which 77 are contributing historic buildings, 60 are non-contributing historic buildings and 3 are less than fifty years old.

Of the 77 contributing historic buildings there are three apartment buildings. The 1927 Lynch Apartments at 523 Orange (PU3946) is a vernacular application of English Revival design as seen in its steep hip roof, eyebrow dormers and arched entries. The Grange Apartments at 809 Orange (PU3966) also modestly employs English Revival characteristics in its two story fieldstone porch with arched openings. The Leonard Apartments at 810 Willow (PU3998) is a traditional building constructed in the mid-1930's.

The remaining 74 contributing homes in the Argenta Residential Historic District can be broadly grouped into architectural style categories parallel to what was being built across the nation in the early part of the 20th century.

Among the earliest buildings in the residential district are the eleven Colonial Revival influenced houses. Originally all four houses on the East side of the 400 block of Willow had identical floor plans. The houses at 414 Willow (PU3967) and 416 Willow (PU3968) feature an eclectic blend of Colonial Revival characteristics. The other two Colonial Revival homes on the block have had porches removed and are sided in wide aluminum.

More vernacular versions of the Colonial Revival style were found on the houses in the 300 block of W. 7th (PU4126, PU4127, PU4128, and PU4129). These houses have been altered through porch and window replacements and non-original siding. Although currently

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sheathed in asbestos, the Farmer-Brooks House at 623 Orange (PU3950) is an excellent example of the Dutch Colonial Revival style. Constructed c. 1915 the house is characterized by its front facing gambrel roof and shed roof dormers. The design of the Mosley-Zimmerman House at 410 W. 5th (PU4093) is a period revival of the Colonial Revival style popular in the 1920's with its two story side gable roof and symmetrical facade with classical entry.

The vernacular folk house is commonly found in the residential district. There are 19 houses in the district defined as vernacular in style. The shotgun house such as the one at 510 Willow (PU3973) was constructed in this neighborhood from the late 19th century through the 1920's. A Craftsman detailed shotgun house is located at 611 Willow (PU3987) and two shotgun houses were joined in the mid 1920's at 306 W. 8th (PU4141).

The 700 block of Orange (PU3954, PU3955, PU3956, PU3957) features a row of contributing vernacular houses. Virtually identical, these four small frame rental houses appear unaltered from their original appearance.

The influence of the Craftsman style is well expressed in eleven houses in the Argenta Historic Residential District. The earliest Craftsman house in the district is the Mobley-McAninch House at 417 W. 4th (PU4061). Constructed in 1915, the Craftsman influence is seen in wide eaves with triangular knee braces and a two story shed roof bay. Another early Craftsman vernacular form is found in the house at 301 W. 7th (PU4121). A heavy gablet roof, broad eaves and classical columns on brick piers distinguish this transitional vernacular daptation to Craftsman design.

The most outstanding example of the Craftsman style in the district is the c. 1917 house at 415 Willow (PU3971). This unaltered house is an excellent example of Craftsman detailing with its side gable roof with wide eaves and triangular knee braces, gable roof dormer also with knee braces, shed roof bay and battered columns on piers. Although not as intricately detailed, two other houses are similar in their Craftsman plan and are located at 400 W. 5th (PU4090) and 404 W. 5th (PU4091). The Starnes House at 521 Willow (PU3978) is a two story version of Craftsman design. The Freedman-Zimmerman House at 409 W. 5th (PU4082) (although non-contributing due to application of asbestos siding) is a Craftsman form unique to the area featuring a gablet roof with notched rafter ends, granite columns and balustrade on the recessed porch and rear two story hip roof section.

By 1920 development in the western section of downtown North Little Rock was proceeding at a rapid pace. Clearly the largest growth period in the area was 1920-1930 when 75% of

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the houses in the residential district were constructed.

There are 85 (61%) Craftsman Bungalow houses in the residential district. Of these 47 are contributing. The 38 non-contributing Bungalows have, for the most part, been sided in non-original material and some have window and/or porch alterations.

Versions of the Craftsman Bungalow are found throughout the area, but the largest concentrations are located along W. 5th, Willow and in the Melrose Place Addition. Small one story versions of the Bungalow such as houses at 415 W. 5th (PU4085) and the Solon Humphries House at 601 Willow (PU3984) are common to the area. The district's only "Airplane Bungalow" is located at 505 W. 5th (PU4087).

The Melrose Place Addition contains 52 small bungalow houses, all fairly similar in plan and scale. Although only 22 of the Melrose Place bungalows remain unaltered (most of the non-contributing have been covered in synthetic siding) the continuity of this circular addition and its streetscape remain intact. Generally, the brick bungalows have retained their historic integrity while the frame versions have been covered in asbestos or other synthetic siding. Only one non-historic house has been built in the Melrose Addition (PU4008).

