United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property
   Historic name: Zinsmaster Baking Company Building
   Other names/site number: ______________________________________
   Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
   (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location
   Street & number: 2900 Park Avenue
   City or town: Minneapolis State: Minnesota County: 053 Hennepin
   Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
   I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets
   the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
   Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I
   recommend that this property be considered significant at the following
   level(s) of significance:
   ___ national ___ statewide ___ local
   Applicable National Register Criteria:
   ___A ___B ___C ___D

   Signature of certifying official/Title: ____________________________ Date

   State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

   In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

   Signature of commenting official: ____________________________ Date

   Title: ____________________________ State or Federal agency/bureau
   or Tribal Government
4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

______________________________
Signature of the Keeper

______________________________
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:  X

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

Building(s)  X

District

Site

Structure

Object
**Zinsmaster Baking Company**

**Hennepin, Minnesota**

**Name of Property**

**County and State**

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Noncontributing</th>
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<tr>
<td>buildings</td>
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Total

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: _0_________

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6. **Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- **INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION/Manufacturing Facility**

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- **DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling**

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Sections 1-6 page 3
7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Art Deco
- LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Collegiate Gothic

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: ________________________
- Foundation: CONCRETE
- Walls: BRICK
- Roof: ASPHALT

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

Summary Paragraph
See continuation sheets.

Narrative Description
See continuation sheets.
8. Statement of Significance

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

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

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

☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

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

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

☐ B. Removed from its original location

☐ C. A birthplace or grave

☐ D. A cemetery

☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

☐ F. A commemorative property

☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years
Zinsmaster Baking Company
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

INDUSTRY


Period of Significance
1928-1959


Significant Dates


Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)


Cultural Affiliation


Architect/Builder
DeJarnette, Charles W.
Zinsmaster Baking Company
Name of Property

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

See continuation sheets.

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

See continuation sheets.
9. Major Bibliographical References

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

See continuation sheets.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- **X** preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ____ previously listed in the National Register
- ____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ____ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #__________
- ____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #__________
- ____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #__________

**Primary location of additional data:**

- **X** State Historic Preservation Office
- ____ Other State agency
- ____ Federal agency
- ____ Local government
- ____ University
- ____ Other
  - Name of repository: ______________________________

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** HE-MPC-4220

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10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 0.94 acres
Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**
Datum if other than WGS84: __________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 44.949975  Longitude: -93.265798
2. Latitude:  
   Longitude: 
3. Latitude:  
   Longitude: 
4. Latitude:  
   Longitude: 

Or
**UTM References**
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927  or  ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone:  
   Easting:  
   Northing: 
2. Zone:  
   Easting:  
   Northing: 
3. Zone:  
   Easting:  
   Northing: 
4. Zone:  
   Easting:  
   Northing: 

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

Lots nineteen (19), thirty-seven (37), and thirty-eight (38) of Auditor’s Subdivision No. 215 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries encompass the city lots on which the Zinsmaster Baking Company Building was constructed, and represents the entire property during the period of significance.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Rachel Peterson
organization: Hess, Roise and Company
street & number: 100 North First Street
city or town: Minneapolis state: Minnesota zip code: 55401
e-mail: rachel@hessroise.com
telephone: 612-338-1987
date: November 21, 2019

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
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: Zinsmaster Baking Company Building
City or Vicinity: Minneapolis
County: Hennepin
State: Minnesota
Photographer: Rachel Peterson
Date Photographed: May 2, 2019

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0001. Primary east facade (right) and south wall (left), looking northwest.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0002. Primary east facade, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0003. Primary east facade, looking southwest.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0004. Primary east facade with decorative stone details, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building Building_0005. Decorative stone details along roofline, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0006. Primary east facade (left) and north wall (right), looking southwest.


MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0008. West wall (left), looking east.
Zinsmaster Baking Company
Name of Property

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0009. South wall, looking northwest.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0010. Entrance lobby and main stair, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0011. Main stair, looking northwest.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0012. Main stair looking toward second-floor landing, looking east.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0013. Main stair at second-floor landing, looking north.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0014. Main stair, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0015. First floor, corridor, looking north.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0016. First floor, typical apartment living room, looking southeast.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0017. First floor, typical apartment kitchen, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0018. First floor, typical apartment bathroom, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0019. First floor, typical apartment bedroom, looking north.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0020. First floor, garage, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0021. Second floor, north stair, looking east.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0022. Third floor, former mixing room, looking southeast.
Zinsmaster Baking Company
Name of Property

Hennepin, Minnesota
County and State

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0023.
Third floor, former mixing room, looking north.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0024.
Third floor, freight elevator in former ingredient room on mixing platform, looking north.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0025.
Third floor, former fermentation room, looking north.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0026.
Third floor, corridor to staff rooms, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0027.
Third floor, former men’s lunch room, looking south.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0028.
Third floor, former women’s locker room, looking south.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0029.
Basement, former flour-storage room, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0030.
Third floor, non-historic community room, looking west.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0031.
Third floor, former cold-storage room, looking north.

MN_Hennepin County_Zinsmaster Baking Company Building_0032.
Second floor, west stair, looking west.
Zinsmaster Baking Company                                   Hennepin, Minnesota
Name of Property                                          County and State
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.
7. Description

Summary
The Zinsmaster Baking Company Building is a former bakery at 2900 Park Avenue in Minneapolis. The building was designed by Charles W. DeJarnette with influences from the Collegiate Gothic and Art Deco styles. It is three-stories tall at the southeast corner and steps down to two stories moving north and west. The walls are red brick with buff stone accents. A stone band with “Zinsmaster Baking Company” engraved on it is above the second story windows on the primary east façade. Additional stone details are along the roofline.

The building was partially converted to residential use in 1987. Apartments were constructed on the first and second floors. The third floor retains its open plan and historic materials from the period of significance. Historic materials are also extant in the building’s stairwells, including the ornate main stair. During the renovation project, a section of the building along the north wall was demolished. Portions of walls on the west half of the building were reclad with stucco and received new window openings as part of that project. Despite the later alterations, the building retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historical significance as an industrial bakery.