The outstanding example of English Revival period design is seen in the Owens House at 401 W. 4th (PU4057). This two story house was constructed in 1927 by the family who owned and built the Owens Funeral House at 500 Main (PU0020). Steep gable roof lines with half timbering and the texturing achieved through the use of brick and stone add to the distinctiveness of this high styled house.

Three houses contribute to the residential district in their c.1940 Minimal Traditional design. The duplex at 305-307 W. 5th (PU4075), and the house at 618 Willow (PU3983) feature the characteristic close eaves and rake with minimal detail typical of the houses built in the late 1930's through 1940's. The McDermott House at 413 W. 4th is a two story brick version of the Minimal Traditional design with a one story flat roof porch with decorative roof balustrade.

It is in the residential area of downtown North Little Rock that the most change has occurred. This historic residential district has always catered to railroad workers with boarding houses and apartment buildings. However, the decades since the 1960's have seen an even greater increase in transient residency. Once well-maintained large family homes have been converted to rooming houses and apartments; many have deteriorated. Many of

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the homes in the residential district which were originally covered in frame exterior wall material have been covered in non-original materials. Some have been sheathed in asbestos, and some in aluminum.

The majority of the buildings in the Argenta Historic District are in fair to good condition. There are a few, particularly in the residential area, which have fallen into deteriorated condition. Absentee ownership has created many problems for the neighborhood as those properties are sometimes not well maintained and/or tenants are not carefully screened. As with many downtown commercial districts, false metal fronts have been placed on first floor facades of some of the buildings. Yet in both the residential and commercial districts, the streetscape consistently remains intact.

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#### Summary

Criterion A, local significance

The Argenta Historic District is locally significant under Criterion A as the two groups of historic structures most directly associated with the historic community of Argenta, the earliest settlement north of the Arkansas River at this location that later became what is now known as North Little Rock. More than any other residential area in North Little Rock, the Argenta Historic District represents a continuum of the city's development. The era between 1890 and 1940 is the period when North Little Rock established itself as a city of the first class and emerged as an industrial center. At the crux of the development of North Little Rock was the strong role the railroad played in the city's economic base and its effect on the industrial nature of the city. The process by which North Little Rock grew from a small settlement to a city of the first class is an important part of the development of central Arkansas' urban center. The foresight and ingenuity of early leaders in North Little Rock is a significant example of community planning and development.

The relatively high number of non-contributing structures belies the fact that the vast majority thereof are historic structures that have been artificially-sided in an historicallyinappropriate manner; the residential and commercial storefront pattern of both sections has remained largely intact.

### Elaboration

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The area along the north bank of the Arkansas River did not parallel the development of Arkansas's capitol city across the river, Little Rock. It is thought that as early as 1810 there were white settlers across from "the little rock". The area was referred to as "Opposite Little Rock" on early maps. In 1845 an army officer named Richard DeCantillon Collins who surveyed roads and rivers in Arkansas for the government registered with the Pulaski County clerk's office eight square blocks for sale on the north bank of the Arkansas River. The first name given to the area was DeCantillon.

Another early settlement in the area called Huntersville is believed to have been named for Capt. R. L. Hunter who surveyed a route for the Little Rock-Fort Smith railroad. The first rail route built in Arkansas was the Memphis and Little Rock Railroad. Completed in 1862, the railroad ended at a depot on the north river bank "opposite Little Rock" from where passengers were ferried across the river to Little Rock. In 1871 the Arkansas Gazette published an editorial in an attempt to clear general confusion about the name of the town "opposite Little Rock". This editorial explained that during the Civil War the military

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superintendent of the north side depot was William Hunter and the location was known as the military post of Huntersville. By 1872 what was left of the Huntersville settlement had been destroyed by fire. Yet another development on the north side, though not as well known as DeCantillon, Huntersville or Argenta, was the town of Quapaw. In 1865 William E. Woodruff advertised riverfront lots adjacent to "Huntersville" but there is no evidence of any deeds recorded.

In 1866 the town of Argenta was surveyed and platted (Argentum is Latin for Silver). Folklore says that silver had been discovered about ten miles north of the town site (in actuality, "Kellogg's Diggins" was a lead mine which was intermittently mined through the 1920's and did indeed yield some silver). Another version of how Argenta was named centers around a Frenchman named A.J. Burnett who built a two story hotel called the Argenta before the Civil War. It is said that the area around the hotel and the town of DeCantillon were combined and named Argenta.