Exterior
The Zinsmaster Baking Company Building is at 2900 Park Avenue in Minneapolis’s Phillips neighborhood. The building faces Park Avenue to the east and is immediately south of a depressed former rail corridor for the Chicago, Milwaukee and Saint Paul Railroad, which was listed in the National Register in 2005 (Chicago, Milwaukee and Saint Paul Grade Separation Historic District). The Zinsmaster property was constructed after the railroad district’s period of significance and was therefore excluded from the historic district.

The building is deeply set back from Park Avenue and the large front lawn has a modern black steel picket fence on its east and south sides. A concrete sidewalk runs east-west through the yard to the building’s main entrance. A second sidewalk runs along the east wall from the main entrance to a driveway on the south side of the property. A small parking lot at the northwest corner of the property was created in 1987 when part of the building was demolished. A brick retaining wall and a non-historic chain-link fence are on the north side of the parking lot.

At the southeast corner, the Zinsmaster Baking Company Building is three stories tall. The rest of the building is two stories tall above a partially exposed basement. The southwest corner of the building was originally one-story tall; the second-story was constructed as an addition in 1951. The building is largely clad in red brick with buff-stone details. Sections of the secondary walls on the west half of the building are covered with cream stucco.

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1 Permit No. A29663 (April 2, 1951), City of Minneapolis; Aerial Photograph Nos. A-17-018, WN-4M-202, and WN-3ee-148, John R. Borchert Map Library, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.
The primary east façade is divided into two sections: the three-story section to the south and the two-story section to the north. A curve in the east façade softens the transition between the three- and two-story sections. The façade’s parapet and ornamentation reflect the Collegiate Gothic and Art Deco styles through the use of geometric ornamentation. Two sections of the parapet at the north and south ends of the wall are clad in stone and have a round medallion with an inscribed “Z.” Additional medallions are on the tower’s south and north walls, emphasizing its prominence. An engraved stone panel reading “Zinsmaster Baking Company” is between the second- and third-story windows on the tower, flanked by square stone-and-brick decorations. Two flagpoles are on the roof at the north and south ends of the three-story section.

The building’s primary entrance is in the center of the east façade. The historic stone surround is intact. The door and transom have been replaced and the two sidelights have been filled with solid panels. A set of concrete stairs leads to the doorway and has non-historic painted-steel handrails. A modern awning shelters the entryway and two non-historic sconces flank the door.

Single and paired double-hung windows are on all levels of the east façade. The window openings retain their historic dimension and have historic stone sills. The double-hung, multi-pane sashes are modern replacements, but reference the original windows’ design. Brick panels with stone borders separate the third-story windows.

The south wall ranges from two to three stories tall, and the building’s roofline steps down moving east to west. The easternmost bay holds non-historic multi-pane windows matching those on the east façade. The next six bays moving west hold pairs of non-historic one-over-one windows surrounded by solid infill. The historic brick lintels are intact. A modern pedestrian door and overhead door are near the west end of the wall. Both openings appear historic, but the doors are replacement units. Three window bays on the west end of the first floor have been covered with solid panels. Four window openings on the second floor hold non-historic one-over-one windows. Three additional bays hold non-historic oriel windows.

The west wall of the building has a pedestrian entrance on the first floor. The historic opening has been largely infilled to accommodate a non-historic door, but is still visible. Two additional first-floor openings (one on either side of the pedestrian door) have been infilled. A glass-block window is on the second floor above the pedestrian door. It is flanked by two historic window openings, which now hold non-historic windows and solid panels.

The north wall has two distinct sections. The east section is clad in brick and has two pairs of multi-pane windows in its east bay. A stone medallion is above these windows. Two additional window bays are on the first floor. Each holds two non-historic one-over-one windows below a solid panel. The second floor has three openings with the same arrangement of non-historic windows and panels. The remainder of the north wall was originally on the interior of the building and became an exterior wall after a portion of the building was demolished in 1987. The formerly interior sections of the wall are clad in stucco and have a combination of non-historic flush and oriel windows. A non-historic entrance is near the east end of the
The building’s roof is clad in a modern asphalt roofing system. Historic penthouses for the freight elevator and north stair are extant on the north side of the roof.

**Interior**

The lobby inside the building’s primary entrance is decorated in the Art Deco style. It was historically the main entrance for visitors and was intended to make a positive impression through its design. The lobby floors are covered with alternating historic black and white square tiles, and the walls have a historic tile wainscot. Historic plaster is extant on the upper half of the walls, but has been covered with a non-historic textured topcoat. Decorative molding is around the edges of the ceiling. The light fixture is non-historic.

The main staircase is on the north side of the lobby. It has a simple paneled newel post with a ball finial. A decorative bannister runs between the first and second floors. It has a metal structure with elongated ovals between each post. The wood handrail is natural wood; the rest of the bannister is painted black. The treads are covered in historic black and white tile. The landing at the second floor has the same black and white floor and wall tiles as the lobby. A doorway on the landing’s north wall originally led to a public waiting room. It has been infilled with recessed sheetrock and the door opening is still apparent.

The first and second floors previously held the bakery’s wrapping, shipping, and oven rooms as well as offices. In 1987, apartments were constructed on both floors. All apartments have non-historic floor and wall finishes and dropped gypsum-board ceilings. Several of the apartments have short sets of stairs inside the entrance or between rooms, which account for platforms present in the original baking floors that have been retained. The corridors on the first and second floors have carpeted floors and dropped acoustic-tile ceilings.

In addition to apartments, the first floor also has a small leasing office and a garage. The office is roughly in the location of the former sales manager’s office, but appears to have non-historic walls and finishes. A garage is at the east end of the floor in the bakery’s loading room. The garage has industrial finishes in keeping with the building’s historic function. The floors are concrete. The walls are concrete block, but are largely covered with non-historic sheetrock. The ceiling is covered with non-historic dropped acoustic tiles. Small storage rooms are framed by non-historic partition walls.