Although a post office was established in Argenta in 1871, the town had not incorporated. In 1873 the completion of the Baring Cross bridge across the Arkansas River just to the west of downtown Argenta, connecting it with Little Rock and the southwest, heralded the beginning of a long period of growth for the city of Argenta. By the late 1870's Argenta was a major railroad line crossing. As the railway related shops, warehouse and workforce increased so did the town of Argenta. Additions to the west of the Original Town of Argenta were platted in the 1880's including DeCantillon Addition, Hudson's Addition and Clendenin's Addition. It was common for a large portion of railway labor to be migratory and large numbers of these "boomers" as they were called passed through Argenta. The railroad people who settled in one place were called "homeguards". With a rapidly growing population and little organized means of enforcing the law the disorderliness of the town inspired an article in the Arkansas Gazette in December 1880 encouraging the town of Argenta to incorporate for the purpose of obtaining control of the "lawless conditions".

However no steps were taken to establish Argenta as an incorporated city until 1890 when an incorporation petition was filed. The Little Rock city attorney advised the City Council that the boundaries of the cities of Little Rock and Argenta extended to the middle of the Arkansas River between them and therefore considered Argenta contiguous to Little Rock. In an election in April, 1890 Little Rock voters decided to annex lands contiguous to their city. Argenta was made the eighth ward of the city of Little Rock. Although C.L. Vogel (Vogel Grocery 323 Main-PU0010) challenged the legality of the election in the Supreme Court of Arkansas, it was affirmed that the annexation was legal.

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At the time of its annexation to Little Rock, Argenta was still considered a "rough" town (Argenta was "off limits" even to soldiers stationed at nearby Fort Roots Military Base). Saloons and gambling houses filled the buildings along Argenta's primary street, Newton Avenue (later changed to Main St.). There were no paved streets, no water system, plank sidewalks, a small police force, and only bucket-brigade fire protection. Low lying streets with no drainage system often flooded, leaving Argenta a muddy mosquito infested area. Although a "free" wooden bridge was constructed across the Arkansas River in the late 1890's, little improvements were made in Little Rock's Eighth Ward.

The name Faucette is synonymous with the history of North Little Rock. Brothers William C. and James P. Faucette were foresighted businessmen who played a significant role in the independence and development of Argenta/North Little Rock. After settling in Argenta in 1878, both men had worked on the Little Rock-Fort Smith Railway. As an early business venture the Faucette brothers operated a boarding house which catered to railroad workers (Faucette Building 400 Main-PU0011). Later they bought land in downtown Argenta and built a private electric light plant.

As one of the first aldermen elected from the Eighth Ward of Little Rock, William Faucette pushed for improvements in the swampy Eighth Ward. In 1901 a group of men from the Eighth Ward led by the Faucette brothers secretly organized for the purpose of separating Argenta from Little Rock. An area immediately north of the Argenta town site (what is roughly today 15th St. on the south, 23rd St. on the north, Main St. on the east and the railroad tracks on the west) was incorporated as the "Town of North Little Rock" in 1901. The Faucette brothers paid the filing fee for the incorporation of North Little Rock and Frank O. Cook was elected the first mayor.

The group from the Eighth Ward then manipulated a bill through the Arkansas Thirtyfourth General Assembly in 1903. Prepared by state senator James P. Clarke, this bill was written to permit the annexation or consolidation of one municipal corporation located within one mile of any other municipal corporation. The act was called the "Hoxie-Walnut Ridge Bill" and the men from the Eighth Ward paid a lobbyist from Walnut Ridge to ascertain its passage. There was little attention paid to this piece of legislation by the General Assembly as it was thought to have been a special interest bill written to permit the cities of Hoxie and Walnut Ridge to consolidate. The Hoxie-Walnut Ridge bill was signed into law in March, 1903. On May 1, 1903, the day after the legislature adjourned, William C. Faucette announced that he had a petition signed by Argenta property owners asking to be annexed to the incorporated town of North Little Rock under the provisions of the Hoxie-Walnut Ridge Bill. A special election was held in July 1903 and the citizens of North

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Little Rock and Argenta voted to secede from Little Rock and become part of the incorporated town of North Little Rock. Frank O. Cook resigned as mayor and the city council elected William Mara the second mayor of North Little Rock.

The annexation of Argenta by North Little Rock was in dispute in the courts for over a year but in February, 1904 the Arkansas Supreme Court decided in favor of the North Little Rock-Argenta annexation. William Faucette was elected mayor in the city's first general election. In addition to the mayoral position, a full slate of city officers were elected and the city was divided into four wards. With a population of 6,500 and an established city government North Little Rock became a city of the first class.