The third floor is largely unaltered from the period of significance. Two large rooms occupy the majority of the floor. Smaller rooms on the west side of the floor served as locker rooms and lunchrooms for the staff. The large room on the east side of the floor was originally the bakery’s mixing room. A historic raised platform is along the east and north walls. An ingredient room was originally in the northeast corner, but the partition walls were removed, likely during the period of significance. Original white and black tiles are on the north and east walls below and between the windows. Historic beadboard paneling covers the ceiling, but leaves the building’s structure exposed. Tracks and rollers for moving machinery are also extant on the ceiling. The floor is concrete.
Moving west, a second large room on the third floor was the fermentation room. It has historic plaster walls and ceilings and a wood floor. A hallway runs along the north wall to a series of small rooms, which have historic plaster walls and ceilings and tiled floors. Some have wood beadboard on the ceilings. Several historic industrial-sash windows on the third floor have been covered on the exterior but are exposed on the interior.

Most of the building’s basement is unfinished and communicates its historic use as flour storage and cold storage for the bakery. Exposed concrete, clay-tile, steel, and wood structure is on the ceilings. Historic concrete walls framing the cold-storage room are extant. A portion of the former flour storage area has been divided with non-historic concrete-block walls and converted to a community room. It has non-historic finishes.

**Circulation**
The building’s main stair is inside the main entrance along the east wall. It runs between the first and third floors. The flight between the first and second floor is decorated with historic tile (described above). The flight between the second and third floors is a historic utilitarian steel stair. An additional historic steel stair is near the north entrance. The wall-mounted handrails are non-historic, but the interior handrails with the knob finials are historic.

A freight elevator runs from the basement to the third floor but is only visible on the third floor. Two doors, one facing the third floor and one facing the floor’s raised platform, appear to be historic.

**Integrity**
The Zinsmaster Baking Company Building retains good historic integrity to support its eligibility for the National Register despite alterations after the end of the period of significance.

The building’s 1951 addition falls within the period of significance and contributes to the property’s overall significance. It was retained through the building’s conversion to residential use and now holds apartments.

The building was partially converted to apartments in 1987. That rehabilitation project altered portions of the exterior and interior and impacted the building’s historic integrity. The largest impact was the demolition of a portion of the building was demolished to create a surface parking lot. The razed section was on the north side of the building facing the railroad corridor and held some of the bakery’s loading area and garage. The demolished portion of the building was a relatively small portion of the overall building mass.² The west half of the demolished section was one story and the east half was two stories. Its removal did not alter the primary façades or the building’s appearance from Park Avenue, which was a critical consideration in the building’s design and the company’s acceptance by its residential neighbors.

² The demolished and retained sections of the building are illustrated on Figure 2 on the Additional Information Continuation Sheets.
The exterior of this section followed the design of the building’s secondary walls. It had no additional ornamentation like is on the primary façade. The current garage at the west end of the first floor was also part of this loading room and continues to communicate the historic function of the space despite the addition of some non-historic finishes. Portions of the secondary walls on the west half of the building were reclad with stucco during this rehabilitation project and new non-historic window openings were installed. These alterations are not readily visible from Park Avenue and do not substantially compromise the building’s integrity.

Also during the 1987 project, most of the first floor and all of the second floor were converted into apartments. Aside from offices on the east side of the first floor and the north end of the second floor, these floors were largely open during the bakery’s operations. Historic raised concrete platforms on both floors remain and create a series of grade changes within and outside the apartments. New wall, floor, and ceiling finishes obscure the historic structure on these floors. It is unclear if historic finishes are extant underneath the new finishes. The historic entrance lobby on the first floor and the historic stairwells were retained during the renovation. The entrance lobby was intended to make an impression on guests and communicate the company’s status. This was achieved through decorative finishes such as the black and white tile floors and wainscot and the ornamental balustrade, which have been retained.

The third floor for the building was not converted into apartments and has good historic integrity. The floor originally held the bakery’s mixing and fermentation rooms. These spaces were integral to the bakery’s operation and held several pieces of innovative machinery that allowed Zinsmaster to produce mass quantities of bread. The staff locker and lunch rooms were also on this floor. Historic finishes are extant throughout the third floor on the floors, walls and ceilings. A historic mixing platform along the east perimeter wall is also extant. Through these finishes and features, the third floor sufficiently communicates the building’s history as an industrial bakery.

All of the building’s stairwells are also largely unchanged from the period of significance. The main stair runs between the first and second floors on the east side of the building, and is the most decorative remaining portion of the building. The other stairs in the building are utilitarian and do not have any decoration. The original stair structure and metal-tube handrails are intact. The stairs have been repainted and new handrails have been added to the walls, but do not materially diminish the integrity of these features. The original freight elevator is also extant. It has been covered with non-historic materials on the first and second floors, but is visible on the third floor.

Since the 1987 project, the building’s windows have been replaced. The historic window openings are unaltered. The non-historic windows on the primary façade reference the historic windows and have minimal impact on the building’s integrity. The landscape has also undergone more recent alterations. The building’s deep setback and landscaped lawn were important factors in its design and acceptance by the neighborhood. These features retain good historic integrity despite some changes to the landscaping. The original curved sidewalk has been replaced with the current linear center sidewalk and the fence is non-historic. The recent alterations have not, however, substantially impacted the property’s integrity, especially as viewed from Park Avenue.
The building’s setting is largely intact from its period of significance. There has been some new construction and alteration, but its proximity to the railroad corridor and its location in a residential neighborhood remains intact.

The Zinsmaster Baking Company Building has sufficient historic integrity to be eligible for the National Register, despite alterations after the period of significance. The building’s conversion to residential use impacted its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. There is, however, a sufficient amount of intact historic material to communicate the building’s history as an industrial bakery. This history is communicated though the intact primary façade and interior spaces such as the third floor, garage, basement, and interior circulation. Taken as a whole, the Zinsmaster Baking Company Building retains enough historic integrity for listing in the National Register.
8. Statement of Significance

Summary
The Zinsmaster Baking Company Building at 2900 Park Avenue in Minneapolis was constructed in 1928 as a bread factory for its namesake company. This was the company’s fifth plant and represented the height of its development. The new Minneapolis factory contained cutting-edge technology that improved production efficiency and made the facility one of the most advanced in the nation. Zinsmaster’s flagship plant also served as one of the company’s best advertisements and communicated its commitment to cleanliness at a time when the public was skeptical of industrially produced food. The property has local significance under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its role in the rise of industrial bakeries. The property’s period of significance begins with its construction in 1928 and runs through 1959 when founder Harry Zinsmaster stepped down as the company’s president.

Narrative Statement of Significance
Buying bread from a store is a relatively new practice in America. In 1890, 90 percent of bread was baked at home by women. The few commercial bakeries in operation during the nineteenth century were small—most had just one oven—and produced bread by hand. Larger industrial bakeries made up an even smaller part of the market and accounted for only 6 percent of bread consumed nationally. Between 1890 and 1930, however, industrial bread production began to rise due to three primary factors:

increased demand for commercial baked goods,

improved machinery for mass production, and

better mass-distribution methods.3

Increased demand for commercial products at the turn of the century was partly the result of women’s changing lifestyles. Prior to 1890, nearly all bread was baked at home. It was a time-consuming process, but it held cultural significance. Preachers and reformers of the time, who were mostly male, extolled “Mother’s bread” as a symbol of goodness and purity. Women’s were under pressure to commit their time and money to baking, but this practice was only affordable for middle- and upper-class households. Poor families relied on inexpensive store-bought bread that was affordable because the loaves were poor quality and produced in unsanitary factories. Households that could afford to make their own bread did so because they were assured a clean, high-quality product. Therefore, commercially available breads were associated with the lower classes and had a limited consumer base.4

Early commercial breads had a serious public-relations problem and were viewed by most consumers as unhealthy and dirty—the grain equivalent of germ-clotted milk or contaminated meat. According to historian Aaron Bobrow-Strain, “a simple loaf of bread from a small urban bakery seemed to many consumers a harbinger of death and disease.” These facilities often stretched their wheat flour by adding plaster of Paris, borax, chalk, or other materials to their dough, which repelled customers. They also often sold underweight loaves and were notoriously harsh workplaces, and these practices did not garner any goodwill from the purchasing public. In an effort to improve conditions, the federal government held

hearings on bread contamination and the Pure Foods Movement specifically targeted bakeries in its work to set standards for food and drug production.\(^5\)

In 1912, the National Association of Master Bakers (later renamed the American Bakers Association) implemented a sanitary code to improve product quality, but consumers were still skeptical of mass-produced bread. Public opinion began to change with the development of new technologies such as automatic wrapping machines that protected food from contamination. For many customers, the large, gleaming machines and bright, airy factories gave them confidence in industrial foods and helped combat their preconceptions about factory-produced bread. Many bakeries also had their employees dress in white uniforms to reinforce that their facility was clean.\(^6\)

America’s entrance into World War I was another catalyst in consumers’ increased comfort with mass-produced baked goods. National rationing programs encouraged civilians to change their eating habits in order to send as much food as possible to servicemembers. The U.S. Food Administration made Mondays and Wednesdays “Wheatless Days” and asked citizens to use a mix of 75 percent wheat flour and 25 percent flours from other grains in their baking. Using different flours significantly impacted bread recipes for home bakers—baking is more a science than an art—and resulted in ruined loaves and wasted wheat. In contrast, the precise methods of industrial baking under the direction of experienced bakers was an efficient use of wheat flour. The U.S. Food Administration urged citizens to buy industrially produced bread as a way to support the war effort. This government endorsement was a powerful stimulus for the growing bakery industry.\(^7\)

Improved and automated technology was another essential component in the development of industrial bakeries. New machines streamlined the bread-production process and improved cleanliness by limiting human interaction. A new type of oven had a long conveyor belt that carried dough through the machine, emerging perfectly baked. This was a clear improvement over earlier peel ovens where dough was loaded in on flat shovels (called peels) and needed constant monitoring and adjusting. Mechanical ovens operated continuously and eliminated stops and starts in the baking process, which dramatically increased the amount of bread that could be produced each day. The advanced machines caused the use of peel ovens to drop by 93 percent between 1910 and 1923, and another 50 percent between 1923 and 1929.\(^8\)

Other new machines also increased production and completed steps that had previously been done by hand. High-speed mixers, introduced in 1905, had a 1,200-pound capacity and allowed bakeries to mix large batches of dough at once. Automated rounders came on the market the following year and kneaded and shaped the dough into perfect rectangular loaves. Mechanical provers provided the ideal conditions for dough to rise. These machines were improved throughout the early 1900s to be more efficient and more sanitary; rounding machines were built with higher capacities and provers were enclosed to

\(^8\) Panschar, *Baking in America*, 120.
prevent contamination.9

Slicing machines became a major selling point for industrial bakers. The first loaves of automatically sliced bread were produced in 1928, by Missouri’s Chillicothe Baking Company. Small bakeries had long been slicing bread at the point of sale, but factory-made bread was softer and difficult to cut until Otto Rohwedder invented a slicing machine. Chillicothe’s sliced bread rapidly found a market—sales rose by 2,000 percent in a matter of weeks. The local newspaper reported that the standardized slices were “definitely better than anyone could possibly slice by hand.” By late summer 1928, bakeries throughout the Midwest had invested in slicing machines.10

The machine that arguably had the most impact on bread cleanliness was the automatic wrapping machines. Wrapped bread was protected from contamination during distribution and while it was on the shelves at the local market. This gave consumers greater confidence in the product. Wrappers, however, prevented people from gauging a loaf’s freshness by smelling and touching the bread directly. As a result, customers squeezed the wrapped loaves to test its softness which became synonymous with freshness. Packaging also gave companies a new opportunity for advertising, which they used to emphasize the product’s purity and cleanliness.11

By 1930, these technological advances had produced a modern assembly line for bread production. The standardized process and improved technology boosted the efficiency of industrial bakeries and produced a consistently high-quality product. It also greatly improved the public perception of commercially available bread. This softening of attitudes was helped along by a wider cultural shift toward a scientific understanding of diets and food production. Factories with large, shiny machines were viewed as more advanced than home kitchens and therefore superior.12

Now that bakeries could produce large quantities of goods and had a ready consumer base, they needed better distribution networks to bring the two together. Early distribution methods relied on horse-drawn carts, which were expensive and could only travel short distances. Throughout the 1920s, bakeries replaced their carts with motorized trucks, which could deliver to a wider area in the same amount of time. This change literally expanded the market for industrial bakers and allowed them to reach more wholesalers, retailers, and even individual customers via door-to-door sales. Truck-based distribution led to larger sales, and by 1930, industrial bakeries provided over 80 percent of commercially available bread nationwide.13