William Faucette was re-elected mayor in 1905 and 1907. James Faucette was selected to fill the unexpired mayoral term of the city's second mayor, E.A. Ramsey in 1910 and was re-elected mayor in 1911. It was the Faucette brothers who set up improvement districts which included paving streets and installing a drainage system. The privately owned Faucette Brothers Bank (established in 1901) changed their name to Twin City Bank with James Faucette as president and then incorporated as a public bank. Manufacturing and railroad business expanded and the city began to flourish.

On October 26, 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt visited the city and gave a short speech at the City Park (located at 5th & Main where the North Little Rock Post Office (420 Main-PU0012) stands). It is said that Roosevelt remarked "Mr. Faucette, I am delighted to meet the mayor of Argenta". In January, 1906 a city ordinance was passed changing the name of the city to Argenta.

Argenta was experiencing an economic boom in the first decade of the 20th century. Four railroads were located in the city. Cotton oil mills and the lumber industry provided a strong economic base for growth. In 1910 Justin Matthews, a local businessman and real estate developer, built a two story building with full basement (razed by Urban Renewal in the 1960's) which covered an entire block. Other local businessmen built brick buildings along Main Street, including the Manees family (313-315 Main-PU0008, 317-319 Main-PU0009) and Solon Humphries, a real estate developer (318 Main-PU0005, 324 Main-PU0006 104-110 E. 4th-PU0007). Argenta High School (razed) was an impressive brick building constructed in 1912 and the first school on the north side of the river to offer twelve grades.

The Faucette brothers were the force behind construction of a new city hall building in 1914 (PU0001) which remains an outstanding architectural and governmental anchor in the

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commercial district.

There were approximately 15 saloons and gambling houses in the downtown area at the turn of the century. When Arkansas went dry in 1916, these establishments were forced to close and the face of Main Street began to change as stores and businesses replaced the saloons.

The name remained Argenta until 1917 when it was changed to North Little Rock and has remained as such since (in 1958 there was an unsuccessful campaign to change the name back to Argenta). The 1917 name change to North Little Rock was fostered by James P. Faucette after a trip to California where he saw the economic benefits to a small town close to Hollywood after changing its name to "West Hollywood". J.P. Faucette was convinced that changing the name of Argenta back to North Little Rock would be a financial boost to the city.

As the city's business section grew, its residential area was changing west of Main Street. Although additions had been platted, there was little building in most of the area west of Main St. Orange and Willow Streets were occupied by black families. At least two black churches were once located on Orange Street. In the early years of the century, white and black families often lived on the same blocks. By 1915, however, most of the downtown residential neighborhood was occupied by white local business owners and workers and railroad employees. Within the district are business buildings and the residences of those businessmen.

In 1923 the Broadway Bridge over the Arkansas River was dedicated. A key force in the construction of this bridge was Justin Matthews. The "free bridge" built in the 1890's was replaced in 1924 by a Main Street bridge. Replacement of a dangerous wood viaduct over the railroad tracks at 9th and Main by a new concrete viaduct in 1927 accessed the areas north of downtown for further development. The city had a streetcar system in its downtown and was in such good financial condition that a banner was placed on the eastern edge of town reading on one side "Locate in North Little Rock- A City Without Indebtedness" and "Welcome to North Little Rock, The Industrial City of Arkansas" on the other side.

Both the commercial and residential districts of downtown North Little Rock remained viable through the 1960's. In the latter part of the 1960's Urban Renewal projects cleared a two block wide path along the Arkansas River. Commercial buildings in the first two blocks of Main Street were razed and two modern bank buildings were constructed in the 200 block of Main.

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Buildings in the first two blocks of Maple, Orange and Willow were also cleared as a part of the Urban Renewal projects. To the east of the Argenta Historic Commercial District, construction of Interstate 30 interrupted that portion of the historic downtown neighborhood. West of the residential district, more "improvements" and rerouting of traffic arteries opened once serene streets to heavy use.

Although the fabric of the Argenta Historic District has been confined to a small core area, within the two discontiguous districts a sense of the original historic character of the neighborhood remains.

The architectural character of the Argenta Historic District is based on the simple vernacular nature of the area's historic buildings which were built between the early 1890's and 1940. It features a broad selection of architectural styles including the elaborate Queen Anne style Baker House at 109 W. 5th (PU3227, NR-listed 1976), simple shotgun houses such as the one located at 510 Willow (PU3973), Colonial Revival as seen in 414 and 416 Willow (PU3967, PU3968), English Revival as in the Owens House at 401 W. 4th (PU4057), and Craftsman Bungalows as exemplified in the Simons-Ivy House at 710 Willow (PU3990). The Owens Funeral Home Building at 500 Main (PU0020) is the district's lone example of Spanish Revival design.