9 Panschar, Baking in America, 116-118.
10 Bobrow-Strain, White Bread, 55-56.
11 Bobrow-Strain, White Bread, 24-25, 57.
13 Panschar, Baking in America, 128-141.
Zinsmaster Baking Company

Minnesota had all of the ingredients needed for a successful baking company at the turn of the century. Minneapolis was one of the country’s leading producers of flour thanks to the nationally known Pillsbury and Washburn-Crosby Companies. Minnesota’s population was also on the rise, having increased by over 66 percent between 1880 and 1890. Northern Minnesota and the Twin Cities saw the largest increases during that period. The state also had strong transportation networks via boats, trains, and trucks. Harry W. Zinsmaster and R. F. Smith wanted to capitalize on these resources and opened the Zinsmaster-Smith Bread Company in 1913, in Duluth, Minnesota.14

Harry Zinsmaster had experience in the baking industry; his father, William Zinsmaster, founded the Des Moines Bakery Company in 1893, where Harry briefly served as vice-president and sales manager. Less is known about R. F. Smith, and he left the company in 1918. Harry Zinsmaster pushed forward with the venture and renamed the company the Zinsmaster Baking Company. The Duluth factory was successful thanks to its signature Butter Nut Bread, and Zinsmaster constructed new factories in Saint Paul in 1919, Hibbing in 1922, and Superior, Wisconsin, around 1925. Each of these new factories expanded Zinsmaster’s delivery range; the company’s preservative-free bread had a short window of time to reach customers before it went stale.15

Zinsmaster promoted the cleanliness of its products to set itself apart from the lingering public skepticism of industrial bread. A 1913 brochure for the company asserted that “absolute cleanliness will be the watchword in every department.” Zinsmaster’s Butter Nut Bread was “clean—absolutely clean” because the factory was “a new modern, sanitary bakery” and the products were “wrapped in sanitary waxed, dust-proof paper by machines.” Zinsmaster touted its wrapping machines in several advertisements and promoted how they kept the bread fresh and clean. One ad noted that the wrapped loaves were “snugly sealed in their waxed jackets that keep the freshness, flavor, and savor in and protect them from contamination.” Harry Zinsmaster was acutely aware that industrial bakeries were still thought of as dirty places and offered tours of his factories to prove to the public that they were clean. These tours were also opportunities to show off innovative machinery such as an automated pan greaser, a traveling oven, and proofing machines.16

The Zinsmaster Baking Company was proud of the amount of cutting-edge technology in its facilities. It regularly invested in new machines and was the first company to produce sliced bread in northern Minnesota. Advertisements for Zinsmaster’s sliced Master Loaf noted that the company “takes the lead in an amazing new service for the home; a revolutionary convenience in your kitchen.” This pre-sliced bread was marketed directly toward women, who were told it would make serving fresh bread to their families and guests easier and eliminate the hassle of knives or cleaning up afterward.17

17 Advertisement, Minneapolis Star, June 11, 1929.
The Zinsmaster Baking Company also promoted the quality of the ingredients used in its breads. A promotional recipe booklet from the company stated that “only selected flours, milled to a certain high standard, are used in Zinsmaster’s breads. . . . Attention to such details is what makes Zinsmaster’s bread as good tomorrow as it is today.”18

**The Minneapolis Plant**

In the mid-1920s, the Zinsmaster Baking Company began planning a fifth plant to be located in Minneapolis. In September 1927, Harry Zinsmaster announced that the company had selected a site in the Phillips neighborhood and planned to spend $200,000 on a new factory. The project became a point of heated debate in the city, feeding into ongoing tensions between industrial and residential development.19

The Zinsmaster Baking Company strategically selected a site for the new factory alongside the Chicago, Milwaukee and Saint Paul Railroad (CM&StP) corridor. The easy access to a major transportation network had made the rail corridor an attractive place for many industrial businesses. This was a particularly important factor for Zinsmaster. The company had a nearby plant in Saint Paul,20 but that factory was just a block north of the state capitol building and did not have easy access to railroad transportation. The new plant in Minneapolis would have a more efficient transportation network by virtue of its location. The easy rail connection would also expand Zinsmaster’s distribution radius. The preservative-free bread needed to be delivered to stores within a day or two of baking or it would be stale before it reached customers. The new Minneapolis factory’s close proximity to the railroad meant that freshly baked bread could be loaded and shipped more efficiently, allowing Zinsmaster to reach more buyers.21

The Zinsmaster site, however, faced Park Avenue, a residential street that had been developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s by wealthy residents. Homeowners on Park Avenue were trying to style their street as the Summit Avenue of Minneapolis, a reference to the marquee Saint Paul street filled with high-style mansions occupied by societal elite. An industrial plant on Park Avenue could derail, in the opinion of wealthy residents, the efforts to establish the avenue as Minneapolis’s premier residential thoroughfare. Likely because of Park Avenue’s status, the site selected by Zinsmaster was partly zoned for residential development and partly for light-industrial use. This zoning pattern was different than the majority of sites along the CM&StP line. In order to build the factory, the residential portion of the property would need to be rezoned.22

The Zinsmaster Baking Company submitted its request for rezoning to the city in September 1927. The company planned to set its new building back fifty feet from Park Avenue and include a buffer of

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20 The Saint Paul factory was at 97 Sherburne Avenue and was demolished in the 1980s.
landscaping between the street and the factory so that it would blend into the neighborhood. Homeowners on Park Avenue initially supported the project, “believing that a high-class industry would benefit the community,” but by late September their opinions had changed. A group of residents and members of the Twenty-Eighth Street Improvement Association went before the city council to oppose the rezoning. Their main concern was that the Zinsmaster factory would be noisy and smelly, and would generally degrade the aesthetics of Park Avenue. During a city council hearing, a resident commented that the street “is a beautiful entrance to downtown Minneapolis. Distinguished visitors are often taken down that avenue as one of the show streets of the city.” Representatives of Zinsmaster refuted the residents’ concerns. They argued that because the facility produced bread, there would not be an unpleasant odor. The company had also invested in lighter delivery trucks, which would be quieter and would enter and exit at the rear of the building. Noise would be further mitigated by the top-of-the-line machinery. Zinsmaster argued that since the site was already partially zoned for light industry, the neighbors should support a bakery rather than leaving it available for “some really objectionable industry.”

The arguments between the Zinsmaster Baking Company and the area’s residents reignited a larger discussion in Minneapolis concerning how much industrial development should be allowed and where. A couple of years earlier, a vinegar factory had wanted to build in Northeast Minneapolis on Main Street Northeast. The area was already industrial—railroad tracks ran behind the property, a window and door factory were across the street, and a brewery was just a block away. The residents of two nearby houses objected to the development and were able to convince the city council to rezone the property and block construction. The vinegar factory moved to Saint Paul and many felt that this was one more example of Minneapolis losing out on jobs for its citizens, income from property taxes, and “general prosperity with its widespread blessing.” A string of similar decisions earned Minneapolis a reputation as a city hostile toward industrial development where companies could not select their own sites even in industrial areas. In contrast to many of the earlier conflicts between industries and residents, this skirmish involved two very influential factions: the wealthy residents of Park Avenue and Zinsmaster Baking Company, a prominent industrial bakery.

Many of the residents’ concerns centered around the aesthetics of the proposed industrial building. W. Y. Chute, Zinsmaster’s representative during the debate, assured them that the new facility would be “a beautiful structure fitting in well with the architecture of the district.” Despite the company’s reasoning, the residents maintained their opposition and the proposal was tabled until it could be heard by the city council’s Roads and Bridges Committee.

23 “Council to Act for $350,000 Bakery Site,” Minneapolis Tribune, September 30, 1927; “Council Consent for Park Avenue Bakery Sighted,” in Zinsmaster Baking Company clipping file, James K. Hosmer Special Collections, Minneapolis Central Library.
24 “Favoring Industries—Somewhere Else,” in Zinsmaster Baking Company clipping file, James K. Hosmer Special Collections, Minneapolis Central Library.
25 “Baking Project Wins City Approval” and “Council Will Act on Bakery Site,” in Zinsmaster Baking Company clipping file, James K. Hosmer Special Collections, Minneapolis Central Library.
After hearing arguments, the Roads and Bridges Committee unanimously voted to rezone the Zinsmaster site to light industrial and the proposal was sent back to the city council. Several of the aldermen had announced their opinions prior to the hearing, and when the votes were cast on October 14, 1927, the rezoning ordinance passed and Mayor Leach approved it without comment. Residents were undaunted by the approval and filed a suit in district court to overturn the rezoning ordinance and prevent Zinsmaster from constructing the factory. The suit did not move forward and the Minneapolis Star reported that after an injunction failed to materialize, Zinsmaster rushed to get the new factory up and running. This victory by Zinsmaster served as an important step towards proving that residential and industrial uses could exist side by side in the city.26

As a nod to the residents’ concerns, the Planning Commission requested to review the architectural and landscaping plans for the new Zinsmaster factory to ensure the building complemented the neighborhood. Zinsmaster hired Charles W. DeJarnette of Des Moines to design the new factory. DeJarnette had a longstanding relationship with the Zinsmaster Baking Company. He was married to a relative of Harry Zinsmaster, had previously designed the company’s Duluth plant, and likely worked on the Saint Paul and Superior plants as well. DeJarnette originally proposed using white painted or glazed brick for the Minneapolis factory, which had been used on Zinsmaster’s Duluth, Saint Paul, and Superior plants. Apparently, the Planning Commission reacted negatively to the material and it was replaced with red face brick. The factory’s ventilating equipment and landscaping was also reviewed and approved by the commission. DeJarnette’s final design used the popular Art Deco and Collegiate Gothic Styles. The building was significantly more ornate than the company’s existing factories, but reflected the sophisticated architecture seen on Park Avenue.27

The Zinsmaster Baking Company began construction on the new facility right after the Planning Commission’s approval, and the plant was finished early in 1929. Operations began on April 10, 1929, and the company hosted a public open house on April 30. Harry Zinsmaster gave a speech to mark opening day, and commented on the building’s design, saying “our new plant marks a departure from older industrial buildings in many respects. The site is located in the heart of one of the city’s large residential sections, and we have tried to make the building and grounds conform to the surroundings. Engineers have succeeded in eliminating the objectionable features which in the past have been associated with large manufacturing plants.” 28

The new Minneapolis building was also designed to be a permanent advertisement for the company. Zinsmaster’s earlier plants were smaller and architecturally plain in comparison. None of them fit the bill of a flagship factory for the company. Harry Zinsmaster was an ad man at his core and was keenly aware of how a new top-of-the-line building could attract new customers. Zinsmaster was well aware of the negative connotations that plagued the baking industry, and he was constantly battling to have his

27 “Baking Plant Project Wins City Approval”; Building Permit No. A18955 (June 29, 1928), City of Minneapolis.
28 “Zinsmaster Opens $400,000 Bakery,” in Zinsmaster Baking Company clipping file, James K. Hosmer Special Collections, Minneapolis Central Library; “Fifteenth Anniversary for Minneapolis Plant,” The Mixer, no. 4 (February 1944), np.
company known as a clean bakery. For these reasons, renovating one of the company’s existing plants would not have the same impact as constructing a new architecturally ornate and technologically advanced plant. The new, stylish building in a desirable neighborhood could go a long way to elevating Zinsmaster’s status among industrial bakers. Years later, the company newsletter would echo this sentiment and call the Minneapolis building “a good advertisement for a quality product.”

Once the new plant was up and running, the Zinsmaster Baking Company invited a group of bakery engineers to tour the new factory, and they rated it as “one of the finest in the United States.” At the Minneapolis plant, the production and packaging processes were almost entirely automated, which was an improvement over the earlier Zinsmaster factories. The building was designed so that the bread-making process started on the third floor and finished in the basement. The dough was mixed in two high-capacity, high-speed mixers on the third floor and then left to proof in the adjacent fermentation room, which had an air washer to filter and humidify the air so that the dough would stay clean and moist as it rose—cutting-edge technology in the 1920s. After the dough proofed, a dividing machine split it into standardized pieces that were kneaded by a rounding machine. A molding machine kneaded the dough again and placed it in pans that had been mechanically greased. Then the dough rose again in a “proof box” on the second floor before it entered Zinsmaster’s travelling oven. This oven was the factory’s showpiece. It was ninety feet long and could bake 80,000 loaves of bread each day. After the bread baked, it went through the slicing machine. Zinsmaster was the first company in the region to sell sliced bread and having this machine in its arsenal was key to the company’s success. Finally, the bread was wrapped by a machine on the first floor and shipped out to stores across the upper Midwest from loading rooms on the first floor and in the basement.