The wide range of interpretations and vernacular adaptations of the style influences represented in the district is significantly reflective of the development of the city of North Little Rock with its working class foundations. As a city whose economic base was the railroad industry, the character of North Little Rock developed as a much different city from Little Rock. An advertisement for the sale of lots and houses in Argenta at the turn of the century boasted "even the poorest workman can easily own his own home by practicing a little self denial and economy".

The Melrose Place Addition, located on the northwest corner of the Argenta Historic Residential District is a 14.21 acre tract of land bought by North Little Rock's Twin City Bank in the early 1920's. Twin City Bank platted the subdivision in 1924 and constructed 53 small Craftsman bungalow homes between 1925 and 1929 (one historic home has been razed and one ranch house c. 1960 has been constructed). A large span of vacant land on the north of Melrose Place was never developed and was commonly used by railroad workers as walking access to the railroad yards just to the north of this green space, and prior to construction of the new high school in 1929 was used as a football practice field. Most of the houses in the Melrose Place Addition are frame front-facing gable roof bungalows. A few are faced in brick (116 Melrose Circle-PU4003, 120 Melrose Circle-

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PU4004, 144 Melrose Circle-PU4009, 230 Melrose Circle-PU4016, and 117 Melrose Divide-PU4045). One house, which was originally frame, was faced in fieldstone in the early 1940's (113 Melrose Circle-PU4028). Several of the houses have been covered in synthetic siding and have had other alterations. Although only 22 of the homes in the Melrose Place Addition are considered contributing, the historic cohesiveness of the streetscape remains intact.

Despite the fact that the neighborhood has deteriorated considerably, the character of the Argenta Historic District clearly is derived from its early 20th century buildings. The alteration of many of these structures has been an adaptation to a changing economic base and growth away from downtown. As early as the 1920's many of the larger homes were divided into apartments or opened for boarding houses. As with many inner city neighborhoods throughout the country, absentee landlord problems with maintenance and general neighborhood deterioration have grown. Many of the frame houses have been sided with synthetic materials in an attempt to reduce maintenance costs. Some commercial buildings have been stuccoed or faced with aluminum panels. Despite these changes the historic aggregation in the two districts remains.

Crime in the downtown area of North Little Rock increased dramatically in the decade from 1980 to 1990 and threats to the stability of the neighborhood do exist. A strong neighborhood organization organized in 1991 is aggressively seeking preservation of the area. The Boosters For A Better Downtown North Little Rock which is comprised of residents, business owners, city officials and other interested people has brought the needs of their historic neighborhood to the forefront. Bright street lights have been placed in the neighborhood and police protection has been greatly increased. An "Argenta Community Development Corporation" has been formed and plans are underway to renovate several homes in the area. The North Little Rock city government is taking an active role in the effort to save its historic downtown area. The hope is that through interpretation of this area's historic significance to the city, the neighborhood can be revitalized as a commercial center and historic residential neighborhood.

Although many changes have occurred in and surrounding downtown North Little Rock, the discontiguous commercial and residential historic districts retain their historic ambiance. Containing a total of 172 buildings (of which only 10 are less than 50 years old), the Argenta Historic District documents the development of North Little Rock from a muddy, rough settlement to a city of the first class.

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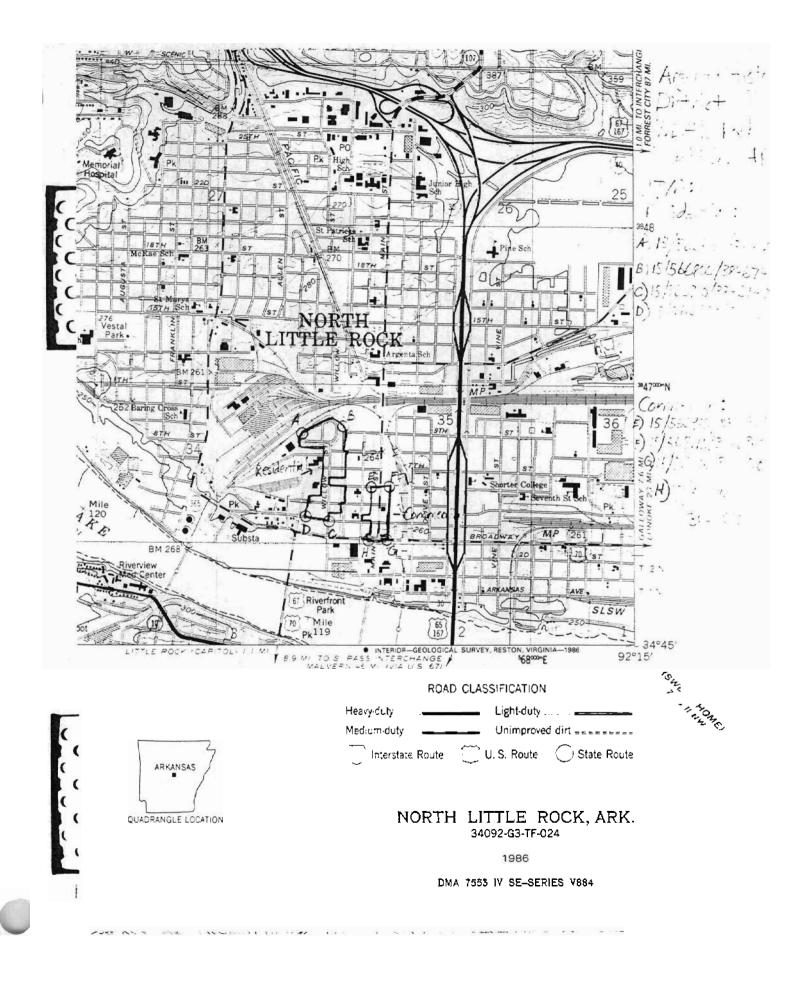
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ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROCRAM

April 7, 2000

Carol D. Shull Chief of Registration United State Department of the Interior National Register of Historic Places National Park Service 800 North Capitol Street, Suite 250 Washington, D.C. 20002

RE: Argenta Historic District, North Little Rock, Pulaski County

Dear Carol:

We are enclosing for your review the amendment to the above-referenced nomination. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable procedures and notification requirements associated with amending National Register nominations.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathy Buford Slater State Historie Preservation Officer

CBS:km

Enclosures



Argenta Historic District Name of Property Pulaski, AR

County and State

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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We are requesting that the Argenta Historic District Nomination be amended to include the following four buildings as contributing structures. At the time the original nomination was prepared these four structures were considered non - contributing within the district because of unsympathetic additions/alterations. Since then, the structures have been restored to their historic appearance.

1 & 2 Name of	f Property & Location:					
historic name	Argenta Historic District (Amendment – changing 4 non-contributing properties to contributing)					
	David Holland House, 320 West Eighth Street					
	House at 518 Willow Street					
	House at 512 Willow Street					
	House at 718 Willow Street					
ity or town	North Little Rock	vicinity				
state <u>Arkans</u>	sas codeAR countyPulaski code11	9 zip code72114				
As the designarequest for det Places and me does not meet nationally Signature of State or Fed	ral Agency Certification         ated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this          ated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this          ated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this          ated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this          ated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this          atemination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant         attentional Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant         attentional Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant         attentional Register Criteria         attentional Register Title         attentional Register Title         bate         bate         attentional bureau         attentional bureau         attentional bureau         attentional bureau	Register of Historic ty 🛛 meets 🗖				
Signature of	The property of meets a does not meet the National Register Criteria. (1) See Continuation sites forertifying orticlal Title 4-10-0D Date Date eral agency and bureau					

Privately owned buildings; count of contributing buildings in district after the 1999 amendment – 98, count of nonontributing buildings in district after the 1999 amendment – 68. New count of contributing buildings in district – 102, mew count of non-contributing buildings in district – 64.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### SECTION 7: PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

At the time the original nomination was prepared these four structures were considered non-contributing within the district because of unsympathetic additions/alterations. Since then, the structures have been restored to their historic appearance.

Argenta Historic District North Little Rock, Arkansas Pulaski County Property: 320 West Eighth Street

The David Holland House at 320 West Eighth Street in the Argenta Historic District was constructed in 1929. The frame house is a long, horizontal-shaped structure with a steep cross gable roof and one-half front porch covered by a flat roof. Three brick chimneys rise from the roof of the house. A low shed roof room addition is situated on the rear (south) of the house. An original shed roof rear west elevation porch has been enclosed.

The house rests on a foundation of brick piers infilled with sections of corrugated metal. The front (north) porch rests on a continuous brick foundation. Original weatherboard walls were sheathed in roll asphalt siding from the 1950s to late 1999. Windows are tall wood double-hung, two-over-two. Glass transoms are located over main entry doors on the front (north).

The front (north) porch features a flat roof supported by a single square brick column. A low brick pier to the right of the three concrete steps to the porch has been removed. The porch appears to be the only Craftsman era feature of the exterior.