All of the new bakery machinery was incredibly heavy and the building was designed to carry substantial loads. Platforms with additional reinforcing were constructed for the oven and the mixing equipment. Cork pads were also laid between the sub-floor and finished floor on the third floor to absorb vibrations and sound from the mixing and fermentation equipment.

Zinsmaster rolled out a new advertising campaign after the Minneapolis plant opened. Most of the ads focused on the modern technology in the factory and the high-quality bread they produced. Zinsmaster marketed its bread specifically to women, who were the primary grocery shoppers in most families. Advertisements in the Minneapolis Star emphasized the quality of the company’s bread, saying that it was just as good as homemade loaves. Another full-page advertisement directly linked the new factory with quality bread that women could feel good about buying. The ad stated that Zinsmaster had built the new factory in order to give “Minneapolis mothers and wives a pure, fresh loaf of bread, nourishing, healthful and with a true home-like flavor.” The facility’s Baking Master was in charge of seeing that

30 “Zinsmaster Ovens, First of Type in Northwest, Will Bake 5,000 Loaves of Bread Hourly,” Minneapolis Star, March 9, 1929; Zinsmaster Bread Company files, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis; Zinsmaster Baking Company drawings, 1928, Zinsmaster Bread Company files, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.
31 Zinsmaster Baking Company drawings, 1928.
each loaf was “baked with the same care that mothers and wives use in their home baking.” A photograph or drawing of the new Minneapolis factory, particularly its east façade, was often included on the advertisements.32

These advertisements helped Zinsmaster grow its customer base. The company invested in a fleet of thirty-two trucks to deliver its products to wholesalers and retailers across to the eastern half of Minnesota, northwestern Wisconsin, and northwestern Michigan. Its non-perishable toasts and crackers were shipped to thirty-nine states and southern Canada. The company also worked with retailers on advertising and merchandising the bread. The Minneapolis plant had a model store on its first floor where grocers could come for ideas on how to stage Zinsmaster products.33

Zinsmaster continued to improve the Minneapolis facility as new technology became available. When the Minneapolis plant first opened, Zinsmaster wrapped bread in wax paper, which was sealed with a hot iron. As waterproof cellophane wrappers gained popularity in the 1930s, Zinsmaster changed its packaging to use the new material. To seal the wrappers, the company partnered with the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company (now known as 3M) and began using the company’s new Scotch Tape. Always concerned about his product’s appearance, Harry Zinsmaster said that “our dealers tell us the package had plenty of customer appeal and sales prove it. Much of this display value comes from the neat closure made possible by Scotch Tape.”34

The company also updated its ingredient-delivery systems to improve efficiency. When the factory first opened, flour was hauled inside in 100-pound sacks. Beginning in 1949, Zinsmaster could order bins holding 3,000 to 3,500 pounds of flour, which were more efficient both for the flour mills and the bakeries. These bins required new machinery to empty them, and Zinsmaster installed that new technology in January 1949.35

In 1951, Zinsmaster constructed an addition to the west side of its plant. A second story was added over the southwest corner of the building to serve as a garage, according to the building permit. Historic photos of the building show that the addition was faced with brick and blended into the existing building. The expanded garage facilities allowed the factory to more efficiently load and unload its delivery trucks.36

Harry Zinsmaster

32 Advertisement, Minneapolis Star, April 27, 1929.
35 Untitled, Minneapolis Tribune, January 16, 1949.
36 Permit No. A29663 (April 2, 1951), City of Minneapolis.
The success of the Zinsmaster Baking Company was due to the strength of its leader, Harry Zinsmaster. He grew up in Iowa working with his father at the Des Moines Bakery Company, recalling that he “did everything from cleaning out the stable to driving a bread route.” After graduating from Amherst College in Massachusetts, Zinsmaster worked at a Chicago advertising agency. This early exposure to marketing influenced how he would lead the Zinsmaster Baking Company. One of his mentors at the advertising agency advised Zinsmaster to “try to do things better and different,” which he put into practice when he started the Zinsmaster Baking Company a couple of years later. Zinsmaster advertised his company on radio programs such as Master Melody Time, Master Memory Time, and Master Open House, which reached wide audiences. He also ran print advertisements in local newspapers and magazines. The American Baker profiled Zinsmaster, complimenting his “keen sense of what a baker can do to enhance his prestige and that of the industry.” The article specifically noted Zinsmaster’s leadership during the Great Depression and his willingness to employ innovative tactics “with zeal and force” to keep his company afloat. One such innovation was opening a large meeting room in the Minneapolis plant to the community. This brought more people into the facility and the model store.37

As Zinsmaster’s recognition grew, he was invited to participate on several national committees and boards. Arguably his most acclaimed position was as president of the American Bakers’ Association (ABA)—“the most important of the [baking] industry trade associations in both size and prestige”—from 1933 through 1952. During that time, Zinsmaster was unanimously elected to serve as the association’s board chair, a position he held from 1946 to 1949. In 1946, the association was preparing to launch an advertising campaign, which evolved into a slate of public-relations activities called the Baking Industrial Promotional Program (BIPP). Zinsmaster’s marketing acumen made him the most appealing candidate to lead the ABA through this phase of intense promotion.38

The BIPP was formed to temper the effects of the end of World War II on the bakery market. During the war, citizens were compelled to buy bread from bakeries to save wheat at home. Because of the rationing programs, war-time diets included more fruits, vegetables, and dairy products in order to send as much meat and grains to the troops. After the war, there was a concern that Americans would not raise their bread consumption to pre-war levels. BIPP began an advertising program, later called the Bakers of America Program, to “cultivate public appreciation of the baking industry and stimulate larger consumption of bakery food.” When the program launched in April 1947, it was one of the most comprehensive national advertising campaigns to date. Using its $1.5 million-dollar budget, the ABA placed color advertisements in popular magazines such as Life, McCall’s, and Ladies Home Journal. Multi-page spreads ran in medical journals and grocery trade magazines. These ads were reprinted in small local publications, plastered on the sides of trucks, and displayed in grocery stores.39