Argenta Historic District North Little Rock, Arkansas Pulaski County Property: 518 Willow Street

Constructed c. 1910, the house located at 518 Willow Street is a shotgun form structure with Craftsman detailing, distinguishing it from the two adjacent shotgun style houses or the same block. The house is a one-story simple horizontal plan typical of the shotgun folk form with a rear portion which slightly projects from the north side and extends past the south elevation wall to form an ell. Of frame construction, the original wood clapboard exterior walls have been covered in asphalt shingles. The house rests on brick piers and the foundation has been filled with corrugated metal between piers.



Argenta Historic District Name of Property Pulaski, AR County and State

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The roof of the shotgun style house at 518 Willow is a clipped gable which distinguishes it from the simple gable roofs on the other shotgun form houses on the block. The roof is covered with composition shingles and forms a hip on its rear (east) end. A brick chimney rises from the center of the main portion of the house and a tall brick chimney rises from the rear room of the house.

Two tapered wood posts on granite piers support the hipped roof of the front (west) porch. The porch is accessed by one concrete step. The entry door is wood with a glass light in the upper half and is situated on the southern edge of the porch. Thin metal posts support the rear (east) hipped roof porch.

Windows are double-hung wood frame with four-over-one lights. The north elevation features three sets of pairs of windows, while the southern elevation contains two single double-hung windows and one pair of windows on the rear room.

Argenta Historic District North Little Rock, Arkansas Pulaski County Property: 512 Willow Street

The house located at 512 Willow Street in North Little Rock's Argenta Historic District was constructed circa 1910. It is a folk form house often referred to as "Shotgun" style characterized by its long and narrow shape. The house is one story tall, one room wide, and several rooms long. The gable roof of the house faces toward the front (west). The house is of frame construction and rests on brick piers. Sheets of corrugated metal have been used to infill between brick piers.

The original exterior wood clapboard walls were covered in composition shingles in the early 1950s and removed in late 1999. Original one-over-one wood windows have been replaced with metal two-over-two windows. The flat roof front porch is supported by wood posts on masonry piers. A low masonry pier in the center of the porch flanks the step to the entry door which is located on the south end of the narrow façade.

North Little Rock, Arkansas Pulaski County Property: 718 Willow Street

The house located at 718 Willow Street in North Little Rock's Argenta Historic District (NR 03-15-93) is a one-story rectangular-shaped structure of frame construction. The house is capped by a front-facing gable roof from which three brick chimneys rise. The roof's wide eaves and extended rafter ends lend Craftsman style characteristic to the house. The house rests on brick piers with corrugated metal infill.

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A single square brick column supports a front southwest corner recessed porch. A low shed roof addition on the rear (east) extends past the wall of the house on the south rear corner.

The original wood weatherboard exterior walls were sheathed in roll asphalt siding from the early 1950s to 1999. Windows on the house are tall; two-over-two double-hung of wood construction. Two entry doors are located in the inner corner of the recessed front porch. An exterior door on the rear north elevation is accessed by two concrete steps and covered with a projecting shed roof. Another two exterior doors are located on the rear (east) shed roof addition.

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### National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### SECTION 8: HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Argenta Historic District North Little Rock, Arkansas Pulaski County Property: 320 West Eighth Street

The David Holland House at 320 West Eighth Street in the Argenta Historic District is a one-story, long and irregularly rectangular-shaped structure covered by a cross-gable roof. Research indicates Missouri Pacific Railroad switchman David Holland constructed the house on its present site in 1929.

The form and detailing is characteristic of pre-1929 architectural styling. Tall double-hung wood windows with twoover-two lights, the steeply pitched cross-gable roof and irregular shape are typical of the type of small house constructed in the 1910s spanning the transition from Queen Anne style to Colonial Revival style. Although unsubstantiated, the possibility that this house was constructed at another location around 1910 and moved to its present site in the late 1920s would account for its pre-Craftsman period architectural characteristics.

David Holland only resided in the house through the 1930s. Since the 1940s the house has been occupied by many residents, most of whom only lived there for one or two years.

The construction of the David Holland House at 320 West Eighth Street is indicative of the large amount of construction which took place in the neighborhood during the 1920s to meet the demand for housing close to Missouri-Pacific Railroad repair shops and yards. It was during the 1920s that the neighborhood now known as the Argenta Historic District saw the most growth. The construction of the David Holland House at 320 West Eighth Street represents this period of the district's development, from which its present character is derived.

Argenta Historic District North Little Rock, Arkansas Pulaski County Property: 518 Willow Street

The shotgun form house located at 518 Willow Street in North Little Rock's Argenta Historic District was constructed circa 1910. The row of shotgun style houses on the east side of the 500 block of Willow Street represents the type of small housing constructed in great numbers in the first two decades of the twentieth century in this neighborhood. Only a few shotgun style houses remain in the district, either replaced by a construction boom in the 1920s or destroyed during the Urban Renewal program of the 1960s.