As the program gained traction, the planning committee used several different tactics to reach an even
wider audience. The dynamic campaign was heralded as “the most important promotion in the history of the food business.” In 1949, the Los Angeles Times noted the success of the advertising program, highlighting the 150 percent increase in sales of baked good since the end of World War II.40

In addition to his work with the ABA, Zinsmaster held several high-profile positions with other organizations. He served on President Truman’s Citizens Food Committee during World War II and was a member, vice-president, and director-at-large for the National Association of Manufacturers after the war (1945-1956). He was on the board of directors of several prominent organizations including the Northern Pacific Railway (1933-1962), Saint Paul’s Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children (1934-1945), and the First American National Bank of Duluth (1938-1971). Zinsmaster also consulted for several government agencies and programs in the lead-up to World War II including the National Council for Improvement, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the 9th Federal Reserve District. These appointments reflect Zinsmaster’s influence throughout manufacturing and marketing industries.41

Closing
In 1959, Harry Zinsmaster stepped down from his position as president of the Zinsmaster Baking Company. He served as chair of the board until his death in 1977. The company had no one to replace its charismatic leader. In December 1977, Iowa-based Metz Baking Company purchased Zinsmaster and took over the Minneapolis factory. The company attempted to expand the building but was met with fervent opposition from neighbors. In an ironic rehash of the 1927 zoning debate, Zinsmaster needed to rezone more land in order to build an addition but was opposed by local residents. This time around, one of the objecting neighbors was the alderman for the Eighth Ward who had direct influence over the decision. Metz’s expansion plant for the site stalled and the company closed the Minneapolis factory in 1980. In 1987, the building’s first and second floors were converted into apartments. A portion of the building at the northwest corner was demolished to create a small parking lot for residents. The west half of the demolished section was one story tall and the east half was two stories tall. The first floor held garage and loading space and the second floor held offices. Portions of the secondary walls were covered with stucco and received new window bays to facilitate the property’s new residential use.42

Significance
The Zinsmaster Baking Company’s Minneapolis plant has local significance under Criterion A in the areas of industry for its role in the growth of industrial bakeries. The company made a name for itself by producing high-quality bread using the latest technology. Early industrial bakeries had a reputation for producing poor-quality bread in unsanitary conditions. To combat the industry’s negative reputation, Zinsmaster heavily promoted its clean facilities and sanitary products. Zinsmaster’s Minneapolis plant in

particular had a wide array of cutting-edge technology, including slicing and wrapping machines, that gave consumers confidence in their product and fueled the company’s success. The building’s architecture was also an effective advertisement for the Zinsmaster Baking Company. The handsome Art Deco and Collegiate Gothic building stood in contrast to the public conception of industrial bakeries as dirty factories. The building was used in the company’s advertisements and helped reinforce its image as a clean, trustworthy bakery.

The Minneapolis factory represents overarching themes in the industrial baking industry’s rise to ubiquity. The plant’s reliance on technology and nearly complete automation reflected the larger movement toward mass production and away from homemade bread. Zinsmaster, like bakeries across the country, prioritized their distribution networks carefully cultivated relationships with wholesalers and retailers in order to bring their breads to customers. The facility was located near a railroad line and had easy access to major truck routes, which were essential for receiving raw materials and distributing their products across the region. With their advance production and distribution facilities, Zinsmaster became a regionally prominent industrial bakery.

Zinsmaster’s Minneapolis plant is the best remaining example of the company’s history. The Hibbing plant (600-698 East Nineteenth Street) is extant, but is smaller and has a more modest design compared to the Minneapolis factory. The Duluth (2831 West Superior Street) and Saint Paul (97 Sherburne Avenue) factories have both been demolished.

There are several extant industrial bakeries in Minneapolis, but many of these have poorer integrity than the Zinsmaster Baking Company Building. Several more have been demolished. A comparison study was conducted as part of the 2004 survey of the Zinsmaster Baking Company led the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office to conclude that the Zinsmaster property appeared eligible for the National Register. Some of the extant industrial bakeries in Minneapolis were local branches of national companies, unlike Zinsmaster, which was a Minnesota-based company. Others produced non-perishable products, such as crackers, and were not part of the fresh bread industry. The Zinsmaster Baking Company building is among the best remaining examples of industrial bakeries from this period.43

The property’s period of significance runs from 1928 when the factory opened through 1959 when Harry Zinsmaster stepped down as president of the company.

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Zinsmaster Baking Company
2900 Park Avenue
Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota
Coordinates: 44.949975°, -93.265798°

The property boundary is outlined in blue.
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Zinsmaster Baking Company Building
Name of Property
Hennepin County, Minnesota
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Additional Documentation Page 2
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 5

Zinsmaster Baking Company Building
Name of Property
Hennepin County, Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)
Zinsmaster Baking Company -- Second Floor Photo Key
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 7

Zinsmaster Baking Company -- Third Floor Photo Key

Zinsmaster Baking Company Building
Name of Property

Hennepin County, Minnesota
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 8

Zinsmaster Baking Company Building
Name of Property
Hennepin County, Minnesota
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Photo A
Zinsmaster Baking Company, 1929
(Minnesota Historical Society)

Photo B
Zinsmaster Baking Company, ca. 1930
(Minnesota Historical Society)
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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**Photo C**  
Zinsmaster Baking Company, 1958  
(Minnesota Historical Society)

**Photo D**  
Zinsmaster Baking Company, 1929  
(Minnesota Historical Society)
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Additional Documentation Page 10

**Photo E**
Zinsmaster Baking Company, 1929
(Minnesota Historical Society)

**Photo F**
Zinsmaster Baking Company, 1929
(Minnesota Historical Society)
Figure 1: 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of the Zinsmaster Baking Company Building.
**Figure 2:** 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of the Zinsmaster Baking Company Building. The blue shaded area was demolished in 1987. The purple shaded area is the building’s current footprint.