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The house at 518 Willow Street was, as many others of its type in the neighborhood, occupied by a series of short-term residents in its early years. Many of the early occupants of the house were employed by the Missouri-Pacific Railroad, whose repair shops and yards were located within walking distance of the house.

In the early 1930s the Emmitt Putman family moved into the house. The Putmans were associated with Vogue Cleaners, located in North Little Rock's downtown, as was the Joseph Ollie family who lived next door at 512 Willow. The Putman family occupied the 518 Willow Street house through the early 1960s.

In the late 1960s, the house was purchased for rental income and was sporadically occupied by a series of temporary residents until 1999 when it was purchased by a local non-profit housing corporation who is in the process of renovating it.

Argenta Historic District North Little Rock, Arkansas Pulaski County Property: 512 Willow Street

The "Shotgun" style house located at 512 Willow Street in the Argenta Historic District was constructed circa 1910. As was often the case in North Little Rock's historic Argenta neighborhood, this house was built to directly respond to the urgent need for housing near the Missouri-Pacific Railroad yards and repair shops, the major employer in the city from 1900 through the 1950s.

After its construction around 1910, a different resident occupied the small house each year. Beginning in 1919 the Thomas Crumley family moved into the house and remained there through the late 1930s. Originally spelled 'Krumley'', the family was headed by Konstantia Krumley, widow of Jesse Krumley. Sons John, who was employed by the city's fire department, and Thomas, a railroad employee, apparently changed the spelling of the name to 'Crumley'' around 1919.

Joseph Ollie was the second resident to be long-term associated with the house at 512 Willow Street. The Ollie family moved into the house in the late 1930s. Ollie was a cook for one of the large hotels in downtown Little Rock. His wife, Margaret, worked in a clothing cleaners located on North Little Rock's Main Street. Joseph Ollie died in the early 1950s and his widow remained in the house at 512 Willow Street through the end of the 1960s.

After the death of Mrs. Margaret Ollie, the house was purchased for rental income and occupied by a series of residents until 1999 when it was purchased by a local non-profit housing corporation who is in the process of renovating this house along with the other three folk form houses surrounding it.

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The house at 512 Willow Street is a significant representation of the early development of the residential area of North Little Rock's downtown. The early years of the twentieth century saw a great influx of construction in the area, much of which were rows of "shotgun" style houses. Only a few clusters of these shotgun form houses remain in the district. The 512 Willow Street House is one of the examples of this type of affordable housing which was once common in the Argenta Historic District.

North Little Rock, Arkansas Pulaski County Property: 718 Willow Street

The house located at 718 Willow Street in the Argenta Historic District is a one-story rectangular shaped structure of frame construction. It was constructed on the site circa 1929 to respond to the need for housing near Missouri-Pacific ailroad repair shops and yards. According to research sources, the house has always been rental property, occupied by a series of temporary residents.

Neighborhood folklore indicates the house consists of two army barracks relocated from Camp Pike, north of the city. Although there is no historic evidence to substantiate this theory, it is a well-known fact that structures from Camp Pike were offered to the public for relocation after the camp slowed operations following the end of World War I. The tall two-over-two double-hung windows and interior detailing such as bull's eye door and window moldings and exceptionally tall ceilings would indicate stylistic details not particularly common to the late 1920s.

The house at 718 Willow Street has been occupied as a multi-family unit off and on since its construction in the Argenta neighborhood. City Directories in the 1930s and 1940s indicate a series of railroad employees resided in the house.

Although it remained occupied through late 1999, the house at 718 Willow Street has suffered from neglect and progressive deterioration. The property has been purchased by a local non-profit housing corporation and is slated for renovation.

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### National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**Geographical Data** 

Acreage of Property 33

#### **UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Α	15 Zonc	566540 Easting	3846690 Northing	В	15 Zone	566800 Easting	3846740 Northing
С	15 Zone	566710 Easting	3846140 Northing	D	15 Zone	566560 Easting	3846170 Northing
E	15 Zone	566980 Easting	3846360 Northing	F	15 Zone	567110 Easting	3846360 Northing
G	15 Zone	567100 Easting	3846010 Northing	Н	15 Zone	566960 Easting	3846010 Nonhing

#### SEE ATTACHED QUAD MAP.

#### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

The boundaries remain the same as they were at the time the Argenta Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in March of 1993.

The boundaries for both of the discontiguous districts that together form the Argenta Historic District are shown as the dotted lines on the accompanying sketch map entitled "Argenta Historic District."

#### SEE ATTACHED SITE MAP.

#### **Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

This boundary includes all of the properties that historically have been associated with the district that retain their integrity

